


Accursed



Bone and Barrow



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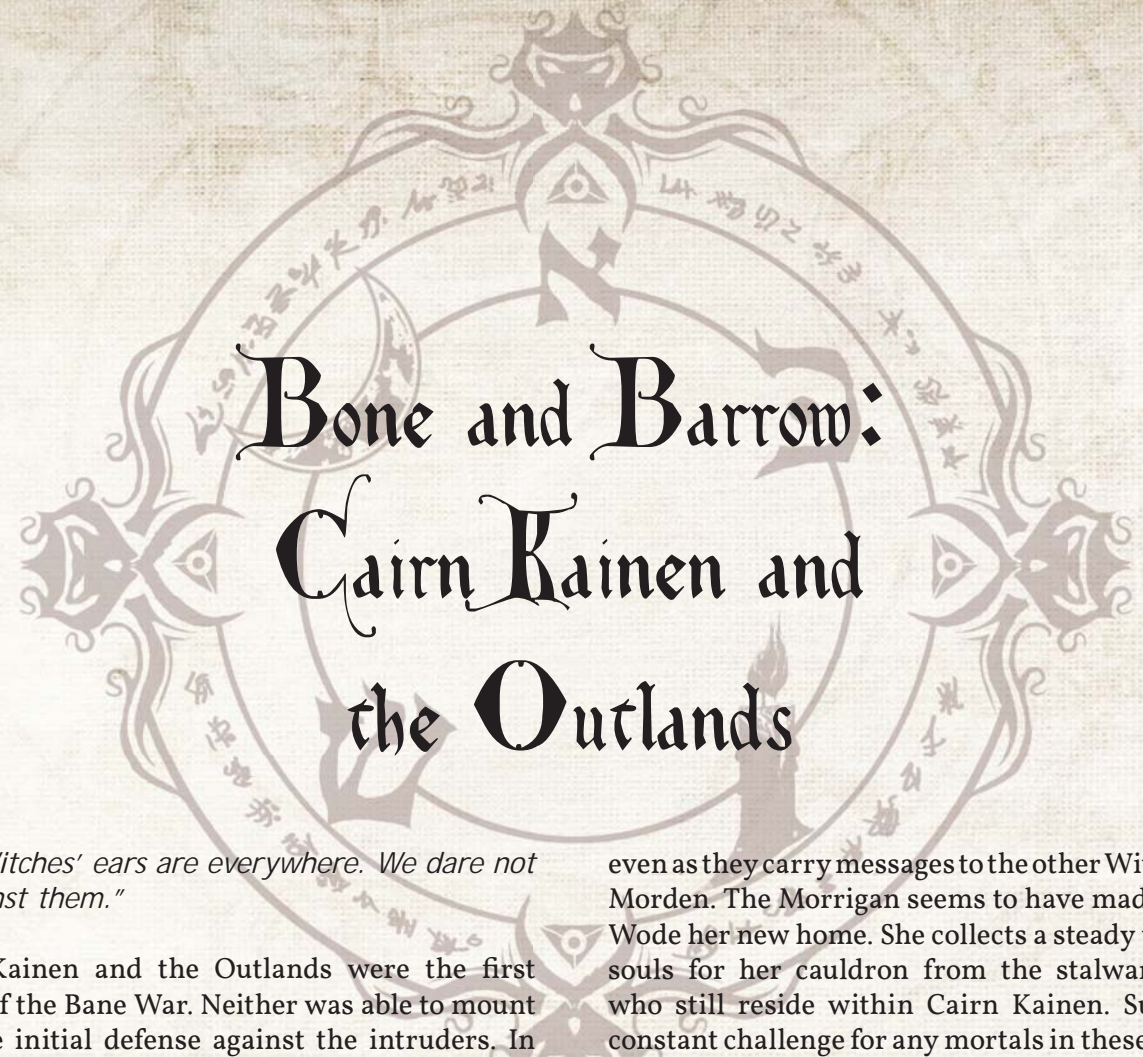
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Bone and Barrow: Cairn Kainen and the Outlands

"The Witches' ears are everywhere. We dare not speak against them."

Cairn Kainen and the Outlands were the first casualties of the Bane War. Neither was able to mount an effective initial defense against the intruders. In both cases, their early collapse empowered the Witch Army, contributing to its success against Morden's other nations.

When the Witch Army crested the Darkfall Peaks, they descended upon the Outlands. These small nations were unprepared for the brutal assaults that followed. In short order, attackers overran the nations imprisoning their citizens or transforming them into Accursed. Over the course of the Bane Wars, the Witches continued to plunder the Outlands. By Wars end there was little left to salvage and even fewer survivors to do so.

The Morrigan's early infiltration of Cairn Kainen collapsed the country's leadership and eliminated its base of power before the war had scarcely begun. Without a High King, the clans fell to internal squabbling, and were unable to field a united army. While some joined with the Army of Light, others retreated to their clanholds. Cauldron-born soon dominated the land.

Now, both regions suffer under tyranny, even after the Witch Council dissolved. Hecate's Oubliette remains in the foothills of the Darkwall Peaks. Her banes prowl the Outlands, surveying their domain

even as they carry messages to the other Witches across Morden. The Morrigan seems to have made Blackroot Wode her new home. She collects a steady tithe of new souls for her cauldron from the stalwart clansfolk who still reside within Cairn Kainen. Survival is a constant challenge for any mortals in these places, and desperation leads to many false hopes.

