

# SPELLBOUND KINGDOMS



FRANK BRUNNER



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# WELCOME

Welcome to the revised and complete edition of Spellbound Kingdoms. I am very excited about this game! I hope that it becomes your “go-to” fantasy RPG.

There are a lot of ideas here that might be new even to seasoned roleplayers. These include:

- Scene-order play
- Inspirations
- Mood
- Organizations that allow you to “zoom in”

and “zoom out,” scaling the campaign action from personal all the way up to global

- Integrated culture, war, shadow war, and economy rules

- Improv social scenes

Even if SK does not become your go-to fantasy RPG, I hope that you take some of these ideas and drop them into your other games.

I deserved and took a lot of grief for the layout in the first release of SK. I hope that this simpler layout is, if not *Ennie*-worthy, at least better.

Simplification is a theme that runs throughout this edition. I simplified many rules, from Mood and Inspiration to character creation and culture. The same spirit is there, but it now has a more elegant expression. For those of you who have read the first book, there is enough new material here that I believe that your present perusal will be rewarded.

Remember to stop by the forums. One of the combat styles in this book (Matt Miller's Long Arm spear-fighting style) had its start on our homebrew forum. Who knows what future content will pop up?

Above all else, I hope that you have fun with the game.

Enjoy!

# RULE ZERO

Rule Zero applies. Make whatever rules you need to have fun, and toss out the rules that aren't fun. This is your game now. Find what works for you and your group, and go with that.

That said, fear not! I do not mean to abdicate my responsibility as a game designer or absolve myself of any poor choices by saying, “Hey, just Rule Zero it.” It's my job to design these rules so that what's here is the most fun for the most people. I have tried very hard to do that. I hope that Rule Zero will be needed rarely.

There is another point that goes along with Rule Zero: hew to the spirit of the rules, not the letter. That way leads to adventure!

# MATERIALS

You'll need a set of seven gaming dice: d2, d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20. You'll also want copies of the fighting styles that your character might use (at the end of this book) and something to mark position on your style sheet. I use a miniature figure that represents my character.

# PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

I assume you already know what an RPG is, what a GM is, and how RPGs with a GM are typically played.

If you don't, then I don't know how you came to be reading this book. My marketing-fu is not that strong! Perhaps a spouse handed you or emailed you this book? Regardless, I've got your back, *Mystery Reader*: go to your favorite search engine, look up roleplaying games, and come on back. You'll be glad you did. RPGs rock.



## CREDITS

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Come join us online at [www.spellboundkingdoms.com](http://www.spellboundkingdoms.com)!





## CHAPTER ONE: RULES

Take a look at that picture up there. Igor Kieryluk drew it for this game. Those are three Axemen, so named after Jason of Thyre presented his lover Siobhan with a hematite-and-gold axe pendant, saying, “Your love is like an axe to the frozen sea that was within me.”

The Axemen above are raiding a Thyran castle, perhaps to assassinate a tyrant, to blackmail the tyrant’s wife, or to steal the bottle containing his daughter’s ability to love - a bottle that the tyrant has promised to give back to her once she reaches her majority without ruining herself.

Igor did a good job of capturing the spirit of the game. It’s the spirit of Axemen raiding, of love, of desperation, of creaking leather and rough rope standing against all the ice and magic and stone and inertia of centuries.

That’s the spirit that these rules support.

The rules drive the game at a fast pace and set it on a collision course with the most dearly held inspirations of both PCs and NPCs. If lovers are riven, homes are burned, and true love conquers all, then you are playing the game as it was meant to be played. May you find as much enjoyment in so doing as the rest of us!





## OVERVIEW

The core mechanic is a die-step, roll-over-target-number system. Each kingdom or region has its own target number, called the Doom.

Inspirations are at the heart of every character. Use them like action points in any scene to give you a bonus. Unlike other action points you may be familiar with, Inspirations are represented directly in the game world, and you can lose them (if someone kills your wife, for example).

SK's five main scene types are combat, mass combat, chases, investigations (or explorations), and social encounters.

The mode of play is classic RPG play or scene order play. "Scene order play" is optional. It means that players take turns picking what they want to accomplish in a scene (find a password, intimidate a rival, loot a tomb, etc.) and how they want to accomplish it (stealth, combat, chase, social, war). Then the group plays through the set scene, and if the PCs "win" they get the desired result; if they "lose," something gets worse for them. A single campaign may switch between modes of play, or use only one mode or the other.

## CORE MECHANIC

Spellbound Kingdoms uses d2, d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20 dice. The size of the die that you roll is determined by the relevant characteristic, attack, vehicle, or whatever else you are using. Roll the highest die that does not exceed the value of your characteristic.

*Example.* If your Strength is 7, roll a d6 when using Strength.

*Example.* Sometimes this is noted dStr. For example, dStr if your Strength is 8 means d8.

If you meet or beat the target number, you succeed. The target number is usually the Doom (see below) or your opponent's opposed roll.

## MODIFIERS

There are no modifiers applied to the result of the roll. The number showing on the die is what you get. Once you have a feel for it, you can resolve actions from the battlefield to the salon extremely quickly this way.

SK does use two modifiers to rolls, but they are used before rolling.

The first modifier is a die size change.

*Example.* Celeste lunges with her longsword at a madman. Normally that is a d8 attack, but since her previous round was spent feinting, she gains a one die size increase. She rolls a d10.

Dice can never be lowered below a d2. Any increase above a d20 results in rolling a second d20 (and another d20 for each increase beyond that). Take the highest single roll as your result.

*Example.* Raleigh Arbuthnot is firing a zeppelin's ballista at an amphitheater of people attending an unsanctioned violin concert. Normally he rolls a d12, but for various reasons, the GM awards him 3 die size increases. He ends up rolling 3d20 (d12 --> d20 is the first die size increase, and there are two remaining increases for a total of three big d20s). He rolls the three d20s and takes the highest single roll as his result.

The second modifier is a bonus die or a penalty die.

If it is a bonus die, roll all the dice and take the single highest roll as your result.

If it is a penalty die, roll all the dice and take the single lowest roll as your result.

*Example.* Rex Shorn attempts to disarm a Jakattan needle trap. He rolls a d8 for his Quickness, but he also has a bonus die from his "History: Trapfinder for Rithaign Factors, Haulers, and Panhandlers (10)." He rolls a d8 and a d10 and gets a 5 and a 3. He takes the 5 as his result.

*Example.* Orton Shieldbearer is so shaken by a magic surge (one that caused ghosts to flit through the battlefield) that his heart fails him. He takes a Heart penalty die on his next attack. He normally would roll a d8 for a Lunge. Now he rolls a d8 and a d6 (his Heart score is 6) and gets a 7 and a 2. He takes the 2 as his result.

# DOOM & TARGET NUMBERS

In the uncommon case you have both a penalty die and a bonus die on the same roll, apply the bonus die last. This applies to Mood and Inspiration (see below) as well; they apply after any penalty dice.

*Example.* Mercy Manthorpe unwittingly ate madfire ashes at dinner, giving her a Reason penalty die to all activity for the next hour. Looking for a safehouse, she attempts to leap across a rooftop. Her Quickness is a 9, so she rolls a d8 as her base die. She has a Reason of 5, so she rolls a d4 as her penalty die. Rolling these two, she gets a 2 on the base and a 3 on the penalty. The 2 is her result so far. But she also has a “History: Nightrunner for the Rithaigh Factors, Haulers, and Panhandlers (9),” so she rolls a d8 bonus die. On this bonus die, she rolls a 5, and therefore she takes the 5 as her final result.

## TIES

In an opposed die roll, ties go to the higher die size. If both tying dice are the same size, re-roll. (Re-roll only the two tying dice, not any other dice such as Inspirations, bonus dice, etc. if you have them.)

If the roll is not actively opposed (as when it is made against the Doom), then a tie - a result equal to the target number - counts as a success.

## DICE EXPLODE

Dice explode. That is, when you roll the highest number possible on a die, also increase the die by one size and roll again. The largest number showing on any die is the result of your roll. Dice can explode multiple times.

*Example.* Elena of Muda-Tarsk rolls a 10 on a d10. This explodes, so she rolls a d12. She gets a 7 on the d12. The result of her roll is the 10 that she had originally.

*Example.* Minette Viera rolls a 4 on a d4. This explodes, so she rolls a d6. She gets a 6 on the d6. This explodes too, so she rolls a d8. She gets a 3 on the d8. The result of this roll is a 6, the highest number on any of the dice.

If you are rolling against an opponent, then you each roll and the higher roll wins.

On the other hand, if you are rolling against the environment, the target number is usually the Doom of the region. The Doom is born of magic, the king, and fate. It measures the difficulty of life. Woe and misery walk in lands with high Doom, while the sun shines warmer, and there are fewer children wailing from plague-flagged tenement windows, in lands with low Doom. Doom opposes heroic actions; a peasant need not roll against the Doom to cook lunch.

From a game design point of view, the Doom is an aid to the GM. Instead of feeling forced to come up with difficulties or target numbers on the spot, the GM uses the Doom.

*Example.* Nicholas the Nail is galloping on horseback through an open-air bazaar. He needs to jump Zeb, his horse, over a table of rye loaves. This is Rithaigh, where the Doom is only 3 (the king’s wrath is focused on fractious East Fire across the bay). Nicholas rolls a d6 because his Quickness is 6. He gets a 5 on his roll. This is greater than the Doom, so he clears the table and races on.

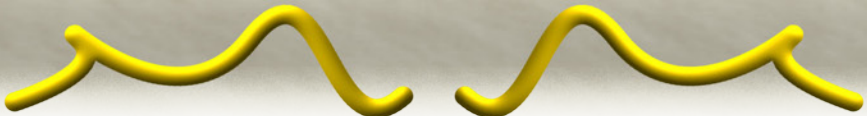
The GM can, of course, adjust the target num-



A NOTE ON DICE  
d12 to d20 may seem like a large or uneven jump, but in fact it is not. Consider the jump from d2 to d4: you have doubled your maximum roll. The jump from d10 to d12 is nowhere near that large a relative increase. d12 to d20 merely brings the increases back to the same scale.

There are many other considerations, but considering them, including the almost visceral fun of rolling the big ol’ d20 while your opponent rolls a pathetic d8, the jump from d12 to d20 is justified, mathematically and otherwise.





ber for any task to be different from the Doom. Particularly easy or difficult tasks are often so adjusted. The GM is also encouraged to reward roleplaying as appropriate with an adjustment to the target number. If a player describes a stunningly clever method to accomplish his goal, or if his description of his attempt entertains the entire table to the point of universal acclaim, then the GM should give serious consideration to lowering the PC's target number.

## MOOD

A king's mood can crucify a hundred witches - or set them free. A trader's mood can help close the deal on a dozen zeppelins - or ruin his fortunes forever. In the Kingdoms, mood is a critical social tool.

In battle, a character's Mood can mean the difference between survival and death. Those who know they can win, who fight with energy and vim, who by dint of psyche dodge their opponent's worst blows and connect with their own - these are the champions.

At creation, a PC's Mood is half his Heart score.

### **You gain Mood by:**

Winning a social attack (usually Charisma vs. Charisma roll) and choosing to gain a Mood point rather than inflict a point of Mood damage.

Executing a daring combat trick, such as swinging from a chandelier, can increase your Mood (see the fighting style sheets at book's end). Using these maneuvers outside of combat does not raise Mood; only the rush and risk of combat seasons your maneuvers with the proper zest.

Various character class abilities, talents, and outstanding roleplay (at the option of the GM and the other players) can increase Mood.

Spending a scene (or a full day outside of scene play) and narrating or roleplaying how you use the time to elevate your Mood also works. This raises Mood to its maximum (or beyond, for exceptional roleplay). This only works if scenes are in limited supply; there should be a cost (opportunity or otherwise) for raising Mood. The GM may call for a roll to see if a character's time is spent successfully, or impose a monetary cost (good times aren't cheap!), especially if an adversary or organization is working against you.

Your maximum Mood is equal to your Heart.

### **You can use Mood in these ways:**

Spend one Mood point to gain the maximum result on your current die. You can do this even after you have rolled the die and know the result. The die does not explode. There is one exception; maximizing a d20 with Mood (or an Inspiration) gives you a 12 (not a 20). You can roll the die also, if you haven't already, and take either the 12 or the roll.

Spend one Mood point to prevent a point of Body or characteristic damage in combat or elsewhere.

**You can lose Mood** by spending it, but also to social attacks, living contrary to the culture of a region, moving through haunted environments, spells, and more. There are many ways to fall in the Kingdoms.

Mood cannot be reduced below zero.

When your Mood is at zero, your Inspirations are vulnerable to social attack. A successful social attack against you causes you to lose 1 Inspiration point. The social attack must specifically target your Inspiration. If your Mood is above zero, your Inspirations are generally safe from social attacks.

You can use only one Mood point per check. For example, you cannot use one Mood point on the main die and another on a bonus die.

*Example.* Saul throws a grappling hook up to the parapet. He rolls his Strength (5, for a d4) and gets a 3. The Doom is 4, so Saul would fail. He spends a Mood point, however, raising his result to the maximum on his Strength die, namely, a 4. This ties the Doom, and Saul catches the hook on the parapet.

*Example.* Rusudan, the Yoked Usurer of Syrbizond, tries to identify a foreign gold coin. She rolls her Reason (8, for a d8) and her bonus die, History: Moneychanger of Syrbizond (10, for a d10). She gets a 7 and a 5. Her target number was 9, and neither of these rolls is good enough. So she spends a Mood point and gains the maximum on her bonus die, that is, a 10, which surpasses the target number.

The Mood rules push gameplay toward social interaction. An insult can haunt you, and a friendly beer and game of slap-ass with the serving girl can buoy you through the day.

Note that because Mood can soak damage, insulting your opponent during combat is an effective tactic. Swashbuckling characters and their players usually love this.

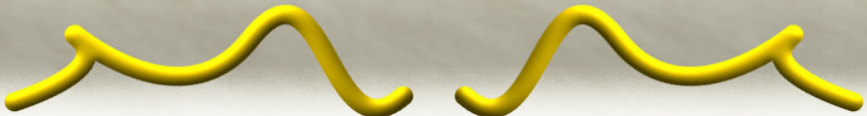


## INSPIRATIONS

To understand the Kingdoms, you must understand Inspirations. This is a world where love and fear hold dominion even over death. Inspirations drive the architect to build, the lover to woo, and the warrior to fight. They move the world, and they have the power of magic. For all of these reasons, the nobles condition the commoners to accept a life of blandness and to settle for tepid passions. Inspirations are far too dangerous for just anyone.

Love for your brother is an Inspiration. Vengeance against the savage warlord who destroyed your village is another. Paranoia inspires the madman. Faith inspires the priest. The list is endless.

PCs and important NPCs have Inspirations. There are always numbers attached, for example: “Seeks vengeance on Baron Vountainne (2)” or “Faith in the return of her husband from Ku-to-en (4).” These



values cannot sum higher than the character's Heart score.

*Example.* Serrated Penelope has a 7 Heart. She could have "Fear of aging (3)," "Ambition to see the Descent (3)," and "Love of diamonds (1)." She could not have another inspiration because the sum of her values already equals her Heart score (3+3+1=7).

In play, similar to Mood, Inspirations function as action points. That is, a character can use an Inspiration to gain a boost to an action. His love, fear, madness, or other inspiration spurs him on to greater deeds.

You begin the game with any number of Inspirations whose total point value equals your Heart score.

You can use each of your Inspirations once per scene. Any more often than that and the focus becomes a distraction rather than an inspiration. Unlike with Mood, using an Inspiration does not diminish that Inspiration's value.

You can use only one Inspiration per check. For example, you cannot use one Inspiration on the main die and a different Inspiration on a bonus die.

#### **When you use an Inspiration:**

You roll your Heart die as a bonus die, taking its result if it is higher than your current die's result.

If you narrate how your Inspiration relates to the task at hand (called "stunting") and your Inspiration has a value of 2 or more, then your current die and Heart die both yield their maximum value. They also explode. You can choose to use an Inspiration after seeing the result of the initial roll.

Note the one exception: if you are rolling a d20 and use an Inspiration to maximize it, instead of an automatic 20, you get a 12 and a roll of the d20, taking the higher result.

#### **You can lose Inspiration:**

If your Mood is zero, a successful social attack specifically directed at your Inspiration reduces that Inspiration by 1 point.

After any scene (or day) when there was a direct attack on the focus of your Inspiration, reduce your Inspiration by 1. If the attack destroys the focus, you may lose the Inspiration entirely if the GM rules that the memory of the focus cannot provide sufficient Inspiration.

The goal of a scene in scene order play can be a reduction of an Inspiration (one or more points).

You can voluntarily lose Inspirations in the same way that you regain lost Inspiration points; see below.

Inspirations cannot go below zero. An Inspiration that falls to zero is erased from the character sheet.

**To regain a lost Inspiration point,** spend several days (or at least one full scene) and narrate how you use the time. This raises your Inspiration by one. In some cases, the GM may determine that there is opposition to your recovery - an enemy organization with agents in your mother's household, for example, could prevent you from improving your relationship with your mother. In such cases, you may be required to win a contested roll or to succeed in a roll against the Doom in order to regain lost Inspiration.

**To gain a new Inspiration,** spend a week (or at least two scenes) pursuing your new Inspiration. You must narrate and succeed in two unmodified Heart rolls against the Doom (if you fail, begin again next scene). If a previous Inspiration of yours was reduced to zero, you must follow this "new Inspiration" procedure to re-establish it.

#### **You can use an Inspiration:**

Only when you are aware of the check. If you don't know that you've been exposed to a disease, you cannot use an Inspiration to resist it. Spells generally make the target aware of his status as a spell-target, and therefore you can use Inspirations against spells.

To use an Inspiration, the character must be inspired by the importance of the situation. Usually this occurs only during tense scenes with major consequences at stake. If the GM asks for a flavor roll - just a fun roll to see what happens - Inspirations do not apply. For example, you couldn't use an Inspiration when rolling to see if your character cooked a tasty breakfast, or to see if your character avoids being splashed by mud when the Dauphin's carriage wheels by.

If a character wants to use an Inspiration on an important roll that is not part of a scene where Inspiration scarcity is a threat - such as casting a high spell and making its Magic roll during a week of campaign downtime - then the character starts off the next threatening scene (chase, social, combat, mass combat, investigation, etc.) already having spent one Inspiration use.

*Example.* Theo Rush makes a Warrior's Strike,



a d6 Attack. He rolls a 4, which misses against his opponent's 5. Theo uses his Inspiration: Hatred of Valte Riel nobility (1). This allows him to roll his d8 Heart die, getting a 6. He hits!

*Example.* Isolde Ravelli is running from kingsmen across a spell smuggler's barge in Rithaign. She is attempting to "push it" and sprint; she needs to roll a 7. Her Quickness is only a 6. She invokes her Inspiration: Find and free her brother (3) and narrates that the spell she is smuggling will help her find her brother. Now she gets the maximum roll on her Quickness (6) and on her Heart (6). These scores are not good enough, but both dice explode, and on one of the two d8s that she rolls next, she gets a 7, making her chase roll. She escapes!

*Example.* Ciomathe the Scarlet is attempting to forge a love letter to the Archbishop of Rithaign. She has Reason 6 and History: Calligraphy Prefect at Beloved King's School (4). She wants to roll as high as possible, so she uses an Inspiration: Advance the cause of the Low God Iuchus (3). By using the Inspiration and narrating its relevance, she gains the maximum on her normal dice (a 6 on her characteristic die and a 4 on her history die). She also gains the maximum on her Heart die; in her case, a 6. Finally, all of these dice explode!

I addressed "you," the player, in this section. But the same rules apply to NPCs with inspirations. As a player, if you come up against a major NPC, attack him through his Inspirations first! Tyrants, wizards, and madmen alike are less formidable after their spirits have been crushed.

## FEAR

The Kingdoms breed fear. Fear rises in the howls of wolf children in the night; in the moans of madfire victims, shambling through streets lined with hastily shuttered windows; in the creaking of the zepelin hulls overhead, as kingsmen patrol and watch for poets and lovers.

You gain fear more easily than you can other Inspirations. In any scene, once per scene, you can take a new Fear as an Inspiration or add a point to an existing Fear. Your Inspiration points still cannot exceed your Heart score. Adding to your Fear this way requires no action and is instantaneous: you suddenly discover that you're more afraid of something than



### USE YOUR INSPIRATIONS

There is no carryover. That is, you do not get to use an Inspiration twice in the next scene if you don't use it now. With one exception, then, it is to the character's advantage to use all of his Inspirations in every scene.

That one exception is in the case of a secret. A character may want to keep his Inspirations a secret, probably so that no one attacks them. In that case, a character who fears he can be read too easily might not want to use - and risk revealing - an Inspiration.

you thought, and you really, really need to escape!

Fear can motivate, but it can also paralyze. You take a Heart penalty die on every roll in the first round of any encounter where you are face-to-face with your fear (or, in the case of an intangible fear, when you are directly faced with the fear's implications).

## DEATH, DESTINY, & NARRATIVE CONTROL

Love and fear are the most powerful forces in the world. Where there is love, death has no dominion, and where there is fear, peace finds no purchase.

Inspirations can change the world. You have already seen how Inspirations can act as action points. They can do more: they can save a character when nothing else can.

If a character has a Love with a value of 3 or more, she cannot be killed or indefinitely removed from play except by natural causes. If any other inspiration has a value of 4 or more, the same is true. Love, Fear, and other inspirations are the masters of fate in the Kingdoms.

Magic runs deep and permeates everything. The stronger a character's passion, the greater her destiny. A strong enough passion yields an undeniable destiny.



This mechanic impacts gameplay in several ways. First, it allows players to retain narrative control over their characters. A character with a strong unfulfilled destiny is not going to die because of a lucky crit from a goon in a tavern brawl. A character can only be killed after he has been hunted, harried, and forced to watch his wife and daughter die.

This mechanic also encourages play that involves assaults on Inspirations rather than bodies. Enemies become true villains as they attack a PC's Inspirations. They might kidnap and murder a son,

torture a friend, or set fire to a business. The villain can only go in for the kill after the hero's Inspirations are low enough – after his fields lie in flames and his hopes are nothing more than ash in the streets of East Fire.

Players, in response, look to participate in role-playing scenes that build up their loves, ambitions, and other Inspirations. The higher they can raise a love, the more proof it is against attack.

Of course, players also look to attack the Inspirations of important antagonist NPCs before taking





on the NPC himself. Upon meeting the warlord for the first time at an opera, a PC may choose not to draw her longsword, scream an oath to a Low God, and charge. Instead, she is more likely to trade jibes over canapés, to embarrass the warlord in front of his troops, or to steal whatever he loves most: his horses, his trophies, his women. Once the warlord has been hurt enough - truly hurt - then our heroine screams and charges.

Not all NPCs should have Inspirations of 3 or greater, of course. That would be boring. It also would not be true to the Kingdoms. People in the Kingdoms are aware of the power of Inspirations, and the nobility has worked for years to stamp out all sparks of the precious stuff among the commoners. Only very special people defy this training and culture. In a sense, high Inspirations are what make the PCs special.

What happens when a character loses a fight or drives off a cliff in a chariot, but escapes death because of an inspiration? The GM and player narrate the outcome together, but the rule of lost scenes applies: things get worse. The character might be captured. Perhaps he catches a branch on his plummet down the chasm, or he lands in a river but now finds himself a stowaway on a ship bound for the Dragon Isles. Perhaps a kingsman rescues the character only to demand cooperation in blackmailing an archmage.

## TRUE LOVE

Once in his life, a character can select a love with a value of 4 or more to be his true love. True love is the *ne plus ultra* in the Kingdoms, celebrated in songs though it is death for any bard to sing them and a taking for any poet to write them.

True love cannot be denied. There may be spells, environments, and conditions that prevent a character from tapping his Inspirations. Such do not prevail against true love. A character can always be inspired by his true love.

True love cannot be doubted. A true love is proof against social attacks, even if the character's Mood is zero. Only a direct assault on the object of the love makes an effective attack against true love.

True love cannot be ignored. Any time a character invokes true love (which cannot be more than once/scene, as with any Inspiration), the Doom is lowered by 1 for the roll.

Adventure and true love go hand in hand. For many adventurers, true love is the impetus for their life beyond banality. For others, it is a treasured benefit. In either case, adventurers are wise to risk loving so passionately, but they must be careful to safeguard their loved one.

If a character ever loses his true love, his maximum Mood is reduced by half for a year and permanently reduced by two points: one for him, and one for his lost love.

If you ever are in doubt as to how to adjudicate the power of true love, do not be. True love is the most powerful force in the world. That is why kings destroy it.

### REMOVED FROM PLAY

When the rules say that a character with a sufficiently high inspiration cannot be indefinitely removed from play, they do not mean that he cannot be captured, or petrified, or confined to a fixer's lung with consumption. By many means, the world and its agents can capture, petrify, and infect the PCs.

But this cannot remove a PC *from play* indefinitely. That is, if a PC is captured, or petrified, or bedridden, there still must be scenes that give the PC a shot at coming back or afford him a meaningful play experience. PCs being what they are, and players enjoying what they enjoy, this probably means that one of the attempts at a comeback is successful, sooner rather than later. Of course, if his Inspirations have been lowered enough, then the PC can be removed from play not only indefinitely, but permanently.

The same is true of villains! A PC can capture a villain, but that villain is allowed repeated escape chances, quite likely successful, if he is sufficiently inspired. Until his Inspirations are lowered, the villain remains a threat.







# HISTORY & SKILLS

A character's history determines her skills. If she runs away to join the wagon shows, she might have skill in shadow drama, acrobatics, and bribery. If she grows up in the wings of the opera house, she might have skill in singing, sewing, and disguise.

A history item might say, "Piloted walking ballista in the Opana campaign (4)," or "Spent St. Vartan's Eve in Rithaigh celebrating with the twin daughters of Duke Tumentant (5)." Anything that you can write down in a sentence, clause or phrase can be a history and therefore a skill.

The GM and the game group must accept your skill phrasing. For example, "Guild thief (5)" is too general for most groups, but "Tomb robber for Rithaigh Factors, Haulers, and Panhandlers (6)" is specific enough.

You gain at least one skill point at the end of each adventure session. The GM may award additional skill points during or after the session according to the run of play.

The first skill point spent in a particular history gives you a history rated 4. This supplies a bonus d4 die to roll whenever that history is applicable. This is noted as, for example, "Spent four years indentured to puncture priests in Oryn-ja (4)."

Each skill point that you gain after the first increases that skill by one. Your bonus die size is the largest die size that does not exceed your skill value. For example, after putting four points into a skill, your skill value would be 7 (4 for the first point, one increase for each point thereafter). You would roll a d6 bonus die for this skill, as that is the largest die size that does not exceed 7.

You cannot have more histories than your Reason score. For example, a character with Reason 5 cannot have more than five different histories.

You cannot use a history to aid a combat roll or magic roll. Histories in Spellbound Kingdoms measure different quantities; there are other systems (talents, fighting styles, magic schools, and so on) to measure

how a character's choices and experience contribute to his combat and magic abilities.

Skills take practice to keep up. You can drop a skill at will. This can be useful to make room for a new skill.

Languages are history items like any other skill. One point allows you to speak, read, write, and comprehend the language at a functional level. Two points allow fluency. Three points or more signify fluency, eloquence, etymological scholarship, and literary flair. Your author aspires to a 2.

Remember this trick for calculating skill values: the skill value is always 3 more than the points invested.

## CHARACTERISTIC & SKILL CHECKS

Many checks are simply characteristic rolls, either against the Doom or against a competitor's roll. When you have an applicable skill, however, you roll that skill as a bonus die.

*Example.* Sgt-Errant Oliver Ghespure attempts to repair his stolen lamellar armor after escaping the docks in far Ku-to-en. The Doom is 5. His Strength is 8, and he has the history, "Armor smith in the Royal Halberdiers (9)." He rolls a d8 for his Strength and a d8 for his History, taking the higher of the two dice as his result.

Perception is a Reason check unless there is an obvious reason for it not to be. Animals and monsters with animal-level Reason scores (2 or lower) use a d6 for perception checks unless their description states otherwise.

Some tasks cannot be reasonably attempted without training. The GM judges which tasks those are. Simple characteristic rolls are not allowed for those tasks; only characters with a relevant history can even attempt the task.

If two or more histories apply to the same check, you can use them all, gaining multiple bonus dice on the roll. As always, only the single highest roll counts.



# SCENE TYPES

You can play Spellbound Kingdoms in two different modes, classic play or scene order. In either case, although much more discretely in scene order play, the in-character portions of the game are composed mainly of these types of scenes.

- Combat.
- War (mass combat, shadow wars, and cold war conflicts between organizations).
- Social encounters.
- Chases.
- Investigation, exploration, and stealth (espionage).

## CLASSIC & SCENE ORDER PLAY

There are two modes of play in Spellbound Kingdoms. Use both at different times in the campaign, however and whenever your group prefers. Or use only one mode or the other - choose what works for you and your group!

The first mode is classic play. Classic play is the style of many RPGs: the GM presents events, sometimes with player input, and the players respond to those events. When characters fight through dens of howling troglodytes, disarm poison needle traps on secret doors, fight through undead slaves to the chanting necromancer, and unshackle the maiden on the altar before the necromancer's dagger comes down, that is classic play.

The second mode is scene order. In scene order play, players and the GM take turns presenting scenes. Choose one player or the GM to set the first scene. To set a scene, the player describes what he wants to accomplish (find a password, intimidate a rival, loot a tomb) and how he wants to accomplish it (stealth, combat, war, social encounter, chase). If the players "win" the scene, they get the desired accomplishment. If they "lose" the scene, something gets worse.

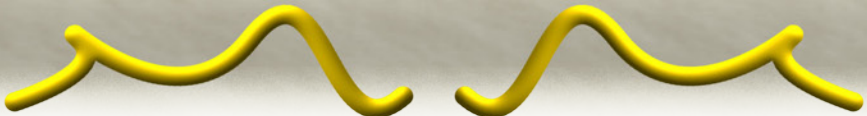
Something getting worse is dictated by the scene. In a combat or a social encounter, the adverse

effects could be nothing more nor less severe than the damage they suffered during the scene. After losing a chase, the PCs may be captured, or they may be the butt of a garrulous bystander's jokes, earning them a negative reputation with the townsfolk. A lost battle in a war might destroy part of a PC's wealth, home, or organization - or the effects may be limited to the troops that were lost in combat. The GM must rule for the good of the campaign as a whole, with an eye for self-consistency and a purblind sense of justice.

Why use scene order play at all? Classic play has worked fine for almost forty years of tabletop RPGs. You can play Spellbound Kingdoms just fine without ever using scene order. But scene order can bring a briskness to games where the pace is flagging. In scene order play, the group jumps from one defined conflict to the next. There is little downtime, few if any stalled investigations, and hardly ever a time when one player is haggling with the blacksmith over the price of stirrups while the rest of the party is mounted and ready to ride. The GM still provides a narrative function by bridging scenes, and the players jump from significant scene to significant scene. Importantly, players choose the types of scenes they want, helping the GM set the pace with the right mix of action, talk, and reaction.

Every group is different, but classic play tends to excel at grand missions with well-defined goals, prepared plot branches, and clear choices for the PCs. These are often adventures that require a session or more to complete. Exploring a sprawling ruin, breaking into a school in the mountains and rescuing a student, or escorting a musician out of a city where he has become too famous. Classic play adventures sizzle when the entire group is working toward the same goal, facing well-defined options, and fighting to overcome a series of challenges.

Scene order excels at sandbox play, "in between" time, investigations, and scripted play. Discrete scenes make it easy for GMs to hand their players a sandbox and let them explore and build at will. Scene order gives you a definite method for resolving "in between" time - those sandbox moments that come after a grand adventure, when the party is back in town and fissiparous, with the thief wanting to job a wagon of drakatizon, the engineer wanting to build a mechanical songbird, and the warrior wanting to go



with his mercenary company to squash trouble down in the river colony of leper-wights. Scene order also supports scripted play, which is a method of play that uses scene-type sequencing to produce good pacing and story structure.

Give scene order a try and see when it works for you. Remember, though, that in the end both play styles are valid and useful, and both play out with as much excitement and vigor as you bring to them.

## SCENE LIST & SCENE ORDER PLAY

Commonly for scene order play, I put a list in front of the players at the table. The list specifies scenes that advance the plot and fit the current milieu or adventure. It helps players think of scenes. Of course, players are free to take play in any direction they choose with their scenes, but a scene list is a helpful prompt, especially for hesitant players.

I do this most often for investigations and explorations. For down-time scene order play, even the most timorous player usually puts forth a myriad of scene ideas for his character (although, even then, to be safe I always keep a quickly jotted list of two or three scenes per character that I can run to focus on that PC and keep the player active).

*Example.* Two pirates, identical save one man's half-missing ear, both claim to be the Baroness's lost childhood lover. She is offering officers' commissions for an upcoming zeppelin expedition to the Descent for anyone who can help her determine which man, if either, is her dear one. The party wants to steal a zeppelin. Their opportunity arises through the officers' commissions. Here is a potential scene list that I might put down to prompt efficient investigation:

- 1) Talk to Half-ear.
- 2) Talk to Pretty Ear.
- 3) Explore Half-ear's ship, the *Salt Widow*.
- 4) Explore Pretty Ear's ship, the *Covenant*.
- 5) Confront the harbormaster.
- 6) Search the lover's childhood home,  
abandoned after the Crown Inamorata

jealously destroyed his family.

7) Consult with the Baroness's priest.

For each scene, the players choose stealth, combat, a social encounter, or another scene type. If they choose combat with scene 3), they battle the *Salt Widow's* pirate crew across the deck and through the rigging. If they win the battle, they find a diary and jewels undeniably proving Half-ear was in the Baroness's circle of nobility twenty-five years ago, though he may or may not have been her lover. If the party had chosen stealth, or a chase, or a social encounter, they could sneak through the ship at night, race the ship to an isle where Half-ear buried the diary and jewels, or talk their way past the possessive first mate and his lubricious wife. No matter the type of scene played, the PCs find the diary and jewels if they succeed, and something gets worse if they fail.

Don't be fooled by scenes 1) and 2). Though they say "Talk to" this or that eared pirate, each could easily be a combat or other scene type. Perhaps Pretty Ear is so truculent that he attacks immediately upon seeing the party, only giving up his information if the party bests him in a pirate bar brawl. Or perhaps when the party meets Half-ear to talk, he turns tail and runs, leading them on a chase scene through the pomegranate stands and dream apple carts in the dock slums. If the PCs catch him, he talks.

When you create your adventure and its scene list, jot down how each plot point could be resolved by combat, by a social scene, and by stealth, investigation, or exploration. I do not show this list to the players ahead of time; I only use it so I can quickly run the scene no matter if the player says, "I want to run a combat scene where we beat the stalks off the confessor and his bodyguards until they talk," or, "I want to run a social scene with the confessor at the daily hangings and try to embarrass him in front of the crowd."

And a final note: let's say the party attacked, starting a fight to learn what the confessor knows. In classic play, the GM might start the PCs outside the cathedral, forcing them to battle through novitiates and other pious mooks, to overcome trapped idols, and ultimately to discover a hidden sanctum sanctorum, where at last they face the priest in a climactic battle. And the GM could do that in scene order play, too. It would be a long scene, but that may be what the group





desires.

On the other hand, in scene order play, the GM could flash right to the battle with the priest, describing the cathedral and how the party came to this battle in as much or as little detail as necessary.

Flashing to a conflict like this does not mean that the group must discard all the entertaining consequences that can result from a raid on a busy cathedral. One character's organization can quickly make a Shadow roll against the Church's Shadow roll, and the result could determine if the PCs face any negative consequences for the raid. The consequences might be a lingering curse because one of the PCs' mooks offended a seradynn witch who was praying at the votives; or a temporary reduction in the PCs' organization's Force because the priests captured the PCs' brute squad during the raid; or any other narration the GM and players provide. Remember that negative consequences like this are fine opportunities for the GM to foreshadow or introduce plot hooks!

## DECLINING A SCENE

What happens if the GM sets a scene, say a social scene at a masquerade ball, and a player says, "No, it's tailor-made for Henrietta to try to seduce me there, I'm not going!" Of course, this can happen in classic play too, but it happens more obviously in scene order play.

You could just roleplay the situation, of course! No doubt that would be fun.

But if you want to focus on other events in the campaign and not devote time to dodging invitations, then resolve the conflict with a quick Charisma vs. Charisma roll, or, even better if available, appropriate organization rolls (often Efficiency vs. Efficiency). The roll could represent jockeying for social position, identifying potential traps, spying on the other organization or individual, or anything else appropriate to the situation.

If you win the roll, you are free to decline the invitation. If you lose the roll, you are still free to decline it, but if you do, you take 4 Mood damage from the stress of avoidance.

## EXAMPLE OF SCENE ORDER PLAY

The characters have just returned from a raid into the jungles of the Sun Goddess. They hacked their way through creepers to a ziggurat where a priest of the Sun Goddess was sacrificing idolaters. They rescued the idolaters and escaped on a riverboat, sailing and paddling across the border into Naklion with the templars of the Sun Goddess hurling atlatls right up to Fort Gau. This was all done in classic play. Now, back in the desert capital of Naklion, the party has encountered a problem: the noble whose idolatrous son they rescued is missing. They want to find the noble, one Joaquin Nata, the Negus Fiqir.

Sam is GMing. Mike is playing Edmond Rheims, a mercenary archer. Izzy is playing Amaranth Hushcar, a seradynn troll noble of Naklion. Peter is playing Cyrus Mawi, a Naklion vagabond, and Emily is playing Cressida Jonta, a fixer who maintains trade with both the underworld and the nobility of Naklion.

GM. So it is true: the Negus Fiqir has vanished. His wife weeps in the searing sunlight on the marble porch, and her servants fan her with peacock tail feathers. She is in no condition to talk today. Since you're back in town, this investigation could go in a zillion directions. Let's break this up into scene order. Who's got a scene they want to run? Remember that now, especially after the Fiqir's disappearance, the Negus Negast rules the city under martial law, and spearmen click in lockstep on every cobbleshell street corner. Also, Cressida and Cyrus are wanted; reputations of 7 and 8 for that.

*(Sam puts out a Scene List for the players with recommended points in the investigation. The list includes 1) Finding a safehouse with the thieves guild or Amaranth's family for Cressida and Cyrus; 2) Talking to the Fiqir's wife; 3) Searching the Fiqir's house; 4) Talking to the rescued son about his missing father; and 5) Interrogating the Fiqir's remaining bodyguards.)*

Amaranth. Cress and Cy can hide with my

family. And I'll kill two birds with one scene, asking my father what he's heard among the nobles. So, a social scene to find out what daddy knows.

Edmond. Hm, barring anything stunning resulting from that, I want a stealth scene searching the Fiqir's house for a clue about his disappearance.

GM. Ok. Let's tackle Amaranth's scene first. Cy and Cress, I'm rolling your reputations to see if the guards recognize you as you come into the Hushcar estate. Guards' perception vs. your Charisma. *(The GM rolls the guards' Reason check with the PCs' reputations as bonus dice, but still neither guard beats either PC's charisma roll.)* The Hushcar gate sentries dump a tub of rose water over your head to clean you up, Cyrus, but they don't recognize either of you. Inside, you hear cries, squawking, and mad fluttering. In the sunroom, you find the Hushcar patriarch clipping his parrots' wings. The way he's doing it clearly hurts the birds. They cry and try to hop away.

Amaranth. Daddy, what happened to the Negus Fiqir? *(There is a good deal more roleplay that informs the social attack upcoming and could provide bonuses or penalties, but we skip to the mechanics)* That's an 8 on my social attack.

GM. *(Rolls for Daddy, gets a 6, and decides that Daddy doesn't want to lose Mood. He answers his daughter honestly.)* "My dear Amaranth, I've been wondering the same thing. Tewfik, the man who sells the pelts and curiosities in the bazaar, tells me that he sold a chryselephantine tiger idol to the Negus Fiqir just before the man disappeared. Twefik claimed the idol was cursed by the Sun Goddess's templars. With the other ear, in the nobles' baths I heard that the crew of the *Princecatcher* is talking about spotting a body bobbing out by the reef. How did I hear these things? Oh, a little bird told me." He chuckles, snaps his shears, and clips a shrieking parrot's wing.

*(Izzy is done, so the group moves to Edmond's scene.)*

Edmond. I'm waiting until night, then searching the Negus Fiqir's house. Anyone else coming?

*(After determining that no one wants to miss out on the raid, the GM runs an investigation scene for the party that features a stake-out every night for a week, with traps, a covert exploration a lively barracks, two quick combats with guard panthers, and a*

*puzzle-box containing the Fiqir's diary. After overcoming these challenges...)*

Edmond. I love puzzle-boxes. So, the Negus Fiqir wanted to start his own little Low God tiger cult here in Naklion? I wonder how his son and wife will take that news.

Cy. Let's talk to this Tewfik first. I want to know just what we're dealing with in this idol. And you know what? I'm sick and tired of the guards in Twefik's bazaar harassing me about my fashion sense. I'm going to pick a fight. If we win, the guards will talk, and Tewfik will be scared into talking too. Who's with me? Combat scene!

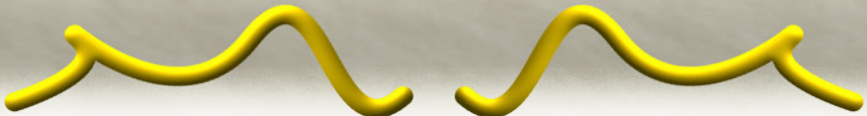
*(The bazaar fight unfolds. The GM doesn't have stats but scribbles down, "5 bazaar guards, Mood 2, Body 5, Guardsman style (x3) and Black powder Musketeer (x2)" - and that's all he needs to run the fight. Unfortunately for Cyrus, the guards win. The rule of lost scenes applies: something gets worse. In this case, the GM decides that all the players in the scene get three points added to a Reputation: Wanted and Dangerous, applicable in all of Naklion.)*

Amaranth. That's great, Cyrus. You suck.

Cyrus. Oh please. How was I to know there were musketeers puffing out back? Those smackbrains probably spiked their hookah with something from the local fixer. I smelled more than coconut in that water!







Amaranth. How could you smell when your face was in the dirt?

Edmond. All right, you two, I've got a scene. Let's go to talk to the *Princecatcher's* crew. I want information about the body they saw in the bay.

*(The group jumps to a social encounter on the boat. The GM roleplays First Mate Janson Skwee, and after name-dropping and threats, Edmond, Amaranth, Cyrus, and Cressida lower the mate's Mood enough that he decides to talk rather than go to 0 Mood and risk his Inspirations.)*

GM. So he tells you the location of the corpse by the harbor reef. I'm going to jump in with a scene here, assuming people go out to find the body.

Cressida. My guild has a sloop that the monarchy doesn't know about – let's take it and find the body.

GM. Great. Everyone gets out to the reef just in time to see three bare-chested men, with tulwars and waist sashes, haul a body out of the saltwater and let it thud down into their skiff. The body is covered in seaweed and blood. The men see you, shout something in a language you do not recognize, and hoist their skiff's lone sail. The chase is on! Unless of course you want to let them escape?

*(Here the party engages in a chase scene that ends with the two vessels capsized near an out-cropping glowing faintly in the sunset. The party has learned from the diary that the Negus Fiqir was involved in a Low God tiger cult, but they do not know where he might be presently. Shark fins cut through the water as the players debate what to do next...)*

Maybe that is how your group plays all the time! Skipping from one focused scene to the next, set by both players and GMs, is not necessarily a new idea for RPGs. It is at its heart no more than a method to keep the game moving from one point of interest to the next.

Scene order is not for everybody, and you can just ignore it if you like. No game mechanics require it. For some groups, classic play is quite similar to scene order play. Other groups might see a large difference between a more free-form, stream-of-action roleplay and the discrete set pieces of scene order. Often, a mix of the two styles is best.

## TIME & AREA

There are two different scales for area in Spellbound Kingdoms. In both cases, an area is an abstract territory defined by the GM or the player who built or owns the region.

Use small scale areas for combats and close spells. For example, a small keep might be broken into areas that include the antechamber, the great hall, the kitchen, the dungeon, the second-floor barracks, and a top-floor lord's chamber. The toll bridge over the Rill might be broken up into the west end, the east end, the toll house, and the toll house's roof.

Use large scale areas - often called "regions" in these rules - for economics, politics, wars, shadow wars, and high spells. For example, the city and environs of Thyre might be broken up into regions including different neighborhoods in Thyre (High Thyre, Low Thyre, the Old Bastion, and the Ghosts in Silver), the western Free Road, the southern plains, the dam on the Rill, and the Theater Road. Define regions as best suits your campaign!

Some abilities have two recharge times: per scene or per day/week/season/etc. The latter is self-explanatory. The former means that if you are using scene order play, the abilities recharge once per scene. Do not hesitate to make a scene last for a week, if that suits the campaign. For example, an overland journey from Syrbizond to Oryn-ja may be one fortnight-long scene. This forces players to concentrate on resource management and, I hope, adds to the fun by creating a challenge and increasing suspense.

## EXCLUSIVITY

As you read on, bear in mind that powers in Spellbound Kingdoms are not exclusive. That is, just because a character class or organization or anything else has a specific power listed does not mean that someone else cannot accomplish the same thing through clever play, unstoppable ambition, or blind luck. For example, a secret society has the power Fanaticism. This does not mean that another person or agency cannot inspire a region of people to zealotry. It only means that the secret society can do this in one (powerful) action, while others must invest roleplay, resources, and risk.

# CHAPTER TWO: COMBAT

Blade, pistol, and fist all have their place in combat, as do falling sandbags, eggshell grenades soaked in flake spores, and the most unpredictable destructive force of all, magic. No matter what your combat style is, clear tactical thinking is vital.

Part of that tactical thinking is the decision when to use Mood and Inspirations. Combat is so fast that the next round can start before a player realizes that he should have used a Mood or Inspiration last round. Don't be that player!

Another large part of the tactical thinking is the choice of fighting styles and maneuvers within those styles, as we shall see.

## OVERVIEW

1) Choose your fighting style and opening combat maneuver. Fighting style and a character's current maneuver limit his choice of actions next round. Some styles don't teach you how to follow a lunge with a parry, for example.

2) Reveal your chosen maneuver. Each maneuver has an attack die (on the left) and a defense die (on the right). Roll the attack die against your target. Roll the defense die against anyone attacking you. On a hit, the default damage is 1 Body. That can change, so know your maneuvers and weapons.

More information follows, but that's the basic idea. In other words, "Consider your opponent's fighting style and current maneuver. Pick your maneuver, then roll your attack die against your target (if any), and roll your defense die against anyone attacking you. Repeat."

There are two more things you might want to know right away. First, which maneuvers are possible in a given round? Look at your style's sheet (at the end of this book). Balancing maneuvers are underlined, and they're always possible. Beyond that, the only maneuvers that you can execute are those that are in the same row or column as your current maneuver. You do not have to move one at a time through a row or

column; any maneuver in the same row or column as your current maneuver is possible. Think of a rook on a chessboard. If a rook could move from the maneuver you just executed to the maneuver in question, then that maneuver is possible. If a rook couldn't get there, then it's not possible. Your style doesn't teach such a transition. (There is an occasional exception to this; an arrow on a style sheet means that you can move in the direction of the arrow, from the maneuver at the tail of the arrow to the maneuver at the tip of the arrow - but not backwards.)

Second, who reveals his maneuver choices first in a round, or is it simultaneous? In a duel, it is always simultaneous. In larger conflicts, the GM may choose to use duel initiative, where choice and revelation of maneuver are simultaneous (try to outguess your opponents!), or melee initiative, which allows one side of the melee to get a jump on the other (this is further explained below).



## FIGHTING STYLES

Fighting skillfully in the Kingdoms means fighting in a particular style.

Every style is different. One style may teach the student how to disarm his opponent after parrying, while another may teach the student how to disarm only when he is on the offensive and backing his opponent down. A third style might never teach a disarm maneuver at all.



The key point to understand is that each style requires its own footwork, balance, timing, grip, and positioning. Each develops its own mental, physical, and emotional approach to combat. Swashbucklers swing from chandeliers and slash at opponents, savages charge and bear hug and bite, and guardsmen hunker behind shields and probe for a counterattack.

Each fighting style has requirements listed in the lower left hand corner. If you do not meet the fighting style's requirements, you cannot fight in that style. If, possibly through injury or fatigue, you do not meet the requirements of any styles that you know, you can only use the basic combat maneuvers. The basic combat maneuvers are listed in the lower right of every style sheet, and anyone can use them.



## STYLE SHEETS & CHOOSING ACTIONS

Each style has a flowchart, or style sheet, that depicts the maneuvers taught by that combat style. The attack die of the maneuver is to the left of the maneuver, and the defense die is to the right. When you execute a maneuver, roll the attack die. Whenever you are attacked, roll the defense die. If the attack die beats the defender's die, the attack scores and does one point of damage (possibly more, depending on various factors, as we will see below). Ties go to the larger die size; rolls that are still tied are rerolled.

The style sheet also shows which maneuvers are accessible from which other maneuvers. An accessible maneuver is one in the same row or column as the current maneuver. It is important to know what

maneuvers you are capable of executing next round, but it is also important to know what maneuvers your opponent is capable of executing. That way, you can anticipate his actions and choose your own maneuvers to counter.

Characters begin combat with one of the underlined maneuvers, the so-called balancing maneuvers. Characters may also rebalance to a balancing maneuver at any time during combat. In this case, the balancing maneuver does not need to be in the same column or row as the character's current maneuver.

As I said in the overview, think of a rook on a chessboard. If a rook can get there (without jumping over any gaps in the row or column), then your style allows you to flow into that maneuver from your current maneuver. This represents the style's teachings: one style may teach the footwork necessary to follow a spin with a jab, while another may teach you how to follow a spin with a parry or feint.

Two more notes on accessible maneuvers: if an arrow appears on a combat sheet, you can transition to a maneuver in the direction it points but not against the direction it points. Also, you can repeat a maneuver unless it is marked with an (r) (which means you must rebalance next round; see p. 24).

A player can use a figure or a die to keep track of her maneuvers on her style sheet. When it is time to reveal her choice for the round's maneuver, she simply moves her figure or die to the new maneuver.

The combat style sheets are located at the end of this book.

*Example.* Fighting in Free Sword style, Vincent Vasquez feints and dodges to open the combat. Dodge and Feint is in the same column as Counterstrike, Spin, and Unbalancing Feint, so he could use any of those maneuvers next round. He could also use any of the re-balancing maneuvers next round (Lunge, Warrior's Strike, or Dodge and Feint again). But that's it. He could not make a Driving Cut or push forward in an Onslaught. Those maneuvers can't follow a Feint in the Free Sword style.

*Example.* Jude is sniping with a bow in Arrowheart style. He can open the combat with Archer's Shot, Shot on the Run, Shoot and Dive, or Aim and Breathe. He decides to take an Archer's Shot. Now his choices are the same three as before, plus Trick Shot,



Double Shot, and Mighty Pull. He chooses Aim and Breathe in the second round. After he has aimed, in the next round he can choose any action on the chart with the exception of Penetrate and Anticipate (both of which must be preceded by a Mighty Pull).

*Example.* Inverness Dugray is shielding his wizard, Tomas, against Anointed archers. He fights in Guardsman style. He can begin the fight with Shield Run, Block, Guard's Strike, or Shield Other. He knows he wants to run to the next tent so that Tomas can grab the dangling zeppelin rope there and make his escape. He chooses Shield Other because in Guardsman style, first you must set yourself and your shield in position, and then you can run with your charge. That is, first you use the Shield Other maneuver, and then you can Escort. If Inverness should happen to stop and attack, he can do so using the Distracting Blow maneuver to attack and still defend Tomas. On the round following a Distracting Blow, Inverness could return to Escorting, or he could Bodyguard, Body Blow, Knock Down, or use Shield Tactics.

## INITIATIVE

There are two initiative methods: duel and traditional. For duels, that is, one-on-one combat, use duel initiative. For combats with more than one participant on either or both sides, use duel or traditional initiative. Of course, at the option of the GM and the group, you may use either initiative system for all combats. The game is yours. Find what works for you!

In duel initiative, the combatants choose their maneuvers in secret and reveal them simultaneously. Each combatant tries to anticipate his opponent's next action based on the accessible maneuvers in the opponent's fighting style. Tactical thinking and planning is critical.

In traditional initiative, every participant on each side rolls his Quickness die. The PC rolling the highest has the option of going first or delaying. When a PC goes (that is, chooses an action from his combat style sheet), resolve his attack immediately. In the first round of combat, everyone chooses his opening ma-





neuver simultaenously, but the maneuvers are resolved in initiative order. A delaying PC can jump in at any later moment save the middle of another characters' turn.

In duel initiative, effects such as Grabbed and Rebalance take effect after the round ends. All actions occur simultaneously, so that two swordsmen can kill each other in a round. In traditional initiative, effects occur immediately on a character's turn. This often exposes a fighter to more rebalancing attacks and makes the maneuvers deeper in the combat tree harder to reach.

In traditional initiative, roll for initiative only at the start of the combat. Keep the same order throughout the subsequent rounds.

Mood and Inspirations can be used on initiative rolls as usual.

## SIMULTANEOUS RESULTS

In duel initiative, results occur simultaneously. In other words, even if a troglodyte's Bash does enough damage to drop a PC to 0 Body, that PC still gets a chance to resolve his own attack and deal damage this round.

This applies to effects other than damage, too. Effects apply at the end of a round and before the next round starts.

*Example.* The PCs are fighting a nest of spellstalk victims. The PCs and the spellstalk victims choose their maneuvers simultaneously, in secret, and then reveal them. The two sides resolve their actions, and all resolution takes place simultaneously. As the resolution plays out, the PCs burn and stun the stalkers. But the stalkers still resolve their actions this round without being burned or stunned. The stunning and burning does not take place until the end of the round, after all other actions have been resolved.



**SEIZE THE INITIATIVE**  
Originally, SK used only duel initiative for all combats. I still love that style of play, but many people prefer the ease of narration afforded by traditional initiative. I admit that I enjoy it also, both as a GM and a player.

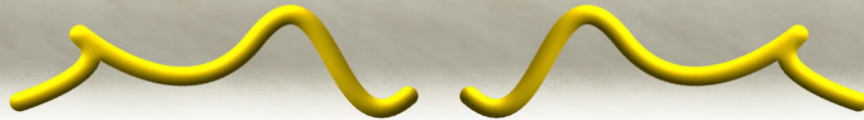
In addition to the narration focus, I have fun trying to pick the perfect maneuver, already knowing what my opponent has selected to defend with.

A third initiative system is the modified duel initiative system. The side with the highest single Quickness roll among its fighters gains the advantage in the chaos of melee. That side wins initiative and can choose whether to go first as a group - everyone choosing and revealing maneuvers before the other side - or to go second, waiting to choose and reveal maneuvers until after the entire other side has done so for the round. All effects apply simultaneously at the end of the round, as usual for duel initiative. In modified duel initiative, re-roll initiative each round.

## TARGETING & ROUND LENGTH

Combat is a terrible mix of chaos and threat. Each round, you are assumed to be engaged with and threatening all other creatures in your area. Your action for the round – usually a combat maneuver - represents your best chance to score damage or cause some other effect. You can target any other creature in your area with a melee attack. See Movement and Maps below for more information on areas.

Rounds vary in length. Generally, they are about six seconds long, but a round where all combatants circle each other, posture, and trade insults might be much longer. The GM is the final arbiter of round length, should it ever matter (usually it only matters for how long a noble can prattle on while the warriors go about the real business of combat!).



## MULTIPLE ATTACKS & DEFENSES

If an attack is listed as d4/d4, that means that the character attacks twice. The attacks may be made against separate targets.

If a character executes a maneuver with a bonus such as “+1 attack die size next round,” and he follows that with a multiple attack maneuver such as d4/d4, the bonus applies to both of the attacks, making it d6/d6 in this case.

Multiple defense dice – say d4/d4 – are rolled against each attack. For example, if a character is two-hand-parrying for d4/d4 defense and comes under attack from two assailants, each making two attacks, then the defender rolls d4 and a d4 against the first assailant’s first attack, a d4 and a d4 against the first assailant’s second attack, a d4 and d4 against the second assailant’s first attack, and finally a d4 and a d4 against the second assailant’s second attack. Every time, he takes the highest single score on his two d4s as his result.

If a character executes a maneuver with a bonus such as “+1 defense die size next round,” and he follows that with a multiple defense maneuver such as d4/d4, the bonus applies to both of the defenses, making it d6/d6 in this case.

## MANEUVERS REQUIRE TARGETS

Attack maneuvers must be executed against a target.

A character cannot advance through the maneuvers of his style unless he is engaged with an enemy. Put another way, a character can’t go through his forms in the villain’s coat closet and then burst out with his ultimate maneuver just as the villain opens the door. This is because a large part of any fighting style involves knocking your opponent off his rhythm, positioning him for your next blow, and judging his own movements in order to set up yours. You can’t do that if you’re fighting a mink stole in the coat closet.

## DAMAGE & EFFECTS

If a maneuver lists no effect, then it deals 1 Body damage on a hit. If it lists only an effect, it does no Body damage; rather it causes the effect on a hit. If it lists “1 + [effect],” then it does both 1 Body damage and the effect (still, only on a hit; misses cause no damage or other effect).

Many effects are possible.

“Rebalance” means that on a successful hit, your opponent must rebalance next round (that is, execute a maneuver that is underlined on the style sheet, or else break style completely with one of the maneuvers in the lower right corner of the style sheet). Your opponent also loses any bonuses he might have built up, such as “+1 die size to next attack.”

“1[characteristic]” such as “1 Str” means that the attack does 1 point of damage to the characteristic. This is important partly because of the minimum characteristic requirements for a style. A character brought below his minimum Strength for a style, for example, is too fatigued or injured to carry on in that style. He might be reduced to panting and heaving, using only the basic “no-style” maneuvers available to everyone (in the bottom right of every style sheet).

“Move target 1 area” means you may move your target 1 area into an area of your choice. A target moved against its will must also rebalance.

“Move 1 area” means you may move as part of the maneuver. A move is normal horizontal movement. Fancy moves that let you gain altitude – like Climb – say “Climb” or “Gain altitude” or something similar.

“(r)” after a maneuver means that you must rebalance after executing that maneuver.

“+1 damage next round” applies to all of your attacks in the next round. If you execute a maneuver with three attacks next round, each one does +1 damage.

“Until forced to rebalance” means that the effect lasts until an opponent or your own maneuver (marked (r)) forces you to rebalance.

Some maneuvers are marked with an M in the upper-right hand corner. A character cannot use these maneuvers unless he is a master of the style.



## WORDS HAVE MEANING

Words mean what they say. If an attack says Trip, then it causes the target to fall down. It cannot be successful against a creature that is not standing upright. If an attack says Death from Above, it cannot be executed without attacking from higher ground.

Note that just because an attack trips a target does not mean that the target begins the next round prone. On the contrary, although Trip maneuvers cause the target to fall down, in most cases it is assumed that, although the target falls, he quickly stands back up, ready to fight again (probably needing to rebalance, as the Trip maneuver states).



## MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS

In general, any non-attack action is covered by the Trick/Misc. Action maneuver in the lower right corner of the style sheet. This includes picking up a weapon, cutting the cord on the portcullis's counterweight, mounting, opening a door, and more.

A few flamboyant combat styles, such as Swashbuckler and Dagger-and-wine, feature maneuvers that allow for a Trick without breaking style. Others must rebalance after a Trick.

## MASTER, APPRENTICE, & NEOPHYTE

A character who knows the style but has not yet mastered it is called an apprentice of the style. The apprentice can use all the maneuvers in a style save those maneuvers marked with "M."

A character who knows only the rebalancing maneuvers and two others (which must be accessible from balancing positions) is called a neophyte of the style.

## SWITCHING STYLES

Switching styles requires a Trick, which is a maneuver located in the lower right corner of the style sheet. After executing the trick, the character begins the next round executing one of the balancing maneuvers of his new style.

## MOVEMENT & MAPS

Combat is broken up into abstract areas. The GM defines areas qualitatively: the library, the balcony, the space inside the giant cake before the royal chef's birthday feast.

Movement within an area is free and assumed as part of the positioning of combat. Movement between areas requires a move action (one action moves one area), which is usually the Trick maneuver in the lower right corner of the style sheet. Some styles have maneuvers that offer optional movement as part of the attack (Bull Rush Assault, for example).

In duel initiative, when you move, you can be attacked in both areas of your movement. That is, if you are rushing up the stairs from the library floor to the balcony, then both the guards on the floor and the kingsman on the balcony can hit you with melee attacks this round, assuming they anticipated your

charge and targeted you. On the other hand, when you charge to attack, you can only make a melee attack against a target in the area into which you are moving. That is, if you are rushing up the stairs from the library floor to the balcony, then you can only make attacks this round against targets on the balcony. (This applies only to melee attacks; ranged attacks may aim in any direction as usual.)

This means that you do not need a map to play Spellbound Kingdoms. By all means, however, use one if you enjoy doing so. Maps can be beautiful, illuminating, and inspiring. They can also remind players and the GM of the environment tricks available in different areas.

## ENVIRONMENT TRICKS

Environment tricks are special actions afforded by the environment.

The best environment tricks destroy scenery: collapsing a ceiling, upending a vat of boiling troll-blood, setting fire to the baron's bed, releasing the sawmill so the snarling blade careens around the room, slicing open the school's manticores cadaver and hiding inside while madfire rips through the lab. Environment tricks are fueled by creativity and drama.

It is the player's responsibility to narrate how her character is manipulating the environment. If the GM and the group agree that her actions are plausible, she can attempt the trick.

Attempting an environmental trick requires a check against the Doom. Roll your appropriate characteristic die against the Doom. Unlike other combat rolls, histories or skills can provide bonus dice to this roll. The GM modifies the Doom according to his judgment of the difficulty of the maneuver.

If you fail the check vs. the Doom, your attack and defense this round are normal for a Trick/Miscellaneous action (0/d4), and nothing comes of your attempt.

If you make the Doom roll, the trick goes off.

The specifics of the trick are up to the GM and the group. I recommend that the player negotiate with the GM before attempting the trick, so that it is clear

### SAMPLE ENVIRONMENT TRICKS

TRICK	ADJUSTMENT TO DOOM	POSSIBLE EFFECTS
Pour oil on bed, light bed	0	1 dmg/rd to all in bed
Dramatic charge crashing through stained glass window	0	1 dmg to you; +1 Mood to visible allies
Take cover	0	d8 bonus defense die vs. ranged attacks
Rip open bag of flour	0	-2 attack die size to all in area next round
Drop sandbag on head	0	d4 attack; 1 dmg + rebalance on hit
Soup in the face	0	d6 attack; -2 attack and defense die size on foe next round
Strew marbles, fruit rind, ice, basilisk eyes	0	Succeed Qck vs. (Doom-2) or rebalance for all in area; works only once/area
Toss screeching cat	0	d4 attack; rebalance
Pull down tapestry	1	d6 attack; up to 3 targets grabbed
Topple wardrobe, hack down chandelier	1	d8 attack; 1 dmg vs up to 3 foes
Blinding sun reflection off shield in eye	1	d6 attack; blind 1 round
Sip tea while fencing	1	d2 defense; +1 Reputation if you end up winning
Threaten a hostage	1	Deal a Coup de Grace to hostage if you're attacked
Scatter coins to create a crowd in street	1	d4 attack vs all in area; rebalance
Leap onto moving vehicle or horse	2	Str. vs. Str. check if there are other riders fighting to keep you off
Collapse weak balcony	2	d8 attack; 2 dmg to up to three foes
Fight on rolling log, railing, floating spar	2	d6 attack; +1 Mood to you, -1 Mood to foe



what the effects will be before trying the Doom roll.

*Example.* Zach is playing Ricardo Luzanne. He negotiates with his GM for an environment trick.

Zach. I want to hack off the spigot from the rice whiskey cask and hold a torch in front of the opening, so that when the pressurized liquor shoots out, everyone in the room gets sprayed with a flaming jet.

GM. Nice, but everyone in the room? That's going to be a high Doom.

Zach. All right, just the three Halberdiers.

GM (looking to make sure everyone is ok with this level of swashbucklery): Ok, Strength vs. Doom, but the Doom is a 6 for this, not 4.

Zach. And they'll be on fire afterwards, 1 body per round until they take a trick to put it out, if I make a Strength vs. 6 Doom roll?

GM. Sure. It'll only be a d6 attack against their defense, though.

Zach. I'm trying it. Here's to you, Halberdols! (He rolls against the Doom and fails, then uses an Inspiration to get an 8 on his Strength check. He goes on to roll a d6 against each Halberdier, causing 1 damage this round and 1 ongoing fire damage to each Halberdier that he hits.)

There are two final notes on Environment Tricks. First, if you as the GM want your game to include amazing feats and stunts, I recommend using the "Say yes" philosophy when it comes to Environment Tricks. That is, err on the side of the possible. Let the players go for it and reward them for doing so.

That said, the second note is to be careful of an all-Trick all-the-time campaign. If all the PCs and NPCs are pulling tapestries down and using puppies as body shields every round, Tricks can lose their drama. One way to limit this is to say that a second similar Trick in a combat is much more difficult to pull off, since everyone is looking for it now. Raise the Doom to a prohibitively high number. Another way is to allow only Tricks that take the table by surprise, reasoning that if the player can't surprise a table of gamers with her Trick, how would her character surprise a seasoned foe?

## SAMPLE ENVIRONMENT TRICKS (CONT.)

TRICK	ADJUSTMENT TO DOOM	POSSIBLE EFFECTS
Skewer apple on sword; eat it while fencing	2	d2 Defense; + 2 Reputation if you end up winning (+4 if you also sipped tea while fencing this combat)
Swing on chandelier, slide down bannister, etc. to gain momentum	2	Move, +2 dmg next round
Bag over the head	3	d4 attack; blinded until removed
Hit ignorant bystander; frame foe	3	Succeed at Cha vs. bystander's Rsn or you are found out
Use bystander as marionette to attack for you	4	d6 attack; 2 + 2 Mood for you + 1 Mood for allies
Tie foe to ox cart, slap ox	4	d8 attack; 1 + grabbed + foe moved 1d4 areas, ongoing until foe uses Trick to untie
Living shield: grandmother in babooshka, baby, puppy	4	d10 defense; 50% of misses hit living shield, -4 reputation to you and attacker
Domino improvised weapon	5	Hit chandelier, it knocks torch, it hits stein, stein falls on foe; 1 + 2 Mood for all allies, ranged
Collapse mine shaft ceiling	5	d20 attack; 5 damage to all in area
Tie or manacle two enemies together	5	d6 attack on each; Both enemies are grabbed until undone
Cut or scar an opponent (alternatively, paint his face) so that he now resembles a duck, pig, or clown	5	After 3 such tricks, you succeed. Opponent loses 4 Mood and takes 2 reputation damage. You and all allies gain 2 Mood.



## CONFLICTING ACTIONS

Simultaneous initiative and environmental tricks can lead to simultaneous, conflicting actions. Two characters might pick up the same dropped musket at the same time, for example. Or one character might try to shove a door closed in the same round that another tries to prop it open, or one character grabs a second while he is trying to flee.

Roll a characteristic check to determine the winner. Keep in mind this is not necessarily a Quickness check to see who does his action first. The actions are likely simultaneous. Instead, in the above examples, each character would roll Strength. The higher rolling character yanks the weapon away, or pushes the door into place, or drags the grabbed character into his area.

## ARMOR & WEAPONS

Weapons and armor are ranked according to Quality. Quality can stem from different sources. One weapon might have a high Quality because of its material, another because of its craftsmanship, and yet another because of a spell or a crisis surge.

Armor absorbs damage in combat. For each two points of Quality, armor absorbs one point of physical (not magical) damage per combat. This damage is normally temporary. Post-battle adjustments, re-seatings, and fixes return the armor close to its original condition. There are, however, special attacks that more seriously damage armor Quality (until a real armorsmith's repair is made). Armor damage absorption is an abstraction; it represents an armor's protection over the course of a fight.

Weapon quality is important for penetrating armor. There are many armors which ignore 1 point of damage per strike from weapons below Quality X. If you know that the baron's son has inherited a suit of dragon plate, then you had best arm yourself with a weapon of Quality 6 or higher if you want to threaten him in combat.

Weapon Quality is also important for resisting attacks that target your weapon. Sundering weapon attacks, muriatic acid, spells, and monster abilities can all degrade your weapon's Quality.

## DYING & DEATH

When a character reaches 0 Body, he can no longer fight.

What happens next depends on the character. If he has nothing calling him to this world - no love or other Inspiration of appropriately high value - then he is unconscious. Another point of Body damage pushes him over the edge, and he dies.

If he does have something calling him to the world, then the player and the GM narrate the character's survival. Perhaps he is captured, perhaps marooned, perhaps he suffers a blow to a Reputation or an Inspiration in the process.

Remember, too, that psyche, morale, and ambition play key roles in combat, especially in a world where love, fear, and other emotions have such power. A character can always spend a Mood point to prevent a point of Body damage.

## RANGE

Ranged attacks suffer a -1 die size penalty per area after the adjacent area.

*Example.* Wet Tessa, captain of the Opanan ship *Tumult*, shoots an arrow from the deck of her caravel, across the docks, and into the harbormaster's office. This is two areas away (deck > docks > office), so she takes a -1 die size penalty to her attack die.

*Example.* Samuel Torch throws his knife from the entryway all the way across the great hall, which the GM has described as divided into four areas (entryway at the foot of the hall, feasting tables, low stairs, and lord's table). Samuel takes a -2 die size penalty because the lord's table is three areas away (foot > feasting tables > stairs > lord's table).





## CRITICAL HITS

Any time the defender rolls a 1 and the attacker rolls over half on his die, the hit is a critical hit. The attack does two extra points of damage in physical combat and one extra point in social combat.

## GRAB

You can grab someone else in combat. Most of the time, if you succeed with a grab attack, then both you and your target are considered grabbed. Some attacks, such as Dagger-and-wine's Tangled Cloak, grab a target without causing the attacker to be grabbed.

When grabbed, you can't move, and you can only execute re-balancing maneuvers or grab maneuvers (such as Bear Hug or Throw). You can also execute reasonable tricks, including a Strength vs. Strength check to break the grab.

Grabs end after one turn if not maintained. For example, if Octavia entangles Wilhelm in a bedsheet in round one, then Wilhelm is grabbed during round two (in traditional initiative, the grab ends after Octavia goes again). He is free after that (unless, of course, Octavia had successfully executed a second Tangled Cloak maneuver in round two).

## SURPRISE

If one combatant surprises the other, he can enter his fighting style before the other does. In the surprise round, the surprised defender uses a d2 to defend, and the attacker uses whatever maneuver he chooses to open the combat with.

A defender is surprised only if he is completely unaware of the attacker. Simply drawing a sword quickly, say in the middle of an argument over the origin and recent history of a playing card, surprises no one.

## MODIFIERS, LIGHTING, & BLINDNESS

Many situational modifiers are already included in the fighting styles. The Savage style's Dive and Tackle, and the Swashbuckler style's Death from Above, for example, both include a higher ground advantage for the attacker.

Modifiers should only be applied for truly unusual circumstances, such as an earthquake causing the Hall of Mirrors to collapse on the combatants, or the revelation of your secret twin before fighting that twin in a duel, or several ballistae firing directly into the combat. When modifiers are applied, they usually take the form of a penalty to attack or defense dice.

Lighting modifiers are not included in combat styles. There are two lighting conditions. In deep shadow, attack dice are reduced by two sizes. In complete darkness, all melee attack and defense dice are reduced four sizes to a minimum of d2. Ranged attacks are impossible without some special ability or mitigating circumstance. The darkness penalties also apply to a character who is blind.

## TERRAIN

Terrain's effect on combat is so severe and ubiquitous that some styles teach footwork and balance specifically for shifting or uneven terrain. Here are some common effects.

*Bouncing/rolling/jolting vehicle (ship or zep-pelin deck, back of escape wagon, etc.).* Each round, roll a Quickness check against the Doom or be forced to rebalance.

*Water.* Any water deeper than knee deep prevents the use of all maneuvers except rebalancing maneuvers.

*Thick underbrush, deep snow.* Moving to a new area in combat requires a Strength check against the Doom.

*Gale, deluge, blizzard.* -2 die sizes to all ranged attacks and perception checks.

*Uneven terrain.* Any time you are hit, roll a Quickness check against the Doom or be forced to rebalance.

# HEALING

Healing occurs in three ways.

First, immediately after a combat, chase, or other damaging scene, a character has a chance to recoup some Body or characteristic loss. Some of the Body and characteristic damage taken in the fight may turn out to be shock, an easily stanced wound, or swelling that is severe but short term.

The PC rolls his Strength vs. the Doom for every Body or characteristic point that he lost. For each successful roll, he regains a point of Body or characteristic damage. Mood and Inspirations can modify these healing rolls, but for Inspiration purposes, the healing rolls count as part of the previous scene (meaning that some characters may not have an Inspiration use remaining after battle).

The second way to heal is at 1 Body/week and 1 characteristic point/week.

The third way is to take a scar. If a player wishes, his character can be maimed or scarred. This brings his Body and characteristics up to maximum in one day, for the wound cannot now heal fully - it is as healthy as it ever will be again. The wound could be a lame leg, a missing eye, a scarred lower lip, etc.

A scarring is an important event in the character's history. It cannot be forgotten. When a player takes a scar, he loses one history slot. For every three scars, a character loses one point from his strength score.

## COUP DE GRACE

If an opponent is completely helpless and you are free to attack without harassment, you can roll your Strength or Quickness die as damage each round.







## EXAMPLE OF COMBAT

Patrick is playing Tibor Valtseng, a smuggler and swashbuckler from Muda-Tarsk, while Kasey Lynn is playing a Rithite rogue named Emmaline Lafoi. The GM is Collin.

Emmaline has stolen a set of children's dolls, each carrying a Dramba Healing Loa. The Archbishop of Rithaign wants them back and has dispatched a trio of the High Church's requisitors to that end. The requisitors catch up to our two heroes as Emmaline and Tibor are exiting the Shuddering Lion through a back alley in a vain attempt to avoid being spotted.

GM: The alley smells of rotting banana peels, gnarsk bones, and spilled liquor. Three shadows flit in rapid succession across the refuse-strewn dirt. Looking up, you see a trio of black-clad armsmen leap from rooftop to rooftop. One of them draws a bow; the other two sport back-strapped broadswords and start leaping from balcony to laundry line to sill, descending toward you. Roll for initiative!

Tibor: Piss on a spellstalk. If that archer is a master he can probably get a headshot off before we get up there. I'd go defense next round.

Emmaline: Yep. I'm going Dagger-and-Wine, as usual. Shadows are my friend.

Tibor: I'm thinking I'll need vertical mobility, so I'll start in Swashbuckler instead of Free Sword.

GM: It looks like the swordsmen are going Free Sword and the archer is using Arrowheart.

*Both sides roll their Quickness dice. Emmaline uses an Inspiration to roll the highest, then the archer goes, then Tibor; and then the two swordswingers.*

Emmaline: I'm dodging into the shadows. Assuming these guys are after the Comneni dolls, they've probably been told to target me. Time to hide.

GM: The archer is nocking a cardinal-feathered arrow, aiming and breathing. It appears your theory is sound, Kasey Lynn, because the arrow's tip is aimed straight at Emmaline's heart.

Tibor: Daredevil move, and with my "world is a weapon" talent, I'm adding an environment trick to the climb. I'm assuming it's three areas here, bot-

tom, middle, and top like the last time we fought in a Rithaign alley, so my environment trick as I climb is to run along one laundry line and use my roofsword to cut the line above me, dropping one of those swordsmen into a more rapid descent than he planned.

GM: All right, roll Strength and Quickness vs. the Doom in order to hit the laundry line in the right place and send the swordsman plunging, probably a d10 attack for a 3 damage drop.

Tibor: Strength *and* Quickness vs. the Doom? How about just Quickness.

GM: The laundry lines are strong, but you could roll just to twang the line. Then the swordsmen would have a more controlled fall, breaking on other lines and awnings. Say a d10 attack for 1 damage.

*Patrick decides Tibor goes for that. He rolls his Quickness vs. the Doom and ties it; a success. Then Patrick rolls a d10 attack against the swordsman's d4 defense (the swordsman is using the Move 0/ d4 generic combat maneuver in the lower right of his Free Sword style sheet). The swordsman tumbles head-over-caiman boots to the ground, taking 1 damage.*

GM: The swordsman springs to his feet and swipes his broadsword through the canopy where he last saw Emmaline.

*The swordsman uses the Warrior's Strike rebalancing maneuver from the Free Sword style. He rolls a d6 against Emmaline's d8 (for the Dodge into Shadows maneuver from the Dagger-and-Wine style). The swordsman rolls a 4, and Emmaline rolls a 4. Emmaline wins the tie because her die is bigger.*


GM: The other swordsman continues his descent. So, as we start the second round, Tibor and one swordsman are in the middle area among the laundry, where the air is awash with clean linen angels. Emmaline and one swordsman are on the alley floor, while the archer is at the top shooting.

*The initiative order stays the same.*

Emmaline: I'm skulking in the shadows. No way I'm giving the archer an easy target.

GM: The archer looses the arrow at where he thinks he sees you skulking and dodging. Red-feathered death shoots toward you.

*The GM rolls the Called Shot: Head attack die from the Arrowheart maneuver; a d6 (d4 increased one die size by the Aim & Breathe maneuver). He rolls a 2*



and decides that the archer will use his lone Inspiration, Fear of the Archbishop (2). That gives the archer an 6 for his attack roll (maximum on his attack d6) and a 6 on his Heart die (which also happens to be a d6). The dice also explode. The archer rolls two d8s, and gets a 7 on one. That 7 is his result.

Meanwhile, Emmaline's defense dice for her Skulk in Shadows maneuver are d8/dQck. She rolls and gets a 6 and a 4. She spends a point of Mood to maximize one roll, getting an 8, beating the archer's 7.

GM: The arrow blazes by your head and thuds, quivering, into an ergot victim's discarded crutch.

Tibor: You're down a Mood point.

Emmaline: Yes but if that head shot had hit me, I'd take 5 damage. I'll trade 1 Mood for that any day. Plus you're a swashbuckler! With all your spectacular shenanigans wowing me and raising my Mood, I can spend Mood like candy.

Tibor: Sure. I'm just here to entertain you.

Emmaline: Pretty much.

Tibor: Ok, I make an Acrobatic Charge up to the roof where the archer is ensconced. My environment trick as I go is -

GM: Hold on. Acrobatic Charge doesn't include a climb, so you can't do it from the laundry lines up to the roof.

Tibor: Flipping trog lips. All right, just another Daredevil Move, up to the roof. No environment trick; I don't have the major version of the talent.

GM: The swordsman in the middle area drops next to Emmaline, and the other one swings twice at the spot where he sees her ducking behind an abandoned ox cart.

*The swordsman uses the onslaught maneuver, rolling a d6 and a d4, getting a 5 and a 1. Both of these widely miss against Emmaline's d8/dQuickness rolls, a 3 and a 7 against the 5, and a 4 and a 5 against the 1.*

GM: Same initiative. We have Emmaline facing off against two swordsman on the ground - one of them is building up a nice attack against you, Emmaline, already executing an Onslaught. The archer is not faring so well, gulping and staring at Tibor, who is suddenly in his face with a roofsword.

Emmaline: That swordsman does need to be taken down before he can Eviscerate me. I'm going to

leap out from the other side of the ox-cart and backstab him.

*She rolls a d10 attack, getting a 6. The swordsman rolls his d6 onslaught defense die, gets a 5. He has no Inspirations or Mood, so he is hit by the backstab. This does 4 points of damage, which, combined with the 1 point of damage he took from falling, finishes him (his Mood was 0).*

GM: Blood spurts in pulses from the swordsman's chest. He had no idea that you were on that side of the ox-cart. He slides off the end of your dagger, Emmaline, and belly-crawls for three elbow-pulls. Then he moans "Coretta...", and expires.

Emmaline: Pretty dramatic death for a fool. He should have left the area when I started skulking around. I wonder who Coretta is?

GM: The archer drops his bow, pulls a broadsword and switches style to Free Sword.

Tibor: Spectacular Strike! As he pulls his sword, I thwack his blade with my own, forcing him to pull it out at an awkward angle and slice his own neck!

*Tibor rolls a d8, getting a 5. The archer, using the Trick 0/d4 generic maneuver to switch styles, rolls a 3. The strike does 1 damage.*

Emmaline: About time you did something entertaining. *She ticks up her Mood by 1 according to the Spectacular Strike description.*

Tibor: For my environment trick, I kick his bow over the edge of the roof.

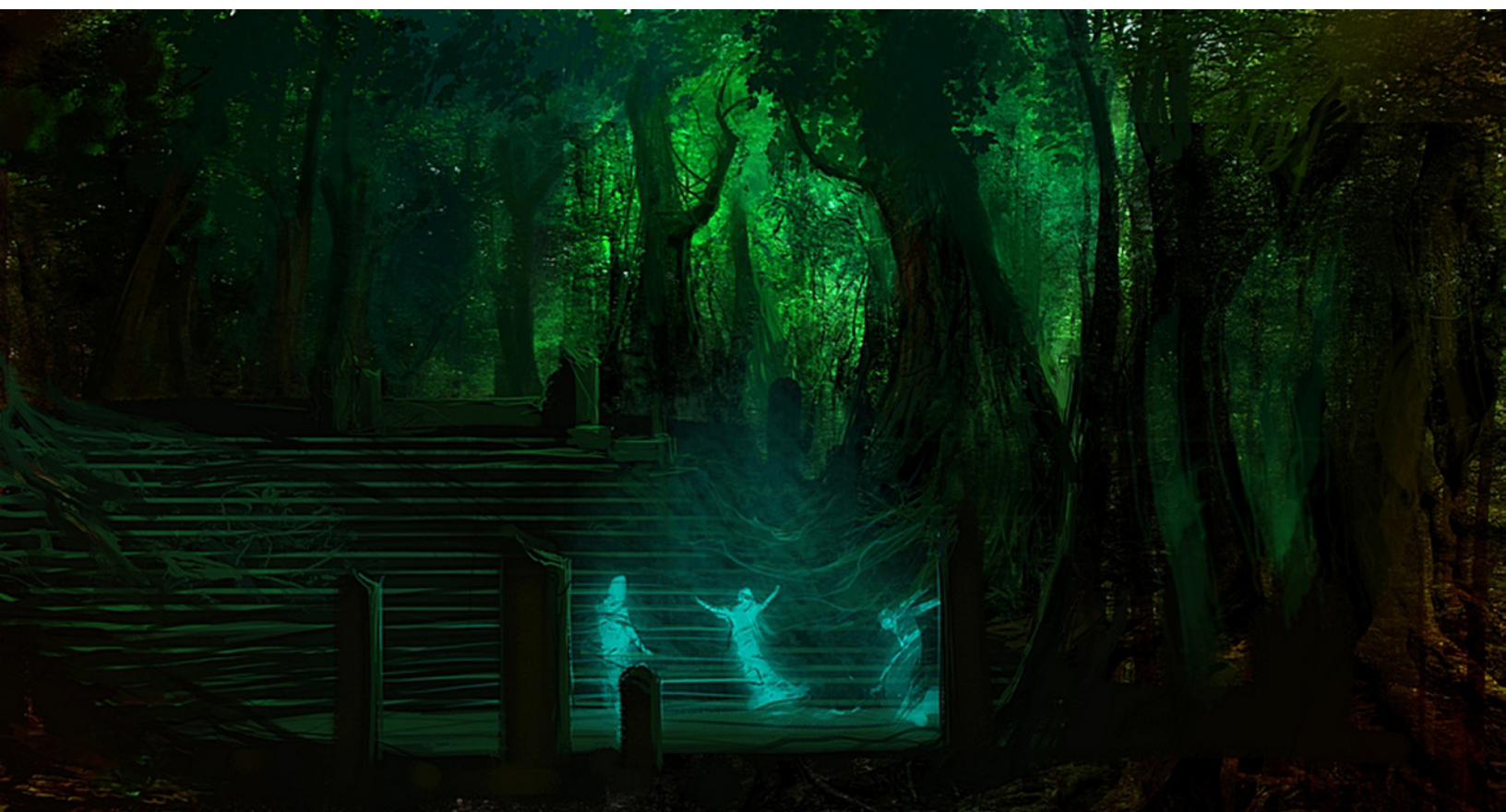
GM: Sure thing; no roll required for that one. Now, the last swordsman attacks Emmaline with a Warrior's Strike.

*The swordsman rolls a 6, exploding to a d8, on which he rolls a 7. Emmaline's d4 rolls a 1, but rather than take the critical hit, she spends a Mood point to raise her defense roll to a 4. She is still hit and takes 1 point of damage, but she avoids the +2 damage from the critical.*

Emmaline: That's 2 damage, effectively, instead of 3. Time for more entertainment, swashy!

*With Tibor and Emmaline clearly having the upper hand, the GM moves the action to a Chase scene (p. 42).*





## CHAPTER THREE: MAGIC

Magic is the greatest curse and the greatest treasure known to man. It is a force of nature, and a wild one. With no cause or warning, it can burn down a city of 10,000 people or sicken every first born son in a kingdom. People fear magic. People resent magic. Yet every day, men risk death for spells. A single spell can save a life.

There is a saying in the Kingdoms: “Hate what you love.” They say that the High God teaches us to mix our emotions, to dilute love with hate so that neither emotion becomes too strong. Emotions contain powerful magic, so we must keep our emotions weak to limit any collateral damage their magic causes.

But when it comes to magic itself, “Hate what you love” does not mean what the priests mean. It means that people love magic, and they hate magic, both so strongly that the two emotions do not cancel out but roil and intensify, tearing apart whoever dwells too long in the arcane shadow. Magic leads to madness.

Here’s an overview of the important magic concepts in the game.

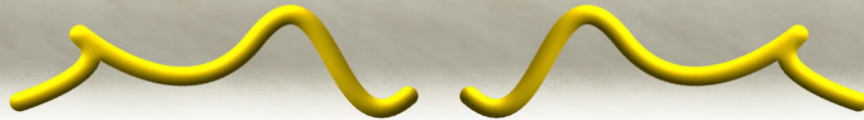
*Interference.* Spells and spellbound creatures interfere. Interference can cause a wild magic surge.

*Natural vs. artificial.* Natural magic is an exception to the interference rule. Natural magic never interferes. Anything not man-made is natural. A troll’s ability to regenerate, a spontaneously risen ghoul, and a cave haunted by the whispers of murdered lovers are all natural magic.

*Styles, schools and traditions.* Spells are learned in styles, schools and traditions. Each school has different spells and different requirements.

*Combat styles.* Each school has a combat style sheet. These are used just like a fighting style’s combat style sheet.

*Spellbound.* You are spellbound if you have learned a magic style (neophyte or greater). Being spellbound can amplify magic’s effect on you.



## NATURAL MAGIC

Like the weather, magic is always present, often unpredictable, and occasionally devastating. Most days, in most places, it is unnoticeable. A lucky village can go for generations without any ill magic. But its menace is never too far removed. Everyone knows someone who has been touched by magic.

Magic events on a minor scale are uncommon. In a town of 10,000 people, roughly one minor- to medium-scale magic event occurs each week. These events are almost always destructive. They might be a magical disease striking a young woman, all the glass in a church's windows suddenly shattering, or all the cheese in a fromagerie deliquescing. In a larger city, something like this happens somewhere every day.

Magic events on a larger scale are rarer. In a town of 100,000 people, a larger event happens on average once per season. This could be a town park getting wet as if it were raining without anyone actually seeing rain; a statue tumbling prone, dragging itself through the dirt to a crossroads, and then speaking in a language no one knows before reverting to lifelessness; a blacksmith shrieking and turning into a six-legged, carapaced beetle freak who attempts to devour his apprentice; or the landlady discovering she is inexplicably and irresistibly in love with the old man who rents a room from her.

Approximately once a decade, somewhere in the known world, there is a magical cataclysm. These events are bizarre and catastrophic. All the males in a city might fall into a coma for fifteen years. Doubles of every person might be spawned in a city fifty miles distant. Tentacles might sprout over a village and drag it underground to a fate unknown. A dragon might become intelligent.

Most cataclysms are acute, but there is also chronic natural magic. The trolls' regeneration ability is undoubtedly magical, yet it has persisted through all history. The haunting of Indrazhe, Descent beasts, and the eastern sea storms are all examples of persistent natural magic.

## ARTIFICIAL MAGIC

Wizards and witches can master magic, but to do so they must also submit. This is the first rule of magic "Magic, to be commanded, must be obeyed." Those who obey are the spellbound.

You are spellbound if you choose to learn to cast spells (at the neophyte level or greater). Learning a magic style is a decision that cannot be reversed. Once you are spellbound, you are spellbound forever.

Being spellbound has consequences. The first consequence is that you and your spells interfere with other spells. This is the second rule of magic, namely, "Magic hates magic." Because of this, if you are not given leave to be spellbound in a kingdom, you are likely marked for death and hunted.

A second consequence is that some spells and wild surges may affect you differently than they affect others.

Finally, being spellbound stains you. Some recognize you on sight. Others can recognize you with a quick spell, using mandrake root or a topaz rubbed between the forefingers. Sometimes you can disguise your nature. But do not count on it. The stains of magic are not easy to hide.

## INTERFERENCE & SURGES

Magic is a limited resource. When two or more wizards in an area attempt to control it, they are like two beggars fighting for a single pot of stew. One might grab it, or the other, or both. More likely, the stew spills and scalds them.

When you cast a spell, if you roll a 1 and there are other spellbound creatures or items in your area, then you cause a wild surge, regardless of whether or not you subsequently use Inspiration, Mood, or another means to modify the roll.

If your spell does not normally require a roll, but there is the possibility of a surge, then you must roll your Magic die when the spell takes effect, with a 1 causing a surge.

Remember that "area" for close spells means your immediate area: the bunk room, the laboratory, the zeppelin deck. For high spells, "area" is more likely to mean a county, a town, or a forest.





## SURGES & EFFECTS

A wild surge is an uncontrolled eruption of magical energy that occurs when a caster rolls a 1 and there are other spellbound creatures or items in the area.

Surges occur in addition to the intended spell effect. When a wizard casts a spell, it always goes off. It may or may not have a surge to go with it.

When you cause a wild surge, the eruption of energy assaults all spellbound creatures (including you) plus one random creature in your area. The attack is magical and uses the same die as the spell that caused the surge. Those attacked must defend with a Magic roll ("taking the hit" is not an option). If they are hit, they suffer 1 damage per spellbound creature in the area. The GM narrates the disaster, which can manifest in vastly different forms: a shower of acid, a sword suddenly heated to 1000°, an ear-splitting peal of thunder.

If the GM wishes, she may have the wild surge do something other than body damage. A wild surge that sucks memories and brain tissue may attack a character's Histories, for example, or his Reason score.

*Example.* Aldraic the druid begins a Fertility ritual targeting a Kvalt savage. The ritual gestates a stunted freak twin under the savage's skin. There is no attack roll and no spell effect yet, so there is no interference. The next round, while the Kvalt savage panics, Aldraic casts Birth. This causes the freak to burst to the surface and begin to bite. Aldraic rolls his attack die, a d8 for Birth. He rolls a 1. Aldraic's spell warps out of control and becomes a wild surge.

The GM narrates the freak screaming as it is born. The spell still takes effect, but in this case, that does not mean much: the spell missed its target (it rolled a 1 on the attack die) and Aldraic is not using Mood or an Inspiration to raise the attack roll.

Now the GM determines the random character to be attacked by Aldraic's spell. After that, he re-rolls Aldraic's original d8 magic die against the two spellbound creatures plus the one randomly selected target. He narrates the freak exploding out of the skin, shooting across the room, and exploding in fragments of sinew and bone, dealing 1 Body and 1 Charisma to the affected targets.

## CRISIS SURGES

A crisis surge occurs when a wild surge critically hits. Crisis surges are the largest single reason that people throughout the Claw fear and despise magic. When a crisis surge occurs, almost anything can happen.

The GM narrates the effects of a crisis surge. The effects may be nothing more than a ringing in the ears and a point of Mood damage. Or they could be a volcano erupting, a spellstalk plague, a princess cursed to a thirty-year slumber, a second head - be creative!

Note that because high spells affect large areas, there is a significant chance that each high spell wild surge is a crisis surge.

## MASTER & APPRENTICE

Masters and apprentices do not interfere with each other so long as the *master and apprentice* talent is used (see the Chapter on Talents).

Cabal members interfere with each other, but *cabalistic casting*, a power that your Arcane Order can bestow, helps cabal members to cooperate.

## MAGIC IN COMBAT

Like fighting styles, magic schools use a flowchart in combat. Although magic in the Kingdoms is learned as schools and traditions as well as styles, I call magic flowcharts "style sheets" for convenience and consistency.

Use a magic style sheet like a fighting style sheet. Each action represents a step in casting a spell. You might begin with an incantation and then decide to burn coriander. That decision determines which magical energies you can loose upon the world when the spell is finally completed. Or you might dedicate a doll on the first round, chant and point the needle on the second round, then shout and stick the needle into the doll's leg on the third round, collapsing your target in a shrieking heap.

Underlined actions are re-casting actions. They



## SAMPLE MAGIC SURGES

1. Lightning arcs from the caster to all victims
2. Ears bleed, head aches, followed a minute later by a dying slug oozing from the left ear
3. Thunder claps loud enough to break glass
4. All gear carried by victim spikes temperature to 100 degrees Celsius or more
5. Victim coughs up pins and one item related to an Inspiration
6. Daylight nightmares: the victims see their worst fears and take Mood damage
7. Septic dark lines spread through veins causing Strength damage
8. Hounds of ill omen howl in the distance. The victims take a Heart penalty on checks against the Doom for a number of checks equal to the damage of the surge.
9. Victims steam and dessicate
10. Boils and pustules cover the victims; damage is to Charisma and/or Reputations
11. Fireball!
12. Skulls reverberate with magical backlash; damage is to Reason
13. Objects animate and fly at high speeds, colliding into victims
14. Victims' gear swept as if in an unstoppable current toward the nearest fountain/tavern/blood spill, dragging victim, causing Quality damage to gear
15. Ghosts of dragons howl through the area, causing Mood and Body damage
16. Victims' skin is flayed by invisible whips.
17. Allies' breath turns caustic, searing the lips, mouth, nose, and airway from the inside out
18. Mushrooms grow in area; 1 round later they explode with spores that cause Magic and Quickness damage
19. Quincunx small holes open in the foreheads of victims; blood geysers
20. Dozens of 1-foot high copies of the victims spawn and swarm ankles

are always accessible, just as rebalancing actions are in a fighting style. Other accessible actions are those actions in the same row or column. Again, this is identical to the way that a martial style sheet works.

There is only one difference between a magic style sheet and a fighting style sheet. Namely, the magic attack and defense dice.

## MAGIC ATTACK & DEFENSE DICE

Spells that list their attack die in the lower left make physical attacks. Crimson Bands of Hessek in Battlecraft, for example, are physical bands that encircle, constrict, and burn or consume the victim.

Use a physical defense – one in the lower right of a maneuver – to defend against a physical spell.

Spells that list their attack die in the upper left make magical attacks. There is no physical manifestation that can be dodged or blocked. Curse Doll and Pin Through the Head in the Dramba style, for examples, are magic attacks.

Use two dice to defend against a magical attack. First, always use your magic die. Second, if your current maneuver provides a magical defense die listed in the upper right, use that magical defense die also. The majority of maneuvers and many spells do not have a magic defense die, so most of the time when you resist a magical attack, you will be rolling only your magic score.

## RANGE

Unless stated otherwise, ranged magic effects have a range equal to the caster's line of sight within the appropriate area. That is, a close spell has a range of wherever the caster can see, so long as it is still within the caster's area, as judged by the GM. For example, a caster in his tower could cast a close spell anywhere in his study, but not anywhere in the valley that he can see out his tower window (though he can see the valley floor, it is not in his area).



## RE-CASTING

Any attack that causes a rebalance also causes a recast. An attack that causes a re-cast does not necessarily cause a rebalance.

## SCROLLS, POTIONS, & CANDLES

A wizard can trap any of his spells in an inanimate object. Spellbound or not, anyone can then use the object and release the spell. Triggering the release may or may not require a command word; the wizard trapping his spell makes this decision at the time of the trapping. The person releasing the spell chooses the spell's target, using the original wizard's Magic die or attack die. A spell can only be released once; after that, the object no longer holds a trapped spell.

Common triggers and spell objects are: drinking a potion; burning a paper charm; snuffing or burning a candle; sacrificing a calf; kissing a girl; reading a scroll; defacing a doll or image; cutting the skin holding a tattoo; immersing a relic in blood; inhaling from a hookah; winding, setting, and releasing an orrery.

At any one time, a wizard can have trapped a maximum of 1 close or combat spell per 3 magic levels. Thus, a 10-level wizard/4th-level warrior can have 3 close or combat spells trapped at a time.

A wizard can trap a high spell, but if he does, he cannot cast another high spell until that one is released. There is one exception to this, however, and it involves the form that spells are bound in. When he first creates a trapped spell, the wizard must make a choice that will stay with him for the rest of his life. Will he specialize in one form of trap, or will he be a generalist? A generalist can trap spells in any form: potion, sacrificial animal, a child's dreams, etc. He gains nothing beyond versatility. A specialist wizard chooses one type of trap. He can never make any trap except this kind of trap or one specified in the spell's description, but in return for the lost versatility, he can keep one high spell in a trap and still be able to cast one high spell per day as normal. Under no circumstances can he keep more than one high spell trapped at a time.

Releasing a close spell in combat is a Trick.



Releasing a combat spell in combat requires as many consecutive Tricks as rounds it would take to progress from a re-casting maneuver up to the combat spell. Releasing a high spell in combat requires five consecutive Tricks.

Holding or releasing a spell does not make you spellbound. On the other hand, the objects that contain the spells are themselves spellbound. They are spellbound even with respect to their creator, that is, they interfere with their own creators' other spells.

If an object holding a trapped spell is destroyed, the spell dissipates without effect.

A spellbound creature who touches a spell-trapping object knows that there is a spell in it, though he does not necessarily know what spell or the command words to release it.

## LEARNING SPELLS

When you are an apprentice of a style, you know all the close spells and combat spells save the Master spells (marked with an M). When you are a master of a style, you know all of the close spells, all of the combat spells, and all of the high spells. If you are only a neophyte of a style, you know only two close spells, the re-casting combat spells, and two other combat spells. Remember, once you learn any magic style at any level, you are spellbound.



## COMBAT, CLOSE, & HIGH SPELLS

Every school has close spells, combat spells, and high Spells.

Combat spells are spells that are quick enough to be cast in a combat. They appear on the magic school's style sheet and are explained in the gloss. They can be cast outside of combat too, of course.

Close spells are spells that draw only on the magic in the area immediately around the witch. They can be cast in combat as a trick/miscellaneous action. They are low risk spells because the witch can remove nearby creatures, assuring herself that she is the only spellbound creature in the area. A witch can cast any close spell as often as she likes as long as she is an apprentice or master of the style. A neophyte picks two close spells (as she picks two combat spells beyond the rebalancing spells), and she can cast those two close spells, and only those two close spells, as often as she likes.

High spells are profound spells with the ability to affect the course of the world. They draw on magic from a large region. A wizard can attempt only one high spell per scene (or day). A wizard can only cast a high spell if he has mastered the style.

When casting a high spell, a wizard faces a significant risk of interference from other spellbound creatures. The GM must decide, when building his world, what the average number of spellbound creatures per area is. This number has logical consequences. High spellbound densities imply many outlaws, anarchy, overcrowdedness, or possibly advanced sociology, along with many wild surges. Low spellbound densities imply less chaos, low populations, savages, or possibly advanced tyranny and social control, along with fewer wild surges.

## DETECTION

In general, combat spells and close spells do not broadcast your location. There are ways for a caster or an organization to track down another caster, however, so caution is advised.

A high spell, on the other hand, allows all organizations and casters in an area to roll their Arcana or Magic against the caster's Magic. If the caster wins, he remains undetected. If another caster or organization wins, then that caster or organization knows that a high spell has been cast, and the rough location of the caster (but nothing else, such as the identity of the caster or the spell cast).

When a crisis surge occurs, every spellbound creature in the region knows it. They also know the rough location of the caster.







# CHAPTER FOUR: CHASES

There are many reasons to run in the Kingdoms. You could run for your life, like the thief dashing through the palace with the spell in her pouch and the guards on her tail. You could run for something more important than your life, like the groom on horseback galloping through the canals, jumping bridge to gondola to barge, trying to catch up to the pirates and the abducted bride. And of course you could run a race, like the ice sleds sailing and skidding around the walls of Thyre at the Neverlight Festival.

## OVERVIEW

In a chase, the GM presents the players with a series of locales: a cavern dripping with lava gobs, a natural arch over a chasm, a secret temple entrance that is peristyled with whirling scythe traps and collapsing columns of alchemist's fire. The PCs take one or more rounds to cross each locale. In each round:

1. The GM describes the locale and tells the players its Chase Difficulty. Usually that's just the Doom.
2. Each PC decides if she wants to keep pace, push it, take it easy, or if she wants to take an action such as attacking or strewing caltrops in her wake.
3. PC and NPC actions (attacks, using an item, etc.) are resolved.
4. Everyone rolls against the Chase Difficulty. Those who succeed can gain ground, those who fail fall behind.

Naturally, the characters' actions (step 3) may make it easier or harder to race (step 4). It's not easy to steer your cave boat through the rapids when screaming Low God cultists are hurling javelins from the boat behind yours!

## LOCALES

In most locales, the Chase Difficulty is the Doom. Some particularly easy locales - deserted boulevards in moonlight, a level meadow at noon - may have a Chase Difficulty lower than the Doom. Particularly hard locales - the icy rapids of the Vrandenmark River, the Gauntlet of the Rithaign Factors, Haulers, and Panhandlers - may have a Chase Difficulty higher than the Doom.

Some locales also have a consequence for failure that goes beyond just losing ground in the chase. Failing to run across the parapet may cause you to fall into the moat; failing a chase roll while dodging through the castle kitchen may leave you splattered with boiling tomato sauce (perhaps 1 dmg + 1 to any existing negative reputation in the castle!).

## ACTIONS

The six basic actions that a character can choose are:

- Run. This is the default action. You run, pilot, or ride as fast as you can while maintaining moderate control. If you succeed, you don't gain ground on the others in the race, but you don't lose any either. If you fail, you lose one range increment.
- Push it. You sprint or push your vehicle until it threatens to fly apart. Increase your Chase Difficulty by 1, but if you succeed, you gain a range increment. If you fail, you lose one range increment, as always.
- Under control. Slow and steady wins the race. Subtract three from the Chase Difficulty. Whether or not you succeed at your Chase Difficulty roll, you lose one range increment. But you have the best possible chance to make the Chase Roll. This option is best used when a failed chase roll carries consequences far worse than losing ground - perhaps when you are running a bridge over shark-infested waters or driving a yak wagon through a bazaar of peasants shouting for your head.



- **Attack.** You can make an attack using any of the basic maneuvers (lower right hand corner of the style sheet) or one of the rebalancing maneuvers from a style that you know, as long as that maneuver includes movement. Each range increment in a chase counts as one area for ranged attacks. If you hit, your opponent's Chase Difficulty increases by 2 in addition to any damage that you do. When you attack, you increase your own Chase Difficulty by 1 whether you hit or not. If you make your Chase roll while attacking, you keep pace in the chase, neither gaining nor losing ground.

- **Defend.** Normally you defend with a d4 while running. Choosing to Defend allows you to use your Quickness die instead. You can also use one of the rebalancing maneuvers from a style that you know, as long as that maneuver includes movement. When you defend, you increase your Chase Difficulty by 1. If you make your Chase roll while defending, you keep pace in the chase, neither gaining nor losing ground.

- **Trick.** You can try an environment trick. These often rocket you ahead two or even three range increments if they work: swinging on a chandelier

through a window for a shortcut; racing a horse through underbrush to cut ahead through a hairpin curve; stoking the zeppelin's engines with an experimental fuel mix; using a grappling hook with your ice-runner sail-sled to take a turn tighter than anyone else is able to. In general, trying a Trick increases the Chase Difficulty by 1 or more, although some might not, for example, using a Knowledge (streetwise) history to remember a shortcut. As with Environment Tricks in combat, the player and the GM should negotiate the Difficulty increase and attendant risks and rewards until a bargain is struck.

## RESOLVING ACTIONS

Everyone reveals her action choice simultaneously, just as in duel initiative combat. Resolution also occurs simultaneously. It is possible, for example, to be felled by a kingsman's arrow just as you cross the drawbridge.

Remember that if you are attacked, you defend with a d4 unless using the Defend action this round.

