

SPELLBOUND KINGDOMS



BY FRANK BRUNNER



CORE RULEBOOK PDF VERSION

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PART I

WELCOME

Welcome to the Kingdoms.

The Kingdoms are spellbound. They stand on the brink of an enlightenment that may never come.

In the Kingdoms, you will find zeppelins, courtesans, feral children, alchemy, sorcery, engineering, politics, dragons, and slaving undead. You will find a world that rings with swordplay and roars with flocks of manticores rising out of the forests. You will find a world of love, fear, and magic.

I'm glad you're here!

MATERIALS & FRIENDS

To play, you need a pen, paper, and a set of dice: d2, d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20.

You also need a couple of friends. Although you can play Spellbound Kingdoms with just two people, it is best with three to six. Spellbound Kingdoms is meant to be played with the same group over many game sessions. Take time to build your character, explore the world, develop relationships between characters, conquer what must be conquered and experience the fantasy world through your character's eyes and heart.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

This book assumes that you know what an RPG is and what various acronyms such as PC and GM mean. If you don't, please find online one of the many excellent RPG articles. Or ask a friend. You'll be glad you did. RPGs rock.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Read the rules first to get a feel for the game. Make sure you grasp the core mechanic (it's easy!) and then read through the five scene types: combat, mass combat, social encounters, chases, and investigation & exploration.

Remember that there is a lot of game here. You don't have to use it all. On a first reading, the pages and pages of mass combat units might seem daunting. If that's the case, then keep in mind that you can play a grand RPG without mass combat at all. Just ignore the extra material for now. With social encounters, for example, you can ignore the "Who's Line Is It Anyway?" improv-type rules on a first read-through. The game functions just fine without them. Come back to them when you like!

Read through the character and setting information next. Think of characters you want to play and settings you want to explore. As with everything else, the setting contained here is but one example of what you can do with the SK rules. I can't wait to see homebrew settings for the game.

Finally, crack open the toolbox. This section is the only section meant to be referenced during actual play. Players and GMs alike use the style sheets, and GMs running sandbox-style games can make great use of the aids in the toolbox.

One last way to use the book is to rip out ideas for other games. The maps, the improve rules, the random tables, the organization rules, and many other pieces are easily portable to other systems.

However you use the book, I hope that you enjoy it. Read it and make it your own. Season to taste, game chefs, and enjoy the feast!

PART II

CHAPTER TWO: HOW TO PLAY



OVERVIEW

Here's an overview of the important concepts in Spellbound Kingdoms.

- The core mechanic is a die-step, roll-over-target-number system. Each kingdom or region has its own default target number, called the Doom.
- Inspirations are at the heart of every charac-

ter. Use them like action points in any scene to give you a bonus die. Unlike many other action points you may be familiar with, inspirations are represented directly in the game world, and you can lose them (someone kills your wife, for example).

- The five main scene types are combat, mass combat, chases, investigations (or explorations), and

social encounters.

- The style of play is classic RPG play or scene order play. “Scene order play” means that players take turns framing scenes and setting goals. A single campaign may alternate between the two styles. This is often the best overall approach to the game, as different styles are suitable for different scenes and game situations.

Now let’s explore those four ideas, along with a few other important concepts, in more detail.

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.

MODIFIERS & SIZE WRAP

There are no modifiers applied to the result of the roll. The number showing on the die is what you get.

Instead, modifiers are applied before rolling, and they change the size of the die.

Example. Bella 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 and rolls a d10 for her attack (one up from the d8).

Modifiers can never lower the size of a die below d2. Modifiers that increase a die size beyond d20 are rare, but they can and do happen. When you have an increase to a die size larger than d20, “roll over” and start counting up again from d4. When you roll

over, you roll a d20 and whatever die you finish at. If you roll over twice, you roll two d20’s and whatever die you finish at.

Example. Isaac is blocking using the Free Sword style. That gives him a d10, but he has four die size increases. He rolls a d20 and a d6 (d10 -> d12 -> d20 -> d20 + d4 -> d20 + d6).

MULTIPLE DICE

When multiple dice are rolled for a check, the best single number is the result.

Multiple dice usually occur because of inspirations, mood, size wrap, or other bonus dice.

Example. Alejandro wants to leap up to the castle parapet. His strength is only 5, giving him a d4 for strength. He uses an Inspiration to gain a d12 Heart bonus die. Now he rolls a d4 and a d12, which come up as a 3 and a 6. The 6 is Alejandro’s result.

Penalty dice can reduce a result. When rolling a penalty die, the worst single number is the result.

Example. Gustaf tries the same leap. His strength is a 7, giving him a d6 for strength. Unfortunately, he is suffering from a hallucinogenic powder, which means he must roll his reason die as a penalty die. His reason is a 5, so that die is a d4. He rolls the strength d6 and gets a 5. Unfortunately, when he rolls the reason die, it is a 2. The 2 is the result of his roll.

AN ACTIVE MIND



In addition to the four concepts mentioned in the overview, there is also an important meta-concept: play with an active mind and a critical eye. The game relies on the GM and the players to judge and create. Is the magistrate’s penchant for pine nuts and narghiles a secret or public knowledge? Is the dance floor with its minstrel’s gallery best considered one area or two? Is the midnight sewer meeting with Raleigh Rumpp best handled with pure roleplay, a single roll, or the full social encounter rules?

The game does not dictate choices such as these. Let context and reason be your guide.

If you have both penalty dice and bonus dice on the same roll, apply the bonus dice last. That is, determine the roll normally with a penalty die. After that, roll the bonus die. If it is higher than the previous result, then take the higher bonus die as the new result. This doesn't happen often because penalty dice are far from ubiquitous, but it does happen.

Example. Mercy tries the same leap as Alejandro and Gustaf. Her strength is 6, so her die is a d6. She rolls a 4. Then she rolls her dust penalty die, namely her reason die, and gets a 3. The 3 is the result of her roll so far. But let's say she uses an inspiration to give her a bonus die. Now, at the end, she rolls her inspiration die, describing how her lust for vengeance on the duke drives her to leap to the parapet. She gets a d10 inspiration die, rolls it, and comes up with a 6. The 6 beats the 3, so it is the result of her roll.

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

Example. Adrienna 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 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.



DOOM & TARGET NUMBERS

If you are rolling against an opponent or there is something else actively working against you, 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.

Example. Nicholas is galloping on horseback through an open-air bazaar. He needs to jump Zeb, his horse, over a table of rye loaves. This is Rithaign, where the doom is only 3 thanks to the king's wrath being focused on fractious East Fire across the bay. Nicholas rolls a d8 (his Quickness is 7, and he has one die size increase from a history item: horseman). He gets a 5 on his roll. This is greater than the doom, so he clears the table and races on.

The doom of a region can save GMs the time and mental energy required to assign target numbers. This can speed play.

There are times, however,

when the GM assigns a target number other than the doom.

Example. Charlotte is searching an abandoned shanty for signs its previous owner was spellbound. The GM thinks it is easy to find the bloody dramba doll in the trash heap in the corner, so even though the Doom is 5, he assigns a target number of 3. Charlotte rolls a d6 (her Reason score is 6). She gets a 5. Success! She finds the dramba doll.

Kings, nobles, and other characters can increase or decrease the doom, sometimes for themselves, and sometimes for everyone in the region. This is usually accomplished through story goals and the campaign as judged by the GM, but there are also specific powers that allow this. One common way to decrease the doom is by destroying the doom's supports. For example, a king might derive power from his relationship with the assassin's brotherhood. If the PCs can destroy that relationship, the doom in the region goes down by 1. When kingdoms are described, they often say where some of the doom comes from. If during the course of play, the PCs destroy or ameliorate the source, the doom can be lowered. As always, the GM and the group must judge, as decreasing or increasing the doom significantly changes the campaign milieu.

TIES

In any opposed die roll, ties go to the higher die size. If both tying dice are the same size, re-roll.

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.

INSPIRATIONS & STUNTING

To understand the Kingdoms, you must understand inspirations. Inspirations can 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 both of those 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. For example, 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, inspirations function as action points. That is, a character can use an inspiration to gain a boost to an action. His love, or fear, or madness, or other inspiration spurs him on to greater deeds.

When a character uses an inspiration, he gains

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.



his heart die as a bonus to the roll. The result of the roll is the highest number showing on either die: the normal die for the roll or the heart die.

If the player narrates how his inspiration relates to the situation at hand and describes his character's inspiration and action (this is called "stunting"), then the bonus Heart die that he rolls is increased a number of times equal to the value of the inspiration.

A character can decide to use his inspiration at any point before the effects of the roll are applied. That is, he can decide to use an inspiration after he sees the result of his roll or his opponent's roll. Of course, his opponent can then also use an inspiration (if he has one).

A character can use each of his inspirations once per scene. Anything more than that causes the inspiration to become a distraction rather than a motivation. Since most characters have only a handful of inspirations, wise use is important. There is no carry-over if an inspiration is not used in a scene. 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, 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.

Example. A character with a Heart characteristic score of 5 and Ambition: Dreams of Nobility (2) is fighting in Free Sword style. He makes a Warrior's Strike. His attack die is a d6. He rolls a 1 and then decides to use his ambition to power his attack. Since he does not narrate anything, he rolls a d4 for his Heart. On this d4, he rolls a 3, and takes that as the result of his attack.

Example. Therese Vhalline is begging the castellan for an audience with the prince. She has charisma 6, heart 5, and the inspiration "Fear of being alone (left in the woods as a child)" (3). She rolls her social attack as a d6, which is her charisma die. She gets a 1 and decides to use an inspiration. She narrates

how the prince's refusal to see her plays on her fear of abandonment and social isolation. She then rolls her heart die increased three times. This is a d10 (d4 heart die, increased three times for the narration and the value of the inspiration). She gets a 6 on the d10. The value of the social attack on the castellan is a 6, which is the better of Therese's two dice.

Example. Sergeant-errant Oliver Ghespure, with Heart 7, is inspired by his faith in the King's Legion (2). Fighting a suspected traitor, he executes a Slash, which normally attacks with a d8. After Sgt-Et. Ghespure rolls a 2, he falls back on his faith. His player declares, "A sergeant in the King's Legion can never fall to a traitorous knave!" He then rolls his Heart die increased twice. This is a d10 (d6 Heart die, increased twice for the narration and value of the inspiration). He gets a 7 on the d10. The value of his attack is that 7, which is the better of his two dice.

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 love has a value of 3 or more, the character 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 play with fate itself in the Kingdoms. Magic runs deep and permeates everything. The stronger a character's passion, the greater his destiny. A strong enough passion yields an undeniable destiny.

This mechanic pushes gameplay in several directions. 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 critical hit 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 inspiration 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 home. 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 roleplaying 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. A PC may choose not to draw her longsword, scream an oath to a Low God, and charge the evil warlord the first time she sees him. 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.

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.

For more on the rule of lost scenes and ideas of how things can get worse, see the random tables in Part V: Toolbox.

RAISING INSPIRATIONS

Raising an inspiration requires spending time with that inspiration. In scene order play, the player devotes a scene to his inspiration. In classic play, the character spends uninterrupted time pursuing his inspiration, a day to a week depending on the time frames of the campaign. The character should not have a chance to raise it a second time before another character acts (this could be an NPC trying to lower the inspiration that the character just spent time shoring up!).

Spending time on an inspiration raises it one point. Remember that the sum of a character's inspiration values cannot exceed his Heart score.

In some cases, the GM may determine that there is opposition in place to a character's attempt to raise his inspiration. When that happens, the character must win a contest in order to raise the inspiration.

Example. Myev wants to increase her love for her aging mother. When it is Myev's player's turn, she says, "I'm going to spend time with my mother and try to work on our relationship." That is usually enough to raise the inspiration by one point. On the other hand, perhaps the GM knows that Myev's enemies have turned one of Myev's mother's maids against her. Then there is a social encounter, wherein the maid causes a scene, and whispers in the old woman's ear horrible things about Myev. Myev must then win a social combat to increase her love.

When an inspiration doesn't exist – that is, it

CAPTURED, PETRIFIED, AND PLAGUED: 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.

has a value of 0 because it is a new inspiration or one that had been previously destroyed – the character must succeed with a heart roll against the doom in order to raise the inspiration to 1. She may re-try if she fails, but the re-try requires another scene.

Fear is an exception. The Kingdoms breed fear. You can always raise a fear by one point, in any scene, once per scene. This requires no action and can be done right before you roll: you suddenly discover that your fear is greater than you thought, and you really, really need to escape such a horrible fate!

ATTACKING INSPIRATIONS

Attacking someone else's inspiration always requires a contest. The GM or the player making the attack can determine the type of contest.

For example, if a player is attacking the Guildmistresses' narcissism, then he might attack her in combat. If he wins, he has scarred her, at least temporarily, and lowered the inspiration she receives from her vanity.

Another example: a sheriff wants to hang a PC rogue. He decides to attack the PC rogue's inspiration "Love for the people of the Underduct neighborhood (4)." The sheriff meets the PC after one of the PCs' heists and engages in an argument on the merits of a neighborhood that is known to be home to drunks, whores, and criminals. They engage in a social combat; if the PC loses, he has come to doubt the neighborhood he held dear, and his inspiration goes down by one point.

A final example: Beth is playing Etta, a warrior fighting the Duke. To weaken the Duke and the Doom, Etta stages a combat scene. "I'm going to take a bunch of his prisoners out of the dungeon. That ought to hit him where it hurts, since he loves to run them through his experiments." Because this is a combat encounter and not a stealth encounter, the GM starts Etta (and whatever friends wish to come) in the dungeon, with the doors flying open, the prisoners tiptoeing out, and the guards charging down the stairs at Etta. If Etta and her companions fight to safety, the Duke loses a point from his Love of Magical Experimentation on Living Subjects; if she is unsuccessful, then things get worse: she may be captured, the doom may increase, or she may gain a reputation as a weak champion.

LOSING INSPIRATIONS

If you lose an inspiration completely, you take 4 mood damage.

If you lose a love completely, instead of 4 mood damage, you lose all mood and take 4 heart damage. You regain this heart damage at the rate of 1 per week only if you succeed in a heart vs. doom check each week. An inspiration can boost this roll as normal.

If you lose your true love, your mood drops to 0, your heart drops to 2 and recovers at half the normal rate, and your maximum heart die size decreases by one forever.

INSPIRATIONS AS PENALTIES

Fear is the easiest inspiration to gain, but it is also the easiest for your enemies to exploit. In the first round of any scene that finds you face-to-face with your fear, you must roll a heart penalty die on every roll. After that, your fear ebbs and adrenaline takes over. (Remember that a heart penalty die means that you roll your normal die along with your heart die and take the lowest number showing as the result.)

Other inspirations can also be used against you in any scene. When someone succeeds with a social attack against you (a social attack is usually charisma vs. charisma or charisma vs. reason) and insults, threatens, or mocks one of your inspirations, you take a heart penalty die on your next roll.

Each inspiration can only be exploited once per scene this way. That is, each can be exploited only once in total, not once per person. If someone else beats you to it, then you cannot attack the same inspiration: the subject has lost its bite.

In combat, a social attack like this is a Trick. In social combat, it is simply an attack like any other.

FORCING AN INSPIRATION

Sometimes characters force inspirations on one another: terrorizing someone to make him fear, or seducing someone to make her love.

To do this, you must win a social contest. Your target defends, however, with both his charisma and reason dice. This is a large bonus; normally in a social contest a character defends with only charisma or reason, not both. If you win the contest, your opponent takes an inspiration point in fear of you, love for you, or whatever else you have convinced him of.

TRUE LOVE

Once in her life, a character can select one love with a value over 5 to be her true love. A true love inspiration die rolls its maximum value once per day. The character chooses when this happens.

True love may also have more interpretations as the GM sees fit.

Choose your true love wisely. Losing a true love incurs harsh penalties

(see Losing Inspirations above). On the other hand, it may not be wise to neglect the power of true love to avoid these penalties. The maximum roll on an inspiration die is a tremendous power, and it is meant to encourage roleplay by rewarding characters who find their true loves. Do not hesitate to join them!

FORGETTING AN INSPIRATION

“The heart is slow to learn what the swift mind beholds at every turn,” as Millay said. It takes time to forget, even when we know we must.

Lowering an inspiration of your own by one point requires a week. Roll your heart against the doom. If you fail, you have not lowered your inspiration; if you succeed, you have.

Example. Scarlet is trying to shake off her father’s tyranny of her: “Fear of drunk father (3).” After one week, she rolls her heart die, d8, and beats the doom. Her fear drops to 2.

Of course, complications can arise. When this happens, the PC must win a scene before having a chance to lower her inspiration.

Example. In the next week, the GM decides that church spies might notice something different about Scarlet. The GM rolls the shadow score for the local church against Scarlet’s

charisma roll. The church spies win and notice that she is detaching herself from her father. Quickly, the church alerts the father, who storms into Scarlet’s room above the chandlery. This week, instead of a simple heart roll against the doom, Scarlet must win a social encounter against her father in order to have a chance at rolling against the doom.



HISTORY & SKILL

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 Rithaign with the twin daughters of Ponce 'Three Blades' Desoto (2)." Anything that you can write down in a sentence, clause or phrase can be a history and therefore a skill.

There are two catches. First, it must be something that your character actually spent time doing during his last level. Second, the GM and other players must accept it.

The first point spent in a history gives you a one die-size increase to your characteristic die when making an appropriate check.

After you have spent four points in a history, then in addition to the die-size increase to your characteristic check, you roll a d4 bonus die. After you have spent six points, you roll a d6 bonus die. And so on!

Example. Sergio has the history "Spent youth cleaning the pet cages for the Infanta of Queensport, Lavinia Rosa Helem (1)." Later in life, he is flirting with a scout on the Crown Road. When the scout's falcon lands on her glove, Sergio tries to identify it. Because of his history, he rolls reason with a die size increase to identify the falcon's breeding and habits.

Example. Yord tracks game constantly in the Fyrajji forest, and he has a history that says exactly that: "Tracks game constantly in the Fyrajji forest (7)." When he needs to track someone, he rolls his reason die increased once along with a d6 bonus die. He rolls his reason increased once, along with the d6, and he takes the higher result.

A character cannot have a number of histories more than his reason score. There is no limit to the value of each individual history.

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.

GAINING SKILL

At each level, a character gains one history item or a point in an existing history. Some levels in some classes award more. Additionally, every game session that does not increase a character's level grants one skill point (or more).

GMs may also award additional points for achievements and experiences, even within a session.

FORGETTING A HISTORY

People forget, and time erodes everything, even skill. You can drop a history at will.

The GM may veto this, however, if it is one of your signature skills that you use frequently (hard to forget what you do every day!) or if it is something that you have used very recently. You can still drop such a skill, but you must do so at the rate of 1 point per week. You cannot use the skill at all during the time it is fading.

Picking up new skills and dropping old ones are useful for skill-specific missions. You might need to learn a bit of Jakattan quickly, and so you let your Akran lapse in order to pick it up.

GMs, please dangle history increases in front of players mid-adventure: "You've been living among the savages for a fortnight; so anyone who wants to take a history in 'Knows the ways of the Fyrajji' can put two points in it." The players can pick up the skill points temporarily, forgetting them at the end of the adventure. Such "short-term memory" history items model well a character who learns how to play the local card games, cook the local food, and in general "go

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native.”

When you are at the maximum number of skills (your reason score), you must roll your reason vs. the doom at the end of every season. If you fail, one random history item decays by one. Time erodes skills, and people forget. (This encourages players to leave one history “slot” open, to be filled by temporary knowledge that they forget at the end of the season. This is by design and promotes characters who are constantly evolving, giving players a chance to try out a variety of experiences and skills.)

ENGINEERS & FIXERS

Some class abilities give bonuses to wide categories of skill checks. Notably, the fixer and the engineer gain bonuses to alchemy and engineering checks, respectively.

An alchemy check is anything that involves alchemical items, processes, or knowledge. An engineering check is anything that involves engineering items, processes, or knowledge (including any mechanically operated items; these items do not need to appear on the “Engineering” table in Chapter 16 to be considered an engineering item).



A FEW NOTES ON SKILLS



Trained vs. Untrained. There are some situations where a character can only attempt a roll if he is trained in the appropriate skill. An untrained character can't make a reason check to wire a jaw shut after a bar fight, for example.

Skill Lists. If you are uncomfortable with making your own skill descriptions, take the skill list from any other RPG and use that. Choose whichever skills you like!



MOOD

Mood is important in a world where inspirations can have powerful magic effects. A character's mood can push her to exertion and success in the same way that an inspiration can, although not quite as strongly.

Spending a mood point allows you to roll a single bonus heart die with your roll. You can use a mood die with any roll, and you can use mood and an inspiration on the same roll.

When you use a mood point, decrease your mood by one. Your mood can't drop below zero. If your mood is zero and you lose a mood point because of someone's action, then you lose one from your heart score instead. Like other damage, this returns at the rate of 1 per week. Mood loss cannot force your heart score below 2.

Mood for a new character starts off at 0.

Mood can never exceed your maximum heart score.

Gaining mood dice often happens during the course of another scene. Some characters have specific abilities to grant mood. In scene order play, any player can devote a scene to increasing his mood by one or more points (possibly all the way to full if he spends time with a Hearts witch or witty swashbuckler!). Also, the GM should award mood increases at appropriate moments according to roleplay and story.

Characters lose mood in many ways. Swashbucklers can mock you, some scenes are designed to cause mood loss, and of course there are natural disasters, diseases, unfriendly cultures, spells, lost inspirations. GMs should not be shy about mood damage. There are many ways to fall in the Kingdoms.



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.
- Mass combat.
- Social encounters.
- Chases.
- Investigation and exploration.

Later chapters in Part Two discuss each scene type in detail.

CLASSIC PLAY & SCENE ORDER

There are two modes of play in Spellbound Kingdoms. Use both at different times in the campaign, however and whenever your group prefers. (And see the next section for tips on when each mode shines.)

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. When characters enlist together on a pirate galleon, swab salty decks, haul ropes to the tune of sea chanteys, fight off sea serpents, and search for the Dragon Isle where Captain Ortega landed the spring before and buried his chest of mint wine and gold, 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. That player starts the scene, naming what his character wants to accomplish, usually including the scene's location, what kind of a scene it is, and who is present. The GM amends as necessary for the good of



A LITTLE PATCH

There's a lot to do in the Kingdoms.

As you read through the rules here in Part Two, keep in mind that the game is built so that you can start your first campaign with just a few of the rules. I mentioned this in Part I, but it

bears repeating.

If you'd like, for now, focus only on combat and social encounters. Everything else can come as the campaign advances. Not that the other rules are difficult, cumbersome, or even lengthy! But Spellbound Kingdoms covers a lot of ground, and sometimes it's easier to start with just a little patch.

the campaign as a whole. Other players can participate with their characters if they like. After resolving the scene, the next player has a chance to set a scene. Play out that scene, then another player sets a scene, and so on. Sometimes a line of roleplay or a conversation resolves the scene. Sometimes a single roll does it. Other times many dice roll and many sub-conflicts are resolved before the scene is finished.

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 well-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 important scene to important scene. Give it 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.

CHOOSING A PLAY MODE

At the start of a campaign, the GM generally presents the first few scenes. This gives players a chance to get to know the characters and the world. After that, the preferences of the group determine which style of play predominates.

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, and scripted play. Discrete scenes and the toolbox section of this book 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 dream apples for his guild, the engineer wanting to build a mechanical songbird for the marchioness, 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.

STAKES & CONFLICT

Every scene has one of two results: the player achieves all or part of his goal, or things get worse. There are no empty, meaningless scenes.

This requires player and GM agility. The scene set-up must be logical, and it must reasonably lead to the goal that the player has in mind for his character. If the character fails, then the GM must be quick to supply a negative consequence: a sinking reputation, a waste of gold, a burned and salted farming province with at least thirty villagers dead. Remember, there are tables in Part V: Toolbox that supply many flavors of woe. Consult them as needed when things get worse.

Another way to put it, or another way to approach scenes, is this: focus on the conflict. Once the conflict is resolved, move to the next scene.

(If the scene doesn’t have much conflict, then check carefully to make sure people are enjoying the roleplay and socialization. If not, summarize the scene in a line or two and move on!)



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 atlats right up to Fort Gau. This was all done in classic play. Now, back in town, the party has encountered a problem: the noble whose idolatrous son they rescued is missing. They want to find the noble: Joaquin Nata, the Negus Fiqir. An investigation begins in the tropical port city of Naklion.

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 noon sun 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.

Amaranth. Cress and Cy can hide with my family. I can convince my father, just distract him with gossip. So that's my scene: I'm going to talk to the Hushcar patriarch, dear old daddy. Cy and Cress can come with me.

Edmond. Hm, barring anything stunning resulting from that, my scene is a stakeout. I'm going to hide in the Janhoy tower (*points to map of city*) and watch the Negus Fiqir's home from an arrow slit.

GM. Ok. Cy and Cress, I'm rolling your reputations for the guards to recognize you as you come into the Hushcar estate; roll your charisma. (*The GM rolls their reputation as a bonus die with the guards' reason check, 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. He is doing it so that it causes pain to the birds; they shriek 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, but we will skip to the mechanics*) That's an 8 on my social attack.

GM. (*rolls for Daddy, gets a 6, and decides that Daddy has no need to lose mood to fight over this with his daughter*). "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 a chryselephantine tiger idol came alive and walked into the jungle on the night the Negus Fiqir disappeared. On the other hand, the crew of the *Princecatcher* is talking about spotting a body bobbing out by the reef - a body that looked like the Negus Fiqir. 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 watching the Negus Fiqir's house from an arrow slit in the tower.

GM. Right! Just a quick perception roll. (*As Edmond rolls his reason boosted by any perception skills he might have, the GM thinks. He wasn't planning on having a clue revealed by a stakeout, but now that Edmond is trying one, if he is successful, then he has to gain at least part of his goal.*)

Edmond. 7! That's way over the doom. What do I notice?

GM. *(decides to shift a clue from elsewhere to here)* Actually, nothing. Nothing about the Negus's house. However, through a different arrow slit, you notice what looks like a file of trampled brush leading into the jungle, somewhere east of the Negus Fiqir's home.

Cyrus. Hm, maybe the low god idol. Definitely worth checking out. Let's talk to Tewfik the pelt merchant first, though, 'cause he saw it too. And you know what? I'm sick and tired of the guards in the bazaar harassing me about my fashion sense. If they try it again, I'm going to pick a fight. If we win, they'll talk, and Tewfik will be too scared not to talk. Who's with me? Combat scene!

(The bazaar fight unfolds – the GM uses some quick stats from the Toolbox in Part V – but 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: Troubled 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 about what they saw.

(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, and Cyrus convince the mate to talk).

GM. So you know where the body was seen bobbing out by the reef, just this morning. I'm going to jump in with a scene here, assuming people go out to find the body.

Cressida. My guild has a small sailing 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 husky men, tulwars held in sashes at their waists, haul a body out of the saltwater

and let it thud down into their skiff. The body is wearing seaweed and blood and nothing else. 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. They race through the reef, which threatens to punch through their sloop's hull, between breakers, past a



SCRIPTED PLAY

school of leaping fire fins, around two fishing boats hauling in gill nets, all the while exchanging crossbow shots. Eventually, the party catches up, boards the skiff, and prevails in combat.)

Cyrus. Who sucks now, Amaranth? Duck and slip wins every time!

Cressida. I haven't done a scene yet. We put these three jokers in my lab, manacled to the wall where I planted those spellstalk victims last year. I make sure I have lots of bubbling alembics, gurgling flasks, and pots boiling stuff that smells worse than five-day-old jungle rat. That should give me the theme bonus to intimidation that I built into the lab. Then I wake 'em up and interrogate them.

Cyrus. While she's doing that, I want to track down rumors of that walking statue. I'm going to ask around the shanties outside of town.

GM. No problem, that'll just be a quick roll. But Cressida hasn't gone yet, so let's play her scene. It's going to be a little longer because these guys are not cooperative. Anyone else coming? All right, here we go: The men rattle their chains, flailing, and mutter in that strange tongue. Their eyes widen and they go silent when they see what Cressida has boiling on her lab table.

(A social combat – an interrogation – scene follows. The party learns that the body from the bay is the Negus Fiqir, drowned in a Low God ceremony.)

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 completely new. 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 are balanced around 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 and defined consequences of scene order. Often, a mix of the two styles is best.

Scripted play is a type of scene order play that provides a built-in pacing guide for your game. The script allows a prepared or published adventure to maintain pace and plot while players still have the creativity to explore as they desire.

Scripted adventures are usually divided up into beginning, middle, and end. The beginning usually starts off with a combat, mass combat, or chase scene, and both the beginning and the middle almost always conclude with a revealed secret.

A full scripted play adventure might have an outline like this for its beginning:

1. Combat
2. Social Encounter
3. Investigation and Exploration
4. Social Encounter
5. Chase
6. Investigation and Exploration
7. Combat
8. Social encounter (secret revealed)

When it is a player's turn to frame a scene, he must make one according to what the script reads. It is the GM's responsibility to make sure that secrets can be revealed at the appropriate time.

INVITATIONS & SCENES

There are times when characters might not want to appear in a scene that another has requested: at a party, a duel, a play. This happens more often in scene order play, but it can occur in classic play too.

Of course, you may always just roleplay out the situation. This can be great fun. But if you want to focus on other events in the campaign and not devote time to dodging invitations, then use this rule: To avoid cleanly an event to which you have been invited, you must succeed on a charisma roll against the charisma of the person who is inviting you. If you fail, you must either appear in the scene or take 3 mood damage from the stress of avoidance.

Now we're going to shift our focus to two final topics.

SCALE & AREA

There are two different scales for area in Spellbound Kingdoms. In both cases, an area is an abstract region 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, second-floor barracks, and a top-floor lord's chamber. The toll bridge over the Rill might be broken up into the west end of the bridge, the east end, the toll house, and the roof of the toll house.

Use large scale areas for economics, politics, wars, shadow wars, and "high" or ritual spells. For example, the Protectorate of Thyre might be broken up into regional areas 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.

In other words, define areas as best suits your campaign. Some groups prefer combat scenes with many rooms, others paint with a broader brush. Take the game as a blank canvas and color as you wish!

POWERS & EXCLUSIVITY

As you read on, bear in mind that powers in Spellbound Kingdoms are not exclusive. That is, just because a 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 Believed Dead. This does not mean that another agency cannot erase a character's entire record of existence, from reputations to holdings. It only means that the secret society can do this in one (powerful) action, while others must invest roleplay, resources, and risk.



PART II

CHAPTER THREE: COMBAT

Here's an overview of combat:

1. There is no initiative. Players and GM choose actions simultaneously. A player's choice of actions is limited by his character's current maneuver. Some styles don't teach you how to follow a lunge with a parry, for example.
2. Players and GM reveal actions simultaneously.
3. Resolve all actions simultaneously. Each maneuver on the combat style sheet lists 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: "Watch what your opponent is doing and guess what he's going to do next. Then pick your maneuver, reveal it, and resolve it."

One more thing that you might want to know right away: Which maneuvers are possible in a given round? Look at your style's sheet (in the Toolbox, Part V). 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. Think of a rook on a chessboard. If a rook can 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.

That's it! You can play with just those rules, but keep reading. That was only a quick explanation. Below, we go at a more leisurely pace, and I'll cover a lot more detail.



COMBAT PRIMER

This chapter is little changed from the Combat Primer released as a preview in April. If you have read the Primer, then you can focus on just these sections: Healing and Maiming, Surprise, Mounted and Vehicular Combat, Aquatic Combat, Coup de Grace, and the expanded Common Environmental Tricks table.

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.

CHOOSING ACTIONS & THE STYLE SHEET

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 weapons, armor, and other factors, as we will see below). Ties go to the larger die size; rolls that are still tied are re-rolled.

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.

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.

Dice can be useful if there are multiple enemies: in that case, the number on the die designates which enemy you are attacking. A figure's facing can also designate an enemy.

The combat style



sheets are in Part V: Toolbox.

Example. Fighting in Free Sword style, Vasquez feints to open the combat. Feint is in the same column as Precise Strike, 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, Block, or Feint again). But that's it. He could not Trip, 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, Arrow Stab, or Aim and Breathe. He decides to take an Archer's Shot. Now his choices are the same three as before, plus Tumble and Shoot. 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 in an oasis south of Malyrigaaz. 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 Body-guard, Body Blow, Knock Down, or use Shield Tactics. One final note: if an arrow appears on a combat sheet, you can transition to a maneuver in the direction it points, but never against the direction it points.



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 he 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 a 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 A TARGET

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 empty silk in the coat closet.



DAMAGE & EFFECTS

If a maneuver lists no effect, then it deals 1 body damage on a hit. If it lists 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.”

“Unsteady” means that your opponent is knocked off his rhythm, although not as severely as a “rebalance” result. An unsteadied opponent must either break style, rebalance, or execute a maneuver that is adjacent to a re-balancing maneuver.

“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 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 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” 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 “Move, gain altitude” or something similar.

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

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).

MASTER & APPRENTICE

A character who knows the style but has not yet mastered it is called an apprentice of the style.

A character who knows only the rebalancing maneuvers and two others (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.

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.

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 (Savage Charge, for example).

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 move, 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. Use the Trick maneuver (lower right on the style sheet) to execute an environment trick.

Environment tricks often have special attack dice and effects.

Here are two tricks for the main room of a lumber mill.

Sawmill. The waterwheel outside pumps gears that spin the sawblade at furious, buzzing speeds. Any character tossed into the sawblade



must defend a d10 attack or suffer 2 Body damage. Treat the blade as a separate area, so that maneuvers such as Savage Charge, Driving Onslaught, *et al.* can force opponents into the blade.

Fling Sawdust. Attack die d6. You scoop up sawdust and fling it in your opponent's face. A hit penalizes your opponent with -2 die size to attack and defense until he uses a Trick to wipe his eyes clean.

In most cases, environment tricks should be obvious to characters, although the GM can tell players which environmental tricks are available when the characters first enter an area. The GM can also rule that the same environment trick doesn't work twice on the same target - there is a crucial element of surprise.

Environmental tricks provide ways for characters without a strong fighting style to be effective in combat. See the Common Environmental Tricks table later in this chapter. Environmental tricks are an engineer's best friend!

SIMULTANEOUS, CONFLICTING ACTIONS

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

WEAPONS & ARMOR

character into his area.

Weapon and armor quality are ranked according to quality. A typical farmer's scythe used as a weapon might be quality 1, while a prince of the blood's broadsword might be quality 8. An average kingsman's sword has quality 3. If your weapon has a quality 3 or more greater than the armor that it is attacking, then your attacks do 1 extra point of damage.

By the same token, if your armor's quality is 3 or more greater than that of the weapon attacking it, then attacks against you deal 1 less damage.

GMs must therefore be careful with weapon and armor qualities. Players must also take care. A beast with a legendarily tough hide either requires a legendary sword to slay it or else judicious use of high-damage maneuvers such as Backstab, Spin, and Eviscerate.

Some styles teach maneuvers that improve the effective quality of a weapon, shield, or armor. Some styles also teach maneuvers that attack a weapon or armor and degrade its quality.

Weapons and armor of the Kingdoms are described in Chapter 16.



BODY

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 blow 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 his reputation or an inspiration. Remember that the Toolbox section of this book has plenty of ideas for this situation.

RANGE

Ranged attacks suffer a -1 die size penalty per area after the first if they travel more than one area away.

Example. Lydia shoots an arrow from the deck of the *Tumult*, 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 one extra point of damage.

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. He is free in round three, however, unless Octavia successfully executes another Tangled Cloak maneuver in round two.

SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS & LIGHTING

Many situational modifiers are already included in the fighting styles. The Savage style's Dive, 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 being poisoned before fighting 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.

One exception is lighting modifiers. There are two lighting conditions. In deep shadow, attack dice are reduced by two sizes. In complete darkness, all 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.

TRAINED VS. MOOKS

If you are trained in a combat style and attack someone who is not, you do one extra point of damage on a hit. "Trained" means that you know a combat style at the apprentice level or higher.

This, combined with the weapon and armor rule (red shirts do not make good armor!), means that mooks can go down in one or two hits. It also means that some PCs are mooks – in combat, if not elsewhere. So be careful!



ΘΠ BALANCE

Keep in mind that not all styles are meant to be balanced against each other individually. Rather, the game as a whole is balanced. Some styles should consistently kick certain other styles from here to Malyrigaaz and back!



ΠARRATION

In I-go-you-go games, it's easy to spot when to narrate: "A 20! Sweet! Harold the Axe leaps off the back of the wagon, cleaving down through the chest of the beastman, cracking ribs as he goes. Ok, Chris, now it's your turn." In SK, everyone goes at once. So when does the GM, or player, narrate?

The easy answer is: narrate whenever it will enrich the game. That is different for every group, but reading your group is one of your jobs as a GM or player (that's why you get paid in rubies as big as your fist, right?).

The hard answer is: narrate when actions are revealed and when they are resolved. When everyone first moves their figures to a new maneuver at the start of a round, narrate the actions. The GM can often sneak this in while players all look at each others' selections.

For example, if the swashbuckler chooses Death from Above and the kingsman chooses Block, then you have, "Tristan swings off of the balcony, lets go of the rope halfway out over the tavern floor, and plunges toward the guard with his dagger leading the strike. The guard grunts in surprise and yanks his shield up to block." Then both players roll dice, and both actions are resolved. Narrate the outcome. "Tristan thuds onto the kingsman, who couldn't get his shield all the way up in time. Tristan plunges his dagger to the hilt in the burly man's shoulder. The man's grunt of surprise becomes a scream of pain."

EXAMPLE OF COMBAT

In an alley between tenements in the Foreign Quarter of Rithaigh, Anton Poincarre steps out of the shadows to confront Lydia Novele and her companion, Trevor Thorpe. Anton demands the return of the Madfire Seed Lydia took from him. She refuses, and the fight is on.

This alley is near Lydia's one-room home, so the players and the GM already know the environments and the tricks available. We begin!

Round 1. Trevor, a warrior, knows Free Sword and Swashbuckler. Faced with a fop likely to be fighting in Court Sword, Trevor chooses Free Sword, opening with a conservative but potentially telling Warrior's Strike against Poincarre.

Lydia knows only Dagger-and-wine, and she promptly tries to dodge into the shadows.

The GM, playing Anton, does open with Court Sword, in its most defensive balancing maneuver, a feint. He also waves his hand and two archers step into the windows high above the clotheslines and tomato lines.

Now that all have revealed their styles and maneuvers (simultaneously!), attacks are resolved.

Trevor rolls a d6 for his attack against the fop, and Poincarre rolls a d6 for his defense. A 4 for Trevor and a 3 for Poincarre means that Trevor's sword slices a cut along Poincarre's thigh for 1 body damage.

There are no other attacks, so we move to round 2.

Round 2. Trevor, seeing the archers, knows that Free Sword, a stationary style, is not suited for this battle. He breaks style to switch to Swashbuckler. That requires a Trick/Miscellaneous action this round.

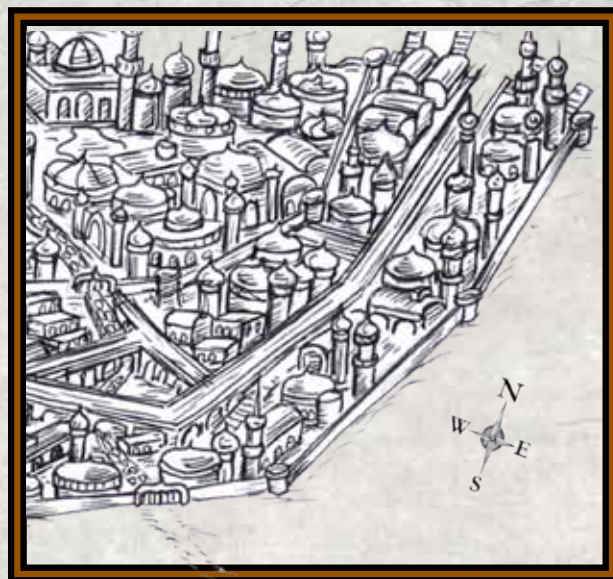
Lydia, anticipating archer fire, flashes out of the shadows just enough to "Duck and Slip" between Poincarre and the archers.

Poincarre is injured but imagines that Trevor and Lydia will run for cover from the archers. Not needing to worry about his defenses, he lunges at Lydia.

As the players' and GM's choices are revealed, the GM narrates Poincarre's evil chuckle as he lunges to skewer Lydia. He rolls a d10 for attack (d8 for the

lunge, increased by one for last round's feint) and gets a 5; Lydia matches with a 5 on her d6. Poincarre wins, however, because his die size is larger. He sticks Lydia for 1 point of damage.

Now the archers shoot at Lydia, each fighting



in Arrowheart, each choosing an Archer's Shot. Each rolls a d6, resulting in a 5 and a 3. Lydia rolls her d6 defense twice more, getting a 3 and a 4. The first arrow slices open her shoulder for 1 body damage. The second, however, is now rolled as an attack against Poincarre because of Lydia's duck and slip! The arrow's d6 is a 3 this time. Poincarre rolls his d2 lunge defense and gets a 2. That explodes, so he rolls a d4, but alas, the result is only another 2. His own archer's arrow sticks Poincarre's bicep! The damage is 1 body. Poincarre roars at the archers to hold.

Round 3. Trevor does a daredevil move climbing up the clotheslines and tenement walls to assault one of the archers. Because the maneuver lists "Climb" as a result, he does not need to make a characteristic or skill check to succeed at this.

Lydia decides that her duck and slip won't work this round. She isn't ready to risk a further wound with a low-defense sneak attack, so she thinks

about using the clotheslines to tangle up Poincarre. Ultimately, she decides to dodge into the shadows again.

The archers shoot at Trevor as he scales the tenement, and Poincarre strikes a pose: the “Judge’s Stance,” a dueling pose taught to him by his honored father the Butcher of Marmn. This is the pose maneuver, and it intimidates those who know it (along with the Poincarre family’s reputation for torture).

The GM narrates, and resolution is straightforward. The archers each roll a 4 on a d6; Trevor rolls a 1 and a 5 on his d6. The 1 would result in a critical hit for 2 body damage, but Trevor uses an inspiration - his love for Lydia drives him faster than any arrow can fly - allowing him to roll a d10 for defense (d6 for his heart, increased twice for the stunting narrative description). He rolls a 4, which wins because of the larger d10 die size. The arrows whiz by, and Trevor takes no damage.

Round 4. Lydia decides now is the time: a sneak attack from the shadows can almost finish off Poincarre. She whirls out of the shadows and slices at his throat.

Trevor thinks about a spectacular strike involving tomatoes and laundry thrown into the face of a humiliated archer, but he wants to maintain his momentum for next round. He decides to attack the highest archer with a charge.

Poincarre has his feet under him now; he

knows how to riposte out of the Judge’s Stance pose. That is what he will do. His archers run for their lives into the tenement hallways, not willing to face a swashbuckler at close range.

Lydia rolls a 3 on her d8; Poincarre rolls a 2 on his defense and a 4 on his Reputation die (bonus from posing last round). The rogue misses! But Lydia uses an Inspiration - ambition to become a Queen Below, and Poincarre stands in her way - and she rolls a 5 on her inspiration d12. She hits. Normally, this would do 2 body damage, but Poincarre’s armor is of higher quality than Lydia’s weapon, so it deals only one point of damage. Poincarre is at 2 body.

Poincarre would have a chance to riposte against Lydia if she had missed, but she did not.

Trevor’s charge on the archer allows him to slice one for 2 body damage (4 on a d6 vs. 1 for the archer’s defense; a critical hit).

Round 5. Seeing his archers chased off, Poincarre turns to flee.

Trevor has other ideas. He leaps from the balcony, swinging down on a tomato line, screaming Poincarre’s name. This is a Death from Above maneuver. Lydia dodges into the shadows again.

Trevor’s is the only attack. He rolls a 4 on his d8; Poincarre gets a 3 on his d4. Trevor hurtles down, smashes into Poincarre and finishes the combat with the fop bleeding and groaning underfoot!

COMMON ENVIRONMENT TRICKS

TRICK	ATTACK/ DEFENSE	EFFECT
Set fire to an area	-/-	1 body damage per round to all in area
Take cover	-/+2 die size	+2 die size to defense vs. ranged until you move
Crash through glass/wall (on purpose)	d6 vs. you/-	1 body vs. you if hit; +1 Mood to you and allies
Sandbag dropped on head	d4/-	1 body + rebalance
Soup in the face	d6/-	-2 die size to attack and defense next round
Fall off a ledge	-/-	Rebalance + 1 body/five feet beyond ten feet
Use bystander as marionette	d4/d2	1+2 Mood damage to humiliated foe; +1 Reputation to you
Rip open a bag of flour	-/-	-2 attack die size & -1 defense die size to all in area
Tie foe to ox cart, slap ox	d2/-	Move (random) & 1 body/round until untied (Trick unties)

COMMON ENVIRONMENT TRICKS (CONT.)

TRICK	ATTACK/ DEFENSE	EFFECT OR NOTE
Topple wardrobe (full)	d4/d2	1 body + unsteady
Strew marbles, fruit rinds, ice	d4/-	Rebalance (only works once/area)
Bag over the head	d2/d2	Blinded (-4 die sizes from atk & def, min. d2)
Clang bell to deafen	d6/-	Unsteady (only works once)
Crash through glass/wall (accident)	-/-	Str vs. quality of wall; 1 body on a make, 2 on a fail
Blinding sun reflection in eye	d4/-	-1 die size attack and defense
Toss screeching cat	d6/d2	+1 to a negative reputation; 0 + unsteady (1 body on crit)
Living shield: boy, baby, puppy	0/-	50% atks hit hostage; +4 neg. reputation to you & foe
Threaten a hostage	0/-	If your Qck roll beats the atk roll, deal a Coup de Grace
Hit ignorant bystander, frame foe	dCha/-	Miss or bystander's reason roll > your atk roll betrays you
Sip tea while fencing	0/d2	+1 Rep. to you if you end up winning
Spit apple on sword, bite between blows	0/d2	As sip tea while fencing; +3 Rep. if both in same fight
Collapse balcony	d20/d2	First must break balcony (see Breaking Items Ch. 10)
Domino improvised weapon	d2/-	Hit chandelier, it knocks torch, it hits stein, stein falls on foe: 1 body + 1 Mood to self or allies
Pull rug out from under feet	d6/-	Rebalance; must beat doom with Str or Qck roll
Fight on railing, rolling log, spar	-/-	Fight normally; make Qck vs. doom each rd or rebalance
Scatter coins to create crowd	-/-	Fighting in a crowd: -1 atk and def die sizes
Swing on chandelier, rigging, slide down bannister	-1 die size/-	Basic atk at -1 die size, move; +1 body dmg on crit

* If no defense die is listed, then it uses the base defense for a trick/miscellaneous action. This is a d4, barring some exceptional power.

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.

HEALING

A character heals 1 body per week.

If a player wishes, his character can be maimed or permanently wounded in order to accelerate the healing process. The wound could be a lame leg, a missing eye, a scarred lower lip, or something similar. This is an important event in the character's history. It preys on his mind, and it cannot be forgotten. When a player takes a wound, he loses one history slot. After three wounds, a character who is maimed also loses one point from his strength score.

MOUNTED & VEHICULAR COMBAT

A skilled rider does gain an advantage from a mount. Her basic attack maneuver - the untrained one in the lower right of the style sheet - becomes (Riding Skill)/d4. This is an exception to the rule that skills cannot help in combat. If a mounted character does not have training in riding, he cannot use this attack. He can still use a Strength/d2 basic attack, of course.

There is no style for vehicular combat. A character attacking at range from inside a moving vehicle takes a two die-size penalty to his attack.

Characters fighting hand-to-hand in a moving vehicle must make balance checks against the doom each round, unless the GM rules that the ride is sufficiently smooth. If a character fails, he must rebalance next round (and his opponent knows this).

AQUATIC COMBAT

Combat under the seas, or even wading above the knees, is difficult. The forms, movement, and balance of a fighting style are all washed away.

Only the basic combat maneuvers are available. No style function in water that deep unless especially dedicated to that environment (and there are none such in this book).

Even movement is difficult. To move in combat in water that is deeper than the hips, the character must make a strength check against the doom. Otherwise, he stays in place and struggles.

COUP DE GRACE

If an opponent is completely helpless, you can roll your Strength or Quickness die as body damage each round.



PART II

CHAPTER FOUR: MAGIC

MAGIC OVERVIEW

Magic is the greatest curse and the greatest treasure known to man. It is a force of nature, and a capricious one. It can sour chocolate or burn down a city of 10,000 people over night, with no cause or warning. People fear magic. People resent its existence. Yet every day, men all across the Kingdoms risk death for spells. A single spell can change a life, and there are many who have no hope but magic.

spell's intended effects.

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



Some say that the Kingdoms adage “Love what you hate” was born out of this lustful, hateful relationship that most people have with magic.

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

Interference. Spells and spellbound creatures interfere. Interference can have two results. First, it can cause a wild magic surge. Second, it can weaken a

learned in styles, schools and traditions. Each school has different spells and different requirements. Some spells are useable only in particular situations.

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.

Those are the important magic concepts in brief. Now we're going to look at them closer and lay out the SK rules for magic. The Toolbox section later in the book lists the actual spells and gives you the magic style sheets.

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 fragrantly 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.

Tables for random natural magic events are included in the Toolbox.



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 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, perhaps using incense or a topaz rubbed between the forefingers. Sometimes you can disguise your nature. But do not count on it. The chains of magic are not easy to hide.

INTERFERENCE

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 pot of stew. One might grab it, or the other, or both. More likely, the stew spills and scalds them.

Check for interference only when a spell has an effect. Do not check for interference when a wizard begins casting a spell or during the days when a witch's brew simmers in the cauldron. Check when the wizard looses the lightning bolt, or when the virgin drinks the witch's philter. (Also, check only once per spell, even if the spell makes multiple attacks. The highest attack roll for the interference check.)

To check for interference, make your spell's attack roll, if it has one. If it does not, roll your magic die. Compare the result of your roll to the number of spellbound creatures and objects in the area, or, for combat spells, to the number of spellbound creatures and objects in the combat. If your roll is less than the number of spellbound creatures and objects, your spell surges out of control. This is a wild surge, which is detailed below.

That's it!

Remember that "area" is different for the two different kinds of spells. "Close" spells and combat spells gather their magic from smaller areas: a tavern, a laboratory, a campsite. High spells – the spells that can plague a kingdom or blight the harvest or harden the claws of a legion of troglodytes – gather their magic from regions: a neighborhood in a city, a small town, a borderlands keep. See Chapter 2 for more information on areas.

WILD SURGES

A wild surge is an uncontrolled eruption of magical energy. It occurs in place of the intended spell effect.

If you cause a wild surge, roll again the same die that caused the wild surge (your attack die or magic die.) This is called your wild surge roll.

In a combat, the wild surge roll is an attack roll against one random creature in the combat. Creatures defend with a magic roll, plus a physical defense roll if the wild surge has a physical manifestation. The defender takes the higher of the two rolls, as usual.

If the random target of a wild surge is spellbound, the wild surge always hits.

The GM narrates a disaster appropriate to the situation.

Usually the disaster causes body damage to the creature it targets. If she wishes, the GM may narrate a magic effect that causes another type of damage: characteristic, history, mood, gear quality, inspiration, organization characteristic, wealth, or anything else. The GM has a lot of freedom. I encourage GMs to keep in mind that magic is capricious and devastating. Have fun with this!

Example. Aldraic the druid begins a Fertility spell cast against a Kvalt savage. This gestates a swarm of human-headed beetles under the savage's skin. There is no attack roll and no result yet, however, so there is no interference.

The next round, while the Kvalt savage panics, Aldraic casts Birth. This causes the beetle boil to burst, and the baby savage beetles begin to bite. Aldraic rolls his attack die, a d8 for Birth. He rolls a 1. Since there is one other druid present (total of 2 spell-



RANDOM WILD SURGES

WILD SURGE	PHYSICAL DEFENSE?	EFFECT IF HIT
1 Arcane blast debris	Y	Debris from surge blast hurtles at target; 1 body damage.
2 Psychic scream	N	Mind is torn. 1 reason.
3 Ecu spew	Y	Distillate of magic. 1 quickness.
4 Memory worms	N	Worms feast on memories. 1 skill point.
5 Whirlwind	Y	Moved one small area (50%) or large region (50%)
6 Meteor	Y	Spell condenses to shooting rock. 1 body + rebalance.
7 Magnet	Y	Loose objects fly at target. 1 body + strength.
8 Earth tremors	Y	1 body dmg to target; all are unsteadied
9 Smoldering flesh	N	1 Quickness, Strength, and Charisma
10 Nightmare density	N	Sink halfway into any surface (rebalance, a Str. vs. doom trick frees target)
11 Mirror horror	N	Every mirror in region for 1 day shows target committing a heinous act. +4 to a negative reputation.
12 Surge spike	-	Roll twice more. Add 2 to each roll; add 1 to any damage.
13 Earthquake	Y	2 dmg to target creature and buildings; all unsteadied
14 Spellbound Pillars of Fire	N	10 spellbound creatures nearest target creature erupt in agonizing flames, losing all mood and 1 point from two inspirations. All creatures sharing an area with a spellbound pillar of fire take 1 body dmg if hit by the surge's attack.

bound creatures), Aldraic's spell warps out of control and becomes a wild surge.

The GM narrates the beetles thousand human heads screaming as they melt, their birth aborted, and the beetle sludge-and-plasma that remains behind is blasted by a magical wind onto Aldraic's friend Jarod. Jarod defends with his magic roll, and Aldraic rolls his d8 again. If Aldraic hits, his own friend is damaged by the caustic, decomposing beetle sludge!

A critical hit from a wild surge is called a crisis surge. The effects of a crisis surge are left to the group and the GM. They may be nothing more than an extra point of damage. On the other hand, the crisis surge may affect everyone in the area with madfire, spellstalks, or the blink. Crisis surges are one of the reasons that the populace fears magic to the core. Anything could happen. GMs and players are encouraged to use creativity.

MASTERS, APPRENTICES, & CABALS

Masters and apprentices do not interfere with each other. Nor do members of the same cabal under certain circumstances. You must take the Master and Apprentice talent each time you wish to take an apprentice. Cabal members normally interfere with each other, but the magic order power cabalistic casting provides some workarounds.

MAGIC IN COMBAT

Magic is a devastating primal force. It is no surprise that wizards use it to tear people apart.

Just like fighting styles, magic schools use a flowchart in combat. Although magic in the Kingdoms is learned mainly in schools and traditions, we 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 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.

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



HOW MANY SPELLBOUND IN THAT CASTLE?

In the Kingdoms, this varies widely by region. In Part IV, you can find statistics for many regions and areas. In a homebrew campaign world, this is a decision that shapes the social and political heart of the world.

HOME BREW WORLDS & MAGIC

There is no need to include magical interference in your homebrew campaign world. Be aware, however, that a world without magical interference is probably much more magic-dominated than the Kingdoms. In the Kingdoms, the interference of magic keeps magic rare by making it risky, menacing, dangerous, and anti-collaborative.

You can remove all these elements as you wish in your own world. In terms of game character balance, wizards and other users of magic become more powerful, mundane classes less so.



ATTACKS WITH SPELLS

Spells that list their attack die in the lower left make physical attacks. Ribbons of Hessek in Battlecraft, for example, are physical ribbons of acid-dripping dragon sinew that slash out and physically attack an opponent.

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

Spells that list their attack die in the upper left make purely 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 pure magic attacks.

Use your magic score to defend against a magic attack. If your current combat spell or maneuver supplies one, you can instead use the magic defense die listed in the upper right. Most spells and maneuvers do not have a magic defense die, though; simply use your magic score.

LINE OF SIGHT

Unless stated otherwise, 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. For example, a 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.

RE-CASTING

Any attack that causes a rebalance also causes a re-cast. The inverse is not always true: spells and attacks that force a re-cast do not cause a rebalance unless specifically noted.

POTIONS, SCROLLS, DOLLS & ORBS

Unless the style states otherwise, any spell can be set down in a permanent form and sold. It might be a potion, a scroll, or a doll whose face is melted with an incense stick. A caster can have 1 close spell per magic level and 1 high spell per five magic levels in solid



form. Thus, a 10th-level wizard/4th level warrior who binds spells to candles can have ten candles containing close spells and two candles containing high spells. All casters can do this; it requires no special knowledge. Anyone – caster or not – can release such a spell as long as he knows the command words. Doing so is a trick in combat for a close spell. A high spell takes five consecutive tricks in combat.

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 is destroyed without effect.