Survivors in both of these regions share a strong sense of cynicism toward any supposed saviors. They have seen many others fall to the Witches, and they do not expect a hero to suddenly emerge. Overcoming the tyrants requires the nations to carefully rebuild—a process that could take decades. If heroes emerge and score some early victories, then the clansfolk and the Outlands survivors would surely join the fight against the tyrants. However, they have no faith to place in an unproven dream. Instead, they expect to toil under tyranny, while they try to devise a plan that might eventually yield some success.

At the same time, Accursed and other refugees have a strong interest in exploring and liberating these lands. The Outlands in particular are less densely settled than any other areas of Morden. This leaves space for those who bear a Witchmark to live apart from other humans. The potential exists for the creation of a homeland, where Accursed need not live under the constant scrutiny and judgment of those who have been spared their fate. Before that can happen, however, the threat of the Witches must be overcome, or they are certain to undo any progress.



Cairn Kainen is the Eastern-most realm of Morden, nestled into a broad valley bordered by the Darkwall Peaks and the soaring plateau of the Highlands. The blasted Outlands lie to the North, and to the Southwest is a narrow coastal region along the Bay of Hyphrates, leading into the Discordian Sea. The region is known for rocky, yet fertile plains, sprawling moors, and beautiful vistas of gently rolling heather.

Geography

Once a shining jewel of Morden, Cairn Kainen became a bleak realm under the rule of the Morrigan. Still, the region retained its breathtaking vistas and terrain that gave it an unusual character. Cairn Kainen remained a place like no other in Morden.

The Highlands

The Western portion of Cairn Kainen is dominated by the Highlands. This region is comprised of several minor mountains, hills, and ridges. Only a handful of stubborn clanholds and outlying villages sparsely populate the area. The elevation changes sharply in the Highlands from the rest of the realm, supplying stunning overlooks of the surrounding lands.

BLACKROOT WODE

A dark and wretched forest, Blackroot Wode squats amidst the Highlands like a canker. The trees of Blackroot Wode, as the name suggests, are interconnected through a complex system of tangled, gnarled roots that lie seemingly everywhere throughout the region. The Morrigan has taken Blackroot Wode as her home and lair, further lending to the sinister feel. It is common to encounter the shambling undead known as cauldron-born beneath the boughs of this wood. Ravens roost throughout the region in large flocks, one of the few remaining signs of life. The absence of life leaves Blackroot Wode unsettlingly quiet. A waiting stillness suffuses the region and seems to closely observe any intruders with ghastly intent.

The Morrigan's rule over Cairn Kainen enforces only a few laws, but one of them involves the Witch's home. "Any who trespass beneath the boughs of Blackroot Wode shall enter the Dark Cauldron," the edict states, and so the Morrigan has enforced since she took power. The cauldron-born who patrol the Wode are infamously cruel to any intruders, though few are slain outright. Instead, the undead seem bound to obey the Morrigan's will, more intent on capturing interlopers and dragging them off for a darker fate.

While the Morrigan's law regarding trespass into Blackroot Wode is well-known, it is equally clear that she occasionally ignores her own rules. From time to time, the Witch has tolerated some small incursions into her realm, occasionally even beckoning wanderers who pass close to the borders of her domain. Nearly always, these exceptions are made for mortals and Accursed who are exceptionally talented in one area or another, often as artists, singers, or storytellers.

There are numerous legends that claim several gifted bards have entered the Morrigan's court in this fashion. According to the tales, these "guests" are kept frozen in cages of ice, released only once per season to compete against one another for the Morrigan's favor. Those who win her contest are set free, escaping Blackroot Wode only to learn that years or decades have passed since they first went missing.

ELDENTIR

The most ancient legends of Caer Kainen reference a place of wonder and myth known as Eldentir. Some scholars believe that Eldentir was located in the nation's Highlands region. It was described as a place of haunting beauty and elegance, peopled by a noble folk who were a blend of both mortal and fey, yet neither. In the tales, Eldentir's citizens were neither friendly nor hostile towards the people of Caer Kainen and beyond. They simply were, having existed for eons and seemingly content to exist for another untold millennia.

However, the tales of the Eldentir end abruptly a short time after the establishment of Morden's nations. There are no stories of war, plague, or disaster, but the Eldentir simply seemed to vanish from history, as if it were erased from all living memory. Many modern scholars, particularly those of the Order of the Penitent, believe that the Morrigan's efforts to build an alien realm in Blackroot Wode is her attempt to create some echo or reflection of the Eldentir's ancient glory.

Hidden Moon-Paths

Blackroot Wode is intentionally a forbidding and dangerous place to visit. However, nothing requires the Accursed to simply walk into the Morrigan's lair. The Fey know of many secret routes known as "moon-paths." These moon-paths connect portions of Blackroot Wode with the rest of the world, and many of them are found in Cairn Kainen. Should the Penitents find a way to acquire this knowledge from the Unseelie Court, the Gamemaster has a ready-made tool to transport the heroes into the Witch's homeland and, most likely, right into an impressively dramatic challenge.

The Lowlands

The majority of Cairn Kainen lies in the "lowlands," remaining below the peaks of mountains on nearly all sides. The lowlands are filled with verdant plains and gently rolling hills, commonly considered amongst the most picturesque lands in all Morden. The lowlands are home to the largest, concentrated populations in Cairn Kainen, with several larger clanholds surrounding the ruins of Shieldhaven.