### CHASE ACTIONS

YOUR ACTION	CHASE DIFFICULTY MODIFIER	IF YOU PASS YOUR CHASE ROLL	IF YOU FAIL YOUR CHASE ROLL	OTHER EFFECTS
Run	-	-	Lose 1 range increment	-
Push It	+1	Gain 1 range increment	Lose 1 range increment	-
Under Control	-3	Lose 1 range increment	Lose 1 range increment	-
Attack	+1	-	Lose 1 range increment	Make an attack; +2 to target's Chase Difficulty this round if you hit
Defend	+1	-	Lose 1 range increment	Defend with Quickness instead of d4
Trick	+1 or more	-	Lose 1 range increment	Attempt an environment trick as negotiated with GM





# CHASE ROLLS

After resolving all the actions for the round, players make their chase rolls against the Chase Difficulty. A roll that equals or exceeds the Chase Difficulty succeeds.

Chase rolls are usually Quickness rolls along with any relevant skill as bonus dice.

*Example.* Ivor the Boneless has a 5 Quickness and a History: Trail runner in the Fyrjaj (8). He rolls a d4 for his Quickness and a d8 bonus die for his skill when attempting to make a chase roll.

A chase roll does not always have to be Quickness. The player narrates what her character is doing to keep up with the chase. If that is sprinting, then Quickness is the appropriate die. But if your character is paddling an outrigger to escape savages in the Dragon Isles, then Strength is the right die. In a crowded street, a player can enlist the aid of street urchins to point out a quick shortcut through vendor's stalls - and then he rolls Charisma for his chase roll. As always, creativity and fun should be rewarded.

Also as always, be careful not to stretch belief. Running, swimming, climbing, and leaping are inherently physical activities, and players should not abuse the ability to narrate substitutes for physical, speed-related characteristics and abilities. In other words, be vigilant about what narrations make sense or are too cool to deny. A good rule of thumb is that in a typical chase scene, a character will only find one or two environments where she can use Reason, Charisma, or a related skill instead of Quickness or a physical skill related to speed and chases. A player who has made the choice for her character to excel in chase scenes by choosing chase-related histories and abilities should not be overshadowed by weakly justified narrations from players eager to run every chase scene down the yellow brick road (that is, munchkin it up).

*Example.* Tarion Gottvilse races down a corridor of the Rithaign Tower dungeon, chased by a kingsman. The corridor has difficulty 3, and Tarion chooses to shoot behind him with his wheellock as he runs. The GM decides that the kingsman is going to try to push it to catch Tarion.

Tarion rolls his basic shoot attack (dQuickness) against the guard's defense of d4 and hits, doing 1 point of damage, but more importantly increasing the kingsman's Chase Difficulty by 2 this round.

Now that the action is resolved, Tarion and the guard make their chase rolls. The Chase Difficulty is the Doom, 4, but Tarion has to beat a 5 because his Attack action increased the difficulty by 1. The guard is pushing it and was hit, so he increases his difficulty by 3; he needs a 7. Tarion rolls his Quickness die and gets a 5, so he keeps pace. The guard rolls and fails, but he uses a point of Mood to maximize his d8 Quickness roll. He therefore makes the roll and gains a range increment on Tarion.

## RANGE INCREMENTS

There are six range increments: 1-5 and Long Range. If you gain a range increment as a result of pushing it or an environmental trick, then you move up one or more increments; if you fail a roll or use the under control maneuver, then you drop one increment. (At best! Remember that failing a chase roll in the wrong locale can take you out of the chase permanently!)

You can't fall further behind than Long Range.

Range increments are relative. If two people are tied in the first increment, and then one gains a spot while the other holds steady, the "holding steady" is now in the second range increment while the gainer is alone in the first range increment.



## EXAMPLE OF A CHASE

Tibor Valtseng, swashbuckler and thief, is on the roof when the Church's archer turns and flees. Emmaline Lafoi, enchantress and thief, is at the bottom of the alley with a Church swordsman when he turns and flees through an alley door. Patrick and Kasey Lynn, playing Tibor and Emmaline, decide to chase the Church agents, and Collin, the GM, sets the scene.

GM: Tibor sees a sharply sloped tenement roof ahead of him. The archer scrambles over the peak out of sight. Emmaline sees her quarry disappear into an alley doorway.

Emmaline: "Never split the party" is my rule, so I'm not going after that quarry. Instead I'm scaling the alley walls - using those laundry lines that Tibor left dangling - and following in Tibor's wake. I'm pushing it because I assume I'm at Long Range.

GM: No, just rank 5. The archer is in the first rank, and Tibor's in rank 2.

Tibor: Assuming the Chase Difficulty is the Doom of 4, I'm pushing it too.

GM: The archer ahead of you is simply running. Tibor, if you fail, you'll have to make another Quickness check against the Doom or fall to the ground, taking damage and probably ending the chase.

*Tibor agrees and they all roll. No one narrated otherwise, so they all use their Quickness dice. The two PCs need a 5; the Doom is 4 but they are each pushing it. Emmaline rolls a 5 and gains a range increment. Tibor rolls a 1 and decides against using Mood or an Inspiration. He has to roll his Quickness again against the Doom; he makes this roll and catches the tenement's gutter just before going over the edge. He loses a range increment in the process. The archbishop's archer has an unmodified Chase Difficulty, so he needs a 4. He rolls his Quickness and gets a 6, so he avoids losing ground.*

GM: Emmaline, you shoulder yourself up onto the roof and start sprinting, boot heels pounding on slate. All of you, your three silhouettes streak past the setting sun one after the other: the archer is in the first rank, Tibor follows in the third, and Emmaline in rank 4. This round there is a huge swarm of bats that rises

for the night and flaps by as you run. The Chase Difficulty starts at Doom + 1 this round because of the bats and because you'll have to leap across an alley dividing a narghile den from a whorehouse.

Emmaline: Bloody hell, I don't want to fall now. I'm running normally, but I'm using my "Grew up on the streets of Rithaigh" history to find a shortcut here. Maybe there's a ledge to scurry across on the next building.

GM: The archer, for his part, is trying an environment trick. As he runs through the narghile den, he shouts "Kingsmen! Kingsmen! It's a raid!" hoping that the chaos in his wake will slow you down.

Tibor: I'm going to push it. This guy is going to ruin my reputation down here if I don't catch him.

*The GM rolls to resolve the archer's action first. The archer rolls his Charisma against the Doom and fails. The GM describes the addicts as too burned out to notice.*

*Now everyone rolls chase rolls. The Chase Difficulty is 5, but the archer needs a 6 because he tried an environment trick. He rolls a 4 and loses one range increment. Emmaline needs a 5, but she gets to roll both her d6 Quickness and the d8 History that she is using this round. She rolls a 5 and a 2, succeeding, which means she doesn't lose ground and has a net gain of 1 on the archer. Finally, Tibor needs a 6 because he is pushing it; he rolls a 4 and falls back a range increment.*

GM: You dash across the rooftop strewn with drug addicts. The archer is in the first rank, Tibor in the third, and Emmaline is now up to third also. On the far side of the roof, the archer rounds a cistern and a blazing bonfire comes into view. This is a still, you can tell by the smell, and the moonshiners are startled and angry as you prepare to barrel through their work area. Across the still, maybe a building or two away, you can see a zeppelin cord dangling - if the archer beats you there, the chase will be over. You've got two areas left to make up the ground!





## CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

Harpichords and waltzes one year, fiddles and jigs another; décolletage one season and buttons up to the collarbone the next. Fashions change, but the truth does not. And the truth is that fashion kills.

Fashion and reputation are weapon and armor to the socialite. Other deadly tools of the trade are manners, innuendo, rumor, art, and proteges. Social encounters can doom a man as surely as any physical combat.

### OVERVIEW

Social encounters consist of good old-fashioned roleplay. At whatever points are appropriate in the roleplay, one person or another can make a social attack, which is a Charisma vs. Charisma roll. The loser takes 1 point of Mood damage. This goes on, back and forth between sides, until one side surrenders or escapes.

Improv social scenes are an option. Some groups enjoy them, others do not. Include them as you like. When you do, a player who notches an Improv Achievement gains an in-game benefit: a bonus to attack or defend, a soupcon of healing, a History point, or something else the GM deems fit.

### SOCIAL ATTACKS

Roll your Charisma die to make a social attack. Your opponent defends with his Charisma.

If you win the opposed roll, your opponent takes 1 point of Mood damage. If his Mood is already 0, then you can cause 1 point of damage to one of his Inspirations instead, provided you meet two conditions. First, your social attack must somehow relate to the targeted Inspiration. Second, you must know what Inspiration you're targeting. In other words, if

you don't know what your opponent's Inspirations are - at least one of them - then you cannot damage them. How do you find out what an opponent's Inspirations are? The same way you find out any other secret: roleplay, investigate, threaten, cajole - whatever it takes!

There is often a way that allows the victim to avoid the Mood damage. If you have a demand, then your opponent can agree to it and avoid the mood damage. You might want him to divulge a secret, let you pass through a city gate, have dinner with you, give up his faith, abandon one of his Inspirations - whatever your desire. If the opponent agrees, he avoids Mood damage.

Of course, if you have no demands and just want to watch the world burn, then your opponent cannot acquiesce and suffers accordingly.

After your attack, you continue roleplaying until your opponent makes an attack roll. After that, it's back to you, and so on until one side surrenders or flees.

Note there are also special social attacks that have effects other than Mood damage; see below.

## REPUTATIONS & HISTORIES

Relevant reputations (p. 58) and histories can be used as bonus dice in social encounters. Each reputation or history, however, can only be used once per scene. After that, your tales of your days at court grow stale, and people realize that behind your reputation, you are just a person after all.

Relevant negative reputations are also limited to being used against you once per scene. Your reputation oozes before you, but repeated obloquy begins to sound petty. Negative reputations continue to inform the GM's roleplay of NPCs, of course, including any decisions such NPCs may make.

## CRITICAL HITS

An insult can score as deeply as a sabre. As in physical combat, if you roll over half on your die while the defender rolls a 1, you score an extra point of damage.



### HOW MUCH CAN HE TAKE?

When PCs attack an NPC and try to force the fellow to acquiesce to a demand, the GM must decide how much emotional pain the NPC can take, that is, how low the NPC will let his Mood drop before surrendering.

In some cases, the answer is obvious. Some lords will never betray their word of honor, even if they are battered to 0 Mood and 0 Inspirations; some craven wretches yield at the first threat. But what to do about the in-between cases?

A moderately committed NPC usually caves once his Mood is zero if not before. He cannot countenance a threat to his Inspirations.

But to keep the scene moving, you may want to roll the moderately committed NPC's Heart vs. the Doom every time he loses a Mood point. If he fails the roll, he yields. This can be a fun roll to make while all the players watch if the PCs only have time to make one or two attacks before the city watch arrives or the suicide pill stops the NPC's lungs.

## SECRETS

If you reveal to your target knowledge of a scandal involving the target, you increase your accompanying social attack die size by three. The GM and the other players judge what is a scandal and what is not.

This only works once per secret.

*Example.* Tess is in the cool air of the upstairs balcony at the Shadows and Sparrows, a mirage club in Rithaigh. She is leaning against Horace, who is leaning against the marble railing. Casually, Tess mentions that she knows Horace is sleeping with the boss of the Cutters Guild. Horace stiffens, and Tess increases her next attack roll by three die sizes.





# FASHION IS A WEAPON

Clothes, jewelry, perfumes, heirloom rapiers and other gewgaws make excellent conversation pieces and status symbols.

Select one fashion item per scene. One time in the scene, you can use that item's Quality as a bonus attack or defense die when making or defending against a social attack.

## SPECIAL ATTACKS

Not every attack is a dagger to the heart, and not every comment is a wound to the ego. You may also attempt these attacks in a social encounter.

- Disarm. Clothes and other conversation pieces can be “disarmed.” Make an attack as normal; if you succeed, your opponent cannot use that item until she gains a Mood point (either through an effort of her own or someone else).

- Power attack: Your attack is emotional and illogical, but if it hits home, it hits home deeply. You decrease your attack die by two sizes, but if you hit, you do one extra point of damage.

- Mood Lift (Schadenfreude). If your social attack hits, you may forego causing Mood damage to your opponent. Instead, you gain a point of Mood yourself.

- Narrated attack. You can narrate action that allows you to use a characteristic other than Charisma for your social attack or defense. A card trick that embarrasses your host, or a flex of your muscles at the young noblewoman, and you can use Quickness or Strength to make a social roll. The GM is encouraged to limit *de facto* the use of Narrated attacks to one or two per scene. Charisma is the primary mover in social encounters, and Charisma-based characters' investment is to be protected.

- Smear. You drag someone's name through the stalks. After your social attack hits, instead of losing Mood, he loses 1 reputation. Someone from the relevant reputation group must be present; if a tree falls alone in the forest, it doesn't lose reputation with the rose bushes in the city.

- Self-aggrandize. If your social attack hits, instead of doing Mood damage, you gain 1 point of reputation with one group that is present.

## IMPROV

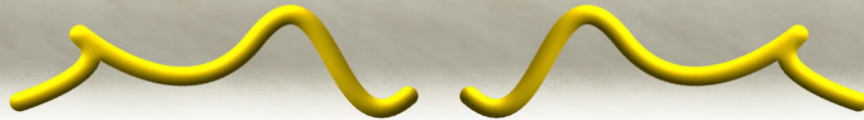
Improv social scenes are drama or theater games. They force players to think quickly and adapt to a dynamic chain of events. Because they are played out in real time, they challenge the player and not the character. This goes against a core tenet of much RPG play, and thus they are only an optional rule.

I mean that, dear reader! Improv social scenes are not for everyone. Some people strongly dislike them. But others love them. Try them and see for yourself. I have listed them here in relative order of popularity in playtesting.

- Lines. The GM prepares lines of dialogue ahead of time. The lines should support the themes and the atmosphere the adventure is intended to create. At the beginning of the session, the GM hands out the lines on slips of paper to all players. Whenever a player uses one of these lines in roleplay, he slaps down the slip of paper, says the line or paraphrases it, and gains a d10 bonus die that can be used with any social die roll in the current scene. A player can only use one line per scene. Lines can be an effective method for keeping the atmosphere in a social scene close to what was intended for the adventure.

- Prop. At the start of a social scene, the GM hands a single Prop to a random player. A player who is holding the prop and uses it logically in conjunction with a social attack gains a d12 bonus die to the attack. Everyone who asks for the prop in character (with a logical reason) must be handed the prop; there is no refusing. A character cannot be asked for the prop until she has had a reasonable chance to use it. A “reasonable chance” is usually a few lines of dialogue.

As with Lines, the GM should choose props that reinforce intended themes. The skull of a betrayed uncle for adventures focusing on death and fear; a white plume for adventures focusing on swordplay, honor, and romance; a canary in a yellow gold cage for adventures focusing on freedom and duty. This is your chance to inject literary symbolism into your game with a capital scarlet A.



- **Voiceover.** In Voiceover, each player in the scene is allowed to do one inner-monologue voiceover for someone else's character, including an NPC. For example, "I really didn't want to threaten him. I thought he was kind of cute," or, "I wonder how that would taste." A player who accepts the voiceover as the true inner thoughts of her PC and roleplays accordingly gains a d12 bonus die to use at any time during the scene.

- **Rudolph.** The Rudolph variation starts with the GM giving everyone a perceived handicap at the start of the scene. A chocolate smear on a party dress, a bad haircut, or a wasp sting to the tongue that causes a lisp. The player must roleplay accordingly. No penalties arise, but if the player manages to turn the handicap into an advantage, he gains two d12 bonus dice to use in this encounter. For example, the young lady with a chocolate smear on her dress might use it as an excuse to chat up the major domo and get on his good side by offering her bodice to his roaming hands, all in the name of a good cleaning. The young man with a bad haircut might tell the story of how he has such a noble soul that he likes to slum and shower poor barbers with his gold rather than patronize wealthy coiffeuses. The trader with the wasp sting to the tongue might use it as a demonstration of a new fixer's poison that he is selling.

- **Trigger.** Each character has one trigger that will prompt a reaction: anger, despair, lust, etc. Triggers and reactions are prepared ahead of time with the character's history in mind (random triggers are not conducive to character continuity). In a long-term campaign, PCs can learn other PCs' and major NPCs' stimuli, and any social scene can be a Trigger scene. When a target character is triggered and reacts, she gains a d10 bonus die for use anywhere in the encounter. The character who triggers the reaction gains no bonus other than the manipulation of the target character into a certain reaction and emotional state.

- **Ensigns.** The GM hands out new character sheets representing the maids, stewards, sommeliers and stableboys of the PCs. The players play these "ensigns" discussing what they have heard about their masters and their masters' recent activities. After the ensigns' scene, each player must choose whether or

not his PC really did act the way the Ensigns said he did. If he accepts the Ensigns' narration, he gains 2 mood and all inspirations are increased by one for one week.

- **Sets.** There are several sets laid out. Each set consists of three related actions in a theme. The Lecher set might consist of ogling young women, whistling and innuendo, and pinching what's been ogled. The Martyr set might consist of offering labor to other people despite the pain in one's back (which is of course loudly mentioned), mumbling while staring at the floor and insisting that nothing is wrong, and praising every little thing that someone else does as far beyond one's own meager capabilities. Anyone who completes a set of three in a scene gains a d12 bonus die to use in this or the next social encounter. Note that this one tends to force characters in certain directions. Players don't like to have their characters forced! So unless you know the players and characters well, and you can provide sets that you know the players will find interesting and in character, steer clear. Some sets that work well are Heroic, Provocateur, Blank Stare, Adventurous, Rebel, Flirt, Stoic, Expert, and Entertainer.





## CHAPTER SIX: WAR

Sometimes the story of a man's life explodes to a scale too large for individual combat. Then siege engines rumble across the fields, boots pound the mud, and the horns of a hundred legions summon kingdoms to war.

### WAR OVERVIEW

War never changes. It destroys wealth, it sunders families, and it forges history.

There are two ways to deal with war in the campaign milieu. First, there is an abstract method. In the abstract method, the warring organizations (kingdoms, mercenary companies, religious movements, etc.) make opposed characteristic rolls. Winning the roll wins the battle.

Second, you can play out each battle. A battle is broken into rounds. In each round, you:

1. Issue formation orders.
2. Issue maneuver orders using command points.
3. Reveal your formations and maneuvers.
4. Resolve all actions simultaneously.

Most of the conventions from individual combat also apply to mass combat: attack dice, defense dice, multiple attacks, and so on. But there are a few new concepts as well, such as command points and spirit.

### WAR IN ABSTRACT

This is the first method for dealing with war. Use it for battles or entire wars fought in the background of the campaign. In other words, if you want a quick way to resolve battles in a war without playing out every maneuver and counter-maneuver, this is the method to use. You may find it works well to use this abstract method for most of the preliminary battles in a war, and then use the detailed method for the climactic battle(s).

To resolve a battle in abstract, roll the Force (x3), Shadow, Arcana, and Efficiency dice of the commanding organizations on each side. Compare the dice in the order they were rolled: first force die vs. first force die, second force die vs. second force die, etc. Find the winner of each roll. The side with the most

winning rolls is the victor in the battle.

In the case of a tie, roll the Force dice one more time to decide the battle (and re-roll this last Force again if there is still another tie).

*Example.* The Marquis of Chert's army is battling a tribe of savages pouring out of the Fyraj. The army rolls a 7, 2, and 5 on its Force dice; a 3 for Shadow; a 2 for Arcana; and a 6 for Efficiency. The tribe rolls a 6, 5, and 4 on its Force dice; a 2 for Shadow; a 3 for Arcana; and a 5 for Efficiency. Comparing the rolls, we see that the Marquis's army won two of three Force rolls (7 over 6 and 5 over 4), the Shadow roll, and the Efficiency roll. This means the Marquis's army has won more aspects of the battle than the tribe has, and therefore it carries the day.

The normal effects of war apply (see War and Economy and Aftermath, p. 53 and p. 54 respectively).

## TROOPS & UNITS

Troops are the smallest divisions of an armed force. They are recruited as one group and cannot be usefully broken down further. The number of individual creatures in a troop varies depending on its nature. A troop of short pikemen from Valte Riel might have seventy-five men in it, while a unit of mammoth cavalry from Windhover Valley might have only ten mammoths and their crews. The numbers are variable to keep the threat levels constant. In other words, ten war mammoths and their riders have (very) roughly the same combat effectiveness as seventy-five Rielien infantry.

Brigades are two or more troops combined into one group. A brigade receives its orders, forms up, and maneuvers as if it were a single unit. The rules for stacking troops into brigades are below.







Unit can refer to either a brigade or troop.

Finally, legions or armies are the entire force belonging to one faction. A legion or army may be made up of any combination of troops and brigades.

## FORMATION & MANEUVER ORDERS

Every troop's description states the formations it is capable of. Each round, you can re-set a troop's formation.

If a formation lists an attack die, then you also issue orders giving the troop its target.

You can also spend a command point to order troops to perform maneuvers. Maneuvers are more complicated than formations, and the maneuvers a troop performs may depend on the troop's current formation.

## COMMAND POINTS

Command points represent your ability to communicate with and control your troops. An enemy can specifically target your officers and your lines of communication. Such an attack denies you the ability to command your troops. You may lose command points or find that command points cannot be applied to panicked or leaderless units.

Each PC acting as a general produces one command point. If a PC has 5 or more martial levels and is the field marshal, then that PC produces two command points. Other organization- or class-specific abilities can produce more command points.

Your command points can never exceed the efficiency score of the commanding organization.

At the beginning of each round, in secret, you allot your command points. There are five ways:

- Moving a unit to a new area costs one command point.
- Executing a maneuver costs one command point.
- Using an organization's ability or making a characteristic roll with an organization costs one command point.
- Combining troops into a brigade, or breaking

a brigade apart into troops, costs one command point (and only one, regardless of how many troops are involved in the sorting out).

- Make a Force roll against the Doom to grant a point of Spirit to a unit (up to its maximum). This is useful to rally units at 0 Spirit, who are routed and fleeing the battle.

## ATTACKING & DEFENDING

Each formation and maneuver lists an attack die and a defense die. The attack die is listed first. When attacking, roll your attack die. If it beats the defender's roll on his defense die, you cause damage to the targeted troop or brigade. The default damage is 1 health, but many formations and circumstances can modify this. Just like a character with Mood, a unit can sacrifice a point of Spirit to soak up damage.

You roll your troop's defense die separately against every incoming attack this round. The rules for rolling attacks and defenses are the same as they are in individual combat. So, for example, if a maneuver lists (d4 and d6)/d8, then you roll a d4 and d6 to attack one or two targets, and you roll a d8 every time you are attacked this round.

Non-ranged attacks can target any other unit in your area.

Magic attacks specify if they are defended against by anything other than the normal physical defense die.

## HEALTH & SPIRIT

Health measures a troop or brigade's physical wellbeing. When it reaches zero, the troop or brigade is removed from the fight.

Spirit measures a troop or brigade's willingness to fight. When it reaches zero, the unit retreats each round until it has escaped the battle. If a commander rallies the unit by restoring its spirit to any value above zero before it leaves the map, it comes back under command and fights. If it escapes off the map, then it appears at the end of the battle somewhere in the region (a number of areas away equal to



its speed, if you are using regional areas).

There is no upper maximum to spirit. A unit can be inspired beyond its normal spirit value during a battle. At the end of a battle, units return to their normal spirit value.

## RANGED ATTACKS

As in individual combat, reduce the attack die by one size per range increment beyond the first. For example, if a target is three areas away, reduce the attack die size by two.

## SECRET TROOPS

Some troops are secret. They cannot be targeted on the battlefield until detected. A cabal of mages casting from inside one of the command tents, a disguised squad sneaking behind enemy lines to assassinate officers, and a sky hook lurking in a fog bank are all examples of secret troops.

To detect a secret group, either use a counterinfiltration unit's maneuver or stance (see troops in chapter 16) or use a command point to allow your organization to roll its Shadow or Force against the secret troop's defense die. If your organization wins the roll, it has acquired the secret troop, and it may target that troop for the rest of the battle.

## HEROIC ACTIONS

A PC can leave the command structure on the battlefield to act on her own. When she does so, she no longer contributes a command point to the total.

Typical heroic actions include using a class ability, challenging an enemy champion to a duel, opening a parley, attaching to a unit, or undertaking any number of battle-specific missions (pull back the chain to open the dam; light the signal fires so the reinforcements know to come; run down the splinter unit before it reaches the city walls).

In many cases, the GM must judge the effect

of heroic actions. Defeating an enemy champion may cause spirit damage to every troop in the entire enemy legion, while shattering a dam will change the terrain of the battlefield.

## TERRAIN & WEATHER

A rainy day can save a kingdom. See the table for environmental effects on battle.

### TERRAIN EFFECTS ON MASS BATTLES

TERRAIN	EFFECT
Gale	-2 die size to all ranged attacks
Heavy rain	Roll organization's Force as a penalty die with every roll. Black powder weapons require an Efficiency roll vs. the Doom to operate.
Fog	-4 die size to ranged attacks.
Lightning	+1 die size to all magic rolls. Otherwise, same as heavy rain.
Madfire	Wild surge attack rolls increased two die sizes. Any unit that rolls a 1, for any reason, creates a wild surge.
Moonlight	-1 die size to all attacks.
Starlight	-2 die sizes to all attacks.
Darkness	-4 die sizes to all attacks.
Mountainous, hazardous	Every attempted maneuver requires Force vs. Doom first; failure means the maneuver is not executed (the unit remains in its old formation or maneuver).
Sand (desert), snow	Movement requires a Force vs. Doom roll.
Ice	Every action requires a Force vs. Doom roll; failure means the unit does not act this round.
Extreme temperature	Every successful hit inflicts an additional 1 Spirit damage.



# MOVEMENT

Moving a unit costs one command point. By default, a unit can move one area. Special units, formations, maneuvers, and terrain may allow more or less movement.

The battlefield is divided into areas by the GM. As in smaller-scale combat, the GM uses his judgment and divides according to the dictates of narrative and logic.

Unlike in smaller-scale combat, a troop cannot move through an enemy troop's area. A troop can enter an enemy's area and retreat from it to the same area from which it entered. It may not leave the enemy troop's area in any other direction until the enemy troop leaves or is defeated. Note that this allows infantry lines to shield archer lines. Secret or hidden troops, aerial troops, and some troops with special abilities (such as giants) can ignore this restriction and move through enemy areas.

## NOTATION

For large battles with many units, you might want to track your commands each round. List your units down one side of a piece of paper. Next to each unit, write a one- or two-word note stating its action for the upcoming round. Put a tick mark next to each action that requires a command point so that you can easily make sure you spend neither too many nor too few command points. For successive rounds, simply carry the procedure across the page.

Once an action is resolved, circle it. This will prevent you from missing actions or resolving them twice.

## STACKS & BRIGADES

The advantage of forming troops into a brigade is that a single command point can now cause many troops to perform the same maneuver.

Combining troops into a brigade (called *stacking*) requires a command. You may start a battle with your troops stacked as you wish. You may stack as many troops into one brigade as you like with a stack command. The units must all be in the same area.

Forming a second brigade requires another command.

Multiple units in the same brigade gain one bonus die for every unit beyond the first that can perform that maneuver or assume that formation. The bonus die is the same size as the original attack die. Each additional unit also increases the damage by one on a successful attack.

*Example.* A brigade has three infantry and three archer units in it. The archer units have the “Volley (Darken the Heavens)” formation, normally d8/d2 for 1 damage. If the brigade attacks with this maneuver, the attack is d8/d2, but the attacker rolls three d8s and takes the best roll. If the attack hits, it does 3 damage.

Siege weapons and units capable of siege damage are an exception. Instead of gaining a bonus die, for each additional siege weapon in the brigade up to four, they gain an attack die size. A single onager might attack with a d8, but a brigade with four onagers attacks with two d20s (taking the best result).

All troops in a brigade add their health scores together to find the health of the brigade. The spirit score of a brigade is equal to the lowest spirit score of any troop.

A brigade defends with the defense die of whatever maneuver it is executing that round.

Disbanding a brigade (called *unstacking*) requires a command point. An unstack command only applies to one brigade, but from that brigade, you may unstack as many troops as you like into as many troops or smaller brigades as you like.

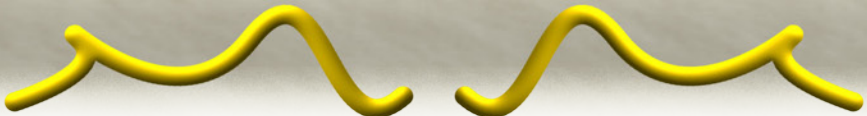
When a brigade unstacks, its health and spirit damage is spread equally among all the troops. In the likely event that there is an uneven amount of damage, determine randomly which groups take a greater share of the health damage.

## TARGETING

When you command a unit to attack, you designate a unit as the target. Unless it has a special targeting ability, the attacking unit cannot pick out an individual troop within a brigade as its target. It attacks the brigade as a whole.

Similarly, no unit can target an individual creature. Entire squads can't leave the front and chase





down an officer. However, there is one exception to this "troops can't target individuals" rule: if the opponent has nothing remaining but individual units, then all units can attack those individuals.. In this rare case – perhaps when the opposing legions have been routed while their heroes stay behind – a mass combat unit can attack an individual creature. When this happens, the mass unit always captures or destroys the creature.

Note, finally, that there may be some giant creatures with both mass combat and individual combat statistics. These creatures can be targeted in mass combat like any other unit.

## MAGIC SURGES

Magic units count as a single spellbound creature for purposes of surges (they are assumed to be using master-apprentice chains).

Wild surges occur at this scale just as they do on the individual scale. A magic unit that rolls a 1 when casting creates a wild surge. That surge attacks all spellbound units plus one other random unit anywhere on the battlefield. A wild surge that hits deals 1 point of health damage per spellbound unit on the battlefield.

Crisis surges are possible and probably catastrophic.

## STRATEGIC MOVEMENT

Strategic movement refers to movement outside of combat. A legion uses strategic movement to patrol a road, march to a different earldom, or haul equipment to a naval port. Unit descriptions state their strategic speed. The scale used for this is abstract and is for your reference, especially as a comparison to other units. In your game world, you should decide how long it takes a basic troop - light footmen, say - to cross a region. Then scale the other movements from there.

Tactical movement occurs within a battle. It is smaller in scale and is suitable for individual heroes. Unless otherwise stated, a unit can move 1 area per round in a combat (and only if it receives orders to do so!).

## STARTS, ENDS, & ESCAPES

An army can start a battle at any time by attacking another army. If you are using a regional map, the two forces must be in the same area.

On the tactical map at the start of the battle, the GM points out where you can place your units to start the battle based on terrain, position on the strategic regional map, and the events in the campaign world.

You escape a battle by moving off the tactical map.

If a troop, brigade, or legion leaves a battle by escaping, it appears on the regional map at any distance up to the limit of its strategic movement speed, at the player's discretion.

## RECOVERY

After a battle, the winner's forces remain in the area. The loser's remaining forces appear together in an area of their choice, no farther away from the battle site than double the slowest troop's movement speed.

For every troop that was brought to zero health, each side rolls its organization's Force score against the region's Doom. A successful roll means that enough members of the troop have survived to maintain the troop. It has Health 2 (and Spirit 2 if its Spirit was lower after the battle). An unsuccessful roll means that the troop is lost. A new one may be mustered in its place at the normal cost.

Troops regain Health and Spirit at the rate of 1 each per week as long as they are well supplied and do not engage in battle during the week.

## TIME

A round in battle takes anywhere from ten minutes for fluid, fast field battles to ten days for castle sieges. Most open-field battles are fought over several days, with periods of furious action punctuated by extended detentes. Many sieges take weeks or even seasons.

## WAR AFFECTS ECONOMY & MOOD

When a region is first plunged into war, the following effects occur:

- All items in the region move up one Wealth Level. War makes resources scarce, travel hazardous, and labor expensive; this causes prices to rise.
- The maximum Mood of everyone in the region decreases by 1. This includes travelers if they stay in the region longer than one week.

Each one of these effects occurs again every two seasons. That is, every six months, all items move up one Wealth Level and everyone's maximum Mood decreases by one.

Finally, if a region is at war for more than a year, one of its culture lines may be rewritten to touch upon the topic of war. It need not be supportive, but it should somehow involve the war.

## BUILDINGS & SIEGES

Any troop inside a building gains the building's defense score as a bonus stat to its defense die when defending against invading attacks, melee or ranged. For example, a halberdier unit in a borderlands keep with Defense 10 cannot be hit unless the attacker rolls 10 or higher. The attacker must also beat the defender's defense roll. Once a building's quality is 0, troops can storm it. Defenders do not gain the building's defense against attackers who are already inside.

To reduce a building's quality, attack it. Only siege engines (and a few spells and special abilities) can damage a building. The siege engine makes its attack roll and must roll the building's defense value or higher. If it does so, it damages the building. The default damage is 1 unless otherwise stated. If you are wondering how a trebuchet with a d8 attack can damage a castle with Defense 16, check p. 51 and the stacking rules (in other words, stack!).

A city or building comes under siege when it runs short on food. In the absence of stores or relief supplies, food shortages occur three weeks after the beginning of the assault. With stores, rain, and courtyard farming, this pre-siege time can be prolonged







indefinitely.

Once a city is running short on food, it must roll its Efficiency (the efficiency of the commanding organization in the city) against the Force or Efficiency roll of the attacking organization (the attacker chooses which die to use). This opposed roll occurs each week. If the city under siege loses the roll, all troops inside lose 1 spirit and 1 health. Once all troops reach 0 spirit or 0 health, mutineers open the city gates to the invaders.

## AFTERMATH

After a battle, the victors decrease one of the losing organization's characteristics (Force, Arcana, Shadow, Efficiency, or Scope) by one if the battle was a skirmish, two if a significant battle. More (possibly much more) damage can be inflicted for very important battles, per the judgment of the GM and the group.

A war is over when one side surrenders or has no troops (or is removed from play because it has zero Force and zero Scope). The victors can dictate terms to the losing side. If the losing side refuses the terms, the victors can roll a Force vs. Force check each day to cause a point of damage to the losing side's Scope or Force. Once a side has lost all its troops and been brought to zero Scope and Force, the victors claim its assets (including territory, buildings, vehicles, troops, and one-quarter of its Wealth) and remove it from play.

## SHADOW WARS

As the Organizations chapter states, some organizations cannot be targeted by wars. These clandestine groups operate out of sight and are too nebulous, with power bases that are too hidden, to directly assault. Thieves Guilds and Secret Societies are two such organizations.

These two types of organizations can be assaulted, however, by means of a shadow war. In fact, any organization can be attacked in a shadow war. Assassins, blackmail, sabotage, and unexplained "accidents" replace the troops, orders, and supply lines of an open war.

To fight a Shadow War battle, first you must

discern your target among the shadows. This is best handled in the course of play. In the absence of full roleplay, an expedient method is a Shadow vs. Shadow roll.

Once you have acquired your target, narrate your organization's attack and roll the appropriate dice. For example, if you narrate a gang of thugs shattering windows at midnight and dragging the merchants of your enemy's guild out into the streets and beating them, then you roll Force to attack. Your enemy can narrate his own defense using Force, Arcana, or Shadow (though it would be highly unlikely that a merchant guild has significant access to Arcana!). The higher roll wins.

If you successfully attack, reduce one of your opponent's characteristics by one (Force, Arcana, Shadow, Scope, or Wealth Level) or destroy one of its buildings (but not a wonder).

Shadow war attacks require timing (usually night-time) and planning (bribes) to remain out of the public eye. Because of this complication, you cannot attack the same characteristic two attacks in a row.

Because the opportunistic nature of the war precludes focusing fire on one characteristic week after week, a shadow war is generally longer and more torturous than an open war. It can be just as deadly, however, in the end. Also note that organizations in Shadow Wars pay a high opportunity cost, namely, whatever else they could have spent that action on this week.

Shadow wars depress the economy, but not Mood, as most citizens are unaware of the Shadow War and, of those that are aware, a fair number are crazy enough to enjoy it. Each side in the Shadow War picks one commodity (weapons, foodstuffs, lumber, fixer's items, etc.) and increases the Wealth Level for that item by one. For every season that the shadow war continues, increase the Wealth Level of the affected items by a further point.

Shadow wars are most often won by capitulation and truce, but organizations can resist fanatically until brought to zero Scope, zero Force, and zero Shadow. Once at that point, an organization ceases to exist outside the annals of history. The victorious organization can claim the vanished organization's assets (including territory, buildings, vehicles, troops, and one-half of its Wealth).





# CHAPTER SEVEN: WEALTH & WORLD

The wealth of kingdoms is not fixed. Wars destroy it, and work builds it. Nor does wealth fix the world or hold it inviolate against the vicissitudes of culture, economy, craft, disease, and disaster, which happen to be the topic of this chapter.

## WEALTH

Characters have Wealth Levels. A Wealth Level is an abstract representation of a character's economic and social standing, his credit, his capital, his income, his debt, his earning potential and more.

Wealth Levels make it easy to model a region's economy, which is important when PCs begin waging shadow wars that plunge a kingdom into an economic depression, or when they discover a new technology that enriches the nobility, the serfs, or both. Wealth Levels also make it easy for players to track PC inventory without spending the time to track every last coin in the PC's purse.

- PCs begin at Wealth Level 2 unless otherwise stated.
- By virtue of his Wealth Level, a PC can own up to 5 items of his Wealth Level and up to 5 items of each level below that. In addition, he can always buy with cash as many items (of any level) as he likes.
- A PC can "trade up" and buy a Wealth Level 2 item with a Wealth Level 3 slot.
- PCs cannot use multiple lower Wealth Level slots to purchase a single higher-level item. For example, you cannot use two Wealth Level 2 slots to buy a single Wealth Level 3 item.
- PCs must wait at least a week before replacing a broken, consumable, or unwanted item.

*Example.* Nicolas Dantes is Wealth Level 4. He purchases a sword, a shield, and armor, each of Wealth Level 4. He also purchases a fixer's potion, Wealth Level 4, and a black market Letter in the Wine spell, Wealth Level 4. If he drinks the fixer's potion and reads the spell, then he can buy two more Level 4

items, but not until a week passes, giving his cash flow time to adjust.

To advance to the next Wealth Level, you must invest gold equal to your current wealth level times 1000. For example, if you are at wealth level 2, then you must invest 2000 gold to advance to wealth level 3. Once invested, the gold is gone, and you live at one higher Wealth Level.

Not everyone wishes to convert their cash into Wealth Levels. By changing gold into a Wealth Level, a character climbs the social and economic strata of the world. A Wealth Level 10 character may receive an invitation to the archbishop's ordination or the Baron's polo match, but a Wealth Level 2 character never will. On the other hand, enemies have an easier time destroying a character's wealth if it is represented in Wealth Levels because they can attempt blackmail, arson, embezzlement, and other crimes beyond theft.

The maximum Wealth Level is 20. Any item above 20 is "priceless." This is a misnomer, of course. The point is that such items can only be purchased in cash, for hard gold, not by virtue of wealth level and its attendant status, social influence, and credit.



You can voluntarily drop a Wealth Level (by selling off assets, cashing in favors, etc.) and gain back half of what you invested to attain that wealth level. For example, if you drop from wealth level 7 to 6, you gain back 3000 orbs. Wear and transaction costs prevent you from regaining the full amount in cash. (Note, however, that there are properties that do return positive value on your investment. These are buildings that increase an organization's income; see the Equipment chapter.)

# SELLING ITEMS

If you sell an item that you found in a treasure hoard, stole from a kingsman, or obtained in any way other than using your Wealth Level, then you gain cash (gold) for the item as dictated by your roleplay with the GM.

In contrast, items that you acquired using your wealth level do not generate gold for you when you sell them. Their sale price is subsumed in your Wealth Level statistic. You obtained them partially on credit, investment, and social standing. Just as you didn't pay cash for them at purchase, you do not gain cash for them at sale.

# COST OF LIVING & BEGGING

Anyone with a wealth level of 1 or higher is assumed to have enough wealth on hand to afford the necessities of life that are available at level 0. For those destitute characters at wealth level 0, the cost (usually in moons and dirt) of necessity items is left to the GM and roleplay, as prices at that level are variable, being whatever the miserables can get for their wares. In other words, haggle!

# COINS

Gold coins in the Kingdoms go by many names: kings, crowns, suns, dragons, and orbs in various kingdoms. Along the Free Road, the gold coins of different realms are collectively called dux or ducats.

Silver and copper coins exist too, usually called moons and dirt (or bits, for bits-o-dirt) respectively. A silver coin is usually worth 1/10 of a gold; a copper is worth 1/100.

## CASH VALUE OF ITEMS

ITEM'S WEALTH LEVEL	ITEM'S CASH VALUE IN GOLD
1	50
2	100
3	300
4	600
5	1000
6	1500
7	2100
8	2800
9	3600
10	4500
11	5500
12	6600
13	7800
14	9100
15	10500
16	12000
17	13600
18	15300
19	17100
20	19000

The formula for the cash value of an item of level n is  $[n(n-1)/2]*100$ .

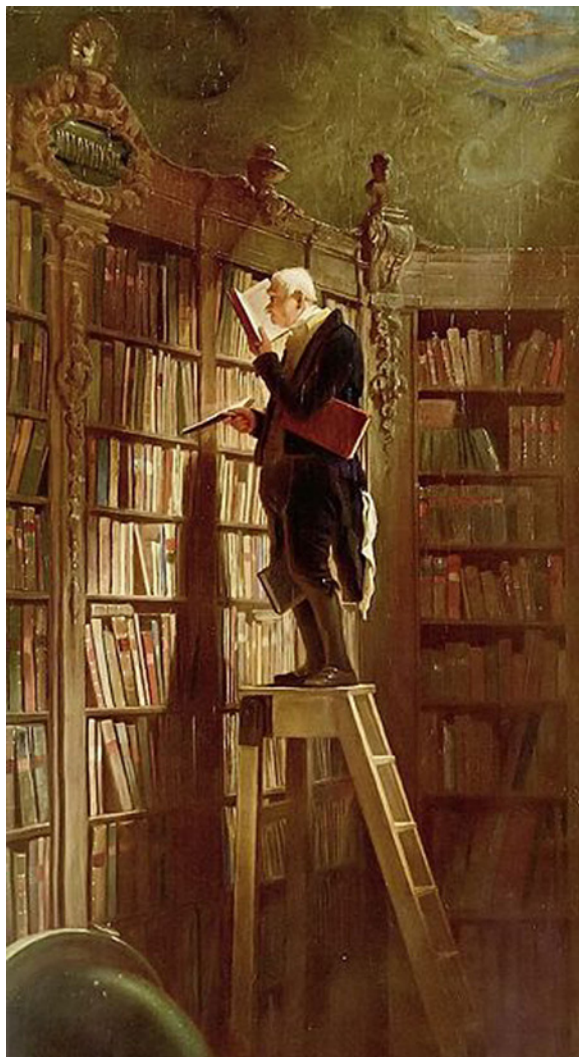
# ECONOMY

Track economies in deviations from the norm. If the economy is rolling, then items become available at Wealth Levels lower than normal. For example, a spool of riotwire is normally Wealth Level 4. In a region where the economy in the weapons sector is doing very well, that spool might be available at Wealth Level 3 or even 2. Conversely, if the economy foundering, then items are available at wealth levels higher than normal. In a region where war has driven up prices, roofswords, normally Wealth Level 4, might be Wealth Level 5 or 6.

More than two deviations in any direction, no matter the source, is generally impossible without accomplishing significant story goals.

Items at wealth level 0 are a special case. They do not jump up to wealth level 1, or higher, in tough economic conditions. Even in a wartorn land, where the economy is in shambles, people still manage to subsist. Food does not suddenly cost 400 gold per meal. But the food does rise in cash price, per the GM, and decrease in quality, from potatoes to roots to grubs to scavenged leather, vellum and insects.

There are many ways to affect the economy. Organization powers, royal fiat, disasters, wars, and plagues can all have an impact. Remember story goals, also. Story goals are a straightforward path to altering a region's economy. Perhaps the goal of an evening's play session is to infiltrate a rival kingdom's iron mine and collapse it, thus causing an increase of 2 in the Wealth Level of weapons, armor, and armored troops for that Kingdom. The spike in prices leaves the Kingdom undermanned and vulnerable when the PCs' legions invade.



## WEALTH LEVEL & SOCIAL CLASS

WL	EXAMPLES
0	Beggar, shepherd who has lost his sheep, sailor (pre-voyage); rogue or miser keeping funds in cash
1	Peasant, hired hand, common townsfolk, brute, whore, impoverished trader
2	Farm holder, guildsman, novitiate priest, fixer, sailor (immediately post-voyage)
3	Artisan, guild official, low Dryght or other cabal wizard, successful trader
4-7	Kingsman, priest, artist with patrons, established fixer, petty bourgeoisie
8-12	Bishop, guild boss, master trader, ship's captain, bourgeoisie, ranking wizard
13-17	Peerage, nobility, archbishops, guild founders, transmuters, archmagi
18-20	Royalty, Cardinal, select nobility

## CULTURE

Every region has three "culture lines." A culture line is a line - a sentence or two - describing what the people in that region value, fear, or practice. The royalty sets two of a region's culture lines, and the most powerful local organization (the regional organization with the largest Scope) sets the third.

If all three culture lines are reflected in a character's Inspirations, then she is at home. Her maximum Mood is increased by 1.

If a character has an Inspiration opposed to the culture of her current region, her maximum Mood is decreased by 1 for each such culture.

Changing the culture is a monumental task. Minds grow roots deeper than Waylorn pines, and they change reluctantly and then but desultorily. The royalty and powerful organizations can change their culture lines at will, but barring a special event, a year or more is required before the culture changes take place. Revolutions, that is, changes in royalty or power, are rare in the Kingdoms' history, but they can change culture much more quickly. A Chosen One can also change culture quickly through a combination of fulfilled prophesy and unstoppable Charisma.





## INVESTIGATIONS & DEAD ENDS

If the players in your group are at a dead end in an investigation and are content to follow other plot leads, by all means let them. The threat of failure in the game world needs to be real.

The game also needs to be fun, however, and if your players are stymied in an investigation that they feel they must continue, then hide the clue elsewhere. In this case, "elsewhere" means "behind a different sort of challenge." For example, if the PCs failed to discover the clue in a dialogue scene, then provide a lead to a chase scene where the PCs can win the same clue. If the PCs are determined to track down a clue, keep giving them opportunities, but vary the approach.

At the GM's option, increase the Doom by 1 for each extra opportunity. This makes the players pay a price for each failed attempt. When they come to the climactic encounter of the investigation, whether it is a dialogue scene in court or a "boss fight" or anything else, the players are more likely to feel a sense of achievement if they have had to overcome difficulties to arrive at the climax.

## PACING

Paying attention to scene types and sequence can help the GM to pace her campaign. If she has four social encounters in a row, for example, that may spell trouble. Or it may be perfect for her group. One of the GM's first duties is to read her group; little else avails if she does not know what the group enjoys and what it does not.

In order of "thrilling action" for most groups, the scene types are action, chase, war, social encounter, investigation. In order of real-world time spent on the scenes, they can (for most groups) run in roughly reverse order. Use social encounters and investigations to build tension. Stack your clues like rocks. Use a combat scene at the climax to send all your rocks avalanching down at once.

## ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations are easy to neglect. If this is your first time playing Spellbound Kingdoms, you might even be better off mastering and applying the other rules before you tackle organizations.

But when you can, do use organizations. They can avoid the need for deus ex machina in a dead-end investigation scene, for example. Just allow the player to make an organization roll to find the clue; if the organization makes its Shadow roll against the Doom, then someone in the PC's organization has found the necessary clue. Then the Doom need not rise and the players need not feel vouchsafed.

Organizations perform many other tasks, as outlined in Chapter 11, but they provide a rich background to your campaign world. Remember to use it.

## REPUTATIONS

Reputations are similar to histories. Players use them after much the same fashion. Reputations do not count against a player's history total. There is no maximum number of Reputations per character. If Cal of Birgholdt offends every faction in Azenahal with his outlandish "native dress" and insulting accent, then he amasses as much ill will as he is due.

Positive reputations are awarded by the GM, the adventure, or the acclaim of the group when a PC does something memorable. They work as Histories do: the first point in a Reputation grants a d4 bonus die. Subsequent points count up from 4, so that after 3 points, a character has a Reputation 6 (1 point for the d4, then another point to bring it to 5, then another to bring it to 6) and he rolls a d6 bonus die. A PC can roll one Reputation bonus die any time that he could use a History or skill bonus die, and he can use both a Reputation and a History together on the same roll.

Negative reputations are also awarded by the GM, the adventure, or the acclaim of the group. They are used as bonus dice by the opposition. For example, if a PC with a -9 Reputation: Hunted by Dynn tries to haggle with a Dynni merchant, the merchant gains a d8 bonus die (d8 being the largest die size not larger than 9).

Reputations fade. Once a player has more

reputations than his Charisma score (or when the GM and the group simply feel that a Reputation has been on the character sheet long enough), at the end of the gaming session, the player rolls his Charisma vs. the Doom for each Reputation. If he fails, that Reputation loses one point. The player rolls for each Reputation he has except for Reputations that he used or built upon in the just-finished gaming session.



## DISEASE

The Kingdoms are unclean. Diseases are common, progress rapidly, and range in effect from cosmetic to lethal.

Diseases are resisted with a Strength check made against the virulence numbers given here. A check that equals or exceeds the virulence avoids the disease.

If a person fails the first Strength check, then she contracts the disease. She suffers from it for a week, and then she can attempt to shake it off. Shaking it off requires a second Strength vs. virulence check. Continue checking once per week until the victim shakes it off.

After a disease is shaken off, healing occurs naturally (1 characteristic or Body point/week).

Here are some common diseases in the Kingdoms along with their virulence, their symptoms, and their effects.

*Common cold* (3). Strength and Quickness are reduced by one.

*Influenza* (3). Strength and Quickness are reduced by 1 each week. If the recovery check never succeeds before both statistics reach zero, it is fatal.

*Pox* (3). Strength and Charisma are reduced by 2 for the duration of the disease. Once the victim recovers, the victim rolls a Charisma check (2). Failure indicates a permanent loss of one Charisma point due to severe pockmarking and scarring. A character can never have the pox twice.

*Dysentery* (4). This proceeds as the flu, except that the loss of strength and quickness in the first week is 2.

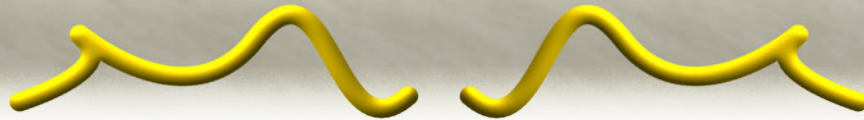
*Ague* (3). Reason and Strength are reduced by 2 until the character begins to recover.

*Scabies* (3). Maddening itching reduces Reason by 1. The mites jump to anyone who touches the victim (including in combat).

*Consumption* (3 to resist contraction; 6 to recover). Strength is reduced by 1 each month. When it reaches 0, the victim dies without care. With care, she is bedridden for a number of months equal her original strength score, and then dies (recovery checks continue as normal).

*Flake plague* (4). A noxious odor accompanies the flaking of skin. A stiff wind can cause a flake plague victim to resemble a tree in autumn shedding its leaves. Flaking of mucosal membranes makes speech above a hoarse whisper difficult and painful. Strength, Quickness, and Charisma are reduced by one each week. Once all three are zero, the character dies.

*The plow* (3 to resist contraction; 5 to recover). A black v-shaped line plows its way across the victim's skin, usually in the upper chest, arms, or back, during the course of this disease. The plow is accompanied by muscle spasm and amnesia. Quickness is reduced by 2, and the victim must roll a reason check against the recovery virulence or forget one randomly



selected history each day (memory of it returns the next day). The plow is chronic and does not worsen over time. Even after recovery, the v-shaped line made by the disease remains.

*Leprosy* (2 to resist contraction (3 for wights); 4 for monthly checks; cannot be shaken off). A Strength check against the virulence is made each month. If failed, another piece of the body (GM or player's choice) withers away over the course of the next month. Each time something withers away, Charisma is reduced by 1. The character does not die when Charisma reaches 0. He must fail two more consecutive Strength checks (1/month) before he dies. In the meantime he gains a reputation point as a legendary leper every time he makes a Strength check.

*The tics* (4). The victim has contorted facial tics and blurts strange noises. Reduce all social attack dice by three sizes.

*Ergotism* (4). Caused by eating bad wheat, ergotism induces auto-amputation and hallucinations. Once per scene, at a stressful point, roll Reason vs. the virulence. Failure results in a hallucination, and the character spends every other round dealing with the hallucination rather than the real world (GMs may rule that exceptionally good roleplay with the hallucination – a stirring speech, for example – may still have an influence on others in the real world who happen to overhear). In addition, once per week, roll Strength vs. the virulence. Failure indicates that a piece of the body has atrophied and auto-amputated. The character takes a scar or a maiming wound (see Healing, p. 30) after the auto-amputation, and the disease is gone.

## MAGICAL DISEASE

Magical diseases are rarer than physical diseases, but they can be even more devastating. A magical disease is resisted with the Magic score. Otherwise, they are similar to physical diseases.

*Spellstalks* (6). First an eye appears in the skin, blinking, gazing out at the world. Then a stalk appears supporting the eye, pushing it out of the body, always watching. Or it may not be an eye – sometimes a finger, or a talon, or a dripping pustule tips the stalk. Sometimes the victim becomes a madman, recognizable as once-human. Other times the stalks slough

off, slither away, and the victim devolves into nothing more than an ooze of tissue. Sloughed or not, stalks often display a strange intelligence, and there are many who believe that spellstalks communicate and conspire to steal man's world for their own.

Reason and Charisma are reduced by one each week when the victim fails his Magic check against the virulence. When either characteristic reaches zero, the victim has completed his transformation and is no longer a player character. If spellstalks are resisted, the victim desquamates and is rid of the stalks. Though the victim has recovered, the stalks may slither off, forming an aberration with strange goals and a hatred for its parent character (p. 192).

*Madfire* (4; cannot be shaken off). The fire of wild magic burns in your eyes; everyone can see it. You are spellbound. Whenever a wild surge occurs in your area, fire roars from your skin in a blast wave. Everyone in the area is attacked by a magic attack (d6; physical and magical defenses apply) for 1 point of Body and 1 point of Reason damage. Every time you blast like this, you permanently replace one of your inspirations with something utterly mad, chosen by you and the GM. Once all of your inspirations are replaced, you have gone mad and become a madfire burner.

*Blink* (3; cannot be shaken off). Pieces of the victim blink out of existence for a short time. As time goes on, larger pieces blink away for longer times. Eventually, all of the victim disappears for all of time. The victim is not simply invisible; she is gone. There is a recorded case of a woman who blinked away, was presumed gone, and then fifty-two years later returned, weeping, at her husband's side. He didn't have the chance to finish his exclamation of surprise and joy before she blinked away again.

Once per scene, the victim rolls Magic against the virulence. In the first season that the victim has the disease, if the roll fails, a vital part of the victim blinks away. Any combat or social dice the victim rolls this round are reduced by three sizes. After one season, when the victim blinks, she disappears entirely for one round. After two seasons, she disappears for two rounds. This continues for eight seasons, and as the second year of the disease begins, the victim blinks away forever.





*Abynder akkas* (4). Glyphs and letters appear in relief on the victim's skin. Often they are red and angry, as if hot irons were pressing up from within the body, trying to break out. Any spellbound creature can read the glyphs, which spell out the secrets of the victim: his loves, his hates, his inmost considerations.

The abynder akkas victim can attempt to conceal this with long sleeves and perukes up to the chin, but somehow the disease always finds a way to betray him in the end. Any spellbound creature looking on an uncovered abynder akkas victim learns one secret and knows his current thoughts. Unfortunately for kings who would use abynder akkas against suspected spies or prisoners to be interrogated, the akkas seems to be completely resistant to domestication.

*Drain* (3). Whenever the victim loses Mood - including when he uses Mood to benefit himself - everyone else in the area must make a Magic roll against the Doom or lose a point of Mood also. Spellbound characters must make two checks, possibly losing two Mood. Characters with the drain are also, idiosyncratically, magnets for undead.

## DISASTERS

Misfortune is not limited to a personal scale. Disasters on a regional scale - both natural and man-made - have shaped the physical and emotional landscapes of the Kingdoms.

*Earthquake*.\* Temblors shake all buildings for damage equal to the Doom. Falling debris, landslides, and cracks in the shifting earth harm characters for the same amount of damage unless the character makes a quickness check against the Doom.

*Tornadoes*. Twisters rip 1 in every 20 buildings. They destroy wooden buildings; they cause damage equal to the Doom to stone buildings. Twisters have the same chance of hitting a character in the area, and if the character fails a Quickness check against the doom, he takes damage equal to the Doom.

*Flood*.\* Floods do 1 damage per hour to all structures in the affected areas. The flood crests, peaks, and ebbs over a number of hours equal to twice the doom. Crashing flotsam, collapsing buildings, and cascades harm characters similarly for each hour they do not succeed in a Quickness or Reason check against

the Doom.

*Hurricane*.\* Hurricanes do damage as a flood with maximum damage equal to half the Doom (rounded down). A hurricane can cause a flood, and then the flood does additional damage.

*Blizzard*. The blizzard freezes characters outside of shelter, causing 1 point of damage per half hour unless the character makes a Strength check against the Doom. Pilots crash vehicles unless they make a piloting check against the Doom each half hour.

*Creeping doom*.\* Locusts, ants, beetles, wasps and a hundred other stinging, biting, buzzing insects cause damage equal to the Doom to all living creatures who do not make a reason check against the Doom. The creeping doom endures until sundown (or sunrise).

*Fire*. The fire burns wooden buildings in the area for damage equal to twice the Doom. It does damage equal to the Doom to any character that does not make a quickness or reason check against the Doom.

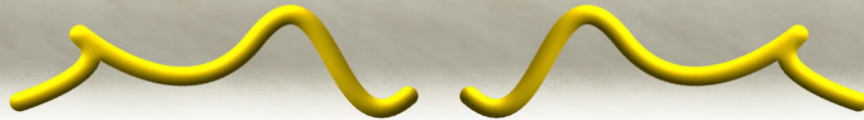
*Avalanche/mudslide*. Avalanches do damage as an earthquake, but they trap and suffocate any character who critically fails his Quickness check (that is, rolls a 1).

*Rain of rocks*. Pebbles and boulders fall. Buildings and characters take damage equal to the Doom; characters can avoid this damage with a successful Reason check against the Doom. Immediately after rocks fall, one prophesy comes true.

*Rain of frogs*. Somehow, most frogs live. They are an ill omen, however, and they do more structural damage than one might think. As the omen portends, any magical sector of the economy is depressed by 1 for the next season, and all buildings have their defense value reduced by two.

*Madfire*. Madfire ignites and burns throughout the area: on a wainwright's sign; on the nightgown of the cooper's wife; on a milking jar or a violin or a duelist's best plume. Double the number of spellbound creatures and objects in the area, as each madfire counts as one. One in every ten creatures must make a Magic check against the Doom or contract the madfire disease.

*Faces like pillars of light*. Scholars do not



understand why this bizarre disaster is so frequently associated with crisis surges. This disaster transforms everyone in the region who fails a Magic roll against the Doom. A transformed creature loses his face; where it once was, a beam of light shoots forth. The beam projects an image in the manner of a masked spotlight, and it is powerful enough to put the image even on clouds in a night sky. The image might be dragons diving, or a burning witch, or a freak hatching from a cracked skull. An afflicted creature takes damage equal to the Doom. The GM or an instigating player selects the image.

*Glass.* Buildings and characters begin to turn to glass unless successful on a Quality or Magic check against the Doom. The vitrification takes seven days. Each day, a new body part or building area vitrifies, but each day allows a new Quality or Magic check. Vitrification of a body part must be taken as a maiming, taking the place of one history item. If the eyes are cut out of a fully vitrified man, then for a day afterwards, no matter how far away they are taken, what they see appears as an image in the glass of the eyeless body.

*Sink.* Creatures sink into surfaces that they are touching. Once inside, they do not die, but cannot speak to those outside. They slide around through the surfaces, able to gesture, but not able to manipulate any objects save those they brought with them. A sunken character cannot affect the outside world in any way, though he may be able to communicate with it through silent images, pantomimes, or writing. A magic check against the doom allows the character to avoid sinking; one check is allowed per hour. The sinking process takes four hours, during which the character is stuck to the surface into which he is sinking.

*Soulhail.* No one works or plays; all thrash in bed or on the ground in paroxysms of agony as stones plummet from a livid sky. Inspirations drop one point for every Heart roll failed against the Doom; roll every half hour. The hail takes three hours to clear. Acting in any coherent manner during a storm requires a Reason check against the Doom.

\*After these disasters, the agriculture economy is damaged by 1 (75%) or 2 (25%) wealth levels. Agriculture generally includes a kingdom's troops, subsisting as they do on food.

## DEPRIVATION

Characters can last three weeks without food and three days without water. After that, they lose 1 point from each characteristic each day (in the case of food) or every two hours (in the case of water).

A character can last without air undamaged for two minutes. After that, a character who cannot breathe must make Strength rolls against the Doom, one per round.

After he fails one, then he starts losing 1 Body and 1 Reason per round until his Body reaches zero.

Characters exposed to extreme environments take 1 point of damage per half hour unless they succeed in a Strength check against the Doom.

## BREAKING OBJECTS

Roll an attack against the defense value of the building or the quality of the item. If you succeed, you deal one quality damage to the building or item.

The GM may rule that some items cannot damage other items on a reasonable time scale (daggers vs. iron bars, river water vs. desert rock, &c.). He may also rule that some items always break others (cannonball vs. stained glass window, headsman's axe vs. neck, knife vs. gnarsk sausage, &c.).

Only siege weapons can do damage to buildings or other objects with a defense value.

## CRAFTING

To make an item, roll your skill vs. the Quality of the item. If you succeed, you have put one Quality point in the item. Once it reaches its full total of Quality points, the item is complete. If you ever critically fail a roll, the item is botched and must be started over.

You must have a History or skill of the appropriate sort; no crafting roll is possible without some training.

You may make a new crafting check to add another point of Quality to the item after a number of days equal to the final quality of the item. For example, if you are making a roofsword (quality 4), then you can make a new check every four days. After four





successful checks, your sword is finished.

The time spent working is “off-screen”; as long as you have several hours per day to devote to crafting, you can continue your normal adventuring career while crafting. You may even adventure on the road or in semi-hostile climes, depending on what you are crafting.

The total cost of the creating the item is equal to half its cash purchase cost.

Especially large items, including buildings, operate on a different time scale. Use the same rules as above, but all times are doubled. Buildings that are critically botched lose only half of their current total of quality points.

Organizations can contribute a bonus die to your roll. Crafting can also be conducted entirely by organizations, freeing up characters for more adventurous concerns. Of course, in that case the crafting is conducted using the organization’s relevant score rather than the character’s skill.

## EXPERIENCE & ADVANCEMENT

After a game session, the GM awards characters History points. The standard award is one or two History points, but this can be adjusted as the GM judges. The History points may be spent on anything the player decides, but if he spends them on something that he did in play, the GM typically awards a bonus History point or other perk reinforcing the character's development.

After every second or third game session, the characters gain an experience level instead. If the players have met a major story goal, then it is appropriate to award the level after two sessions; otherwise, award the level every three sessions. Similarly, if players fail to accomplish story goals, a level may not be awarded for four, five, or more sessions.







# CHAPTER EIGHT: CHARACTER CREATION, RACES, & CHARACTERISTICS

There are many in the Kingdoms who have the potential to be greater than what they are today. There are many loves forgotten and many lives half-lived. Will your character be one of those? Or will he remember? Will he live?

To create a character, follow these steps:

- I. Choose species and race.
- II. Assign characteristic scores.
- III. Choose a class.
- IV. Choose one history or skill
- V. Choose what inspires your character.

## HUMANS & TROLLS

There are two intelligent species in the Kingdoms: humans and trolls. Other intelligent creatures exist, but they are singletons, sterile freaks of magic: a cranky aspen, a riddling weasel, a man gone to spellstalks.

There are two races of trolls: “rain” trolls, sometimes called simply trolls, and the seradynn. Both races of trolls appear quite similar to humans. Rain trolls are ten percent taller and more massive than the average human, and their skin tones vary from icy blue to deep water green. Occasionally, rain trolls have one- to six-inch horns, and some annually shed and regrow two- to ten-point antlers.

Seradynn are on average ten percent smaller than humans, and their skin tones include all the human tones, rain troll tones, plus a few shades running from rose to gold. Their eyes are often amber, scarlet, or lavender, although human colors are also seen. Seradynn are much more likely to have small horns than rain trolls are. Prehensile tails are known but uncommon.

Intellectually, trolls and humans are on par. Troll engineers, troll wizards, and troll artists are, on the whole, no better or worse than their human coun-

terparts. Trolls possess no more acute senses than humans; they are no more able to see in the dark or smell peppermint across a city street or hear a mouse’s heartbeat across a clearing.

But there are differences. Magic is first and foremost.

## HUMANS, TROLLS, & MAGIC

Trolls use magic to regenerate. This is natural magic, which means that regeneration does not make a troll spellbound or interfere with other magic. As you would imagine, regeneration informs the troll psyche. Rain trolls, especially, tend to be equanimous and favor the long-range view of life. They are slow to anger: why fret when whatever went wrong will just grow back in a month? This attitude also makes trolls appear brutal to some humans. Instead of confining his misbehaving son to the home, a troll father rips his son’s arms off for a week.

Humans have adapted differently to a world suffused with the chaos of natural and artificial spells. Where troll bodies exploit magic with regeneration, human spirits exploit magic with inspiration. The human heart and its capacity for inspiration have expanded slowly through the millenia, allowing humans to achieve feats far beyond what would otherwise be their limit.

This point must be emphasized: generalizations do not apply to individuals. There are friendly trolls and friendly humans, cruel trolls and cruel humans, generous and vindictive and moronic and beautiful examples of both species.

In the end, choice of action, not chance of birth, defines the man.



# HUMANS

There are four different human races:

- Nineblood. These are the most common humans, sturdy, industrious, and intense.
- Islander. Brought up in the chaotic islands, these humans have a reputation for being survivors.
- Prince and princess of wolves. These are feral children, abandoned to the wild and reared by an awakened pack of wolves or dogs.
- Wights. Tampering with lifespan and the origin of life itself has prolonged, and some would say stained, the wights' lives.

All humans receive +1 Heart. They also receive one further ability depending on their race.

# NINEBLOODS

This is the most common race in the Kingdoms, and for a reason, or so the ninebloods say. Nineblood humans are the distillation of thousands of years of civilization.

They are hardy on the whole and variegated on the part: tone of skin, tint of hair, and timbre of voice vary, but their sculpted frames and annealed constitutions are consistent and renowned. Ninebloods are the first thought for most upon hearing the word "human."

The nineblood intensity is legendary. There is an old joke: How many mining picks does a nineblood need? None. He just stares at the shaft wall until the wall gives up.

In many places, that intensity has been frustrated. Ninebloods are entrepreneurs, innovators, and explorers; beggars when they must be and princes when they can be. They are found in every Kingdom and at many levels of society. Their range of settlement and trade has fostered a race of multiple talents and sundry beauties. But the culture of the Kingdoms is restraint. As men have learned more and more of the secrets of magic, the kings have hoarded a greater and greater share of those secrets for themselves. The lesson of magic in the current age is fear, and the spirit of the times is paranoia. While the intensity of the ninebloods has brought them this far, the future is uncer-

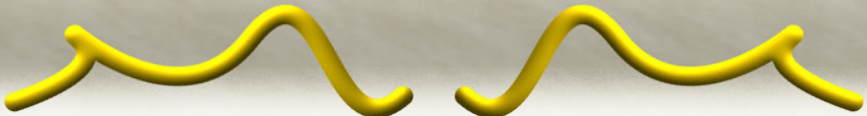
tain. There are many who believe that the nineblood race is ready to boil over – or evaporate.

*In the game.* Ninebloods make excellent all-around characters. Their racial abilities are useful everywhere from royal audience chambers to muddy battlefields. The human intensity that manifests as a bonus to the Heart score is a valuable resource in every conflict. Whatever class you pursue, you should play to the strengths of the nineblood: his heart and his Inspirations.

Spend game time cultivating your Inspirations. Learn talents that capitalize on your relationships and values. When pinned down, do not be afraid to take on Fear as a spur-of-the-moment Inspiration; your high Heart score means that you can afford to do a little more of this than others. Since you expect to rely on your Inspirations, choose talents and place characteristic scores that protect and serve them. If many of your Inspirations are personal relationships, take social talents and a high Charisma score. If many are material possessions, take shadow or martial talents to seize and safeguard them.

*Creating and playing a nineblood.* Creating a nineblood leaves you with a lot of possibilities. Appearance, culture, and history can vary widely because ninebloods are present in so many different fields and so many different forms. There are skinny merchant ninebloods, fat noble ninebloods, dark ninebloods, light ninebloods, redheads and brunettes and twenty different sorts of blondes. The most common factor, which is by no means a universal factor, is the nineblood intensity and passion. Here are a few ideas to take to the game table with your nineblood character.

- Bring the intensity. Every now and then, bang the table for emphasis when talking. Look directly at the person you are addressing. React with passion in combat: exult in your victories and curse your defeats.
- Develop an oath and utter it whenever your character is angered, frustrated, or just plain fired up. Something mundane like "Blood of the dog" works, but something specific to the setting, like "Mother's madfire milk," or "Jungle piles!" is great too.
- Spend time on your inspirations. Make sure



that everyone at the table knows what your Inspirations are. Talk about them often.

- If possible, pick someone else at the table to be one of your inspirations. Friend, rival, lover, sister or brother; it doesn't matter. By involving another character with your own, you are helping to focus and layer the game play.

*Racial abilities.* Ninebloods have +1 Heart, as all humans do. Additionally, they can use one Inspiration a second time in a scene.

Finally, if he chooses at character creation forever to forfeit the extra use per scene of an Inspiration, he receives the other pan-human benefit. Namely, he increases his Magic die one size whenever resisting magic.

## ISLANDERS

At the edge of the world, assailed by storms and surrounded by skies and seas, the islanders have remained distinct from the nineblood humans of the Claw.

The islanders are a race of survivors. Cyclones, volcanoes, madfire, sodden hordes of undead, and soulhail have all failed to scour life from the Dragon Isles. Because the islands are isolated, each one is an ideal demesne (in some cases, 'toy' is the better word) for any wizard that can chase off or exterminate all others casters on her island. Witch doctors, hougans, magi, skinstealers and loa callers rise and fall as magical chiefs and queens in the Dragon Isles, some faster than the seasons can change. The Ephemera, these kingdoms are called, and they bring war and destruction to the sands and jungles of the archipelago.

To persevere athwart this tide of misfortune, the islanders possess slightly more control over magic than even the ninebloods. Their magic resistance extends even to the land's Doom. When pushed, an islander can push back against the Doom, diminishing it.

Another difference from the ninebloods is the islanders' appearance. Where the mainlanders have a great diversity in appearance, the islanders almost all are brunet, with blue or silver eyes, and dark skin. The last difference is subtle. It goes to the heart of

what it means to be an islander. In short, it is this: islanders are the most paranoid and superstitious of people. From natural disasters to the walking dead, from madfire one season to a mad free mage the next, the islands are roiling with peril. Even if she is reclining in a bower of heliotrope, sipping indaja nectar from a teak cup and licking roast peacock juices from her fingers, an islander is always on edge, watching for shadows in the bower and poison in the nectar. It is not something taught, this edginess; it is simply how the blood runs on the edge of the world.

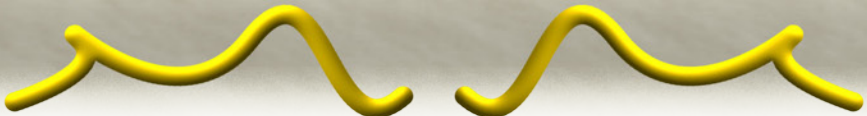
*In the game.* Islanders make excellent shadow and social class characters. Their paranoia is excellent for intelligence operations, scouting missions, and dinner parties that are little more than open interrogations. The ability to decrease a Doom is a potentially life-saving ability for a spy who plans to operate in dangerous environments without immediate back-up.

Most rolls against the Doom are made by skills and characteristic checks. Try to amass as many skills as possible. Again, shadow and social classes excel here.

*Creating and roleplaying an Islander.* Full of salt water and magma, sun and storm, islanders are prone to paradox. Remember the "hate what you love" adage that is common in the Kingdoms; it meshes particularly well with the islander mind set. Other roleplaying tips follow.

- Pick one island for your home and develop it. Who lives there? How did it influence you? There are unnumbered islands in the Dragon archipelago, so there is plenty of room for one more that you make up. Match it with your character's inspirations, history, and goals.
- Indulge yourself. A typical islander grew up in the midst of hauntings, jungle drumbeats with unnerving origins, and dragon flight clashes that shook the stones off the volcanoes. Yet you managed to survive. Likely, your character is the type who knows how to relish a meal of roast pig while watching the end of all things.
- Develop some paranoid habits. Maybe your character has facial tics. Maybe he stutters (but keep this one minimal; it can annoy your





fellow players). Maybe your character carries two coconut seeds in his left hand, and he won't stop rolling and clicking them.

- Give your character a motive for leaving the islands. A lost love, a chance at riches, an arcane compulsion. Tie it to an inspiration.

*Racial abilities.* Islanders have +1 Heart, as all humans do. Additionally, they can lower the Doom by one for another person or themselves, once per scene per person. This is done at will; it does not require a Trick in combat, a touch, or any action save willing it.

Finally, if an Islander chooses at character creation forever to forfeit the ability to lower the Doom, he receives the other pan-human benefit. Namely, he increases his Magic die one size whenever resisting magic.

## WIGHTS

If fear is the oldest emotion, then power is the oldest desire. That desire formed the wight race.

Unlike the other races, with the arguable exception of the princes and princesses of wolves, the wights are artificial. They made themselves. It started millennia ago, in the inner caves of the outer isles, where chalk and ochre drawings on cave walls depict the early kings dangling stick-figure infants over bubbling cauldrons. The fire spits groaned under the weight of undying sacrifices, mothers burnt charms over wailing babes, and the kings anointed the first-born in each warren. Misguided or inspired as they may have been, these people were not cowards. Seeking power, immortality, or knowledge, they fashioned their hearts, souls, and minds from darkness and human clay. The wights emerged.

Today wights partially fulfill the dreams – or nightmares – of those early cauldron tenders. They are human, but they are also more. They live somewhat longer than other humans and trolls; up to 100 years of undiminished agility and acumen precede a precipitous decline into dust. Wights can survive for six minutes without air, six days without water, and six weeks without food (roughly double the human norm). A wight's body is cool to the touch, and his blood smells of bitter almonds. But the early kings would be most proud of the wights' ability to thrive on the fear

of their weaker, unaltered cousins. It is this ability, the ability to thrive on others' fears, that other humans find most threatening in wights.

Wights are rarely tolerated by Kingdoms society. More frequently they are pariah or even prey. There are rumors of kings keeping covens of wights for purposes only guessed at. In a few places, however, wights dominate. The kings are cold in Varteka, Malyrigaaz, and many (likely ephemeral) kingdoms of the Dragon Isles. Where wights rule, common folk of other races emigrate. They have no desire to live in a territory ruled by a monarch who can eat their fear.

*In the game.* Fear is a powerful tool for you. The more your adversaries are afraid, the better off you will be. Consequently, learn talents that play on fear. Your home can be another way another way to raise hackles. Appoint it in keeping with your desire to inspire fear and its heralds, unease and dread. Choose your organization to support your lifestyle. The sunny amphitheater of the Royal Jongleurs' Repertory company probably is no place for a wight; but the mausoleum of the Necromancer's Guild is.

Wights, like ninebloods, have no specific preferred class. Battlefields are often awash in fear, and wights are able warriors. But they also make dangerous diplomats, courtiers, and traders. The battlefield is not the only place where a wave of fear can turn the tide.

*Creating and playing a wight.* Artificial wights may be, but they are not necessarily wicked. Most wights struggle to decide whether or not to promulgate fear and dread. True, the wight gains personal power from doing so. But the wight may have a conscience, or he may wish to avoid finding himself at the end of a pitchfork or tied to a stake after spreading one terror too many. Emphasize the temptation and struggle of a wight in your roleplay (unless you are consciously playing against type).

Here are some tips for freighting your wight's scenes with fear.

- Give your wight a distinctive presence. Maybe she smells like humus. Maybe black birds always land near her when she's outdoors. Maybe her voice sometimes sounds much further away than it should, or windows and wine glasses break when she



walks by.

- Consider appearance. A wight's skin is pale, although it may have garnet, black, or sallow overtones. They have lightning-white hair, or bitumen hair, or hair that is white with black like a snowfield crossed by ravens. Most wights are thin. Eyes range from black to cerulean, and facial features tend toward aquiline and vulpine.
- Keep some mystery. The oldest and strongest fear is the fear of the unknown. Keep the other players apprehensive with your secrets.
- The best way to be associated with fear is to be scary. To scare NPCs, consider the tactics discussed in "In the game" above. To scare your fellow PCs, learn some risky spells or maneuvers. If you disregard the chance of magical catastrophe every time you start an incantation, you can bet the other players are going to think you're a little bit scary. They might think other things about you, too, but that's what playing a wight is all about.

*Racial abilities.* Wights have +1 Heart, as all humans do. Additionally, they know if another person in the area has a Fear. They can sense the Fear's relative strength, and they can prey upon it. When a wight thus feeds, she uses her target's Fear as her own Inspiration for one roll. This also causes the target to lose 2 Mood unless the target makes a Reason roll against the Doom. A wight can feed on Fear once per scene, at will, requiring no action save a moment's volition and no contact save line of sight.

Finally, if a wight chooses at character creation forever to forfeit the ability to feed upon Fear, she receives the other pan-human benefit. Namely, she increases her Magic die one size whenever resisting magic.

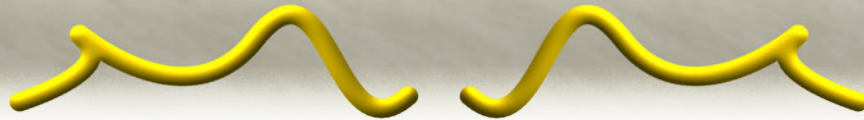
## PRINCE OF WOLVES, PRINCESS OF WOLVES

A prince or princess of wolves is a child abandoned in the wild.

Why would a mother do this? If you lived in the Kingdoms, you wouldn't have to ask. Kings are not kind to children. Children dream, and hope, and love. The kings teach them how wrong this is, how unbridled inspirations can have disastrous consequences. Their lessons are not gentle. The lessons are wicked enough that a tradition has developed, fervently denounced by the monarchies, that if the stars are the right color, and the season is right, then when a mother lays her babe down on a bed of moss and ferns in the forest, or rubbish in the alley, magic can save the child. The tradition says that a pack of wolves, or perhaps wild dogs, awakens to intelligence, and runs with the child, keeping it safe from kings and cruelty.

The mothers are driven to this from different backgrounds. A courtier who despises the society she uses. A farmer's wife who refuses to watch another son broken by the Duke's professors. A housemaid who sees what the nobility do to children with too much spirit. All that they share is desperation. They don't want their son to hate what he loves. So they choose to leave the boy to the wolves rather than to let him be brought up in a Kingdom where he will learn to forego passion, forget love, lose himself in the safety of the Kingdom.

Most times, the trick does not work. The children are never seen again. But now and then, when magic and the stars are right, it does work. The advent of a human child awakens the wolves. The pack becomes intelligent. It raises the child, and it loves the child. And then the child leaves the pack. Often many years have passed, and he is now a man. At night, he jogs over manicured lawns and scampers over city walls. He is coming back. Some come back wild, some angry, some hurt. Some come back to the very house they were born in; others come back to villages



and cities they have never seen before. They are never the same. They always come back missing the pieces left with the wolves and carrying the pieces the wolves are missing. There are sorrowful howls in the forest where the child has left.

From there, stories diverge. Some princes of wolves are able to masquerade in society; happy in some fashion for decades. Others return to their packs after tasting and despising society. Some take the time before returning to the woods to break their mothers' hearts, cruelly and at length. And there are some who successfully reunite with both their wolf family and their human family.

*In the game.* Princes of wolves make excellent fixers. Some say this is because they need to fix their own broken childhood. Regardless of the reason, a prince's ability to benefit another through his Inspiration use meshes well with a fixer's alchemical suite.

A prince has learned to benefit others through the intensity of the pack-bond. Most sages say this tendency toward bonding is self-fulfilling, leading the right feral children to be saved, while also explaining the prevalence of twins. Naturally, organizations prize princes and princesses of wolves. They make excellent officers in armed legions, prefects in arcane orders, and trade princes in guilds. Some organizations also value princes of wolves highly for the princes' iconic value as symbols of resistance to the kings.

*Creating and roleplaying a prince of wolves.* In some ways, the prince of wolves is a narrower concept than other races. You must work harder to make your character stand out from other princes of wolves.

Consider these tips:

- Describe your pack. Name the wolves, sketch their personalities, draw a map of their hunting grounds, talk about the way the pack smelled on cold mornings and summer mornings and after crossing a river. Talk about memorable hunts, favorite prey, and pack enemies.
- Know why you came back (or didn't). This is arguably the most important decision a prince of wolves ever makes: Ought I return to society? Make sure that your prince has an answer to that question.
- Bring the wolf. Sniff everything. Howl some

times just to see if any thing howls back.

Pace in circles. Try to set up the party like a pack, with an alpha, beta, and omega.

- Twin princes or princesses of wolves are legendary and held to be omens: future kings, saints, or destroyers. Are you a twin? Who is your twin? Male, female, lost, known, loyal, traitor?

*Racial abilities.* Princesses of wolves have +1 Heart, as all humans do. Additionally, once per scene, a princess of wolves can loan an Inspiration to help another person, be he one of her "pack" or not. The recipient uses the princess's Inspiration as if it were one of his own. This allows him to roll his Heart die as a bonus die. If the princess's Inspiration was 2 or higher, and if she narrates her Inspiration's relevance, then the recipient maxes his current die and the princess's Heart die, and both dice explode. This counts as the princess's use of that Inspiration for this scene; she cannot use it again, on herself or another, until the group decides the scene is over. Doing this takes no time in-game; the princess of wolves can use this ability even on another's turn.

Finally, if a princess of wolves chooses at character creation forever to forfeit the ability to help others with her Inspiration, she receives the other pan-human benefit. Namely, she increases her magic die one size whenever resisting magic.

## TROLL (RAIN TROLL)

The rain trolls have always been in the Claw. In the days before the seradynn arrived, they were called simply trolls. Nowadays, they are sometimes still called simply trolls, but they are also known as 'rain trolls' because of their high populations and presumed origins in the deluge jungles of Jakatta.

Other than occasional horns, slightly larger frames, and blue-green skin tones, rain trolls appear similar to humans. Appearances do not tell the whole story, however, for there is an important difference. Trolls regenerate.

Regeneration allows trolls to approach crises more philosophically than many humans would. After all, it is easier to remain calm despite an arrow pierc-





ing your liver if you know that the organ can heal itself almost as quickly as you can remove the shaft. This calm and deliberate outlook is stereotypical of the rain trolls. Many humans in the Kingdoms say that to truly understand a troll, you have to understand someone who would rip his own arm off just to scratch his back. This is an exaggeration, of course. Trolls feel pain as humans do, and they avoid autoamputation. As with much hyperbole, however, the adage contains a kernel of truth. Troll regeneration offers options beyond the reach of humans.

The iconic image of the troll is a cool, reserved schemer, whether that means a shiftless grifter leaning against a pillar outside a Jakattan sun temple or an eminence grise who lurks behind the throne of successive Cardinals in Valte Riel. The trolls' "long view" approach to life allows them to master a broad array of skills. But they are not exclusively con men and viziers. On the contrary, rain trolls are to trollkind what ninebloods are to humankind: the most numerous, successful, and known of their species. Trolls fill many roles across the Kingdoms. They are farmers, miners, rebels, bakers, soldiers, brewers, and anything else that can make gold and love in the world.

*In the game.* Troll regeneration is a valuable ability for any warrior, but it can be handy for other characters as well. Using it in combat requires two rounds, so look for talents, fighting styles, class abilities, and allies that can buy you a round. Also, avoid overconfidence. Regeneration is best used outside of combat. During combat, in the midst of flashing blades, regeneration is anything but a guarantee of survival.

A rain troll's equanimity is a boon in negotiations. Trolls make excellent "face" characters because their focus on skills supplies them with a bonus die in many situations. Trader, courtier, and rogue are a natural character class for this reason. Trolls also make excellent fixers and engineers because of those classes' reliance on skill.

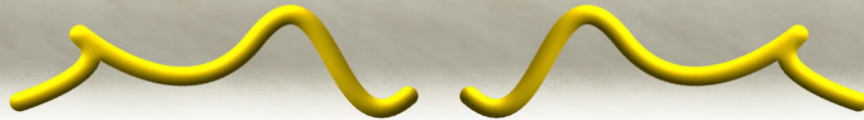
*Creating and roleplaying a rain troll.* When describing your rain troll's appearance, remember that rain trolls are ten percent larger than humans, with skin tones ranging from icy blue to deep-water green, and small permanent horns or seasonal antlers.

Consider these tips for roleplay:

- If you are playing an iconic advisor troll, think of some aphorisms ahead of time. "The rose does not always go to the most beautiful." "Such a tragedy that love does not preclude hate." "How sad that what is pleasing to the purse is not always pleasing to the heart." Utter them often to chide your fellow players or to make wise but obscure statements about the future.
- Know how your regeneration works, and take advantage of it. Often this means contriving some short rest after combats. Think about how your regeneration looks and sounds (do you hear bones pop back together? Does it smell like ozone?). Be ready to describe your regeneration as well as use it.
- Play up to or play against the stereotype of the troll as a wise counselor. Either nod sagely and treat everyone else in the party as a student, or play a fixer-loving, wizard-mocking, wild troll with a mess of a personal life and a shaved stripe down his scalp tattooed with Thus to Tyrants.
- In social encounters, maintain an even emotional keel. When someone insults you, raise an eyebrow. When someone insults your parents, your homeland, your children, and what your parents and your children do in your homeland, pause a beat and then say, "Fascinating."

*Racial abilities.* Trolls regenerate. They can regenerate their Body score per season (so, 4 or 5 Body per season for the average troll). This can re-attach limbs, organs, and the head. If a vital part of a troll's anatomy is withheld or prevented from regrowing for a season, then the troll dies. Parts with the ability to move (crawling hands, inching legs) move dumbly toward their fellow parts if such exist within 50 feet; otherwise, detached parts are inert. If a troll is brought to 0 Body and burned, it cannot regenerate. In combat, a troll can regenerate 1 Body by using two consecutive tricks. Troll regeneration does not regenerate characteristic damage unless the troll has another ability that allows this.

Trolls also have one body part that functions



remotely. For example, if you are an eye troll, you can detach your eye, leave it up to a mile away on a shelf, and have it spy for you; if you're a hand troll, you can toss your hand in a fixer's wagon, then at night crawl it out, feel your way to the door, and unlock it from the inside to let the rest of your body in. Choose one body part; you can never change your choice. The remote functioning works up to one mile away.

Rain trolls start all histories or skills at 6, rather than 4, for the first point that they put into the history. Subsequent points work normally. For example, a rain troll with 5 points in a history would have a value of 10 (6 for the first point plus 4 for each of the following four points).

Finally, if a rain troll chooses at character creation forever to forfeit his bonus to skills, he gains the other pan-troll ability, *viz* +1 Body.

## SERADYNN

The seradynn arrived forty-eight years ago, in living memory for some in the Kingdoms.

The first discovery took place aboard a caravel named the *Windsnare*. The discovery was a troll foot, wrapped in cheesecloth, in a crate of bacon forks destined for the table of a tycoon of far Oryn-ja. The stevedore who unwrapped the foot did not know what to make of it. Contrastingly, the foot knew exactly what to make of itself. Namely, a new troll. It twitched out of the shocked stevedore's hand and began an awkward toecrawl toward a pottery crate. Out of that crate flopped a troll leg. The foot and leg attached. Then they knee-inched to a wine barrel, where a one-armed torso hauled itself over the rim and assembled itself with the footleg. And so on. Other stevedores watched troll bodies reform all across the *Windsnare*.

The same events played out everywhere in the harbor of far Oryn-ja that day. Not a single regenerated troll knew where he had come from or why he arrived dismembered and scattered in cargo holds. The origin of the seradynn remains a mystery to this day.

The new trolls were not the same as the old. Where rain trolls are slightly taller than humans and thick, seradynn are slightly shorter and lithe. The horns of seradynn are varied, and many seradynn have

a tail. Despite these bestial accents, the seradynn retain elegant facial features. This combination of the savage and the beautiful has earned the seradynn the epithets Dark Graces, Fury Troll, and Beast Troll (the word seradynn itself derives from a prophecy of the Inquisition in Dynn that speaks of a race of fiends rising in the land of men).

Seradynn do not in general share the same sage minds as the rain trolls. Their closer relationship with magic leads them down other paths.

*In the game.* Seradynn are known to be magical, so be prepared for enemies to meet you with Parapet Defense in combat and a spellbound coterie at feasts and social occasions.

Keep in mind that the strength of the seradynn as a race is magic. Pick up talents, abilities, and styles that capitalize on your Magic score. If you are spellbound, consider choosing a magic style that emphasizes spells with magic rather than physical attacks; Drama and Hearts are good choices.

Of course, the bonus to magic does not mean that you need to be a witch or wizard. Far from it. Magic permeates the world. There are many ways to draw on its power and leverage your increased Magic score: building your home in a magical place, acquiring and using items that only function for someone with a high Magic score, or learning combat maneuvers that train physical defenses while leaving you to rely on natural talent (ie, your high Magic score) rather than Parapet Defense maneuvers for magical defense.

*Creating and roleplaying a seradynn troll.* The seradynn are a blank slate. They have appeared in the Kingdoms with no past and no memories.

- Decide what your character believes about the origin of the seradynn. Are they on the run from one of the savage parts of the world? Are they an experiment by a mad king? A magic accident? There is a popular culture in the Kingdoms that has decided the seradynn must be on the run from someone or something. But there is no consensus as to what that someone or something is, and there is little evidence save the seemingly last-resort nature of the seradynn's arrival to support the culture in



the first place.

- Affect a habit involving one of your non-human body parts. Perhaps you're ashamed of your tail and always hiding it. Perhaps you polish your horns when nervous. Or maybe your tail always rises embarrassingly whenever you smell chocolate.
- Seradynn often feel the need to settle. Own a home and secure it. When other characters come over, make them wait while your guards check them.
- As always, choose Inspirations to match your character's goals, personality, and background. Does she embrace magic or resent it? Does she want to discover her race's past or forget it?

*Racial abilities.* Trolls regenerate. They can regenerate their Body score per season (so, 4 or 5 Body per season for the average troll). This can re-attach limbs, organs, and the head. If a vital part of a troll's anatomy is withheld or prevented from regrowing for a season, then the troll dies. Parts with the ability to move (crawling hands, inching legs) move dumbly toward their fellow parts if such exist within 50 feet; otherwise, detached parts are inert. If a troll is brought to 0 body and burned, it cannot regenerate. In combat, a troll can regenerate 1 body by using two consecutive tricks. Troll regeneration does not regenerate characteristic damage unless the troll has another ability that allows this.

Seradynn also have one body part that functions remotely, as all trolls do. For example, if you are a mouth troll, you can detach your maxilla and mandible and everything in between, set the whole on the bar, and talk to your friends even if the rest of you is a mile away; if you're a tail troll, you can paint your tail like a snake and slither it through the Inamorata's gardens to steal her scarf (you'd have to have some means of seeing where it went). Choose one body part; you can never change your choice. The remote functioning works up to one mile away.

Seradynn gain +1 Magic.

Finally, if a Seradynn chooses at character creation forever to forfeit his +1 Magic, he gains the other pan-troll ability, viz +1 Body.

## CHARACTERISTICS

Assign a 4, 5, 6, 6, 7, and 8 to each of the following characteristics (you get two 6s). You can increase these characteristics as you gain levels.

The characteristics are:

- Strength
- Quickness
- Reason
- Charisma
- Magic
- Heart

As you advance, your characteristics increase (see the next chapter). But there is a limit to troll and human bodies and minds. No characteristic can be raised above 12. As always, magic and other exceptions may apply, but 12 is the normal limit to characteristic scores.

*Strength.* Strength measures the force you can exert and the punishment you can take. Some fighting styles, weapons, and armor require minimum strength scores.

Stronger characters are more likely to resist diseases, withstand the elements, or hang on to the peak of the obelisk until the zeppelin arrives and throws down a rope. During the course of play, you might need to make a strength roll to bend bars or lift gates, to push a wizard off a cliff, to shrug off the effects of a poison, or to endure in a blizzard.

*Quickness.* A quick character can dodge blows and strike with an accuracy improved by speed. Quickness is also an index of a character's agility. You want a high quickness if you plan on picking pockets in the bazaar, scaling courtyard walls, or melting into the shadows before the queen's guards can see you.

As with Strength, certain fighting styles and weapons require minimum quickness scores. Quickness is the default characteristic in chase scenes, making it essential for characters that live on the run.

*Reason.* Reason allows you to perceive presence and meaning, decipher codes, pilot a zeppelin, and alight upon lucid conclusions that a dimmer mind misses. If you want a character that builds trebuchets, challenges princes to games of nine men's doom, maintains a castle, and notices the flaw in a diamond





brooch from across the dance floor, you want that character to have a high reason score.

Reason also determines your maximum number of skills, so if you would like to excel in many different fields, assign a high value to your Reason score.

*Magic.* Every child is born with some amount of magical aptitude. This characteristic measures that aptitude. Magic is used to cast spells, but it is also used to resist spells. You roll your magic die to survive magic storms, activate a warding item, or fight off a magical disease.

A wizard character needs a high magic score. Many magic styles have steep minimum magic score requirements. Anyone who expects to be fighting witches and wizards also does well to invest in a high magic score. Even if he is not spellbound, he will use his magic score to resist the spells flying his way.

*Charisma.* A character with a high charisma might be a leader, a comedian, or a beauty. A high charisma score may mean that you create a great first impression, that you are a warm friend, or that you cut an imposing figure on the battlefield. You should decide at character creation the origin of your character's charisma (or lack thereof!).

As the game plays out, you might make a charisma roll to barter for a cheaper sword at the blacksmith, to win the princess's hand, or to rally your troops.

Not surprisingly, charisma is very important in social scenes. It is also important if you want to fully employ flamboyant, extroverted combat styles like Swashbuckler.

*Heart.* Courageous men have conquered more kingdoms than all the clever magicians and strong warriors combined. A character with a large heart may be generous, ambitious, kind, or intransigent. His passions burn hotter, his loves are fiercer, than those of ordinary men. You might need Heart to swing your sword even as your vision grows dark from your wounds, or to love a woman that the entire kingdom despises, or to persevere after your son falls in battle.

Heart raises your maximum Mood and is a vehicle for your Inspirations. I recommend a high Heart score. In the end, Heart is what makes a hero who he is.

## HEALTH

There is more than one way to hurt a man. Body represents physical health. Mood represents mental health. Both affect each other.

*Body.* Wounds, disease, poison, fatigue and more can lower Body. Rest, care, and magic can raise Body.

Body starts at 5. Rules for Body and Mood damage and recovery are given in Chapter Two. Remember, after each battle, roll Strength vs. the Doom to recover each point of Body (or characteristic) lost.

*Mood.* A character's mood shades his actions. Characters mired in depression are less effective than characters energized by a sense of purpose. A high mood score might represent happiness and fulfillment, but it could just as easily represent intensity, confidence or righteousness. A low score might represent sadness or despair, but it could also represent frustration, confusion, or guilt. Mood starts at half a character's Heart score. The full rules for Mood are in Chapter One (p. 8).

*Reputation.* Reputation measures the social health of a character. Unlike body and mood, a character can have multiple reputation scores. All his reputations start at zero; they change when a character makes an impression on enough members of this or that group.



## CHAPTER NINE: CHARACTER CLASSES

Your character's choice of class determines his access to fighting styles, magic styles, talents, characteristic increases, and special abilities. Choices within a class are often more important than the class itself. A rogue who learns free sword and chooses martial talents plays much differently than a rogue who learns dagger- and-wine and chooses social talents, for example. Still, class makes a difference.

When creating a new character and whenever your character gains a level, select a class and advance one level in that class. The classes are:

- Chosen One
- Engineer
- Fixer
- Noble, Priest, Courtesan, Courtier
- Rogue, Assassin
- Savage
- Trader
- Warrior
- Wizard, Witch

### TABLES & TALENTS

There are two tables for each character class, the main table and the talent table.

Both tables spell out totals. In other words, at each level, the class tables list the abilities gained in total from level zero, rather than simply listing "what's new." "+4 Str or Qck" means total from level 0 in this class; you do not gain 4 Strength or Quickness points this level!

I did this to help you (and me) create high-level NPCs quickly. Now we do not have to add up all the previously earned class abilities; we need look only at the current level line in the table. So much faster!

*Styles.* On the class table, a fighting or magic style with (n) is at the neophyte level; (a) at the apprentice level; and (m) at the master level. You must already be an apprentice of a style before you can master it.

*Talents.* Talents are extraordinary abilities

that can shock and awe the untalented. They require intense practice. You can have, at most, three talents trained at one time. It is easy to let your training lapse and lose a talent; you can do this at will. A week after your abandonment, the talent disappears. Whenever you level up, or after training a suitable time as judged by your GM, you can replace any forgotten talents with new ones for which you are eligible.

Talents come in three tiers: minor, major, and grand. In every case, the higher tier talent includes the lower tier talents' abilities. For that reason, there is no need to have a minor talent when you are able to learn the major one. The major one includes the minor one. Still, if you like a minor talent but do not like its major or grand forms, you are welcome to keep that minor talent. It still counts as one of your three talents. Training more than three is too difficult.

Characteristic increases can be split as you wish. "+4 Str or Qck" could be +3 Strength and +1 Quickness, for example.

### MULTICLASSING

When your character is ready to rise a level, pick a class and add 1 to your previous level in it. You gain all the appropriate abilities. A 7th level Chosen One/7th level Rogue, for example, has all the characteristic increases, class abilities, and styles of a 7th-level Chosen One and a 7th-level Rogue.

There is one exception to the "just take all abilities from both classes and add them together" rule. That exception is talents. Even when you multiclass, you cannot train more than three talents at a time. To determine the number and level of talents a multiclassed character gets, add up all the character's class levels and then use whichever class table the player chooses to determine the number and type of talents.

*Example.* In the case of a 7th-level Chosen One/7th-level Rogue, the player would find the "14th level" line on either the Rogue's or the Chosen One's

talents table, and he would use the numbers on that 14th level line to determine the talents of his 7/7 Chosen One/Rogue.

Multiclassing strains the psyche. If you take a level in a new class before you have reached name level in all your previous classes, your maximum Mood is cut in half (round down), and you take 3 Mood damage at the start of each scene (or day).

## CHOSEN ONE

### [MAGIC OR MARTIAL]

A chosen one only gets one choice for herself. At the start of things, at least, that's how it is, and that's how it probably will be for the rest of her life.

A chosen one is a child of fate, an inheritor of doom, an unlucky soul who did not choose great power or great responsibility but has both thrust upon her. Her one choice comes as soon as Destiny chooses her, and it is this: live up to the responsibility or die.

A chosen one might be the reincarnation of an ancient mystery cult's savior, with no knowledge of her true identity until the cult lamas come to venerate and instruct their reincarnated goddess. A chosen one might be a farm girl whose tilling turns up an ancient sword that begins to whisper to her and urges her to join a millennia-old shadow war. Another chosen one might be a young girl who catches a book falling from a passing zeppelin, reads it, and suddenly finds herself empowered and thrust into a conflict older than the Age of Cartonnage.

Hosting an ancient spirit, inheriting forbidden knowledge, discovering new secrets; there are many ways to be chosen. The result is what matters. The character is now part of something greater than herself.

Some chosen ones develop physical prowess, others arcane. All are powerful. A chosen one:

- Draws power from a source of legend.
- Battles with blade, spell, or both.
- Gathers followers and leads a movement that could change history.
- Heralds a time of great change – if she lives.

Note that a Chosen One's levels can count as either martial class levels or magic class levels. If her first style is magic, then her class levels count as magic. If her first style is martial, then her class levels



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## CHOSEN ONE

LEVEL	TITLE	CUMULATIVE INCREASES	CUMULATIVE STYLES		CUMULATIVE CLASS ABILITIES
			Fighting	Spell	
1	Awakened	-	1a	*	Destiny history.
2		+1 Str, Qck, or Mgc	1a	*	Destiny history.
3		+1 Str, Qck, or Mgc	1a	*	Destiny history.
4		+1 Str, Qck, or Mgc	2a	*	Destiny history.
5	Anointed	+1 Str, Qck, or Mgc	1m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration.
6		+2 Str, Qck, or Mgc	1m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration.
7		+2 Str, Qck, or Mgc	1m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration.
8		+2 Str, Qck, or Mgc	2 m	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration.
9		+2 Str, Qck, or Mgc	2m	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration.
10	Chosen	+2 Str, Qck, or Mgc	2m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, zealots.
11		+2 Str, Qck, or Mgc	2m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, zealots.
12		+3 Str, Qck, or Mgc	2m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, zealots.
13		+3 Str, Qck, or Mgc	2m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, zealots.
14		+3 Str, Qck, or Mgc	3m	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, zealots.
15	Destined	+3 Str, Qck, or Mgc	3m	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, zealots, mass following.
16		+3 Str, Qck, or Mgc	3m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, zealots, mass following.
17		+3 Str, Qck, or Mgc	3m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, zealots, mass following.
18		+4 Str, Qck, or Mgc	3m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, focused zealots, mass following.
19		+4 Str, Qck, or Mgc	3m, 1a	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, focused zealots, mass following.
20	The One	+5 Str, Qck, or Mgc	4m	*	Destiny history, Destiny inspiration, focused zealots, mass following, revolution.

As always, in the styles column, "a" means apprentice, "n" means neophyte, and "m" means master. You must be an apprentice of a style before you can become a master of that style.

\* A Chosen One can substitute a magic style for any fighting style. For example, at level 9, a chosen one could be a master of a fighting style and an apprentice of two magic styles; or she could be a master of a magic style, apprentice of another magic style, and apprentice of a fighting style.

## CHOSEN ONE CUMULATIVE TALENTS

LEVEL	TITLE	MINOR	MAJOR	GRAND
1	Awakened	-	-	-
2		-	-	-
3		1	-	-
4		1	-	-
5	Anointed	2	-	-
6		2	-	-
7		3	-	-
8		3	-	-
9		2	1	-
10	Chosen	2	1	-
11		1	2	-
12		1	2	-
13		-	3	-
14		-	3	-
15	Destined	-	2	1
16		-	2	1
17		-	1	2
18		-	1	2
19		-	0	3
20	The One	-	0	3

NB: A Chosen One's talents are martial or magic. After becoming Chosen (level 10), one talent may be social.

count as martial.

*Adventure ideas.* Chosen are almost precluded by their nature from leading normal lives. A momentous event has brought great power to them, and nothing can ever be the same again.

Chosen adventures concentrate on several themes. Self-exploration is a major one. Why was I chosen? What is special about me, if anything? And if nothing is, do I deserve my gift or its burden?

Other themes in chosen adventures include living up to one's destiny, discovering one's destiny, and

fighting off the cults that have arisen over the centuries to prevent a prophesy girl like you from coming to power.

*In the Kingdoms.* Kings hunt the chosen. Some kings act on the barest hint of prophecy, and they fill rows of oubliettes with children in iron masks and manacles, each child bearing the stink of destiny from one soothsayer or another. Kings suspect everyone, and they know that their suspicions are correct, always, when it comes to a child of fate. Kings cannot suffer prophecy.

Commoners hunt the chosen too. Often, the villagers blame a chosen for the latest magical disasters, droughts, and famines. The chosen may be stoned. If she is charismatic enough, however, and especially if she is powerful enough, a village or neighborhood may adopt her as a totem. She wakes up every morning to strawberries, peonies, and weak beer on her sill.

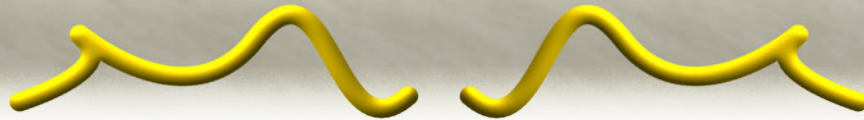
If she grows powerful enough and wise enough, a chosen one fulfills her destiny. Usually this destiny is greater than her and affects her world in profound ways. She might change the culture of an entire kingdom, quiet the magic that has made life a nightmare for generations of villagers, or stave off the collapse of civilization.

## CHOSEN ONE ABILITIES

*Destiny history.* Name the focus of your abilities. What chose you? A cult, a sword, the spirit of your grandfather, a philosophy - you learn from it. You gain a History (6) in something related to your focus. This does not count toward your normal limit of Histories. You can raise this History as you would any other, that is, by spending points awarded in play.