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

SCHOOLS & TRADITIONS

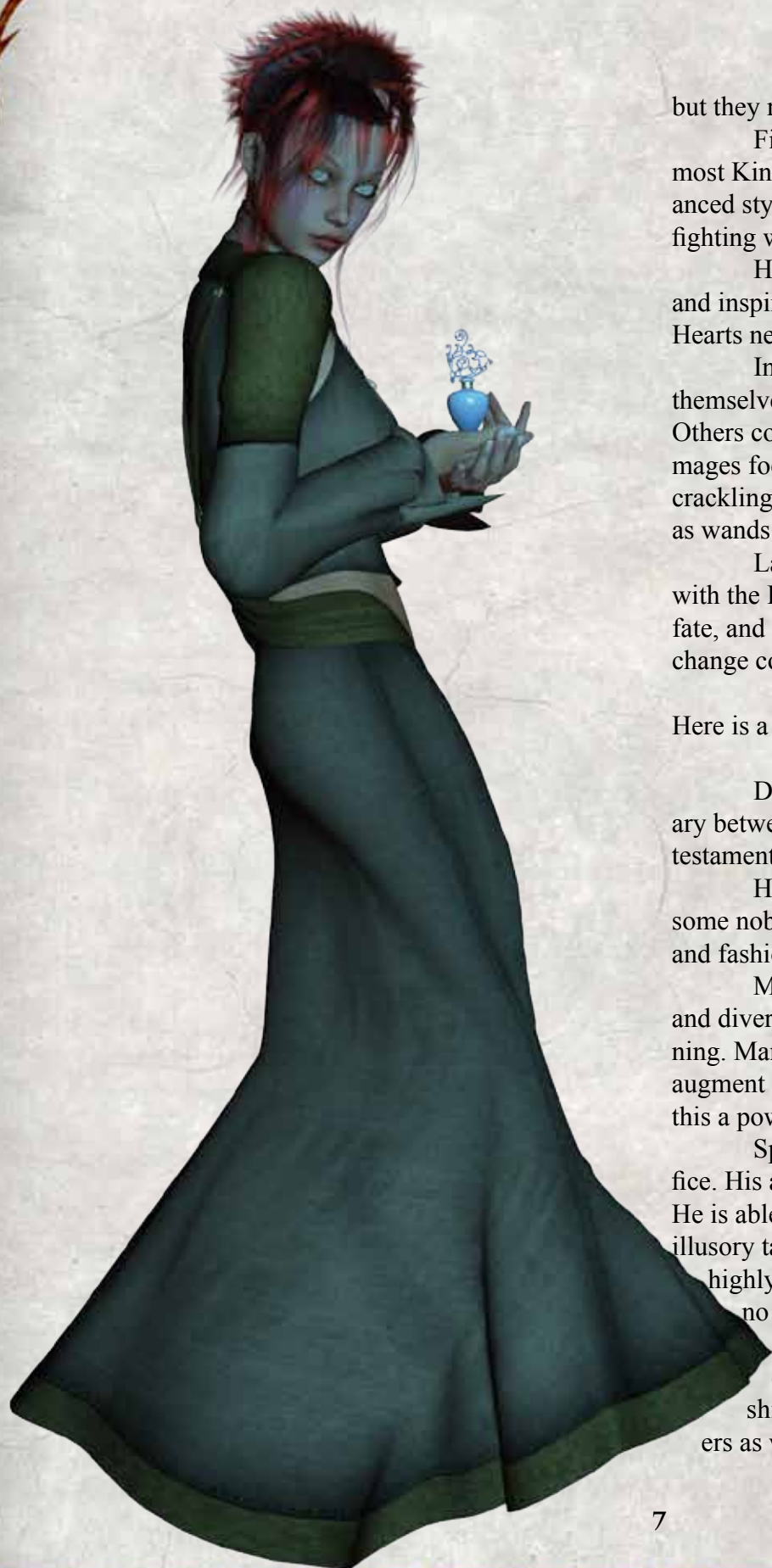
Magic in the Kingdoms is not homogeneous. The very act of spellcasting varies from style to style. Dramba rituals fill the air with lemon smoke and brick dust and the sound of rattling gecko bones. Incandescent spells crackle with lambent light and a nimbus of flame. No two styles are similar.

There are six magic styles and six grand styles. These are described in detail in the Toolbox.

For now, here is a brief summary highlighting the differences among the schools.

Dramba. Dramba casters are ritualists. A dramba witch is likely to chant and dance by firelight, to hang animals in sigil cages, and to use dolls fashioned in the likeness of her subject.

Druidic. Druids are artists of the sacrifice and students of the natural. Not all druids worship nature,



but they respect it and the wild power of its magic.

Fieldcraft. Fieldcrafters are the backbone of most Kingdoms' wizard schools. Fieldcraft is a balanced style that gains its name from its use in the field, fighting with kings' armies.

Hearts. The magic of relationships, fear, mood, and inspirations is the magic of Hearts. A mistress of Hearts needs nothing more than herself to cast.

Incandescent. Incandescent wizards consider themselves the most talented in the kings' service. Others consider them the maddest. Incandescent mages focus on combat and the channeling of pure, crackling magic, especially through implements such as wands and staves.

Language of Stars. This school is associated with the Low Gods and heresy. It teaches fortune, fate, and divination. Its wizards claim to see the stars change color through the seasons.

Here is a similar summary for the grand schools:

Death Lore. A necromancer masters the boundary between life and death. The race of wights is a testament to the enduring power of the Lore.

Highcraft. An advanced form of fieldcraft. In some noble circles, Highcraft is considered impressive and fashionable. Ironically, fieldcraft is sneered at.

Maelstrom. Elemental magic can build dams and divert storms – or burst dams and call down lightning. Many maelstrom masters are often cabalists who augment their power with many apprentices, making this a powerful spell school on the fields of war.

Spellsmith. A spellsmith has no match in artifice. His art is the most permanent in all the schools. He is able to fashion items that hold magic, including illusory tapestries, pictures, and shadow-spectaculars highly valued by noble and peasant alike. There is no spellsmith combat style.

Weremagic. Weremagic is the magic of shapeshifting. Masters of weremagic can shift not just their own forms but those of others as well.

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 or mistress 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 the neophyte level or better, you are spellbound.

CLOSE, COMBAT, AND 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 wizard. They can be cast in combat as a trick/miscellaneous action. They are low risk spells because the wizard can remove nearby creatures, assuring himself that he is the only spellbound creature in the area. A wizard can cast a close spell as often as he likes, although some have costs associated with them.

High spells are profound spells with the ability to affect the course of the world. They draw on magic from a large region. When casting a high spell, a witch faces a significant risk of interference from other spellbound creatures. GMs have information available on the average number of spellbound creatures present in the political and geographical areas of his world (for the Kingdoms, this information is provided in Part IV).

A wizard can only attempt one high spell per day.

INSPIRATIONS & SPELLS

Inspirations work with magic just as they do with anything else. Once per scene, an inspiration can be used to modify a roll.

In areas of high population, where the number of spellbound creatures in a neighborhood might be a dozen, inspirations are often the only way that a caster can cast a high spell without causing a wild surge.



DETECTION

In general, combat spells and close spells do not broadcast your location. There are spells that allow 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, including the identity of the caster or the spell cast).

PART II

CHAPTER FIVE: THE CHASE

There are many reasons to run in the Kingdoms. You could run for your life: 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: 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 for a race: the ice sleds sailing and skidding around the walls of Thyre at the Neverlight Festival.

CHASE OVERVIEW

Chases are broken into rounds. Each round has the same two parts. First, declare and then resolve your actions. Second, make your chase roll. The difficulty of the chase roll depends on the environment and the actions from the first part of the round. After everyone has made her chase roll, reposition yourself in the chase order according to the results.

Pursuers and the pursued are ranked in six range increments. The increments are 1 through 5 plus Long Range; everything below 5 is grouped together at Long Range. The GM decides where characters are to start a chase. Roughly, one area in a melee fight corresponds to one range increment in a chase.

Those are the general ideas. On to the specifics!

CHASE ENVIRONMENTS

Each round, before players choose and resolve actions, the GM presents the players with terrain options. For example, the GM might offer the players three options: over the rooftops, through the bazaar, or through the library. Each area comes with its own risks and rewards. For example, the rooftops are difficulty 4 but a failed chase roll means falling and taking 1 body damage. The bazaar is difficulty 3 but a failed chase roll means upsetting a fish cart, smelling like pickerel, and taking a -1 Reputation with the townsfolk. The li-

brary is difficulty 5, but it has a glass window that you could smash through, risking 1 body damage but gaining 1 Mood for you and your allies from the audacity (see Common Environment Tricks for the smashing through glass trick in Chapter Three).

If all the parties in a chase are pursuing the fugitive in the lead, then the fugitive picks the terrain each round. Otherwise, every player decides for her character.

Sometimes there is no choice between different environments in a chase. Race courses are often linear (or circular), for example.



CHOOSING ACTIONS

After each player knows what environment his character is moving through this round, then everyone chooses his actions. The six basic actions are:

Run. This is the standard maneuver. You run, or pilot, or swim as fast as you can. If you make your chase roll, you gain one range increment.

Push it. You sprint, or you push your vehicle until it threatens to shake apart. Add two to the difficulty of the chase roll. If you succeed, you gain two range increments.

Under control. Slow and steady wins the race. Subtract two from the number needed to make the

chase roll. If you succeed, you do not gain any range increments. Then why choose “under control”? Because of this: when you lower the target number of the chase roll, you make success much more likely. There are times when you absolutely must make a chase roll.

Attack. You can attack with any basic maneuver or rebalancing combat maneuver that you know. You must be in the same area as your target to attack with a melee attack. Roll your attack against your opponent’s defense, which is normally a d4. If you hit, your opponent’s difficulty for the chase roll this round increases by two, in addition to any damage you do. If you attack, you don’t gain any range increments if you make your chase roll this round.

You can use an attack to grab someone in a chase. With a hit, you can end the chase scene for you both. You are not required to end the scene, but the

chase cannot continue until the grab is broken.

Defend. Defend allows you to use your Quickness instead of a d4 as your defense die. You could also use any rebalancing combat maneuver that you know instead of the d4, as long as that maneuver also allowed movement. The Guardsman’s Shield Run is an example of this. You gain no range increments for making your chase roll this round, but sometimes the added defense is worth it.

Environment Trick. You execute an environmental trick. This might be one that the GM tells you about or one from the Common Environment Tricks table. Executing an Environment Trick adds one to the difficulty of your chase roll this round.

CHASE ACTIONS

ACTION	CHASE ROLL DIFFICULTY MODIFIER	IF YOU PASS YOUR CHASE ROLL	IF YOU FAIL YOUR CHASE ROLL	OTHER EFFECTS
Run	-	Gain 1 range increment	Lose 1 range increment	-
Push it	+2	Gain 2 range increments	Lose 1 range increment	-
Under control	-2	-	Lose 1 range increment	-
Attack	-	-	Lose 1 range increment	Make an attack
Defend	-	-	Lose 1 range increment	Use Quickness or rebalancing maneuver as defense die
Environment trick	+1	Gain 1 range increment	Lose 1 range increment	Execute trick

RESOLVING ACTIONS

Everyone reveals his action simultaneously, just as in combat. Resolution also occurs simultaneously. It is possible, for example, to be felled by a pursuer'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.

Run, Push It, and Under Control don't require resolution. Some Environment Tricks don't either.

Once all attacks and tricks have been resolved, go on to the chase roll.

CHASE ROLLS

The difficulty of a chase roll is determined by the environment and the round's actions. Jumping from the big hand to the little hand on the Dynn clock tower while a crossbow bolt pierces your calf is harder than sprinting around the track in the Unicorn Downs, for instance.

Everyone rolls her chase roll at the same time.

Chase rolls are narrative. To make a chase roll, narrate what your character is doing to keep up with the chase. If he is sprinting, then the GM in all likelihood expects a Quickness roll from you. If your character is pumping a mine car along a track, you can use Strength to make your chase roll.

But there is more than that. In a crowded street, a player who narrates his character enlisting the aid of street urchins can roll Charisma as his chase roll. If you are in the library and your character has a history of using this library, you could narrate how your character's knowledge of the reading room allows him to dodge between the stacks and come out ahead. In this case, roll your reason die with your library history bonus. The possibilities are limited only by the environment and your skill and imagination.

One word of caution: chases are inherently physical activities. Players should not abuse the ability to narrate substitutes for physical, speed-related characteristics and abilities. In other words, the GM should be vigilant about what narrations make sense. 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 skill directly 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).

Especially exciting or thrilling narrations – “critical narrations” – gain a one die-size increase.

If you equal or exceed the chase difficulty with your chase roll, you gain a number of range increments specified by your action for the round.

If you fail your chase roll, you lose one range increment.

Example. Terrence races down a corridor of the Rithaign Tower Dungeon, two steps ahead of the kingmen. The corridor has difficulty 3, and Terrence



chooses the Run maneuver. His player narrates Terrence running, so he rolls his Quickness die. With a 3 on the die, Terrence succeeds and gains 1 range increment this round.

Example. Terrence now reaches the torture room, with iron maidens, racks, and a viewing balcony with walnuts and sherry for the nobles. The difficulty in this crowded room is 5. Terrence's player chooses the Run action again, but this time the player narrates Terrence jumping, grabbing one of the manacle chains dangling from the ceiling, and swinging his way up to the viewing balcony. He rolls his strength die and uses his History: Wolf Child to increase the die size by one. He rolls a 4, a failure. Now he has to decide whether or not to use an Inspiration or a Mood. If he does not, he loses 1 range increment this round.

SEQUENCING

Once all chase rolls have been made, the players in the chase are re-sequenced.

The ranks are 1-5 plus Long Range. The leader or co-leaders of the race always occupies rank 1. All ranks are relative. That means that if everyone in the chase gained 1 range increment this round, then no one moves on the rank order (because no one gained or lost ground relative to anyone else).

Example. Nezzar, Oliver, and Phineas are racing horses in an Equine Steeple at the Unicorn Downs. Nezzar starts the round in the lead. Oliver is one rank behind, and Phineas is at Long Range. As a result of the round, Nezzar gains one increment, Oliver gains one increment, and Phineas gains two increments. This means that Nezzar and Oliver remain unchanged, and Phineas moves up one spot into rank 5.

Example. This one is as complex as chases get. Don't worry, you'll get the hang of it. Let's put Nezzar, Oliver, and Phineas in the same ranks as above: 1, 2, and Long Range. This round, Nezzar loses one range increment, Oliver gains two, and Phineas gains one. This means Oliver has a net gain of three on Nezzar and one on Phineas. So Oliver takes over the lead

in Rank 1, with Nezzar two behind in Rank 3. Oliver's net gain of one on Phineas means that Phineas is now five spots behind Oliver instead of four, so Phineas is still at Long Range (although he is two spots closer to Nezzar).

The technique used in the second example is a quick way to re-order multiple-participant chase scenes: find the new leader, determine his change relative to everyone else, and just fill in everyone else behind him. Of course, many chase scenes end when the leader is overtaken, and in the round when that happens, there is obviously no need to re-order.



Here's a secret for running a great chase scene. Imagine that the characters are standing still while the terrain changes around them. Don't describe it that way to the players, of course, but it helps you get in the right frame of mind: you're bringing things to the players each round. They're standing still, and each round you're bringing new challenges and new choices to them in the form of new terrain options and new obstacles.

PART II

CHAPTER SIX: SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS



Harpsichords and waltzes one year, fiddles and jigs another; deep 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.

Social encounters rely on fashion, manners, dialogue, innuendo, and actions both blatant and subtle. They transpire any place where wit is weapon and reputation is armor. And they can be every bit as dangerous as physical combat.

This chapter shows you how to run and win social encounters.

SOCIAL OVERVIEW

In a social encounter, characters exchange wit, words, and actions. A character may attempt to convince her opponent of her views. She may also attempt to harm her opponent's reputation or mood.

Play in a social encounter is typical roleplay. Everyone speaks and interacts, roleplaying in first- and third-person, narrating character actions and acting them out directly. At some point, a player or GM calls for a social roll. The attacking roll is made, with bonuses and penalties according to the roleplay. A harmed character has an immediate chance to reply,

should he wish.

After the first resolution roll, the scene may go on, or it may stop. Many scenes will be over after this first roll. Hagglng over the price of herring, or pumping the bartender for information, or asking the chandler's wife to spread a rumor are probably not activities that merit an extended scene. Other scenes, however, may go on until one side flees or is wounded into submission.

Let's take a look at how a social scene plays out.

FIRST ATTACK & TURN ORDER

Unlike combat, conversations go in turn order. True, one participant may interrupt another, but for the most part dialogue is he-says, she-says.

After you have been roleplaying in a scene for a while, a player or the GM declares the first attack. If another player jumps in and says, "Wait, I want to go before this," roll charisma dice. The higher roll goes first. If everyone wants to make an attack all at once, everyone acts in the order of the charisma dice. This is similar to the initiative order of many RPGs. Once everyone has had a chance to attack, continue role-playing and repeat as necessary.

Often the scene is the PCs as a group attempting to convince an NPC of something. In this case, tradition allows the PCs to go first. If the NPC does not acquiesce, he can attempt to retaliate. The turns alternate after that.

SOCIAL ATTACKS

Roll your charisma die with appropriate modifiers, including improv modifiers (see below). Your opponent defends with either his charisma or his reason (his choice).

If you win the opposed roll, your opponent takes 1 point of mood damage. As usual, if his mood is zero, then he takes 1 point of heart damage instead.

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 (that is, lower an inspiration's value) – whatever your desire. If the opponent agrees, he avoids mood damage. Of course, if you have no demands and simply seek to hurt your target's feelings, he cannot acquiesce in order to avoid the injury.

In this way, many social combats tend to be traded attacks until one side wants to stop taking mood damage and gives in to the other's demands. Typically, an uncommitted NPC will give in after the first failed roll. A committed NPC gives in once his mood hits zero, which is when he starts to take heart damage.

When one party is reduced to the minimum heart (2), the social scene ends. Narrate the conclusion as necessary with no further social attacks or consequences. If a scene goes this far and a "winner" must be determined, the winner is the one whose remaining heart is higher.

Most social scenes end long before one party reaches 2 Heart.

CRITICAL HITS

It is possible to score a critical hit in a social encounter. If you roll over half on your die while the defender rolls a 1, you score an extra point of damage. (This is the same as it is in physical combat).

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 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.

AIDING OTHERS

Sometimes characters find it necessary to team up in a social encounter. For example, a group of PCs trying to win the release of a companion from a baron might find that, individually, they are no match for the baron's social skills. If they team up to plead their case, however, they might have a chance.

To aid another character, do not attack when it is your turn. Instead, devote your action this round to aiding your ally. He gains a one-die size increase to his roll.

HISTORIES & REPUTATIONS

You can use a history once per social scene, provided of course that it is relevant and roleplayed. After that, your story becomes tiresome, your antics boring, your wit stale.

Reputations are histories, so they can be used to aid you only once per scene. Your reputation carries weight, but eventually everyone realizes that you are just another person (especially as the conversation grows animated and takes on a life of its own).

Similarly, a negative reputation can only be used against you once. Again, your reputation flies odiously before you, but eventually people see you as a person and not a rumor.

Inspirations are available once each per encounter, as usual.

CLOTHES ARE WEAPONS

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

As long as the fashion item is relative to the encounter, any time you have a fashion item that is 5 or more levels higher than your target's, you deal an additional point of mood damage in a social attack.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Not all attacks are attempts to hurt someone until they acquiesce to your demands. Here are the other types of social attacks.

Disarm. Clothes and other conversation pieces can be "disarmed." A social attack roll that equals or exceeds the value of the fashion item renders it unusable for the remainder of the scene: "Be quiet about your silk gown with the amethyst enhancer; no one cares." If someone else is wearing the exact same thing, both are automatically disarmed.

Power attack: You swear something to be true on all that you hold dear. You gain one die size on your social attack by risking 1 point of a reputation. If



you fail the attack, you lose the point. The reputation must be relevant to at least some of the people in the social encounter.

Reputation (Smear). You focus on damaging someone's reputation. You make a normal attack, and your target defends normally. Instead of losing mood, he loses 1 reputation if the attack is successful. Someone from a relevant group must be present; if a tree falls alone in the forest, it doesn't lose reputation with city hedges. No one can lose more than 2 points from a single reputation in a social scene.

Reputation (Aggrandize). You try to build up your own reputation. Make your attack as normal against your target. If you succeed, you have increased your reputation by 1 with some group that is present. No one can gain more than 1 point for a single reputation in a social scene.

Ruin. This attacks the target's wealth level. It is a special attack available only to nobles and courtisans.

Special attacks are useful when you are engaged in a social encounter by a knave with nothing to lose, that is, a villain whose mood and heart are already at the minimum.

THEME MODIFIERS

If there are themes for the environment or even for an entire adventure, then you gain a theme bonus die each time your roleplay touches on one of the themes. You can only gain a theme bonus die once per encounter for each theme.

You can use a theme bonus die as soon as you get it or hold onto it. Theme dice expire at the end of the encounter, however, so if you do not use it before the end of the encounter, it is wasted.

Example. After chasing Elgin Bloodfingers down a culvert in Azenahal, Annabel has him pinned against a sewer grate. One of the themes for this adventure is intimacy, so Annabel narrates how she leans up real close in Elgin's face, her warm breath blowing miniature ripples in the beads of canal water on the hoodlum's forehead. Because she is playing up to intimacy, Annabel gains a d8 theme bonus die. She can use it in her next social attack or defense or wait until later in the scene.

IMPROV & IMPROV MODIFIERS

An improv modifier is an optional modifier that comes from improv elements of roleplay. Similar to drama games, these improv elements force you to think quickly and adapt to a dynamic chain of events. They challenge the player, not just the character.

They 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 or the adventure prepares many lines of dialogue ahead of time. He hands these out on slips of paper to all players at the beginning of the session. Whenever a player uses one of these lines in roleplay, he slaps down the slip of paper and gains a d10 bonus die that can be used with any social die roll this scene. A player can only use one line per scene. Prepared lines should reinforce the themes and moods of the campaign or adventure. This can be an effective method for keeping the atmosphere in a social scene close to what was intended for the adventure.



IMPROV LOVE

I'm just going to say it: I love improv. I relish the challenge and the spotlight as a player. I love the energy, focus, and symbolism as a GM. And in both cases I love how it produces new results that take the characters in directions that I might not have thought of before.

But I mean it when I say it's not for everyone. Please, if you don't like it, rip out this page and file it with all your favorite Drew Carey videos.

Prop. This works similar to Lines, but instead of many scripted lines, there is only one Prop. 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. A player who logically uses the prop in conjunction with a

IMPROV STYLES

STYLE	TASK	BONUS FOR SUCCESS
Lines	Use randomly selected dialogue line or stage direction	d10 bonus die to any social roll in scene
Prop	Ask for prop, receive it, use it in character	d12 bonus die with accompanying attack
Rumors	Guess what rumor has been spread about you	2 Mood
Voiceover	React properly to GM or player internal monologues	d10 bonus die to next social defense
Rudolph	Turn an assigned handicap into an advantage	Two d12 bonus dice to use in encounter
Trigger	React to a stimulus	d10 bonus die to any social roll in scene
Ensigns	Roleplay and accept the narration of minor characters	2 Mood and 1 point increase to all inspirations for one week
Sets	Complete a set of characteristic actions/lines	d12 bonus die to any social roll in scene
Forced lines	Take the GM's lines and make them your own	d10 bonus die to next social attack



social attack gains a d12 bonus die to the attack. Again, 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. Go for it, literature fans!

Rumors. Each player is handed a piece of paper describing a rumor about everyone else. The player does not know the rumor that has been spread about his own character. During the course of the scene, the player must guess what the rumor about his character was, judging by the reactions of other players in roleplay, their innuendo, and NPC comments and actions. If a PC guesses correctly at the end of the scene, he gains 2 Mood from the satisfaction and relief of solving the puzzle. If the PC does not guess correctly, he gains a d6 reputation for whatever the rumor in fact said: people believe it is true since the PC was not able to figure it out and deny it. (A PC can tell another PC what the rumor about them is - PCs have free will! - but doing so incurs 4 mood damage as it is awkward

and impolite to tell someone face-to-face such a vile rumor about them, especially one that you suspect may be true).

Voiceover. In Voiceover, players not in the scene are given two chances each to inject a voiceover into the proceedings. At any point in the social encounter, a player with a voiceover can say something like, "I could tell how surprised he was by my pleasant tone." The players in the scene must act out the voiceover as if it truly were the inner monologue of the character in question. The GM or adventure can provide prepared voiceover lines, or the group can trust the players to choose wisely. Anyone who fails to react to a Voiceover in a reasonable way takes a -1 Mood penalty from the cognitive dissonance. Anyone who does take a Voiceover line properly in stride gains a d10 bonus die on their next defense.

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 player has one stimulus that will prompt a reaction: anger, despair, lust, etc. Prepared stimuli and reactions are prepared ahead of time with the character's history in mind (for character continuity I do not recommend assigning triggers randomly). In a long-term campaign, PCs can learn other PCs' stimuli, and any social scene can be a Trigger scene, even in conjunction with another improv style. 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, which she is obliged to roleplay.

Ensigns. The GM hands out new character sheets representing the maids, stewards, sommeliers and stableboys of the PCs. 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. If he does not accept the Ensigns' narration, he loses 2 mood and all inspirations are decreased 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), assenting silently 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 gains a d12 bonus die to use in the 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, steer clear.

Forced lines. Like Lines above, but much more challenging to the player and potentially disruptive. Use with caution! Forced lines are sometimes best interpreted as the PC blurting out something he might not have meant to say, whether from foolishness, absent-mindedness, or fury. To run this improv style, the GM places a line of dialogue or a stage direction in front of the PC at a time of her choosing. The player must then utter the line or take the direction in the next few seconds of roleplay or suffer a -1 Mood penalty. If he does execute the forced line, he gains a d10 bonus die on his next attack.

THEME MODIFIERS

In some social contests, you're not trying to win over the person you're talking to. You're trying to win over the audience. This is often true for politicians, barristers, and other entertainers.

When you are playing for an audience, your attack rolls must equal or exceed the Audience Difficulty rather than your conversation partner's reason or charisma rolls. The GM sets the audience difficulty according to its cultures and attitudes.

When one character is a solo performer, he simply rolls his best relevant social die and checks to see if it beats the audience difficulty.

If there are two or more characters, they attack each other normally throughout the performance. Banjos duel, courtesans exchange petty insults with each other while flirting with the dauphin, or lawyers argue before making a final pitch to the judge. This goes on



SOCIAL RULES VS. ROLEPLAY

As with all parts of Spellbound Kingdoms, the rules do not preclude outside-the-rules actions. Take as an example a scene where Sgt. Ghespure must convince the chamber maid that he should be allowed to take her mistress's glove. He has three rounds to do so before the mistress returns. The GM might have the maid propose an offer to Sgt. Ghespure: meet the maid at the Lover's Bridge at midnight, and she will allow him to take the glove. There is nothing in the social encounter rules about such a bargain, nor should there be. Role-play first, use rules when you must. When you do, allow them to inform and support your roleplay!



either for a set number of rounds or until both agree to make audience difficulty checks; the GM decides. Once the time has arrived, each makes a social roll, modified by the actions of the previous rounds (one side may already have conceded!). If neither beats the audience difficulty, neither side gains any benefit. Otherwise, whoever exceeds the audience difficulty by the greatest amount carries the day.

Reputation always applies with the audience. Even if a reputation was used once already in the pre-audience roll sniping, it applies again, as a penalty or bonus, when the final roll is made. If applicable, multiple reputations apply.

A FIGHT BREAKS OUT

Just as war is an extension of politics, swordplay is an extension of wordplay. Sometimes a conversation becomes a fight.

This is one of the hazards of a social scene. If you are using a script, the combat scene that blows up out of a social scene is not considered part of the normal scene order. After it is resolved, continue on with the scene order as usual.

You cannot start a fight at a royal ball without consequences. Whoever escalates a social scene into a physical conflict takes 8 damage to an appropriate reputation (or gains 8 to a negative reputation) and takes 3 mood damage from the stress.

SEDUCTION

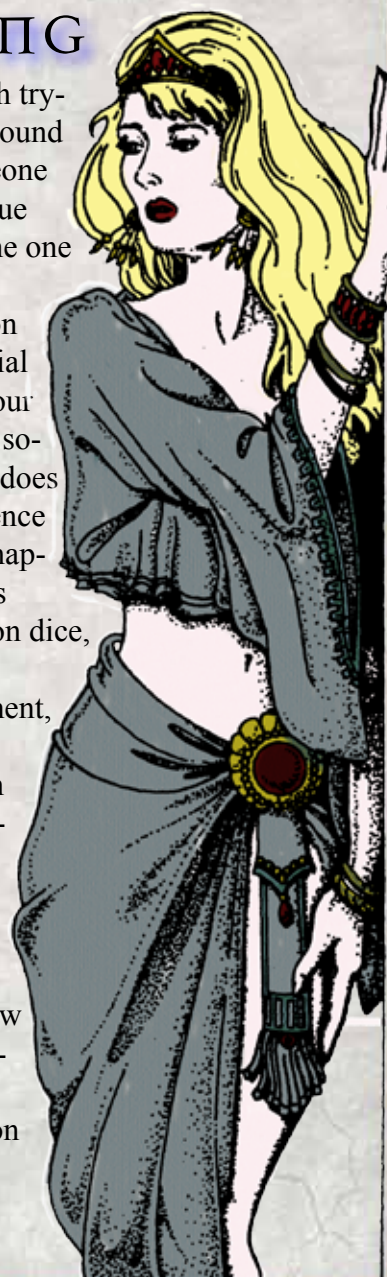
& PREACHING

A harlot and a preacher are each trying to sell something. In Spellbound Kingdoms, you can make someone love you, believe in you, or value you. In game terms, you become one of their inspirations.

Forcing an inspiration on someone is similar to other social combats. You must convince your foe to come to your side, using social attacks to punish him if he does not submit. There is one difference in this case, as mentioned in Chapter Two: your opponent defends with both his charisma and reason dice, not just one or the other.

If you do win the argument, your opponent gains you as an inspiration (value 1) of a sort in keeping with the social encounter.

If necessary, the vanquished opponent must remove one inspiration point of his choice to make room for the new inspiration. He takes full consequences for whatever penalties might accompany the inspiration drop.



PART II

CHAPTER SEVEN: ORGANIZATIONS

TYPES & CHARACTERISTICS

A man can't be in two places at once, but his organization can. With a thieves guild, you can have a spy rolling in satin sheets with the princess in East Fire in the same early morning that you have smugglers unloading spells from a barkentine down at the docks. With a trading company, you can have guardsmen shooting crossbows from atop stagecoaches barreling through Ashery Pass at the same moment that you sip tea with a beautiful painted panjandrum in Syrbizond.

Organizations are many things in Spellbound Kingdoms. They are a way for a character to extend his reach beyond the troglodyte beneath his sword and the ruby in his hand. They are a way to measure the effects of war, peace, plague, famine, and discovery. They are a way for players to change the course of the Kingdoms' history.

The seven organization types are:

- Armed legion
- Magic order
- Noble house
- Savages
- Secret society
- Thieves guild
- Trading company

Organization creation and advancement is in chapter 14.

For now, know that organizations have these



characteristics:

- Force
- Arcana
- Shadow
- Efficiency

Force measures armed might; arcana measures magic; and shadow measures the stealth and espionage abilities of the organization. Efficiency represents an organization's ability to get things done quickly, correctly, and with a minimum of waste.

Organizations also track wealth level. Finally, every organization has a scope, which measures how influential in the world the organization is. Scope is to organizations what level is to characters. A scope 1 organization has a small amount of influence in its city block or rural village; a scope 5 organization is a major player in a small town or a recognized concern in a large town; scope 10 is the level of baronies and large guilds; scope 15 is the level of small kingdoms and powerful guilds; scope 20 and above are the domains of kingdoms and world-spanning secret societies that have carried on for centuries.

PLAYERS CONTROL ORGANIZATIONS

Players, through their characters, are in charge of 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 organization? The answer is: he's not in charge of the entire Impale, 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 should write down, "Western Patrol, Twenty-Sixth Wyverns Errant, of the Impale." As he increases his status and invests in his followers and allies, he gains more and more power within the larger organization. He can adjust the title

of his organization accordingly. Eventually, when his organization has the same scope as the Impale, then he controls the entire organization. Succession struggles and power intrigues of all sorts often attend the last few steps of a PC organization's rise to preeminence.

ORGANIZATION ACTIONS

In Scene Order play, organizations can act twice per round. In classic play, organizations can act twice per week. They can act at any time. The player controlling the organization does not need to wait for a scene that he creates or any "turn."

Sometimes there is a rush to see who acts first. Two organizations vie to be the first to stake a claim on a new mine or to extend an invitation to the king. In this case, they roll an opposed efficiency check to determine who acts first.

Organization actions fall into two categories.

A bonus for a character's actions. An organization can use its action to give a bonus die to a character's action. The organization must have reasonable means to do so, as narrated by the player in control of the organization.

Example. Nicolette is trying to corner a trader at a party and winnow out a secret about the Dragon Isles. She narrates how her trading company, the Lilacs, has fed her information about her target's preferences in women. She dresses accordingly, flirts outrageously with the trader, and, when the time comes, rolls her own social attack dice along with her organization's shadow die (taking the highest number as her result, as always).

An independent action. An organization can act to accomplish something on its own, without supplementing an individual's action. It can buy a building, move its troops, conduct research, sign a treaty, spy on a court, smear a rival, or send ships across the salty seas to the Dragon Isles. This is a game played in your imagination. Set it free!

WHAT DO ORGANIZATIONS DO?



Organizations take care of the “big picture.” They translate individual action to the regional or global scale. An individual might have a chance to topple a government on her own, but there is no way that she would not be able to seize power and effectively govern without an organization.

Some examples of organization actions are:

- Change the mood of a Kingdom.
- Wage war.
- Establish and enforce law.
- Inflate regional prices and depress a region’s economy.
- Raise or lower a region’s technological level
- Settle a new city.
- Trade with a new civilization on a culture-wide scale
- Conduct espionage in multiple regions simultaneously
- Coordinate engineering research across the Claw
- Generate wealth – or destroy it.



The possible actions do depend on the scope of the organization. A secret society that consists of one old man and his adoring cat groomer is not going to carry out the same sort of operations as a continent-spanning conspiracy with agents in a dozen royal courts.

For example, an armed legion that is little more than a street gang (scope 1 or 2) might try to raid a local slaughterhouse, while a kingdom’s army (scope 15 or greater) is more likely to pillage an enemy’s coastline. A kingdom might outlaw trade with a neighboring kingdom, declare a holiday, raise or lower taxes, or claim all firstborn sons in the month of the Sun Panther.

Chapter 14, Organization Creatino and Advancement, has more information and ideas about what actions organizations can take.

RESOLVING ORGANIZATION ACTIONS

The primary means of resolving an organization action is with characteristic checks. Special abilities in the organization’s description sometimes provide other means of resolution. Here are a few examples of resolving organization actions.

Example. Jack’s repertory company, the Lord General’s Players, is trying to smuggle red kohl into the city in the company’s prop trunks. He rolls his group’s shadow (a 7, so he rolls a d6) against the city watch’s shadow (5, so it rolls a d4). Jack rolls a 3, the watch a 4. The red kohl is confiscated, and the watch is coming for the head of the company, namely Jack! If Jack had been there himself, of course, he could have used his individual abilities to help smuggle the

red kohl. But he was in cold Varteka, unaware that things were boiling over back home...

Example. Emmaline casts a high spell. High spells always alert nearby magi. The city watch, the city's arcane order, and all of the city's noble houses roll their arcana against Emmaline's magic. She rolls against each one individually. The odds are that someone will discover her.

CAN MY ORGANIZATION HELP?

Yes.

If the player has gone to the trouble of building up his organization, and he provides a reasonable explanation for how his organization could help him out of a bind, then the organization can help. A player should benefit from his play. He rolls his organization's relevant characteristic score as a bonus die

along with his roll. The organization must be accessible, of course, given the time frame and location of the matter at hand (see the next section for more).

This counts one of the organization's actions for the week.

The general idea is that players should be rewarded for building up their organizations.

Example. Jonas, a warrior, enters a kingdom where the culture is virulently statist and pacifist, so that any non-kingsman warrior must make a reason check vs. the doom each day or suffer 1 mood damage (to a minimum of 0). Jonas's player asks if his armed legion, which is secretly waiting in the holds of five fake cargo ships at the docks, can buoy his mood. It is reasonable that they could, either through their mere presence or through clandestine visits or messages couriered by street urchins, so Jonas rolls his legion's shadow score as a bonus die along with his reason each day (the legion rolls shadow because it is subverting the local culture and remaining hidden while doing so).



ACCESSIBLE

Your organization cannot help in regions where it is not present.

If your group is comfortable using narrative, story-based definitions to define your organization's reach, then by all means do so. If you prefer rules with numbers to define your organization's reach, then use the two that follow.

An organization must have at least one building in a region to have a chance of being considered present in that region.

Organizations with scope less than 5 are present only in one city, county, or area where they have buildings. Organizations with scope 5 or more are present throughout their home kingdom. Organizations with scope 10 or more can be present throughout their neighboring kingdoms, provided they have at least one building there. For every 1 scope beyond 14, the organization is present in one more kingdom, provided, as always, it has a building in that kingdom.

FOCUS ON CHARACTERS

Characters are the focus of Spellbound Kingdoms. Organizations are extensions of the characters that control them. A character can use her organization twice per week (or twice per round if you are playing in scene order), but there is no such hard limit to the number of actions she can take. Allow your organizations to highlight your characters and show off their power, but do not allow them to overburden play with bookkeeping and accounting. This is, after all, a roleplaying game, and while it is fun and possible to roleplay a character, roleplaying an entire organization is arguably neither!

ORGANIZATIONS NEED INDIVIDUALS

Organizations do not have characteristics measuring reason or charisma. If a character wants to ponder or negotiate, he must do it himself or find another individual to do it for him (perhaps one hired by his organization). The organization can provide a bonus to these rolls through espionage, bribes, and other means, but both reasoning and talking are activities carried out at the individual level.



INDIVIDUALS NEED ORGANIZATIONS

Remember that there are some actions that only organizations have the manpower and reach to accomplish. Fielding troops is one. An individual character cannot field an army. He can hire one without a prior organization if he wishes, but then by default the troops that he hires are an armed legion. They must be funded, and they are modeled by the same rules as any other armed legion.

WEALTH

Organizations track their wealth level just as characters do (see Chapter Ten).

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. To go from 6th to 7th level requires 6000 gold. Like individuals, organizations can buy items with cash instead of using wealth level. There is a table in Chapter Ten that lists the cost for items at each wealth level.

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 income 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 organization cannot command more troops than its force score.

Moving all of its troops – or just a few – on the overland map is counts as one of the organization's actions for the week (or round, 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.

Note that in scene order play, very short scene time may lead to ridiculous travel rates: a brigade of heavy footmen crossing the continent in a day or two, if your scene length is short enough. In such a case, the GM must judge, probably deciding that the troop cannot move faster than its normal rate per week).



PART II

CHAPTER EIGHT: WAR



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

War has many sides. This chapter focuses on resolving battles. It also discusses the economic and cultural destruction wrought by war. Information on mustering and maintaining troops, as well as building forts and castles, is in Chapter Sixteen.

BATTLE OVERVIEW

A battle consists of rounds. Each round, you:

1. Give formation orders.
2. Give 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. Let's take a look at the details.

VOCABULARY OF WAR

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 war striders from Jakatta might have only four striders and their crews. The numbers are variable to keep the threat levels constant. In other words, four war striders 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 command troops to perform maneuvers. Maneuvers are more complicated than formations, and the maneuvers a troop can perform depend on the troop's current formation.

You must spend one or more command points to order a troop to perform a maneuver.

COMMAND POINTS

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

At the beginning of each round, allot your command points. There are four ways to allot them. First, movement costs a command point. If you want a troop to move into a new area, spend a command point. Second, maneuvers cost command points.

Some cost more than one. Third, combining troops into brigades (or de-combining them) costs a command point (one per brigade formed or unformed, regardless of how many troops constitute the brigade). Finally, changing a unit's stance costs a command point. In the round after a unit has completed a maneuver, it can drop to a stance for free. No command point is required. At all other times, entering a new stance does require a command point.

To determine how many command points you have, count up the number of player characters that you have directing your army. Each PC who wishes to take a heroic role and lead the legion contributes one command point. A character with at least 4 martial levels contributes two command points as long as he is the field marshal (that is, the highest ranking officer in the field). If not, he contributes only one, just as everyone else.

An NPC with more than five martial levels may contribute command points at the GM's option. The GM may also rule that other NPCs contribute command points.

You can have no more command points than the efficiency score of the commanding organization.

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, but many formations and circumstances can modify this.

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.

SPIRIT & HEALTH

Health measures a troop or brigade's physical well-being. 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 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.

A commanding organization can make a force roll to grant a unit 1 additional spirit; this takes a command point.

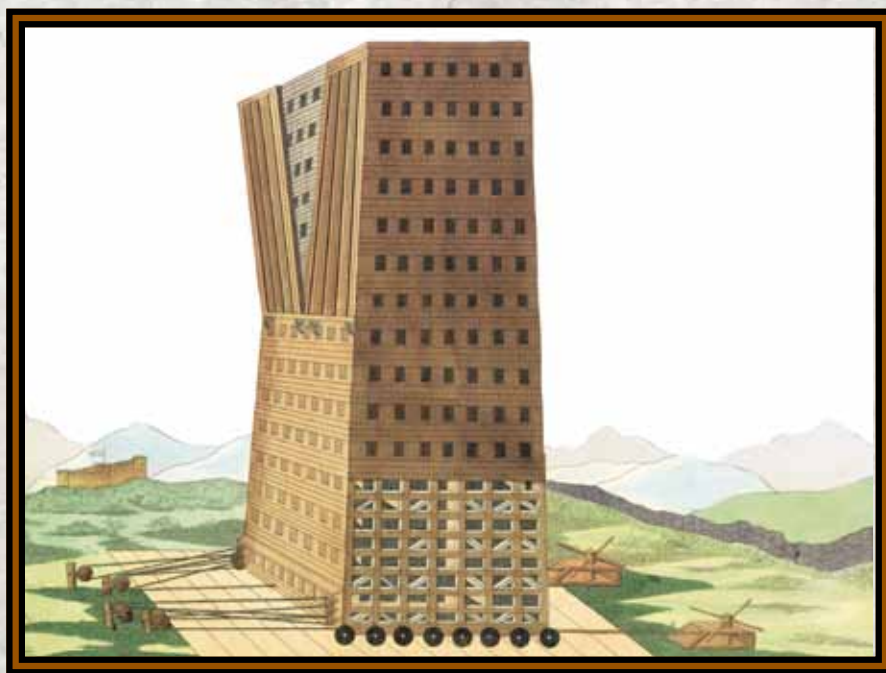
RANGED ATTACKS

Like 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 counter-infiltration unit's maneuver or stance (see troops in chapter 16) or use two command points to allow your organization to roll its shadow score against the secret troop's defense die. In the latter case, choose five areas to search in. If the secret troop is not in those areas, your search cannot succeed.





HERO ACTIONS

Normally, a PC involved in a battle is part of the command structure. She shouts commands, leads troops, and fights alongside her men. If she wants, however she can strike out on her own. She is a hero, and a hero's choices can make her seem larger than life.

If a character takes a hero action, she does not contribute to her army's command point total this round.

Typical hero actions include:

Use class ability. A witch might burn something in her cauldron that diffuses fog across the entire battlefield. An engineer might repair a cannon or modify a ballista to launch a grappling hook onto a hovering zeppelin.

Duel. You challenge an enemy hero. The winner gains 1 spirit for every unit, and the loser is out of the battle. If the challenged hero does not accept the challenge, the challenger and the challenged roll opposing Charisma checks. If the challenged hero loses,

each unit on his side loses 1 Spirit.

Mission. The GM, or a player subject to GM veto, may design missions to be carried out during the battle. The normal flow of battle stops during a mission, and the action of the mission is resolved. Usually this is a classic roleplaying scene, with the heroes overcoming hazards, guards, and a final foe in a harrowing climax. The heroes may be assaulting a trundling siege tower that is crucial to the enemy's plans, sneaking across lines to rescue a kidnapped general, or planting a madfire seed in the command tent. A mission does not have to be resolved all at once. Often one or two scenes from the mission are played, and then two more rounds of the battle are resolved, then back to the mission, and so on. Adjust the pace to suit the interests of the group. The results of the mission depend on its nature, but can include:

- 1) Commander killed. All units lose 4 spirit, and the appropriate command points are lost.
- 2) Unit removed from combat. The dreadnought zeppelin crashes into a mountainside, a dragon is slain,

the undead are laid to rest.

3) An effect is removed. If the PCs destroyed a Wonder that the enemy was carrying or marching before, for instance, its bonuses and penalties are removed.

4) An effect is created. The PCs may have burst a dam, flooding one half of the battlefield. Or they may have cleansed a temple, and now all allied troops deal one additional damage on every hit.

Threats and deals. If the opportunity presents itself, a hero may take an action to negotiate a surrender, tempt and seduce the opposing general, or cut a deal with a mercenary commander.

Attach. The hero attaches himself to a unit. He still contributes command points, but he takes one body damage for every point of damage suffered by the troop. He may benefit the troop he is attached to, according to his talents or class abilities.

At the GM's discretion, NPC villains (and

rarely, allies) can also take hero actions. GMs should be careful not to take the spotlight off the players, however, and therefore use their NPC hero actions judiciously.

MOVEMENT

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

TERRAIN & WEATHER

Battlefields are broken up into abstract areas. The GM decides where the areas are in the same way that she does in smaller scale combat.

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

TERRAIN AND WEATHER EFFECTS

TERRAIN/ WEATHER	EFFECT
Gale	-1 die size to all ranged attacks.
Rain	Roll organization's efficiency as a penalty die with every roll. Black powder weapons require efficiency vs. doom roll to operate.
Fog	-1 die size to melee attacks. - 4 die sizes to ranged attacks.
Lightning storm	+1 all magic attack dice. Other effects as 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	Roll organization's force as a penalty die with every roll.
River ford	A unit cannot move unless its organization's force or efficiency roll beats the doom.
Desert, sand	Every time a troop moves, dust clouds obscure it. +2 die sizes to all defense dice in the areas.
Snow	Any troop not native to snow takes 1 spirit in addition to 1 health with every hit.
Ice	-1 defense dice. Organization must roll efficiency vs. doom in order to move.

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.

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 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 increase by one the attack die size for every unit beyond the first that can perform that maneuver or assume that formation. They also increase the damage by one when an attack hits.

Example. A brigade has three infantry and two archer units in it. The archer units have the "Volley (Darken the Heaves)" formation, normally d8/d2 for 1 damage. If the brigade attacks with this maneuver, the attack is d10/d2 (increased one die size for the second unit) and it does 2 damage.

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 in the brigade. Some troops break this rule; it can be useful to combine zealots with other troops to keep morale up.

DISBANDING BRIGADES

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

When a brigade unstacks, its health 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 slightly greater share of the health damage. Spirit damage, on the other hand, applies equally to every troop in the brigade. In other words, if the brigade had taken 4 spirit damage, then when it disbands, every troop in the brigade has 4 spirit 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.

TROOPS VS. INDIVIDUALS

Similarly, no unit can target an individual creature unless the opposing force consists of nothing but individual creatures. In this rare case – perhaps when the opposing legions have been routed while its heroes stay behind – a mass combat unit can attack an individual creature. When this happens, the mass unit always captures or destroys the creature.

There is one exception to this rule that no matter the prowess of one individual, he cannot prevail against a mass combat unit. That exception is in the case of creatures (usually large creatures) who have both mass combat statistics and individual combat statistics. If such a creature targets an individual, resolve the combat normally using individual combat rules.

WAR MAGIC

Spellbound troops are assumed to be using cabalistic casting and master-apprentice chains in a battle. Each spellbound troop counts as one spellbound creature for purposes of interference.

Example. In the Rithite Vanguard, there are two Covens circled in the commander's tent, chanting and glamering the vanguard's flanking scouts. In the opposing Dresgilioch ranks, there is one war wizard with ten acolytes. On the entire battlefield, there are considered to be three spellbound creatures. The standard interference rules apply: any magic roll that is under 3 causes a magic surge that attacks one random unit on the battlefield.

STRATEGIC VS. TACTICAL MOVEMENT

Strategic movement refers to movement outside of combat. A legion uses strategic movement to patrol a road, caravan 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. For the Kingdoms, this information is provided in Part V.

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!).

BATTLE STARTS, ENDS, AND ESCAPES

A troop, brigade or legion can start a battle at any time by attacking another force. If you are using a regional map, the two forces must be in the same area on the regional map.

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.

Escaping a battle requires a successful retreat off the tactical map.

If a troop, brigade, or legion leaves a battle by escaping, it appears on the regional map 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 of the battle. The loser's forces that were in the area at the time of defeat appear together with any escaping troops in the escaping troops' area. If there were no escaping troops, the loser's forces appear in an area up to two areas away.

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 1. An unsuccessful roll means that the troop is lost. A new one may be mustered in its place.

FALLOUT

Wars devastate the economy. Some sectors of the economy may benefit – weaponsmiths, provisioners – but whatever excess wealth comes to them is diverted from elsewhere. The destruction of property and the opportunity cost of marching to war inevitably depress a region.

When there is war in a region, or when a kingdom is at war, prices increase. The minimum wealth level required for all items increases by 1. It increases another 1 for each season that the kingdom remains at war. This increase can be offset by other advances; see the organization and

building rules in Chapter 16, for instance.

Wars also wear on the soul. At the start of each scene in a region where a war is raging, everyone rolls reason vs. the doom. Failure indicates 1 mood damage.

Not only the souls of individuals are affected. The kingdom's soul, such as it is, is affected. Each year a kingdom is at war, it loses one culture entry, determined randomly. When this is eventually replaced, it can only be replaced with a culture entry that relates to war.

SCENES & TIMING

Some battles take place over a period of days or even weeks. Cutting away from the battle can be an effective narrative technique. When your group chooses to play this way, stop the battle scene after two or three rounds rather than continuing it until one group achieves victory. Play a round or two of other

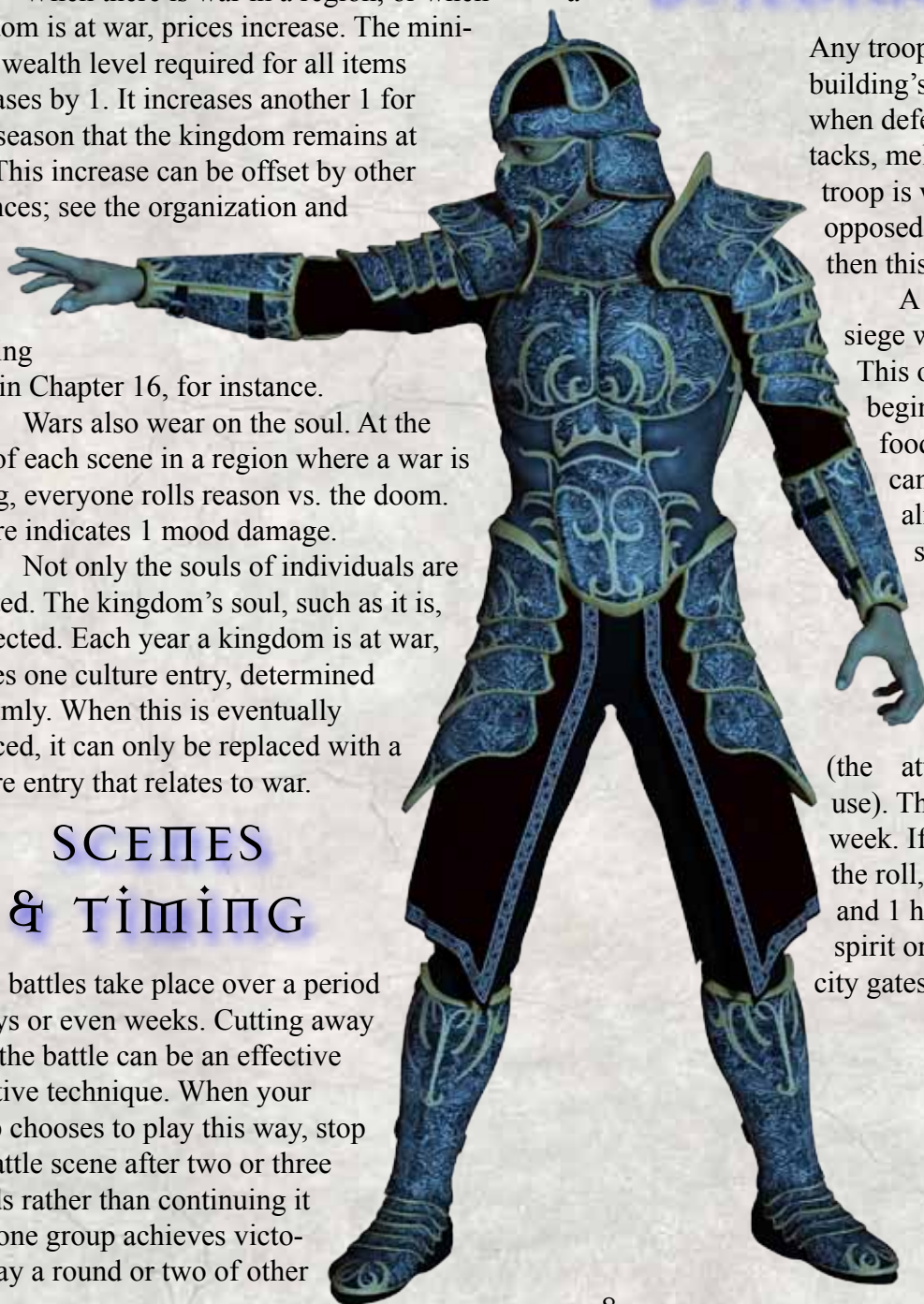
scenes, and then come back to the battle. This can give a strong illusion of depth to the game world. It also facilitates two-tier gameplay where individual heroes are the focus in some scenes and organizations and massive scale combat are the focus in other scenes.

BUILDINGS & SIEGES

Any troop inside a building gains the building's defense score as a bonus die when defending against invading attacks, melee or ranged. If the invading troop is within the building proper, as opposed to outside or on the walls, then this bonus does not apply.

A city or building comes under siege when it runs short on food.

This occurs three weeks after the beginning of the assault, although food and water storage facilities can prolong this pre-siege time almost indefinitely. Once under siege, the city 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.



PART II

CHAPTER NINE: INVESTIGATIONS & EXPLORATIONS

Investigations and explorations are classic roleplaying. A dungeon raid. A murder investigation. Setting your friend up on a date with the talking, refuse-digesting (and lonely) sewer monster. Use this as the “catch-all” category for any scene that doesn’t fall into the other four types.

These scenes do not have to be explorations or investigations in the strict sense of discovering new land or interrogating a suspected thief. Exploring the game world in any of its facets is enough. A winter’s night staring through your breath to stake out the castle guard rotation, or shattering windows and smearing pepper-musk on a tax house to get in good with the thieves guild, or testing a new poultice on a palsied dockworker – all of these are investigations and explorations of a sort.

Let’s take a look at how these scenes play out in Spellbound Kingdoms.

OVERVIEW

Like other scenes, an investigation or exploration is almost always focused on conflict. Often, this conflict stands between the PCs and information: track down a rumor among the uncooperative trolls of the Exchequary, search the bordello with an outraged madam haranguing you at every turn, examine the plague fixer’s corpse without catching the plague. It is the GM’s job to make the PCs’ pursuit of information challenging and entertaining (it is also the players’ job, of course: be an active player!).

The group may wish to resolve an investigation or exploration with a quick roleplay, a single roll, or a combination of both. This is always a valid choice, and it keeps the game moving.

For more extended investigations or explorations, use two ideas. The first is the investigative version of Things Get Worse, which allows you to continue past dead ends that might otherwise bring an investigation to a screeching halt. The second is

the threat system. The next few sections discuss these two ideas.

Finally, remember that large investigations or explorations, those intended to be the focus of an entire evening’s play, are best handled as many different scenes: combat, chase, and social scenes.

CONTINUING PAST DEAD ENDS

Often investigations are sequential: find the first clue, which leads to the second, which leads to pulling the mask off the terrible old man. There are two potential problems: dead ends and pace. This section discusses the former; the threat system discusses the latter.

Dead ends can occur because a group fails to find the clue. Their characters might fail their search or intimidate or gambling checks and thus miss out on critical information. It is true that the GM can always plant more clues to be discovered, but it is also true that the characters can meet an especially bad run of luck and miss six clues from six different sources. Dead ends can also be reached through player, as opposed to character, obtuseness, although certainly not in your group, constant gamer!

Must an investigation stop like an ox at an endless thistle patch every time the players reach a dead end?

No. Instead, apply the rule of lost scenes: things get worse. The investigation continues, but something gets worse. For quick investigation scenes meant to be played out as a piece of an overall evening’s gaming session, allow the party to go on but increase the doom by 1, only until the end of the investigation. The climax of the investigation should feature something that will harm the party if they fail a roll against the doom: a salt mamba poison dart trap, passing off a forgery that could land them in oubliettes if discovered, or crossing a rope bridge that is

swaying over a raging cataract. This way, if they have failed too many checks earlier in the investigation and the doom is high, the party faces a serious risk. They do have the choice to continue, however, instead of being stopped at a dead end. Of course, as the doom rises, they may wish to abandon the investigation for now rather than face the climactic challenge with the world set against them.

To plausibly continue the investigation in the face of a dead end, use a deus ex machina. The Toolbox lists several. Use one of these to provide a clue when the party reaches a dead end. Then increase the doom by one – make sure the players are aware – and continue on with the investigation!

THREAT SYSTEM AND PLAY STYLE

If your group is playing in the classic style, then investigations and explorations are probably prepared in advance by the GM. As mentioned earlier, this style works well for longer adventures where the entire group is focused on a common goal: a grand exploration of a sprawling, abandoned castle; tracking a murderer through three villages with two warring noble houses bickering for and against you; assaulting the wizard's tower after an experiment has gone stalky; or smuggling the fixer across the border so he can save his sister from the blink. In this case, the threat system is merely an aid to the GM in preparation. Do not let it rule you in any case.

If your group is playing in scene order (for any reason: in between grand missions; playing sandbox style; there is a war going on and every instant counts), then the GM may not have a particular investigation or exploration prepared in advance. In that case, he may turn to threat system in the Toolbox section to run one extemporaneously.