BOGLANDS & MOORS

Many regions in the lowlands are broad, flat areas that were formerly marshes and swamps many centuries ago. Decades of concerted effort drained large parts of the land, making it some of it arable. However, huge regions are still treacherous to both travelers and farmers, retaining large areas of groundwater, unsteady footing, and surprisingly unstable sinkholes. For most of the year, the lower temperatures cause these regions to harbor exceptionally thick banks of fog and mist.

LOCH LUMOND

The largest body of water inland of Cairn Kainen, Loch Lumond dominates much of the lowlands. This massive freshwater lake is incredibly deep, its roots reaching down far past the point that any mortal man can reach via diving. Fish are plentiful in the loch, and several villages have built their homes near the shores of the loch in order to take advantage of the ready supply of cool, clean water. No single clan lays claim to the loch. Instead, by ancient tradition, the loch is considered to belong to all clansmen equally. Several clans do maintain fishing boats upon the loch, and Clan Martigan sponsors an annual boat race around the shores of the loch. The winner is awarded prizes from the clan leader and is often considered a test of one's fitness to become a warrior for the clan.

Fishermen have long told stories around the hearth fire of strange sights glimpsed in the depths of Loch Lumond. Most clansfolk dismiss such tales as nothing more than superstition or stories told to entertain the gullible. True or not, the stories concern a strange beast of immense size that is said to lair within the loch. This creature is described as being larger than any boat, with glowing green eyes and a serpentine neck. According to the fishermen, any time the creature is spotted, it means that the catch for that day is destined to be lean, for the beast scares off any local water life whenever it appears.

LOCH FINNERE

This particular water feature is part of the lands of Clan Finnoul. The loch is connected to a natural mineral spring, making the water particularly clear. Loch Finnere is often warmer than the surrounding land, resulting in copious mist and fog in the early morning and evening. Since the appearance of the Banshee (see page 10), the loch has grown murky, the region seemingly permeated by a sense of dread and danger.



Giant Raven

Normal ravens are frighteningly commonplace in Cairn Kainen. It is said that each of these birds owes absolute allegiance to the Morrigan. Considered an ill omen, ravens are unwelcome in most clanholds, and are—at best—tolerated whenever encountered in the wild. However, the Morrigan has used her witchcraft to transform some of her favored servants into much larger and far more frightening shapes: the giant raven.

Giant ravens are rare, typically only appearing when sent to make a point for their Witch mistress. Those who displease the Morrigan can find themselves the target of these human-sized, black-feathered avengers, swooping in to peck and claw at any exposed flesh. Further, these massive birds are notoriously greedy. Victims who survive the creature's attacks often find valuable objects missing in the aftermath.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Subterfuge d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

Bite/Claws: Str + d6.

Combat Reflexes: +2 to recover from being Shaken.

Fear: Anyone who sees a giant raven must make a fear test.

Flight: A giant raven flies with Pace 18 and a Climb of 3.

Low-light vision: Giant ravens ignore penalties for Dim or Dark lighting.

Theft: As a free action, a Giant Raven may make a Subterfuge roll to try and steal a small item from any enemy it is engaged with in melee combat.

Uncanny Accuracy: Giant ravens that strike a target in melee automatically hit the least-armored location.

Witchline (Morrigan): Banes of the Morrigan can be sensed by Revenant Accursed within 25 feet. Giant Ravens suffer +4 damage from cold iron weapons.

Grave Knights

Among the most feared of the Morrigan's cauldron-born are the grave knights. Stronger, faster, and more skilled than the typical undead servant, grave knights bear the arms and armor that distinguished them as veteran warriors in life. It is the grave knights who serve as leaders and commanders for other cauldron-born in battle.

Often, these creatures bear a singular name or title signifying something important about the grave knight; his preferred method of execution, the manner in which he fights for the Morrigan, or an epithet granted to him by his enemies.

Known grave knights of Cairn Kainen include:

- **The Knight of the Gallows;** who prefers to hang those who offend the Morrigan.
- **The Knight of the Broken Sword;** this knight takes weapons as trophies from those whom she slays.
- **Sir Heartsblood;** a grave knight who prefers impaling an enemy's heart with a lance.
- **Dame Twilight;** she seeks out her victims at the midpoint of day and night

History

In the earliest days of Morden, tribes of men arrived seeking a new home, brought here by the mysterious lightning bridge. Nothing concrete is known about the bridge or from whence the tribes originated, but their arrival in Morden founded the nations that exist today. When the tribes first ventured East, they encountered a fertile valley sheltered by high mountain peaks. The broad valley contained lush and inviting terrain, composed of sweeping rocky moors and long stretches of wild heath. This territory was perfect for grazing livestock and raising small farms. Revitalized, the tribes settled across this land, intermarrying until they began to form larger groups. In time, those groups transformed into seven great clans, each one filled with proud, territorial folk. These people were passionate, quick to love as well as anger. While the clans prospered among the hot-blooded society, they found they could not work together without great difficulty. Wars sprung up amongst the clans, fed by skirmishes over property and raids that robbed livestock—and occasionally, brides or grooms! Some of the raids extended into neighboring realms, garnering both wealth and mistrust from Hyphrates and the Outlands.