*Destiny inspiration.* Your destiny provides Inspiration. Choose an Inspiration in keeping with your chosen destiny and write it down on your character sheet. With this ability, you may exceed your normal Inspiration limit by one.

*Zealots.* A dozen zealots follow you every-



where that you let them. You may have other followers, of course, in your organization or elsewhere. But these zealots are always ready to fight and die for you. They prefer to fight in Mob style and have 16 Body (effectively) and 6 Mood, although they never use their Mood to soak Damage in combat, believing it is more devout to shed blood in your name. At each subsequent level, your zealots gain 1 effective Body when fighting in Mob style. Individually, they have 4 Body (they are ascetics, fasting and meditating upon you rather than eating) 6 Mood (again, Mood is never used to soak Damage), and fight in Berserker style. Once you are Destined, they also learn Guardian style. Fallen zealots are replaced at the rate of one per week, although after you are Destined, this changes to one per scene (or day).

*Mass following.* Your destiny pulls others. A cultural movement gathers in your wake. If you do not already have one, you gain an organization of followers. Usually this is an armed legion or secret society. If you do already have one, increase its scope by 4 and its efficiency and one other characteristic by 6.

You also gain a reputation equal to your Charisma with a population of your choice (you may be a faceless, anonymous hero if you prefer).

Finally, you can rewrite one of your home region's culture lines. This change in culture takes effect immediately.

*Revolution.* Your destiny has rallied the people to your cause. In any war that is fought in pursuit of your destiny, you give +2 Spirit and +1 Health to all allied units.

Also, your ability to change the culture expands. You can rewrite a second line of culture for your home region, and you also can write a line of culture that applies to the entire kingdom, replacing one of the royal culture lines.

*Talents.* As a Chosen One, your talents begin as martial or magic - your choice, but it must be the same as your first style choice. After becoming Chosen (level 10), one talent may be social.

NB If a Chosen One's destiny involves an object such as a sword or shield, that object typically gains 1 Quality point per PC Chosen One level. This is to ensure that the PC is not fighting with a sub-optimal focus object when she reaches high level.

## ENGINEER

Need a zeppelin pilot to drop your cordsmen precisely on the parapet and not in the moat? An engineer is your man. Need someone to sap a castle, bombard a fleet, and then build a monument after the war is won? Find an engineer.

Engineers live by their wits. This is not so different from a courtesan or an ambassador, but where those seek to master men, an engineer seeks to master nature.

An engineer's devices must survive and function in a world filled with magic and chaos. Not every device functions perfectly every time, but engineering in the Kingdoms has advanced to the point where reliable black powder weapons and a few more complicated machines are possible. Most people, at every level of society, know of the benefits that an engineer affords his fellow man. The heated floors, soaring aqueducts, giant mills and dams, and ponderous zeppelins are testimony to the efficacy of engineers.

An engineer on an adventure usually clutches his gadgets like talismans. Tuned monocles, trick staves, wheellock pistols and spring-loaded grappling hooks are staples of the engineer's adventuring kit.

Play an engineer if you want to:

- Direct bombardments and sieges.
- Collapse walls and crash chandeliers on your opponents' heads.
- Deploy an arsenal of gadgets.

*Adventure ideas.* Engineers find power in machines. They constantly go into the field to test new gears, new vehicles, new weapons. Among the armed legions, engineers are valued highly. A combat engineer can change the course of a battle with sapping, entrenchment, or a trebuchet bombardment. On a more individual scale, adventuring companies also value engineers. A dungeon engineer is frequently essential for crossing difficult impasses or breaking into sealed vaults, and a wilderness engineer is indispensable for piloting the expedition's vehicles and crafting traps, shelter, and artillery from scavenged local materials.

*In the Kingdoms.* Engineering is a new profession. It is rare, but its advances have made engineers





## ENGINEER

LEVEL	TITLE	CUMULATIVE INCREASES	CUM. STYLES Fighting	CUMULATIVE CLASS ABILITIES
1	Draftsman	-	1n	Engineering.
2		-	1a	Engineering, signature item.
3		+1 Reason	1a	Engineering, signature item.
4		+1 Reason	1a	Engineering, signature item.
5	Engineer	+1 Reason	1a	Engineering, signature item, combat engineer.
6		+1 Reason	1a	Engineering, signature item, combat engineer.
7		+2 Reason	1a, 1n	Engineering, signature item, combat engineer.
8		+2 Reason	1a, 1n	Engineering, signature item, combat engineer.
9		+2 Reason	2a	Engineering, signature item, combat engineer.
10	Chief Engineer	+2 Reason	2a	Engineering, signature item, chief combat engineer, mechanical advantage.
11		+2 Reason	2a	Engineering, signature item, chief combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar.
12		+2 Reason	2a	Engineering, signature item, chief combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar.
13		+3 Reason	2a	Engineering, signature item, chief combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar.
14		+3 Reason	2a	Engineering, signature item, chief combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar.
15		+3 Reason	2a, 1n	Engineering, signature item, master combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar, masterworks.
16		+3 Reason	2a, 1n	Engineering, signature item, master combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar, masterworks.
17		+3 Reason	2a, 1n	Engineering, signature item, master combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar, masterworks.
18	Architect of Wonder	+3 Reason	3a	Engineering, signature item, master combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar, masterworks, wonder worker.
19		+3 Reason	3a	Engineering, signature item, master combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar, masterworks, wonder worker.
20	Prime Mover	+4 Reason	3a	Engineering, signature item, grandmaster combat engineer, mechanical advantage, scholar, masterworks, wonders without end.

As always, in the styles column, "a" means apprentice, "n" means neophyte, and "m" means master. You must be an apprentice of a style before you can become a master of that style.

prominent in many circles. They are a frequent target of vituperation from the bankers, schoolmasters, and clergymen whom the commoners still see as more respectable, if not more adventurous. Reliable zeppelins are perhaps the engineers' most significant achievement, and the new prototype submersibles may soon rival them. Kings as well as commoners are taking notice. Whether or not that is bodes good or ill for the engineers remains to be seen.

## ENGINEER CUMULATIVE TALENTS

LEVEL	TITLE	MINOR	MAJOR	GRAND
1	Draftsman	-	-	-
2		-	-	-
3		-	-	-
4		1	-	-
5	Engineer	1	-	-
6		2	-	-
7		2	-	-
8		3	-	-
9		3	-	-
10	Chief Engineer	2	1	-
11		2	1	-
12		1	2	-
13		1	2	-
14		-	3	-
15		-	3	-
16		-	2	1
17		-	2	1
18	Architect of Wonder	-	1	2
19		-	1	2
20	Prime Mover	-	0	3

NB: An engineer's talents are martial or shadow. After you become a Chief Engineer, one talent may be social.

## ENGINEER ABILITIES

*Engineering.* Add 1 bonus point per engineer level to (up to) three Histories that are primarily focused on engineering.

*Signature item.* Choose one engineering item to be your signature item. As long as you can plausibly narrate how you use your signature item to perform an environment trick, you roll your Reason rather than Strength or Quickness (or any other stat) against the Doom when you attempt to initiate the trick. For example, a spring-launched grappling hook with a mechanized winch is Nikolai Khury's signature item. In a fight against highwaymen on the Free Road, Nikolai attempts an environmental trick where he shoots the grappling hook into the upholstery of the pole's seat on the stagecoach. Then he rips the seat free of the coach so that it crashes into the highwaymen. To beat the Doom, rather than roll Strength, he rolls his Reason by attaching the hook in just the right spot (if he succeeds, as normal, he goes on to roll a d8 attack for 2 points of damage against each highwayman - or whatever attack and damage combo he and his GM work out).

*Combat engineer.* When you use an engineering item that normally causes damage in combat, such as a grapeshot bomb or a whiplash gyre, it causes 1 extra point of damage on a hit. In a battle, you can gain this bonus with siege weapons. You must be attached to the siege weapon unit (thus not contributing a command point). When you are a chief, the bonus damage increases to 2 extra points; at 15th level, 3 extra points; and as Prime Mover, 4 extra points.

*Mechanical advantage.* Treat any engineering item you use as two Quality points higher than it actually is. This includes any zeppelin, ship, or submersible on which you are an officer. Any building or vehicle that you construct is also two Quality points higher than normal. At 15th level, both of these bonuses become 4 points higher than normal.

*Scholar.* When an engineer ascends to 11th level, and twice more when he ascends to 17th level and 19th level, he gains three History points beyond what the GM awards.

*Masterworks.* Given time, your forge, and



your lab, you can improve by one the quality of any weapon, armor, vehicle, building, engineering item, or mass combat troop's weapons. This takes one day per quality point. In the case of a mass combat troop, weapon improvements increase damage by one from all maneuvers (not formations).

*Wonder worker.* Once in your life, you can construct a wonder.

*Wonders without end.* You may construct as

many wonders as resources permit. You may only work on one wonder at a time.

*Talents.* An engineer's talents are martial or shadow. After you become a Chief Engineer, one talent may be social.



# FIXER

## [SHADOW]

Fixers are the alchemists, surgeons, fences, healers and sages of the underworld. Like the traders, they maintain a loose network across the Claw. Unlike the traders, the fixers are not all harnessed in the beneficial service of profit. Their fraternity is built upon centuries of secrets, upon knowledge lost and found and lost again, upon betrayals masked with lies. Some fixers are heroes in the slums. They cure the sick and shelter the innocent. Other fixers are kingsmen and sadists. They exult in pouring ratlight attar, redolent of anise and decay, down the throats of captured traitors.

A fixer refines nature in order to create something more than nature. He transmutes ash to death and water to life. His potions, dusts, elixirs, sticks, and salves can burn, disintegrate, petrify, heal, and transform.

But fixers do not rule their underworld demesnes because they can distill from the natural world a spell's power. They rule because they can nullify a spell's power. Kings despise this ability, and they seek to co-opt or crush any fixer who dares operate outside a royal charter.

Yet those fixers persevere. Theirs is the Great Work.

You should play a fixer if you want to:

- Brew alchemical mixtures and transmute substances and people.
- Fight against atrocities of magic.
- Join a clandestine fraternity that extends as far as the Claw reaches.

*Adventure ideas.* Fixers always need reagents, but even more than that, they need knowledge. A rumor of an eastern island king who knows how to intensify drakatizon is enough to send a fixer sailing into the sunrise. Fixers plumb tombs and rummage through every table overflowing with gewgaws in the bazaar. They whisper with haggard old crones on their deathbeds and lonely nobles in their marriage beds. All for a chance at knowledge.



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## FIXER

LEVEL	TITLE	CUMULATIVE INCREASES	CUM. STYLES Fighting	CUMULATIVE CLASS ABILITIES
1	Nephew	-	1n	Fix.
2		-	1n	Fix, fraternity.
3		-	1a	Fix, fraternity.
4		+1 Reason or Charisma	1a	Fix, fraternity.
5	Brother, Fixer	+1 Reason or Charisma	1a	Fix, fraternity, alchemy.
6		+1 Reason or Charisma	1a	Fix, fraternity, alchemy.
7		+1 Reason or Charisma	1a, 1n	Fix, fraternity, alchemy.
8		+2 Reason or Charisma	1a, 1n	Fix, fraternity, alchemy.
9		+2 Reason or Charisma	1a, 1n	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix.
10	Father, Artiste	+2 Reason or Charisma	1a, 1n	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse.
11		+2 Reason or Charisma	2a	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse.
12		+2 Reason or Charisma	2a	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse.
13		+3 Reason or Charisma	2a	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse, transmute.
14		+3 Reason or Charisma	2a	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse, transmute.
15	Grandfather	+3 Reason or Charisma	2a, 1n	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse, transmute, mortal dram.
16		+3 Reason or Charisma	2a, 1n	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse, transmute, mortal dram.
17		+3 Reason or Charisma	2a, 1n	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse, transmute, mortal dram, scholar.
18		+3 Reason or Charisma	3a	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse, transmute, mortal dram, scholar.
19		+3 Reason or Charisma	3a	Fix, fraternity, alchemy, quick fix, transfuse, transmute, mortal dram, scholar.
20	Allfather	+4 Reason or Charisma	3a	Fix, fraternity, quick fix, alchemy, alchemy, transmute, mortal dram, scholar, the Great Work.

As always, in the styles column, "a" means apprentice, "n" means neophyte, and "m" means master. You must be an apprentice of a style before you can become a master of that style.



Often – too often for some - adventure comes looking for a fixer. Jealous magi, supplicating cripples, enraged inquisitors, and desperate children all seek out fixers to one end or another. It's up to you what you do with them.

*In the Kingdoms.* Fixers are breaking history. For centuries, there were wizards, witches, and everyone else. Eventually engineers began to part the clouds with their zeppelins and bombard walls with their cannon, but even then the kings viewed these rude mechanicals as tools to be manipulated.

Fixers are different. Fixers have always been moving in the undercurrents of society. The first King Below in East Fire was an alchemist. There are alchemists' marks on the walls in the Old Bastion in Thyre that talk about the time before the stars had color. Alchemy has been around for centuries, and there are ruins under the streets of Varteka and Muda-tarsk where the cisterns still reek of alchemist acid.

Not until recently, however, did alchemy have the power to turn a man into a quickruby golem. Not until recently did alchemy have the power to dissolve spellstalks, stop the blink, quench madfire, and chase the abynder akkas. Not until recently did alchemy have the power to stop magic.

Small wonder the kings are concerned.

## FIXER ABILITIES

*Fix.* You can cure any disease, stop any magic or alchemical effect, or neutralize any poison that targets an individual creature. In the case of disease, alchemy, or poison, if your fixer level is greater than the virulence of the disease or the quality of the alchemical item or poison, you are successful. In the case of a spell, your Reason roll must beat the Magic roll of the spell's caster. A fix can only be attempted once per week per victim because of the stress involved, and the attempt requires one hour per point of virulence, quality, or caster level. You must have access to your laboratory or a source of fixer's supplies.

*Fraternity.* You gain a reputation 8 "One of us" with other fixers, and you can call upon the Fraternity (Scope 15, Force 6, Arcana 6, Shadow 14, Efficiency 8) for one organization action per month.

## FIXER CUMULATIVE TALENTS

LEVEL	TITLE	MINOR	MAJOR	GRAND
1	Nephew	-	-	-
2		-	-	-
3		-	-	-
4		1	-	-
5	Brother, Fixer	1	-	-
6		2	-	-
7		2	-	-
8		3	-	-
9		3	-	-
10	Father, Artiste	2	1	-
11		2	1	-
12		1	2	-
13		1	2	-
14		-	3	-
15	Grandfather	-	3	-
16		-	2	1
17		-	2	1
18		-	1	2
19		-	1	2
20	Allfather	-	0	3

NB: A fixer's talents are shadow or social. He must always have at least one shadow talent.

*Alchemy.* Add 1 bonus point per Fixer level to (up to) three Histories that primarily focus on alchemy. Also, treat any alchemical item you use as being two Quality points higher than it actually is. When you are a Grandfather in the fraternity, this bonus increases to 4 Quality points.

*Quick fix.* In combat or any other scene, you can attempt a quick fix. This functions as the Fix ability, but it requires a Trick to execute, and it is only successful if your Reason check beats the Doom, virulence, or opposed Magic check, as appropriate. You





may attempt this only once per condition; if you fail, then the situation is not treatable by your quick fix. If the quick fix is successful, the condition returns after combat (if its duration would normally have it do so). You may attempt a more permanent cure with the Fix ability. You must have a Fixer's kit on hand.

*Transfuse.* The patient lies down on your table, and you perform a transfusion. You must have access to your alchemical laboratory, and the transfusion takes one hour. If you fail your Reason roll (aided by your alchemy skill as a bonus die, of course) against the Doom, then the patient loses all Mood and all but one Body without gaining any of the transfusion's effects. A character can withstand one Transfusion attempt per week. Choose your transfusion:

- **Phlegm.** You restore up to 4 points of Characteristic damage (Strength, Quickness, etc.). Increase this to 6 points when you are a Grandfather.

- **Bile.** You restore up to 3 points of Body damage. Increase this to 5 points when you are a Grandfather.

- **Sanguine clots.** You raise the recipient's maximum Mood by 3 for one scene (or one day).

- **Ichor.** You lay a corpse out on your table, inject it with ichor, and a zombie arises. It is as likely to kill you as anyone else, so manacles are advised. Conducting the process is a Wealth Level 3 item, or 300 gold orbs under normal economic circumstances. When you are a Grandfather, you can create contagion zombies and human-raptor cross-stitch zombies as Wealth Level 6 items. As an Allfather, you can create Undead Giants as Wealth Level 11 items.

- **Liquid breath.** The recipient can survive without air for 5 hours per fixer level. If he does not receive a reverse transfusion – this time back to blood – before the time is up, he takes 1 Body damage per half hour until he does receive a transfusion. The process is a Wealth Level 4 item, or 600 gold orbs under normal economic conditions.

- **Quicksilver.** The recipient gains 6 Quickness and can outrun a horse. The effects last for one hour, and afterwards, the recipient ages 1d4 years. Each such transfusion is a Wealth Level 7 item, or 2100 gold orbs under normal economic conditions.

- **Spellstalk cruor.** The recipient is spellbound

for one scene (or day).

- **Quickruby or quicksludge.** Your injection enlarges and transforms the victim into a quickruby or quicksludge golem (p. 186). The golem obeys you as a dimwitted automaton, although commands against its original personality allow it a Reason or Charisma roll (its choice) to resist, opposed by your Reason roll. A transfused golem understands and carries out simple commands, such as "Guard this room and attack anyone who enters without displaying the Sign of the Dryght" but can do nothing much more complicated than that. This transfusion lasts until the victim makes a Strength check against the Doom; he has the opportunity to do so once per scene (or day) beginning two days after the injection. Preparing a quickruby golem requires one full scene (or at least one day) and three injections totaling Wealth Level 14.

*Transmute.* You can turn lead into gold. The transmutation requires expensive materials and skilled labor, but as long as you can be in your lab one week out of every two for a season, then for that season you gain 100 gold per fixer level.

*Mortal dram.* When you use an alchemical item that normally causes damage, it causes 1 additional point of damage. As an Allfather, this increases to 3 additional points of damage.

*Scholar.* When a fixer ascends to 17th level, and again when he ascends to 19th level, he gains three History points beyond what the GM awards.

*The Great Work.* You can prepare the Ultimate Solution, which is proof against magic. Creating a dose of the solution requires a week in your lab, and it loses all potency if not used within the following week. After a man drinks it, for one scene (or one day), he gains a d12 bonus die on any roll to resist magic, and he is immune to surges and magical disease. The Ultimate Solution is a Wealth Level 18 item, or 15,300 gold orbs under normal economic conditions.

*Talents.* A fixer's talents are shadow or social. He must always have at least one shadow talent.

# NOBLE, PRIEST, COURTESAN

[SOCIAL]

Do nobles feel guilt? Do they hear the screams of the longshoreman's wife as her baby dies for lack of a spell? Do they hear the cries of the children up past bedtime, nagged by pain, wanting only a powder from an outlawed fixer? Do those sounds crash dissonantly in nobles' nightmares - or are they actually the melodies of sweet dreams? If you can answer those questions, you can play a noble.

Nobles are the ruling class, with priests, courtiers, and courtesans providing moral, economic, and social support. Priests grant to nobles the blessing of the High God for protecting society from the evils of magic; courtiers and courtesans grant to nobles intellectual and social justification and relief. Most nobles are born to the privilege; most priests come from noble families; most courtiers are in houses bred to a particular court. Very few are elevated from the subject class, and then only after blackmail, murder, or a fortune in bribes.

Nobles are no stranger to swordplay and combat, as duels, hereditary appointments to military offices, and tournaments form a significant part of the lifestyle. There is a saying in the kingdoms: The difference between a noble and a savage is that the noble wipes his sword after stabbing you.

A courtesan plays many roles: politician, broker, socialite, ambassador, concubine. Many peasant girls dream of a life at court filled with glitter, masquerades, spice wines and rose attar. Some of them grow up to realize their dreams, and they learn that there is all of that and more at court. There are whispers behind closed doors, backstabbing, the buying and selling of friendships, and bodies bobbing in the moat at dawn.

Some courtesans retain their innocence, but most lose it. Whether her days and nights take her to the exchequery, the party halls, or the bed chambers, a courtesan either masters her social skills or finds



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# NOBLE, PRIEST, COURTESAN

LEVEL	TITLE**	CUMULATIVE INCREASES	CUMULATIVE STYLES		CUMULATIVE CLASS ABILITIES	
			Fighting	Spell	Noble	Courtesan, Priest
1	Debutante	-	1a	*	Noble house, reputation.	Friends at court, reputation.
2		+1 Charisma	1a	*	Noble house, reputation.	Friends at court, reputation.
3		+1 Charisma	1a, 1n	*	Noble house, reputation.	Friends at court, reputation.
4		+1 Charisma	1a, 1n	*	Noble house, reputation.	Friends at court, reputation.
5	Courtesan	+1 Charisma	1m, 1n	*	Noble house, reputation, impose.	Friends at court, reputation, impose.
6		+1 Charisma	1m, 1a	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader.
7		+2 Charisma	1m, 1a, 1n	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader.
8		+2 Charisma	1m, 1a, 1n	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader.
9		+2 Charisma	1m, 2a	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader.
10	Mondaine	+2 Charisma	2m, 1a	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader, ruin.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader, secrets.
11		+3 Charisma	2m, 1a	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader, ruin.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader, secrets.
12		+3 Charisma	2m, 1a	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader, ruin.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader, secrets.
13		+3 Charisma	2m, 1a, 1n	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader, ruin.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader, secrets.
14		+3 Charisma	2m, 1a, 1n	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader, ruin.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader, secrets.
15	Aura	+3 Charisma	2m, 1a, 1n	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, ruin, secrets.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, secrets, twist the knife.
16		+3 Charisma	2m, 1a, 1n	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, ruin, secrets.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, secrets, twist the knife.
17		+4 Charisma	2m, 2a	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, ruin, secrets.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, secrets, twist the knife.
18		+4 Charisma	2m, 2a	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, ruin, secrets.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, secrets, twist the knife.
19		+4 Charisma	3m, 1a	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, ruin, secrets.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, secrets, twist the knife.
20	Eminence Grise, Doyenne	+4 Charisma	3m, 1a	*	Noble house, reputation, impose, leader, ruin, secrets, the taking.	Friends at court, reputation, impose, leader, secrets, twist the knife, ruin, toys and games.

As always, in the styles column, "a" means apprentice, "n" means neophyte, and "m" means master. You must be an apprentice of a style before you can become a master of that style.

\* A Noble can substitute a magic style for any fighting style. A priest or courtesan, propinquity and intimacy notwithstanding, may learn a maximum of one magic style, and even then may face legal and social repercussions.

\*\* Titles given are for courtiers and courtesans. Noble titles vary by region. For the Old Kingdoms, a standard progression is 1: Lord; 5: Baron; 10: Earl or Count; 15: Marquis; 20: Duke. In the southern islands, a standard progression is 1: Haile; 5: Haile Addaka; 10: Negus; 15: Negus Ras; 20: Negus Negai. In the High Church, priest titles are 1: Novice; 5: Priest; 10: Bishop; 15: Archbishop; 20: Cardinal.



herself suffering her worst nightmare: exclusion.

Priests of the High Church are at once the nobles' masters, equals, and slaves. On Church grounds, canon law supercedes even royal decree. Elsewhere, the relationship is most often dependent upon a simple question: How much does the king need the Church's blessing? There are many ways to answer that question, and many forms of blessing. Each answer and each blessing could change a priest's life forever.

The noble class (but not priest or courtesan) can only be picked at character creation or after a suitable story development within the campaign.

Play a noble if you want to:

- Glitter in social encounters.
- Ruin your enemies with an insult at the dinner table as easily as a counter-lunge on the duelist's mat.
- Crush a kingdom against the rocks of Fate.

*Adventure ideas.* For a courtesan, living in the capital does not just mean court life: it means court life or death. Everyday, tea in the salon, promenade in the tulip garden, verbal snipes and subtle knives transform the course of life into a gauntlet of hazards. One wrong word and a life – a kingdom – can be changed forever. Courtiers and nobles live adventure without ever leaving the sweetmeats, custards, and violin music of the palazzo.

It is the culture all across the Claw (it is different in Jakatta) that nobles take the field with their legions, albeit usually in the back of the ranks rather than the front. But courtiers and nobles can be thrown out or lured out of the palace for reasons short of war: exile, ambassadorship, parties, the founding of a new keep on the borderlands, a parade, a rare tulip rising on a hilltop north of the Caves of Komark. But any excursion beyond the curtain walls is freighted with risk and treated as such. An entourage of lancers, musketeers, and a wizard accompanies any noble not slumming incognito. For the ruling class, even the calmest social opportunity can boil over with peril.

*In the Kingdoms.* Nobles and courtiers are a separate class of people, not the same as common folk. Most commoners look on nobles with deep respect, fear and gratitude. Respect because the nobles are powerful; fear because the nobles are vindictive and covetous; and gratitude because the nobles are often spellbound. The commoners know the dangers of

## NOBLE, PRIEST, COURTESAN CUMULATIVE TALENTS

LEVEL	TITLE	MINOR	MAJOR	GRAND
1	Debutante	-	-	-
2		-	-	-
3		-	-	-
4		1	-	-
5	Courtesan	1	-	-
6		2	-	-
7		2	-	-
8		3	-	-
9		3	-	-
10	Mondaine	2	1	-
11		2	1	-
12		1	2	-
13		1	2	-
14		-	3	-
15	Aura	-	3	-
16		-	2	1
17		-	2	1
18		-	1	2
19		-	1	2
20	Eminence Grise, Doyenne	-	0	3

NB: A noble or courtier's talents are social, martial, or magic, but he must always have at least one social talent.

magic. Most of them consider the nobles to be bearing a heavy burden by controlling magic, limiting magical access, and thus preventing wild surges and crises. A few radical thinkers believe that commoners should have the right to wield magic, but most people believe that a ruling class with exclusive control over magic is a necessary evil.



## NOBLE, PRIEST, & COURTESAN ABILITIES

*Noble house.* You begin play with control of a noble house with Scope 1 (or a faction of Scope 1 within a greater noble house). You also begin play at Wealth Level 4.

*Reputation.* Spend your Charisma score in points on Reputations. You cannot spend more than 4 points in a single reputation from this ability. For example, if Angetorix Lauge, Lord Dreach, has an 8 Charisma, he can spend 4 points in two different reputations and end up with Reputation: Merciless administrator of the king's justice (7) and Reputation: master of Court Sword style (7). Every time you gain a new title (levels 5, 10, 15 and 20), you gain your Charisma in reputation points.

*Friends at court.* You can call in a favor from a friendly organization once per scene (or week). When you are first level, pick from the campaign world one organization with a presence at court and a scope of 5 or less. Each time you gain a new title, name one new friendly organization that you may call upon. Its scope cannot exceed your priest or courtesan level. In some cases, the GM may require a roll from you in order to use this ability successfully. Organizations refuse to commit any acts perceived as self-injurious. Finally, note that "friends at court" may be a euphemism for "people you can blackmail at court," "people who worship you without requital at court," "useful idiots at court," etc.

*Leader.* Once per scene (or day) per person, you can raise a friend's Mood by 3 points with only a short conversation, blessing, command, or gesture. At 15th level, you can use your leadership to raise an ally's Mood by 5, but still only once per scene (or day) per person.

*Impose.* When an opponent is at 0 Mood and you make a successful social attack against him, you can impose yourself on his psyche and force him to take you or something about you as a point of Inspiration. This could be a fear of you, lust for you, hatred for you, or any other Inspiration depending on your roleplay. This happens in lieu of other effects, such as damaging an Inspiration. If the opponent has no room for new Inspirations, he abandons an old one and takes

the new one at the first opportunity.

*Ruin.* When you hit with a social attack in front of a suitable audience, instead of causing damage as normal, you can cause the victim to lose 1d6 Wealth Levels. You can do this only once per season per target, and the audience must include people whose opprobrium can ruin your opponent's credit, honor, holdings, or contact network.

*Secrets.* Once per scene, when you do Mood damage with a social attack, you either force the opponent to lose 4 Mood or reveal a secret.

*Twist the knife.* If you exploit a secret concerning your target along with a successful social attack, you force your opponent to flee the scene or lose all Mood and 2 points from an Inspiration (you must know of and allude to the Inspiration, as usual, or you cannot attack it). This can only be done once per secret, of course; after that the secret is out.

*Toys and games.* The lives of others are toys and games to you. The ambitious and the lustful are your weapons, the gullible and the love-blind are your puppets, and anyone who bores you is your target. Create an NPC protege or puppet of half your level, with Inspirations that aim to humiliate your foes or ruin their lives, and set that NPC loose in the campaign world. When he dies, create another one.

*Taking.* Once per season, you bless a wizard with the ability to cast the high spell Taking. With this spell, the wizard can take someone's capacity for an emotion. If the wizard succeeds, the target never again knows love, or hate, or sorrow, or fear, or faith or any other Inspiration designated by you. The wizard must win a Magic vs. Magic roll to take the target's emotion.

The taken emotion is bottled and can be decanted into 1d6 doses. It tastes exquisite, spiced and bitter. Drinking it allows you to use an Inspiration of the taken type once within the next minute. It keeps forever.

If the target had any Inspirations using the taken emotion, they are lost. They can never be regained.

Taking is difficult. A wizard can only attempt this after a week of fasting, and only once per season.

*Talents.* A noble or courtier's talents are social, martial, or magic, but he must always have at least one social talent.

# ROGUE, ASSASSIN

## [SHADOW]

Rogues and assassins share many traits. Both deceive, beguile, and sneak. They learn many of the same abilities as they gain levels, but there are significant differences.

The focus of an assassin is needle sharp: infiltrate, execute, and escape. To be sure, a tricky infiltration may require scaling the castle wall or impersonating the target's daughter, and thus to a master assassin, wit and charm can be as valuable as poison and riotwire. But for an assassin the point is, logically, assassination.

Rogues have a broader focus. Spy, thief, confidence man: few lives are as varied and eventful as a rogue's. Although he attempts to remain in the shadows as much as possible, the rogue knows that there are times when he will be alone in the camp of the enemy. At these times, he must have the right tool for the job, whether it is a smile and a pat, a ribald joke in the enemy's native tongue, or a dagger in the gut.

When an assassin or a rogue does his job well, no one knows who he is. There are statues of generals, kings, and wizards, but of the world's greatest rogues, there are no records at all. On the other hand, it may be that there are many such records, each under a different name...

Play a rogue if you want to:

- Sneak through shadows and cut your enemy down quickly.
- Play the knave and break hearts.
- Embarrass your enemies in chases across rooftops.

*Adventure ideas.* Rogue and assassin adventures start and end in the shadows. Stealing signet rings from nobles to forge war orders, prying jacinth eyes from horned idols in sealed temples, tempting the dauphin into the salubrious underworld of the city to distract him from the dangers of the coming revolution – all of these are adventures fit for rogues. Assassin adventures are much the same, but they end with more blood on the flagstones.



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## ROGUE, ASSASSIN

LEVEL	TITLE*	CUMULATIVE INCREASES	CUM. STYLES Fighting	CUMULATIVE CLASS ABILITIES**
1	Right Person	-	1a, 1n	Hunted.
2		+1 Quickness	2a	Hunted.
3		+1 Quickness	2a	Hunted.
4	Rogue	+1 Quickness	2a	Hunted, trickster.
5		+1 Quickness	1m, 1a	Hunted, trickster.
6		+2 Quickness	1m, 1a	Hunted, trickster, ambush.
7		+2 Quickness	1m, 1a	Hunted, trickster, ambush.
8		+2 Quickness	1m, 1a, 1n	Hunted, trickster, ambush.
9		+2 Quickness	1m, 1a, 1n	Hunted, trickster, ambush.
10	Boss	+2 Quickness +1 Charisma	2m, 1n	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity.
11		+2 Quickness +1 Charisma	2m, 1n	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity.
12		+3 Quickness +1 Charisma	2m, 1a	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity.
13		+3 Quickness +1 Charisma	2m, 1a	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity.
14		+3 Quickness +1 Charisma	2m, 1a, 1n	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity.
15	Duke Below	+3 Quickness +2 Charisma	2m, 1a, 1n	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity, headhunter, rogue's life.
16		+3 Quickness +2 Charisma	2m, 2a	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity, headhunter, rogue's life.
17		+3 Quickness +2 Charisma	2m, 2a	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity, headhunter, rogue's life.
18		+4 Quickness +2 Charisma	3m, 1a	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity, headhunter, rogue's life.
19		+4 Quickness +2 Charisma	3m, 1a	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity, headhunter, rogue's life.
20	King Below	+4 Quickness +3 Charisma	3m, 1a	Hunted, trickster, ambush, false identity, headhunter, rogue's life, impostor, haunt the memory's halls.

As always, in the styles column, "a" means apprentice, "n" means neophyte, and "m" means master. You must be an apprentice of a style before you can become a master of that style.

\* Titles given are for rogues. Assassin titles are 1: Thug; 5: Killer; 10: Assassin; 15: Death Artist; 20: Death Lord.

\*\* Class abilities are for rogues. Assassins have the same progression with two exceptions: at 10th level, assassins receive the Assassinate ability instead of False Identity, and they never receive Trickster, Rogue's Life or Impostor.



Rogues and assassins often combine forces with members of other classes. Warriors provide muscle and occupy the guards while the rogue tries to sneak behind the lines and purloin the wizard's tome. Social characters such as traders and courtesans hire rogues and assassins to protect them on diplomatic missions. Rogue bodyguards make much better conversation than warrior or savage bodyguards, and if anyone knows how to foil a thief, it is another thief.

*In the Kingdoms.* In public, nobles denounce thieves guilds, decry the sins of the demimonde, and outlaw all assassinations and assassin brotherhoods. In private, the aristocracy delights in the company of rogues – many are rogues – and would not know what to do if there were not an assassins' brotherhood to add a dash of lethality to their daily stew of court speeches, polo matches, and serf trading.

Day to day, rogues and assassins have mundane lives among the right people. Hours pass hum, as they practice their slight of hand on lemons and cards, trail watchmen to learn the patrol patterns, and leave wine, gold, chocolate, or roses on the proper doorsteps. Then, when opportunity comes like a cloud across the face of the sun, the rogue's time is at hand. He raids warehouses, dungeon vaults, and the freesia-scented boudoirs, conservatories, and libraries of the city's oldest and noblest families.

## ROGUE & ASSASSIN ABILITIES

*Hunted.* When making Chase rolls, increase your Quickness by one die size.

*Trickster.* Add 1 bonus point per rogue/assassin level to (up to) three Histories that primarily involve hiding, sneaking, deceiving, bluffing, or tricking.

*Ambush.* Use the ambush ability after you hit someone who was not in combat, was not aware of your presence, and has fewer levels than you have shadow levels. If your Quickness score is equal to or greater than his total Body + Mood, you slay him

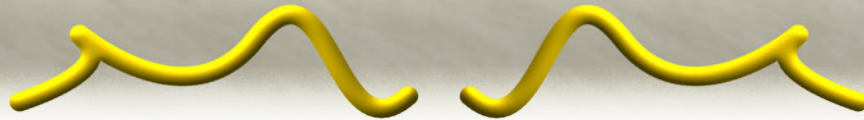
## ROGUE & ASSASSIN CUMULATIVE TALENTS

LEVEL	TITLE	MINOR	MAJOR	GRAND
1	Right Person	-	-	-
2		-	-	-
3		1	-	-
4	Rogue	1	-	-
5		2	-	-
6		2	-	-
7		3	-	-
8		3	-	-
9		2	1	-
10	Boss	2	1	-
11		1	2	-
12		1	2	-
13		-	3	-
14		-	3	-
15	Duke Below	-	2	1
16		-	2	1
17		-	1	2
18		-	1	2
19		-	0	3
20	King Below	-	0	3

NB: A rogue's talents are shadow, martial, or social. An assassin's talents are shadow or martial, but at 10th level and higher an assassin can select one social talent.

instantly.

*False identity.* You have a false identity with up to 12 Reputation points, spent as you wish, and membership in (not command of) one organization of your choice. When you choose to live under this identity, all Reputation gains or losses accrue to this



identity, not your true identity. When you become a Duke Below and again when you become a King Below, you create a second and a third false identity. An assassin gains only one false identity, and it does not come until he is a Death Artist.

*Assassinate.* You can kill someone even if they have an Inspiration of 4 or more (3 or more in the case of love). Adventurers, kingsmen, and possibly even kings fear this ability.

*Headhunter.* Once per week, you may undertake a mission to murder or incapacitate key members of an organization. While the GM may have you play out the scene in special cases, in an abstract approach you roll your Quickness against the organization's Shadow roll. If you win, you have kidnapped or slain key members in that organization, reducing its Efficiency by 1 and one other characteristic save Scope by 1 (your choice of Force, Arcana, or Shadow). If you hit the same organization three weeks running, it loses 1 Scope.

*Rogue's life.* You gain an extra major talent. If you are crowned a King Below, this extra talent becomes a grand talent. You now have four talents, one more than the normal maximum. As usual for rogues, your extra talent must be shadow, martial, or social.

*Impostor.* One of your fake identities has grown so powerful that you can now direct the fake's organization's actions once per week. If you are found out, of course, you lose this ability, although you can create a new fake identity immediately and grow back into this ability after two shadow levels.

*Haunt the memory's halls.* You haunt the thoughts of those who come up against you. Some fear you, some obsess over you, some pray for your death. Anyone who is covered by one of your reputations, who has an Inspiration involving you, or who has met you at least once before in any sort of conflict, takes a Heart penalty on all rolls in the first round of his encounter with you. If he has a Fear of you, this effect stacks, extending the Heart penalty to two rounds.

*Talents.* A rogue's talents are shadow, martial, or social. An assassin's talents are shadow or martial, but at 10th level and higher an assassin can select one social talent.

## SAVAGE [MARTIAL]

Savages are the hunters, herders, husbands, and wives of the hordes that roam the wilderness. From birth, they struggle in an environment of predator and prey. Wyvern shrieks and wolf howls are the lullabies of the wild.

The civilized folk say that the savages have the mercy of a thunderstorm and the intelligence of a soil clod. The latter is false, the former often true. Savage culture is intricate and nuanced, but it reflects and informs the lives of people who live with scarcity. Hope is the scarcest resource of all: hope for control of their destinies, hope for a long future, hope for their children. These are people who feel that they are playthings in the hands of the gods of magic, weather, luck, and beasts.

A savage:

- Leaps into battle and fights like a wild animal.
- Exults in the fury of battle.
- Finds strength and comfort in the horde.

*Adventure ideas.* Like warriors, savages are at home in combat. When raiders start harassing his tribe, a savage attacks the threat with steel and sinew, not charm and treaties. His adventures highlight martial action: shoot-and-run bow combat through the forest, or a visionquest to wrestle a lake serpent, or an honor war to sack a decadent city.

In adventuring groups, many savages play the role of guide. They frequently have skills that aid survival in the wilderness, and their homes are almost always in such a place. Many of the savage's adventures, therefore, take place outdoors. Some may involve his native tribe. Single combat for the right to be chieftain, bloody skirmishes in territorial wars, and hunting the witch doctors of enemy tribes are common blazes along the life trail of the savage.

*In the Kingdoms.* Savages are found on the fringes of the Kingdoms. The Fyraj forest, the Waylorn Mountains, the Kvalt range, and the plains north and south of Windhover valley are almost exclusively populated by savages. Especially along the Free Road



in the north, savages rely on trade with the civilized world for steel, black powder, and even spells; they sell furs, ivory, herbs, and intelligence in return. Sometimes slaves are traded, although this occurs more in the Dragon Isles than anywhere else.

In the old Claw, most commoners and nobles have never met a savage. They tell jump-stories around winter fires about the Savage Who Crawls, the Horde of a Thousand Ruptures, and Zenin, whose beard could scratch diamonds. Occasionally expeditions to the Fyrajj bring back to civilization savages chained behind wagons, and there is a circus at court while the savages are forced to perform for the nobles. Some civilized folk of the Old Claw do hire savages as guides or even exotic bodyguards. But a savage is never to be trusted, relied upon, or respected.



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## SAVAGE

LEVEL	TITLE	CUMULATIVE INCREASES	CUM. STYLES Fighting	CUMULATIVE CLASS ABILITIES
1	Maagaazod, Brave	-	1a	Bloodlust.
2		+1 Strength	2a	Bloodlust, beast world.
3		+1 Strength	2a	Bloodlust, beast world.
4	Ogichidaa, Savage	+1 Strength	1m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, visionquest.
5		+1 Strength	1m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest.
6		+2 Strength	1m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest.
7		+2 Strength	1m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest.
8		+2 Strength	2 m	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off.
9		+2 Strength	2m	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off.
10	Ogimaa, Chief	+2 Strength	2m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy.
11		+2 Strength	2m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy.
12		+3 Strength	2m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy.
13		+3 Strength	2m, 2a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy.
14		+3 Strength	3m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy.
15	Ogimaa Miigaadiwin, War Chief	+3 Strength	3m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy, horde.
16		+3 Strength	3m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy, horde.
17		+3 Strength	3m, 1a	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy, horde.
18		+4 Strength	4m	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy, horde.
19		+4 Strength	4m	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy, horde.
20	Maagaazod Makwa, Beast Warrior	+4 Strength	4m	Bloodlust, beast world, vision quest, shake it off, frenzy, horde, totem beast.

As always, in the styles column, "a" means apprentice, "n" means neophyte, and "m" means master. You must be an apprentice of a style before you can become a master of that style.



## SAVAGE ABILITIES

*Bloodlust.* Whenever you begin a combat, increase your Mood by 2 (without exceeding your maximum).

*Beast world.* At 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 20th levels, you grow closer to the beast world. Choose one of the following:

- Bear: +1 Body.
- Cat: +1 Quickness.
- Eagle: Add 1 bonus point per Savage level to any skill involving perception.
- Barracuda: You swim as though born to water. Reduce the Doom by 3 when making Swim (or related) checks.
- Jungle strider: You leap uncannily well. Reduce the Doom by 3 when you leap.
- Ox: You are hale. Reduce the Doom, Quality, or virulence by 3 when resisting disease, poison, or alchemy.
- Owl: You can see well in all but complete darkness.

You can take each one multiple times, allowing you to gain +4 Body by level 20, for example.

*Vision quest.* Each time you gain a level, you enter the sweat lodge and receive a vision quest. Often the quest is to slay in personal combat a monster or wizard. The vision quest may take a month, a day, or years. The GM decides the specifics based on the nature and needs of the campaign, or he may roll randomly to determine the object and complexity of your vision quest. If you accomplish your quest before you reach the next level, you gain +1 Heart until your next level increase, whereupon your Heart returns to normal and you must embark on a new vision quest to gain the bonus.

*Shake it off.* You can shake off damage once per scene. When your enemy hits you with an attack roll that is less than your Strength characteristic, you can invoke this power and reduce the damage to 0.

*Frenzy.* You can spend a Mood point to cause one additional point of damage with a melee attack.

*Horde.* If you have a tribe, that is, a "savage tribe" organization per the Organization chapter rules, increase its Force by 4. Increase the health and spirit

## SAVAGE CUMULATIVE TALENTS

LEVEL	TITLE	MINOR	MAJOR	GRAND
1	Maagaazod	-	-	-
2		-	-	-
3		1	-	-
4	Ogichidaa	1	-	-
5		2	-	-
6		2	-	-
7		3	-	-
8		3	-	-
9		2	1	-
10	Ogimaa	2	1	-
11		1	2	-
12		1	2	-
13		-	3	-
14		-	3	-
15	Ogimaa Miigaadiwin	-	2	1
16		-	2	1
17		-	1	2
18		-	1	2
19		-	0	3
20	Maagaazod Makwa	-	0	3

NB: A savage's talents are martial. After a savage becomes an Ogimaa, one of his talents may be social.

of all units under your command by 1.

*Totem beast.* You can fight in one of the following beast styles: Carapace, Claw/Claw/Bite, Poison Sting, Gore and Trample. You are a master of the style. Some maneuvers may require that you wield poisoned punch daggers, wear a horned helm, or use some other item that can provide for the style's maneuvers.

*Talents.* A savage's talents are martial. After a savage becomes an Ogimaa, one of his talents may be social.



# TRADER [SOCIAL]

Traders know that money is the root of all good.

Some are champions of freedom, some are kingsmen through and through, but all believe that the next big deal is waiting in the village just around the bend.

Entrepreneurship knows no borders. Traders journey beyond the fields we know and process the unknown world into the known world. They are the pollinators of civilizations, sowing secrets like seeds across the Claw. Silks, jewels, spells, art, arms, and new fighting styles are their harvest. Few can claim to have seen as much territory, lived as many cultures, and learned as much recondite lore as a trader. On the rare days that a trader is at home in a village or city neighborhood of his own, the locals often ply him for tales and advice.

Traders, like members of all classes, are not uniform. There are those who conduct business without ever leaving a table: usurers, goldsmiths, insurers. Some traders are hucksters peddling ogre-strength gnarskleather breechcloths and roc feather suits (you can fly!) from the back of a covered wagon. There are caravans that trade in delirium, slaves, and spells. There are traders who deal in intangibles: territory rights and mine claims and ruin hoard shares. And when nobles don't trust their advisors, they call in a trader to negotiate treaties, ransoms, and spell exchanges. But no matter if he travels or not, no matter the value of his goods, a trader lives by his words and his salesmanship. In the end, the trader may aim for gold, but he deals with people.

Play a trader if you want to:

- Reap profits.
- Risk everything on one caravan.
- Wield the art of the deal like a rapier.

*Adventure ideas.* When traders plan for adventure, they welcome it. An expedition to a recently discovered Age of Cartonnage tomb in order to recover a fortune in lapis lazuli artifacts? In an instant. A caravan through the Fyraj to deliver poultices to Chert and make a killing off the sea plague? Of course. Trad-

## SAMPLE VISION QUESTS

ROLL	COMPLEXITY (BY APPROX. TIME TO COMPLETE)	POSSIBLE VISION QUESTS
1	Over one year	Sack a major city
2	One year	Change the mind of a Low God
3	One year	Sew a headdress of wizards' tongues
4	Half a year	Slay a dragon
5	Half a year	Slay a giant in single combat
6	Half a year	Plant a field with spellstalks
7	Half a year	Track and slay an all-white descent cat
8	Half a year	Love a woman raised by wolves
9	One season	Break a griffon to your saddle
10	One season	Slay one hundred undead
11	One season	Hold a dragon in your hand
12	One season	Enslave a noble
13	One season	Eat steak boiled in the tears of troglodytes
14	Next new moon	Gaze upon the White Sea
15	Next new moon	Steal a wizard's child
16	Next new moon	Teach a wizard to hunt with a stone dagger
17	Next new moon	Climb Koshtra Noln.
18	Fortnight	Crash a zeppelin
19	Fortnight	Break every window in a nobleman's church and deface his altar
20	One week	Capture an assassin

ers are born to risk everything in grand schemes.

On the other hand, traders abhor unplanned adventures. Too bad for them that their gold attracts unplanned adventures on a regular basis: complications at court when two different nobles claim the same set of bowls from Oryn-ja; highwaymen raiding along the Kingsroad; wizards demanding suicide trading runs to the last family of sane wights living in the Oudren Miasma. Unplanned adventures destroy wealth.

*In the Kingdoms.* Traders wander four out of five seasons. They have a reputation as catalysts of change and heralds of new ideas. That is a dangerous reputation in the Old Claw, where kings measure their rule in centuries of stability.

In the north, traders move along the famed Free Road between Thyre and far Oryn-ja. This road skirts the northern edge of the Old Claw in the west, and marches further and further into the dawn-strange East as it goes. As its name suggests, the Free Road is free from tolls, taxes, and other predations perpetrated by kingsmen. As much as anywhere, the Free Road is home to traders.

But few traders stay exclusively on the Free Road. The lure of gold and the pressure of competition drives them to venture further south. In the Old Claw, there are two popular routes. The first is a sea route ferrying foodstuffs north and ore south. It runs a circuit putting into port at Muda-Tarsk, Kharvov, Azenahal, East Fire, Valte Riel, Rithaign, and, when necessary, Steerk. The second is a land route running along the Harvest Road and Kings Road through Avedine, Dresgilioch, and Hessek.

## TRADER ABILITIES

*To the heart.* You can see a man's inner heart, and you can crush it. Or inspire it, as you wish.

Once per scene per target, you can damage an Inspiration with a successful social attack, whether or not your opponent is at 0 Mood.

*Exotica.* Dropping anchor in sundry seaports, hitching your wagon to freezing iron rings in the northern mountains, and making stops at every hearth in between can teach you a lot. At every titled level, you gain a new ability that you have picked up from one of your foreign exposures:





## TRADER

LEVEL	TITLE	CUMULATIVE INCREASES	CUM. STYLES Fighting	CUMULATIVE CLASS ABILITIES
1	Clerk	-	1n	To the heart, exotica.
2		+1 Charisma	1a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot.
3		+1 Charisma	1a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot.
4		+1 Charisma	1a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader.
5	Trader	+1 Charisma	1a, 1n	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader.
6		+2 Charisma	1a, 1n	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell.
7		+2 Charisma	2a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell.
8		+2 Charisma	2a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell.
9		+2 Charisma	2a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell.
10	Far Trader	+2 Charisma	1m, 1a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell.
11		+2 Charisma	1m, 1a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell.
12		+3 Charisma	1m, 1a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell.
13		+3 Charisma	1m, 1a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell, friend in every port.
14		+3 Charisma	1m, 1a, 1n	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell, friend in every port.
15	Magnate	+3 Charisma	1m, 1a, 1n	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell, friend in every port, new society.
16		+3 Charisma	1m, 1a, 1n	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell, friend in every port, new society.
17		+3 Charisma	1m, 1a, 1n	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell, friend in every port, new society.
18		+4 Charisma	1m, 2a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell, friend in every port, new society.
19		+4 Charisma	1m, 2a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell, friend in every port, new society.
20	Merchant Prince	+4 Charisma	1m, 2a	To the heart, exotica, polyglot, leader, sell, friend in every port, new society.

As always, in the styles column, "a" means apprentice, "n" means neophyte, and "m" means master. You must be an apprentice of a style before you can become a master of that style.

- A familiar (p. 103). This makes you spell-bound.
- A Beast World ability (p. 96).
- An apprentice magic style (making you spell-bound). Magic is rare even in the trader's world. You may choose this only once.
- An apprentice fighting style. Combat training

demands your ultimate capital: time. You may choose this only twice.

- An extra social or shadow talent, scaled to the level of your highest-level talent.
- An increase of 2 in your organization's scope, efficiency, and one other score of your choice.

*Polyglot.* You learn a language at the proficien-



## TRADER CUMULATIVE TALENTS

LEVEL	TITLE	MINOR	MAJOR	GRAND
1	Clerk	-	-	-
2		-	-	-
3		1	-	-
4		1	-	-
5	Trader	2	-	-
6		2	-	-
7		3	-	-
8		3	-	-
9		2	1	-
10	Far Trader	2	1	-
11		1	2	-
12		1	2	-
13		-	3	-
14		-	3	-
15	Magnate	-	2	1
16		-	2	1
17		-	1	2
18		-	1	2
19		-	0	3
20	Merchant Prince	-	0	3

NB: A trader's talents are of any sort. He must always have at least one social talent.

cy level. At every new level title, you learn another language at the proficiency level and upgrade one old language to the fluent level. None of these languages count toward your normal history cap.

*Leader.* Your leadership bolsters your allies' spirits. Once per scene (or day) per person, you can raise a friend's Mood by 3 points with only a short conversation or even a simple gesture such as sharing a swig from your hip flask. Once you are a Magnate, you can use your leadership to raise an ally's Mood by 5, but still only once per scene (or day) per person.

*Sell.* Whether it is ivory flatware from Oryn-ja or a threat to scar a courtesan from ear to ear, no one sells it like you do. Once per scene, you can use your Trader level as a bonus die when you attempt to sell

something. This includes selling in the metaphorical sense; for example, convincing someone that your point of view is the correct one.

As a Far Trader, you can use the *sell* ability to impose yourself on a social opponent. When an opponent is at 0 Mood and you make a successful social attack against him, you can force him to take you or something about you as a point of Inspiration. This could be a fear of you, lust for you, hatred for you, or any other Inspiration depending on your roleplay. This happens in lieu of other effects, such as damaging an Inspiration. If the opponent has no room for new Inspirations, he abandons an old one and takes the new one at the first opportunity.

*Friend in every port.* Your journeys and your winning nature have brushed the world with your colors. No matter where you are, your organization can help you. Deep in a dungeon? Someone from your guild has left blazes and a cache. On a ship? Someone in the crew turns out to be a cousin of that orphan you saved from the "Summer Surprise" thunder drake stampede in Avedine.

*New society.* The long road has brought you to the doorstep of a new society or culture. Create an organization whose scope does not exceed your level. The organization must fit with your recent journeys, and you must explain why it has gone unnoticed until now. That organization is now a part of the campaign world. For example, you might create an armed legion that is marching on your enemy's castle, or a secret society of courtiers dedicated to assassinating the king. You discover a second new society when you become a Merchant Prince.

*Talents.* A trader's talents are of any sort. He must always have at least one social talent.

# WIZARD, WITCH

[MAGIC]

There are two laws of magic: "Magic hates magic," and "Magic, to be commanded, must be obeyed." The first describes interference, the second describes how magi must submit and become spellbound before they can attempt to control magic. But to many who are not spellbound, there is a third law of magic: Witches must burn.

Wizards and witches haunt the loneliest towers on the bleakest moors and the highest spires in the most uncaring cities. There, they struggle to control nature's true fury: magic. One mistake, and a thousand mothers might go blind, a thousand fathers spontaneously bleed to death. What hubris, to dabble with such forces! A hubris that leads inevitably to the third law of magic.

And yet witches persist, and men are willingly spellbound every day. Some seek the power of magic to save a loved one. Some seek the power of magic to burn the neighboring village. The reason is always important, always life or death. It has to be. If a witch is not powerful or hidden, she will burn.

A wizard:

- Throws fireballs.
- Visits nightmares.
- Burns for his sins.

NB: 'Wizard' usually, but not always, refers to a male; 'witch' always refers to a female. The abilities they gain are identical.

*Adventure ideas.* A wizard's style influences his adventuring choices. Battlecraft wizards find adventure on the battlefield, while dramba hougans plunge into dungeons and uncharted lands in search of ingredients and recipes for their cauldrons. With the right styles, a wizard is capable of meeting challenges in any number of arenas: guild halls, noble courts, tombs, battlefields, and ill-favored alleys.

Like fixers, wizards find adventure comes to them. The proverbial pitchfork-and-torch-bearing mob of peasants is always a threat. Kings seeking advice, rivals seeking to lower the spellbound density, and bitter souls seeking a weapon powerful enough to yield vengeance are just a few of those who might seek out



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## WIZARD

LEVEL	TITLE	CUMULATIVE INCREASES	CUM. STYLES Magic	CUMULATIVE CLASS ABILITIES
1	Prestidigitator	-	1a	Familiar.
2		+1 Magic	1a, 1n	Familiar.
3		+1 Magic	2a	Familiar.
4		+1 Magic	1m, 1a	Familiar.
5	Thaumaturge	+1 Magic	1m, 1a, 1n	Familiar, implement, arcane defense.
6		+2 Magic	1m, 1a, 1n	Familiar, implement, arcane defense.
7		+2 Magic	1m, 2a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense.
8		+2 Magic	2m, 1a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense.
9		+2 Magic	2m, 1a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense.
10	Wizard, Witch	+2 Magic	2m, 1a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life.
11		+2 Magic	2m, 1a, 1n	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life.
12		+3 Magic	2m, 2a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life.
13		+3 Magic	2m, 2a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life.
14		+3 Magic	3m, 1a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life.
15	Mage	+3 Magic	3m, 1a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life, famulus.
16		+3 Magic	3m, 1a, 1n	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life, famulus.
17		+3 Magic	3m, 1a, 1n	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life, famulus.
18		+4 Magic	3m, 2a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life, famulus.
19		+4 Magic	3m, 2a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life, famulus.
20	Archmage	+4 Magic	4m, 1a	Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spell-bound, wizard's life, famulus, arcane supremacy.

As always, in the styles column, "a" means apprentice, "n" means neophyte, and "m" means master. You must be an apprentice of a style before you can become a master of that style.



a wizard - and become irate if the wizard is not helpful enough.

Like rogues, wizards that do good must often remain anonymous. The rain troll swilling beer and swinging a battleaxe is a recognized hero; he returns to town and a honey pig is roasted in his honor. The seradynn mumbling incantations and crackling with subcutaneous lightning is an unrecognized hero; she returns to town and is as likely as the honey pig to be roasted. Wizard adventurers must find rewards other than adulations and memorial fountains.

*In the Kingdoms.* Wizards and witches are the most magical people in the known world, and as such, they are among the most feared, hated, and entreated. Common folk fear and rue magic. Nobles hunt outlaw magi zealously and persistently. The only exceptions – the only wizards not widely hunted - are noble wizards or their handpicked apprentices. In most Kingdoms, these are recognized as the sole legitimate users of magic. Any non-noble or designee of a noble who dares to use magic is an outlaw. In most kingdoms, the nobles are so jealous that the penalty for unlawful magic use is death. Noble and noble-designated wizardry is shielded from the commoners, but it is widely known that there are many spellcasters of all styles among the Kingdoms' nobles.

## WIZARD ABILITIES

*Familiar.* Choose a familiar from the list below. The familiar must also be an Inspiration in some manner.

A familiar is a small creature that serves its friend and master, to wit, you. Unless otherwise noted, familiars start with 0 Mood and have 1 Body, Strength 2, and all other characteristics 4. Their intellect is roughly equivalent to that of a human child. Familiars understand but cannot speak their master's native language. Familiars are spellbound.

The exact benefits conferred by a familiar are:

Mongoose – In combat, three times per scene, you may add a move to any action.

Cat – Increase your Quickness by one and your organization's Efficiency and Arcana scores by one.

Dwarf Bear –Has Str 6, Qck 6, and 3 Body.

## WIZARD CUMULATIVE TALENTS

LEVEL	TITLE	MINOR	MAJOR	GRAND
1	Prestidigitator	-	-	-
2		-	-	-
3		1	-	-
4		1	-	-
5	Thaumaturge	2	-	-
6		2	-	-
7		3	-	-
8		3	-	-
9		2	1	-
10	Wizard, Witch	2	1	-
11		1	2	-
12		1	2	-
13		-	3	-
14		-	3	-
15	Mage	-	2	1
16		-	2	1
17		-	1	2
18		-	1	2
19		-	0	3
20	Archmage	-	0	3

NB: A wizard's talents are magic.

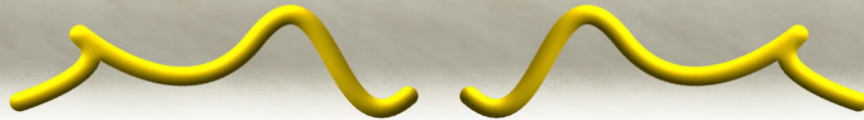
Dwarf bear plate armor is available in many styles at all quality levels (wealth level = quality level + 3).

Toad – add 1 to your Body score.

Floating Skull – The skull knows two Histories or skills of your choice at a level equal to your magic levels (minimum 4), and it can speak your language, often acerbically.

Raven – You can see through the raven's eyes 10 minutes/day to a range of 10 miles/magic level.

House Dragon – Your dragon grants you a 1 point Mood increase once per scene at a time of your



choosing by licking you in the face, playing hide-and-go-seek in another character's gear, or twanging on its tail like a sitar. It can also generate a 3" flame equivalent to a large candle at will.

A familiar cannot be killed or permanently removed from play unless your Inspiration for it is first reduced to zero. If the familiar is removed from play, then you may call a new one after one season passes.

Finally, such is the way of magic that familiicide is arguably beneficial. You may kill and eat your familiar to gain +1 to your magic score. You can never have another familiar again.

*Arcane defense.* You roll your Magic die as a defense die against all spells, even those that attack physically. For example, Stone Pincer Slash in the Battlecraft style attacks physically. Normally, the target rolls only its physical defense die against the Pincer. You roll your physical defense die as normal, but you also roll your Magic as a bonus defense die.

*Implement.* Once per scene, you may use your implement (staff, wand, orb, talisman, amulet; pick one) to grant one spell a bonus die equal to your magic levels, useable on any one roll. If you are in combat, the bonus die can be for attack or defense (magical defense, not physical). If you lose your implement, you must spend a season replacing it.

*Detect spellbound.* Once per scene per target, roll your Magic vs. the target's Magic. If you win, you know if he is spellbound or not. You can use this once per person per scene.

*Wizard's life.* You gain an extra major talent. Once you become an archmage, this extra talent becomes a grand talent. You now have four talents, one more than the normal maximum. As usual for wizards, your extra talent must be magic.

*Famulus.* Your familiar can activate your trapped spells, that is, it can read a scroll, burn a candle, grind an organ or any other action to release a spell that you have placed in an object (see page 34). It cannot release any spells trapped by other casters.

*Arcane supremacy.* Any time one of your spells hits someone with fewer levels than you, increase the damage by 1. Mastery maneuvers increase the damage by 2.

*Talents.* A wizard's talents are magic.

## WARRIOR [MARTIAL]

Warriors are soldiers, pit fighters, tavern brawlers, mercenaries, and bodyguards. Some warriors are charismatic generals, some are straight-ahead bashers, and still others are spellbound multi-talents. But all share one trait: their craft is violence.

Warriors laugh at those who say that violence never settles anything. Throughout history, nothing has ever settled more issues than violence has.

A warrior:

- \* charges into combat.
- \* commands and inspires troops.
- \* exploits armor and weapons to master the battlefield.

*Adventure ideas.* Gear is important to a warrior, and the desire to acquire sharper weapons and stronger armor is always an impetus to adventure. Ultimately, however, there are things far more important to a warrior than gear. Glory and honor motivate some. Many more fight for a cause. Whether this is one of your Inspirations or not, you should decide why your warrior risks his life in armed combat.

Warrior adventures are red-blooded and whiteknecked. Ringing steel, narrow escapes, and the cries of battle take the stage in physical, visceral adventures. Not for warriors the niceties and subtle wit of court. Warrior adventures are more likely to feature action: slaughtering zombies, hunting manticores on the borderlands, and charging enemy lines.

*In the Kingdoms.* Warriors are the most versatile and abundant armed combatants in the Kingdoms. They serve in the armies of Marnh and Syrbizond; they guard the Crypt August in Varteka; they bounce in the glitter clubs of Azenahal. It takes gold and time to train a warrior, and those two investments are what separate the warrior from the savage. Warriors are awarded respect and even friendship by the villagers and common folk of most kingdoms. The commoners respect the reliability of arms much more than they respect the vicissitudes of magic.



# WARRIOR ABILITIES

*Armor.* You exploit your armor to the fullest. Your armor can absorb 1 Body per quality point, rather than the normal 1 Body per two quality points.

*Combat mastery.* Any time you hit with a mastery maneuver against someone with fewer levels than you have martial levels, increase the damage by 2.

*Training.* At 6th level and again at 16th level, you gain +1 Body.

*War stories.* Once per scene, you can tell a war story. Instead of using your Charisma to make a social roll, roll your martial level die.

*Warrior's life.* You gain an extra major talent. Once you become a Living Legend, this extra talent becomes a grand talent. You now have four talents, one more than the normal maximum. As usual for warriors, your extra talent must be martial.

*Devastation.* If your weapon is greater Quality than your opponent's armor, your mastery maneuvers cause 3 additional points of damage. This does not stack with Combat Mastery.

*Combat supremacy.* Any time you hit someone with fewer levels than you, increase the damage by 1. Mastery maneuvers increase the damage by 4. This does not stack with Combat Mastery.

*Talents.* A warrior's talents are martial. After a warrior becomes a Hero, one of his talents may be social.



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## WARRIOR

LEVEL	TITLE	CUMULATIVE INCREASES*	CUM. STYLES Fighting	CUMULATIVE CLASS ABILITIES
1	Fighter	-	2a	Armor.
2		+1 Strength	2a, 1n	Armor.
3		+1 Strength	2a, 1n	Armor.
4		+1 Strength	1m, 1a, 1n	Armor.
5	Warrior	+1 Strength	1m, 1a, 1n	Armor, combat mastery.
6		+2 Strength	1m, 1a, 1n	Armor, training, combat mastery.
7		+2 Strength	1m, 2a	Armor, training, combat mastery.
8	Veteran	+2 Strength	2m, 1a	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories.
9		+2 Strength	2m, 1a	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories.
10	Hero	+2 Strength	2m, 1a, 1n	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life.
11		+2 Strength	2m, 1a, 1n	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life.
12		+3 Strength	2m, 2a	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life.
13		+3 Strength	2m, 2a	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life.
14		+3 Strength	3m, 1a	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life.
15	Master	+3 Strength	3m, 1a	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life, devastation.
16		+3 Strength	3m, 1a, 1n	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life, devastation.
17		+3 Strength	3m, 1a, 1n	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life, devastation.
18		+4 Strength	3m, 2a	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life, devastation.
19		+4 Strength	3m, 2a	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life, devastation.
20	Living Legend	+4 Strength	4m, 1a	Armor, training, combat mastery, war stories, warrior's life, devastation, combat supremacy.

As always, in the styles column, "a" means apprentice, "n" means neophyte, and "m" means master. You must be an apprentice of a style before you can become a master of that style.

\* A warrior may substitute a Quickness increase for any Strength increase.

## WARRIOR CUMULATIVE TALENTS

LEVEL	TITLE	MINOR	MAJOR	GRAND
1	Fighter	-	-	-
2		-	-	-
3		1	-	-
4		1	-	-
5	Warrior	2	-	-
6		2	-	-
7		3	-	-
8	Veteran	3	-	-
9		2	1	-
10	Hero	2	1	-
11		1	2	-
12		1	2	-
13		-	3	-
14		-	3	-
15	Lord, Master	-	2	1
16		-	2	1
17		-	1	2
18		-	1	2
19		-	0	3
20	Living Legend	-	0	3

NB: A warrior's talents are martial. After a warrior becomes a Hero, one of his talents may be social.

## STARTING HISTORY & GEAR

If you are creating a character, then remember to follow the steps on page 64. After choosing your species, race, characteristics, and class, you need to describe one History item that will function as your character's skill. It starts with a value of 4 (so you roll a d4 bonus die when attempting checks that are based on this skill).

Also, choose Inspirations for your character. Remember, the total point value of your Inspirations cannot exceed your Heart score.

Finally, equip your character. Your character starts at Wealth Level 2 unless your class says otherwise. He also gains additional gear as listed below.

## ADDITIONAL STARTING GEAR

CLASS	GEAR CHOICES
Chosen One	Two WL 3 items from any table
Engineer	One WL 4 and one WL 3 item from the Engineering or Weapon tables
Fixer	One WL 4 and one WL 3 item from the Alchemy tables
Noble, Courtesan	One WL 8 item from the Mounts & Vehicles list or the Building list, or one WL 5 item from any table
Rogue, Assassin	Two WL 3 items from any table
Savage	Two WL 3 items from the weapon or armor tables
Trader	Three WL 3 items from any table
Warrior	One WL 4 item from either the weapon or armor table, and one WL 3 item from the other table
Witch, Wizard	Two WL 3 items from any table



# CHAPTER TEN: TALENTS

To recap, here are the rules for talents.

- Talents have minor, major, and grand effects.
- The number and level of talents that you have is determined by your class's talent table in Chapter Ten. Talents require practice, and keeping up more than your class and level allow is not possible.
- You can drop any number of talents and learn any new ones for which you are eligible when you go up a level.

## MAGIC TALENTS

*Amulet.* An amulet is the wizard's shield and the witch's refuge. If you have the implement class ability and have selected the amulet, then you ignore the first two points of magic damage you take in a scene (minor), the first four points (major), or the first four points plus one point per magic attack from any creature below level 10 (grand).

*Curse.* You can trap your spell not just on an object but on another person. The trap comes with a contingent condition that triggers the spell. The trigger must be an action taken by the victim, not a natural event such as "every sunrise." "When the victim walks into the sunlight," however, does work. The trigger is chosen by you, the caster. The spell functions just as any other trapped spell, except that you must win a Magic vs. Magic roll to set the trap on your target, and nothing will trigger the spell except fulfillment of the trigger condition. You can place a fireball curse that blasts the victim if he sets foot in your city, for example, or a silence spell that activates if the victim starts to say your name. The curse lasts for one day (minor); one season (major); or permanently (grand). A grand curse may be triggered more than once, the other curses vanish after one use.

*Improved familiar.* Increase two of your familiar's characteristics by 2 (minor); two of your familiar's characteristics plus his Body by 3 (major) or all of your familiar's characteristics plus his Body by 3 (grand). At your GM's option, you may instead (or in addition) add an extension to a special ability, such as

adding clairaudience to the raven's clairvoyance, or a second language to the floating skull.

*Lace.* Roll your alchemy or poison skill against the Doom. If you succeed, you lace your spell with a poison that you are carrying. If and when your spell does damage, then the poison's effects are added to the spell's effects. If you fail your skill check, the spell has no effect and you must re-cast (minor). The major version of this talent grants 1 bonus damage to the poison; the grand version grants 2 bonus damage. The poison is consumed if and only if you succeed in your skill check.

*Ley lines.* Pick one location; your magic is concentrated in the land there. Three times per scene, you gain a d10 bonus die on a magic roll you make in that place (including magic attack and defense rolls). At the major level, choose a second location; at the grand level, choose a third location and increase the bonus die to a d12.

*Magic bloodlines.* As Fate would have it, magic pulses in your family line like blood in a vein waiting to be tapped. At the minor level, you gain one of the effects listed below (other effects are possible; consult with your group and your GM).

Minor effects:

- Glowing eyes (one candlepower each)
- Touch wilts plants
- Tattoo birthmark, shifts over weeks
- Thunderclap when you use an Inspiration
- Worms surface in your wake when you walk on soil and sometimes other surfaces
- Your blood is flammable as lantern oil

At the major level, in addition, you gain a bonus point to Strength, Quickness, Reason, or Charisma that you can assign anew each day.

At the grand level, in addition to the minor and major effects, you pick one activity: triggering an engineering item, casting a spell, handling animals, leaping, swimming, balancing, etc. You can never change this activity once you pick it. You force the Doom against that activity to increase by 2 for everyone in your area, always, excluding you.

Unlike other talents, magic bloodlines, once





chosen, cannot be "forgotten" (not when gaining a level nor any other time).

*Magical beast lord.* You and your organization can breed and raise magical beasts at a Wealth Level one below normal (minor), two below normal (major), or two below normal with Health and Spirit increased by 2 each (grand).

*Master and apprentice.* You can be a master and an apprentice. Both casters must have this talent, which functions for both at the master's level (minor, major, or grand). A master must have more magic levels than his apprentice.

At the minor level, master and apprentice do not count as spellbound for each other, that is, each never causes interference with the other's spells. The major level includes the minor level bonus and also raises the apprentice's Magic score to one below the master's score as long as the pair are in the same area. The grand level includes the major level and also grants each partner a new magic talent as long as both are in the same area.

The apprentice of your apprentice also counts as your apprentice, and so on, so long master-apprentice chains are possible. Each individual wizard can only have one immediate master and one immediate apprentice. Acquiring a new apprentice or master requires at least one week of attunement and practice.

A master can dismiss his apprentice's spells or force him to re-cast with a successful Magic vs. Magic roll; this is a free action. Most masters and apprentices write a covenant with elaborate clauses and subsections detailing their mutual responsibilities and retained rights under scores of different eventualities.

*Orb.* Orbs are the symbol of vision and perception. If you have the implement class ability and have chosen the orb, you roll a d20 when attempting to discern if someone is spellbound or not. You can also make a Magic vs. Magic (or Doom, in the case of environments) roll once per target per scene. With each roll, you detect any and all of the following: the presence of a spell, invisible or magically hidden objects, undead or other magical creatures (minor); all of the preceding plus the approximate Mood of a man, the approximate characteristics (Str, Qck, etc.) of

a man, the fighting and magic styles known by a man, and his surface thoughts over the last minute (major); all of the preceding plus the approximate strengths of a man's Inspirations (though not their source), the Histories of a man and their approximate strengths, and the surface memories of a man going back a number of hours equal to your magic levels (grand).

*Put your heart into it.* Temporarily decrease your Heart by 1 when you create a trapped spell (scroll, potion, etc.). You gain the Heart point back when the spell is released. When it is released, if the spell has been stored for more than one day, increase all the spell's numeric effects by 1 (minor), 2 (major), or 3 (grand).

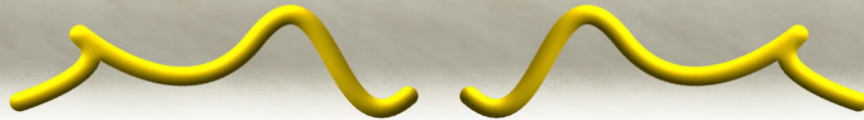
*Rush.* Increase your Mood by 1 whenever your Magic roll (or a magic attack roll) exceeds the Doom. You can benefit from this ability once per scene (minor), twice per scene (major), three times per scene (grand).

*Shadow caster.* You roll your magic levels as a bonus die when attempting to remain unhidden while casting a spell or when attempting to avoid being detected as spellbound. You can use this once per scene (minor), three times per scene (major), or an unlimited number of times (grand).

*Staff.* The staff is the symbol of wisdom. If you have the implement class ability and have chosen the staff, increase your Reason by 1 (minor), 2 (major), or 4 (grand).

*Talisman.* A talisman is a luck charm against chaos, especially the chaos of magic. If you have the implement class ability and have selected the talisman, you are never damaged by a wild magic surge that you create. In addition, you can force any surge that targets you to re-roll its attack roll once (minor) or twice (major). The grand version of this talent works as described above, twice per scene, but is effective against crisis surges as well.

*Vampiric implement.* When you cast a spell with your implement and cause damage to your target, you gain 1 Body or 1 Mood (your choice) (minor); or 1 Body and 1 Mood (major); or 1 Body, 2 Mood, and up to 2 points of characteristic damage you may have suffered (grand). In any case, you can never exceed



your maximum scores through this vampiric effect, and you can only benefit from this ability once per injury, that is, you cannot use this ability a second time until you have healed to your maximum and are again injured.

*Vizier.* You increase your organization's Arcana score by 2 (minor), 4 (major), or 6 (grand).

*Wand.* A wand is the most popular implement among arcane duelists. If your implement is the wand, you may use your class "implement" ability one extra time per scene as long as the extra use is against a spellbound creature (minor), two extra times per scene (major), or five extra times per scene (grand).

*Zur's feedback.* When you are hit by a wild surge, you can choose to inflict 1 point of damage on the caster who caused the surge (minor). The major form of Zur's feedback causes 2 points of Body damage and 1 point of Magic damage to the caster, and the grand form causes 3 points of Body damage and 3 points of Magic damage to the caster.

## MARTIAL TALENTS

*Atrocity.* Your violence unnerves even veterans. When you kill an enemy in battle, all remaining opponents in the area take 1 Mood damage (minor); take 1 Mood damage and take a Heart penalty die on their next attack (major); take 1 Mood damage, take a Heart penalty die on all rolls next round, and must make a Heart check against the Doom or rebalance (grand).

*Brutal slayer.* Pick one type of enemy: undead, giants, descent cats, troglodytes, dragons, etc. Work with your GM to find an appropriate category for the campaign. Humans and trolls are categories that are too broad, but "Earl Montjaune's Personal Guard" or "Templars of the Sun Goddess" may be appropriate for your campaign.

When you hit a target of your chosen type with a mastery maneuver and that foe has three or fewer levels, compare your Strength score to his total Mood + Body (before calculating damage from the blow). If your Strength is equal to or greater than that total, you slay your foe (minor). Upgrade this to "six or fewer levels" at the major level. Upgrade this to "nine

or fewer levels" and pick a second type of enemies at the grand level. You cannot take this talent twice and thereby gain more slayer target types, nor can you have this talent and Precise Slayer. Too much concentration and single-minded focus is required.

*Dugray's feint.* When executing a mastery maneuver while wielding a one-handed weapon, you can add a dQck feint attack. It does no damage, but if it hits, your opponent is forced to rebalance. You can use this feint once per scene (minor), three times per scene (major), or with every mastery attack (grand).

*Field marshal.* When you are in command of a legion in battle, you contribute one extra command point four times per battle (minor); every round (major); or every round and you can make reasonable hero actions while still contributing command points (grand).

*Fleet commander.* One zeppelin, naval, or siege unit gains +1 damage on all attacks under your command (minor); up to three such units gain +1 damage on all attacks under your command (major); up to five such units gain +1 damage on all attacks and a free move of 1 area each turn (grand).

*Great weapon overpower.* When attacking with a mastery maneuver while wielding a two-handed weapon, add a dStr attack to your normal attack roll(s). If you hit, your opponent takes a Strength penalty die on all physical rolls next round (physical attacks, defenses, athletic skill or History checks, etc.). You can use this attack once per scene (minor), three times per scene (major), or with every mastery attack (grand).

*Hold ground.* You gain your Strength as a bonus die when resisting attempts to move you in combat. You can use this talent once per scene (minor), three times per scene (major), or an unlimited number of times per scene (grand).

*Improved critical.* Your critical hits do +3 rather than +2 damage (minor); +4 damage (major); +4 damage and you crit when your opponent rolls a 1, 2, or 3 rather than just a 1 (grand, and note that you still must roll in the top half of your attack range).

*Intimidate.* You can roll your Strength instead of Charisma as a social attack die whenever you attempt to intimidate your opponent. You can do this once (minor), twice (major), or an unlimited number



(grand) of times per scene.

*Hammer knockback.* When attacking with a mastery maneuver while wielding a two-handed, blunt weapon such as a maul or great hammer, you may add a dStr attack against your target, pushing your opponent one area away if you hit. You may do this once per scene (minor); three times per scene (major); or with every mastery attack (grand).

*Martial bloodlines.* As Fate would have it, you are the scion of a family tree rooted in blood and blossoming with violence. You learn an extra fighting style at the neophyte level (minor); at the apprentice level (major); and at the master level (grand). Unlike other talents, martial bloodlines, once chosen, cannot be "forgotten" (not when gaining a level nor any other time).

*Measure of a man.* Roll your martial levels die against the Doom. On a success, you can determine a creature's approximate Body score, Mood score, and martial levels (minor); also his approximate Strength, Quickness, and gear quality (major); also, if you observe him in combat, which fighting styles he knows, which styles he has mastered, and any combat-oriented talents he has (grand).

*Parry.* When wielding a one-handed weapon without a shield, you gain an additional dQck defense die. You can use this ability once per scene (minor), three times per scene (major), or three times per scene plus with every mastery maneuver (grand).

*Precise slayer.* As *brutal slayer* above, but use Quickness rather than Strength.

*Rip and break.* When you hit with a mastery maneuver, you can convert one point of the damage to characteristic damage (Strength, Quickness, or Reason). With the major talent, you can convert up to two points to any two characteristics (out of Strength, Quickness, or Reason, no more than one point per characteristic), and as a grand talent, you can convert up to three points of damage to one point to all three characteristics. You cannot use *rip and break* at the same time that you use another mastery maneuver talent (such as scimitar dervish, hammer knockback, etc.).

*Scimitar dervish.* When attacking with a mastery maneuver while wielding a scimitar, you may

make one extra dQck attack against the same or a different target. You may do this once per scene for one point of damage (minor); three times per scene for two points (major); or with every mastery attack for two points of damage (grand).

*Shield bulwark.* When executing a mastery maneuver and wielding a shield, you gain an additional dStr defense die for you and one ally in your area. You may use this once per scene (minor); three times per scene (major); or with every mastery maneuver (grand).

*Smith.* When crafting a weapon, armor piece, engineering item, siege item, building or fortification, the cost of creating the item is only 40%, rather than 50%, of the item's gold value. Also, reduce by one day the amount of time you must wait before attempting to add another quality point to the item (minor); reduce that time by two days and ignore any critical failure rolls (major); as the major talent, plus increase the final value of the item by two quality levels (grand).

*Steadfast.* When someone tries to damage your Mood during combat, you gain a bonus Heart die to defend, once per scene (minor); three times per scene (major); or on every attempt (grand).

*Sweep the leg.* When attacking with a mastery maneuver while wielding a pole arm, spiked chain, whip, or similar weapon, or while fighting unarmed, you may add an additional dQck trip attack against your target, forcing him to rebalance if you hit. You may do this once per scene (minor); three times per scene (major); or with every mastery attack (grand).

*Tactical commander.* When you are in command of a legion in battle, you can use your organization's Force as a bonus die for a non-siege unit's attack roll once per unit (minor); for a unit's attack or defense roll once per unit (major); for a unit's attack and defense roll once per unit, including siege units (grand).

*The bigger they are.* When you slay a creature significantly larger than man-sized, you can cause its hemorrhaging corpse to fall on an enemy. This is a d12 attack for 3 damage against one target (minor); or a d20 attack for 3 damage against up to three targets (major); or a d20 attack for 5 damage + rebalance against up to five targets (grand). The targets must be man-sized or smaller.





## SHADOW TALENTS

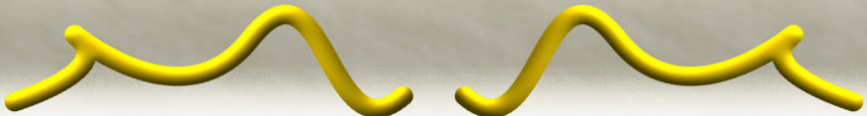
*Byways.* You can lead a chase through dangerous territory: alleys littered with broken glass, abandoned fixer labs dripping with acid, or the most rat-infested sewer tunnels. When you are in the lead of a chase, you make everyone else roll a supplemental Chase roll against the Doom. Those that fail take 2 points of damage. You can use this ability once per chase (minor); three times per chase (major); or three times per chase against a Doom increased by 2 (grand).

*Combat pick.* When you disarm your opponent in combat, you can make an opposed Quickness check. If you win, you can snatch from your opponent his weapon or one small object worn or carried in sight and accessible (GMs must judge this, as always).

Examples of such items are dangling earrings, necklaces, fobs, or scabbarded or holstered sidearms such as main-gauches or spare wheellocks. With the minor talent, you can take the disarmed man's weapon; with the major talent, you can take the weapon and a small item. With the grand talent, you can take any item the other man is carrying, so long as it is small enough to snatch with one hand.

*Death study.* Each round that you remain completely hidden while the target of your study is in combat, you uncover weaknesses in his technique and add +1 damage to your next strike. If you are spotted, your opponent becomes aware of you, you are forced to rebalance, or if you miss with your strike, you lose the bonus damage. You can gain a maximum bonus damage of 4 from this maneuver (minor); maximum of 6 but you gain two per round (major); 9 but you gain 3 per round (grand).

*Gambler.* Add 4 bonus points to any History



that involves gambling. In addition, during a gambling scene, you can re-roll any die or re-draw any card once (minor), three times (major), or every time (grand).

*Harrowing.* Often useful as a threat during interrogations, you can create such a nightmarish duration vile for a captive that he is forced to take a scar (see p. 30) if he does not acquiesce to your demands. The art of scarring the psyche as well as the body is difficult. You can give any particular captive such torture no more than once (minor) or three times (major). Or, it must be said, an unlimited number of times (grand), which leaves the captive a husk of a being, unable to recall any of its own history, only remembering the pain and fear you have left in its place.

*Improved critical.* Your critical hits do +3 rather than +1 damage (minor); +4 damage (major); +4 damage and you crit when your opponent rolls a 1, 2, or a 3 rather than just a 1 (you still must roll in the top half of your attack range).

*Insidious fear.* When a character uses an Inspiration and still fails his roll against you - whether it be in a social attack, chase, combat, or any other scene - you may make an immediate social attack against him. If you win, that character must take one Inspiration point of Fear for you. If he is already at his maximum Inspiration limit, this has no effect. You can use this once per scene (minor), three times per scene (major), or an unlimited number of times per scene (grand). As a grand talent, there is no secondary social attack necessary; anyone who fails a roll against you after using an Inspiration instantly gains Fear for you.

*Lost.* You add 4 points to your organization's Shadow score when it attempts to hide information, smuggle contraband, sequester a dignitary, or, in general, prevent something from being found. With the major talent, add 6 points; with the grand talent, add 8 points. If the bonus points put your Shadow score over 20, you gain a second d20 bonus die instead.

*Lucre.* Any time you hit another organization in a shadow war, you gain ten times their scope in gold (minor); twenty times their scope in gold (major); forty times their scope in gold (grand).

*Misdirect.* When someone fails to see you (that is, you win a hide roll against him), you can misdirect him. He thinks you went in a direction of your choice

(minor); as previous plus you were carrying, doing, or saying something of your choice (major); as previous or he sees another person or creature entirely moving in another direction, doing something different, etc. (grand).

*Poisoner.* Increase the quality level of any poison you use by 1 (minor), 2 (major), or 4 (grand). This stacks with the Fixer's alchemy ability (and any other relevant ability), but only to a maximum of 6 points higher than listed.

*Precise slayer.* As *brutal slayer* above (p. 110), but use Quickness rather than Strength.

*Rend.* When you hit with a mastery maneuver while wielding a piercing or slashing weapon, you can convert one point of the damage to characteristic damage (Strength, Quickness, or Reason). With the major talent, you can convert up to two points of damage to one point to any two characteristics (out of Strength, Quickness, or Reason, no more than one point per characteristic), and as a grand talent, you can convert up to three points of damage to one point to all three characteristics. You cannot use *rend* at the same time that you use another mastery maneuver talent (such as scimitar dervish, hammer knockback, etc.).

*Right people.* You know all the right people. When you or your organization attempts to gain information that can be had by contacting other members of the underworld, lower the Doom by 1 (minor), by 3 (major), or by 6 (grand). Dooms of 7 or higher are rare; the grand version of the talent is meant to imply that your friends in the underworld can find out nearly any "normal secret" information, leaving only the "world-changing secret" information as a challenge. You may use this talent once per topic per week.

*Shadow general.* When your organization is waging a shadow war, you cause one bonus point of damage when you hit an enemy organization. You can use this ability once every three attacks (minor); once every other attack (major); or every attack (grand).

*Shutter conscience.* A selective memory is a sinner's friend. You have forgotten more pain, heart-break, and atrocity than most people have ever seen. After a round finishes, you forget 1 Mood or Inspiration damage you took during that round (minor), 3 Mood or Inspiration damage (major), or all Mood and





Inspiration damage (grand). You cannot use this ability to recoup any Mood you spent yourself or Mood lost to something other than damage. You may do this once per scene; you pick the round immediately after it has finished.

*Sprint and snipe.* In a chase, when you attack with a ranged attack and hit, you deal 1 extra point of damage. Use this ability three times per chase (minor); every round (major); every round for 2 extra points (grand).

*Trap artist.* Increase your relevant die by one size when rolling to see if you successfully set a trap (minor); in addition, the trap does 2 extra points of damage (major); in addition to all of the above, the trap affects two more targets or, if it is already an area of effect trap, it affects a second area (grand).

*Unscathed.* You are accustomed to sliding through curls of riotwire and tumbling off balconies. In a chase, you can ignore two points of damage caused by the environment. You can split these points up over different rounds. With the major talent, you can ignore up to four points of damage, and with the grand talent up to eight points.

*World is a weapon.* You are adept at environment tricks. You can add an environment trick to any other chase action at no cost (no modifier to the Doom or the Chase Difficulty, no increased penalty if your trick fails). In combat, you can add an environment trick to any maneuver that includes a move. You can do this once per scene (minor), twice per scene (major), or three times per scene (grand).

## SOCIAL TALENTS

*Administrator.* Increase by 1 the score of one of your organization's characteristics (Force, Arcana, or Shadow). At the major level, increase it by 3; at the grand level, increase it by 6.

*Audience chamber.* You have an audience chamber, be it a throne room, battlefield command pavilion, or the back room at the Shadows and Sparrows. When in your audience chamber, your social attacks affect everyone that you are speaking to, up to three people (minor), six people (major), or everyone in the audience chamber (grand).

*Bad.* You're not just bad for a little while, you're bad for good. Pick one negative reputation that you have. You gain a positive reputation at half that value (round up, minimum 4) with a group of your choice. The group must be one that is logically pleased by your negative reputation (usually the enemy of your enemy). With the major talent, pick two negative reputations to gain partnered positive reputations; with the grand talent, pick three. If you ever lose the negative reputations, you also lose the associated positive ones.

*Bolstering wit.* Your insults wound their target but amuse everyone else. Once per scene, when you cause Mood damage with a social attack, you also grant 2 Mood points to one ally (minor), three allies (major), all allies (grand).

*Contempt.* You have no time to waste on your social inferiors. You deal one additional point of Mood damage with every social attack against a target with less than 3 levels (minor); against any target with 6 or fewer levels (major); against any target with 9 or fewer levels (grand).

*Deflect the blame.* It's all their fault. You can blame one of your reputation groups instead of yourself, sacrificing an entire positive reputation (it must have at least two points in it) to avoid up to four points of Mood or Reputation damage (from a single attack). You must narrate how you are scapegoating the faction. At the major level, you sacrifice 5 reputation points (you need not lose the entire reputation), and at the grand level, 3 reputation points. You can use this ability once per scene.

*Emotional paralysis.* After you win a social scene, your opponent (pick one if there are many) cannot gain Mood for one day (minor); two days (major); a week (grand). The grand talent also prevents the opponent from gaining Inspiration points.

*Fashion kills.* Treat any fashion item that you use in a social scene as one Quality point higher than it really is (minor); two points higher (major); four points higher (grand).

*Fashion maven.* You can use a second fashion item for a social attack or defense die in a scene (minor); a second and a third item (major); or three items including the same one twice (grand).





*Inspirational leader.* A unit in your army can roll your Charisma as a bonus die on any roll. You can use this ability once per battle (minor), twice per battle (major), or four times per battle (grand).

*Keen eye.* Roll your social levels die or your Reason against the Doom. On a success, you can ascertain a character's Mood, Wealth Level, and home region simply by studying him as he interacts with others for a few minutes. With the major talent, you learn all of the above, plus all class titles he has earned and the general areas of his Inspirations (but not their specific sources). With the grand talent, you learn all of the above, and you can adapt your approach so that, when interacting with the target of your study, your Charisma is two points higher than normal. (NB: The preceding assumes the target of your study is not trying to actively conceal his nature. If he is, then rather than roll against the Doom, make an opposed Charisma check.)

*Manager.* Increase the Efficiency of your Organization by 1 (minor), 3 (major), 5 and increase another characteristic by 2 (grand).

*Moral support.* You can allow an ally to roll your Charisma as a bonus social defense die. You can do this once per scene (minor), twice per scene (major), or four times per scene (grand).

*Moved by propinquity.* If the focus of your Inspiration is another person and she is present in your area, you may use that Inspiration one extra time per scene. With the major talent, you can do the same but your Inspiration need only be less than a handful of areas away; with the grand talent, you can use this ability as long as you saw your Inspiration sometime today.

*Nemesis.* Pick one of your social tormentors. When resisting her or attacking her in a social scene, treat your Charisma as if it were two points higher (minor); four points higher (major); or six points higher (major).

*Public relations.* You are a master at public relations. For every positive reputation you have at 7 or higher, you gain a gift from the admiring multitudes. If your reputation is 7 or higher, you gain one item of Wealth Level 9 or less (minor). Impoverished populations may present you with land, livestock, slaves, advantageous marriages, or lionizing skalds instead of an item listed in the Equipment chapter. In addition, if your reputation is 11-15 and you have the major version of this talent, you gain a statue and a holiday. The statue grants you a new reputation, Memorialized (6), with anyone who sees the statue. In a region that celebrates your holiday, on that day, your maximum Mood increases to 6 above its maximum, and you receive as tribute one item of Wealth Level equal to your character level. Finally, if your reputation is 16 or more and you have the grand version of this talent, your public clamors for you to be granted a noble title or for you to be beatified. As a living saint, you roll a d20 bonus die in each and every dealing with the Church, you may claim canon law regardless of location, and you command the respect and awe of a saint (which the GM must judge).

*Reasoned defense.* You can defend against a social attack using your Reason rather than your Charisma. You can do this once per encounter (minor); three times per encounter (major); every time (grand).

*Ridicule.* When you make a social attack against anyone whose highest Wealth Level fashion item is 4 or more levels below your highest Wealth Level fashion item, you do one additional point of damage. You can do this once per scene (minor); three times (major); or with every attack (grand).

*Rumors.* Once per week, you can launch a rumor with sufficient traction that it damages or bolsters someone's reputation. Roll your Charisma against the Doom (to help) or your opponent's Charisma (to harm). If you succeed, you alter one of your target's reputations by one, up or down according to the rumor you spread. This is a minor talent. The major talent allows you to hit two different targets in a week; the grand allows you to hit three different targets per week.

*Secret sharer.* You tempt people into divulging their secrets. When a person confides a secret in you,



she increases her maximum Mood by 1. This lasts until the secret is no longer a secret (whether you sold it or whether it was exposed through another eventuality). At the minor level, you can share one secret each from three people; at the major level, you can share two secrets each from four people; and at the grand level, you can share two secrets each from a number of people equal to your Charisma.

*Spiritual leader.* Your organization restores 2 Spirit points rather than 1 when it rallies a troop or unit in a battle. You can use this ability once per unit (minor); twice per unit for 3 Spirit points (major); or an unlimited number of times for 3 Spirit points (grand).

*Stake your word on it.* Choose a reputation of yours that covers your target and attack him with a social attack. If you hit, you do one extra point of damage, but if you miss, you lose one reputation point. Per attack, you can risk up to one reputation point (minor), two reputation points (major), or four reputation points (grand). Each risked reputation point causes 1 extra point of damage; if you miss, all risked reputation points are lost. You can use this talent once per scene per target.





## CHAPTER ELEVEN: ORGANIZATIONS & RESEARCH

Famous organizations in the Claw include the Church; the 23 Daughters of Asenkut Ragul; and the Rithaign Factors, Haulers, and Panhandlers.

Organizations provide another level of play, allowing you to "zoom out" the focus of your campaign to include wars, shadow wars, cultural decline and

advancement, subverting the economy of a kingdom or bolstering it.

There is of course more. While your sword arm reaches only so far, organizations allow you to wield a lever large enough to move the world.





## WHY ORGANIZATIONS?

The big picture answer is, of course, "Because they make the game more fun." If they are not making your game more fun, get rid of them.

Here's where you can find some of this fun.

- They make characters more powerful. Many times after a campaign has reached a high level of PC power, the players look to influence their world in ways beyond swinging a sword and stabbing a chimera in the goat eye. Organizations provide that world influence. A priest is a priest, but a priest with a congregation is a political power.

- They also make characters more vulnerable. Players become attached to their characters' organizations. GMs can exploit this, threatening organizations to challenge players and add tension to the campaign.

- Organizations add another layer to the world. While ultra-simulationism is not the goal, organizations do add to verisimilitude, suspension of disbelief, and immersion. Each organization makes the milieu more nuanced, more worthy of exploration, more real.

- Organizations empower unique villains. The unctuous city councilman who wouldn't know a sword from a goosequill is no nemesis in an RPG system whose only conflict resolution is armed combat. But the useless-in-combat adventurer-hating councilman becomes a recurring villain like no other when you add an organization that can torment the PCs with taxes, bogus criminal charges, city watch harassment, the Inquisition, and military drafts and impressment.

- Organizations bring options to classes that traditionally plateau at high levels. Can a high-level wizard of the Druidic school summon a plague that terrorizes an entire barony? You bet. Fun! Can a high-level rogue do that? Nope. But his thieves guild can loose anarchy on the barony, sending thugs to haul farmers out of bed in the middle of the night, burn granaries, bleed cattle and maim random travelers. Fun! (For a certain type of rogue, anyway.)

Can you do this without organizations? Sure. But organizations give you a quick, fast-paced way to do so. Are the PCs heading off to an audience at the Baron's chateau, but you want to remind them of

the enemies they've made in the Dryght? Then, "The Dryght have been rumormongering again, and merchants bite their thumbs at you as you walk by. Roll your Charisma or lose 2 Mood. The Dryght get a 9 on their Shadow roll." And there you have it - quick targeting, quick result, a layer of depth to the world, and a recurring villain popping up!

## ORGANIZATION CHARACTERISTICS

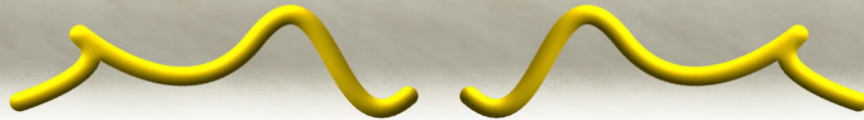
Each organization has these characteristics.

*Force.* Force is physical might. A church's Force score might derive from its templars and the crusaders it can call up, while a barony's Force score might derive from the baron's knights, mercenaries, and soldiers. Force also represents force of spirit, and your ability to resist attacks upon battlefield morale. You might roll Force to defend a castle, hold a border, sweep the thieves out of the docks district, or maintain open shipping lanes through a hostile Kingdom's waters.

*Arcana.* Arcana measures the organization's magical power. Magic is dangerous, and most organizations have no facility with it. Others clutch after magic with obsessive zeal, seeking the secrets that Kings and Queens hold in jealous hearts. You might roll Arcana to change the weather, to prevent a rival organization from controlling the magic in the area, or to increase or decrease the number of freak magical monster births to unsuspecting mothers.

*Shadow.* An organization's Shadow score is its power in darkness, its power to commit acts never meant to see the light of day, and its ability to escape the consequences of its actions. You might roll Shadow to steal from another organization, spy on an individual, or to cover up your tracks so that no one knows who has been working against them.

*Efficiency.* Efficiency determines how quickly your organization can accomplish tasks and how many resources it burns through in doing so. Efficiency can also rule out some tasks as too difficult. Finally,



Efficiency is also transparency. That is, the more efficient an organization is, the more easily it allows its members to communicate information and wealth. You might roll Efficiency to act before another organization can, to conclude a deal without wasting gold, or to issue multiple commands during wartime.

*Scope.* Scope represents the reach and influence of the organization. The material size of the organization as measured in population, buildings, and territory influences its Scope. Other factors also influence Scope: contacts, favors, secrets, spells, artifacts, enslaved monsters, and more. One religion may have a scope of 15 because it has many temples and a congregation spread throughout the countryside. Another religion with only one small temple and a small congregation may still have a scope of 15 because it has a network of allies at court, a strong bloodline in two noble houses, and a millenia-old alliance with a secret society of assassins.

An organization's characteristics can be diminished. An invading army can burn your fields, raiders can steal your artifacts, and whispers in the night can turn your agents. It is also possible to have a large Scope and yet have little real power. This represents a "hollow man" organization, one that was once great, or that has a widely known name and reputation, and yet has little power to back up its reputation. Hollow men result when an organization's Scope is large but its Force, Arcana, Shadow or Efficiency have been reduced to almost meaningless levels.

An organization is eradicated and removed from play if its Scope and Force are both brought to 0. Scope, Force, and Shadow must all be brought to 0 to remove a Thieves Guild or Secret Society.

## PLAYER CONTROL

Through their characters, players control organizations. At low levels, this may seem a contradiction. If Geoffrey is newly knighted in the Impale, how could he be in charge of his entire knightly order? The answer is: he's not in charge of the entire order, he's in charge of a little piece of it. His squire, his banner man or page, his mount, and a drunk blacksmith are probably the extent of his organization when he begins.

Instead of writing down "The Impale" as his organization on his character sheet, he could write down, "Western Patrol, Twenty-Sixth Wyverns Errant, Order of the Impale." As he gains status, followers, and allies, he gains more and more power within the order. When he rolls his organization die, the aid might come from his own small faction within the large organization, or it might rely on allies in the large organization itself. His organization's characteristics represent both his own faction's abilities and his ability to call upon the larger organization for aid. For example, when Nassar Benbarak rolls the Force die from his Dynni Inquisition organization, using it as a bonus die when attempting to intimidate foreigners, he relies on the name and power of the entire organization. When he rolls a Dynni Inquisition Shadow die when attempting to smuggle a spell past the harbor-master at Muda-Tarsk, he might use people from his own faction within the larger Inquisition. In each case, he rolls the same size die, but the source of the power is slightly different.

Eventually, when a character's faction is equal in Scope to the entire organization's Scope, the character can challenge for leadership of the entire organization. Succession struggles and power intrigues often attend a PC's rise to prominence. The GM should present grand roleplay opportunities in this case! The GM should also present roleplay opportunities if a player wants to go higher up in his organization for more power than his own characteristic dice provide.

Of course, it is also possible, even common, for a PC to found an organization that begins very small. In that case, the PC does not command a faction within the organization, he commands the full organization itself. As the Scope increases, so does the size of the organization.



# ORGANIZATION ACTIONS

Organizations can act once per scene (or twice per week outside of scene order play). If there ever is a question as to which organization acts first, the competing organizations roll an Efficiency check.

An organization can only act in a region if it has its headquarters or at least one building in the region.

Organizations act in two ways. First, they can support a character and provide a bonus die on a roll. Second, they can act independently.

*Example.* Nicolette Themis, the Fire Sage of Kharkov, is trying to corner a trader at a party and winnow a secret about the Dragon Isles. She narrates

how her trading company has fed her information about her target's preferences in women. She dresses accordingly, flirts outrageously, and, when the time comes, rolls her organization's Shadow die as a bonus die along with her social attack.

*Example.* The Red Cheroot thieves guild is trying to abduct a kingsman to be run through the gauntlet as entertainment at this year's All Below. They roll a 9 on their Shadow die, beating the Doom, so the GM rules that they abduct a minor functionary in the king's bureaucratic apparatus.

## ORGANIZATIONS: EXAMPLES OF AID

SCENE TYPE	ACTION	BENEFIT
Chase	Player narrates: Organization maintains a safe house here, so PC knows the area well	Roll Shadow as bonus die on chase roll.
	Player narrates: Organization regularly roughs up the locals in this part of town, so they get out of my way.	Roll Force as bonus die on chase roll.
	An organization skiff is tied up at the docks.	Open a new path across the water in the chase.
Social	Organization digs up dirt on opposing barrister preceding a trial before the Marquis.	If a Shadow vs. Doom roll succeeds, you know a secret about your opponent
	Organization's tailors work on your outfit.	Roll Efficiency as bonus die on one social roll
	Party is hosted at organization's summer villa.	If an Efficiency vs. Doom roll succeeds, you gain 1 Mood.
Investigation	Network of organization informants funnels rumors your way.	Roll Efficiency and Shadow as bonus dice to gather information.
	Organization whispers about you in the right ears.	Increase a reputation by one die on this investigation.
	Requisition orders go through.	Organization loans a zeppelin with ten cordsmen.
War	Local members provide crack snow gear.	One troop ignores terrain modifiers.
	Organization assists with command and control.	Roll your Efficiency as a bonus die on any non-combat roll.
	Local scouts run recon during the battle.	Roll Shadow as a bonus die when looking for enemy secret troops





## HOW TO USE ORGANIZATIONS IN ACTUAL PLAY

First, don't use them if you don't like them. It's your game. Or, use them as pure fluff, or something with a minimal story bonus. For example, only PCs with scope 5 or higher organizations are invited to the Fifth Season Royal Ball, or, no woman of the upper class will marry someone without a Wealth Level 10 and an organization of scope 8.

But if you like organizations as I do, then you'll want to use them for more. Some people immediately grok organizations. If you're having a little trouble, though, here's the way to think of it.

Remember when you were first learning to play RPGs. You had a character, and maybe you asked, "What can my guy do?" I hope that your GM said something like, "Whatever you want. Just tell me what you want to do."

Do that same thing with organizations. What can your organization do? Whatever you want. Just tell your GM, and he'll judge. You have Force, Arcana, Shadow, and Efficiency scores. Use them to roll opposed checks and to roll against the Doom. When you attack another organization, use the rules in Chapter Six for wars and shadow wars.

See the table on the preceding page for examples of organization action by scene type. Some organizations are more suited to certain actions than others, of course. By no means take the table as a limiting or even prescriptive treatment of organizations. They are yours to use as best fits your campaign and your play style.

## ORGANIZATION VS. ORGANIZATION & PC

Violent conflict between organizations is either a war or a shadow war. See Chapter Six for the war rules.

Conflict between an organization and a PC is asymmetric. Rarely can a PC harm an organization. Organizations are too diffuse to target with a sword and too expansive to curtail with a single man's admonition. A PC needs people to listen to him - followers of his own, his own cabal or tribe or legion - to bring down an organization.

Organizations, however, can affect a single PC. The typical attack is harassment. An armed legion sends goons to beat the PC's sister. A thieves' guild plants a severed finger in the PC's drink at a tavern. Roll the organization's relevant die against the PC's Charisma or Reason, as the GM judges, with a bonus defense die, probably Shadow or Force, from the PC's organization (defending in this way does not count as the organization's action for the scene or week). If the attacking organization wins, it causes 1 Mood damage, or perhaps 2 Mood damage for especially keen attacks.