THREAT SYSTEM

To use the threat system, roll on the Clue Location table, Conflict table, and Final Challenge table. Roll (or choose) as many times on the clue location and conflict tables as you must to tailor the investigation scene length to your tastes. Anything more than three

clues, however, is probably best handled as a larger adventure made up of several other scene types: combat with the seradynn Low God cultists yields one clue, a social encounter with a thieves guild stooge yields another, a chase yields a third clue, and so on.

Decide on the Final Conflict at the start. This allows you to use the foreshadowing elements in the early parts of the investigation.



PACING

It is important to keep the pace up in investigation and exploration scenes. If you are using the threat system and the Things Get Worse rule, a lot of the work is done for you. One challenge after another should follow in rapid succession. If the PCs fail, do not waste time with fruitless leads (maybe one fruitless lead, especially if it is entertaining!). Instead jump right to the deus ex machina, ramp up the doom, and move to the next location and next clue. Investigations and explorations should take no longer than social encounters and combats.

If you are not using the threat system, then it is up to the GM and players to move at an acceptable pace through the encounters. Do not let things drag, and if a dead end comes up, either swing around it (with another clue or another path to success), blast through it (deus ex machina), or end the scene.

ALWAYS A MEANINGFUL CONSEQUENCE

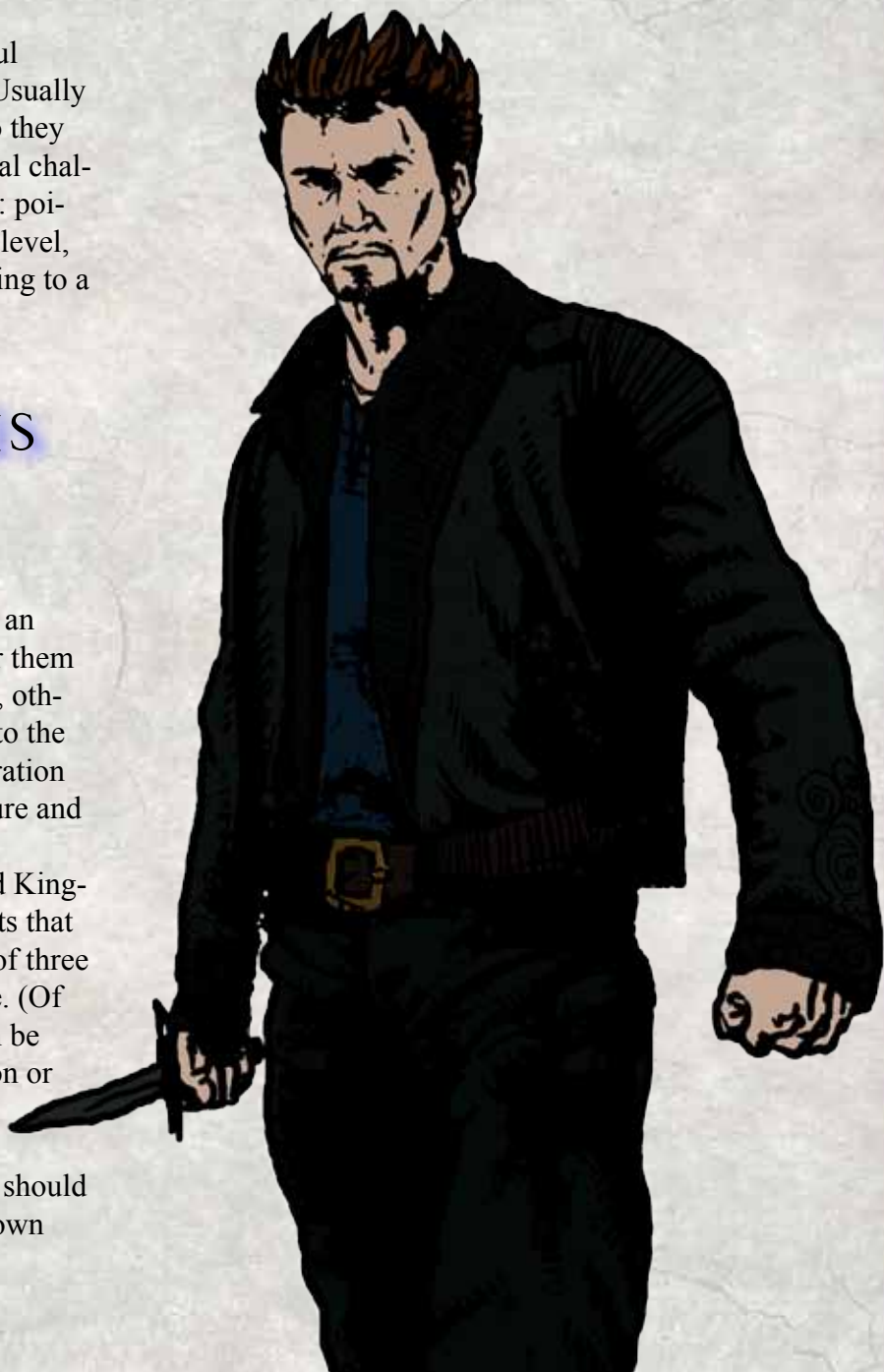
Every scene has a meaningful consequence. Investigations and explorations are no different.

If the characters succeed, the meaningful consequence is the achievement of their goal. Usually that's information. If they fail, then not only do they not get their goal, they suffer a penalty. The final challenges in the threat system have clear penalties: poisonings, maimings, reputation damage, wealth level, mood damage, even a crisis of confidence leading to a loss of inspiration is possible.

IF THE THREAT IS TOO MUCH

The challenges faced by a character or party in an investigation or challenge may be too much for them to handle. Some groups enjoy these challenges, others do not. Too-difficult challenges lend depth to the campaign world for some, but they cause frustration for others. Judge your group's appetite for failure and feed as appropriate.

The inspiration mechanic in Spellbound Kingdoms is your campaign insurance against threats that are too high. As long as a character has a love of three or more, he cannot be cut down before his time. (Of course, if he does not have such a score, he can be killed. In such a case, however, the investigation or exploration should be a climactic encounter, fitting in scope and grandeur to a hero in such desperate straits. In other words, the adventure should be planned and considered, rather than just thrown together randomly from the threat system.)



PART II

CHAPTER TEN: MISCELLANEOUS RULES

This chapter covers all the miscellaneous rules that glue the combat, social encounter, and other rules together. They include wealth of nations and individuals, cultures, reputations, crafting, and two forces that are as powerful as kings: disease and disaster.

WEALTH

Every character has a wealth level. The starting level for PCs is 1 unless otherwise stated. Wealth levels allow PCs to equip their characters without worrying about accounting details. They also allow the group to easily alter the economy in a region.

A character can purchase up to five items of his wealth level and five items of each level below that. You can always “trade up” and purchase an item at a higher wealth level. You cannot “pool” lower wealth level slots to purchase a higher level item; that is, you cannot spend two or more wealth level two slots to buy one wealth level three items. This is impossible because wealth level is not simply a matter of additive cash value but an abstract representation of financial and social status.

An impoverished character at wealth level 0 cannot purchase anything except with cash.

After maxing out the purchases allowed by your wealth level, you must wait a week before replacing any consumed or broken items.

Example. Nicolas is wealth level 4. He purchases a sword, a shield, and armor at 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 wealth level 4 items, but not until a week passes, giving his cash flow time to adjust.

To move up a wealth level, a character must invest gold in capital. The capital could be land, an investment in a trading company, a loan to a noble house, or a simple deposit with a moneylender. Once the investment is made, the gold is gone, and the character lives at one higher wealth level.

You must invest gold equal to your current wealth level times 1000 to advance to the next level. That is, if you are at wealth level 2, then you must invest 2000 gold to advance to wealth level 3. If you are at wealth level 6, you must invest 6000 crowns to advance to wealth level 7. The exception

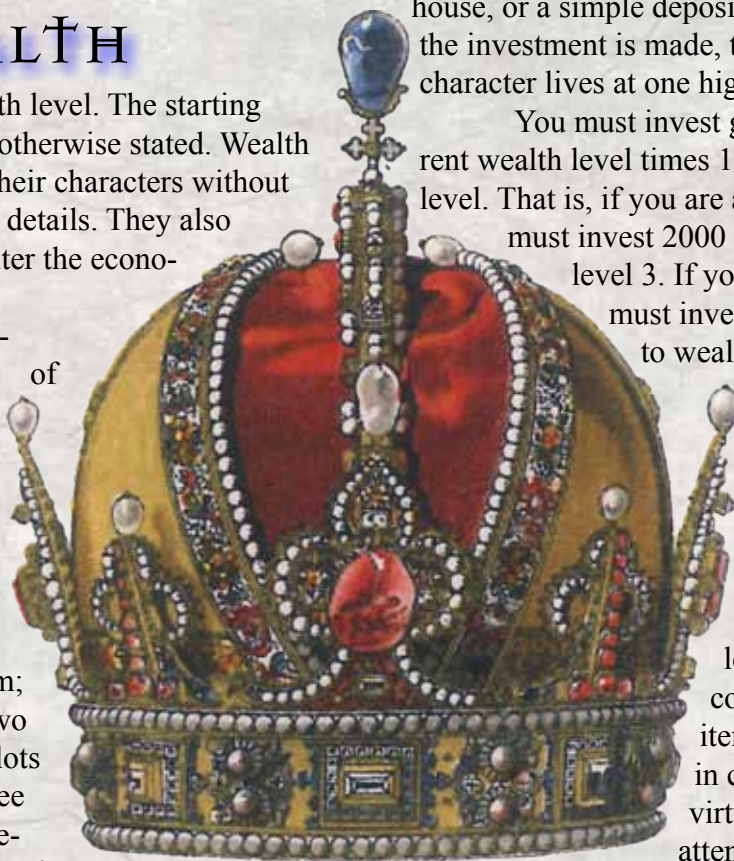
here is level 0. You must invest 100 gold to go from wealth level 0 to wealth level 1.

The maximum wealth level is 20. Any item above wealth level 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.

DROPPING A WEALTH LEVEL

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 suns. 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. They are detailed in chapter 16.

CASH

You can buy items with gold instead of with your wealth level. See the accompanying table for how much an item of a given wealth level costs in cash.

For some characters, paying in cash is wise. For others, investing their gold and climbing the wealth levels is the better choice (especially because some social functions do not welcome characters below a certain wealth level).

SELLING ITEMS

If you sell an item above your wealth level, you gain gold as dictated by the roleplaying of the sale. If you sell an item below your wealth level that you did not purchase – an item found in a treasure hoard, for example – then you gain gold in the same way.

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.

BEGGARS, MISERS, & ROGUES

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 misers can get for their wares. In other words, haggle!

CASH VALUE OF ITEMS

ITEM'S WEALTH LEVEL ITEM'S CASH VALUE

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



TWO NOTES

I'm hiding this down here so nobody gets intimidated. Not that this is that bad, but some people don't like math. If you're interested, though, the formula for the cash value of an item of level n is $[n(n-1)/2]*100$.

The second note concerns coins. Gold coins are called crowns, dragons, suns, rings, and orbs. Silver and bronze coins exist, often called moons and dirt, usually worth 1/10 and 1/100 of their gold counterparts.

ATTACKS ON WEALTH

Some organizations and individuals have attacks that can reduce your wealth level. They can attack your credit, defame your name, increase the costs of doing business, or outright steal from you. Often, an organization of your own is the best way to defend against attacks on your character, credit, and personal holdings. High reputation can also help.

Keeping your money in cash, rather than investing in wealth levels, can help you avoid attacks such as this. In that case, you are still susceptible to robbery – probably moreso. There is no sure thing in the Kingdoms.

ECONOMY: THE WEALTH OF KINGDOMS

Spellbound Kingdoms tracks economies in cities, regions, kingdoms, or other abstract areas. Sectors of the economy – arms, magic, farming, shipping, what have you – can also be tracked. When a player or the GM changes the economy in an area through the actions of a character or organization, simply make a note of that in the campaign log. Or don't make a note of it, and

trust that if it is important enough, you (or the player to whom it is important) will remember.

An area's economy is tracked in deviations from the normal wealth level. If the economy is rolling, then items become available at lower wealth levels. For example, an spool of riotwire is normally wealth level 4. In a region where the economy in the weapons, smithing, or mining sector is doing very well, it is available at wealth level 3 or even wealth level 2. Or perhaps a region is known for its vineyards, and all wine is available at one wealth level lower than usual. On the other hand, if the economy is foundering, then items are available at wealth levels higher than normal. A region where war and famine have driven up prices might have roofswords, normally wealth level 4, available at 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 cannot jump up an entire wealth level. Instead, they increase in price according to the GM's judgment. More importantly, they continually decrease in value and appeal. 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 steadily decrease in quality, from potatoes to roots to grubs to scavenged leather, vellum and insects.

WEALTH LEVEL & SOCIAL CLASS

WEALTH LEVEL

TYPICAL SOCIAL CLASS

0	Beggar, impoverished shepherd, sailor (pre-voyage); rogue or miser keeping funds in cash
1	Peasant, hired hand, common townsfolk, brute, common 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
13-18	Peerage, nobility, archbishops, guild founders, transmuters, archmagi
18-20	Royalty, select nobility

CHANGING THE ECONOMY

There are many ways in Spellbound Kingdoms to change a region's economy. War depresses the economy. A high spell can bring plague or famine, sending prices of food to the clouds. Even a well-placed rumor at court can be enough to cause prices in one sector to go up or down. At the GM and players' option, even a simple action from a high-scope organization can affect the economy. For example, after many play sessions that have seen a scope 14 thieves guild rise to dominate Muda-Tarsk, the GM may allow a shadow roll against the doom to lower all fixers' goods prices in the port city by one wealth level for a month.

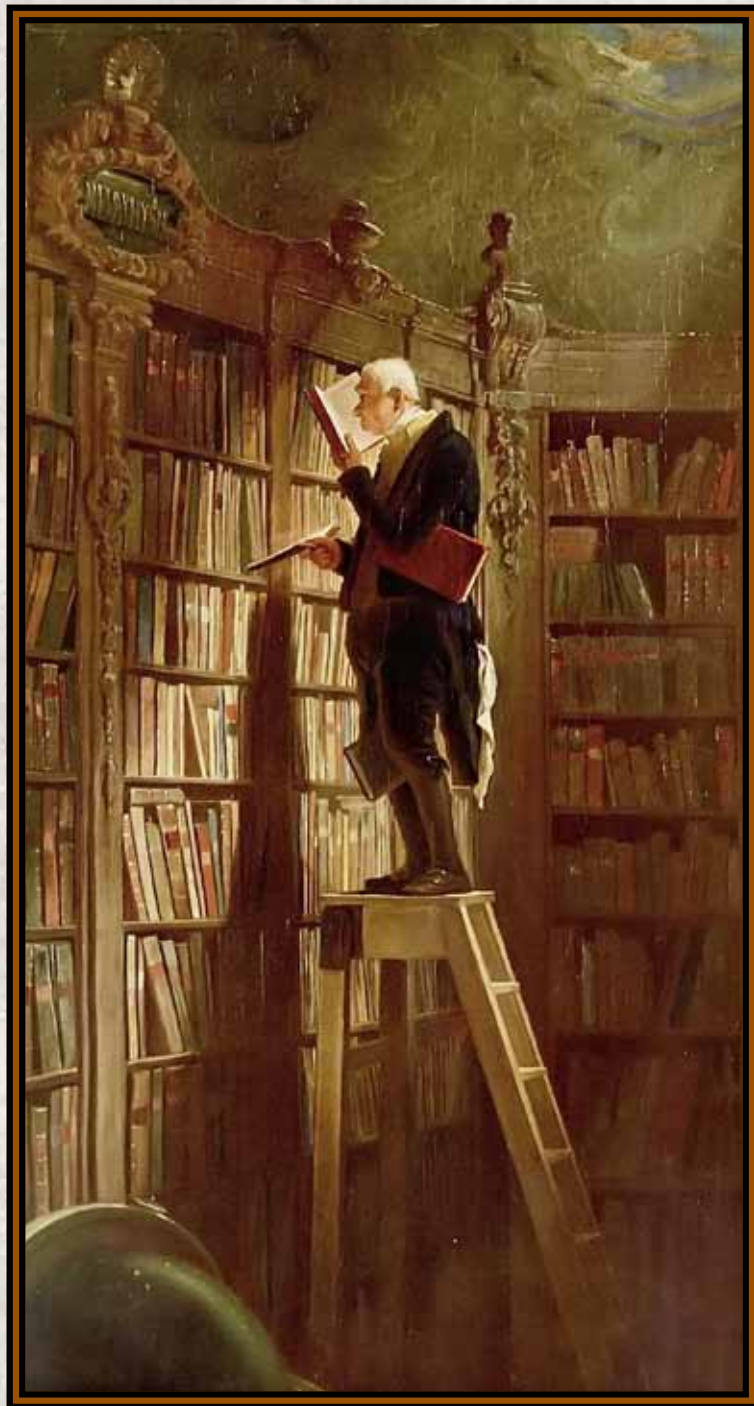
GMs can also place story goals that have profound effects on the economy. Perhaps the goal of an evening's play session is to re-open a mine that will flood the market with iron and reduce the wealth level of metallic products by 1, in addition to affording each character a reputation boost and a history item. There are more reasons than gold to go into a monster-haunted mine!

CULTURE

Cultures manifest in several ways in Spellbound Kingdoms.

One way is a reputation bonus. In Marnh, for example, anyone with a sailing reputation increases that reputation by two points, such is the esteem in which they hold the sea and the men who ride it. A culture's effect on reputation is not always positive. In night-haunted Dynn, anyone known to be spellbound gains a reputation 8 (or 8 points to an existing reputation) for wickedness and depravity.

Another way to model culture is in the economy. In Jakatta, sun plate is a valued tradition. All sun plate is two wealth levels lower than normal. In Orynja, where the spell economy is far more open than in the west, spells are sold at two wealth levels lower than normal.



REPUTATION

Perhaps the most powerful expression of culture is the doom. Many monarchs have intertwined their doom with the culture of the region. A change in culture can lower the doom (or increase it, of course).

Finally, some cultures naturally resonate with some values. Anyone who holds an inspiration matching a cultural value may benefit from this with a one-point increase in her inspiration. For example, a warrior who has the inspiration Duty to protect (3) will see it increase to a value of 4 when she travels to Jakatta, where duty is instilled in the blood of all.

Most kingdoms and regions have three culture entries, although an area could have more or less.

CHANGING THE CULTURE

It is harder to change a culture than to change an economy.

Typically, there are three culture items in a region. Two are from the kingdom, and one is from the local region. At each new year, the three highest scope organizations in the kingdom roll their efficiency. The winner can replace one of the two kingdom culture items. The same struggle for cultural dominance transpires at the regional level, but only organizations with headquarters in the region can participate. The top three regional organizations roll efficiency, and the winner is allowed to rewrite the regional contribution to the culture.

The people of the Kingdoms are accustomed to capricious and arbitrary kings. Still, if the GM rules that a culture change is too silly, too radical, or too irrational, then you must write another culture.

Culture can also be changed through roleplay and story goals. The GM may allow you to set a story goal that changes the culture: "If my character accomplishes Y, the culture will change in X way."

Finally, there are class powers that can affect culture, most notably the Chosen One's drive toward transcendence.

Reputations are histories, but they do not count against the maximum number of histories that a character can maintain. A character can have any number of reputations.

Beneficial reputations are used just like skills. Most apply only in social encounters. When a reputation could help a character, any positive reputation below 4 is a one die-size increase to the character's roll. Unlike other skills, the increase is always only one die-size, no matter what the value of the reputation. For any positive reputation 4 or larger, the player gets a one die-size increase and also rolls the reputation as a bonus die. This works like a characteristic: if the reputation is value 5, then roll a d4; if it is 8, roll a d8; if it is 11, roll a d10. In other words, roll as your bonus reputation die the largest die that is not bigger than your reputation size.

Harmful reputations are given by the GM as bonus dice to the opposition. When a reputation could hurt a character, any negative reputation below 4 is a one-die bonus to the opposition's roll. For any negative reputation 4 or larger, the opposition gets a one-die size increase and rolls a d4 (or larger) bonus die. For example, if a trader with a "Mocked in Opana for a boar-hunting accident (6)" reputation was trying to convince an Opanan to join a dangerous route as a caravan guard, the Opanan would roll a d6 bonus die in her attempts to resist the trader.

After each adventure, when experience is handed out, subtract one from any reputation that was either a) not used or b) does not have an affected population in the location where the adventure took place. People forget.



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 strength check that equals or exceeds the virulence avoids the disease.

Once she has contracted a disease, a victim recovers with a strength check against its virulence. A check for shaking off the disease is made each week. After a disease is shaken off, healing occurs naturally (see the chapter on combat for healing rules).

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

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

2 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.

3 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.

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

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

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

7 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).

8 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.

9 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.

10 Leprosy (2 to resist contraction (4 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 neces-

sarily die when charisma reaches 0. He must fail two more consecutive strength checks before he dies. In the meantime he gains a reputation point as a legendary leper every time he makes a strength check.

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

12 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 the chapter 3) 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 underneath it, and it slowly extrudes, lolling outward, dumbly watching. It is not always 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 the world of men.

Reason and charisma are reduced by one each week. When either reaches zero, the victim has completed his transformation and is no longer controllable

as a player character (see Part V Toolbox). If spellstalks are resisted, the victim desquamates and is rid of the stalks. Though the victim has recovered, the stalks slither off, forming an aberration with strange goals and designs, and a deep hatred above all for its parent character (again, see the Toolbox).

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



OTHER DISEASES

There are many other diseases in the kingdoms. But they don't all have different effects. You might contract jungle weep, pneumonia, threads, or any of a dozen other diseases that all have the same mechanical effects as the flu or consumption. GMs should feel free to replace the names and symptoms of diseases here with local bugs suited to the flavor of the campaign, while keeping the mechanical effects the same. Or tweak the mechanical effects too – build your world!

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 outcast (see Toolbox).

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 for one round. After two seasons, she disappears for two rounds. This continues for eight seasons, and as the second year of the disease, 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 finds a way to betray him as long as any part of the body at all, even the eyes, is exposed. 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 mood also. Spellbound characters must make two checks, possibly losing two mood. Characters with the drain are also, idiosyncratically, magnets for undead.

DISASTER

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.

Tornado cluster. 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 (reason) 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).

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. Faces are lost when beams of light erupt straight forward. 1 of every 10 characters is transformed unless he makes a magic check against the doom. A transformed character takes damage equal to the doom. The radiance that pours from the faces of the victims contains an image visible across the region: dragons are projected into the sky, or a witch burns in the eruption of light, or a skull cracks and hatches a son. The GM or an affected player selects the image. It causes mood damage equal to the doom to all who fail a reason check against the doom, and it causes 1 damage to all buildings as the light erupts through ceilings, higher floors, and roofs.

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 lie in bed and writhe as these agonizing stones deluge from a sky gone mad. Inspirations drop one point for every heart roll failed against the doom. The hail takes three hours to clear; checks are made hourly. Acting in any coherent manner during a storm requires a magic check against the doom; checks are made every quarter hour.

Rain of rocks. Pebbles and boulders fall. Wooden buildings and characters take damage equal to the doom unless successful with a quality or reason check against the doom. Immediately after rocks fall, one prophesy comes true.

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

DEPRIVATION

Characters can go 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 go without air for a minute and a half. 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.



EXPERIENCE

Experience is awarded after every session. Characters gain experience based on their amount of participation in the story. It does not matter what they participated in, as long as they participated. If a character was present in more than half the scenes in a story, she gains experience.

Gaining experience results in one of two rewards: a history point or a level (which includes a history point). The GM chooses which is appropriate based on the session's play.

In general, the reward cannot be two history points in a row. That means that a character should gain a level at least once every two sessions.

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 craft-

ing roll is possible without some training. The base characteristic is almost always reason or quickness (quickness in the sense of fine motor control).

It takes you a number of days equal to the final quality of the item to make a crafting check. 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 scale. Use the same rules as above, but all times are doubled with a minimum time of one month per quality point. Buildings that are critically botched lose only half of their current total of quality points.

Organizations can contribute a bonus die to your roll. This counts as an action for the organization for the week. 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, and the crafting is one of the organization's actions for the week.

BREAKING ITEMS

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. sausage, &c.). In particular, only siege weapons can do damage to buildings or other objects with a defense value.

PART III

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

RACES & CHARACTERISTICS

There are many in the Kingdoms who have the potential to be greater than what they are today. What sort of character do you want to play?

Does your character swing a sword hard enough to shatter corundum? Does she have the grace to make a tree weep and a stone smile? Has she stood silent upon a peak in Ku-to-en, witness to the White Sea?

There are many paths untaken and lives half-lived in the Kingdoms. Take one. Live one.

OVERVIEW

Use each of the sections below and in the next chapter to generate your character. Here is a summary of the steps involved:

- I. Choose species and race (this chapter).
- II. Assign characteristic scores (this chapter).
- III. Choose a class (next chapter).
- IV. Choose a history or skill (next chapter).
- V. Choose what inspires your character (next chapter).

HUMANS & TROLLS

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

Trolls appear similar to humans. There are two races of trolls: “rain” trolls, sometimes called simply trolls, and the seradynn. 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 even more rarely, they 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. Seradynn are much more likely to have small horns than rain trolls are. Tails are rare but known.

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 counterparts. Trolls possess no more acute senses than humans; they are no more able to see in the dark or smell cinnamon or hear a mouse’s heartbeat from fifty yards away.

There is one profound difference between trolls and humans, and that is their relationship with magic.

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 a different relationship with magic. Instead of embracing it and using it to regenerate, human bodies resist magic. This resistance does not prevent humans from becoming wizards. Rather, they seek to master magic more than it masters them. This urge to control, along with intense passions, contribute to the perception of humans throughout the Kingdoms as fiery, stubborn, proud, and ambitious.

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.



PLAY WHAT YOU WANT

The Kingdoms have been here for centuries. Is it possible that a human is born with the ability to regenerate? Absolutely. If you like and everyone at the table agrees, then choose the racial abilities that you want, and assign them to any phenotype you desire. Couple the wight's abilities with a seradynn troll's horns and tail. Put the prince of wolves' abilities in a wight's pale skin and gaunt frame. Play what you want



Or toss out the Kingdoms and go from scratch: a waterworld where a crisis surge sank all the continents; a dawn world where magic doesn't interfere and has just been discovered by twins who happen to despise one another; a barren world where magic not only interferes but there is only one wizard per kingdom, and he's the king. Build your world!

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 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 it gives up and spits out some gems.

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 uncertain. 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. Any character expecting to cross a wizard at some point can benefit from resistance to spells, and the nineblood 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; 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 or 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 setting-specific 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. When resisting magic, increase your die size by one.

Increase your heart by 1.

You can use one inspiration a second time in an encounter. This does not have to be the same inspiration every time.

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 are slightly more magic-resistant 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 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 how simply 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 conversations 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 "love what you hate" 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. Sooner or later, the dread gets to everyone in the islands. 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 if you like.

Racial abilities. When resisting magic, increase your die size by one.

Decrease the doom by one for any roll for which you invoke an inspiration. The doom is lowered only for you, not anyone else.

You gain a one die-size increase on perception rolls.



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 80 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 (values that are roughly double the human norm). Cold and poisons do little to harm a wight, whose body is already cool to the touch, and whose blood is already almond-scented poison. 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 exploit others' fears, that other humans find most threatening in wights.

Rarely, wights are 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 Muda-Tarsk, as well as in many (likely ephemeral) kingdoms of the Dragon Isles. Where wights rule, common folk of other races emi-

grate. 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. The aptly named Fearsome is one. 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. On the one hand, the wight gains personal power from doing so. On the other hand, 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 blackbirds always land near her when she's outside. Maybe her voice sometimes sounds much further away than it should. Maybe windows and wine glasses break now and then when she walks by.

- Consider appearance. A wight's skin is pale, although it may have garnet, white, 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 elegance.

- 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 have a small 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. When resisting magic, increase your die size by one.

You take 1 less point of damage (body damage or characteristic damage) from cold, poison, disease,

and death magic.

You feed on other's fears. Once per scene, you can use someone else's fear as an inspiration. If it is fear of you, you can use it twice. You know if there is fear in a man (you must be able to see him).

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. They 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 choose to leave the child to the wolves rather than to let the child 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 warriors and rogues. Their mobility means that they can reach targets quickly, and the human magic resistance means that they are often able to ignore any magical obstacles on the battleground. When selecting combat styles, choose



styles that can take advantage of mobility. Savage and mounted are ideal for princes of wolves.

Ironically, princes and princesses of wolves are valued in human organizations. Their mobility makes them valued members of vanguards and thieves guilds across the Claw. They are also held – especially in the case of twins – as icons of resistance to the monarch's authority.

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.

- Keep the wilderness in your character. Sniff everything. Howl sometimes just to see if anything howls back. Pace in circles. Try to set up the party like a pack, with an alpha, beta, and omega. Not all of these ideas work for every group – and perhaps none of them do for yours. But consider them.

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

Racial abilities. When resisting magic, increase your die size by one.

When a prince of wolves uses an inspiration with chase action or with a combat maneuver that involves movement, he can gain one extra range increment in the chase or moves one extra area in combat.

A prince of wolves gains two bonus points in one Inspiration he has that involves his pack or his human family. This does not count toward the normal limit on inspiration points (ie, the character's Heart score).

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 deluged 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 here, 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 piercing 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 better. 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 a troll is a wise counselor, vizier, or sage. Their “long view” approach to life allows them to master a broad array of skills. But they are not exclusively advisors and eminences grises. 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 often best used

outside of combat, or in between two combats. While the blades are still out, regeneration is anything but a guarantee of survival.

A rain troll’s equanimity is a boon in negotiations. Trolls make excellent “face” characters because they are not likely to fall for emotional tricks. If you are building troll “face,” make sure that you place a high score in reason as well as charisma so that you are as cool-headed and temptation-proof as possible.



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

SERADYNN

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 together in dark recesses of your homeland, pause a beat as if you are studying him, and 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.

When resisting any social attack or a change in mood, increase your die size by one.

You can have one more history than normal (that is, one more than your Reason score).

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

The first discovery took place aboard 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 toe-crawl toward a pottery crate. Out of that crate flopped a troll leg. The foot and leg attached. Then they knee-hiked to a wine barrel, where a one-armed torso groped over the rim and assembled itself with the foot-leg. 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 and Beast Troll (the word seradynn itself derives from a prophecy of the Inquisition in Dynn that speaks of a race of beasts rising in the land of men).

Seradynn do not in general share the same sage minds as the rain trolls. Their even closer relationship to magic turns 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 is his magic score. Pick up talents, abilities, and styles that capitalize on your magic score. Dramba sympathy magic and Hearts both allow you to take damage in-

stead of allies; this is combines well with your regeneration ability.

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) 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 your horns made you an outcast in a human village growing up. Or maybe your tail always rises embarrassingly whenever you smell chocolate.



• Seradynn often feel the need to settle. Own a home and secure it. Define the areas with social encounter bonuses that suit your troll. 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.

Increase your magic score by 1.

Any time you gain a talent, you can take a magic talent regardless of the options listed.

CHARACTERISTICS

Assign a 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 to each of the following characteristics. 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 except

heart can be raised above 15. As always, magic and other exceptions may apply, but 15 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 overall 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 resist taunts, maintain your composure in battle, and discern the details that a duller mind misses. If you want a character that builds trebuchets, pilots zeppelins, and maintains a castle, you want that character to have a high reason score.

Reason along with charisma is very important in social encounters, where it allows you to defend against the insinuations, backhanded compliments, accusations and insults of your fellows.

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 Swash-buckler.

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 warded item, or fight off a magical disease. A wizard character needs a high magic score. Anyone who expects to be fighting witches and wizards also does well to invest in a high magic score.

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.

HEALTH

There is more than one way to hurt a man.

Body. Body represents physical health.

Wounds, disease, poison, fatigue and more can lower it. Rest, care, and magic can raise it. It starts at 5.

Rules for body damage and recovery are in Chapter 3 with the combat rules.

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 1. The full rules for mood are in Chapter 2.

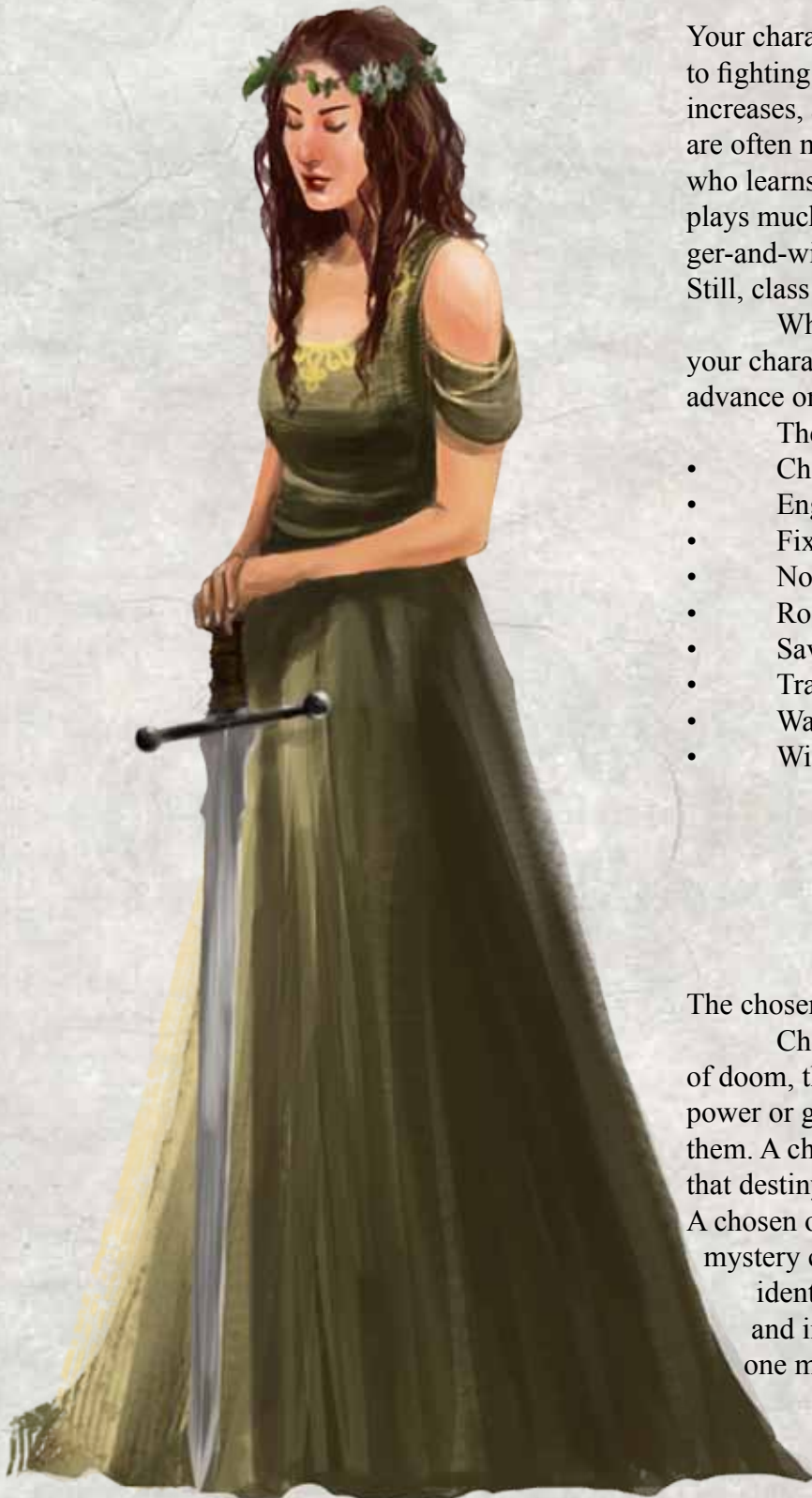
Reputation. Reputation measures the social health of a character. Unlike body and mood, a character can have multiple reputation scores. All his reputations start at zero; they change only when a character does something notable. Chapter 10 explains how to gain and lose reputation.



PART III

CHAPTER TWELVE:

CLASSES & ADVANCEMENT



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, choose one class and advance one level in that class.

The classes are:

- Chosen One
- Engineer
- Fixer
- Noble, Courtesan, Courtier
- Rogue, Assassin
- Savage
- Trader
- Warrior
- Wizard, Witch

CHOSEN ONE

The chosen never choose. Destiny chooses them.

Chosen are the children of fate, the inheritors of doom, the unlucky souls who do not choose great power or great responsibility but have both thrust upon them. A chosen one is a normal person until the time that destiny calls.

A chosen one might be the reincarnation of an ancient mystery cult's savior, with no knowledge of his true identity until the cult lamas come to venerate and instruct their reincarnated lord. A chosen one might be a farm girl whose tilling turns up an ancient sword that begins to whisper



CHOSEN ONE

LEVEL	LEVEL TITLE	POWERS GAINED
1	Awakened	Two fighting or magic styles (apprentice); Focus skill.
2		+1 Strength, Quickness, or Magic
3		Talent (martial, magic).
4		Fighting or magic style (master).
5	Chosen	Fighting or magic style (apprentice). Focus inspiration. +1 Body.
6		Talent (any save doom).
7		Fighting or magic style (master).
8		Talent (any).
9		Talent (martial, magic). +1 Strength, Quickness, or Magic.
10	Destined	Grand fighting or magic style (apprentice). Doom talent. Shrine.
15		Movement. Doom talent.
20		Revolution. Doom talent.

Like all classes, a chosen one gains a history with every level increase and a heart increase at every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, etc.).

The styles taken at level one do not have to be of the same type (martial or magical), but one must be designated the “primary” style. If the primary is a magic style, then the chosen one’s levels count as magic levels. If it is a fighting style, then the chosen one’s levels count as martial levels. The chosen one’s mastery at level four and grand style at level five must be the same type as the primary style.

At 11th level and every third level past 10 (13, 16, 19, etc.), a chosen one gains one talent of any type (except doom).

At 12th level and every fourth level past ten (14, 18, 22, etc.), a chosen one gains apprenticeship in a new fighting or magic style (including a grand style) or mastery of a style she already knows. The apprentice cannot choose fighting styles if he is primarily a magic class, and vice versa.

At every other level not listed above, a chosen one gains +1 to strength, quickness, or magic; gains the Movement ability; increases his focus inspiration by 1; or increases his focus skill by 2, or a doom talent if the level is divisible by 5.

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 inducted into a secret society she never knew existed.

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 (and likely much older).

Some chosen develop physical prowess, others arcane. All are powerful. A chosen:

- Draws power from a source of legend.
- Battles with blade, spell, or both.
- Heralds a time of great change – if she lives.

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 were they chosen? What is special about them, if anything? And if nothing is, do they really deserve their gift and their burden? Other recurrent themes in chosen adventures include living up to one's destiny, discovering one's destiny, and fighting off the cults that have arisen over centuries to prevent a prophecy-girl like you from coming to power.

In the Kingdoms:

The monarchs hunt chosen ones. 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, but they know that their suspicions are correct, always, when it comes to a child of fate. Kings cannot suffer prophecy.

Commoners hunt chosen ones too. But with commoners, the chosen one has a chance. Often, the villagers blame the chosen one for the latest magical disasters, droughts, and famines, and many are stoned. If the chosen one 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, herald the end of a decades-long war, or quiet the magic that has plagued a coast.

CHOSEN ABILITIES

Spellbound. If you learn magic abilities, you are spellbound.

Apprentice in a style: You may use all the spells or maneuvers of one fighting or magic style that are not mastery spells (marked with M).

Mastery of a style: You may use all the spells and maneuvers of the fighting or magic style. You must already know the style at the apprentice level.

History. At each level, you gain one history point.

Talent. You gain a talent of the designated type. If your chosen one levels are martial, you cannot take the magic option when given a choice between martial and magical, and vice versa.

Focus skill. Choose the focus of your power: a ring, a sword, a shield, a second spirit that shares your body. The focus shares the history of its legend to you. You gain an extra history with value 6, but the history must relate to the focus and why you are chosen. This does not count against your normal history limit; you may raise it as if it were your own.

If your focus has a physical form, you can

repair it and even increase its quality. The cost represents gold for fixer's oils, smiths' labor, and secret ceremonies to revive the dormant power in the focus. It costs as much to increase the quality of your focus as it would to buy any other object of the same type and increased quality.

In other words, buy a new sword and increase its quality by one. That's your new focus sword (or whatever item you buy). The intent of this rule is to keep your focus scaling with your wealth and level, so that you don't become a level 20 chosen one fighting with a quality 3 sword (unless you are impoverished and down on your luck, in which case, your focus may or may not be as damaged and worn as you are!).

Finally, although your focus can be separated from you or damaged, its destiny is tied to your own. As long as you survive, circumstances conspire to keep the focus from being destroyed (or even kept separated from you for very long, say, more than a few days).

Focus inspiration. Your focus has its own destiny and inspiration. Choose one in keeping with its motivations and write it down on your character sheet. The inspiration's value is 2 and its heart is equal to your chosen one level. You may use the focus's inspiration to aid you, although the GM retains veto power over this use because the inspiration belongs to the focus, not you. The GM may also compel the inspiration's use if the right occasion arises. This does not count against your normal limit of inspirations.

Movement. 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, efficiency, and one other characteristic by 1. You also gain reputations equal to your Charisma, if you wish (you may be a faceless, anonymous hero if you prefer).

Revolution. Your destiny has rallied the people to your cause. You can rewrite the culture entry of one area whose scope is no greater than your chosen one level (this could be a small kingdom). You should choose this area early on in and relate it to your focus.

ENGINEER



Engineers build cathedrals, zeppelins, castles, cannon and more. They 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 items are possible. There are few people in civilization, at any level of society, who do not know of the benefits that an engineer affords his fellow man. The

ENGINEER

LEVEL	LEVEL TITLE	POWERS GAINED
1	Draftsman	Engineering. Signature item. Fighting style (neophyte).
2		+1 Reason. Fighting style (apprentice). Advanced learning.
3		Maintenance. Talent (shadow, social).
4	Engineer	Artisan's quality. Master of the environment. Combat engineer.
5		Fighting style (neophyte). Advanced learning.
6		Fighting style (apprentice). Talent (social, shadow, or martial).
7		Construction. Combat engineer.
8		Higher learning.
9		+1 Reason. Fighting style (neophyte). Talent (shadow, social).
10		Research. Mechanical advantage. Combat engineer. Apprentice of a grand fighting style. Higher learning.
15	Chief Engineer	Work of genius. Improved artisan's quality.
20		Master of Wonders.

Like all classes, the engineer gains a history at each level and a heart increase at every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, etc.).

At 11th level and every third level thereafter (14, 17, 20, etc.), you gain a new talent (social, shadow, or martial).

At 12th level and every fourth level thereafter (16, 20, 24, etc.) you gain apprenticeship in a new fighting style (including a grand style) or mastery of a style you already know at the apprentice level.

At every level not included above or listed on the table, the engineer either gains higher learning, combat engineer, +1 reason, or work of genius.

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.

Adventures

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

Engineers are a relatively new profession. They are still rare, but their advances have made them stand out among the woodsmen, farmers, tailors, and the rest. Reliable zeppelins are perhaps the engineers' most significant achievement, and the new prototype submersibles may soon rival them. Kings are taking notice. Whether or not that is good or ill for the engineers remains to be seen.

ENGINEER ABILITIES

Fighting style (neophyte). You may use the balancing maneuvers and two others of your choice from a particular fighting style. You must be able to reach your chosen maneuvers from one of the balancing maneuvers.

Fighting style (apprentice): You may use all the spells or maneuvers of one fighting or magic style that are not mastery spells (marked with M). You must already know the style at the neophyte level.

Fighting style (mastery). You may use all the spells and maneuvers of the fighting or magic style. You must already know the style at the apprentice level.

History. At each level, you gain one history point.

Talent. You gain a talent of the designated type. If your chosen one levels are martial, you cannot take the magic option when given a choice between martial and magical, and vice versa.

Engineering. Roll your engineer level as a bonus die on all rolls related to engineering (minimum d4).

Signature item. Pick one engineering item. It becomes your signature item. As long as you can narrate your actions plausibly, you can always use your signature item in combat with an environmental trick to increase or decrease the trick's attack or defense die size by one. If your narration is thrilling and draws cheers, you can increase or decrease the die size by two. You can change your signature item when you gain a new wealth level.

Advanced learning. You gain two histories instead of

just one.

Artisan's quality. When you use an engineering item, consider its quality to be one higher than it actually is.

Maintenance. Choose three items (weapons, armor, or engineering item). You can maintain them at a quality two higher than normal. The items cannot have a wealth level greater than your engineering level. The items need not be your own, but you must have daily contact with them.

Master of the environment. Roll your engineering level as a bonus die when attempting a mechanical environmental trick.

Construction. Treat all buildings as one wealth level lower and one quality higher than listed for purposes of purchase and construction (your organization gets this bonus as well).

Combat engineer. Pick one troop in your organization. Your maintenance and oversight of that troop's gear increases their health, spirit, all maneuver attack, or all maneuver defense dice by one size.

Higher learning. You gain three histories instead of just one.

Mechanical advantage. Your environmental tricks do 1 extra point of damage in combat.

Research. Your assistants in the laboratory know how you like things done. When your organization does research on engineering items or buildings, you can roll as if you were there, even if you are far afield.

Work of genius. An advancement suddenly becomes clearer. Build one engineering item, building, or combat unit normally. Its quality is 3 higher than normal. You can never build another work of genius of this type.

Improved artisan's quality. When you use an engineering item, consider its quality to be 4 higher than it actually is.

Wonder worker. Your organization can build wonders.

FIXER [SHADOW]

Fixers are the apothecaries, surgeons, fences, and sages of the underworld. Like the traders, they maintain a loose network across the Claw. Unlike the traders, the fixers are a dark fraternity. 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 struggling 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. No. They rule because they can nullify a spell's power.

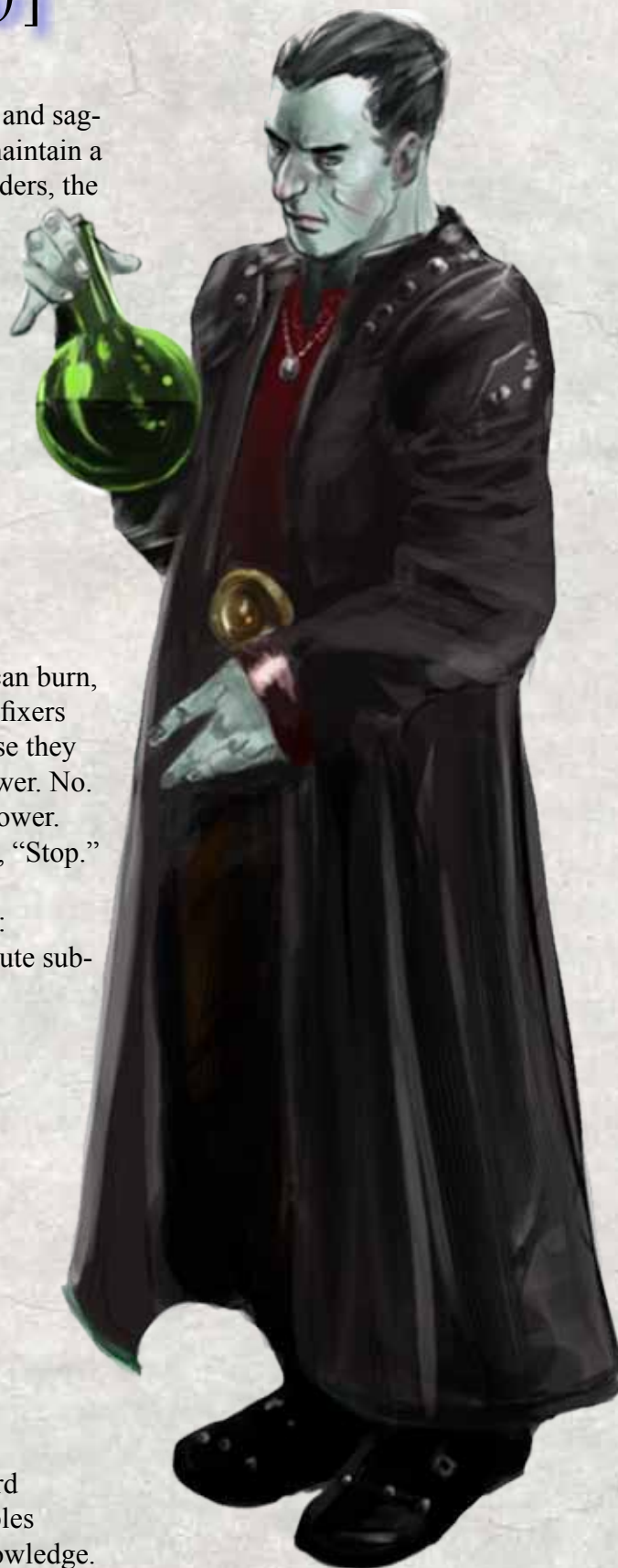
A fixer stands athwart magic and says, "Stop." His is the Great Work.

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 gew-gaws in the bazaar. They whisper with haggard old crones on their death-beds and lonely nobles in their marriage beds. All for a chance at knowledge.



JM

FÍXER

LEVEL	LEVEL TITLE	POWERS GAINED
1	Fence	Alchemy. Signature item. Fighting style (neophyte).
2		Inventory. +1 reason or charisma. Fighting style (apprentice).
3		Talent (social or shadow).
4	Fixer	Fix. Artisan's quality.
5		Battle fix. Fighting style (apprentice).
6		Talent (any save doom).
7	Hack, Barber	Fixer's friends. Research.
8		Battle fix. Fighting style (master).
9		+1 reason or charisma. Talent (social or shadow).
10	Doctor, Artiste	Transfuse. Transmute. Fighting style (apprentice). Battle fix.
15		Sanctuary. Improved artisan's quality.
20		The Great Work.

Like all classes, the fixer gains a history at each level and a heart increase at every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, etc.).

At 11th level and every third level thereafter (14, 17, 20, etc.), you gain a new talent (social or shadow).

At 12th level and every fourth level thereafter (16, 20, 24, etc.) you gain apprenticeship in a new fighting style (including a grand style) or mastery of a style you already know at the apprentice level.

At every level not included above or listed on the table, gain one of: battle fix, +1 reason or charisma, +1 to any one of your organization's scores, increase by one the number of characters you can place in sanctuary (you must already have that ability), or pick a new zombie or golem type for your ichor or one to all infusion ability. You may also choose to increase by 1 any number in transfuse or decrease a wealth cost by half. You can only choose a numerical increase or decrease twice per transfusion type.

Often – too often for some - adventure comes to 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

History is breaking, and fixers are to blame.

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 scorned 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 a time before the stars had color. Alchemy has been around for centuries, and there are places in ancient 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 haile addaka. Not until recently did alchemy have the power to cure magic.

Small wonder the kings are concerned.

FIXER ABILITIES

Fighting style (neophyte). You may use the balancing maneuvers and two others of your choice from a particular fighting style. You must be able to reach your chosen maneuvers from one of the balancing maneuvers.

Fighting style (apprentice): You may use all the spells or maneuvers of one fighting or magic style that are not mastery spells (marked with M). You must already know the style at the neophyte level.

Fighting style (master): You may use all the spells and maneuvers of the fighting or magic style. You must already know the style at the apprentice level.

History. At each level, you gain one history point.

Talent. You gain a talent of the designated type. If your chosen one levels are martial, you cannot take the magic option when given a choice between martial and magical, and vice versa.

Alchemy. Roll your fixer level as a bonus die on all rolls related to alchemy (minimum d4).

Signature item. Pick one alchemical item or substance. It becomes your signature alchemical item. As long as you can narrate your actions plausibly, you can always use your signature item in combat with an environmental trick to increase or decrease the trick's attack or defense die size by one. If your narration is thrilling and draws cheers, you can increase or decrease the die size by two. Use of the signature item consumes it as normal. You can change your signature item when you gain a new wealth level.

Inventory. You keep on hand three alchemical items of your maximum wealth level or lower (if your wealth level is less than 3, consider it to be 3 for purposes of

this ability). These items do not count toward your regular wealth level limit. If you use any of the three items during a week, you can replenish them for the next week as long as you have access to a fixer's kit or an alchemical laboratory.

Artisan's quality. When you use an alchemical item, consider its quality to be one higher than it actually is.

Fix. You have a chance to end any ongoing disease, magic or alchemical effect, or poison that targets an individual creature. Roll your reason against the virulence of the disease, the quality of the poison or alchemical concoction, or the magic of the caster (or the doom if neither of those is appropriate). You gain your fixer level as a bonus die as normal for alchemical rolls. If you succeed, the victim is cured or dispelled. You may attempt this multiple times per week, but only once per week on a given person. You must have access to a fixer's kit or alchemical lab to do this. If done in combat, it requires three consecutive tricks during which neither you nor your patient can move or take any strenuous action.

Battle fix. Ointments, balms, salves, and poultices maintain one mass combat troop in tip-top shape.

Increase its health by 1. Each subsequent time you gain this ability, you learn how to support more troops. Pick another troop to receive the bonus. You can change troops at any time that you are with the troop. A change requires a week to take effect.

Fixer's friends. The dark fraternity of fixers welcomes you. You have a "One of our own (8)" reputation with all other fixers, assuming you can prove to them you really are a fixer.

Research. Your assistants in the laboratory know how you like things done. When your organization does research on alchemical items or methods, you can roll as if you were there, even if you are far afield.

Transfuse. The victim lies down in your laboratory, and you perform a transfusion. You must have access to an alchemical laboratory. The transfusion takes one hour. If the character fails a strength check against the doom (using your fixer levels as a bonus die), the transfusion fails and he takes 2 strength and 2 body damage. A character can receive one transfusion per week at these odds. For each subsequent transfusion

attempted, the doom is increased by five and the strength and body damage by two, cumulatively.

Phlegm. You restore up to 3 strength and 3 quickness.

Bile. You restore up to 3 reason and 3 charisma.

Carmotic plasma. You heal the patient of 2 body damage.

Ichor. You transfuse ichor into a corpse. The corpse becomes a zombie (see Toolbox), although it attacks you just as readily as anyone else. After one week, unless it receives another injection, the zombie de-animates. The cost is 300 gold.

Quintessence. You transfuse orichalcum into the subject. He can survive without air and can withstand extremes of hot and cold (including lava) for 1 hour per fixer level. If he does not receive a second transfusion – this time back to blood – before the time is up, he takes 1 damage to his body per hour until he does receive a transfusion. The cost is 500 gold.

Transmute. You can turn lead into gold. The process requires expensive materials and a lot of time, but as long as you can be in your lab for one week per season, then for that season you gain 100 gold per fixer level.

Sanctuary. The fraternity of the fixers is ancient, obscure, and powerful. Pick one character to enter the fixers' sanctuary. The protected character gains your organization's shadow score as a bonus die against any cultural, economic, or organizational attacks. This does not count as one of the organization's actions for the week.

Improved artisan's quality. When you use an alchemical item, treat its quality as 4 higher than it actually is. Great Work. Add the following options to your transfuse ability:

Spellstalk cruor. The transfused patient is spellbound for the duration of the transfusion (1 day).

Sulphur of Vim. The transfused patient increases his magic score by four. Sulphur of vim does not work on spellbound creatures. It is primarily used to boost the patient's defense against magic. The transfusion costs 1000 gold and endures for 1 day.

One to all. You know how to meld a man's flesh into stone, metal, and other substances. Pick one type of golem. With 1000 gold in components,

you can transform a man into that golem for 1 day. He maintains his own mind (reason, charisma, heart, inspirations, mood, fighting styles, and history). He gains the other scores and abilities of the golem.

NOBLE, COURTIER, COURTESAN [SOCIAL]



NOBLE, COURTIER, COURTESAN [SOCIAL]

LEVEL	NOBLE LEVEL TITLE	COURTIER, COURTESAN LEVEL TITLE	NOBLE ABILITIES GAINED	COURTIER AND COURTESAN ABILITIES GAINED
1	Lord, Lady	Dilettante, Debutante	Peer. Noble House. Fighting or magic style (apprentice).	Friends at court. Fighting or magic style (neophyte).
2			+1 Charisma. Reputation. Fighting or magic style (neophyte).	+1 Charisma. Reputation. Fighting or magic style (apprentice).
3			Talent (social, martial, or magical).	Talent (social or martial).
4	Noble Title (per regional custom)	Courtesan	Reputation. Fighting or magic style (apprentice).	Reputation. Fighting or magic style (neophyte).
5			Ruin. Fighting or magic style (master).	Friends at court. Fighting or magic style (master).
6			Reputation. Talent (any save doom). Grand fighting or magic style (neophyte).	Reputation. Talent (social or martial).
7			Talent (any).	Fighting or magic style (apprentice).
8			Reputation. Fighting or magic style (apprentice).	Reputation.
9			+1 Charisma. Talent (social, martial, or magical).	+1 Charisma. Talent (social or martial).
10			Reputation. Doom talent. Fighting or magic style (master).	Tempt, Inspire. Friends at court. Reputation. Fighting or magic style (master).
15	Noble Title (per regional custom)		Grand house. Doom talent.	Secret sharer. Advance at court.
20	Noble Title (per regional custom)		Peer of renown. Doom talent.	Twist the knife. Advance at court.

Like all classes, nobles, courtesans, and courtiers gain a history at each level and a heart increase at every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, etc.).

At 11th level and every third level thereafter (14, 17, 20, etc.), you gain a new talent (social for courtesans; shadow, social or martial for nobles).