Bran MacLir

It required a man of singular conviction, courage, and strong will to unite the fractious clansfolk into a nation. That man was named Bran MacLir. Originally a younger son of a poor clanhold, Bran astonished his peers with his skill as a warrior and a leader. In time, young MacLir gathered around him a mighty warband of shield bearers, and together they forged a legend. In battle after battle, MacLir and his men went undefeated, yet Bran felt something was missing from his life. He took solace on a mountaintop, seeking a

noble purpose; a true challenge for his supreme ability. The bards say that upon that night, Bran MacLir vowed to do what had never been done: unite the clans under a single banner.

More than a hundred stories chronicle Bran's exploits, describing how the young warrior challenged and defeated clan lord after clan lord, until all seven had bowed their heads and sworn themselves to MacLir's cause. The stories say that some of the clans were brought to Bran's side through discourse and riddles, whilst others required shaming on the field of battle or a cunning trick of words. Regardless of the means, the seven clans stood as they never had before—as one. Loyal and steadfast, the clans crowned Bran MacLir as their first High King and praised him as the father of their new nation.

The Years of Plenty

The new High King's first command was to construct a mighty fortress in the heart of the realm. This castle would serve as a symbol of the clans' unity, a place of protection for all clansfolk, regardless of which clan they came from. It would be the realm's capital and the seat of the High King's government. Bran named this fortress Shieldhaven, and the collective nation became known as *Caer Kainen*—The Unbroken Fortress—in the tribal dialect of the clansfolk. Master masons and architects from across Morden came to participate in the construction of this massive castle, and it took decades to achieve completion. For all that, the work went faster than planned, aided by volunteer workers drawn from every clan. The High King worked alongside his people, welding them together in the crucible of this first grand project undertaken between all seven of the clans.

The High King's promise yielded fruit. His council included advisors from every clan, and he dealt with each of the seven clans equally in all manners. His successors followed in MacLir's footsteps, ruling wisely and well. *Caer Kainen* thrived and became one of Morden's foremost nations, prosperous and well known for producing crafts of high-quality.

The only black mark from this period involves one of the seven clans: the Cavendish. Agents of the High King discovered evidence that creatures from within or beyond the Darkwall Peaks had met with leaders of the Cavendish clan. According to the bards, these monsters offered the Cavendish great power, including the secrets of Witchcraft, in return for unspecified favors in the future. In truth, the offers were made by early scouts from the Grand Coven, and the Cavendish clan had barely enough time to even consider the temptation before the High King took action. The Cavendish clan was banished from

Legends of Bran MacLir

There are almost as many tales about the first High King of *Caer Kainen* as there are bards to sing of them. Some of the most commonly known legends of the High King's unmatched prowess and heroism include:

Bran and the Holy Sword: In this story, the High King sets out after a cowardly criminal and encounters a series of dangerous enemies. Bran battles his way through several monsters before confronting one that he cannot defeat: the cyclopean Balor. In retreat, the High King is saved by the very thief he had set out to capture. Joining forces, the two discover a hidden cave and a hidden prize: the holy sword known as the *Spatha Sancta*. With this anointed blade, the High King destroys Balor and magnanimously allows the thief to go free for his aid.

Bran and the Mountain Princess: Yearning for a companion to ease his loneliness, the High King searches the land for a bride. Unsuccessful, the High King pauses near the tallest mountain of the Highlands when he hears a song of soul-aching beauty. Resolved to find the source of this song, Bran climbs the mountain, fighting his way past icy yetis and howling wind-beasts. At the very peak, Bran encounters a woman, her voice entrancing—it is she who is the singer. Bran courts the woman by bringing her gift after gift, resorting to ever-wilder and more unique items to win her heart. In the end, the woman reveals that all she ever wanted was Bran's strong arms to hold her, and the two are wed.

Bran and the Dragon: This rollicking tale sees the High King make a wager with his wife as to whom can bring home the largest fish from Loch Lumond. In a series of humorous events, the High King tries different tactics to find his quarry, only to discover that a malign dragon has taken refuge within the loch. In the end, Bran challenges the dragon to single combat over the fish in the dragon's lair. Bran is victorious, but he finds he can no longer enjoy the taste of fish as food forevermore.

Caer Kainen, declared exiles and forcibly relocated to the border of the Outlands (into a realm that would become Deepshadow, see page 27). Upon that day, the seven great clans became six, and all signs of the Cavendish were erased from proud Shieldhaven.

The Bane War and the Betrayal

When the Grand Coven began their invasion of the Outlands, desperate messengers and fleeing refugees swiftly made Caer Kainen aware that the invasion had begun. No stranger to facing monsters from the Darkwall Peaks, the clansfolk readied for war. Some of the more hot-blooded clans dispatched warriors northwards to raid and harry the Witch armies. Many of these raids focused upon the foreign mercenaries who marched with the Witch's supernatural creatures, as the clansfolk hold a dim view of those who collaborated with evil. High King Gaelen, first of his name, ruled Caer Kainen at that time, having recently wed and begun a family with Lady Aideen Finnoul. Gaelen summoned his most trusted advisors to Shieldhaven to devise a plan for defending Caer Kainen and striking back at the invading Witch army.

Due to Caer Kainen's unique terrain, defending the realm looked like an easy task. The misty boglands were difficult at best for any force to traverse. The Highlands offered numerous observation posts for scouts to report on any invading army's progress. The clansfolk knew the wild heath of the land better than any, guaranteeing costly ambushes for the enemy. However, the invasion and conquest of Caer Kainen would not come from without but from within.

