

Codex

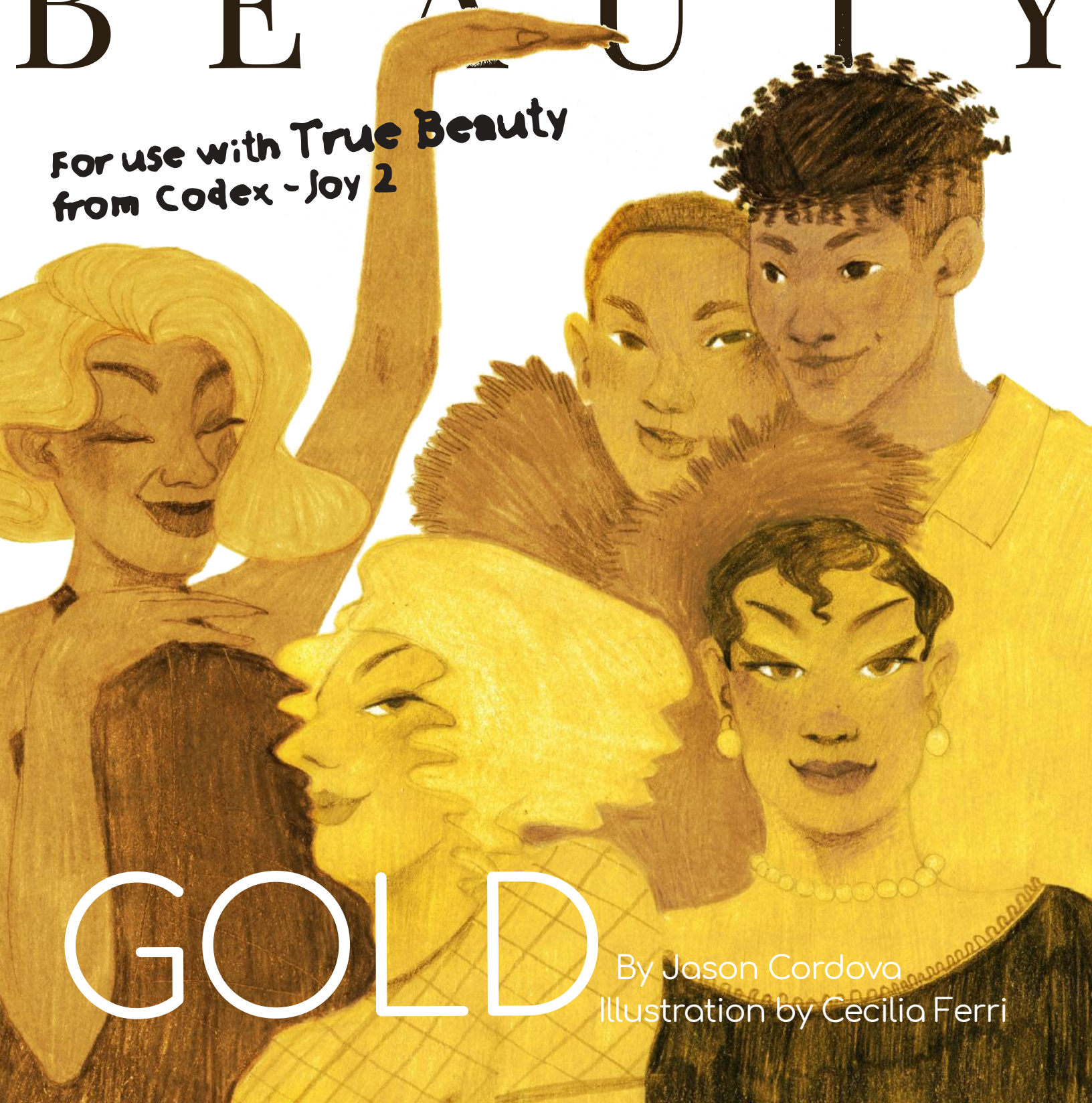
The Gauntlet's monthly RPG zine



GOLD

TRUE BEAUTY

For use with True Beauty
from Codex - Joy 2



GOLD

By Jason Cordova
Illustration by Cecilia Ferri

Sample Character Concepts

THESE are merely ideas—some inspiration for creating your TRUE BEAUTY character. Feel free to rearrange these ideas as needed, or discard them entirely. Ultimately, so long as you stay focused on the core activity of preparing for and walking in balls, your character concept can be as simple as “a young person of color seeking fame and family in the ball scene.”

Note: Some of these sample character concepts involve very difficult subject matter. Be sure everyone at the table is comfortable with your idea.

- ◇ **The Fae**, who has a job at a fancy department store, and who can get their hands on all the latest fashions.
- ◇ **The Ghoul**, whose Hunger is Thrills. Gets off on trespassing in white spaces; they like to see just how far they can go before whiteness asserts itself, frequently to tragic ends.
- ◇ **The Hollow**, who is a founding of House Diamante, a homeless youth with no memory of where they came from, and no real sense of what they bring to the ball. Themes of self-discovery and identity.
- ◇ **The Infernal**, whose Dark Power is a rich, Wall Street sugar daddy. Themes of power, control, fetishization, social class.
- ◇ **The Mortal**, who is the exciting ingenue of the ballroom scene, but who is a little edgier than the fresh-faced, innocent Unicorn who is the focus of TRUE BEAUTY.
- ◇ **The Queen**, who wants to break away from House Diamante and become the mother of their own house. Also works well for *The Witch* and *The Werewolf*.

- ◇ **The Vampire**, who is a loyal friend and honorary member of House Diamante, but who is now more of an elder statesman of the Harlem ballroom scene, having founded it many decades ago. They achieved legendary status before most of these new children were born, but they still enjoy walking the balls, and if they can help House Diamante win a trophy or two, all the better.
- ◇ **The Serpentine**, whose snake family is a rival house. (*Choose from the list below.*)
- ◇ **The Sasquatch**, a cryptid/urban legend who lives in Central Park.
- ◇ **The Cuckoo**, an employee of a rich white family on the Upper East Side. The Cuckoo frequently “borrows” the clothing of their employers. Themes of passing and identity.
- ◇ **The Heir**, a rich kid whose family owns many of the oldest, grandest buildings in the city. Currently hiding out in the ballroom scene, desperately trying to escape the violent expectations of their family. (*This character concept is an exception to the normal TRUE BEAUTY requirement of playing a character of color.*)
- ◇ **The Neighbor**, who isn’t actually a member of House Diamante. But they’re always around, the one person who actually admires the “glamorous” life of the ball houses. Maybe someday they’ll work up the nerve to walk in a ball themselves. But for now, they’re just happy to be here.

20 Rival Ball Houses & their Mothers

1	House of Gucci-Glitz <i>Gina Gucci-Glitz</i>	11	House of Basquiat <i>Anastasia Basquiat</i>
2	House of Galaxia <i>Hesperia Galaxia</i>	12	House of Chanel <i>Gordon Chanel</i>
3	House of Empress <i>Toni Empress</i>	13	House of Infinity <i>Iggy Infinity</i>
4	House of Temptation <i>Monica Temptation</i>	14	House of Tempest <i>Terrance Tempest</i>
5	House of Magenta <i>Cyan Ida Magenta</i>	15	House of Ducati <i>Ivana Ducati</i>
6	House of Iconique <i>Imani Iconique</i>	16	House of Le Cirque <i>Champagne Le Cirque</i>
7	House of Samurai <i>Roberto Samurai</i>	17	House of Transcendence <i>Bianca Transcendence</i>
8	House of Majeur <i>Ursula Majeur</i>	18	House of Joyeux <i>Adriana Joyeux</i>
9	House of Bellissima <i>Vivica Bellissima</i>	19	House of Adair <i>Linda Evangelista Adair</i>
10	House of Magnificence <i>Magnificence</i>	20	House of Crystália <i>Coco Crystália</i>

20 Ball Themes

1	Over the Rainbow <i>Emerald City Eleganza Extravaganza</i>	11	A Weekend in the Hamptons <i>Feeling Your Beige Fantasy</i>
2	Legendary Children of the Corn <i>Rural Horror Realness</i>	12	Le Affair <i>A High-Profile Divorce in Three Acts</i>
3	Let Them Eat Cakes <i>The Cheeky Court of Louis XVI</i>	13	I Own 51% of this Damn Company <i>Rich White Lady Realness</i>
4	All that Glitters <i>Gilded Fantasy</i>	14	A Golden Ticket to Pure Imagination <i>Willy Wonkiana</i>
5	Escapade <i>Jet Set Eleganza</i>	15	Freshman Orientation <i>Ivy League Realness</i>
6	A Night of Divas	16	Tea and Strumpets <i>Sexy Britannia</i>
7	Le Moulin Rouge <i>Can-Can-Can You Dig It?</i>	17	Bulfinch's Fabulous Mythology
8	Walking for Pinks <i>A Night at the Sockhop</i>	18	War of the Worlds <i>Invasion of the Body Snatched</i>
9	Blood and Black Velvet <i>Gothique Fantastique</i>	19	Cherry Ice Cream Smile <i>Women All Over the World</i>
10	Sweet 16 Supreme <i>Daddy Bought You EVERYTHING</i>	20	Say it with Color!

10 stores to Mop From:

- 1 BERGDORF GOODMAN
- 2 LERNER
- 3 Abraham and Straus
- 4 Nord's
- 5 HENRI BENDEL NEW YORK
- 6 Saks Fifth Avenue
- 7 bloomingdales
- 8 Century 21 department store
- 9 TIFFANY & CO.
- 10 BONWIT TELLER

100 PERCENT OFF!

20 *Nightlife Spots*

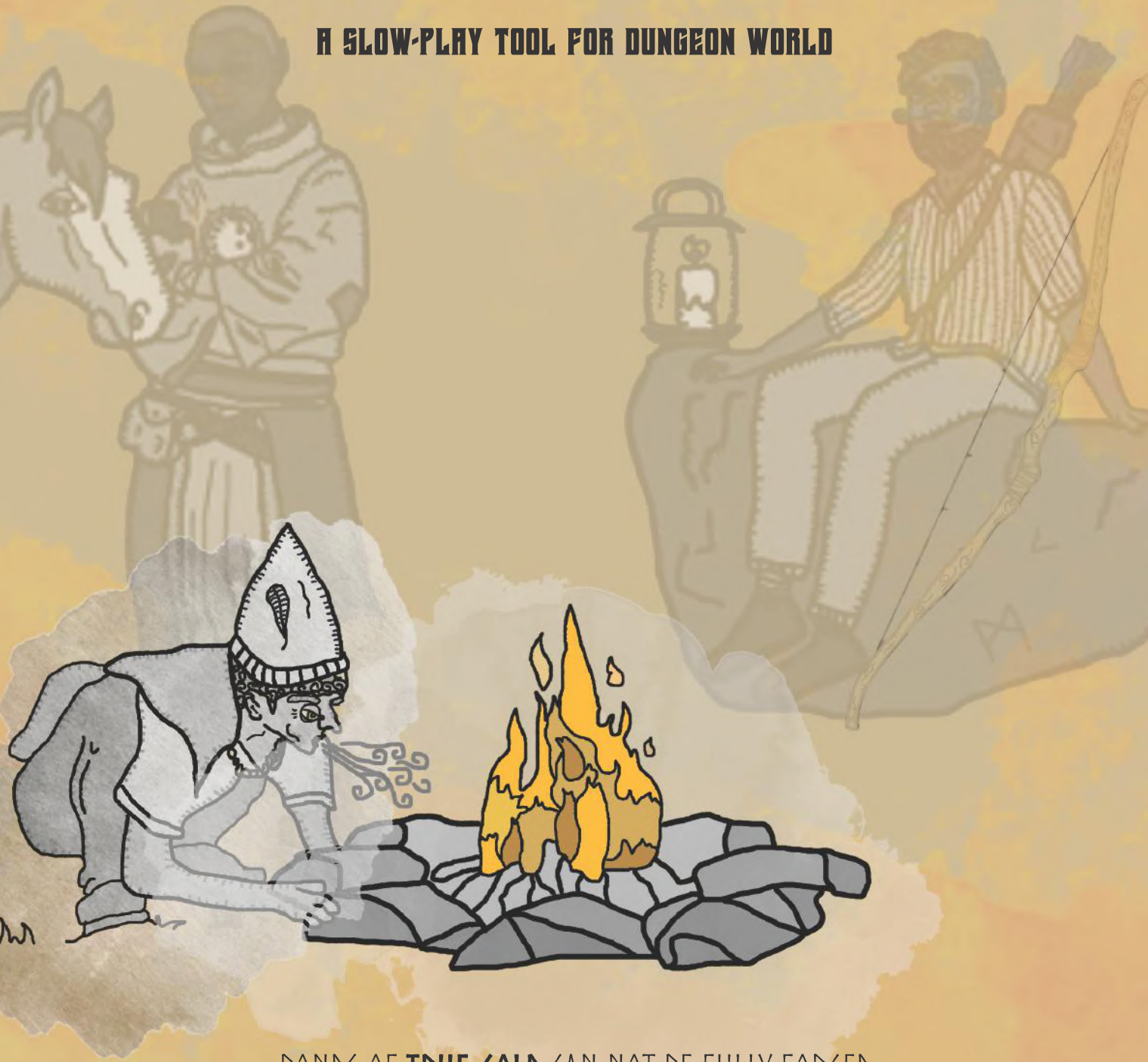
1	The Incursion	11	Chanteuse Bar
2	Paradise Garage	12	Daddy's Place
3	The Tropicalia	13	The Gregory
4	Intimates	14	The Deep End
5	Manhunters	15	The Gold Bar
6	The Patagonia	16	Time & Temp
7	Diamond Life	17	Sketches
8	Amber's Bar	18	Chic Bar
9	The Starlight	19	Tunnel Vision
10	Basement of the Christopher Hotel	20	The Eleanor P. Driscoll School of Dance (after hours)

The Playlist: TRUE BEAUTY *gold*

Love Sensation	Loleatta Holloway
Controversy	Prince
Warm Leatherette	Grace Jones
Let the Music Play	Shannon
Sugar Walls	Sheena Easton
Head to Toe	Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam
I'm Coming Out	Diana Ross
Running Up That Hill	Kate Bush
White Horse	Laid Back
In My House	Mary Jane Girls
Over and Over	Shalamar
We Are Family	Sister Sledge

THE TRUE-GOLD FORGE

A SLOW-PLAY TOOL FOR DUNGEON WORLD



BONDS OF **TRUE-GOLD** CAN NOT BE FULLY FORGED
WITHIN THE INTENSE HEAT AND PRESSURE OF PERILOUS JOURNEYS.
THEY REQUIRE STOLEN MOMENTS IN LONELY HAVENS.
THEY ARE TEMPERED BY HUSHED WORDS OVER BROKEN BREAD;
QUENCHED IN THE SOFT LIGHT OF THE **TRUE-GOLD** FORGE -
BESET BY THE DARK.