At 12th level and every fourth level thereafter (16, 20, 24, etc.) you gain apprenticeship in a new fighting style (including a grand style) or mastery of a style you already know at the apprentice level. Nobles may choose magic styles instead of fighting styles.

At every level not included above or listed on the table, a noble may gain +1 charisma, two reputation points, grand house (only if you already have it once from 15th level), an increase in your Peer of renown reputation (only if you already have it once from 20th level), or a doom talent (only at levels divisible by 5).

At every level not included above or listed on the table, a courtesan or courtier may gain +1 charisma, two reputation points, friends at court, or advance at court. Once above 10th level, the courtier or courtesan can choose his friends at court from any court in the known Kingdoms.

Nobles are the ruling class. Most are born to the privilege, while a very few are elevated from the subject class, usually 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 could be many things: political deal 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. Whispers behind closed doors, backstabbing, and the buying and selling of friendships – and more – are common. Some courtesans retain their innocence, but most lose it (or never had it to begin with). Some courtesans have designs on the throne itself. Whether her days and nights take her to the exchequary, the throne room, the party halls, or the bed chambers, a courtesan either masters her social skills or she finds herself suffering her worst nightmare: exclusion.

Nobles, courtesans, and courtiers have much in common. They share the same class advancement table, although some abilities are exclusive to one class or the other.

Play a noble if you want to:

- Glitter in social encounters.

- Ruin your enemies with an insult at the dinner table or a counter-lunge on the duelist's mat.
- Control the fate of a kingdom.

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 turn the course of life to 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 sweet meats, custards, and violin music of the palazzo.

It is the culture all across the Claw (save 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 gratitude because the nobles are spellbound. The commoners know the dangers of magic. Most of them consider that the nobles are bearing a heavy burden by controlling magic and preventing its spread through the commoners' ranks, thus minimizing the danger of wild magic catastrophes and crisis surges. A few radical thinkers believe that commoners should have the right to wield magic, but most believe that the ruling class is a necessary evil.

On the rare occasion of a king's death, noble titles are passed down to the first son or, in a few kingdoms, the first daughter. When a first son or daughter proves an incompetent monarch, courtiers and courtesans scramble to seize the dropped reins of power. Wars of succession are common when a king passes, but kings prolong their lives through magic. A coronation is unlikely to happen twice within a hundred years.

NOBLE, COURTIER, AND COURTESAN ABILITIES

Spellbound. If you learn magic styles, you are spellbound.

Fighting style (neophyte). You may use the balancing maneuvers and two others of your choice from a particular fighting style. You must be able to reach your chosen maneuvers from one of the balancing maneuvers.

Fighting style (apprentice): You may use all the spells or maneuvers of one fighting or magic style that are not mastery spells (marked with M). With the exception of the style that you begin with at first level, you must already know the style at the neophyte level.

Fighting style (master): You may use all the spells and maneuvers of the fighting or magic style. You must

already know the style at the apprentice level.

Noble house. Begin play with a noble house, scope 1. Also, your wealth level is 4.

Peer. Begin play with reputation points equal to your charisma score. You cannot put more than 4 points into a single reputation to start the game.

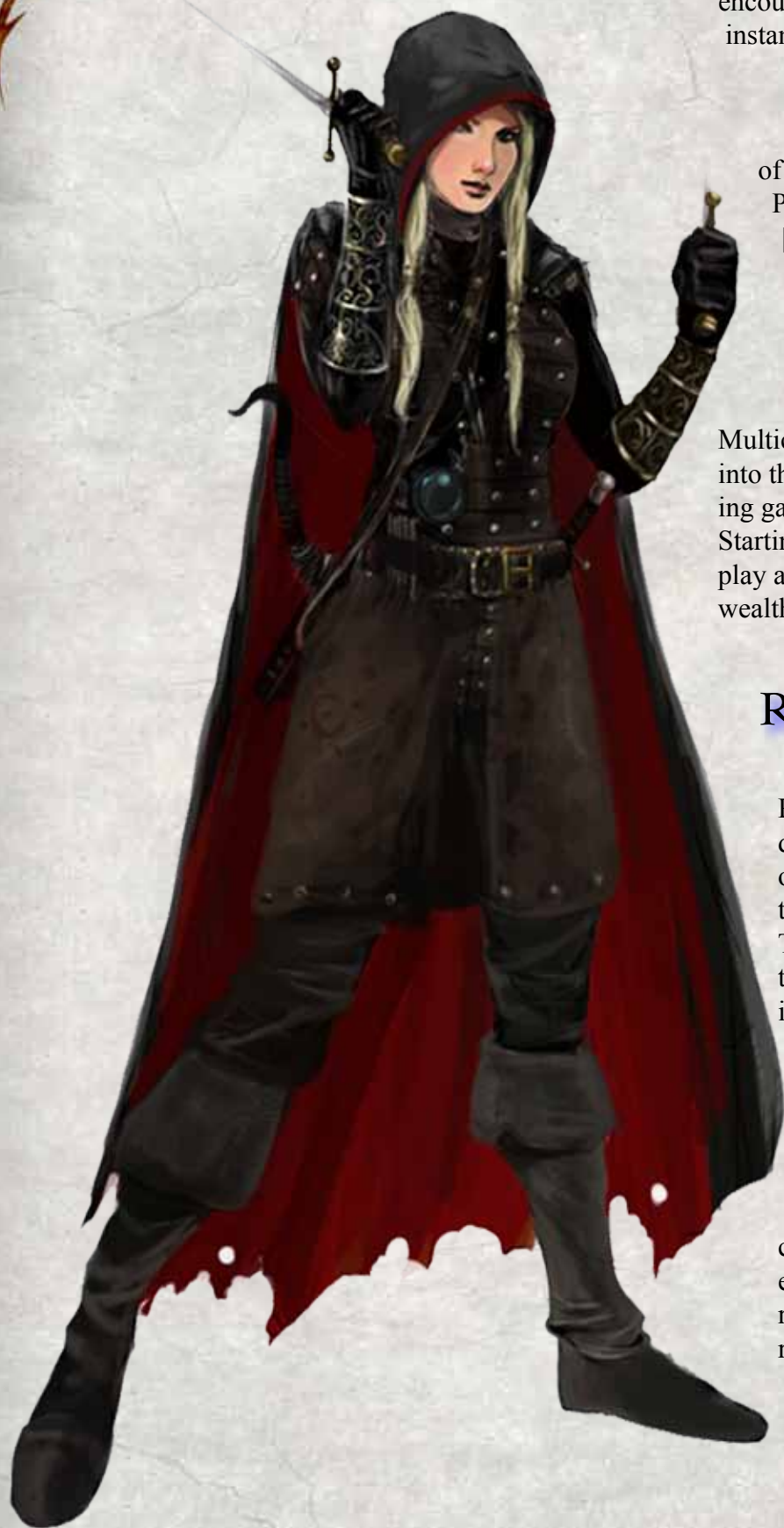
Friends at court. Friends in high positions pull strings for you. When you gain this ability, identify an organization at court with whom you have contact (create its statistics unless the GM already has them). Once per season per organization, you can make a charisma check opposed by the efficiency of the organization. If you win the check, you can direct the organization for one action during the current week, as if you controlled it normally. The organization cannot have a scope more than three greater than your courtesan level. For example, a second-level courtesan cannot direct an organization of scope 6 or higher. Of course, other characters (and you) can recruit friends at court through normal roleplay. This ability, like other abilities, does not imply exclusivity. It simply saves you effort and time, and it models your above-average capability in this regard.

Reputation. Rumors swirl. Gain two reputation points allocated as you wish.

Ruin. A word from your lips withers your opponent's finances, scaring away commerce and encouraging thieves. You can make an attack in social encounters that reduces someone's wealth level by one, as long as there are other people of his wealth level or greater present (you must have someone present who can go forth and ruin him). You may attempt this only once per encounter, regardless of success. A person may only have his wealth level reduced by three per encounter by this ability, regardless of number of attacks by separate nobles.

Tempt, Inspire. When you seduce someone, terrorize them, or attempt to inspire them in any other way – in game terms, whenever you attempt to force your target to take an inspiration point involving you – he resists only with his reason score. (In the standard case, both reason and charisma are used to reduce seduction and terrorizing attempts). All other bonuses and penalties apply normally.

Grand house. Increase two of your noble house's



scores by one point.

Secret sharer. When you win a secret in a social encounter, you gain another from the same source instantly.

Twist the knife. Double all inspiration damage. That is, when you cause an opponent to lose an inspiration point, he loses two instead of one.

Peer of renown. You have a reputation “Scion of [your noble house] (6)” in all civilized lands in the Claw.

Advance at court. Pick one of the organizations that are your friends at court. Increase two of their characteristics by two.

Multiclassing note for nobles: you cannot multiclass into the noble class without a title being granted during gameplay.

Starting class note for nobles: a character who begins play as a noble begins at wealth level 4 rather than wealth level 2.

ROGUE, ASSASSIN

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

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ROGUE/ASSASSIN

LEVEL	ROGUE LEVEL TITLE	ASSASSIN LEVEL TITLE	ROGUE ABILITIES GAINED	ASSASSIN ABILITIES GAINED
1	Right Person	Right Person	Hunter and hunted. Fighting style (apprentice).	Hunter and hunted. Fighting style (apprentice).
2			Expertise. +1 quickness.	Expertise. +1 quickness.
3			Talent (shadow). Fighting style (apprentice).	Talent (shadow). Fighting style (apprentice).
4	Rogue	Brother	Trickster.	Targeted strike.
5			False identity. +1 body.	False identity. +1 body.
6	Spy, Thief, or Rakehell	Killer	Talent (shadow or social). Fighting style (master).	Talent (shadow or social). Fighting style (master).
7			Fighting style (apprentice).	Fighting style (apprentice).
8	Agent, Boss, or Swell	Artist	Expertise.	Expertise..
9			Talent (shadow). +1 quickness. Fighting style (master).	Talent (shadow). +1 quickness. Fighting style (master).
10	Guild Boss, Spymaster, or Earl Below	Father	Impostor. Fighting style (master).	Assassinate. Fighting style (master).
15	Duke Below		Ruse.	Fear the reaper.
20	King Below	Grandfather of Assassins	Fool.	Finish the job.

Like all classes, rogues and assassins gain a history at each level and a heart increase at every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, etc.).

At 11th level and every third level thereafter (14, 17, 20, etc.), you gain a new talent (shadow, social, or martial).

At 12th level and every fourth level thereafter (16, 20, 24, etc.) you gain apprenticeship in a new fighting style (including a grand style) or mastery of a style you already know at the apprentice level.

At every level not included above or listed on the table, a rogue or assassin may gain +1 charisma or +1 quickness, expertise, or another false identity.

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 foe 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 usually end with more blood on the flagstones.

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 often hire rogues and assassins to protect them on diplomatic missions. They usually make much better conversation while on the road than warriors or savages, and if anyone knows how to foil a thief, it is another thief.

In the Kingdoms

In public, the Kings denounce thieves guilds, issue proclamations decrying the sins of the underworld, and sign treaties forbidding the use of assassins in domestic affairs. 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 provide a soupcon of lethality to the boring stew of court negotiations, backstabbing, and peasant-trading.

Day to day, rogues and assassins have semi-mundane lives among the commoners and demimondaines.

Hours pass ho-hum, as the shadow walkers practice their slight of hand on lemons and cards, trail watchmen to learn the patrol patterns, and leave wine bottles and chocolate 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 warded warehouses, dungeon vaults whose existence is known to only a few, and the freesia-scented boudoirs, conservatories, and libraries of the city's oldest and noblest families."

ROGUE AND ASSASSIN ABILITIES

Apprentice in a style: You may use all the spells or maneuvers of one fighting or magic style that are not mastery spells (marked with M).

Mastery of a style: You may use all the spells and maneuvers of the fighting or magic style. You must already know the style at the apprentice level.

Hunter and hunted. Increase your quickness die one size in a chase scene.

Expertise. You gain three histories instead of just one this level.

Trickster. You gain your shadow levels as a bonus die when attempting to deceive someone.

Targeted strike. You can make precision strikes against organizations, taking out key personnel and disrupting command and communication. Roll your shadow levels against the organization's shadow score. If you succeed, you have assassinated a key member. Reduce one of the organization's scores (your choice) by one.

Targeted strikes require a great deal of planning and patience waiting for the right opportunity; you may only attempt one per season.

False identity. Create a fake identity with up to 8 points in reputation. You can live as this character, and while you do so, any reputation gains or losses accrue to this personality, not yours. While living under your false identity, you gain your shadow class levels as a bonus die three times per scene when attempting to resist divulging a secret. As with other abilities, this does not mean that other characters can't do this. Rather, this ability simply saves you the time of building up a false identity and eight points in reputation, and it awards you a bonus in the form of your shadow levels when living as Bunberry or whoever your false identity might be.

Assassinate. Training has made you strong. You can kill someone even if she still has 3 or more inspiration points in love or fear (or 4 more inspiration points in any other category.)

Impostor. With a successful roll (shadow level vs. the reason of your target; organizations can aid with their shadow scores), you confuse your victim. He shows up at the wrong venue, and in disguise you take his place in any social encounter. As with other abilities, this does not mean that other characters can't do this. Rather, this ability simply gives you a short cut to accomplish a scheme that is part of your signature repertoire. With this ability, you can only impersonate the same character once per season. At the social encounter, any reputation penalties that you incur are transferred to the character you are impersonating.

Normal chances to see through your deception apply.

Ruse. When someone attacks one of your inspirations, it turns out that wasn't your true inspiration at all. You may declare the use of this power after a scene, when you know if you've won or lost. If your opponent beats you at a charisma vs. charisma roll, then you do not fool anyone. If you beat your opponent, however, then his attack goes for naught, as its target was not a real inspiration for you. Set that inspiration to 0 (that is, remove it from your character sheet), and show the GM the true inspiration, which must be of the same type and magnitude.

Fear the reaper. If you are attempting to make someone fear you (take an inspiration point in "Fear of [you]," he can defend only with charisma. Normally

when you force an inspiration on a target, the target defends with both charisma and reason. You also gain the Fearsome talent for free.

Fool. You play the ultimate trick on an enemy. You might convince him that his wife is unfaithful. Or that his god has abandoned him. Or that the princess is slavishly in love with him. One of his previous inspirations keeps its same value and object, but you change the other words. "Love for wife (4)" might become "Hate for wife (4)." "Pride in conquest of the Farmarch (2)" might become "Shame in conquest of the Farmarch (2)." You must succeed in a social encounter for this to work. Each time you fool a character, he gains a cumulative d20 bonus die to resist further attempts to fool him.

Finish the job. If you drop an opponent to 1 body, you may make an immediate melee attack against him.

The attack uses your quickness as the attack die; your defense remains whatever it otherwise would have been this round.

SAVAGE [MARTIAL]

Savages are the hunters, herders, husbands, and wives of the hordes that roam the wilderness. From birth, they are raised in an environment of predator and prey. The shrieks of wyverns, the rustle of porkleaves, and the sudden flap of owls diving for mice are the sounds that lull children to sleep in the wild.

The civilized folk often say that the savages have the mercy of a thunderstorm and the intelligence of a rock. The latter is as false as the former is true. Savage culture is far from nonexistent. It is merely informed by forces that he does not know how to control: magic, weather, luck, and the spirits of 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 is meets the threat with brawn and weapons, not charm and treaties. His adventures highlight martial action: shoot-and-run bow combat through the forest, or a vision quest to wrestle a lake serpent, or a spirit war leading the horde to sack a decadent city.

In adventuring groups, savages often 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 Fyrajj forest, the Wylorn 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 many staples, selling furs, ivory, herbs, and intelligence in return. Sometimes slaves are also traded, although this occurs more in the Dragon Isles than anywhere else.

Within the Kingdoms, most common folk and nobles share the same opinion of savages: they are dangerous, unenlightened people who live far below the ethical, cultural, and technological standards of any civilized Kingdom. They can be amusing for a week at court. They can be useful to hire as guides or to court as allies. They can be exploited for their knowledge of the land. But with rare exceptions, they cannot ever be trusted, relied upon, or respected as equals.



SAVAGE [MARTIAL]

LEVEL	LEVEL TITLE	POWERS GAINED
1	Brave	Fighting style (apprentice). Tribal communication. Native.
2		+1 strength or quickness.
3		Talent (martial). Fighting style (master).
4	Savage	Exult in battle. +1 body. Fighting style (apprentice).
5		Fighting style (apprentice).
6		Talent (martial). Fighting style (apprentice).
7	Chieftain	War chieftain. +1 body.
8		Fighting style (master).
9		+1 strength or quickness. Talent (martial).
10	Chieftain of Chieftains	Council chieftain. Exotic charm. Grand fighting style (apprentice).
15		Shake it off.
20		Combat mastery.

Like all classes, savages gain a history at each level and a heart increase at every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, etc.).

At 11th level and every third level thereafter (14, 17, 20, etc.), you gain a new talent (martial or social).

At 12th level and every third level thereafter (15, 18, 21, etc.) you gain apprenticeship in a new fighting style (including a grand style) or mastery of a style you already know at the apprentice level.

At every level not included above or listed on the table, you gain +1 strength or +1 quickness, war chieftain, or council chieftain.

SAVAGE ABILITIES

Poor. Savage characters begin at wealth level 0 with no gold.

Apprentice in a style: You may use all the spells or maneuvers of one fighting or magic style that are not mastery spells (marked with M). If you do not already know it, you must learn the Savage style before apprenticing in anything else.

Mastery of a style: You may use all the spells and maneuvers of the fighting or magic style. You must already know the style at the apprentice level. If you do not already know it, you must master the Savage style before mastering anything else.

Native. In any roll that deals with the wilderness and your tribal lands, you gain your savage levels as a bonus die (minimum d4).

Exult in battle. You gain 1 mood every time physical combat begins. Increase your organization's force by one and any other characteristic by one.

War chieftain. Choose two troops under your command, Increase their health by one and one maneuver's attack and defense dice by one size.

Council chieftain. If your organization is a tribe, increase its force by one and one other characteristic by one.

Exotic charm. Nobles from civilized lands are fascinated by you. Increase your charisma by two when dealing with them. You lose this ability if you have levels in the noble class.



Tribal communication: You know your tribe's language in addition to Akran (if you are from the claw) or Jakattan (if you are from the islands). Additionally, you know how to send a signal across your tribal lands in one day, using smoke signals, messenger birds, watch-fires, or the like. Your tribal lands extend up to roughly 100 miles in radius (and may be much smaller). You may communicate up to twenty-five words in your message.

Shake it off: The first time you take damage in an encounter, if the attack roll does not beat your Body score, you ignore the damage.

Combat mastery. If you are fighting in a style that you have mastered, and your opponent has not mastered any styles, you score 1 extra point of damage with each successful blow. (This bonus applies to other people. Monsters, unless marked as noncombatants, are assumed to have mastered their native fighting styles.)

TRADER [SOCIAL]

Traders believe 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 transform the unknown world into the known world. They are the pollinators of civilizations, sowing secrets like seeds across the Claw. Silks, jewels, spells, art, and arms are their harvest.

Few can claim to have seen as much territory and known as many cultures 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 all classes, are not uniform. There are those who conduct business without ever



TRADER [SOCIAL]

LEVEL	LEVEL TITLE	POWERS GAINED
1	Explorer	Fighting style (neophyte). Superior merchandise. Language.
2		+1 reason or charisma.
3		Talent (social).
4	Trader	Haggle. Fortune. Fighting style (apprentice). Language.
5		Expertise. Fighting style (apprentice).
6		Talent (any save doom).
7		Friend in every port. Language.
8		Fighting style (master). Fortune.
9		Talent (social). +1 reason or charisma.
10	Magnate	New culture. Fighting style (apprentice). Language. Fortune.
15		Best of all possible worlds.
20		Exotica.

Like all classes, traders gain a history at each level and a heart increase at every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, etc.).

At 11th level and every third level thereafter (14, 17, 20, etc.), you gain a new talent (any but magic).

At 12th level and every fourth level thereafter (15, 18, 21, etc.) you gain apprenticeship in a new fighting style (including a grand style) or mastery of a style you already know at the apprentice level.

At every level not included above or listed on the table, you gain +1 charisma or reason, a language, expertise, fortune, new culture, or exotica (if you already have gained it once).

leaving a table: usurers, goldsmiths, insurers. Some traders are covered-wagon hucksters peddling gnarsk-leather breechcloths and roc feather suits. Others are much more or much less. There are caravans that trade in troll delirium, slave girls, and spells. Others stake territory and trade rights to mountains, lakes, and ruins. Still others negotiate treaties on behalf of kings and caravan a hundred wagons through mountains to transport one royal bride. 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 deals with people, not gold.

Adventures

Paradoxically, traders may seem both likely and unlikely to encounter adventure. Likely because their journeys are so wide-ranging; unlikely, because peace and free commerce are essential to their livelihoods. Precisely because of the importance of peace, many traders seek out what others would call "danger." There is no altruistic motive here: the trader wishes to nip the problem before it blooms. Many traders use their organizations, their connections, and their henchmen to raze bandit camps, hunt chimeras, and negotiate favorable terms with the Thieves' Guild (one way or the other).

Also note that adventure often comes looking for traders. That much gold in one place is tempting to more than just potential business partners.

In the Kingdoms

Most traders wander four out of five seasons. They do not want to overstay their welcome, and they are aware that the Kings tolerate their presence only so long as they continue to provide goods and services otherwise unavailable. In the north, traders move along the famed Free Road between Thyre and far Oryn-ja. On the two eastern peninsulas, the two most popular caravan routes are Azenahal to Dynn and Syrbizond to Oryn-ja. Though these routes are the most popular, they are still dangerous enough that the caravans are well-guarded.

In the south, traders are divided into two camps. One, the "easy wagons," trade along the Harvest Road and the Kings Road. The wagons usually move in small groups rather than the large caravans that band together for safety on the Free Road and the eastern peninsulas. The other group of southern traders are the ship-borne merchants that ply the Sea of Princes. Depending on their routes, they may experience nothing but well known, calm waters (between Queensport, Rithaign, Zocith, and Varteka) or harrowing adventures (beyond the Claw to the Dragon Isles and back to Oryn-ja).

TRADER ABILITIES

Fighting style (neophyte). You may use the balancing maneuvers and two others of your choice from a particular fighting style. You must be able to reach your chosen maneuvers from one of the balancing maneuvers.

Fighting style (apprentice): You may use all the spells or maneuvers of one fighting or magic style that are not mastery spells (marked with M). With the exception of the style that you learn at first level, you must already know the style at the neophyte level.

Fighting style (master): You may use all the spells and maneuvers of the fighting or magic style. You must already know the style at the apprentice level.

Superior merchandise. You have a trader's eye for quality items. Anything you buy has a 1-in-4 chance of being 1 higher quality than normal.

Language. In your travels, you learn to read and write an additional language. Unlike learning a language normally, this does not count against your skill totals. This ability grants the equivalent of a one-point skill in the language. If you increase the language's skill, it counts against your history total normally.

Haggle. Increase your charisma die one size in any scene involving a negotiation.

Fortune. Increase your wealth level and your organization's wealth level by one.

Expertise. You gain three histories instead of one.

Friend in every port. As long as you are in any known city or its environs, you are within reach of your organization. A known city is any city where trading ships of the Claw (or your home) drop anchor at least once per year.

New culture. Traveling the world, you discover a new civilization. This civilization is just now rising to prominence. Your group has two approaches to this ability. First, you define the civilization in cooperation with the GM and other players, and you choose the characteristics, culture, and all other qualities as any other civilization described in the Toolbox. Second, you may skip all this and simply say that the new civilization is an enemy or ally of one kingdom or one organization. As a result, that kingdom or organization must deal with the new culture, either by raising or lowering (your choice) two of its numerical characteristics by two. This represents the benefits of trade with a new ally or the costs of contending with a new enemy.

Best of all possible worlds: Your deals benefit both parties. Any time you seal a (meaningful) deal between individuals, both parties increase their mood by 1.

Exotica. An engineer surrounded by blasting furnaces and clanking gears in a basement in Thyre. A jongleur in Rithaign who is selling his dead grandfather's spells. A ruin near Varteka. No matter what the source is, you've found an important item. Choose any item other than a wonder from Chapter 16. You have found one. You can sell it to the highest bidder or keep it for yourself.

WITCH OR WIZARD

[MAGICAL]

Wizards and witches live with danger. They attempt to control a volatile and potentially devastating natural force: magic. Those who succeed can turn the invisible, breed lilacs from dead ground, and call down the fires of the firmament. Those who fail are often burnt by their own fire.

Style of magic defines a wizard. A drab witch doctor is different from an incandescent mage, and is another beast entirely. The traits common to almost all wizards and witches are a strong affinity for the arcane arts (as measured by a high Magic score) and the will to use it.

Many have one or the other; few have both.

A wizard:

- Haunts dreams and throws fireballs.
- Whispers in kings' ears.
- Burns for his sins.

'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 styles influence his adventuring choices. Battlecraft wizards find adventure on the battlefield, while spellsmiths plunge into dungeons and uncharted lands in search of ingredients for their creations. With the right styles, a wizard is capable of meeting challenges in any



WITCH OR WIZARD [MAGICAL]

LEVEL	LEVEL TITLE	POWERS GAINED
1	Student	Magic style (apprentice).
2		Familiar. +1 Magic.
3		Talent (magic). Magic style (apprentice).
4		Detect spellbound.
5	Wizard or Witch	Magic style (master).
6		Talent (magic, social). Magic style (apprentice).
7		Implement.
8		Magic style (master).
9		Talent (magic). +1 Magic.
10	Master Wizard or Lady Witch	Improved implement. Grand magic style (apprentice).
15		Vizier.
20	Archmage or Witch Queen.	Arcane supremacy.

Like all classes, wizards gain a history at each level and a heart increase at every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, etc.).

At 11th level and every third level thereafter (14, 17, 20, etc.), you gain a new talent (magic or social).

At 12th level and every third level thereafter (15, 18, 21, etc.) you gain apprenticeship in a new magic style (including a grand style) or mastery of a style you already know at the apprentice level.

At every level not included above or listed on the table, you gain +1 magic or reason, an increase of 1 to one of your familiar's characteristics, an extra use of your implement per encounter (to a maximum of three uses per encounter), or vizier (if you have already gained it once).

number of arenas: guild halls, noble courts, tombs, the fields of war, and alleys by moonlight.

There is also a strong adventure hook built into the wizard's progression. Namely, the need for training. Who knows what a master wizard might require of a potential student?

Wizard adventures often run afoul of local authority. Magic is a mysterious and dangerous force. When a magical beast begins prowling the town streets at night, the townspeople go looking for a hero. A large troll with a sword is a likely hero: he is welcomed to town, and a pig is roasted in his honor. The

wizard is an unlikely hero, and more often than not, the wizard instead of the pig is roasted. Many wizards work in isolated towers, adventure in secret, and return to their towers alone and uncelebrated.

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 wiz-

ards not widely hunted and hated - are noble wizards or their handpicked magi. 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.

WITCH/WIZARD ABILITIES

Spellbound. You are spellbound.

Magic style (apprentice). You may use all the spells of a style that are not mastery spells (marked with M).

Magic style (master). You may use all the spells and maneuvers of the magic style. You must already be an apprentice of the style.

Familiar. Choose a familiar from the sidebar. The familiar must also be an inspiration (what type is left to the player to decide). No extra inspiration points are awarded, so the familiar must fit within the character's current inspirations.

This is the way of magic: you may kill and eat your familiar to gain +1 to your magic score. You can never have another familiar again.

Sidebar: Familiars

A familiar is a small creature that serves its friend and master: you. Unless otherwise noted, familiars have 1 Body, Strength 2, and all other characteristics 4. Their intellect is roughly equivalent to that of a young human child. Familiars understand but cannot speak their master's native language. Familiars are spellbound.

The exact benefit conferred by the familiar is as follows:

Mongoose – In combat, once per encounter, you may add a move to any action.

Cat – Increase your organization's arcana and efficiency scores by one.

Dwarf Bear – Has Str 6, Qck 6, and 2 Body. 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 – Skull knows two history categories of your choice at a level equal to your level.

Raven – Can see through raven's eyes 1 minute/day to a range of 10 miles/magic level.

House Dragon – 1d2 mood increase each week; generate 1' flame equivalent to a large candle at will.

Note that these species traits, just like character racial traits, can be mixed. Those listed above are the norm. But if you want a familiar that is a toad but has the dwarf bear's stats, you can have it. This is magic. If a familiar is ever killed or lost – and it cannot be unless your inspiration for it is reduced to zero simultaneously or beforehand – then you may find another one after a week.

Detect spellbound. Roll your magic vs. a target's magic. If you win, you know if he is spellbound or not. You can use this once per person per scene.

Implement. Once per day, you may use your implement (staff, wand, orb, what have you) to grant one spell a bonus die equal to your magic levels, useable on any one roll. If you lose your implement, you must spend a season replacing it. At 10th level, you may use your implement twice per day.

Vizier. You grant your organization +1 to its efficiency and +2 to one other score.

Arcane supremacy. Whenever you make an attack roll with a spell in a grand style that you have mastered, you cause an additional effect: pick up to three foes in the area casting a spell in a school that he has not mastered. They each must recast.

WARRIOR [MARTIAL]

Warriors are soldiers, pit fighters, tavern brawlers, mercenaries, and bodyguards. Some warriors are charismatic generals, some are straight-on bashers, and still others are spellbound multi-talents. But all share one trait: their craft is violence. They laugh at those who say that violence never settles anything. Throughout history, nothing has ever settled more issues than raw, brute force.

A warrior:

- * charges into combat.
- * commands and inspires troops on the battlefield.
- * masters more fighting styles than any other class of character.

Paths

Background.
Advancement.

Adventure Ideas

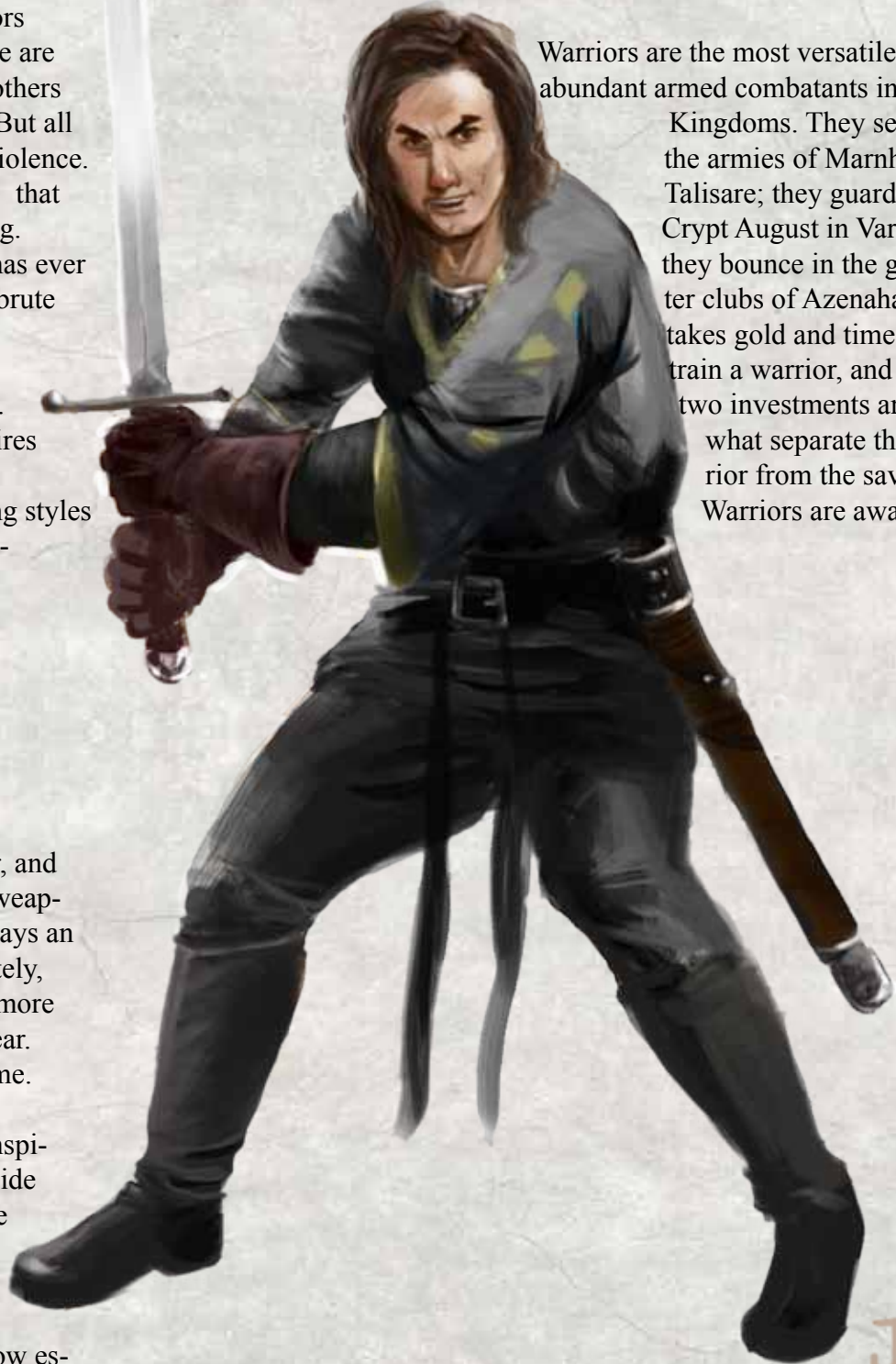
Gear is important to a warrior, and the desire to acquire sharper weapons and stronger armor is always an impetus to adventure. Ultimately, however, there are things far more important to a warrior than gear. Glory and honor motivate some. Many more fight for a cause. Whether this is one of your Inspirations or not, you should decide why your warrior risks his life in armed combat.

Warrior adventures are red-blooded and white-knuckled. 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 Talisare; 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



M

WARRIOR [MARTIAL]

LEVEL	LEVEL TITLE	POWERS GAINED
1	Fighter	Live by the sword. Two fighting styles (apprentice of each).
2		+1 strength or quickness.
3		Talent (martial). Fighting style (apprentice).
4	Warrior	Domination. Fighting style (master).
5		+1 body. Fighting style (apprentice).
6		Talent (martial or social).
7	Veteran	Battlefield leader. Talent (martial).
8		War stories. Grand fighting style (apprentice).
9		Talent (martial). +1 strength or quickness. Fighting style (master).
10	Hero	Demoralization. Troop training. Grand fighting style (master). Battlefield inspiration.
15		Marshal. Devastation.
20		Combat mastery. Supreme inspiration.

Like all classes, warriors gain a history at each level and a heart increase at every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, etc.).

At 11th level and every third level thereafter (14, 17, 20, etc.), you gain a new talent (magic or social).

At 12th level and every third level thereafter (15, 18, 21, etc.) you gain apprenticeship in a new fighting style (including a grand style) or mastery of a style you already know at the apprentice level.

At every level not included above or listed on the table, you gain +1 strength or quickness, another war story per social scene (to a maximum of three), troop training, or marshal.

respect and even friendship by the villagers and common folk of most kingdoms. The commoners respect the force of arms much more than they respect the vicissitudes of magic.

WARRIOR ABILITIES

Apprentice in a style: You may use all the spells or maneuvers of one fighting or magic style that are not mastery spells (marked with M).

Mastery of a style: You may use all the spells and maneuvers of the fighting or magic style. You must

already know the style at the apprentice level.

Live by the sword. Treat your weapons as 1 quality higher than they actually are.

Domination. In combat, when you score a critical hit, your opponent must rebalance.

Battlefield leader. You increase the spirit of up to three troops by 2 each as long as you are in the battle (somewhere, not necessarily attached to the troop).

War stories. Once per social encounter, you can tell a war story. Instead of using your charisma, you use your martial levels as your social attack die.

Troop training. Pick two troops. Increase the attack and defense dice for one of their maneuvers by one die size.

Demoralization. Whenever you score a critical hit, you also deal one mood damage to your enemy.

Battlefield Inspiration. Your personal inspirations also inspire your troops. For each inspiration that you have, you can roll a Heart die once per battle in place of any unit's roll. You can decide to use this after the results of the first roll are known, just as with a normal inspiration roll.

Marshal. Your leadership stirs the hearts of many. Increase the force of your organization by 1 and one other characteristic by one.

Devastation. In any style that you have mastered, you score critical hits not just when your opponent rolls a 1, but also on a 2 (assuming you hit and roll over half on your attack die).

Combat mastery. If you are fighting in a style that you have mastered, and your opponent has not mastered any fighting styles, you score 1 extra point of damage with each successful blow. (This bonus applies to other people. Monsters, unless marked as noncombatants, are assumed to have mastered their native fighting styles.)

Supreme Inspiration. When you use your Battlefield Inspiration ability, the heart die is increased a number of times equal to the value of your inspiration.

FUTURE PLANS: MULTICLASSING

When a character gains a level, he is free to train in whatever class he likes. He then adds 1 to his previous level in that class.

Progressing in multiple classes strains the psyche. A character takes 1 mood damage per day if he starts a new class before raising all currently known classes to name level. Name level means the level that includes the name of the class (usually 3rd, 4th, or 5th level). This penalty is cumulative. For example, a character who is name level only in Warrior but also has levels in Rogue and Savage takes 2 mood damage per day. If he then raised Rogue to name

level, he would take only 1 mood damage per day. If he then raised Savage to name level, he would stop taking mood damage.

There is a talent, in the next chapter, that allows for low-level multiclassing without a mood penalty.

FINISHING TOUCHES

History

Choose one history item for your character at first level. He gains one more history per level (at least) after that. See chapter 2 for more information on histories.

Inspiration

Choose inspirations for your character at first level. See chapter 2 for more information on inspirations.

Wealth Level

Unless otherwise stated, your character begins at wealth level 1.

To add the finishing touches to your character, write down other details as you like in the time-honored RPG fashion. Hometowns, lost loves, the sound of the dam breaking in the spring of 1602 before your village was washed away, the screams of your brother as some cataclysm of flood magic transmuted him into an eel-armed chimera – whatever details make your character your own!

PART III

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: TALENTS

Here are the talents available to your character as she follows her path in the Kingdoms.

MAGIC TALENTS

Combat spell accuracy. Choose one combat spell with an attack roll. Increase its attack die size by one. You must be a master of the style, and even then, the style can only be pushed so far. You may only choose one such spell per style, and you cannot choose a recasting spell.

Vicious implement. When you attack with your implement, you deal 1 point of characteristic damage. Choose which damage type you deal when taking this talent; it cannot change later. You must have the Implement ability.

Vampiric implement. Your implement attack characteristic damage gives you the 1 characteristic point that it drains from the target. You must have the implement ability and the vicious implement talent.

Spell power. Choose one close spell (including a combat spell). When that spell would fizzle to no effect through a wild surge, you gain a magic roll against the doom. If you succeed, the spell manifests normally instead of fizzling.

Channeler. Increase the physical defense die size of any channeled spell by one. A channeled spell is any spell that maintains an effect from round to round in combat only if you repeat the maneuver each round.

Passover. Choose a style. When casting close spells with this style, reduce by one the effective number of spellbound creatures in the area.

Improved Passover. Choose a style that you have Passover in. When you cast a high spell with this style, reduce by two the number of spellbound creatures in



the regional area.

Suppress. As a trick in combat, you can roll your magic against the doom. If you succeed, you don't count as spellbound next round.

Artificer. For purposes of crafting only, reduce by one the quality of any arcana item that you are crafting. Once complete, the item attains its normal quality.

Arcane endurance. If you succeed in a strength vs. doom roll, you can attempt a second high spell in a day. You must be a master in the style. Even with this talent, you may only accomplish this feat of endurance once per week.

Stability. Increase your rolls to defend against wild surges by one die size.

Improved familiar. Increase two of your familiar's stats by one each. This can be taken up to three times.

Little wizard. Your familiar can cast one of your trapped spells per day. You must have taken the improved familiar talent.

Familiar bond. Distress, satiety, curiosity – whatever your familiar is feeling, you are aware of it, no matter the distance between you. You are also always aware of your familiar's approximate distance and direction.

Guild mage. You know how to contribute to an organization. Raise the arcana score of your organization by 2 points.

Silent school. Normally spell-casting requires sound. With this talent, you know how to cast spells from one school without using sound. You can take this multiple times. Each time it applies to a new school. You must be a master of the school.

War wizard. Increase by one die size all magic attacks and defenses of any troop that you are attached to in battle. You must have mastered at least one grand style.

Magical beast lord. With your help, your organization can raise and tame magical beasts at one wealth level lower than usual.

Master and apprentice. You take an apprentice. The apprentice does not count as spellbound for you, allowing you to cast without worrying about interference from him (his trapped spells, just as yours, do count as spellbound). Likewise, you do not count as spellbound for your apprentice. You may choose this multiple times; each time, select a new apprentice. If an apprentice leaves your service, which he can do at any time, this talent is wasted for you. You may cancel your apprentice's spells with a free action magic roll opposed by your apprentice's magic roll. You may attempt this once per round. Your apprentice must have you as one of his inspirations. Your apprentice also increases his magic score to one lower than

yours, as long as he is within the same region as you. Magi typically write a covenant that states the responsibilities of master and apprentice to each other.

Hidden caster. Once per week, you can cast a high spell that has no chance of being detected unless you roll a 1 on your associated magic or attack roll. In the case of a 1, determine detection normally. Read the bindings. By looking at a spellbound creature, you know which schools you share in common. You must know that the creature is spellbound.

High mastery. Choose one style that you have mastered. When casting in this style, if you roll a d8 or d10 and it explodes, then you roll a d20 as your exploding die. When you roll a d12 and it explodes, roll two d20s as your exploding dice. Take the highest result as usual



MARTIAL TALENTS

Weapon generalization.

Choose one style that you have mastered. When fighting in this style, you can use a weapon not designed for it (a mace with Free Sword, for example). All your attacks are reduced by one die size, however, and specific maneuvers may be still be impossible (Slice Open, for example, is not possible with a club).

Weapon specialization. Choose one weapon. When using a weapon of that type, you treat its quality as 1 higher than it actually is.

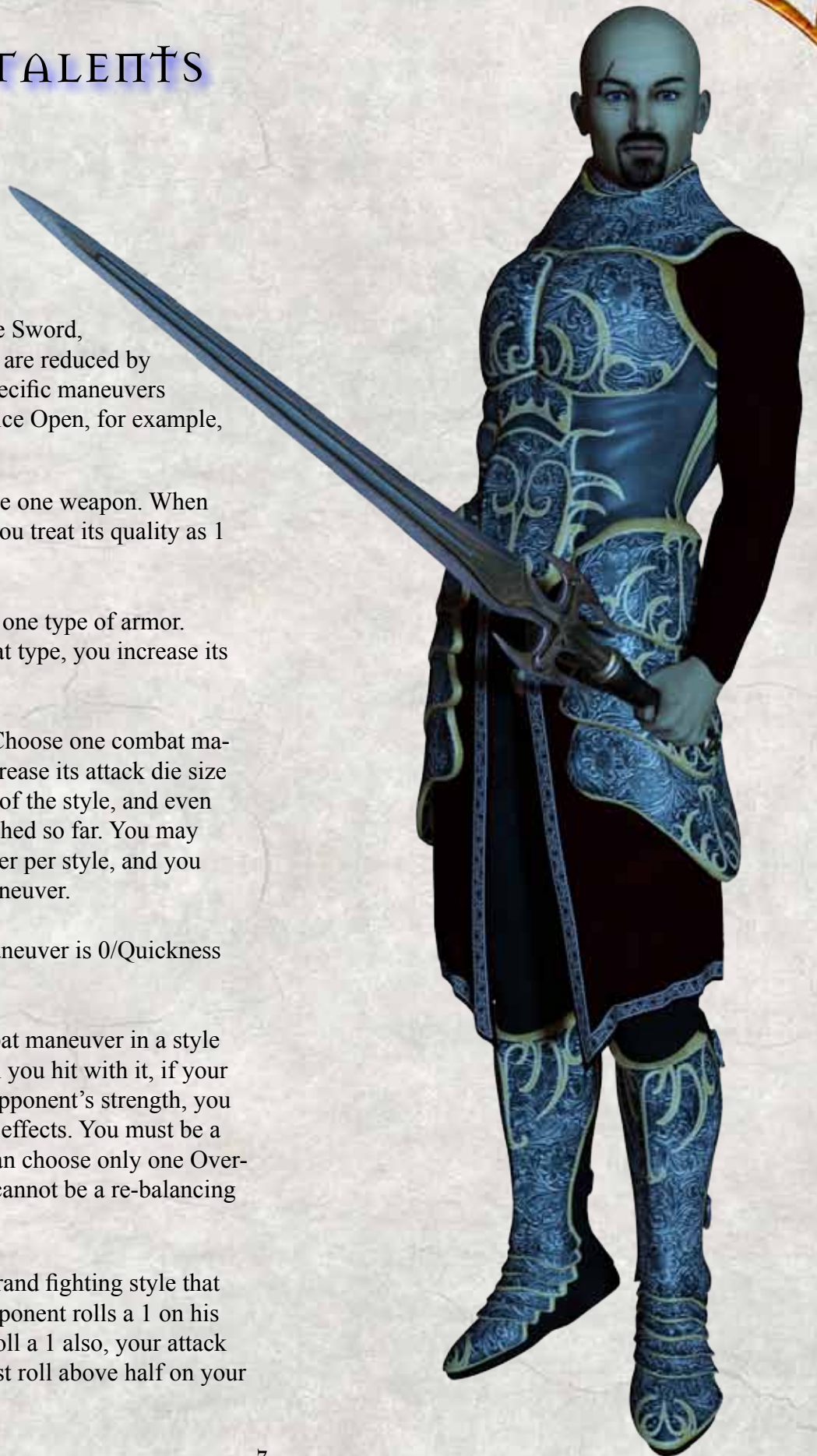
Armor specialization. Choose one type of armor. When wearing an armor of that type, you increase its quality by 1.

Combat maneuver accuracy. Choose one combat maneuver with an attack roll. Increase its attack die size by one. You must be a master of the style, and even then, the style can only be pushed so far. You may only choose one such maneuver per style, and you cannot choose a balancing maneuver.

Defensive trick. Your trick maneuver is 0/Quickness instead of 0/d4.

Overpower. Choose one combat maneuver in a style that you have mastered. When you hit with it, if your strength is greater than your opponent's strength, you add knockback (1 area) to the effects. You must be a master of the style, and you can choose only one Overpower maneuver per style. It cannot be a re-balancing maneuver.

Improved critical. Choose a grand fighting style that you have mastered. If your opponent rolls a 1 on his defense die, then unless you roll a 1 also, your attack is a critical (normally you must roll above half on your die to make the hit a critical).



Set piece. You are an expert with one environment trick. Increase its attack and defense dice by one each.

Measure of a man. If you are a master of the style that your opponent is using, then you can measure his soul by the way he fights. You know your foe's greatest inspiration: love, faith, fear, or something else. If the object of that inspiration is martial (love of war, fear of dying, pride in his troops' efficiency), then you know that too.

High mastery. Choose one style that you have mastered. When fighting in this style, if you roll a d8 or d10 and it explodes, then you roll a d20 as your exploding die. When you roll a d12 and it explodes, roll two d20s as your exploding dice. Take the highest result as usual.

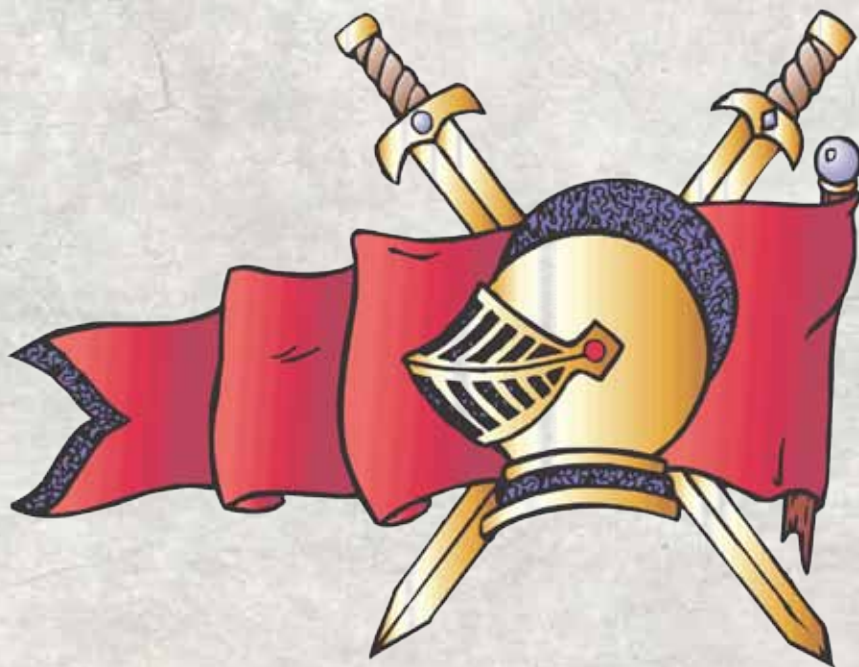
Vicious two-hander. Choose a maneuver in a style that you have mastered. When you wield a large weapon in two hands and your strength is greater than your opponent's strength, you add 1 point of characteristic damage to the attack. Choose one characteristic now; you cannot change this later. You may choose this multiple times, but only once per style.

Spiritual leader. When you are the commander of a legion, increase by 1 the spirit score of any troop whose spirit is less than your charisma. Do this once per troop; it can never be repeated for that troop.

Siege commander. When you are the commander of a legion, increase by 1 the quality of all your siege engines.

Naval commander. When you are commander of a legion, increase by 1 the quality and speed of all your naval ships (waterborne, not airborne).

Admiral. When you are commander of a legion, brigades that consist of three or more ships gain a bonus 1 on all damage.



General. When you are commander of a legion, brigades that consist of three or more ground troops gain a bonus 1 on all damage.

Sky commander. As naval commander, but with zeppelins, bombardier balloons, and other airborne vehicles.

Sky captain. As Admiral, but with airborne vehicles.

Field marshal. Prerequisite: you must be an admiral, general, or sky captain. You generate one extra command point in battle.

Exploit secret. When you use a Trick to reveal a secret about your opponent in physical combat (anything that would shock him to know that you know or could make public), you deal 1 Mood damage whether you hit or not, and you force your foe to rebalance if you do hit.

Intimidate. The menace isn't all in your words. You can roll your strength as your social attack die (instead of charisma) whenever you try to intimidate someone. All other effects and modifiers apply normally.

War hero. Pick three important NPCs in the campaign. You are their war hero, and they must take inspirations of value 2 or more to reflect that. You must have fifteen or more marital levels.

Camaraderie. Once per scene, you may have a friend (someone for whom you have inspiration) defend you in conversation or dive to take an arrow for you. Roll your friend's usual die size and take the best of the two rolls (yours and your friend's).

The Bigger They Are. When you kill a monster that is significantly taller than men in combat, you can strike the final blow so that the giant zombie (or other creature) topples down on another one of your foes. Roll another attack at d10 against your target's defense. Standard attack rules apply (the target must be in the same area, the damage is 1 body).

Hero figure. If you are attached to a troop, though you do not contribute command points to the legion, you improve all rolls made by the troop by four die sizes. You must be a hero or a chieftain of chieftains.

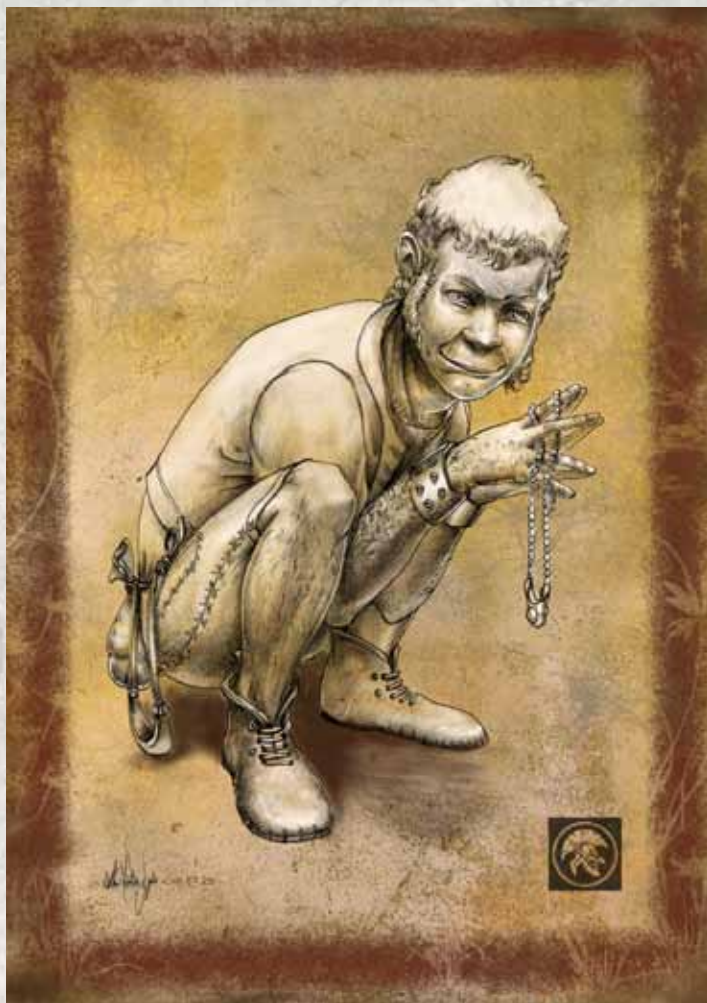
Military historian. You gain two knowledge histories that do not count against your normal limit (your Reason score). Each history starts with a value of 6.

Fearsome. Anyone who fears you takes the heart penalty in the first two rounds of combat, not just the first.

Delight in plans. When an environmental trick is successful in combat, you gain one mood. This works once per combat.

or d10 and it explodes, then you roll a d20 as your exploding die. When you roll a d12 and it explodes, roll two d20s as your exploding dice. Take the highest result as usual.

Set piece. You are an expert with one environment trick. Increase its attack and defense dice by one each.



SHADOW TALENTS

Stealth commander. As long as your group of five or fewer stays in the same area as you, your stealth rolls – rolls to remain undetected or unseen – cover all of you. No individual rolls are required.

High mastery. When using a shadow skill (the GM is the judge of what is a shadow skill: stealth, lockpicking, disguise, forgery, and the like), if you roll a d8

Scavenger: Thief, agent, privateer – whatever the brand of rogue, these sort know how to salvage gear. If he is attached to a brigade that wins a battle, he gains one random item martial item of wealth level 1-8 (again, randomly determined). [[@@a free roll on Treasure Table..@@]]

Logical soul. Prereq: name level in engineer, fixer, or trader. You can choose to resist all magic that affects the mind with reason instead of magic.

The Bigger They Are. When you kill a monster that is significantly taller than men in combat, you can strike the final blow so that the giant zombie (or other creature) topples down on another one of your foes. Roll another attack at d10 against your target's defense. Standard attack rules apply (the target must be in the same area, the damage is 1 body).

Dodge on the run. In a chase, your default defense die is a d6 instead of a d4. You must be name level in a shadow class to select this talent.

Dodge magic. Increase your defense die size by one when defending against magic. This only applies to physical defense dice, not magical defense.

Gambler. You gain a bonus quickness die once per game. As with all such, use it at whatever point you wish. This is in addition to any skill you might have in gambling.

Bluff. Increase your social attack die size by one when bluffing.

Hard life. You gain five history points.

Shot on the run. In a chase, you increase all your ranged attack die sizes by one.

Slippery. When someone attempts to grab you in a chase, you roll your shadow levels as a bonus die to resist. Prerequisite: dodge on the run.

Bad. Being scorned by one group makes you desired by another. For each group with whom you have a negative reputation, choose one related or opposed group. With this related or opposed group, you can roll your negative reputation as a positive one. For example, Nico has the reputation "Despised by Marnh professors and academicians for outrageous theories of alchemy and engineering (8)." With the Bad talent, he can roll this reputation as a positive with one related or



opposed group. He chooses "Wives of Marnh professors and academicians."

Fearsome. Anyone who fears you takes the heart penalty in the first two rounds of combat.

Scoundrel. You take only 1 mood damage from losing an inspiration, and only 1 heart damage from losing a love. True love damage applies as normal.

Decapitating mission. On the battlefield, you can take out the enemy officers and disrupt their command structure. Roll your shadow levels against the enemy force's shadow; if you win, they lose a command point next round.

Guild master. Increase your organization's shadow score by two and one other characteristic by one. You must be name level in a shadow class.

Heist. Your organization gains a one die-size bonus when attempting to steal from another organization.

Obscure. Your organization gains a one die-size increase when attempting to keep a secret hidden (including when it aids another creature in doing so).

Trap lore. When rolling to disarm a trap, treat the quality of the trap or the doom (whichever you are rolling against) as one lower.

Trap artisan. Any trap you make or buy has its quality increased by one. Prerequisite: trap lore.

Case the joint. If you study an organization's headquarters, you can roll your reason score with your organization's shadow score as a bonus die against the opposing organization's shadow score. Roll once for each day that you study the headquarters, up to five days. For each success, you learn one secret about the organization: a characteristic, a building location, its leader's identity, etc., as worked out between you and the GM.

Calculating grenadier. Your "Shoot" basic combat maneuver is Rsn/d2 rather than Qck/d2 when using grenade-like weapons (vials of alchemist's fire, for example).

Delight in plans. When an environmental trick is successful in combat, you gain one mood. This works once per combat.