Other attacks and effects are possible. Thieves' guilds can steal wealth levels; noble houses can ruin reputations; secret societies can hide forbidden knowledge or assassinate key allies. Resolve these attacks in the same way, namely, the organization rolls its relevant characteristic against the PC's relevant characteristic. The PC's roll can be aided by a skill or his own organization. Attacks such as these can make fearsome foes of NPCs who don't know a single fighting or magic style.

Finally, consider that the Third Ward Baker's Guild of Steerk might be powerful in the Third Ward of Steerk, but probably does not have the clout to harass a peer of Avedine. An organization that is 5 or more scope below a character's level cannot harm the character.



## WEALTH LEVEL

Organizations track their wealth level just as characters do.

Organizations are not as efficient as individual characters are. An organization can only hold and maintain two items of its wealth level and two items of each wealth level below that. The rest of the organization's wealth is tied up in maintenance, transaction, and other costs.

To bring an organization to the next wealth level requires the same amount of gold as an individual requires, namely, the current wealth level multiplied by 1000. For example, to go from 6th to 7th level requires 6000 gold.

Like individuals, organizations can buy items with cash instead of using wealth level. The table on page 56 lists the gold to wealth level conversions.

A character can have his organization purchase items for him, although this may upset others involved with the organization (investors, rival members, superiors). A character may also take gold out of his organization by subtracting one from its wealth level. This returns to him one-half the gold needed to advance to the old wealth level. For example, the southern family line of a distinguished noble house is at wealth level 9. The matriarch subtracts 1, leaving the noble house family at wealth level 8, but giving her 4000 gold (half what is needed to advance from wealth level 8 to 9).

Any financial action, including selling off a wealth level or making a trade with another organization or individual, counts as one of the organization's actions for the week.

## TROOPS

An armed legion can muster, command, and maintain as many troops as it can afford. Other organizations cannot have a number of troops exceeding their Force score.

Moving all of its troops – or just a few – on the overland map counts as one of the organization's actions for the week (or scene, in scene order play). Troops continue on the orders you've given them until they reach their destination or some other event occurs that would cause them to stop, such

as running across enemy forces. You do not need to use an organization action to keep a troop moving. It moves on until it hits its destination or receives orders directing it elsewhere.

## JOINING FORCES

All for one! Sometimes the players want every PC to belong to the same organization. Four musketeers working for the archbishop, perhaps, or five rogues charming and backstabbing their way up the guild ranks, or four students at the same wizard school.

This is a fortunate situation because common player interests allow the GM to challenge all of the players at once. She does not need to create an armed legion to challenge the warrior's armed legion, plus a Low God cult to challenge the priest's temple, plus a secret society to challenge the chosen one's rise. Instead, one challenge fits all. (Of course, a common GM trick in any game is to structure challenges so that the challenges always fit multiple PCs, no matter how diverse the PCs' interests - but when all the PCs are in the same organization, doing so is much easier.)

Beyond efficiency, focused plots, and reduced GM burden, theme is another advantage of PCs joining forces in one organization. Instead of a sequence of scenes cutting from a druid's grove to a fixer's lab to an admiral's flagship, the campaign has time to brood over one theme and trace motifs from one scene to the next.

Here are the rules for troupe organizations.

- In troupe organization play, the PCs work and communicate within a single organization. For every PC beyond the first in an organization, increase the Efficiency and one other score by one. If the PC's primary class (highest number of levels) is martial, he increases the organization's Force score; shadow classes increase the Shadow score; magic classes increase the Magic score; and social classes increase any score (each PC chooses and may switch once per season).

- Because multiple PCs are directly involved, the organization gains one extra action per scene (or two per week) per PC after the first. For example, if three PCs join the same organization, it gains 2 extra



actions. This puts it close to par with the number of organization actions that would be available in the game if every PC ran his own organization.

- Costs do not increase. While there is no additional wealth level or prerequisite cost for the extra actions per organization, there is the increased risk to the PCs of placing all of their fortunes in one organization's well-being.

- If there is a conflict over who commands an organization or a portion of the organization, the PCs make opposed Charisma rolls to see who has command. Histories modify this opposed roll as usual.

- When stunting (see below), a player cannot use other players' PCs as the sole basis of the stunt.

- Advancement by level (see below) proceeds with the lowest-level PC. That is, the automatic Scope increase at every other level happens when the lowest-leveled PC in the organization gains a level. For

example, if Magnus, Philip, and Isidore are all in the same armed legion, levels 4, 6, and 5 respectively, then the armed legion gains an automatic Scope increase every other time Magnus (level 4) increases his level.

## STUNTING

Although PCs cannot use their individual Inspirations and Mood to aid an organization's die roll, there is a way to stunt and gain a bonus.

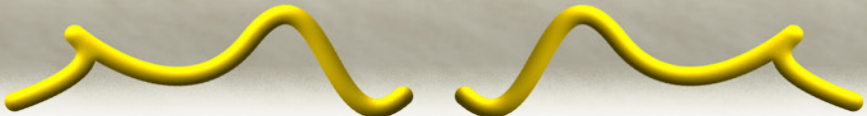
If a player details his organization's roster, maps its headquarters, or writes a few lines describing the organization, then he can stunt on these details once per week. He gains a re-roll of the organization's die roll for his stunt.

"Details his organization's roster" often means naming at least one NPC per Scope level and describ-

## ORGANIZATIONS: STORY GOAL ADVANCEMENT

TYPE	STORY GOAL	ADVANCEMENT
Armed Legion	Fight on the winning side in a major war.	Increase Scope by 2.
	In a treasure horde, discover a legendary general's treatise on military logistics.	Increase Efficiency by 1.
Cabal, Coven	Marry the Nightshade Queen of Syrbizond.	Dowry of 6 buildings, 3 troops.
	Capture the Living Fire of Koshtra Indege.	Increase Arcana by 1.
Church, Temple, Sect	Visit from the Cardinal.	Increase Scope by 5 for one month.
	Capture and impale a Low God and its cultists.	+6 reputation for every member of the organization.
Noble House	Clear out and reclaim a border keep teeming with chimera above and troglodytes below.	Gain keep and its surrounding buildings.
	Exchange foster sons with Nahalite royal cousins.	+1 Scope
Savage Tribe	Conquer a neighboring tribe.	+1 Scope, +1 Force.
	Gain control of standing stones.	+1 Arcana and gain two magical beasts as troops.
Secret Society	Blackmail or turn a noble.	+2 income.
	Win a shadow war against the regional detachment of the royal legion.	Install your puppet officer as the commander; +1 Force.
Thieves Guild	Steal the logbooks from the royal exchequery.	+1 Shadow, +1 income.
	Destroy all other local thieves guilds in a shadow war.	+2 Shadow, +1 Force.
Trading Company	Survive a trading mission to the Dragon Isles.	+2 income.
	Break a siege and deliver goods to a starving city.	Gain two buildings in the city.





ing that NPC's role in the organization. The GM may accept other player-made details as the basis of acceptable stunts. These details could include designing and stamping a logo for the organization, making a flowchart hierarchy of positions and communications within the organization, writing fiction about a day in the life of the organization, or any of the many geeky, super fun things we love to do to enrich our immersion.

*Example.* Horace Threet, Fixer of the Scar Ward in Dresgilioch, sends a member of his trading company to investigate rumors of a ship in harbor carrying seven Taken emotions. His company has a 7 Shadow score, so he rolls a d6 to investigate. Horace's player, however, has a roster for the trading company and explains in detail which trader goes to the harbor, and why. As a result of this stunting, Horace's company gains a re-roll of the d6, should he need it.

## CREATING AN ORGANIZATION

Some classes, such as the noble, grant you an organization for free. Other characters must found their organizations according to the following rules.

*Arcane order.* You must have mastered one spell school and own any type of wizard's refuge (a building of wealth level 5, at the least). Your Arcana starts at 6 and your Scope at 1. Assign a 4, 3, and 2 to the other three scores. Note that arcane orders are high treason unless sanctioned by the nobility.

*Armed legion.* Recruit two troops (purchasing them normally as an individual) and invest 1000 gold crowns. Your Force starts at 6 and your Scope at 1. Assign a 4, 2, and 1 to the other three scores.

*Noble house.* You gain a noble house if you have a level in the noble class. Barring that, you must gain a noble title during the course of play. Your Scope starts at 1. Assign a 6, 6, 4, and 2 to the other four scores.

*Savage tribe.* You must be an ogiichiida savage (4th level). Your force starts at 4 and your Scope at 1. Assign a 4, 3, and 2 to the other four scores.

*Secret society.* Fanaticism informs every secret society. You must have an Inspiration 4 or more that relates to the purpose of the society and invest 500

crowns. Your Scope starts at 1. Assign a 4, 4, 3, and 2 to the other four scores.

*Temple, church, sect.* You must invest 500 gold, have a building (any building will do), have a Charisma 6 or higher, and choose the High God or a Low God. State your creed and publish it in an appropriate form. Your scope starts at 1. Assign a 4, 4, 3, and 2 to your other four scores.

*Thieves guild.* You must be name level in a shadow class and own a safe house (any building will do). Your Shadow starts at 6 and your Scope at 1. Assign a 4, 2, and 1 to the other scores.

*Trading company.* You must invest 2,000 gold crowns. Your Efficiency starts at 4 and your Scope at 1. Assign a 4, 3, and 2 to the other three scores.

## ADVANCEMENT

Organization advancement comes through three means: PC level advancement, acquired buildings, and story goal achievement.

Increase your organization's Scope by 1 every other time you gain a character level. This represents your experience and growth as a leader. It also represents the time you have invested in the organization and your accumulation of financial and political capital. As your character levels up, you also increase your organization's Force, Arcana, Shadow, and Efficiency scores according to individual organization schemes (see the following section). If you have more than one organization, choose only one to benefit when you level up.

Buildings, wonders, cultures, and other actions may also increase your organization's characteristics. See Chapter Eleven (p. 152) for buildings that can make your organization more powerful.

Story goal achievements can also increase an organization's characteristics. The GM should handle this like treasure. He must judge what is an appropriate award for the players' accomplishments. The chart on p. 123 offers some examples.

Finally, bear in mind that organizations are only as good as the man at the top. An organization cannot grow to a Scope larger than the number of character levels of its leader. (An organization whose leader is somehow removed and replaced with a lower-level leader retains its current Scope.)



# ARMED LEGION

While the fops at court prattle on, and the wizards stargaze from their towers, the legions get things done. Examples of armed legions are the king's army, a band of mercenaries, and a homeless armada sailing from an island Kingdom that sank beneath the waves.

*Special.* Armed legions can command any number of troops (normally, an organization's troops cannot outnumber its Force score).

*Advancement.* Each time you increase your Scope, raise your legion's Force by one. Every other Scope increase, raise two other characteristics by one or one other characteristic by two.

*Ascendancy.* If you have a greater Scope than every other organization in your region, then you are in ascendancy. You may re-write one of your region's culture lines. Changing to a new culture line requires approximately one year. Possible culture lines include but are not limited to:

- **Martial architecture.** Even the normal buildings in your region begin to look like military buildings. Reduce by 1 the wealth level of all military buildings.
- **Martial youth.** The kids in your region are born to soldier. Increase the spirit of all newly recruited troops in your region by 1.
- **One True Style.** Your culture venerates one particular fighting style over all others. Anyone who has mastered that style gains a Reputation 8, applicable to every citizen in the region.
- **Culture of Strength.** The farmers, the sailors, and even the bankers of your region scoff at the weak. Anyone with a Strength of 4 or less must roll his Reason against the Doom each morning. Failure indicates that he loses 1 Mood.

In addition, you may choose to institute either a Pax Arma or a Tyranny of Arms.

- *Pax Arma.* Peace rules throughout your region. The entire economy improves by one step, meaning that all items now cost one less Wealth Level.
- *Tyranny of Arms.* All organizations headquartered in the region that are not armed legions have their wealth levels reduced by 2, and everyone in the region gains fear (2) of your organization

and its members. (PCs and NPCs alike drop other inspirations as quickly as possible in order to make room for this fear.) This last can be avoided if a character rolls Reason vs. the Doom, but the roll is repeated each month until the character learns fear.

# CABAL, COVEN

There are wizards in the Kingdoms who have the power to boil seas and to whisper to a lover across a continent. Most of these are jealous, insular fiends. But some witches manage to cooperate with coven sisters, and some wizards manage to form cabals, despite the constant threat of backstabbing and betrayal.

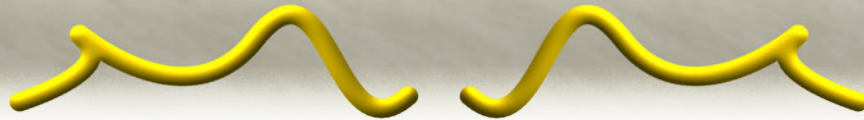
In the Kingdoms, a cabal must have the king's sanction to function legally. Illegal cabals are hunted with prejudice. Even legal cabals are dangerous; a king's blessing is as inconstant as the moon and far less predictable.

*Special.* Wizards and witches in a cabal or coven gain *cabalistic casting*. If a magic surge hits a cabal member, any fellow cabalists in the area do not add to the surge's damage (normally, a person hit by a magic surge takes 1 point of damage per spellbound creature in the area).

*Advancement.* Each time you increase your Scope, raise your Cabal's Arcana by one. Every other Scope increase, raise two other characteristics by one or one characteristic by two.

*Ascendancy.* If you have a greater Scope than every other organization in your region, then you are in ascendancy. You may re-write one of your region's cultural lines. Changing to a new culture line requires approximately one year. Possible culture lines include but are not limited to:

- **Tradition of tomes.** Everyone in your region writes. Even the goodwives on the farthest homesteads keep diaries on treated birchbark or horn slate. Any research roll is increased by one die size.
- **Tradition of scholarship.** In your region, every History that involves scholarship or research begins at 6 rather than 4 (8 rather than 6 for rain trolls).
- **Monstrous breeding ground.** Your region has become a breeding ground for enormous magical beasts. Decrease the wealth level of all magical beast troops by one.



- **Favored familiar.** Choose one type of familiar. There are two effects. First, that type of animal is venerated almost unto a sacrament in your region. Killing one is unheard of and punished with the most painful tortures leading to slow, public death. Even brushing one off of a windowsill is forbidden. Second, all familiars of that type gain four characteristic score points to be spent as the wizard chooses.

In addition, you may choose to institute either eminent domain or sacrificial casting.

- *Eminent domain.* Any wizard who is capable of casting a high spell can seize property in the name of isolation. The rationale is this: the more empty space a wizard has around him, the fewer people there are to be affected by surges if anything goes wrong. The property remains under the wizard's control for half a week per magic level, so a wizard/warrior 12/5, for example, could hold seized property for 6 weeks.

- *Sacrificial casting.* If you sacrifice a living creature of sufficient power and rarity in front of your entire cabal, then on every Magic roll over the next day, you can roll your cabal's Arcana score as a bonus die.

## CHURCH, TEMPLE, SECT

Churches legitimize government. Who dares move against the Marquis when he has the High God on his side?

Many PCs who found churches do so simply as a congregation of the High Church. If you prefer, you may pick a Low God to be the object of your sect's devotion.

*Special.* If your church is a congregation of the High Church, then throughout the Old Claw (roughly the Claw's two westernmost peninsulas), it is entitled to Canon Law. That is, on the church's grounds, the laws of the Cardinal in Valte Riel supercede the laws of the local nobility or even the Kingdom. If your congregation is not part of the High Church, then instead you gain the secret status (like Thieves Guilds and Secret societies, you can only be targeted in a shadow

war).

*Advancement.* Each time you increase your Scope, raise your sect's Arcana or Shadow by one. Every other Scope increase, raise two other characteristics by one.

*Ascendancy.* If you have a greater Scope than every other organization in your region, then you are in ascendancy. You may re-write one of your region's cultural lines. Changing to a new culture line requires approximately one year. Possible culture lines include but are not limited to:

- **Pious.** The people in your region are passionately religious. Anyone with an Inspiration honoring the High God, the church, or your temple gains one point in that Inspiration (this does not count against the maximum allowed).

- **Intolerance.** Anyone with a religion different from yours takes a negative Reputation (8) in your region.

- **Holy war.** In a battle against a foe your church has excommunicated, all troops mustered and maintained by the church increase their spirit by 2.

- **Closed minds.** Any attempt to proselytize the devoted folk in your region is difficult. Your subject rolls your sect's Efficiency die as a bonus die to resist the conversion attempt.

In addition, you may choose to institute either Beatification or an Inquisition.

*Beatification.* Your sect elevates someone to sainthood. If yours is a heretic sect, you can even raise up someone or something as a Low God. All relics and artifacts of the new saint are worth a minimum Wealth Level of 2 (and possibly much more, according to the GM's judgment and the roleplay occurring at the table), and any member of your sect with an Inspiration point in the new saint can use that Inspiration two extra times per scene while on consecrated ground.

*Inquisition.* The church leaders seat a body of investigators, judges and executioners. This body is the Inquisition, charged with purging your region of infidels. Everyone in your region gains a Fear (2) of the Inquisition as soon as they have an unallocated Inspiration point (immediately in most cases).



# NOBLE HOUSE

A noble house is a an extended family with a history of power and wealth. Most go to great lengths to secure their ancient privilege against challenge.

Some houses are built in the shadows, while other houses are in effect shrines bustling with pious churchgoers supporting the High God. Whatever their differences, all noble houses that last long do so by dealing ruthlessly with allies and enemies alike.

*Special.* Everywhere but on High Church ground, you are the law. If your noble house's Scope outranks the local city watch's Scope, you are never arrested or seriously harassed by the watch or any other local, official force.

*Advancement.* Each time you increase your Scope, raise one of your House's characteristic scores by one. Every other time you increase your organization's Scope, also increase one other characteristic score by two or two other characteristic scores by one.

*Ascendancy.* If you have a greater Scope than every other organization in your region, then you are in ascendancy. You may re-write one of your region's cultural lines. Changing to a new culture line requires approximately one year. Possible culture lines include but are not limited to:

- Paranoia. Fear and suspicion pervade society.

Anyone who does not have Fear or Suspicion as an inspiration has their maximum Mood lowered by 3.

- Numb. No one can be allowed to love, or fear, or feel anything too strongly. It is too dangerous. Only nobles and rebels have any Inspiration at all in your region. Anyone with an Inspiration of 2 or higher must make a Heart roll against the Doom once per week; failure results in the loss of one Inspiration point (determined at random).

- Misery. While this culture line is in effect, your house and family members increase their Wealth Level by 1. Everyone else in the region decreases his wealth level by 1.

- Salon. Your noble house fosters new ideas and free thinking. You gain a positive reputation of 8 applicable to everyone in your region save other nobles, and all researchers roll your House's Efficiency as a bonus die in their efforts.

In addition, you may choose to institute either Famine or a Tyranny of Kings.

- *Famine.* Hunger is a timeless tool of despots. Every non-noble in the region for a week or longer lowers his Body, Strength, and Quickness by 1.

- *Tyranny of Kings.* Pick one Inspiration type (love, revenge, ambition). You forbid all forms of it. Anyone who has an Inspiration of one of the verboten types faces an increase of +2 to the Doom on all rolls.





## SAVAGE TRIBE

Savages are demons and sirens, howling and calling beyond the lands of civilization. They are foils to the discipline of the armed legion and the sophistication of the noble house, and they are danger, adventure, and the unknown to all of the settled Kingdoms.

*Special.* In your homeland, your power multiplies. Your organization may act twice per scene (or three times per week), it gains +1 Force and +1 Efficiency, and your troops gain +1 Spirit.

*Advancement.* Each time you increase your Scope, raise your tribe's Force by one. Every other time you increase your tribe's Scope, also increase two other characteristic scores by one.

*Ascendancy.* If you have a greater Scope than every other organization in your region, then you are in ascendancy. You may re-write one of your region's cultural lines. Changing to a new culture line requires approximately one year. Possible culture lines include but are not limited to:

- Tribal law. In your region, people live by your rules. There is no property ownership, no sanctioned magic, and there might not be permanent dwellings. You set the laws, and the tribe enforces them.

- Raiding. Your people embrace raiding the civilized folk as a way of life. All troops recruited from among your savages retain your homeland bonuses (under 'Special' above) when raiding a bordering civilization.

- Sack. Your people hate cities and all signs of civilization. Your troops deal one extra point of damage to buildings, vehicles, and siege engines.

- Beast world. All savages who have the beast world class ability gain an extra use of it at 1st level.

In addition, you may choose to institute either Closed Culture or Tyranny of Nature.

- *Closed culture.* Any native of your region ignores all culture lines when traveling to other regions and, in fact, retains the culture lines of your region.

- *Tyranny of nature.* All engineering items, alchemical items, trapped spells, and technically sophisticated vehicles (ships, zeppelins) brought into your homeland lose 2 Quality points immediately and 1 more per week until the item wins a Quality roll

against the Doom or is broken.

## SECRET SOCIETY

Secret societies move in the penumbra of history, pulling the strings of lords, priests, and generals. Rumors in a tavern, the stubs of incriminating pages ripped from an ancient text, and ritual murders are often the only signs that a secret society exists. Some societies are devoted to preserving a kingdom-shattering secret. Others want to accomplish a goal: the silencing of the dragons, eradication of a centuries-old noble house, finding a Chosen One, or preventing a prophesied cataclysm. Secret societies recruit all manner of agents: magicians, assassins, soldiers, spies, and courtesans. The only common trait is fanaticism.

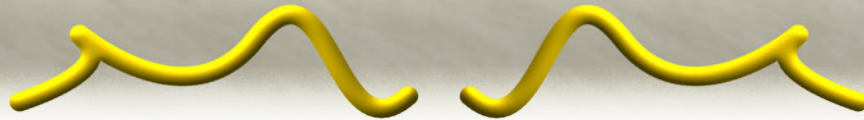
For a secret society, two tenets always hold: Survival depends on remaining hidden, and success lies in manipulation. Many secret societies view their job as building a house of cards: they stack up the opinions and forces of the world in just the right way, so that one breath from the society crumbles everything.

*Special.* Your society is secret. It can never be targeted by a war. Only a shadow war can hurt it, and even then, any would-be attacker must first identify you (through the regular course of play).

*Advancement.* Each time you increase your Scope, raise any characteristic except Force by one. Every other time you increase your society's Scope, also increase one other characteristic score by two.

*Ascendancy.* If you have a greater Scope than every other organization in your region, then you are in ascendancy. You may re-write one of your region's cultural lines. Changing to a new culture line requires approximately one year. Possible culture lines include but are not limited to:

- Agents of obliteration. Thanks to your culture honoring the obliteration of history, your agents are well placed to suppress forbidden knowledge. Roll your Shadow, Arcana, or Force die (your choice) as a bonus die whenever you or your organization attempts to destroy knowledge, silence news and rumor, keep a



secret, or limit the spread of ideas.

- **Fire inside.** Your culture values fanatic devotion. Increase your die size by one when resisting any attempt to infiltrate your organization or turn your agents.

- **Taboo.** Name one custom or practice. Usually this is something that threatens the secret your society is sworn to protect. The taboo could be expeditions to the Descent, political marriages, romantic marriages, settlement within a dozen miles of Koshtra Nohn, etc. Anyone who commits the taboo has her maximum Mood lowered by 3.

- **Trust.** You create a false sense of trust in the culture, making it very easy for you to infiltrate other organizations. Once per week, when rolling against another organization, for any check which infiltration may reasonably aid, you force the target organization to roll its Shadow die as a penalty die.

In addition, you may choose to institute either Fanaticism or Ignorance is Bliss.

*Fanaticism.* You create a culture of fanaticism. Anyone with an Inspiration that involves your society's goals (in a positive way) gains one bonus point in that Inspiration. This bonus point does not count against a character's normal limit.

*Ignorance is bliss.* You nudge the people in your region toward blissful ignorance. They resent anyone who upsets their reverie. Any character known to be an investigator, a secret seeker, or a searcher for truth earns an instant negative Reputation (8).

## THIEVES GUILD

Life as an outlaw is never easy. The thief always hears the boot of the city watch at his back, and he always listens for his partner's slumbering breaths before he allows himself sleep.

Despite the harrowing days of a life on the run and the eternal air of suspicion, for some the temptation of the next big score is too great. For others, the law itself has become evil, and justice is only to be found outside its confines.

A thieves' guild can be a den of scoundrels, a band of merry men, a syndicate of slavers, a street

gang, a pirate crew, or any other organization that lives outside the law.

*Special.* Your guild is hidden. It can never be targeted by a war. Only a shadow war can hurt it, and even then, any would-be attacker must first identify you (through the regular course of play).

*Advancement.* Each time you increase your Scope, raise your guild's Shadow score by one. Every other time you increase your guild's Scope, also increase two other characteristics by one or one other characteristic by two.

*Ascendancy.* If you have a greater Scope than every other organization in your region, then you are in ascendancy. You may re-write one of your region's cultural lines. Changing to a new culture line requires approximately one year. Possible culture lines include but are not limited to:

- **Scofflaw.** Your success encourages contempt for nobles. All nobles, kingsmen, courtiers, city watchmen, and other representatives of the aristocracy lose six points from every positive reputation.

- **Smugglers' haven.** Anyone attempting to smuggle or cross a border (including into and out of a walled city) in your region gains an increase of one die size on all relevant rolls.

- **Seize the night.** The nights are wild in your region. Members of your guild, black market fixers, spell smugglers, and all other outlaws gain one Mood every sunset (not exceeding their maximum).

- **In broad daylight.** You promote such an atmosphere of corruption that crime becomes easier than honest work. Decrease the Doom by one whenever making a roll to engage in criminal activity.

In addition, you may choose to institute either Black Market Extortion or Circle of Trust.

*Black Market Extortion.* Through legal and court machinations, you drive goods out of the open market and onto the black market. Any engineering, alchemical, stolen spell, weapon, or armor is treated as its normal wealth level for you because of your position in the black market. For everyone who is not in your guild, the same items are two wealth levels higher than normal.

*Circle of Trust.* You make one other organiza-





tion secret, so that it can only be attacked in a shadow war (and must be detected first). The organization must have a lower scope than your guild. The organization loses its secret status if it engages in a war (but not a shadow war) or, of course, if it is detected. Once detected, it cannot again be hidden by this ability. If your guild's Scope is 10 or higher, you can bring a second organization into your circle.

## TRADING COMPANY

Trading companies travel the Old Claw and beyond, forging or bringing back treasures that everyone wants at prices that just enough people can afford. Brigands, tempests, predatory nobles and kingdoms at war are only a few of the hazards braved by traders in their travels.

No organization is as diverse as a trading company. No organization is needed by so many and appreciated by so few.

*Special.* Trading companies can act in a region even if they do not have a headquarters there. All that is necessary for a trading company to act in a region is a building or a headquarters in an adjacent region, or a WL 10 or greater ship in port or zeppelin at the docking tower.

*Advancement.* Each time you increase your Scope, raise your company's Efficiency score by one. Every other time you increase your company's Scope, also increase two other characteristics by one or one other characteristic by two.

*Ascendancy.* If you have a greater Scope than every other organization in your region, then you are in ascendancy. You may re-write one of your region's cultural lines. Changing to a new culture line requires approximately one year. Possible culture lines include but are not limited to:

- Cultural ties. Your region develops a fondness for the goods of a particular culture. Everyone from that culture gains a positive Reputation (6) in your region.

- Worldly. People in your region travel more than most, and they are familiar with more of the Claw than most. All cultural, geographical, and navigational skills start at 6 rather than 4 (8 rather than 6 for rain

trolls).

- Signature item. Your region is famous for producing or trading in one particular item. Increase its Quality level by 1 and decrease its Wealth Level by 1 when manufactured or traded in your region.

- Mutual benefit. The people of the region know that trade benefits all. Once per scene (or week), after completing a significant trade, both trading partners gain one Mood. The GM and the group must judge which trades are significant; passing a rock and a burnt hookah stub back and forth benefits no one.

In addition, you may choose to institute either Trade Center or Invest Capital.

*Trade center.* Your region is a thriving trade center. Decrease the Wealth Level of all transportation and imported items by one.

*Invest capital.* Once per season, you can increase by one any characteristic score of any organization in the region - your own or another's. You cannot raise any characteristic score above 10 in this manner. Many trading companies sell the use of their capital, that is, they extract a high price for using this ability on others.



## RESEARCH

The world is not constant. Monuments crumble, memories fade, and villages sicken and die. Night dives down, always, like a great crow to the feast. While it is the nature of things to fall, man can, with effort, on some nights, send up a flare against the darkness.

Research is the engine that launches that flare. Building upon what has been learned, engineers, wizards, and others advance their work and achieve feats out of the reach of previous generations.

Some would say that this advancement has led to the present crisis in the Kingdoms. Others would say that it is the only chance that the Kingdoms have.

Both organizations and individuals can conduct research. Organizations conduct research more commonly than individuals, but individuals can research independently if they have a source of financial and material support.

Research can lead to advancements in warfare, engineering, magic, the arts, or nearly any other field of endeavor.



## CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Research on objects - or anything with a wealth level - is just like crafting. Roll your researcher's skill against the research subject's quality (or wealth level if it has no quality rating). If he matches or surpasses it, then he has put one point into the research. This takes a number of days equal to the quality (or wealth level) of the item. After the researcher has put a number of points into the research equal to the quality of the item, then the research is complete.

Research can be conducted by organizations, freeing up characters for more adventurous concerns. Of course, in that case the research is conducted using the organization's relevant score rather than the character's skill. Research counts as one of the organization's actions for the week.

Always use the original wealth level of an item that has been researched to a lower wealth level.

To research a method or anything else without a wealth level, roll against the Doom. The GM can modify the Doom as necessary. For example, if an organization is conducting military research to improve the defense of Longbowmen troops in their Close Quarters formation, then the GM makes the organization roll against the Doom. To increase the Longbowmen's attack die on their Scout-guided Shot maneuver, however, requires a roll against the Doom + 8 because it is a maneuver that is already close to the pinnacle of human performance.

For method research, the number of successful research rolls to finish the item is equal to the die size being modified. In the Close Quarters example, the researcher needs four successes to finish; in the Scout-guided Shot example, the researcher needs at least 12 successes to finish. As always, the GM is free to alter or set different timelines and success numbers, as best suits the campaign.

## RESULTS OF RESEARCH

Research can do any of the following:

- Raise the attack or defense die size of a troop maneuver or stance. You share the knowledge with all your troops, so that all troops capable of that maneuver (now and future recruits) gain the benefit of the research. For example, a cavalry charge that is normally d6/d4 becomes d8/d4 for every cavalry unit of that type in your organization.
- Raise the quality of every item of a given type manufactured by your organization, including items, troops, vehicles, services, and buildings. For example, all Rithite maces are now quality 5 instead of quality 4.
- Reduce by 1 the wealth level of all items of a given type, including items, troops, vehicles, services, and buildings.
- Grant a bonus charisma die to any representative of your organization dealing with a foreign culture that you have researched. This bonus die can be used at any point in the social encounter, but a representative of the foreign culture must be present. The size of the Charisma die is determined by the Charisma of your representative.
- Increase an organization's characteristic by 1.
- Increase by 1 any statistic of a building, vehicle, or siege engine.
- Discover resources. You discover a cache of a new type of natural resources. Name the type of natural resources, specify where they were found, and then state what the resources help you do or build. For items, after you specify what item the resources help, you reduce by 2 the Wealth Level of up to 4 items made with the same resources. For methods, after you specify which method the materials help, you gain your organization's Efficiency die as a bonus die when using the specified method.



## STEALING & LIMITS OF RESEARCH

The results of research are secret. They can be stolen from or forced out of your organization or your organization leader as any other secret can be.

Natural resources are an exception to this. They cannot be stolen. If you wish to take them, you must conquer the land where they are found.

Research is limited to two steps. That is, no numeric factor can be increased or decreased more than two steps, ever.



## RESEARCH PREREQUISITES

To be eligible to achieve an advance in an area, you must meet the prerequisites. In general, there is no cost other than meeting the prerequisites. If you can support one of these research buildings, then you can support the research that goes on inside. There may be specific exceptions when research is too specific. For example, the GM may rule that only an Armed Legion can research how to increase the attack die of a troop of Musketeers.

- Warfare. A barracks plus at least four brigades capable of any maneuver you wish to advance.
- Magic. A tower or other isolated building of at least Wealth Level 7.
- Engineering. An engineer's shop and equipment of at least Wealth Level 8.
- Arts. A university, theater, publishing house, studio, or other artistic building.
- Social skills. A wealth level 6 or better residence.
- Economy. A wealth level 8 or better storefront or merchant building.

# CHAPTER TWELVE: GEAR, BUILDINGS, AND TROOPS

*A grappling hook hurtles through the night sky, falling against a backdrop of stars and distant spires, then clangs on the cistern pipe, scrapes and catches fast... and the thief escapes.*

*A flute plays notes of sugar and dreams... and the dragon is charmed.*

*A corset is unlaced... and the kingdom is undone.*

Grappling hooks, flutes, corsets, ten-foot poles and more are in this chapter. Larger purchases – buildings, siege engines, ships, troop training and recruit-

ment – are also detailed here.

Gear is not all. It isn't love, it can't guarantee happiness or change how you treated your son or whisper in your ear on the eve of St. Jhess. And yet many a man meets Death every day for lack of gear alone.

NB The items listed are typical, not definitive. There's nothing stopping you from having a Quality 10 hauberk made from the finest steel by the finest smiths. Simply adjust the wealth level as the GM and the group judge.

## ARMOR

	QUALITY	MIN. STRENGTH	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
Clothing	0	-	-	-
Breastplate and mail	6	6	5	1000
Brigandine	6	7	4	600
Cave boat mail	3	5	5	1000
Dragon plate	12	8	14	9100
Fang ropes	1	2	1	50
Gnarsk hide jerkin; bracers; sewer leathers; buckler	1	2	1	50
Horn lamellar	3	5	3	300
House vambraces	1	2	3	300
Inquisitor mail	4	6	6	1500
Leather armor	2	3	3	300
Mail hauberk	5	7	3	300
Masterpiece silkmetal mail	10	7	12	6600
Plate armor; coat-of-plates	8	7	6	1500
Round shield; teardrop shield; pavise; troop shield; et al.	2	5	2	100
Silkmetal hauberk	8	5	10	4500
Silkmetal tunic	4	3	7	2100
Steel and bone lamellar	4	4	5	1000
Studded leather armor; hamata	2	4	2	100
Sun plate	2	3	5	1000
Wyrn plate	14	9	18	15300



**Quality:** Half of this can be used as Body to soak damage in combat (round down). With the right class abilities (warrior), you can use the entire quality as Body.

**Min. Strength:** You can wear an armor whose minimum strength exceeds your Strength, but all your physical rolls, including attack and defense rolls, are at -2 die sizes.

**NB Armor** does not stack. Use the highest single value selected from all the armor you are wearing. This includes shields.

**Cave boat mail.** The men who ply the dark network of cave rivers running from Dynn to Azenahal often wear this bulbous mail. When a ripcord is pulled, air plackets inflate underneath the low-density horn and bone plates. The swimmer gains a d12 bonus die for swim checks. The plackets must be inflated with a Quickness check against the doom. Repeat tries on subsequent rounds are possible until the plackets inflate.

**Clothing.** Clothing provides no armor or Body bonus regardless of its quality.

**Dragon plate.** Made from tiled dragon scales, dragon plate ignores 1 point of damage per strike from weapons of quality 5 or less.

**Fang ropes.** Often seen on Dramba witch doctors and Fyrajji savages, these ropes are sinews pulled from trophy beasts and adorned with rows and rows of fangs. A savage drapes the fang ropes over her body (often otherwise bare) to gain an intimidating presence. If you have savage levels, these are quality 6 in a social encounter.

**House vambraces.** These forearm plates have been fashionable for centuries in the western Claw. Unlike other armors, they can be used in social encounters if you have levels in the noble class. In such a case, their quality is equal to their wealth level.

**Inquisitor mail.** Night-haunted Dynn manufactures blackened mail insulated against the flames of Inquisition. Those wearing Dynn mail take 1 less point of damage from any heat source.

**Masterpiece silkmetal mail.** This potentially legendary armor ignores 1 point of damage per strike from weapons of Quality 4 or less.

**Sun plate.** Originally a decorative armor of

Jakatta, sun plate reveals as much as it conceals. It was and is used by the nobles of the south to dress their concubines provocatively. Nonetheless, it does provide a small measure of protection, and it has become popular in fashionable courts on the mainland, where it is called slave, sun, or dancer's plate. Unlike most other armors, it is effective in social encounters as well as martial. Moreover, in social encounters, the sun plate's quality is equal to its wealth level.

**Wurm plate.** The only six wurm plate suits known to exist are all sewn from the scales of the wurm known as Sore (or perhaps Soar; the Middle Rithite is ambiguous), a beast slaughtered by Joachim Tumenant four centuries ago. Wurm plate ignores 1 point of damage per strike from weapons of quality 8 or less.







## MELEE WEAPONS

	QUALITY	MIN. STRENGTH	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
All-Below Roofsword	12	4	14	9100
An Rach	18	5	18	15300
Club; peasant's flail; smith's hammer; laced femur; et al.	1	4	1	50
Courtsmith rapier, longsword, saber, greatsword (greatsword is two-handed)	9	7	10	4500
Engineer's chain blade	6	5	8	2800
Fixer's fang	7	3	8	2800
Greatsword, two-handed	5	8	3	300
Halberd; glaive; partisan; billhook (all two-handed)	4	6	3	300
Honor axe; Queensport broadsword	7	5	7	2100
Jakattan templar machete	8	5	9	3600
King's Avenger	17	7	16	12000
Kingsman longsword	6	6	5	1000
Lance, mounted only	4	5	5	1000
Longsword, poor; hand axe, crude morningstar	2	4	2	100
Longsword; battleaxe; warhammer; mace; falchion	3	4	3	300
Masterpiece longsword; masterpiece falchion; et al.	14	4	18	15300
Orynjan kris	3	2	7	2100
Petrified head	2	2	1	50
Rithite mace	4	4	5	1000
Rooftword	5	5	4	600
Saint sword	15	6	15	10500
Shortsword, dagger, stiletto	1	2	2	100
Spear	3	6	2	100
Spiked whip	2	3	4	600
Staff, two-handed	2	6	1	50
Surge weapon (Gate, Stillness, Suske, Twice Sara, et al.)	18	5	18	15300
Syrbizond tulwar	8	8	7	2100
Trick staff, engineer's staff	2	6	4	600
Zeppelin flight officer's cutlass	6	3	7	2100



## RANGED WEAPONS

	QUALITY	MIN. STRENGTH	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
Angon, Pilum	2	5	2	100
Blowgun	1	2	1	50
Bow	4	4	2	100
Crossbow	4	3	4	600
Dragon culverin	7	8	11	5500
Engineer's crossbow	11	6	10	4500
Honor axe (throwing)	7	6	4	600
Javelin	3	5	1	50
Kitaarsa shortbow	5	4	3	300
Longbow	5	7	4	600
Masterpiece bow	14	6	15	10500
Masterpiece wheel lock caliver	15	6	16	12000
Musket, matchlock; arquebus	5	5	4	600
Musket, wheel lock; caliver	8	3	10	4500
Pistol, matchlock	5	1	6	1500
Pistol, wheel lock	7	1	9	3600
Shuriken; Orynjan hair pin; chakram collar and bracelet	3	2	3	300
Siege crossbow	8	8	3	300
Snake culverin	5	7	8	2800
Throwing knife	2	2	2	100

**All-Below Roofsword.** This is a roofsword made by the best smiths in the underground. Increase the die size by two when attacking to break an object. If your opponent has armor quality 5 or less, you do one extra point of damage

**Angon, pilum.** If this hits a character wielding a shield, and the pilum is of equal or superior quality, the pilum penetrates the shield, does 3 damage to the shield's Quality, and remains stuck in the shield. A shield with a dangling pilum is unusable. The shield-bearer (or anyone) can take one round as a trick to extract the pilum from the shield. Shields reduced to 0 quality or less are unusable even after the pilum is removed.

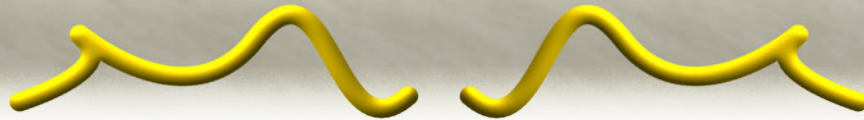
**An Rach.** The legendary An Rach is also known as the Clan Blade. It is a single-edged, two-

handed greatsword with jacinth intaglio along the spine of the blade. Whenever a clan member or lover uses an inspiration within the same area, you benefit as if using that inspiration. Choose one roll this round on which to apply the inspiration. An Rach is spellbound.

**Billhook.** A polearm with a hook designed for anticavalry measures, the billhook adds one to all attack die sizes when attacking a mounted opponent. It is wealth level 4, but otherwise the same as the halberd.

**Courtsmith weapon.** If your opponent has armor quality 3 or less, you do one extra point of damage.

**Engineer's chain blade:** Tiny serrated teeth are set into the edge of a broadsword blade and spring-loaded on a gear-and-pulley system. When you drive



the blade against an opponent, you can choose to release the spring. The freed chain zips around the blade's edge, sawing your opponent's flesh and armor. You do 1 point of damage to your opponent's armor. Furthermore, if the chain blade's quality is greater than your opponent's new armor value, you do 1 extra point of body damage. Reloading a spring blade requires a trick and a Reason check against the Doom.

**Fixer's fang.** A dagger made for poison, the Fang's hilt contains three separate reservoirs. A thumb press on a brass valve, a flick of the wrist, and poison seeps down the blade (this does not require a Trick in combat; it is a free action). You can coat the Fang with any poison you have placed in one of the reservoirs.

**Honor axe.** These are becoming the iconic weapon of the Axemen, those who have taken up Jason's War after the fall of Thyre. All else being equal, kingsmen preferentially target honor axe wielders.

**King's avenger.** For several centuries, it was tradition in the Old Claw for Kings to forge an Avenger sword for their champion. The swords are tuned to avenge a particular inspiration. Love is the most commonly avenged inspiration; Hope, Ambition, and Beauty are also famously avenged. If the King's Avenger hits someone with such an inspiration, they take two additional points of damage. Anyone with control over the Doom in a region can change the sword's attunement after a day spent doing nothing else. King's avenger's are spellbound.

**Masterpiece sword.** When attacking an opponent with armor quality 8 or less, your strikes do one extra point of damage.

**Orynjan kris.** For almost a century, this wavy-bladed dagger is the *de rigueur* fashion blade of the Old Claw. Very rarely is a noble asked to leave an Orynjan kris at the door; it is assumed that if one can afford a kris, then one can also afford to pay for any trouble that might be caused. In social scenes, a kris's quality is equal to its wealth level.

**Petrified head.** West of the westernmost kingdoms, where the mountains rise to bite the sky, savages leave the heads of their enemies in Waylorn glaciers for many new moons. When they return, the heads are petrified. The heads are then hollowed out and used as

fist weapons. Often the face is studded with spikes or razor flanges. If the head is a person known to the target and your attack roll exceeds the target's Reason roll, then the target takes a Heart penalty on all attack rolls next round.

**Rithite mace.** On a critical hit, these spiked and flanged clubs deal one point of quality damage to opponent's armor.

**Roofsword.** Used by thieves on the rooftops of Rithaigh, sailors on the Sea of Princes, and all manner of vagabonds in between, the roofsword is a mongrel child of cutlass and longsword. Many men have journeyed halfway across the world with nothing but the shirt on their backs and their roofsword. It is used to cut rope, split gold coins into pieces of eight, hack down doors in boarding raids, and jimmy guild strongboxes. Increase the attack die size by two when attempting to damage an item.

**Spiked whip.** Whips are favorites of swash-bucklers who use them to wrap around cross beams and swing through battlefields. A spiked whip requires a minimum 6 quickness. It increases any trip attack die by one size.

**Spear.** Spears are standard polearms, and can be thrown awkwardly (reduce the attack die by one size).

**Saint sword.** Somewhere in the sword, usually in a hollow hilt, a relic chamber holds a piece of a saint or hero. A fingernail, a lock of hair, or petrified flake of skin are common relics. Not all saint swords are religious; many are simply so-called after their similarity to swords originally made by the Church. The one commonality is that the relic is always from someone who died spellbound. The relic provides a bonus magic defense d6 die once per round, at a time of the wielder's choosing. The sword is spellbound.

**Surge weapon.** No one forges a surge weapon. Instead, surge weapons form naturally from cooling metaphysics after a crisis surge. Known surge weapons include Gate, a jet black short sword that spreads the blink disease with every hit; and Suske, a sooty morningstar with an animated fanged maw in its spiky head, which attaches to its target and chews for many rounds on a hit. Surge weapons are spellbound.



**Trick staff.** The trick staff sprouts a welter of buttons, levers, and ripcords along the shaft. These conceal or project hooks, blades, telescoping rods, spring-loaded darts, detachable pulleys and line, and more. Their chief use is by engineers who use them to execute environment tricks (see the signature item ability, page 77).

## RANGED WEAPONS

**Ammunition.** The cost of ammunition is subsumed in the wealth level or gold cost of the item that expends it.

**Firearms.** In addition to their other effects, firearms thunder. Any untrained, noncombative creature with intelligence 2 or less must roll its Heart vs. the Quality of the firearm; failure indicates the creature flees, probably permanently, but at least one round.

**Crossbow.** Crossbows and arbalests shoot bolts from a stock with an orthogonally mounted bow. Loading a crossbow is a trick in combat, and a strength roll (3) is required to complete the job in one rather than two rounds.

**Dragon culverin.** This is a more powerful, heavier hand cannon than the snake culverin. You must carry a shooting brace to rest the cannon against when firing. The cannon's default damage is 6. Setting the brace and priming the cannon requires four Tricks. The standard attack with a culverin is the "Shoot" quickness/d2 basic combat maneuver, but see the note under snake culverin.

**Engineer's crossbow.** This crossbow can shoot bolts and quarrels like a normal crossbow, but it can also shoot a bolt fitted with a glass bulb, a vial, a trailing grappling line, or a chuted flare bolt. With a glass bulb bolt, the wielder can shoot a bulb filled with any contact poison at a target. The bolt does no damage, but the bulb breaks and splatters the target with its contents. A vial on a bolt is used to ferry messages, signet rings, charms, potions or the like across a battlescene. Parachute flare bolts can dispel darkness for half a minute.

**Matchlock pistol or musket.** A matchlock fires by touching a smoldering cord or burning match to a charge. Matchlocks cannot fire in wet or humid weather. Five consecutive combat Tricks are required

to load a matchlock and prepare it for firing.

**Shuriken, hair pins, chakram collar and bracelet.** These weapons of far Oryn-ja are easily concealable (+2 die sizes to any such attempts). They are also fashionable, and you may use their wealth level as a fashion Quality level in social encounters.

**Siege crossbow.** This crossbow is almost a ballista. In addition to all other effects, a creature struck by a siege crossbow must roll his Quickness against the crossbow's attack roll. If he fails, he must re-balance. Loading a siege crossbow requires three rounds (some styles might cut this to two rounds).

**Snake culverin.** This and the dragon culverin are two different versions of a man-portable cannon. The snake is lighter, easier to manufacture, and does not hold as great a charge. Firing a snake culverin requires four consecutive Tricks to position and load, with the shot coming on the fifth round. The standard attack with a culverin is the "Shoot" quickness/d2 basic combat maneuver, and its damage is 4. If you have a style that allows for the use of black powder weapons, you may fire a culverin as part of a maneuver, provided that you spend one extra round loading, and provided that the maneuver is one that logically matches your actions. In such a case, use the maneuver's normal attack and defense dice and add 2 to the damage if the culverin hits (add 4 for a dragon culverin).



**Wheel lock pistol or musket.** A wheel lock fires by creating sparks between pyrite and a steel wheel inside a housing. As such, it can fire in any weather. A more significant advantage is that the wheel lock can carry a charge and ammunition for hours and still be ready to fire as soon as it is pulled from a concealed holster (a match lock weapon cannot do this for a number of reasons). Reloading a wheel lock requires three consecutive combat tricks. Most wheel lock artists carry multiple wheel lock pistols rather than reloading in the midst of battle. Masterpieces do one extra point of damage when your opponent's armor Quality is 5 or less.



## FASHION

	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
<i>Every day</i>			
Bourgeoisie wardrobe	5	4	600
Court wardrobe	12	12	6600
Farmer, trader, guildsman, smith mundane wardrobe	2	1	50
Farmer, trader, guildsman, smith exceptional wardrobe	3	2	100
Labor subfusc (serf, slave, apprentice, indentured servant)	1	-	2
Noble wardrobe	10	9	3600
Priest, artisan, magnate, kingsman wardrobe	4	3	300
Rags, castoffs, slum motley, horsehair shift	0	-	< 1
<i>Occasional</i>			
Ball gown, dancing jacket, masquerade mask and gown	7	10	4500
Cabochon ruby ring, pear diamond necklace, gold earrings, et al.	9	10 - 18	4500-15300
Dragon basque, dragon corset, tapestry cape, trophy bandolier, train skirt	8	8	2800
Fixer's ink tattoo (specify location, subject, colors, and scents)	6	4	600
Gem-encrusted tortoise, portrait tortoise, kidnapped or orphaned wizard's familiar, clockwork canary	9	12	6600
Hunting leathers, horse track jaunting kit, boating hat and coat	4	4	600
Pedigreed taille, Nahalite veil, house ascot, Opana tiara	8	11	5500
Pegleg (Queensport tale-carved), pegleg (springblade), monocle, wooden eye (painted with the Language of Stars), glass eye (hollow for cricket), meerscham	5	7	2100
Slumming shirt and britches, burlesque tournure	4	6	1500
Tattoo (specify location and subject)	2	1	50
Temple best, High God holiday chasuble, Vartekan phylactery	5	9	3600

**Jewels.** As with every fashion item, you can purchase jewelry at a range of wealth and quality levels. Talk with your GM if you want something that is not shown; what is listed in the table is typical for the Old Claw.

**Labor subfusc.** This is not to be confused with the academic subfusc of the colleges at Queensport and Thyre. Academic is black and often has a subtle satin sheen; labor subfusc is brown to mute the blood, mud, and grease stains. Labor subfusc is also more practically cut in laced leggings and loose tunics, providing for the ability to pass the subfusc on to future generations (or surviving members of the current

generation).

**Pedigreed taille, dragon basque, Nahalite veil, ball gown, pegleg, wooden eye.** By dint of bare midribs, deep décolletage, a skin-tight fit, fashion legend, or sheer aristry, these fashion items can be used once per scene to Distract your opponent. Make a normal social attack using this item as your Quality die. If you succeed, your opponent takes a Reason penalty die on all rolls next round.

**Tapestry cape.** These capes are woven like a multi-panelled tapestry that depicts a story. Against anyone with a reputation or History involving the events on your tapestry, increase the quality of the



cape by 4.

**Tattoos.** A tattoo has double its quality when first revealed: a fighter ripping his shirt off to reveal a death's head inked on his pectorals, a woman raising her dress to expose the ink on her thighs, a forbidden sigil tattooed on a disciple's scalp under hair that must be shorn before the tattoo is visible.

**Tortoise, familiar, canary.** You can always

stare at your pet (your fashionable pet!) and pretend not to have heard someone's biting remark. In any round in which you use your fashion pet, you can ignore a point of social damage. You may use your pet once per scene. The pet must be fashionable; no one brings a hound dog to a coronation.

## ALCHEMY

	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
Nephew's kit	3	3	300
Fixer's kit	5	8	2800
Fixer's lab	12	10	4500
<i>Distillations and fabrications (well known)</i>			
Alchemist's fire	4	2	100
Alkahest (Fixer's bane)	5	6	1500
Antivenin	4	4	600
Carmot powder	6	4	600
Drakatizon (cat's eye)	7	5	1000
Dream gel	9	10	4500
Ice rose	4	3	300
Jakattan spider incubation vial	4	8	2800
Lilac delirium	5	7	2100
Midnight kohl	8	6	1500
Muriatic acid	5	4	600
Muriatic catalyst	5	1	50
Oil of cat's foot	4-6	2-4	100-600
Orichalcum`	6	8	2800
Red kohl	4	5	1000
Stranglesmoke stick	6	3	300
Vapors of Muda-Tarsk	6	5	1000
Vitriol	6	4	600
Water of kings (aqua regia, dispel water)	6	9	3600
White kohl	4	3	300
Wound paste	5	3	300





## ALCHEMY (CONT.)

	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
<i>Distillations and fabrications (obscure)</i>			
Alchemist's grease	4	2	100
Alchemist's soul fire	10	14	9100
Binary inferno	8	10	4500
Bitter grog	3	6	1500
Cockatrice whip	4	10	4500
Embrace	5	4	600
Fixer's gum	3	3	300
Null jelly	5	7	2100
Red sulfur	2	2	100
Spagyric poultice	3	2	100
Twitcher head	5	4	600
White sulfur	6	3	300
<i>Poisons</i>			
Asp venom	3	6	1500
Bonding syrup	4	4	600
Cinnacide	3	5	1000
Crushed lotus	4	7	2100
Dragon dream dust	4	3	300
Dynn oil	4	4	600
Madfire ash	3	4	600
Ouroboros	8	17	13,600
Salt mamba	6	8	2800
Scorpion	3	6	1500
Venom meduse	7	10	4500
Werevenom	5	8	2800
Wight blood	3	3	300

**Nephew's kit, fixer's kit, fixer's lab.** Each set of gear allows you to prepare alchemical items up to the quality of the kit or lab. Each also allows a fixer to use his *fix* ability, and a lab allows the use of the *transfuse* class ability.

**Alchemist's fire.** Alchemist's fire is an oil that burns violently when lit, even if it is mixed in water. This makes it especially useful for attacking ships, kraken, dragon, and other magical beasts deployed in naval warfare. Alchemist's fire does one point of fire damage to its target. (The attack must hit with a

“Shoot” basic maneuver, or the equivalent, in combat. You may substitute the Quality of the alchemist's fire for your Quickness when making the "Shoot" attack roll, if you like.) The fire then does 1 point of damage in each subsequent round until the target uses a trick to put it out.

**Alchemist's grease.** This is enough to cover one flight of stairs, a small room's floor, or a handheld object. To move through the greased area or to pick up a greased object, a quickness roll against the grease's quality is required. Spreading the grease in combat requires three tricks.

**Alchemist's soul fire.** This is the same as alchemist's fire, but it also deals one point of Strength, Quickness, Reason, or Charisma damage per round (the fixer chooses the type of damage when creating the soul fire). Furthermore, when a character attempts to quench the fire, he must succeed at a Reason or Quickness roll (the character chooses which) opposed by the soul fire's Quality roll.

**Alkahest.** A clear liquid, alkahest is a violent emulsifier. Roll the alkahest's Quality die against the Quality of any alchemical substance it touches. If the alkahest wins, the contacted alchemical substance is rendered an inert, valueless ecru goo.

**Anti-venin.** Anti-venin is effective prophylactically as well as therapeutically. The antivenin is effective for a number of hours equal to its quality. Roll the anti-venin's Quality die as a bonus die for any attempt to resist poison.

**Binary inferno.** A sticky amber liquid is half of the binary inferno. The fixer keys the liquid to a particular person's chemistry; the fixer must have several tissue samples from the target (hair, sweat, skin, blood). When the liquid is exposed to air within several feet of the target, the liquid ignites in an inferno. The inferno rolls its Quality as an attack die against the keyed target and up to five others in the area. Those struck take three points of damage and are burning with intense flames, taking one point of damage per round until a Trick is used to douse the flames. Assassins often coat a trained bird with the binary liquid. When the bird alights near the target, the inferno erupts, and in the confusion, the assassin finishes the job.



**Bitter grog.** This beverage tastes of anise and clove. An imbibor loses one point of Mood and gains one point of Magic. You can quaff multiple steins, but your Magic score cannot exceed its normal maximum by more than 2. Mood damage is not so limited. The effects persist for one hour.

**Camraderie.** This pecan powder is added to wine. Drink it with up to six of your fellows, and for the next six hours, you can track them by scent, as they can you. If someone tries to obscure the tracks, roll your Reason against their attempt (probably their Reason), and use the embrace's Quality as a bonus die.

**Carmot powder.** Carmot is a red paste that spurs transmutation. As a loose powder, it can be scattered across an area, attacking the integrity of every item therein, prompting decay and damaging transformation. An exposed item must roll its Quality against the carmot's Quality. Failure means that the item loses 1 Quality point. An item cannot lose more than 2 Quality points to carmot in one week. During combat, spreading carmot in an area requires a trick. Assume that weapons, armor, and clothes are exposed, but no other items are.

**Cockatrice whip.** This leather whip is tufted with cockatrice feathers. Wield it as a normal weapon.

If it hits, the whip and the target make an opposed Quality vs. Strength roll. If the target loses, his flesh partially petrifies. He is treated as Grabbed for a number of rounds equal to the whip's Quality. The whip degrades rapidly; it lasts for a number of attempts equal to its quality.

**Drakatizon.** Applying two drops of this cherry red liquid, one onto each eye, grants vision in the dark for one hour. The vision is far from perfect; the user sees as if in a dim, shadowy room. Only blacks, whites, and shades of gray are visible.

**Dream gel.** Dream gel is stored under alcohol. It is clear, odorless, and has the consistency of thick mucus. When removed, it sours and becomes useless if not smeared within a minute against the



shaven head of a creature with a Reason score of 3 or more. If it is so smeared, dream gel provides the proper interface between a Dream Projector and a dreaming creature (see p. 149).

**Fixer's gum.** Fixer's gum is stored in bricks the size of a rain troll's thumb. One brick forms a bond that can only be broken by a Strength check higher than the Quality of the gum. The gum loses its potency after a number of days equal to its quality.

**Ice rose.** This is a red rose that, when planted in carmot (it is ineffective without the red paste), rapidly blanches (within one combat round). The whitening rose drinks in the heat in the area. The temperature drops to freezing, water throughout the area ices over, and canteens crack as the water expands into ice. Temperatures begin rising normally on the following round, returning to normal after several minutes (depending on the ambient temperature before the endothermic event). Anyone in an area where an ice rose is growing is attacked by the ice rose's Quality die rolling against the individual's Strength die. If the ice rose wins, the person takes 1 point of damage from the shocking freeze.

**Jakattan spider incubation vial.** When this forearm-sized porcelain canister shatters, a Jakattan spider swarm spills out over the area. The swarm attacks and defends with its Quality die, and it does 1 point of damage on a hit. The swarm absorbs 3 points of damage before dispersing. Single weapon strikes cannot hurt the swarm, but many environment tricks, spells, and items can.

**Lilac delirium.** Inhaling and succumbing to these fumes, the victim gains 1 Mood at the cost of 1 point of damage to a random characteristic score. For each half hour spent in the fumes, another 1-for-1 trade occurs. Two hours can be spent in the lilac fumes per dose (and per day or scene).

**Midnight kohl.** This kohl is black and sometimes contains gold glitter. You gain a bonus social die equal to the kohl's Quality when attempting to conceal or learn a secret. The kohl wears off in six hours, and you cannot wear it with any other kohl.

**Muriatic acid.** Drizzled on a metallic surface, muriatic acid rolls its Quality die against the metallic surface's Quality, causing one point of Quality damage if it wins the roll. Roll once per hour, and continue rolling as long as the acid wins the roll or until the metal is eaten away.

**Muriatic catalyst.** This reduces muriatic acid's damage period to minutes instead of hours. That is, roll a damage check each minute for muriatic acid quickened by a catalyst.

**Null jelly.** Any item (not creature) coated by null jelly rolls the jelly's quality as a bonus die when





resisting magic. The jelly remains active for one day.

**Oil of cat's foot.** Two applications of oil of cat's foot, one on each foot, quiet a character's movements for one hour. The character rolls the Quality of the oil as a bonus on his stealth checks.

**Orichalcum.** Golden red, stiff, and dense, orichalcum is an unnatural metal that sublimates over a period of days when exposed to air. Orichalcum glows in the presence of the spellbound, be it creature, item, or location. When used while you are creating an alchemical item, orichalcum mixes with the other ingredients to increase the final product's Quality by 1. Orichalcum can also be laid into a building's concrete mix, where it increases the walls' quality by one. The price reflects enough orichalcum to mix with one alchemical item or to lace the concrete in a typical cottage. Orichalcum does not stack with itself, that is, multiple applications to the same item yield no benefit beyond the initial benefit.

**Red kohl.** This make-up cannot be worn with any other kohl. It increases the wearer's Charisma by 1 for six hours.

**Red sulfur.** At high speeds, red sulfur reacts with air to shed lurid light. In night battles, especially at sea, cannon balls and ballista bolts are treated with red sulfur and launched in high arcs to illuminate the enemy's position. On a smaller scale, an arrow, cross-bow bolt, or musket ball covered in red sulfur lights up the entire path of its flight. The light persists in the air even after the cannonball or arrow has passed. The air fades to black over the course of two minutes (high winds cut this time to two rounds). While glowing, the red sulfur eliminates any effects of darkness.

**Spagyric poultice.** Strapping this net of crushed and oiled herbs against your skin for a day grants you a bonus for the remainder of the week. Roll the poultice's Quality die as a bonus die whenever attempting to shake off or avoid contracting disease.

**Stranglesmoke stick.** The smell of apples rotting in the fields rises with the smoke when this stick is lit. Everyone in the area must make a Strength check against the quality of the Stranglesmoke stick or be seized in a coughing and choking fit, unable to do anything but move. The smoke is thin enough that

vision is not affected. The smoke dissipates after two rounds.

**Twitcher head.** A twitcher zombie's head begins to twitch after being lifted out of its alchemical preserving fluids. It can be pulled from its storage sack and tossed in the same round as a Trick in combat. The next round, it explodes, rolling its Quality die as an attack die against all in the area. It causes two points of damage and exposes those hit to the flake plague (see p. 59).

**Vapors of Muda-Tarsk.** When you burn an incense stick marinated in alkahest and red sulfur, you produce the vapors of Muda-Tarsk. In the thin, transparent vapors, the faces and voices of your loved ones call out to you. Sounds and smells of battles and feasts from your youth swim through the mists. Everyone in the area raises his Heart score by two. The effect lasts for one minute. The mists are not thick enough to obscure vision.

**Vitriol.** Vitriol is mixed with black powder and then loaded into a musket or pistol. After, when the weapon fires, the vitriol coats the ball or shot with a tarry, burning black goo. The painful attack does one extra point of damage if it hits.

**Water of kings (aqua regia).** This colorless liquid appears, feels, and even tastes as water, but it never casts any reflection, nor does it refract light. When a spellbound item is immersed in aqua regia, roll the Quality die of the aqua regia against the Magic die of the wizard who created the item. If the aqua regia wins, the spellbound item loses its spell or spells. The aqua regia loses its potency after dissolving the spell or spells from one item.

**White kohl.** In the Old Claw, white kohl is an ancient art. Each shade, each whorl, is freighted with meaning from centuries of tradition. White kohl performance ceremonies are most common in the long stretch between midwinter and spring but can occur throughout the year. Increase any one of your Reputations by two if, at a significant white kohl party, yours is applied by someone whose skill roll beats the Doom. White kohl wears off after six hours, and it cannot be worn with other kohl.

**White sulfur.** White sulfur, when dissolved in



water and quaffed, speeds and strengthens the user. Increase by 1 the damage caused by basic melee attacks (Str/d2) and use the sulfur's Quality as a bonus die on all Strength and Quickness rolls. The sulfur's effects last for one hour. For a week after using white sulfur, each day the user must roll his Strength vs. the Doom. Failure indicates that the user's Reason and Charisma are reduced to 3 that day.

**Wound paste.** When applied after a combat, wound paste grants the user its Quality as a bonus die on two rolls made to recover Body damage (see Healing, p. 30).

## POISONS

Unless otherwise stated, a poison is resisted by Strength vs. static Quality (not an opposed roll, this is simply a Strength roll against a fixed number, namely, the Quality of the poison). Failure to resist means that the poison takes effect next round.

Wound or contact poisons are difficult to apply to a weapon and can only be applied in combat with three consecutive Tricks and an alchemy skill check against the Doom. If a character fails this check, he must spend another three rounds applying the poison before making another check. Most of the time, poisons are applied outside of combat. The poison coats a weapon only until the first successful blow.

**Asp venom.** A character wounded with asp venom loses one point of Strength per round until dead. Each round, the character may make a Strength check (at his maximum, not current, Strength) against the quality of the poison to stop the progression. In any case, the asp venom cannot cause a person more Strength damage than its quality.

**Bonding syrup.** If not resisted when eaten, this syrup causes the victim to fall in love with (automatically adding an appropriate Inspiration) and attempt to seduce the next person he meets. If he is already at his Inspiration maximum, there is no Inspiration added, as the syrup wears off in three hours. Some couples share bonding syrup purposefully, usually on top of iced cream.

**Cinnacide.** This vermilion dust smells of cinnamon. It can be spread throughout an area using an atomizer (in combat, this is a single Trick). Anyone

breathing it and not resisting loses one point of Reason per round until unconscious or until he leaves the area. Each round, the character can stop the progression by making a Strength check against the fixed Quality of the poison. In any case, the cinnacide cannot cause a person more reason damage than its quality. Cinnacide can be spread throughout an area using an atomizer. Once the victim is no longer taking damage from the cinnacide, he recovers his lost reason at the rate of one point per minute.

**Crushed lotus.** When burnt, prepared crushed lotus petals act as a powerful amnesiac. Anyone in the area who does not resist the poison loses access to one randomly determined Inspiration and one randomly determined History. The memories, the Inspiration, and the History return after a Reason check vs. the Doom, made daily until success.

**Dragon dream dust.** Anyone in the area who does not resist the effects of inhaling this dust rolls a Reason penalty die on all rolls next round. Concentration is difficult when your mind is falling through a reverie of fire and rapine.

**Dynn oil.** Developed by Inquisitors who had no wish to hear the blasphemies of their subjects, Dynn oil induces an aphasia that prevents all writing and speech. The oil must be swallowed. A new Strength check is allowed once every half hour (the effects wear off in a maximum of 6 hours).

**Madfire ash.** Spellbound creatures who eat madfire ash immediately attack anyone around them. The victim tries to cast a spell every round and is unable to distinguish between friend and foe. She attempts to burn everything to the ground. Each round, a new Strength vs. Quality check is applicable.

**Ouroboros.** Distilled from dragon cerebral blood and cardiac tissue, ouroboros poison causes your heart to eat itself. After failing to resist when contacted by the poison, the victim rolls his Heart against the Doom once for each Inspiration that he has. If the Heart roll fails, he takes Body damage and Heart damage equal to the value of the Inspiration, and he loses access to that Inspiration for one week.

**Salt mamba.** Smelling of azaleas, on contact the salt mamba's venom causes living tissue to desalinate and necrose. The victim loses 2 Body per round for three rounds, with a new Strength vs. fixed Quality



check each round to stop the damage.

**Scorpion.** A character wounded with this venom loses 1 Quickness per round until paralyzed and then dead (the lungs, too, are paralyzed). Each round, the character makes a Strength check against the Quality of the poison to stop the progression. In any case, the scorpion venom cannot cause a person more Quickness damage than its quality.

**Venom meduse.** When contacted by this poison, and after failing to resist, the victim hears music and hissing in his ears as he slowly petrifies. The victim loses 1 Quickness each round, as if affected by scorpion venom, but the damage is not limited by the poison's Quality. If the victim reaches 0 Quickness, he is petrified for a number of weeks equal to the poison's Quality.

**Werevenom.** Werevenom in a wound immediately causes 1 body and 1 strength damage if not resisted. Furthermore, anyone infected with werevenom must roll his Strength against the Doom when in moonlight. If he fails, he spends the next half hour out of his mind, believing himself a werewolf. There are persistent rumors of "true" werevenom that transforms a man into a half-wolf beast, but only the Fixer's brotherhood and perhaps a few unfortunate howling souls know the veracity of those rumors.

**Wight blood.** Redolent of coconut, prepared wight blood poison causes hallucinations of fear when injected. For two combat rounds after being injected or wounded, or for one minute outside of physical combat, the victim must roll a Heart penalty die with all other rolls.

## ENGINEERING

	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
10' pole (engineer's)	7	3	300
Atomizer, plunger or squeeze bulb	2	2	100
Automata (theater, tree, clock, ferry)	8	14	9100
Bear trap	4	2	100
Breakaway wheel lock (pistol or musket)	7	12	6600
Burr bomb	6	5	1000
Clockwork canary	9	12	6600
Detonator	6	2	100
Divine wind rat	6	8	2800
Dream projector	12	15	10,500
Drop cord	6	3	300
Ejector saddle or ejector seat	4	5	1000
Engineer's crowbar	3	2	100
Grapeshot bomb	6	4	600
Grapple gun and belt winch	4	3	300
Haptic gauntlets	9	10	4500
Hook prosthesis: branding iron	5	8	2800
Hook prosthesis: geared and self-propelled	5	7	2100
Hook prosthesis: geared double-claw	4	5	1000
Lightning gyre	7	11	5500
Mechanical dirge bird, dancer, apocalypse	10	18	15,300
Mirror helmet	4	3	300





## ENGINEERING (CONT.)

	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
Moth bomb	6	5	1000
Orrery	6	15	10,500
Piston boots	8	5	1000
Plunger piton	7	3	300
Riotwire	7	3	300
Riotwire arrow	6	4	600
Scope goggles	7	9	3600
Shadow show	4	5	1000
Smoke bomb	6	2	100
Speaking tubes (zeppelin, ship, submersible, castle)	8	13	7800
Spyglass	6	5	1000
Whip gyre	7	9	3600
Whisper chamber	7	8	2800

**10' pole (engineer's).** An engineer's 10' pole, also called a longspoon army knife, weighs 5 pounds and telescopes between 2' and 11'. It contains a periscope for seeing around corners or through dimensional portals. The staff also has thermometers to detect temperatures and thermal gradients along the length of the pole. A sliding bullseye lantern can move between 2' and 10'. Finally, two flint-tipped and three drill-tipped grippers form a retractable waldo that grabs with Strength 3 and has the dexterity to write one's name with a quill, spark a fire, or drill a 0.5"-diameter bore hole up to 1 foot deep.

**Atomizer, plunger, or squeeze bulb.** These allow you to disperse a liquid or fine powder over a wide area. Without a device like this, poisons such as dragon dream dust only affect one target rather than all creatures in an area.

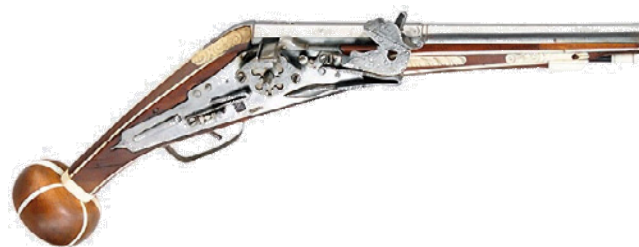
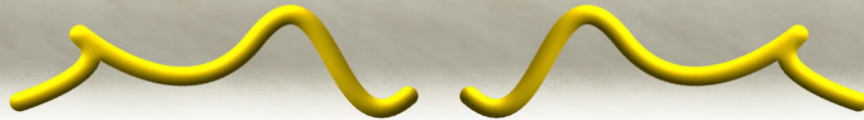
**Automata.** These statues and sculptures have a limited motive force. They are powered by falling weights, wound springs, and, rarely, heated bulbs of steam with escape valves whose reaction force induces rotation. When in his theater, castle, garden, harbor, or other property, an automata owner can roll the au-

tomata's Quality die once per scene as a bonus die on any type of social roll (the automata is impressive!) or combat roll (the automata interferes in just the right way!).

**Bear trap.** Laid on a stair, in a wading pool, or amidst the detritus of the forest floor, a bear trap attacks with its Quality die against the defender's Quickness (or his Defense die, if in combat). A creature caught in the bear trap is Grabbed. To detect a hidden bear trap, a character rolls Reason vs. the trapmaking skill of the trapmaker (usually Reason with a trapmaking skill for a bonus die). A Strength check against the Quality sets the trapped victim free.

**Breakaway wheel lock musket or pistol.** The firearm breaks down into seemingly innocuous parts. You gain the item's Quality as a bonus die when attempting to conceal it. These can be smuggled with a ball loaded. They are otherwise identical to wheel lock pistols and muskets, above. Breaking down or reassembling one of these weapons requires one round for anyone with a history in engineering and two rounds for everyone else.

**Burr bomb.** This bomb scatters thousands of



burrs marinated in nettle extract. The bomb attacks up to five people in its area with a Quality roll opposed by the target's Defense or Quickness roll (if out of combat). Targets that are hit are covered in burrs. They take 1 point of Mood damage and roll a Reason penalty die on attack rolls next round. To throw this bomb up to 1 area away, you must succeed at a Strength check vs. the Doom (engineering histories or skills count as bonus dice for this check). If you fail, the bomb stays in your area, possibly attacking you.

**Clockwork canary.** These works of art are social marvels (see p. 141).

**Detonator.** You can attach a detonator to any of the four bomb types. The detonator allows you to drop the bomb, move up to three areas away - possibly to a concealed position - and detonate the bomb (a Trick in combat). For every two points by which the Detonator's Quality exceeds the Doom, you can trigger an additional bomb with the same detonator.

**Divine wind rat.** This mechanical contraption, customarily built to look like a rat, rolls forward trailing black powder and tiny fragmentary shells behind it. It moves one area per round, and it has one body and d2 defense. When the trail is lit, determine five people per area randomly along the trail (five people in each of the areas the rat has crossed). Roll the rat's Quality against the targets' Defense or Quickness (if out of combat); each target hit takes 2 points of damage. The rat is destroyed. Detecting the rat's motion, if one is not looking for it, requires a Reason check opposed by the Quality roll of the rat.

**Dream projector.** A dream projector is a dull, lockable iron helmet with opaque lenses covering the eyes and six articulated wires as thick as a baby's forearm and yards long. It only functions when locked on the head of a patient covered with dream gel (see p.144). When functioning, a dream projector projects overhead, in three dimensions and with full sound, the dreams of the patient. The first use of this is entertainment. Nobles often place serfs, one per chamber, in dream projectors and host parties where they and their peers laugh deep into the night. The second use of the dream projector is information. The patient must roll his Reason die against the projector's Quality die each night or give up one secret (randomly determined)

until he has nothing left to hide. The third use of the dream projector is manipulation. Anyone who has seen another's dreams gains the projector's Quality die as a bonus die on the next appropriate social roll.

**Drop cord.** These cords are 500 feet long and feature a ratcheted handheld slide. A cordsman can zip down up to 100 feet in a single round. His defense while doing so is d4.

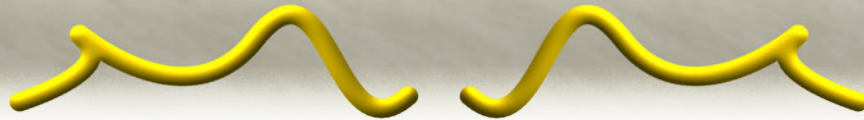
**Ejector seat or ejector saddle.** Roll the ejector seat's Quality die. If it beats the Doom, then you eject without damage from a vehicle that is crashing, flying apart, or speeding toward certain doom. If it fails, then you still eject, but you take damage equal to the Doom.

**Engineer's crowbar.** This crowbar has a gearshaft handle that cranks the bar through an angle, allowing the wielder to make a Strength 12 check against anything that could be opened with a crowbar.

**Grapeshot bomb.** A grapeshot bomb rolls its Quality die as an attack against up to 5 randomly determined targets in its area. Each hit does 1 point of damage. You must succeed at a Strength check vs. the Doom to throw this bomb up to one area away (engineering histories or skills count as bonus dice for this check). If you fail, the bomb stays in your area and could hit you.

**Grapple gun and belt winch.** With a range of 150 feet, the rocket grapple can launch to even very high roofs. Catching it on a proper support is a bit tricky and requires a Quickness roll against the Doom (and, of course, Engineering skills are bonus dice to this roll). The cable can support up to 250 lbs. The winch reels in with 8 Strength. It allows the wearer to be lifted by the cable attached to a rocket grapple, once the grapple has caught something. The wearer moves at a walking pace.

**Haptic gauntlets.** These gauntlets have feedback gears calibrated to give valuable data to an engineer (only someone with an engineering skill can use



them). When an engineer attempts to learn something about an item or a structure, these gloves lend their Quality as a bonus die. Possible data include temperature, Quality, age, typical Wealth Level, region of origin, and Defense (for buildings and vehicles). These gloves also lend their Quality as a bonus die whenever the engineer crafts something.

**Hook prosthesis: branding iron.** A reservoir of oil burns in the base of this hook-topped cuff. The oil heats the iron to branding temperatures. Anyone hit by the hook in hand-to-hand combat must roll Quickness against the fixed Quality of the branding hook. Failure causes 1 additional point of damage and marks the victim with a burn that leaves a pale white scar after healing.

**Hook prosthesis: geared double claw.** This is two opposed hooks on a cuff that fits over an arm stump. The hooks are geared and spring-loaded. The owner can activate the spring as a free action, causing the double claw to snap shut. This gives him a Strength of 12 for one suitable action. In combat, resetting the spring is a Trick.

**Hook prosthesis: geared and self-propelled.** This is another cuff with a hook, intended to be fit over an arm stump. Springs and a pressurized air bladder propel the hook through the air when released. It trails up to a 50' tether, allowing the owner to use the prosthesis as a propelled grappling hook. It can also be used as a basic ranged attack (dQuality/d2) for 1 damage + the target is grabbed. Reloading the tethered hook requires 4 rounds in combat.

**Lightning gyre.** This steel sphere pockmarked with teardrop-shaped spigots whirs, sparks, and rotates blindingly fast when activated. The gyre sparks to every character in the area wearing metal armor or carrying a metal weapon (up to 30 targets maximum). If there are no characters in the area with metal armor or weapons, the gyre sparks to five randomly determined targets. It attacks with a Quality vs. Defense roll and does 2 points of damage per strike. The lightning gyre operates for a number of rounds equal to its Quality. You may toss the gyre one area for every three points of Strength that you have.

**Mechanical dirge bird, white kohl dancer, or apocalypse assassin.** These are some of the most feared devices in the Kingdoms. They are small clock-

work boxes surmounted by a figurine. The box winds up and plays music, usually somber bagpipes with sackbut and harpsichord harmonies, while the figure moves through a punch-sheet set repertoire. They are highly sought after as works of art and status symbols. Owning one grants you a reputation equal to the Quality of the item as an art collector. Increase the reputation size by two for each further item you possess. The fear associated with these figurines comes from their final use. When a taking is poured in libation over the figurine, a crisis surge occurs. One of the effects of the surge is that the figurine becomes intelligent; other effects are left to the GM. The figurine's new personality matches its music and the taking. It can speak, and its repertoire of motions becomes unlimited. It is still bound to the top of its music box, however, save for at most one hour per day. During this hour, on its master's command, the figurine enlarges to become a manticore (bird); a Mondaine, that is a 10th-level courtesan (white kohl dancer), or a 10th-level Assassin (apocalypse assassin). The animated figurine becomes the same NPC each time upon animation. Wounds, reputations, histories, and so forth persist. While animated, the figurine obeys the commands of its master as it best understands them.

**Mirror helmet.** This full leather helmet zips tight in the back of the head. The eye pieces are mirrored and shielded against glare, allowing the wearer to use the helmet's Quality as a bonus die when resisting blinding lights, gaze attacks, and the like. There are also two projecting mirrors at either side of the helmet that face the rear and allow the wearer to see behind himself. The wearer reduces his Quickness and Charisma each by 4 while wearing the helmet, as it is disconcerting, interferes with instinctual reflexes, and looks silly.

**Moth bomb.** This bomb explodes with a brilliant flash of light that has a chance to blind (p. 29) everyone in the area for 1 round; roll its Quality vs. each defender's Quickness. After the blast, incandescent white flakes flutter through the area for three rounds. Anyone in the area during one of these rounds must make an opposed Quickness check against the Quality of the bomb. Failure indicates the interloper touched a "moth," as they are called, and takes 2 points of damage. You must succeed at a Strength check vs. the



Doom to throw this bomb up to one area away (engineering histories or skills count as bonus dice for this check). If you fail, the bomb stays in your area.

**Orrery.** This room-sized model of the stars turns in circles, shells, and ellipses. These are complicated, expensive, and impressive devices. The owner gains a reputation as an orrery owner among academics and priests of stars. The reputation is equal to the quality of the device.

**Piston boots.** Pistons in these boots' heels aid your jumps. Roll the boots' Quality as a bonus die on any jump. Unfortunately, your Quickness is reduced by 3 when wearing these heavy boots.

**Plunger piton.** With a charge of black powder and a silkmatal spiked tip, the plunger piton drives itself into any stone or softer surface and sticks fast. It can support up to 400 pounds. Removed pitons cannot be reused.

**Riotwire.** A character risks laceration when entering, exiting, or moving within an area strung with riotwire. The riotwire attacks with its Quality die, and if it hits, it does 1 point of damage and attacks again. It can attack up to three times in a round if it keeps hitting. Riotwire is ineffective against armor of equal or superior quality.

**Riotwire comet arrow.** A riotwire comet arrow spools out multiple coils of riotwire as it flies, leaving behind it a wide tail of razor-sharp filaments. The "safe ends" of the tail wires are simple cable for three or four feet, attached to belt loops on the archer's belt. This allows the archer to tie off the cable after the arrow has flown. Comet arrows provide a quick way to spread riotwire across an area of up to 100 feet by 10 feet (the most wire that can fit in an arrow capsule).

**Scope goggles.** Roll the goggles' Quality die as a bonus die when you search an area for tracks, small objects, blood spatters, etc.

**Shadow show.** A shadow show apparatus is a small (4' wide by 8' high) shadow theater with automated curtains, puppets, lights, and sound effects. If you have a History in a relevant performance skill, increase your History value by the Quality of the shadow show.

**Smoke bomb.** Smoke obscures the area, providing cover equal to deep shadows: all attack die sizes are reduced by one. Ranged attacks that are not



area-of-effect are impossible without some special ability. Visual perception checks fail unless they beat the Quality of the smoke bomb. You must succeed at a Strength check vs. the Doom to throw this bomb up to one area away (engineering histories or skills count as bonus dice for this check). If you fail, the bomb stays in your area.

**Speaking tubes.** These tubes snake through the infrastructure of the building or vehicle and terminate in brass horns. By speaking into a horn and manipulating a series of levers, a speaker can make herself heard in any other part of the building or vehicle. In a castle, or if more than half of the zeppelins, ships, submersibles, and other capital vehicles in an armed legion have speaking tubes, the commanding organization rolls the speaking tubes' Quality as a bonus die when making Efficiency tests.

**Spyglass.** This allows you to see with accuracy up to one mile away, eliminating range penalties to visual perception rolls and rolling the spyglass's Quality as a bonus die when observing objects more than 100 yards distant.

**Whisper chamber.** An engineer can design a room with elliptical walls that focus sound on two points up to 100 feet apart. Two people standing at

these two points can communicate via whispers that no one else hears.

**Whip gyre.** When activated and tossed, tendrils sprout isotropically from the gyre and begin to lash furiously. Up to five randomly determined people in the area take 1 point of damage and must rebalance if struck by a Quality vs Defense roll. The gyre continues to spin, lashing everything in the same manner, for

two more rounds. You may toss the gyre one area for every three points of Strength that you have. A cable attached to the gyre allows you to pull the gyre one area back toward you each round as a Trick. The gyre blocks sight and prevents missile attacks through its area.

## BUILDINGS

	DEFENSE	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE	EFFECT
<i>Businesses and establishments</i>					
Arcane Tower, 40' radius, seven stories	11	23	-	30,000	+2 Arcana and Reputation 12: Wizard or Witch
Barracks and drill grounds	5	9	13	7800	+1 Force
Bazaar stall, kiosk	-	1	4	600	+1 income
Blacksmith shop	3	5	10	4500	+1 income or +1 Force
Cathedral	8	18	20	19,000	+2 Force, Arcana, Shadow, or income
Church, temple	6	10	13	7800	+1 Force, Arcana, Shadow, or income
City building, ¼ block, three stories	2	6	13	7800	-
Copyist, printer	2	3	9	3600	+1 Efficiency
Engineer's shop	3	4	9	3600	+1 income or +1 Efficiency
Farm, family	2	4	8	2800	+1 income
Goldsmith shop	3	4	16	12,000	+4 income
Inn, crossroads wayside	2	3	9	3600	+1 income; can be residence too
Inn, grand	4	5	14	9100	1 theme; +2 income; residence
King's school	7	12	15	10,500	+1 Shadow, +1 Arcana, and Reputation 12: Cruelty
Library	3	5	13	7800	+1 Arcana
Market, fairgrounds, bazaar	2	4	10	4500	+2 income
Mill	4	5	11	5500	+1 income and +1 Efficiency
Mine (mother lode)	9	7	17	13,600	+3 income
Mine (standard)	6	10	13	7800	+1 Force, Arcana, Shadow, or income
Rune wall, stele, or obelisk (i)	4	10	14	9100	+2 Arcana
Safehouse (i)	+3	+4	14	9100	+1 Shadow
Shrine	3	2	10	4500	+1 Force, Arcana, Shadow, or income
Storefront	2	2	8	2800	+1 income

## BUILDINGS (CONT.)

	DEFENSE	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE	EFFECT
Tannery	2	3	9	3600	+1 income
Tavern, blind pig (i)	3	2	5	1000	+1 Shadow or +1 income
Tavern, kingsman	2	4	9	3600	+1 income
Theater below (i)	2	3	9	3600	1 theme and +1 income
Theater, grand; amphitheater	2	6	17	13,600	2 themes and +2 income
Thieves' training gauntlet (i)	2	2	10	4500	+2 Shadow
Tower, 40' radius, four stories	4	5	14	9100	+1 income
Warehouse	2	4	6	1500	+1 income
Waxworks (i)	3	4	9	3600	+1 income and +1 Shadow
Wood shop	2	3	8	2800	+1 income
<i>Homes and residences</i>					
Homeless	-	-	0	-	Reputation 6: Dirty Bum
Shack, shanty, shed, tenement room; rented and shared	-	-	1	-	-
Shack, shanty, shed	2	1	2	100	-
Cabin, rented; tenement room, rented	-	-	3	-	-
Cottage, rent	-	-	4	-	-
Cabin	2	2	6	1500	Reputation 4: Landed
Tenement room, ownership	-	-	7	2100	-
Row house, rent	-	-	8	-	-
Cottage	2	3	8	2800	Reputation 6: Landed
Manor house	2	5	15	10,500	1 theme; Reputation 8: Landed
Tenement building	3	10	15	10,500	Reputation 10: Slumlord
Rowhouse	3	5	15	10,500	1 theme; Reputation 6: Landed
Chateau	3	15	20	19,000	4 themes; Reputation 12: Landed and wealthy
Keep, outpost, fort	10	20	15	10,500	1 theme; Reputation 10: Landed and Powerful; +2 Force
Castle, barony	10	30	-	60,000	3 themes; Reputation 12: Landed and Powerful; +3 Force
Castle, earldom	12	36	-	87,000	5 themes; Reputation 12: Landed and Powerful; +4 Force
Castle, duchy	14	42	-	119,000	7 themes; Reputation 16: Landed and Powerful; +5 Force
Castle, royal	16	50	-	156,000	8 themes; Reputation 18: Landed and Powerful; + 5 Force





(i). The buildings marked (i) are illicit. If such a building's secret location is ever revealed, the king-men will attack within a season.

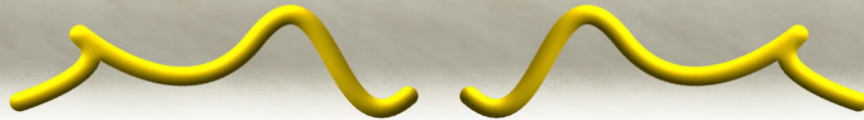
Defense. The static number that must be hit to damage the building. Only siege weapons can damage an object with a defense quality

Structural quality. The number of points that must be crafted to build the building, or that must be taken out to destroy it.

Effect: organization score. The first two build-

ings of a given type stack their bonuses. Beyond that, organization scores do not rise. Redundancy can still be useful in times of war, of course, in the event that one building is razed or captured.

Effect: income. Gold income (or drain) stacks. If the economy in a given sector is depressed, then the income is negative. For example, if agriculture items are more expensive than normal in a region, then a small farm's income is -1, not +1. At the end of each season, roll your total income die against the Doom.



On a success, you gain one-quarter the gold needed to advance to the next wealth level (or, at wealth level 20 and above, 5000 gold). For example, if you have five buildings at +2 income and one at -1 income, then your income is +9. You roll a d8 against the Doom. If you roll more than double the Doom, you gain one-third the gold necessary to advance.

Effect: theme. The architecture, ornamentation, and decoration of your building or chamber supports a theme: fidelity, death, artifice, lust or another theme. If you host someone in that room, you roll the building's Quality up to three times per scene as a bonus die when your social attack or defense exploits that room's theme. To gain the bonus, you must narrate how your character exploits the theme as part of your social attack or defense.

Effect: Reputation. This reputation applies in the building's region.

**Bazaar stall, kiosk.** Unlike other buildings, this can be damaged in a reasonable time by an individual acting alone. He can break it as any other item; see chapter 10 for the rules on breaking items.

**Castle, any size.** It is unheard of in the Old Claw, and rare elsewhere, for someone other than a titled noble to command one of these castles (other than in a stewardship or regency position). A PC noble may inherit such a castle through advancing in levels, or he may need to finance his own for various reasons, at the GM's judgment. Other classed PCs should be barred from owning castles barring unusual circumstances.

**Grand theater.** Most grand theaters are named after a sponsoring noble, and most theaters open with a flattering biographical play about that noble. In return, grand theaters are the second-most likely place to find most nobles (court, of course, is first). Entertainments never include plays that challenge the status quo, but they do feature opera, straight plays, miracle plays, commedia dell'arte, cat burning, bear baiting, orange girls, and, in Thyre and Queensport, lectures on the wonders of the age.

**Safehouse.** A trapdoor in the wine cellar, a pivoting fireplace leading to a secret chamber, a priest hole – somehow you disguise your building's true nature. Add the safehouse's characteristics to those of

another building. The location becomes a secret. The safehouse built-ins must be purchased at the same time that you purchase another building.

**Shrine, church, temple, cathedral.** These are dedicated to the High God. Any such holy or unholy site consecrated to a low god is illicit (i), has its Quality decreased by 1, Wealth level reduced by 2, and gives +1 Shadow and +1 Arcana.

**Theater below.** This underground theater is anathema to kings. Uncensored art breeds inspiration like carrion breeds maggots. The nobility has a duty to protect the commoners from the dangers of excessive love, passion, and sorrow. The penalty for owning or working at a theater below is death, often after watching one's family tortured and maimed on the theater's stage in a Last Show, popular among certain nobles.

**Waxworks.** On rolls relating to disguise, the waxworks bonus to your organization's Shadow score is +3.

## MOUNTS & VEHICLES

Vehicles without a defense value can be hacked apart by a determined axeman (p. 62). Vehicles with a defense value can only be damaged on a reasonable time scale by siege weapons.

Effect: Fashion item. You can use this item's Wealth Level as a bonus die on a social roll once per scene.

Effect: Mobile audience chamber. When riding in this item, you can use the Audience Chamber regardless of where your "true" audience chamber is.

Effect: naval stealth. The commanding organization can roll the vehicle's Quality as a bonus Shadow or Force die once per week or up to three times per battle. The submersible is a secret troop in battle (p. 50) as well as a secret outside of battle. The submersible's effective range is 100 miles, but an onboard engineer can extend this indefinitely with the right skill checks, allowing extended missions of exploration and discovery.





## MOUNTS & VEHICLES

DEFENSE    QUALITY    WEALTH    GOLD    EFFECT  
                                 LEVEL    PRICE

Draft horse	-	-	3	300	-
War horse	-	-	6	1500	Can use in mounted combat
Race horse	-	-	6	1500	-
Camel	-	-	4	600	-
Ice sled	-	1	1	50	-
Screened box palanquin, litter	-	3	15	10,500	Fashion item; mobile audience chamber
Open wagon and gnarsk team	-	6	8	2800	-
Box wagon and gnarsk team	-	7	9	3600	-
Puzzle-box Wagon (Hidden City of the Free Road) and gnarsk team	-	9	10	4500	Use Quality as bonus die to smuggling attempts
Zeppelin, trader	4	8	17	13,600	+2 income
Zeppelin, crown	5	9	19	17,100	+1 income; Reputation 18: Wondrous, wealthy, and wise
Balloon and gondola	2	4	7	2100	-
Barge	5	5	8	2800	+1 income
Caravel	5	6	9	3600	+1 income
Ferry	3	5	5	1000	+1 income
Bathysphere	3	6	10	4500	Use Quality as bonus die for undersea Research attempts
Submersible, prototype	5	8	-	100,000	+2 Force, Efficiency, or Shadow; naval stealth

## WONDERS

Only an architect of wonder (18th-level engineer) can craft a wonder.

Unless otherwise noted, any reputation bonus granted by a wonder applies throughout the civilized world.

**Cathedral of ages.** No dome is wider, and no steeple higher, than the cathedral of ages. It soars. Every troop that you command increases its spirit value by 2, so long as they share the cathedral's religion.

**City bridge.** You build a bridge so wide, so high, and so strong that an entire city neighborhood develops on its surface, in its walls, and in its supports. Church bells ring, lambs cry at slaughterhouses, and

babies scream in apartments all along your creation. In this city microcosm, you have a chance to mold the economy of the region. Pick two sectors of the economy, and as long as you control the bridge, you can adjust each of the four sectors up or down one level at will. Your organization also gains +4 Efficiency and either +3 Force or +3 Shadow.

**Doomsday device.** A doomsday device always operates mechanically or alchemically, though many believe it uses magic to draw strength from the Inspiration of its creator. The device can have many forms: an explosive mine dam holding back lava that will divert and engulf a city, or an earthquake projector the size of Koshtra Nohn, or a toxin in the rats of a city that is released upon reaching critical mass. A dooms-





## WONDERS

	DEFENSE	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE	EFFECT
Cathedral of ages	10	20	-	90,000	Spirit
City bridge	12	25	-	90,000	Microcosm
Doomsday device	10	18	-	120,000	Bring doomsday to one target
Dragon garden	4	8	-	120,000	Dragons; +6 income
Flower of forgetfulness	-	20	-	100,000	Forgetfulness
Giant	8	15	-	50,000	Reputation; drink the taking
Glorious arena	8	15	-	70,000	Glory
Legion below	-	50	-	120,000	Replace fallen troops
Spectacular theater	4	10	-	60,000	Write culture
Submersible	10	10	-	100,000	+2 Force, Efficiency, and Shadow; naval stealth
Triumph: arch, obelisk, wall	4	10	-	60,000	Reputation
World's orrery	-	20	-	90,000	View history
Zeppelin dreadnought	As maneuver	20	-	100,000	See Troops section, below.
Ziggurat, pyramid	8	18	-	60,000	Arcana

day device always takes from one season to one year from its setting to its triggering. During this time, the city, council, region, or any other single-entity target knows that a Doomsday device has been triggered, usually through rumors from laborers who worked for the engineer while constructing the device. Even if there were no such laborers, somehow, word always leaks out when a doomsday device is counting down; perhaps that is another part of the device that blurs the boundary between magic and engineering. If the device is not stopped, then it utterly destroys the target.

**Dragon garden.** Your garden attracts dragons like a flame attracts moths. You can capture and train two dragons at no cost, and they do not count against your organization's troop limit. The dragons are replaced one season after they fall in combat, again at no cost.

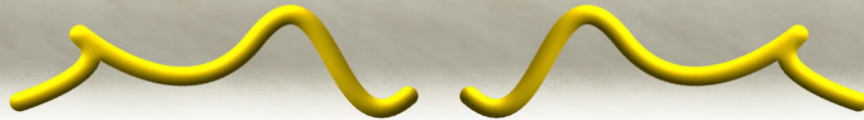
**Dreadnought zeppelin.** These are detailed in the Troop section below.

**Flower of forgetfulness.** This porcelain sculpture (actually a bowl, not a flower) is the most beautiful art object in the world - or, at least, the most hypnotic. Anyone looking at it must make an opposed

roll, Reason vs. Quality (a d20 for the Flower), or stare at the bowl for an hour. After that hour, another roll is allowed. Anyone staring at the bowl for more than one hour loses two points from a random Inspiration, as all else is forgotten when contemplating the Flower. Note that although the flower's Quality is 20, a single hit from any weapon will destroy it.

**Giant.** This colossal statue towers over your city. You choose its likeness, pose, and import; through this choice you can assign a Reputation 20, positive or negative, to any individual that you like. The reputation cannot be brought below 10 while the Giant yet stands. Furthermore, the Giant can animate in defense of your city if it is fed the proper takings: the Love of a Maid, the Rage of a savage, the Hope of a Child, and the Wrath of a Father. When these takings are poured out on the Giant's feet, it animates for one season in defense of its city (see Colossus, p. 170).

**Glorious arena.** Anyone who wins a gladiatorial match in the glorious arena gains a point of Reputation. The exact Reputation is up to the player, but it must be appropriate for the arena. Anyone who views a championship match in the arena (occurring once



per season) leaves with a bonus Inspiration: Glory of Combat (1) that endures for a week. This inspiration can exceed the normal maximum.

**Legion Below.** Fixers and thieves are not the only ones who use the underworld. A king who has constructed a Legion Below has thousands of terra cotta soldiers prepared to animate and swell the ranks of his forces. The Legion Below cannot move of its own power before being brought to life; it must be transported. It is the equivalent of 5 troops when filling a zeppelin, barge, or wagon's cargo hold. Once deployed, it can negate up to 50 Health damage in a battle by replacing living units as they fall. The Legion Below can only be used once; its clay falls lifeless after the use. The Legion Below is built by an engineer, but the final step of its preparation is to anoint it with two takings (this is similar to the Giant, above). The takings must be the Peace of a warrior and the Faith of a criminal.

**Spectacular.** A spectacular is a theater of dreams, an opulent, intricate marvel that elevates the art of any violinist, harpsichordist, player, acrobat, catburner, bear-baiter, or soprano who trods its boards. People idolize the spectacular stars. The king loses one of his culture lines when a Spectacular is built. Now, the three culture lines are written as follows: 1 by the king, 1 by the most powerful locally-based organization, and 1 by the owner of the Spectacular.

**Submersible.** Except for the differences noted in the table, these are similar to the prototype submersibles listed under Mounts and Vehicles above.

**Triumph.** A marble monument, traditionally built after victory in war, memorializes your triumphs and your history. Up to six people can be assigned a reputation (20) as you like, positive or negative. The reputation cannot be brought below 10 while the triumph yet stands. Every person known to be a member of the organization that built the triumph gains a reputation 8: Triumphant.

**World's orrery.** This orrery contains miniature stained glass slides of nearly every important event in recorded history. Set the orrery for any date, and it spins to the correct alignment. Then it uses a bullseye lantern to project the image on that day's stained glass slide onto a larger-than-life screen. All the important

events of the day are shown in the stained glass slide, so sages using a world's orrery roll its Quality die as a bonus die on any relevant knowledge check, including all historical or geographic research attempts and attempts to uncover relevant secrets. The orrery must have a team of engineers and artists devoted to it to keep it up to date. These artisans' wages constitute a Wealth Level 15 item.

**Ziggurat, pyramid.** Enduring and powerful, pyramids and ziggurats are statements of raw power. Increase your organization's arcana score by 6 and all maneuver attacks and defenses of spellbound troops and beasts by one die size.

## TROOPS

Troops have wealth levels, as do any other purchase. You can, as always, convert the wealth level to a cash gold price. However, if you purchase troops for cash, you must pay that price in gold every other week in order to maintain that troop. If you purchase a troop using the wealth level system, the maintenance cost is already included; it is represented by the use of one of your wealth level "slots" to own the troop. Owning troops using the wealth level system is easier than paying cash. This represents the advantages of credit, capital, usury, banking and more.

Remember that an armed legion can own as many troops as it can afford, but other organizations can own and command no number of troops greater than the organization's Force score. Individuals may own and command one troop for every four points of Charisma.

Remember that strategic movement is abstract and relative (see p. 52).

Remember also that an attack does 1 damage on a hit unless another damage value is specified.

# TROOPS

	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE	DESCRIPTION
Angry mob	-	-	Pitchforks and torches
Archers	8	2800	Ranged attack
Combat engineers	8	2800	Repairmen for siege engines
Convicts, slaves, impressed troops	5	1000	Expensive and listless
Cordsmen	9	3600	Aerial drop troops
Crossbowmen	7	2100	Cheap, versatile ranged attackers
Desperate and untrained: cooks, camp followers, townsfolk, schoolchildren	-	-	Last resort
Dramba coven	8	2800	Stealthy hex witches
Druids	8	2800	Attackers and healers
Expert wheel lock musketeers	12	6,600	Skilled ranged attack
Fanatics, cultists, brainwashed canaille	1	50	Crazed zealots
Fieldcraft & Battlecraft wizard & apprentices	11	5500	Battlefield terrain control magic
Fyrajji savages	4 (merc)	600 (merc)	Stealthy forest barbarians
Heavy cavalry	10	4500	Shock cavalry
Heavy footmen	7	2100	Armored infantry
Kingsmen, assassins, and spies	9	3600	Stealthy special forces
Kvalt savages	4 (merc)	600 (merc)	Hardy, snow/mountain guerrillas
Light cavalry	8	2800	Rapid-response/vanguard cavalry
Light footmen	6	1500	Mobile infantry
Longbowmen	10	4500	Powerful ranged attack
Maelstrom wizard & apprentices	11	5500	Weather wizards
Match lock musketeers	6	1500	Cheap, slow ranged attack
Mounted archers	10	4500	Mobile ranged attack
Mounted Serai savages	4 (merc)	600 (merc)	Desert nomad cavalry
Parapet defenders	9	3600	Anti-magic armored warriors
Pikemen	7	2100	Anti-cavalry infantry
Sailors, pirates, privateers	7	2100	Individuals armed with cutlasses
Shield bearers	6	1500	Guardian troops
Spearmen	7	2100	Anti-mobility troops
Templars	9	3600	Special forces: spirit and defense
Town militia	5	1000	Spirited, desperate defenders





## TROOPS (CONT.)

	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE	DESCRIPTION
<i>Naval vessels</i>			
Carrack	13	7800	3-4 masts, fo'csl, aftcastle, bowsprit
Galleon	15	10,500	3-4 masts, lateen-rigged, aftcastle
Sloop	11	5500	Single mast, sleek and low
Galley, longship	10	4500	Propelled by oars
Trireme galley	11	5500	Propelled by three rows of oars
Pump boat with cistern	7	2100	Fire defense ship
Fire ship	3	300	Burning shell, anti-formation ship
<i>Airships</i>			
Dreadnought zeppelin	-	100,000	A wonder of the world
Escort zeppelin, yacht	17	13,600	Nimble raiding zeppelin
Frigate zeppelin	18	15,300	Ship of the line for aerial combat
<i>Beasts</i>			
Descent cat cage-wagons	8	2800	Vicious horse-sized cats
Mammoth cavalry	12	6600	Powerful, pinning cavalry
Mammoth cavalry: howdah-mounted cannon	12	6600	Cannon on mammoth back
Raptor horde and handlers	5	1000	Uncontrollable dinosaur stampede
War apes	8	2800	Brachiating bloodthirsty primates
<i>Magical beasts</i>			
Chimera chariots	12	6600	Mobile, multiple-attack cavalry
Colossus	-	-	A wonder of the world
Dragon	-	-	A wonder of the world
Giant	-	-	Single-creature troop
Jungle strider	-	-	A village fits on its back
Manticore flight	12	6600	Trained aerial monsters
Quickruby golem knot	-	-	Anti-magic brutes
Roc	14	9100	Single-creature troop
Skeletons, children's legion	-	-	Wailing child skeletons
Skeleton legion	-	-	Brittle, fearless horde
Undead giant	-	-	One-creature troop
Zombie legion	-	-	Contagious brain eaters
Zombie legion, twitcher	-	-	Exploding brain eaters
Zombie legion, human-raptor cross-stitch	-	-	Fast and bounding brain eaters



## TROOPS (CONT.)

	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE	DESCRIPTION
Siege tower	4	600	Built on site to surmount walls
Trebuchet	4	600	Catapult + sling
Battering ram	3	300	Anti-fortification
Ballista	4	600	Siege vs. large creatures
Onager (Bishop's mule)	3	300	Kicking torsional catapult
Turtle	4	600	Portable cover for special unit
Light cannon	7	2100	Anti-fortification artillery
Heavy cannon	8	2800	Anti-fortification artillery

### Angry mob

**Speed (strategic):** 1

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 5

**Maneuvers:**

1. Restraint – 0/d4.

**Formations:**

1. Go wild – d4/d2.

**Wealth level:** - (only acquired through roleplay)

### Archers

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Scout-guided shot – d8/d2 and roll organization's Force as bonus attack die. 2 health. Only from Volley formation.