The True-Gold Forge is an expansion of Jason Codova's Perilous Journey procedure (reproduced below), as found in *The Discern Realities Annual* (2017). The procedure is concise and effective: however, over an extended campaign you might want more questions and prompts to draw on! The original procedure is intended for use with *Dungeon World* - but the prompts within this little expansion are system agnostic, and could easily slot into most fantasy genre games.

TRAILBLAZER: Tell us about a distinct geographical feature or landmark you are using to navigate by. Is there a legend or story associated with this landmark? If so, tell us about it.

SCOUT: What are you particularly worried about running into during this journey? What rumors have you heard that make such an encounter so frightening to you?

THE QUARTERMASTER: One of your fellow party members does something at camp you find particularly annoying. What is it? One of your fellow party members does something at camp you find surprisingly endearing. What is it?

Jason's Perilous Journey Procedure

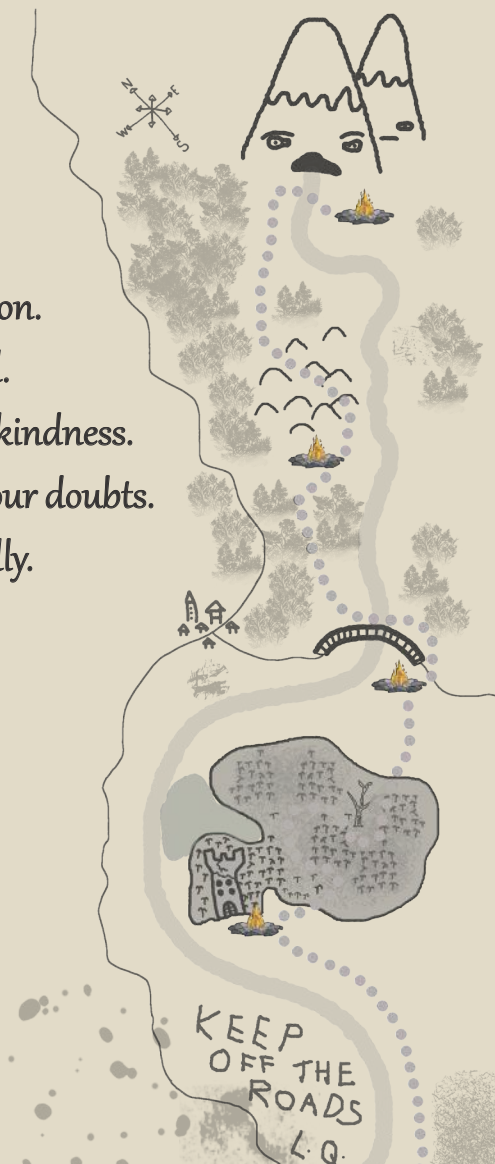
THE TRUE-GOLD FORGE

GRIPES, BLESSINGS, AND THE ROAD AHEAD













- • Request forgiveness, **or demand an apology.**
- • Begin an honest conversation, **or ask a personal question.**
- • You travelled this road once, **or know someone who did.**
- • Give a travelling companion a gift, **or do them a small kindness.**
- • Complain about something insignificant, **or express your doubts.**
- • Tell your companions about an old rival, **or a trusted ally.**

DREAMS, NIGHTMARES, AND PROPHETIC VISIONS













- • Weather-watching, bird-signs, **reading tea-leaves.**
- • A beautiful dream, **or a disturbing nightmare.**
- • A prophetic dream...? **Dejavu.**
- • Morning Prayers, **Final Devotions.**
- • Spirits, Ghosts, **Otherworlds.**
- • What happens if we fail?















HOME, MEMORIES, AND FIRST IMPRESSIONS

-   Compare your scars, *or: what does your name mean?*
-   Share your earliest memory, *or divulge your deepest regret.*
-   Where will you return to after the journey, *or: where will you never go back to?*
-   Tell a story you were told as a child, *or hum a lullaby.*
-   First impression of a companion, *or: what had you heard of them before you met?*
-   A friendly competition of strength, wit, *or sleight of hand.*













SONGS, ANCESTORS, AND HOW WE CAME TO BE.

-   Sing a song, *or demand one of your companions sing one.*
-   A tale of your ancestor/s , *or the hope of your people.*
-   A ghost story, *bugbears or bogeymen.*
-   Pantheon, Lost Faith, a Dead God.
-   *How were your people created?*
-   A constellation, *or: how were the mountains and oceans formed?*

PRACTICALITIES: BAD FOOD, WET BOOTS, FULL PACKS.

-   A delicious feast or a terrible meal: *how does the food remind you of home?*
-   How is *the weather or the landscape* making the journey difficult?
-   Investigate a treasure in the firelight, *or ask about a companion's belonging.*
-   Tend to your own wounds, *or ask for help.*
-   Drown your sorrows, *blacken your lungs,* get high.
-   Care for your gear, *or rifle through a companion's belongings.*

LEARNING, FORGETTING AND... RETURNING?

-   Teach a companion something, *or ask a companion to teach you.*
-   Ask a companion “*Where did you learn to...?*”, or “*Who taught you to..?*”
-   Hone your skills - *A Training Montage.*
-   Prepare spells and rituals, *or experiment with a magical object.*
-   *Teach me your language,* or ask me to learn mine?
-   *Where do we go when we die?*

USING THE TRUE-GOLD FORGE



Little moments of calm and mundanity around the campfire can provide a strong contrast aesthetically to the action and high stakes of adventuring. The prompts above are intended to initiate interactions between the characters, push them to ask one another questions, draw out snippets of backstory, shared history, motivations - and perhaps suggest what lies ahead in their future...

Connecting the questions and responses to your characters is a fun, challenging, and effective playing technique. However, it is also just as appropriate to add some disconnected colour or a sprinkle of details that enrich the world without progressing any central narrative. Roll on the tables, or “cheat” and choose whatever catches your eye.



THESE FLEETING SANCTUARIES - EPHEMERAL ISLANDS IN AN EVERCHANGING SEA

- ...embraced by the gentle bend of a quiet stream...
- ... once a home, now the ghosts of the past haunt the walls of a broken house...
- ... beneath a bridge: no-one travels this road anymore...
- ... long grass, trampled down, warm ashes in the firepit: secondhand campsite...
- ... gaze up into the outstretched arms of this ancient tree: true understanding...
- ... a broken tower: small creatures nestling amongst mouldering books ...

THESE EDGES, THESE BRINKS THESE INBETWEENS ARE THE BIRTHPLACE OF MAGIC... PLACES OF POWER.

- ... a cavemouth: a way between the open air and the earth beneath, between light and dark....
- ... the beach: the edge of where the ocean meets the shore...
- ... the border between two nations: what kind of magic lives here..?



Lu Quade



TROPHY GOLD

JESSE ROSS

OVERVIEW

Trophy Gold is a collaborative storytelling game about a group of treasure-hunters on an expedition to a haunted environment that doesn't want them there. It requires one game master (GM) to moderate the game and portray the dangers of the world, and one or more players to portray the treasure-hunters. A session of Trophy Gold typically takes about 3–4 hours, though a full adventure could take more than one session to complete.

If you've played Trophy—the game that Trophy Gold is based on—you'll find much that's familiar. However, unlike Trophy, your treasure-hunters aren't necessarily doomed. They have a chance to succeed: they can retrieve priceless artifacts, face down dangerous creatures, and maybe even survive long enough to tell their tale and venture out another day.

Trophy Gold takes the collaborative, push-your-luck rules and rolls of Trophy and blends them with the survive-by-your-wits mentality of old school fantasy games. Instead of the ever-increasing power that comes with leveling up found in other games, treasure-hunters in Trophy Gold remain fragile, meaning death is always just one bad roll away.

According to Ben Milton, old school designer famous for the games *Maze Rats* and *Knave*:

The more of the following a campaign has, the more old school it is: high lethality, an open world, a lack of pre-written plot, an emphasis on creative problem solving, an exploration-centered reward system (usually XP for treasure), a disregard for "encounter balance", and the use of random tables to generate world elements that surprise both players and referees. Also, a strong do-it-yourself attitude and a willingness to share your work and use the creativity of others in your game.

It was with this philosophy in mind that Trophy Gold was designed, and with the last sentence, in particular, that Trophy Gold is being released under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License. [HTTPS://CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/LICENSES/BY/4.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)



Trophy Gold is based on *Trophy*, originally by Jesse Ross, with additional contributions by Jason Cordova, David Morrison, Jim Crocker, Leandro Pondoc, and Luiz Paulo Ferraz. Trophy is adapted from *Cthulhu Dark* with permission of Graham Walmesley. Trophy is also based on *Blades in the Dark* (found at [HTTP://WWW.BLADESINTHEDARK.COM/](http://www.bladesinthedark.com/)), product of One Seven Design, developed and authored by John Harper, and licensed for use under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license ([HTTP://CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/LICENSES/BY/3.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/)).

PRINCIPLES

It's very important to make sure everyone going into a game of Trophy Gold is on the same page. Principles are the guidelines you should follow to make sure that happens, and to make your game feel old school. Whenever you speak, try to align with the principles of your role.

PLAYER PRINCIPLES

Be curious. Both as a player and as the character you are playing, you are an explorer. Ask questions of the GM as well as your fellow players. Probe your surroundings: open doors, look behind statues, shine a torch down the dark hallway. Pay attention to the details you're given.

Play to win. Play like your life depends on it, because in this game, it likely does. Use your wits, and when you have to fight, fight dirty.

Play to lose. At some point, your luck will run out. Embrace it and lean into it.

GM PRINCIPLES

Play to find out what happens. Even if you sit down with a pre-written incursion or adventure module, go into the game with a willingness to let the session unfold on its own terms.

Make the world and everyone in it seem real. Describe the world in sensory-rich detail. The people and monstrosities that inhabit it should have tangible goals and memorable traits.

Be a fan of the characters. This doesn't mean "let them win." It means "give them challenges that make you root for them."

Value player skill over character ability. The characters are purposefully thin. The players should make them feel real, including their own wits and clever solutions.

Sometimes, disclaim decision-making. You are co-creating the story with your players. Let them chime in to flesh out the world, describe things they see, and get invested in what's happening. Also, when you don't have an answer, leave things to fate and let the dice decide.

Provide problems without obvious solutions. You don't need to have all the answers. Give the players lots of chances to be creative, and then reward their creativity.

Ask leading questions and build on the answers. Make players co-creators of the world to get them invested in it. Ask them about their characters, the things they know and observe. Make them complicit in their own fate.

When there's no rule, apply consistent rulings. This game doesn't have many rules. If you need to make a rule up on the spot, do so, then be fair by using that rule in all similar situations.

CREATING A TREASURE-HUNTER

In Trophy Gold, you play a treasure-hunter intent on entering the forests, ruins, and other haunted spaces of the world in search of riches. Treasure-hunting is for gamblers: a high-risk, high-reward pursuit fueled by a mix of hope and desperation, and undertaken by those who are committed to be the winner in this winner-take-all game.

First, choose your *Name*, *Occupation*, and *Background*. Your Occupation is the role you serve in the party now, and the place where you focused your attention and skills. Your Background is what you used to do. Often, there is a reason you no longer do it. When you choose your Background, think about what made you leave that profession and why you can't ever go back to it. The bottom three Backgrounds are strange heritages (Beastbitten, Manikin, and Faeborn), and are detailed below.

Next, choose your *Drive*. Your Drive is the reason you hunt for treasure. Over the course of the game, you will collect Gold, some of which can be stashed away in your Hoard in support of your Drive. When you reach 100 Gold, you achieve your Drive and can retire your treasure-hunter.

Next, choose your *Backpack Equipment* and, if desired, *Combat Equipment*. Equipment is divided into three groups: Backpack Equipment, Combat Equipment, and Found Equipment. All three are outlined in the following sections.

Next, choose your *Rituals*, if any. Rituals are dangerous spells you can cast to perform miraculous feats. All treasure-hunters can learn and use Rituals, regardless of Background or Occupation. You can start with up to 3 Rituals, but you must increase your starting Ruin by 1 for each Ritual you know.

Finally, set your *Ruin*, *Burdens*, and *Hoard*. Your starting Ruin is based on the number of Rituals you know. Your starting Burdens are based on the number of pieces of Combat Equipment you have. Your starting Hoard is always 0.