A woman of extraordinary beauty, dark of hair and eye, came to Shieldhaven. Her name, she said, was Lady Macha. Upon her arrival, she was granted the High King's protection and shelter within the castle walls—Gaelen extended to her the traditional guest-right of his people. The Lady Macha soon came to be noticed nearly everywhere within Shieldhaven. In short order, she became an inseparable part of Gaelen's court.

The newcomer's influence over High King Gaelen was apparent to one and all within Shieldhaven. The High King's closest friends and even his Queen attempted to intervene, but Gaelen would have none of it. He had become obsessed with the dark-haired visitor, allowing matters of state—and preparations for the Bane War—to grow stale and indolent. The absence of the High King's authority rendered any meaningful acts of government impossible, sowing confusion and despair among the military forces marshalled for action against the Witches. While the Outlands burned under the Witch army, Caer Kainen did nothing, drifting along waiting for the High King's order to launch the attack.



That order never came. Instead, on the night of the new moon, High King Gaelen did the unthinkable—he put everyone he had ever loved or admired to the sword. This event became known as the Betrayal, for the High King's obsession had clearly descended into insanity. Gaelen's mad slaughter claimed the lives of even his own family, and no one was spared. Witnesses claim that Lady Macha embraced the High King when the dark deeds were done, standing alone as the last survivors fled from the carnage. When the clans learnt of the High King's treachery, it sundered the bonds that had united them for generations. All hope seemed to have been dashed. Any who went to Shieldhaven seeking answers discovered that the proud castle was now an abandoned shell.

Lady Macha was revealed to be one of the mighty Witches ravaging the Outlands, claiming the title of the Morrigan. In the tongue of the clansfolk, this meant she was “the queen of war and death.” This title proved apt, for the Witch had great necromantic powers, raising an army of undead beings from the depths of her dark cauldron. Ravens became her messengers, croaking her commands in human voice to every town and village in the realm. Those who did not submit were attacked by hordes of undead warriors, beings called “cauldron-born” due to their

origin. Horrifyingly, these corpse-warriors were made from the slain clansmen who opposed the Morrigan. Under assault of the living dead and reeling from the treachery of the High King, the clans were helpless to fight back. Two of the great clans were utterly eradicated when they attempted resistance, only to have their broken bodies transformed into yet more cauldron-born serving the conquering Witch. A massive army of undead soon gathered and marched over the Highlands into Valkenholm, enacting a surprise attack on the gathered forces of the other Morden nations. This assault smashed the Alliance, ending all hope of defeating the Witch army.

After the Bane War's conclusion, Caer Kainen was no more. The realm had been torn apart by death and despair, the clan leaders fearful to emerge from beyond their fortified clanholds. Four out of every ten clansfolk had fallen or been transformed into a servant of the Morrigan. Many proclaimed that the end of the world had come, and for Caer Kainen, it surely had. The realm was thereafter known as Cairn Kainen—a gravesite for what had once been one of Morden's strongest nations.

The ravens brought word of the Morrigan's rule to all surviving clan leaders. The black-feathered emissaries announced that the Witch had laws she would ruthlessly enforce upon her realm:

- The first demand was for each clanhold to provide men and woman as tribute at the height of every season.
- The second was that any command of hers was to be met unquestioningly.
- Third, that Blackroot Wode was the Morrigan's personal territory and none would survive who entered there.
- Fourth, the ruins of Shieldhaven were not to be rebuilt, but to stand as a monument to the weakness of the High King.
- Finally, any who resisted her rule—extending to the immediate family—would be transformed into cauldron-born.

A decade after the Bane War's end, the land of Cairn Kainen is one where life is difficult and nothing is certain. Many clanholds lie empty, their people long dead or scattered elsewhere as refugees. Some villages are abandoned husks, home only to wandering groups of cauldron-born or roosting ravens. The remaining clans have become unfriendly, nursing slights and grudges against one and all to safeguard their own survival. Resentment lurks just below the surface for each settlement and every clan, for there are few resources to go around and the clan leaders lay blame upon outsiders and enemies at every turn. The Betrayal of High King Gaelen seems to have irrevocably

wounded the clansfolk's spirit, and the people seem doomed to wither, divided from one another by mistrust and anger that they dare not unleash against their conqueror.



Malikyth

Arrogant, amused, aloof—these words all describe the Unseelie Fey known as Malikyth. Almost painfully comely to look upon, his hair is like that of spun gold, his eyes as dark as the night sky. A boastful and proud being, he has claimed to be responsible for transforming Lady Aideen Finnoul into the Banshee of Loch Finnere.

Malikyth has been known to wander Morden, particularly in Cairn Kainen, spending his time toying with mankind. As with many of the Unseelie Fey, Malikyth prefers the path of deceit to that of truth, complicating any documented encounters with him or his kind. Similarly, his sense of humor is twisted, and he has been known to grant the occasional wish only for its effects to backfire in dangerous and malignant ways. If angered or insulted, he is as likely to viciously attack as he is to simply vanish.

He is no friend to the Morrigan, but that does not mean he is an ally to the Order of the Penitent. He has been known to complain bitterly of the Morrigan's theft of the Dark Cauldron, and there are those among the Order who believe he could be an ally, if such a being could ever be trusted to hold up his end of a bargain. Malikyth has hinted more than once that he knows secret paths into and out of the Morrigan's domain within Blackroot Wode—that alone makes him a valuable, if unreliable, resource for the Accursed.