2. Aim and mighty pull - +2 attack die size and +1 damage next round.

**Formations:**

1. Volley – d8/d2.
2. Close quarters (melee) – d2/d4.
3. Readied shot – 0/d4 and name a condition (a troop moves, a spell is cast, etc.). In subsequent rounds, as long as you have not changed from this stance, you gain a d12/d2 attack at the moment the named condition manifests.

**Wealth level:** 7

### Combat engineers

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 2

**Maneuvers:**

1. Repair – 0/d4. Add 1 structural quality point to a building, vehicle, etc. Can only be used for half the building's quality points in any one battle.

2. Entrench – All allies in area gain one defense die size as long as they do not leave the area.

3. Camouflage - 0/d8. You can hide another group. If it has not yet attacked in this battle, it becomes secret until it moves or attacks (or until discovered).

**Formations:**

1. Defend – 0/d4.
2. Fortify – 0/d4. Add 2 to the defense value of any building, vehicle, or structure. Engineers must be inside the structure.

**Wealth level:** 8

### Conscripts, slaves, impressed troops

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 2

**Maneuvers:**

1. Charge – d4/d4, move.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d4/d4.

**Wealth level:** 5



## Cordsmen

**Speed (strategic):** 3 (or zeppelin speed)

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 6

**Maneuvers:**

1. Rappel – 0/d10 and descend on cord from zeppelin, detach optional.
2. Descending storm (ranged) – d8/d6 and descend from zeppelin. 1 health and 2 spirit. Detach optional.
3. Ascend – 0/d6 and reel up to zeppelin. Requires two consecutive maneuvers.
4. Attach – re-attach to cords if detached.

**Formations:**

1. Blades from clouds – d6/d6. Must be detached from cords.
2. Pendulum (sky hook) – d10/d2, 2 health, move with zeppelin, take double damage if hit by melee.

**Wealth level:** 9

## Crossbowmen

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 3

**Maneuvers:**

1. Aim – 0/d2 - +2 attack die size and +1 damage next round.
2. Charge & shoot – d6/d4 + move.

**Formations:**

1. Crank & shoot – d8/d2. Crank & shoot requires one round to crank and one round to shoot. The “aim” maneuver can occur in between.
2. Bash (melee) – d4/d4.

**Wealth level:** 6

## Dramba coven

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Shroud – 0/d2. One unit of no more than five troops is secret until the coven stops chanting this maneuver or until the unit attacks. Multiple covens can shroud multiple units. If a unit has stopped attacking

and moved out of the area where it was attacking, and no one attacks it for a round, it can be reshrouded.

2. Boil – d8/d2. 2 health. The targeted troop uses the commanding organization’s Arcana score to defend.

**Formations:**

1. Zombie army – 0/d2. Raise and command one zombie legion in any other area occupied by an allied unit. The dramba coven has one command point per round that it can use only to direct the zombies’ maneuvers. The coven does not need line of sight; it sees through the zombies’ eyes. The zombies mill about ineffectively unless the dramba coven maintains this formation and uses the coven’s command point to command the zombie legion.
2. Cotton ear – d12/d2. Target troop cannot receive orders and therefore cannot execute maneuvers next round. Target resists with commanding organization’s Arcana.

**Special:** Dramba covens’ locations on the battlefield are secret until discovered.

**Wealth level:** 9

## Druids

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 4

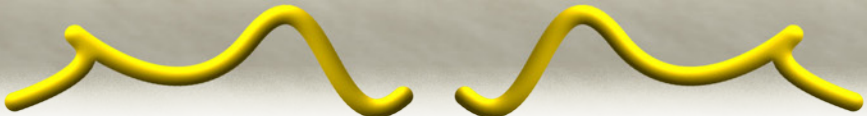
**Maneuvers:**

1. Sacrifice – 0/d4. Take 1 health and 1 spirit from one allied troop and give 1 health to another.
2. Gale of fire - d8/d4. 2 health to up to 5 units in one area. Only from Sun Curse. The target units defend with their organization’s Arcana score.
2. Faces and Names in the Blood – d10/d4. 1 spirit to up to 5 troops in one area. The target troops defend with their organization’s Arcana score.
3. Read the sky – 0/d6. Roll a d6 to detect secret troops or learn an enemy secret in three different areas (selected by the druids). Secret troops defend with their defense die; organization secrets are defended by the organization’s Shadow score.

**Formations:**

1. Sun curse – d4/d4, ranged. Troop takes 1 health and 1 spirit damage. If killed by sun curse, a conflagration arises attacking at d6 against other





troops in area (randomly selected, maximum five). The conflagration does 2 health damage. Target defends with its commanding organization's Arcana score.

2. Fear the Harvest – d10/d4. 1 spirit. Target defends with its commanding organization's Arcana score.

**Wealth level:** 9

### **Fanatic canaille or rabid mass**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 5

**Formations:**

1. Suicide wave – d12/d2, 1 health damage to target and self.

2. Human shield – 0/d4. Give d4 bonus defense die to one ally unit.

**Wealth level:** (must be gained through roleplay)

### **Fieldcraft, Battlecraft wizard and acolytes**

**Speed (strategic):** 4

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Burning Ribbons – d6/d4. Each ribbon does 1 health and 1 spirit per round as long as the wizard and his acolytes cast this spell or remain in the Burning Ribbons stance. Multiple ribbons are possible.

2. Orbfall (ranged) – d8/d4. 2 health to up to four units in area.

3. Stone slam (ranged) - d10/d4 vs. buildings. 1 quality.

4. Disguise Troop - 0/d4. One troop blends with the scenery. It is secret until the Battlemaster and his acolytes stop chanting this maneuver or until the troop attacks. If a troop has stopped attacking and moved out of the area where it was attacking, and no one attacks it for a round, it can be disguised again.

**Formations:**

1. Blur (ranged) – 0/d4 – increase defense die size of three troops by one die size each.

2. Sharpen - Increase the attack die of one unit's melee attack next round by one die size.

3. Burning ribbons – 0/d4.

4. Bridge - This forms a narrow stone bridge crossing one area. It takes one troop 2 rounds to cross

the bridge. The bridge disappears instantly if the Battlemaster and his acolytes break this stance.

5. Wizard wall – 0/d4. One area is blocked by wall on one side. Ranged, spell, and other attacks through the wall are impossible. The wall has structural quality 2 and defense value 4. It disappears if the Fieldcraft master and his acolytes break this stance. A second wall placed in the same spot as the first always generates a wild surge.

6. Eyes of Marnhok – 0/d6. Increase commanding organization's Shadow score by 4 and all troops' defense die size by one when defending against attacks from secret troops.

7. Brilliant Signals - Adds 1 to the command point total next round.

**Wealth level:** 11

### **Fyrajj savages**

**Speed (strategic):** 3 (5 in homeland)

**Health:** 4

**Spirit:** 4 (7 in homeland)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Stalk – d4/d6 ranged. Fyrajji are unseen and considered secret (can only be targeted if detected; see secret troops in chapter on war). Can only be used in forest.

2. Hack and Scalp – d4/d4. 1 health + 1 spirit.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d4/d4 (d6/d6 in homeland).

2. Defend – 0/d6.

**Wealth level:** 4 as mercenaries.

### **Heavy cavalry**

**Speed (strategic):** 4

**Health:** 6

**Spirit:** 5

**Maneuvers:**

1. Charge – d10/d8, move, break formation. 2 health + 2 spirit. The move is not optional.

2. Smash the line – d12/d10 vs. infantry. 2 health.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d8/d8. 2 health.

2. Defensive Line – d4/d12.

**Wealth level:** 10



## Heavy footmen

**Speed (strategic):** 2

**Health:** 5

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Column push – d10/d8, 2 health.
2. Shield other – 0/d6. Other gets your defense

die.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d6/d6.
2. Defend – 0/d10.

**Wealth level:** 7

## Kingsmen, assassins, spies

**Speed (strategic):** 5

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 6

**Maneuvers:**

1. Assassinate officers – d8/d6 vs. enemy organization. Enemy organization defends with its Force or Shadow score. 1 Efficiency damage plus one fewer command point next round.

2. Sneak – 0/d10, move.

3. Disappear in the chaos – 0/d8. Regain secret status.

4. Spy – d8/d6 vs. organization's Efficiency or Shadow score. If you win, you learn one secret (eg location of a secret troop, maneuvers and **Formations** of a troop, brigade composition, heroes' locations).

5. Sneak attack – d12/d6. 3 health. Must have been undetected. Breaks stealth.

6. False orders – d12/d8 vs. organization's Efficiency score. You intercept orders in the enemy's command structure. Next round, use the kingsmen's action to issue false orders, giving you control over one enemy unit.

7. Camouflage - 0/d8. You can hide another group. If it has not yet attacked in this battle, it becomes secret until it moves or attacks (or until discovered).

**Formations:**

1. Lie low – 0/d10.
2. Hunt and kill - d8/d4.

**Special:** Kingsmen are a secret group until discovered or until they attack.

**Wealth level:** 10

## Knights

**Speed (strategic):** 5

**Health:** 8

**Spirit:** 8

**Maneuvers:**

1. Charge – d10/d10, move, 3 health + 2 spirit. The move is not optional.

2. Break the line - d12/d10 vs. infantry. 3 health damage.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d8/d10. 2 health.
2. Defensive line - d4/d12.

**Wealth level:** 14

## Kvalt savages

**Speed (strategic):** 3 (5 in homeland)

**Health:** 4

**Spirit:** 3 (7 in homeland)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Avalanche charge. d8/d6, move, 1 health.

2. Rage - 0/d4. Ignore 1 damage to you this round and gain +1 damage and commanding organization's Force as bonus attack die next round.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d4/d4 (d6/d6 in homeland).
2. Defend – 0/d6.

**Wealth level:** 4 as mercenaries.

## Light cavalry

**Speed (strategic):** 5

**Health:** 5

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Charge – d8/d4, move 2 areas, 1 health.
2. Wheeling cover run – 0/d8, move.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d6/d6.
2. Harrow and Harass – d8/d2. 1 health + 1 spirit.
3. Cut off - d6/d4. 0 health, 0 spirit, but target, if hit, cannot move.

**Wealth level:** 8



### **Light footmen**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Wedge – d10/d6. 2 health.

2. Run and counter – 0/d6, move. Add a d6 attack against one unit that attacks you; otherwise, no attack.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d6/d4.

2. Defend 0/d6.

**Wealth level:** 6

### **Longbowmen**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 6

**Maneuvers:**

1. Scout-guided shot – d12/d2 and roll organization's Force as bonus attack die. 3 health.

2. Aim and mighty pull - +2 attack die size, +2 damage, and ignore range modifiers out to 3 areas next round.

**Formations:**

1. Volley – d10/d2. 2 health.

2. Close quarters (melee) – d4/d4.

3. Double time - d6/d2. 2 health. Attack the same target twice. Longbowmen lose 1 Spirit per round spent in double time.

**Wealth level:** 10

### **Maelstrom wizard and acolytes**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Weather – change the weather to anything desired (see p. 50). This can only be used once per battle (by any maelstrom group) and requires three consecutive maneuvers without breaking formation.

2. Windwalk - Increase one unit's movement rate by one next round. Also, it can move through enemy troops.

**Formations:**

1. Twister – d6/d4 vs. buildings and troops.

1 quality to buildings; 1 health to up to three units.

2. Gale – 0/d4. Missile fire other than siege weapons suffers a five die size penalty in up to three adjacent areas.

3. Chain lightning – d10/d4. The lightning does 1 health to up to three units in one area, each of whom defends with its organization's Arcana score.

**Wealth level:** 11

### **Mounted archers**

**Speed (strategic):** 5

**Health:** 5

**Spirit:** 5

**Maneuvers:**

1. Gallop and shoot - d6/d4. Move, 1 health.

**Formations:**

1. Ranged skirmish - d6/d4.

2. Draw and fight – d4/d4. d6/d6 vs. infantry.

**Wealth level:** 10

### **Musketeers, match lock**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 4

**Spirit:** 3

**Formations:**

1. Load & fire – d8/d2. Load & fire requires two rounds to load and one round to fire. 3 health.

2. Rapid load & fire – d4/d2. Reduces loading time to one round, but a roll of 1 fouls the troop's guns so badly that a command point must be spent to restore order. Until the point is spent, the troop cannot do anything but move or use their bayonets and stocks. 2 health.

3. Bayonet & stock (melee) – d6/d4.

**Wealth level:** 6

### **Musketeers; wheel lock experts**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 5

**Spirit:** 6

**Maneuvers:**

1. Charge & fire – d10/d2 + move. 2 health.

2. Sharpshooter aim – 0/d2 - +2 attack die size and +2 damage next round.

3. Fusillade – d10/d2, target loses one command point next round, 1 health.



### **Formations:**

1. Rapid load & fire – d12/d2. Load & fire requires one round to load and one round to fire. Sharpshooter aim can be used between rounds.
2. Regimental load & fire – d12/d2. Regimental load & fire requires two rounds to load and one round to fire. If the first shot hits, the troop also rolls the commanding organization's Force score as a second and third attack. 2 health.

**Wealth level:** 12

### **Parapet defenders**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 4

**Spirit:** 5

#### **Maneuvers:**

1. Countershot – 0/d8. d8 ranged attack against any who attack you, up to five targets.
2. Repulse (melee) – d8/d8. 1 health and push troop back out of castle, keep, wall, etc. if within one area of outside.
3. Hunger flight arrows - d8/d2. 1 health; +2 health (3 total) against flying or spellbound units. Only while defending castle or similar.

#### **Formations:**

1. Arcane Forms (melee or ranged) – d4/d6. 2 health and one unit in your area gains your defense die as a bonus die against any magic attack.
2. Skirmish – d8/d6.
3. Abjuring Forms - 0/d10. Up to two allied units in your area gain your defense die as a bonus die against magic.

**Special:** Roll parapet defenders' defense die as a bonus die against attacks normally defended against by an organization's Arcana score. Troop is spellbound.

**Wealth level:** 10

### **Pikemen**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 4

**Spirit:** 4

#### **Maneuvers:**

1. Unhorse and spike – d12/d6 vs. cavalry, 2 health.
2. Tie down. 0/d8. If your target moves, d12

attack for 3 health damage.

### **Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d6/d4.
2. Set vs. charge. 0/d4; d8/d10 vs. any group that moves into your area; 2 health.

**Wealth level:** 7

### **Sailor, pirate, privateer**

**Speed (strategic):** 2 (or ship's speed)

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 4

#### **Maneuvers:**

1. Board – d10/d10, 2 health, when first entering a ship.
2. Crack crew - +1 defensive value to the ship and +1 die size to all the ship's attacks (only one crack crew can benefit a ship at a time).

#### **Formations:**

1. Deck fighting – d8/d8 only on ship's deck, 2 health.
2. Land fighting – d4/d4.

**Wealth level:** 7

### **Scouts**

**Speed (strategic):** 6

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 6

#### **Maneuvers:**

1. Stalk (ranged) – d6/d8, 1 health. Scouts are secret while executing this maneuver (p. 50).
2. Coordinated scouting – Move + roll d6 plus organization rolls its Force or Efficiency vs. secret troop's defense die to detect it. All secret groups in the scouts' area and adjacent areas can be detected.

#### **Formations:**

1. Scout – 0/d6. Roll d6 to detect hidden or secret troops in immediate or adjacent areas.
2. Skirmish – d4/d4.
3. Lay low – 0/d10. Secret.

**Wealth level:** 8

**NB:** "Second finger" scouts are available at **Wealth Level 6**. Reduce all defense dice by one size and remove the "Lay low" stance.

### **Serai savages, mounted**

**Speed (strategic):** 4 (7 in homeland)

**Health:** 3 (4 in homeland)

**Spirit:** 3 (7 in homeland)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Wind of heaven – move 3 areas.
2. Charge – d6/d4, move 2 areas. (d8/d4, 3

health, in homeland)

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d4/d4 (d6/d6, 2 in homeland).
2. Run interference – 0/d4. Ally also gains d4
3. Cut off - d4/d4. Target, if hit, cannot move.

**Wealth level:** 4 as mercenaries.

### **Shield bearers**

**Speed (strategic):** 2

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 3

**Maneuvers:**

1. Guard – 0/d8. One ally troop also gains d8 as a bonus defense die.

**Formations:**

1. Defend – 0/d6. One ally troop gains a d6 as a bonus defense die.
2. Skirmish – d2/d4.

**Special:** If placed in a brigade with as many shield bearer troops as ranged troops, the archer troops all gain 1 die size defense bonus to all formations and maneuvers.

**Wealth level:** 7

### **Spearman**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 4

**Spirit:** 3

**Maneuvers:**

1. Javelin (ranged) – d6/d4, 2 health.
2. Pilum (ranged) – d8/d4. No health damage, but target cannot shield or guard another next round.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d4/d4.
2. Tie down – 0/d6. If target moves, then you get a d10 attack for 2 health.

**Wealth level:** 7

### **Templars**

**Speed (strategic):** 4

**Health:** 5

**Spirit:** 9

**Maneuvers:**

1. Column Push – d10/d8, 2 health.
2. Shield others – 0/d8. One ally gains d8 as a bonus defense die.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d6/d6, 2 health.
2. Pray and preach - +1 to spirit and next round's attack and defense dice for templars and one ally unit.

**Wealth level:** 10

### **Town militia**

**Speed (strategic):** 2

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 2 (7 in hometown)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Charge – d4/d4, move, 1 health.

**Formations:**

1. Hold the line – d4/d6.
2. Town song – 0/d4, increase next attack die size by 2 and damage by 2.

**Wealth level:** 5

### **Untrained militia, townsfolk, and camp followers**

**Speed (strategic):** 2

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 1

**Maneuvers:** 1. Scramble – d2/d4.

**Formations:** 1. Stand in harm's way – 0/d4.

**Wealth level:** - (acquired only through roleplay)

## **NAVAL VESSELS**

### **Carrack**

**Speed (strategic):** 10

**Health:** 14

**Spirit:** 5 (crew)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Broadside – 0/10. Half cannons fire.
2. Sail – 0/10. Move and fire 2 cannon.

**Formations:**

1. Harass – 0/10. Two cannon fire.
2. Load & Unload – move 2 troops/round into or out of the carrack.

**Special:** A carrack can carry up to 4 troops and up to 10 cannon or ballistae.

**Wealth level:** 13

**Fire ship, fire husk**

**Speed (strategic):** 1

**Health:** 1

**Spirit:** n/a

**Maneuvers:**

1. Launch and collide – d8/d2. Disrupts target (target cannot maneuver next round), causes 2 damage, and sets ships on fire (fire continues until put out with a pump boat or by the commanding organization making an Efficiency roll against the Doom). Ships on fire cannot act other than to move.

**Formations:**

1. Drift and burn - 0/4.

**Special:** If a fire ship hits its target, it is consumed in the conflagration. If it misses, the commanding organization can recapture the fire boat and have a second chance at re-launching it toward a target only if it makes an Efficiency roll against the Doom, spending a command point to do so.

**Wealth level:** 4

**Galleon**

**Speed (strategic):** 9

**Health:** 16

**Spirit:** 5 (crew)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Broadside – 0/11. Half cannons fire.
2. Sail – 0/11. Move and fire 2 cannon.

**Formations:**

1. Harass – 0/11. Two cannon fire.
2. Load & Unload – 0/11. move 2 troops/round into or out of the galleon.

**Special:** A galleon can carry up to 5 troops and up to 12 cannon or ballistae.

**Wealth level:** 15

**Galley, longship**

**Speed (strategic):** 8

**Health:** 9

**Spirit:** 5 (crew)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Row & Sail – 0/7 – move 2 areas. The galley cannot execute this maneuver in consecutive rounds.

2. Ram - d12/7 and move. 1 quality to target ship, which cannot move or execute a maneuver next round. You or the target must leave the area before ramming again.

**Formations:**

1. Harass – 0/7. Two cannon fire.
2. Load & Unload – 0/7. Move 2 troops/round into or out of the galley.

**Special:** A longship can carry up to 2 troops and 2 cannon or ballistae.

**Wealth level:** 10

**NB:** Trireme galleys have the same statistics as the longship galley, except the defensive value is 8 and:

**Galley, trireme**

**Speed (strategic):** 8

**Health:** 9

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Trireme ram – d12/8 and move. 2 quality damage to target ship, which cannot move or execute a maneuver next round. You or the target must leave the area before ramming again.

**Wealth level:** 11

**Pumpers with cistern, fire control team**

**Speed (strategic):** 1

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 4

**Formations:**

1. Put out fire - 0/4. Puts out one fire per round in its area or adjacent area with no need for you to spend a maneuver.

**Wealth level:** 4

**Sloop**

**Speed (strategic):** 10





**Health:** 11

**Spirit:** 5

**Maneuvers:**

1. Broadside – 0/9. Half cannons fire.
2. Sail – 0/9. Move and fire 2 cannon.

**Formations:**

1. Harass – 0/9. Two cannon fire.
2. Load & Unload – 0/9. move 2 troops/round into or out of the sloop.

**Special:** A sloop can carry up to 3 troops and up to 6 canon or ballistae.

**Wealth level:** 11

## AIRSHIPS

### **Zeppelin, dreadnought**

**Speed (strategic):** 7 (aerial)

**Health:** 20

**Spirit:** 5

**Maneuvers:**

1. Full sail – 0/12. Move 2 areas.
2. Dreadnought broadside – 0/12. Half cannon fire at +1 attack die size. 2 health and 1 spirit to a unit, or 1 quality to a building, and in either case, an enemy whose forces are hit loses 1 command point next round from the shock and awe of the bombardment.

**Formations:**

1. Sky command – 0/12. +1 command point and +1 to all commanding organization's characteristics save arcana, both next round, as usual.
2. Harass – 0/12. 4 cannon fire.
3. Load & unload – 0/12. Move three troops/round into or out of the dreadnought.

**Special:** A dreadnought can carry 12 cannon and 5 troops.

**Wealth level:** A dreadnought can only be built as a wonder of the world.

### **Zeppelin, escort; yacht**

**Speed (strategic):** 9 (aerial)

**Health:** 7

**Spirit:** 5

**Maneuvers:**

1. Wind race – 0/9. Move 3 areas.
2. Broadside – 0/9. Half cannon fire.

**Formations:**

1. Harass – 0/9. One cannon fires.

2. Load & unload – 0/11. Move two troops into or out of the frigate.

**Special:** An escort zeppelin can carry 1 troop and up to 4 cannon or ballistae.

**Wealth level:** 17

### **Zeppelin, frigate**

**Speed (strategic):** 8 (aerial)

**Health:** 9

**Spirit:** 5

**Maneuvers:**

1. Full sail – 0/11. Move 2 areas.
2. Broadside – 0/11. Half cannon fire.

**Formations:**

1. Sky command – 0/11. +1 command point next round.
2. Harass – 0/11. Two cannon fire.
3. Load & unload – 0/11 move two troops per round into or out of the frigate.
4. Surveillance - d8/11. Roll d8 to detect secret troops in up to three designated areas.

**Special:** Frigates can carry up to four troops and 8 cannon or ballistae.

**Wealth level:** 18

## BEASTS

### **Descent cats**

**Speed (strategic):** 1

**Health:** 10

**Spirit:** 4 cats, 3 handlers (cannot soak health damage)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Pounce 0/d6 - move 2 areas including through an enemy-occupied area.
2. Pack assault - d10/d4 - 4 health + 1 spirit.

**Formations:**

1. Unleashed – d8/d4, 2 health + 1 spirit.
2. Cornered - 0/d6 - d8 attack against any who attack you (up to five attacks).

**Special:** The cats disperse and lope for the hills four rounds after being released from their cages, regardless of what they did during those four rounds.

**Wealth level:** 10



### **Mammoth cavalry**

**Speed (strategic):** 4

**Health:** 9

**Spirit:** 5

**Maneuvers:**

1. Net – d10/d6. Netted troop cannot act until the round in which a command point is spent to unfoul it (and a second command point must be spent if the troop is to maneuver during that round). Each mammoth carries three nets. After they are gone, this maneuver cannot be used.

2. Trample charge – d10/d2. 1 health, 1 spirit, move.

**Formations:**

1. Trample – d10/d6.

**Wealth level:** 12

### **Mammoth, howdah-mounted cannon**

**Speed (strategic):** 3

**Health:** 8

**Spirit:** 5

**Maneuvers:**

1. Trample & fire – d10/d4. 1 health, 1 spirit, and cannon fires.

2. Charge & fire – cannon fires and move.

**Formations:**

1. Trample – d6/d6.

**Special:** The platform in a mammoth howdah can support one cannon (heavy or light).

**Wealth level:** 12

### **Raptor horde and handlers**

**Speed (strategic):** 1

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** Fearless (handlers 3)

**Formations:**

1. Unleashed – d8/d2, 1 health, 1 spirit.

2. Caged and snarling - d2/d2 - 1 spirit

**Special:** Any gunfire or cannon shot causes the raptors to flee for the following round unless the commanding organization makes a Force roll vs. the Doom.

**Special:** The horde disperses three rounds after being released from its cages, meandering through the battlefield and feeding on grass. This happens regard-

less of what the horde did during its three rounds under control.

**Wealth level:** 5

### **War apes**

**Speed (strategic):** 2

**Health:** 6

**Spirit:** Fearless (cannot soak health damage)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Bounding charge – d6/d2, 2 health, and move 2 areas. Requires 2 command points.

2. Track scent – 0/d4. Roll d8 to detect any secret troop in the immediate or any adjacent area.

**Formations:**

1. Frenzy – d4/d4. If first attack hits, roll another attack. Continue until miss; a maximum of 3 attacks are possible.

2. Scatter – 0/d6.

**Special:** War apes take no terrain penalties under normal circumstances. They are able to brachiate, leap, clamber, and climb with uncanny alacrity.

**Special:** War apes are territorial and cannot be stacked into a brigade with another war ape troop.

**Wealth level:** 8 or increase wealth level by one for armored war apes, whose health is 8.

## **MAGICAL BEASTS**

### **Chimera chariots**

**Speed (strategic):** 5

**Health:** 4

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Overrun – d8/d8. 2 health. Move 1 area, including through an enemy's occupied area.

2. Miasmal breath – d8/d6. Two attacks against separate targets in your area. 1 health and disorganized (unit cannot maneuver next round). Cannot use consecutively.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d4/d4, 3 attacks.

2. Circle the chariots – 0/d8, +2 attack die size to all attacks next round.



**Wealth level:** 12

### **Colossus**

**Speed (strategic):** 5

**Health:** 16

**Spirit:** Fearless

**Maneuvers:**

1. Stomp and pound (melee) - d20/d20, two attacks, 3 health.
2. Hurl boulder (ranged) – d20/d12, 3 health. This may also be Hurl Uprooted Tree, Hurl Chunk of Curtain Wall, and so forth as appropriate. This attack can do siege damage against buildings and other large structures.
3. Overstep – 0/d12. Move two areas, including movement through an enemy troop. Only from Sweeping Blow (or another maneuver).

**Formations:**

1. Sweeping blow - d10/d10, three attacks vs. separate targets, 1 health and push one troop/hit one area away.
2. Pack earth - 0/d10 - Regenerate two health as long as in contact with ground.
3. Crush - d10/d10 - 3 health.

**Wealth level:** (obtained through roleplay)

### **Dragon**

**Speed (strategic):** 12 (aerial)

**Health:** 16

**Spirit:** As individual dragon's Heart

**Maneuvers:**

1. Fire breath (ranged) – d20/d10 vs. three units in same area. Cannot use on consecutive rounds. 2 Health.
2. Rampage (melee) – d20/d12, four attacks, 1 health + 1 spirit (each attack).
3. Dragon flight – d10/d20. Move two areas. 1 spirit to up to five units in area flown over; units defend with commanding organization's Force score.

**Formations:**

1. Circle and wait – 0/d12. +2 fire damage next round.
2. Destruction – d12/d12, two attacks, 2 health and 1 spirit.

**Wealth level:** (obtained through roleplay)

### **Giant**

**Speed (strategic):** 4

**Health:** 9

**Spirit:** 3

**Maneuvers:**

1. Earthquake club – d10/d6, three separate attacks (all targets must be in your area). 2 health + knocked off balance (the unit can't move next round, although it can attack, including with a maneuver).
2. Overstep – 0/d8. Move two areas, including movement through an enemy troop.

**Formations:**

1. Pound - d10/d8. 2 health.
2. Hurl boulder - d10/d6. 2 health. This attack can do siege damage against buildings and other large structures.

**Wealth level:** Obtained through roleplay.

### **Jungle Strider**

**Speed (strategic):** 6

**Health:** 18

**Spirit:** 3

**Maneuvers:**

1. Stomp – d12/d2 vs. 5 units in same area.
  2. Load & unload – 0/d2. Unload up to two troops per round, to ground level or castle wall level.
- Special:** A jungle strider can transport up to ten troops.  
**Wealth level:** Only obtained through roleplay.

### **Manticore flight**

**Speed (strategic):** 4 (aerial)

**Health:** 6

**Spirit:** 3

**Maneuvers:**

1. Tail spike volley (ranged) - d10/d8. 3 health. Can use three times per battle.
2. Dive, rend, and fly - d10/d4, two attacks. 2 health. Move 1 area. Cannot use in consecutive rounds.

**Formations:**

1. Dive and rend - d10/d4. 2 health.
2. Aerial harassment - d6/d8. 1 health.
3. Wing circle - 0/d10.

**Wealth level:** 12.





## **Roc**

**Speed (strategic):** 4 (aerial)

**Health:** 7

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Dive – d20/d6. 3 health, 2 spirit. Cannot use in consecutive rounds.

2. Screening flight - 0/d8 - one unit gains your defense die as a bonus die against ranged physical attacks.

3. Snatch - d6/d6. Grab a siege engine or officer-and-horse. Siege engine: when you drop it next round, it is destroyed. Officer-and-horse: enemy loses 1 command point for three rounds. Cannot snatch more than one in three rounds.

**Formations:**

1. Talon rake - d10/d4. 2 health.

2. Wing buffet - d6/d4, five attacks against separate targets (all must be in same area). 1 health.

**Wealth level:** 14.

## **Ruby golem knot**

**Speed (strategic):** 4

**Health:** 9

**Spirit:** 4

**Maneuvers:**

1. Smash the ranks – d8/d8. 2 health and disorganized (cannot maneuver next round).

2. Knot heart - 0/d10. Remove magic effect from one unit or area if your d10 roll beats enemy organization's Arcana roll.

**Formations:**

1. Smash - d8/d8. 2 health.

2. Tangle - d8/d8. If enemy moves this or next round, you gain a d12 attack that does 2 health and disorganizes the enemy (cannot maneuver next round).

**Special:** Any brigade containing a quickruby golem knot gains a d8 bonus defense die against every magical attack.

**Wealth level:** Obtained through roleplay. Nine ruby golems make one knot.

## **Skeleton legion**

**Speed (strategic):** 2

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** Fearless (cannot soak health damage)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Wedge – d6/d4. 1 health + 1 spirit.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d4/d4. 1 health + 1 spirit.

2. Defend 0/d6.

**Special:** Skeletons are spellbound.

**Wealth level:** Obtained through roleplay.

## **Skeleton, children's legion**

**Speed (strategic):** 4

**Health:** 4

**Spirit:** Fearless (cannot soak health damage)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Wail – d8/d6. 1 spirit; -1 attack and defense die size until a command point is spent to calm the troop. Targeted unit defends with its commanding organization's Force or Efficiency.

2. Gleeful swarm – d6/d6, three attacks on same target, 1 health + 1 spirit each attack.

**Formations:**

1. Brigade drill – d4/d6. 1 health + 1 spirit.

**Special:** The legion is spellbound.

**Wealth level:** Obtained through roleplay.

## **Undead Giant**

**Speed (strategic):** 4

**Health:** 10

**Spirit:** Fearless (cannot soak health damage)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Snatch and devour – d8/d6. 2 Health, 2 spirit and -1 attack die size until a command point is spent to calm the troops. Also, the Giant gains 1 Health. Only accessible from the Hunger formation (not repeatable in consecutive rounds).

2. Slap – d12/d6. 2 health and 2 spirit.

**Formations:**

1. Trample – d10/d4. 2 health and 1 spirit.

2. Guard – 0/d8. d10 attack, 2 health, against up to five enemy units that enter your area this turn.

3. Hunger - 0/d4. Hunger for one designated unit. Move up to one area to stay adjacent to or within the same area as that unit. Can move through other



units.

**Special:** The giant is spellbound.

**Wealth level:** Obtained through roleplay.

### **Zombie legion**

**Speed (strategic):** 2

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** Fearless (cannot soak health damage)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Rend – d8/d2. 1 health + 1 spirit.

2. Gnaw and infect – d4/d4. Only accessible from the Feed formation. If the zombies gnaw upon a troop that subsequently dies at any time before this battle concludes, that troop rises as a zombie legion under the control of the zombies' masters.

**Formations:**

1. Feed – 0/d4. Feeding on corpses raises the zombie legion's health by 1 to a maximum of 7.

2. Slam – d4/d4. 1 health + 1 spirit.

**Special:** The zombies are spellbound.

**Wealth level:** Obtained through roleplay or a dramba coven.

### **Zombie legion, twitcher**

**Speed (strategic):** 2

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** Fearless (cannot soak health damage)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Exploding head – d12/-. 3 health + 3 spirit.

The zombie legion expires after their heads explode. Only accessible from Twitch stance. The attack targets up to three units in the area with gore, slime, and spiky bone fragments.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d6/d6. 1 health.

2. Twitch – 0/d8.

**Special:** The zombies are spellbound.

**Wealth level:** Obtained through roleplay or a dramba coven.

### **Zombie legion, human-raptor cross-stitch**

**Speed (strategic):** 5

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** Fearless (cannot soak health damage)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Rend – d8/d4. 2 health + 1 spirit.

2. Leap and gnaw – d12/d4. 2 health, 2 spirit, and move 1 area including through an enemy's area. Only from Stalk.

**Formations:**

1. Skirmish – d6/d4. 1 health + 1 spirit.

2. Stalk - 0/d8.

**Special:** The zombies are spellbound.

**Wealth level:** Obtained through roleplay or a dramba coven.

## **SIEGE WEAPONS**

Default damage (if nothing else is listed) for siege weapons is 1 Quality to a building or siege weapon or 1 health to a troop.

### **Ballista**

**Speed (strategic):** 1 (or build on site)

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 3 (shot team)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Aim. 0/d3; +2 attack die size next round.

2. Sky shot. d6/3 vs. aerial target

3. Beast shot. d8/3 vs. war beast (dragon, jungle strider, undead giant, similar)

**Formations:**

1. Load and shoot. d6/3.

Load and shoot requires two consecutive rounds to load; shoots on the third round. The "aim" maneuver can be used in between; that is, just after loading and just before shooting.

**Wealth level:** 4

### **Heavy Cannon**

**Speed (strategic):** 1

**Health:** 3 (cannon); 2 (fire team)

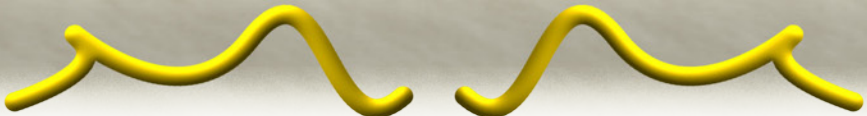
**Spirit:** 0 (cannon); 5 (fire team)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Aim. 0/2; +1 attack die size next round.

2. Fire with extra powder. d10/2; 2 damage. On a 1 or 2 the cannon cracks and takes 3 Health damage.

**Formations:**



1. Load and fire. d10/2. Loads cannon in the first two rounds and fires it in the last round. The “aim” maneuver can be used in between: just after loading and just before firing.

**Wealth level:** 8

**NB:** Light cannon are the same as Heavy cannon, but they are wealth level 7, cannot fire with extra powder, and move at strategic speed 2.

**Special:** When cannon are mounted, as on zeppelins or in a mammoth howdah, they still require two rounds to load and one round to fire. Even when a zeppelin maneuver says, for instance “Broadside... half cannon fire,” it means that half the cannon fire only if they are already loaded and ready to fire.

### **Onager (Bishop’s mule)**

**Speed (strategic):** 1 or built on site

**Health:** 2

**Spirit:** 3 (launch team)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Aim. 0/d2; +1 attack die size next round.

2. Unorthodox launch. d2/2; see trebuchet for damage. Must spend prior two rounds loading.

**Formations:**

1. Launch and load. d6/2. 1 damage. Load and launch requires two consecutive rounds to load; shoots on the third round. The “aim” maneuver can be used in between; that is, just after loading and just before launch.

**Wealth level:** 3

**NB:** An archbishop’s mule is to the onager as the Akran trebuchet is to the trebuchet.

### **Siege Tower**

**Speed (strategic):** - (must be built on site)

**Health:** 4

**Spirit:** 3 (haul team)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Unload. 0/3; 1 troop moves out of the top of the siege tower

2. Load. 0/3; 1 troop moves into the bottom of the siege tower.

**Wealth level:** 4

**Special:** A siege tower can hold up to three standard sized troops. With a tower, troops can storm a building before its defense value has been reduced to 0.

### **Trebuchet**

**Speed (strategic):** - (must be built on site)

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 3 (launch team)

**Maneuvers:**

1. Aim. 0/d3; +2 attack die size next round.

2. Unorthodox launch. d4/3; enemy heads do 1 spirit damage; infected animal carcasses do 1 spirit damage and cause struck troop to check vs. pox (roll organization’s Force vs. virulence); firepot causes 1 dmg/rd to wooden buildings until the enemy organization uses a command point to put out the fire. Must spend prior two rounds loading.

**Formations:**

1. Load & Launch. d8/3; 1 quality vs. buildings. Load and launch requires two consecutive rounds to load; launches on the third round. The “aim” maneuver can be used in between; that is, just after loading and just before launching.

**Wealth level:** 4

**NB:** An Akran trebuchet is a WL 6 trebuchet that ignores range penalties for the first two areas, rather than the first area. In other words, do not apply the one die size penalty per area until the third area distant from the Akran trebuchet.

### **Turtle**

**Speed (strategic):** 1

**Health:** 3

**Spirit:** 3

**Formations:**

1. Give cover. Add d8 bonus die to the defense of a battering ram, combat engineer troop, or pump and cistern fire team.

**Wealth level:** 4

**NB:** A wealth level 7 turtle called a battleroof is available that provides the same d8 bonus defense die to ballistae.





# CHAPTER THIRTEEN: GM'S TOOLBOX: MONSTERS, TIPS, AND SETTING

This chapter aims to help the GM run his campaign. A setting is here, and monsters, but let's start with a few tips for running the game and the system.

## BIG PICTURE TIPS

The game is yours. This book presents guidelines only. Please adopt and discard guidelines as best suits your group! Remember the two cardinal rules of house rules: 1) Be consistent. The rules need to work the same way, for every character, every time. 2) Be minimalist. Don't change things that aren't broken for your group, even if you see people on the interwebz claiming that a rule is the most broken rule since Prohibition.

If you have a question, please ask on the forums. If I seem to be caught up raising my daughter and teaching, by all means email me to get my attention.

Finally, note the game's portability. It's easy to port over much of this game to your second-favorite RPG. Mood and Inspirations are almost trivially easy to implement in another RPG (especially a "traditional" RPG without a similar pre-existing mechanic). Mass combat, social combat, the improv social combat games, and the chase rules can all be exported, together or separately, in whole or in part. And the idea of scene order play is one hundred percent system-independent. So please, try SK mechanics with other games. Hack. Bash kits. Have fun!

## RUNNING THE CAMPAIGN TIPS

The single most important step in being an entertaining GM is to listen to your players. Listen to what they say they want out of the game, but also lis-

ten to their reactions to different parts of the game. Do they get excited when a chase scene starts? When it's a game break for pizza, which NPC's downfall are the players plotting? What "war stories" get told the most? Listen to everything your players say. That way you can have the best shot at building a campaign entertaining both for them and for you.

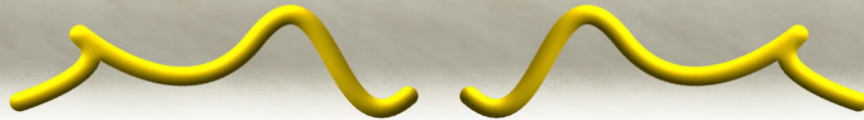
SK provides several tools to help you figure out what your players want. Look at their Inspirations. A player who writes for his rogue's inspiration, "Seeks balance in his soul between two conflicting forces: greed (for gold and power) and honor (in the name of his fallen father)" is probably looking for a different sort of gaming experience than the fellow who writes, "Die trog!"

A character's Histories also tell you what kind of character the player wants to build. Give him challenges and rewards along the path to building that character.

In scene order play, you can tell by the scene types what sort of game the players gravitate towards.

Let none of these cues - scene choice, Histories, Inspirations, or anything else - substitute for direct, clear communication. Ask your PCs what kind of a game they want and tell them what kind of a game you want.

Once you know what kind of game you all are shooting for, use the SK tools to shape your world. Use culture lines to tweak a setting's ambience. Use organizations to make the background come alive. Are you shooting for a high fantasy, Good Kingdom vs. Bad Kingdom? Then write culture lines that raise the Heart of defenders of innocents, and in the Bad Kingdom write culture lines that raise the Doom for anyone offended by the nobles' nearly constant torture of the serfs. (Most of the time, try to word culture lines so that they affect the PCs.) If you really want high fantasy, take out the "magic hates magic" interference



rules and ignore the sociopolitical consequences of Inspirations. Or do your players want a grimdark world with exquisite moral choices? Then make your most powerful organizations Shadow and Martial, paint every powerful NPC as morally ambiguous at best, twist economies by increasing the Wealth Level of all non-martial items by 2, and boost grimdark Inspirations by 1 through culture lines. Use the "lines" improv game to reinforce the grimdark themes. SK has a lot of ways to flavor your campaign to taste!

## SCENE PLAY AND PLOT TIPS

If your group is using scene order play, then remember the scene list and other tips from page 13.

One idea that I didn't mention back on that page is to read your group. That is, when someone is suggesting a scene, watch the faces and the reactions of the other players. If they are excited, make the scene a full one, with roleplay and action as appropriate. But if the other players are rolling their eyes, then shorten the scene. Resolve it by an opposed organization roll, or by the proposing player's PC rolling against the Doom, or a similar single-roll mechanic.

Rely on organizations often in scene play. An obvious benefit is that because of the "zoomed out" level of abstraction, organization rolls can resolve a host of intricacies in a single die roll. But there are less obvious benefits too. One of the most important is the fact that players love to tinker with their organizations during another player's scene. That is a generalization (every player is different), but it is worth investigating for your group. You may well have the sort of player who, while his character is "off camera" for a scene, loves detailing his organization. The organization stunting rules are designed to support, encourage, and capitalize on this sort of tinkering. If it's going on in your group, use it by devoting time to organizations - as much time as the group enjoys.

One more tip about scene play is that you don't have to use all the scene types. If your group hates mass combat, for example, then those scenes don't occur in your campaign, as simple as that.

If you can address more than one goal or

challenge more than one PC in a scene, then take the opportunity and do it. It's almost always a good idea to directly challenge as many PCs as possible in a scene. One way to do this is to encourage the PCs to have shared Inspirations. If all of the PCs have an Inspiration that reads, "Thwart the naga cult's plans to enthrall the baron," then every PC is instantly hooked when the party uncovers a clue pointing in this direction.

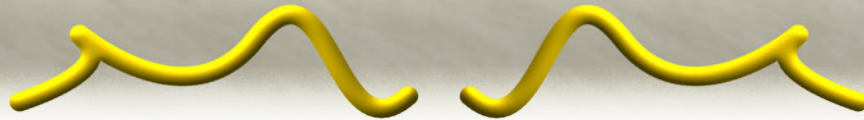
Arguably, this is suboptimal play on the PCs' parts (they're putting all their gold in one loot sack, so to speak). Gamers tend to be strongly individualistic, too, so PC Inspirations will not always be shared. When this happens, work to see if you can weave disparate Inspirations together. For example, if one PC had the Inspiration, "Thwart the naga cult's plans to enthrall the baron," and another PC had the Inspiration, "Become the guildmaster of the Axe Bridge thieves guild," then you could tweak your world so that the Baron is positioned to help the PC thief reach his guildmastership. Then voila! the PCs both have an interest in saving the baron.

There will always be some PCs who are more in the spotlight than others in any given scene. Make sure that an even mix of scenes occurs so that the spotlight is spread evenly over the campaign and over each session.

Finally, consider the time scale of some abilities and effects when setting your scene length. Some abilities can only function once per scene. If you make your scenes long, PCs stand a greater chance of running out of resources and becoming less effective. This can be a desired effect, but it can also sneak up on you unaware if you do not consider the effect of scene length on character efficacy.

## COMBAT, SOCIAL COMBAT, AND CHASE TIPS

Combat sheets can clutter up the gaming table. To cut down on this clutter while still putting a lot of monsters into play simultaneously, make sure that many of the monsters fight in the same style. Then use multiple counters on the same style sheet for these monsters. You can easily have six to ten monsters



fighting this way on only one or two pieces of paper. If you have more monsters than ten in a fight, consider using the Mob combat style, at least until the Mob is cut below 10 Body or so.

Another way to reduce clutter is to shrink the combat sheets to half size before printing or copying them (I don't like this option, personally, but some do).

Remember that low level NPCs and monsters can present reasonable challenges for mid- to high-level PCs. In social combat, a low-level NPC with one or two high reputation scores can devastate a PC with ten more levels. Use this to develop NPCs that are despised by your players. Send a 1st-level officious bureaucrat who can't even lift a sword to dress down your 10th-level PCs - damaging their Mood, Reputations, or even Inspirations - and you have built an adversary that your players cannot wait to quash. How about a 1st-level NPC rogue with 8 Charisma and a History as a successful lothario (8) sent to seduce a PC's wife, who happens to be his main Inspiration?

Combat encounters, too, can use low-level creatures to threaten high-level PCs. A group of 1st-level warriors, half using Guardsman (or even Guardian) and the other half using Great Weapon or Free Sword, can pose a challenge for characters who are significantly higher level.

What's the advantage of using low-level creatures or NPCs? They're easier and faster to create, allowing you more time to focus on other aspects of your campaign. Also, players get annoyed when they reach 15th level only to find that the common city watchmen are now 15th level also. A world where the NPCs don't magically scale with the PCs is a world with a touch more verisimilitude.

Along the same lines, please don't feel that you need to protect low-level PCs from high-level NPCs. Low-level PCs equipped with Inspirations and Mood can take on - or at least survive - encounters with high-level foes. If your PCs stumble into the Archduke's secret lab or the dragon's lair at 1st level, have at it!

Any time, in fact, that the PCs stumble into an area you have not fully prepared, you'll need to wing it. One way to wing it in combat is to pick out a combat style for your impromptu NPC and assign him 5 Body and 2 Mood (add Inspirations if it's an important NPC). In social combat, assign a Charisma score, one

relevant Reputation, and one relevant History. To wing a chase scene, assign to the NPC a Quickness score, 4 or 5 Body, and 1 or 2 Mood. If anything else comes up - say, you roll a History for the NPC - write it down as it happens so that you can note it later. Notes are a sandbox GM's bestfriend!

Winging war scenes is a bit harder. Here's one way. Count how many units are in the PCs' legion. Give that same number of units to the other side, 1/3 light infantry, 1/3 heavy infantry, 1/6 archers or musketeers, and 1/6 cavalry. If the PCs' legion is small, instead include equal numbers of light infantry and archers or musketeers. This is just for winging it, of course. By far the better course, especially with a war scene, is to engage in plenty of individual-scale roleplay beforehand. Each combat or social encounter or theft-and-chase will affect the big battle to come: what troops the enemy has available, what plans to allow for ambushes the PCs have access to, which traitors reveal which secrets, and so on. This sort of roleplay has a natural "build up to the climax" progression, with the battle scene being the climax. However, if you do need to wing it, the above guidelines are a good bet.

A final note on combat: be aware of the Carapace, Guardian, and Guardsman styles' impact on play. Namely, they lengthen combats (because they're defensive). This can be just the ticket for groups who find Spellbound Kingdoms's blistering combat pace in need of a relaxing, catch-your-breath deceleration now and then. But if you're trying to squeeze in a quick combat scene before the ham pizza and nachos delivery arrives, enemies with Carapace style might not be the best choice.

## CREATING YOUR OWN COMBAT AND MAGIC STYLE TIPS

Even moreso than the previous tip sections, this section is far from exhaustive. Different groups have different play styles, and what might be a fantastic spell style in one group could be boring or broken in another. Not every combat style in this book was created according to these tips. Use your own judgment, as always.





For combat styles, there are three different classifications that are useful.

First, does your style emphasize attack, defense, or an all-around approach? If it is an attacking style, then its maneuvers (with perhaps one exception) should have an attack die greater than the defense die. Attacking styles might have a d6 attack for a rebalancing maneuver ranging up to a d12 for a mastery maneuver. Defensive styles should have most defense dice greater than attack dice, with a d6 defense on a rebalancing maneuver ranging up to a d12 for a mastery maneuver. All-around maneuvers should have lower defense dice than a defensive style and lower attack dice than an attacking style.

Second, classify your style according to the one special maneuver, or one type of special maneuver, that the style's theme implies. A defensive style might emphasize tripping or bodyguarding; an attacking style might emphasize characteristic damage or ranged damage. An all-around style might emphasize attack and defense versatility at the cost of mobility. I recommend restricting your style to only a couple of special maneuvers partly because of balance reasons and partly because your style needs a focus in order to be evocative and inspiring.

Third and last, classify your style according to timing. That is, does your style concentrate on set-up maneuvers that do little damage but set you up for a mortal strike in the fourth round? Or does your style try to do as much damage as it can in the first and second rounds, before a more cautious style has a chance to take advantage of superior positioning, feinting, footwork, and counterattacking?

In case it is not clear, one reason that you should classify your styles this way is to make sure that your style has a counter-style. Designing an uber-style is, in general, a poor choice because it sucks flavor from the game: soon everyone will be fighting in the uber-style and all others will go by the wayside. Instead, design your styles so that they have counters. For example, styles that require a few rounds to set up big maneuvers are vulnerable to forced rebalancing. As another example, attack styles that rely upon multiple low-attack-dice attacks are vulnerable to defensive styles. Every style should have a counter.

People who read your style for the first time should be able to have fun trying to find which other styles are the best counters for it. (And, by the same token, it can be a lot of fun to search through existing styles to see which ones your new style will totally destroy).

Magic styles are even more dependent upon theme than combat styles. Because of the freeform spell rules, you cannot provide a complete list of the spells available in a style. Instead, provide a clear theme to the style, one that spurs creativity and does not overlap more than 50% or so with existing styles (the lower the overlap the better). History and tradition are two of the best tools to use when crafting a style that must spur creativity while remaining unambiguous. Tap into myth, pop culture, other RPGs, or any other source that your group knows.

Consider carefully the spells or maneuvers available in a spell's combat sheet. These spells are also available outside of combat as close spells. A quick healing spell providing +1 Body during combat might seem like an innocuous spell, but if there are no other restrictions, then such a spell would wreak havoc with the campaign world when used at will outside of combat (by "wreak havoc" I mean "change fundamentally" the typical pseudo-Renaissance life that is the default supposition for background characters in SK as written).

## FOCUS OF PLAY TIPS: WHAT DO WE ACTUALLY DO?

Here's where I try to help you and the game avoid the trap of "This is cool stuff, Inspirations are super-mega-foxy-awesome-hot, but now we're sitting at the table with these characters and... what do we actually do?"

I think SK is in a better position than, say, Changeling in this respect, but let's elucidate regardless. Keep in mind that there are many ways to play SK, and as always, you should do what your group enjoys the most.

The Kingdoms are on the brink. One push in either direction can bring them to an age of Enlightenment or plunge them into a new era of darkness. That's

the "big idea" campaign in SK: will the players bring the Kingdoms into Enlightenment or push them back into darkness?

Of course that subsumes many other questions. How do the PCs become powerful enough to influence the fates of kingdoms and civilization? Adventures! Adventures in dungeons and savage forests and the courts of the mighty, saving princesses and slaying dragons, raiding a tomb for a Legion Below, chasing a traitor through the capital's streets, winning allies and defeating enemies. As the characters become more powerful, they gain more leverage in world affairs. Eventually, the players will have to decide what to do with their own piece of the Kingdoms: will they allow commoners to use magic, despite the risk? Or will they defer to the danger of uncontrolled magic and curtail it accordingly? Will they crush Inspirations, or allow Inspirations to grow freely? What is right: to recognize freedom or to protect the safety of others? Who should decide? What price is too high? Is there any price that is worth giving up love for?

You can also play SK without ever considering the "big idea" campaign. Almost any type of traditional fantasy RPG campaign is possible, from dungeon crawls to fetch-the-macguffin-of-seven-parts to Western-March-sandbox.

A third "what do we do now?" answer is a hybrid of the "big idea" campaign with a traditional adventure arc. In this game, conduct a typical fantasy RPG, but place emphasis on the roles of Love and Fear. Relentlessly attacking a PCs' Inspirations is a good way to do this. Traditional campaigns are great, but they take on a new dimension when the villain returns every week and is intent on ruining everything that a PC loves. PCs with high Inspirations should be regular targets of kingsmen.

In Spellbound Kingdoms, love and fear are the most powerful forces in the world. As a result, the kings and the church



suppress them. Make your characters feel this suppression as they go about their adventuring, and their victories will be all the sweeter.

Remember the conflict inherent with magic, too. Will the PCs risk damaging innocents by casting a magic spell? Have they committed a morally wrong act if they do? Engage the players on this topic early and often to add depth to the campaign.





# BESTIARY

Here is a table summarizing the monsters and each one's challenge level. Remember, though, that low and high level, while different, are still capable of challenging each other in physical combat. You can pose a credible threat with a few low-level creatures

facing a high-level party, while at the same time a low-level party of four has a chance to take down some of the tougher creatures in the bestiary (dragons, likely, are the exception).

CREATURE	DESCRIPTION	LEVEL
Basilisk	Fearless, aggressive great lizard with petrifying gaze.	Low-Mid
Chimera	Magical hybrid of two or more species.	Low-Mid
Cockatrice	Unintelligent fowl with petrifying feathers.	Low
Descent cat	Four breeds of large cat. Aggressive, cunning predators.	High
Dragon	Legendary aerial beast.	High
Giant	Plodding brutes.	Mid
Golem	Four varieties of living artifice.	Low-Mid
Griffon	Aerial flock hunter.	Low
Jungle strider	Docile. Tall as the jungle canopy; broad enough for a village on its back.	Mid (deter)
Kraken	Mainly aquatic, but cloud krakens are born in storms.	High
Lich	Powerful, spellbound, dispassionate undead.	Mid-High
Living fire/earth/etc.	Devastating animation of fire, earth, water, or air.	Mid-High
Madfire burner	Madmen consumed by wild magic.	Mid
Manticore	A chimera, man-bat-lion, aerial ranged attacker.	Low
Naga	Intelligent human-serpent chimera.	Mid-High
Raptors and drakes	Four terrestrial, large reptiles. Fast and often pack hunters.	Low-Mid
Roc	Enormous bird of prey. Hunts mammoths.	High
Skeletons	Three varieties of brittle, unintelligent undead.	Low
Spellstalks	Three varieties of infectious, intelligent tentacle masses.	Mid
Swarm of vermin	Rats, spiders, scarab beetles.	Low-Mid
Troglodyte	Degenerate descendants of the kingdoms' refugees.	Low
Vampire	Powerful, spellbound, passionate undead.	Mid-High
Various animals	Wolf, elk, gnarsk, Waylorn bear, python, mammoth; pets and guards.	Low
War ape	Trained simian guard and/or shock troop, usually with spiked gauntlets.	Low-Mid
Were-beast	Five varieties of half-man, half-beast.	Mid
Zombies	Walking dead with moderate cunning and immoderate hunger.	Low-Mid



Perception: Beasts with animal Reason (d2)  
use a d6 for perception checks unless otherwise noted.

## **Basilisk (king lizard)**

Level 5

Str 6, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 5, Mgc 9, Hrt 5

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 6, Claw Quality 5

Fighting Style: Claw/Claw/Bite (master)

Variation: King Lizard. 1) Replace "Bounding Sprint" with "Burning Eyes," 0/d6, effect: Add d8 magic attack to next round's attack. If the attack hits, the target loses 2 Quickness, and the attack automatically recurs each round until the attack misses or until the target is turned to stone at 0 Quickness.

2) Add a petrifying attack as a fourth attack, at d6 magic/d4 defense, to the Claw/Claw/Bite maneuver. The attack has the same effect as above.

In the Kingdoms: Kings raise these lizards to create statue gardens for princes and princesses to play in, and those of royal blood are immune to the lizards' petrifying gaze. At least, that is what the legends say.

A basilisk is a four- to six-foot long lizard, covered with dry black and green scales, and standing three or four feet high at the shoulder. There are both four- and six-legged varieties, the six-legged one being more common in the Old Claw. Its eyes are filmy and ecru.

In the wild, the basilisk is an aggressive predator. It is assumed by most that the basilisk uses its gaze attack defensively when faced by superior opposition as it cannot digest stone. There are sages, however, who believe that the king lizard uses statues as incubators for its eggs. Some kings do keep basilisks, but they are not fully domesticable and can turn at any moment on even the most skilled handler.

A fixer's ability is potent against basilisk petrification. Statues older than 1 week per fixer level require special ingredients to revive, including the bones of the basilisk who turned the statue.



## **Chimera**

Chimeras are freaks, misbegotten of crisis surges. Magic fuses sundry creatures into one, shattering their minds and bodies, then sweeping up and fixing the parts together in the shape of a mad beast. Chimeras are sterile, but certain forms are commonly enough created by magic that they have their own societies. The two most common hybrids are the manticores and the nagas, each of which merits a separate entry below (pp. 189-190).

There are several known types of base chimera.

### **Chimera, island (lion-goat-serpent)**

Level 3

Str 8, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 3, Mgc 5, Hrt 5

Body 4, Mood 0

Armor Quality 2, Claw Quality 3

Fighting Style: Claw/Claw/Bite (master)

Variation: Island Chimera. 1) Poison: Whenever the bite attack of a claw/claw/bite attack hits, the target is poisoned with asp venom (p. 146).

2) Replace "Foreclaw Rush (r)" with "Butt (r),"



d4/d4, no damage, move target one area.

The island chimera has three heads: a lion, a serpent, and a goat. The lion head's roar carries for miles over the oceans and beaches of the East, the serpent's head drips asp venom, and the goat head is used to butt creatures off the island bluffs the chimera calls home.

The chimera's body is that of a lion, and it has wings that resemble a large bat's. Four feet tall at the shoulder and not particularly dense, the chimera can fly for short bursts of two to five seconds at a time. It is fond of cliff-hopping for prey and diving down upon incautious islanders beaching outriggers on the coast below.

### **Chimera, sheencayese (man-scorpion)**

Level 5

Str 10, Qck 7, Rsn 3, Cha 5, Mgc 4, Hrt 6

Body 5, Mood 1

Armor Quality 2, Weapon Quality 2 (varies)

Fighting Styles: Poison Sting (master; increase Whip-lash to d8/d6 attack and d6 defense), Carapace (apprentice)

Wind tambourines, staked skulls, and pungent bags soaked in sudor mark the perimeter of sheencayese territory. Sheencayese are intelligent (barely) and angry (very) at the world for the damage that magic has done to them. They are sterile half-men, half-scorpions, with the head, torso, arms, and hands of a human or troll man or woman and the body of a giant scorpion. Though they have no special protection against magic, they have nothing special to live for, either, and thus their anger leads them to preferentially target the spellbound in combat.

In their desert camps, the sheencayese maintain a shambles of their former society (often an entire village is turned by a crisis surge into sheencayese). One of the highlights of the year in a sheencayese encampment is the Fifth Season, when all the spellbound captives are sacrificed, dipped one appendage per day into a pit of desert leeches.

### **Chimera, winged mammoth (roc-mammoth)**

Level 7

Str 13, Qck 5, Rsn 2, Cha 3, Mgc 6, Hrt 3

Body 14, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0, Weapon Quality 4 (tusk, hoof)

Fighting Styles: Behemoth (master)

The most recent recorded winged mammoth was spotted over the Windhover Valley by a naturalist accompanying Inverness Dugray's expedition to the Descent. In the Age of Cartonnage, a flight of the beasts was used as aerial cavalry to assault Thyre from over the Waylorn Mountains, but such a large grouping is unheard of in the modern age (such a group is also, presumably, made obsolete by the advent of zeppelins).

### **Chimera, mini-head swarm (human-millipede-earwig)**

Level 7

Str 2, Qck 9, Rsn 1, Cha 2, Mgc 7, Hrt 2

Body 4, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0, Weapon Quality 3

Fighting Styles: Swarm (master; add 1 Reason damage to both Invade Orifice and Emerge from Orifice (r))

Each of this swarm's tiny creatures is a millipede or earwig with a human head. Each head is an individual, with its own features, hairstyle, earrings, black eye, gold tooth or the like. A cacophony of high-pitched screams rises from the swarm. Half of the screams are "Help me!" and half are "Die! Die!"

The swarm is voracious and attacks every last living thing. A given individual mini-head may or may not be as mindless or insane as the swarm, but separating the right individual from the swarm is a task for a Cardinal or a King, at the least.

### **Cockatrice**

Level 2

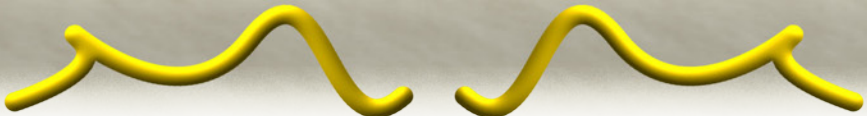
Str 3, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 3, Mgc 4, Hrt 4

Body 2, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0, Weapon Quality 2

Fighting Style: Slasher (apprentice; replace Double Jab with Feather Storm (r), d6/d6 attack d6 defense, 1 + 1 Qck damage. If the Feather Storm hits, the target loses 1 Quickness, and the attack automatically recurs each round until the attack misses or until the target is turned to stone at 0 Quickness.

Cockatrices are gangly fowl whose feathers petrify flesh. They are the size of a chicken, and their



elongated body is squamous posterior to the wings. They are farmed by some for their feathers, which have wide applications in alchemy and engineering.

## **Descent Cat**

A descent cat is to a tiger what a tiger is to a house cat. They are massive, compact cats, with the largest massing over 1000 lbs and standing five feet high at the shoulder.

Descent cats have keen senses and roll a d8 Perception die unless otherwise stated.

That descent cats hail from the near-mythical Descent is a well-supported conjecture, but still a conjecture. Their numbers are greatest in the northern lands and only climb as one climbs the Waylorns. Short of an expedition returning more volubly than Inverness DuGray's, however, there is no proof that descent cats are not indigenous to the Waylorns.

## **Descent cat, shadow prince**

Level 13

Str 10, Qck 13, Rsn 2, Cha 7, Mgc 8, Hrt 9

Body 7, Mood 4

Armor Quality 6 (hide), Weapon Quality 8 (claw, tooth)

Fighting Styles: Claw/Claw/Bite (master).

Variation: Shadow Prince. 1) Increase all claw attacks to d8 and all bite attacks to d12.

2) Increase claw and bite damage by 1 each.

3) At night or in shadow, the shadow cat adds a dQck defense die to every maneuver.

4) During the hours from sunset to sunrise, the shadowcat emanates darkness. He rolls his Magic die against any artificial lighting attempt (use the Quality of a mundane light source (1 for a lantern) and the caster's Magic roll for a magical light source). If the shadowcat succeeds, the light is extinguished and deep shadow (p. 29) engulfs the area. The shadowcat gains a new roll each round against all light sources in the area.

The shadowcat is a cunning nocturnal predator. It stalks prey by scent, heat, sound, and sight, using a d12 die on all perception checks. It hunts animals directly, rarely bothering with anything other than a

direct charge and all-out assault. It hunts men more patiently. After tracking down a party of mountain travelers or a zeppelin crew grounding its ship for repairs after a mountain storm, the cat stalks the edges of the camp until a single person separates himself. The cat then pounces and attempts to kill and carry off its prey as quickly as possible. It expends all Mood possible on the first blows of this attack, and it bounds and climbs away if the alarm is raised.

The shadowcat's fur is void black. Its eyes are equally black with zero albedo, even in direct light.

## **Descent cat, jump cat**

Level 13

Str 10, Qck 13, Rsn 2, Cha 7, Mgc 5, Hrt 8

Body 10, Mood 4

Armor Quality 8 (hide), Weapon Quality 8 (claw, tooth)

Fighting Styles: Claw/Claw/Bite (master).

Variation: Jump cat. 1) A jump cat using Bounding Sprint can climb two areas instead of just one.

2) Three times per scene, a jump cat can add a move or a climb to any other maneuver.

3) Increase all claw attacks to d8 and all bite attacks to d12.

4) Increase claw and bite damage by 1 each.

5) Pounce is +2 damage next round.

Jump cats are diurnal. They prefer the dense boreal woods of the Waylorns, where the evergreen canopy rarely drops below 100 feet, and where they can spend weeks without touching soil, bounding from treetop to treetop. Their striped coat is tan and taupe and much longer than that of any other descent cat.

## **Descent cat, snow cat**

Level 13

Str 10, Qck 11, Rsn 2, Cha 5, Mgc 9, Hrt 6

Body 9, Mood 4

Armor Quality 10 (hide)

Weapon Quality 10 (searing claws)

Fighting Styles: Claw/Claw/Bite (master)

Variation: Snow cat. 1) Increase all claw attacks to d8 and all bite attacks to d12.

2) Increase claw and bite damage by 1 each.

3) Snow cats steal heat. Everyone in the same





area as a snow cat is targeted by a d6 magic attack that does 1 point of damage by sucking heat. The heat repairs the snow cat's Mood on a point-for-point basis.

4) Increase claw and bite maneuver defense dice to d8.

Snow cats are dense predators, densely furred with pure white pelts, the best specimens of which are valued at WL 7. They hunt over wide areas and blend well with the snow and ice terrain even while on the move. The snow cat's signature trait is its aggressive theft of the body heat from other fauna. When hunting humans or trolls, the cat often steals up outside a tent, steals heat through the tent walls, and kills a man while he sleeps. Then the cat slinks inside the tent to snatch up and abscond with the frozen body, stopping to eat it in a location at least two miles distant.

### **Descent cat, lord**

Level 16

Str 13, Qck 20, Rsn 2, Cha 9, Mgc 8, Hrt 8

Body 11, Mood 6

Armor Quality 10 (hide)

Weapon Quality 10 (claws)

Fighting Styles: Claw/Claw/Bite (master)

Variation: Descent cat lord. 1) Increase all claw attacks to d12, all bite attacks to dQck, and all claw or bite defenses to d8.

2) Increase claw damage by 1 and bite damage by 2.

3) Pounce does +3 damage next round.

4) Increase Swipe and Foreclaw Rush to d10/d8.

The Descent cat lord's gracefulness belies its size. With red stripes on sable fur, the cat lord's first appearance is often when he divides the branches at the edge of a camp and stares into the fire circle. After the campers have scattered, he leisurely takes his fill of supplies and stragglers.

The cat lord has no shadow ability, no heat-draining aura, and no special jumping ability. But it holds its title as the most devastating Descent cat, not because of minor magic but because of devastating power and speed.

### **Dragon**

Level 18

Str 22, Qck 15, Rsn 2, Cha 13, Mgc 10, Hrt 9

Body 40, Mood 9

Armor Quality 16 (scales)

Weapon Quality 16 (claws and jaws)

Fighting styles: Dragon (master), behemoth (master), aerial (master).

Dragons are legends. Each one takes wing with a hundred stories weighing it down. They are among the most puissant creatures in the known world, and even in this age empowered to pierce the clouds with a zeppelin's bowsprit there is no marvel to surpass a dragon in flight.

Despite their grandeur, most dragons are no more intelligent than an average beast. They do have uncanny senses, however, and roll a d12 for perception checks.

Instead of intelligence, dragons rely on their breathtakingly powerful natural gifts. Their scales are proof against minor cuts: dragons ignore 1 point of damage per hit from weapons of Quality 14 or less. Dragons also exploit their scales to the fullest: their armor soaks damage on a 1:1 basis, rather than the normal 1:2. And even unintelligent dragons are canny enough to increase their armor's effectiveness by using the Melt breath weapon attack against foes with high Quality weapons.

Occasionally, the vicissitudes of magic generate intelligence in a dragon. One might conclude that the legends of these creatures outshine by far those of their beastly kin, but such is not the case. With intelligence comes caution. Most intelligent dragons become spellbound, often learning a form of weremagic that allows them to pass for a man, be it human or troll. Intelligent dragons find life much less dangerous in such a guise. There are constant rumors that a were-dragon (an awkward but common usage) sits on this throne or that throne. Ehansk and Avedine are often thrown under suspicion in this manner. In the far east, the Dragon Isles have earned their name because of the several dragons that eschew dissembling and reign openly as kings.

## Giant

Level 8-10

Str 14, Qck 5, Rsn 5, Cha 4, Mgc 6, Hrt 5

Body 9, Mood 2

Armor Quality 3 (varies), Weapon Quality 4 (varies)

Fighting styles: Giant (usually master).

Unlike dragons and descent cats, giants are not a true species or race. Rather they are a collection of freaks spawned from magic, alchemy, and, to hear the kings' sages tell it, overweening ambition.

Most giants are solitary and lonely, and although the latter condition prompts attempts at ameliorating the former, the attempts are rarely successful. Giants are awkward and angry. They are susceptible to bluffs and charms, but even when befriended, a giant is unstable. His temper, magically shortened as his body was lengthened, brings early doom to peaceful relationships.

Giants vary in appearance. Pied skin, horns, elliptical eyes, dragging knuckles - there are as many variations as there are giants. Most are between ten and twelve feet tall but can range higher. In combat, giants are clever enough to use terrain, Block the Way, and their reach maneuvers to crush opposition efficiently. Many will also sacrifice the low defense of a Wind Up - possibly offsetting damage with Mood - in order to execute a Two-Handed Overhand Smash.

## Golem

Golems are artificial. This makes them spiritual kindred of a sort with wights, although golems are not sentient. Wights feel this affinity and create more golems than any other race.

There are two types of golems to create: crafted and transmuted. Battlecrafters fashion the crafted golems from lifeless materials: brass, clay, and orichalcum are the most common. Fixers create the transmuted golems via injections into a living human or troll.

### Brass Golem (crafted)

Level 6

Str 10, Qck 4, Rsn 2, Cha 2, Mgc 8, Hrt 5

Body 8 (or Battlecrafter level), Mood 0

Armor Quality 8 (brass plates)

Weapon Quality 6 (morning star)

Wealth Level 12

Fighting Styles: Guardian (master), Giant.

Brass golems are 10' tall bodyguards. They appear as ornate sculptures of warriors, brass figures of heroes from the Age of Cartonnage. To be guarded by one is to announce your importance to the king, for they are walking, obvious, trapped high spells. Nothing like it could be suffered without the king's express permission. Each point of a brass golem's armor soaks one point of damage.



## Clay Golem (crafted)

Level 6

Str 9, Qck 4, Rsn 2, Cha 2, Mgc 9, Hrt 5

Body 7 (or Battlecrafter level), Mood 0

Armor Quality 7 (skin), Weapon Quality 5 (fists)

Wealth Level 12

Fighting Styles: Brute, Carapace.

Clay golems are especially resistant to fire damage; they ignore 2 points of fire damage per hit. They also resist elemental and magic damage, ignoring 1 point per hit. As such they are often used by their wizard creators as forge runners and lab servants, able to walk straight into a smith's open hearth and survive. Clay golems are 7' tall and have a sheen over their hardened clay skin. Their features are rounded and anthropic, although some wizards paint outlandish colors and sigils on the clay. The Language of Stars' magic mouth is a common spell placed on a clay golem.

Like brass golems, a clay golem counts as the caster's bound high spell.

## Quickruby golem (transmuted)

Level 9

Str 13, Qck 7, Rsn 2, Cha 2, Mgc 8, Hrt 5

Body 8 (or Fixer level), Mood 0

Armor Quality 8 (corundum skin)

Weapon Quality 8 (fists)

Fighting Styles: Brute (master), Carapace (master)

Quickruby golems are the product of a fixer's transfusion and a living human or troll. They are two to four feet taller than the original creature, with skin of incarnadine corundum, lustrous and cool to the touch. The skin absorbs damage on a 1:1 basis.

A quickruby golem rolls its Magic die as a bonus die with any mastery attack. If the Magic die rolls higher than the target's defense die, then one randomly determined, ongoing spell effect on the target (if any) is extinguished.

## Quicksludge golem (transmuted)

Level 9

Str 10, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 2, Mgc 10, Hrt 5

Body 9 (or Fixer level), Mood 0

Armor Quality 6 (sludge skin)

Weapon Quality 6 (fists)

Fighting styles: Berserker (master)

Variation: Quicksludge Tar Needle. 1. Replace "Trip" with "Flick Tar Needle," d8/d2 ranged 1 + tarred.

2. Replace "Bite Face Off" with "Slag Needle Storm (r)" mastery maneuver, d8/d4, ranged, 5 targets, 1 damage + tarred.

3. The damage of "Reckless Thrust (r)" is 2 + tarred.

4. Tarred opponents are attacked by the golem's Magic score each round until a Trick is used to remove the tar. The tar sticks and hampers movement. A tarred creature takes a Strength penalty die on every physical roll (attack, defense, climb, etc.). Tar globs stack, so that a character slimed by three tar globs takes three Strength penalty dice each round. One Trick removes all tar globs, no matter how many there are.

Quicksludge golems are slender and 7' tall. They resemble an emaciated, rack-stretched human whose flesh has been transmuted into tar. And that is for good reason, to wit, that is exactly what they are.

A fixer's injection changes a human or troll into a quicksludge golem. The golem has little mind, but can obey simple commands. It enters a peculiar frenzy in combat and can gain and use Mood, but this frenzied Mood re-sets to 0 as soon as the quicksludge golem calms.

## Griffon

Level 4

Str 8, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 4, Mgc 5, Hrt 6

Body 8, Mood 0

Armor Quality 4 (hide)

Weapon Quality 6 (talons and beak)

Fighting styles: Aerial, Claw/Claw/Bite.

Griffons magnificent winged beasts. They resemble an eagle crossed with a lion, but are a true race, not a chimeric one.

Griffons adore horseflesh and will sometimes attack caravans for the horses. This is a particular problem in the Windhover Valley region of the Free Road, where flocks of griffons darken the skies and drown out the thunder with the flaps of their wings. Sages in Chert are convinced that there is an intelligent griffon behind this behavior, but no matter the truth, the traders on the Free Road carry on. They





sometimes bring spare horses to leave behind in an attempt to appease the griffon flocks.

## **Jungle Strider**

Level 10 (deter)

Str 8, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 4, Mgc 5, Hrt 6

Body 20 (deter), Mood 0

Armor Quality 8, Weapon Quality 6

Fighting styles: Behemoth (master).

Jungle striders are scenery. They are broad enough that entire towns grow up upon their backs. Indeed, in Jakatta, only the three favored cities of the Sun Goddess are allowed to exist upon Her holy jungle floor. All other settlements are located in trees or on the backs of jungle striders.

The combat characteristics listed here represent what it takes to deter or drive off a jungle strider. The entire jungle strider is taller than the emergent layer of the jungle canopy, that is, over two hundred feet tall. Bringing him down, dead, is more a matter of civil engineering than combat.

When attacked, jungle striders respond lethargically. They flick at the minor annoyances; this is represented by their mastery of the Behemoth style above. Beyond that, if the jungle strider is assaulted by a troop-level force, use the warfare rules (p. 47), while if the jungle strider is assaulted by an individual force, resolve the combat using the Behemoth style. Note that if the jungle strider is brought to zero deterrence health, it will leave the region for at least a day.

## **Kraken**

Level 15

Str 20, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 7, Mgc 5, Hrt 5

Body 40, Mood 0

Armor Quality 11, Weapon Quality 12

Fighting styles: Behemoth (master), Slasher (master).

Variation (Slasher): Kraken. 1. All d8 attacks become d12s.

2. The kraken executes 4 maneuvers each round, one for each spiked arm-tentacle. Track these as separate creatures.

3. Increase all damage by 2.

Krakens are aquatic beasts. They have serpentine heads wider than a castle gate and leviathan bod-

ies, scaled and more massive than any galleon. Double tentacles flail at either side of the monster, and its body terminates in a flipper said to be massive enough to cause a wave to bring down a city.

Krakens are beastly in disposition and, in sages' recorded history, gain intelligence much less frequently than dragons do (and it is rare in dragons). Krakens are thankfully uncommon, and although spectacular, a kraken attack on a ship or a coastal town is almost (but not quite) unheard of.

In mass combat, a kraken uses a dragon's statistics, but does not gain any of the fire attacks. A critical hit on a water-going boat capsizes it.

## **Lich**

Liches are created when powerful wizards embrace death. There is power in death, and by giving the Lord Archer dominion over his body, a wizard seizes some of death's power for his own. Liches can also be created from whole cloth by natural magic.

Liches have the characteristic odor of mildew, body, and rot. They are gaunt, with brittle hair and skin that appears bruised and shadowed, but they retain their flesh. As they age, trauma can expose bone, for a lich's flesh does not heal well (sometimes not at all) when abraded or lacerated.

Statistics for liches are varied. For the more common type - a human or troll wizard who becomes a lich - use the template below. For the spontaneous lich, you may use the characteristics presented here, which are typical for a powerful lich. You are also encouraged to make your own, as well - this is your game, and these are only guidelines.

### **Lich Template**

Level As character

Str 7, Qck 6, Rsn/Cha/Mgc As character, Hrt 4

Body As character, Mood (varies, maximum 4)

Inspirations As character

Armor Quality/Weapon Quality As character (varies)

Fighting styles: As character

Magic styles: Death Lore (master); others as character. Changes:

Cold resistance. Liches take 1 less point of



damage per strike from any source of cold damage, including environmental cold damage.

Poison and disease resistance. A lich rolls his Magic die as a bonus die when resisting poisons and disease.

Age. A lich ages only 1 year for every 5 years that pass.

Chilling spells. All lich mastery spells that deal damage deal one extra point of cold damage.

Soul rip. A lich can rip a piece of your soul out of your body. On a successful critical melee hit or any melee hit with a mastery attack, armed or unarmed, a lich rips one of your Inspirations from your body. The ripped-out piece of your soul resembles a ghostly light throbbing and whimpering in the lich's grasp. If the lich lets go, the piece bobs in the air at head height. The piece rolls a d4 defense die and has 2 body points. If the piece is an Inspiration and is destroyed, then you lose that Inspiration and all Mood. Both can be regained subsequently, albeit with work (pp. 8 and 9). A lich cannot rip away True Love (p. 13). The soul piece can survive in the lich's possession indefinitely. Liches revel in torturing victims, threatening to destroy the pieces of a victim's soul or threatening to throw the pieces into a spellstalk colony.

If you regain control of the piece before the lich destroys it, you can reunite with it at a touch. In combat, this reunion requires a trick.

Crux/phylactery. A lich has torn his own soul into pieces - one piece for every six character levels, to be precise. He stores the pieces of his own soul in cruxes or phylacteries, which can be any object and can even be a living creature. If the lich's body and Inspirations are destroyed, as long as even one phylactery survives, the lich's body will regenerate, and he will return after a number of seasons equal to his level.

Corrupted Heart. A lich's Heart score is reduced to 4, or stays at its previous value, if the lich is a turned human or troll with a former Heart score less than 4.

Corrupted Inspirations. A lich can only have unwholesome Inspirations. If he loves, the object of

the love must be vile; if he dreams, his dreams must fester. He cannot know True Love, although, tragically, someone may have True Love for him.

Racial loss. A lich loses the racial abilities it had in life.

#### Sample Lich

Luis Castro, Don Ferrante, lich, Castellan of Torre Cabra, spiteful father

Level 15: Wizard 10/Warrior 5

Str 7, Qck 6, Rsn 7, Cha 6, Mgc 10, Hrt 4

Body 6, Mood 4

Inspirations: Jealously protects his titles and positions (2); Seeks vengeance on his daughter and wants to humiliate her for turning to the Free Road and trading (2).

Armor Quality 8, Weapon Quality 6

Fighting styles: Court Sword (master), Free Sword (apprentice), Guardsman (neophyte; Shield Tactics and Escort).

Magic styles: Death Lore (master); Battlecraft (master); Language of Stars (apprentice).

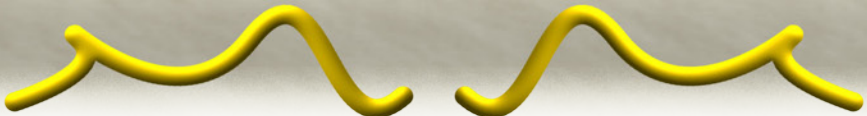
Gear: silkmetal hauberk, zeppelin flight officer's cutlass, toad familiar named Goncalvo, wand of northern cork and maple (wizard's implement), twenty-two gold Riel coins, miniature Nail book, relic chamber holding hairs from Saint Therese of the Scales; makeup and eleven thumb-boxes of kohl; notes on disguising a lich's skin and shadowed features.

Special: Don Ferrante has all the abilities and vulnerabilities of a lich, listed above. His phylacteries are a bottle of wine stored in the Cardinal's cellar and his daughter's eyes, which enchanted him as she grew up, but which he now loathes and covets.

Class abilities: Arcane defense, implement, detect spellbound, armor, combat mastery.

Talents: Wand (grand), vampiric implement (grand), rush (major), magical beast lord (major).

Histories: Maintains the castle Torre Cabra (12); has studied the historical masters of Court



Sword style (6); has held onto his position as Castellán for over three decades through intimidation of rivals and melodramatic public displays of faith (8).

Reputations: Held in the esteem of the bishops of Valte Riel (8); feared throughout Torre Cabra and its village (10); known to the nobles of Valte Riel (4).

## **Living Fire, Living Earth, Living Water, Living Air**

Level 10

Str 14, Qck 11, Rsn 3, Cha 8, Mgc 8, Hrt 3

Body 14, Mood 0

Armor Quality 2, Weapon Quality 9

Fighting styles: Aerial (air only; master); Giant (master); Gore and Trample (master).

Variations: Gore and Trample. Improve Impale to d10/d4, 2 + grabbed. Improve Trample (r) to d10/d6, 2 + rebalance, 3 targets.

Giant. Hurl Boulder is Hurl Element.

Living elements are massive creatures that generally manifest as humanoids 10' or more tall, or as bulls or stags racing across the sky or open fields. Their elemental bodies are almost completely malleable, so more forms are possible if not common.

A living element can cause a disaster of the appropriate type: fire, flood, earthquake, hurricane (p. 58). Doing so causes the elemental to disincorporate for up to a year. Understandably, living elementals are loathe to use this ability. Nonetheless, they can occasionally be forced or cajoled into using it.

## **Madfire Burner**

Level 8

Str 5, Qck 8, Rsn 4, Cha 5, Mgc 6, Hrt 4

Body 5, Mood 0

Armor Quality 2 (leather shirt)

Weapon Quality 3 (varies)

Fighting styles: Skulker, Elemental Maelstrom (fire spells only).

These insane individuals are always wreathed by faint flames just visible against the background. When a person finally goes completely mad from madfire (p. 57), she becomes a madfire burner. Most burners die within several weeks because they are too

mad to remember to feed themselves. A few are savvy enough to do so and last longer, but in both cases, the dangers to the rational world are grave.

Whenever a spell is cast in the presence of a madfire burner, the burner blasts madfire. The blast attacks all creatures in the area with a d6 physical burst of fire. The damage is 1 point of Body and 1 point of Reason. Those hit are exposed to madfire (Strength vs. the virulence, 4, to resist).

Madfire burners are capable of goals and cunning. They are willing to do anything to accomplish their goals, and it is this recklessness that causes them to be such a danger to themselves and others.

## **Manticore**

Level 4

Str 12, Qck 7, Rsn 4, Cha 4, Mgc 5, Hrt 4

Body 5, Mood 2

Armor Quality 3 (hide), Weapon Quality 5 (varies)

Fighting styles: Aerial, Claw/Claw/Bite.

Variation: Aerial. Replace Talon Rake with Tail Spike Launch, d6/d6, 1 (ranged) + fly.

Variation: Claw/Claw/Bite. Replace Foreclaw Rush (r) (mastery) with Tail Spike Launch (non mastery), d6/d6, 1 (ranged) + fly.

Manticores are human- or troll-headed, bat-winged lions with spiked tails. They can fling these spikes over great distances, and a preferred combat tactic is to fly overhead and throw down deadly spikes on landbound targets.

Manticore society is shamanistic. There are druidic and dramba witches - magic is almost exclusively practiced by females - and there are individuals who have mastered Claw/Claw/Bite or Aerial style. The above characteristics, however, represent a typical manticore. Chiefs and warriors gain Mood from elaborate chanting, flight rituals, and facial scarring.

## **Naga**

Level 10

Str 5, Qck 7, Rsn 10, Cha 8, Mgc 10, Hrt 6

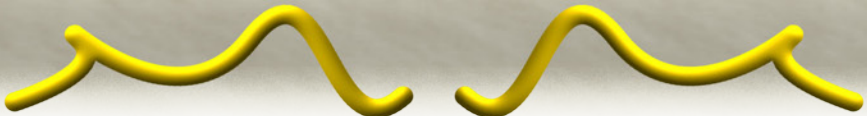
Body 5, Mood 6

Armor Quality 4 (scales)

Weapon Quality 4 (constricting tail)

Fighting Styles: Tentacles and Spellstalks.





Magic Styles: Two masteries; varies. Typical choices are Elemental Maelstrom, Hearts, and Weremagic. Variations: Tentacles and Spellstalks. 1) Remove "Align with Mouth" and all subsequent maneuvers.

2) Replace Align with Ear with Coil 0/d6; replace Drill the Ear with Loop and Coil d6/d4 1 + grabbed; replace Suck Tissue (r) with Constrict, d10/d6, 2 + grabbed.

Naga are intelligent, and therefore can have Inspirations and Histories suitable to the individual. In almost all cases, however, naga are vain, covetous, and contemptuous of men, trolls, and other naga. Their Inspirations tend toward the hateful and the degrading, their Histories tend toward the bloody and the amoral.

Naga have troll or human heads atop a serpent's body. Lengths of 20 or more feet are possible. They have forked tongues, and their speech is a hissing tempest of dissonant sibilance. The uninitiated would surmise that a naga, hating life, leads a solitary existence. This is not true. Nagas hate life, but that drives them toward it, not away. Nagas gather cults to worship the serpents as Low Gods; nagas form secret societies bent on the destruction of the most noble families; nagas corrupt the best and the brightest in the kings's schools. It is, in fact, a very rare naga who does not insinuate herself into the fabric of society, only to unravel it from within.

## Raptors and Drakes

These reptiles are common throughout the Claw. Many savage tribes take a raptor or a drake as a totem; many Masters of the Hunt keep raptors or drakes for their lords's sport. War raptors find exotic use on the field of battle.

### Lace raptor (*ardax raptor*, *kawairiza*)

Level 2 (individual) 7 (pack)

Str 6, Qck 10, Rsn 2, Cha 4, Mgc 3, Hrt 3

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 3 (scales)

Weapon Quality 6 (claws and jaws)

Fighting Styles: Claw/Claw/Bite. In sufficient numbers, Mob (master).

Variation: Mob. 1. Remove Stone and Detritus Barrage.

2. Change Throw (mastery) to Shred (mastery), d10/d4, 2 + 3 Quality to armor.

3. Change Lunatic Pursuit (r) to Lunatic Pursuit (r), 5 damage + move.

The lace raptor has patterns on its scales that resemble lace. There is nothing soft about its small, pebble-hard scales, however, except this appearance from a distance. The raptor stands about 4 feet high, with powerful hindlegs, stunted forelimbs, an oversized skull, and wide jaws bristling with incisors.

Lace raptors travel and hunt in packs whenever possible. A typical pack consists of seven individuals and has 21 Body.

### Plated drake (*ankhyscera drake*, *okitairu*)

Level 5

Str 11, Qck 4, Rsn 2, Cha 4, Mgc 3, Hrt 6

Body 7, Mood 0

Armor Quality 8 (scales)

Weapon Quality 3 (horns, hooves, and tail)

Fighting Styles: Carapace, Trample and Gore.

Special: Armor. The plated drake can use its Armor Quality 8 to soak Body damage on a 1-for-1 basis.

The plated drake is a ponderous, quadrupedal reptile with a massive head plate projecting a single horn. The horn is 4' or more long, almost half again as long as the 10' long drake. The plated drake's headplate and skin are smooth, dull green, and cool to the touch while the horn is rough, opalescent, and warm.

Plated drakes are omnivores with a preference for vegetables, but they will take meat when it presents itself.

### Flesh-Eater raptor (*voras raptor*, *tabe-mono*)

Level 3

Str 5, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 4, Mgc 3, Hrt 5

Body 2, Mood 0

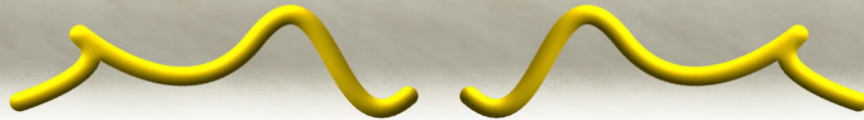
Armor Quality 1 (scales)

Weapon Quality 3 (talons, poison)

Fighting Styles: Poison Sting

Variation: Reduce Grab and Pierce damage to 1 + poison.

Poison: Raptor poison. Quality 3. A character wounded with this venom loses 1 Body per round until dead. Each round, the character may make a Strength check



(at his maximum, not current, Strength) against the quality of the poison to stop the progression. In any case, the Raptor venom cannot cause a person more strength damage than its quality.

These diminutive raptors are knee-high to a rain troll, but they have fan-like sails on their backs, between their forelimbs and bodies, and behind their heads (a hood sail). This allows them to sail and climb with ease: d12 bonus die to such checks. One of their favorite tactics in combat is to skitter, twist, and leap to gain an advantage on their foe, and then grab and inject their poison repeatedly.

The poison is delivered via two fangs. Few can survive repeated injections of the raptor's flesh-eating venom. The raptor is more properly called a marrow-eater, since that is what it sucks out of bones after its victim's flesh has been eaten away.

### **Thunder drake (ptumbra drake, yomimazi)**

Level 9 (individual), Level 15 Mob

Str 7, Qck 8, Rsn 2, Cha 4, Mgc 5, Hrt 6

Body 8, Mood 0

Armor Quality 1 (feathers)

Weapon Quality 4 (talons)

Fighting styles: Gore and Trample (master), Aerial as Spellbound creatures permit, Mob (master) as numbers permit.

The thunder drake is a scarlet-feathered scavenger roughly the same size as the plated drake. When there is a spellbound creature in the area, thunder drakes can fly. When a herd of thunder drakes passes overhead, the sun is darkened.

Omnivorous, thunder drakes are opportunistic feeders. They can be spooked, and the herd's first instinct is to shy away from loud and bright displays. When hunger or another reason presses them, however, the herd is capable of mounting a terrible attack. The so-called "Summer Surprise" thunder drake heard of Avedine stampeded through four villages in one night in the Rill valley some years ago, leaving nothing standing upright in the mud save a few broken-off planks.

### **Roc**

Level 14

Str 20, Qck 8, Rsn 2, Cha 4, Mgc 8, Hrt 6

Body 25, Mood 0

Armor Quality 6, Weapon Quality 12

Fighting styles: Aerial (master).

Variation: Aerial. 1. Increase all Talon attack dice to d10.

2. Replace Snatch Object (r) with the Grasp --> Carry Off two-manuever chain from the Dragon style. Special: A roc's talons deal one extra point of damage per attack against anything with Armor Quality 4 or less.

A roc is an enormous bird of prey. It can carry off a mammoth in its talons and drop the carcass in a nest the size of a city block for its fledglings to feast upon. Their eyesight is famously keen; a roc can resolve the points on a rain troll's antlers from two and a half miles away. It also hears well, and traders buy extra marten oil in Thyre to lube their wagons' wooden wheels and axles. Young rocs, hearing the squeaks of the wagons, have been known to mistake the boxy vehicles for bleating mammoth calves.

### **Skeleton, humanoid**

Level 2

Str 6, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 5, Mgc 7, Hrt 4

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0 (varies), Weapon Quality 3 (varies)

Fighting Styles: Slasher (varies)

Necromancers use Death Lore to raise skeletons for a variety of reasons. Massed skeletons are effective shock troops in combat, while individual undead can be useful servants and protectors.

In general, a skeleton knows the fighting style it was most closely associated with in life. The skeleton of a bodyguard fights in Guardian style; the skeleton of a guild enforcer uses Brute. Guardian-style skeletons are particularly prized as they can be valuable shields for deathmasters.

Note that skeletons are artificial, not natural, creations and therefore count as spellbound creatures.

### **Skeleton, beast**

Level 2

Str 6, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 5, Mgc 5, Hrt 3

Body 4, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0 (varies), Weapon Quality 3 (varies)  
Fighting Styles: Trample and Gore (varies)

Beast skeletons comprise wolf, raptor, gnarsk, and many other animals' skeletons. While slightly more massive than humanoid skeletons, they are not as magically resistant.

Like all skeletons, these are spellbound.

## **Skeleton, frenzy**

Level 4

Str 6, Qck 8, Rsn 2, Cha 5, Mgc 6, Hrt 4

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0 (varies), Weapon Quality 3 (varies)

Fighting Styles: Berserker (master), Undead (master)

There is always a telltale mark on a frenzy skeleton. Wisps of flame in the eye sockets, an intact tongue gibbering constantly, or even a ruby beating warmly where the heart should be.

Frenzy skeletons are more dangerous than other animated skeletons because they can gain Mood. Deathmasters have little control over the creation of frenzy skeletons. Although many schemes have been tried, their production is random. Roughly 1 in 4 skeletons created is a frenzy skeleton.

## **Spellstalks**

One man's disease is another creature's birth. Spellstalks are parasites that grow in a human or troll host, opening eyes in a man's chest, extruding stalks from his thighs and neck, and feeding on the flesh of the host as they grow. Eventually, the host is consumed, or the stalks are shed.

### **Spellstalk bolus**

Level 5

Str 6, Qck 9, Rsn 6, Cha 6, Mgc 9, Hrt 5

Body 3, Mood 3

Armor Quality 0, Weapon Quality 3

Fighting Style: Tentacles and Spellstalks

Magic Style: Language of Stars (varies)

These are the least inimical of the spellstalk strains. A bolus is composed of sloughed-off stalks that failed to kill their host. Many stalks boast eyes, fingers, shanks of hair, and teratomas constantly near to bursting. The bolus slithers for locomotion and can

spread out to a 10' reach, but when packed into a ball is only 3' in diameter.

While no one can fathom the workings of the spellstalk psyche, it appears that boluses are used to scout, watch, and guard. They roll a d10 for perception checks. A bolus can also preserve the tissue that it has sucked after drilling through the ear canal. After it presents this tissue to a vivinaculum or an aberration, the more sophisticated spellstalk entity reads the tissue's memory and learn a secret about the donor.

### **Spellstalk victim**

Characteristics as character

Fighting Style: As character; Tentacles and Spellstalks (master).

Magic Style: Language of Stars (varies).

When a spellstalk victim succumbs to the disease and dies, this is one of two possible results. In this case, the character continues on with his same Histories, fighting styles, characteristics, etc. - but now he is completely under the spellstalks' control, an agent for their alien designs, despising his former life.

The spellstalks can hide themselves under clothing with a disguise check (Reason + applicable History/skill) opposed by the target's perception roll.





## Spellstalk vivinaculum

Level 12

Str 9, Qck 8, Rsn 10, Cha 7, Mgc 11, Hrt 6

Body 5, Mood 3

Armor Quality 4 (scales)

Weapon Quality 3 (tentacles)

Fighting Style: Tentacles and Spellstalks (master)

Magic Style: Language of Stars (master) (varies)

A vivinaculum is the second possible result when a host succumbs to the spellstalk invasion and dies. Within an hour of death, the body is barely discernible beneath the writhing mass of tentacles, eyes, teeth, hair, and sinew. Vivinacula can grow to be 20 feet across with tentacles fully stretched.

Magic is second nature to spellstalks. As always, their minds are inscrutable, but many sages believe that spellstalks have a plan and are executing it.

Every vivinaculum knows at least one spell school at the highest level. There have been many reports over the centuries of spellstalk vivinacula casting spells that belong to no known school. With such a creature, the temptation to exaggeration is obvious, but there are many wizards across the Claw who believe that spellstalks hold clues pointing toward a new

school of magic.

## Spellstalk aberration

Level 10

Str 10, Qck 5, Rsn 7, Cha 4, Mgc 9, Hrt 6

Body 8, Mood 3

Armor Quality 4 (scales)

Weapon Quality 6 (tentacles)

Fighting Style: Tentacles and Spellstalks (master)

Magic Style: Language of Stars (master)

Armor: A spellstalk aberration can use its armor Quality 4 to soak damage on a 1-for-1 basis.

Variation: Tentacles and Spellstalks. Replace Fibrous Invasion to the Brainstem with Seed, d8/d4, 1 + exposed to spellstalks disease (p. 57).

Spellstalk aberrations are the result of spellstalks conquering a host who is unintelligent. Waylorn bears, mammoth, basilisks, and other creatures can fall prey to the spellstalks' infection as easily as a human or troll.

While the resulting abomination is intelligent, it is distinct from a vivinaculum. Not quite as smart, not quite as magically talented, the spellstalk aberration is physically hardier than the vivinaculum.

Stealth is a hallmark of the aberration, despite its bulk. Spellstalk aberrations roll a d10 bonus die when attempting to avoid detection. Too often, victims see a splat of goo drip into their porridge tin, look up, and find that an aberration has been stuck to the cabin ceiling all night, doing whatever bizarre things that spellstalks do. The aberration then slithers out the window while the stunned diner gapes - or it attacks.

## Swarm, rats

Level 2

Str 4, Qck 7, Rsn 2, Cha 5, Mgc 3, Hrt 5

Body 4, Mood 0

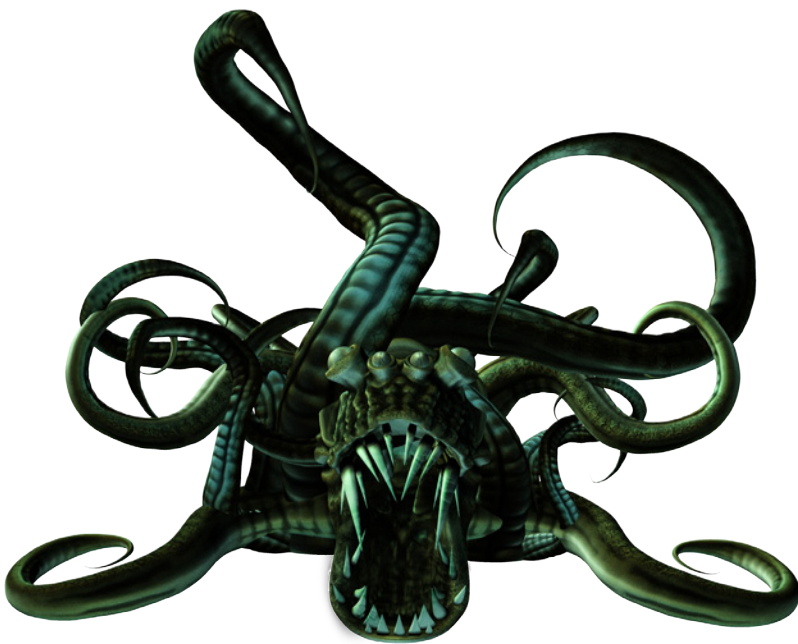
Armor Quality 0

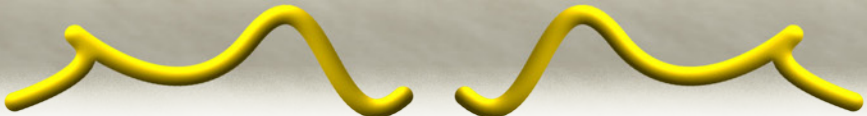
Weapon Quality 1 (teeth)

Fighting Style: Swarm

Variation: Swarm. 1. Replace Invade Orifice with Strip, d8/d6, 1 + remove one item (jewelry, clothing, clutched document, etc.) from the victim.

2. Replace Emerge from Orifice with Retrieve, 0/d6, move + carry stripped items.





The arrival of a rat swarm is heralded by an aroma of sewage and a chorus of squeaks. Often, a ratmaster accompanies a swarm of rats. The ratmaster uses the Weremagic spell Horde or a variant to direct the rats. One typical scenario sees the ratmaster on a rooftop, directing his rats to swarm a noble in the dark street below, strip all the shiny objects from the noble, and then retrieve the shinies to the top of the building for the ratmaster.

### **Swarm, spiders**

Level 2

Str 2, Qck 6, Rsn 1, Cha 3, Mgc 3, Hrt 4

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0

Weapon Quality 1 (teeth)

Fighting Style: Swarm

Variation: Swarm. On any damaging attack, the victim is also exposed to spider poison (Quality 3, 1 point of Body and Quickness, non-recurring).

Spider swarms are common in tombs, abandoned schools, and mines. Given half an hour, spiders can fill an area with sticky, irritating webs that cause 1 Mood damage to anyone entering the area (a perception check against the Doom allows a character to notice the webs before moving into the area).

### **Swarm, scarab beetles**

Level 3

Str 2, Qck 11, Rsn 2, Cha 5, Mgc 6, Hrt 4

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 6 (hard shell)

Weapon Quality 1 (teeth)

Fighting Style: Swarm

Scarab beetles can fly, but they prefer to burrow. In sand, loose soil, or a similarly porous surface, scarab beetles can move through the earth as easily as they can skitter across its surface. If they burst up from the ground to attack a foe who is unaware of their presence, they pour forth with such vigor and angry buzzing that the opponent takes a Heart penalty roll on all rolls in the first round.

### **Troglodyte**

Level 2

Str 7, Qck 6, Rsn 4, Cha 4, Mgc 5, Hrt 4

Body 4, Mood 2

Inspiration: Fear 3 (object varies)

Armor Quality 2 (rags) (varies)

Weapon Quality 2 (stone club) (varies)

Fighting Style: Skulker (varies)

The first troglodyte paintings show Kings from the Age of Cartonnage sealed in their painted boxes and floating through the ancient streets of Dresgilioch, Oudren, and Massara. In those early sewer and cave paintings, energy crackles from the cartonnage boxes and scores of crudely drawn men fall over dead in the wake of the mighty passage.

Scenes like this, no doubt, caused the men and women who would become troglodytes to flee underground. In some ways a forerunner of the wolf-child phenomena of the past five centuries, the retreat of the troglodytes underground has produced a race that is far more phenotypically different from its progenitors.

Unlike the races that live under the sun, troglodytes have rough, scaly skin ranging in hue from gray to green. If their skin is like a lizard's, their eyes are like a cat's, with cabochon yellow irises and elliptical pupils. These eyes allow troglodytes to function normally in all but complete darkness (where they are as blind as everyone else). Troglodyte fingernails are more akin to one-inch claws.

Troglodytes fled the surface in fear, and they live in fear. All troglodytes have a Fear Inspiration of at least 3 points. When used, the flight instinct in troglodytes releases a stench laden with information. Troglodytes in neighboring areas and any troglodyte entering the area within an hour can learn by scent what caused the fear and any other information included by the frightened trogs (if they fled, where they were heading, what the threat was, who was present, and more).

The fear-stench is in fact only one example of the rich scent language used by the troglodytes. A gland near the sinus allows a troglodyte to mark a spot by spittle or by licking. A great deal of information can be included in the marking scent, something equivalent to a brief human conversation. A human or troll can learn this language but pays triple the number of skill points (p. 11).

In the modern era, typical troglodyte terrain



include sewers, mines, underground cisterns, deep caverns, Oudren and other cities sunk by crisis surges, and the vast river network running underneath Dynn, Ehansk, and Azenahal.

Troglodytes lose 1 point of Mood for every half hour spent in sunlight.

NUMBER OF TROGLODYTES APPEARING	EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUALS
3-6	Runt
7-12	1d3 Runts, 1 Champion
13-18	1d4 Runts, 1 Champion, 1 Under Chief
19-26	1d4 Runts, 2 Champions, 1 Honored, 1 Under Chief
27-50	1d6 Runts, 3 Champions, 2 Under Chiefs, 2 Honored, 1 Chief

*Runts* are troglodytes who never grew to full size. Malnutrition and fear of growing up may both be to blame. Whatever the cause, a runt has Strength 4 and Body 2 and is only a neophyte of his fighting style; other stats are unchanged. Runts are a tortured underclass in troglodyte society and are forced to wear leather harnesses with handles at the shoulderblades. Any other troglodyte can steer a runt, load a runt as a pack animal, force a runt down an unexplored tunnel, or whip it screaming down a shaft as a diversion while the main tribe circles behind an enemy. Runts, in turn, are often vile, nasty, and vicious to anyone they can find power over.