BACKPACK EQUIPMENT

Your treasure-hunter starts out with a backpack filled with strange and useful equipment for their incursion. Roll a dark and light die to select a backpack, or feel free to pick the one that best matches your treasure-hunter's Occupation, Background, or some other aspect of the character as you've imagined them. Each backpack has slots for 6 items. The 3 items listed in the backpack take 1 slot each, leaving you 3 open slots. Open slots can be used to pull out additional equipment as you need it, described on the next page.

In addition, it's assumed that you have flint and steel (or some other method to start a fire), and the typical supply of rations and drink for the incursion. However, the GM can always put these items in danger or take them from you as a complication or consequence of a roll. You can replenish these items without cost by successfully making it back to town.

Some items have quantities or a number of uses listed in parentheses. Keep track of these. When you use up or lose an item (including an item from your starting Backpack Equipment), cross it off. Spend 1 Gold back at town to reopen that slot.

Jeff is playing Nima the Ranger. Jeff rolls a dark die and a light die to determine which backpack Nima starts with. His dark die is 3 and his light die is 2, meaning Nima's backpack has 300 feet of twine, wind chimes, a monstrous wooden mask, and room for three more things to be determined as needed.

During the adventure, Nima wants to use the twine to set up a perimeter alarm around the party's campsite. Jeff has three open slots, so he has Nima rummage through her bag to see if she can find that small bell she knew she brought. Jeff writes down "Bell, small" in one of the three open backpack slots, leaving him with two more open slots. The GM might also require Jeff to reduce the amount of twine he has left if they believe that Nima won't be able to recover the twine used in the perimeter alarm.

ADDITIONAL BACKPACK EQUIPMENT

Though you are foolish enough to be a treasure-hunter, you are not so foolish as to venture out into the world unprepared.

When you rummage through your backpack and you have open slots, pick one piece of equipment below to fill a slot.

Air bladder	Candles, 2 hrs dim (6)	Fishing net, standard	Journal & black ink	Pickaxe	Sponge
Bear trap	Chain (12')	Fishing rod	Lockpicks	Pole (10')	Stakes, wooden (6)
Bell, small	Chalk, white (6 uses)	Grappling hook	Mallet	Pot of tar (3 uses)	Tent, one-person
Block & tackle	Cooking pot	Grease (3 uses)	Mirror, small glass	Rope (60')	Torches, 3 hrs (3)
Bottles, lead (3)	Crowbar	Hourglass, 30 min. marker	Musk, deer (3 uses)	Scroll tube, empty	Twine (150')
Bucket	Face paint (3 uses)	Iron spikes (6)	Padlock & key	Shovel	Whistle

COMBAT EQUIPMENT

The type of equipment needed to face the things that lurk in the hidden parts of the world don't come cheaply. You must increase your starting Burdens by 1 for each piece of Combat Equipment you select from the following list.

Armor: *Breastplate, Chainmail, Gauntlets, Helmet, Shield, etc.*
A piece of armor can be marked to absorb damage during a Combat Roll. All armor is unmarked when your treasure-hunter returns safely to town after an incursion.

Weapon: *Axe, Bow, Dagger, Spear, Staff, Sword, Warhammer, etc.*
Weapons allow you to participate in a Combat Roll, though you put yourself at risk of injury.

FOUND EQUIPMENT

Items found while on an incursion can be carried on your person without them taking up slots in your backpack. Found Combat Equipment increases your treasure-hunter's Burdens if kept, though can replace an existing piece of Combat Equipment.

RUIN

This number shows how much the world has dug its claws into you, including the physical and mental harm you've suffered.

It starts at 1, but is increased for each Ritual you know at the start of the game.

BURDENS

This number represents the amount of Gold you must recover on your next incursion in order to feed, clothe, and house yourself, and pay your debts. It starts at 1, but is increased for each piece of Combat Equipment you start with. This number goes up as you take on additional Burdens throughout the game.

HOARD

This number represents the amount of Gold you have stashed away in support of your Drive. It starts at 0.

BESTIARY

In addition to the individual character sheet for your treasure-hunter, the party keeps a shared log of all the monsters they've faced. This is called the Bestiary, and it persists even when individual treasure-hunters do not.

THE PEOPLE OF THE CROWN

Humans of all ranks and walks of life exist under the protection of the Crown. Other, stranger beings are also counted among the citizenry, provided they stay out of trouble and promptly pay the royal tax collector.

BEASTBITTEN

Woe to the human who returns from the forest or field marked by the bite of a ravenous beast. If not urgently treated, such wounds can fester and provoke the bitten's body to undergo a transformation. On moonless nights, their bodies stretch and break, growing features resembling their attacker: claws, hooves, fangs, fur, antlers. Feral beastbitten are considered criminals under Our Majesty's Laws, and subject to imprisonment or worse in Barsul.

Very rarely, a beastbitten subjected to unconventional treatments is able to be "cured" and reintegrated into society. Though they still transform, they often remain in possession of their faculties, and can even trigger a partial change at will. Notable scholars suggest that such a treatment doesn't actually cure the disease, but merely delays the victim's inevitable descent into a bestial form.

MANIKINS

Far away from prying eyes, particularly powerful and untrusting sorcerers craft companions from planks of wood, scraps of cloth, and bales of hay. These beings, called manikins, are imbued with life, and—on rare occasion—given flesh, breath, and an appearance indistinguishable from other humans.

The nature of what animates manikins is disputed by scholars. Whatever it is, it brings with it the ability to do anything the human spirit is capable of, including casting rituals. King Nasfaref the Undying is rumored to have groomed a manikin apprentice, instructing them in his own mannerisms such that some version of him could hold the throne in perpetuity.

FAEBORN

Faeborn. Changelings. Elvish creatures planted as infiltrators and spies, hidden behind magical masks which disguise their otherworldly appearance. And yet, so much time among the "enemy" can soften one's resolve. Many faeborn take up human causes and concerns, and the Crown treats said individuals as they would any other subject.

Of course, given the faeborn talent for illusions, it's not always clear who the subjects really are, or what they might be hiding.

TROPHY GOLD

NAME

PLAYER

OCCUPATION

Skills

Your Occupation is the role you serve in the party now. Your Background is what you used to do or be before you entered this life of treasure-hunting.

BACKGROUND

Skill

TRAINING

When you make it safely back to town at the end of an incursion, you may acquire the services of a mentor who will train you in the use of a new Skill. Each Skill you acquire permanently increases your Burdens by 1.

Skills

HOUSEHOLD

After you survive your first incursion, you may take out a loan for small private house. It isn't much, but safely returning to the comforts of home after an incursion always heals 1 Ruin and all Conditions. Acquiring a Household permanently increases your Burdens by 1.

Household Name & Description

RITUALS

Any treasure-hunter can learn and use Rituals, regardless of Background or Occupation. You can start with up to 3 Rituals, but you must increase your starting Ruin by 1 for each Ritual you know. You can never lower your Ruin below your starting Ruin.

Rituals

LIBRARY

You have acquired a few small spellbooks you can study in between incursions to learn new Rituals. Each Ritual you learn permanently increases your Burdens by 1.

Rituals

DRIVE

HOARD

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EQUIPMENT

Backpack

USES

Combat

MARKED

Found Equipment

CONDITIONS

BURDENS

GOLD

RUIN

TROPHY GOLD

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Rituals

LIBRARY

You have acquired a few small spellbooks you can study in between incursions to learn new Rituals. Each Ritual you learn permanently increases your Burdens by 1.

Rituals

DRIVE

HOARD

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EQUIPMENT

Backpack

USES

Combat

MARKED

Found Equipment

CONDITIONS

BURDENS

GOLD

RUIN

TREASURE-HUNTER OPTIONS

Roll or choose from among the following options, use one from another Trophy supplement, or work with the GM to make your own.

NAMES

Akaleh	Desarim	Inda	Masero	Osto	Sibil
Alina	Elisio	Kasien	Moradi	Parda	Talia
Aram	Esfahen	Kel	Neven	Pela	Teodan
Baso	Fion	Kiva	Nima	Rasei	Toram
Benah	Foret	Lora	Obeha	Revel	Valen
Daian	Ifori	Mahera	Orlen	Sareh	Vero

OCCUPATIONS and what they are skilled in

or or

Bodyguard <i>protection, speed, vigilance</i>	Ox <i>destruction, persistence, strength</i>	Sellsword <i>athletics, defense, weapons</i>
Lockpick <i>acrobatics, security, surprise</i>	Ranger <i>beasts, hunting, traps</i>	Smuggler <i>dexterity, spontaneity, stealth</i>

or or

Antiquarian <i>artifacts, myths, obfuscation</i>	Leech <i>forensics, herbs, surgery</i>	Oracle <i>gods, rituals, trances</i>
Hedge <i>curses, improvisation, spirits</i>	Magician <i>performance, rituals, trickery</i>	Sorcerer <i>alchemy, rituals, symbols</i>

BACKGROUNDS and what they are skilled in

or or or

Abandoned Squire <i>aiding</i>	Escaped Cultist <i>deception</i>	Plagued Farmer <i>plants</i>
Defrocked Priest <i>omens</i>	Expelled Apprentice <i>lore</i>	Reformed Thug <i>intimidation</i>
Disinherited Noble <i>appraisal</i>	Hapless Peddler <i>trading</i>	Retired Soldier <i>tactics</i>
Emboldened Ratcatcher <i>lair</i>	Heretical Inquisitor <i>secrets</i>	Runaway Kingsguard <i>tracking</i>
Errant Knight <i>dueling</i>	Liberated Prisoner <i>deals</i>	Uninspired Artisan <i>craft</i>
Cured Beastbitten <i>transformation</i>	Orphaned Manikin <i>mimicry</i>	Unmasked Faeborn <i>illusions</i>

DRIVES

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ◻ Acquire the Gleaming Cache before it is too late • ◻ Arm the resistance against Lord Haffir's tyranny • ◻ Attend Countess Shima's Forbidden Festival • ◻ Become part of the Swirling Court • ◻ Become the only patron of Ansem the Wistful • ◻ Break the geas placed by the Witch of Nevask | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ◻ Find the resting ground of the Morning Knight • ◻ Free the serfs of Bandung Prefecture • ◻ Give your betrothed the present they crave • ◻ Humiliate the Chancellor of Yogyakarta Lyceum • ◻ Locate the jewel that haunts Eriol's dreams • ◻ Pay the toll of the Emerald Bridge |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ◻ Break the siege on your sibling's fortress • ◻ Bribe the justiciars so they will erase your crimes • ◻ Bring freedom to Tirollis • ◻ Buy the orphanage where you were mistreated • ◻ Buy your brother's freedom from Barsul Prison • ◻ Commission a glorious statue of your deity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ◻ Pay your father's debt to Bright-Teeth Assyrio • ◻ Publish your discoveries from ancient Kalduhr • ◻ Rebuild Hisham's Fountain • ◻ Repay your debt to the Chieftan of Ubud • ◻ Restore the lost glory of the Caliginous Grove • ◻ Restore the Temple of Tanahlot |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ◻ Destroy the works of Ajino the Debauched Painter • ◻ Earn the respect of the Governor of Fort Duhrin • ◻ Earn the right to your family's name • ◻ Establish an estate in the Levasti countryside • ◻ Finance an expedition into the Blossoming Sea • ◻ Find the artifact that proves the king's true nature | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ◻ Resurrect the Cult of Derawan • ◻ Retire in comfort in the Rose District of Ambaret • ◻ Retrieve the lost banner of the Nameless Legion • ◻ Seize control of the Free Borough of Khamal • ◻ Take Cyrus' place at the Earthen Council • ◻ Win the heart of the heir apparent of Naganeh |

BACKPACK EQUIPMENT

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>• or •</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◻ Fishing net, woven of silver
Bottles, lead (6)
Magnet ◻ Bag of hard candies (12)
Skinning knife
Winterwolf pelt ◻ Chalk, 3 colors (12 uses)
Crowbar
Heirloom compass ◻ Troll blood (heals 1 Ruin)
Jar of glowworms (3)
Vermin repellent (3 uses) ◻ Glass marbles (30)
Pot of tar (6 uses)
Scroll tube (mystery scroll) ◻ Food for your pet goat
Skeleton key (1 use)
Wooden toy unicorn | <p>• or •</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◻ Cage of rats (3)
Flute
Pot of honey (6 uses) ◻ Twine (300')
Wind chimes
Wooden mask, monstrous ◻ Bottle of fine wine
Signet ring & wax
Whistle ◻ Bear trap
Musk, bear & deer (6 uses)
Soap (6 uses) ◻ Journal & black/invisible inks
Grease (6 uses)
Dice (6 normal, 3 trick) ◻ Grappling hook
Rope (120')
Spyglass | <p>• or •</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◻ Iron spikes (12)
Mallet
Tent, two-person ◻ Bag of fool's gold (6 pieces)
Torches, 3 hrs (6)
Pickaxe ◻ Chain (24')
Manacles
Wooden labyrinth game ◻ Candles, 2 hrs dim (12)
Mirror, small steel
Perfume (6 uses) ◻ Ashes of your grandmother
Book, blasphemous
Shovel ◻ Hourglass, 10 min. markers
Numbing herbs (3 uses)
Sewing kit |
|--|--|--|

RITUALS

Roll a dark and light die, then take one, two, or all three Rituals listed. Increase your starting Ruin by 1 for each Ritual you take.