Wish Magic

The powers of the Fey are similar in nature to the witchcraft of the Djinn—both use wishes or bargains as the basis for their potency. Malikyth possesses impressive powers through this means, but any use of this magic alerts the Witches to his location and drains his ability to use more magic for some time. Therefore, he carefully husbands his powers and chooses the right moments to use them, lest he bring down the wrath of the Witches.

The Game Master must use discretion for how to incorporate wish magic into the campaign. Carefully consider the effects of any wish negotiated with the fey. Any use should be appropriately impressive, but with a nasty twist, thanks to the Unseelie's capricious nature.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d12, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Shooting d8, Subterfuge d6, Taunt d12

Charisma: +8;

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 10;

Toughness: 8 (2)

Gear: Fey armor (+2), silver rapier (Str + d6, +1 Parry), fine clothing, wineskin filled with fey wine.

Special Abilities

Combat Reflexes:

+2 to recover from being Shaken.

Fey Magic:

Malikyth uses his Spirit attribute for his spellcasting die. He has 20 power points and may use any of the following powers: *armor*, *bolt*, *divination*, *havoc*, *invisibility*, and *quickness*.

Improved Block:

Malikyth receives +2 Parry.

Low-light vision:

Malikyth ignore penalties for Dim or Dark lighting.

Unearthly Beauty:

Malikyth's countenance is startlingly attractive. He has +8 Charisma.

Unseelie Fey: Malikyth suffers double damage from cold iron weapons.

Wish Magic: Malikyth can grant up to one wish, although due to his nature, the effects of the wish are interpreted to be twisted in his favor (often in cruel ways).

Culture

Life for the folk of Cairn Kainen is centered around the concept of membership within a clan. The clan represents a network of families and friends bound together by shared hardships and obligations. Some of these collective debts stretch back for generations. The clan embodies a specific set of beliefs and traditions that are shared by all its members, binding them into a tightly



knit group with a unique identity.

Normally, families that make up a clan settle in the same general area, occupying several villages or towns near to one another. Borders are fluid and loosely defined in Cairn Kainen, especially since the Morrigan's conquest. This means that one clan's land often infringes upon land claimed by another, ensuring a seemingly never-ending series of feuds and ill feelings between the clans.

Each of the clans has a central settlement known as a clanhold. The clanhold is a large and well-defended community, garrisoned by the clan's most able and veteran warriors. Clanholds incorporate fortifications such as stout walls, watchtowers, or even a keep. Many of these clanholds are large, squat, self-sufficient fortresses that were built to withstand sieges

or fend off monsters from the nearby Darkwall Peaks. The clan's trophies and records are kept in the clanhold, generally under the watchful eye of a bard or scribe. The clanhold is expected to host most—if not all—of the clansfolk in time of war, important celebrations, or for certain official functions including the wedding or funeral of a clan leader.

The clan leader is normally referred to by the name of the clan, whether it be a clan lord or clan lady—for example, the Martigan or the Reacher. Within the clan, the clan leader's word is law; they are an absolute ruler with unmatched authority. Tradition demands that the clan leader must keep counsel with a bard and the eldest amongst the clansfolk. These respected elders are given a voice in the clan leader's decisions. In recent years, some clans—particularly Moonfar and Finnoul—have begun to incorporate Enochian priests into the clan leader's circle of counselors.

As for the Morrigan, she remains aloof from the finer points of governance in Cairn Kainen. While she brooks no organized resistance to her rule, the Witch allows the clan leaders to run their clans as they see fit—in her name, of course. Once the Morrigan established her strictures, she retreated to Blackroot Wode and the mysterious undertaking there that consumes her. The Witch made several gruesome examples early in her reign using the cauldron-born and her raven messengers, imparting a savage lesson to the people of Cairn Kainen: they do as the Witch says, or they die.

It is well that the Morrigan does not involve herself further in the day-to-day lives of her subjects. The fractured nature of the clansfolk and their strong independent spirit was a challenge even for the legendary High King Bran. Thus, the Morrigan—as mighty as she is—prefers to largely ignore the clansfolk as long as they send their tributes and stay out of Blackroot Wode.

However, the Witch's preoccupation with her own schemes has blinded her to the growing resentment amongst the clans. At first, the Morrigan's campaign of fear was enough to keep the clansfolk in line, and the ongoing threat of the tributes quashed any serious desire to fight back. Over time, the clansfolk have begun to overcome their terror of the witch, and replaced it with a slow, simmering rage building within each clanhold. Year after year, this pressure has built, resulting in sullen obedience to the raven messengers and several clan leaders outright hiding important information. The clan leaders realize that any opposition to the Morrigan must be kept secret, meaning that hushed plans are whispered when no ravens are around to hear and weapons are hoarded in places the cauldron-born do not search.

Clan Branagh

An old, irascible clan lord who was named Bleddyn before he assumed leadership leads Branagh. Under the Branagh, they have remained one of the most prosperous in all of Cairn Kainen. Many of the clansfolk attribute this success to good fortune,

however, since it is well-known that their leader is very ambitious. Some speculate that he intends to be the next High King and is willing to do nearly anything to achieve that goal.