*Champions* are troglodytes with Strength 8, Quickness 7, and Body 5. They know the Savage, Skulker, and Guardian fighting styles at the apprentice level. Additionally, when a Champion uses his Fear inspiration and secretes his fear stench, any non-troglodyte in the area who fails a Strength vs. Doom roll is sickened by the stench. He takes a Strength penalty to all rolls next round.

*Under Chiefs* have the same characteristics and stench ability as Champions. They are masters of the Savage and Skulker styles, and they are fantastic sentinels and subterranean trackers, rolling a d10 bonus die for perception and tracking checks.

*Honored* are bloated troglodytes propped up on the softest straw and brought the cleanest water in the warrens. Under Chiefs watch over the honored, and the workers and warriors of the tribe fetch a steady diet of insects, spiders, lizards, cavefish, and various fungal admixtures that have a narcotic effect. The honored spend much of their time in and out of a stupor, although in most cases they have enough coherent, waking moments that they are able to play a part in tribal politics, albeit a sedentary one. When brought on a litter to the site of a combat, the honored are set down next to the chief or under chief. When the chief cuts the honored down her side and she screams, every troglodyte within earshot gains 1 Mood, believing the screams both a blessing and a threat from his chief. This causes 1 Body damage to the honored. The chief can also cut free up to two swarms of spiders or scarab beetles from the subcutaneous pustules where they breed inside the honored's body. This also causes 1 Body damage to the honored. The swarms do not necessarily obey the chief, so this is often used in combination with traps, hit-and-run tactics, or the like.

*Chiefs* have Strength 10, Quickness 7, Reason 6, Charisma 9, Magic 4, Heart 6, Body 6, Mood 6, and 3 Inspiration points beyond the Fear 3 that all troglodytes have. Chiefs are masters of Savage, Skulker, and one other fighting style, often Twin Weapon. Chiefs have the same stench ability as Champions and the same sentinel and tracking ability as Under Chiefs.

When space permits, troglodytes often mob together and fight in the Mob style. For every four troglodytes in a Mob, it has an effective body of 5. For example, a Mob of twenty troglodytes would have an effective body of 25.

There are rumors that troglodytes can be turned back into humans or trolls if their fears are conquered, just as there are rumors that a person fleeing the kings can become a troglodyte if he flees fast and deep enough.

## Vampire

Vampires are created when a powerful wizard turns his back on life and embraces death. Unlike lichs, vampires do not suffer shadowed skin or hair that falls out in patches; many say that a vampire's beauty actu-





ally increases compared to his mortal life. However, vampires do gain a host of vulnerabilities that liches do not share.

When a wizard turns and becomes a vampire, add the template below to the wizard's characteristics.

Natural magic can also create a vampire. In this case, the GM builds the monster as the campaign dictates. That may mean creating the base character first and then applying this template, but it may not. In particular, there are many vampires who know no magic styles at all. It's your game, do what is best for it.

#### Vampire Template

Level As character

Str 10, Qck 10, Rsn/Cha/Mgc As character, Hrt 8

Body 8, Mood 8

Inspirations As character

Armor Quality/Weapon Quality As character (varies)

Fighting styles: Undead (master); as character.

Magic styles: Death Lore (master); others as character.

Variation: Undead. Replace Twitch with Arreting Stare (mastery), d8 vs. Reason/d4, ranged, rebalance. Replace Exploding Head with Command (mastery), d6 vs. Reason or Charisma (defender's choice)/d4, ranged, force the target to take a specific action next round.

Changes:

Cold resistance. Vampires take 1 less point of damage per strike from any source of cold damage, including environmental cold damage.

Poison and disease resistance. A vampire rolls his Strength die as a bonus die when resisting poisons and disease.

Age. A vampire does not show any signs of aging. He does age, albeit at a rate of only 1 year for every 5 years that pass.

Drain. A vampire that hits with a grab attack can bite his target with a successful Strength vs. Strength check. Anyone bitten by a vampire loses 1 Mood and 1 Body, and the vampire gains an equal amount. Elder vampires - those with more than ten levels earned as a vampire - can also drain the experience from a life. In addition to the 1 Mood and 1

Body, the elder vampire drains one randomly selected History. The History is gone, vanished, rather than transferred to the vampire.

If the vampire wishes it, a victim drained to 0 Body in this way rises in one day's time as the vampire's get; see below. A victim that has an Inspiration for the vampire that drains her to 0 Body (usually over a period of days) can return in undeath as a full vampire, if the initiating vampire wishes it.

Captivate. Anyone looking at a vampire and failing a Reason vs. the Doom roll is captivated. She takes a Reason penalty roll on all attempts to do anything except defend herself. She can make a Reason vs. Doom check to break her fascination once per round. Once resisted, the vampire cannot captivate the same target again this scene (or day). A vampire can suppress this ability at will.

Command. The vampire can command anyone who is captivated. The target gains a Reason roll against the vampire's Charisma to resist. If the target fails, the vampire can command actions that do not obviously lead to self-injury. The target gains a new chance to resist (Reason vs. Charisma) with each new command. Once he has successfully resisted, the target can not again be captivated by this vampire in this scene (or day).

Stakes. If the attacker is wielding a wooden stake (typically a Quality 1 weapon) and hits the vampire with a mastery maneuver that causes damage, the stake goes through the heart and slays the vampire instantly. A coup de grace, or any other strike that stakes a vampire's heart, also kills the vampire instantly.

Sunlight. Vampires take 1 damage every twelve seconds they are exposed to sunlight.

Craving. Vampires must drink a quart or more of blood at least four times per week. If they fail to do so, they lose 1 point of Strength, Quickness, Mood, and Body per day. Vampires can enter a state of torpor; a vampire who does not stir from his coffin for a day does not count that day against his feeding requirements. If the blood is not human, the vampire reduces his maximum Mood by half.

Racial loss. A vampire loses the racial abilities it had in life.

### Sample Vampire

Tobias "Toby" Bolche, fat adolescent aristocrat, secret vampire

Level 4: Noble 4

Str 10, Qck 10, Rsn 4, Cha 5, Mgc 6, Hrt 8

Body 8, Mood 8

Inspirations: Insatiable gluttony, revels in surfeit (3); revenge against schoolmates (2); fear of discovery (3)

Armor Quality 6, Weapon Quality 6

Fighting styles: Court Sword (apprentice); Undead (master).

Magic styles: Death Lore (neophyte, Pillar of Ash and Rapture of Ash).

Gear: brigandine, court clothes, kingsman longsword, 31 gold coins of Hessek, black scroll containing the names of his targets of vengeance and lust alternating with obscene stick-figure sketches.

Special: Toby has all the abilities and vulnerabilities of a vampire, listed above.

Class abilities: Noble house (Baronet in the House of Bolche; scope 2, Force 7, Magic 4, Shadow 6, Efficiency 2), reputation.

Talents: Contempt (minor; 1 additional Mood point of damage in a social attack against any target with 3 or fewer levels).

Histories: Has spent a year skulking through the castle, hiding his vampiric nature (8); research on the nature of undead (8); relishes scanning royal and noble laws of succession (7).

Reputations: Feared by the locals dependent on the House of Bolche (6); feared throughout Torre Ca-bra and its village (10); known to the nobles of Valte Riel (4).

### Vampire get

Level 6

Str 8, Qck 9, Rsn 5, Cha 6, Mgc 6, Hrt 4

Body 4, Mood 4

Armor Quality 3 (varies)

Weapon Quality 4 (fists, fangs)

Fighting styles: Undead (master).

Variation: Remove Twitch and Exploding Head.

Gear: varies.

Vampire get are the inferior spawn of a true vampire. A true vampire always knows the direction and approximate distance to his get, and he knows if one of his get has disobeyed a direct order, no matter the distance between the two. A get can only disobey a direct order from its master if it rolls its Reason against the Doom. If a true vampire is destroyed, all of his get are instantly turned to dust.

### War ape

Level 5

Str 10, Qck 7, Rsn 2, Cha 4, Mgc 4, Hrt 6

Body 7, Mood 0

Armor Quality 3 (hide or barding)

Weapon Quality 4 (spiked gauntlets)

Fighting styles: Brute (master); Berserker (master).

Variation: Any Mood a war ape gains from Berserker's rage maneuvers can only be used to maximize attack rolls or Strength rolls.

War apes are a foot taller than most humans and trolls, although this is not immediately evident because the apes typically walk hunched over on knuckles or spiked gauntlets. The apes are native to the tepui jungles of Jakatta, but their trainability and keen senses have driven their spread through the Claw. War apes roll a d8 for perception checks.

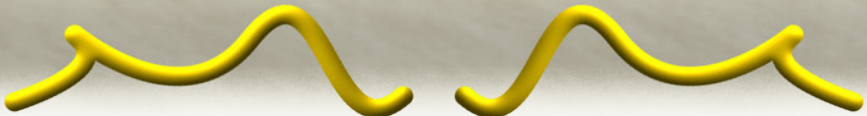
Fitted with armor, the apes are used as sentinels, hunting and tracking beasts, bodyguards, and even massed into war troops. The apes are fiercely devoted to their trainers. Outside of combat, they are loving and family-oriented.

### Were-beasts

True were-beasts are created by natural magic. They are human or troll but are forced to assume a wereshape once per month.

Werelords, as the masters of the weremagic style are called, can also assume the shape of a were-beast for some time during each lunar cycle.

The shape of a true were-beast or a transformed werelord is usually an anthropomorphic hybrid form expressing traits from both root species. Werelords can transform when they please (as long as they are willing to risk a magic surge; p. 215), while natural



were-beasts transform on the night of the full moon and remain in their shape for a 1d6 days.

Every type of true were-beast ignores 1 point of damage from every physical strike that was not caused by a silver weapon.

The statistics below are for typical were-beasts. Werelord wizards using the wereshape high spell may have different characteristics (p. 215).

## **Werebear**

Level 7

Str 10, Qck 5, Rsn 6, Cha 5, Mgc 4, Hrt 7

Body 9, Mood 5

Armor Quality 2 (hide), Weapon Quality 4 (claws)

Fighting Styles: Brute (master), Guardian.

Werebears are an exception to the were-beast norm in that they appear almost identical to a common, albeit enormous, cave bear or brown bear. The telltale differences are the werebear's claws, which are crimson and hyaline, and the eyes, which are human or troll (the same eyes the werebear has in human form).

Werebears who have mastered their style do 1 extra point of damage with Brutal Throw, Brutal Grab, and Shake and Shield.

## **Wereraptor**

Level 7

Str 6, Qck 9, Rsn 5, Cha 4, Mgc 6, Hrt 6

Body 5, Mood 3

Armor Quality 2 (scales), Weapon Quality 4 (claws)

Fighting Styles: Claw/Claw/Bite (master). Wereraptors do 1 extra damage on bite attacks.

Often called lizardmen, wereraptors are agile predators, sometimes partially feathered, sometimes not. Their features are more saurian than human, with scales, talons, forked tongue, and nictitating membranes. A were-raptor's nod to its human or troll side is its upright posture. Raptors and drakes recognize were-raptors as one of their own and do not attack despite the were-beast's anthropomorphism.

A lizardman is the only wereshape capable of speech. It is a sibilant, hissing speech, but it is intelligible. It even makes spellcasting in combat a possibility for werelords (although mastery spells are still impossible). If any one of the lizardman's Magic defense or attack rolls does not beat the Doom, however,

the werelord cannot cast again before using a Trick to cleanse her mind and tongue.

## **Wererat**

Level 7

Str 5, Qck 8, Rsn 6, Cha 7, Mgc 4, Hrt 5

Body 4, Mood 2

Armor Quality 2 (leather armor)

Weapon Quality 2 (dagger)

Fighting styles: Skulker (master), Slasher.

City alleys and sewers are the domain of the wererat. Their natural allies, the rats, are found here. In any environment where sufficient quantities of rats are present, a wererat, including a transformed werelord, can call a swarm of rats at will (one swarm at a time). The swarm obeys the wererat's commands. Issuing a command in combat requires a trick.

If a wererat haunts the same stretch of sewers or the same network of alleys for a season, he can raise one giant rat, which has the statistics of a wolf. He can raise one giant rat per season that he spends in the same location.

## **Weretiger, Werecat**

Level 7

Str 9, Qck 9, Rsn 4, Cha 5, Mgc 6, Hrt 4

Body 7, Mood 3

Armor Quality 2 (hide)

Weapon Quality 6 (claws)

Fighting styles: Claw/Claw/Bite (master). Pounce does +2 damage next round.

In the south, werecats have the coloring of tigers from the Marnh jungle; in the north, they have the coloring of desert cats. But color doesn't matter: the beast is always vicious.

Werecats, including transformed werecat lords, have the same keen senses as a desert cat, rolling a d8 for perception checks.

## **Werewolf**

Level 7

Str 10, Qck 8, Rsn 4, Cha 6, Mgc 7, Hrt 4

Body 5, Mood 2

Armor Quality 2 (hide)

Weapon Quality 4 (claws)





Fighting styles: Claw/Claw/Bite (master);

Werewolves are the most common of the were-beasts. Their howls can be heard for ten miles around. Every werewolf has different fur, whether long and brown and brushed to a sheen, or short and smelling of woodsmoke, or possessed of any other distinguishing characteristic.

Werelords who shapechange into a werewolf share the were-beasts' ability to ignore 1 point of damage per round from a physical weapon that is not silver. A werewolf is so frenzied in battle, however, that a werelord must make a Reason check against the attack roll every time he does take damage. If he fails, he is out of control for the next round, attack the creature who attacked him with the highest damage available attack.

Werewolves, including transformed werelords, also gain a d8 perception die on all perception checks that involve scent.

## **Zombie**

Zombies are re-animated corpses. They are unintelligent, although those created from troll and human corpses are capable of understanding very simple commands.

Understanding and obedience are two different things, however, and most zombies obey nothing but their hunger. Zombies are carnivores. A zombie that does not feed on flesh at least once a day loses one Strength and Body point until it de-animates.

### **Zombie, human or troll**

Level 2

Str 6, Qck 4, Rsn 3, Cha 3, Mgc 4, Hrt 3

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0 (rags)

Weapon Quality 2 (fists)

Fighting styles: Undead; Mob (master) in sufficient numbers.

When they have the numbers, zombies instinctually mob their targets. Typical mobs have 1 Body per zombie.

These zombies are so slow and lumbering that their opponent in combat can always see the zombies'

maneuver before selecting his own maneuver.

### **Zombie, human or troll contagion**

Level 3

Str 6, Qck 8, Rsn 3, Cha 3, Mgc 5, Hrt 3

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0 (rags)

Weapon Quality 2 (fists)

Fighting styles: Undead; Mob (master) in sufficient numbers.

As human or troll zombie, but anyone hit by the Gnaw/Feed maneuver and subsequently killed by the zombie rises 1d10 minutes later as a contagion zombie.

### **Zombie, human-raptor cross-stitch**

Level 5

Str 6, Qck 6, Rsn 3, Cha 4, Mgc 6, Hrt 3

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 4 (scales and joint plates)

Weapon Quality 4 (one claw, one fist)

Fighting styles: Undead (master); Claw/Claw/Bite; Mob (master) in sufficient numbers.

The corpses of the two species are stitched together first and subsequently animated.

### **Zombie, undead giant**

Level 11

Str 14, Qck 5, Rsn 3, Cha 4, Mgc 9, Hrt 3

Body 18, Mood 0

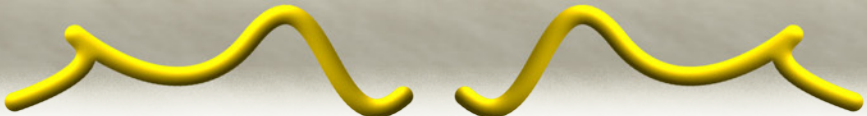
Armor Quality 0 (varies)

Weapon Quality 4 (spiked tree trunk; varies)

Fighting styles: Giant (master), Undead (master).

Variation: Undead Giant. Add 1 damage to Rip and Tear and Lunge in the Undead style. Also, an undead giant can switch between its two combat styles without using a trick.

Undead giants are towering foes at fourteen to sixteen feet tall. They suffer from the same hunger as other zombies, but they have a more magical and horrifying means of sating it. Any undead giant who kills a foe with the Drink/Feed maneuver eats up the foe entirely. The giant gains Body equal to half of the killed creature's total Body (up to a maximum of 24 Body). These extra Body points fade after one hour



and a postprandial fatigue sets in, reducing the Giant's Strength and Quickness by 2 until it rests.

## ADDENDUM: SELECTED ANIMALS

### **Bear (Waylorn bear)**

Level 5

Str 10, Qck 6, Rsn 2, Cha 6, Mgc 3, Hrt 4

Body 9, Mood 0

Armor Quality 2 (hide)

Weapon Quality 4 (claws)

Fighting styles: Claw/Claw/Bite (master). Replace Foreclaw Rush (r) with Rush (r), d6/d6, move target 1 area. Replace Pounce with Bear Hug, d6/d4, 1 + grabbed.

### **Cleaner Crab**

Level 3

Str 6, Qck 4, Rsn 2, Cha 4, Mgc 6, Hrt 5

Body 4, Mood 0

Armor Quality 4 (shell), Weapon Quality 2 (pincers)

Fighting Style: Carapace (master)

Special: Armor. A cleaner crab can use its Armor Quality 4 to soak Body damage on a 1-for-1 basis.

Locked in sand pits below stairs during the day, cleaner crabs shuffle slowly through the halls of chateaux and castles at night. They naturally scour each surface as they move, taking sustenance from the tiniest specks of waste and grit.

Cleaner crabs are three to four feet high and ill-tempered. They cannot abide being disturbed and will sometimes charge even their handlers if interrupted on their nightly rounds.

### **Elk**

Level 1

Str 8, Qck 5, Rsn 2, Cha 3, Mgc 3, Hrt 4

Body 4, Mood 0

Armor Quality 0, Weapon Quality 3 (antlers)

Fighting Style: Gore and Trample.

### **Gnarsk**

Level 1

Str 10, Qck 4, Rsn 2, Cha 6, Mgc 3, Hrt 4

Body 6, Mood 0

Armor Quality 1 (hide), Weapon Quality 1 (hooves)

Fighting Style: Gore and Trample.

Gnarsk are long-haired ungulates resembling a cross between an ox and a cow. They are famously good-natured and kept as pets as well as draft animals and feed cattle. Often one gnarsk is the Toddle Gnarsk and carries very young children on its back through the fields while adults in the community till their lord's soil.

### **Mammoth**

Level 7

Str 12, Qck 5, Rsn 2, Cha 6, Mgc 4, Hrt 4

Body 12, Mood 0

Armor Quality 2 (hide)

Weapon Quality 4 (tusks and hooves)

Fighting styles: Gore and Trample (master); Behe-moth.

### **Stake monkey**

Level 2

Str 9, Qck 9, Rsn 2, Cha 6, Mgc 4, Hrt 5

Body 7, Mood 3

Armor Quality 2 (hide)

Weapon Quality 4 (claws)

Fighting styles: Aerial (neophyte, Stake Frenzy, Slam into Target).

Stake monkeys are monkeys with no feet. Rather, they have sharpened tibia that protrude as stakes several inches straight down from their lower legs. From high in the jungle, stake monkeys plummet, impaling their prey with both stakes. Outside of thick forest canopy, or on the ground, unable to brachiate, a stake monkey is virtually helpless.

### **Wolf**

Level 1 (higher for pack)

Str 6, Qck 7, Rsn 2, Cha 6, Mgc 3, Hrt 4

Body 3, Mood 0

Armor Quality 1 (hide)

Weapon Quality 3 (claws and jaws)

Fighting style: Claw/Claw/Bite; Mob (as pack size permits, usually 1 Body per wolf in the pack).



## SAMPLE NPCs

This section presents a few sample NPCs. Remember that History points, Inspirations, Mood, and Reputations are fluid in Spellbound Kingdoms. Not every NPC will have the maximum possible for his level. This happens for many reasons, but the chief among them is that the kings are constantly trying to grind away any Inspiration or Mood.

**Ballard Shonk**, hired muscle

Nineblood human

Level 1 Warrior

Str 8, Qck 7, Rsn 4, Cha 6, Mgc 5, Hrt 7

Body 5, Mood 4

*Racial ability:* Ballard can use one Inspiration twice in a scene.

*Inspirations:* Must look good in front of his dream girl, Rhisti Cooke, the owner's daughter at his tavern (1).

*Armor Quality 5, Weapon Quality 3*

*Fighting styles:* Free Sword, Guardsman.

*Class ability:* Armor. Ballard can use his armor to absorb damage up to its Quality on a 1-for-1 basis.

*History:* Works as enforcer at a local tavern (6).

*Gear:* Mail hauberk; broadsword; in a locket, a dated three-year-old scrap of paper on which Rhisti had written what needed to be ordered for the tavern. Ballard does not read and does not know what the note says, although he treasures it for he recognizes Rhisti's handwriting.

*Wealth Level 2*

**Ardinho Estrella**, loquacious courtier and unctuous sycophant

Rain troll

Level 1 Courtier

Str 4, Qck 6, Rsn 7, Cha 8, Mgc 5, Hrt 6

Body 5, Mood 2

*Racial ability:* Ardinho can regenerate. His jaws still function under his control up to a mile away, so that he can detach mandible, TMJ and maxilla and leave his mouth on the table to describe what he is seeing, or to whisper advice to a minion while Ardinho stands in

the shadows. He typically wears a satin neckerchief to conceal his face when his jaw is missing.

*Inspirations:* Ambition: gain a position of power and luxury at court, by any means necessary (2).

*Armor Quality 0, Weapon Quality 2* (dagger)

*Magic style:* Hearts.

*Fighting style:* Basic maneuvers only.

*Class ability:* Friends at court. Once per week, Ardinho can call in a favor from the Royal Solicitors' Council, a Scope 5 organization with Force 2, Shadow 6, Magic 2, and Efficiency 4.

*History:* Has a natural talent for negotiations and court politics (6).

*Gear:* Bourgeoisie wardrobe, fixer's ink tattoo on right scapula of a courtier with a swallow on one shoulder and a canary on the other shoulder, Orynjan kris (Quality 4) once belonging to Asenkut Ragul's nephew.

*Wealth Level 4*

*Reputations:* Seen as a potential threat at court (6); feared and hated in his home village of Arford (6).

**Lord Desmond Ashmont**, heir to the Saxtine Barony of Thyre, explorer, adventurer, and lion of the people

Nineblood human

Level 6 Noble

Str 8, Qck 6, Rsn 6, Cha 8, Mgc 4, Hrt 6

Body 5, Mood 6

*Racial ability:* Lord Desmond can use one Inspiration twice in a scene.

*Inspirations:* Lust for adventure (4); desire to see the Descent (2).

*Armor Quality 8, Weapon Quality 7*

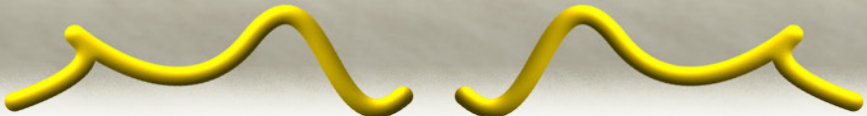
*Fighting styles:* Free Sword (master); Court sword (apprentice).

*Class abilities:* Impose. When an opponent is at 0 Mood, Lord Desmond can use a social attack to force the opponent to take Lord Desmond as an Inspiration.

*Leader.* Once per scene (or day) per person, Lord Desmond can use a brief conversation or other interaction to restore 3 Mood to an ally.

*Talents:* Bad, Bolstering wit.





*History:* Expert sailor (8); expert zeppelin hand (8); loves to ride (8); oversees financing and accounting on expeditions (6); organizes and leads expeditions (6); pores over geography tomes (8).

*Gear:* Gilded coat-of-plates armor emblazoned with the Saxtine seal; Queensport broadsword; platinum spyglass; noble wardrobe; escort zeppelin *Rose Whiskey*.

*Reputations:* Famous and lionized by the people of the Saxtine Barony (8); suspected of heresy by the High Church (6); known as an adventurer throughout Thyre (8); reputation for competence and ruggedness among zeppelin crews (10); remembered as a good-natured hellion at University of Queensport (8).

*Wealth Level* 10

**Leisette Versayre**, fence and factor  
Seradynn troll

Level 4/3 Rogue/Fixer

Str 4, Qck 8, Rsn 5, Cha 8, Mgc 6, Hrt 6

Body 5, Mood 3

*Racial ability:* Leisette can regenerate. She can also detach her prehensile tail and control it from up to a mile away (although she does so blindly if she does not have line-of-sight).

*Inspirations:* Love of gold (3); wants to be acknowledged as a talented fixer (2); fear of magic (1).

*Armor Quality* 4, *Weapon Quality* 4

*Fighting styles:* Dagger-and-wine (apprentice), Twin Weapon (apprentice), Parapet Defense (apprentice).

*Class abilities:* Hunted. Leisette uses a d10 for Quickness when making Chase rolls.

Fix. Leisette can cure any disease, stop any magic or alchemical effect, or neutralize any poison that targets an individual creature.

Fraternity. Leisette can call on her Fixer's Fraternity for one action per month (p. 81 for details on this organization).

*Talents:* Harrowing (minor), Lucre (minor), Right people (minor).

*History:* Disguise artist (8); adept at confidence games and bluffing (10); expert black market trader (8); first-hand knowledge of the sewers, alleys, and rooftop byways of Rithagin (10).

*Gear:* Form-fitting steel-and-bone lamellar imported

from Oryn-ja; roofsword; artisan's wardrobe; fixer's lab in Rithaign near the slums; iron ring of the Fixer's Fraternity, usually worn as a hair tie.

*Reputations:* Member of the Fixer's Fraternity (8); known as a fixer and a fence among the underworld of the Old Claw (6).

*Wealth level:* 5

**Sigfried Davos**, kingsman, veteran, duke's champion, and cruel master

Nineblood human

Level 8 Warrior

Str 10, Qck 7, Rsn 5, Cha 4, Mgc 6, Hrt 7

Body 6, Mood 5

*Racial ability:* The veteran kingsman can use one Inspiration twice in a scene.

*Inspirations:* Delight in causing pain (4); lust for power (2); vengeance on anyone insulting his honor (1).

*Armor quality* 6, *Weapon quality* 6

*Fighting styles:* Great weapon (master), Guardsman (master), Free Sword (apprentice).

*Class abilities:* Armor. Siegfried Davos can use his armor to absorb damage up to its Quality on a 1-for-1 basis.

Combat mastery. Any time the kingsman hits with a mastery maneuver against someone with fewer than 8 levels, increase the damage by 2.

War stories. Once per scene, Siegfried can use his martial level die instead of a Charisma die to make a social roll.

*Talents:* Atrocity (minor), Great weapon overpower (minor), Sweep the leg (minor).

*History:* Expert cordsman and climber, veteran of many zeppelin cord-drop deployments (8); survived months in the Serai desert waiting for the siege of Eastfire to be lifted (11); weaponsmith (9); familiar with the nobles of Eastfire (6).

*Gear:* Brigandine, superior halberd, writs of ownership of several Jakattan slaves, smith's kit.

*Reputations:* Feared as a powerful warrior by nobles of Rithaign and Eastfire (8); Respected as a powerful warrior by militaries of Rithaign and Eastfire (6); welcomed as a Sand Brother in the Serai desert (10).

*Wealth level* 6

**Cressida Vanche**, outlaw witch

Wight

Level 10 Witch

Str 4, Qck 5, Rsn 6, Cha 6, Mgc 10, Hrt 8

Body 5, Mood 0

*Racial ability:* Oncer per scene, Cressida can feast upon another person's Fear inspiration. She gains 2 Mood, the target loses 2 Mood, and Cressida can use the Fear as if it were her own Inspiration that round.

*Inspirations:* Hates magic (4); mourns loss of two daughters and husband killed in a crisis surge she caused (4); self-loathing (2).

*Armor Quality 2, Weapon Quality 2*

*Magic styles:* Death Lore (master), Elemental Maelstrom (master), Language of stars (apprentice).

*Class abilities:* Familiar, implement, arcane defense, detect spellbound, wizard's life.

*Talents:* Amulet (major), improved familiar (major), curse (minor), master and apprentice (minor).

*History:* Housewife for eight years (6); hide from kingsmen while practicing magic for a secret society for sixteen years (8); since the death of her daughters and husband, deals with people through intimidation (6).

*Gear:* Gnarsk leather armor she picks at constantly, dagger used to pick at armor, bedroll, trail rations, faded miniature portrait painting of family inside locking amulet, raven familiar named Wilhelm (Str 4, Hrt 6, all other characteristics 4, Body 4).

*Reputations:* Known among spell smugglers and rebels as a powerful mercenary witch (8); Hated by nobility (10).

*Wealth Level 2*

**Feargus Shorminrac**, Far Trader, engineer, spell smuggler, and Terror of Schools

Trader 10/Engineer 5

Str 5, Qck 6, Rsn 8, Cha 10, Mgc 4, Hrt 7

Body 5, Mood 6

*Racial ability:* Feargus can use one Inspiration twice in a scene.

*Inspirations:* Love for his wife Bethany (3), love for his nine-year-old daughter Abigail "Deadeye" (3).

*Armor quality 8, Weapon quality 8*

*Magic styles:* Dramba (apprentice).

*Fighting styles:* Swashbuckler (master), Blackpowder musketeer (apprentice), Dagger-and-wine (apprentice).

*Class abilities:* To the heart, leader, sell, signature item, combat engineering.

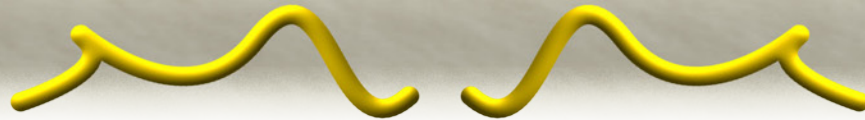
*Talents:* Stake your word on it (grand), moved by propinquity (major), right people (major).

*History:* Built, disarmed, re-set traps for the Thyran Axman's gauntlet (10); maintains own boat and wagon (13); geography and cultures of the Free Road (15); studies locks incessantly, particular locks used in the kingsmen's schools (10); built his two wheel lock pistols himself (8).

*Gear:* Silkmetal hauberk, artisan's wardrobe, bourgeoisie wardrobe, two wheel lock pistols, one wheel lock musket, red cat familiar named Trenton, engineer's 10' pole, map of the Free Road, one-time pad of Scholar Axmen phrases, thank-you parchment drawings from rescued schoolchildren.

*Reputations:* Recognized in the North as successful trader and trading company head (8); excellent reputations with the artisans and traders of Thyre, Chert, Syrbizond, Windhover Valley, and Oryn-ja (10 each); grudging respect from the nobles of Thyre and Chert (6); has smuggled over 100 schoolchildren out of schools using the northern Invisible Zeppelin network (12).

*Wealth level 12*



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN: THE SPELLBOUND KINGDOMS

"The map, my lord."

This was at sunset on the last day of the Glimmering in 1605. The baron stood on his galleon, and the galleon rode on the sea, rocking. Heat sank with the sun. The vellum map was cool and smooth in his hands, like a dying carp. The baron stared at it.

"Do you see the center, my lord? Of our map? It is empty. The heart of our world is a cold sea."

It was true.

"He is a threat, my lord. He loves you too much. He loves everyone too much. His heart is too soon made glad."

They brought the baron's son on deck. He was older than usual for this. Three and three seasons.

"Papa!" the boy yelled. He started to run to his father but was scooped up into the arms of a king'sman.

"You see, my lord? He loves you too much. He cannot stop. You have whipped him, and you have starved him. Nothing stops it."

The baron wanted to argue that love was the province of the nobility. But he knew that all noble-born children were commoners until the king lifted them up. And there was no way a king would lift up such a son as this.

"Do it."

The king'sman threw the boy into the water. The boy screamed all the way down until the splash, and the baron knew the scream was not for fear but for pain at having been rejected by his father.

The galleon turned for home. Being noble was not easy.

Love and fear are the most powerful forces in the Kingdoms. Kings know this, serfs know this, and everyone knows this. Love and fear are masters over even magic and death. And that is why the kings must control love and fear, at any cost.

This is the theme of Spellbound Kingdoms. The setting is built to allow you to explore this theme

- secondarily. Secondarily because theme is not the most important thing in the game. That would be f-u-n fun. The setting is built primarily to bring fun to the game.

The aim of this chapter is to tell you about the setting and to show you how to use it to make your game fun.

### A NOTE ON HISTORY

Historians have difficulty researching and scribing when their sons and daughters are burning with madfire, wailing in hunger, or disappearing from schools where torture is just one tool to eradicate passion and control thought. In other words, magic, kings, priests, disaster, and disease have made history an erratically practiced endeavor.

Kings sometimes work with nature to bury the past. An unknown history is a useful lockbox, in which secrets can be hidden and from which bogeymen and wonders can be pulled as necessary to cow, entertain, awe, and frustrate the commoners.

There appear to have been kings from the beginning of civilization. The dry sandstone caves of the eastern isles are scratched and ochred with stick drawings of tribal chiefs, bellowing with arms raised while masses of islanders bow and chant on the beaches. The earliest inscriptions of the Fallen Kingdom's ossuaries, metopes, and fragmented friezes trace kings back to the beginning of the Claw, when the High God set his hand on the world to make a place for people to live. Monarchy, whether feudal, tribal, or socialist, has been on the Claw longer than written records.

### A NOTE ON THE PRESENT

There is one question that arises not only for historians but for many citizens of all ages: where do we stand? What do we make of our age?





Now, in the Kingdoms, that answer is clear.  
The Kingdoms stand on the brink.

Whether on the brink of enlightenment,  
or on the brink of a new dark age, only time and the  
PCs' actions can tell.

Never has there been a time such as now. Zep-  
pelins and submersibles are making mountain, sea, and  
under-ice crossings possible with acceptable losses of  
life (a few officers, half the crew). Fixers threaten to  
control some of magic's worst ravages. This loosens  
the kings' grips on the commoners, cowed for centu-  
ries by magical disasters and the need for a monarch to  
prevent the worst spell conflicts and crisis surges. En-  
gineers work wonders that attest to a great power not  
subject to magic's vagaries. And in the alleyways and  
undercrofts and taverns of the Old Claw, the Axemen  
have ignited a shadow war. Already, Thyre is burning.

## RISE TO MODERNITY

The modern kingdoms coalesced from smaller  
dominions and tribal lands during the Age of Car-  
tonnage 1500 to 1700 years ago. This was a terrible  
time of fighting, Low Gods, and entire families of  
dead kings and magi wheeled before armies into  
battle. (The elaborate presentation of these totemic  
dead names the Age, along with the decorated boxes  
thought at the time to provide magical protection to  
the monarchs sealed within). In that Age, wild magic  
exploded in the streets. Mortar and brick and potsherds  
clattered into the streets. Wails were everywhere.

The dead nobles' organs were scooped out, the  
bodies embalmed, their souls bleached for the High  
God, and the new idols took their place at the front of  
the columns. The peasants were piled on mass pyres or  
rolled into the cesspool to ferment. The Age of Car-  
tonnage did much to demonstrate the horrors of free  
magic use to the people of the Claw. In their sundry  
battles, would-be kings' magic interfered with each  
other to the extent that villages suffocated overnight;  
babies were born chimeras or angels; and entire moun-  
tains erupted in pyroclastic flows in which people  
could hear their grandparents wailing and cursing  
them hysterically. The magic interferences brought  
disasters that are legend today: the engulfment of

Trastamara, the Muda-Tarsk zombie swarms, the bar-  
ren wombs of Chalve.

The fighting slowed over generations. The  
Age, probably begun with the discovery and founding  
of the modern seven magic styles, ended with  
the consolidation of power. New nobles, kings in the  
modern sense, emerged victorious.

In Hessek, that same king still rules after 1600  
years.

But that may be about to change.

## THE THREE FORCES

Ideas move history. Two old ideas and one  
new idea are setting the course of human events in the  
Claw right now.

First, the concept of nobility. Man's society  
naturally sorts out leaders and followers, but the nobil-  
ity of the Claw has origins in a force beyond human  
nature: magic. Pervasive and pernicious, it inspires  
fear across the known world. True, it has wrought mir-  
acles over the centuries: Saint Aldric's survival at sea,  
the plague-healing tears of the maidens of Dresgilioch,  
and the destruction of the Descent horde. But those  
miracles are not enough to redeem magic in the eyes  
of most.

And therein lies the creation of the nobility. Af-  
ter the nobles seized power and claimed magic as an  
exclusive right (and by extension also claimed exclu-  
sive rights to strong emotions and inspirations, which  
clearly have extreme magical power), the worst of  
magic's interference effects were prevented. If no one  
but the nobles is allowed to use magic, then there are  
fewer opportunities for interference and wild surges.

The nobles ruthlessly hunted down and ex-  
ecuted any free magi. Soon there were far fewer crisis  
surges. For many, especially in the wake of the Car-  
tonnage wars, this was a concession devoutly to be  
wished. These people – not all of the commonfolk by  
any means, but most – were content to worship in a  
(pre- Wrandt) church, feed their families, and live days  
bound each to each in natural piety.

The nobles went further. Everyone can see  
the power that inspirations can have. Love can keep a  
mother alive across mountain ranges as she searches



for the children her husband sold to kingsmen. Desire and ambition make the heart beat faster, the sculptor's adze cut cleaner, and the chef's herb soufflé rise until it quivers on the plate, ready to float away.

Must these emotions, so tied to worldly power, be connected to magic?

Yes.

Must they be controlled to prevent magical interference and disaster?

Yes.

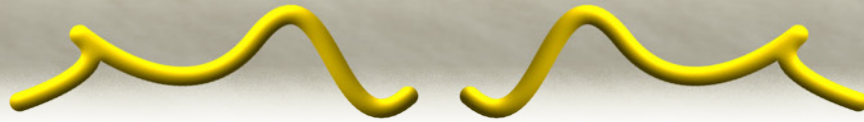
Many peasants rebelled, many did not, as the nobles took this further step. Children were forced into schools and taught, by chalk and by brand, to dim their joys and temper their ardor. In many lands, restrained courtly love was extolled in plays, songs, and poems, while romantic love was attacked. Any man, woman, or child seen to live with too much light, work with too much fury, or burn with too much ambition was taken to one of the king's villages. If they returned, they returned calmer, dimmer, emptier.

The wolf children are one reaction to this. What mother wants her child to grow up without love? True, not all love is banned in the Kingdoms. Only strong, deep, and powerful love. True love. Through inertia, noble aggression, church collusion, and mostly through the fear of magic, the nobles' grip on society has not loosened over six hundred years. And there are many who think it should not. After all, is a love worth a city sinking into the sea?

But now the Axemen say yes. They have revealed themselves, rebelled, and Thyre is burning. Axemen plays and poems (art is ever the vanguard of revolution) point out that emotions are powerful but are not known to cause crisis surges as spell-bound magic does. The Kingdoms are on the brink, with the nobles pushing one way and the Axemen pushing another. Each side, of course, claims to be pushing toward the light while the other pushes toward the darkness.

After nobility, the second idea that is setting the course of human events in the Claw is the





Church. The Church has always been quick to support the noble class's claim to exclusive magic and emotion. That claim and the asceticism it makes incumbent upon the masses match well with the Church's teaching that this world is not as important as the next. There are many cynics, however, like the majority of the Fixers' Fraternity, who see this as nothing more than a quid pro quo: the church gives the nobles religious blessing and justification in return for an increased societal status. Indeed, the clergy's status rivals that of the lower nobility in many places, and canon law supersedes kingdom law on church grounds.

The Church's relationship with nobles has not changed for a millenia. What has changed, and in some minds prompted the drive to a new Age, is the Church's relationship with the commoners.

Until roughly three hundred years ago, men divided the heavens into two categories: the High God and the Low Gods. The High God was the lord of all. He was king to other gods, and he commanded the worship on Earth of paupers, princes, and priests. He showed his compassion by placing his hand on the Earth to form the Claw and give his people a home. He showed his terribleness by doing it violently, making a Claw-slash instead of a handprint. He had to do it violently because bringing order out of chaos and magic hurt him. In stained glass windows, mosaics, and baldachins, he is often shown with a disfigured hand, watchful eyes, and the raiment of a king.

In the old days, only kings and nobles could worship the High God directly. Peasants paid priest-tax for the priests to intercede. The priests prepared Scripts and organized ceremonies to guide the nobles, who would read the peasants' prayers and cooperate with the priests to conduct the High God's ceremony.

Low Gods were for the peasants. There were many, and they were everywhere. Gods of waterfalls, stars, birth, avarice, a town, a book. A Low God could live around any corner. There are many stories of people encountering Low Gods, of Low Gods working great magics, and of Low Gods warring amongst themselves, often using cults of mortals as proxies.

Then the priest Arvind Wrandt changed everything. He began a movement in 1271, ripping the anachronistic cartonnage off the dead Archbishop of Hessek as he lay in state. The cartonnage and its recall of an earlier Age offended Wrandt and prompted him to retreat to his cell to scribe a manifesto. He shortly returned to where the Archbishop lay, placed the manifesto parchment on the corpse's forehead, and nailed it into the skull with an iron nail, using his Book as a hammer.

Wrandt's Turn, as the manifesto and the movement came to be called, is easily summarized: the Low Gods are not Gods, only blasphemers or devils or wizards. The High God was the only God, and he heard everyone: peasant, priest, and king.

The theosophy was more complicated, but it carried the day. The peasants could now speak directly to the High God. They could avoid the priest-tax. Wrandt's turn went from shock to heresy to doctrine in the span of two generations, though not before Wrandt became St. Wrandt, one of the first to die on the pyres of Dynn (though some say that the fires still burn so strongly there because the Dynni are trying to purge their history of this original sin).

Lastly, the third idea that is guiding human events in the Kingdoms is love. Since Wrandt's Turn, commoners believe they have the ability to communicate directly with the High God. This has led to a revolution in thought. If the High God listens to commoners, then they must, somehow, matter. For the first time in history, the individual commoner's life is to be respected, to be valued, to be loved. This emphasis on the individual has inspired and fueled the Axemen's shadow war from the start.

The "Hate what you love" adage is being reimagined and quoted as "Hate what you love, and love what you hate," to emphasize love's role. New interpretations are "Live with passion," "Risk all for love," and even, "Love is worth the hate," rather than the old "Dilute and moderate your strong emotions." Where is this new idea taking the people of the Claw? In the grand campaign of Spellbound Kingdoms, your players can answer that.





## MAGIC AND DISEASE

Natural forces are also at work in the Claw, of course, and have a profound effect on daily life.

Diseases like spellstalks, influenza, and the bloody flux are frequent hazards. Every city has a plague quarantine system with flags, heavy padlocks, and leather-masked fixers rounding through the shuttered districts. Despite these systems, the extremely crowded living conditions in cities make a new outbreak a constant risk. A city can lose ten percent of its population in a standard outbreak. Some plague years see a city's population decline by a third or even a half.

The nobles seem to be doing more in the last year or two, possibly in response to the Axemen's uprising, or possibly in response to some as-yet unannounced magical or alchemical breakthrough. Spellstalk and plow victims, tied thrashing to litters, are brought into university laboratories in Queensport and Thyre frequently in the past months.

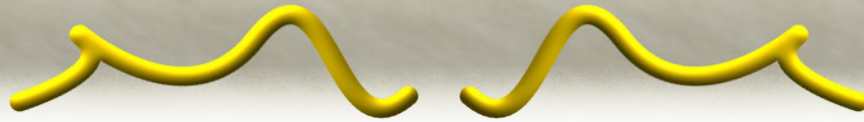
Magic's effect on the world is difficult to overstate. The populace's fear of crisis surges has informed

societal structure, assigning the right to wield magic to the relatively small noble class. Magic has also sown a self-loathing in many people, as they seek magic's power but know that they do so at a danger to their neighbors' lives. The typical commoner throughout the Claw loathes magic, saying "Magic hates magic, and so do I," though that does not stop him from using magic if he has access to it. In the East, magic is slightly more accepted. Most commoners there view magic as otherworldly, the province of the Low Gods and of the nobles.

## THE FOUR ESTATES

In the Old Claw - the western two peninsulas of the Claw - civilization comprises four estates. In increasing status, these are the peasants, the clergy, the nobility, and the king. The class divide is drawn sharply between the peasants and the other three estates.

The closest alliance is between the priests and the nobles. Kings are crowned by priests, archbishops are appointed by kings, and each institution lends to



the other power and legitimacy. There are constant tensions over where canon law ends and where kingdom law starts, but for the most part the nobility and the church are fast allies. The launch of a Deic Fleet to Jakatta, for example, rumored to be on the horizon, could never happen without the cooperation of both of these upper estates.

Nor could it occur without the blessing of the king, the ultimate estate. The power of a king in the kingdom is not to be underestimated. Ancient Lucius in Hessek has ruled for sixteen centuries, and he exemplifies the power of the monarchy. Kings become their demesnes even more than other nobles. The true depth of a king's power is not known nor often plumbed.

The fourth and lowest estate lives a life vastly different from the other three. For the peasants, bread and ale (and sometimes laundry water) replace cakes and wine; 20'x30'x6' tenement flats shared with twenty other wretches replace palace apartments shared with twenty servants; and the reek and roar of cities replaces the fragrance and harpsichord of the rose garden.

Most different for the peasants, however, is the constant surveillance. The lower classes are forbidden magic. The nobility employs numerous agents to enforce this. The ubiquitous agents called kingsmen (though many work for dukes, earls, and lesser nobility) are a primary means of enforcement. The kingsmen do not wear uniforms, and a baker may live next to a butcher all his life, only to wake up and find that the butcher is a trained warrior, come with three others to seize the baker's wife in the middle of the night thanks to her name appearing on a list of suspected magi. A kingsman revealing himself in public causes silence, even in a crowd of a hundred screaming at a horse race but a moment before. In most kingdoms, kingsmen can seize, beat, and torture members of the lower class with almost complete impunity. A painter who inspires too much joy with his paintings; two lovers in a pub whose laughter and sighs are too soft and too sincere; a free druid making a sacrifice in a by-way atelier; anyone could be taken without warning by a kingsman.

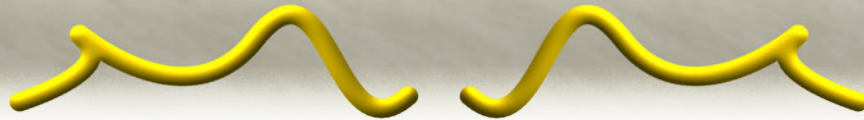
For their part, many of the nobles do take their responsibilities seriously. They could be callous, rude, and contemptuous of the lower class, but many do see it as a duty, even a noble duty, to safeguard the peasants and shepherd them through this world to the next. Although they enjoy the privileges of rank – magic, love, overwhelming passion, vengeance, lust – these dutiful nobles police their domain out of a sense of righteousness. These nobles view the Axemen's shadow war Jason of Thyre's treachery as evil. They have borne the burdens of lordship, endured isolation and sacrificed their personal ambitions, placing the needs of the throne and the safety of the majority above all else. Now Jason has betrayed them and put their charges at risk. They hate him for it.

## THE AXEMEN AND THE CLAW AS IT IS NOW

When Jason became King of Thyre. The heavens themselves blazed forth his ascension to the throne; a comet appeared on the night of his coronation. His twenty eight-year reign was a lightning flash compared to the reigns of other kings, who measure their rule in centuries. But it was a reign as fateful as the comet portended.

Jason worked constantly to reduce the power of the nobles' estate and to expand the scope of the commoners'. He finally went too far when he married a commoner, Siobhan of Arredenthe, and openly encouraged passion beyond the nobility. Predictably, Jason and Siobhan were caught in a swift coup and executed in the royal palace in Thyre. In the wake of that execution, a shadow war has begun. A group calling itself the Axemen is working to finish what Jason started, to bring down the institution of nobility in Thyre and, if they can, the rest of the Claw.

Some say that this shadow war is exactly what Jason intended, and that he and Siobhan were happy to die for it. Others say that Jason's fellow nobles used a Taking to remove Jason's love for Siobhan, and then they were able to kill him with finality. Still others say an assassin, perhaps the Fourth Sage or Trebb Quinlan



of Rithaign, killed Jason.

The Axemen's shadow war is the most volatile force acting in the Claw right now. The effects are being felt far beyond Thyre; nearly all of the kingdoms of the Old Claw are dealing with some form of Axemen activity. But there are other new ideas that could shape the years to come.

**Abolitionists.** These people believe that magic can and should be (must be!) abolished from civilization. The King and Inquisitor of Dynn is one such believer, and it must be said that his people are in full-throated fury behind him. Other, less violent, abolitionists are common among the pioneers of the Windhover valley.

**Rethuid Woods.** Named for the location of the scriptorium and university where the idea first became known, the Woods idea is that noble titles should be bought, fought over, or voted on rather than inherited. Some Woodsmen even believe that the nobility should be assigned by lot. None suggest that the king should be changed. Many kings, thanks to longevity magic, have ruled for so long that the idea of a change is a difficult one, even after Jason's beheading in Thyre.

**Deic Fleet.** This movement wants to send a fleet to Jakatta and conquer it for the High God. They contend that all activity should be focused on the Fleet, just as after the Turn all activity was focused on building the cathedrals.

**Romantics.** This movement has been the most secretive so far. There are many rumors as to its purpose, but it seems clear enough that it wants to win the power of love, fear, and other inspirations for the masses. It may be simply another name for the Axemen.

**Windhover pioneers.** In the last one hundred years, with the improvement of both engineering and magic, Thyre and Oryn-ja have been able to maintain the Free Road and keep it open, at least in the summer months. This in turn has led to settlements in the Windhover valley. The pioneers of this frontier-settlement movement share distaste for the Kingdoms and a desire to strike out independently, casting aside the idea that a man needs a king to protect him from wild magic.

## THE CEREMONY

The Ceremony is the one piece of magic that no King denies to his subjects. A Ceremony can be enacted even by creatures who are not spellbound, and it brings minor magical benefits - or detriments.

Each region's Ceremony is different. In Marnh, people drop stones in water and observe the ripples. In the Grenmarch, you plunge your hand into knotholes in a log. Some knotholes contain only sawdust, others pearls, and still others are crawling with lethal slake beetles. You cannot know what your hand will meet until it is too late.

At least two people participate in a ceremony. The participants take turns generating a random event - drawing a card, throwing a stone into a pool, sipping from one of a hundred shot glasses - and then roleplaying a response to the event. If you threw a stone into a pool and the ripples formed a dragon, for example, you could warn your fellow celebrants that the dragon symbolizes the brigand lord in the western counties. If the stone suspends itself on the water before sinking slowly, you might advise your conversation partner to be careful, like the stone, to settle into matters rather than plunge.

No event can come up twice in a Ceremony. If you are using dice instead of cards, re-roll any repeats. The celebrant can choose to take his result at any time, or he can pass over the current omen. As soon as one participant takes an omen, however, the other participant must accept the next omen that he draws.

Some ceremonies are harsh, with little chance of a positive benefit. Yet they survive. Their people are proud of them, see them as a test of honor, and use them as a way to measure another man's willingness to sacrifice himself.

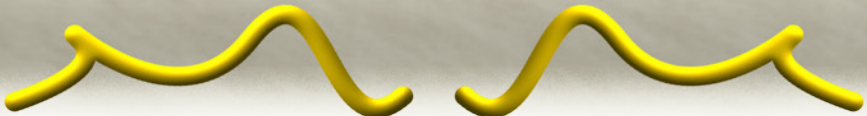
No matter the results, a man cannot participate in a ceremony more than twice per season.





# THE SPELLBOUND KINGDOMS





In the descriptions that follow, "Spellbound density" refers to the number of spellbound creatures likely in the region when a high spell is cast.

## MARNH

**King:** Ephraim IV, House Ipres

**Doom:** 4 (5 in Queensport, 12 in Dresgilioch)

**Capital:** Dresgilioch

**Economy:** Average, with strong sea (all sea-related objects, including troops such as sailors, are obtainable at one wealth level lower than usual)

**Spellbound density:** 3 countryside, 5 town, 7-20 city.

**Culture:** Royal: Anyone whose childhood is spent in Marnh gains 2 skill points to be spent on a sea-related skill.

Royal: All naval organizations of Marnh increase their force score by 2.

Queensport: Anyone who does not have at least one History relating to the sea or to the University cannot use Mood for History or skill rolls.

**Military:** There are 6 duchies with one WL 17 army and one WL 19 navy each. There are also two royal navies, each WL 20.

**Symbol:** Cutlass and crozier crossed over sea waves

**Ceremony:** Stones in the Sea

**Organizations of note:** House Ipres - noble house - F 14, S 8, A 11, E 6, scope 14.

House Leir - noble house, ancient allies of Ipres - F 6, S 13, A 10, E 9, scope 9.

Drum Tide Argosy - seafaring trading company - F 7, S 10, A 6, E 12, scope 10.

Angel Scream - upstart thieves guild - F 2, S 8, A 4, E 4, scope 3.

Vine and Wave Expeditionary Force - kingsmen secret police - F 8, S 8, A 7, E 7, scope 7.

Jungles and seas define Marnh. It is one of the great powers of the world, along with Azenahal, Akra, and perhaps Thyre. Its strengths are its naval power, its sea-trading network, its mastery of the Dramba and Elemental Maelstrom magic schools, and its University. The University at Queensport is rivalled only by that of Thyre.

Geographically, Marnh is dominated the the

twin rivers, the Diamond and the Mantis, and its long coastline. The rivers flow southward through temperate forest highlands giving way to tropical jungle lowlands.

*Surveillance.* King Ephraim brooks no challenge or pretense of freedom on the part of the peasantry.

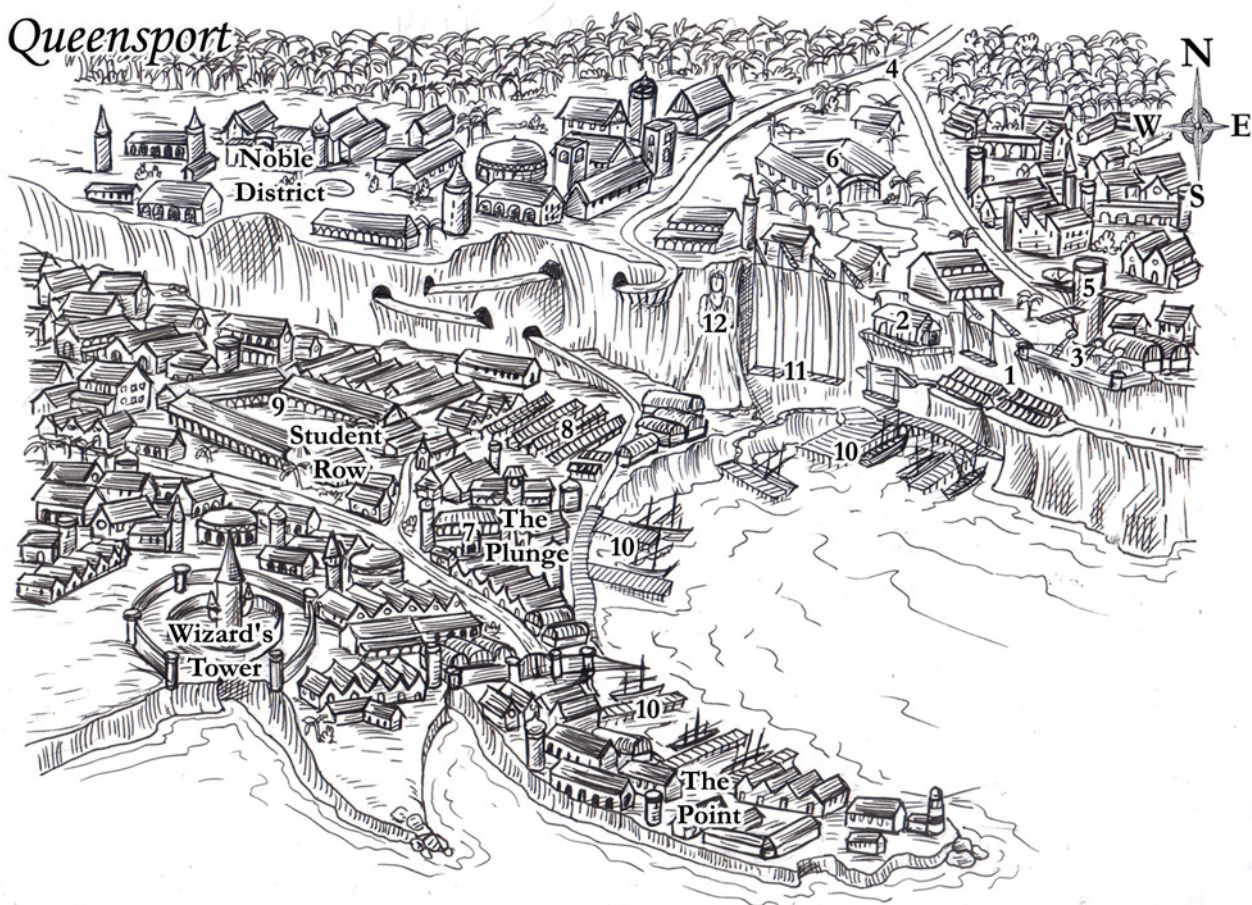
In the jungle-clearings where the stupa and stone towers rise, or in the low coastal villages where fisheries and dock houses sprawl, the one constant of life is the lottery. Conducted by House Ipres, the lotteries inspire a fear known as far as Dynn.

In a Marnh lottery, all of the commoners gather in the village or town center. Sometimes a local baron, sometimes a bishop, and sometimes a peasant honored as the Peasant King masters the ceremony. The details vary: the pick could be a true lottery, by tiles drawn from a box. Other times, the master of the ceremony simply chooses someone. The "winner" of the lottery is usually a man or woman with a family, as this is considered to have the benefit of instructing everyone in the family.

The lottery winners' first prize is relocation. The kingsmen explain that there are camps and villages maintained in the northern forests and western jungles. In these villages, the lottery winners serve the king merely by enjoying themselves, drinking the king's wine and eating his venison. While the winners are so doing, the king's wizards work day and night in the villages, examining every memory the winners ever have had. The wizards search the winners' minds for evidence of betrayal or free thinking, not just in the winner, but in anything that he may have seen in all his years back in his home village. Lovers have no choice but to betray themselves and their lover; engineers cannot help but give up their plans. Of course, if the winners have nothing to hide, there is nothing at all painful about the memory-search process. The kingsmen are very clear on that point when explaining the process to the commoners.

Most winners - called "explorers" by the kingsmen - never return home. Ostensibly this is because of a fear of reprisal. Once in a while, a few explorers do return home, but whether these are the same people or changelings is fiercely, but extremely secretively, debated.

## Queensport



1 Inch = 1000 ft

### Key

- |                               |                             |                                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Cliff Market               | 5. Zeppelin Docking Tower   | 9. The University of Queensport |
| 2. The Harbormaster's Balcony | 6. Palace                   | 10. Docks                       |
| 3. The Battlement             | 7. The Shadows and Sparrows | 11. Gondola Lift                |
| 4. The King's Highway         | 8. Fish Market              | 12. Statue of Queen             |

In addition to the lottery and the terror it inspires, House Ipres and the other noble houses maintain the usual network of kingsmen, informants, and diviner wizards. Dramba houngan using Switch Bodies, Loa Walk, Magic Jar, and Transposition are particularly effective.

*University at Queensport.* Formal education is not as strictly enforced as it is in most of the rest of the west. Some say King Ephraim doesn't educate the youth because he relishes punishing the adults for transgressions they never knew were wrong.

Perhaps ironically, the non-compulsory nature of early education has led to the development of the best academic university in the Claw. While Thyre challenges in aeronautical and submersible engineer-

ing, and Azenahal is a rival in alchemical study, the University at Queensport is the equal of all and mastered by none. The university libraries and archives are a hive of intrigue. More bodies turn up in the University than anywhere else, as noble houses and magic orders employ agents to live here year-round and plumb the halls' secrets. The Museum of St. Jhess' Rock dazzles paying visitors with its selection of treasures from every part of the known world (entrance is only open to patrons at wealth level 3 or higher).

*The Shadows and Sparrows.* This is a theater, tavern, and night club. The Shadows are the mirages and illusions created by spellsmiths to entertain. The Sparrows are the typically female singers that the tavern is famous for. On any given night, patrons might





find a play involving a smuggler trying to smuggle his bride out of Dynn; hear a vocal recital of the classic Azenahal elegies; or join in dancing to the violins, roundly acknowledged to be superior to those of Rithaign.

The proprietor is Buckminster Silk, a nine-blood standing well over six feet tall and built like an inverted Jakattan ziggurat. Despite his imposing physique, Buck is amiable and friendly to student and kingsman alike. There are rumors that he is an abolitionist, but those may be wishful thinking among the increasingly wild students.

The Shadows and Sparrows only lets in people at wealth level 3 and above. Bribes or an argument is the only way in otherwise!

*Grace Shalloch's Angel Scream.* The Angel Scream is a thieves guild in Dresgilioch. It is fairly new, and not an especially powerful organization (scope 7, efficiency 4, F 3, A 4, S 6). It is notable for two reasons. One, Grace Shalloch is the daughter of the Queen, Ephraim's wife Marta. She is not Ephraim's daughter, however, and Ephraim knows this. The public does not and believes Grace to be Ephraim's daughter. Grace Shalloch is, to all but a

few eyes, a dutiful crown princess, set to take over the crown. In private, she is a desperate, tough, but very scared young woman. Ephraim's younger son, with Marta, is named Antonin. Grace is sure that he and his father are scheming to remove her. Never one to let matters fall to chance, and also never one to turn down a bit of the wild side, Grace has started the Angel Scream. Its primary goal is to keep her alive, by any means necessary. Its secondary goal is to discover who her father is.

*Ceremony.* The ceremony in Marnh is called Stones in the Sea. Celebrants take turns dropping stones into water and observing the ripples.

*Adventure seeds.* One: The Museum at St. Jhess's Rock has had a break-in. The thief took an amulet worn by the first Queen of Marnh and Queensport, Helen Rilokithera, called Helen the Grey-Eyed. The amulet is not spellbound, but it does have an inscription about her great grand-daughter, the current queen. There is panic in the capital about just what it might say, especially given the situation with Grace Shalloch. The Angel Scream contacts the PCs and enlists their aid, desperate to recover the amulet before any of the more powerful factions can.

## STONES IN THE SEA CEREMONY

CARD (NO ACE)	DIE ROLL	CEREMONY OMEN	INTERPRETATION
J	1	The stone combusts like a meteor and vaporizes in mid-air.	Your fate is burning. Your Heart score is halved for the next week.
2	2	The stone rests on top of the water for three heartbeats before sinking slowly.	You fail every Quickness roll for the next day unless you use an Inspiration or Mood.
3	3	The stone is snatched mid-air by a jumping fish.	Your highest Quality item falls into the possession of a stranger.
4-6	4-6	Ripples form in the shape of a crown.	You lose one point from an Inspiration.
7-10	7-10	Ripples form the shape of a ship.	Your next journey will be safe.
Q	11	Ripples form the shape of a dragon.	The next time you use an Inspiration, your Heart die explodes twice rather than once.
K	12	Water shoots up. Bobbing atop the fountain is your stone, bearing indecipherable writing.	Look at your stone the next time you have a dilemma. With 90% reliability, the stone has written on it the answer to the dilemma. The writing fades away after that, never to return.



Another one: Dennis Hage, a lottery winner in Dresgilioch, panicked and fled after he was chosen. The kingsmen have tracked this reluctant explorer to the PCs' location and decided that the PCs will do. If they don't find Hage, the PCs are the new winners of the lottery. Led by Jaspar Kreech, a master of Hearts and Language of Stars, the kingsmen kick back and drink pineapple ale on a sun-drenched porch while the PCs sweat, trying to find the true lottery winner.

*Local flavor at the table.* If your game is set in Marnh, you want it to feel like it's in Marnh. First, the nautical theme is everywhere. The Diamond and Mantis rivers dominate the interior of the kingdom, and the sea dominates the south. To get this across to your characters, perhaps make all the NPCs former sailors or shipwrights or fishermen, half of them with hookhands, peglegs, and brightly colored cane pants. Every meal should be seafood, and the smell of the air - freshwater or saltwater - should tell the PC if he's near a river or near the coast.

The language is called Marnhate and spoken with a brogue. Local jargon includes "spellropes" for spellstalks, "haul" and "hoist" for any type of push or pull or carry, and one's "jib" for anything about a person: "Got a guano volcano in his jib, that one does"; "I

don't trust him, he's got a fishy jib"; "Now look at her, there's a jib I'd ride from here to East Fire."

## AKRA

**King:** Lucius (I), House Anfield

**Doom:** 5 (3 in Rithaign, 6 in East Fire, 9 in Hessek)

**Capital:** Hessek

**Economy:** In the East, strong textile and smithing (-1 wealth level to fashion and armor, though not weapons due to various kingsmen machinations and regulations). In the West, poor (+1 wealth level to all items).

**Spellbound density:** 4 countryside, 6 town, 7-15 city.

**Culture:** Royal: Beauty is fleeting, shallow, cheap, and hateful. Anyone with an Inspiration valuing beauty or art has his maximum Mood lowered by 1 while in the kingdom.

Royal: Beauty, especially in art, is the highest, most noble pursuit possible in this life. Anyone who does not have a skill valuing beauty or art has his Mood lowered by 1 while in the kingdom.

(Yes, the two royal culture lines are self-contradictory. Lucius has intentionally established a culture that drives people to practice skills in which they find no Inspiration, probably because he is mad, sadistic, or both.

Rithaign: Rithites love adventure. Anyone who has completed what can be considered "an adventure" boosts all existing positive reputations by 1 while in the city.

**Military:** There are eight duchies, five of which field a WL 19 army and a WL 16 navy. There is also a royal army and navy, each WL 20. The remaining three duchies in the wesetern hinterlands are impoverished and field WL 10 armies.

**Symbol:** Fragments of a stained glass rose

**Ceremony:** Petals and wine

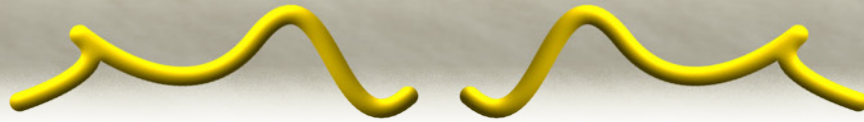
**Organizations of note:** House Anfield – ruling noble house - F 16, S 9, A 14, E 6, scope 16.

House Tumentant, the queen's noble house in Rithaign, favored by house Anfield for a millenia - F 14, S 11, A 10, E 9, scope 14.

The Dryght - arcane order used as secret police - F 7, S 13, A 18, E 8, scope 12.

Rithaign Factors, Insurers, and Beggars - thieves guild - F 6, S 14, A 9, scope 10.





Cutters Guild - thieves guild - F 8, S 11, A 6, scope 7.

Orchids of Hessek - trading company - F 8, S 6, A 7, E 11, scope 12.

Akra is one of the most powerful kingdoms in the Claw. Only Marnh, Azenahal, and perhaps Thyre rival it. Lucius I has ruled with an army of kingsmen and the Dryght, his school of wizards, since the Age of Cartonnage. For the last five hundred years, he has been sealed in an ornate box pulsing with the spells that sustain him. The box is a wicked sieve, trapping life but straining out all vigor. Lucius speaks through a gilded grating in a hoarse whisper and cannot, most think, ever again leave his hermitage. The box, bejeweled and elaborately re-decorated on the occasion of the new year, recalls the Age of Cartonnage, especially when Lucius, inside, levitates across his throne room to blast a petitioner into smoking black paste.

Physically and geographically, the kingdom

has many blessings. The deep harbor in Rithaign on the most important body of water in the word; an easily defended capital atop a tepui; the Harvest road and the Grand Hilt Bay for trade with the north; the Two Kings' Road for trade with Marnh to the south; and badlands and forests in the west and south that conceal entire villages that are little more than experimental laboratories for the Dryght.

*Surveillance.* Akra has a two-tiered surveillance organization. The first tier is overt. Actively so, it attempts to be one of the most obvious displays of royal power in the Claw. Uniformed kingsmen march regular routes along city streets and all along country roads. Zeppelins bristling with archers patrol the city skies. Dryght Listeners to the Language of Stars make a spectacle of themselves in villages, riding in and casting Seek Spellbound in the village square.

The second tier is covert. It consists of rogues and wizards specializing in Battlecraft and Language of Stars. These people go to great lengths to remain





undetected, and some may go for years undercover before taking any action on behalf of the Dryght or the king.

*The Dryght.* Wizards from the king's personal school constantly pry into the minds of randomly abducted peasants to intimidate, enthrall, or torture them. Often the wizards are seeking no particular information, but they are happy to act on anything incriminating. Dream projectors have been very helpful in the Dryght's interrogations.

The archmage of the order is Isabella Raixe. She sets a cruel standard of behavior for the order.

Many Dryght work covertly, but many also work openly. These obvious Dryght wizards and witches take a haughty pride in flaunting their identity and status while dressed in gold robes, usually with intricate headdresses that trail off down the back into strings of charms.

*School and family.* Family life in Akra revolves around work. Education is compulsory for children until the age of twelve, though many try to escape it either because they need to help at home or because their families cannot bear to see the love and hope beaten out of them.

That is the goal of the schools: to train the students in restraint, to teach them the dangers of magic and love. Whippings, holiday mutilations, and perhaps one mortality per term, often at the hands of the kingsmen or the Dryght, are normal in an Akran school.

*Beauty.* Akrans fancy themselves the arbiters of beauty for the entire Claw, yet it is considered silly, wrong, and sometimes downright evil to actually feel inspired by Beauty. How can one find meaning in beauty, when there is so much misery in the world?

Yet the galleris, most underground, do great business, and the noble whose house is not filled with beautiful objects is considered, at best, a war ape who has learned to not make messes in the house.

*Fashion.* The fashion of Akra, and especially Rithaigh, is elaborate. Tri-corner hats, perukes, velvet brocade breeches with ruffled tails borne up by butlers, manticore wing-bone corsets and basques as outerwear, and satin gowns with a twenty-five foot circumference (and what may seem an equal measure of décolletage) are the norm. Pineapple snuff from Queensport and sun plate from Jakatta are also on

trend (1 higher quality than normal for all these items while the trend lasts).

*Guide to Rithaigh.* Rithaigh makes an excellent starter city. The king's attention is constantly drawn to East Fire, that eternal bauble in Akran-Nahalite conflicts. The Axemen's uprising has only further distracted the king. Rithaigh is more free than it has been in a millenia.

Mechanically, all this has helped put Rithaigh's Doom at 3, which is quite conducive to a budding adventuring career.

Rithaigh has approximately 100,000 people, compressed to a hideous density within the city walls. The ports and gates are constantly busy, but the harbor chain, river chain, and gate portcullises come down at dusk every evening. The city entrances open again at dawn. Only characters of Wealth Level 2 or higher may enter the city; others must pay a 100 gold "good faith deposit" that is nearly impossible to ever recover (Charisma or Efficiency vs. Doom + 5). To bring weapons or armor into the city, a character must be Wealth Level 5 or higher. Base commoners are simply not allowed that privilege, although they can be sponsored by anyone with a sufficiently high Wealth Level (5, as above).

1. Old City walls. These are ten to twenty feet thick at the base. They mark the old boundaries of the city, at a time just before the Turn. Now, the Dryght use them as a means to patrol through the city without mingling with the peasants. Only a Dryght wizard or his acolyte may enter the walls, on pain of death. Consequently, the exact nature of the interior of the old city walls remains a mystery.

2. New City walls. The New City walls are looped for cannon and ballista. Unlike the old city walls, they are patrolled by the watch, not the Dryght. Consequently they are far more porous, and rumors abound of entire communities of street people living in the walls, especially near the Meander.

3. River chain. A vessel trying to sail across the river chain is stopped and takes a d20 attack for 3 quality damage. The chain itself is defense 12 and quality 14. Breaking the chain in a siege is very difficult; breaking the humans that control it is probably a much easier alternative. The watch can raise the chain to bar the river in four rounds; they can drop it

# City of Rithaign



1 Inch = 1000 ft

## Key

- |                      |                       |                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. River Gate        | 6. Docks Quarter      | 11. Unicorn Downs |
| 2. Foreign Quarter   | 7. Hearth Quarter     | 12. The Meander   |
| 3. Low Market        | 8. Odren Square       | 13. Cemetery      |
| 4. Rithaign Bridge   | 9. Palace of Talisare | 14. Oparth's End  |
| 5. Merchants Quarter | 10. Winter Hill       |                   |





in two.

4. River gate. The watch contingent stationed at this gate is captained by Gareth Mintar (Warrior 5/ Noble 3). Gareth hates trolls and is proud of it; he doesn't trust anything that can heal a bullet wound faster than he can eat his porridge. He also suspects that anyone entering the gate is a troll in disguise, and often threatens to cut off thumbs to test his theory. His weakness is war stories. Anyone who can tell him a stirring war story (increase the social attack's die size by two if the story's villains are trolls) can ask almost any favor of Gareth.

5. Bridge of Rithaign. The bridge is the heart of the city. There is little in the Claw that cannot be found here: pineapples and mangoes from Queensport, sun plate from Zocith, spice from Surcyre, silk and steel from Oryn-ja.

The Bat Bar is a tavern that hangs underneath the bridge, with glass floors to observe the boats that pass underneath. The Bat is dark and sooty because of the fallout from the traffic above, but it attracts a loyal following. The owner goes by Gretchen (Rogue 3/Engineer 1); she is a first-generation Seradynn who

remembers nothing before she woke up in the harbor of far Oryn-ja. Every year on St. Jhess's Day, she cuts off her antlers and gives them to whoever can stand on the Bat's lower porch rail and down the most shots of Dynn nightgut without falling off into the river.

6. Ferries. Some days, according to the Duke's whims, there is a toll to cross the bridge. Those that don't wish to pay it can always take the ferries across. Larger ferries that also dock here sail across the hilt to East Fire, taking a day or more to make the journey into the Burning Bauble's harbor.

7. Docks. The harbormaster of Rithaign is the Duke's nephew, Marius Nentarsce (Noble 8, werelord (rat)). Though Duke Raoul has no idea, Marius is sympathetic in part to the Axemen (mostly the part where he makes heaps of gold by allowing their smuggling). Thus the Rithaign port is open to all manner of black market activity, amplifying the element of subversion in a city that already passes beneath the king's eye.

8. Odren Square. The city slopes uphill from the bridge to Odren Square, gaining perhaps 500 feet along the Processional, which continues over the summit at Odren Square and then down to the South





Gate. Odren Square is the second busiest section of the city after the Bridge. It is the legal and noble mind of the city, whose regulars look down, literally, upon the business conducted at the Bridge. There are parks and fountains here, most dedicated to generals who have died fighting in East Fire. Odren Square is also the site of the summer Academy violin concerts.

9. Grey Manor. Grey Manor is a chateau in the heart of the very fashionable Winter Hill neighborhood. It is also a safe house for the Cutters guild. The Cutters are one of two major thieves guilds operating in Rithaign. The Cutters and the Merchants Below (as the shadow arm of the Rithaign Factors, Insurers, and Beggars Guild is known) signed a treaty in 1585. The Cutters took everything west of the Processional, and the Merchants Below took everything to the east. Carved into the back of the violin of each guild boss, that agreement expires this year. The world below in Rithaign is on edge. The Axemen's shadow war complicates matters, and everyone has a different opinion about what should happen when guild bosses Ginny "Wheellock" Siddal (Rogue 12/Witch 4) of the Mer-

chants and Treb Quinlan (Assassin 14) of the Cutters meet.

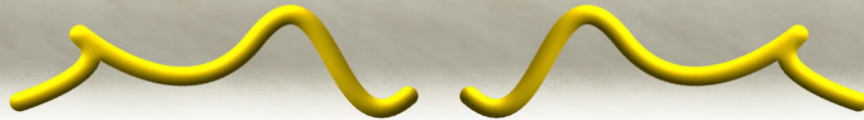
10. River chain house. This is the guardhouse that controls access to the river chain. There are typically a dozen watchmen here at any time, as they also sleep here and use it as a base for their patrols. There is a roughly 50% chance of encountering a Dryght wizard here also.

11. Mills. The mills of Rithaign are not grain mills, although they could be converted to that purpose (and probably have been used as such at times in the past). Instead, they are used to power the bellows, gears, and pulley systems of the various engineering laboratories set up along the river.

12. Dryght tower. The Dryght use this tower for two purposes. First, to survey the southern half of the city and monitor the populace. There are zeppelin docks near the top of the tower, and airships heavy with crossbowmen and wizards often depart to drift over the city and watch for trouble. On holidays, there are as many as ten zeppelins floating in and out of the tower's docks. Second, the Dryght use the tower

## PETALS AND WINE CEREMONY

CARD (NO ACE)	DIE ROLL	OMEN	INTERPRETATION
J	1	An eyeball surfaces in the wine.	A noble has fixed his eye on you and developed a hatred.
2	2	The rose petals turn the wine into water.	Your passions fail you. Instead of the maximizing the result, using Mood on a die roll gives you a result of 4. This lasts for two nights.
3	3	Your wine glass cracks and begins to drip.	You take 2 Strength and Reason damage.
4-6	4-6	Rose petals crumble to dust.	You lose one Wealth level.
7-10	7-10	A bee lands on the rose.	You recover 3 Mood (this has no effect if you are at full Mood).
Q	11	Wine catches fire. A person or place is visible in the flames.	You learn one secret about a rival. You choose the topic (arcane, martial, shadow, social) but not the specific secret.
K	12	Wine freezes, then shatters. In each frozen shard is a different view of a rose.	You can re-write your Inspirations completely, spending up to your full normal Heart value on them, as at character creation.



to elevate themselves away from the masses in order to reduce the number of spellbound that may interfere with their spells. As much as they would like to claim otherwise, there are many rogue spellbound in Rithaighn.

13. King's Mausoleum. This was the site of the worst undead rising since the Age of Cartonnage swarms in Muda-Tarsk. There is a former king of Valte Riel buried in a mausoleum here, and many suspect that is what led to the magic disaster. In 1499, zombies, skeletons, and ghouls climbed up out of their graves at dawn. Some of the reanimated were corpses hundreds of years old. How they escaped decay is only one more of the mysteries of the rising. Following the path of least resistance, the undead flowed downhill to the docks, spilled out into the harbor, and crossed over into the Old City as they pursued fleeing sailors and stevedores. Their hunger was insatiable, and over the course of the morning they were drawn uphill as the human population withdrew. The undead were met by a line of watchmen and Dryght wizards halfway up the hill to Odren Square. The wizards burned the undead to the ground, but not without some losses. A statue stands at the edge of the Odren Square to commemorate the battle. Various Low God cults have been trying to duplicate the reanimation ever since.

14-17. These gates are similar to the river gate, although they are not staffed by anyone as colorful as Sergeant Mintar. The watch chiefs are, in order of keyed location on the map, Hans Renton (Noble 3), Aubrey Gofirth (Noble 5/Engineer 3), Estrellita Vaya Requistes de Contrador (Noble 6/Rog 4), and Stephen Rutt (Rog 5).

*Ceremony.* The ceremony in Akra is called petals and wine. The celebrants take turns pulling a petal from a rose, toasting the destruction of beauty, and sipping the wine.

*Adventure seeds.* A Dryght wizard wants to defect. He asks the PCs to escort him from the Dryght tower to the ferries under the City Bridge. At midnight of the appointed night, the PCs meet the wizard at the tower and set off a grand chase through the city, sprinting through closed markets, skulking through

open taverns, and hitching a ride on a stay-line dangling from a zeppelin.

Another one: The two thieves guilds in the city want to preserve the peace, but neither wants to lose face. They hire the PCs to build up a straw man enemy - the fabled Shadow Golem long sought by the Dryght - for the guilds to unite against and fight. But when the straw man turns out to be real, and the Dryght show up to claim the Shadow Golem spell, the PCs are caught between three guilds and a mad golem.

*Local flavor at the table.* To let your players know that the game is in Akra, emphasize fashion, the constant smell of pineapple snuff, the haze of wig powder when they enter an upper class establishment, and the many art galleries in the street. Perhaps an artist develops a fixation on a PC, and he constantly sketches her whether she consents to be his model or not. Perhaps a noble fixates on a PC, and demands that she model for him. All the food in Rithaighn is covered in sauce, but the sauces are delicious.

The language is Akran, and it is spoken with nasal tones and a lot of scornful sniffs. Jargon includes "bloody" and "trolly," meaning cheap, trivial, easily replaced. This last is a racist pejorative that has great currency at the moment, even among humans who have many friends who are trolls, and even among the trolls themselves.

## THYRE

**King:** None (formerly Jason II, House Rohn)

**Doom:** 4

**Capital:** Thyre

**Economy:** The economy is under siege from the shadow war. There is normally a strong engineering sector. (All items except engineering at +1 Wealth Level; engineering items at normal Wealth Level.)

**Spellbound density:** 2 countryside, 4 town, 5-10 city.

**Culture:** Royal: With the current unrest, trade is valued more than ever in Thyre. Any character with a trading History gains 1 extra Inspiration point, above his maximum, to be assigned by the player.

Because of the unrest, there is no second Royal

culture line.

Thyre: Jason's last effort still stands. Anyone who has an Inspiration involving freedom or love increases his Heart score by 1.

**Military:** There are four duchies with WL 16 armies, eight marches with WL 13 legions, and two Royal Air Forces of WL 19.

**Symbol:** Coins under a zeppelin

**Ceremony:** World sculpting

**Organizations of note:** Axemen - secret society - F 9, S 12, A 4, E 8, scope 10.

House Vorshannen - noble house, royalist - F 11, S 4, A 9, E 8, scope 8.

House Rohn - noble house, revolutionary - F 8, S 10, A 7, E 7, scope 9.

House Eckredda - noble house, royalist - F 9, S 5, A 8, E 5, scope 7.

Drangund Pit Company - trading company, Axemen allies - F 5, S 8, A 7, E 10, scope 9.

Free Road Amber Flag - trading company, Oryn-ja allies - F 8, S 4, A 8, E 10, scope 9.

The Collared - thieves guild growing in the wake of misery caused by the shadow war - F 6, S 8, A 4, E 6, scope 6.

North of the Rill flood plains, the icy peaks of the Waylorns rise like a diamond wall. Set like a basalt cameo against this perpetual snow-and-ice background is Thyre, the largest city of the north. Thyre and Dynn dominate the northern Claw just as Marnh, Akra, and Azenahal dominate the south.

Thyre has long prided itself on being at the forefront of engineering, alchemy, and trade. It should be no surprise then, that as the world teeters on the brink, Thyre was the first to go over the edge.

Thyre is burning. Jason, the king of only three decades, took it upon himself to war against the institution of the nobility. He and his young bride were executed for his troubles, but a secret society calling itself the Axemen has taken up his cause. They are most powerful here in the north, and they have effectively prevented any new king from taking power after Jason. Thyre is currently three intertwined but separate states: the commoners and trade companies in Low Town and the Ghosts district, the nobles and their loy-



alists in Low Town and High Town, and the Church, which has grounds and jealously enforces canon law in all three geographic districts. None of the three states trusts any other (although the Church and the nobles have a history of alliance), and each is prepared to shed more blood for its cause.

Traders still flock here, some despite the near-anarchy, some because of it. Nowhere in the Kingdoms are traders allowed more freedom, and thus nowhere do they generate more wealth. The University continues, too, and the shadow war stays largely away from it. All sides seem to value the knowledge of the University and the goods of the trading routes too highly to risk their destruction.

Geographically, Thyre is surrounded by obstacles: forbidding peaks to the north, and west savages in the Fyraj Forest to the east, and predatory kingdoms to the south trying to feast upon what they perceive as the corpse of a failed kingdom.

*Surveillance.* The Learning Halls of Thyre are set in caves in the Waylorns. Not to be confused with Thyre's University, the Learning Halls are mandatory schools for children 12 and under. The halls are cold places far from any cities or villages. Their distance and imposing locations are in large part intended to prevent escape. The Halls are the harshest, and arguably most effective, schools in the Claw. The Thyram nobles' philosophy is that a properly trained youth



# City of Thyre



## Key

1. The Thyrian Mines
2. The Shivering Cub
3. Royal Zeppelin Hangar
4. Palace of the Aurora
5. The Old Bastion

1 Inch = 500 feet





needs little monitoring as an adult. Even under Jason, the schools continued. Most observers felt that the young King did, ultimately, recognize the need for social order to prevent magic disasters and emotional disturbances, and he chose to mold children rather than torture adults. That the molding sometimes broke the clay was unfortunate but unavoidable.

The professors of Thyre are as frigid and uncaring as their climate. They encourage cliques and exclusion to study social engineering among populations, and they use fear and threats as behavior modification tools. One example is to make an example. The professors and collaborating students choose one girl and tell her that she is deformed, for years on end. Other students stand up and leave when the chosen girl sits down near them. Students are forbidden to touch the chosen girl and are told to run screaming for water if they accidentally brush against her. The chosen girl is laughed at day after day and told by everyone in the community how horrible she is. Then an agent of the professors, posing as a new student, befriends the outcast girl. After years of isolation, the outcast girl has a friend. The friend offers the girl a way out: magic. Of course the instant that the girl accepts and uses the spell her friend has given her, the spell turns horribly wrong. Warts and bleeding pustules burst on the girl's face, and her hair falls out in shanks. The professors then put the victim in pillories or a standing carousel for all the other students to taunt and mock. After that, the girl is usually a broken shell.

Some nobles collect these girls, but most are paraded around towns for a season, as the professors travel and lecture. In some demesnes, the victims are used as scapegoats for natural magical disasters or anything else the local noble is currently being held accountable for.

Few recover. There are other similar tactics used in Thyran schools, all in the name of teaching children the dangers of magic and powerful emotions. Budding romances are common targets. First encouraged and then sabotaged by professors, these mutilated relationships leave the young men and women with guilt, self-loathing, and the scorn of peers for having dared to love. Other kids are told that they have allergies and can only eat certain foods. Magi-

cally induced wretching and sickness are used to drive home the point. Then the safe foods just happen to be struck by famine and disappear from the pantry. When the kids believing themselves to be allergic do anything, including use magic, to find food that they can safely eat, the professors seize them and flay them publicly.

Small wonder that more wolf children come from the hills of the north than anywhere else. Small wonder that the Axemen's first uprising is here.

Before that uprising, adults in Thyre were monitored by different noble houses. Each noble house was assigned an industry or a district and was responsible for the people therein. There was no secret police force in Thyre as there is in nearly every other kingdom in the Claw. Instead, a paternalistic noble house watched every citizen assigned to it. Some noble houses were more draconian than others.

Currently, the noble houses are all at war with the Axemen. It is a war fought in shadows, rising when the sun sets, and after a night's clashes the sun rises on bodies bleeding in the snowy streets and buildings smoldering in frigid air. This has only increased the houses' surveillance efforts. Most noble houses now have required "check ins" for their charges. The least trustworthy citizens are required to sleep in the noble house's stable under guard, and are only allowed out to Low Town or the mines during the day. This is a bit of closing the barn door after the horses have already left, however, as many of the nobles' charges have fled beyond their reach to the Ghosts in Silver district, and of those that have stayed in Low and High Town, many have fallen through the cracks due to forged death reports, lost records, or aristocratic incompetence.

The noble houses have been hard pressed to wage the shadow war and keep up with the policing. However, aid from the southern kingdoms is now arriving daily by zeppelin, and the outcome of the Axemen's uprising is anybody's guess.

*Ghosts in Silver.* This is largely Axemen territory now. The Ghosts is the mining district of Thyre. Built on a different mountainside than the city itself, it is reached by three gondolas, one running to High Town and two to Low Town. The name arises from



impurities in the many silver veins shooting through the deep Thyran mines; the miners call these impurities ghosts.

The Ghosts district was a rowdy and unfriendly place compared to cosmopolitan Lowtown. The miners and engineers who lived and worked here were a breed apart and considered themselves a bit superior to the folks on the "city mountain." Since the Axemen's war began, however, the Ghosts has turned into an armed camp with many large tents. Outsiders are welcomed if they support the cause of freedom. The Mayor is Strom Redskegg (Engineer 12), and most of the Ghosts' forces are provided by trading companies that have rallied to the cause (secretly, of course, not wanting to upset any of their southern aristocratic trading partners).

*The Shivering Cub.* The Cub is the most popular public house in the Ghosts district, and its second floor has become the home of the new Mayor's hastily constructed government.

The tenders, maids, cooks, and hostesses at

the Cub are exclusively women. The owner, Tandy Dressenson nee St. Miljean, is an islander who formerly lived in Rithaign and Steerk. She arrived in Thyre many years ago in a manner that she will not discuss. But now she is married to one of the best engineers ever to come up the gondola (Locke Dressenson), deliriously happy, and brags of her happiness in daily missives to her old friends in the south. As a result, there has been a stream of northward migration in answer to her news, and many marriages to grizzled miners have been the result. Tandy is bubbling over with pride at her matchmaking, and even in these times she is not above trying to make a match with a PC, or asking a PC to escort a girl from the south up to meet her pen-pal in the mines.

*Royal Zeppelin Hangar.* The Thyran University in High Town is, in engineering at least, the match of the University of Queensport to the south. As such, their zeppelin fleet is impressive (WL 20). It is housed here. Recently, zeppelins from the south dock here daily. They are carrying men and magic from the



south, meant to support the nobles in their war against the Axemen. Because of its importance, the hangar has been a frequent target of Axemen raids.

*Palace of the Aurora.* Despite House Vorshannen's best efforts - and those of the other noble houses with lesser claims on the throne - the Palace has been proof against all intrusion since Jason's execution. The rumor is that he cursed the place with a high spell, making it proof against nobility. But if any Axemen have been able to steal inside, they are keeping quiet about it. Howls and clanks resound from the mountain walls behind the castle at night, and the wind seems calmer around the palace than elsewhere. PCs would be rewarded well by any side in the war if they can find a way into the palace.

*The Old Bastion.* This is the stronghold of the Ghosts/Axemen faction in the Low City. There are numerous secret passageways burrowing deep into the mountain from the Old Bastion, including two that lead to different entry points to the Vrandenmark River before it emerges onto the surface. The commander of the Old Bastion is Lissa Danneskjold (Warrior 5/ Rogue 5). She reports directly to Strom Redskegg. They control only one of the two Low Town - Ghosts gondolas, and they are currently researching ways to protect it from the near nightly assaults. They would also like to damage or destroy the other two gondolas. If Lissa and Strom trust the PCs, they ask the heroes to do this.

*Ceremony.* The ceremony in Thyre is called World Sculpting. The celebrants take turns sculpting an ice or snow model of one object: the world, a sword, the Archbishop of Thyre.

*Adventure seeds.* It is more difficult to avoid adventure in Thyre than to find it. The PCs may be asked to guard a gondola, assault a gondola, smuggle letters through the districts, break into the Palace, rescue a child at school, lead a skirmish, defend a crossroads, steal a battle map, retrieve Jason's signet ring, or any of a thousand other things. Here are a couple of specific seeds.

The Griffon Rampant trading company wishes to remain publicly neutral in the Axemen-nobility dispute. They need their zeppelin back, however, and it was stuck in the royal hangar when the troubles began. Now it has been seized by House Vorshannen as state

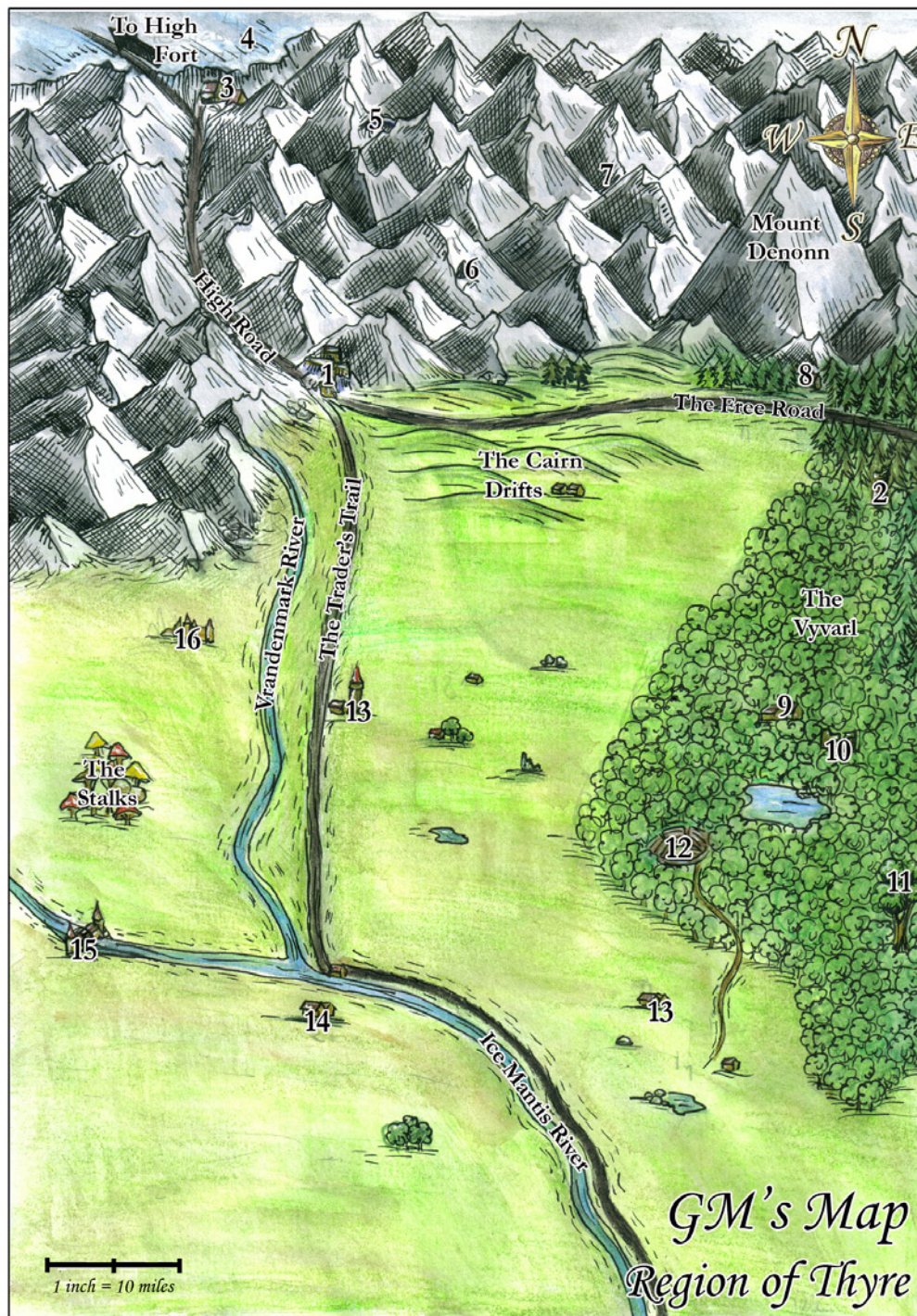


property for the duration of the war. The Griffon Rampant want the PCs to retrieve the zeppelin, and if they happen to deliver to the Ghosts some materiel that the company just happens to give to the PCs, so much the better.

Another: An old man named Jarvis Arbuthnot is convinced that the PCs are Axemen. This stops being a harmless joke when he hands them a map to "the biggest Axe of them all" and falls over, unconscious from the strain of tracking down his heroes.

*Local flavor at the table.* Emphasize the cold in Thyre. Impose Mood or other characteristic penalties for characters whose Wealth Level is so low that they cannot afford warm enough clothing. Build up the atmosphere of paranoia. NPCs should constantly be sizing up the PCs, trying to judge which of the three factions they support. Act out strange hand signals from the NPCs that may or may not be secret signs testing the PCs' membership in this or that society.





## Key

- |                            |                                |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. City of Thyre           | 9. Vyrholm                     |
| 2. Thoor Rahol             | 10. Arinth                     |
| 3. Village of Thistlehagen | 11. Wineleaf                   |
| 4. The Votenjarl Glacier   | 12. Arinth Garden Amphitheater |
| 5. Hail Bridge             | 13. Cougar Dell                |
| 6. The Knight's Wound      | 14. Earl's Crossing            |
| 7. Zeppelin Wreck          | 15. The Wizard's Dam           |
| 8. Red Frost               | 16. Arredenthe                 |





## WORLD SCULPTING CEREMONY

CARD (NO ACE)	DIE ROLL	OMEN	INTERPRETATION
J	1	Sculpture's eyes blink open.	An enemy learns your greatest Inspiration.
2	2	Sculpture spontaneously melts to a puddle.	At a random time (5% cumulative chance per day), your Histories melt away - are unusable - for one day. After they return, you are no longer affected by this omen.
3	3	Sculpture resembles a roc and a mammoth.	Your enemies feast on you. You grant your enemies +1 Mood at the start of every scene, though never to the same enemy more than once in a month.
4-6	4-6	Sculpture resembles a boy or girl.	Your memories are clouded. Reduce all skills to d4 for the next day.
7-10	7-10	Ice and snow in the sculpture turn hot but do not melt.	You ignore the first 5 points of cold damage from any source for the next three days.
Q	11	Chipped off ice regenerates.	You restore 4 Body (this has no effect if your Body is already at its maximum).
K	12	A vein of silver dust appears in the sculpture.	You know the direction, approximate distance to, and name of a vast treasure hoard.

## OTHER KINGDOMS

### Agremarck, the Sealed Kingdom

King: Last known to be John II, House Sentime  
Doom: 16?

The Sealed Kingdom has been so since before the Turn. King John walled off his realm from the world using a high spell, and no one can enter or exit.

Rumors persist, of course. Here is the rumor, or story, or history - no one knows if it is true - that is told around the campfires of the traders, when the day is done and sleep has not yet come.

"This is what happened in the Deep of 1504, when the summer lay slumped on the kingdoms like a dragon slain on a cave floor, and the wheat was dry in the field.

"There were four traders. A father, a mother, a son Josef who was old enough to know that he wanted more out of the summer but not old enough to know what, and a daughter Elaine, who was old enough to know that her brother was hurting but not old enough

to know why. As was the parents' custom when passing this way, they stopped near the Sealed Kingdom to teach their children fear.

"Nothing passes through these walls. No one knows who sealed the kingdom, or when it was sealed, or how. You have seen men impaled like street decorations in Azenahal. You have seen Queen Sophia erase her courtiers' memories of children, loves, youth and leave only pain. You have heard the screams of the sinful in Queensport, the roar of the dragons in Rithaign, and the chants of the witch-hunting mobs in night-cursed Dynn. But this place, this Sealed Kingdom, is the place that men avoid."

"They turned to leave. Josef was old enough to know why the kingdom must have been sealed. Kings are jealous. They do not allow interference with their magic. This one was more successful than most in isolating himself and his subjects. That was all. But Josef was not old enough to ignore it.

"He looked back.



"And saw a paper flutter over the edge of the wall.

"It was a scroll sheet that landed on daisies wilting in the heat. Josef turned his horse and was reading the message before his parents noticed his absence.

"What does it mean?" he asked when his family came to him.

"There was handwriting on the paper. It read, 'Please help me find spells. Sara Holshomb.'

"The mother caught her breath and looked away. The father shook his head. Elaine did not read yet, but she put her hand on her brother's arm and played with the creases in the leather. The only sound was the easy sweep of the wind on the dry fields.

"After some time, the father said, 'We have miles to go, yet.'

"And the family of traders moved on. This time, Josef did not turn back. He had learned fear.

"That is what happened in the Deep of 1604, when the summer lay slumped on the kingdoms like a dragon slain on a cave floor, and the sun blackened the daisies from the center outward."

### **The Holy Empire of Dynn**

King: Neiman Glabe, Holy Emperor of the Turn, House Glabe

Doom: 6

Spiked into the mountains like a head on a pike, Dynn glowers over its territory. Its walls are half iron, just like its heart. West to Muda-Tarsk run its lands, and south to the northern rides of decadent Azenahal.

The Empire is defined by the Inquisition and the Reach. The Inquisition is almost self-explanatory. The emperor and his fanatically loyal populace tolerate no magic at all. They believe that the High God so commanded them. Traders, fixers, nobles – none are welcome if they are spellbound or carrying any spellbound item. In fact, any spellbound travelers are seized at the gates and executed in the gatehouse. Bishops conduct posthumous trials, but since the next world is more important anyway, and since they are doing the High God's work, the Dynni are not concerned with innocent deaths at their gates.



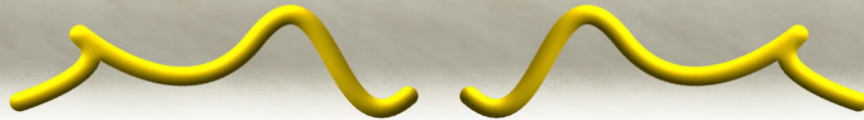
The Reach is the great dream of almost all Dynni, troll and human. The Reach is the great war that will bring the Claw's civilization across the mountains and the seas, to Jakatta, to the Fallen Isle, to the Descent and whatever may lie beyond. But not just any Claw civilization – the Dynni civilization. Such a Reach by the true Claw will bring all the people closer to the High God. The Deic Fleet, which has great support among the pious masses in other kingdoms, is the current focus of the Glabe house.

### **The Lordship of Azenahal**

King: Vulpin Muharram, Doge of House Muhar

Doom: 4 (6 in the Serai badlands)

Lush Azenahal is the unquestioned power in the second peninsula of the Old Claw. The Serai savages pay tribute from their desert to the south, and the scattered islands between the second and third peninsulas



are almost exclusively Nahalite colonies. But to the west and north, the Doge's efforts at expansion are stymied by mighty Akra and immovable Dynn.

The Doge, who would in the west be called king, is Vulpin Muharram. Vulpin is a hawkfaced man and a master of all known magic schools. His familiar, a dwarf bear named Xera, is hardly a dwarf. She is as fat as Vulpin is thin.

Nahalite society worships the High God in a different way than in the western peninsula. The services are more numerous but shorter. Three times per day, Nahalites are called upon to pray while hammering or rapping with the knuckles a semander. If they do not have a true semander with them, any nearby piece of wood suffices. The use of the semander calls the High God to the faithful. Nahalites recognize both the Cardinal in Valte Riel and the Archbishop of Azenahal as equal authorities and representatives of the High God.

There are a greater number of trolls here than in the west, and society tends to be more formal in some ways and more reckless in others. The formality includes more etiquette at elaborate dinners; ornate architecture of minarets and onion domes; labyrinthine networks and hierarchies of friends, superiors and inferiors; and an extremely thorough legal code that addresses topics not often seen in the West (how a husband treats his family, what time of day guildsmen may work, the price of licenses to make clothes with a hundred different dyes, and so on). The recklessness extends to narghiles, opium, and licentiousness to a degree that is virtually never seen outside of the canals and their vassal lands.

As a result of this, many consider Azenahal decadent and about to fall. Yet it survives, and its legions are as strong as its two great southern rivals, Akra and Marnh.

In general, you may think of Azenahal as an Indian (in a few ways Greek) analog to the Old Claw's generally European flavor. Language is different here: shri (male) and shrimati (female) are terms of respect, priests are prophets, spells are rites, wizards are vi-zi-ers, and fixers are guru or yogi.

### **Windhover Valley**

No government

Doom: 3

This fertile plain was almost completely unpopulated by humans and trolls up until the 1400s. Then, as Thyre and Oryn-ja began to maintain the Free Road, traders began to settle in the rich fields and rolling hills of the far north. The winters are not quite as harsh here as in Thyre to the west. Snows, avalanches, and spring floods are still a danger, to be sure, but the pioneers who have settled here find those hazards preferable to the constant surveillance in the south.

There are two current difficulties in the Valley. First, the rocs, chimerae, griffons, and manticores that fly out of the Waylorns are persistent predators. Occasionally people, but more often horses, cattle, and domesticated mammoth are their prey. There have been rumors that the chimera are led by a beast who is at least highly intelligent, with one troll head, one human head, and one snake head. The second difficulty with life in the valley is the influx of wizards. Set free from the chains of the south, these wizards have caused several disasters over the recent years. The common opinion is that something needs to be done, and bounties on free wizards have begun to be posted in general stores across the land.

### **The Doomholds**

Twenty-three kings

Dooms: varies (average 6)

They clutch the strongest who have the least. Such is the situation in the Doomholds. Though its kings have very small domains compared to the mighty plains realms, they hold fiercely to what they have.

There are twenty-three separate kingdoms in the stretch of steep, rounded hills west of the Rill and north of Avedine. Collectively called the Doomholds, these kingdoms are often too focused on internecine strife to commit any energy to external politics.





### **Avedine**

King: Saul VI, House Regolier

Doom: 5

Bitter rival with Dunlor to the East, Avedine has never reached the heights of power enjoyed by Marnh, Akra, or even Thyre. Nonetheless, it is a power in its own right, with several scope 15 or higher organizations. The most notable of these is the Crescent, an order of weremagic masters. The order's research into its strange school has brought their king much success raiding by moonlight across the Rill and into hated Dunlor. The zoos of Priete, the capital, are the most extensive in the world so that the Crescent masters can have the beasts for study. The most recent rumor from Priete, however, claims that two of the zoos' descent cats, augmented with witch-dusted claws, escaped. The cats' association with a troll wolf child, an indirect descendant of the Archbishop of Priete, further complicates the matter.