• or •

• **Army** — create three illusory copies of yourself that mimic your actions exactly

• **Aura** — creatures or objects under otherworldly influence glow faintly

•• **Beacon** — nearby invisible beings or hidden objects shine with a fiery glow

••• **Bewitch** — if given a gift, a person or animal will follow a simple command

••• **Bind** — hold a person or animal in place

•••• **Bolt** — throw a crackling arc of heat and energy

Guide — conjure a golden thread to follow

Hasten — time in a small area moves at twice normal speed

Hold — a warding sigil placed on a door prevents passage for a short time

Hollow — push a spirit from its own body

Hospitality — maintain peace while you share food & drink

Inhabit — possess a person or animal

Rewind — slightly push a person or animal back in time

Scent — use your olfactory sense to navigate in complete darkness

Silence — deafen all nearby for a few minutes

Sleep — send a person or animal into a deep slumber

Slow — time in a small area moves at half normal speed

Smite — strike a being or object with a spiritual weapon

•• or •••

•• **Bottle** — force a spirit into an object

••• **Burrow** — move through the ground

•••• **Channel** — allow a spirit to act through you

••••• **Circle** — anyone within a small ring of salt is unable to inflict or suffer violence

••••• **Darkness** — a living shadow snuffs out all natural and magical light nearby

•••••• **Drain** — remove water from a person or animal

Kindle — produce fire from oneself

Knock — open nearby normal and sorcerous locks

Mask — cover your face and stay still to remove yourself from others' senses

Medium — surface thoughts of nearby creatures enter and overwhelm a target

Messenger — send a message via a woodlands creature

Mirage — create an illusion

Summon — draw a known spirit or person to you

Swarm — trade favors with a colony of vermin

Switch — touch to swap bodies with another

Tadpole — place a frog in a mouth to convert lungs to gills, or gills to lungs

Unfall — temporarily reverse gravity in a small area

Unravel — pull the threads of a ritual to uncast it, and recast it somewhere else

••• or ••••

•••• **Enliven** — give flesh and breath to a human effigy

••••• **Float** — hold your breath to gently levitate

•••••• **Gale** — conjure and guide a mighty wind

••••••• **Germinate** — compel plants to furious growth

•••••••• **Glamour** — appear more charming and attractive

••••••••• **Gleam** — a luminous spirit is bound to an object to project torch-like light

Mirror — take on the form of a known person or animal

Numb — educe sensation within a body

Obscure — hide a person or object from spirits

Parse — divine the true meaning of any word, writing, sound, sign, or symbol

Project — observe a remote location in spirit form

Repel — push away animals or people with spritual force

Voice — alter your voice or make it appear to come from somewhere nearby

Wail — produce a disorientating sound

Ward — stay concentrating to protect a small area

Web — produce enough webbing to cover a creature or reach something nearby

Wither — reduce flora to ash and rot

Yoke — at your command, a spectral bull will drag something roughly your weight

OLD SCHOOL SPELLS

Trophy Gold can be used to play adventures designed for other old school games. The following are the 1st, 2nd and 3rd level magic-user spells from *B/X*, along with their equivalent Trophy Gold Rituals, organized by spell level.

MAGIC-USER	LEVEL 1		
Charm Person	Bewitch	Protection from Evil	Circle
Darkness	Darkness	Read Languages	Parse
Detect Magic	Aura	Read Magic	Parse
Floating Disc	Yoke	Shield	Circle
Hold Portal	Hold	Sleep	Sleep
Light	Gleam	Ventriloquism	Voice
Magic Missile	Bolt		

MAGIC-USER	LEVEL 2		
Continual Light	Gleam	Levitate	Float
Detect Evil	Medium	Locate Object	Guide
Detect Invisible (Objects)	Beacon	Mirror Image	Army
ESP	Medium	Phantasmal Force	Mirage
Invisibility	Mask	Web	Web
Knock	Knock	Wizard Lock	Hold

MAGIC-USER	LEVEL 3		
Clairaudience	Project	Infravision	Scent
Clairvoyance	Medium	Invisibility (10' Radius)	Mask
Dispel Magic	Unravel	Lightning Bolt	Bolt
Fire Ball	Kindle	Protection from Evil (10' Radius)	Circle
Fly	Float	Protection from Normal Missiles	Circle
Haste Spell	Hasten	Slow Spell	Slow
Hold Person	Bewitch	Water Breathing	Tadpole

TROPHY GOLD

BESTIARY

When any member of the party makes a Risk Roll or a Combat Roll against an unknown monstrosity, the monster can be given a Name and added to this list. Once it has a Name, you may do further research on the monster to learn more about it. Most of this information can be discovered during play or freely given by the GM. The only research that must be paid for is learning the monster's Weakness, at a cost of 1 Gold. This sheet is shared by the whole party, and more sheets can be added as more monsters are encountered.

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DEFENSES		WEAKNESS

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DEFENSES		WEAKNESS

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DEFENSES		WEAKNESS

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DEFENSES		WEAKNESS

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DEFENSES		WEAKNESS

HOW TO PLAY

MONSTERS & COMBAT

In the original version of Trophy, fighting a monster will get you killed. In Trophy Gold, fighting a monster is possible and potentially profitable, but extremely dangerous and costly.

All monsters have six features: *Description*, *Endurance*, *Habits*, *Defenses*, *Weakness*, and *Name*.

- **Description** is just that: a description of how the monster looks, sounds, and smells.
- **Endurance** is a number between 2 and 12. The higher the number, the harder the monster is to defeat. To defeat a monster, you must make a Combat Roll against it and get two dice equal to or greater than its Endurance.
- **Habits** are six possible attitudes, activities, or reactions a monster has.
- **Defenses** are any special abilities or effects the monster has, such as petrification or a breath weapon. Monsters can have up to six Defenses, though most will have zero or one. These can be used to give you Conditions whenever your Ruin increases in combat.
- **Weakness** is something that a monster is particularly vulnerable to, such as fire or silver. If the monster's Weakness is used against it, its Endurance is reduced (usually by 1, though the GM can reduce it by more). The only ways for you to discover a monster's Weakness are to stumble upon it by using it during combat, or spend 1 Gold back in town Carousing for the information beforehand.
- **Name** is what you choose to call a monster you've already faced (or you may ask the GM what it is called if you'd rather not come up with a name). Names can only be given once you've made it safely back to town. Once a monster is given a name, it gets recorded in the party's Bestiary, along with all its features (though its Weakness only gets recorded if the Weakness is discovered). A monster doesn't need to be defeated to be given a name and recorded in the Bestiary.

The organs, hides, and essences of a monster can be harvested to sell back in town, and are thus often worth Gold. Roll a number of dice equal to its Endurance (reduced by 1 if its Weakness was used against it). Any 6s rolled are worth 1 Gold.

GOLD & BURDENS

Gold—the abstract measure of the treasure you collect—comes in many forms: from the obviously valuable artifacts you recover, to the rare and mysterious minerals, herbs, and animal parts found in the depths of Kalduhr. Collect enough Gold, and you might even be able to retire from this life of hardship and fund the thing that drives you. But until that day, you have debts to pay off: to those who loan you gear for your trips out to the ruins, and for the place you rest your head back in town.

When you embark on a hunt for treasure, you are making a commitment. You must recover a certain amount of Gold to pay off your sizable debts, or you will die penniless and alone. These

are called your Burdens. You start the game with 1 Burden, plus an additional Burden for each piece of combat equipment you choose to start with, reflecting the cost of upkeep for such specialized gear.

You may take on additional Burdens over the course of the game:

- **Household:** Access to a higher quality of life automatically heals you of 1 Ruin and all Conditions when you return home.
- **Library:** You have acquired a few small spellbooks you can carry with you on your journey. Studying them unlocks new Rituals, at a cost of 1 Burden per Ritual.
- **Training:** You have a mentor training you in the use of a new Skill. Each Skill you acquire costs 1 Burden.

Your total Burdens is your cost for going on an incursion. If you don't return to town with Gold equal to or greater than your number of Burdens, you lose. You overextended yourself, promised your patrons too much, and end up in debtor's prison or worse. Your treasure-hunter is no longer playable and you must make a new one.

If, however, you return with an overabundance of Gold, you can spend it or stash it. You can put it towards:

- **Carousing:** Spend 1 Gold in town to get access to useful information before beginning an incursion. Useful information includes rumors, maps, and a named monster's Weakness.
- **Equipment:** Spend 1 Gold in town to open up crossed-out slots in your backpack.
- **Healing:** Spend 1 Gold in town to heal yourself of 1 Ruin.
- **Hoard:** Stash Gold in your Hoard to get closer to achieving your Drive and retiring your character.

ROLLING THE DICE

There are three rolls in Trophy Gold: the *Hunt Roll*, for exploring the world; the *Combat Roll*, for battling dangerous creatures; and the *Risk Roll*, for all other risky ventures.



HUNT ROLL

Navigating the haunted spaces of the world is for the brave and foolish. Fortunes can change in an instant. Using tokens such as coins or glass beads, track your progress toward the thing you seek.

When you press ever deeper in pursuit of your goal, say how you are exploring your environment, then gather 6-sided dice.



Take one light-colored die just for exploring the world and asking the GM questions about it.



Take another light die if you have a skill or piece of equipment that would make your hunt easier.

Roll the dice. If your **highest** die is a:

- 1 You lose all your tokens, and encounter something terrible.
- 2–3 You encounter something terrible.
- 4–5 Take 1 token, but you encounter something terrible.
- 6 Take 1 token.

Spend 1 token to find a treasure worth 1 Gold.

Spend 3 tokens to find what you came here for.

The GM will describe the nature of any treasures found or terrible encounters had, though they may ask for your input as well.

COMBAT ROLL

Woe to the treasure-hunters who find themselves face-to-face with a vengeful monstrosity, and with no recourse but to swing steel against it.



When you attempt to defeat a monstrosity, first say how you expose yourself to injury or attack, then roll a single light die. The number on the die is called your *Weak Point*, and represents the risks you're taking to face the monster. If multiple treasure-hunters are involved, each rolls their own die.



Now gather a dark die for each treasure-hunter involved in the attack. Roll all the dark dice together.

To defeat a monster (or group of monsters), you must roll against the monster's *Endurance*, which is a number between 2 and 12. The GM may reduce the Endurance if you have relevant Skills or are taking advantage of your equipment, environment, or the monster's Weakness in some way. If the Endurance would go below the number of dark dice being rolled, then no Combat Roll is required. The GM may increase the Endurance if the monster is particularly tough, or if you are at a disadvantage. If the Endurance would go above 12, the monster is too difficult to fight and you must retreat, or find a way to reduce the monster's Endurance.

If the total of the two highest dark dice is **equal to or higher** than the Endurance, the monster is defeated in the manner you and your fellow players describe.

If any of the dark dice **equals** your Weak Point, your treasure-hunter's Ruin increases by 1 for each dark die matching the Weak Point. You can choose to mark off a piece of your armor to ignore all Ruin increases for your treasure-hunter during a single roll. Describe how your armor absorbs the hit to protect you. Marked armor is unusable until you safely return to town.

At this point, if a player wants their treasure-hunter to retreat, that player must hand their Weak Point light die over to another player, who now suffers if either their original Weak Point number or the new number comes up during a re-roll of the dark dice. If both light dice show the same number, the treasure-hunter must re-roll one of the dice to get a different number.



If the two highest dark dice are **less** than the monster's Endurance and you wish to continue the attack, add one more dark die and re-roll all the dark dice.

Baso (Ruin 3), Elisio (Ruin 2), and Sibil (Ruin 4) find themselves face-to-face with a massive, craggy-fleshed monstrosity. Sibil had a previous run in with a similar creature, so believes this to be a troll, which the GM confirms. Distilled troll blood is highly prized for its curative properties, and could be worth something back in town. Plus, Sibil knows that trolls are afraid of fire and believes she and her companions can take it down.

All three players opt to take part in the conflict, so each rolls a single die to find their individual Weak Point.

Baso rolls a 6.

Elisio rolls a 2.

Sibil rolls a 2.

Trolls normally have an Endurance of 10, but when faced with fire—their Weakness—their Endurance drops down to 9. Because Sibil knows this is a troll and knows its Weakness (meaning its Name and Weakness are recorded in the Bestiary), she greases her sword (requiring 1 use of the Grease she has in her backpack) and lights it on fire. Baso and Elisio draw their blades as well.

The party gathers 3 dark dice (one for each treasure-hunter in the conflict), and rolls them. They need their two highest dice to equal 9 or higher to defeat the troll.

They roll the dark dice and get 2, 3, and 4. $3 + 4 = 7$, so they haven't reached the 9 they need to get rid of the troll. Also, since they got a 2 in their roll, and Elisio and Sibil both have a Weak Point of 2, they both increase their Ruin by 1.

Sibil's at Ruin 5 now, which puts her dangerously close to death. She decides it's worth the risk and tells the party they should roll again.


They grab one more dark die for the re-roll, and roll 4 dark dice now. This time they get 1, 3, 5, and 6. $5 + 6 = 11$, which is


enough to defeat the troll. Since the 6 they rolled matches Baso's Weak Point, he would normally increase his Ruin by 1. However, he's wearing armor, so he marks off his breastplate to ignore the injury.


This leaves Baso with a Ruin of 3, Elisio with a Ruin of 3, and Sibil with a Ruin of 5, but they got a troll carcass out of it. When they get back to town they sell the monster's body for Gold. They roll a number of dice equal to the Endurance they rolled against to defeat it, in this case 9. They roll nine dice and get 1, 1, 3, 3, 5, 6, 6, 6, and 6. Since each 6 rolled is worth 1 Gold, they walk away with 4 Gold, to be divided up however they see fit.

RISK ROLL

When you attempt a risky task, say what you hope will happen and ask the GM and the other players what could possibly go wrong. Then gather 6-sided dice.

 Take one light-colored die if the task is something you are skilled at because of your occupation, background, or training, or because you are taking advantage of a piece of equipment or the environment.