Clan Finnoul

The Finnoul clan has always had very close ties with the Fey. Many of them even intermarried with the Seelie court, prior to the Bane War. Unfortunately, the clan has come under a dark cloud in recent years. A dangerous, ghostly being named the Banshee has been terrorizing the clan, crying out for vengeance. Many believe that the Banshee is actually the lady Aideen Finnoul, the slain wife of High King Gaelen. Due to this unwelcome visitor and the end of the Seelie Court, the other clans in Cairn Kainen consider this clan to be unlucky and destined for ill fates. Perhaps because of the Banshee's presence, the Morrigan has kept a close watch on Clan Finnoul, searching for any signs of rebellion. The Finnoul struggles to keep his clan together. He has been considering asking for help from outsiders to deal with the Banshee.

Clan Martigan

Paranoid and fearful, the Martigan once named Lady Arianrhod guides her folk. This clan possesses some of the strongest and most well-defended clanholds in all of Cairn Kainen, but they also suffer the most from the lack of available resources. Many of the clan's livestock were slain during the Bane War, and only by great sacrifice has the clan managed to evade outright starvation as a result. Unknown to the Martigan, some of her people are agents of the Morrigan. In fact, one of her trusted advisors—the scribe Guto—is actually a revenant who still serves the Witch.

Clan Moonfar

This clan is composed of many smaller families, refugees, and remnants of the great clans that were destroyed by the Morrigan's conquest. The Moonfar was known as Lady Gwynief before she assembled the clan. Clan Moonfar continues to reach out to the other clansfolk in Cairn Kainen. Unlike many of her peers, the Moonfar is willing to work with and harbor the Accursed. An Enochian priest who advises her—Glyndwr—serves as an agent of the Order of the Penitent. The Moonfar hopes to establish communication with the other clans have so far met with failure, but she has yet to surrender the dream of re-kindling the clan unity that existed prior to the Bane War.

Revenants in Cairn Kainen

Whilst the clansfolk of Cairn Kainen are unwelcoming to all outsiders, the Revenant Accursed face even more difficulty. Thanks to the depredations of the Morrigan's cauldron-born, any being that resembles the living dead inspires fear and hatred. Revenants suffer an additional -1 Charisma penalty in Cairn Kainen.

Clan Reacher

Aggressive and hot-headed, the Reacher was once named Colwyn. He and his folk are foremost amongst those willing to speak out against the Morrigan's rule. The Reacher chafes at the Witch's demands and constantly drills his warriors while he waits for an opportunity to strike back. Clan Reacher has a large and well-equipped group of defenders, but the restless nature of this clan keeps many of them on the injured list due to fistfights over small arguments. In general, the clan is disdainful of Accursed, but they are not blind to the benefits of working with the Penitent's unusual powers and abilities. One of the eldest and most learned Bards in the land, the irrepressible Dame Llewellyn is one of the Reacher's most trusted advisers.

Clan Weddings

Weddings have attained even greater prominence in the culture of Cairn Kainen since the Morrigan's conquest. The population of the nation is rather low, and the Morrigan's tribute drains the lives of even more clansfolk every year. Thus, the clans encourage weddings at a young age (younger than most realms in Morden), and the fertility of the couple is one of the prime concerns when a betrothal is made.

Before the Bane War, clans would often seek intermarriage, keeping the bloodlines strong and encouraging goodwill with one another. However, the isolation during the war and the decade since its conclusion have suppressed this custom. Currently, it is more common to seek marriage within the clan, though elders worry about the consequences of such practices in the long term.

A clan wedding is usually a cheerful affair, and the happy couple is given gifts while the fathers of the bride and groom present boons to close friends. Clansfolk seek any excuse to throw a party, and weddings are one of the best. Often, a wedding is an occasion to bend some of the clan's restrictions, feast upon food and drink and carouse until the late hours of the night.

Bards

The folk of Cairn Kainen harbor a deep love and respect for the arts. Particularly, this applies to those people who dedicate their lives to the pursuit of art—in the form of storytelling, singing, and lore. Trained from a young age, these people are known as bards, and they are welcome—by ancient tradition—at any clanhold. The role of a bard is one that is woven deeply into the culture of Cairn Kainen. Bards keep the clan's lore, typically through recitations and memorization. Bards are the singers of songs, the keepers of histories, and teachers of political and social skills.

Strength of Arms

Feats of athletics and skill with weapons are cherished in Cairn Kainen. Most clansfolk look upon the strongest and most skilled warriors with admiration or envy. This extends to craftsman in fields that require both precision and power, such as blacksmiths and carpenters.

The clans grant bards many privileges. They may travel from clanhold to clanhold with a guarantee of safety. They are never refused a meal or a place to stay for the night, provided they provide recompense in the form of a song or story. The words of a bard must be listened to carefully, even among the clan leaders (and in earlier times, up to the High King himself). Clan laws and traditions are always interpreted with great leniency for bards, and there are many stories of bards directly challenging laws or beliefs in order to change them for the betterment of the clansfolk.

Guest-Right

An older tradition amongst the clans is that of guest-right. This custom applies to newcomers and outsiders who approach a clanhold and are given shelter under its roof. According to the tradition, the guest is entitled to a meal, a place to sleep (though this may simply be a spot on the floor near the fire), and an expectation that they are not to be harmed as long as they follow the clan's law. The current situation amongst the clans of Cairn Kainen mean that this custom has fallen into disuse, and it is primarily only invoked for bards. A few clans still honor guest-right, but only when it is explicitly requested.