SOCIAL TALENTS

Dazzler. If your charisma is greater than your opponent's reason, you can make social attacks that cause him to forget about his true inspirations. Make a social attack; instead of targeting your opponent's mood, as usually, you target his memory of what defines his character. You try to blind him to his true self. If your attack succeeds, your opponent loses access to one inspiration for the remainder of the scene. This can only occur in social scenes, and you must have name level in a social class.

Free thinker. Reduce any negative culture effects on you by 1, to a minimum of 0.

High mastery. When using a social skill (the GM is the judge of what is a social skill: bluff, read emotion,

negotiate, and the like), if you roll a d8 or d10 and it explodes, then you roll a d20 as your exploding die. When you roll a d12 and it explodes, roll two d20s as your exploding dice. Take the highest result as usual.

Logical soul. Prereq. Name level in engineer, fixer, or trader. Resist mind magic with reason.

Dilettante. You gain five history points.

Martyr. You can increase your social attack die by two sizes if you take 1 Mood damage through self-deprecation.

Scoundrel. You take only 1 mood damage from losing an inspiration, and only 1 heart damage from losing a love. True love damage applies as normal.

Shame. Social talent. You make someone feel so bad that, if you reduce them to less than 0 Mood, they cannot appear in public until their mood is once again positive. You must have at least ten levels in a social class.



Fabulous invitations. Increase your charisma by two die sizes when inviting someone to an event.

Glorious invitations. No one can turn down an invitation to meet with you without suffering double the normal mood penalty. You must have a reputation of 6 or more with the invitee for this to apply. Prereq. Fabulous invitations.

Gloss. You can gloss over a faux pas. Once per social encounter (more than that and not even your skills can bury such a glaring mistake), after an ally has failed or lost a social roll, you can roll your Charisma or social levels (whichever is higher) as a bonus die for one of your ally's actions. This does not count as an action for you. You must be name level in a social class.

High gloss. You can use your gloss talent once per person per encounter. You must have at least ten levels in a social encounter.

Noble mandate. You demand the best from your colleagues. Once per person per combat encounter (more than that and you sound hackneyed rather than inspiring), you can roll your Charisma or social levels (whichever is higher) as a bonus die for one of your ally's actions. This is a trick for you in combat.

Flirt. When talking with someone who could be sexually attracted to you (most often but not always a member of the opposite sex), treat your Charisma as 2 higher. This bonus is lost if the conversation turns antagonistic.

Happy. You're fundamentally optimistic. Your maximum mood is 6 instead of 5.

Depress. You can depress someone to such a degree that they cannot gain points in an inspiration for two weeks, or gain a new inspiration for a month. This cannot be used on a person with positive mood more than once per season.

Mass negotiator. If you have as many or more social levels as anyone else in the encounter, and you are

alone at home or on neutral ground, then you gain an extra attack immediately after each enemy's turn. That is, you alternate turns as sides – one enemy goes, then you go, then a different enemy goes, then you go, and so on. This is talent finds use in audience chambers and guild halls, when aristocrats and bosses entertain several petitioners at once. You must be name level in a social class.

Interrogate. Once per encounter when you are attempting to learn a secret from your foe, you gain your social levels as a bonus die. You must be name level in a social class.

Pet theme. Pick one theme. Whenever you touch on that theme, you increase your attack die size by one. When you do this, you cannot "stack" it with other theme bonuses.

Passionate. When you use an inspiration to aid an attack roll, increase your own mood by 1. You must be name level in a social class.

Encourage, enlighten, and entertain. Once per encounter, when you succeed at a social attack, you can increase the mood of an ally within earshot by 1.

Rumor. You can initiate a Rumors improve social combat scene. You assign the rumors and potential reputations. Ignore this talent if your group does not play with improve scenes.

Stunning revelation. Reveal a secret about your opponent. You gain the 3 die size increase to your attack as usual for revealing a secret in social combat. If your attack hits, then your opponent is stunned almost to speechlessness. He takes 1 mood damage as normal, and his charisma die size is reduced to d4 (or d2 if it was already a d4) until the start of your next turn. You must be name level in a social class.

Damaging revelation. Reveal a secret about your opponent. You gain the 3 die size increase to your attack as usual for revealing a secret in social combat. If you hit with your attack, you deal 2 extra points of mood damage. You must be name level in a social class.

Emotionally invested. Once per encounter, you can roll your heart die as a bonus along with any other die, just as if it were an (un-narrated) inspiration. If you do not win the roll, however, you lose 1 mood.

Clothes horse. You may purchase clothing and other fashion items as if they were one wealth level lower than they are.

High fashion. Increase the quality of all fashion items you own by 1.

Glitter. If you have a fashion item 3 or more better in quality than an opponent's best fashion item, you deal one extra point of mood damage if you make a successful social combat attack while bringing the disparity up in the conversation. You may do this once per social combat. You may choose this ability up to three times, each time gaining another use of Glitter in combat.

Flaunt. If your wealth level is higher than your opponent's wealth level, you gain one free attack during a social encounter. The attack is resolved as wealth level vs. wealth level. For example, if Charmaine is wealth level 6 and Phineas is wealth level 5, then they would resolve Charmaine's Flaunt attack by rolling a d6 for Charmaine and a d4 for Phineas. You must be name level in a social class to take this talent.

Code. Write down one code that you live by. You gain one point to your inspiration involving the code. The point does not count toward your normal cap (your heart score). If you break the code, you lose 4 inspiration in the code's category and you drop to 0 mood.

DOOM TALENTS

Agony. Once per day, you can force someone else to roll magic against the doom. If he does not succeed, he suffers excruciating pain for an hour, taking two penalty dice, heart and magic, on all activities. You must be 20th level in a class that awards doom talents.

Demesne. In your domain, the doom for you is always one lower than for all else.

Lucky escape. Any roll that would result in your incapacitation or death must also beat your land's doom die. If it does not, the effects of the roll apply as normal, but you are not incapacitated or dead. Instead, narrate your escape as if you had enough inspiration to allow you to do this normally.

Prophecy. Predict that an inspiration will be lost, or



FORGETTING TALENTS

that a new inspiration will start. For example, predict that the love of Clea of Valte Riel and the rich fishmonger Fenton Durbwater will die. Or predict that a savage princess will marry you. If that prophecy comes to pass, increase your reason by one and one other characteristic by one. You can only have one successful prophecy per year.

Torment. Choose one creature to torment. For that creature, the doom of your land is increased by one.

Nightfall. Increase the doom of your land by one each time you select this talent.

Enlightenment. Decrease the doom of your land by one each time you select this talent.

Culture. Replace or re-write one of the three culture entries for your lands each time you select this talent. You may instead add a fourth culture item with this ability if the GM judges it a better fit for the campaign.

Drive them out. Pick one species of monster or man (you cannot choose the most common species of man in your lands). That species leaves your lands.

Take. You can grant a wizard the ability – once, under your supervision – to use the high spell Take. He takes away the ability to feel or to be inspired. He rolls his magic die against the target's magic die. All inspirations and other modifiers apply as normal. 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 taken inspiration is bottled, and distills into 1-6 doses. It tastes exquisite, spiced, and rich. Drinking it allows you to use the inspiration once within the next minute. It keeps forever.

If the target had any inspirations of the sort taken, they are lost. They can never be regained.

Taking is difficult. The doom of the land can only be twisted into a taking attempt once per week, in any part of your purview.

Just as with skills, it is possible to let a talent fade. You can drop a talent at any time after you have not used it for a season. After that, the next time you gain a talent, you select two: one that you would have had regardless, and one to replace the lapsed talent. The talent that you select to replace the lapsed talent follows the same “type” restrictions as the original (that is, if the original were selected from social or martial talents, the replacement must also be selected from social or martial talents).

PART III

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: ORGANIZATION CREATION, ADVANCEMENT, & DECLINE

A fantasy organization is an army of disciplined legionnaires marching in rank, a screaming horde of savages pouring over the riverbank, a cabal of wizards plotting to usurp the throne, or a brotherhood of thieves haunting the alleys.

This chapter presents rules for creating and advancing an organization. Chapter 7 presents rules for adjudicating organization actions and impact on play. The seven types of organization are:

- Armed legion
- Magic order
- Noble house
- Savages
- Secret society
- Thieves guild
- Trading company

With the exception of noble characters, PCs do not begin play in control of an organization. Rather, if they desire the utility of an organization, then over the course of the campaign, they must found or join one.

CREATION

Each organization has these characteristics.

Force. Force is physical might. A church's Force score might result from its templars and the crusaders it can call up, while a barony's Force score might represent 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. This measures the organization's magical power. Magic is rare, and most organization types 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. Shadow is the ability to work unseen, to commit acts never meant to see the light of day, and to escape the consequences of your 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 is essential for any organization that wishes to be more than a bystander in world affairs. Efficiency determines how quickly your organization can accomplish tasks, what sort of tasks may be too complicated for it, and how well it communicates and coordinates internally. Inefficient organizations have a difficult time producing wealth. You might roll efficiency to act before another organization can, to conclude a deal without wasting kings, 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 contribute: 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 an millenia-old alliance with a secret society of assassins.

An organization's scope and 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 inflated reputation. Hollow men results when an organization's scope is large but its force, arcana, shadow or efficiency have been reduced to almost meaningless levels.

Many abilities have scope requirements. An organization with a scope of 2 isn't renowned or influential enough to mint its own coins, corner the market on wheat, or blockade the East Fire harbor. Growing an organization's scope is similar to increasing a character's level: it makes the organization more powerful, more capable, and more resilient.

ORGANIZATIONS IN FANTASY LITERATURE

If you're having trouble thinking of how organizations can fit into a fantasy setting, here are a few examples that might help.

- Right people of Camorr, and Locke Lamora's thieves
- Riders of Rohan
- Hogwarts
- Mordenkainen's Circle of Eight
- Thulsa Doom's congregation
- Anasurimbor Kelhus's Holy War



FOUNDING 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.

Remember that your organization might be a smaller part of a larger organization. Chapter 7 explains this. For example, if you are a noble and part of a large and powerful noble house like Rithaign's Tumenants or Azenahal's Comnenus, then it wouldn't make sense to list your organization as Tumenants, Scope 1. Instead, you control a little piece of the Tumenant noble house. Perhaps the current Earl of Frush has given you stewardship over his silkmetal mine in the Way-lorn mountains. Then you could



write down “Tumentant silkmelal mining camp, Waylorn, Frush, of the Tumentant house” as your organization. As your organization grows, it represents your rise in the ranks of the Tumentant noble house. You should change the title of your organization to reflect your stature, and of course you, the GM, and the other players should adjust your play at all points so that the game’s narrative and the creative milieu accurately portray your rise to power.

Armed legion. Recruit two troops (purchasing them normally as an individual) and invest 1000 gold crowns. Your force starts at 4 and your scope at 1. Assign a 3, 2, and 1 to the other three scores.

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 4 and your scope at 1. Assign a 3, 2, and 1 to the other three scores.

Noble house. The only way to gain a noble house is to gain a level in the noble character class. This can easily be done if it is your character’s first level. After that, it is difficult: you must gain a noble title during play. Your scope starts at 1. Assign a 4, 3, 2, and 1 to the other four scores.

Savage tribe. You must be a savage (4th level). Your force starts at 4 and your scope at 1. Assign a 3, 2, and 1 to the other four scores.

Secret society. A driving sense of purpose – some would say fanaticism – forms the basis of 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, 3, 2, and 1 to the 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 4 and your scope at 1. Assign a

3, 2, and 1 to the other three scores.

Trading company. You must invest 2,000 gold crowns. Your efficiency starts at 4 and your scope at 1. Assign a 3, 2, and 1 to the other three scores.

INCREASING SCOPE

Increase your organization’s scope by 1 every other time you gain a character level. This represents your growth as a leader, time invested into the organization, and accumulation of financial and political capital. Certain buildings, wonders, cultures, and other actions may also increase your organization’s scope.

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 may retain its current scope.)

ARMED LEGION

While the fops at court prattle on, and the wizards stargaze from their towers, the legions are out moving and acting. If it weren’t for them, there would be no one to keep the peace. Allies count on legions for protection, and enemies fear them for their might. The role of the legion is either preserver or de-

stroyer.

Armed legions include the King’s army, a band of mercenaries, and a homeless armada sailing from an island Kingdom that sank beneath the waves. Any organization primarily focused on increasing its own physical might can be an armed legion.

If your character runs an armed legion, then during the course of a game, you are likely to find yourself in the thick of the fighting. Armed legions have high Force scores, and you can play to your strength by marching to war, conquering new territories, and policing the homeland. Your friends may purchase your aid in conflicts of their own, and when



the entire region is threatened, they look to you for protection. Law enforcement - benign or tyrannous - is another of your niches.

Scope and abilities. At each even scope increase, raise your force or efficiency by one. At every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, 20, etc.), increase shadow or magic by 1. At each odd level scope increase, choose one of the following abilities.

- Martial construction. Reduce by one wealth level the cost of any martial building (that is, any structure directly related to war, such as a barracks, keep, fort, training grounds, etc.).@@ PUT IN MINIMUM Scopes
- Muster a troop for free. The troop cannot have a cost more than two above your current wealth level. The troop never counts toward your limit on troops.
- Hardened command. Roll your force score as a bonus die whenever an opponent's attack would lower your command point total.
- Improved command and control. You gain one extra command point in battle. You may only choose this once.
- Battlefield command structure. Your efficiency score is treated as one higher during battle. You may choose this ability up to three times.
- Marching efficiency. You may move each of your troops on the overland map once per week (or once per round in classic play) as a free action. This only applies to troops not fighting a battle.
- Power of the legion. Once per round to a maximum of three times per battle, you can substitute your force score for the attack or defense roll of one of your units.
- Spirit of the corps. A unit can take one point of health damage and apply it to spirit instead. Each unit under your command can do this once per battle.
- We are legion. Increase the number of troops you can have under your command by two. You may choose this ability up to five times. Normally, you cannot have more troops than your force score.



- Terrorize. Everyone in the region attacked by one of your troops rolls their reason die. If they do not beat your force total, they lose 1 mood. You must have scope 7 or more. You can only attempt this once per season.
- Destruction and inflation. War devastates the region. In addition to the normal effects of war, pick one type of item. That type of item has its price increased one wealth level beyond the normal fallout increase. This power is usually used when your forces are in an enemy's territory.
- Fortress. Improve the quality of all defensive structures you own by 1.
- Cultural force. You roll your force score as a bonus die when attempting to change the culture of a region. Here are some typical martial cultures you might install:
 - o Favored style culture. Choose one fighting style. Anyone who is a master of that school gains a reputation (6) as a master of the most prestigious fighting style in the land. Culture of might. Your soldiers intimidate the weak. Anyone in your home region with a Strength of 4 or less takes 1 mood damage each morning unless he makes a reason roll against the doom.
 - o Culture of arms. Every day is a good day to fight. All troops levied within your home region begin with spirit 1 higher than normal. Culture of enforcement. Your soldiers enforce the law. Increase the doom by 1 when someone attempts to break the law (theft, murder, denounce a noble).
 - o Culture of violence. Any time you disrupt a social scene, chase, or any other scene with combat, the reputation penalty is reduced by 2 (to 2) and the mood penalty is reduced by 1 (to 2).
- Tyranny of arms. If you are the largest scope



organization in your headquarters' area by 3 or more, then you can choose to install a 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 (4) of your organization and its members. This last can be avoided if a character rolls reason vs. the doom, but it is repeated each month until the character learns fear.

MAGIC ORDER

Not everyone is born with magical talent. Those that are have the ability to boil seas, to whisper to a loved one across a continent, or to pry into a man's dreams. They must either master or be mastered by the wildest and most powerful force of nature: magic.

If your character heads a magic order, she is placing herself in a dangerous position. The potential rewards are great: fame, gold, and what passes for a king's friendship. But the risks are equally great: death, corruption, and madness. Sanctioned magic orders are rare, and a king's blessing is far from

constant. Whether a king's order or not, most magic orders have high shadow scores. You never know when you'll have to hide. Most, in fact, try never to be seen in the first place, either by building towers in the middle of the Serai desert or by hiding in plain sight in the glassworks, slaughterhouses, and homes of a city.

Scope and abilities. At each even scope increase, raise your arcana or shadow score by one. At every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, 20, etc.), increase efficiency or force by 1. At each odd level scope increase, choose one of the following abilities.

- Bound together. The members of your cabal practice rites that bind them all to spells in the same way. This mitigates interference. Everyone still interferes with other, but the attack rolls of wild surges are reduced by one die size. This reduction applies only to spells cast by members of your order and affects only your order; everyone else is still attacked by the full strength wild surge.
- Arcane construction. Reduce by one wealth level the cost of building any arcane structure.
- Research institution. You increase all die rolls related to arcane research by one. You may only choose this ability once.
- Consult. Once per week (or scene), your organization may aid a character in a sagely capacity as a free action. This could be a roll to know the neighborhoods of a city, the location of a shipwreck, or the history of the relationship between a king and his niece.
- Monsters of war. Your organization trains the spawn of magic well. By training a monster unit such as war apes, troglodyte shock troops, or a dragon at 1.5 times the current wealth level cost, you can choose one attack or defense die to increase by one size permanently. This can be for either a maneuver or a stance.
- Power of the order. Once per round to a maximum of three times per battle, you can substitute your organization's arcane score

for one of your spellbound unit's attack or defense roll.

- Vault resources. Your magic order stockpiles resources that reduce the cost of casting any spell by 1 wealth level. Spells that have no casting cost are unaffected by this.
- Favored familiar. The magi of your order tend to have the same sort of familiar. Anyone who does can increase one of his familiar's characteristics by one.
- Cabalistic casting. Pick one school. Your order knows a secret about interference and this school. With a day's preparation, you can cast any spell from this school with assistance, rather than interference. Increase all die sizes associated with casting the spell (attack, defense, or magic) by one for each triplet of acolytes from your guild who assist you, up to three triplets (nine acolytes total). Your order must have scope 12 to use this ability with high spells. This talent also allows a magic order to produce wizard cabals that function as a single unit on the battlefield. The troop maneuvers in Chapter 16 already include the cabalistic casting bonuses; do not increase them further.
- Shadow order. Increase your arcana by one die size when making a roll in a shadow war.
- Terrorize. Everyone in the region rolls their reason die. If they do not beat your arcana total, they lose 1 mood. You must have scope 7 or more. You can only attempt this once per season.
- Cultural force. You roll your arcana score as a bonus die when attempting to change the culture of a region. Here are some typical magical cultures you might install:
 - o Killing an animal of the favored familiar type is punishable by death.
 - o All families must extend full hospitality including home, hearth, and up to 5 gold per family member to any magi that asks for it.
 - o Culture of restraint. Anyone in the region must decrease a Love by 1

each month if he does not beat your arcana score with his heart roll. True loves are immune, and no Love score can drop below one as a result of this.

- o The doom is reduced by 1 for all members of your organization. This requires scope 10 and the king's blessing.
- Tyranny of magic. If you are the highest scope organization in your area by 3 or more, then you can increase or decrease the average spellbound creature number in the area by up to 3. You can also force wild magic to spiral out of control: all wild magic dice explode whenever they roll over half on the die.

NOBLE HOUSE



A noble house is an extended family with a history of power and wealth. One house may be more martial, one may have ties to the underworld, and one may be focused on trade, but all noble houses are familiar with political intrigue and the responsibilities and dangers that accompany privilege. Most go to great lengths to secure their privilege against any challenge.

In low- and mid-level play, yours may be the only organization with the power to perform certain actions. While other organizations are still scraping for every last coin, you have the king's ear. Use this power wisely. Spend political favors where you can, and do not call too much attention to your allies. Lacking your connections, they also lack your security. An

enemy who wouldn't dare assault your house directly might be tempted instead to eradicate your friends.

Tradition is very important to an organization whose power derives largely from the weight of precedent. Noble houses often place special emphasis on bloodlines, symbols and history. Create these for your house. The most interesting noble houses are often the



ones with rich histories. You can play with or against type when crafting your house's history. Perhaps your noble character is a lost prince – perhaps he did not even know he was a prince, the last of his line – and he has now been rediscovered and his house restored. Imagine all the built-in enemies he has: every noble sees him as an instant rival!

Scope and abilities. At each even scope increase, raise your any characteristic save efficiency by 1. At every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, 20, etc.), increase efficiency by 1. At each odd level scope increase, choose one of the following abilities.

- Salon. Your noble house can aid you once in a social scene one time per week (or round, in scene order play) as a free action.
- Philanthropy. You can give anyone an increase of 1 or 2 (your choice) in a positive

reputation with any organization operating within your region. Feel free to charge what ever the market will bear for this favor. You cannot boost a reputation like this more than once per year.

- Condemn. Noble invective smears the target, tagging him with a 1 or 2 point increase in a negative reputation with any organization operating within your region. Your opponent can avoid the smear if he makes
- Law. Within your domain, autocratic rule obtains. Write any law you wish, declare any item contraband, proscribe any item. If you know the identity of a particular lawbreaker, you can roll force or shadow against his defense (usually his organization's shadow). Success means that you have caught the

criminal, and you can punish him as you see fit. You're the noble. The GM and the other players have veto power over any law or excess that you promulgate with this power. Remember to keep the good of the campaign as a whole as your top priority. Your noble house must have at least scope 7 to write laws beyond the assumed laws of most kingdoms.

- **Persecute.** You torment an individual, harassing him with taxmen, threats of abduction, and hints at accusations of treason. He loses 1 point from a random inspiration per attack if he fails a reason roll against whatever die is appropriate for your attack (shadow for underhanded threats, force for overt intimidation, magic for bringing out oozing boils on his stomach).
- **Fealty.** Another organization swears fealty to you. You gain +1 wealth level. The other organization gains +1 efficiency and +1 to another score of its choice because it is able to transfer some bureaucratic tasks to your house and rely on your house for aid. The new organization subjects itself to your laws. This liege-vassal relationship lasts until the liege ends it or until a set time has expired, as agreed upon at the time of the oath of fealty. You may cancel the action of any vassal organization with an opposed shadow roll as a free action.
- **Shadow house.** Increase your shadow score by one die size when participating in a shadow war.
- **Famine.** Food shortages are a timeless tool of the aristocracy. Everyone in the region for longer than a week must roll strength against the doom or have his maximum body reduced by 1 for the duration of the famine. At the start of each season, you decide whether or not the peasants in the region are going to suffer a famine.
- **Power of lords.** Once per battle, one of your units can roll your force score as a bonus die to one attack or defense. You may choose this power twice. It can only be used once per roll



no matter how many times you select it.

- **Spirit of lords.** Once per battle, you can give a bonus of 1 spirit to every allied unit on the field.
- **Example.** Choose one man and make an example of him. Designate one of his inspirations, his organization, or his hometown. After you make an example of him (through whatever means the GM deems sufficiently intimidating or horrifying), anyone who shares his designated quality must make a reason roll against the doom. Failure causes loss of all positive mood, or two heart damage if the mood was already less than one.
- **Settlers.** You welcome a new wave of immigrants. They might be refugees from another kingdom, a sect of savages seeking to become civilized, or anything else you

deem appropriate. With the added population, every organization with headquarters in your kingdom increases its scope by 1. You can only choose this ability once per year.

- **Holiday.** You declare one day in the year a holy day. When this day comes up, everyone in the region gains 2 Mood.
- **Cultural force.** You roll your arcana score as a bonus die when attempting to change the culture of a region. Here are some typical magical cultures you might install:
 - o **Symbol.** Your house's symbol carries almost as much power as the house itself. Anyone bearing it has a Reputation 8 as the house's ally. The penalty for using it without the house's sanction is service, which generally means being turned over to the king's wizards.
 - o **Culture of art.** Anyone who has an inspiration in an art gains one bonus point in that inspiration. The bonus point does not count toward the normal limit.
 - o **Taxes.** Increase by 1 your wealth level and decrease by 1 the wealth level of all other organizations headquartered in your region.
 - o **Liberty.** Whether through apathy, kindness, or shrewdness, some nobles learn to keep from meddling in subjects' affairs. Increase the wealth level of everyone headquartered in this region by 1. This is mutually exclusive with Taxes above.
- **Royal blessing.** Choose one organization. Members of that organization and the organization itself treat the doom as 1, 2, or 3 lower, as determined by you at the time of the blessing. Your house must be royal.
- **Season of wrath.** Choose one season for your land to suffer your wrath. Any organization who fails a doom check during that season suffers a natural or magical disaster before

the season ends.

- **Lese majeste.** If someone attacks you or your house, even in passing in a conversation, you roll your force score as a bonus die in any scene where you are attempting revenge.
- **Tyranny of kings.** If you are the largest scope noble house in your area, choose one inspiration type per season. Anyone who has that inspiration type must roll each week against the doom or lose one point, to a minimum of zero. You may also increase or decrease the doom one point per year if you are a royal noble house. The doom can never exceed your area.



SAVAGE TRIBE

Savages are foils for the other organizations. In contrast to the sophistication of the nobles and the discipline of the armed legions, savages represent raw emotion and unbridled passion. Hooting and banging spears just beyond the city walls, savages are boogey-men in the nightmares of civilized children.

Savages do not build buildings or vehicles beyond wealth level five, nor do they track wealth level above five. Obviously, this cuts off a source of power

for an organization. Do not play a tribe if you want access to the power of gold and concrete.

This is offset by the savage's knowledge of his homeland. There is a reason that the regiments of civilization have not been able to extirpate the savages from the wild forests, mountains, and badlands.

Scope and abilities. At each even scope increase, raise your force by one. At every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, 20, etc.), increase any other characteristic by one. At each odd level scope increase, choose one of the following abilities.

- Savage barbarism. When you defeat an enemy unit in mass combat by bringing it to 0 Health, the horde commits atrocities. Roll your force against the enemy's force

for each enemy troop in the area. Any troop that fails loses 1 from its spirit.

- Tribal law. Within your region, you can use the law power as listed above under noble house. You must have a scope of 7 or more.
- Power of the horde. Once per battle, one of your units can roll your force score as a bonus die to one attack or defense. You may choose this ability up to five times. It can only be used once per roll no matter how many times you select it.
- Terrorize. Everyone in the region attacked by one of your troops rolls their reason die. If they do not beat your arcana total, they lose 1 mood. You must have scope 7 or more. You can only attempt this once per season.
- Horde. Increase the number of troops you can



have under your command by four. You may choose this ability up to four times. Normally, you cannot have more troops than your force score.

- Sack. Horde units increase their attack die size by one when attacking buildings.
- Spirit of the land. Your units increase their spirit by 1 when fighting in their homeland.
- Ambush. When entering battle in any terrain similar to your homeland, you can designate one of your units as hidden. You can choose this ability up to three times.
- Ghosts of the land. The first time a hidden troop attacks in battle, it deals one additional point of damage on a hit.
- One tribe. As long as you are in your homeland, your tribe can aid you in any activity once per week as a free action.
- Cultural force. You roll your force score as a bonus die when attempting to change the culture in your home region. Here are some typical savage cultures you might install:
 - o Culture of animals. Your tribe values animal life as much as it does human life. Killing an animal is murder, unless it is on the hunt. The same goes for killing a human.
 - o Totem beast. Choose your totem beast: bear, cloud wolf, mantichore. Anyone who has not killed a totem beast in single combat cannot have a mood score higher than 3 and gains a reputation 6 for being unproven. For foreigners, the mood limitation can be bypassed with a reason roll that beats the doom.
 - o Vision quest. Once per season, a tribesman can receive a vision quest. Choose the tribesman to enter the sweat lodge, medicine bower, or oracle cave. Then roll on a monster table of the GM's choice (see Appendix @@). If the tribesman defeats the monster in single combat before the season is over, he gains one savage level plus one heart score



increase.

- o Culture of survival. Reduce your scope by one as the weak members of your tribe die off from famine, flood, and gaps. In return, your Force goes up by 2. You may only choose this culture once.
- o Culture of self-reliance. Savages brook no interference from the outside world. The members of your tribe can ignore one culture item introduced by another organization.
- Tyranny of nature. If your tribe is the largest scope organization by 3 or more in your homeland, then all buildings, engineering items, alchemical items, and objects brought into your homeland, save those you sanction,



are reduced 2 in quality. This happens immediately without exception. The loss repeats each season unless the item succeeds in a quality roll against the doom.

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 bizarre 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 millennia-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 rock-piling: they stack up the opinions and forces of the world in just the right way, so that one push from

the society crumbles everything.

In your campaign, consider choosing the secret society's goal in conjunction with another player. Perhaps conspire with a leader of an armed legion to place that leader on the throne on the night the Vartekan comet blazes forth in the heavens. Perhaps plot with the thieves guild boss to steal the First Casket from the Royal Museum to prevent it falling into your nemesis's hands. Perhaps another player is the Chosen One that your society must protect – or destroy.

Scope and abilities. At each even scope increase, raise your shadow by one. At every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, 20, etc.), increase any other characteristic by one. At each odd level scope increase, choose one of the following abilities.

- **Power of secrets.** When you know a secret about an organization or an individual, you have power over them. As long as you have not revealed the secret to anyone, you or an individual member can roll your shadow score as a bonus die once per scene or battle.
- **Power of revelation.** You reveal a secret about an organization or individual.

The revelation is stunning. Organizations lose one action this week (or round). They cannot ever lose two; this ability does not stack with itself or any other action-denying attack. Individuals take 1 damage to mood and any relevant inspiration or reputation.

- **Obscure.** You can make secrets very hard for others to learn. Pick one secret. Whenever someone attempts to learn it, roll your shadow score as a bonus die opposing the attempt to reveal the secret, even if your organization is normally not within range to help. This does not count as the organization's action for the week. You may choose this ability up to three times, each time picking a different secret. If the secret is ever learned, you may turn this ability's invested time, personnel, and energy to a new secret.
- **Lost.** Libraries burn, experts go mad, notes disappear from laboratories. You can cause other organizations to lose knowledge. If you win an opposed shadow roll, your enemy loses all research done on one object or method, or it loses one building, or it loses all proof of one secret.
- **Obliterate.** By burning books, pouring fixer's oils in the ears of sleeping dukes, and burying abandoned ghost towns, you remove the memory of one event or person from the world. You can attempt this once per year. The event or person must be at least 50 years old. Any records that survive are outside of regions where you have influence.
- **Purge.** Fanaticism makes you pure. When combating infiltration or corruption of your organization, you can subtract one from every characteristic except scope and efficiency to gain two bonus d20s for your defense roll.
- **Infiltrate.** Choose an organization for your agents to infiltrate. You deal an extra point of damage against this organization in a shadow war. The infiltration is a secret; once

learned, it can be destroyed with a successful strike in a shadow war.

- **Blood in the shadows.** Increase by one die size your shadow score when making a roll in a shadow war.
- **Neutralize.** When an organization that you have infiltrated takes an action, you can attempt to neutralize that action with opposed shadow rolls. Your scope must be at least as large as the organization you have infiltrated.
- **Control.** With an opposed shadow roll, you can force an organization that you have infiltrated to take any action you please. Doing this a second time in a season exposes your agent. You must have a scope at least 3 greater than the organization you have infiltrated.
- **Fanaticism.** Every one of the society's members gains an increase of 2 inspiration points to the ancient grudge or burning cause that inflames the society. These inspiration points do not count toward the normal maximum (ie, the heart score).
- **Believed dead.** A secret society has strings throughout the known world, and it can erase a person. When a secret society uses this



power, it loses one wealth level with the vast expenditure of resources necessary. But the results are spectacular: the target is believed dead throughout the known world. Even when he presents signet rings and accounts of childhood sworn on Wrandt's book, he is called an impostor and a wizard. He cannot use any of his reputations, cannot access any land or resources, loses all mood, and suffers other indignities as judged by the GM and the group. This lasts for a number of weeks equal to the scope of the secret society. It can be used multiple times on the same person. Minimum scope: 14. Minimum wealth level: 12.

THIEVES GUILD

A thieves' guild can be a den of scoundrels, a band of merry men, a syndicate of slavers, a street gang, or any other organization that lives outside the law. Not all thieves' guilds are land-bound either; pirate culture flourishes beyond the reach of justice.

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 by operating outside its confines.

During the course of a game, a thieves guild might seize an arms shipment meant for the corrupt duke, break into another player's headquarters and steal his ledger and his mistress's silks, or assassinate a rival crime lord. Rarely do you fight open battles with brigades and drumbeat-measured troop evolutions, but a running shadow war in the alleys is common. Many thieves' guilds seek a monopoly on illegality, for the guild that can unite all the gangs and bring peace to the streets is a guild that strikes fear into the hearts of even the most powerful members of society.

Scope and abilities. At each even scope increase, raise your shadow by one. At every level divisible by five



(5, 10, 15, 20, etc.), increase efficiency or force by one. At each odd level scope increase, choose one of the following abilities.

- Quickness in the shadows. The guild can make two attacks per week in a shadow war.
- Security. You can sell your shadow abilities to any other organization. That organization gains the benefit of your shadow score once per week, in a defensive capacity only. Such a use does not count as an action for you. You may only have one such client at a time.
- Plague. Dirty deeds track dirt. You have the ability to start a plague once per season. Pick an area, and choose a disease with virulence 4 or less. Everyone in the area must roll strength vs. the virulence or contract the disease. Economically, choose two plague-related items (wine, food, herbs, shipboard passage to another kingdom, etc.). It is unavailable in the region for the season without a scavenging roll made against the doom.
- Oath. Your guild has taken an oath against an enemy organization. Any roll you make against the enemy organization in a shadow war is increased by one die size.

- Hide. You can make locations secret. This costs half the wealth level, rounded up, of the object you are making secret.
- Steal. You roll your efficiency as a bonus die when attempting to steal from another organization. If you succeed in reducing the organization one wealth level, and gain gold equal to one item at that wealth level (the considerable difference in gold goes to middlemen, resources used in the heist and its planning, and other transaction costs).
- Lucre. Any time you damage another organization in a shadow war, you gain 10 times the organization's scope in gold.
- Brotherhood of thieves. Every member gains a reputation 6, as a thieves guild member, with every other guild in the region.
- Network of knowledge. Every member who is name level in a shadow class gains one history that does not count toward the normal limit. The history can be increased normally, and it starts at one rank. It must be a history that relates to the shadow classes.
- Cultural force. You roll your force score as a bonus die when attempting to change the culture in your home region. Here are some typical savage cultures you might install:
 - o Culture of vice. Inspirations from vices are increased by one point. This point does not count toward the normal maximum.
 - o The thieves guild is recognized as a powerful city guild, and the boss is even granted a minor noble title. This is all usually done in chambers, but occasionally it is public.
 - o Culture of corruption. Mood penalties for breaking contracts, working against one's morals, or behaving unjustly are reduced by 1 to a minimum of zero.
 - o Culture of outlawry: Lords of the Underworld. Any person in your guild gains 2 Mood from the new popularity and reverence for outlaws. He also gains a reputation

(4) as an outlaw, if he so wishes.

- Tyranny of thieves. As long as you are the largest scope organization by 3 or more in your region, then every other organization operating in your demesne loses 1 from its wealth level. You gain 1 extra item at every wealth level you have, that is, you can now have 6 items of every wealth level instead of 5.



TRADING COMPANY

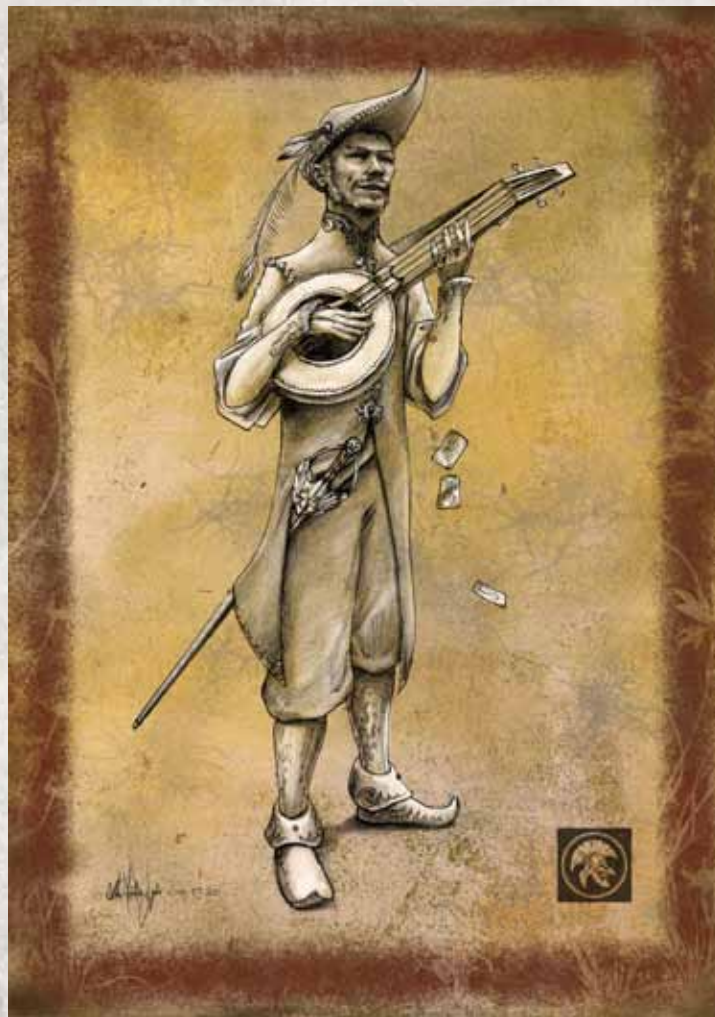
Trading company magnates sit at the same tables as kings and generals but are beholden to no one. Their agents travel the length and breadth of the known world, encountering trading partners civil and savage, magical and mundane. Given the adventures that trading ships and caravans are prone to encounter, a trading company regularly employs the finest swordsmen, spies, and courtesans that gold can buy.

Other organizations count on you to brave

the challenges of the trade routes. Without a trading company, trades between organizations and lands are expensive or impossible due to distance, failure to find middle ground, or lack of financing. To provide trading services, a trading organization must master many different disciplines. It must protect its merchandise in transit, negotiate in exotic locales, subdue or avoid magic, and grease the palms of border guards throughout civilization. No organization is as diverse as a trading company. It is common for a large trading company's master ledger to include in the same month payments to mercenaries on the battlefield, whores in the bedchamber, and engineers in the laboratory.

Scope and abilities. At each even scope increase, raise your efficiency or force by one. At every level divisible by five (5, 10, 15, 20, etc.), increase efficiency, force or shadow by one. At each odd level scope increase, choose one of the following abilities.

- Free transaction. You can make or facilitate one trade per week that does not count against your normal total of actions. Nor is there an action or gold cost for other parties involved in the trade. Charge what you like for this service.
- Beneficial trade. In any trade you make or facilitate, every organization rolls efficiency vs. the doom. An organization who succeeds gains 100 gold for every scope level you have. For example, if you are a 9th level organization, a benefiting organization gains 900 gold.
- Efficient capital. One new building, ship, or other purchase that generates gold generates one-quarter more gold than normal. You may choose this ability multiple times, designating a different piece of capital each time.
- Shortcuts. At a moment's notice, you can jump on a trading partner's caravan, zeppelin, or galleon, and you know all the fastest routes. Your knowledge of the trading routes and your access to the trading network reduces travel time by one day for every week of the journey. Charge what you like for this service. You can use this once per week,



but if you select this ability multiple times, you can use it a number of times equal to the number of times you have selected it, up to five.

- Exotica. Your company's contact with an exotic culture has taught it novel ways of doing business and allowed you to purchase items otherwise unattainable. Choose one of the following at no cost. Its normal cost cannot be more than two above your current wealth level.
 - o One research advancement
 - o One war beast
 - o One regional secret (chosen by the trading company subject to GM veto)
 - o Treasure trove. Roll randomly on the treasure table corresponding to your highest wealth level.

o New philosophy. An exotic idea extends and deepens current thought in the Kingdoms. Choose one idea or action. Many people cultivate inspirations based on that idea. Any member of your trading company can take a reputation (3) as a thinker, explorer, or ambassador for bringing the idea to the Kingdoms. If he adopts that philosophy himself, he gains 1 free inspiration point that does not count toward his normal maximum.

- Single-mindedness. You roll your efficiency as a bonus die against any disaster, attack, or other event that would cause a loss of income.
- Cultural ties. Pick one culture. When dealing with that culture, anyone in your trading company rolls its efficiency as an additional dialogue die once per social scene. This benefit may be chosen multiple times; designate a new culture each time. This does not count as your company's action for the week.

HOW TO HANDLE NPCs LIVING IN DANGEROUS CULTURES



The GM rolling every month or week for every NPC in the realm is unreasonable. As GM, you should only roll for NPCs who come "on stage" and are interacting with the PCs. Even then, if you forget to roll for an NPC who just sold the PCs a bouquet of peonies and three ounces of honey, it doesn't matter. In short: roll when it's important. Most cultural effects are designed so that the players, and not the GM, can roll for them. The players note the effects on a character sheet and carry on quickly. The GM does not have to track the effect of the culture on every single NPC in the kingdom!

- Cultural force. You roll your force score as a bonus die when attempting to change the culture in your home region. Here are some typical savage cultures you might install:

- o Culture of wealth. Anyone with a wealth level above 7 receives a Mood increase of 1 each week.
- o Culture of material. The default quality of all items manufactured in your demesne increases by one.
- o Culture of tolerance, in the name of gold. Anyone can use your efficiency as an extra dialogue die, but it must be used on the side of tolerance, freedom, and respect for the customs of others (not a common thing in the settled lands!).



DIMINISHING CHARACTERISTICS AND SCOPE

There are two ways to diminish the characteristics and scope of an opponent's organization: war and shadow war.

War is just what it sounds like: open mass combat. For every battle you win, you reduce one of your opponent's characteristics or his scope by 1. You cannot reduce the same characteristic two battles in a row.

A shadow war is everything that an open war is not. It is conducted in secret. Narrate your organization's attack on the enemy organization, 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!). If you successfully attack, then reduce one of your opponent's characteristics, wealth level, or scope by one. You cannot reduce an organization's scope by more than one per season.

Shadow war attacks require exquisite timing and planning to remain out of the public eye. You cannot attack the same characteristic (or choose scope) two attacks in a row. You cannot attack more than once per week (or round).



PART III

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: RESEARCH

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

The world is not constant. Yesterday's goal is today's starting line. 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.

Both organizations and individuals can conduct research. Although usually sponsored by organizations, individual researchers can work independently if they have another source of financial and material support.

Research can lead to advancements in warfare, engineering, magic, the arts, or nearly any other field of endeavor.

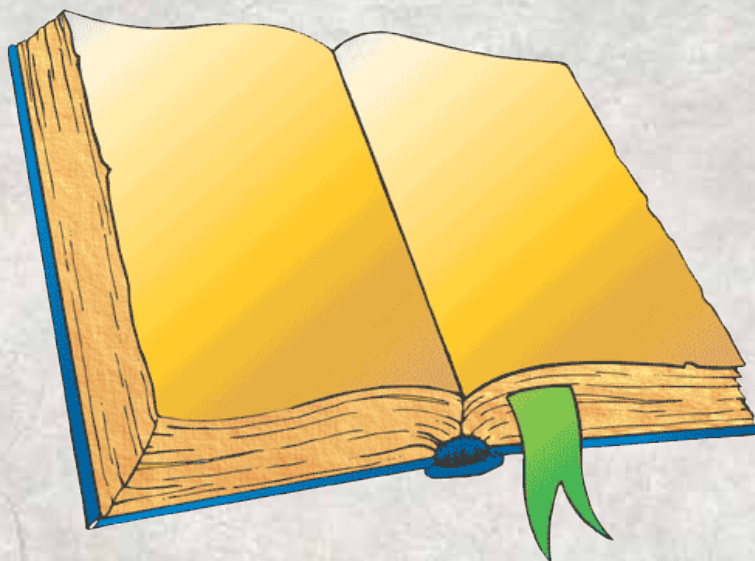
OBJECT RESEARCH

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. Naturally, 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.

That is, if Rithite maces are now made more efficiently and cheaply than ever before thanks to research (that is, research has reduced their wealth level to 3 from 4), then any further research on them still treats them as wealth level 4 rather than their reduced level.



METHOD RESEARCH

Research on methods attacks the doom.

A method could be a troop's attack, an artistic technique, a trade route, or a foreign policy. Proceed as with object research, but roll against the doom rather than the object's quality or wealth level. This is why much research is located in distant, hard-to-reach places. In the wilds, the kings and the populace have not established a great doom.



TIME

If you don't want to keep track of the points put into a research effort, simply allow a research vs. quality (or doom) check after one season, two seasons, a year (whatever is closest to the quality of item squared in days). If the check passes, the research is done. If it does not, then you can try again next month, and keep trying each month until you pass.

EFFECTS 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 (including troops and buildings) of a given type manufactured by your organization. For example, all Rithite maces are now quality 5 instead of quality 4.
- Reduce by 1 the wealth level of all items (including troops and buildings) of a given type.
- Grant a bonus charisma die to any member 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.
- Increase by one die size an organization

attempt to engineer the economy or the culture. The research focuses on one particular method of attempting this; other methods require separate research.

- Increase the amount by which a method changes the mood in a region. For example, a holiday often increases everyone's mood by 1. With research, that can change to 2.

- Discover resources. Resources reduce the cost of anything made or done with that resource. When you discover resources, pick a land area, name the resource, and name what type of item it benefits. Everything of that type of item drops one wealth level in the kingdom that controls the land where the resource is found. For example, a player might state that in the jungles north of Queensport, he has found a new mineral – marnhite, in honor of the kingdom – that is valuable in manufacturing zeppelins. Now, all zeppelins in Marnh are cheaper (-1 wealth level). The first player in the game to find a resource to benefit something has the privilege of naming what the resource is. If anyone else in the game subsequently discovers resources that accomplish the same purpose (that is, benefit the same objects), then that second resource discovery is of the same type as the first (marnhite, in the example above).



STEALING 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.

LIMITS OF RESEARCH

Research is limited to two steps. No numeric factor can be increased or decreased more than two steps.

RESEARCH PREREQUISITES

To be eligible to achieve an advance in an area, you must meet the prerequisites. 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.

Warfare. A barracks plus at least four brigades capable of any maneuver you wish to advance.

Magic. A tower.

Engineering. An engineer's shop.

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.



PART III

CHAPTER SIXTEEN:

GEAR, BUILDINGS, AND TROOPS

OVERVIEW

A grappling hook hurtles through the night sky, falling against a backdrop of stars and distant spires, then clangs on the gutter pipe... 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 individual gear is in this chapter. Larger purchases – buildings, siege engines, ships, troop training and recruitment – 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 meet Death every day for lack of gear alone.

This chapter lists gear, buildings, and troops that your character can acquire.

	QUALITY	MIN. STR.	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
Clothing (see clothing table below)	0	-	-	-
Gnarsk hide jerkin; bracers; sewer leathers; buckler; et al. (all have same statistics)	1	2	1	50
House vambraces	1	2	3	300
Fang ropes	1	2	1	50
Leather armor	2	3	3	300
Studded leather armor; hamata	2	4	2	100
Sun plate	2	3	5	1000
Round shield; teardrop shield; pavise; standard shield; et al.	2	5	2	100
Horn lamellar	3	5	3	300
Silkmetal shirt	3	3	6	1500
Cave boat mail	3	5	5	1000
Inquisitor mail	3	6	5	1000
Steel and bone lamellar	4	4	5	1000
Mail hauberk	4	6	3	300
Breastplate and mail	4	5	5	1000
Brigandine	5	6	4	600
Plate armor; coat-of-plates	6	5	6	1500
Dragon plate	9	7	11	5500

Quality is the quality of the item. If the armor's quality is 3 or more greater than the target's weapon quality, you ignore 1 point of body damage when hit. The table lists typical qualities. There is nothing stopping a blacksmith from making a mace of quality 8, for example. The GM must adjudicate the wealth level, but a good starting point is that wealth level equals the quality of the armor, increased or decreased by one or two for a high or low minimum strength or a special quality.

Min. Str. is the minimum strength required to wield the weapon or wear the armor effectively. Again, these are typical quantities. A blacksmith may be able to make a mace with minimum strength 1, but it is either going to be poor quality or very expensive. A character wearing armor too heavy for him loses one die size from all attacks and defenses per point of deficiency. For example, a character with a 4 strength wearing a mail hauberk (minimum strength 6) subtracts two die sizes from every attack and defense roll.

Wealth level is the item's wealth level.

Gold price is the equivalent purchase price derived from the listed wealth level. If the economics of a region have pushed wealth levels up or down, you must adjust a number of steps up or down in this column too. For example, a wealth level 5 item in a region with a depression (+2 to wealth level cost) becomes a wealth level 7 item. To find its gold cost, you move two steps, from 1000 crowns to 2100 crowns.



STACKING ARMOR AND SHIELDS

Armor quality does not stack. Take the best single armor quality if you are wearing two armors at once.

For example, if someone is wearing house vambraces and leather armor, his armor quality is 2.

If you are using a shield in a style that requires it, the bonus from the shield is already taken into account in the defense dice of the style's maneuvers. This is another example of the fighting style, rather than the equipment, being the determining factor in a combat. (It also allows you to play the character you want to play without being forced into equipment that doesn't match your character concept.)

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.

Fang ropes. Often seen on Dramba witch doctors and Fyrjiji savages, these ropes are actually sinews of

trophy beasts adorned with rows and rows of fangs (and sometimes skulls). The savage drapes these fang ropes over his body (often otherwise bare) to gain an intimidating presence. If you have savage levels, these are quality 6 in a social encounter.

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 other armors, this may be used in social encounters. In social encounters, the sun plate's quality is equal to its wealth level.

Cave boat mail. The men who ply the dark network of cave rivers under the eastern mountains 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.

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 source of heat whose attack roll (or doom) does not exceed the armor's quality.

Dragon plate. This armor is a coat-of-plates using dragon scales for the plates.

WEAPONS

Some fighting styles require a weapon, some forbid it, and some do neither. If your fighting style requires a weapon, make sure that you meet the minimum Strength requirement for both the weapon and the fighting style.



WEAPONS

	WEAPON QUALITY	MIN. STR.	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
<i>Melee</i>				
Club; peasant's flail; smith's hammer; laced femur; et al. (all have the same statis- tics)	1	4	1	50
Shortsword, dagger, stiletto	1	2	1	50
Spiked whip*	1	3	3	300
Longsword, poor; hand axe; crude morningstar	2	4	2	100
Rapier	2	3	3	300
Staff, two-handed	2	6	1	50
Trick staff*	2	6	4	600
Petrified head*	2	2	1	50
Longsword; battleaxe; warhammer; mace; fal- chion	3	4	3	300
Roofsword*	3	3	3	600
Orynjan kris*	3	2	7	2100
Rithite mace*	3	4	4	600
Engineer's chain blade*	3	4	6	1500
Spear*	3	6	2	100
Longsword, kingsman	4	5	4	600

Flight officer's cutlass	4	3	5	1000
Halberd; glaive; partisan; billhook* (all two-hand- ed)	4	6	3	300
Lance, mounted only	5	5	6	1500
Greatsword, two-handed	5	6	5	1000
Longsword of rank	6	4	10	4500
Jakattan templar machete	7	5	9	3600
Greatsword of rank	8	7	10	4500
Roofsword of a King Below	9	4	14	9100
Royal longsword; royal falchion; et al.	12	4	18	15300

Ranged

Blowgun*	1	2	1	50
Angon, Pilum*	2	5	2	100
Throwing knife	2	2	2	100
Shuriken; hair pin; chakram collar and brace- let;* et al.	2	2	3	300
Crossbow*	3	3	4	600
Bow	3	4	2	100
Javelin	3	5	1	50
Longbow	5	7	4	600
Snake culverin*	5	5	5	1000
Dragon culverin*	7	6	8	2800
Pistol, matchlock*	3	1	6	1500
Musket, matchlock*; arquebus	6	5	6	1500
Pistol, wheel lock*	4	1	9	3600
Musket, wheel lock*; arquebus	7	3	10	4500

Spear. Spears are standard polearms, and can be thrown awkwardly (reduce the attack die by one size).

Billhook. A polearm with a hook designed for anti-cavalry measures, the billhook adds one to your attack die size when attempting to unseat a mounted oppo-

nent. It is wealth level 4, but otherwise the same as the halberd.

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.

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, then the target must make a reason roll against the first hit attack roll. Failure means that the enemy gains one fear of the wielder (or loses one mood if he has no room in his heart for more inspirations). A petrified head must make a quality roll against the doom after every combat in order to continue in a functional state.

Orynjan kris. These wavy-bladed daggers are the de rigueur fashion blades of the mainland, and have been for almost a century. Very rarely is one 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.

Rithite mace. These spiked and flanged clubs treat the opponent's armor as three quality lower than it actually is.

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, and more. When executing an environment trick in combat, the engineer (or other wielder) gains one die size to attack or defense as long as he can narrate how his trick staff helps him.

Spiked whip. Whips are favorites of swashbucklers who use them to wrap around cross beams and swing through battlefields. A spiked whip requires a mini-

mum 6 quickness. It increases any trip attack dice by one size.

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 two consecutive tricks and a reason check against the doom.

Sidebar: On quality. Engineers, research, and many other factors can increase an item's quality. Chief among these is the maker of the item. Legendary smiths can create legendary items. Who knows what might lie in the next treasure hoard? The Kingdoms are shrouded, and none can say.

Angon, pilum. If this hits a character wielding a shield, and the pilum is of equal or superior quality, the pilum penetrates the shield and does damage to the shield equal to the attack roll. The shieldbearer (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.

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.

Firearms. In addition to their other effects, firearms thunder. Any untrained creature with intelligence 2 or less must roll its heart vs. the quality of the firearm; failure indicates the creature runs away for at least one round.

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 two rounds to position, with the shot coming on the third round. After shooting, two more rounds are required before being able to shoot again. The standard attack with a culverin is the "Shoot" quickness/d2 basic combat maneuver.

Like all blackpowder weapons, the culverin may scare animals. Any animal failing a heart roll vs. the quality of the weapon turns and flees, probably permanently, but at least for one round.

Dragon culverin. See snake culverin. This is a more powerful, heavier version. You must carry a shooting brace to rest the cannon against when firing. The cannon's default damage is 2 body rather than 1. Setting the brace and priming the cannon takes two rounds. After shooting, two more rounds are required before being able to shoot again. The standard attack with a culverin is the "Shoot" quickness/d2 basic combat maneuver.

Like all blackpowder weapons, the culverin may scare animals. Any animal failing a heart roll vs. the quality of the weapon turns and flees, probably permanently, but at least for one round.

Matchlock pistol or musket. A matchlock fires by touching a smoldering cord or burning match to a charge. They cannot fire in wet or humid weather. Six consecutive combat tricks are required to load a matchlock and prepare it for firing.

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 four consecutive combat tricks. Most wheel lock artists carry multiple wheel lock pistols rather than reloading in the midst of battle.

Shuriken, hair pins, chakram collar and bracelet. These weapons of far Oryn-ja are easily concealable (+1 die size to any such attempts). They are also fashionable,

and you may use their wealth level as a fashion quality in social encounters.

Blowgun. – These weapons are silent and increase their attack die size by one when the target is in the same area as the shooter.



AMMUNITION

The cost of ammunition is subsumed in the wealth level of the item that expends it. As long as your wealth level is 1 or higher, you can afford any normal ammunition. If you are impoverished, NPCs will haggle with you for a cash price (approximately 2 to 5 silver per arrow or round).

FASHION

QUALITY

WEALTH LEVEL

PRICE IN
GOLD

Everyday wear

Peasant, farmhand, laborer subfusc wardrobe	1	1	50
Farmer, traveler, guildsman wardrobe	2	2	100
Priest, artisan, high trader wardrobe	3	3	300
Bourgeoisie wardrobe	4	4	600
Noble wardrobe	8	8	2800
Royal court wardrobe	10	11	5500

Occasional wear

Hunting leathers	3	3	300
Track best	4	4	600
Slumming outfit	4	6	1500
Boating outfit	6	7	2100
Riding outfit	6	8	2800
Track finery	8	8	2100
Theater dress, opera suit and glasses	8	10	3600
Amphitheater gown and parasol, day jacket	8	9	2800
Temple best	8	9	2800
Ball gown, dancing jacket	9	10	3600
Masquerade costume of rank	9	10	3600

Accessories

Tattoo (specify location and subject)	+1	2	100
Fixer's ink tattoo (specify location, subject, color, and scent, if any)	+2	3	300
Sugarcane pants	+1	1	50
Nahalite veil	+1	2	100
Nahalite veil, silk	+2	6	1500
House ascot	+1	7	2100
Opana tiara	+2	10	4500

Train skirt	+1	7	2100
Smoking jacket	+1	4	600
Summer corset	+1	4	600
Raven corset	+2	5	1000
Zeppelin deck goggles	+1	3	300
Dragon basque	+2	6	1500
Tapestry cape	+2	6	1500
Trophy bandolier	+2	2	100
Thyrian matching mittens, muff, and hat	+1	4	600
Slaughterhouse work gloves	+1	0	3
Hessek opera gloves	+2	9	3600
Sun hat	+1	1	50
Badlands hat, wide brim (floppy, flat, or turned up; chinstrap or not)	+2	1	50
Tricorn officer's hat	+2	3	300
Monocle	+1	5	1000
Ship's eyepatch	+1	1	50
Eye, wooden, painted in Language of Stars	+1	3	300
Spectacles	+1	3	300
Cane	+1	2	100
Cufflinks of St. Vartan	+1	4	600
Purse, clutch, satchel; Dresgileoch-stitched	+1	8	2800
Gold-capped tooth	+1	4	600
Stiletto heels, evening	+1	4	600
Stiletto heel boots	+1	5	1000
Sandals, Dresgileoch leather	+1	4	600
Court slippers	+1	7	2100
Cobbler's mash; work boots; rat boots	+1	0	2
Court mules	+2	2	100
Hessek platforms of St. Vartan	+1	10	4500
Pegleg, Jakattan tale carving	+2	3	300
Queensporter pegleg with stump polish	+1	2	100
Jewelry, bourgeoisie	+1	5	1000
Jewelry, noble	+2	9	3600
Tortoise, gem-encrusted	+2	13	7800

FASHION

Everyday wear. Something from these wardrobes is appropriate for almost any occasion.