 Take another light die for accepting a Devil's Bargain from another player or the GM. Devil's Bargains are described in the following section.

 Add a dark-colored die if you are willing to risk your mind or body in order to succeed. You must include this die whenever you perform a ritual.


Roll the dice. If your **highest** die is a:

You fail, and things get worse. The GM describes how.
1-3 The GM may also allow you to succeed, but things will get worse in some other way.

You succeed, but there's some kind of complication.
4-5 The GM describes the complication, then you describe how you succeed.

6 You succeed. Describe how.

If you included a dark die and it rolled **equal to or higher** than your highest light die, and it is **higher** than your current Ruin, add 1 to your Ruin and work with the GM to describe how the world is warping your mind and body.

 If you are unhappy with your roll, you may add an additional dark die to your dice and re-roll. You can keep adding more dark dice and re-rolling. You cannot re-roll when a dark die is the highest die in your roll.

DEVIL'S BARGAINS

The world is dangerous, and treasure-hunters take risks fueled by the folly of their pride. To reflect this, the GM or any other player can offer you a bonus light die if you accept a Devil's Bargain. Common Devil's Bargains include:

Causing collateral damage or unintended harm.

Getting lost or separated from your companions.

Sacrificing an item or piece of treasure.

Betraying a fellow treasure-hunter.

Attracting the attention of monsters or other creatures.

The Devil's Bargain occurs regardless of the outcome of the roll. You make the deal, pay the price, and get the bonus die. The Devil's Bargain is always a free choice. If you don't like one, just reject it (or suggest how to alter it so you might consider taking it). You can always just risk your mind or body and take a dark die instead.

Anyone may veto or suggest alterations to a proposed Devil's Bargain, especially if it would also impact their treasure-hunter.

LOSING YOURSELF

When your Ruin reaches 6, you lose yourself to the wilds that have been growing inside you. You choose whether you become a monstrosity in service to the forces of nature (and the whims of the GM), or whether you simply die. This is an important moment: Everyone focuses on your last actions before you run screaming into the shadows, turn violently against your fellow treasure-hunters, or take your final breath. You may now create a new treasure-hunter, who the GM will introduce into the game at an appropriate moment.

EQUIPMENT & ENVIRONMENT

If you can incorporate your equipment or a feature of the environment in such a way that it would noticeably improve your odds of success, the GM may allow you to add a single light die to your Risk Roll or lower the Endurance of a monster you're fighting.

Your equipment and the environment can also give you fictional permission to attempt something that would not otherwise be possible, such as using a downed tree to cross a stream, or using rope to tie up a possessed treasure-hunter. The GM will decide if what you're using is sufficient to do what you want without a roll, or if you still need to roll to attempt it.

CONVERTING MODULES

The OSR movement has produced a wealth of amazing adventure modules. Converting them to use with a lightweight system like Trophy Gold can be daunting. The following framework can make that process more straightforward.

THEME

The most important step for converting an existing module into a Trophy Gold incursion is to find the module's theme. Look for one word that can serve as a hook to hang everything else on. Keep in mind that there's no "right answer" here. The theme you choose will depend entirely on what aspects of a module you want to explore, and no two GMs will necessarily look at a module and pick the exact same word.

Your theme can be concrete, like "Spiders" or "Darkness," or conceptual like "Suffocation" or "Betrayal." The most rewarding themes work on multiple levels.

SETS

Next, identify the key areas present in the module that will become the incursion's sets. A set is a discrete location with a clear goal. A set could be as granular as a throne room with the goal of finding the queen's hidden chamber, or as expansive as a whole level of a dungeon with the goal of rescuing a captive while avoiding traps and monsters. It's important that a single set—no matter how many rooms or physical spaces exist within it—has a unified appearance and tone. A set should "feel" a certain way. Moving through it provides a single experience.

All sets have five features: *Name*, *Goal*, *Props*, *Traps*, and *Treasures*.

- **Name** is just a simple label you use to track the set on your flowchart. It could be something like "the queen's throne room" or "the Creeping Caves."
- **Goal** is the reason the treasure-hunters are in the set. This could be to "find the hidden door" or "locate the captive." When the treasure-hunters first enter the set, pose the problem they're meant to solve ("The queen has surely hidden herself somewhere here. How do you begin looking for her?" or "The villager abducted by the fishermen sits in a rickety wooden cage suspended over the roiling underground lake. How will you get to him?"). The treasure-hunters can spend 3 tokens collected via Hunt Rolls to immediately achieve the Goal of the current Set.
- **Props** are physical elements the characters can interact with: things they can touch, hide behind, use as improvised weapons, cast rituals on, set on fire, find hidden things in, be pinned against, and so forth. They're dusty tombs and shimmering obelisks and old bridges and sacrificial tables and ornate chandeliers. They're the toys of the set for the players to play with, and for you to use against their treasure-hunters when a roll calls for it. When the treasure-hunters first encounter a prop, describe it with 3–4 details (or ask the players to help you describe it). A set can have as many props as needed.

- **Traps** are the things in the set that can harm the treasure-hunters. When converting a module, make a list of all the traps within that are relevant to the set. They could be monsters or environmental hazards or actual traps—like pit traps or swinging blades. When a player rolls a 5 or less on a Hunt Roll and encounters something terrible, one of these is the terrible thing they encounter. Keep in mind that just because they find the trap, doesn't mean it has harmed them yet (or in the case of monsters, it doesn't mean the monster has noticed them yet). Finding a trap is often very quickly followed by a Risk Roll or Combat Roll. Some traps are associated with particular props.
- **Treasures** are the strange artifacts and precious objects found while exploring. When converting a module, make a list of all the treasures within that are relevant to the set. Treasures are always worth at least 1 Gold. If they are the goal of the set, they're often worth 4 or more Gold. Some treasures are associated with particular props.

Sets can also be accompanied by a map. If the module you're converting comes with a map, you can use that—or part of it—to describe the set. Just be sure to also give it all five features.

The more sets you have, the longer an incursion will take to complete. You can expect to be able to play through 2–4 sets in a 4-hour session, depending on your pace and the number of players. Keep in mind that you can distill a larger module into a one-shot by thoughtfully selecting which sets you use, and by hard-framing your transitions between the sets.

FLOWCHART

Next, arrange your sets into a flowchart. This flowchart maps the story. It will help you track meaningful decision points, and turns the stakes of a set's Goal into concrete results. Success leads to one set, failure to another. If the treasure-hunters neglect to find the queen's hidden chamber and don't come up with a creative alternative for moving the story forward, your flowchart provides a logical next set.

MONSTERS

The monsters in a module can be converted by creating their six features: *Description*, *Endurance*, *Habits*, *Defenses*, *Weakness*, and *Name*. Of these, the Description is the most important as it's the first experience the players will have with the monster. Consider building on the Description by asking the players a question about the monster that reinforces its connection to the incursion's theme.

If the module provides a Morale value for a monster, that number is often the most direct conversion to Endurance. However, it doesn't always make sense, especially for Morale 12 creatures that are easily destroyed, like skeletons and zombies.

If the monster comes with a Reaction table, that can take the place of Habits.

Special abilities or spells become Defenses. Write down any Conditions that result from it. For example, a medusa would have a “Petrifying Gaze” Defense with the Condition “your skin begins hardening and movement becomes difficult.”

Some monsters will list what they are weak against, such as silver with werewolves. In Trophy Gold, a Weakness merely makes a monster easier to defeat; it doesn't prevent the monster from being harmed by other weapons. A Trophy Gold werewolf could still be killed by regular weapons—no silver required. If a module monster indicates that it can only be harmed by particular weapons, you may prevent the use of a Combat Roll against it until the treasure-hunters learn about the vulnerability. However, it is better to allow the monster to still be harmed by regular weapons and simply treat the weapon vulnerability as a Weakness that reduces Endurance.

You can also choose a monster's features based on its size and strength. In Trophy Gold, monsters fit into three broad categories: *medium*, *large*, and *huge*.

- **Medium** monsters are generally human-sized or smaller. They typically have an Endurance of 7 (or 8, if you want to make them more difficult or rare), and often no more than one Defense. Your classic grunt monsters fit into this category: goblins, orcs, skeletons, dwarves, and elves. If the treasure-hunters face a group of these monsters, increase the Endurance by 2 if the party could still reasonably take them on. If the party is vastly overwhelmed, then combat may not even be possible without other significant advantages.
- **Large** monsters can be up to the size of elephants. They typically have an Endurance of 9 (or 10, if you want to make them more difficult or rare), and always have at least one Defense, but can have up to three. Trolls, ogres, basilisks, owl-bears, and black puddings all fit into this category.
- **Huge** monsters are either truly massive, like giants or dragons, or exceptionally hard to destroy, like liches or golems. They typically have an Endurance of 11 (or 12, if you want to make them more difficult or rare), and always have at least two Defenses, but can have up to six.

MAGIC

Spells and spell-like effects should be described as a single short line, allowing for maximum flexibility at the table.

If a module indicates the use of a particular spell, consult the Rituals list earlier in this guide for common early-level old school spells and their Trophy Gold equivalents.

Magic items should likewise be converted to a single line listing the benefit, with negative effects listed as possible Conditions. In Trophy Gold, all magical items should provide an upside and a downside, and the use of a magical item always requires a Risk Roll. Magical weapons that merely provide a modifier as their benefit (a +1 sword, for example), should be changed to something with actual effects, or may simply be treated as a Weakness when attacking certain monsters (thus reducing their Endurance).

It's not always clear how much a magic item is worth. If the players discover an item and wish to sell it back at town, have them roll 3 light dice and take the lowest. That is how much Gold they will get for it. Once the dice are rolled they can't change their mind about selling it and must take the Gold, though they may later attempt to buy it back at double the price.

OTHER CONVERSION RULES

OSR modules often have certain expectations about the type of game you're playing. Below are common OSR ruleset features, and how to handle them in Trophy Gold.

Ability Scores

Treasure-hunters in Trophy Gold don't have the traditional six ability scores. When a test against an ability would normally be called for, have the player make a Risk Roll instead.

Distances

Trophy Gold doesn't use the precise movement rates or measures found in some other old school games. Instead, everything can be classified into three ranges:

- Close (up to 5 feet)
- Near (5–60 feet)
- Far (over 60 feet)

Durations & Time

Trophy Gold doesn't use exploration turns, combat turns or rounds. Combat and spell effects last for as long as is narratively appropriate.

Initiative & Turns

The GM is responsible for dictating turn order and initiative. Whether the treasure-hunters are ambushed or they initiate combat, the players still make a Combat Roll to see what happens, so order doesn't matter as much. This lets the players work out amongst themselves their sequence of actions, with the GM simply responding based on the results of the dice.

Saving Throws

Like ability score tests, all saving throws are also replaced by a Risk Roll, typically with the full effect applying on a failure, half effect on a complication (if applicable), and no effect on a success.

EXAMPLE MODULE CONVERSIONS

On the following pages are two examples of modules that have been converted into Trophy Gold incursions. You will need the original modules in order to follow along. *Tomb of the Serpent Kings* is available for free on DriveThruRPG. *The Ruined Abbey of St. Clewd* can be found in issues 3 and 4 of the *Wormskin* zine, available to buy on DriveThruRPG, though this example conversion included here will only cover the content found in issue 3.

INCURSION — TOMB OF THE SERPENT KINGS

Tomb of the Serpent Kings by Skerples has quickly become a classic OSR dungeon, due primarily to the clarity with which the text outlines the functional and thematic purposes behind the various dungeon areas. For that reason, it is a quite straightforward conversion to a Trophy Gold incursion.

THEME

Descent — There are many motifs present in *Tomb of the Serpent Kings* that would make suitable themes: snakes, transformation, statues, discovery. Descent, however, speaks to the decline of the snake-men, the sorry state of fungus goblin culture, and the literal downward movement of the tomb and chasm.

When describing props, traps or treasures, focus your descriptions on the age and antiquity of them. Show how they have changed over time into something more ruined, decayed, weathered, broken and tarnished. Show how far the snake-men have fallen from the heights of their culture. Ask questions about the heroic legends and myths still told about the snake-men of the past. When new treasure is found, ask what it might have looked like when it was new.

SETS

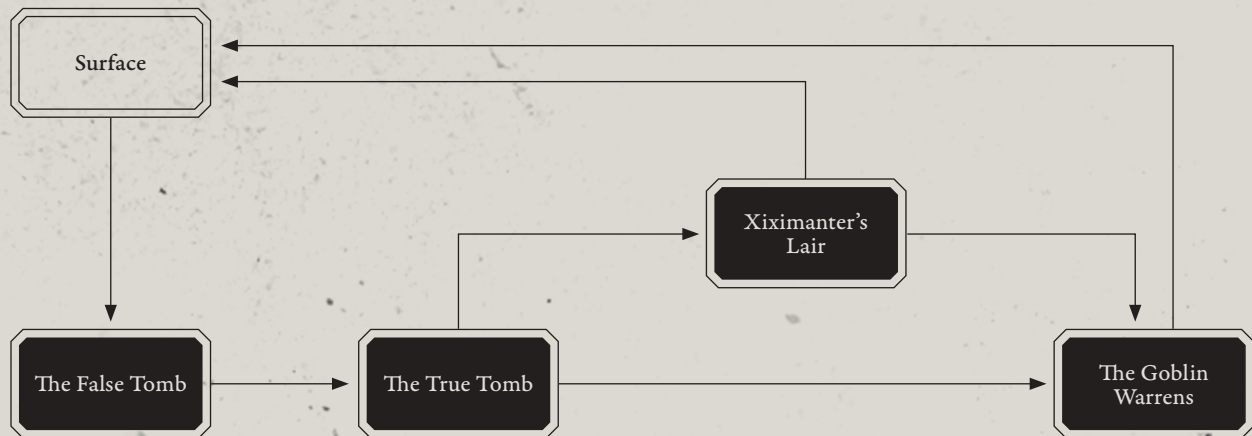
Skerples kindly provides four thematic areas, each of which can be converted to a set: *the False Tomb*, *the True Tomb*, *the Chasm* and *the Goblin Warrens*. The Chasm is relatively light, however, and the True Tomb quite lengthy, so in the following example, the Chasm has been removed and replaced with *Xiximanter's Lair*. For simplicity, some other rooms and encounters have been removed or combined in this example. Specifically:

- 18 and 19 have been removed, connecting 11 to 20
- 22–37 have been removed, creating a wall at the east side of 38, and connecting 52 to the passage along the chasm
- The Basilisk has a key to room 46 (instead of room 28) embedded in its neck

Of course, any of the sets outlined here could be further subdivided into discrete areas to make for a longer game. To run the False Tomb as its own session, for example, treat rooms 1–4 as a set, 5 as a set, and 6–7 as a set.