### **Dunlor**

King: Ramond of the Reach, House Glabe

Doom: 6

Through intricacies of marriage, the Dynn Emperor's cousin is now the King of Dunlor. Few in the Kingdoms know what to make of this, but the number of caravels sailing across the Hilt has certainly increased. For now, it seems that the two relatives are cooperating. Ramond's epithet, insisted by him upon

the occasion of his coronation three decades ago, seems to suggest that he supports the grand ambition of Dynn. In return, Dynn has most likely promised funds for a war against hated Avedine.

### **Opana**

Queen: Sophia I, House Desquin

Doom: 6

Opana has long been a queendom. Sophia has been on her throne almost as long as Lucius in Hessek. In that time, she has taken two husbands, who were awarded the title Prince rather than King. Theresa favors females : most of the marches and baronies are vested in Marchionesses and Baronesses.

Many of these noble ladies own vast vineyards, as Opana has been a wine-producing region for centuries. Its vintages are shipped as far as Oryn-ja. The Amber King has visited Opana, as recently as the year 1588, and there are still vast unoccupied apartments in the palace waiting for his return.

### **Oryn-ja**

King: Asenkut Ragul, the August King in Amber

Doom: 5

Oryn-ja is a culture distinct from the west. The Low Gods are still worshipped here, although they are worshipped in a manner far different from the mystery cults in Rithaign or Dresgilioch. Most homes have a shrine in a corner of one room or another, and in this shrine one or two Low Gods are venerated. Because the Low Gods actually walk the Earth, it is possible for a Low God to visit his shrine and bless the venerator.

Unfortunately, there is room for fraud because many Low Gods, in legends, take on the guise of old, mendicant beggars. When a wizened, smiling old man appears at the door claiming to be the Lord of Myrrh, is he telling the truth? It is unthinkable to question a God. Consequently, the old man or woman is welcomed in and feted. As a result of this social institution, there are many Low Gods walking the streets and fields of Oryn-ja, though how many, if any, of these are actually Low Gods is nearly impossible to determine.

Oryn-ja has maintained the Free Road with





Thyre, and to a lesser extent Syrbizond, for almost a century now. The wealth that free trade has brought to the city has inspired architecture, fashion, and music, although it is all different from anything in the west. Single-string instruments called neko-chi, fifteen feet long, are played by three musicians dancing and strumming the string in many places simultaneously. A neko-chi show is a fascinating spectacle, often performed under the stupa-like towers constructed of redwood and basalt.

The panjandrums of Oryn-ja have long sold dispensations for spells. This practice is unthinkable in the west, but it allows a man to buy the right to cast or carry a single spell. A dispensation is usually a WL 5 or higher item.

### **Kitaarsa**

King: Goldry Daha

Doom: 7

The Kitaarsans are born on the backs of horses, or so the legend goes. This is a riding culture, whose capital is a vast circular city with low walls and plenty of room for both horses and men.

The King is the younger brother of the August King in Amber. Although technically sovereign, Kitaarsa is becoming more and more a vassal of Oryn-ja. The riders are not enamored of that idea, but thus far Oryn-ja has done nothing to antagonize them outright. Livestock are collected as tax in the spring, but no more than they were previously, and the border to the east has grown increasingly peaceful. Oryn-ja has not required Daha to swear fealty yet, but many believe that time cannot be far away.

## BEYOND THE CLAW

No other place has achieved a civilization to match the Claw. Savage villages of wattle and daub dot the windy bluffs west of Opana and Marnh. They are few and far between, the people subsisting on thin fish and mountain game, and often between the call of one trade ship and the next, the village has disappeared.

Across the Waylorn mountains to the North lies the Descent. The Descent is one of the deepest puzzles in the Kingdoms. Its lure may be judged by the number of scholars who have abandoned the many present troubles of the Kingdoms to ponder the distant Descent. For it is there, across the vast Waylorns and the Ocean-in-the-Mountains, called Kvalt, that live the most powerful savages the Kingdoms have ever seen.

Only once have the savages of the Descent swelled up into the mountains like a rising tide, threatening to spill over and down into the Kingdoms. This was in 371, and only the miracle of the soulhail, associated with Saint Vartan, stopped the horde just north of what is now Thyre's famed High Fort.

There are many mysteries about the Descent beyond the strength and quickness of its populace. Why is it warm, this forest and plains-land that lies past the Waylorns? In the Kingdoms, the weather grows colder as one journeys north. But once one comes down out of the Waylorns, on the Descent side, the weather is balmy. At least, so say the journals of Inverness Dugray and Chaistlin Marque, the only two explorers known for certain to have journeyed all the way down to the Descent and back. (Thyre's new submersible, able to cross the Ocean-in-the-Mountains beneath its perpetual ice, may make the crossing to the Descent much easier in this new age.)

Another mystery about the Descent: the savages have never been observed to use magic. This is unusual, as even the most primitive savage cultures of the debased eastern islands always have a witch or houngan or spirit man. The lack of observed witches by Dugray, Marque, and the fallen mountain warriors during the incursion of 371 is fascinating to many academics.

And yet another mystery: what has happened to the many expeditions launched to the Descent, especially over the last five decades? The zeppelin *Jacenda*, launched in 1597 from High Fort and carrying the Jason of Thyre's son, is only the most recent of the famous losses.

To the east and south lie the only known societies that are outside the Claw and not benighted. In the warm south of the Sea of Princes, the subcontinent island Jakatta rises in a series of bluffs and tepuis.

Blistering sun and the cries of a thousand different species of iridescent birds greet the northern visitor. Once a visitor has parted the twenty-foot thorned creeper hedges and hacked through yards of steam-slick underbrush, she finds the flowstone paths of the Sun Goddess's people. Living in open-air, marblepil-lared cities with pergolas and ziggurats redolent of heliotrope and canopy mint, these people worship according to a different religion than that of the High God in the Claw. They worship a sun goddess, and they claim she lives among them, as a queen, atop the highest tepui in central Jakatta. The veracity of this claim is obscured by the lethal shadow of the jungledwellers' xenophobia. Dressed in sun plate and armed with witch-dusted machetes and golden blow guns, the Jakattan templars protect their goddess at all costs.

There are rumors that Inverness Dugray once met the Sun Goddess, but to his death he never claimed that, or so wrote his companion Roget Thibault in his "Extempore Effusion: In Memoriam I. D." In the Claw, there have been many arguments over the true nature of the Sun Goddess. Many in the church believe that she is a Low God. The peasants seem to believe as the church does, and there have been populist stirrings to form a Deic Fleet to sail to the subcontinent and purge it.

In the eastern Dragon Isles, mad kingdoms rise from the sea like embers from a fire: crackling, intense, and brief. The geographical isolation of each island lures power-mad men. These mayfly kings are able to quickly establish a monopoly over the magic in an island, freeing them from the worry of magical interference. But something in the tyrants' nature causes them to overreach. Almost all such nascent kingdoms never last.

His hand pushed the door open. Warm in the snowstorm from the fire burning in the cabin, the rough oak was the first man-made item he had touched in a dozen years. Except, of course, for the items he made himself. Like the weapons he carried.

His pack howled in the moonlit miles of hustled snow behind him. He knew why they were crying.



He hoped he was not leaving them.

Inside the cabin, the courtier looked up, startled. The old man was hunched over a workbench. Spellbound? A surprise.

But not the biggest surprise this night.

"You," the courtier breathed in recognition.

"Me."

"But we threw you into the water..."

The boy, now a man, advanced into the cabin. The fire's warmth danced in him, as if heating his soul back into motion after all this time. He smelled the maple porridge pot and hungered for warm food for the first time that he could remember.

The courtier was bargaining. "Wait! My lord! I can give you gold. Enough gold to buy your own kingdom. I can give you women. Or men. I can give you answers, and power. I can give you spells! I confess it. I am spellbound!"

The man at the door threw a bone spike, and it pierced the courtier's shoulder. The scream was like music, a single rapturous note.

"Wait! I can give you your father."

"I love my father." Jason paused. "I love him so much. But I hate him too."

The second spike pierced the courtier's heart.

Welcome to the Kingdoms. Hate what you love.

# APPENDIX ONE: COMBAT GLOSSES

## ARROWHEART

Arrowheart is the most common archery style in the Claw. It relies on range and allies to keep the archer protected while providing numerous stances and grips.

**Trick Shot.** The environment trick is caused by either you or the arrow, at any point in its flight. You could shoot the arrow so that it knocked over a torch onto an enemy's head and still continued on its way with a d4 attack roll.

**Called Shot: Pin.** The arrow shoots through the target's clothing or flesh and fastens him to an object. There must be something to pin the target too: a hitching post, a tavern wall, a cow, or something similar. Unlike most other Grab maneuvers, the target is considered Grabbed until he uses a Trick (environmental or otherwise) to remove the pinning arrow.

**Called Shot: Head.** You can't use this maneuver if hit while Aiming and Breathing during the previous round.

**Anticipate.** Predict your target's next maneuver and write it down secretly. When your target reveals his next maneuver choice, your shot goes off. It misses if your opponent chose a maneuver different from your prediction. On the other hand, if he did choose the maneuver that you predicted, your deadly shot goes off and attacks with a d10 for 4 damage + rebalance.

You can use a crossbow with Arrowheart in a variation often called Boltheart. In the Boltheart variation, make the following changes:

Your crossbow must be loaded before you can shoot. One action is required to load the crossbow.

Aim and Breathe becomes Reload and Breathe, 0/d2, +1 damage on your next shot.

Double Shot becomes Stock Bash, d6/d6, 2 damage.

Mighty Pull becomes Crossbow Snipe. Your next Penetrate or Anticipate shot scores a critical if the opponent rolls a 1, 2, or 3 on his defense die, regardless of what you roll on your attack die, as long as you hit.



### GENERAL NOTES

"Until you are forced to rebalance" effects end when you are forced to rebalance, whether an opponent or your own style forces you to rebalance. To be specific, any maneuver whose name is followed by (r) forces you to rebalance and ends an ongoing effect with a duration of "until you are forced to rebalance." Switching styles or breaking form also forces you to rebalance, so you lose the effect. Also, multiple uses of "until forced rebalance" maneuvers do not stack.

Remember page 21 lists the effects and their meanings. In particular, remember that "1+ move" means you do 1 damage and you can move, while "1 + move target 1 area" means you do 1 damage and can push your target one area.

## BLACK POWDER MUSKETEER

This style combines panache with firearms. To hear a musketeer tell it, the most important footwork is devoted to keeping the powder off your plume, so to speak. Two load actions are required to load. You can, of course, enter combat with one or more loaded wheel locks, ready to fire.

**Powder Burn.** This cannot be used consecutively on the same target, as blind creatures are immune to the attack. Powder Burn uses a considerable amount of powder; GMs are within their rights to rule that the powder is expended after three to five Powder Burns.

**Plume and Blade.** The d8 attack is for 1 damage; the opposed Charisma roll is for 1 Mood damage.

**Called Shot: Head.** You can't use this maneuver if hit while Aiming and Breathing in the previous round.

**Flash Smoke Screen.** Spot checks are also at -2 die size while the smoke screen persists (two rounds).





## COURT SWORD

The Old Claw nobility consider this their style, and it is the only accepted style at most tournaments. You can only use a Reputation in this style if your opponent is one of those to whom your Reputation applies. For example, if you have Reputation 7 Feared and hated by the peasants of Marnh, that does you no good when fighting a peasant of Azenahal or a savage from the Dragon Isles.

**Pose.** At the time you strike the pose, you choose whether or not your bonus Reputation die applies to attack or defense in the coming rounds. A second Pose does not stack with the first, but it does allow you to switch your bonus from attack to defense or vice versa.

**Satirical Portrayal.** You mock the combat style, demeanor, and comportment of one audience member. You must know the audience member well enough to make your caricature tell. The "audience" need not be staid; it can be anyone able to see you, including other combatants. The "audience" does not include the person you are attacking, as his view is too close to understand fully what you are doing. The Reputation damage occurs only if someone from a relevant group is there to witness the satire.

**Riposte.** If more than one enemy misses you, you can target your choice with the riposte.

**Demand.** The ally chooses which roll the bonus applies to.

**Signature Strike.** The arrows are actually "two way," so that you can return to this maneuver from either of the two mastery maneuvers.

**Lord's Punishment.** The d8 threatens the 2 damage; the dReputation causes the Reputation damage. As always, a member of the group with whom the Reputation is to apply must be present.

## BLACK POWDER & CRIMSON BLADE

**Backstab and Spine Shot.** The 3 damage shot is ranged, the 2 damage stab is not.

**Called Shot to the Head.** You cannot use this maneuver if you were hit while Bracing and Aiming in the previous round.

## DAGGER & WINE

This style is designed for a quick transition from drinking wine with your target to stabbing him in the eye, or from rolling in the sheets with him to rolling him into his grave. To put it another way, once you have the information, you fade into the shadows, there's a flash of blade, and your work is done. Nonetheless, complications do arise, and so this has become a full-fledged fighting style for spies, courtesans, and anyone else who expects to be fighting in bedchambers and porticos with a glass of wine in one hand and a dagger in the other.

Its roots being what they are, however, this style suffers against armor of superior quality. Its popularity despite this shortcoming is a testament to its overall effectiveness and the enduring appeal of the Duck and Slip maneuver.

**Stunning Secret.** You must know and communicate a secret to the target; the GM judges if it is stunning. Any given secret may only be used this way once.

**Intimations.** This also requires a secret, and the secret must pertain to the Inspiration you seek to block.

**Tangled cloak.** The entangling attack requires something resembling bedsheets: a tapestry to pull down, a carpet to pull up, a bridal train to wrap and trap, a cerecloth to wind. You are not grabbed next round. The opponent is only grabbed for one round.

**Disarming Embrace.** Only a grabbed target can be targeted by this maneuver.

**Duck and Slip.** If an attack misses you, you can choose another creature in your area to be targeted by the attack. The attacker rolls the same attack die against the new target, dealing the usual damage if he hits. You may also choose for the attack to target an object instead of another creature. The attacker cannot be the new target of the attack. Only attacks with a physical attack die can be ducked and slipped.



## FIVE SEASONS

No fighting style emphasizes the mind and the soul as much as Five Seasons does. Learning Free Sword or Great Weapon or Arrowheart, the young warrior practices move after combat move, learns footwork, strengthens his body, hones his quickness. The Five Seasons novice does those things, too, but he is equally likely to train by drinking ixsinthe with his grandfather, listening to the music in the cold snow outside an abandoned concert hall for a day and a night, or attempting to walk across rice paper without tearing it. As such, any fighter using the Five Seasons style gains a bonus Reason defense die whenever anyone attacks his Mood.

**Stunning Fist.** The hit target can still fight next round, but he is barely holding on to his style. He can't leave the area; his mind and legs are too wobbly.

**Meditation on Fleeting Summer.** The bonus move does not stack with other moves. That is, if you execute a maneuver next round that includes a move, you do not receive two moves.

**Sere Pressure Point.** You choose which column or row to remove. The lockout lasts until your opponent uses a Trick to roll his Strength against yours and wins the roll.

**Fists Like Sobs of Autumn.** As always, the damage listed is per strike, so if you hit with both fists, the damage will be 4 + 2 Str.

**Blizzard Mind.** The extra d8 attack next round does damage equal to the maneuver's normal d8 attack, or 1 damage if the maneuver does not have a d8 attack.

**Inner Life Flashback.** Your life flashes before you, and you focus on one particular scene that gives you insight into your current travail. You can only do this effectively once per scene.

## FREE SWORD

Free Sword is the most common fighting style in the Claw, versatile and effective.

**Dodge and Feint.** At the time you dodge and feint, you choose whether or not your bonus applies to attack or defense in the coming rounds. A second dodge and feint does not stack with the first, but it does allow you to switch your bonus from attack to defense or vice versa. The bonus begins to apply the round after you dodge and feint. As always, the bonus cannot grant an attack where none existed before; 0 attack does not increase to d2 attack.

**Whirlwind.** You may not attack the same target more than once.

**Counterstrike.** Again, there is only one attack per foe. If fewer than 5 people attack you, then the extra attacks are wasted.

**Spin.** As always, the bonus damage applies to each attack next round. Whirlwind, then, does 3 points of damage to each foe following a Spin, Counterstrike the same.

**Ranieri's Attack.** This attack's sure-footed stance grants the bonus defense die against any attack or environmental factor, physical or magical, that causes you to move, rebalance, fall, trip, slip, be swept away, etc. To be clear, the bonus die is also to be rolled on any check you make against such effects, whether or not the effect is described as an attack.

**Eviscerate.** As always, the damage listed is for each attack, so that if both attacks hit the total damage is 6 + 2 Str + 2 Qck.

There is a common variation of Free Sword named Free Shield or, colloquially, Free Board. This variation first replaces Dodge and Feint with Block, 0/d10, with the same bonus but removing the offensive option, that is, you can only gain a +1 bonus to defense die sizes until you rebalance. Second, the variation replaces Driving Cut (r) with Shield Drive (2r), d8/d8, 1 + move target 1 area. If you hit initially with Shield Drive, you may move with your target and then attempt to use it again in the following round on the same target. After that, you must rebalance. Finally, Free Shield upgrades Counterstrike's defense to d8/d6 while leaving the maneuver unchanged otherwise.



# GREAT WEAPON

Great weapon leverages the power of a two-handed weapon. Not mobile, the style seeks to make up for it in raw force.

**Argenwald's Stance.** You decide each round whether to use your Strength bonus die for your attack or defense roll. It does not grant an additional attack; it is simply a bonus die. Roll it along with your normal attack or defense dice and take the single highest result. You can use it for attack in one round and defense in the next, deciding on the spot as usual with bonus dice, even after seeing the results of the unmodified roll. You cannot use the bonus die for anything other than a physical defense or attack.

**Maim.** Normally a character rolls Strength vs. the Doom after a fight to have a chance at recovering some of the damage. Maim prevents that and any other form of accelerated healing, whether magical or from a fixer. Only time (1 body/week) or a scar (p. 30) heal this wound.

**Pin.** The target is grabbed next round, but unlike the basic Grab maneuver, you are not grabbed. The grab lasts only for a round, and it cannot, in general, be repeated because it can only target someone who is tripped.

**Cleaving Crescent Swing and Sweep.** You can only attack each target once with a Crescent Swing or a Sweep.

**Interpose Weapon.** You and your ally must be in the same area. You can use your Strength bonus die from Argenwald's Stance with your defense roll here, further benefiting your friend.

**Keep at bay** The target is not shoved out of the area, but your great weapon holds him further than arm's length away. If you hit, he cannot get into a position to make a melee attack against you next round.

# GUARDSMAN

Guardsmen are one of the nobles' most valued styles. Not that they deign to learn it (everything is inferior to the elegance of Court Sword), but they value it for the protection it affords. It is rare to encounter a high-ranking noble's champion who does not know the Guardsman style.

**Rampart Defense.** This maneuver's sure-footed

stance grants the bonus defense die against any attack or environmental factor, physical or magical, that causes you to move, rebalance, fall, trip, slip, be swept away, etc. To be clear, the bonus die is also to be rolled on any check you make against such effects, whether or not the effect is described as an attack.

**Escort.** You can move while granting one ally the use of your defense die (d8) as a bonus defense die. This maneuver does not grant a move to your ally; he must be executing a maneuver of his own that allows him to move with you.

**Bodyguard.** As Escort, this does not grant a move to your ally. He must be executing a maneuver of his own that allows him to move with you.

**Bull Rush Assault.** If you move with your target after hitting the first time, you can use a bull rush assault on the same target again in the next round. After that, you must rebalance.

**Repel.** You keep the rabble from entering your area. You can only make attacks against people trying to enter your area during this round; if there are none such, you make no attacks. Those who are hit are denied entry and return to the area they left this round.

There is a variation called Rescue Artist that replaces Repel with Rescue. This is the same as Bodyguard but does grant a move to your ally. Rescue is not a rebalance maneuver, and if you have the gear (grappling hook and line, cargo net with crane and winch, whip, etc.), it functions at range.

# LONG ARM

Long Arm style capitalizes on the reach of the spear. It is popular among witch-hunters who want to keep their distance from spellbound creatures.

**Scorpion Stance.** The bonus only applies if the target of your maneuver is outside your current area.

**Javelin Throw.** You throw a javelin, not your spear.

**Repelling Wind.** This targets any creature (six maximum) who attempts to enter your area this round.

**Pin.** If hit, the target cannot move next round. The target is under no other restrictions (he need not rebalance, etc.).

**Meteor tip.** The move occurs regardless of whether or not either strike hits. The move is optional.



## MOUNTED

The basic maneuvers in the lower right are different for Mounted style. Use them for a skilled rider fighting out of style from horseback.

When you're mounted, any attack that forces you to rebalance may also unhorse you. Make a ride check against the Doom to stay on your mount. A ride check is like any other skill check: roll your relevant characteristic die (in this case, either Strength or Quickness) and the die of one associated history, if you have one (in this case, a history of riding, mounted combat, dressage, or something similar). If either die equals or beats the Doom, you stay on your mount.

Scoop or Drop. To drop an unwilling passenger, win opposed Strength check. To become a passenger against your will, the assailant needs to make a suitable environment trick (p. 26).

Stomp and Smash. Only the d12 Stomp attack forces the target to rebalance. The d8 weapon attack does 2 damage without forcing a rebalance.

Trample. You cannot attack any target more than once.

Overrun. The move is not optional.

## PARAPET DEFENSE

This is the ancient style of castle defenders, often claimed by scholars to be the reason that castles are still largely proof against sieging armies with magi support. The fighter weaves his weapon in patterns that are themselves magical. This raises the fighter's magic defenses, but it also makes him spellbound until he breaks style.

Heart Pattern. You and your allies must be in the same area.

Nightwind Run. You cannot attack any target more than once. The move between areas is optional.

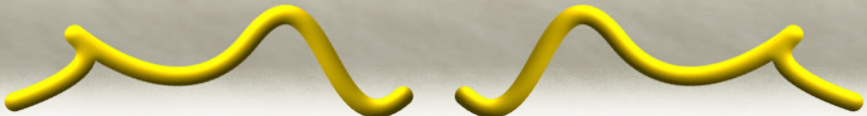
Veil. If a wizard cannot see you, he cannot target you with single-target spells. Area of effect spells may still effect you.

Fredegar's Gorge. Against a spellbound creature, you do 1 point of damage and heal 1 point of recent damage (a Body, Mood, or characteristic point that was lost during this combat).

Devour. If your blow kills a spellbound creature, you gain that creature's Magic die as a bonus die on all your rolls next round.

Steadfast Defense. See Free Sword Ranieri's Attack.





There is a variation called Parapet Disrupt that replaces Storm of Arrows with Disrupting Shot, d8/d6, 2 + re-cast.

## SAVAGE

The savages of the Fyraj forest and the Kvalt range are the main practitioners of this style. Many of its maneuvers resemble the lunges and claw-swipes of beasts native to the savages' homeland.

Weapons are optional for many of the savage's combat maneuvers, but Fury Strike requires one.

Savage requires freedom of movement such that you cannot wear any armor with a Minimum Strength requirement higher than 5.

Savage Charge. The move is not optional; you must build momentum for the charge. The d4 is for the 1 damage; the d6 is for the "move target 1 area."

Bear Hug. You may execute another Bear Hug or a Throw next round, despite the fact that you are considered grabbed (p. 29).

Rampage. You do not move twice (it is 1/1 and a move, not (1+move)/(1+move)). The move that you do get, however, is optional - and it may be a climb rather than a sprint or charge.

There is a very popular variation called Savage Leaper that replaces Rampage with Leap, 0/d6, move + add rebalance to next attack.

## SWASHBUCKLER

Disparaged by nobles as a poor man's Court Sword, Swashbuckler is a flamboyant, daring style that is an inspiration to many and an effrontery to a few.

Flourish. Your flourish is rolled against the Doom, not any opposing roll from a foe.

Jest. As with Flourish, you vie against the Doom, not an opponent, to cheer your ally.

Stab and Mock. You do 1 damage and 1 Mood damage.

Humiliating Blow. The reputation damage must be to a reputation with a group having witnesses present. If there are no witnesses, there is no reputation damage.

Spectacular Strike. You gain the Mood bonus to allies if both the environmental trick and the d8 strike are successful. Usually, but not always, the strike and the trick are related.

Acrobatic Charge. The move is required.

Death from Above. You must have some altitude over your opponent to execute this maneuver.

Swath of Destruction. You cannot attack any target more than once. Each attack deals 3 damage. You can attempt to cut a swath even if your Death from Above strike missed.

Disrobe. You can only target an unarmed opponent. On a hit, you remove most of his clothing or, if he is wearing armor that makes that almost impossible, you put his armor in such disarray that it is effectively two Quality lower than it is rated. After the combat, the owner of the armor can rearrange the armor to restore its full Quality. Furthermore, a disrobed character suffers 2 Mood damage and 2 reputation damage with any interested reputation faction that has witnesses present.

## TWIN WEAPON

Twin Weapon is most often seen in the World Below, as guild thieves and assassins are the most likely souls to have the Quickness for the style and the gold for the multiple weapons.

Blade Storm and Master's Blade Storm. You may not attack any target more than once.

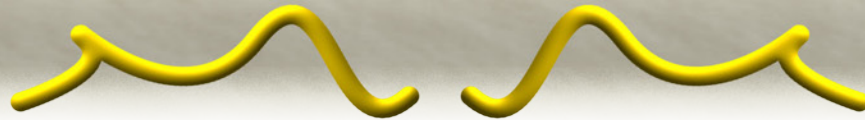
Dervish Spin. The move is optional.

Disarm. The two attacks, as usual for a dX/dX maneuver, can target two separate enemies. You can disarm two foes this round if both of your disarm attacks hit. You can also attack your original target a second time if your first disarm attempt fails.

Rend. This excruciating maneuver does 2 points of damage on each hit, but if both strikes hit an unarmed foe, then you rend him. The blows force him to rebalance and the pain causes him to take a Heart penalty die on all rolls next round (use d4 for Heart if you do not have the NPC stats hand).

Whirling Backlash. This targets only an unarmed opponent; opponents fighting in an unarmed style such as Five Seasons are not eligible targets. Each attack does 2 + 1 Strength damage.





## APPENDIX TWO: MAGIC GLOSSES & SPELL LISTS

See p. 35 for more information on combat, close, and high spells. In general, spell effects do not stack. An increase in Quality from one spell does not add to the increase in Quality from another spell. Instead, take the greater of the two increases.

All of these spell schools have the following two spells.

**Abjure.** This dispels other close spells. Roll your Magic die vs. the caster's Magic die; if you win, the spell is dispelled. You can only attempt an abjuration once per spell.

**High Abjuration.** This is the high spell version abjure. It works in the same way, but it affects high spells (and is itself a high spell).

Spells marked with (M), high spells, and freeform spells can only be cast by a master of the style.

In general, freeform spells are cosmetic, narrative, or not as powerful as the listed spells. When a freeform spell is mechanically consequential, these are **useful guidelines for freeform spells:**

1. The scale is the smaller "area" scale rather than the wider "region" scale.
2. The timeframe is seconds or minutes; in rare cases a scene or day; almost never longer.
3. A Magic roll against the Doom, or an opposed Magic roll, resolves the spell's effects.
4. When they are numeric, the spell's effects are almost always 1 point or less.
5. If the spell is a "stretch" for the style or toward the more powerful end of the spectrum, the GM may increase the Doom in step 3 above.

Freeform high spells are possible, but usually are beyond the reach of a single researcher.

### BATTLECRAFT

#### Combat Spell Glosses.

**Wall of Force.** The wall can curve, but it cannot lie flat or form a circle that closes on itself so as to trap those inside. It is transparent but shot through with the colors of the battlemaster's orb. Spells that

attack without a physical manifestation can be cast through the wall; spells with a physical manifestation cannot pass through or target someone beyond the very real wall.

**Crimson Bands of Hessek.** Each time this spell hits, a crimson band snaps into being on the target's body. Traditionally, the band is acidic dragon sinew, but some battlecrafters have different manifestations, for example, the sparkling velvet ribbons of Asenikut Ragul's twenty-six daughters, each ribbon a different color constrictor stronger than any python. Each band does 1 point of damage per round until the caster is forced to re-cast.

**Stone Pincer Hurl.** The target must be grabbed, so you can't repeat this maneuver in consecutive rounds. Re-grab your victim, and then toss him again.

**Explode Orb.** Each target is attacked only once. The orb discriminates and will not harm allies.

**Enter the Orb.** Spreading both arms in a grand gesture of opening, you expand your sculpted orb until it is large enough to step into. You step in, and it bestows many bonuses until you are forced to rebalance. Every battlecrafter has a unique orb; spend some time designing yours!

#### Close spell list.

**Disguise Terrain.** You can mask a doorway, create the illusion of a cave, hide a window, or make a flowering meadow appear to be a miasmal fen. The illusion is only visual, and it can only be applied to scenery, both indoor and outdoor. A character who knows his vision to be an illusion can interact with the true terrain, but he takes a Reason penalty on all such checks. You can only have one active disguised terrain at a time. If you leave the area, the spell fades after a few minutes.

**Flick.** Without preparation, you can exert approximately one pound of force per magic point. With a 10 Magic, then, you can exert 10 pounds of force for one or two seconds. This is enough to flick a lever, tip a water jug, rock a chandelier, etc. You can use this for environment tricks in social and physical combat





and chases (usually this allows for a Magic roll vs. the Doom instead of a Strength roll, plus it allows for effects at range).

**Ignore Pain.** Pain is a distractor, and it can cause a character to take a penalty die on actions. This spell numbs the body, deadens most pain, and eliminates penalty dice caused by pain. Ignore pain persists indefinitely, but it counts as one of your bound spells. This is a sought-after spell among spell smugglers.

**Mine.** You bind an exploding mine spell to an inanimate object. When the trigger condition is fulfilled, the object explodes, making a magic attack roll with your Magic die vs. the targets' Magic dice, doing 1 point of damage for every two magic levels you have. The trigger condition can be simple ("Someone touches the mine") or complicated, ("Anyone removing the ewer from the sanctum sanctorum, unless within the half-hour the ewer is filled with virgin's blood, and then only on the eves of St. Vartan, St. Jhess, or St. Dominic"). The mine targets the three closest people to the object and the object itself. You should flavor your mine appropriately: lightning, shrapnel, acid, etc. A mine counts as one of your trapped spells.

**Repair.** You can repair simple objects with no interior structure and no complicated moving parts. This includes curtain walls, swords, gate doors, anchor chains, and breastplates, for example, but it excludes black powder weapons, drawbridges, mills, wagons, zeppelins, and musical instruments. When you repair an item, you add 2 Quality to it, but it cannot exceed its original value. You can only repair a particular item once per scene (or day). For more complicated items, someone with engineering skill can do the work necessary.

**Sculpt.** You can sculpt small, simple objects with no interior structure and a very straightforward exterior, such as a shovel, a cup, or a rope. The raw materials to make the item must be present. The item is spellbound and counts as one of your trapped spells until you dismiss it.

**Signal.** You can send your characteristic signal across a battlefield-sized area. Your signal might be a personal seal waving, a streak of your color against the sky, a flare, or a conjured signal fire. The signal conveys no other information; only that the signal has

been given. You must have pre-arranged context with your receiver if you wish to communicate more than this.

**Strengthen (M).** You can add 2 points of Quality to any fixed object. Field marshals often exploit this ability to strengthen their fortifications. You cannot strengthen something whose Quality exceeds your magic levels. The strengthened object is strengthened indefinitely, but it counts as one of your trapped spells. Multiple strengthens do not stack.

**Wall of Force (M).** See the combat spell gloss above. You can have one Wall of Force standing at a time. It is Quality 6, so opponents would have to roll a 6 to hit it and cause 6 points of damage before bringing it down. If your wall is destroyed, you cannot cast another one this scene (or day). You can dismiss your wall at will, or as a Trick in combat.

### **Freeform close spells.**

A battlemaster is not limited to the close spells above. In general, any spell that deforms terrain, masks scenery, improves or degrades equipment, or aids construction or demolition falls within the Battlecraft style.

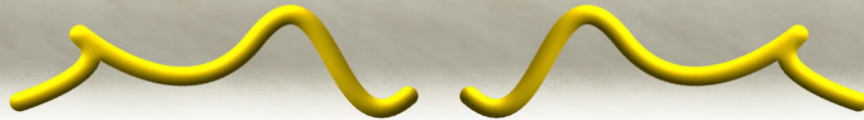
### **High spell list.**

**Construct.** You can construct any building with a Quality up to half your Magic levels. The building lasts for a scene (or a day), and then disintegrates into non-magical sawdust and rubble. If you cast a second consecutive Construct, the original building collapses before the second one springs into place. Creatures caught in the area of a new construction are shoved aside to an adjoining area, while the existing scenery is held suspended elsewhere, returning unharmed upon the spell's completion.

**Crafted golem.** You can create any of the crafted golems (p. 185). The Wealth Level costs apply in full. A crafted golem counts as your bound high spell until it is destroyed, which you can do voluntarily, leaving behind an inanimate shell.

**Harden.** You raise one troop's defense die size by one for all formations and maneuvers. The bonus lasts for one battle. This only applies to troops that wear armor (and not, for example, magical beasts, siege engines, or caster units).

**New terrain.** This spell requires three consecu-



tive rounds of casting. When you are done, your area is a completely different area. You can create terrain in your new area as you wish; see pp. 29 and 50 for information on how terrain can affect combat and mass combat. Once cast, it lasts indefinitely, but it counts as your trapped high spell (until you dismiss it).

**Recovery.** This spell causes all troops after a battle to recover (p. 52) without the need to roll.

**Rescue.** You grant one troop the ability to retreat off the battle map in a single move. The troop can move through enemy units. This spell does not grant any other movement powers, however, so the troop still cannot cross a chasm, leap over a burning pitch-line, or swim in a raging current. This magic can only be safely used for a retreat; if used as part of some greater scheme, a crisis surge is the normal result.

**Sharpen.** You raise one troop's attack die size by one for all formations and maneuvers. The bonus lasts for one battle. This only applies to troops that wield edged or piercing weapons (and not, for example, magical beasts, siege engines, or caster units).

**Weeping wounds.** The commanding organization of the losing side in a battle takes one additional point of characteristic damage when this spell is cast within an hour of the battle's conclusion. Even more significantly, the losing side cannot recover any decimated troops (p. 52).

## DEATH LORE

### **Combat spell glosses.**

**Rapture of Silence.** The bonus applies to both physical and magical defense dice.

**Masque of Ash/Silence.** The masque continues to attack each round until you are forced to re-cast. If it hits it does 1 point of Strength and Charisma damage (Ash) or silences the target (Silence). A masque counts as one of your trapped spells.

**Dustform.** You still occupy the same volume that you always do, so you can't store yourself in a dashberry cup. You could probably fit in a large chest, however. If you are in a tight space when the duration expires, you are ejected to the nearest unoccupied suitable space.

**Limbs of Dust.** Your opponent's arms turn to

dust for a round, and when they come back, they are not the same.

**Death Spell.** You choose the victims; they must all be within the same area. That area must either be your area or one adjacent to it. If a target's current Mood + Body is less than 10 and he is hit by this spell, he dies.

### **Close spell list.**

**Animate Corpse.** After a minute of your chanting, one corpse shudders to its feet like a puppet whose strings have been lifted. As long as you concentrate on it, do not let it leave your sight, and take no actions more strenuous than strolling, it is animated as a humanoid zombie under your control. At the end of ten minutes' control, the corpse's ligature fails and it collapses, no longer fit for animation by any magic or alchemy short of a wild surge.

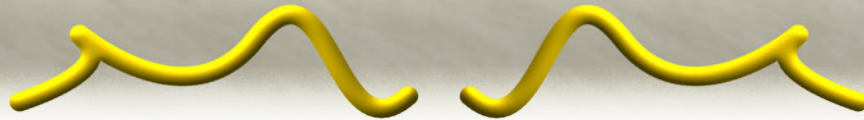
**Chill.** You can lower the ambient temperature in your area by approximately 15 degrees Celsius. This spell endures for a scene (or a day) or until you cast it again in another area.

**Death Scene.** Placing your hand on a corpse of a person who has died no more days ago than you have magic levels, you can learn one thing about the corpse per round or minute. If you have enough time, you can learn or experience:

- The corpse's name.
- Where the corpse lived.
- The corpse's former Inspirations at time of death.
- If the corpse was or is spellbound.

**Death Touch (M).** Plants and unintelligent creatures (including pets, but not familiars) massing up to 1 pound/magic level die at your touch - if you wish.

**Disrupt Unead.** Placing a dollop of null jelly (p. 144) under the tongue of an undead creature and intoning this spell lights a shining radiance within the undead, a radiance that quickly intensifies, heating and cracking the effulgent undead's skin and likely killing the creature. Roll your Magic score with your Reason score as a bonus die against the undead's Magic roll to succeed in destroying it. If you attempt this in combat, three consecutive tricks are required: the first and quite difficult (Doom + 5 or more) trick is to place the null jelly, the second two tricks require you or an ally



to hold the null jelly trapped in the undead's mouth while you cast the disruption. More often, an undead is captured, strapped down, and disrupted - among semi-intelligent undead hordes, one or two disruptions a week improve discipline measurably.

**Dustform (M).** You can only do this for one minute per scene (or day), and the minute cannot be broken down into six seconds here, five seconds there, and forty-nine seconds after supper. It adds no new forms of movement, so you cannot fly, float, drift, levitate, etc. You can squeeze through extremely narrow spaces, pour yourself through tiny holes, even climb up a squirrel-sized chimney, but you must be contiguous at all times and occupy your full volume at all times.

**Fiegn Death.** You can stop the metabolism of one willing creature up to human size (and larger if you are a master of the style). The faker has no need to eat or breathe, and his temperature drops to the ambient. He cannot move, but he or the caster can end the spell at any time. At a casual glance or even a reasonable examination, the faker appears dead. An extremely thorough and determined investigation, however, grants anyone so persisting a Reason or Magic roll against the caster's Magic score (not a roll) to determine the faker's true status.

**Grave portent.** You see a scratch through all creatures whose Mood + Body total is less than 5, as if that creature had been painted in portrait and someone has torn the canvas.

**Moaning Decay.** All corpses in the area, including those long buried in graves, moan and decay into putrescence. The shrieking moans and the noxious fumes of decay persist over the period of an hour. Anyone in the area takes a Heart penalty die on all checks during this hour. There must be a reasonable number of corpses in the area for this spell to succeed. The GM judges what is reasonable; a small sleeping chamber above the mill requires only a single corpse, while the bazaar at the city's center would require at least 20 corpses.

**Silence of the Grave.** When you place silence of the grave upon a willing target, including yourself, he can cast spells in complete silence. Other noises he

generates are as loud as normal.

### **Freeform close spells.**

Deathmasters are not limited to the close spells listed above. In general, any spell touching death, the border between life and death, undead, silence, ash, dust, and the void falls within the Death Lore style.

### **High spell list.**

**Hush.** You steal the voices of every person living in an area the size of a small town. The voices are placed in a puzzle box, cameo locket, or corked bottle. Only spellbound creatures have a chance to resist by rolling their Magic against yours. The town silence continues as long as you maintain the box, locket, or bottle, which counts as your trapped high spell. If the voice vessel is broken, all voices are returned and cannot be stolen again for one year.

**Longevity.** This spell wards off old age. The recipient ages only one year, effectively, over the next 1d6 years. Any wild surge caused by this spell results in a crisis surge. These crisis surges tend to leave either the recipient or the caster deformed or deranged. This has caused the spell to develop an odious reputation, albeit an odious reputation that diminishes its popularity not a whit.

**Raise Undead.** You create a skeleton, zombie, human raptor cross-stitch zombie, or some other unintelligent undead, depending on the corpse available and your intent. If your Magic roll beats the Doom, the unintelligent undead serves under your control (with the intelligence of a half-trained hound) until it is destroyed. If you fail the roll, the mindless creature attacks. If you have two or more apprentices, you can each raise one undead per day, forming a mass combat troop in a few weeks or even less time, depending on the number of apprentices you have to join you in your casting.

**Repulse Death.** When this spell is cast, walls rattle in their foundations like children shaking in anger, and clouds buck and shudder in the sky. This spell thwarts Death, just as a high Inspiration thwarts Death. The spell lies like a mantle on the recipient for an indefinite time, and during this time it counts as your one bound High spell (or your one High spell for the day; see p. 37). When the recipient would die of



a violent, "unnatural" cause, the spell is triggered and spent. Instead of dying, the recipient escapes. The GM and the player, if any, narrate together how the Re-pulse Death recipient escaped from near-certain death.

Turn. You become a vampire or lich. This is an irreversible process. You gain the Strength and Quickness of the undead in question. You also gain the resistances (cold, poison, disease), the special attacks (drain, captivate, soul rip, command) and the vulnerabilities (sunlight, stakes, phylactery, craving, corrupted or ruined Inspirations and Heart). Histories and other characteristics do not change. See the monster entries for more detail.

The Dead Walk. The dead of centuries claw to the surface and stalk the streets of their former homes. This spell can only be cast at night. Uncontrolled, the zombies act as two zombie legions (p. 173) if met by troop- or brigade-level resistance. In such a case, resolve the battle normally using the mass combat rule. If the zombies win the battle, or if there is no mass resistance, then every organization in the region must roll Force against your Magic or lose 1 Scope. Additionally, 10% of the regions population is lost. PCs abroad in the night when the dead walk can expect to find undead in varying densities in each new area they enter, according to the following table.



1-4: 1d4 Human zombies.

5-8: 2d4 Human zombies and 1 undead giant.

9-12: 1d4 Human zombies and 1d4 twitchers.

13-15: 1d4 undead giants.

16-17: 1d4 human zombies, 1d4 twitchers, and 1d4 undead giants.

18-19: 2d20 human zombies and 2d20 twitchers.

20: 3d4 human zombies, 1d4 undead giants, and 1 lich.

## DRAMBA

### Combat spell glosses.

Dedicate Doll. You dedicate a doll to a particular target. If you want to switch targets, you must re-dedicate the doll.

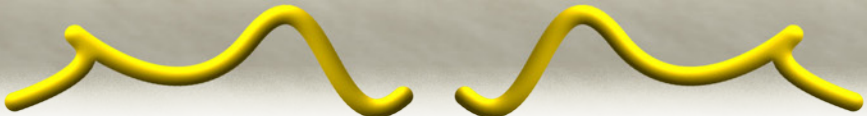
Salve Doll. This heals up to 2 points of characteristic damage, but they must have been inflicted within the last four rounds. Thus, if you begin the Dedicate Doll > Bless Doll > Salve Doll sequence immediately after an ally is injured, your Salve Doll is effective, but with a delay of even one round the sequence culminates too late.

Burn Doll (r). The cleansing fire removes almost any negative magic, poison, or alchemical effect from a person, as long as that effect originated within the last 4 rounds. Against a magic effect, you must win a Magic vs. Magic roll. For poisons and alchemy, roll your Magic die against the static Quality of the poison or alchemical substance.

Hex Eye. The target rolls his own Magic die (not yours) as a penalty die on all defense rolls (physical, magical, or social) next round.

Cloud eye. If an opponent who cannot see you attempts to attack you, he does so as if blinded (p. 29; 4 die size penalty to attack rolls, minimum d2).

Body switch. Each creature retains its own mind but gains the physical characteristics of the other's body (Strength, Quickness, Body). Attempting to directly damage the host body is psychologically difficult and requires a Reason roll against the Doom. In any case, only re-balancing maneuvers and generic maneuvers are possible. Both of you are spellbound for the round in which your bodies are switched.



Brick dust circle. If you move outside of the circle, you lose the bonus (and you must have broken style, since none of the Dramba spells grant movement).

Corn Dust Shower. The protection expires after one scene (or day) if unused.

#### **Close spells.**

Brick Dust Line. You pour out a line of brick dust while invoking the loa. Whenever a creature matching the conditions you set crosses the brick dust line, you are aware of it (and waken if asleep). The conditions you set may be broad or narrow, general or specific, anything from "all creatures" to "that seradynn with the red horns I met at the AllBelow."

Burn Doll. You can, of course, use this spell out of combat to purify a target, provided it is cast quickly enough.

Loa Walk. You spend time walking with the loa, listening to their whispers and drumbeats, moving in their abstruse rhythms. You can converse with the loa, who may or may not be willing to answer questions. The GM should develop loa spirits as NPCs like any other, and you may run a social scene or quick social combat with the loa in order to coax them to cooperate. The loa spirits generally have access to regions up to one dozen miles around the caster, and they can appear to any spellbound creature visually, but not audibly, within that range. If you are a houngan, that is, a master of the dramba style, you can ask the loa to bring you a material item through the spirit realm. In the next scene (or the next day), if the loa assents to your request, it returns with the mundane object you asked it to fetch. Secrets, items belonging to a person, and extraordinary objects cannot be retrieved by loa via this spell.

Hex. The target's dice cannot explode. You must maintain a doll in effigy of the target, and this doll counts as one of your trapped spells. You must make an opposed Magic check when first casting this spell. If the target resists, you cannot target him or her again in the scene (or in the week). If the target fails, the spell lasts until dispelled, you choose to end it, or the doll is destroyed.

Hex land (M). Choose one area of the game world. You build a model of it using bricks, chicken bones, and blonde human hair. In this area, apply

one effect of your choice from the following list. The choice cannot change subsequently. The model and its hexed land count as one of your trapped spells. You cannot have more than one hexed land at a time.

- No magic dice (for the Magic characteristic, or attack, or defense) explode.
- One characteristic (Str, Qck, Mgc, etc.) is always one die size smaller, for everyone, than it is elsewhere.
- Mood cannot be recovered here.
- Anyone with a particular Inspiration (your choice: Fear, Love, Hope, Vengeance, etc.) has her Mood and maximum Mood reduced by 2 here.
- Everyone entering the area sees and hears a brief, twisted version of their comrades and surroundings, causing 1 Mood damage.

Patch. The loa flow from your hands and heal your target for 1 Body, as long as the damage occurred within the last minute. This spell is only effective once per injured state. That is, when a character is wounded and then receives this spell, he cannot again benefit from this spell until after he has healed to maximum Body.

Salve doll. You can of course use this spell out of combat, too, as long as it is applied quickly enough to the injury.

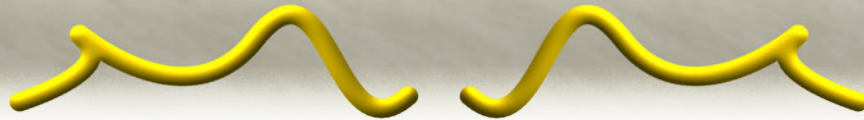
Weal bone. After dedicating a doll in effigy of the target, you chant over the doll and a prepared chicken bone for thirteen minutes. Luck swirls and funnels. When the recipient breaks the bone, which may be weeks later, he gains a bonus die equal to your Magic die on his next roll. A weal bone counts as one of your trapped spells.

#### **Freeform close spells.**

Dramba houngans are not limited to the close spells listed above. In general, any spell that involves curses, hexes, regeneration, transposition, wards, blessings, and spirit loa falls within the Dramba style.

#### **High spell.**

Brick dust hedge. A brick dust line prevents a target from crossing. You must name the target and maintain a doll in its likeness. The target gains a Magic roll, opposed by your Magic roll, when the spell is



first cast. If the target wins, the spell is ineffective. If you win, then the target cannot step over the brick dust line. It is possible - notoriously so, in fact - to make the brick dust hedge a circle, pointing inward, so that a creature is imprisoned in the brick dust circle.

Heap loa salve. This spell does one of the following:

- Removes one alchemical, magic, disease, or poison effect from the target. Magic effects roll their caster's Magic die against yours to resist.
- Heals up to 2 Body.
- Heals up to 2 points of characteristic damage.

There is no time limit as there is for Patch, above, for example. The high spell is effective whether the injury occurred a minute ago or a year ago. The heap loa salve spell, however, still cannot heal more than once per injured state (as Patch, above).

House curse. After dipping a doll in arsenic and wine, you set it ablaze, cursing the doll's likeness. The most widely known dramba curse causes the victim to grow thinner day by day while catching horrifying glimpses of murder and beasts of rapine, always just out of the corner of the eye, slipping away when focused on directly - but you can generate your own curse symptoms as you wish. The curse wears down the target's maximum Mood cumulatively, 1 point per scene (or day) and, if you wish, it also wears down one other characteristic of your choice, cumulatively, also by 1 in every scene. The curse continues until the target is disabled or dead, until you break the spell, or until the ashes of the doll used to cast the spell are purified (usually with a salve doll or heap loa salve spell). The curse attacks with your Magic die; if the target wins the initial roll, the curse is resisted. A curse that is not resisted attacks anew each day. If the target fails the initial roll but wins a subsequent roll, he is still cursed but does not take damage in that scene (or day). If the target of the curse has wronged you, then should you wish it, your curse outlasts the target's (and your) death, moving on to plague his heir or another person in his house, and from there to another person, one at a time without mercy, until the house is no more.

Magic jar. After invoking the loa of theft and

binding, you steal someone's soul and trap it in a jar. The target can make a Magic roll against yours to resist; success means that he cannot again this season be targeted by your magic jar. The remaining husk of a person will, on your successful Charisma vs. Doom roll, follow your simple commands. You make the Charisma roll once per scene; if you fail it, you cannot establish control this scene. You can choose to release the mind from the jar at any time; if the jar shatters, the mind within is restored to its body. The jar and its trapped soul count as your bound high spell.

Transposition. You cause two people to switch bodies. One morning, the chief of guards for the Marquis wakes up to find himself in a scrawny body, tied to a rack in the bowels of the city, while an assassin wakes up in the chief's body, assumes the chief's role for the day, and moves in for the kill. The transposed mind retains its Magic, Heart, Reason, and Charisma dice, along with its Mood, Histories, fighting styles, and magic styles. The bodies keep their respective Strength, Quickness, Body, and Reputation scores. One of the people that switch can be you. This switch initially counts as your bound high spell, but if it is still in place after a fortnight, it no longer counts as your bound high spell.

## DRUIDIC

### Combat spell glosses.

Burn Mistletoe. This spell has no effect other than to burn the mistletoe. Next round, you fan the flames into a Gale of Fire or flare them into an enemy's eyes with the Sun and Fire Glare spell.

Sacrifice. You must burn a plant (preferably mistletoe, but it need not be), slaughter an animal (mouse-size or larger), or pour a libation. If you do not have any of these things at hand, you cannot cast this spell.

Bog. A character can exit or enter the area only after making a successful Strength vs. Doom roll.

Chill Bog. This has the same effects as a bog. In addition, the freezing peat and miasmal morass makes a d8 attack that is physical, not magical, each round. The attack goes against all in the area affected, be they friend or foe, and it does 1 point of damage and forces a rebalance on a hit.





Sun's Bounty. As usual, the bonus damage applies to each attack. So if the druid's 5 allies each execute a maneuver with two attacks next round and all attacks hit, this spell supplies a total of 20 points of extra damage.

Fertility. Something quickens subcutaneously in your target; the swelling causes 1 point of Quickness damage. After the target has taken 3 points of Quickness damage from this spell, you can cast Birth on him. The Quickness damage need not be in consecutive rounds.

Birth. Crazed with jealousy or bestial blood-lust, a stunted freak twin bursts from the target's skin. Usually the freak twin is a tiny head with misshapen hands on spindly arms and a torso that melds with the host's body. The Freak has 3 Body, rolls a d4 defense each round, and bites its host or an adjacent ally at d10 for 1 point of damage each round. In special cases, the GM may assign other qualities, defenses, or attacks to the freak.

#### **Close spells.**

Blight or thrive. You cause a farm's yield to increase or decrease one wealth level. You must cast this spell at least one month before harvest, and the crop counts as one of your trapped spells until it is sold.

Cleanse or sour. You freshen spoiled food, and you clean dirty water. Alternatively, you sour milk and wine, foul water, or rot food. When you cast this on a poison or on a creature that has been poisoned, roll your Magic die. If you equal or exceed the Quality of the poison, you have neutralized the poison. You may only attempt to neutralize a poison once per poisoning. That is, if you fail to neutralize a poison on the first roll, no subsequent cleansing spell of yours will neutralize the poison.

Cages of life (M). In a ritual that lasts from noon to noon, you can bleed one creature to give life to another creature of the same species. Both victim and beneficiary must be held in wicker frames suspended over a double crescent of mistletoe, part of which is burned every hour. Once every four hours, the victim suffers two Body damage and the beneficiary gains one Body. While the ritual proceeds, each pair of cages counts as one trapped spell.

Flame. You can cause flames the size of a camp fire to leap into existence. If there is dry fuel, the

flames light it, but otherwise the flames fade in a flash. Without wood or oil or something similar to light, then, this spell is not suitable for use as a substitute torch.

Fortify or debilitate. You increase or decrease the Quality of a single dose of poison by 1 (or 2 if you are a master of the style). This Quality increase lasts indefinitely, but the poison counts as one of your bound spells.

Libation. With this spell, you can multiply or extend other objects or effects. The libation is fresh blood, usually from a sacrifice, but in any case the blood must be from a wound that causes at least 2 Body damage. You mix the blood with mistletoe in a silver bowl, and then you pour it out onto the object or area that you want to bless. Any mundane, time-limited object or effect is doubled. For example, 6 fish become 12, 7 loaves become 14, an hourglass requires two hours to pour through its sand.

Rust and decay. You accelerate the aging process of any item fashioned primarily of metal or wood. If your Magic roll equals or exceeds the Quality of the item, you decrease its Quality by 1. There is a limit to this forced aging. You cannot make an item age this way more than once per season. If you are a master, then this spell can affect buildings, vehicles, and other large-scale objects.

Seed. Given soil, you cause a seed to sprout and grow to a fully ripened plant in a matter of minutes. This counts as one of your trapped spells; if you release the spell, the plant withers and dies.

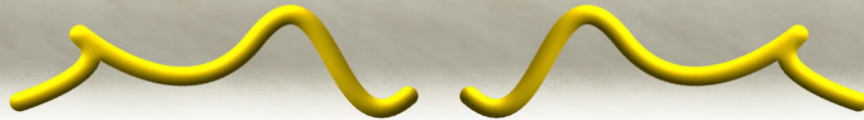
Speak with animals. You can speak with animals as if they were NPCs of very low intelligence. While a full social scene may be neither necessary nor possible (rare is the prolix badger), you do need to roll at least one check (Charisma vs. Doom unless your GM specifies otherwise) to obtain useful information.

#### **Freeform close spells.**

Masters of the druidic style - called archdruids, grand druids, or great druids - are not limited to the close spells listed above. In general, any spell that involves the savagery of the natural world, the cycles of life and death, growth, decay, the sun, and sacrifice falls within the Druidic style.

#### **High Spells.**

Disaster. This spell can only be cast from a



significant geographic point in the landscape: a ring of standing stones, the highest peak in the range, the deepest cavern below the city, or somewhere similarly significant. It also requires a WL 14 quantity of mistletoe, gold dust, and sacrificial beasts. After a night of casting, you wreak disaster upon the region at the rising of the sun. You can cause any of the following disasters (p. 61): creeping doom, earthquake, fire, flood, rain of rocks, rain of frogs, faces like pillars of light, soulhail. The disaster strikes the region that you are in.

**Eclipse.** The sun or the moon darkens to a void within a minute, and darkness prevails for a number of minutes equal to your magic levels. Furthermore, during the eclipse, you can choose to increase or decrease the Doom by up to 4 (minimum 1).

**Fertility.** A druid can ensure a pregnancy within a season with a Magic roll against the Doom. Only one attempt per mother per season is possible.

**Flocks.** Birds dive and attack throughout the region. For a number of days equal to your magic score, anyone going out of doors draws four attacks per minute, each attack a d4 for 1 point of damage.

**Plague.** This prevents everyone in the region from using Mood or Inspiration when resisting a disease. It counts as your bound high spell.

**Sacred ground.** The blood of multiple sacrifices consecrates a grove, a ring of standing stones, or a temple, dedicating the area to one of your Inspirations. The Inspiration must have a value of 4 or more. Anyone, including you, who shares that Inspiration gains one die size to his Magic and Heart rolls when on the sacred ground. This spell may also be cast in reverse to defile previously consecrated ground. The casting must take place on the grounds in question. The casting requires a number of days equal to the Doom and ten times that number of sacrifices.

**Season of Life.** Any human or troll born during this season in your region gains a +2 to his maximum Mood.

**Wild fertility or famine.** A druid can increase or decrease the Wealth Level of the region's agricultural sector by 1.

## ELEMENTAL MAELSTROM

### **Combat spell glosses.**

**Flame shroud.** This works against all attacks with a physical attack die, including those with a magical source. A flare erupts from your flaming body as necessary to respond to ranged attacks.

**Wall of Fire.** The wall must be vertical. It can curve, but it cannot lie flat or form a circle that closes on itself so as to trap those inside. It is translucent, and spells can be cast through it.

**Fire Nova.** The fire bursts from within the targets' hearts. There is no fan of flames or flying ball that can be dodged.

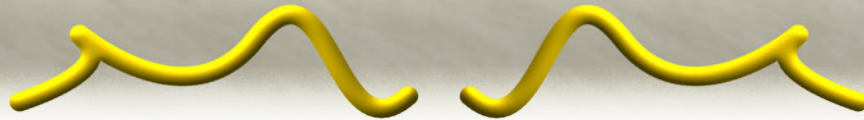
**Petrify.** This spell does 1 point of Quickness damage when it hits. In each subsequent round, you are able to maintain the magic that is slowly petrifying the target. Roll a d8 Magic attack against the petrifying creature; if you hit again, he takes another point of Quickness damage. You are free to cast another spell or take any other action. The ongoing petrification attacks end when you are forced to re-cast, when the target is petrified, or when you and the target are no longer in the same scene (usually this means that one or the other has escaped combat or fled).

**Mistwalk.** This does not allow levitation or grant you a completely immaterial, misty form. It does lighten your body so that moving and climbing is easy and can be done in combat without breaking style. It also transforms just enough of your body into wispy cloudstuff that spells have a hard time affecting you.

### **Close spells.**

**Airy water.** As you stand on the shore or edge of a large body of water, you gesture, and the water begins to bubble. Soon gobs of air are mixed into the water. You and all other air-breathers can breathe this air. The airy water extends in a 10-foot sphere around you, and it lasts until you exit the body of water. When fighting in airy water, combatants take a Strength penalty die with every nonmagical attack and defense roll, and nonmagical ranged attacks are impossible.

**Flame.** You can cause flames the size of a camp fire to leap into existence. If there is dry fuel, the



flames light it, but otherwise the flames fade in a flash. Without wood or oil or something similar to light, then, this spell is not suitable for use as a substitute torch.

**Fog.** Fog rolls in and obscures one area. Perception checks in the fog are at a one die size penalty. Characters not in the fog's area take a two die size penalty on perception checks and ranged attacks for each area between them and the fog.

**Gust of wind.** At your gesture, a strong gust of wind (50 kph) blows from you to the edge of the area.

**Ice rime.** At the end of your incantation (four consecutive Tricks in combat), a coating of ice crystallizes on all exposed surfaces. In the next round, anyone carrying an item must make a Quickness or Strength (her choice) roll against your Magic roll or drop the item. Until the ice melts, anyone moving or fighting in the area must make a Quickness check against the Doom to avoid slipping and falling (rebalancing if in combat).

**Warmth.** You can keep a person warm even if he wears nothing but a loincloth on the peak of Koshtra Indege. The protection lasts indefinitely, but each person so treated counts as one of your bound spells.

**Weather burst.** A weather burst causes a brief but strong outburst of weather. A deluge on a sunny day and a rainbow at an overcast wedding are two examples of what is possible. The weather outburst lasts for a minute, and then all returns to normal.

**Weather witching.** A weather witching changes the weather by one step: a light rain becomes a heavy rain; a drizzle becomes a light rain; a sunny day becomes a brilliant, hot day; a gale becomes a strong wind; and so forth. You can cast this spell once per weather system; that is, you cannot cast this spell a second time until the weather changes naturally.

**Whispers on the Wind.** You can whisper so that the winds carry your words to anyone within sight.

### **Freeform close spells.**

Masters of the Elemental Maelstrom style are not limited to the close spells listed above. In general, any spell that involves storms, the elements, or weather falls within the Elemental Maelstrom style.

### **High spells.**

**Call weather.** You can change the weather. The new weather can be any weather possible for the region for the year. After changing the weather once,

you must let the new weather pattern run its natural course before casting this spell again.

**Calm.** Throughout the maritime region where you cast this spell, winds do not blow. Sail-powered ships cannot move. This quells any winds that were in the area, even storm winds, although other storm effects such as lightning, rain, or snow continue. The calm endures for a day.

**Disaster.** After an hour of casting, you wreak a disaster on your region. You can cause an earthquake, flood, blizzard, tornado, avalanche, or hurricane (p. 61).

**Living fire, living air, etc.** Magic animates an element (p. 189). The living elemental is twice as tall as a man and proportionately thick. The elemental obeys you as long as you make a Reason check against the elemental's Charisma; if you fail, the elemental ceases to live. The spell lasts for only one scene.

**Travelling mercies.** Your spell follows the caravan, armada, craft or individual that you specify. The attendant fair weather increases the large-scale speed of travel by 125%. This counts as a bound High Spell.

**Storm blessing or storm curse.** By calling an intense storm at the wrong time, or calming it at the right time, a maelstrom mage can increase or decrease the Wealth Level of the region's agricultural sector by 1.

**Vortex.** An arcane twister roars through the region along a path you specify up to half a mile long. Anything alive and touched by the vortex is transported elsewhere. Creatures aware of the vortex and attempting to avoid it can make a chase roll against the Doom (or, if appropriate to the game, run a Chase scene against the vortex). Determine the destination of those caught in the vortex by rolling percentile dice.

1-10: Bottom of nearest major body of water.

11-20: Bottom of the nearest dungeon, prison, or school.

21-35: Nearest enemy's courtyard, orchard, lists, peristyle, docks, or similar.

35-50: Heart of nearest magical beast's lair.

51-65: Nearest active battleground.

66-75: Altar room of a Low God cult in a land at least 3 days journey from here.

76-80: Same spot, one week in the future.

81-85: Inside a sarcophagus in a royal tomb.

86-90: Top of the canopy in a royal





bedchamber.  
91-95: Ally's home.  
96-00: Home.

## HEARTS

### **Combat spell glosses.**

**Awaken Heart.** This targets the caster or another creature.

**Hearten.** You hearten only one ally at a time. Name him; if he hits next round, he gains 1 Mood.

**Two Hearts Beast as One.** Both allies must be willing.

**Sympathy.** You must hit both creatures to be targeted; roll the d6 Magic attack separately for each. Despicable, desperate, or clever mages can cast this on a willing ally or slave who waives the to-hit roll, leaving only the true enemy needing to be hit by the d6 Magic attack roll.

There is a variation called "Strange Victory" that replaces Doubt with Loss (d6 Magic attack/d4 defense). Loss wounds the target's psyche. For the remainder of the scene, Despair and Suffering causes 3 damage and prevents the target from using an Inspiration, as well as Mood, in the subsequent round.

### **Close spells.**

**Apathy.** Weak hearts lack will. Against a creature who is not spellbound and has a Heart of 5 or less, this spell succeeds unless you roll a 1 on your Magic roll. Against other targets, it fails. When it succeeds, the target fails to act when he otherwise would. You convince the target to not sound an alarm, to refuse to fight, to ignore the crime he has just noticed. This spell can be successful once per target per scene (or day).

**Boost.** Once per scene (or day) per person, you can boost an ally's Mood by two with this spell. In combat, this spell requires two consecutive Tricks.

**Dead memory.** You double the rate at which the spell recipient can voluntarily lose Inspiration points. This is especially popular as a trapped spell sold to a broken-hearted lover.

**Despair.** Cast this upon a person at 0 Mood. He must then make a Heart roll against the Doom before he can regain any Mood. He can attempt one roll per

scene (or day). While so ensorcelled, the target counts as one of your trapped spells.

**Emotional theme (M).** You subtly alter the emotional theme of a location. Shadows deepen, or gargoyles leer, or the sun comes out, or the fire blazes warmer - depending on the theme you add. For the remainder of the scene or until you leave the location, you can add a theme, just as a building's architecture and design can add a theme (p. 155). You can only use one theme per scene (or day).

**Inspiration sympathy.** You become aware of anyone in sight who shares one of your Inspirations. The Inspiration must match closely. Merely sharing "Ambition" is not enough, nor is "Ambition: be successful." "Ambition: win the Unicorn Downs gauntlet race" is specific enough.

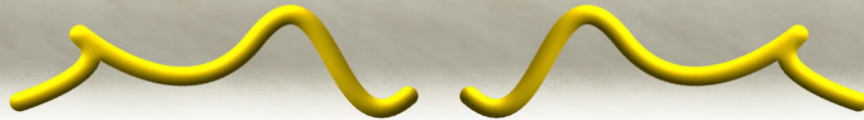
**Masquerade.** You mask your heart. Roll your Magic die as a bonus die when resisting any attempt to read your emotions or discover your Inspirations or intentions. This spell lasts indefinitely but counts as one of your trapped spells while in effect.

**Read Inspiration.** If the target used an Inspiration in this scene, you can read the Inspiration's type (anger, desire, fear, love, vengeance, etc.) but not its focus.

**Read Mood.** You can tell if a person is close to maximum Mood, half Mood, or in danger of despair (zero Mood).

**Serenity (M).** This spell is highly sought after on the black market. A person with serenity feels a preternatural happiness and calm. Although her Mood can decrease, she feels no associated pain or trauma. She does not roll any Heart penalty dice or take any other penalties associated with losing Mood, being insulted, facing Fears, or going against a region's culture. She cannot use any Inspiration which involves violent, angry feelings, and she cannot use any Inspiration at all in combat or mass combat.

**Trollhearts.** Two people who have each other as Inspirations can use this spell to know what the other is feeling at any distance, as long as they are in the same region. Communication is impossible; only vague feelings come through the link: fear, contentment, worry, and anger, for instance. No other information, including the object or cause of the emotion, is shared. A bonded couple counts as one of the Troll-



hearts-casting wizard's trapped spells.

### **Freeform close spells.**

Masters of Hearts are not limited to the close spells listed above. In general, any spell that involves emotions, friendships, enmity, and spirit falls within the Hearts style.

### **High spells.**

Anger. Grudges break to mutiny on all sides. Any attempt to parley instead of fight, to make peace instead of war, to talk down instead of ratchet up must beat the Doom in addition to any opposed roll. This spell must be renewed each scene (or day).

Devotion. The members of an organization redouble their efforts on its behalf. The organization gains 2 Efficiency and 1 to one other characteristic. It persists indefinitely, but while in effect, this spell counts as your trapped High spell.

Forsaken Hearts. You sap the will from everyone in the region. Friends and foes alike take a -1 penalty to their Heart scores unless they succeed in a Magic roll against the Doom. Each person attempts the roll once per day. The spell persists for one month or until you cast it in a different region.

Fountainhead. As Forsaken Hearts, but friends and foes gain a +1 bonus to their Heart scores.

Guilt. Anyone in the region whose Inspirations run counter to the region's culture reduces his maximum Mood by 2, rather than 1, for each such Inspiration. This spell must be renewed each scene (or day).

Hardened Heart. A person with a hardened heart rolls your Magic die as a bonus die whenever he is resisting an attack that would cause Mood or Inspiration damage. The Hardened Heart reduces the character's maximum Mood to 2. Hardening a heart this way counts as your bound High spell.

Intimations. Whispers inflame the heart and the temper, in one meeting of the eyes there are a thousand declarations of love. The bonds and feuds amongst people become stronger. Any Inspiration involving another person or group of people is increased by one. This allows people to exceed their normal maximum Inspiration capacity. The spell persists for one month or until you cast it in a different region.

Tranquility. The aura of peace and calm in the region is so overpowering that anyone engaging in violence must make a Heart check against the Doom

or suffer 1 Mood damage. This spell persists for one month or until you cast it in a different region.

Zeal. All units in a legion gain one Spirit for the battle that must already be occurring when you cast this spell.

## LANGUAGE OF STARS

### **Combat spell glosses.**

Whispers in Starlight. You can only communicate with one ally at a time, and you can only have one ally designated by this spell at a time. NB this spell works perfectly well out of combat. You and the ally must be within sight or within the same area. This spell does not count as one of your trapped spells; such are the mysteries of the stars.

Glow. You must hit each individual spellbound creature with your d10 magic attack. The GM may choose not to tell you whom you are attacking, so that she can keep the identity of spellbound creatures in the area anonymous (in the event your attack fails). You choose the glow color and pattern for each individual spellbound creature you light up. The glow is equivalent to half a dozen candles. While even one spellbound creature is glowing, all magic in the area that rolls a 1 or a 2 - not just a 1 - causes a magic surge.

Astral homunculus. As those who have studied DuGray's account of the Descent observe, magic in the Descent is strange, strong, and wrong. Of course, sages say the same of the Language of Stars style, so the two are perhaps a perfect match. This spell summons the astral homunculus of a descent cat; the homunculus's stats are those of a wolf (p. 200). If you fail the Charisma roll to control the homunculus, the cat is disoriented, enraged, and attacks you. If you succeed, the cat works for you and fights for you for twelve minutes. The same cat's homunculus returns each time (fading away, painfully, instead of truly dying, if severely injured), so it can be trained though never domesticated.

Star in the Skull. Unlike normal, the rebalance forced by this spell does *not* stop the seed from expanding in the skull and making more attacks. Any subsequent forced rebalancing, including that from casting another Star in the Skull spell, will cause the



star seed's attacks to stop. Here's an example of how the spell works: The Listener (apprentices of the style are called Speakers; masters are Listeners) casts Star in the Skull, makes a d8 Magic attack, and beats the target's Magic defense roll. The attack does 1 Reason damage, and the target's head starts to glow, beaming especially through the eyes, ears, wounds, etc. The Listener is forced to rebalance. Next round, the Listener Invokes the Stars, but a sliver of his concentration maintains the Star in the Skull spell. The Star spell makes another d8 Magic attack. It hits and does another 1 Reason damage. On the third round, the Listener casts Celestial Tongue, and his Star in the Skull makes another attack, this time missing. Also on the third round, the Listener is hit by a Doubt spell cast from a Hearts witch. This forces him to rebalance, so next round, the Star in the Skull does not attack. The sliver of the Listener's concentration has been disrupted by Doubt; a new Star in the Skull must be planted.

**Prophecy.** The prophecy must match the final actions closely. Foresaying attempts suffices; results need not be specified. Predicting, "The Son of Loss will attack," is not specific enough. "The Son of Loss will constrain his rage in Argenwald's Stance" works. Only one prophecy per person per scene grants the Mood bonus. The GM is free, naturally, to award larger bonuses for more detailed prophecies. Dueling players, or players in groups haunted by mistrust, may elect to write prophecies on scrap paper, revealing them after the round in question. Any player not made aware of the prophecy does not receive the Mood bonus should it come true. Whispers in Starlight can communicate prophecies while maintaining their secrecy. A character cannot benefit from more than one Prophecy per scene (or day); even the miraculous becomes mundane with repetition.

### Close spells.

As always, combat spells can be used at any time. For most schools, casting one tends to transition the scene into a combat scene, but that is less true for Language of Stars. Glow and Whispers in Starlight are particularly useful outside of combat. Prophecy can be, too.

**Compelling Stars.** In the Language of Stars, you intone one short command. The target can refuse, but in that case he takes one point of Mood damage

if his Reason roll does not beat your Magic roll. The command must be clear and present, and it must be completable within one round. "Eat the dashberry cake" and "Lock the door" work; "Craft a window for St. Jhess's cathedral" does not. This spell requires two consecutive Tricks in combat (the first is to invoke the stars, the second to utter the command). It can only be used in a chase if the target is close enough to hear your shouted command after the second round. Compelling Stars cannot affect the same person more than once per scene.

**Encrypt.** With a wave of your hand, writing transforms into ciphers unreadable by any who are not at least apprentices in the Language of Stars spell school. You can decrypt the text with another wave of your hand. Spellbound texts require you to make a

ROLL	VISION
1-2	Child is eating a rat raw.
3-4	Child is receiving broomstick beating from mother.
5-6	Adolescent is crying into a mangled bouquet of flowers.
7-8	Adolescent is practicing the Rithaign Waltz, in cheap fancy dress, in front of a pier glass - and performing poorly.
9-10	Adolescent is composing a breathless love note to "My One Daffodil."
11-12	Drakness, the smell of lemons, and two voices screaming.
13	The leering face of a dog-headed Low God cult idol.
14	Eating a pot of honey.
15	Meeting a man with a purple-plumed hat outside of a tobacco shop.
16	Buying a Serenity spell from a seradynn spell smuggler.
17	Blackmailing a local noble with the truth about "what happened at Dunwood."
18	Shoveling dirt on a glass coffin, which contains twin brother and sister, screaming and clawing to get out.
19	Hauling a dead Islander body onto a fishing sloop in the Sea of Princes. The vision ends as the body's eyes open.
20	Adult is being shrived by a priest when the priest spontaneously combusts.





Magic roll against the Doom.

Fade. Memories fade. The target loses two points from one history item if she fails an opposed Magic roll. The points return after the scene (or day).

Gift of the Stars. Once per person, usually upon first meeting, you have a vision of one random moment from your new acquaintance's history. This spell could place a high demand on a GM's improvisation skill, but GMs should understand that the random moment need have no bearing on anything else of relevance to the campaign. (To GMs: In practice, in my experience, this spell can be wondrous fun. Toss something out there, let the players attempt to exploit it or torture it into relevance, and once they've done so, run with the result. Some great moments can come from random visions!) Here is a brief sample of random Gifts of the Stars.

History locus. At a touch, you learn the last seven spells and the last seven Inspirations used in an area.

Imminence. This spell grants minor foresight and clairvoyance against non-spellbound creatures. When someone knocks at the door, you can see who is on the other side a moment before you open it. When you are chasing someone through the Arredenthian Vaults, you know what lurks ahead the instant before you round the corner. Your visions never extend more than a second or two into the future. In addition to the obvious perks, Imminence allows you to roll your Magic die as a bonus die when making a chase roll, but you cannot then do anything other than Run or go Under Control this round.

Listen to the Same Stars. After listening to the stars for a night, you learn the name of the most powerful organization in the region and have a vision of one of the organization's recent actions.

Magic Mouth. You place a mouth, no more than half a meter square, in any location: a wall, the inside of a variorum cover, hanging in the air in a cave entrance, etc. The mouth is invisible until a trigger condition is met. Then, the mouth appears and shouts, whispers, or speaks up to twenty-three words of your choice, in any language you know (including the Language of the Stars, which can only be understood by fellow Speakers and Listeners). The trigger condition can be as complex or as simple as you like. After

speaking, the mouth returns to its dormant state until the next time it is triggered. A magic mouth counts as one of your bound spells.

Obliterate. You can erase a book or scroll with a touch. Spellbound objects require you to make a Magic roll against the Doom.

Sage History (M). You can determine which stars are right for a person. Once per season, a person can present two lifepaths to you, and you can direct her down the more fruitful path. In game terms, when a character has a choice of how to spend history or skill points, you can advise him. If he follows your advice, he gains a bonus history point, which must be spent in the same history as the first.

### **Freeform close spells.**

Masters of the Language of Stars are not limited to the close spells listed above. In general, any spell that involves clairvoyance, mysticism, language, or portents falls within the Language of Stars style. Minor illusions and lighting effects are also possible.

### **High spells.**

Capture History. Your mind captures the history of your target. You must touch your victim's temples, jaw, or eyelids throughout the one-hour casting of this spell. At the conclusion, if your Magic roll beats your target's Magic roll, you have captured one history of your choice possessed by your target. The target's history is cut in half while you have it, and can use it, at its full value. You keep it for one scene (or day). The first captured history is erased if you capture a second history.

Disjunction. You separate the spellbound from their spells. Any spellbound person who attempts to cast a spell must make a Magic roll against the Doom first. If it fails, she is unable to cast; if it succeeds, she can cast normally. In combat, this extra Magic roll does not require a separate action, however, if a witch fails to beat the Doom with this Magic roll, she must recast. This spell persists for one scene (or day).

Mass Abjuration. As abjuration (p. 240), but this spell affects every spellbound item and persistent spell in the region. High spells are unaffected.

Occult Doom. In one area (small-scale area, not a large-scale region) you raise or lower the Doom by 2 with respect to Magic. This counts as your bound high spell. The spell persists until you cast it in an-



other location or dismiss it.

**Seek Spellbound.** Name a spellbound person and describe her well enough to identify her uniquely while casting this spell, which requires a mirror, pool, or other gazing surface. You know the direction and approximate distance to the spellbound witch you are hunting. Each noon, roll your Magic die against hers. If she wins, your spell is blocked for the day and she is aware of your hunting. The spell persists until you reach your quarry, until you cast it again to seek another, or until the hunted witch leaves the region.

**Vatic Annunciation.** You prophesy something about the region, and the power of your magic carries it from mouth to mouth, ear to ear, until everyone in the region has heard of your prophesy from a priest, friend, relative, or lord. Your prophecy carries such fear of magic and fate that anyone in the region who is not working toward making your prophecy come true (perhaps simply by believing in it, if there is no direct action reasonably available), has his maximum Mood reduced by three if he does not succeed at a Heart roll against the Doom. This roll must be re-made each week. The prophecy counts as your bound high spell, and it cannot be unbound by you until it either comes to pass or fails. If you are known as the prophet of a failed prophecy, you may gain negative Reputation, at the GM's option. Spellbound creatures are immune to this spell; they have long since learned to live with the terrible entropy of magic.

**Void.** After a night of casting with at least two acolytes, you drop a hole out of the magic in an area. One type of Inspiration - your choice - is now unusable in the region. Void persists indefinitely; it counts as your bound high spell. Any wild surge caused by casting this spell results in a crisis surge.

## WEREMAGIC

### **Combat spell glosses.**

**Corrupting Light.** The shaft of light weakens the target for one round only.

**Lunacy.** The target attacks one of his allies with a randomly determined attack in his current style. The attack must be accessible from the current maneu-

ver, as always.

**Warp Flesh.** Your spell twists your target's flesh, ripping it, inflicting 2 points of damage, and causing it, if you wish, to take on the appearance of a werereature. Victims typically appear half-transformed into anthropomorphic wolves, rats, or bears. The warped flesh does not prevent using weapons or manipulating objects, but the lycanthropic appearance influences social interactions, typically using your Magic roll as either a bonus or penalty die, depending on the situation.

**Wolf curse.** The target of this spell can be willing, in which case no attack roll is necessary. The target must make a Reason roll opposed by your Magic roll or lose his mind while a wolf, even if he is a willing target (this is because "Magic, to be commanded, must be obeyed," that is, magic has its own rules that are often outside even a wizard's control). Used in a non-combat scene, this spell persists for a number of minutes equal to your Magic score. In any case, the spell cannot be effective against the same target more than once in a scene (or day); the power of the spell does not render the flesh sufficiently malleable. You cannot target yourself with this spell.

**Transformation.** This spell requires the bloodlust of combat. If you cast this spell to transform into your wereshape and do not engage in combat on the subsequent rounds, you take 2 Reason damage per round. When you reach 2 Reason, you are of a beast mind; hand your character sheet to the GM until she determines that your mind has healed. Every wizard has one wereshape which is chosen upon first learning this Magic style; it cannot change thereafter.

**Shred.** A history check against the Doom suffices to repair armor after the battle.

**Frenzy.** Only the d12 attack delivers werevenom.

### **Close Spells.**

**Alter Appearance.** A werewizard can warp his own flesh routinely, altering his appearance. The superficial changes can include hair color and length, eye color, maxillofacial bone structure, height, and weight. Not all of these features can be changed at once. There is always some vestige of the werewizard's original appearance. The spell grants the caster's Magic die



as a bonus die to any attempt to avoid the disguise's detection. This is not an illusion; the physical form of the caster actually shifts. Race cannot change.

**Catch Scent.** Useful once per trail, this incantation allows you to roll your Magic die as a bonus die when tracking something by scent.

**Frighten.** Mundane animals are frightened off by werereatures. Inconsequential animals scatter, perhaps supplying you with a social bonus die equal to your Magic die, if you exploit the staging well. Threatening animals roll their Heart against your Magic; if their heart fails, they flee.

**Inconstant Moon (M).** This lunacy inflicts upon the target a lack of constancy. The target cannot concentrate and cannot complete any task that requires more than a minute's worth of attention. Smithing a sword, commanding a battle, reading a long letter; all impossible. The first successful resistance roll breaks the spell, which otherwise persists indefinitely (though it counts as one of your bound spells). A resistance roll can be attempted once per day. A person cannot suffer from this spell more than once per lunar cycle (month).

**Leap.** When leaping, you have an effective Strength of 8 (10 for werelords, that is, masters of the weremagic style). If you roll a 1 on your leap, however, this causes a magic surge just as if you had rolled a 1 on your Magic roll.

**Purge Flesh.** While grisly, this is an effective disease cure, and it sells well on the black market. The recipient must already have contracted a disease. When this spell is cast, his flesh changes. He gains your Magic die on all subsequent rolls to resist the disease. However, he also gains a distinctive, beastly scar or feature such as excessive hirsutism, cat-like eyes, or a dewclaw. This feature acts as a maiming, scar or crippling wound (p. 30).

**Shifting Psyche.** For a moment, the target forgets his own history. He takes a Reason penalty die on his next skill use, provided it is within the hour. Your spell is negated, and cannot be used on this target again this scene, if the target resists your Magic roll with a Reason roll of his own.

**Sniff silver.** With a quick olfactory enchantment, you can sniff out any silver in the area.

### Freeform Close Spells.

Masters of Weremagic, called werelords, are not limited to the close spells listed above. In general, any spell that involves shapeshifting, lunacy, lycanthropic beasts, and warped flesh fall within the Weremagic style.

### High Spells.

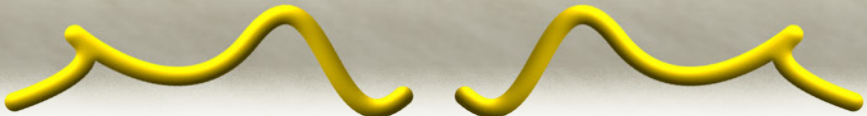
**Curse shape.** To curse someone this way, you must have a piece of their body (hair, fingernail, pound of flesh, etc.) and a figurine of the cursed shape. After the spell is cast, which requires three consecutive tricks if in combat, the target rolls a Magic roll against your Magic roll to resist. If he fails, he is forced into a new shape. He retains his mind: Reason, Heart, Magic, and Charisma scores, Inspirations, Mood, plus histories and skills (although he may not be able to use them in his new form). His other attributes are those of the new form: Strength, Quickness, and Body. The shape of the cursed target depends on the caster's wereshape, although substitutions are possible if the group and GM see fit.

WERESHAPE	CURSED SHAPE
Wolf	Frog
Bear	Puppy
Tiger, descent cat	Kitten
Raptor	Lizard
Rat	Mouse

The victim gains a new Magic roll to break the spell, opposed by your Magic roll, each fortnight for one season. During this time, the spell counts as your bound high spell. After this, the curse becomes permanent and does not count as a bound high spell. There is, however, always a condition that breaks the curse, set by the caster at the time of casting: a kiss from a princess, the true love of a troll, the throne falls and shatters, etc. Note that because the cursed victim retains his Inspirations, killing him may be difficult, even in the cursed animal shape.

**Horde.** You summon a pack of wolves, horde of rats, or swarm of spiders and command them. This takes six minutes; the vermin follow and obey you for one hour or until destroyed. You can also issue com-





mands to any members of the species that you did not summon with a Magic vs. Doom roll. Commanding creatures in this way takes a Trick in combat.

**Moonbane.** You can suspend the moon's progression through its phases. It stays at the phase you stop it for one month. The moonbane affects the entire region.

*New Moon:* Characters with primarily shadow levels (a shadow class is their highest class level) gain a single extra use of one Inspiration in a scene, as long as the extra use of the Inspiration is used to trick, deceive, charm, sneak, or something similar. Shadow organizations (those with Shadow as their highest characteristic) increase their Shadow scores by 2.

*Crescent Moon:* The Doom is increased by one for people who are not spellbound.

*Gibbous Moon:* The Doom is lowered by one for spellbound characters.

*Full Moon:* Characters with primarily magic levels (a magic class is their highest class level) gain a single extra use of one Inspiration in a scene, as long as the extra use of the Inspiration is used when casting a spell. Magic organizations (those with Arcana as their highest characteristic) increase their Arcana scores by 2.

**Lunacy.** The target is afflicted with one of the following manias, determined randomly, unless his Magic roll beats yours.

- 1 - Dipsomania. The character loses one Mood point every hour he is not drunk, progressing into Inspiration damage. Drunkenness reduces all characteristics save Strength and Quickness by 2 and forces a Reason penalty die with every roll.
- 2 - Kleptomaia - The character must steal. He makes a Reason roll against the Doom to avoid stealing something in every scene.
- 3 - Homicidal mania - The character becomes catatonic for 1d12 hours if he has not killed in the last scene (or day).
- 4 - Megalomania - The character believes he is King and becomes enraged (1 Mood point loss) every time someone transgresses this belief.

5 - Paranoia - The character is convinced someone is out to get him. He suffers a Reason penalty die on every roll in the first round and last rounds of every encounter as he looks over his shoulder.

6 - Idiot Savant - The character's Reason is reduced to 2 in all but one field, where his Reason is 12. Typical fields include music, memorization, arithmetic, and detailed knowledge of crisis surges.

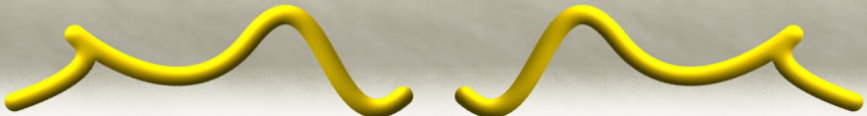
7 - Borrowed personality - The character believes he is another PC or NPC and behaves accordingly.

8 - Schematic monomania - The character is obsessed with accomplishing an involved scheme. Every hour that the character does not work on his scheme, he loses 1 Mood point, progressing into Inspiration damage.

Once affected, the victim rolls a Magic roll against your Magic roll once each day until he throws off the madness.

**Obsession.** You must cast this during the midnight hour of a full or new moon. The target need not be present, but he must be within the region. The target of this spell fixates on one of his Inspirations, determined randomly, to the exclusion of all others. Over time, he puts all of his possible points into that one Inspiration, and he spends as much time as possible pursuing it. The target gains a Reason roll against your Magic roll each time the moon changes phases; success breaks the spell. This spell counts as your trapped high spell.

**Rave Night.** A full moon or a new moon must be in the sky when this spell is cast. For one night, everyone in the region goes mad. Individuals can make an initial Magic roll against the Doom to stave off madness; otherwise, they succumb. Those who go mad are wild and shameless, seeking to sate the most basic drives: hunger, lust, anger, greed. An armed legion trying to restore order to the streets must fight off waves of angry mobs (p. 161). All organizations in the region must roll Efficiency against your Magic roll or suffer a 1 point loss to all characteristics for the next week. An individual out in public on a Rave Night can expect to



encounter 1d4 lunatic revelers per area, in most cases a brawl results without a successful Charisma check against the Doom.

Wereshape. Choose one wereshape: wolf, bear, tiger, descent cat, raptor, rat. Once chosen, you can never change your wereshape. When you cast this spell, over the course of half a minute, you transform into one of these were-beasts (counts as five consecutive Tricks in combat). Your Reason, Heart, Magic, Charisma, Mood, Inspirations, and Histories remain your own, but you gain the Strength, Quickness, Body, Armor and Weapon Quality, shape, and fighting styles of the were-beast, with two exceptions. First, no characteristic can be raised higher than your number of magic levels. For example, if you are a wizard 6/assassin 6 and you shapechange into a werebear, your Strength and Body are 6 rather than the 10 and 9 normally listed for a were-bear. Second, you gain fighting styles only at the apprentice level, even if the were-beast normally has mastered the fighting style. You may also gain other special abilities; these are noted in the were-beast's description. Unless noted, you do not gain other were-beast abilities, such as being proof against all but silver weapons.

You can remain in wereshape for up to one day per magic level per lunar cycle, retaking your original shape over the course of another half a minute. For example, if you are a wizard/chosen one 5/3, and your chosen one levels are magic levels, then you can remain in your wereshape for 8 days per month.

Carried items, including clothing, do not change form with you. Wounds do. That is, if you have suffered 4 points of Body damage in your human form, and then you shift into your wereform, you will still have 4 points of Body damage.

Casting close spells is possible but difficult in wereshape; you must roll your Magic score against the Doom to have a chance at success. Casting spells in combat and casting high spells at any time while in wereshape is impossible.



# APPENDIX THREE: INVESTIGATION & FLAVOR TABLES

## A: LOCATIONS FOR SCENES & CLUES

	CASTLE	CASTLE, PT. II
1	Great hall	Alchemist's atelier
2	Kitchen	Engineer's shop
3	Study	Zeppelin hangar
4	Trophy room, game	Conservatory
5	Trophy room, peasant	Inside iron maiden in dungeon
6	Dream projection room	Cleaner crab pen
7	Audience room	Clerestory
8	Privy	Indoor brook
9	Kennels	Greenhouse
10	Map room	Hall of mirrors
11	Armory	Chapel
12	Tasting room, wine and taken emotions	Anchorite prayer cells
	VILLAGE PT. I	VILLAGE PT. II
1	Rich tavern's wine cellar	Churchyard with lilac bush
2	Poor tavern's flop room/floor	Inside the mind of a child who never speaks
3	The town square well	Stables
4	Troll butcher's ice house	Home of a miser
5	Nest abandoned by wolf child	Home of an Axeman
6	Blacksmith's forge	Home of a king'sman
7	Monument to lost school children	Building burned by king'smen
8	Outdoor bazaar	Gallows

## B: LOCATIONS FOR SCENES & CLUES

	CATHEDRAL/ CHURCH GROUNDS	COUNTRYSIDE/ WILDERNESS
1	Undercroft	Burnt oak trunk
2	Library of Wrandt's Turn books	Ruins of a Low God shrine
3	Vestibule	Wildflower patch
4	Pipe Organ, in B storm pipe	Abandoned hermit's house
5	Sanctuary, under prayer kneeler	Occupied hedge wizard's tower
6	Where sunlight passes through stained glass Wrandt's Nail at noon	Manticore ossuary
7	Baldachin	Lake
8	Carved column containing secret door to spiral stair	Burial cairn covered with mud displaying naga tracks
9	Monk's cell	Brook
10	Holy font	Mine operated by inbred family
11	Wine press	Dead spellstalk mass
12	Choir loft	Natural rock arch
	MISCELLANEOUS	MISCELLANEOUS
1	In the zeppelin captain's stateroom	In the dreams of a leper-wight
2	Winter ballroom	The Free Road
3	Dissolved in wine glass with Language of Stars freeform "Letter in Wine" spell	A field marshal's command tent
4	In the scabbard of the Duke Below's broadsword	On the Sun Goddess' tepui



## C: CHALLENGES

	URBAN	MISCELLANEOUS
1	Break into cathedral to search baptismal records	Translate and interpret journal page
2	Kidnap familiar of a king's Battlecrafter	Tap signal onto wall of Sealed Kingdom
3	Learn a secret from a kinsman	Beat a rain troll in a pain endurance contest
4	Negotiate with thieves guild recruiter	Ice sled race around the walls of Thyre
5	Fight spellstalk victim, wild in streets	Make a pilgrimage to seven Wrandt cathedrals
6	Track a wolf child	Outdress the Duchess
7	Dance with a noble at midsummer revel	Court one of Asenkut Ragul's nineteen daughters
8	Learn the story of the innkeeper's last adventure	Reunite a distant trader and his wife
9	Write and stage a play	Clean (clear the monsters) and open a noble's summer house
10	Fight trading caravel's impressment squad	Win the confidence of a Zocith templar
11	Chase down thieves	Speak to a Low God
12	Flee kinsmen	Race the Free Road
	DUNGEON	DUNGEON
1	Ford underground river	Pick sarcophagus locks
2	Fight troglodyte tribe	Disarm crazed engineer's lab
3	Decipher madman's diary as spiked ceiling descends	Help dying explorer reach the surface
4	Zombie ambush	Shatter golems

## D: NAMES + ROLES

	NAMES (M, F)	ROLES
1	Julio, Maria	Trapper, ratter
2	Anselm, Lieve	Informant
3	Joachim, Anneka	Shipwright
4	Thierry, Minette	Deacon
5	Desmond, Wilhelmina	Fruitmonger
6	Ichabod, Giselle	Teacher, tutor
7	Peter, Quinn	Butcher
8	Liam, Penelope	Sailor
9	Richard, Regan	Heir to a bourgeois fortune
10	John, Catherine	Kingsman
11	Arvind, Branwyn	Farmer
12	Mark, Elena	Sewer worker
	SURNAMES	TAVERN NAMES
1	Thenson, Leval, Shermalhatma	The Dripping Rag
2	Forks, Eikenvald, Ruiz	(An orange X on the sign)
3	Tor, Usetai, Gosh	The Eye in the Pot
4	Winthorp, Holg, Tehjad	The Old Trastamara
5	Millais, Drussen, Mubai	The Saints
6	Crathminster, Endwell, Mhamalyan	Three Hearts and Three Dragons
7	Smith, Gruenfeldt, Jaan	The Violet Room
8	Hefflovich, Hotung, Bansal	Hearth on the Heath

## E: CONFLICTS AND FORESHADOWS

	CONFLICT	ADUMBRATIONS
1	Dramba body switcher has been masquerading as noble	Man in iron mask thrashing in dungeon, dramba houngan puffing narghile in tavern
2	Dragon has gained intelligence and started to carve out a kingdom	Nobles are moving to summer residences, shadow society is becoming more obvious in power vacuum left behind
3	War is coming with a new Descent horde	Widewater has stopped communications, Free Trade road caravans going missing
4	Dynn fanatics are tracking down spellbound in the area	Ranting preachers on street corners, plate armor stash found in harbor warehouse
5	Cover-up of noble's accidental murder of village boy	Several families in village are suddenly wealthy, arguments heard inside nobles' carriages
6	Wizard has attacked zeppelin, crashing it, and there is currently a battle raging in the mountains between wizard's forces and the trader's zeppelin	Strange requests from disguised wizards in town market, increase in spellbound density, wild surges causing chaos in town
7	City neighborhood is being torn apart by shadow war over the allegiance of a refugee magic order from a collapsed Eastern Isle wight kingdom	Bodies found impaled on wagon cart handles in the morning, cracks in the pavement from spells and earthquake wild surges
8	Trader has found new veins in abandoned mine in badlands south of Azenahal; he and nobles are (sometimes violently) negotiating rights	Caravans to Alhos Verradas are ambushed, thieves swarm streets to steal copies of map or claim
9	A peasant has found a book of five Death Spells	Lots of dead bodies of peasant's enemies from the first two spells, increase in wild surges, thieves guild bosses and archmagi suddenly in town to investigate purchase, theft, and vengeance
10	A cult worshipping Grish Torsce, the god of reptiles, has taken over an outlying village	Priest in the local church is acting strangely, disappearances of victims with no coins being taken from surrounding villages, monstrous snake and raptor sightings in woods
11	A fixer is sparing no cost and has no regard for safety as he seeks revenge on the assassin he blames for his wife's death	Poisonous vessels from his workshop have found their way to the tavern and are sickening people, caustic pockmarks in building walls at site of alley fight
12	A baroness is hunting down two lovers and wizards, namely her maniacal fugitive husband and his sadistic Druidess lover	Kingsmen are questioning people about something, by force if necessary; city watch may start chasing PCs, only to apologize for mistaken identity

## F: PICKPOCKET RESULTS

1	Ivory comb (10 m)
2	Dremel, punch, awl
3	Bag of bread
4	Prayer nails
5	Wrandt's book
6	Pocket knife
7	Plague flag, charm
8	High God woodcut
9	Fixer's gum
10	1d10 gold coins

## G: SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

1	Theater, comedy
2	Theater, cat burning
3	Theater below, music
4	Theater below, satire
5	Prayer service
6	Harvest festival
7	Stake monkey hunt
8	Ballroom dancing
9	Tavern dancing
10	Dinner at the Arch-bishop's

## H: CONTRABAND

1	Trapped spell scroll: Body Switch (dram-ba)
2	Trapped spell candle: Disaster (druid)
3	Stirring sheet music
4	Love poem
5	Noble caricature hand puppets
6	Low God idol
7	Cup from royal table
8	Directions to safe house
9	Priest's chasuble
10	Bishop's accounting ledger

## I: DEUS EX MACHINAE

1	Lost love or estranged friend returns
2	A secret door opens, and a seradynn troll beckons
3	A new witness appears
4	A crisis surge shakes the earth, distracting all
5	PC finds a trapped spell scroll
6	The lights go out
7	A companion reveals an unsuspected talent
8	Enemy's disguise fails

## J: ON THE MENU

1	Ale, pint
2	Mead, pint
3	Ale, Thyrian
4	Wine, bottle
5 6	Wine, spiced, bottle Venison
7	Pheasant
8	Pork chop
9	Hunter's stew
10	Shepherd's pie (haggis or venison)

## K: ART OBJECTS

1	Statue: falcon trapped in ice
2	Statue: chimera devouring man
3	Statue: an angel's fire-birth (midwife is blindfolded)
4	Painting: priest under comet
5	Painting: arrival of the seradynn
6	Tapestry: St. Vartan chained
7	Tapestry: Ste. Jhess burning witches
8	Reliquary: fingernail clipping of St. Wrandt



NAME

CLASS AND LEVEL

RACE AND SEX

STRENGTH \_\_\_\_\_

QUICKNESS \_\_\_\_\_

REASON \_\_\_\_\_

CHARISMA \_\_\_\_\_

MAGIC \_\_\_\_\_

HEART \_\_\_\_\_

MOOD

MAX.  
(IN REGION)

BODY

MAX.

### INSPIRATIONS

FIGHTING STYLES: \_\_\_\_\_

MAGIC STYLES: \_\_\_\_\_

RACIAL ABILITIES: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS ABILITIES: \_\_\_\_\_

TALENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### HISTORY AND SKILLS

### REPUTATIONS

WEALTH  
LEVEL

GEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

F: \_\_\_\_ S: \_\_\_\_ A: \_\_\_\_ E: \_\_\_\_ SCOPE: \_\_\_\_

NAME

CLASS AND LEVEL

RACE AND SEX

STRENGTH \_\_\_\_\_

QUICKNESS \_\_\_\_\_

REASON \_\_\_\_\_

CHARISMA \_\_\_\_\_

MAGIC \_\_\_\_\_

HEART \_\_\_\_\_

MOOD

MAX.  
(IN REGION)

BODY

MAX.

## INSPIRATIONS

FIGHTING STYLES: \_\_\_\_\_

MAGIC STYLES: \_\_\_\_\_

RACIAL ABILITIES: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS ABILITIES: \_\_\_\_\_

TALENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

WEALTH LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_ GEAR & PROPERTY: \_\_\_\_\_

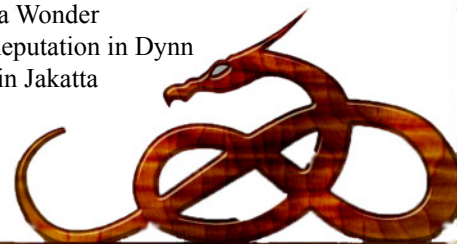
ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_ F:\_\_\_ S:\_\_\_ A:\_\_\_ E:\_\_\_ SCOPE:\_\_\_\_\_

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Win a social scene        | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet a spellstalk victim         | <input type="checkbox"/> Experience True Love.        | <input type="checkbox"/> Command an army that includes a raptor horde                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Win a duel                | <input type="checkbox"/> Rescue a child from school       | <input type="checkbox"/> Master a combat style        | <input type="checkbox"/> Undergo a transfusion in a fixer's lab                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Win a chase               | <input type="checkbox"/> Ride a zeppelin                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cast a high spell            | <input type="checkbox"/> Wear a WL 12+ fashion item  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Win a race at the Unicorn | <input type="checkbox"/> Jump from a moving zeppelin      | <input type="checkbox"/> Survive a crisis surge       | <input type="checkbox"/> Seduce an NPC (make them have a Love or Lust Inspiration for you) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Down in Rithaigh          | <input type="checkbox"/> Sing at the Shadows and Sparrows | <input type="checkbox"/> Live a night as a noble      | <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in Free Ale Night in Steerk                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Win a Marnh lottery       | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase a History to 20         | <input type="checkbox"/> Fight a lich                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Witness a Wonder  |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Be Wealth Level 15 or higher     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fight a dragon               | <input type="checkbox"/> Gain a Reputation in Dynn   |
|  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Own a castle                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Set foot in Jakatta   |
|  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet a king                  |  |
|  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Survive by Inspiration alone |  |

## ACHIEVEMENTS

## HISTORY AND SKILLS

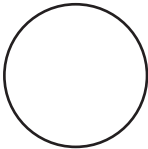
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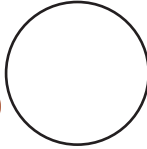


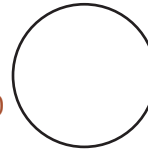


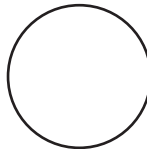
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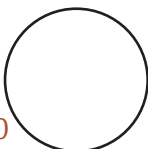
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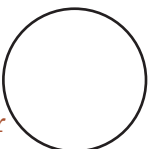
d8  d2  
Penetrate (r)  
3 + 1 Str

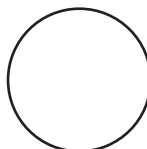
0  d2  
Mighty Pull  
Ignore range penalties  
for first three areas  
next round

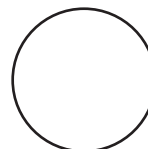
d10  d2  
Anticipate (r)  
Name maneuver;  
if correct do  
4 + rebalance

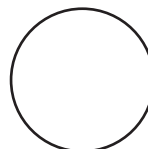
d6/  
d4  d2  
Double Shot (r)  
2/1

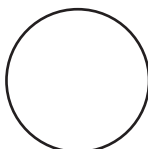
d10  d4  
Called Shot: Torso  
2

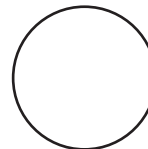
d6  
vs dStr  d2  
Called Shot:  
Held Item (r)  
1 + item dropped

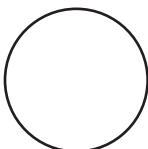
0  d2  
Aim and Breathe  
+1 attack die size  
next round

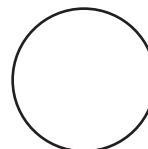
d6  d2 M  
Called Shot:  
Pin (r)  
2 + grabbed  
(Trick ends)

d4  d2 M  
Called Shot: Head (r)  
5

d4  d4  
Trick Shot  
1 + environment trick

d4  d6  
Shoot and Dive (r)  
1

d6  d2  
Archer's Shot  
1

d4  d2  
Shot on the Run  
1 + Move

Requires bow.

All attacks are ranged.

You cannot execute a Called Shot to the Head if you are hit while Aiming & Breathing in the previous round.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot		Trick/Misc.
Qck/d2		0/d4





# BATTLECRAFT

## SPELL COMBAT STYLE

M  
d20 d6  
**Stone Pincer Hurl**  
2 + hurl grabbed  
tgt 1 area

d8 d6  
**Stone Pincer Grab**  
Grabbed

d10 d6  
**Stone Pincer Slash**  
2

d8 d4  
**Crimson Bands of Hessek**  
Banded. Each band does 1 damage per round until you are forced to re-cast

0 d4  
**Pause the Crimson Bands**  
Suspends (not dismisses) the bands' continuing damage while, for example, you interrogate the victim.