Occasional wear. These items improve their quality by 3 when worn at the proper event. When worn outside of such an occasion, they look silly and have an effective quality of 0 (which effectively gives anyone with fashion quality 5 or better a bonus to social damage).

Accessories. An accessory adds 1 or 2 to the wearer's fashion quality when worn at the proper event. When worn outside of such an occasion, it subtracts one from the fashion quality or, at the GM's judgment, is so ridiculous that it reduces the wearer's total fashion quality to 0.

Accessories do not stack. Only the single best accessory's benefit applies.

Tattoos. A tattoo has double its quality when first revealed: a fighter ripping his shirt off to reveal inked pectorals, a woman's dress falling down to reveal fixer's ink on her thighs, a forbidden sigil tattooed on the scalp under hair that must be shorn to see it. Subsequent viewings revert to the normal quality.

Sugarcane pants. These are the loose-fitting, comfortable pants worn tied at the ankles and waist by many along the coastlines of the Sea of Princes. Their colors range from cane green to black, and they have a peculiar adhesive texture when damp. They are fashionable throughout the islands, including Jakatta, or the Western Triad. They are not fashionable at court or in sophisticated society.

Dragon basque. Dragon scales adorn these ladies' garments, which resemble a jacket with a short skirt attached. Basques are suitable for almost any high-fashion occasion, but certainly not for everyday encounters.

Tapestry cape. These tailored capes are woven like tapestries to tell a story or depict scenes from the

wearer's life. They are only appropriate at banquets and events where one might reasonably expect to sit down, remove the cape, and answer questions about it when others ask (as decorum indicates they must).

Trophy bandolier. Generals and savage chieftains alike wear their trophies on sashes. Sometimes the trophies are medals and brooches from the king; sometimes they are the teeth and finger bones of rival chieftains. Savage trophies are appropriate anywhere for someone who is name level in a savage class. Other trophy bandoliers are only appropriate on the battlefield and at court.

Wooden eyes painted in the language of stars are religious orbs, usually blessed, and often the property of a church instead of the parishioner.

Cufflinks of St. Vartan are chained together with a light silver or gold chain that symbolizes the restraint of Vartan of Hessek. They are appropriate at any solemn or religious occasion.

Gem-encrusted giant tortoises have glittering mosaics of rubies, emeralds, and sapphires laid into their backs. Electrum, silver, and gold are often channeled in intaglio alongside the gems. Other tortoises have landscapes or portraits painted on their sanded-smooth shells. Many nobles leash their tortoises to pillars at events, allowing the tortoise to move about a limited area, showing off the house's riches.





ALCHEMICAL ITEMS

	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
Fixer's kit	3	3	300
<i>Distillations and Fabrications</i>			
Stranglesmoke stick	6	3	300
Carmot powder	6	4	600
Orichalcum	5	8	2800
Drakatizon	7	5	1000
Red kohl	4	5	1000
Kohl of days	6	5	1000
Kohl of nights	8	6	1500
White kohl	4	3	300
Skinpaste	4	3	300
Muriatic acid	4	4	600
Muriatic catalyst	4	1	50
Jakatta spider incubation vial	3	8	2800
Water of kings (aqua regio)	5	9	3600
Vitriol	6	4	600
Alchemist's fire	3	2	100
Oil of cat's foot	3	2	100
Ice rose	4	3	300
Feiq (whore's mist)	5	7	2100
Alkahest	4	6	1500
Vapors of Muda-Tarsk	6	5	1000
Antivenin	3	4	600

Embrace	5	4	600
Drought	3	6	1500
Grease vial	4	2	100
Null jelly	5	7	2100
Spagyric poultice	3	2	100
Red sulfur	2	2	100
White sulfur	6	3	300
Fixer's gum	3	3	300
Twitcher head	5	4	600
Cockatrice whip	4	10	4500

Poisons

Asp	3	5	1000
Cinnacide	3	5	1000
Crushed lotus	4	7	2100
Dragon dream dust	4	3	300
Dynn oil	4	4	600
Love drops	4	4	600
Madfire ash	3	4	600
Scorpion	3	5	1000
Salt mamba	5	9	3600
Venom meduse	6	10	4500
Wight blood	3	3	300

Activating an alchemical item requires a trick in combat. The effects take place next round. For example, in round 1, Sam and Leonard are in combat. Sam executes a warrior's strike and Leonard uses the trick maneuver to light a stranglesmoke stick. Sam fails his roll against the stranglesmoke stick, but he resolves his strike normally this round. The stick's effects occur on round 2.

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 unable to do anything but move. The smoke is thin enough that vision is not affected. The smoke dissipates after two rounds.

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 inside and prompting decay and damaging transformation. An exposed item must opposed roll pitting 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. Carmot powder persists in the air for one minute before settling.

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 laid into a building's concrete mix, orichalcum increases the walls' quality by one. The price reflects enough orichalcum to mix with the concrete in a typical cottage.

Drakatizon. Two drops of drakatizon correctly applied, one onto each eye as determined, grant 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.

Red kohl. Red kohl makeup increases its wearer's Charisma by 1 for six hours. It cannot be worn with any other kohl.

White kohl. White kohl is ancient and linked to the lineage of kings. It is an intimidating face paint. The manner of application is freighted with tradition and heraldry, and the tiniest curls signify centuries of atrocities. Increase one of your reputations by two when wearing white kohl. It wears off after six hours, and it cannot be worn with other kohl.

Kohl of days. This makeup is only active in sunlight, and only for six hours after application. Increase by one the die size of any inspiration used in a social encounter. It cannot be worn with any other kohl.

Kohl of nights. This kohl is black and sometimes contains gold glitter. You gain a bonus die equal to the kohl's quality when attempting to conceal a secret. Kohl of nights is not active (and hence gives no bonus) in sunlight. It cannot be worn with any other kohl.

Skinpaste. Skinpaste stops bleeding. It restores one point of strength or quickness, and if its quality is equal to or greater than the doom, it restores one point of body damage. Skinpaste can only be used once per week on a patient.

Muriatic acid. Drizzled on a metallic surface, muriatic acid does 1 quality point of damage per hour for a number of hour equal to its own quality. Increasing the

concentration does not help, but a second application of muriatic acid is possible.

Muriatic catalyst. Muriatic catalyst is a burgundy, wispy material that when applied to a metal surface in contact with muriatic acid reduces the operating time from hours to minutes (1 point of damage per minute).

Jakattan spider incubation vial. When this forearm-sized canister vial shatters, a Jakattan spider swarm spills out over the area (d12/d8, 1 + unsteady, 3 body to break it up).

Water of kings. When a spellbound object (not creature) is immersed in the water of kings, it must roll its quality against the doom. If it fails, the object loses its spellbound nature (and any spells it contained) and is otherwise unharmed. If it succeeds, it survives to make another check once per minute until pulled out of the water or destroyed. The water of kings loses its potency after destroying one item. The price shown is for enough water of kings to immerse a large book.

Vitriol. Vitriol is mixed with blackpowder. As the weapon fires, the vitriol coats the musketball or grape-shot with a tarry, burning black goo. The painful attack does one extra point of body damage if it hits.

Alchemist's fire. Alchemist's fire is an oil that burns when lit, even if it is mixed in water. This makes it especially useful for attacking ships, kraken, dragon turtles, 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.) The fire then does 1 point of strength damage in the subsequent round unless the target uses a trick to put it out.

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 gains two die sizes on any quickness roll made to move stealthily.

Ice rose. This is a seed that, when planted in carmot (it is ineffective without the red paste), rapidly grows a red rose (within one combat round). The red blossom

rapidly brightens to white as the rose drinks in all heat. The temperature drops to freezing, water ices over, canteens crack as the water expands into ice. A minute later, the temperature begins to rise again, and after a third minute, the air temperature is back to normal (any ice remains and melts at a normal rate).

Feiqa (whore's mist). This perfume smells of jasmine and orchids. Anyone who is in close contact with the wearer for more than a few seconds – a private conversation suffices – loses one from his Reason score unless his body resists with a Strength vs. quality check. The effects persist for four hours, and remember that feiqa also affects whoever wears it.

Alkahest. This substance dissolves any adhesive and any alchemical substance with which it comes in contact, as long as the quality of the substance does not exceed the quality of the alkahest. If the substance to be dissolved is of higher quality, then the alkahest and the substance both roll quality dice to see which prevails. Drinking alkahest does not neutralize a poison already coursing through the veins.

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. Images and smells of swords and forests from your youth swim through the mists. Every inspiration used by anyone in the area gains one die size. The effects last for one minute. The mists are not thick enough to obscure vision.

Antivenin. Alchemical antivenin increases the imbibor's strength by two die sizes for the purposes of resisting poison. The antivenin is effective for a number of minutes equal to its quality.

Embrace. 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 (or possibly the doom), and use the embrace's quality as a bonus die.

Drought. This is a bitter beverage that tastes of anise and clove. When drunk by a person at 0 mood or less, drought increases her magic score by 1 for six hours.

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. If double the normal time is taken, objects can be picked up and areas moved through without the check. Spreading the grease in combat requires three tricks.

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.

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.

Twitcher head. A twitcher zombie's head begins to twitch after being pulled out of its alchemical preserving fluids. The next round, it explodes, doing one point of damage and exposing those struck by head gore to one random disease. The twitcher head rolls its quality as the attack die.

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 turns to stone. The whip only lasts for a number of attempts equal to its quality.

Spagyric poultice. Anyone keeping a spagyric poultice pressed against bare skin for 1 day increases his strength die size when attempting to shake off a disease. He increases his die size by one for every quality point of the poultice.

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 over enemy positions to illuminate the enemy's position. On a smaller scale, an arrow, crossbow bolt, or musket ball covered in red sulfur lights up the entire path of its flight in dancing red lights. In both cases, the light persists in the air, slowly settling to the ground over the course of a minute (high winds cut this time to a single round). Also in both cases, the red sulfur eliminates any darkness bonus to defense that a unit or combatant might enjoy.

White sulfur. White sulfur, when combined with carmot, promotes flesh transfusion. Any creature that imbibes a white sulfur and carmot paste, usually spread on a crust of bread, rolls the white sulfur's quality as a bonus die when undergoing a fixer's transfusion.

Poison. Unless otherwise stated, a poison is resisted by strength vs. quality (not an opposed roll, this is simply a strength roll against a static number, namely, the quality). Failure to resist means that the poison takes effect in two rounds (not this round, not next round, but the round after that).

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. This is an arduous process. Most of the time, poisons are applied outside of combat. The poison only lasts until the first successful blow.

The poisons listed here must be treated and preserved to be useful. In part for this reason, they are alchemical substances.

Asp. A character wounded with asp venom loses one point of strength per round until asleep and then 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.

Cinnacide. This vermilion dust smells of cinnamon. Anyone breathing it and not resisting loses one point

of reason per round until unconscious. Each round, the character can stop the progression by making a strength check against the quality of the poison. Leaving the area does not stop the progression once it has begun. 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. Assassins often toss a smoldering crushed lotus stick into a target's bedchamber before entering. Anyone who inhales the smoke of burning crushed lotus without resisting loses one point from reason, quickness, and each inspiration for the next minute.

Dragon dream dust. Anyone inhaling this dust must resist or roll 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 prevents intelligible speech. It must be swallowed. Detecting it in any beverage before swallowing requires a reason check against the quality of the oil. A new strength check is allowed once every quarter hour (the effects wear off in six hours maximum).

Love drops. This sweet liquid, once swallowed, causes a victim to attempt to seduce the next appropriate person he talks to. Detecting it in any beverage before swallowing requires a reason check against the quality of the oil.

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. He attempts to burn everything to the ground. Each round, a new strength vs. quality check is applicable. Non-spellbound creatures are unaffected. Madfire ash is ingested. Detecting it in any food before swallowing requires a reason check against the quality of the oil.

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 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 scorpion venom cannot cause a person more strength damage than its quality.

Salt mamba. The salt mamba's venom causes the body's tissue to desalinize and necrose. The victim loses 1 body per round for three rounds, with a new strength vs. quality check each round.

Venom meduse. The victim hears music and hissing in his ears as he slowly petrifies. The victim loses one Reason and one Quickness per round. When both reach zero, the victim is turned to stone. A new strength vs. quality roll is allowed each round; on success, the petrification process stops.

Wight blood. Redolent of almonds, 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 ITEMS

	QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE
Atomizer, plunger or squeeze bulb	2	2	100
Harpoon and winch	6	6	1500
Grapeshot bomb, grenade, burst arrow	6/5/4	4	600
Smoke bomb, grenade, burst arrow	7/6/5	2	100
Spitfire bomb, grenade, burst arrow	5/4/3	5	1000
Phosphor bomb, grenade, burst arrow	4/3/2	2	100
Moth bomb, grenade, burst arrow	5/4/3	4	600
Riotwire	4	3	300
Arrow, riotwire	3	4	600
Spyglass	5	5	1000
Orrery	6	15	10,500
Shadow show	4	5	1000
Gear bar	4	2	100
Grapple gun	4	3	300
Bear trap	4	2	100
Piston boots	3	4	600
Belt winch	6	4	600
Mirror helmet	3	3	300
Ejector saddle, seat	4	5	1000
Drop cord	6	3	300
Hook-hand, blade leg	2	6	1500
Hook-hand, geared	2	9	3600

Breakaway wheel lock pistol	3	11	5500
Breakaway wheel lock musket	6	12	6600
Mechanical dirge bird, dancer, apocalypse	10	14	9100
Blasting trap	5	7	2100
Screamer trap	5	6	1500
Divine wind rat	6	8	2800
Whip gyre	6	9	3600
Lightning gyre	8	10	4500
Caltrop storm	6	7	1500
Speaking tubes (zeppelin, submarine, ship, castle)	3	13 (vehicle) or 16 (castle)	7800 or 12000

ENGINEERING ITEMS

Firearms. Firearms, both portable and cannon, are engineering items. Aiming them, however, is not an action that depends on engineering skill, and therefore engineers do not receive their level as a bonus die when making attack rolls with firearms.

Bombs, grenades, and arrows. Bombs are heavy enough so that they can only be dropped, not thrown. Grenades can be thrown, and burst arrows can be shot. As weapons, burst arrows are one quality inferior to grenades, and grenades are one quality inferior to bombs. Grenades and bombs must be armed or lit with a combat trick in the round before throwing. It takes two rounds total to launch a grenade or bomb: a trick to arm it and then an attack maneuver (often the “Shoot” basic maneuver) to throw or drop the explosive. All of these devices thunder the same way that firearms do; see above.

Grapeshot bomb, grenade, burst arrow. The grapeshot explodes on impact, making an attack against everyone in the area. The attack is rolled with the grapeshot’s quality die.

Smoke bomb, grenade, burst arrow. 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.

Spitfire bomb, grenade, burst arrow. The spitfire bomb clatters to the floor and begins to spit embers and char, leaving soot to mark its trail as it jitters through its attack. It attacks all in its area (rolling its quality die), dealing one point of damage to any who are scorched. The next round, anything flammable in the area catches fire, meaning that commencing on the third round, anyone in the area takes 1 point of fire damage (if there is enough fuel for an inferno). The spitfire then goes out.

Phosphor bomb, grenade, burst arrow. A bright flash at ground level may blind everyone for 2 rounds (a quickness roll against the quality averts the eyes in time). The area remains lit by phosphors suspended colloiddally in the air, eliminating any bonuses for darkness, for one minute.

Moth bomb, grenade, burst arrow. These leave burning white flakes floating in the area. For a minute after the explosion, anyone in the area makes a quickness check against the quality of the bomb. Failure indicates the interloper touched a “moth,” as they are called, and takes 1 point of body damage.

Riotwire. A character risks laceration when crossing an area strung with riotwire. The riotwire attacks with a d6, and if it hits, it does 1 point of damage and attacks again. It can attack up to three times if it keeps

hitting. Riotwire is ineffective against armor of equal or superior quality.

Riotwire arrow or bolt. A riotwire arrow spools out coil upon coil of riotwire as it flies. The "safe end" of the riotwire is simple cable for three or four feet, attached to a belt loop on the archer's belt, so that the archer can tie off the cable after the arrow has flown (a trick in combat). This makes a quick way to spread riotwire across a distance of up to 100 feet (the most wire that can fit in an arrow capsule). The cost of the arrow does not include the riotwire itself.

Harpoon and winch. A character who launches a harpoon must use a combat trick and hit his target with a ranged attack such as the "Shoot" basic combat maneuver. If a harpoon hits its victim, it does one damage and is tethered to the harpoon thrower. The harpoon thrower may drop the harpoon at any time, but the speared victim can only remove the harpoon with a strength or quickness vs. quality check. The winch can pull harpooned characters closer. Using the winch is a trick for the harpoon launcher, and the winch pulls with strength equal to its quality. It rolls an opposed check against the victim's strength, and with a success, the winch hauls the victim one area closer per round. The line can haul vertically a maximum weight of 250 lbs. Reloading a harpoon in combat requires three consecutive tricks. The harpoon uses the basic launching mechanism as the rocket grapple gun below. A harpoon is designed for striking creatures, not anchor points, but if the target surface will allow a harpoon to lodge, it can be used as a grapple gun.

Atomizer. These spread powders and poisons throughout an area. They require a reason roll against the doom to use properly.

Spyglass. This allows you to see with accuracy up to one mile away, eliminating range penalties to visual perception rolls.

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.

Shadow show. A shadow show apparatus is a small (4' wide by 8' high) shadow theater with automated curtains, puppets, lights, and sound effects. It increases any appropriate performance by two die sizes, but you must already have a relevant history of 4 or greater.

Gear bar. This crowbar has a geared driveshaft 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.

Grapple gun. With a range of 150 feet, the rocket grapple can latch on to roofs. Latching it onto a proper support is a bit tricky and requires a quickness roll against the doom (engineering bonuses apply to this roll). The cable can support up to 250 lbs. The rocket grapple is particularly effective when combined with a belt winch.

Belt winch. This winch reels in with strength equal to its quality. 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 jogging pace.

Piston boots. These increase by one the die size of any jump check.

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. On a hit, the defender is held fast until the lock is released. The lock can be picked with a lockpick check made against the quality of the trap. Detecting the trap requires a reason check against the quality of the trap (GMs may allow an artfully placed trap to use the artisan's skill roll, rather than the quality of the trap, as the target number for the reason check).

Mirror helmet. A complicated series of mirrors over the eyeholes of this helmet renders you immune to gaze attacks. You take a one die-size penalty on attacks and defense.

Ejector saddle, seat. 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.

Drop cord. These cords often reach 500 feet in length. A swordsman can zip down up to 100 feet in a single round, and he can descend the entire 500 foot length in twenty seconds. His defense while doing so is d4.

Hook-hand, blade leg. This attaches to a stump where a hand or a lower leg formerly was. It looks like a normal hook or pegleg, but when a button is depressed, a stiletto springs out and locks into place. Detecting the blade in its concealed state requires a reason check against the quality of the item.

Hook-hand, geared. Otherwise the same as the hook-hand above, this model has two opposing hooks and a gear house in the ferrule. The gearing mechanism allows the hand to crush whatever fits in the double-pronged hook with a strength of 12.

Breakaway wheel lock pistol, musket. The firearm breaks down into disingenuous 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.

Mechanical dirge bird, dancer, or apocalypse. These small clockwork devices play music, usually somber bagpipes, sackbut and harpsichord harmonies, while going through a limited, pre-set repertoire of motion. 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, in particular mechanical art. Increase the reputation size by two for each further item you possess. There are rumors that these items, as much as a taking, can be ensorcelled in ways that make kings cackle into the night.

Blasting trap. This tripwire and pressure-plate system attaches to a gyre, bomb, or grenade. When someone steps on the trap, the bomb explodes. Detecting it

before setting it off requires a reason check against the quality of the item.

Screamer. This is the same as a blasting trap above, but rather than set off a gyre or bomb, it sets off a loud screaming, easily audible in all surrounding areas.

Divine wind rat. This mechanical contraption, customarily built to look like a rat, rolls forward trailing blackpowder 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, everyone along the trail (everyone in the areas it has crossed) takes 1 point of body damage. The rat is destroyed. Detecting the rat's motion, if one is not looking for it, requires a reason check against the quality of the rat.

Whip gyre. When activated and tossed, tendrils sprout isometrically from the gyre and begin to lash furiously about. Anyone in the area takes 1 point of damage if struck by a quality vs defense roll. The gyre continues to spin, lashing everything, for a number of rounds equal to its quality. A cable attached to the gyre allows the wielder to pull the gyre one area toward him each round as a combat trick. Activating the gyre is a trick, and tossing it is another action, so it takes two rounds total to activate a gyre. The gyre blocks sight and prevents missile attacks.

Lightning gyre. Operated as a whip gyre, a lightning gyre sparks to every character in the area each round. If a character is struck by a quality vs defense roll, he takes 1 point damage and must make a Strength vs quality check to avoid being blinded the next round. The lightning gyre operates for a number of rounds equal to its quality. Activating the gyre is a trick, and tossing it is another action, so it takes two rounds total to activate a gyre. The gyre blocks sight and prevents missile attacks.

Caltrop storm. These "hopping caltrops," when spread, do not rest on the floor. Rather, one round after being sown, they begin to spin, powered by the blackpowder within them, and they jump like popcorn in the skillet.

Soon the entire area is filled with exploding, popping, spinning caltrops to a height of 10 feet. The storm lasts for a number of rounds equal to its quality. Anyone entering it takes 1 point of damage if hit. The storm blocks sight and prevents missile attacks.

Speaking tubes. These tubes snake through the infra-

structure 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, the tubes increase the efficiency of any organization headquartered in that castle by one.



BUILDINGS

	DEFENSE	STRUCTURAL QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE	EFFECT
<i>Businesses and establishments</i>					
Stables	2	2	6	1500	+1 income
Flophouse	2	2	4	600	-
Inn, country wayside	2	2	9	3600	+1 income
Inn, city	3	5	12	6600	+1 income
Inn, grand	3	8	18	15300	+2 income
Slaughterhouse and butcher shop	3	4	7	2100	+1 income
Chandlery	2	2	7	2100	+1 income
Waxworks*	3	4	7	2100	+1 shadow or +1 income
Farm, family	2	4	8	2800	+1 income
Farm, crown	2	6	9	3600	+1 income
Vineyard	2	4	9	3600	+1 income
Hunting grounds	2	14	6	1500	-
Barn and silo, cistern	2	5	4	600	-
Mine, metal	6	4	19	17,100	+2 income, +1 force, or +1 efficiency
Mine, mineral	6	4	19	17,100	+2 income, +1 arcana, or +1 efficiency
Dam	4	8	11	5500	+1 income
Mill, grain	4	7	9	3600	+1 income
Mill, lumber	4	7	10	4500	+1 income
Tavern, public house	3	3	8	2800	+1 income
Prison	5	6	11	5500	+1 income or +1 shadow
Shipyard	6	8	16	12,000	+2 income or +1 efficiency
Zeppelin docks	5	7	15	10,500	+2 income or +1 efficiency
Docks	4	7	11	5500	+1 income or +1 shadow

Library	3	5	13	7800	+1 arcana
Copyist, printer	2	3	9	3600	+1 efficiency
Theater below	2	3	9	3600	+1 theme and +1 income
Theater, grand; amphitheater	2	6	17	13,600	+1 theme and +1 income
Wood shop	2	3	8	2800	+1 income
Engineer's shop	3	4	9	3600	+1 income or +1 efficiency
Blacksmith shop	3	5	10	4500	+1 income or +1 force
Goldsmith shop	3	4	16	12,000	+2 income
Warehouse	2	4	6	1500	+1 income
Safehouse	+3	+4	14	9100	+1 shadow
Tannery	2	3	9	3600	+1 income
Bazaar stall, kiosk	3	1	4	600	+1 income
Storefront	2	2	8	2800	+1 income
City building, ¼ block, three stories	2	6	13	7800	-
Tower, 40' radius, four stories	4	5	14	9100	+1 income
Arcane Tower, 40' radius, seven stories	11	23	-	30,000	+2 arcana
Shrine	3	2	10	4500	+1 force, arcana, shadow, or income
Church, temple	6	10	13	7800	+1 force, arcana, shadow, or income
Cathedral	8	18	20	19,000	+2 force, arcana, shadow, or income
Barracks and drill grounds	5	9	13	7800	+1 force
Thieves' training gauntlet	2	2	10	4500	+2 shadow

Homes and residences

Homeless	-	-	0	-	Reputation (6) in home town: Dirty bum
Shack, shanty, shed, tenement room; shared	-	-	1	-	-

Shack, shanty, shed	2	1	2	100	-
Cabin, rent; tenement room, rent	-	-	3	-	-
Cottage, rent	-	-	4	-	-
Cabin	2	2	6	1500	+1 to any Land-owner reputation
Tenement room, ownership	-	-	7	2100	-
Row house, rent	-	-	8	-	
Cottage	2	3	8	2800	+2 to any Land-owner reputation
Manor house	2	5	15	10,500	+3 to any Landowner or Wealthy reputation
1 theme					
Tenement building	3	10	15	10,500	Reputation (10) in hometown: Slumlord
Rowhouse	3	5	15	10,500	As cottage plus theme
Chateau	3	15	20	19,000	+6 to any Wealthy reputation; four themes
Keep, outpost, fort	10	20	15	10,500	+6 to any Wealthy or Powerful reputation; one theme; defense die size +3
Castle, barony	10	30	-	60,000	+7 to any Wealthy or Powerful reputation; three themes; +2 force; defense die size +3
Castle, earldom	12	36	-	87,000	+8 to any Wealthy or Powerful reputation; five themes; +3 force; defense die size +4

Castle, duchy	14	42	-	119,000	+9 to any Wealthy or Powerful reputation; seven themes; +4 force; defense die size +5
Castle, royal	16	50	-	156,000	+10 to any Wealthy or Powerful reputation; ten themes; +5 force; defense die size +5

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 invested to build the building, or that must be taken out to destroy it.

Effect: organization score. The first three buildings 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.

Effect: theme. For each room or area that you add to a large structure, and for some buildings, you can decorate it to support one theme: fidelity, death, artifice, wealth. If you host someone in that room, you gain a die size to your social attacks when touching on that theme.

Effect: defense die size. All troops on all defenses (stance and maneuver) increase their die size by the indicated amount when inside the castle. This is in addition to the bonus defense die accorded by the building's defense value. In short, it is difficult to attack a force inside a fortress.

This die size increase applies only against ranged attacks, as melee attacks are impossible until the fortress is stormed.

BUILDINGS

Waxworks. Your organization can only benefit from one of these establishments. Only so many disguises are needed.

Barn and silo, cistern. When you come under siege,

after three weeks roll your organization's efficiency, increased by one die size for each barn and silo or cistern that you own. If you beat the doom, your city is not considered to be under siege that week. Each time you use this ability, however, cross off one barn and silo or cistern. It's empty now.

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.

Safehouse. A trapdoor in the wine cellar, a pivoting fireplace leading to a secret chamber, a priest hole – somehow you disguise your organization's true quarters. The location becomes a secret. The safehouse built-ins must be purchased at the same time that you purchase another building.

Bazaar stall, kiosk. Unlike other buildings, this can be damaged by an individual acting alone. He can break it as any other item; see chapter 10 for the rules on breaking items.

Castle, earldom and greater. It is very rare for someone other than a titled noble to command one of these castles, other than in a stewardship or regency position. There are many benefits to commanding such a lofty title, but they are listed in the noble class, not here.

VEHICLES

Some vehicles have no defense value and therefore can be hacked apart by a determined axeman: a screened palanquin, for instance, or an open wagon. Others can only be damaged on reasonable time scales by siege weapons: crown zeppelins, for example.

Naval stealth. This submersible quality allows the commanding organization to roll its shadow die as a bonus die at any time during a battle, up to three times per battle, as long as the player can plausibly narrate the sub's actions. Note that a submersible is a Wonder and can only be built by an engineer capable of building such.

WONDERS

Wonders can only be crafted by a team led by an engineer with the Master of wonders class ability.

All Wonder reputations apply throughout the civilized world.

Triumph. A marble monument depicts your glory and your history. Up to six people can be assigned a reputation (20) as you like. The reputation carries throughout the known civilized world. The reputation cannot be brought below 12 while the triumph still stands. Every person known to be a member of the organization that built the triumph gains a reputation 8: Triumphant.

Ziggurat, pyramid. Enduring and powerful, pyramids and ziggurats are statements of raw power. Increase your organization's arcana score by 2, all maneuver attacks and defenses of spellbound troops and beasts by one die size, and you can increase the doom by one in one other kingdom.

Dragon garden. Your garden attracts dragons like a flame attracts moths. You can capture and train two dragons, and they count against your organization's troop limit. The dragons are replaced one season after they fall in combat. The dragon garden also generates income for your organization from the dragon scales that are shed and collected; you gain a wealth level.

Cathedral of ages. No dome is wider, and no peak higher, than the cathedral of ages. It soars. You gain a d20 bonus die whenever dealing with the High God's church, even if it is to intimidate it. Every troop you command increases its spirit value by 2.

Spectacular. A spectacular is a theater of dreams, an opulent, intricate marvel that elevates the art of any violinist, harpsichordist, player, acrobat, cat-burner, or opera soprano who trods its boards. A spectacular continuously informs the culture of its kingdom. You

MONUMENTS & VEHICLES

	DEFENSE	STRUCTURAL QUALITY	WEALTH LEVEL	GOLD PRICE	EFFECT
<i>Mounts</i>					
Draft horse	-	-	3	300	-
War horse	-	-	6	1500	Can use in mounted combat style
Race horse	-	-	6	1500	-
Camel	-	-	4	600	-
<i>Vehicles</i>					
Screen box palanquin, litter	-	3	15	10,500	+1 quality fashion accessory; only appropriate in streets
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	+1 die size to smuggling attempts
Zeppelin, trader	4	8	17	13,600	+2 income
Zeppelin, crown	5	9	19	17,100	+1 income; +4 to any wealth reputation
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	3	8	2800	+1 to related research attempts
Submersible, prototype	5	8	20	19,000	+2 force, efficiency or shadow; naval stealth
Ice sled		1	1	50	-

TROOPS

can write a new culture item for the kingdom, adding a fourth slot if the first three are presently used (as is usual). With each new theater season – the theater season runs from just after harvest time to midsummer eve – you can re-write your culture item.

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 as any other troop. It is the equivalent of 5 troops (it packs much tighter than living, breathing, squirming troops). 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. Unlike other wonders, the Legion Below is not built by engineers but wizards. The wizard must be an archmage and a master spell-smith, and he must act in concert with the king of his land, who by virtue of doom is the only one who can command a Legion Below (and only one Legion Below may exist in a Kingdom at a time).

Zeppelin Dreadnought. This wonder appears as a troop in the troops section, below.

Submersible. This wonder is in the vehicles section.

Kvalt savages

Speed (strategic): 3 (5 in homeland)

Health: 4

Spirit: 3 (7 in homeland)

Maneuvers: 1. Avalanche charge. d8/d6, move 1.

2. Rage - 0/d4. Ignore 1 damage to you this round and gain commanding organization's force as bonus attack die next round.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d4/d4 (d6/d6 in homeland).

2. Defend – 0/d6.

Wealth level: 4 as mercenaries.

Fyrajji 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.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d4/d4 (d6/d6 in homeland).

2. Defend – 0/d6.

Wealth level: 4 as mercenaries.

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 in homeland)

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d4/d4 (d6/d6 in homeland).

2. Run interference – 0/d4. Ally also gains d4 bonus defense die.

Wealth level: 4 as mercenaries.

Light cavalry

Speed (strategic): 5

Health: 5

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Charge – d8/d4, move 2 areas.

2. Wheeling cover run – 0/d6, move.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d6/d6.

2. Harass – d8/d2.

Wealth level: 8

Heavy cavalry

Speed (strategic): 4

Health: 6

Spirit: 5

Maneuvers: 1. Charge – d10/d8, move.

2. Smash the line – d12/d8 vs. infantry.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d8/d8.

2. Defensive Line – d4/d12.

Wealth level: 10

Light footmen

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 3

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Wedge – d10/d4.

2. Run and counter – 0/d6, move. Add a d6 attack against one unit that attacks you; otherwise, no attack.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d6/d4.

2. Defend 0/d6.

Wealth level: 6

Heavy footmen

Speed (strategic): 2

Health: 5

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Column push – d10/d6.

2. Shield other – 0/d6. Other gets your defense die.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d6/d6.

2. Defend – 0/d10.

Wealth level: 7

Pikemen

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 4

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Unhorse and spike – d12/d6 vs. cavalry.

2. Tie down. 0/d8. If your target moves, d12 attack for 2 health damage.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d6/d4.

2. Set vs. charge. 0/d4; d8/d8 vs. any group that moves into your area.

Wealth level: 7

Angry mob

Speed (strategic): 1

Health: 3

Spirit: 5

Maneuvers: 1. Restrain – 0/d4.

Stances: 1. Go wild – d4/d2.

Wealth level: - (only acquired through roleplay)

Conscripts, slaves, impressed troops

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 3

Spirit: 2

Maneuvers: 1. Charge – d4/d4, move.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d4/d4.

Wealth level: 5

Town militia

Speed (strategic): 2

Health: 3

Spirit: 2 (7 in hometown)

Maneuvers: 1. Charge – d4/d4, move.

Stances: 1. Hold the line – d4/d4.

2. Town song – 0/d4, increase next attack die size by 2.

Wealth level: 5

Untrained militia, cooks, townsfolk, and camp followers

Speed (strategic): 2

Health: 2

Spirit: 1

Maneuvers: 1. Scramble – d2/d4.

Stances: 1. Stand in harm's way – 0/d4.

Wealth level: - (acquired only through roleplay)

Archers

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 3

Spirit: 5

Maneuvers: 1. Scout-guided shot – d8/d2 and roll organization's Force as bonus attack die.

2. Aim and mighty pull - +2 attack die size and +1 damage next round.

Stances: 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: 8

Longbowmen

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 4

Spirit: 6

Maneuvers: 1. Scout-guided shot – d12/d2 and roll organization's Force as bonus attack die.

2. Aim and mightypull - +2 attack die size, +1 damage, and ignore range modifiers out to 3 areas next round.

3. Double time – d6/d2, attack the same target twice. -1 Spirit to Longbowmen.

Stances: 1. Volley – d10/d2.

2. Close quarters (melee) – d4/d4.

Wealth level: 10

Mounted archers

Speed (strategic): 5

Health: 5

Spirit: 5

Maneuvers: 1. Gallop and shoot. d6/d4, move.

Stances: 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: 3

Spirit: 3

Stances: 1. Load & fire – d8/d2. Load & fire requires two rounds to load and one round to fire.

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.

3. Bayonet & stock (melee) – d6/d4.

Wealth level: 6

Musketeers; wheel lock experts

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 4

Spirit: 6

Maneuvers: 1. Charge & fire – d10/d2 + move.

2. Sharpshooter aim – 0/d2 - +2 attack die size and +1 damage next round.

3. Fusillade – d10/d2, target loses one command point next round.

Stances: 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.

Wealth level: 12

Crossbowmen

Speed (strategic): 33

Health: 4

Spirit: 3

Maneuvers: 1. Aim – 0/d2 - +1 die size next attack.

2. Charge & shoot – d6/d4 + move.

Stances: 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) – d6/d4.

Wealth level: 7

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.

Stances: 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 footmen troops as ranged troops, the archer troops all gain 1 die size defense bonus to all stances and maneuvers.

Wealth level: 6

Spearman

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 4

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Javelin (ranged) – d6/d4.

2. Pilum (ranged) – d8/d4. No health damage, but target cannot shield another next round.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d4/d4.

2. Tie down – 0/d6. If target moves, then you get a d10 attack.

Wealth level: 7

Templars

Speed (strategic): 4

Health: 5

Spirit: 10

Maneuvers: 1. Column Push – d10/d6.

2. Shield others – 0/d10. One ally gains d8 as a bonus defense die.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d6/d6.

2. Pray and preach - +1 to spirit and next round's attack and defense dice for templars and one ally unit

unit

Wealth level: 9

Knights

Speed (strategic): 5

Health: 8

Spirit: 8

Maneuvers: 1. Charge – d10/d10, move, +1 attack die size next round.

2. Break the line - d12/d8 vs. infantry. 2 health damage.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d8/d10.

2. Defensive line - d4/d12.

Wealth level: 14

Scouts

Speed (strategic): 6

Health: 3

Spirit: 6

Maneuvers: 1. Stalk (ranged) – d4/d8. Scouts are secret while executing this maneuver (see secret troops in the war chapter).

2. Coordinated scouting – 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.

Stances: 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.

Wealth level: 8

**"Second finger" scouts are available at wealth level

6. Reduce all defense dice by one size and remove the "Lay low" stance.

Cordsmen

Speed (strategic): 3 (or zeppelin speed)

Health: 3

Spirit: 6

Maneuvers: 1. Rappel – 0/d12 and descend on cord from zeppelin, detach optional.

2. Descending storm (ranged) – d8/d6 and descend from zeppelin. 1 health and 1 spirit. Detach optional.

3. Ascend – 0/d6 and reel up to zeppelin. Requires two consecutive maneuvers.

4. Attach – re-attach to cords if detached.

Stances: 1. Blades from clouds – d6/d6. Must be detached from cords.

2. Pendulum (sky hook) – d10/d2, move with zeppelin, take double damage when hit by melee.

Wealth level: 9

Fanatic canaille or rabid mass

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 3

Spirit: 10

Stances: 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)

Combat engineers

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 2

Spirit: 3

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. Requires two rounds.

2. Entrench – All allies in area gain one defense die size as long as they do not leave the area. Requires two rounds.

Stances: 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

Fieldcraft, Battlecraft wizard and acolytes

Speed (strategic): 4

Health: 2

Spirit: 6

Maneuvers: 1. Grasping Ribbons – d6/d4. 0 health but target cannot move next round.

2. Orbfall (ranged) – d8/d4. 1 health to up to four units in area.

Stances: 1. Blur (ranged) – 0/d4 – increase defense die size of three troops by one die size each.

2. Bridge – 0/d4. This forms a narrow stone bridge crossing one area. It takes one troop 2 rounds to cross the bridge. The bridge disappears if the Fieldcraft master and his acolytes break this stance.

3. 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.

Wealth level: 10

Dramba coven

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 2

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Shroud – 0/d2. One troop is secret until the coven stops chanting or until the troop attacks. Multiple covens can, of course, shroud multiple troops. After a troop has stopped attacking and moved out of the area where it was attacking, it can be re-shrouded.

2. Boil – d8/d2. 1 health and -1 defense die size next round. The targeted troop uses the commanding organization's arcana score to defend.

Stances: 1. Zombie army – 0/d2. Raise and command an army of zombies. The dramba coven has one command point per round that it can use only to direct the zombies' maneuvers.

2. Cotton ear – d12/d2. Target troop cannot receive orders and therefore cannot execute maneuvers next round. Target resists with commanding organization's arcana.

*Dramba covens' locations on the battlefield are secret until discovered.

Wealth level: 8

Druids

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 2

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Sacrifice – 0/d4. Take 2 health from one allied troop and give 1 health to another.

2. Faces and Names in the Blood – d8/d4. -1 spirit to up to 5 troops in one area. The target troops defend with their commanding organization's arcane 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.

Stances: 1. Sun curse – d4/d4. 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.

2. Sun blessing

2. Fear of the Harvest – d8/d4. 1 spirit. Troop defends with its commanding organization's arcane score.

Wealth level: 8

Highcraft wizard and acolytes

Speed (strategic): 4

Health: 3

Spirit: 6

Maneuvers: 1. Titan slam (ranged) – d8/d4. 2 health, 1 spirit, and slammed backward or sideways up to two areas of the highcraft master's choosing.

2. Stone slam (ranged) – d8/d4 vs. buildings. 1 quality.

3. Orb storm (ranged) – d8/d4. Requires two rounds. Enemy organization defends with its arcane score. A successful orb storm reduces command points by three next round.

4. Shadow close – 0/d4. Highcraft wizards' location on the battleground is now secret until discovered.

Stances: 1. Titan's fist (ranged) – d12/d4. 1 health and 1 spirit.

2. Shadow guard – 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.

3. Channel magic – 0/d4. Increase commanding organization's arcane score by 4 during the battle; only functions in the roar and chaos of battle.

4. Blur, bridge, or wizard wall (see Battlecraft wizard and acolytes).

Wealth level: 13

Incandescent wizard and acolytes

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 2

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Pyrotechnic cloud – d10/d2. This is cast on a siege weapon as it attacks a building. On the siege weapon's next attack, the stone or ball explodes at distance into brilliant, burning tendrils. The attack does no damage to the building, but the d10 attack from the cloud goes against three troops inside the building as the tendrils writhe their way inside the structure. They defend with their organization's arcana score. The damage is 1 health and 1 spirit.

2. Burn – d8/d2 vs. unit or building. Up to three targets in the same area. Wooden buildings and vehicles continue to burn at 1 point of damage per round.

Stances: 1. Brilliant Signals – 0/d2. Increase command point total by 1 next round.

2. Radiant weapons – 0/d2. One unit increases its melee attack die size by 2 next round.

3. Scintillating decay – d8/d2 vs. enemy organization. Organization defends with its arcana score. A hit decreases the enemy organization's force score by 1, but cannot reduce it below half its maximum value.

Wealth level: 10

Maelstrom wizard and acolytes

Speed (strategic): 3

Health: 3

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Weather – change the weather to anything desired (see the Weather section in chapter 8).

This can only be used once per battle (by any maelstrom wizard group).

Stances: 1. Twister – d8/d4 vs. buildings and troops. 1 quality to buildings; 1 health, 1 spirit and move 1 random area to up to two troops.

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 five troops in one area, each of whom defends with its organization's arcana score.

Wealth level: 11

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.

Stances: 1. Arcane Forms (melee or ranged) – d4/d4. 1 health and you along with up to four allied troops gain a two die size increase to your defense rolls against magic.

2. Skirmish – d6/d4.

Wealth level: 9

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 shadow score. If you win, you learn one secret (location of a secret troop, maneuvers and stances of a troop, brigade composition, and heroes' locations and actions, for example).

5. Sneak attack – d12/d6. 2 damage. Must have been undetected.

6. False orders – d12/d8. 0 health, but 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 in the third round.

Stances: 1. Lie low – 0/d10.

2. Hunt and kill – d8/d4.

*Kingsmen are a secret group until discovered or until they attack.

Wealth level: 9

Sailor, pirate, privateer

Speed (strategic): 2 (or ship's speed)

Health: 3

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Board – d10/d10 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).

Stances: 1. Deck fighting – d8/d6 only on deck of a ship.

2. Land fighting – d4/d4.

Wealth level: 7

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.

Stances: 1. Harass – 0/10. Two cannon fire.

2. Load & Unload – move 2 troops/round into or out of the carrack.

*A carrack can carry up to 4 troops and up to 10 cannon or ballistae.

Wealth level: 13

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.

Stances: 1. Harass – 0/11. Two cannon fire.

2. Load & Unload – 0/11. move 2 troops/round into or out of the galleon.

*A galleon can carry up to 5 troops and up to 12 cannon or ballistae.

Wealth level: 15

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.

Stances: 1. Harass – 0/9. Two cannon fire.

2. Load & Unload – 0/9. move 2 troops/round into or out of the sloop.

*A sloop can carry up to 3 troops and up to 6 cannon or ballistae.

Wealth level: 11

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 cannot ram on consecutive rounds.

Stances: 1. Harass – 0/7. Two cannon fire.

2. Load & Unload – 0/7. Move 2 troops/round into or out of the galley.

*A longship can carry up to 2 troops and 2 cannon or ballistae.

Wealth level: 10

* Trireme galleys are available. They have the same statistics as the longship galley, except the defensive value is 8, and the following:

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 cannot ram on consecutive rounds.

Wealth level: 11

Zeppelin, frigate

Speed (strategic): 8

Health: 9

Spirit: 5

Maneuvers: 1. Full sail – 0/11. Move 2 areas.

2. Broadside – 0/11. Half cannon fire.

Stances: 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.

Frigates can carry up to four troops and 8 cannon or ballistae.

Wealth level: 18

Zeppelin, escort; yacht

Speed (strategic): 9

Health: 7

Spirit: 5

Maneuvers: 1. Wind race – 0/9. Move 3 areas.

2. Broadside – 0/9. Half cannon fire.

Stances: 1. Harrass – 0/9. One cannon fires.

2. Load & unload – 0/11. Move two troops into or out of the frigate.

An escort zeppelin can carry 1 troop and up to 4 cannon or ballistae.

Wealth level: 17

Zeppelin, dreadnought

Speed (strategic): 7

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.

Stances: 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.

*A dreadnought can carry 12 cannon and 5 troops.

Wealth level: (can only be built as a wonder of the world)

War apes

Speed (strategic): 2

Health: 3

Spirit: Fearless

Maneuvers: 1. Bounding charge – d6/d2 and move 2 areas. Requires 2 command points.

2. Track scent – 0/d4. Roll d6 to detect any secret troop in the immediate or any adjacent area.

Stances: 1. Frenzy – d4/d2. 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: 11

*Can increase wealth level by two for armored war apes, whose health is 4.

Mammoth cavalry

Speed (strategic): 4

Health: 9

Spirit: 5

Maneuvers: 1. Net – d10/d6. Struck 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.

Stances: 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.

Stances: 1. Trample – d6/d6.

*The platform in a mammoth howdah can support one cannon (heavy or light).

Wealth level: 12

Dragon

Speed (strategic): 12

Health: 16

Spirit: As individual dragon's heart

Maneuvers: 1. Fire breath (ranged) – d20/d10 vs. three units in same area. Cannot use consecutively.

2. Rampage (melee) – d20/d12, four attacks, 1 health + 1 spirit.

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.
Stances: 1. Circle and wait – 0/d12. +2 fire damage next round.

2. Destruction – d12/d12, two attacks, 1 health and 1 spirit.

Wealth level: (obtained through roleplay)

Raptor horde and handlers

Speed (strategic): 1

Health: 2

Spirit: Fearless (handlers 3)

Stances: 1. Unleashed – d8/d2, 1 health, 1 spirit.

2.

3.

*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.

*Regardless, the horde disappears after three rounds, dissipating through the battlefield and feeding on grass.

Wealth level: 5

Chimera chariots

Speed (strategic): 4

Health: 3

Spirit: 3

Maneuvers: 1. Overrun – d8/d4. 1 health + move.

2. Miasmal breath – d8/d6 vs. one unit. 1 health + unit cannot maneuver next round. Cannot use consecutively.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d4/d4, 3 attacks.

2. Circle around – 0/d6, +2 attack die size to all attacks next round.

Wealth level: 10

Zombie legion

Speed (strategic): 2

Health: 3

Spirit: Fearless

Maneuvers: 1. Rend – d8/d2. 1 health + 1 spirit.

2. Gnaw and infect – d4/d4. 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.
Stances: 1. Feed – 0/d4. Feeding on corpses raises the zombie legion's health by 1 to a maximum of 5.

2. Slam – d4/d4. 1 health + 1 spirit.

*The zombies are spellbound.

Wealth level: (obtained through roleplay or a dramba coven)

Skeleton legion

Speed (strategic): 2

Health: 2

Spirit: Fearless

Maneuvers: Wedge – d6/d4. 1 health + 1 spirit.

Stances: 1. Skirmish – d4/d4. 1 health + 1 spirit.

2. Defend 0/d6.

*Skeletons are spellbound.

Wealth level: (obtained through roleplay)

Skeleton, children's brigade

Speed (strategic): 4

Health: 4

Spirit: Fearless

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. Gleeeful swarm – d8/d6, three attacks on same target, 1 health + 1 spirit.

Stances: 1. Brigade drill – d4/d8. 1 health + 1 spirit.

*The brigade is spellbound.

Wealth level: (obtained through roleplay)

Giant, undead colossus, ruby golem brigade

Speed (strategic): 4

Health: 9

Spirit: 4

Maneuvers: 1. Overhead slam – d6/d4, 1 health, 1 spirit, and stunned (cannot maneuver next round.)

Stances: 1. Sweeping blow – d6/d4 vs. two units. 1 health + 1 spirit.

Wealth level: (obtained through roleplay)

Jungle Strider

Speed (strategic): 6

Health: 18

Spirit: 3

Stances: 1. Stomp – d12/d2 vs. 3 units in same area.

2. Load & unload – 0/d2. Unload up to two troops per round, to ground level or castle wall level.

*A jungle strider can transport up to six troops.

Wealth level: (only obtained through roleplay)

Siege Tower

Speed (strategic): - (must be built on site)

Health: 4

Spirit: 3 (haul team)

Maneuvers: Unload. 0/3; 1 troop moves out of the top of the siege tower

Load. 0/3; 1 troop moves into the bottom of the siege tower

Stances: -

Wealth level: 4

A siege tower can hold up to three standard sized troops.

Trebuchet

Speed (strategic): - (must be built on site)

Health: 3

Spirit: 3 (launch team)

Maneuvers: Aim. 0/d3; +2 attack die size next round.

Skyshot. d2/3 vs. aerial target; 1 quality

Unorthodox launch. d4/3; enemy heads: 1 spirit; infected animal carcasses: struck troop; checks vs. pox (roll organization's Force vs. virulence); firepot: 1 dmg/rd to wooden buildings until maneuver is used to put out fire

Stances: 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

*Trebuchet, Akran – 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.

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)

Stances: 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

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; same as trebuchet.

Stances: 1. Launch and load. d6/2; 1 quality vs. building

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

*Archbishop's mule – as Akran trebuchet.

Turtle

Speed (strategic): 1

Health: 3

Spirit: 3

Stances: 1. Give cover. Add d6 bonus die to the defense of a battering ram, pump and cistern fire team.

Wealth level: 4

*A wealth level 7 turtle called a battleroof is available that provides the same d6 bonus defense die to ballistae, although it makes sky shots impossible.

Battering Ram

Speed (strategic): 3 or built on site

Health: 2

Spirit: 3

Stances: 1. Smash gate. d10/d4; 1 damage to gates.

If more than 1/3 the building's structural quality is dealt to the gates by a battering ram, the gates open.

Only one battering ram at a time can assault a gate.

Wealth level: 3

Pumpers with cistern, fire team

Speed (strategic): 1

Health: 2

Spirit: 4

Stances: 1. Put out fire. Puts out one fire per round in its area or adjacent area with no need for you to spend a maneuver.

Wealth level: 3

Heavy Cannon

Speed (strategic): 1

Health: 3

Spirit: 5 (fire team)

Maneuvers: 1. Aim. 0/2; +1 attack die size next round.

2. Skyshot. d2/2 vs. aerial target.

3. Fire with extra powder. d10/2; 2 damage. On a 1 or 2 the cannon cracks and takes 3 Health damage. (Cannon must be loaded, of course.)

Stances: 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

*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.

*When cannon are mounted, such as on zeppelins or a platform 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.

PART V

CHAPTERS SEVENTEEN & EIGHTEEN: THE KINGDOMS

The Kingdoms lie on the three peninsulas known as the Claw, a moniker accurate in geography and temperament. This chapter introduces you to the Kingdoms and provides a survey of several regions. It includes highlights and expanded detail for three regions, including a profile of Rithaign, which is especially well-suited for launching your campaign. The violins of Rithaign, the sea squid casseroles of East Fire, and the burning pogroms of night-haunted Dynn await you. Read on and enjoy!

HISTORY

Historians have difficulty researching and scribing when their sons and daughters are burning with mad-fire, 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 peasants.

There is one question which 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 that is the brink of enlightenment, or the brink of a new dark age, only time and future historians will now.

Never has there been a time such as now. Zeppelins and submersibles have begun to make mountain, sea, and under-ice crossings possible with acceptable losses of life (that is, usually the officers and half of the crew return). Fixers threaten to control some of magic's worst ravages. This loosens the kings' grips on the peasantry, cowed for centuries by magi-

cal disasters and the need for a monarch to prevent the worst spell conflicts and crisis surges.

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.

RISE TO MODERNITY

The modern kingdoms coalesced from smaller dominions and tribal lands during the Age of Cartonnage 500 to 600 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). 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 Cartonnage 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 mountains erupted in pyroclastic flows in which people could hear their ancestors wailing and cursing them hysterically. The magic interferences brought disasters that are legend today: the engulfment of Trastamara, the Muda-Tarsk zombie swarms, the barren wombs of Chalve.



The fighting slowed over generations. The Age, probably begun with the discovery and founding of the modern twelve magic traditions, ended with the consolidation of power. New nobles, kings in the modern sense, emerged victorious.

In Hessek, that same king still rules after 600 years.

But that may be about to change.

THE FOUR FORCES

Ideas move history. But new ideas have been scarce over the past six centuries. In their absence, two natural forces and two historical concepts have shaped the societies and history of the Claw. The two natural forces are magic and disease; the two historical concepts are nobility and the church.

The most profound force is magic. Pervasive and pernicious, it inspires fear across the known world. True, it has wrought miracle over the centuries: Saint Aildric'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.

After the nobles seized 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 executed any free magi. Soon there were far fewer magic disasters. For many, especially in the wake of the Cartonnage wars, this was a concession devoutly to be wished. These people – not all of the commonfolk by any means, but many – 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. Usually they were not heard from again.

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 loves, deep loves, powerful loves. True loves.

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?

The church has 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. Cynics like the majority of the Fixers' Fraternity 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 nobility in many places, and canon law supersedes kingdom law on church grounds.

Diseases like spellstalks, influenza, and the bloody flux are the final force that has shaped the Kingdoms. The two largest outbreaks of disease occurred in the mid-2nd century and again 75 years ago at the beginning of the sixth. Oryn-ja was spared the first, and Thyre the second, but other cities lost between a third and half of their populations each time. Quarantine systems with flags, heavy padlocks, and leather-masked fixers are in place, but the extremely crowded living conditions of the masses in the city make a new outbreak a constant risk.

The nobles seem to be doing more, now. Gold is suddenly available for fixers' research. Spellstalk and plow victims, tied thrashing to litters, are brought into university laboratories.

This fight against an ancient foe is but one of the new ideas at work in the Claw. There are more. Many are not nearly as popular.

What will happen? That is up to you and your group. As always, build your world!

◉UTSIDE 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 largest 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 597 from High Fort and carrying the second two sons of the King of Thyre, 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. Pity the natives are not as welcoming. When you part the twenty-foot thorned creeper hedges and hack through steam-slick underbrush, you find the paths to the Sun Goddess's people. Living in open-air, marble-pillared 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 jungle-dwellers' 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. There have been many arguments over the true nature of the Sun Goddess in the north. 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. Conflict with other Dragon Isle upstarts, internecine warfare, crisis surges and of course the dragons are all threats.

THE ESTATES

In the western two peninsulas of the Claw - what is called the West and the "second finger" - 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.

On the eastern fringes of the Claw, the Wrandt turn never came. The Low Gods are sometimes still worshipped, often in ways that never were in the West. The three lower classes - royalty excluded - mingle here in ways that are, to the Western mind, bizarre. Certainly in Rithaign one would never find a princess of the Diamond Goddess washing feet for coppers in the Summit square!

Where the four estates are distinct, in by far the greater part of civilization, they are central to the culture. 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 estates.

Nor could it occur without the blessing of the king. The power of a king in the kingdom is not to be underestimated. Ancient Lucius in Hessek has ruled for six 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, though it has been plumbed often.

The fourth 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 always causes silence, even in a crowd of a hundred, and ice in the veins of the onlookers. Kingsmen can seize, beat, and torture members of the lower class with almost complete impunity in most regions. 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 sewer atelier; anyone could be taken without warning by a kingsman. Other methods of surveillance are detailed

in the Kingdom descriptions that follow.

For their part, many of the nobles do take their responsibilities seriously. They could be callous, rude, and completely 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. The case of Darmid and Lesa is a famous example. Lesa, a princess, loved Darmid, a farm boy. Though it brought tears to her eyes, and she never married, she had Darmid's hands nailed to his knees and tossed into the city's cesspool to drown. She had to do it: he loved her back. (This was in Thyre, and there are many who say that Darmid lost his love for Lesa as she threw him away to die. There are others who say that somehow he survived, and he haunts the city still.)

RELIGION

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 conduct the High God's ceremony.

In those days, 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 old 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 271, 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 return to his cell and script a manifesto. He shortly returned to where the Archbishop lay, placed the manifesto parchment on the man's forehead, and nailed it into the skull with an iron nail and his Book as a hammer.

Wrandt's Turn, as the manifesto and the movement came to be called, was easily summarized: the Low Gods were 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. And the priests did not need the kings to conduct the ceremonies that they prepared. Wrandt's turn went from shock to heresy to doctrine in the span of a few decades, 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 sin by burning all blasphemers they can find).



NEW IDEAS

Some see Wrandt's turn as the first of the new ideas. Others say it was the breakthroughs of the first engineers to make zeppelins, or the first fixers to be able to mitigate the flux.

Regardless of what came first, there are several new ideas in the Claw today. Here is a brief survey of a few.

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 thought is that the 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.

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

HOW TO CONDUCT A CEREMONY

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.

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 shares distaste for the Kingdoms and a desire to strike out on one's own, casting aside the idea that a man needs a king to protect him from wild magic.

THE CEREMONY

For each of the Kingdoms that follows, the name of the Ceremony is given. For some, an entire ceremony chart is provided.