FLOWCHART



SET NAME		THE FALSE TOMB	
SET GOAL		Find the entrance to the True Tomb.	
PROPS	TRAPS	TREASURES	
4 Coffins (Statues) Each coffin holds a hollow clay statue of a snake-man.	The clay statues are filled with a noxious gas.	One of the statues wears a silver ring that can act as a poison dagger, but may also harm the wearer when used.	
Door An imposing door locked with a heavy stone bar blocks the way.	Lifting the stone bar causes a massive hammer to swing down from the ceiling, smashing the door and anything in the way.		
3 Coffins (Skeletons) Each coffin holds a snake-man skeleton.	The <i>skeletons</i> come alive and attack if the coffins are disturbed.		
Idol A giant, hideous statue of a snake-man god sits in the center of the room beyond the skeletons. Under the Idol, water has eroded the ground, revealing a secret passage to the True Tomb.			
ADDITIONAL TRAPS	None		
ADDITIONAL TREASURES	None		

7

SKELETON — Rattling bones, held together with strands of toughened ligament, rags, and scraps of rusted armor

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiding among bones | <input type="checkbox"/> Rising from a grave or tomb | <input type="checkbox"/> Standing guard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moaning for release | <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking a missing limb | <input type="checkbox"/> Attacking with a hatred for life |

DEFENSES None

WEAKNESS Bludgeoning

SET NAME		THE TRUE TOMB	
SET GOAL		Find the treasures of the snake-men.	
PROPS		TRAPS	TREASURES
<p>Pit In the center of an octagonal room ringed with glaring snake-man statues is a large pit filled with an oily, foul-smelling liquid.</p> <p>The room contains seven passages.</p> <p>The only open passage leads to the <i>Statuary</i>.</p> <p>Five of the passages are sealed, but easily opened and lead to tombs, including the 3 <i>Coffins</i>, the <i>Collapsed Tomb</i>, and the <i>Crude Tomb</i>.</p> <p>The last passage is blocked by an elaborate stone door with carvings of snakes raining from the sky. It leads to a bottomless chasm and a pathway to the <i>Goblin Armory</i> (in the <i>Goblin Warrens</i>).</p>		<p>Anyone who gets too close to the water will be attacked by one of two severed, decayed arms with long, clawed fingers, which crawl out from the pit. Treat as <i>crawling claws</i>.</p> <p>Drinking the water or getting the water in an open wound may cause limbs to wither and rot off.</p>	<p>At the bottom of the pit, the following can be recovered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A heavy gold chain • Random gems and jewels • A gibbering mummified head • A silver ring of eyesight (one of the wearer's eyes pops out and becomes as hard as glass, but still sees normally)
<p>3 Coffins Three stone coffins rest beyond the pit. Two are undisturbed and contain inanimate corpses. One is open and empty, having formerly held the creature now in the pit.</p>			<p>A scroll can be found in the open coffin. The scroll allows a single casting of a ritual Sleep, after which the scroll bursts into flame.</p>
<p>Collapsed Tomb A partially collapsed room echoes with angry groans.</p>		<p>A <i>skeleton</i> with a greataxe peers through a hole in the rubble, and will attack any who clear a path.</p>	
<p>Crude Tomb A roughly carved and poorly painted room holds a single stone coffin.</p>		<p>In the coffin is a badly mummified snake-man, now more ooze than person. It will pull back from torches and fire. It will regenerate and wander unless burned. Treat as a <i>black pudding</i>.</p>	<p>The ooze has a few small rings embedded in it.</p>
<p>Statuary 18 hollow clay statues of snake-men stand guard.</p> <p>Under one of the statues in the statuary is a secret passage to the <i>Basilisk Hall</i> (in <i>Xiximanter's Lair</i>).</p>			
ADDITIONAL TRAPS	Floor traps (slide, spike, lightning)		
ADDITIONAL TREASURES	Assorted scrolls written in a forgotten language (containing the ravings of the now-mummified snake-men)		

8

CRAWLING CLAW — Severed and decaying hands with clawed fingers

• Flopping around

•• Scurrying like a rat

••• Attempting to crush

•• Emerging from dark places

••• Attempting to strangle

••• Leaping

Strangle — The claw momentarily squeezes the life from you and you see strange visions

WEAKNESS Fire

9

BLACK PUDDING — A dark, amorphous blob, dragging its mass across the cave floor with the force of an ocean wave

Quivering with anticipation

Grasping at your ankles

Dripping down from above

Pooling around a recent kill

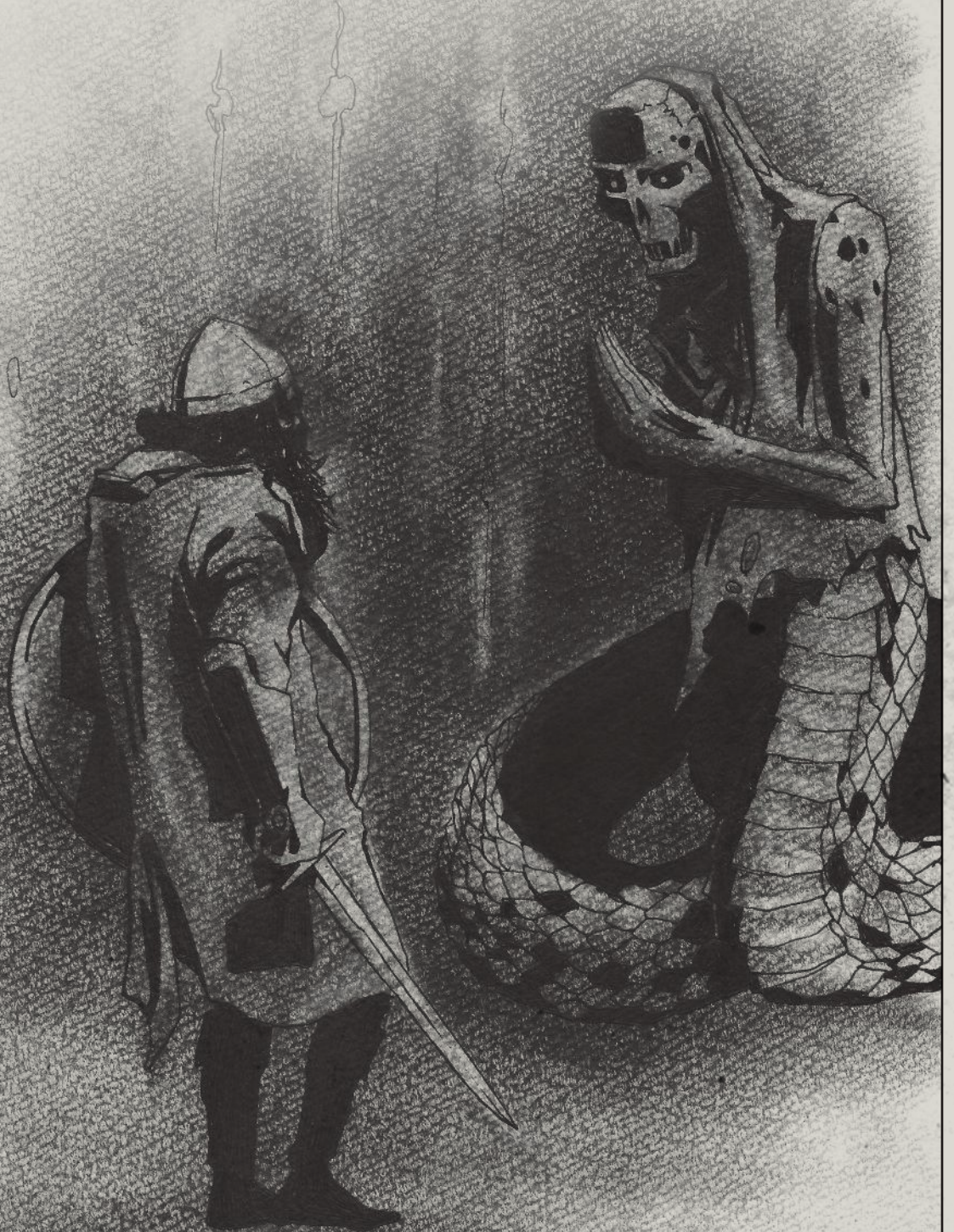
Squeezing through cracks

Splitting into two puddings

Acidic — The weapon you attacked it with is dissolved and destroyed

WEAKNESS Fire

Corrosive grasp — You are badly burned, making the limb it grabbed useless until treated



SET NAME		XIXIMANTER'S LAIR	
SET GOAL		Make a deal with—or avoid—Xiximanter.	
PROPS		TRAPS	TREASURES
<p>Basilisk Hall This massive stone chamber contains broken pillars and surprisingly accurate stone statues of bats, spiders and goblins. It's almost completely dark. The sound of a massive chain being dragged by the basilisk can be heard from around the center of the hall.</p> <p>Embedded in the basilisk's neck is a key to the <i>Throne Room</i>.</p> <p>There is also an open passage to <i>Xiximanter's Chambers</i>, an open passage to the <i>Spawning Pit</i> (in the <i>Goblin Warrens</i>), a secret passage to the <i>Statuary</i> (in the <i>True Tomb</i>), and a secret passage to the surface.</p>		<p>Unless the party hugs the wall, the <i>basilisk</i> will sniff them out and attack.</p> <p>The basilisk will attempt to petrify anyone directly in front of them.</p>	
<p>Xiximanter's Chambers This finely carved stone hall is lit by magical purple lights. Kegs, bottles, flasks, flaying knives and syringes are scattered around the room.</p> <p>There is a pit holding 6 miserable fungus goblins.</p> <p>Xiximanter looks like a dried human corpse fused to a snake tail at the waist, with fangs and tiny, red eyes. He is in the middle of an "experiment," but is otherwise exceedingly polite.</p> <p>In the room behind Xiximanter is the most exquisite display case of potions and elixirs. He will not let the party pass unless they agree to be his apprentices or his experimentation subjects.</p> <p>This room contains a hidden passage to the <i>Throne Room</i> hiding behind a rotting wall hanging.</p>		<p>Xiximanter will try to make a deal for rare ingredients, rituals, or intelligent creatures to distill into potions. Treat as a <i>lich</i>.</p>	<p>Collected in bottles and jars are rare herbs and seeds.</p> <p>In the display case are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 mutation potions • 1 youth potion • 1 poison • 2 healing potions
<p>Throne Room An extravagant red stone, gold, and mirrored room. The throne itself can be sold, but requires 3 people to lift and causes an uncontrollable lust for power in any who sit in it and fail a Risk Roll.</p>			<p>The throne is worth 5 Gold—or 6 with a good story.</p>
ADDITIONAL TRAPS	None		
ADDITIONAL TREASURES	None		

10 BASILISK — A giant gray eight-legged lizard with a flat crocodile head full of teeth

• Sniffing the air	•• Striking	••• Staring at a victim
•• Curled up, possibly asleep	••• Demanding pets and scratches	••• Raging and thrashing

<p>Charge — The beast charges you, terrifying you and possibly knocking you down</p> <p>Petrifying Gaze — Your skin begins hardening and movement becomes difficult</p> <p>Reptilian Frenzy — You are knocked back as the beast thrashes about wildly</p>	<p>WEAKNESS Reflections</p>
--	------------------------------------

11

LICH — A desiccated corpse covered in profane symbols and wrapped in arcane robes

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Casting obscure rituals | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing twisted experiments | <input type="checkbox"/> Sacrificing victims |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Studying scrolls or elixirs | <input type="checkbox"/> Summoning dangerous spirits | <input type="checkbox"/> Protecting its soul-vessel |

Darkness — Shrouding shadows cause confusion, causing you to suffer a companion's attack

Flaming Wall — A wall of fire bursts from the ground, causing severe burns

Ritual Reflection — A ritual targeting the lich is reflected back at the caster

WEAKNESS Phylactery

SET NAME

THE GOBLIN WARRENS

SET GOAL

Make it back to the surface.

PROPS

Spawning Pit

The pit is a hideous mash of fungus, dead animals and bloated sacks of fluid. Every few minutes, a new goblin drags itself from the slime of the pit.

TRAPS

There are *goblins*—and half-formed goblins—everywhere. They will try to crawl all over you, eat you, or collect your blood to water their farms.

TREASURES

Digging through the mash will turn up a few silver knives.

Goblin Throne Room

4 fungus goblins worship at the feet of their king: a stick and mud idol they constructed. The king wears a crown made of forks and knives.

The *goblins* will attack if they think you've shown the king disrespect.