Requires no weapon, no shield.  
All are ranged.  
Reason 8, Magic 8.

d10/d10/d10 d6 d4  
**Lightning Orb**  
1/1/1 (ranged)

d10 d6 d4  
**Explode Orb (r)**  
2  
5 targets in one area (ranged)

0 d4 d4  
**Sculpt Orb**

Strike  
Str/d2

Throw/Shoot  
Qck/0

0 M d6  
**Enter Orb**

Add move, climb, +1 physical and magic defense die size, and +1 damage until you are forced to re-cast

M d8 d6  
**Improved Arcane Wards**  
+1 magic defense die size until you re-cast

0 M d6  
**Wall of Force**  
A Quality 6 invisible wall (10' high, as long or wide as the area) stands until smashed or you are forced to rebalance

Defend  
0/Qck

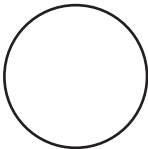
Trick/Misc.  
0/d4

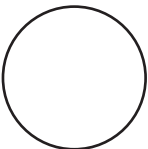
Grab  
Str/d2

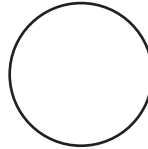


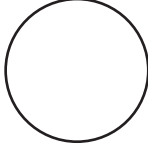
# BLACK POWDER AND CRIMSON BLADE

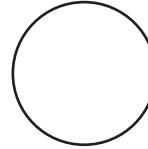
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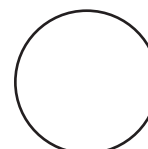
d6  d4  
Approach Cut  
2

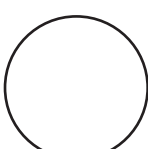
d12  d8  
Muzzle in the Face  
7

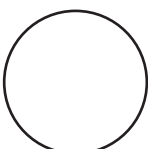
d4  d4  
Called Shot: Head (r)  
6

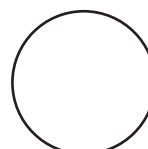
d8/  
d4  d8  
Artery Jabs  
1/1

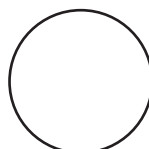
d4  d6  
Called Shot: Limb  
3 + rebalance

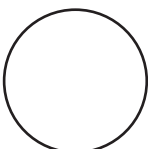
d4  d4  
Slash  
1

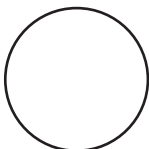
d6  d6  
Blade Feint  
and Pistol Whip  
1 + rebalance

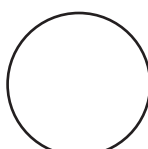
d10  d4  
Quick Shot  
2

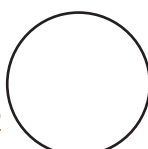
0  d4  
Brace & Aim  
+1 attack die size  
next round

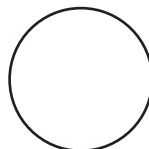
0  d8  
Fade into Shadows  
0

0  dQck  
Dodge & Load

d8/  
d8  d4  
Backstab and  
Point-Blank Spine Shot (r)  
2/3

0  d4  
Shift and Load  
Move

d12  d8  
Shot from the Dark (r)  
4

0  dQck/  
d8  
Hide and Brace

Requires one-handed slashing or piercing weapon,  
pistol, no shield, no armor with Min. Str. greater than 4.  
2 load actions required to load.  
Quickness 6.  
Shots are ranged; others not.  
Cannot use Called Shot: Head if hit while Bracing & Aiming.

Strike Str/d2	Defend 0/Qck	Grab Str/d2
------------------	-----------------	----------------

Throw/Shoot Qck/0	Trick/Misc. 0/d4
----------------------	---------------------

# BLACK POWDER MUSKETEER

## COMBAT STYLE

Cha  
vs. Cha

d4

Load and Jeer

1 Mood

d12

d4

Quick Shot

2

0

d4

Flash Smoke Screen

-2 attack die size  
next 2 rounds  
for all in area  
(out of powder after this)

M

d8/  
d6

d4

Double Shot

2/2

Requires two  
wheellocks

Cha  
vs. Doom

d4

Load and Jape

+1 to one ally's mood

d8/  
d8

d4

Shoot, Stab & Dash

3/1 + move

Second attack is not ranged

M

d4

d4

Ricochet Shot (r)

3 + can go around corner  
+ shot triggers  
environment trick

d6

d4

Called Shot: Limb

4 + rebalance

0

d2

Aim & Breathe

+1 attack die size  
next round

M

d4

d4

Called Shot: Head (r)

Double range penalties  
7

0

dQck

Dodge & Load

d8/  
Cha  
vs Cha

d6

Plume & Blade

1 + 1 Mood

0

d4

Run and Load

Move

d8

d6

Thrust and Feint

1 and + 1 melee damage until  
you are forced to rebalance

d6

d4

Slash

1

M

d6

d4

Powder Burn

Blind 1 round  
(not ranged)

Requires blackpowder weapon and blade, no shield.

2 load actions required to load.

Quickness 6, Charisma 5, Strength 5.

You cannot execute a Called Shot: Head if you are hit while Aiming & Breathing in the previous round.

Strike

Str/d2

Throw/Shoot

Qck/0

Defend

0/Qck

Trick/Misc.

0/d4

Grab

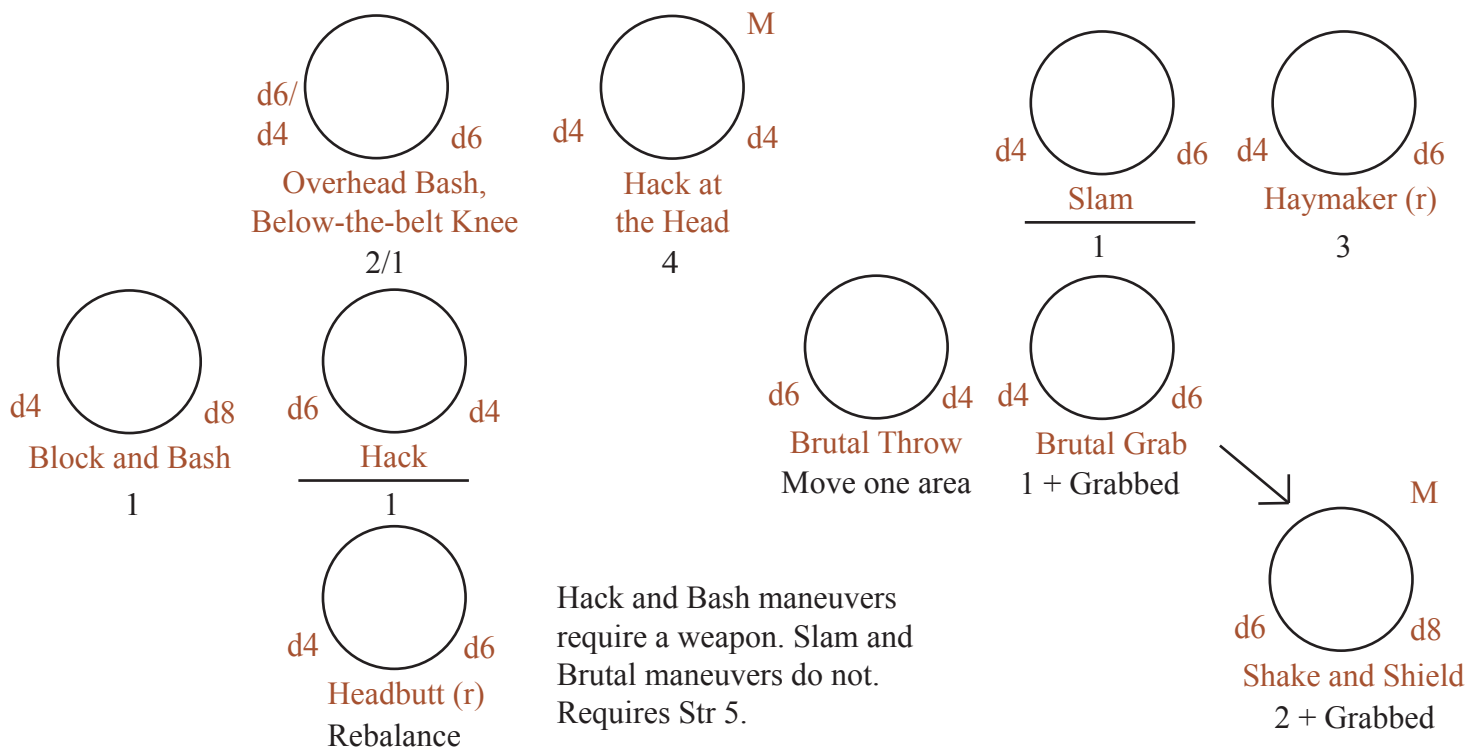
Str/d2





# BRUTE

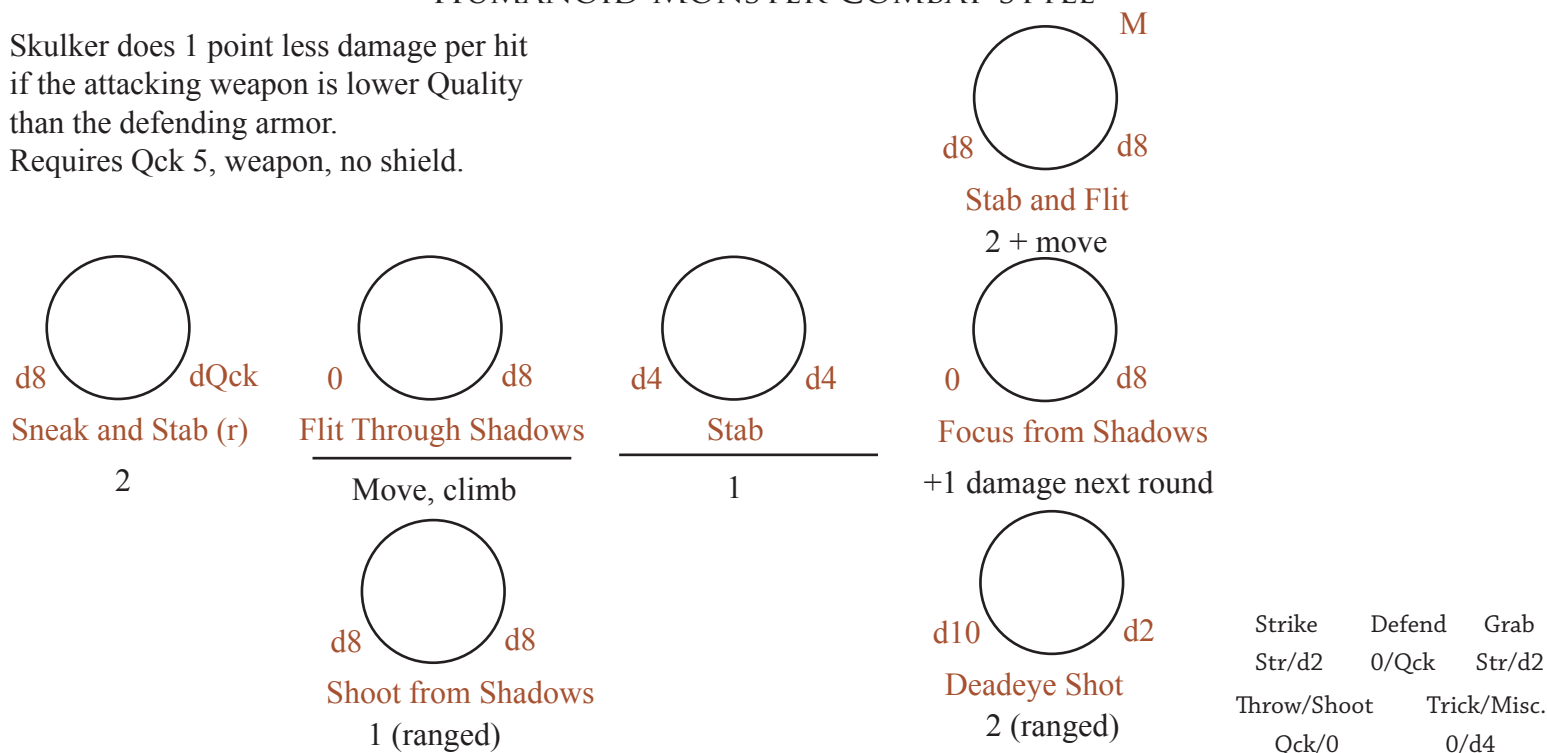
## HUMANOID MONSTER COMBAT STYLE



# SKULKER

## HUMANOID MONSTER COMBAT STYLE

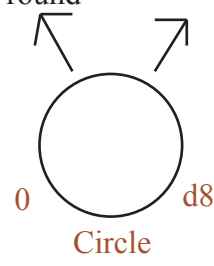
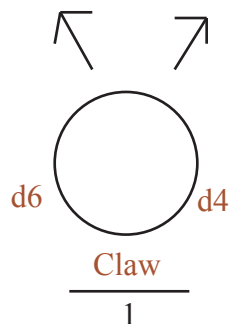
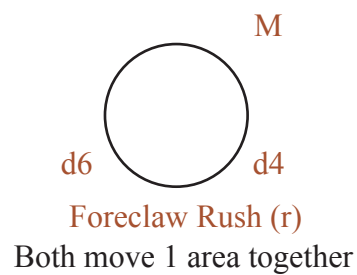
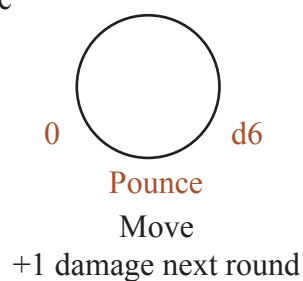
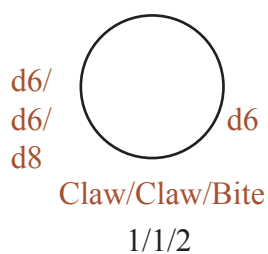
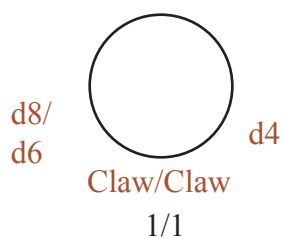
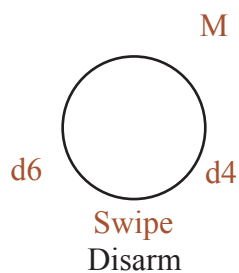
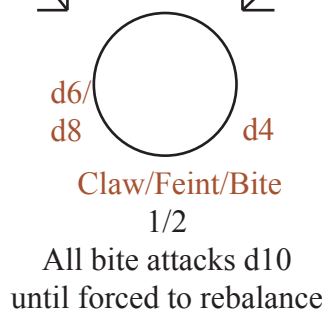
Skulker does 1 point less damage per hit if the attacking weapon is lower Quality than the defending armor.  
Requires Qck 5, weapon, no shield.





# CLAW/CLAW/BITE

## COMBAT STYLE



Requires Str 4, Qck 5.

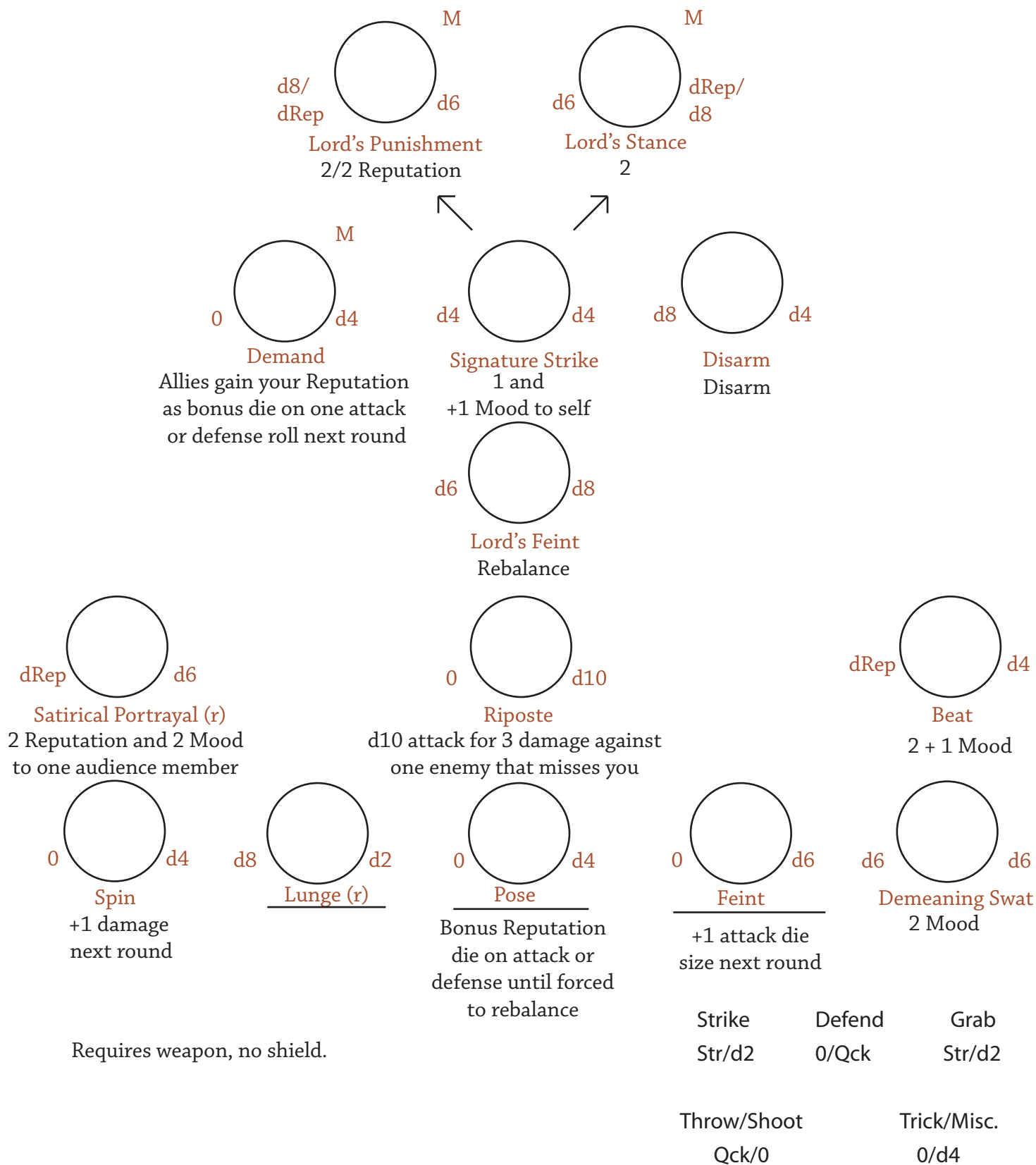
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4



# COURT SWORD

## COMBAT STYLE







# DAGGER-AND-WINE

## COMBAT STYLE

M

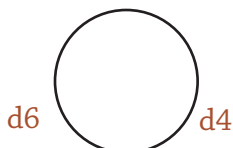


Between the Ribs (r)  
3 + 1 Str



Disarming Embrace

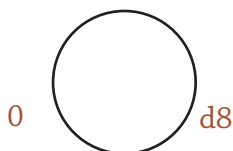
1 Mood + Disarm  
a grabbed target



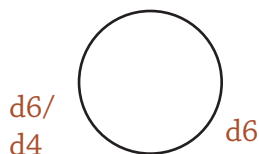
Tangled Cloak

Grabbed

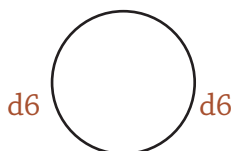
Requires cloak, bedsheets, etc.



Whirling Trick  
Move + env. trick

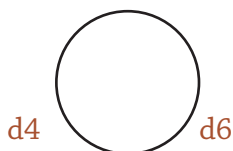


Dagger Flurry  
2/1



Low Blow (r)

2 Qck + 2 Str  
recovered after 1 round



Cut

1



Intimations

For the rest of the fight,  
target cannot use the  
Inspiration attacked by  
the secret you reveal.

Requires secret



Stunning Secret

2 Mood + rebalance;  
Requires secret

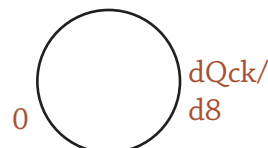


Bitter Whispers

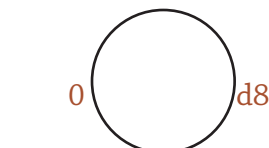
1 Mood



Backstab (r)  
4

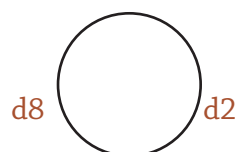


Skulk in Shadows  
Move

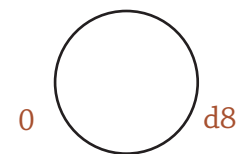


Dodge into Shadows

+2 damage  
next round



Sneak Attack  
2



Duck and Slip

If you are missed, attack goes vs.  
creature of your choice (in area)

Requires Cha 6, Qck 6, dagger or similar, no  
shield.

-1 damage vs. any armor with Quality greater  
than your weapon's Quality.

Strike  
Str/d2

Defend  
0/Qck

Grab  
Str/d2

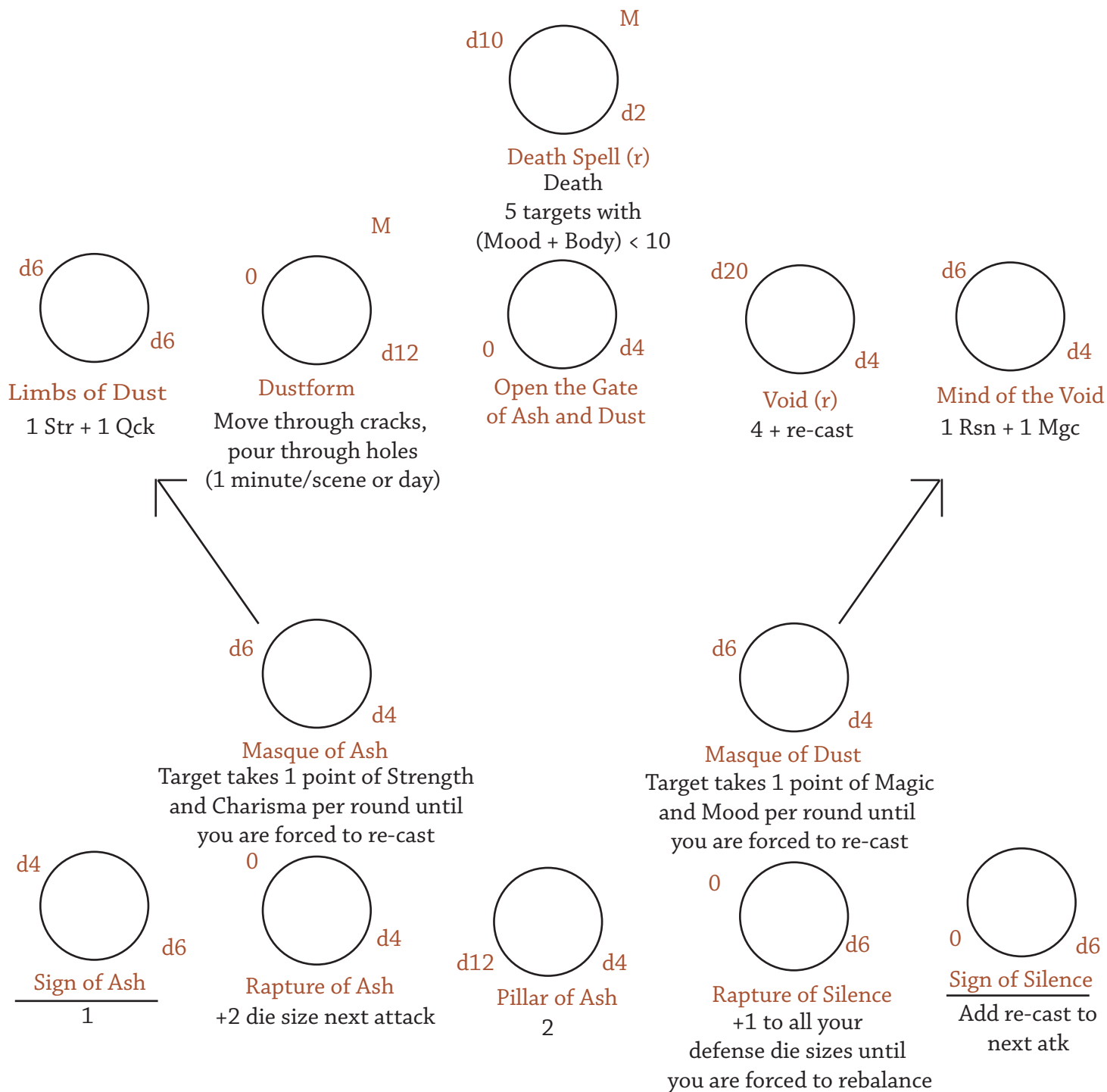
Throw/Shoot  
Qck/0

Trick/Misc.  
0/d4



# DEATH LORE

## SPELL COMBAT STYLE



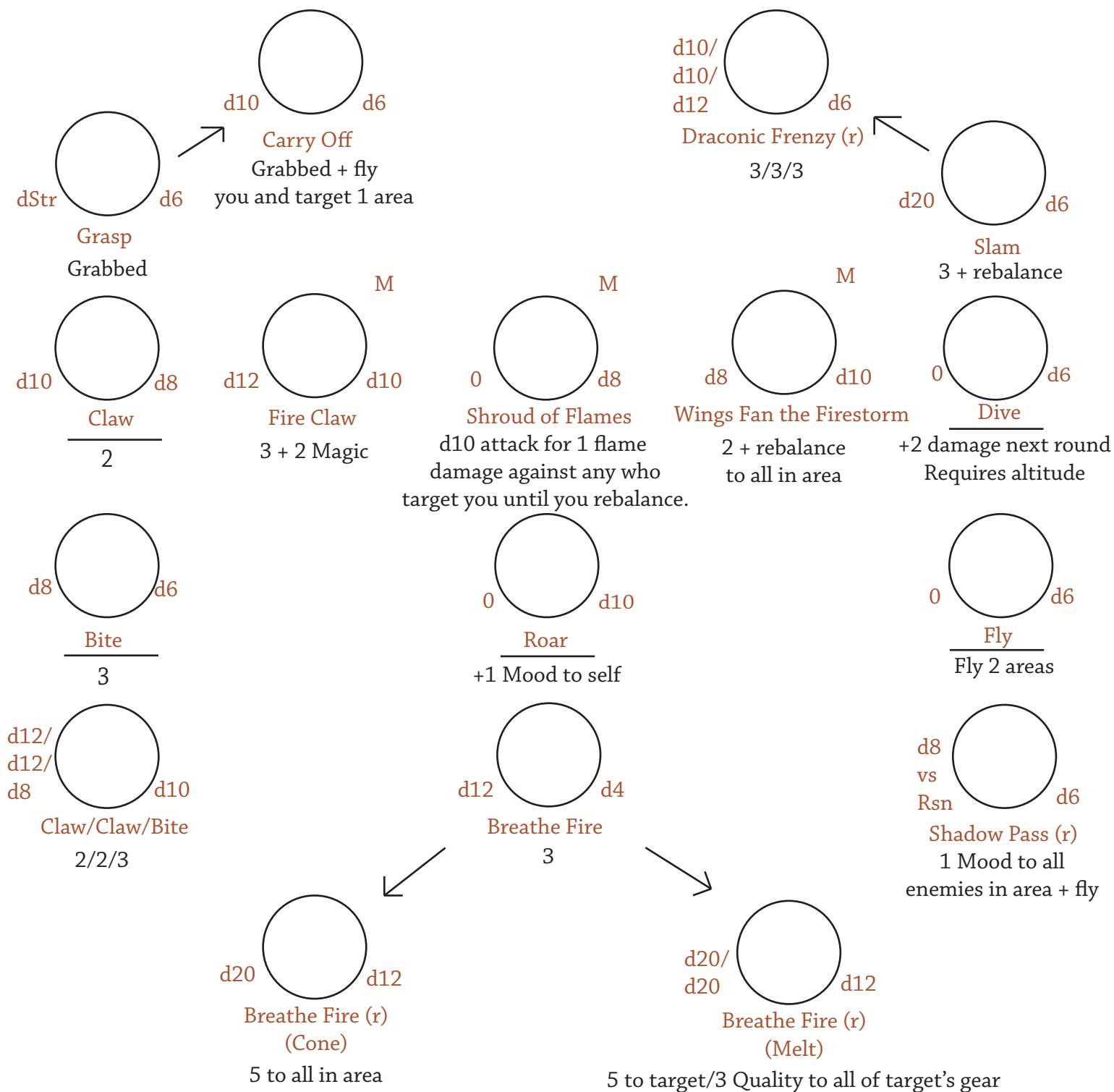
Requires no weapon, no shield.  
All are ranged.  
Reason 6, Magic 7.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot		Trick/Misc.
Qck/0		0/d4



# DRAGON

## MONSTER COMBAT STYLE



Requires dragon.

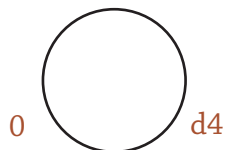
A dragon gains a Strength bonus die against any physical attempt to force it to rebalance or move.



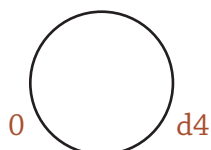


# DRAMBA

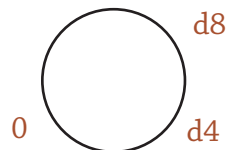
## SPELL COMBAT STYLE



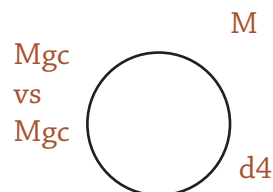
**Corn Dust Shower**  
Target ignores 1 point  
of damage from  
next 3 attacks



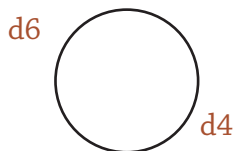
**Charm Trance**



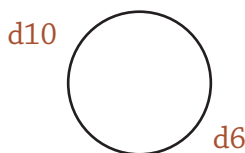
**Brick Dust Circle**  
+2 to your magic defense  
die size until you are  
forced to re-cast



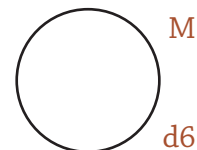
**Burn Doll (r)**  
Remove one magic, disease,  
poison or similar effect  
applied within last 3 rounds



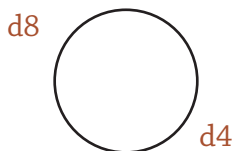
**Burn Doll**  
1 + 1 Cha + 1 Str



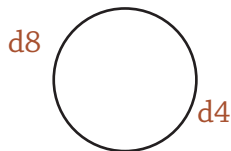
**Hex Eye**  
Target takes Magic penalty die on  
all defenses next round



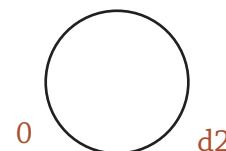
**Salve Doll (r)**  
+2 to any characteristic  
harmed within last 3 rounds



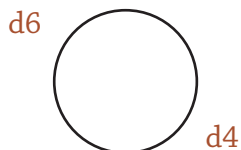
**Pin to Head**  
1 + recast



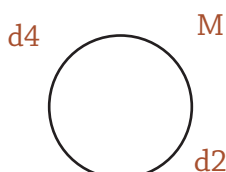
**Cloud Eye**  
Target cannot see you next round



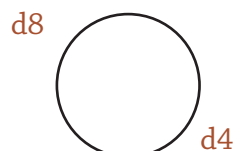
**Anoint Doll**  
Target uses caster's magic  
die as bonus die for 2 rolls  
next round



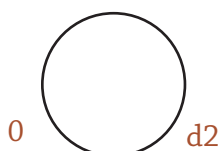
**Pin to Heart**  
3



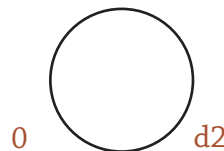
**Body Switch (r)**  
Switch bodies with target  
(next round only)  
Rebalance actions only



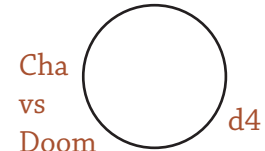
**Curse Doll**  
-1 Mood



**Dedicate Doll**



**Dedicate Doll**



**Bless Doll**  
+1 Mood to target

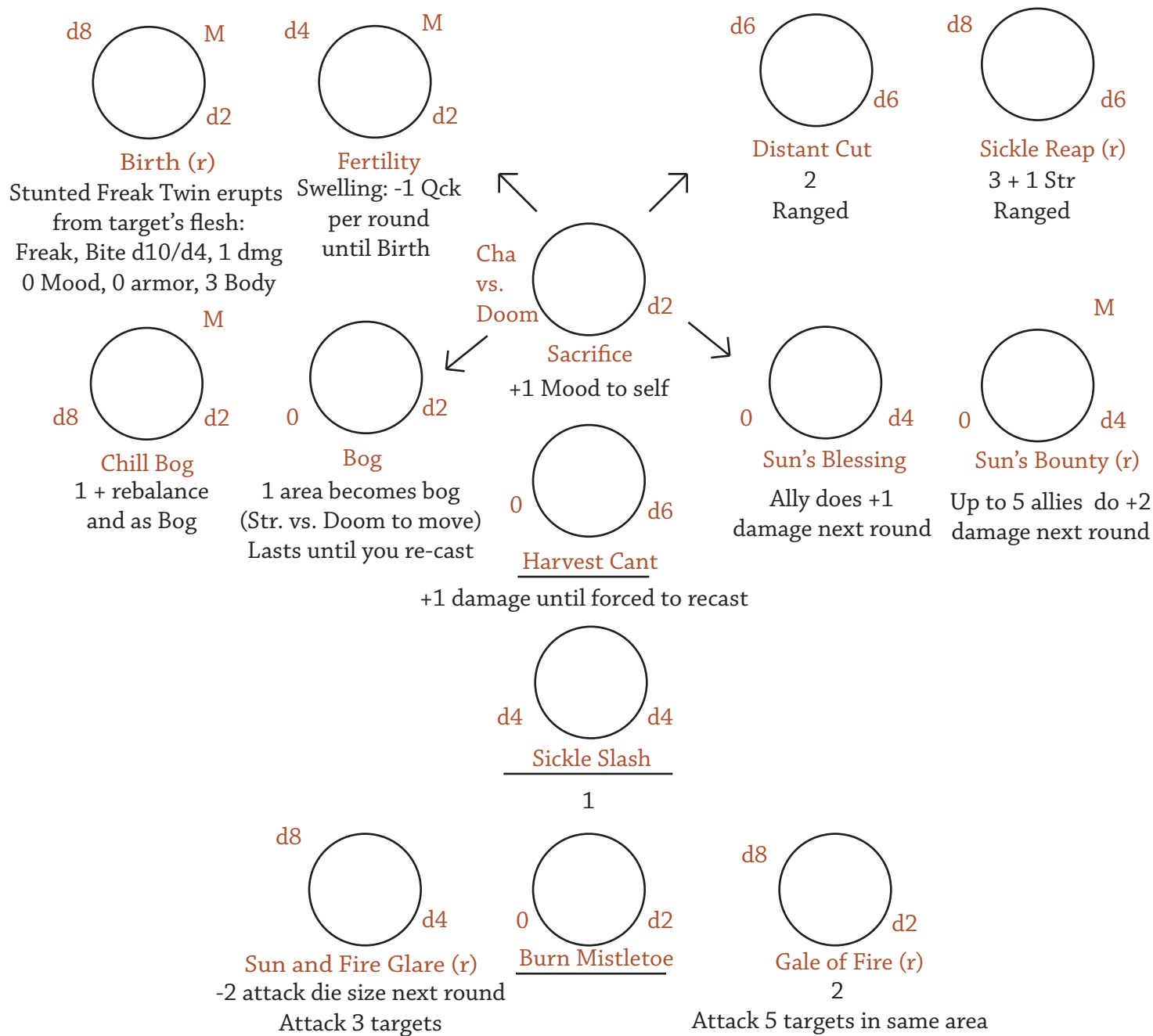
Requires no weapon, no shield.  
All but dust spells are ranged.  
Charisma 6, Reason 5, Magic 6.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot		Trick/Misc.
Qck/0		0/d4



# DRUIDIC

## SPELL COMBAT STYLE



Requires sickle, no shield.  
All are ranged except Sickle Slash.  
Reason 6, Magic 7.  
Sacrifice requires plant or animal to burn or wine to pour.

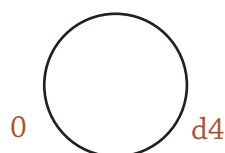
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4

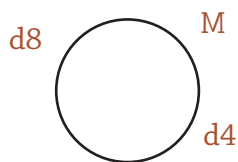


# ELEMENTAL MAELSTROM

## SPELL COMBAT STYLE

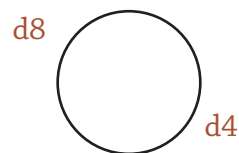


Intensify

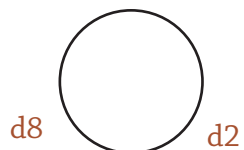


Petrify

1 Qck/round  
until you are forced  
to re-cast

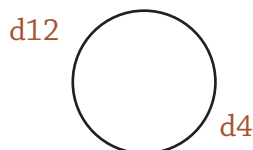


Thunderbolt  
Rebalance



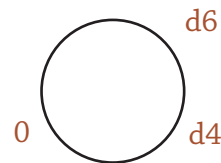
Rain of Rocks

1  
up to 3 targets

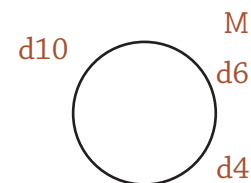


Lightning Bolt

4

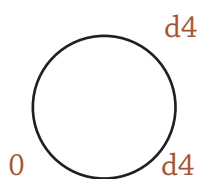


Intensify



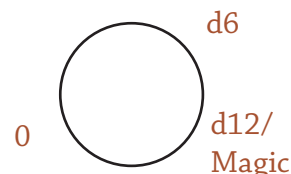
Tempest

1 and -2 attack die size  
to all in area

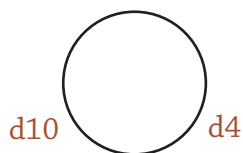


Flame Shroud

d6 magic attack for 1  
vs every attack targeting you,  
until you are forced to re-cast

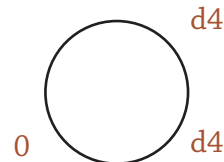


Mistwalk  
Move, Climb

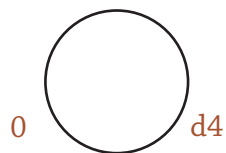


Fireball (r)

3 (ranged)  
up to 5 targets in same area

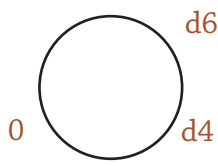


Summon Storm

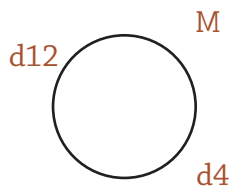


Wall of Fire

10' high wall separates two areas  
d12 magic attack for 3 damage  
against any crossing the wall  
(lasts until you are forced to re-cast)



Intensify



Fire Nova (r)

3  
up to 5 targets in your area

Requires no weapon, no shield.  
All attacks are ranged.  
Reason 8, Magic 8.

Strike

Str/d2

Defend

0/Qck

Grab

Str/d2

Throw/Shoot

Qck/0

Trick/Misc.

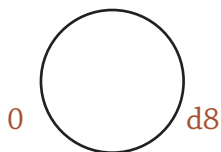
0/d4



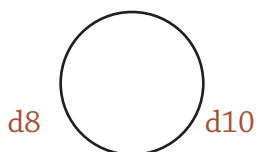


# FIVE SEASONS

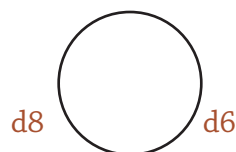
## COMBAT STYLE



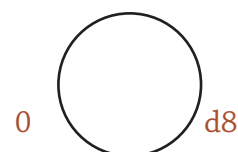
**Melting Ice Stance**  
Ignore next 2 points  
of damage



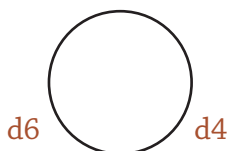
**Fist of Ice**  
2 + 1 Qck



**Winter Wind Throw**  
1 + move target 1 area

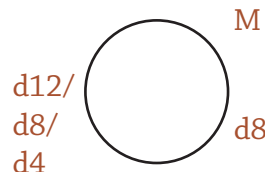


**Blizzard Mind**  
Add d8 attack  
next round



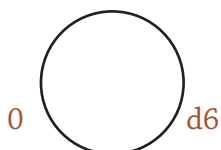
**Fevered Spring Kick**

1



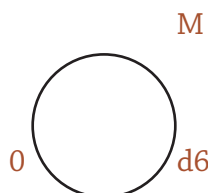
**Cyclone Kick**

3/2/1



**Budding Leaf Movement**

Move



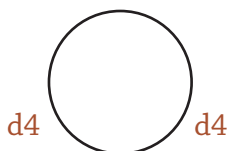
**Inner Life Flashback**

Recharge one inspiration and  
recover half your total mood.  
Once per scene.



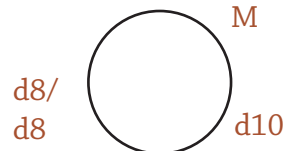
**Sere Pressure Point (r)**

Remove 1 column or  
row from target's style;  
Trick (Str vs. Str) ends.



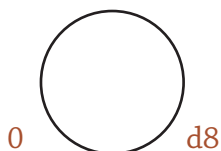
**Stunning Fist**

1 + can't move next round

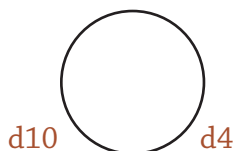


**Fists Like Sobs  
of Autumn**

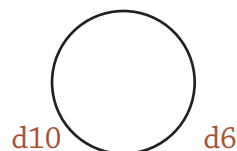
2 + 1 Str



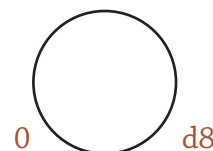
**Fires of Spring Stance**  
+2 damage next round



**Earthfall Trip**  
1 + rebalance



**Summer Sun Kick**  
2 + move



**Meditation  
on Fleeting Summer**  
Add move next round

\* All maneuvers gain a bonus Reason defense  
die when resisting Mood attacks.

Requires Rsn 6, Qck 5, Str 5,  
no armor, no shield, no weapon or exotic  
weapon (at GM's judgment).

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Scheme	
Qck/0	0/d4	



# FREE SWORD

## COMBAT STYLE

M

d12/d12

Eviscerate (r)

3 + 1 Str + 1 Qck  
(each attack)

d6

Unbalancing Feint

Rebalance

d10

Free Sword Strike

2

d6/d4

Onslaught

2/2

0

Counterstrike

d8 attack for 1 damage  
against up to 5 foes who miss you

d8

Ranieri's Attack

1 + d12 defense against  
any terrain effect, move, or rebalance

M

d8

Driving Cut (r)

2 + move  
target 1 area

0

Spin

+2 damage next round

d10

Body Chop (r)

2

d6

Passing Slash

1 + move

M

d8

Whirlwind

1  
Attack 3 targets

0

Dodge and Feint

+1 attack or defense die size  
until forced to rebalance

d8

Lunge (r)

1

d6

Warrior's Strike

1

Requires: one-handed sword or similar edged  
weapon, armor, Str 6, Qck 6.

Strike  
Str/d2

Defend  
0/Qck

Grab  
Str/d2

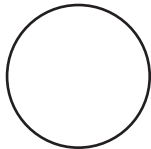
Throw/Shoot  
Qck/0

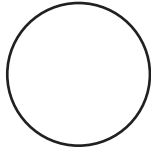
Trick/Misc.  
0/d4

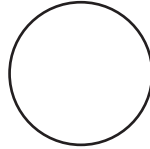


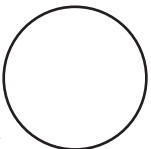
# GIANT

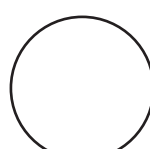
## COMBAT STYLE

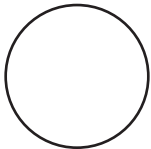
0  d8  
Leap Up and Dodge

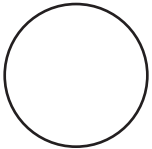
d6  d4  
Slam  
2

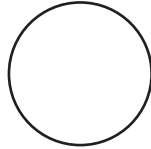
d4/  
d4  d4  
Clobber Walk  
2/2 + Move

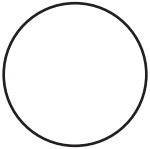
d12  d2  
Smash Landing (r)  
3 + rebalance

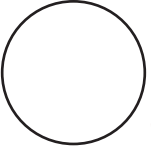
M  
d6/  
d6  d2  
Giant Rampage (r)  
3/3 + move

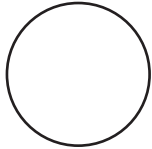
d4  d4  
Reaching Sweep (r)  
1  
3 targets up to one area away

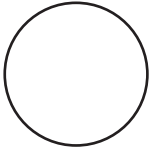
d8  d4  
Block the Way  
Target can't enter  
or leave your area

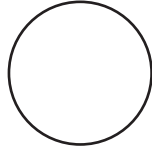
0  d4  
Wind Up

d4  d4  
Reaching Slam (r)  
2  
Up to 1 area away

d6  d6  
Kick  
3

d6  d6  
Bat (r)  
2 + move target  
2 areas

d8  d4  
Hurl Boulder  
2 (ranged)

M  
d6  d4  
Two-handed Overhead  
Smash (r)  
4 + 1 Str + rebalance

Requires Str 9 and giant size.  
A giant gains a Strength bonus die  
against any physical attempt to force  
him to rebalance or move.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.	
Qck/0	0/d4	





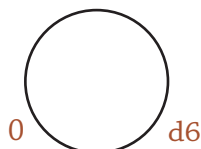
# GORE & TRAMPLE

## MONSTER COMBAT STYLE



Hoof/Hoof

1/1



Charge

+2 damage next round  
+ move



Charging Gore

1 + move



Trample (r)

1 + rebalance  
3 targets



Head Butt (r)

1 + move target  
one area



Impale

2 + grabbed



Gore

1



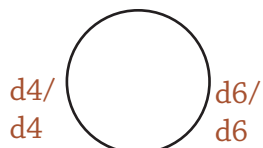
Flip

1 + move gored target  
one area

Requires Str 6 and  
horns or similar.

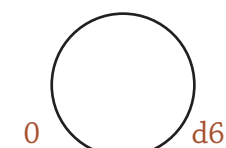
# CARAPACE

## MONSTER COMBAT STYLE

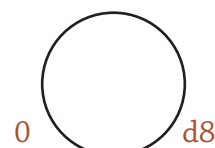


Shielded Flurry (r)

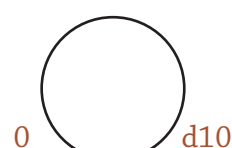
2/1



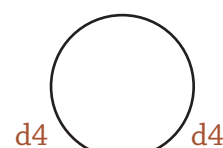
Bracing Stance  
Ignore 1 point of  
damage this round



Carapace Defense

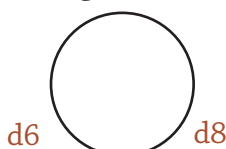


Blocking Stance



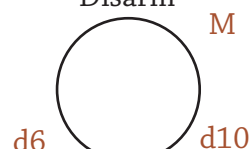
Heedless Swing

1



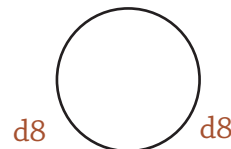
Slap Away  
Disarm

M



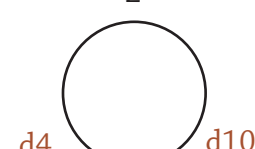
Bash Back

1 + move target 1 area



Slam

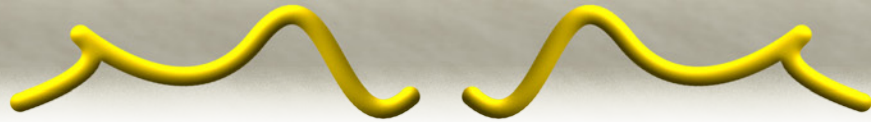
2



Careful Crush

3

Requires Str 6 and  
carapace, armored  
hide, or similar.



# GREAT WEAPON

## COMBAT STYLE

<div>M</div> <div>d4</div> <div>d8</div> <div>Maim</div> <div>2 + this damage can only be cured by time or taking a scar</div>	<div>dStr</div> <div>d6</div> <div>Rising Strike</div> <div>2</div>	<div>d8</div> <div>d4</div> <div>Trip Rebalance</div>	<div>M</div> <div>d10</div> <div>d6</div> <div>Pin</div> <div>1 + tripped target is grabbed by your weapon</div>
<div>0</div> <div>d6</div> <div>Mighty Swing</div> <div>+1 damage next round</div>	<div>0</div> <div>d6</div> <div>Argenwald's Stance</div> <div>1 Str bonus die/round until forced to rebalance</div>	<div>d4</div> <div>d4</div> <div>Great Weapon Strike</div> <div>2</div>	
<div>dStr</div> <div>d6</div> <div>Keep at Bay</div> <div>1 + target can't melee attack you next round</div>	<div>d8</div> <div>d4</div> <div>Overhead Strike</div> <div>3</div>	<div>dStr</div> <div>d4</div> <div>Cleaving Crescent Swing</div> <div>2 2 targets</div>	<div>d6</div> <div>d6</div> <div>Sweep</div> <div>2 5 targets</div>
<div>M</div> <div>d12</div> <div>d6</div> <div>Devastation</div> <div>5 + move target 1 area</div>	<div>0</div> <div>d4</div> <div>Interpose Weapon</div> <div>Ally rolls your defense die as bonus defense die</div>		<div>M</div> <div>d8</div> <div>d6</div> <div>Sweeping Trip Assault (r)</div> <div>5 targets 3 + rebalance</div>

Requires two-handed weapon.  
Strength 7.

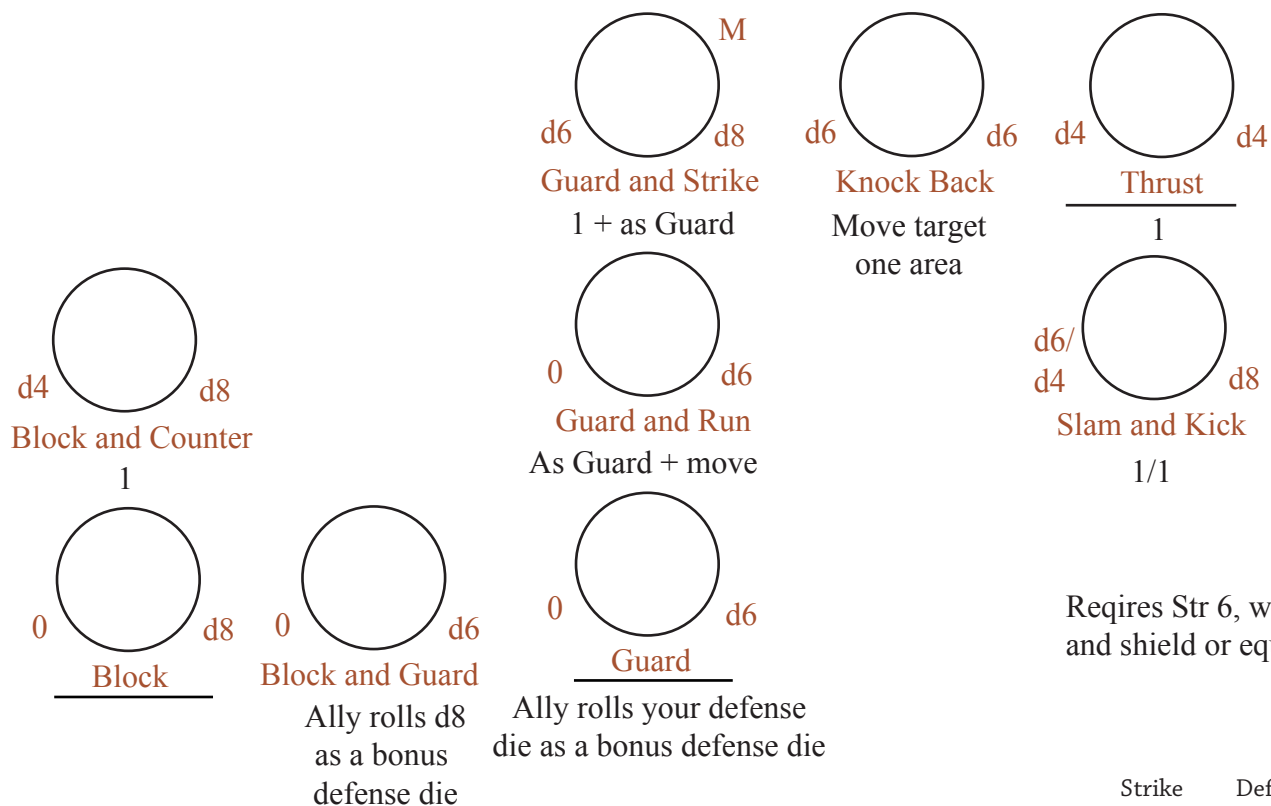
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4



# GUARDIAN

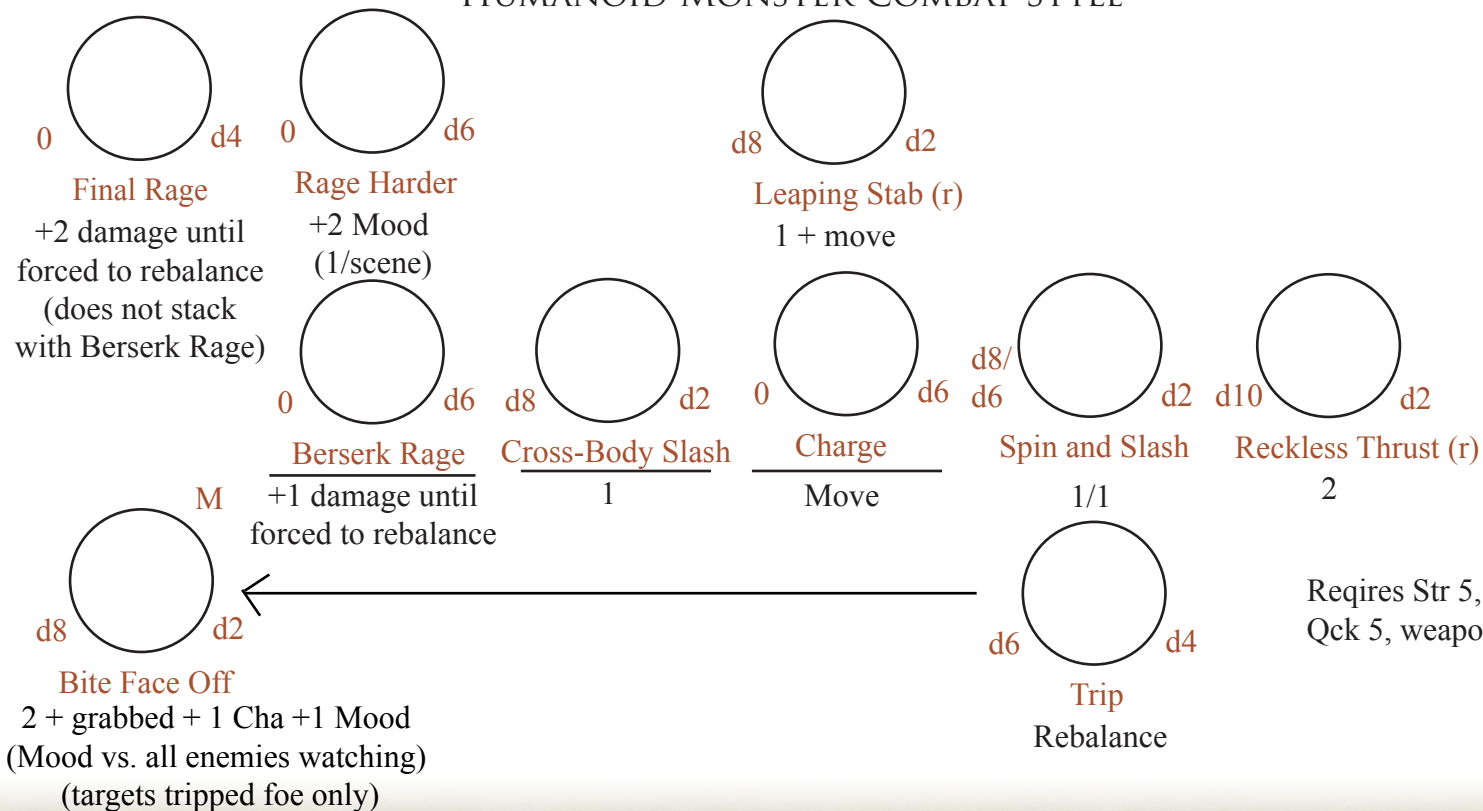
## HUMANOID MONSTER COMBAT STYLE



Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.	
Qck/0	0/d4	

# BERSERKER

## HUMANOID MONSTER COMBAT STYLE







# GUARDSMAN

## COMBAT STYLE

<div><div>M</div><div>d10</div><div>d12</div><div>Repel</div><div>Attack only those entering your area 1+ Target can't enter your area Up to 3 targets</div></div>		<div><div>M</div><div>d8</div><div>d12</div><div>Bull Rush Assault (2r)</div><div>3 + move target one area + optionally move with target</div></div>		
<div><div>d4</div><div>d4</div><div>Distracting Blow</div><div>2 + Ally rolls your attack die as a bonus defense die</div></div>	<div><div>d4</div><div>d8</div><div>Bodyguard</div><div>2 + move + as Shield Other</div></div>	<div><div>0</div><div>d8</div><div>Shield Tactics</div><div>+1 defense die size until you are forced to rebalance</div></div>	<div><div>d6</div><div>d8</div><div>Body Blow</div><div>3</div></div>	<div><div>dStr</div><div>d4</div><div>Knock Down</div><div>Rebalance</div></div>
<div><div>0</div><div>d8</div><div>Escort</div><div>Move + as Shield Other</div></div>	<div><div>d4</div><div>d6</div><div>Guard's Strike</div><div>1</div></div>		<div><div>d4</div><div>d12</div><div>Rampart Defense</div><div>1 + d12 bonus defense die against any terrain, move, or rebalance</div></div>	
<div><div>0</div><div>d6</div><div>Shield Other</div><div>Ally rolls your defense die as a bonus defense die</div></div>	<div><div>d6</div><div>d8</div><div>Shield Bash</div><div>Rebalance</div></div>	<div><div>0</div><div>d8</div><div>Shield Run</div><div>Move</div></div>	<div><div>0</div><div>d8</div><div>Screened Riposte</div><div>d6 attack for 1 damage against up to three who miss you</div></div>	<div><div>0</div><div>d10</div><div>Block</div></div>

Requires: Str 6, weapon, armor, shield.

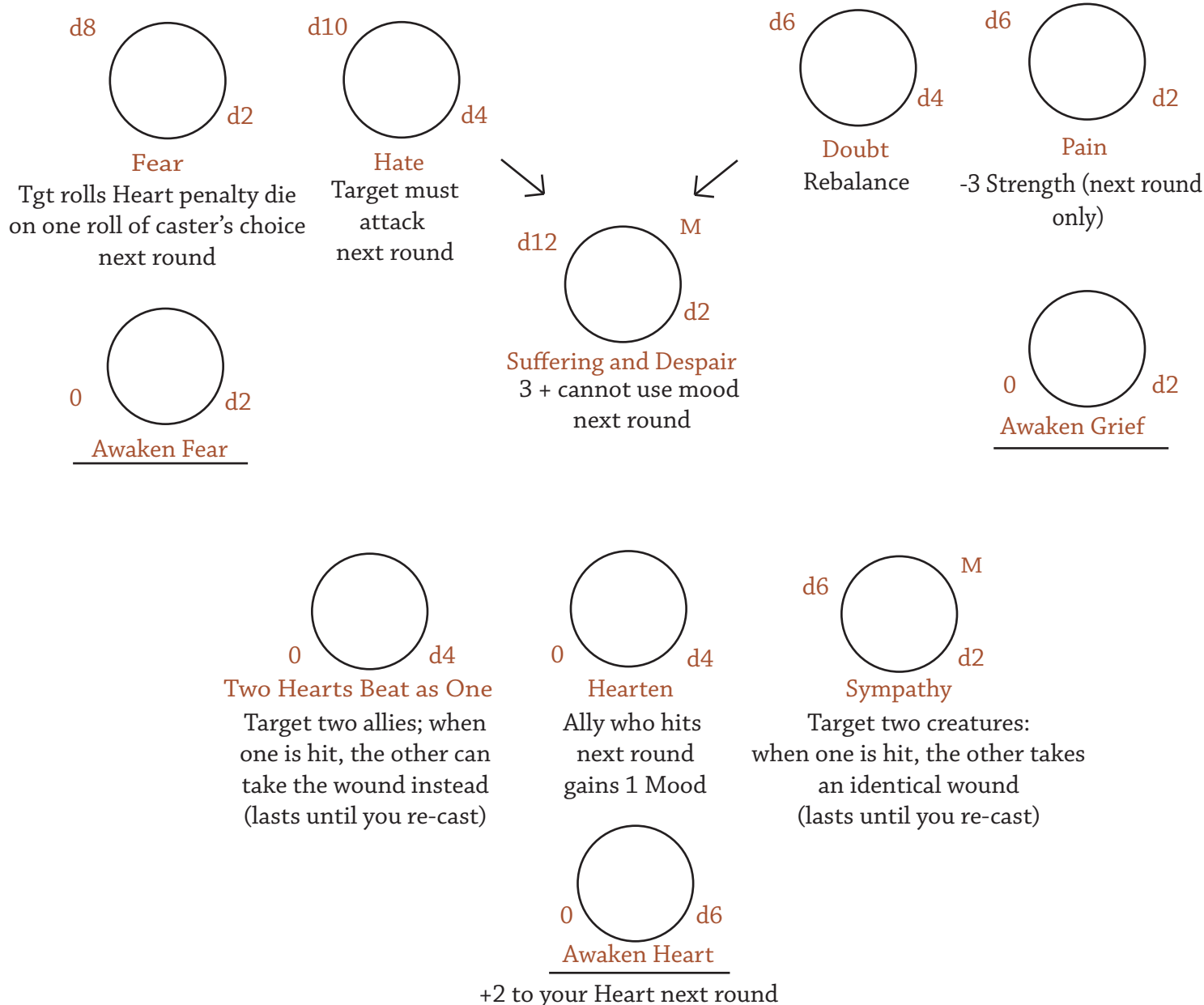
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/d2	0/d4



# HEARTS

## SPELL COMBAT STYLE



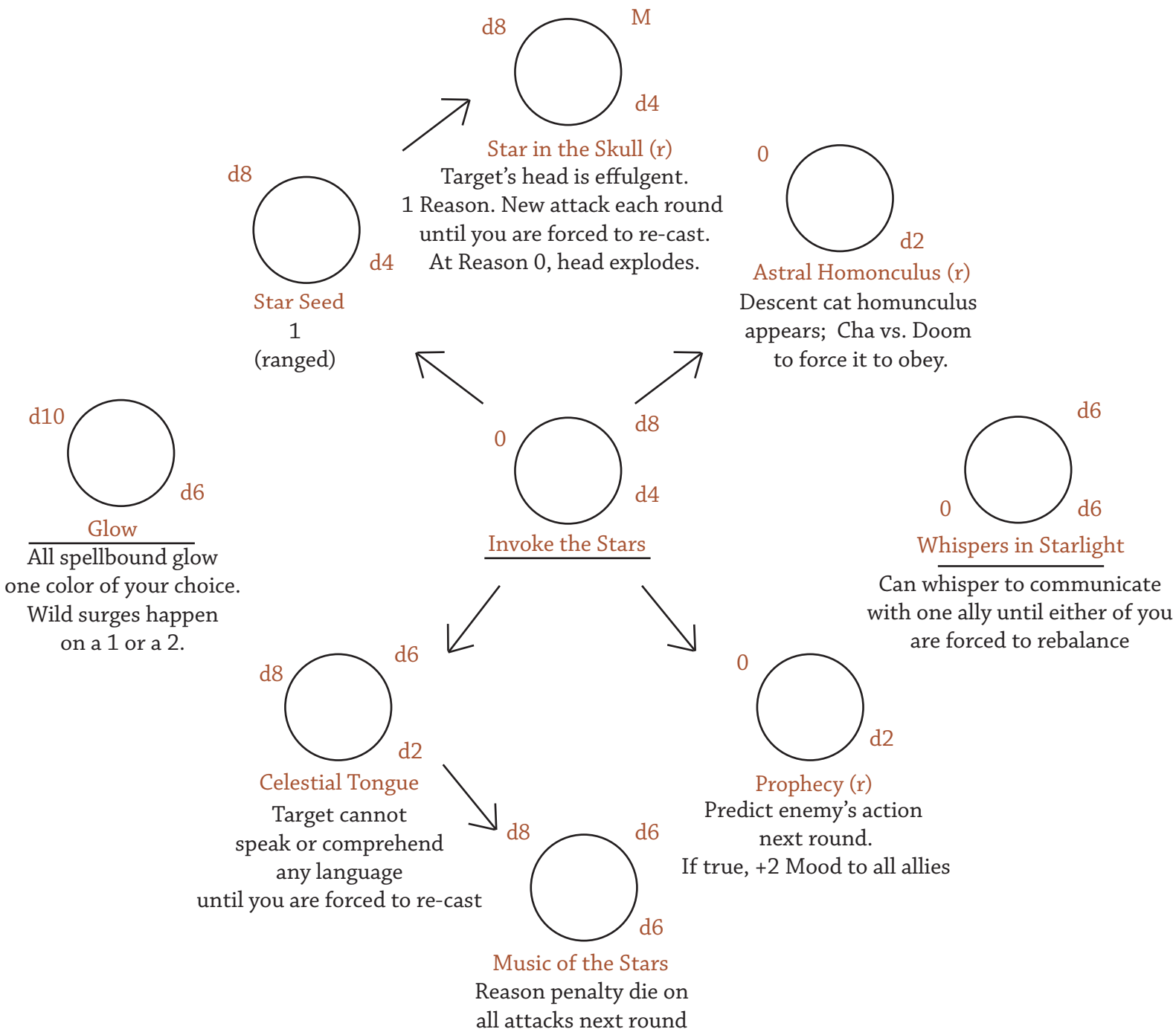
Requires no weapon, no shield.  
All are ranged.  
Charisma 7, Magic 7.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4

# LANGUAGE OF STARS

## SPELL COMBAT STYLE



Requires no weapon, no shield.  
All are ranged.  
Magic 7.

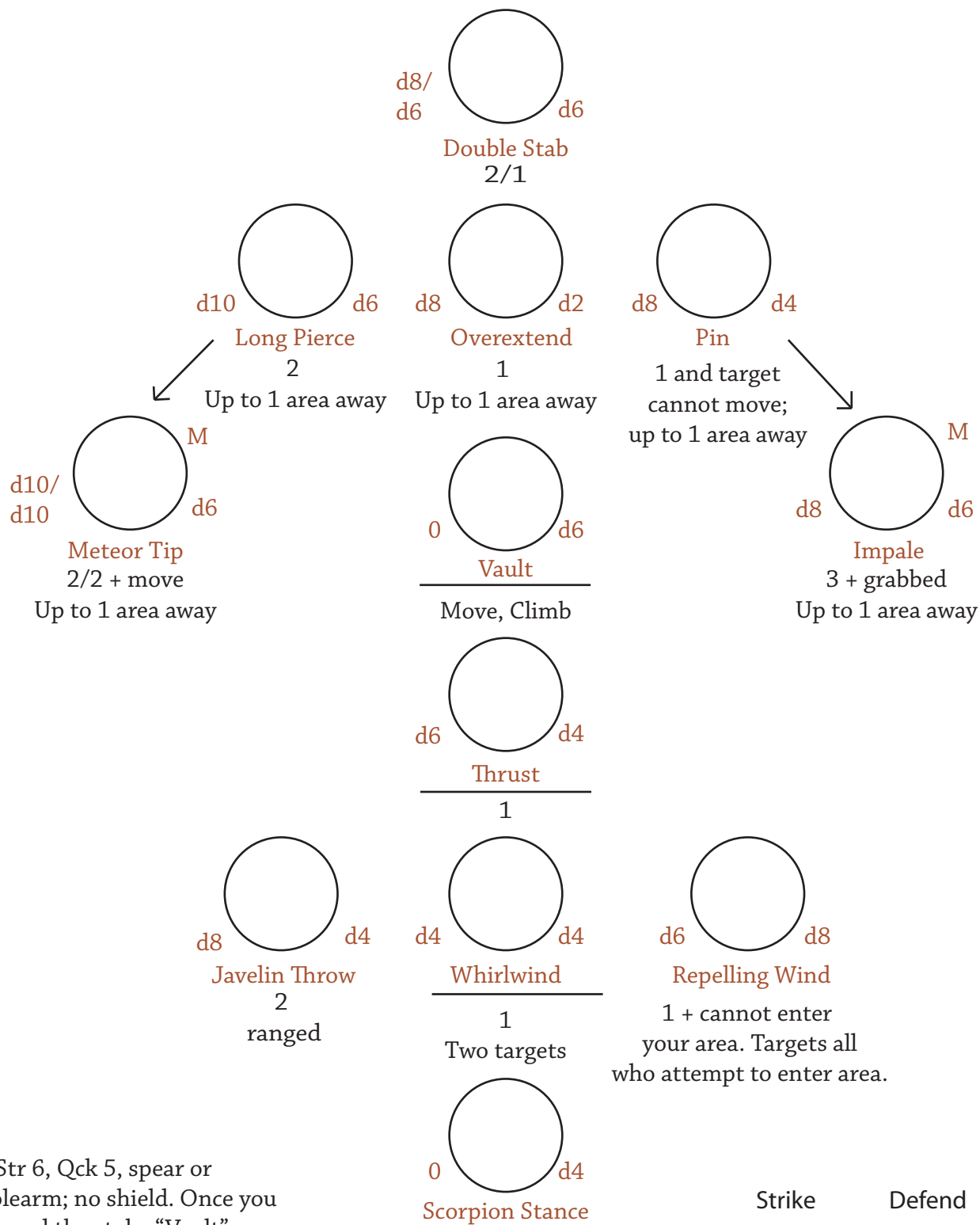
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot		Trick/Misc.
Qck/0		0/d4





# LONG ARM

## COMBAT STYLE



Requires Str 6, Qck 5, spear or similar polearm; no shield. Once you have mastered the style, "Vault" becomes "Vault Foe (M)," d2/d6, 1 + Move, Climb.

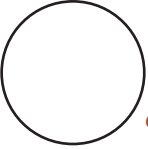
+1 attack die size and +1 damage to attacks outside your area until forced to rebalance

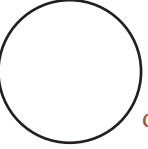
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot		Trick/Misc.
Qck/d2		0/d4

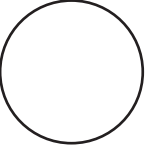


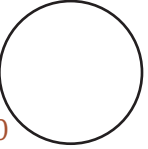
# MOB

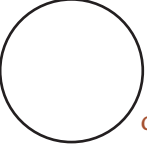
## COMBAT STYLE

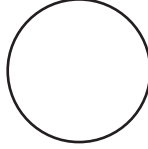
d6  d4  
Stone and Detritus  
Barrage  
1 ranged

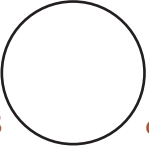
0  d6  
Inflame  
+1 Mood to mob

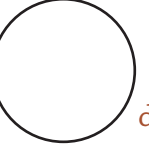
d8  d4  
Trample  
2

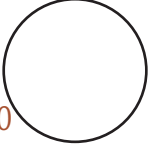
d10  d2  
Crush  
2

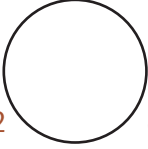
d8  d4  
Engulf  
1

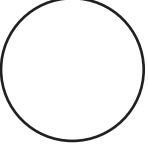
d6  d4  
Sweep  
Move and move  
target with mob 1 area

d8  d2  
Crush and Rend  
2 + 1 Str + rebalance

0  d4  
Rush  
Move

M  d4  
Throw  
2 + move Swept  
target one area

M  d4  
Hysterical Crush  
3 + rebalance + 1 Mood to Mob

M  d2  
Lunatic Pursuit (r)  
Move onto Thrown  
target + 5 damage

Requires mob.

Mobs below 15 body cannot use Mastery maneuvers.  
Mobs are forced to rebalance only when they take 1  
damage/5 body in a round. That is, a Mob with 23 body is  
forced to rebalance after it takes 4 or more points of damage  
in a round. A maneuver with attacks that target multiple  
creatures can direct all of those attacks against a mob.

Strike  
Str/d2

Defend  
0/Qck

Grab  
Str/d2

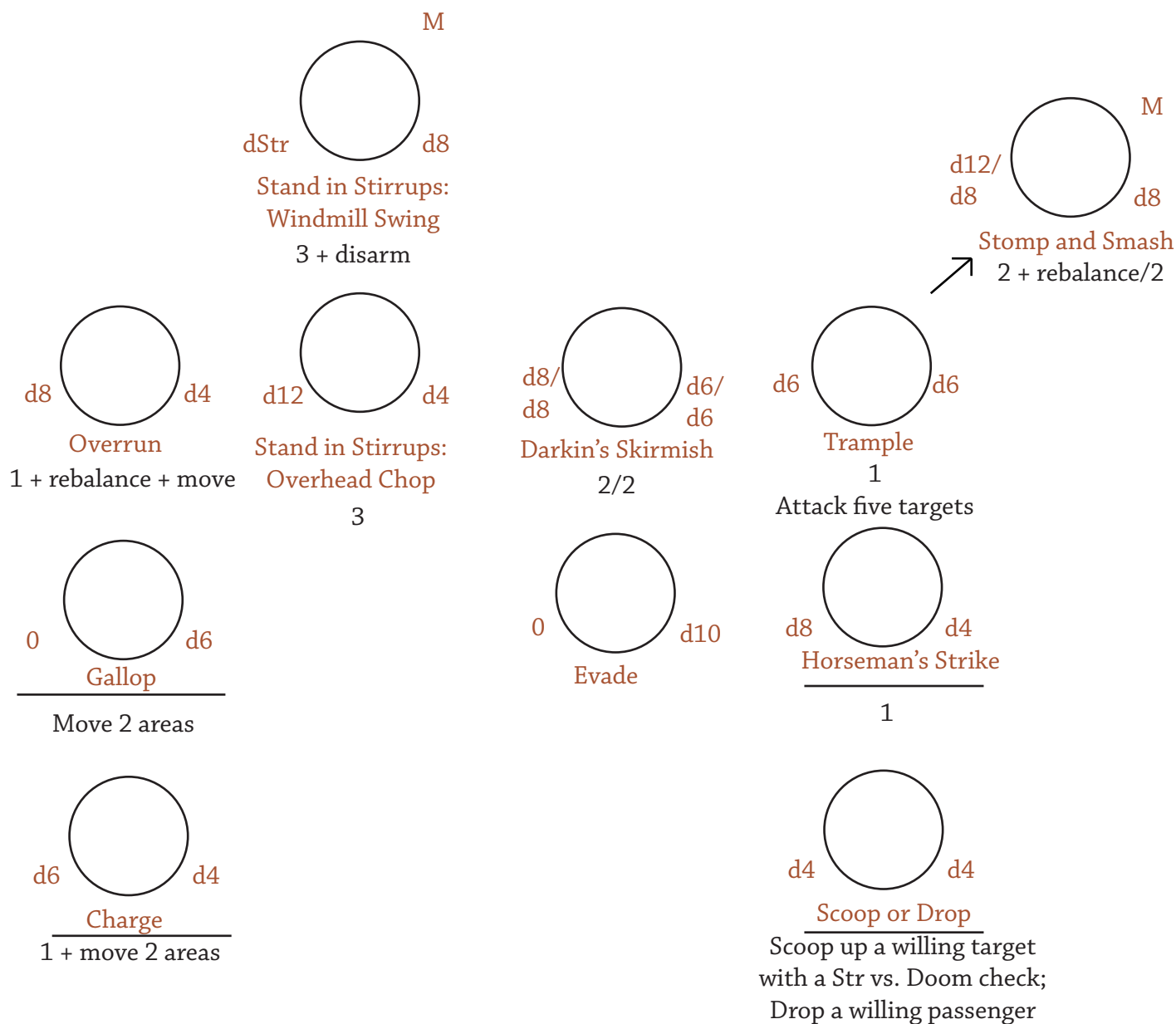
Throw/Shoot  
Qck/0

Trick/Misc.  
0/d4



# MOUNTED

## COMBAT STYLE



Requires mount, weapon.

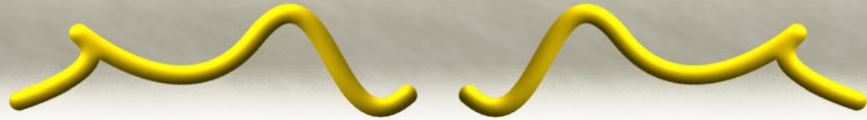
Strength 5, Quickness 5.

Any time you are forced to rebalance, you must make a Ride check against the Doom. If you fail, you are unhorsed.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/dQuality of mount	-

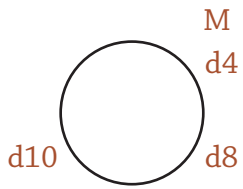
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
d4/d2	0/d4



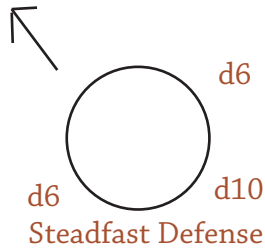


# PARAPET DEFENSE

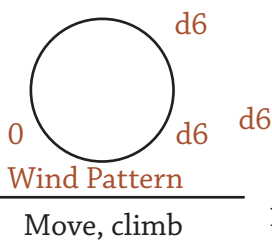
## COMBAT STYLE



Over the Rampart (r)  
1 + move + move  
target one area



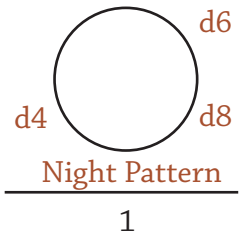
Steadfast Defense  
2 + d10 bonus defense die against  
any terrain, move, or rebalance



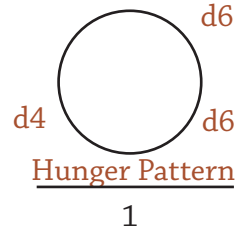
Wind Pattern  
Move, climb



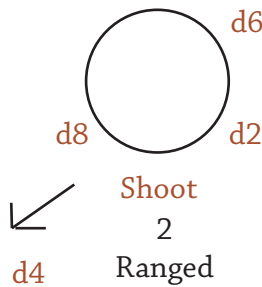
Heart Pattern  
1 + up to 3 allies  
gain your magic  
defense die as a  
bonus die



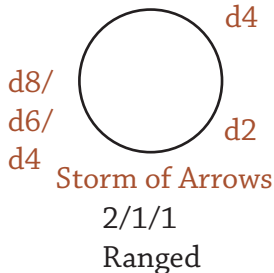
Night Pattern  
1



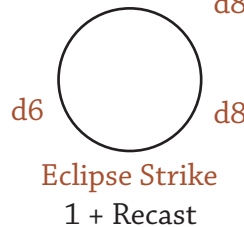
Hunger Pattern  
1



Shoot  
2  
Ranged



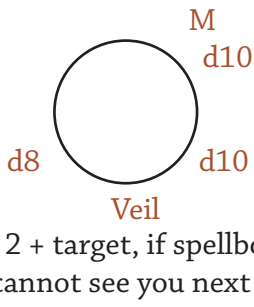
Storm of Arrows  
2/1/1  
Ranged



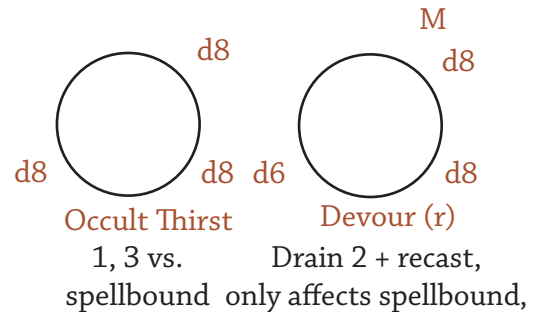
Eclipse Strike  
1 + Recast



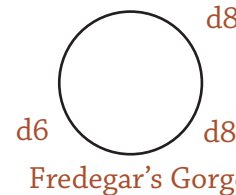
Nightwind Run  
1 + move  
3 targets



Veil  
2 + target, if spellbound,  
cannot see you next round



Occult Thirst  
1, 3 vs. spellbound  
Devour (r)  
Drain 2 + recast,  
only affects spellbound,  
on a killing blow you  
gain deader's Mgc die  
as a bonus die on all  
rolls next round



Fredegar's Gorge  
1, drain 1 vs. spellbound

Requires weapon, Strength 5, Magic 5.

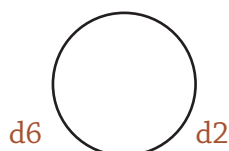
You are spellbound while in this style.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.	
Qck/0	0/d4	



# POISON STING

## MONSTER COMBAT STYLE



Stinger Lunge

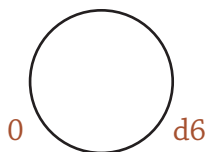
2 + poison



Snap/Snap/Sting

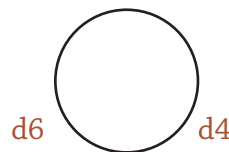
1/1/2+ poison

M



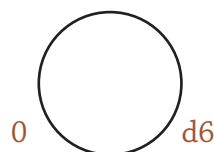
Stinger Feint

+1 attack die size  
until rebalance



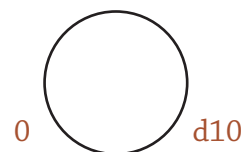
Snap

1



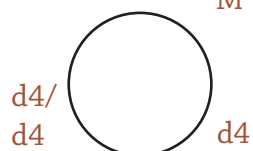
Skitter

Move, climb



Twisting Leap

Move, climb,  
+1 damage next round



Whiplash

1 + rebalance/  
2 + poison



Double Sting (r)

2 + poison/2+ poison

Requires Qck 5,  
Str 5, poison.

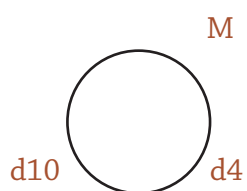


Grab and Pierce

3 + poison/Grabbed  
(Attacker must rebalance if  
the grab misses)

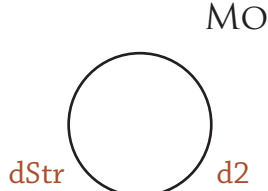
# BEHEMOTH

## MONSTER COMBAT STYLE



Smack and Sweep

3 + 1 Str  
5 targets



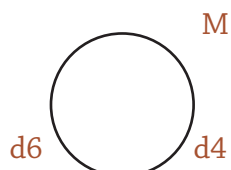
Pin and Smother

2 + 1 Str + Grabbed  
2 targets



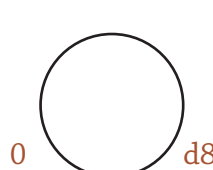
Crush

1 + Grabbed  
5 targets



Ground Pound (r)

Rebalance  
All in area,  
friend and foe



Rear Up

+1 damage next round



Stomp (r)

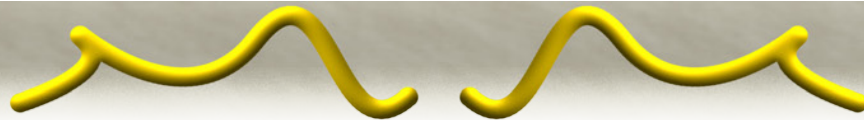
3 + 1 Str



Trample (r)

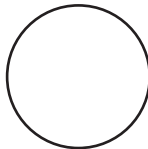
2/2/2 + move

Requires Str 9 and giant size.  
A behemoth gains a bonus  
Strength die against any  
physical attempt to force it  
to rebalance or move



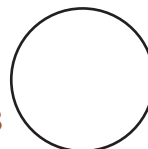
# SAVAGE

## COMBAT STYLE

0  d4

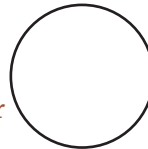
Climb

Gain altitude

d8  d2

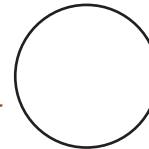
Dive

2 + rebalance  
Requires altitude

Str  d2

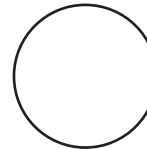
Bear Hug

1 + 1 Str  
+ grabbed

Str  d2

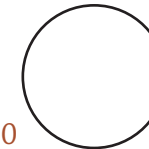
Grab

Grabbed

d8  d6 M


Throw (r)

2 + move target  
1 area

0  d6


Rage

+1 damage  
until forced to rebalance

d10  d6

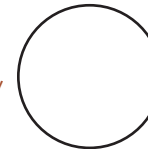
Fury Strike

2

0  d4 M

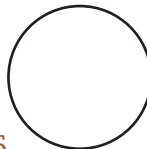
Mighty Rage

Ignore 1 point of  
damage per round  
until forced to rebalance

d6/  
d6  d4

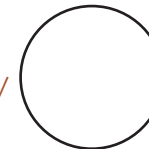
Rampage

1/1 + move, climb

d6  d4

Slam

1

d4/  
d6  d2

Savage Charge

1 + move/  
move target 1 area

Requires: Str or Qck 7. No Shield, no armor that  
requires a Strength greater than 5.  
Weapon required for Fury Strike. Weapon is  
otherwise optional.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot		Trick/Misc.
Qck/0		0/d4





# SLASHER

## HUMANOID MONSTER COMBAT STYLE MONSTER COMBAT STYLE



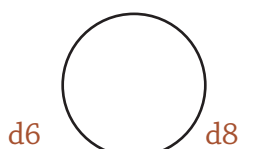
Double Jab

1/1



Cut Low

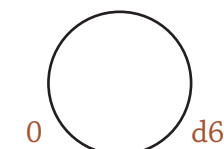
1 + 1 Qck + 1 Str (r)



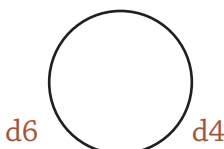
Guard and Counter

1

Only attack those  
who attack you.  
Up to 3 targets.

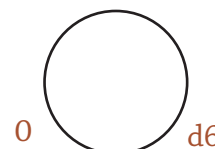


Feint



Slash

1



Whirl

+2 damage  
next round



Crosscut Slash

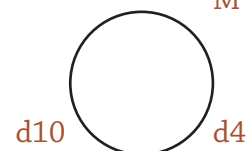
1

M



Raking Assault

1/1



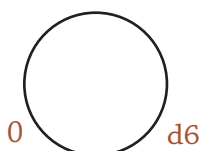
Lunging Feint (r)

Rebalance

Requires Qck 5 and  
weapon (for humanoid).

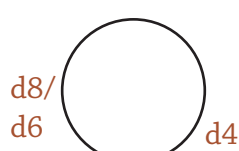
# AERIAL

## MONSTER COMBAT STYLE



Dive

+1 damage next round  
Requires altitude



Talon Frenzy (r)

2/2



Slam Into Target (r)

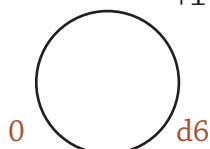
1 + rebalance



Snatch Object (r)

Take one item from target

Requires Str 4, Qck 5.



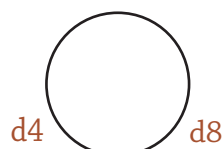
Fly

Fly 2 areas



Talon Rake

1 + fly



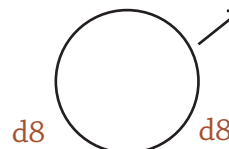
Eye Scratch

1 + blind next  
round + fly



Talon/Talon/Beak

1/1/2



Swoop

2



Crashing Swoop (r)

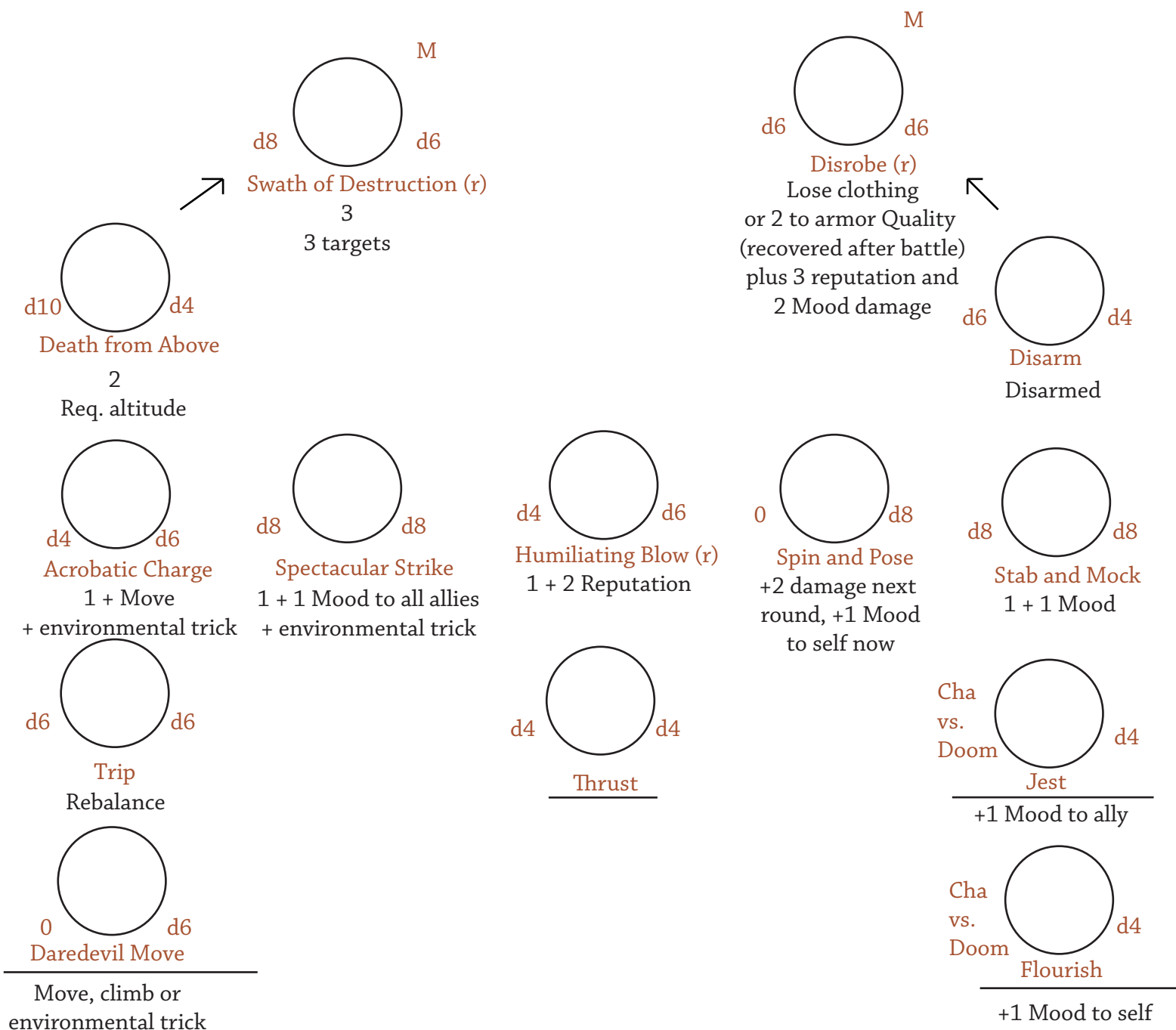
1 + move opponent  
1 area

M



# SWASHBUCKLER

## COMBAT STYLE



Requires Cha 7, no shield, no armor, swashbuckling weapon (as judged appropriate for your campaign's approach to swashbuckling).

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot		Trick/Misc.
Qck/0		0/d4

# TENTACLES/SPELLSTALKS

## MONSTER COMBAT STYLE

Cha.  
Vs. Rsn

d4

Sickening Undulation

Move, climb  
1 Mood

d8/d8  
d4/d4

d6

Thrash (r)  
1/1/2/2

d6

d6

Whiplash  
1

0

d4

Align with the Ear

0

d4

Align with the Mouth

d8/  
d4 vs.  
Rsn

M

d4

Fibrous Invasion  
to Brainstem

d8

d4

Shoot the Mouth  
1

d12

d6

Tunnel and Burst  
3

d6

d6

Drill the Ear  
1

d10

d6

Suck Tissue (r)  
3 + 1 Reason  
+ rebalance  
+ learn secret  
(learn secret applies  
only for masters  
of the style)

1/Act as tentacles' puppet,  
attacking ally next round

# SWARM

## MONSTER COMBAT STYLE

Swarms cannot be damaged by  
individual physical weapons.  
Area of effect weapons, environ-  
ment tricks, and spells can  
damage swarms.

Basic attacks (Str/d2) with  
torches or similar can damage a  
swarm (1 point).

d8

d2

Overrun  
1 + Move

0

d2

Rush  
Move, climb

d10

d4

Engulf  
1

d12

d4

Devour  
3

d8

d6

Invade Orifice  
2 + 2 Mood

d10/  
d8 vs.  
Rsn

d2

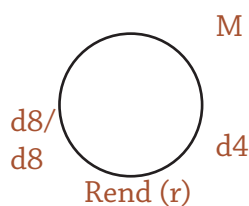
Emerge from Orifice (r)  
3 + rebalance/  
1 Mood to enemies watching



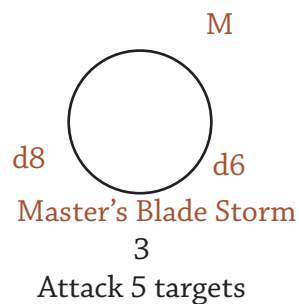


# TWIN WEAPON

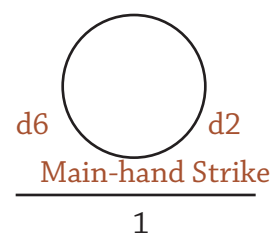
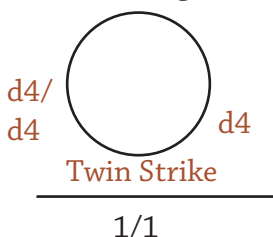
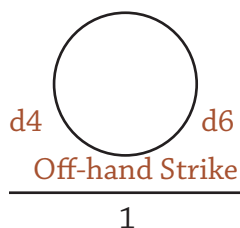
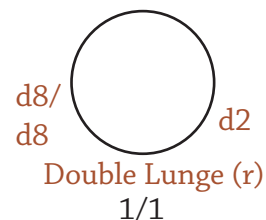
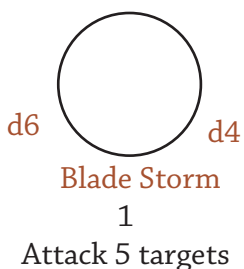
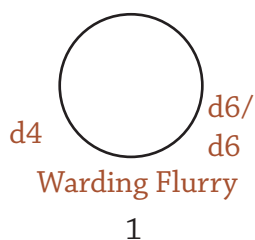
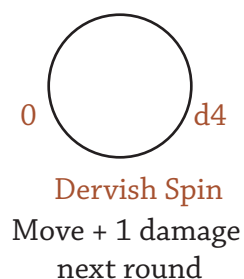
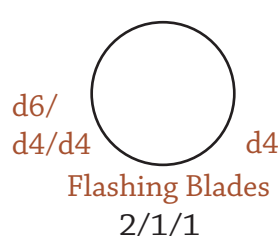
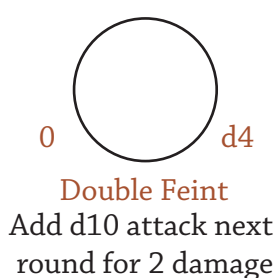
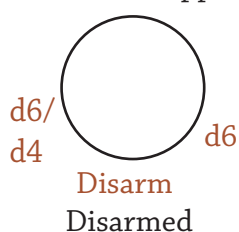
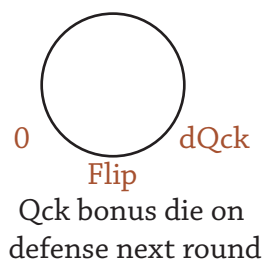
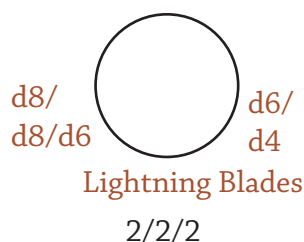
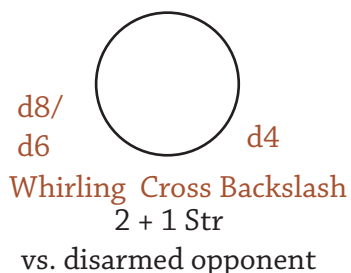
## COMBAT STYLE



2/2 + if both attacks hit unarmed foe,  
foe must rebalance and takes  
a Heart penalty die on all rolls next round



Attack 5 targets



Requires Quickness 7, twin blade or piercing weapons.

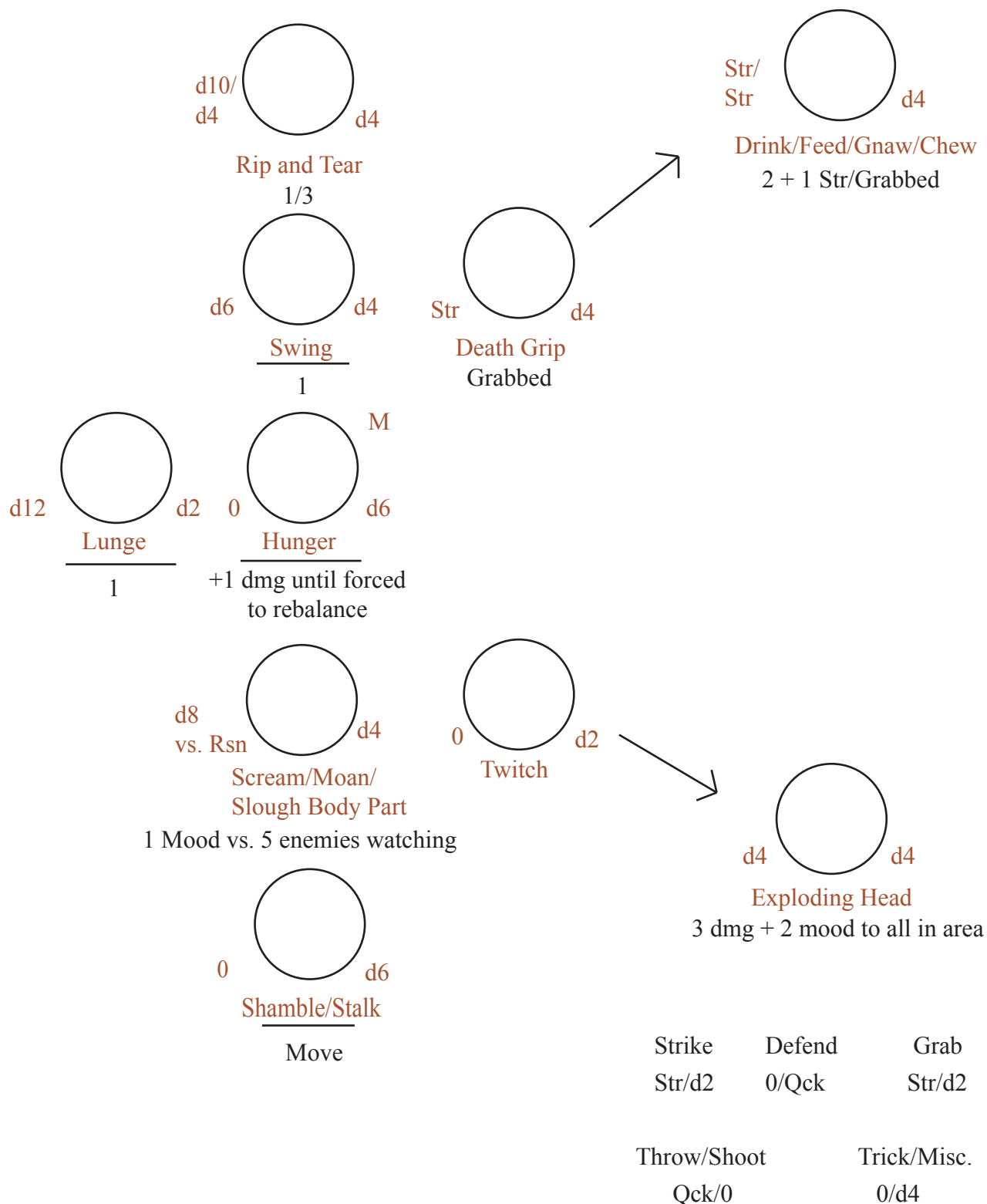
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4



# UNDEAD

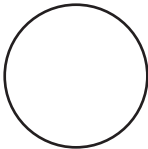
## MONSTER COMBAT STYLE

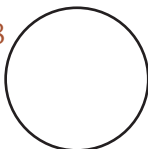


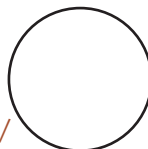


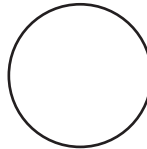
# WEREMAGIC

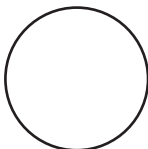
## SPELL COMBAT STYLE

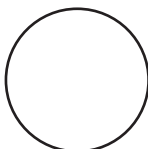
0  d6  
Inconstant Moon  
Move

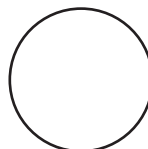
d8  d2  
Corrupting Light  
1 + 2 Str (2 Str is  
next round only)

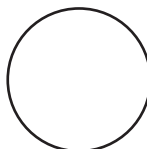
 d6  
d6/  
d6 Claw/Claw  
2/2

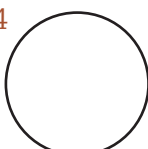
0  d4  
Transformation

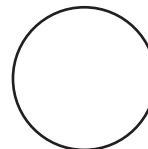
d6  d2  
Lunacy  
Tgt attacks his  
ally next round  
with random attack

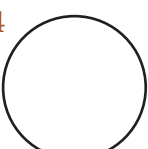
0  d4  
Gibbous Swell  
+2 damage until  
you are forced to re-cast


d10  d6  
Bite  
3

0  d4  
Spring  
Move, Climb

d4  d2  
Warp Flesh  
2 + appear as anthropomorphic creature  
until you are forced to re-cast

d10  d10  
Shred  
1 + 3 to armor quality

d4  M  
d2  
Wolf Curse (r)  
Target becomes wolf, gains  
Claw/Claw/Bite fighting style, Rsn vs. your Mgc  
to retain mind (otherwise attacks randomly),  
lasts until you are forced to re-cast

 M  
d8/  
d8/d12 d6  
Frenzy  
1/1/2 and infected with  
werevenom (p. 143)

Requires no weapon, no shield.  
Spells in the left fang (Inconstant Moon,  
Lunacy, etc.) are ranged. Right fang  
spells/maneuvers are melee.  
Quickness 6, Magic 7.

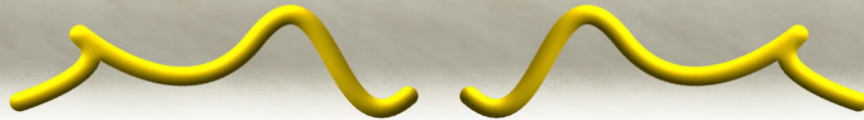
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.	
Qck/0	0/d4	





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## ART CREDITS

All of the fantastic maps were done by Gillian Pearce. I re-lettered the map of the Claw from Gillian's original (the one that was in the first release of SK), so if you do not like the lettering there, blame me and not her.

Luis Noguez did the Chapter Five title picture and the zeppelin view on p. 226.

Elisabet-Stacy Hurley did the moody Claw landscapes on pages 18, 215, 216, 222, 225, 229, 231, and 233.

Jason McLellan did the inspiring character class illustrations.

The giant on p. 185 is by Kimagu, Kiss Marton Gyula. Coloring by me.

Peter Szabo Gabor of Eastern Raider Games did the zombie hand on p. 244.

James Yee of Nebulous creations did the weapon and armor spot pieces on pages 20, 21, and 25.

Antal Keninger of Lightworker Publications did the basilisk in the bestiary.

The prolific Sade created the pieces on pages 37, 38, 143, 144, 151, 192, and 193.

And of course Igor Kieryluk, who has gone on to work for some of the biggest names in the industry, did the cover; the title illustrations for chapters 1, 3, 6, and 11; the haunting genre homage on p. 9; the submersible on p. 131; and the city on p. 219.

In addition to the above, I have used a number of paintings from old masters. Some highlights:

p. 12 is Francesco Hayez's "Kiss."

p. 22 is Jean-Leon Gerome's "Duel after a Masquerade Ball."

p. 30 is by Ilya Repin.

p. 48 is by John Thomas Serres.

p. 53 is by Victor Vasnetsov.

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p. 206 is Repin again.

p. 208 is Klasztor Kartuzow's monastery.

p. 238 is Vasnetsov again.

## AFTERWORD

This book does not contain the spirit, energy, or fun that a game of Spellbound Kingdoms can create. My lame writing guarantees that. Although I hope you enjoy reading this book and contemplating the ideas within, the true joy and adventure of Spellbound Kingdoms are to be found in the game as it is played.

You can read about the idea of love and fear being the most powerful forces in the world - or you can create a character and explore that world.

You can read about the idea of zero-sum resources (magic in this case) - or you can create a spellbound character and join the fight for that resource yourself.

You can read this book and analyze its motifs, themes, doubling, commentary on human issues - or you can get out the dice and play.

I know which one I would choose. See you at the table!