The Ceremony is a cooperative magic ritual. It provides minor augurs and omens, and every now and then a single ceremony explodes into a stunning and powerful magic force.

The Ceremony is always highly stylized, although the form varies widely by Kingdom and region. In Marnh, people drop stones in water and observe the ripples. In the Grenmarch, you plunge your hand into knot-holes 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.

Peasants of the Kingdoms value their ceremonies highly. Not even the kings dare deny the peasants the Ceremony.

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 simply nod and talk about the mysteries of dragons, or you could interpret the omen and warn your fellow celebrants that the dragon symbolizes the brigand lord in the western counties. There is room for interpretation. 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 plunging in.

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, commenting on it, and continue on with the ceremony. If he continues until there is only one result left, he must accept that result. If you finish your ceremony but your partner continues, then you must continue also, drawing cards or rolling, although nothing has any effect for you (but do not stop your roleplay, for your partner's fate is still in the cards!). If the celebrant draws an Ace or a 2, he must take the result; his ceremony cannot go on except to accompany his partner.

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 benefit or suffer from a ceremony more than twice per season.

THE KINGDOMS

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, countryside: 0 close; 3 high.

Spellbound density, town: 0 or 1 close; 5 high.

Spellbound density, city: 0 or 1 close; 7 high.

Queensport: 0 or 1 close; 7 high. Dresgilioch: 0 or 1 close; 12 high.

Culture: Marnh values the open sea and journeys.

Anyone whose childhood is spent in Marnh gains 2 skill points to be spent on a sea-related skill. All naval organizations of Marnh increase their force score by 2.

Military: There are 6 duchies with one WL 17 army and one WL 17 navy each. There are also two royal navies, each WL 20.

Symbol: Cutlass and crozier crossed over sea waves

Ceremony: Stones in the Sea

Jungles and seas define Marnh. One of the great powers of the world, its strengths are its naval power, its sea-trading network, and its mastery of the dramba and maelstrom magic schools. None of these are equaled anywhere in the Claw. The university at Queensport is also considered the strongest in the Claw. Geographically, Marnh is dominated by the twin rivers, the Diamond and the Mantis, as they charge 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. Arnh, the lotteries are open and quite visible – or at least the results

are.

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 irregularly by House Ipres, the lotteries inspire a fear known as far as Dynn. In fact, the Dynni disparage the Marnh lottery, saying, “At least we only take the guilty.”

In a Marnh lottery, all the lower class gather in the tillage 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 fate of the lottery winners is officially relocation. The monarchy explains that there are secret villages maintained in the northern forests and western jungles, where the winners’ daily life over the years is explored in detail through alchemical and magical means, yielding important information that they might not even know that they carry. In fact, the King’s official title for the lottery winners is “explorers.” Of course the explorer cannot be examined in his home village because the spells involved would interfere with the spells used by the king’s wizards to help the local populace farm, raise healthy children, and more. And of course most explorers can never return to their home village because of the fear of reprisal. Someone who said something wrong in the presence of the explorer, or someone who held a secret that the explorer divulged to the kingsmen, would inevitably seek revenge. For their own good, most explorers must never return. Instead, they help the King explore distant shores, bringing glory to Marnh in their new role.

Once in a while, a few explorers do return home, but whether these are the same people or mere changelings is fiercely, but extremely secretively, debated. No one would dare to debate openly what the

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 |

kingsmen say when they return the explorers.

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 doctors using Switch Bodies and Erase Memories are particularly effective.

University at Queensport

Formal education is not as strictly enforced as it is in most of the rest of the west. It simply is not as important to the social order as it is elsewhere. 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 engineering, 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 own bride out of Dynn; or hear a singer's 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 2 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 or-

ganization (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. Grace Shalloch is, in public, 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.

Stones in the Sea

The ceremony in Marnh is called Stones in the Sea. Celebrants take turns dropping stones into water and observing the ripples.

The table for the Stones is on the next page.



CEREMONY: STONES IN THE SEA

Card (no ace)	Number	Omen	Interpretation
J	1	The stone disappears before it hits the water.	You have no fate. In your next battle, you cannot use inspirations.
2	2	The stone sits on the water's surface for three heartbeats before gradually sinking, as into soft mud.	Your enemies will roll maximum against you in their next three attempts.
3 -6	3-6	Ripples form 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 sound (you cannot lose inspiration while on this voyage).
Q	11	Water turns clear and you see a picture of one of your inspirations.	The next time you use this inspiration, it will roll maximum.
K	12	Water begins to hum, then fountain erupts with stone, written on in indecipherable symbols, resting on top.	Look at the stone the next time you have a dilemma. You will be able to read the symbols, and they will tell you, with 90% accuracy, the answer to the dilemma.

Adventure Seeds

- 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 Pallas. The amulet is not spellbound, but it does have an inscription about her 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 amu-

let before any of the more powerful factions can.

- 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 Jaspas Kreech, the kingsmen kick back and drink pineapple ale on a sun-drenched porch while the PCs sweat.

Thyre and the Protectorate of Thyre

King: Jacen II, House Rohn

Doom: 5 (3 in Ghosts district)

Capital: Thyre

Economy: Excellent engineering (all items available at two wealth levels lower than normal).

Spellbound density, countryside: 0 close; 2 high.

Spellbound density, town: 0 or 1 close; 2 high.

Spellbound density, Thyre: 0 or 1 close; 7 high.

Culture: Thyre is a trading Kingdom. Anyone who is a trader gains one extra inspiration point (only while in the Kingdom, of course!) to use as he wishes. Thyre also demands education. Anyone who has not been through a formal education suffers 1 mood loss per week while in the kingdom.

Military: There are four duchies with WL 15 legions, eight marches with WL 11 legions, and two Royal Air Forces of WL 18.

Symbol: Traditionally, coins under mountains. Recently, a circling zeppelin in the upper right has been added.

Ceremony: World Sculpting

North of the Rill flood plains, the peaks of the Waylorns rise like a sparkling diamond wall. Set like a basalt cameo in this diamond 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.

The Protectorate is unique in its pursuit of engineering. Submersibles to cross Lake Kvalt and zeppelins to explore and cross the Waylorns hold the potential to add the Descent and new resources to Thyre's staple industries, mining, engineering, transport, and trade. The king spares no expense in supporting the research of his engineers, making his city a rival in this regard to the University at Queensport.

Except for its educational system, freedom is a hallmark of Thyre. There is no tariff to enter the city, and there are no taxes on trading within the city. Small wonder that traders flock here, despite the cold. This freedom of trade is also extended to the states in the Protectorate. Alone among the kingdoms, Thyre

allows its vassals true sovereignty. Most still swear allegiance to Thyre for various financial and military reasons, but at least one, the Grenmarch, has broken almost completely free with no reprisals at all from Jacen.

Thyre is beset on all sides: forbidding peaks to the north, the Fyrajji savages in the forest to the east, and predatory kingdoms to the south. Yet it has managed to survive, and even thrive.

Surveillance

The Learning Halls of Thyre are set in caves in the Waylorns. They are cold places far from any cities or villages. Their distance and forbidding locations are in large part intended to prevent escape.

The Halls are the harshest, and arguably most effective, schools in the Claw. King Jacen's philosophy is that a properly oriented youth needs little monitoring as an adult. The truth is that Jacen finds adult surveillance distasteful and disrespectful. But he appears to have little problem with imposing all manner of surveillance and social manipulation on his kingdom's children. Most observers feel that he does, after all, recognize the need for social order to prevent magic disasters and emotional disturbances, and he chooses to mold children rather than torture adults. That the molding sometimes breaks the clay is unfortunate but unavoidable.

The professors of Thyre are as frigid and uncaring as their climate. They encourage cliques and exclusion just to study social engineering among populations, and they use fear and the threat of sinister treatment as experimental and behavior modification tools.

One example is to make an example. The professors, and students at the Professors urging, choose one girl and tell her that she is deformed, for years on end. Other students stand up when the professors' chosen outcast girl sits down near them to talk. Some outcast girls, living in the cavernous dormitories of the mountainside schools, do not know a human touch for years after the time they are taken from home. They are laughed at day after day and told by everyone in

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

the community how horrible they are. 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, her hair falls out in shanks. The professors then put her in pillories or a standing carousel for all the other students to laugh at.

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, as examples (scapegoats, even, in some demesnes, for natural magical disasters or anything else the local noble is currently being held accountable for).

Few recover. There are other similar tactics used across the Protectorate, 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 are sick and can only eat certain foods. Magically induced writhing and sickness are used to drive home the point. Then the safe foods just happen to be struck by famine, and they disappear from the pantry. To conclude the lesson, the professors make examples of the kids who will do anything to obtain the foods that are the only way they have been told they can safely eat.

Small wonder that more wolf children come from the hills of the north than anywhere else.

Ghosts in Silver

The Ghosts in Silver 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 is a rowdy and un-

friendly place compared to cosmopolitan Lowtown. The miners and engineers who live and work here are a breed apart, and they do not appreciate outsiders looking into their affairs. Nonetheless, they are frequently disappointed. More and more the King has asked southern experts and northern engineers alike to meet in the Ghosts, review the ore being extracted, and improve the manufactories that have grown up here. Recently, a series of wild magic surges have almost shut down the Ghosts. Where they are coming from is a mystery whose only clue is a bitter orange smell left in the mines after each surge.

The Shivering Cub

The Cub is the designated neutral ground of the Ghosts district. It is here that the native miners and engineers ask to meet with "outsiders" just coming up on the gondola. They say that a man goes a little mad if he stays in the Ghosts too long, and those that have met with miners in the Cub attest to the saying's truth.

The tenders, maids, cooks, and hostesses at the Cub are exclusively women. The owner, Tandy Dressenson nee St. Miljean, is an islander. She came to Thyre many years ago in a manner that she will not discuss. But now she is married to one of the King's best engineers (Locke Dressenson), deliriously happy, and constantly brags of her happiness to her friends in the south. There has been a stream of northward migration in answer to her news, and so far many marriages to grizzled miners have been the result. Tandy is bubbling over with pride at her matchmaking, and she is not above trying to make a match with a PC.

Ceremony

The ceremony in the Protectorate of Thyre is World Sculpting. A snowbank is observed as the wind wears it down, or an ice block suspended over a flame, or a sand channel as water runs through it. The Thyrans say that the world can be seen in such small events.

CEREMONY: WORLD SCULPTING

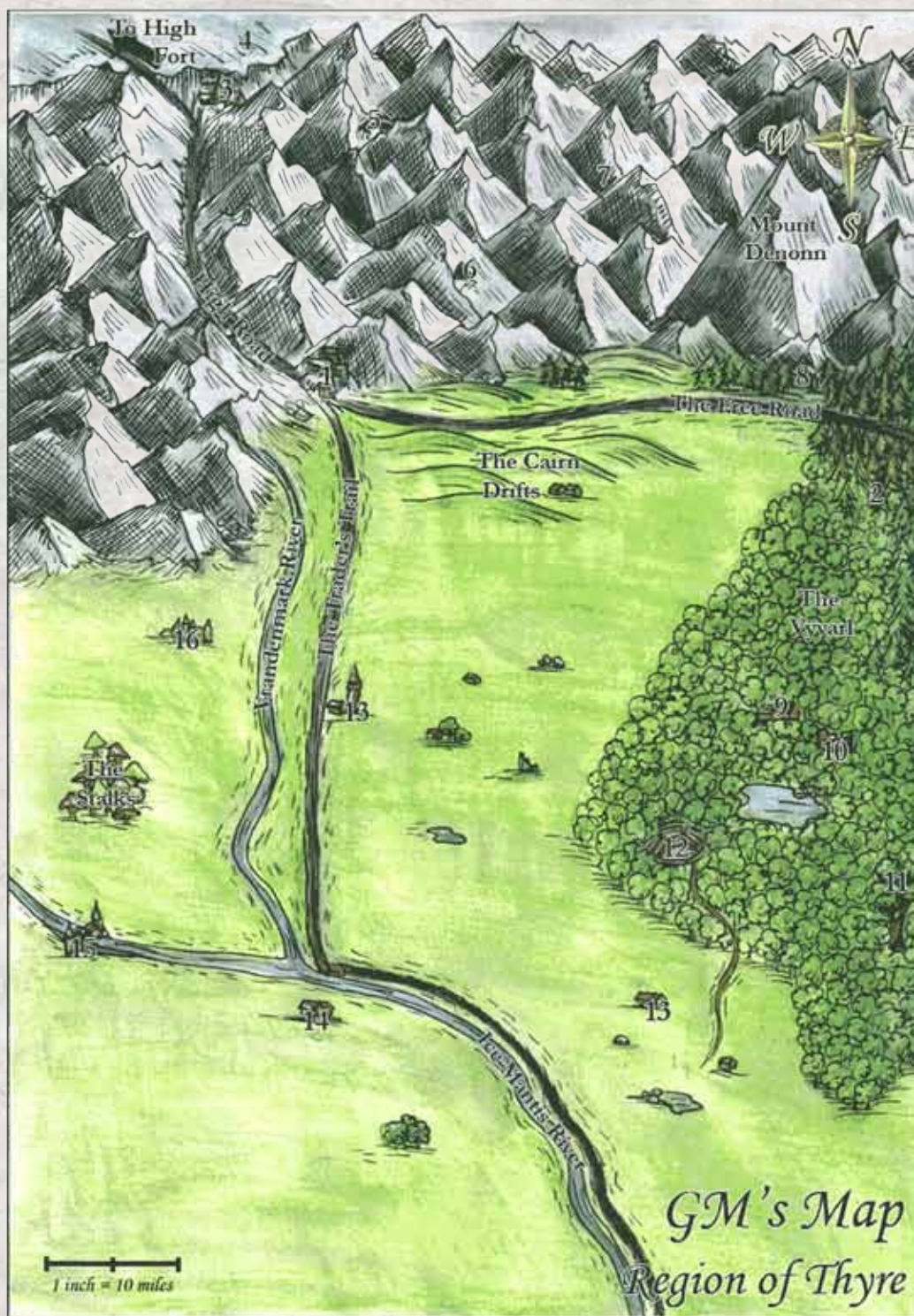
Card (no ace)	Number	Omen	Interpretation
J	1	Sculpture forms eyes.	Doom will come. The kingsmen know your two highest inspirations. If any has a value greater than 2, they come for you.
2	2	Sculpture loses all form and structure.	Your skills will fade when you need them the most. At a time of the GM's choice, all of your skills disappear for one day. If the GM does not want to choose, assume that this occurs at the start of the character's next adventure.
3 -7	3-7	Sculpture resembles a roc or a hare.	You will give joy to your enemies (they gain +1 mood at the start of the next social or physical combat).
8-10	8-10	Sculpture resembles a family member	Now is a good time to speak with family members. Any time spent increases a mood or inspiration by 2 rather than just 1 (normal limits apply).
Q	11	Sculpture resembles a troll and human face superimposed.	You will benefit from the advice of others. Your next engineering or crafting project, so long as it is aided by another person, rolls maximum every time until the project is finished.
K	12	A vein of silver dust appears in the sculpture.	You know the direction to a vast treasure.

Adventure Seeds

- A southern trader named Constance Brulant hires the PCs to negotiate for a 1/100 ownership of the Ghosts in Silver mine. Unfortunately for her, Constance has rivals richer in underworld connections than in gold. Rather than outbid her, they have smeared the PCs' reputations in Thyre. By the time the PCs arrive, they each have the following reputations: Smuggler of spells (4), Dangerously Passionate (4), and Wanted for a Bounty in Oryn-Ja (6). They might not even make it through the gate before they are arrested! Fortunately, the Neverlight Festival is starting, and clearing their names is as simple as appearing at the parties and showing everyone who they truly are. If they are sufficiently witty, they should have their reputations removed after only 4 or 6 social scenes. Alternatively,

they could hunt down the agent who smeared them. He's still in town, a rain troll in a boarding house near the Old Bastion, living under the name Amos Traske.

- For once even the professors are scared. The school at Mute Grizzly peak has been evacuated after the ten-year-olds disappeared. In their beds were single rubies centered on the clothing pouch that doubled as pillows for the kids. The headmaster began a search, but called it off after one of the Restraint professors was found crucified to a wall at the back of the cavernous school.



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 |

Akra, the Fragments of the Rose

King: Lucius I, House Anfield

Doom: 5 (3 in Rithaign, 6 in East Fire, 9 in Hessek)

Capital: Hessek

Economy: In the east, strong traditional (all items at available at -1 wealth level save alchemical, engineering, and magical items). In the hinterland west, poor (all items available at +1 wealth level).

Spellbound density, countryside: 0 close; 4 high.

Spellbound density, town: 0 or 1 close; 7 high.

Spellbound density, city: 0 or 1 close; 10 high.

Rithaign: 2 or 3 close; 12 high. Hessek: 0 or 1 close; 12 high.

Culture: Akrans value beauty, but they say they hate it. Anyone who has a reputation or inspiration involving either beauty, denouncing beauty, or the destruction of beauty gains 6 to the reputation or 1 to the inspiration while in Akra. Any person of wealth level 4 or higher who does not own at least two beautiful art objects gains a reputation as a heathen (8).

Military: There are 8 duchies, 5 of which have a WL 20 army (land and air), a WL 20 navy (sea and air), and two castles of each political level (fort, baron, earl) save the ducal level, where there is only one castle. The remaining 3 duchies are in the western hinterlands, impoverished, and have WL 10 armies.

Organizations of Note (E = efficiency, F = force, S = shadow, A = arcana):

House Anfield – noble house, scope 18, E 11, F 16, S 14, A 15.

Dryght – magic order, scope 16, E 10, F 8, S 14, A 16.

House Nentarsce – noble house, scope 15, E 9, F 12, S 12, A 8.

Orchids of Hessek – trading company, scope 12, E 16, F 10, S 10, A 4.

House Tumentant – noble house, scope 14, E 5, F 14, S 16, A 13

Rithaign Cutters Guild – thieves guild, scope 11, E 14, F 10, S 16, A 10.

Merchants Below – thieves guild, scope 11, E 13, F 6, S 12, A 12.

Symbol: Torn rose

Ceremony: Petals and wine.

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 kingsman and the Dryght, his school of wizards, since the Age of Cartonnage. Lucius is wizened. Longevity magic is a wicked sieve, trapping life but straining out all vigor. He is wheeled or littered through his palace in Hessek now and has not been seen outside of the palace in decades. His spells are still felt throughout the Kingdom, however, and the destruction of the Nahalite attempt to recapture East Fire was testament to Lucius' remaining power.

Physically, the Kingdom has many blessings. A deep harbor at Rithaign; an easily defended capital atop a mesa, Hessek; the Harvest road and 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 closely monitors its citizens. Many highcraft masters, dressed as peasants, patrol through the streets, country lanes, rivers, and harbors using the Seek Spellbound spell.

Kingsmen also maintain a constant vigil. Indeed, kingsmen originated in Akra. Lucius created a clandestine force under his father's nose before the Age of Cartonnage had ended, and he used it to usurp his father's power (rumor has it that his father's cartonnage mummy remains housed in the palace in Hessek).

The third component of Akra's surveillance is Lucius himself. He has not survived for six centuries because of a lack of vigilance. Lucius spends time and gold to ensure that he sees as much as possible of his Kingdom, every fixer deal in a back alley to the duke's evening at the theater.



In everything – surveillance, war, diplomacy, industry – Akra is watched over and commanded by the Dryght. These are the king's own wizards and the only permitted spellbound creatures in Akra. They are mostly highcrafters, spellsmiths, and heartsmen, with a smattering of other schools. The Dryght as much as the king tolerate no rivals and move quickly to extinguish any free magi.

The Dryght operate on a strict master and apprentice hierarchy. An acolyte can expect to remain an apprentice for a dozen years, often longer, before he advances.

The archmagistrix, Isabella Raixe, sets the standard of behavior for the order. It is a cruel standard. The Dryght constantly pry into the minds of randomly abducted peasants to intimidate, enthrall, or torture them. Often they are seeking any random information they might stumble across; other times they have a specific goal in mind. The Dryght do not hide their faces in public. Rather, they take a haughty

pleasure in flaunting their identity and status in white and 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 12, 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 upper classes fancy themselves the arbiters of

beauty and art for the entire Claw. Yet it is fashionable to claim that beauty is not as important as the Turn, or the Deic Fleet, or the King's health. It is rude to love beauty out loud in Akra. Saying so is considered unkind and almost like endangering one's neighbors through reckless magic use or true love: how could you risk such a thing? Courtly love, piety, and asceticism are all held up as real virtues. Disagreement is met with ostracism and worse.

Yet the art galleries, most underground, are doing brisk business, and a noble whose house is not filled with beautiful objects is considered a peasant in an ape suit.

Fashion

The fashion of Akra, and especially Rithaigh, is elaborate. Tri-corner hats, perukes, velvet brocade breeches and satin skirts with a twenty-five foot circumference, worn under manticore wing-bone corsets, are the norm. Pineapple snuff from Queensport and dragon plate from the eastern islands are also respected fashion items (1 higher quality than normal while the trend lasts).

Campaign Starter Spotlight: Rithaigh

Rithaigh is a city of contrasts. Ruled by Akra's king Lucius I from the acropolis city of Hessek to the west, it is arguably more important than the capital. All manner of trade goes through Rithaigh: grain and livestock from the north, ore and minerals from the west, fish and exotics from the eastern sea. Yet for all of this advantage and significance, the King often overlooks Rithaigh. His attention is focused across the channel, on East Fire, the eternal bauble that Azenahal and Akra can never keep from fighting over. As a result of the oversight of the King, Rithaigh is a rare example of a large, important city where the king's eye is somewhat lax. The Dryght still watch the city, of course, and nearly every day the Bridge sees one or two abductions, but in relative terms, Rithaigh

has been left free to develop over the last several decades.

Finally, please note that one reason that Rithaigh is a good starter city is its low doom (3).

Guide to the City

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. Entrance to the city for non-citizens is a Wealth Level 2 item. If a character is not Wealth Level 2 with a slot open, or does not have 100 gold in bribes, he must conjure some other means of entering the city. (Perhaps a social combat scene with the gate guard is in order!) Entering with arms and armor is a wealth level 4 item, as such must be sponsored by a member of the upper class.

One final note before we get to the specifics: Rithaigh and Marnh are famous for their violins. Harpsichords are popular too, but there is a great rivalry between Rithaigh and Marnh as to whose violins are the most evocative, plaintive, and soulful. Street musicians abound. Occasionally, in their bids to win dirt and moons from passersby, if they feel there are no Dryght or watchmen near, they play hauntingly beautiful melodies.

In the notes that follow, the numbers are keyed to the accompanying map.

1. Old city walls. These are ten feet 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

City of Rithaign



1 Inch = 1000 ft

Key

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Old City Walls | 7. Docks | 13. King's Mausoleum |
| 2. New Walls | 8. Odren Square | 14. South Gate |
| 3. River Chain | 9. Grey Manor | 15. Wizard's Gate |
| 4. River Gate | 10. Guardhouse | 16. Ochare's Gate |
| 5. Rithaign Bridge | 11. Mills | 17. Old City Wall Gates |
| 6. Ferries | 12. Wizard's Tower | 18. Outlying farms, pastures, inns |

of entire communities of street people living in the walls, especially near the Meander. The walls have never been breached under siege.

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, and 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 in two.

4. River gate. The watch contingent stationed at this gate is captained by Gareth Mintar. 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 (a successful social attack; increase your charisma two die sizes if the story involves troll villains) can bring him back to his senses, even if it doesn't grant free entry.

5. Bridge of Rithaigh. The bridge is the unquestioned 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, and blacksmiths 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; she is an immigrant Seradynn who was one of the first off the boat. Every year on St. Jhess's Day, she cuts off her antlers and gives them to whoever can stand on the Bat's 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 Ball's harbor.

7. Docks. The harbormaster of Rithaigh is the Duke's nephew, Marius Nentarsce. Though Raoul has no idea, Marius is in fact a Woodsman. Thus the Rithaigh port is open to all manner of shadow activities, 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 heart 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 mansion, almost 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 Rithaigh. In a remarkable display, the Cutters and the Merchants Below struck a bargain in 580. To spare all sides a shadow war, the Cutters took everything west of the Processional, and the Merchants Below took everything to the east. That agreement, carved into the back of the Merchants Below guild boss's violin, was for twenty years. It expires, then, this year. The world below in Rithaigh is on edge, waiting to see what will happen when guild bosses Ginny "Wheellock" Siddal and Treb Quinlan 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 Rithaigh 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 bristling with crossbowmen and wizards often depart, slowly drifting over the city, watching 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 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 Rithaigh (increase the normal Akran spellbound statistics by two in Rithaigh).

13. **King's Mausoleum.** This was the site of the worst undead rising since the Muda-Tarsk swarms at the height of the Age of Cartonnage. 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 499, 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 bloodlust ran unchecked, 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 park, very near the spot where the battle occurred 101 years ago. Various Low God cults have been trying to re-enact the reanimation every year 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, Aubrey Gofirth, Estrellita Vaya Requistes, and Stephen Rutt.

Ceremony

In Akra, the celebrants take turns pulling petals from a rose and sipping wine.

CEREMONY: PETALS AND WINE

Card (no ace)	Number	Omen	Interpretation
J	1	An eyeball surfaces in the wine.	A noble has fixed his gaze on you, and for some reason (mistaken identity, relation to a foe of yours, belief in a prophecy you happen to match, etc.), developed a powerful hatred.
2	2	The fallen rose petals have formed a skull on the floor.	You will roll a 1 on your next three meaningful combat rolls.
3 -5	3-5	Rose petal crumbles to dust in your fingers.	You will lose a wealth level within the week (failed investment, flooded caravan, bank robbery, slandered credit, etc.).
6-10	6-10	A bee lands on the rose.	Your next attempt to increase your mood will succeed, at least partially.
Q	11	Wine catches fire, flames harmlessly for ten seconds. A city or building is visible in the flames.	You learn one secret about a rival; you choose the topic (social, martial, shadow, or arcane) but not the specific secret.
K	12	Rose weeps sparkling wine.	Your next two inspiration rolls will roll maximum.

Adventure Seeds and Shoots

So you have a GM, a table of players, and you're ready to build your world. Excellent! I hope that some adventure seeds jump out at you from the description of Rithaigh above (namely, a shadow war breaking out between two thieves guilds, the harbormaster smuggling goods into the harbor looking to hire the PCs, an undead horde rising from the King's mausoleum, an accident in the Dryght tower, etc.).

Here are two more adventure seeds. Add a little role-play and sprinkle in some dice, and they'll grow up with as many plot branches as you could wish for!

The Wizards. This adventure begins with a chase. The PCs are grasped by a dying Dryght wizard on a street corner near the Dryght tower sometime after dusk. No one else is around as the Dryght wizard wheezes with his last breath, "Catch him!" She points to a silhouette on the rooftop, and then dies in the PCs' arms. The silhouette figure turns and runs.

It is foolish to disobey a Dryght order, but if the PCs do, they are accosted moments later by two Dryght magi. The magi assume the PCs killed their colleague, and they open in Battlecraft style with dweomer bolts meant to kill. Most likely, the PCs will try to fight and be almost killed. Still, if they are sufficiently inspired, they will live to fight another day.

If the PCs chase down the silhouette figure, they have a chance to talk to him. If they fail to catch him, or if they escape the Dryght attack, then they run into the fleeing figure's sister, who fills them in and asks for help on his behalf.

The fleeing figure is Ric Arbuthnot, and he himself is a Dryght wizard. The problem is this: after only two years, he no longer has the stomach for it. He is trying to get from the south end of the city, near the Dryght tower, to the slums in the north end where a ferry is waiting to take him to Pelascal. The PCs are essentially on an escort mission, if they accept it. (If they don't, Ric and his sister Tabitha do their best to lead the PCs on a chase up to the ferries). The complication is that the Dryght have already turned almost every organization in the city against the PCs.

No matter which way the PCs go, they will encounter resistance.

You can lay the options out and ask the PCs what kind of scene they would like to run to make it past the next piece of the city. Or you can do it the old-fashioned way, preparing each section of the city in advance, and either guiding or facilitating the PCs' progress through.

For example, from the first area where Ric is found, the PCs could go through the cemetery, the processional, the Meander or the outer docks. One player might have the idea to fight through undead in the graveyard. He frames a combat scene, and the party wins so they advance through the cemetery to its far side. You as the GM should narrate their progress, and tell them that from where they stand now, at the back of the graveyard, their new options for advancement are the Dryght wall or the old city wall gate. The city wall gate is guaranteed to be a social encounter, and the group has not played one of those yet, so the players choose to run one. And so on!

If the escort group makes it all the way to the ferries, a zeppelin swoops down out of the sky, shooting ballista and dropping a handful of cordsmen. The party must put Arbuthnot on the ferry and defend against the cordsmen and ballistae while he makes good his escape.

Of course, if Arbuthnot does escape, the PCs gain a negative 10 reputation with the watch and mages in the order.

Here are some suggested scenes to use as the PC party makes its mad overnight run through Rithaigh:

Hearth Quarter – chase through a large metal shop, with open liquid metal hearths on the floor

Docks – combat scene with the dockhands of a ship

Unicorn Downs – social encounter with stable hand to borrow horse, then a chase scene while you run in race with enemies watching from the audience

Odren Square - Chase through the open square

Grey Manor – Social encounter with thieves guild, who can offer standard items and fixer items.

Docks – A fight with a semi-organized street gang.
There are more idea below in the suggested scene order.

If the PCs do make it to the ferries, Ric boards and makes his escape. Tabitha and the PCs stay behind, lower on the Dryght's target list than Ric would have been.

This one night can lead to a campaign's worth of adventures. The Dryght want the PCs dead for embarrassing them and allowing a member to defect; they are recurring villains. Perhaps other patrons have heard of the PCs' role in the escape, and now the PCs are in demand as "extractors" all up and down the Hilt. And, in the end, maybe Ric did not get away cleanly. The Dryght are still tracking him. It could be that the "Believed Dead" power of the secret society organization is the only way that Ric will ever truly be safe. Tabitha founds or joins an organization that can do this for her, and she wants the PCs' help. Should they give it, they are making yet another decision that puts them at odds with the established powers in the region. Adventure cannot help but follow!

Here is a suggested scene order for this seed:

- * Chase (after Ric) or social encounter with Dryght or Tabitha
- * Social encounter (with Ric)
- * Combat: dock fight.
- * Investigation and Exploration (searching for secret doors in harbor sewers)
- * Social encounter (with Merchants Below using sewers to smuggle)
- * Combat (emerging from sewers into basement of a guarded warehouse in the Merchants district)
- * Social encounter (sneaking through the Bat Bar without being recognized by a Dryght wizard there, drinking)
- * Chase (down river on stolen barge, Dryght attacking from the banks of the river, people fleeing the magical display)

A Dark Culture. This one begins the way a lot of fantastic adventures do: with a fight! Out of nowhere, on the city streets, in a beer-soaked tavern, in the middle of the tepidarium, a group of young bravos spots the PCs. "There's one!" they cry – and it's on. Pick a good location with lots of environmental tricks to use (cauldrons of cooking venison and walls of glassware in the tavern; pressurized water pipes with scalding water, not to mention heavy tax collectors clutching tiny towels as they flee, in the public baths).

Afterwards, the PCs discover the source of the problem. The Duke has begun a campaign to change the culture of Rithaigh. New statues are going up, a new play opened, there are sermons in the churches and Wrandt halls, all to one effect: something is very, very bad. What that "something" is depends on your campaign. Pick a trait of the PCs: maybe it's a seradynn troll, maybe it's fixers, maybe it's poets or redheads or people who Five Seasons style. If possible, pick something that many PCs have in common. For the purposes of this seed description, let's say that it's seradynn trolls. So now the culture is that any seradynn troll loses 1 mood per week from the general antipathy of the city, and she gains a d8 negative reputation as an unclean pariah. Make it clear that the affected PCs are not going to be comfortable unless they do something about this. (Of course, if they ignore it and go off in some other direction roll with that!)

When the PCs investigate what has happened, they can eventually learn from the Minister of Culture, Pierre Gobbo, that the Duke has intelligence indicating that Nahalite agents, all seradynn trolls, are planning on smuggling themselves into the Rithaigh harbor just as they arrived in the eastern ports several decades ago: in pieces. To be on the safe side, the Duke has started a campaign to guard against all Seradynn. (If you're not using seradynn, the anticipated infiltration might not be quite as dramatic, but it is still anticipated.) Gobbo offers to let the PCs catch the spies, and then the Duke will relent in his cultural campaign. He directs the PCs to a certain spot on the docks, saying that is the suspected infiltration point.

Of course, the PCs are ambushed there by kingsmen!

Why? After another post-fight investigation, the PCs learn that in fact there is no threat from Azenahal. Instead, there is a Low God cult that believes in a reincarnation of their god in the form of a seradynn troll. The cult has grown so powerful that the Duke fears acknowledging it openly. Rather than let the PCs help, Gobbo decided to destroy them for being too nosy on a sensitive matter.

Now that they are alive, Gobbo considers it a point of pride to finish the PCs off. They are hardly worth his time, in his opinion, but he likes to do a thorough job. So he will continue to harass the PCs throughout the adventure (and longer).

The Low God cult, meanwhile, led by priestess Nullah Vanaiti, wants to enlist the PCs' aid in finding their reincarnated seradynn troll. The identity and location of the troll is on a prophecy slate lying deep under the King's Mausoleum, and the PCs go on an old-fashioned dungeon crawl to reach the bottom.

What they find at the bottom sets up the climax of the adventure. Perhaps the seradynn troll whom the Low God cult wants to claim as their own is the Duke's wife, a double scandal since everyone assumed her human (glamer magic must be at work). Perhaps the seradynn troll is one of the PCs after all. Perhaps the seradynn troll is one of the PCs, but now to become the reincarnated Low God, she must be sacrificed so that her body is available for the God. Either way, the Low God cult now demands that the PCs either accompany them in a scheme to abduct the Duchess, or that the chosen PC sacrifice herself.

A running battle through the slums of Rithaign ensues. The Low God cult and Minister Gobbo's kingsmen all pursue the PCs, dueling with each other when their paths cross.

Depending on how things turn out, the PCs could be run out of town, they could gain reputations as troublemakers, or, if they eradicate the cult and turn the evidence in, they could gain a positive reputation with the Ministry of Culture. They are known to the Low God cult and the Rithaign ministry of culture, either as allies or enemies. They will begin making their

way in the world, shaping it as they go.

I'd suggest the following scene order for the first part of this adventure. This is only approximate, of course, as your adventures will always vary!

- *Combat

- *Social encounter

- *Chase (PCs spot one spot someone who looks like one of the Nahalite agents, or a little kid yanks one of the chosen PC's hairs free, screams, and runs to church, hoping to turn in the hair for a reward; presumably the PCs give chase)

- *Combat (kingsmen ambush at the docks)

- *Investigation (searching the kingsmen, who sent them, why)

- *Social encounter (confronting Gobbo)

- *Social encounter (Nullah Vanaiti)

- *Exploration, Combat (dungeon crawl)

- *Social encounter

- *Combat or Chase



OTHER KINGDOMS

The Holy Empire of Dynn

King: Neiman Glabe, Holy Emperor of the Turn,
House Glabe

Doom: 6

Neiman Glabe, the Holy Emperor of the Turn, is a priest first and a king second. Fortunately, he sees the two roles as nearly identical: marshal the people for God and burn the disbelievers. As his self-bestowed title indicates, he has ambitions far beyond the mountainous kingdom which he now rules.

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 runs 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. In fact, any spellbound travelers are seized at the gates and executed immediately. 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 Dynn civilization. Such a Reach by the true Claw will bring all the people closer to the High God. The Deic Fleet, which has a great support among the pious masses in other kingdoms, is the current focus of the Glabe house.

Azenahal

King: Vulpin Muharram, Doge of House Muhar
Doom: 4 (5 in New Trastamara, 6 in the Serai badlands)

Lush Azenahal is the unquestioned power in the so-called Second Finger, and she has had success spreading eastward and south. 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 is stymied by mighty Akra and immovable Dynn.

The current Doge, who would in the west be called king, is Vulpin Muharram. Vulpin is a hawk-faced man and a master of Weremagic and Familiar. His familiar, a dwarf bear named Xera, is hardly a dwarf. She is as fat as Vulpin is thin. Other linguistic changes in the kingdom include prophets, rites, viziers, and sirr, called priests, spells, wizards, and magic in the west.

Nahalite society worships the High God in a different way than in the western peninsula. 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 twin, conflicted nature, 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.

Windhover Valley

Doom: 3

This fertile plain was almost completely unpopulated by humans and trolls up until the 500s. 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 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, and manticores that fly out of the Waylorns are tenacious predators. Occasionally people, but more often horses and cattle are their prey. There have been rumors that the chimera are led by a beast who is at least semi-intelligent, with one troll head, one human head, and one snake head (in addition to the usual lion's body and roc's wings, of course).

The second difficulty with life in the valley is the influx of free magi. 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 magi 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 to what they have with a fierceness rarely seen outside the highlands.

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 focused on internecine strife.

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, and now Thyre. Nonetheless, it is a power in its own

right, with several scope 15 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.

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 has walled off his realm from the world, and no one can enter or exit. There was one time, ninety-six years past, that was of interest. Here is the story 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 504, 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.

Opana

Queen: Theresa I, House Desquin

Doom: 6

Opana has long been a queendom. Theresa has been on her throne almost as long as Lucius in Hessek. In that time, she has taken two husbands, who are 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 August King in Maize has visited Opana, as recently as the year 588, and there are still vast unoccupied apartments in the palace waiting for his return.

Oryn-ja

King: Asenkut Ragul, the August King in Maize

Doom: 6

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 here, as many Low Gods are reputed to 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 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 unlike 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.

Kitaarsa

King: Nodry 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 Maize. 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.





1 inch = 200 miles

GM's Map
The Spellbound Kingdoms

PART V

CHAPTER NINETEEN: THE TOOLBOX

Use these tables to improve your game. They have multifarious uses:

- Sandbox play
- Extemporaneous world-building
- An “idea bank” to spur creativity
- Adding variety and unpredictability
- Classic play “fill-ins” for impromptu investigations or spots the GM has not completely prepared
- Fun reading, I hope!

Remember: the numbers are there so that you can randomly roll on the tables, but like everything else in the game, you do not have to use them. Sorting through the options and choosing the best one is sometimes the wisest course.

Finally, keep in mind that these tables are not just for GMs. Players can use them to help with building their organizations, filling in their characters’ backstories, detailing new civilizations, setting story goals, and more.

A: CLUE LOCATIONS

	<i>Castle</i>	<i>Castle, Pt. II</i>
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	Sun room	Atrium
7	Audience room	Clerestory
8	Privy	Indoor brook
9	Kennels	Greenhouse
10	Armory	Hall of mirrors
11	Shrine	Chapel
12	Tasting room, wine and taken emotions	Anchorite prayer cells
	<i>Village</i>	<i>Village</i>
1	Rich tavern’s wine cellar	Churchyard lilac bush
2	Poor tavern’s drunk room	In the mind of a child who never speaks
3	Inside the town square well	Stables
4	Troll butcher’s ice house	Stables, floor of stall
5	Nest abandoned by wolf child	Home of a miser
6	Blacksmith’s forge	Home of a king-man

A: CLUE LOCATIONS (CONT.)

	<i>Cathedral</i>	<i>Countryside/ Wilderness</i>
1	Undercroft	Hollow knot in oak tree
2	Between the pages of Priest's Turn book	Ruins of a Low God shrine
3	Scribbled in margins of letter from priestess's lover	Pattern of tulips planted on hillside spells clue
4	Knave	Abandoned hermit's house
5	Sanctuary, under prayer kneeler	Occupied hedge wizard's tower
6	Cleavely melted into the stained glass	Bottom of manticore pit nest
7	Carved into back of baldachin	Bottom of lake
8	Through secret door in sanctuary pillar	Burial cairn
9	Monk's cell	Dragons' graveyard
10	Ossuary	Mine operated by inbred family
11	Bobbing in cistern on roof	Beach popular with yachting nobles
12	Choir loft, where choirs constantly sing	Abolitionist's meeting house
	<i>Miscellaneous</i>	<i>Miscellaneous</i>
1	In the zeppelin captain's stateroom	In the dreams of a leper-wight
2	Worn on the neck of the seradynn princess	Lost along the Free Road
3	Dissolved in wine glass with Letter in Wine spell	In plain sight: town square fountain inscription
4	Forged into the Duke Below's sword	On Sun Goddess' tepui

B: CHALLENGES

	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Miscellaneous</i>
1	Break into dungeon to search torture room	Translate and interpret journal page
2	Kidnap familiar of a king's Highcrafter	Tap signal into Sealed Kingdom
3	Negotiate with impoverished guard	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	Fight Dynni "Reach" fanatics	Craft a quality 11 item using materials from Oryn-ja
7	Glitter in disguise at a noble's soiree	Win the love of one of Asenkut Ragul's nineteen daughters
8	Learn the story of the old innkeeper's last adventure	Reunite a distant trader and her husband
9	Attend theater and meet the lead actress	Find a wolf child left to the wild eighteen years ago
10	Fight trading caravel's impressment squad	Win the confidence of a Zocith templar
11	Chase down thieves	In disguise (or not), lead a Low God cult
12	Flee kingsmen	Race the entire Free Road
	<i>Dungeon</i>	<i>Dungeon</i>
1	Ford underground river	Pick sarcophagus locks
2	Fight troglodyte tribe	De-fuse crazed engineer's lab
3	Decipher madman's babble	Help dying explorer
4	Zombie ambush	Shatter golems

C: FINAL CONFLICTS AND THEIR 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	Thyre 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 archamgi 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 or regard to 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

D: SUCCESSFUL 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

E: SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

1	Theater, comedy
2	Theater, cat burning
3	Theater below, music
4	Theater below, satire
5	Prayer service
6	Harvest festival
7	Trade met
8	Ballroom dancing
9	Tavern dancing
10	Dinner at the Arch- bishop's

F: CONTRABAND

1	Trapped Spell scroll: Corn Shower (dramba)
2	Trapped Spell candle: Spellsmith (Kateryna's Floating Litter)
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

G: DEUS EX MACHINAE

1	Lost love or estranged friend returns
2	A secret door opens and a rain troll beck- ons
3	A 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 offers ultima- tum

H: ON THE MENU

1	Ale, pint
2	Mead, pint
3	Ale, Thyrian
4	Wine, bottle
5	Wine, spiced, bottle
6	Venison
7	Pheasant
8	Pork chop
9	Hunter's stew
10	Shepherd's pie (haggis or venison)

I: ART OBJECTS

1	Statue: falcon trapped in ice
2	Statue: chimera de- vouring man
3	Statue: fire-birth (mid- wife is blindfolded)
4	Painting: priest under comet
5	Painting: arrival of the seradynn, panic of dockhands
6	Tapestry: St. Vartan chained
7	Tapestry: Ste. Jhess burning witches in Dynn
8	Reliquary: fingernail of saint, name faded

MONSTERS

Descent Lion. Lions with heritage from the Descent: opalescent highlights in the mane and shoulder fur, black eyes, and startling quickness.

Str 6, Qck 10, Rsn 1, Cha 6, Mgc 6, Hrt 4. Body 4.

Fighting style: Claw/Claw/Bite.

Variation: Descent Lion. Replace Pounce with Improved Pounce (0/d6; move; +1 dmg and +1 atk die size next rd). Replace Tackle and Rake with Descent Growl (Cha vs. Rsn; -1 Mood to all who can hear). Claws and bite are quality 5. Opalescent streaked fur is quality 1.

War drake. Six feet tall at the shoulder, war drakes are miniature dragons, bonded from birth to a handler.

Str 10, Qck 4, Rsn 1, Cha 6, Mgc 4, Hrt 4. Body 6.

Fighting style: Claw/Claw/Bite.

Claws and bite are quality 3.

Scales are quality 4 (6 with barding).

Chimera. These winged quadrupeds are foul-tempered in all three of their minds. The three heads are usually a lion's, a goat's, and a serpent's.

Str 6, Qck 7, Rsn 1, Cha 4, Mgc 8, Hrt 6. Body 4.

Fighting style: Claw/Claw/Bite (chimerical variation only).

Variation: Chimerical. Replace Pack Assault with Swoop (d4/d6; move, fly). Replace Tackle and Rake with Venom Spit (r) (d8/d4; 1 + 1 Str).

Claws and bite are quality 3.

Scales and fur are quality 2.

War ape. The 10-foot tall gorillas of Jakatta are trained to fight, most often with studded gauntlets.

Str 10, Qck 6, Rsn 1, Cha 6, Mgc 3, Hrt 6. Body 7.

Fighting style: Giant (giant ape variation only).

Variation: Giant Ape. Replace Stomp with Furious Ape Leap (0/d4; Move, Climb, +1 attack die size next round).

Studded gauntlets are quality 4.

Gorilla hamata is quality 2.

Troglodyte. Usually rain trolls, these unfortunates have run away from kings only to be slowly transformed by the magic of their underground homes.

Str 8, Qck 6, Rsn 5, Cha 5, Mgc 6, Hrt 3. Body 4.

Fighting style: Free Sword (apprentice).

Variation: Replace Feint and Unbalancing Feint with Secrete Stench and Spray Stench (Str. vs. Rsn, unsteady; and Str. vs. Rsn, rebalance respectively). Weapons and armor are typically quality 2, claws are quality 3 (and can be used with the Troglodyte's Free Sword style).

Manticore. Human-headed but beast-brained, these winged tiger-humans are vicious predators.

Str 10, Qck 7, Rsn 1, Cha 5, Mgc 5, Hrt 4. Body 6.

Fighting style: Claw/Claw/Bite.

Variation: Replace Corner with Fling Tail Spikes (ranged, d4/d4/d4/d4 attack, d6 defense) and replace Pack Assault with Aim (+1 die size all attacks next round).

Claws and bite are quality 3, tail spikes quality 6.

Scales are quality 4 (6 with barding).

Spellstalks. These shambling horrors have sloughed off a spellstalk victim (or consumed him wholly, in which case raise Str and Qck by 2 and stalk quality by 3). They often come in bundles of 6 to 10 stalks. Each stalk fights separately on the style sheet. They are spellbound.

Str 6, Qck 10, Rsn 3, Cha 2, Mgc 9, Hrt 6. Body 1 per stalk.

Fighting style: Tentacles/Spellstalks.

Tentacles are quality 4 armor and quality 3 weapons.

Madfire victim. These men have gone insane, some obviously, some less so. Characteristics are typical. They are spellbound.

Str 6, Qck 7, Rsn 4, Cha 4, Mgc 8, Hrt 6. Body 5.

Fighting style: Apprentice of savage.

Variation: Madfire victim. Replace Grab with Burn (0/d6), Throw with Spitfire (r) (d8/d4, three targets, 2 damage, ranged) and Bear Hug with Flames in Skull (d12/d2, 2 damage + 1 damage continuously until a misc. action puts them out).

Weapons quality 3, armor quality 0.

Dragon. Dragons are unintelligent and rare, but they still command the attention of kings. Dragons have individual statistics; these are typical.

Str 22, Qck 15, Rsn 2, Cha 21, Mgc 23, Hrt 13. Body 40 to 100.

Fighting style: Claw/Claw/Bite.

Variation: Dragon. All claw and bite attack dice are d20, all defense dice are d20/d12, double the number of every maneuver's attacks, and replace Pack Assault with Breathe Fire (r) (not a rebalancing maneuver, d20/d20, ten targets in same area, 5 dmg plus 1 dmg continuously until a misc. action puts it out).

Claws, bite, and scales are quality 14+.

Raptor. Four feet tall, and three feet of that are teeth. Str 6, Qck 9, Rsn 2, Cha 3, Mgc 3, Hrt 6. Body 3.

Fighting style: Claw/Claw/Bite.

Variation: Raptor pack. Replace Pack Assault with Raptor Pack (as Pack Assault, but 2 damage, and not a rebalancing maneuver).

Claws and bite are quality 3.

Scales are quality 4 (6 with barding).

Ghoul/zombie/skeleton/giant. Undead rise spontaneously from wild surges. They rise spontaneously, purposefully, and en masse from crisis surges. By feeding, the undead can replace body parts that fall off (often as a result of their damage-be-damned fighting style).

Str 8/6/4/12, Qck 4/2/4/2, Rsn 6/1/1/2, Cha 6/3/3/3, Mgc 8/4/4/8, Hrt 6/1/1/6. Body 6.

Fighting style: Undead (and Giant, for giant undead).

Hands or weapons, and clothing or armor are typically quality 3 and quality 0 respectively, although ghouls and giants use whatever they can find.

Ruby golem. Often these are made from fixer's transfusions, willingly or not.

Str 13, Qck 4, Rsn 2 or as original, Cha 3 or as original, Heart 4 or as original. Body 7.

Fighting style: Giant.

Fists are quality 7, corundum skin is quality 8.

SPELLS

These are the high and close spells of the various magic schools.

Every school has its own sphere of close spells. These are shadow magics, illusions, glass cleaners, and other handy effects. They can have real use in the game milieu, although they cannot be used to activate most environment tricks in combat, chases, or social encounters. Perfectly matched environment tricks (lighting a fire for an incandescent witch, for example) are quite possible. I encourage players and GMs to interpret and employ them creatively.

The high spells and their effects are detailed.

The combat style sheet spells are also close spells; many useful spells are found there!

DRUIDIC

Close spells: Light and blood are the topics of all druid prestidigitations. For example, a druid can brighten a room, make someone warm, or make a cut drip sparkling blood.

High Spells: Casting a high spell requires a successful magic check against the doom unless otherwise stated.

Birds. Birds dive and stab across the Kingdom. Everyone in the Kingdom suffers 3 Mood damage. If anyone dares go outside, he suffers two to eight d4 attacks per minute.

Eathquake. Druids can cause an earthquake, as the natural disaster in chapter 10.

Fire. Druids can also cause fires, as the natural disaster in chapter 10.

Fertility. A druid can ensure a pregnancy within a season. Only one attempt per season per mother is allowed.

Wild fertility (famine). A druid can increase or decrease the agricultural economy of a region by one step, once per year.

Sacrificial gift. A druid can boost a character's existing skill by six points. This requires a living sacrifice and a magic roll against the doom.

Sacrificial consecration. A druid can consecrate a site. Each druid must choose only one site that he can consecrate (on midsummer's eve he can change his choice). The effects only last for the day that the druid casts the spell, so if the druid wishes the effects continuously, he must use his high spell every day for the consecration. A consecrated site grants a bonus of 1 die size to all magic rolls made by the druid or his allies.

INCANDESCENCE

Close spells: Incandescence is all about brilliance, light, fire, and crackling energy. An incandescent wizard can make someone's hair stand on end, light a rain-soaked log, or purify and smoke a hog shank for dinner.

High Spells:

Fire. An incandescent witch can burn a city, as under the Fire disaster in chapter 10.

Volcano. An incandescent witch can wake a dormant volcano, producing a result that combines the fire and earthquake disasters.

Sky sign. The incandescent witch can produce a sign in the sky that is seen throughout the region. One symbol or glyph is the extent of the sign.

Cauterize wound. When someone takes a wound or maiming to accelerate healing, an incandescent mage can cauterize the wound. In this case, the wound scars over after one year, releasing the history slot back for use by the PC.

Burn falsehood. The incandescent witch can cause

someone to suffer 1 heart damage per lie told. The effect lasts for ten minutes, provided the witch wins an opposed magic check against the subject.

HEARTS

Close spells: A hearts witch focuses on secrets, loves, and fears. She can always grant a one die size increase or decrease to any reputation or inspiration roll (in combat, this is a trick).

High Spells:

Forget. A hearts witch can end the penalty for a lost love or inspiration by causing the character to forget about the affair completely, as if it never happened.

Erase memory. As opposed to Forget, this erases a history, skill, or inspiration. The target cannot use the quantity designated for one day (after which, the hearts mage may renew the spell, of course). An opposed magic roll is required, and in the case of an erased inspiration, the target resists with that inspiration as a bonus die (in addition to using it in its normal capacity, if desired).

Love. The next person that the target of the Love spell meets must make an opposed check against the Hearts witch. Failure means that struck person must take a 1 Love inspiration for the target of the spell, erasing another inspiration on the spot if necessary to make room.

Monitor reputation. Everyone talks about reputations, and what everyone talks about, a hearts witch knows. With a successful magic check against the doom, she can learn all of the reputations possessed by the target of the spell.

BATTLECRAFT

Close spells: Battlecraft is also called fieldcraft. A wizard of this school can use a close spell to strengthen a rickety shelf, sculpt a castle out of the sand, and pull a lever (allowing for many environmental tricks in combat with this style).

High Spells:

Sharpen. A fieldcrafter can sharpen the weapons of any troop in combat, increasing all of its attack die sizes by one.

Harden. A fieldcrafter can harden the armor of any troop in combat, increasing all of its defense die sizes by one.

Terrain. Any effect of terrain can be altered by one (for example, ice can be worsened to a -2 die size penalty).

Bridge, trench, home. Once per season, a battlecraft can attempt to create a bridge or similar structure of large size. The magic roll against the doom, as always, must be successful. The building lasts for one day and then decays harmlessly to sawdust.

Vision. The battlecrafter can grant himself or any ally a vision as of a hawk, soaring through the terrain, for any terrain that he can see. The recipient of the vision can soar for ten minutes. This grants a bonus of 2 die sizes to any attempt to discern a secret troop in battle, or to discover a secret about an enemy organization.

DRAMBA

Close spells: Incense, bone castings, corn dust and brick powder are a few of the reagents stocked in a dramba witch's cabinet. She can grant a blessing of one die size to any history or skill roll. She can also heal 1 characteristic damage point received within the last half hour, and burn away one disease, poison, or magical effect that occurred within the same time frame (although she can only do either once per season per target).

High Spells:

Create zombie/skeleton/ghoul/undead giant. A dramba witch can have under her control one undead per magic level. Only masters of the style can create ghouls and undead giants, and even then only one of each at a time can be kept under control.

Switch bodies. With a high spell that requires half a day to cast, a dramba witch can switch bodies with a target. Usually the witch ties herself in her basement first, prevent escape by the victim. The witch can prolong this spell day-to-day. The initial and subsequent checks are opposed magic checks. Once one has failed, the witch may not switch bodies again with the victim until a season has passed.

Heal. A dramba witch can burn away disease, poison, or magical effects as with a close spell. With a high spell, however, the time frame is extended to one day.

LANGUAGE OF STARS

Close spells: The language of stars is a school of divination, although many would say it is a school of delusion. A wizard of this school can increase a perception die roll by one size as a close spell, although only once per day per target. These diviners can also always discern what spell is trapped in a trapped spell object and glean the command words thereof. Language of stars wizards can also disguise their speech and that of their allies, making any observer think that one conversation occurred while the true conversation was entirely different (this requires an opposed magic check).

High Spells:

Omen of good fortune. The wizard can supply these omens for a region: disease virulences are diminished by one, disaster effects are decreased by one die size or one damage, crisis surges are less severe, one sector of the economy rises by one point for a season.

Omen of ill fortune. The wizard can also turn on his people, having the opposite effects as those described just above.

WEREMAGIC

Close spells: Corruption, transformation, and the inconstant moon are the subjects of weremagic. A weremagician can levitate objects under his own weight if they are bathed in moonlight, and he can change the color, personality, and species of small animals. He can also create soft illumination, curdle food, and panic most animals.

High Spells:

Transform. A weremagician can study one natural animal smaller than himself per magic level. He can transform into that creature with a high spell.

Curse form. He can also force this form on another creature. This requires a day to cast, and the victim must be present and unmoving the entire time. At the end of the casting, opposed magic rolls are made. If the weremagician wins, the victim changes form. If the victim wins, the weremagician cannot try again until tomorrow. A daily high spell, again requiring opposed magic rolls by the weremagician, is required to keep the victim in his cursed form, although there is no range limit on this. The victim retains his mental characteristics (cha, rsn, mgc, and hrt) but takes on all other characteristics of the curse form.

DEATH LORE

Close spells: The provinces of death are this school's domain: dust, ash, and silence. A close spell (with an opposed magic check) can be used to steal a man's voice for a minute. All manner of hauntings can also be projected at will by an accomplished death lore wizard.

High Spells:

Create undead. As a dramba witch, a death lore wizard can create undead. A master of death lore, however, can retain two undead per magic level, and up to four ghouls or giants (in any combination).

Death Watch. A death lore wizard can keep anyone he cares for on a death watch. The spell lasts for one day, so it must be the wizard's daily high spell if it is to continue for longer than twenty-four hours. Anyone who would die while under a death watch takes a wound instead, and escapes the situation just as if he or she had a sufficiently high inspiration. (Particularly determined killers can remove the death watch prior to the mortal blow by any other means effective in removing magic effects, usually a fixer's concoction or a dramba witch's salve.

MAELSTROM

Close spells: A wizard who masters the maelstrom commands the power of storm and sky. He can bring a light rain or dispel a light rain, call up a breeze or dismiss it, at will. He can also darken the day with clouds or brighten it with fair skies.

High Spells:

Agricultural command. The wizard can increase or decrease the agricultural section of the economy by one point. He can only attempt this once per season.

Storm seas. A maelstrom wizard (with a successful magic vs. doom roll as always) can prevent ships from traveling. A ship's captain who attempts to command his ship into such heavy weather must make one command skill check every ten minutes against the doom or take 2 structural damage to his ship. The wizard can create this same storm over land, although its effects do not extend past the aggravation of the peasants' misery.

Calm. A maelstrom wizard, casting a high spell with a duration of an hour, can cancel any storm and prevent one from arising for the remainder of the day (rolling opposed magic checks with any other maelstrom master who casts to the contrary).