More and more goblins will continue to show up unless the Spawning Pit has been burned.

Goblin Farms

A dank, dark garden planted with rotting leaves, weapons, fingers, and the occasional treasure.

A hallway off of this room leads to a passage to the surface.

The *goblins* will attack if they think you've shown the king disrespect.

Dredging the room will turn up:

- A ruby
- The Crown of the Serpent-Kings, which is worth 6 Gold and causes the wearer to gibber in terror if they fail a Risk Roll
- Blue cucumber mushrooms, which can cure petrification

Goblin Armory

A partially collapsed room containing an assortment of improvised weapons: brooms, pitchforks, sharpened sticks.

A *goblin* on patrol will try to keep the party out, and will call for backup if needed. They use the improvised weapons to attack.

ADDITIONAL TRAPS

Wandering goblins

ADDITIONAL TREASURES

None

7

GOBLIN — A short, dirty, misshapen person with pointed teeth and beady eyes

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preparing a trap | <input type="checkbox"/> Whining pathetically | <input type="checkbox"/> Trying to hide |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing with something disgusting | <input type="checkbox"/> Tormenting something small | <input type="checkbox"/> Begging for mercy |

DEFENSES None

WEAKNESS Loud noises

INCURSION — THE RUINED ABBEY OF ST. CLEWD

The Ruined Abbey of St. Clewd by Gavin Norman & Yves Geens is the first adventure found in the *Wormskin* zine for the setting of Dolmenwood. The adventure is divided into two parts: the surface and the crypts. What follows is a conversion for the first half of the module, found in issue 3 of *Wormskin*. Dolmenwood features some of the most imaginative monsters in the OSR, ripe for the narrative-focused encounters of Trophy Gold.

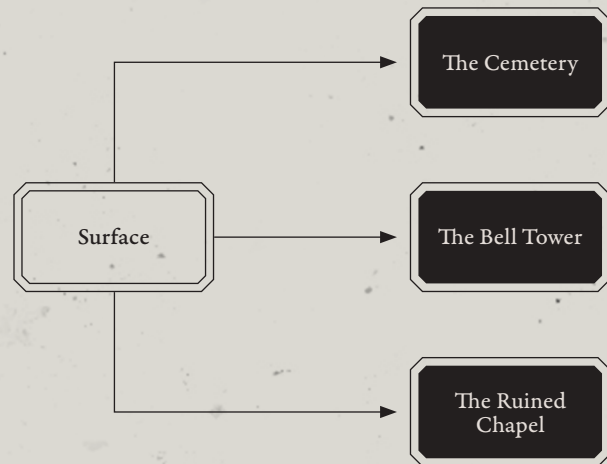
THEME

Obsession — All the figures in this incursion are obsessed. The scryke with the skeleton in the mausoleum, the gloam with its macabre collection, and the children with the gloam (though that obsession is magically-induced). Connect those obsessions to the treasure-hunters' obsessive desire for wealth in order to fulfil their Drives. Find opportunities to mirror the actions of the party in the actions of the monsters and children.

SETS

Like *Tomb of the Serpent Kings*, this module provides predefined thematic areas which can be easily converted to sets and props. This conversion will focus on the Graveyard, the Bell Tower/Chapel of St. Woad, the Ruined Chapel, and the Mausoleum of Archimandrite Heccadedicon, though some of these sections are merged together. The other areas are more directly connected to the crypts, which are not covered here.

FLOWCHART



SET NAME	THE CEMETERY	
SET GOAL	Learn the secrets of the abbey.	
PROPS	TRAPS	TREASURES
<p>Graveyard Crumbling stone walls covered in ivy surround the graveyard. A few of the graves are in the process of being dug up.</p>	<p>One of the <i>children</i> might be found here, but they will run back to the Bell Tower if noticed.</p>	
<p>Mausoleum An opulent tomb, though weather-worn. The tomb has been plundered and nothing valuable remains.</p>	<p>A <i>scryke</i> lurks inside, attempting to reassemble the bones of the Heccadedicon. The scryke will offer to share secrets if the skeleton's lost teeth are found and returned.</p>	
ADDITIONAL TRAPS	None	
ADDITIONAL TREASURES	None	

CHILDREN

The children under the sway of the gloam are still just regular humans, and can be subdued without the use of a Combat Roll.

8

SCRYKE — A stunted, shadowy person hovering over a bizarre collection

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking out unhallowed artifacts | <input type="checkbox"/> Consuming something strange | <input type="checkbox"/> Spouting obscure lore |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cunningly twisting words | <input type="checkbox"/> Wrapping around a person like fog | <input type="checkbox"/> Convincing accomplices |

Fog Form — The creature turns into a choking fog, surrounding you so you can't breathe

WEAKNESS Faith

SET NAME		THE BELL TOWER	
SET GOAL		Rescue the children.	
PROPS	TRAPS	TREASURES	
Ground Floor On this floor stands a shrine to St. Woad. A few wooden pews remain, though most are worm-ridden and decaying.			
First Floor The former quarters of the abbey's warden, now it is a ramshackle mess where 3 lost children live. The children will run up to the <i>Third Floor</i> if scared or threatened.		If the <i>children</i> see the party approaching, they will hide themselves, use their only dagger to stab one time at a member of the party, then run away.	
Second Floor A terrifying tableau of taxidermied animals fill this floor. Each has human teeth sewn into its mouth. These are the missing teeth from the mausoleum and dug up from the graves.		If the stuffed animals are disturbed, the <i>gloom</i> will attack.	
Third Floor/Belfry A great bronze bell hangs here, along with the <i>gloom</i> in the form of dozens and dozens of crows.		The <i>gloom</i> will attack or attempt to charm any who enter.	
ADDITIONAL TRAPS	None		
ADDITIONAL TREASURES	None		

10

GLOAM — A flock of ragged crows, or a tall, gaunt man made of feathers, beaks, and tiny bird bones

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Causing dread and unease | <input type="checkbox"/> Flying away and keeping watch | <input type="checkbox"/> Hovering just above the ground |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charming the innocent | <input type="checkbox"/> Collapsing into human form | <input type="checkbox"/> Protecting its collection |

Charm — You feel protective of the creature, and put yourself in harm's way to defend it

Disease — You are touched by the creature, and the touched skin blackens and flakes off

WEAKNESS Sunlight

SET NAME		THE RUINED CHAPEL	
SET GOAL		Find the hidden treasures of the chapel.	
PROPS		TRAPS	TREASURES
<p>Mosaics Though now somewhat destroyed and covered in vines, 7 mosaics detailing the life and works of St. Clewd line the halls of the chapel.</p> <p>In the final mosaic, placed behind the Main Altar, St. Clewd wears a ruby ring. Removing the tile with the ring reveals a key-like cylinder that can be inserted into the <i>Main Altar</i>.</p>			
<p>Main Altar This altar is covered in stumps of candles, wilted flowers, and unrecognizable stains.</p> <p>Inspecting it will reveal a circular hole, for placing the key found in the <i>Mosaics</i>.</p>			<p>Using the key to open up the altar reveals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gold chalice • A gilded religious icon • A golden scepter
<p>Organ Strange sounds emanate from the pipes.</p>		Disturbing the organ will cause a flock of <i>ghost crows</i> to attack the party.	
ADDITIONAL TRAPS		None	
ADDITIONAL TREASURES		None	

7 GHOST CROW – Transparent, shade-like birds with haunting calls

<input type="checkbox"/> • Foretelling danger	<input type="checkbox"/> •• Attacking passersby	<input type="checkbox"/> ••• Flying through you
<input type="checkbox"/> •• Roosting somewhere haunted	<input type="checkbox"/> ••• Cawing loudly	<input type="checkbox"/> ••• Obscuring the moonlight
DEFENSES None		WEAKNESS Silver



Three Dozen Notable People *Over*

50

- • Marta ran Vigil Creek Nature Preserve for 50 years. She stayed even while her back gave out and her health failed her, until the day she went to check the fence around the boundary and never came back. The land was soon sold, but every construction project went wrong. Sinkholes, floods, broken equipment... Workers talked of a silent, stooped old woman with bark skin and Spanish moss hair. The land is still as wild as ever, but they call it Marta's Woods now.
- • Don't let her grandmotherly little-old-lady demeanor get you to drop your guard. Minnie Cho is tough as nails and is the most brilliant litigator any courtroom in this city has ever seen! She's been at this game since before your mother was born, and believe me: She knows how to play it better than you do. If you're up against her, I would advise you to settle.
- • You need to marry your blade to a target? You go to the Strop. He'll sit with you and ask all kinds of questions. Childhood dreams, your first love, the favourite thing you lost—he'll ask it all and more. Little crinkles around his eyes and that shake in his hands. Eventually he'll nod and wave you to the door. Next day it's ready, wrapped in plain brown paper. An edge sharper than memory, and tang stronger than truth.
- • Sun Xi has lived his whole life in the bustling metropolis. He's well known for being an impeccably dressed and is an attentive patron of the arts. His home is a miscellany of those who have benefited from his patronage. If you attend one of his parties and offer a fitting tribute to his walls (a famed painting, a rare recording, even a performance), he might reward you with a peek into his treasury.
- • Miss Florence appears distant, perhaps confused at first when greeted by visitors, but smiles easily and squints as if deciding which shape they really are. Those who come to her with their troubles may be put off by her abrupt laughter and proclamations that they've "made a real mess" or "won't ever find it now"—as if their quest and the very fate of the world were a spilled cup of tea or a lost thimble. But those who stay and listen well may find prophecy in her musings before she shoos them out the door with a vague "see you next time around."
- • Nobody ever baked a cookie better than Tia Catalina's biscochitos, sweet and crumbly and with a licorice smell that would draw you in from wherever you were playing. We all call her Tia Catalina, but she's not really aunt to anyone we know. The only time I ever saw her angry was the time we all made mud cookies with her cutters. She seemed ancient to me as a child—how old must she be now?
- • It is said that the Devil knows more for being old than for being the Devil, and Madam Chapman is living proof of that proverb. The superstitious youngsters say that's the reason she's even still alive! They claim that she gives Old Nick advice on issues of the living.
- • Decker Jensen is the last living person to have seen a bird, ya ken. He's so old his nose has gone a bit beaky on his hairless head. But barter him a box of chocolates, and he'll tell you the tale—though be warned, he wavers randomly between sayin' he killed the bird and sayin' the bird saved his damn fool life.

Thieves broke into the Temple of the Moon the other night, intending to steal the silver font where the Goddess turns water into potions of healing. It turns out that they needed its holy magic. For while Father Actios may be pushing 70, he can swing that enchanted mace as well as he did back in his adventuring days.

Did you ever hear a whistle like old Auntie Jean? She'll tell you she learned it from her Auntie to bring in the winds and call Emu to the dance. And then she'll laugh and get ice cream or rustle about in the shed. But that night a howler will roll in and drum on the roof, and all you'll dream about is Auntie Jean's shrill whistle.

James Duncan has lived through more wars and trenches than he can count. Missing three fingers, one ear, and an eye, Jamie is as grizzled as they come. Don't let that stop you from seeking out his wisdom, as he has remained good friends with all his wartime pals, even after they've left the land of the living.

Peter King is a teacher—English and history—with a passion for poetry and revolutions. He's one of the good ones; he takes care of the kids and offers advice, guidance, and open ear for anyone. Or at least a limerick, if nothing else helps. During the holidays, though, he'll change from his nondescript suits to equally nondescript motorcycle wear, load up on weapons, and go monster hunting for fun. None of his students have ever seen the tattoos protecting his skin, or the scar from the times the tattoos weren't enough.

Me and Luis work in the same garage. I'm pushing 40, and he's gotta have like 20 years on me. Nice guy, don't know him well. There was that one time when a weird-looking lady brought in a vintage VW Beetle with no plates, and she asked specifically for Luis. Before he shooed me away, I swear I heard him whistle and say something like, "A QX-48 Timerider! What a beauty!" After I came back from my smoke break, the car and the lady were gone. When I asked, Luis just smiled and shrugged.

As their name tag suggests, Faze staffs the Reference Desk at the Occluded Library. Respectful patrons who speak quietly and listen patiently will benefit from Faze's insightful (if laconic) commentary on almost any topic. Despite their small stature and advanced age, Faze will not hesitate to defend the Rules of the Library from would-be book thieves, loud talkers, and other miscreants.

Grandma Sprinkles is the face of Pentrex Consolidated Inc's food production unit, mostly specializing in snack cakes and other confections. Her face is emblazoned on every packing product, a sweet plump old grandmother that you swear you remember from your youth at some point. Rarely she makes public appearances for Special VIP tours of the factory, and it's amazing how the actor playing her always looks exactly like the brand image!

Weff Rolls-With-Sparks lied about their age to join a jumpship crew and get off-world, so the nickname "Kid" has stuck even though (thanks to relativity) they can drink in any bar they want when they burn their way back home and present their original ident card that says they're over 300 years old.

Rhys is not a young mage anymore. Still, you'd usually think he's harmless—he loves talking laboriously about magic. Or whisky. Or both—it's a little hard to tell, really, with his sentences meandering between one topic and the other. Don't be fooled, though. He's a stone-cold pragmatist willing to make all the hard choices to protect his people, and he throws fireballs or multiple lightning bolts with equal competence.

Sister Mary Immaculate is a well-respected mother superior, but her obsession with neatness sometimes rankles the newer sisters. Still sharp as a tack, she rarely discusses life before the convent, refusing to confirm or deny the rumor that she was a silent film starlet before hearing the call of the Lord.

Callen Hargrave, the Golden Age villain Cataclysmo, reformed and made a fortune off his weather control technology. He is now the primary patron of the Dual Identity Action Network (DIAN), the most powerful public interest group in the nation's capital. DIAN pours money into high-powered lawsuits, public relations campaigns, and political donations in pursuit of limiting government registration of superhumans, banning power nullification technology, and a Constitutional amendment securing the right to a secret identity.

Grandma swears humans built the rust pilgrim, though its metal body looks nothing like ours. Most everyone that's met Ol' Red agrees, see, 'cause it acts like us... or rather how we wish we were: kind to the downtrodden, defender of the oppressed, the last wholly good person left in the wastes.

Graysister Jez wasn't the best mechanic at the monastery—commonly known as The Garage—but she was more than good enough to keep the Wasteland Riders' choppers in good condition (those monks were not known for their repair skills). Anyone who criticized her usually wound up with a mouthful of broken teeth, because she wrapped her fists in broken lengths of motorcycle chain and didn't pull punches.

Untold millennia later, Parallax still can't decide if the stupid lab accident that converted them to "pure energy" was a blessing or a curse. As they watch the Terminusians try one last time to rekindle their sad, dying red giant before it collapses and leaves the entire Universe dark, they are surprised to find themselves actually speculating: wondering if even this will be enough to finally end them.

Mi Sung Kang stunned the world in her first public appearance, but this octogenarian has broken records, as well as bones, and shows no signs of stopping her domination of the MMA ring with her mastery of several martial arts.

Erys wasn't quite a surgeon or a wardoc, but had been doing this for so long that stopping the bleeding was second nature, and they were always a welcome hand when you were tracking down apostos and herets with access to kinweeps. The enweeps cauterized as they burned through you so they either killed you instantly or left you in fighting shape, but the kinweeps took you out of commission and could kill you fast if they nicked something vital. And if Erys needed to work on you, there usually wasn't time for niceties like anes or lido—it was gonna' hurt.

Dan is an octogenarian who plays video games on YouTube. He also has several blogs about life hacks, politics, and other things. What people don't know: Dan is a first generation hacker, and he's never let up. He knows the internet inside and out, and he needs to: He's approaching ninety, and his body won't make it much longer. So he needs to upload his consciousness, because there is absolutely no alternative. And he's making progress: If you look at the web of connections between websites, they resemble the neural structures of Dan's brain. Only lately, he has begun to suspect that he is not the only one doing this...

Walter McAlmond is the man to see if you're looking for the best fit in town. No matter your size, your shape, or your wallet, Walter knows how to work with cloth and will get your shirts and pants feeling like they were born on you. It's almost as though he knows every edge and curve of your body!

You'll find Neal drinking coffee with a few other old boys at the local cafe. Calloused and a little bit stooped from years of manual labor, he spends his time complaining about politicians, taxes, and what the young people are getting up to these days. He's often mistrustful of outsiders, but his passion for birding leads to a surprisingly wide array of contacts.

Not many wrestlers achieve superstardom at age 64, but that's the year Stan Melkewicz debuted his now-legendary announcer persona, Professor Turnbuckle. Drawing on his earliest pre-wrestling days as a busboy at a now-long-defunct Catskills comedy club, the offbeat and decidedly promiscuous octogenarian and "leading expert in the physics of wrestling" proved an instant and enduring fan favorite, earning Stan the fame he never found inside the squared circle.

While well known as Dame Geordie, an iconique one hit punk rock wonder from some years back, the real Georgette Blomgren is a kickin' retiree with a green thumb many consider a wonder of the gardening world. Don't forget to read the signs in her garden carefully, as an unfortunate typo has led to more than one deceased fan.

In every generation there are some late bloomers, but Linda sort of tops them all, as she discovered her magic at age 64. She knows that young people learn faster, that's why she created the spell "Second Youth." She's now at "sixteenth youth" and still learning.

He is old enough that if he ever had a name, it is long forgotten. But rumors persist that he was once the greatest assassin ever and led an extraordinarily lethal collective of killers for hire. While most of the young people who went to him seeking training in deadly arts came back scoffing at the idea that he was ever anything but a doddering old fool prone to over-watering plants and collecting stray kittens, he invited a few inside his home—and they were never seen again. They couldn't all have run away; who knows what became of them?

Rowan doesn't pay much attention to the rest of the village; villagers have been coming to their grove for as long as they can remember. Rowan just makes something to eat from the magic herbs in their garden, listens to whatever needs to be said, and sends the weary traveler onward, hopefully a little lighter than when they arrived and with a little luck in their stomach.

This is Christine. She is 53 years old, but you don't see that. With her tanned skin, elegantly blonde hair, smiling brown eyes, and impeccable clothing, she looks timeless. Christine likes mystery novels, and every time someone talks about zombie apocalypses or other catastrophes, she jokes about eating babies. And her jokes are wickedly, morbidly funny, because who would really eat a baby? Yes, it's said witches might do that, but who believes in witches, anyway?

Lucius was only seen during the day, offering some timely advice to every member of his five generation family. A well kept gentleman appearing no older than 60, with a slight smile and widow's peak in his grey hair. No one ever saw Lucius approach, they would hear his gentle steps and suddenly he would be there.

Maria Segundo lives a quiet life in her apartment. She wakes up, tends to her garden, and never asks questions when people come to see her with mysterious injuries, just sews them up at her table and sends them away with a smile.

At 17 and 8 months, Optipuss spends about 20 hours a day asleep. He doesn't go on missions any more, but even with the cataracts coming in and the renal support kibble, he's more than capable of handling any nefarious moron who thinks that just because Optimax is off saving the Universe or whatever that the Optiplex is just up for grabs.

Codex Keepers

A Thousand Faces of Adventure, Keeper of the Drunken Pirate's Forgotten Wish

Aaron, Keeper of the Child Upon Whom We Dare Not Look

Jesse Abelman, Keeper of the Moon's First Memory

Rob Abrazado, Keeper of the Purple Falsehood

Stras Acimovic, Keeper of the Man Who Dies Every Third Day

Quentin Acord, Keeper of the Word that Binds and Blinds

John Adamus, Keeper of the Endless Page

Benjamin Adelman, Keeper of the Brotherhood of the Black Dragon's Great Saga

Joaquin Aguirrezabalaga, Keeper of the Blood of Lursiss

Vendevogel Alain, Keeper of the Omegatherion of Fasar

Jesse Aldrich, Keeper of Azurix, the Blue Dust Planet

Alex, Keeper of the Midnight Court of Old Queen Rianne

John Alexander, Keeper of the Child Whose Face is a Mirror

Zach Alexander, Keeper of the Weeping Cells

Adam Alexander, Keeper of the Seven Splints of the Demon Crown

Jack Alexander, Keeper of the Lies of the Child Kingdom

Brendan Allison, Keeper of the Child Who Creeps and Crawls

Kristin Allison, Keeper of the Bright One's Shroud of Mourning

Brian Allred, Keeper of the Spear Eldfuglinn, Which Burns with the Terrifying Light of the Sun

Bryen Alperin, Keeper of the Sibylline Grimoire

Joe Amon, Keeper of the Astral Blades

Erik Amundsen, Keeper of Pages Touched but Unread

Ancusohm, Keeper of the Stone Queen's Egg

Rod Anderson, Keeper of the Floating Flesh Monolith

Dustin Andrews, Keeper of the Egg of Existential Dreaming

Robert Angus, Keeper of the Keystone of the Many Worlds

Apollo, Keeper of the Vein-Seeking Tongue

Vincent Arebalo, Keeper of the Dolm Sarcophagus

Mark Argent, Keeper of the Child Who Has No Shadow

Gene Astadan, Keeper of the Temple of the Viridescent Wyrms

Michael Atlin, Keeper of the Beetle's Teeth

John Atwood, Keeper of the Diary of Sanguine is the Eye

Archmage Aulin, Keeper of the Turtle-plate Greaves of Old King Marwen

Tom Axon, Keeper of the Sultana's Blue Dreaming

Misha B, Keeper of the Grand Apotheosis

Jim B., Keeper of the Two Puppets that Gleeefully Interrogate

Michael Bacon, Keeper of the Thirteen Rhyming Spells of Kiesow

Rye Baerg, Keeper of the Mark of False Direction

Eric Bahr, Keeper of the Burrow From Which It Comes

Andrew Bailey, Keeper of the World Teeth

Vincent Baker, Keeper of the Sign of the Tree of Life

Josie Baker, Keeper of the Mutinous Younglings

Chad Bale, Keeper of the Chimes of Misery

Noah Ban, Keeper of the Maze of Unending Pleasure

BansheeGames, Keeper of the Lost Child's Breadcrumbs

Michael Barford, Keeper of the Eternal Chime

Mike Barnes, Keeper of the Hymnal of St. Thibold the Merciless

Marco Barreto Bittner, Keeper of the Leonine Child That Wails and Stings

James Barta, Keeper of the Dreary Island of St. Lomax the Unseen

Michael Bartman, Keeper of the Sad Tale of Alvin Horoux

Nick Bate, Keeper of the Most Delectable Wyrms Viscera

Jacob Bates, Keeper of the Fleeting Blooms

Joe Beason, Keeper of the True Name of Ashmedai

Scott Beattie, Keeper of the Worm Bone Frescoes

David Beaudoin, Keeper of the Clock's Fourth Hand

Michael Beck Esperum, Keeper of the Recorded Grievances of the Thousand Heretics

Becky, Keeper of the Record of Where We Have Been

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Del Benjamin, Keeper of the Thunderstorm Chariot

Nate Bob Benton, Keeper of the Fungoid Blessing

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Sarah Bolling, Keeper of the Last Lantern Before the Black Gate

Boni, Keeper of the Thirteen Principles of Volmun

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Brian, Keeper of the Autumnal Princedoms

Logan Bright, Keeper of the Flourishing Spore

Finn Brightwell, Keeper of the Shrine of Melchior the Maggot

Darren Brockes, Keeper of the Agony Songs

Bromeliad, Keeper of Our Mother's Cool Breath, Bottled

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Bill Brown, Keeper of the Emerald Path

Jason Brown, Keeper of the Cardinal's Confession

Bryan, Keeper of the Festering Estuary

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Shanon Daly, Keeper of the Fire of Nal-K'aa
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Norm Elvin, Keeper of the Refined Rose Dust of Daar Angúl
Epistolary Richard, Keeper of the Blood-Red Violin of Lagethelin Muse-Taker
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The Fifth World, Keeper of the Wisdom of Emerald
Nightmare
Klint Finley, Keeper of the Book of Marvels, Wired Shut
Forever
Finn, Keeper of the Spider Tombs
Asbjørn Flø, Keeper of the Ten Hidden Keys
Marcus Flores, Keeper of the Chromatic Gates
flyaturtle, Keeper of the Red King's Heart
flying grizzly, Keeper of the Silence Between Thunder and
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Josh Fox, Keeper of the Pitch-Black Sails
Andrew Fox, Keeper of the Child Who Cannot Be Cut,
Though We Frequently Try
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Francisco, Keeper of the Blood-Soaked Corridor
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Michael Friese, Keeper of the Smoke Sylphs
Frosty Sage, Keeper of the Hull of the Void Hatred
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Sean G, Keeper of the Creature Who Is Always Just Behind
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Nicolás Garcia Lanza, Keeper of the Mossy Robes of the
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Charles Gatz, Keeper of the Last Words of the Drowned Men
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Michele Gelli, Keeper of the Woman Who is a Nest for
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Joshua Gilbreath, Keeper of the Elven King Who Never Was

James Gibson, Keeper of Beltherion Brightlord's Shadow
John Glass, Keeper of the Malignant Verses
Christopher Gmelch, Keeper of Lianore's False Lament
gnapo, Keeper of the Emerald Path
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Celadon
Edgar Gonzalez, Keeper of the Iridescent Forest
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Paul Groudas, Keeper of the Rusted Crown of Old King
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Matt Hayles, Keeper of the Child Who Cannot Cry
Blaise Hebert, Keeper of the Living Wick of Gautama's
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Michael Heiligenstein, Keeper of the Child Who Repeats the
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Vee Hendro, Keeper of the Laments of the Awful Sea
Miguel Hernandez, Keeper of the Astral Bell Tower
Brett Hickinbotham, Keeper of Kultok's Bowl of Hollow Suns
Edward Hickcox, Keeper of the Bridge of Wanderers
Andrew Hicks, Keeper of the Hell of the Upside-Down
Sinners
Brandon Hinton, Keeper of the Ministry of Embers
Bryanna Hitchcock, Keeper of the Blight Goat and Its Five
Ever-Hungry, Ever-Gnashing Mouths
William Hobson, Keeper of the Phantom Penitents
Kyle Hodnett, Keeper of the Secret of Clovis Stout-Hearted
Arnie Holder, Keeper of the Mortician's Tesseract Heart
Nick Hollingsworth, Keeper of Tarnat's Prayer for Peace
Danny Hood, Keeper of the Fabulous Fish Parade
Nicholas Hopkins, Keeper of the Passage to Dim Carcosa
Nicholas Hopkins, Keeper of the Space-Borne Memory that
Creeps into Our Dreams

Jake Householder, Keeper of the Sky Tribunals
Logan Howard, Keeper of the Broken Blade
Stephen Humphreys, Keeper of the Puppeteer's Shadow
Ross Hunter, Keeper of the Serpent Sword of Master Iron-Wing Crane
Sid Icarus, Keeper of the Box Into Which We Dare Not Reach
Insanodog, Keeper of the Porcelain Lantern Which Shall Never Be Lit
insert quest here, Keeper of the Silver Light of St. Lannen the Pure
Spencer Isdahl, Keeper of the Steel Blessing of Ares
Zachary Isom, Keeper of the Nameless Queen's Sobriquet
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