Travel weather. A maelstrom wizard can increase by 20% the strategic speed of any troop, unit, or vehicle.

Hurricane, blizzard, flood. The maelstrom master can cause a hurricane, blizzard, or flood, as the disaster in chapter 10.

HIGHCRAFT

Close spells: The close spells of the highcrafter are the same sort as those of the battle- or fieldcrafter.

High Spells:

The high spells of highcraft are different from those of battlecraft.

City sphere. In times of need, a highcrafter can cast a sphere around a city. This increases the defense value of the city walls by 3, makes the city impregnable to normal sappers (though not siege engines), and adds 2 to the defense die size of anyone on the walls defending the city. The sphere counts as two spellbound objects in every region of the city for purposes of interference. The highcrafter cannot move while his sphere is in place. It lasts for one day. If the city walls are breached, the sphere winks out. The sphere may be either transparent and invisible, or opaque and colored.

Seek spellbound. The highcrafter can roll an opposed magic check against one creature he knows to be spellbound. If he succeeds, he knows the current direction and approximate distance of the spellbound creature.

Hunt inspiration. The highcrafter can hunt inspirations. With a successful magic roll against the doom, he knows the direction and approximate distances to all creatures with inspirations high enough to affect the narrative. If he sees them face to face within an hour, he knows who they are.

Augment familiar. This spell increases the highcrafter's familiar's physical statistics by 2. A master of highcraft can teach his familiar the claw/claw/bite or savage style (or another the group deems more appropriate).

Strength of magic. A highcrafter with acolytes can use any of the war maneuvers of the Highcraft Wizards troop (chapter 16).

SPELLSMITH

Close spells: Spellsmiths are devoted to artifice. Their close spells can create dollhouses out of tree stumps, bend spoons, and flip levers (allowing many environment tricks in combat). They can also make any item appear to be one quality level higher than it is (magic vs. reason roll dispels this notion).

High Spells:

Kateryna's Floating Litter. This litter, prized among nobles, floats of its own accord. A single servant, often a captured war enemy, is all that is required to push the litter through the streets of the noble's town. Many dukes retain multiple spellsmiths so that they may have several different styles of litter available each day.

Permanency. With his victim strapped in place, a spellsmith may make permanent any magic effect upon the victim. This requires a day-long rite, three acolytes, and a magic roll vs. the doom. When complete, the spell placed upon the victim is natural, that is, it does not cause interference. Attempting to place a second permanent spell on the same victim has always results in a crisis surge. (It should be noted that some spellsmiths and patrons have used permanency on themselves, to graft on a particularly beneficial spell.) This can also be used to make a close spell's effect permanent, for example, with an illusory mural. Crisis surges have been known to interfere with these "natural" permanent effects, however, and therefore kings strictly ration their spellsmiths in the use of this spell.

Artificial body. A spellsmith can graft a prosthesis, ensorcelled to appear as the smith wishes, onto any wound or maiming the character may have taken on. This immediately frees the history slot for the character's use. The prosthesis is a spellbound object, unless a permanency spell is used to graft it naturally.

Hasten building. A spellsmith can drive laborers to perform at their peaks. Every crafting roll that they perform is maximum for the duration of the building, as long as the spellsmith devotes his daily high spell to hastening the building (and makes his magic roll against the doom each day, of course).

Ape or raptor golem. The spellsmith can craft one of these golems at a time. A single day's casting brings the golem into existence. These fight as the regular monsters of the same name, although they gain the spellsmith's magic die as a bonus die to any roll once per round provided the spellsmith is a master of his craft. The golems also have 1 more body than the original, and master spellsmiths create golems with all defense dice increased by two sizes. Research can extend the capabilities of the ape or raptor golem significantly. Animating a golem that has already been built is the caster's high spell for the day, but unlike the original animation, it does not require a full day's casting.

ARTIST'S CREDITS

The following artists' work appeared exclusively in this pdf.

- Elisabet Stacy-Hurley did the marvelous landscapes such as "The Grandeur of Timelessness" on the Rithaighn pages.

- Luis Noguez did the zeppelin illustration and the social encounter chapter banner, that has also graced the web page.

- Jason McLellan did all of the character class illustrations. I wish I could have used his warrior twice, putting it in the combat section as it is in the Primer. That warrior illustrates the fighting style idea of SK very well, I think!

- Igor Kieryluk did the cover and the amazing genre painting in How To Play (did you think it was one of the old Dutch masters?). He also did the sub and the similar illustrations.

- Gillian Pearce, cartographer and artist, did the maps. Wait until you see the softcover book, which should have more of her maps!

The following artists' work appeared here nonexclusively:

- Sade
- James Yee, Nebulous Creations
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Games

- Some artwork taken from Publisher's Assistant Clip Art series by Politically Incorrect games. FCopyright Rick hershey, used by permission. For more information, visit www.pigames.net. Specifically, it's the one picture at the end of the Investigation chapter, colorized by YT, not anyone at PIG. Highest credit text - to -art ratio winner!

- Joseph Wigfield: "Some artwork in this book is ©2007 Reality Deviant Publications, used with permission."

- Some artwork copyright Richard Spake, used with permission.

- V Shane's Wizard Kanji font.

Finally, I used many public domain images from masters such as Jean Leon Gerome, Francesco Hayez, Caspar David Friedrich, Franz von Stuck, Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Etienne Dinet, Carl Spitzweg and Georges de la Tour.



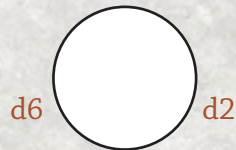
MORE TO COME!

More monsters, more grand fighting styles to support higher level play, more examples of close spells, and a much closer look at the decadent Middle City, Azenahal, coming up in the softcover book!

In the meantime, come on over to the website, spellboundkingdoms.com. This is the first game that I have put out on my own (rather than with Wizards or Paizo), and it has been an amazing experience. I hope you are enjoying it. So please do stop by the forums on the website. I can't wait to talk to you!

ARROWHEART

COMBAT STYLE



d6

d2

Penetrate (r)

2 + ignore 2 armor



0

d2

Mighty Pull

Ignore range penalties
for first three areas
next rd



d6

d2

Anticipate (r)

Name maneuver;
3 dmg if correct



d4/
d4

d2

Double Shot (r)



d8

d2

Called Shot: Torso (r)



d4

d2

Called Shot: Arm (r)

1 + unsteady

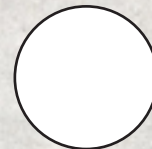


0

d4

Aim and Breathe

+1 atk die size next rd



d4

M

d2

**Called Shot:
Held Item (r)**

Atk. vs. Str
or dropped



d2

M

d2

Called Shot: Head (r)

Double range penalties
3



d4

d6

Shoot and Dive (r)



d6

d2

Archer's Shot



0

d4

Find the Center

Ignore 2 armor next atk



d2

d2

Shot on the Run

Move

Requires bow.

All attacks are ranged.

Strike

Str/d2

Defend

0/Qck

Grab

Str/d2

Throw/Shoot

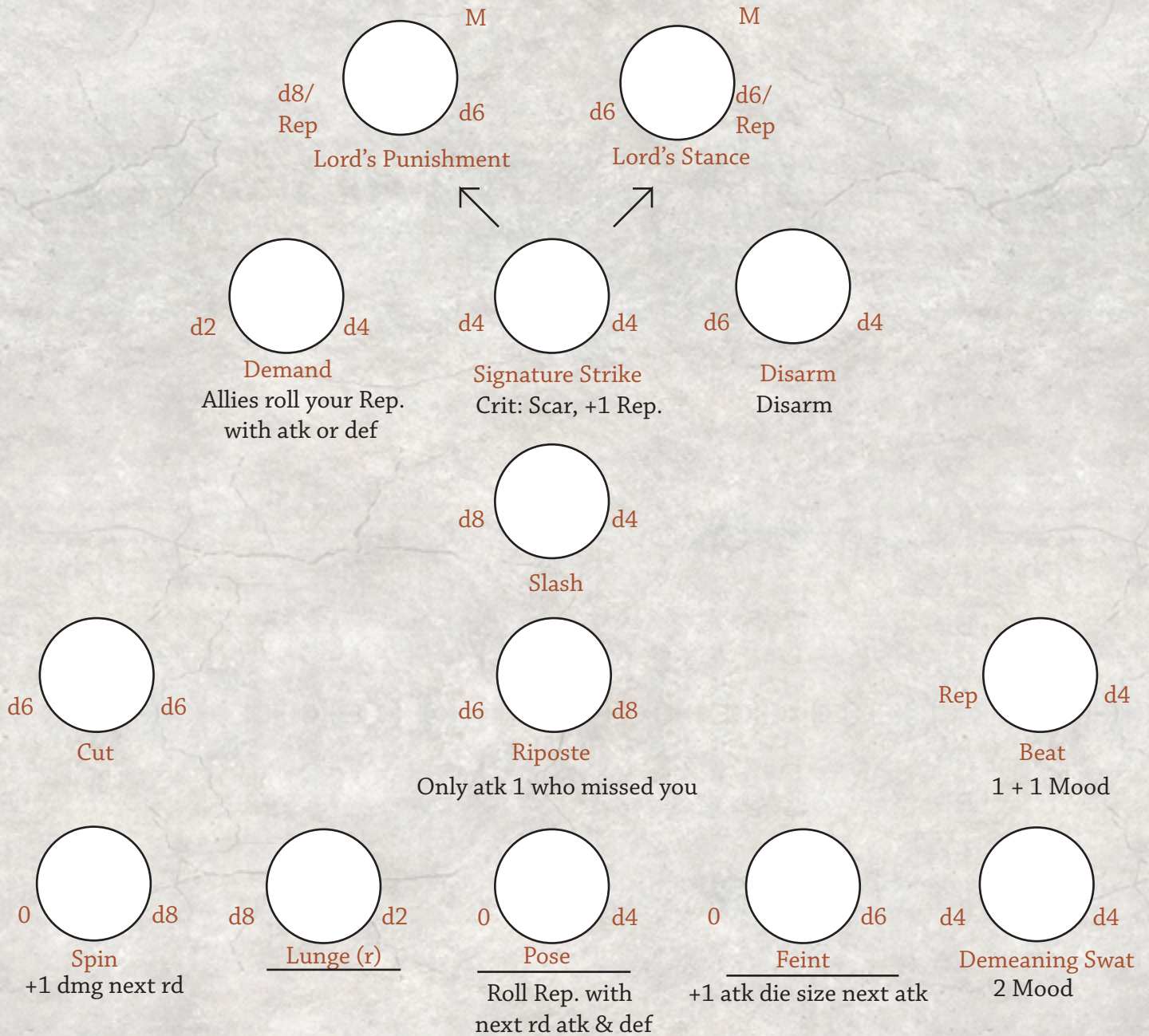
Qck/d2

Trick/Scheme

0/d4

COURT SWORD

COMBAT STYLE



Requires weapon, no shield.

Strike
Str/d2

Defend
0/Qck

Grab
Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Scheme
0/d4

DAGGER-AND-WINE

COMBAT STYLE



Between the Ribs (r)
2



Backstab (r)
3



Disarming Embrace
Disarm



Tangled Cloak
Grabbed
Req. cloak, bedsheets, etc.



Dodge into Shadows
+1 dmg next rd



Hide in Shadows
Move



Whirling Trick
Move + env. trick



Sneak Attack



Dagger Flurry



Duck and Slip
If missed, atk goes vs.
creature of your choice



Low Blow (r)



Cut



Intimations
Can't use Inspiration
Req. secret



Stun
Tgt can't act next rd
+1 dmg next rd
Req. secret



Bitter Whispers
1 Mood

Requires Weapon, No Shield.

-1 dmg vs. any armor that is
1 or more higher value
than your weapon.

Strike

Str/d2

Defend

0/Qck

Grab

Str/d2

Throw/Shoot

Qck/0

Trick/Misc.

0/d4

FIVE SEASONS

COMBAT STYLE



Melting Ice Stance
+2 def. die size next rd



Hand of Snow



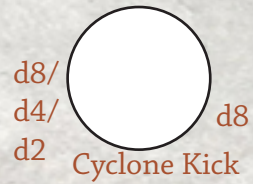
Winter Wind
Move target 1 area



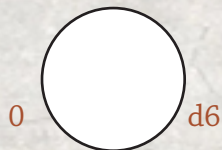
Blizzard Mind
Add d4 atk next rd



Fevered Spring Kick



Cyclone Kick



Budding Leaf Movement
Move



Inner Life Flashback
Recharge one inspiration



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 rd



Fists Like Sobs
of Autumn
2



Fires of Spring Stance
+2 atk die size next rd



Earthfall Trip
Rebalance



Summer Sun Kick



Meditation
on Fleeting Summer
Add move next rd

Requires Rsn 6, Qck 5, Str 5,
no armor, no shield.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Scheme	
Qck/0	0/d4	

FREE SWORD

COMBAT STYLE



Requires: edged or pointed weapon, armor,
Str 6, Qck 5.

Strike

Str/d2

Defend

0/Qck

Grab

Str/d2

Throw/Shoot

Qck/0

Trick/Misc.

0/d4

GUARDSMAN

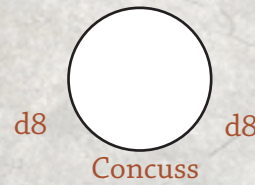
COMBAT STYLE

M



Attack only those entering your area
1+ Target can't enter your area
Up to 3 targets

M



1 + rebalance



Distracting Blow
Other rolls your atk
as def bonuse die



Bodyguard
1 + As Escort



Shield Tactics
+1 def and armor
next rd



Body Blow



Knock Down
Rebalance



Escort
As Shield Other
plus move



Guard's Strike



Expertise Block
Armor quality
treated as 2 higher



Shield Other
Ally rolls your
def and his



Shield Bash
Unsteady



Shield Run
Move



Riposte
Only atk one creature
who misses you



Block

Requires: Str 6, weapon, armor, shield.

Strike
Str/d2

Defend
0/Qck

Grab
Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Scheme
0/d4

PARAPET DEFENSE

COMBAT STYLE

M

d6

d6 d4

Devour
1 + 1 magic
+ recast

d6 d4

Occult Stab
1 + 1 vs. spellbound

0

d4

Feed
+1 dmg next rd

d4

d4

Heart Blood
1 + you and one ally
roll Heart as magic def

d10

0

d6

Shelter (r)
All allies in area
get your def. vs. magic

0

d6

Wind Pattern
Move, climb

d4

d4

Hunger Pattern

d6

d6

Rampart Guard

d6

0

d4

Night Pattern

d6

d4

Heart Pattern

d6/
d4

d2

Storm of Arrows (r)
Ranged

d4

d4

Eclipse Strike
Recast

d6

d6

d2

Shoot
Ranged

d4/
d2

d6

Starfall

M

d4

d4

Veil
1 + can't tgt you
with spells; Rsn vs.
Atk ends

Requires weapon, Str 5.

You count as spellbound.

All maneuvers have magic defense d4 unless
noted (upper right).

Strike

Str/d2

Throw/Shoot

Qck/0

Defend

0/Qck

Grab

Str/d2

Trick/Misc.

0/d4

SAVAGE

COMBAT STYLE

Str  d2
Bear Hug
 1 + 1 Str
 + grabbed

d8  d6
Throw (r)
 1 + move 1 area

Str  d2
Grab
 Grabbed

0  d4
Mighty Rage
 As Rage + you take -1 dmg this rd

d8  d4
Fury Strike

d6  d4
Rampage
 1 + move

d4  d2
Savage Charge

1 + Move
 Str vs. Str to knock
 target back 1 area

d6  d4
Slam

0  d4
Rage

+1 atk & def next rd

d8  d2
Dive

Req. altitude
 Atk 2 tgts
 Crit: rebalance

0  d4
Climb

Gain altitude

Requires: Str or Qck 6
 No Shield, weapon for
 Fury Strike, Rampage

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc. Action	
Qck/0	0/d4	

SWASHBUCKLER

COMBAT STYLE

d6  d6
Spectacular Strike (r)
1 + 1 Mood to allies

d8  d4
Slash

M
d6  d6
Swath of Destruction (r)
3 targets

d8  d4
Death from Above
2
Req. altitude

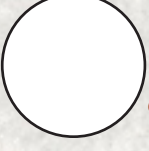
M
d4  d4
Disarm
Disarm
d8  d6
Disrobe (r)
2 to clothing or armor (temp.)
+ 1 reputation

d6  d6
Charge
1 + Move

d6  d8
Humiliating Blow (r)
-1 Reputation

d6  d4
Mocking Blow
1 + 1 Mood

d6  d4
Thrust (r)

d6  d6
Trip
Unsteady

0  d8
Spin
+1 dmg next rd

0  d4
Flourish
Env. Trick
+1 Mood to self

0  d6
Daredevil Move
Move, climb

0  d6
Jest
+1 Mood to ally

0  d6
Feint
+1 atk die size next atk

Requires Cha 6, Weapon, No Shield

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Scheme
0/d4

TWIN WEAPON

COMBAT STYLE

0  d6

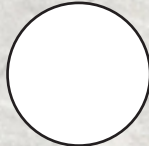
Double Feint
Add d6 atk nxt rd

M
0  d6

Find the Gap
Treat tgt armor
as 2 lower nxt atk

d4/
d4/
d2  d4

Flurry

M
0  d6

Masterful Feint
+1 atk & def next rd

d4/
d4  d4/d4

Counter Storm

d4  d4

Whirlwind Cut
1 atk vs. all in area

d8/
d2  d2

Stab and Slash

d2/
d2  d6

Warding
Flurry

0  d6/
d4

Blade Wall

d6/d4  d2

Flashing Blades

0  d4

Exploit
+2 wpn quality nxt rd

d6  d4

Jab

d2  d6

Off-hand Strike

d4/d4  d2

Twin Strike

d6  d2

Main-hand Strike

Requires Quickness 6, Weapons

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Scheme	
Qck/0	0/d4	

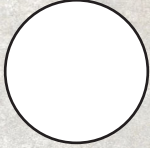
BLACKPOWDER MUSKETEER

GRAND COMBAT STYLE

Cha vs. Rsn  d2

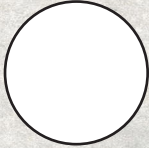
Load and Jeer

Cha vs. Rsn: 1 Mood

d12/d8  d4

Double Shot

Requires two wheellocks

0  d4

Flash Smoke Screen

-2 attack die size next rd.
(all in shooter's area)
(out of powder after this)

M  d4

Powder Burn

Blind
(not ranged)

0  d6

Load and Jape

+1 to ally's mood

d8/d8  d4

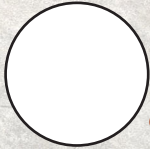
Stab & Shoot

2 body dmg each atk
(One atk is not ranged)

M  d12

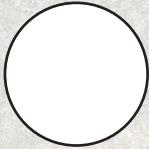
Ricochet Shot

2

d10  d4

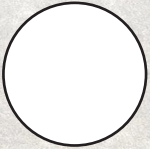
Called Shot: Limb

2 + rebalance

0  d2

Aim & Breathe

+1 atk die size next rd

d4  d2

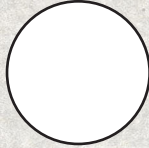
Called Shot: Head (r)

4

0  Qck

Hide & Load

Ignores cover, can shoot around corners, can trigger environment trick, all in addition to the 2 body dmg

0  d4

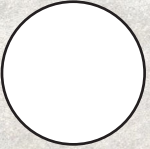
Take Cover

+2 defense die size until you rebalance

0  d4

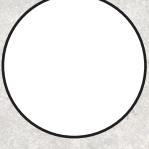
Run and Load

Move

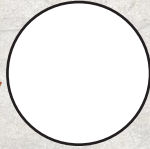
d12  d4

Quick Shot

2

d8  d6

Slash

d8/d8  d6

Plume & Blade

1 + 1 Mood

Requires blackpowder weapon, no shield.
2 load actions required to load.
Quickness 7, Strength 5.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

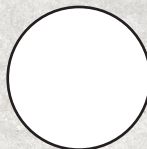
Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Misc.
0/d4

GREAT WEAPON

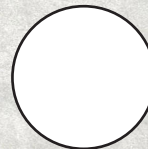
GRAND COMBAT STYLE

M

d4  d10 Str  d10

Maim
1 + this point
can only be cured
by magic or by
taking a maiming

Overhead Smash
2

d10  d6 d6  d4

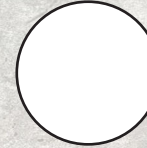
Trip
Rebalance

Skewer
2 targets:
3 body to first target,
1 body to second,
both are grabbed
on your weapon

0  d6 d6  d6

Mighty Swing
+1 dmg and strength
rolls maximum
next rd.

Interpose Weapon
1 + Ally gains your attack
roll as defense bonus di
this round

0  d8

Vault
Move, climb

Str/
d8  d6

Hack

d12  d6

Bash Back
1 + move target 1 area

Str  d8 Str  d8

Cut Down the Mob
5 targets
As Keep at Bay

Keep at Bay
1 + can't melee atk
you next rd.

d10  d6 0  M

Sweep
5 targets

Sweeping Trip
5 targets
1 + rebalance

Requires two-handed weapon.
Strength 8.

Strike Defend Grab
Str/d2 0/Qck Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

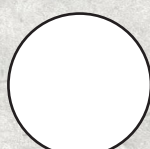
Trick/Misc.
0/d4

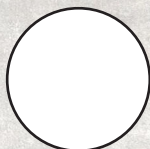
INFINITE RECURVE OF SOUL

GRAND COMBAT STYLE

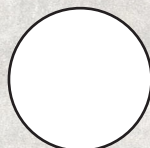
M
0  d6
Fullness of Purpose
Next Inspiration
rolls maximum

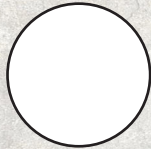
d12/
d6  d10
Jump Chop
1+ move

M
d20  d4
Forbidding Palm Strike
Forbid 1 action or maneuver
If target takes that action within
one week, he dies.
(You can use this at most 1/week.)

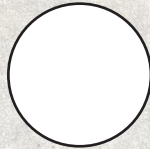
0  d6
Crouch
Quickness rolls max. next rd.
on every roll

0  d8
Spring
Move and +1 dmg next rd
to all attacks

Qck/
Qck  d8
Dizzying Flurry (r)

0  Qck
Dodge

Str  d10
Eecurve Kick
+1 atk die size next rd

0  d10
Infinite Body
Strength rolls max. next rd.

d12  Qck
Infinite Kick
2 + move

0  d10
Rejuvenation
Ignore 2 points of
characteristic damage
taken last round
(1/day)

d12/
Str/
d8  d6
Crowd Walk
1 + move or climb as many
areas as you hit (landing on
heads as you leap)

Requires unarmed, unarmored.
Quickness 7, Strength 7, Reason 7.

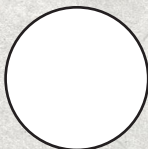
Your body is considered to have weapon
and armor quality equal to half
your martial levels (max. 10)
when fighting in this style.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4

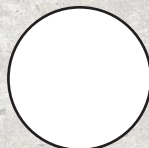
WARLORD

GRAND COMBAT STYLE

d8  d4
Ruin Strike
 2 + disarm

d2  d8
Decapitating Strike (r)
 Death

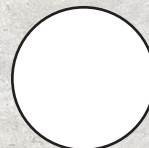
d8  d6
Distracting Blow
 1 + target takes
 -2 atk die size penalty
 next rd.

0  d6
Attack Focus
 +4 weapon quality
 until you rebalance

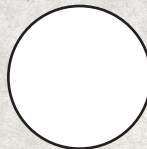
d10  d10
Intimidating Feint
 0 + rebalance

0  d12
Warlord's Focus
 +1 atk die size on all
 until you rebalance

d12/
d10  d8
Greater Onslaught

0  d10
Defensive Focus
 +4 armor quality
 until you rebalance

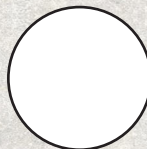
0  Str
Brace For It (r)
 Take 1 less damage
 this rd

d8  d2
Power Bash
 1 + unsteady

Str  d2
Smash

d4  d10/
Str
Set Shield

Str  d6
Skull Ringer
 1 + re-cast

0  d12
Spin
 Str. rolls maximum
 and +1 dmg nxt rd

d6  d8
Warlord's Charge
 1 + move

0  d12
Block

Str  d6
Warlord's Strike

Requires weapon, shield.
 Strength 8, Quickness 6.

Strike
 Str/d2

Defend
 0/Qck

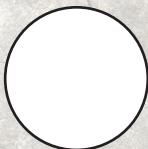
Grab
 Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
 Qck/0

Trick/Misc.
 0/d4

ZEPPELIN DECK KING

GRAND COMBAT STYLE

Str  d10

Raise the Spirits
1 + one troop
gains 4 spiri
(only in battle or war)

d10  d12

Parry & Riposte
Can attack all those
who attack you,
and only them

d20  d6 M

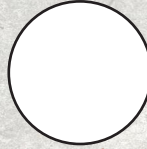
Runs Like a Duck
(If target is not moving
this round, the attack fails.)
1 + rebalance
+ target rolls base attack
against ally
+ target gains 2 to
negative reputation

d8  d6

Deck Tumble
3 targets
1 + move, climb

d12/
d12/
d12  Qck

Swashbuckler's Assault (r)
1 + allies can use you
as a free Inspiration
this round, provided
they narrate their
awe of your maneuver

0  d8

Panache
Next mood roll
is maximum
for you or 1 ally

0  d8

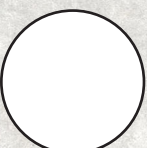
Spin
+2 dmg next rd.

d12  d6

Bash Back
1 + move target 1 area

d10/
d8  d10 M

Double Feint
0 + rebalance

0  d12

Dodge and Feint
+ 1 atk die size on all
attacks next atk maneuver

0  d4

Chase Flair
Move + environmental trick

Str  d8

Acrobatic Charge
1 + move

d4  d10

Swinging Slash
2 + Move
Must be swinging
on something

d10  d6

Slash

Cha
vs. Rsn  Qck

Plume to the Face
Target must atk you
next rd or lose all mood

Requires one-handed weapon.
Strength 6, Quickness 6, Charisma 6.

Strike

Str/d2

Defend

0/Qck

Grab

Str/d2

Throw/Shoot

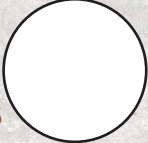
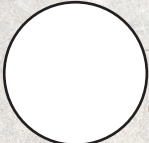
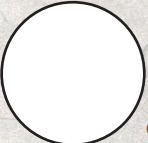
Qck/0

Trick/Misc.

0/d4

BATTLECRAFT

SPELL COMBAT STYLE

M d12  d6 Stone Pincer Hurl (r) 2 + move grabbed tgt 1 area	d6  d4 Stone Pincer Grab 1+ Grabbed	d8/ d4  d4 Cataclysm Rays	0  d4 Compound Cataclysm As Fulminate plus add d4/d2 attacks	
d10  d6 Stone Pincer Slash		0  d4 Fulminate +1 dmg nxt rd. all attacks		
d4/ d2  d4 Ribbons of Hessek 1 + move 1 area	0  d4 Gather Stone	0  d6 Wards +2 physical defense die size and +1 magic defense die size until you re-cast	0  d2 Gather Magic	M d6  d6 Improved Arcane Wards +2 magic defense die size until you re-cast
0  d4 Coil the Ribbons +3 die sizes and +1 area to Ribbons attack			d12  d6 Smash Wards Re-cast	

Requires no weapon, no shield.
All are ranged.
Reason 5, Magic 7.

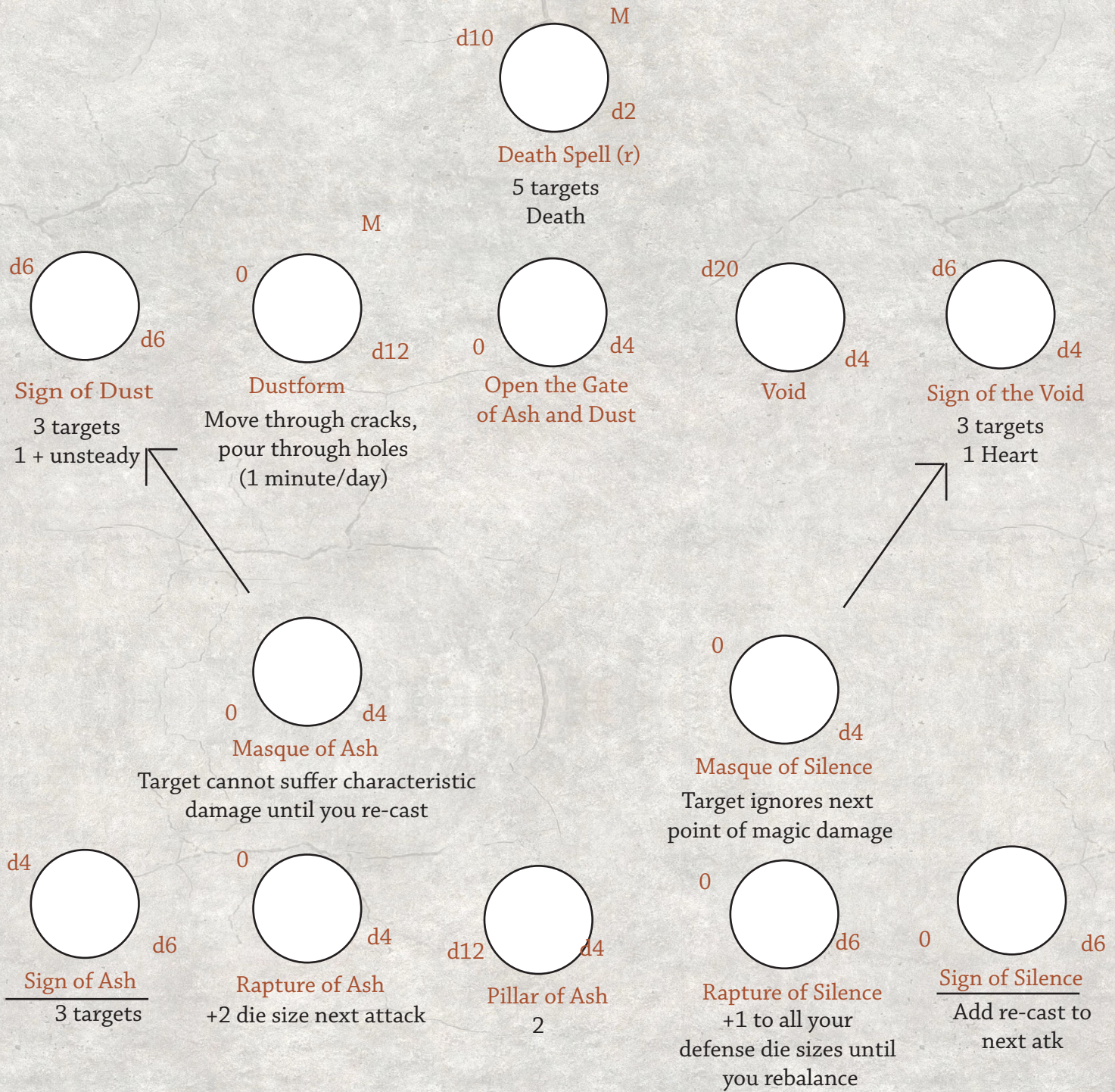
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Misc.
0/d4

DEATH LORE

SPELL COMBAT STYLE



Requires no weapon, no shield.
All are ranged.
Reason 8, Magic 8.

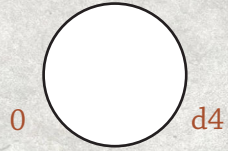
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Misc.
0/d4

DRAMBA

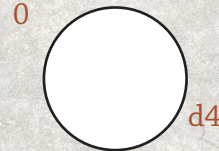
SPELL COMBAT STYLE



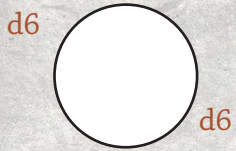
Corn Dust Shower
You ignore next two
body damage



Charm Trance



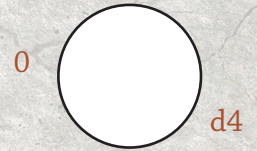
Brick Dust Circle
+3 magic defense die size
until you leave the area



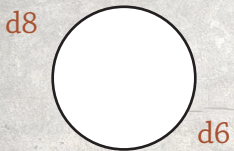
Burn Doll
1 + 1 Cha



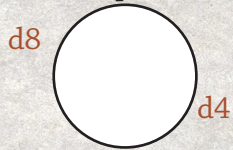
Hex Eye
+2 dmg + rebalance
next pin atk



Burn Doll (4)
Remove one magic, disease,
poison or similar effect
1/season per target



Pin to Head
1 + recast



Cloud Eye
Target cannot target you next round



Salve Doll
+2 to any characteristic
harmed in this combat



Pin to Heart



Body Switch (r)
Switch bodies with tgt
(next rd only)
Rebalance actions only
1/season per target



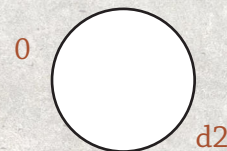
Anoint Doll
Use caster's magic die as
bonus die for 1 roll next rd



Curse Doll
-1 Mood



Dedicate Doll



Dedicate Doll



Bless Doll
+1 Mood

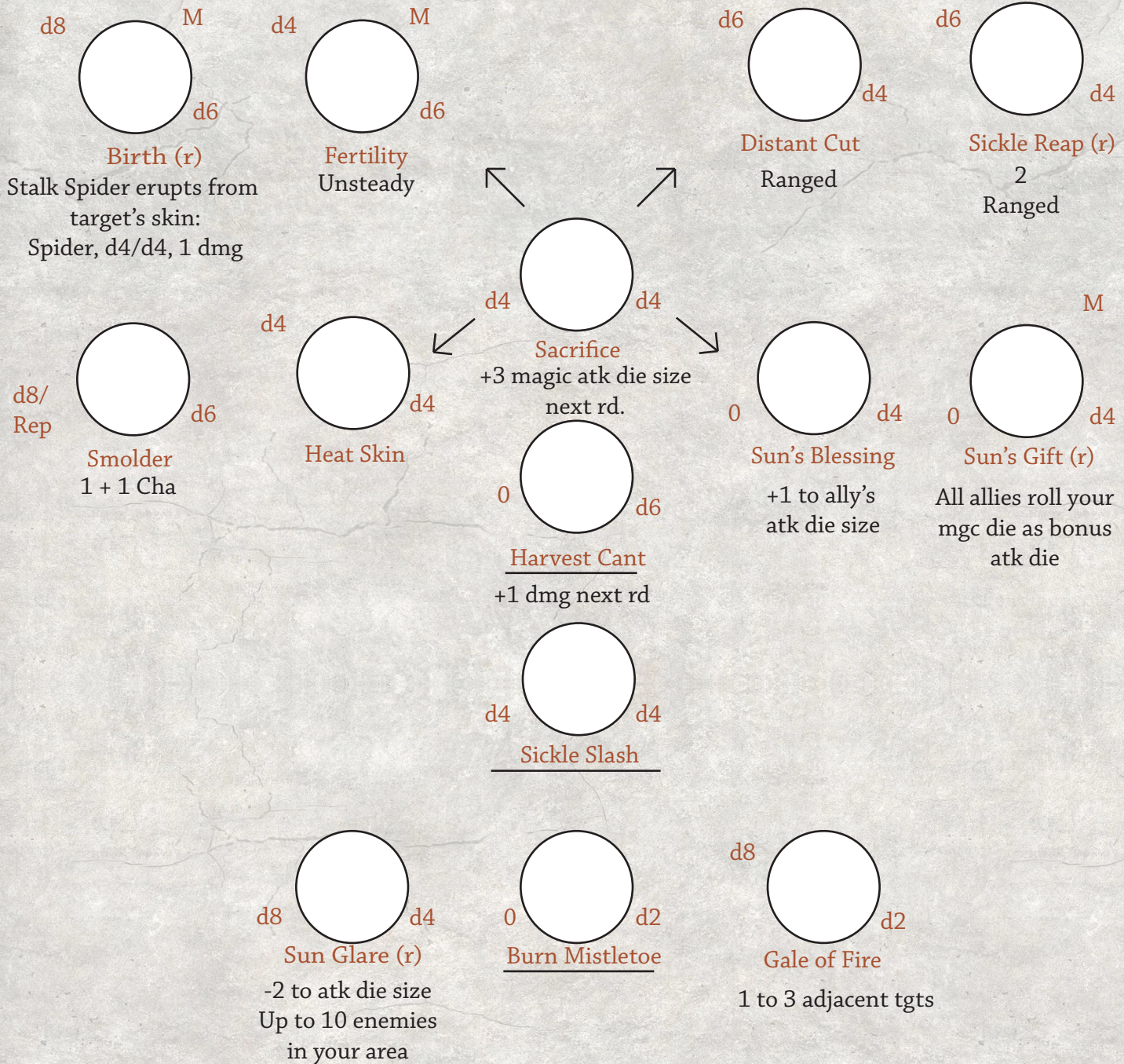
Requires no weapon, no shield.
All are ranged.
Charisma 5, Reason 5, Magic 6.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4

DRUIDIC

SPELL COMBAT STYLE



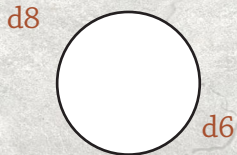
Requires sickle, no shield.
All are ranged except Sickle Slash.
Reason 6, Magic 7.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4

HEARTS

SPELL COMBAT STYLE



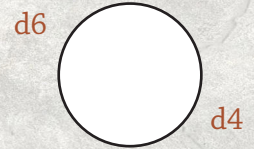
Anger
Unsteady



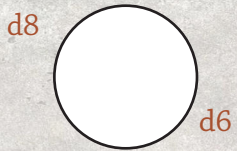
Hate
Target must
attack next rd



Doubt Crisis
-1 Mood to 5 targets



Reconsider
Target cannot
attack the same tgt
next rd.



Awaken Fear
Tgt rolls heart penalty die
on 1 roll of caster's choice
next rd



Suffering and Despair
1 + cannot use mood
or inspiration next rd.



Awaken Shame
-1 Mood



Two Hearts Beast as One
Target two allies; when
one is hit, the other can
take the body wound instead
(lasts until you re-cast)



Hearten
+1 Mood to ally



Sympathy
Target two creatures:
when one is hit, the other takes
an identical wound
(lasts until you re-cast)



Awaken Heart

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

HIGHCRAFT

SPELL COMBAT STYLE

M

d20 d6

Stone Pincer Hurl (r)
2 + move grabbed
tgt 1 area

d10 d4

Stone Pincer Grab
1+ Grabbed

d20 d6

Stone Pincer Slash

d12/d8 d4

Ribbons of Hessek
1 + move target 1 area

0 d4

Gather Stone

0 d6

Wards
+2 physical defense die size
and +1 magic defense die size
until you re-cast

0 d4

Coil the Ribbons
+3 die sizes, +1 damage,
and +1 area
to next Ribbons attack

d10/d10/d10 M

d4

Sparkling Orb

d10 d4

Explode Orb (r)
5 targets
1 + -1 atk and def
die size next rd

0 d2

Sculpt Orb

0 M

d4

Enter Orb

Add move, climb, +1 physical
defense die size, +2
magic defense die size,
and triple the damage of
Explode Orb
until you re-cast

d12 M

d6

Smash Wards

Re-cast M

d6 d6

Improved Arcane Wards
+2 magic defense die size
until you re-cast

Requires no weapon, no shield.
All are ranged.
Reason 8, Magic 8.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

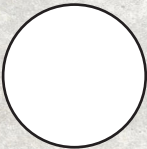
Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Misc.
0/d4

INCANDESCENCE

SPELL COMBAT STYLE

d12/
d10/
d8



M

d6

Lightning Bolt Storm

d10



M

d6/
Rep

Storm Cage

As Lightning Cage plus
and 1/round to those inside

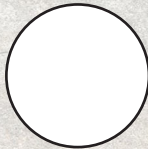
d12/
d8



d4

Forked Bolts

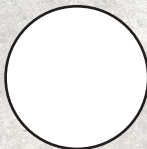
d12



d4

Lightning Bolt

d10

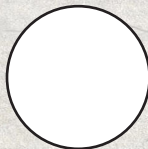


d4

Lightning Cage

Encloses up to 1 area
2 + unsteady to any
exiting

d10

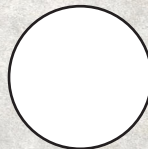


d4

Thundering Spear

1 + rebalance

0

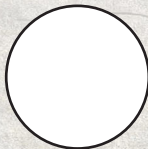


d2

Incandecsent Implement

Recharge implement
(use it a 2nd time this battle)

d10

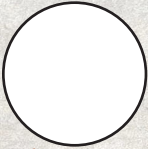


d4

Wave of Fire

5 adjacent targets

d8

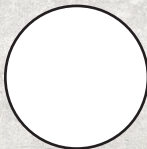


d4

Radiant Spear

1 + recast

d8

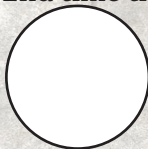


d2

Fire Weapon

Ally's weapon does
+1 dmg next rd

0

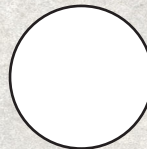


d4

Brilliant Wards

+2 physical defense
die size until you
rebalance

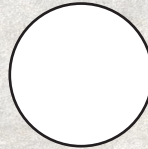
d8



d4

Orb of
Incandescence

d10



d2

Wall of Fire

1 to any who
cross wall

Requires no weapon, no shield.
All attack spells are ranged.
Reason 7, Magic 6.

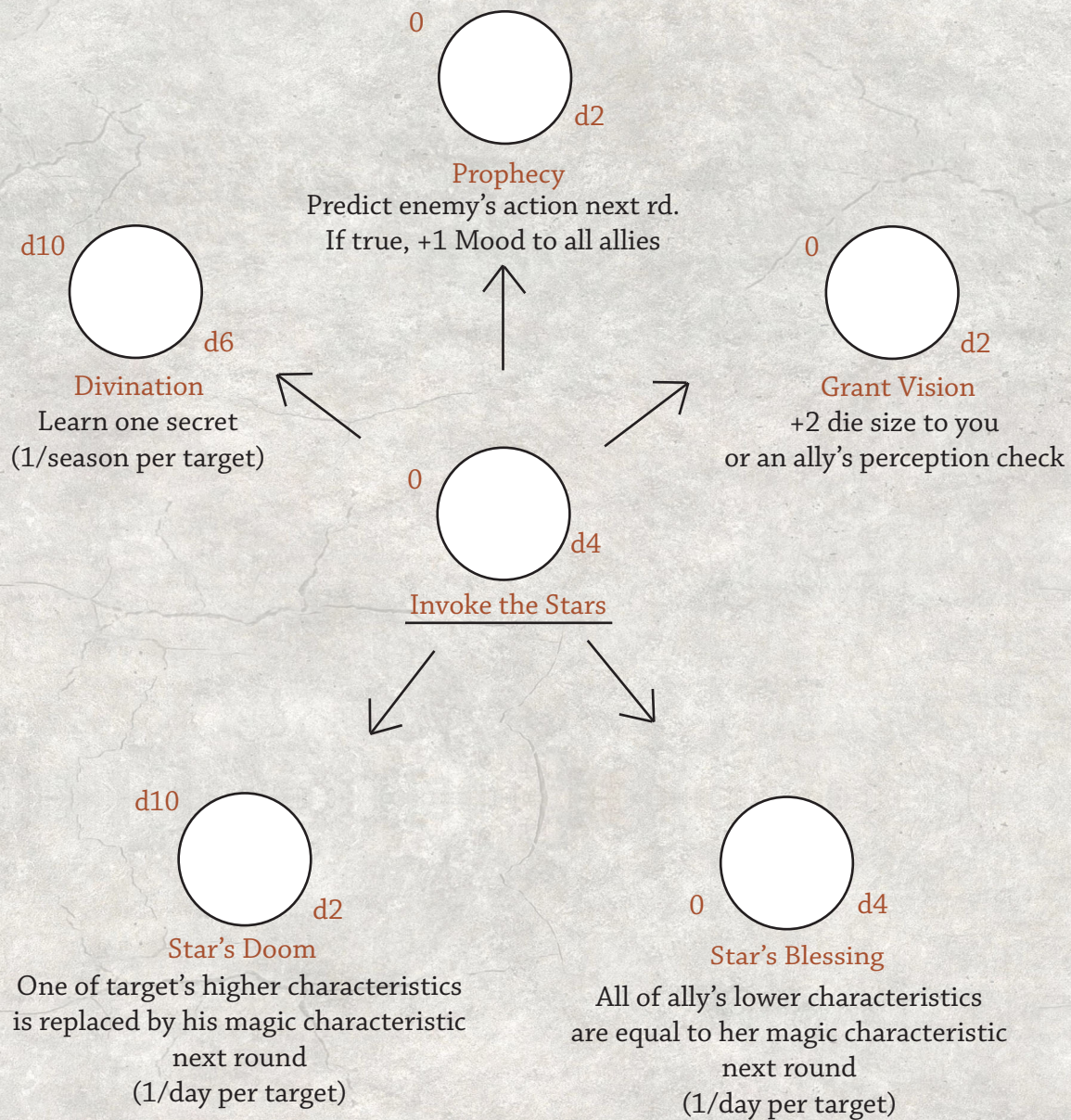
Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Misc.
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
Qck/0

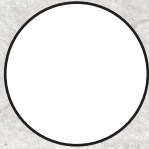
Trick/Misc.
0/d4

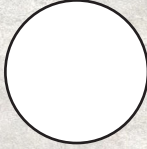
MAELSTROM

SPELL COMBAT STYLE

M
d12  d12
Maelstrom

10 Targets in same area
2 + Move

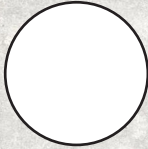
0  d2
Intensify

0  d4

Summon Storm

+1 damage until you re-cast

d20  d4
Thunderbolt
Rebalance

d6  d4

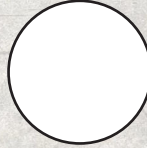
Hailstorm

3 targets

0  d4

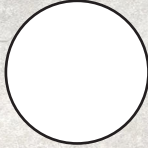
Absorb Storm

Next atk roll = your magic score

d6  d4

Eldritch Squall

10 targets in same area
Unsteady

0  d4

Debris Cloud

+2 physical and
+1 magical
defense die size
until you recast

d10  d4
Lightning and Soul Hail

4 Targets
(Each attack does
1 body dmg)

Requires no weapon, no shield.
All are ranged.
Reason 8, Magic 8.

Strike

Str/d2

Defend

0/Qck

Grab

Str/d2

Throw/Shoot

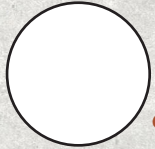
Qck/0

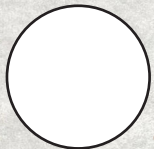
Trick/Misc.

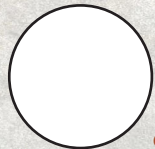
0/d4

WEREMAGIC

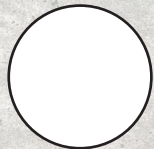
SPELL COMBAT STYLE

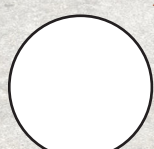
0  d6
Inconstant Moon
Move

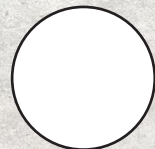
0  d6
Corrupting Light
+2 damage next atk

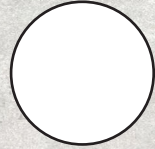
d8  d8
Claw

0  d4
Transform

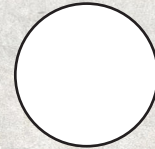
d6  d6
Lunacy
Tgt attacks his ally next rd with basic attack

M
0  d4
Gibbous Swell
Attack roll = magic score next rd.

d10  d6
Bite
2

0  d4
Leap
Move, Climb

d4  d4
Eclipse
Blinded (-4 atk and def. die size)

d10  d10
Shred
1 + armor is 3 points lower until you rebalance

d4  d4
Wane
1 + 1 Str + 1 Qck

d10  d6
d10/
d10
Tainted Frenzy

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 8.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Misc.
0/d4

CLAW/CLAW/BITE

COMBAT STYLE

D6  D4
Bite

D6  D4
Corner
Can't move next rd

0  D4
Pack Assault
1+ Increase atk die size
by 1 per pack member
to a max. of d12

D2  D4
Tackle and Rake
1 + Grabbed + Increase
atk die size by 1 per pack
member to a max. of d12

D4/
D2  D4
Claw Frenzy

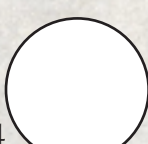
D4/
D2/
D6  D6
Claw/Claw/Bite

0  D4
Pounce
Move
+1 atk next rd

D4  D4
Swipe
1 + disarm

D4  D6
Claw

0  D8
Circle

D4  D4
Forepaw Rush
Both move 1 area together

Strike
Str/d2

Defend
0/Qck

Grab
Str/d2

Throw/Shoot
Qck/0

Trick/Scheme
0/d4

GIANT

COMBAT STYLE

d2/
d2  d2
Clobber Walk
3 + Move

0  d4
Wind Up

d4  d4
Two-hand Overhead
Smash (r)
3

d6  d4
Bat (r)
1 + move 1 area

d2  d2
Sweep (r)
Atk all targets in area

d8  d2
Kick
1 + unsteady

d8  d2
Stiff Arm
Target can't enter your area

d2  d4
Stomp
Move

0  d4
Flex
+2 atk die size next atk

d2  d2
Slam
2

d8  d2
Grab
Grabbed

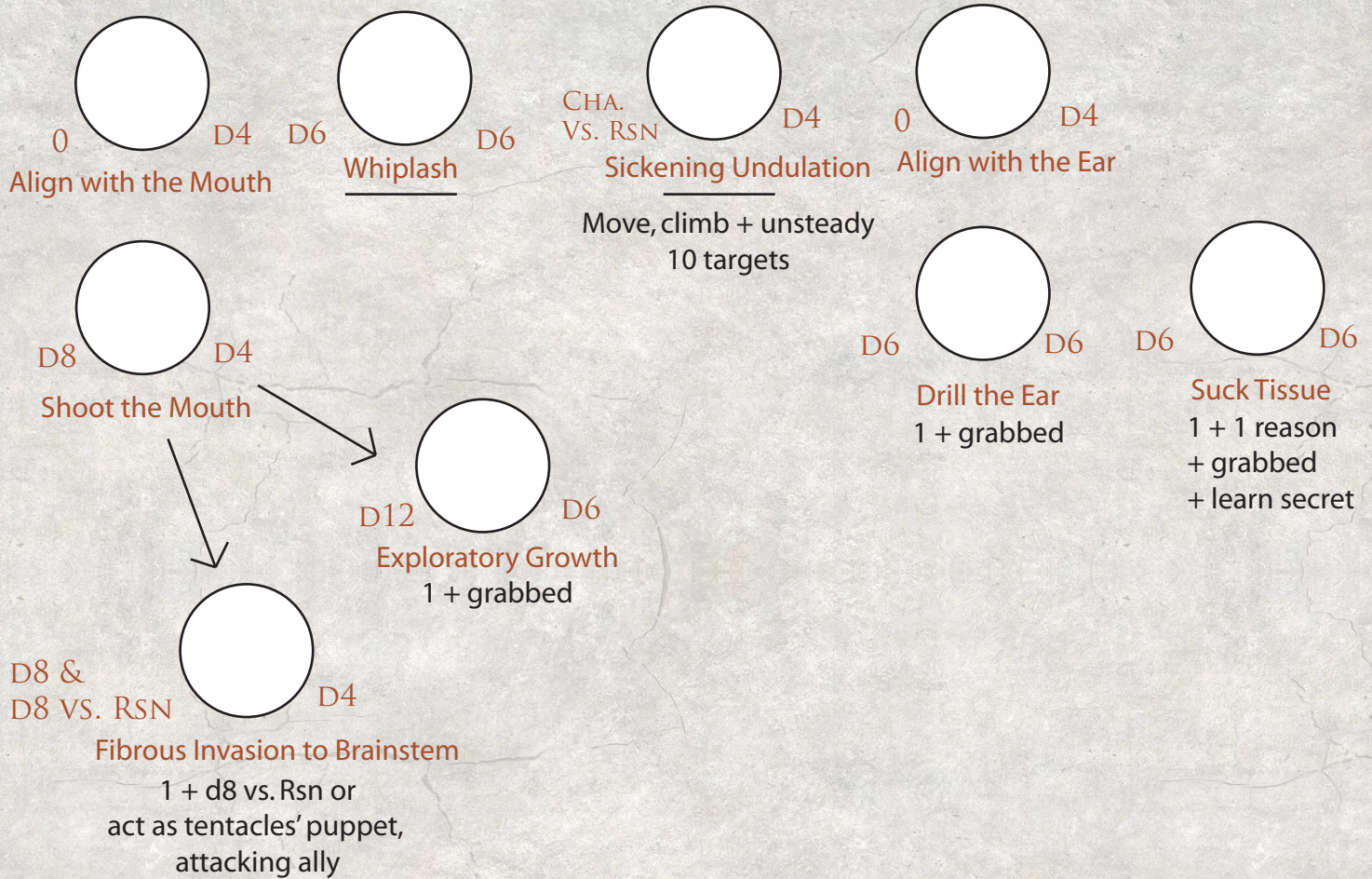
When hitting smaller targets, giant weapons do neither extra damage against weaker armor nor lower damage against stronger armor.

Requires giant size.

Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2
Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc. Action	
Qck/0	0/d4	

TENTACLES/SPELLSTALKS

COMBAT STYLE

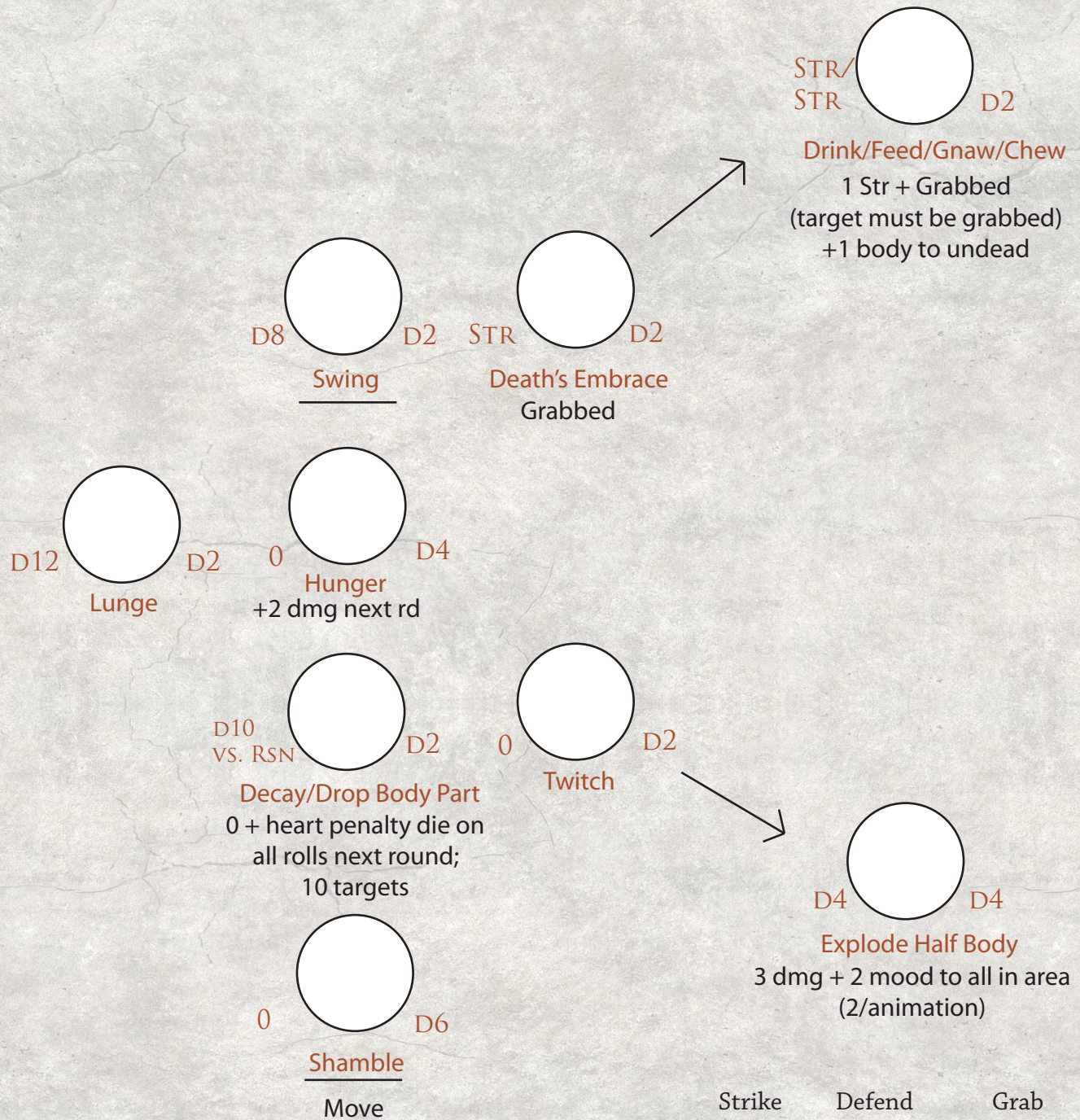


Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4

UNDEAD

COMBAT STYLE



Strike	Defend	Grab
Str/d2	0/Qck	Str/d2

Throw/Shoot	Trick/Misc.
Qck/0	0/d4