Celebrations

Harvestmoon is the grandest and most widely celebrated holiday of Cairn Kainen. It is held at the end of Summer and has many associated traditions. There is usually a maypole around which dance the unmarried youths of the clans. There are several contests, often of wit and strength, though a few revolve around drinking and eating huge quantities of food and liquor. Drinking songs are often composed on the spot, typically poking mild fun at figures of authority. Most attendants look forward to the closing of harvestmoon, for this is when athletic and martial challenges are held. These challenges yield a victor for one year, a largely ceremonial title but one young clansfolk covet.

According to legend, even the most prideful and stubborn clan leaders were known to grant boons. The dance around the maypole was egalitarian, involving

any youth who wished to dance, regardless of birth or station. Unfortunately, the harvestmoon celebration has not been held amongst the clans since the Morrigan's conquest, leaving only the eldest clansfolk to remember these once-sacred customs. Instead, the clans have created smaller, far more subdued versions of the holiday—yet everyone who participates can feel the oppression that encroaches upon the festivals. The Moonfar has quietly sent messages to the other clan leaders requesting a return of the harvestmoon celebration. Many believe that if it could resume, the clans might have an opportunity to re-unite.

Winternight marks the closing of the year in Cairn Kainen. Traditionally, it is a somber occasion, typically marked by older clansfolk holding a vigil until the dawn. It is a time to consider past mistakes, honor accomplishments, and review promises sworn or bargains made during the year. The younger clansfolk have begun using winternight as an excuse for more lighthearted behavior, and more than one clan wedding has begun or ended the following morning due to impulsive romantic entanglements.

Raven's Eve is a tradition that began only a year after the conquest of Cairn Kainen. Beginning at dusk, this is a remembrance of the clans who died at the Morrigan's hand. Stories are told about High King Gaelen. Older clansfolk typically use the night to reinforce the laws of the clan leaders, striving to keep their people as safe as possible from the Witch's ire. Of late, some clans have taken Raven's Eve as an opportunity to air their grievances about living under the Morrigan's rule, and some have begun using it as a chance to plan for a time when the Witch is no longer in charge.

Food and Drink

The food of Cairn Kainen has a mixed reputation amongst outsiders. Much of the fare prepared by the clansfolk is boiled or braised. The realm is known for hearty and filling fish and lamb dishes, but anything involving beef or pork is typically considered bland and uninteresting to foreign palates.

By contrast, Cairn Kainen is considered to have some of the finest liquors in all of Morden. Every clan has at least one dedicated distillery and dozens of breweries creating a dizzying variety of fermented beverages. Highland denizens typically prefer darker, thicker beers while the lowlanders are generally more interested in paler draughts or even mead.

Music and Dance

The role of the bard is traditionally one of great honor amongst the clanholds. Bards are the singers of stories, the tellers of tales and often, musicians of

some skill. Storytelling is a very popular pastime amongst the clans of Cairn Kainen, as are riddles and intellectual challenges called head-spinners.

The most common instruments are drums, harps, horns, flutes, and bagpipes. Many clan leaders and High Kings commissioned songs about their exploits, some of which are still sung today. Naturally, ribald and down-to-earth songs are more commonly asked for in the taverns of Cairn Kainen.

High, leaping dances are popular among the clansfolk. One particular style known as the Highland reel is wilder and open to improvisation. The lowland communities near Loch Lumond prefer a more close in style that keeps the upper body static while tapping and kicking the feet, referred to as lordskip.

The Spiral

The symbol of the spiral is an important one in Cairn Kainen. No one is quite certain when the spiral became associated with the realm, but it has been so for many generations. Warriors of Cairn Kainen adorn themselves with tattoos of spirals across their faces and arms, craftsmen work spirals into metal and woodcraft, and several of the clans' banners feature spirals and complicated knots. These hypnotic patterns have become a symbol of the realm, and many clansfolk wear them proudly.



Breathtaker

These cauldron-born resemble others of their kin, but possess eyes that glow with pale white light, their skins stretched taut across a gaunt frame. Known as Breathtakers amongst the Clansmen of Cairn Kainen, these banes can unerringly track down any creature by somehow sensing the act of breathing. Even more horrifying, they can steal the breath from a man's lungs with a single touch, invigorating themselves at a cost of great pain and suffering to the victim.

Unarmed and unarmored, breathtakers have most often been seen alongside grave knights. Some scholars amongst the Order of the Penitent speculate that they may have been transformed from bards or other advisors that angered the Morrigan. At least one folk tale amongst the Clanholds describes a similar fate visited upon a bard entrusted with a secret who unwisely whispered it to his lover.

Whatever the truth, breathtakers have only appeared in Cairn Kainen over the last twelve years. So far, they have not yet spread beyond the borders of that realm. Whether the banes represent a whim of their creator Witch or are part of some larger scheme, none can yet say.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Subterfuge d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

Special Abilities

Bite/Claws: Str + d4.

Breath Sense: Breathtakers can sense the presence of a breathing being within 50 feet. This sense is not based upon sight, smell, or hearing. (Golems, mummies, revenants, and any other creatures who do not breathe—such as constructs or undead—cannot be targeted using this ability)

Low-light vision: Breathtakers ignore penalties for Dim or Dark lighting.

Steal Breath: Anyone struck by a breathtaker, including a Touch attack, whether they are damaged or not, must make a Vigor roll. Failure means the character's breath has been stolen from their lungs, and the victim suffers and immediate Wound. This heals one Wound for the breathtaker, if he is injured. This ability only functions on beings that breathe.

Undead: +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; immune to disease and poison; does not suffer wound penalties.

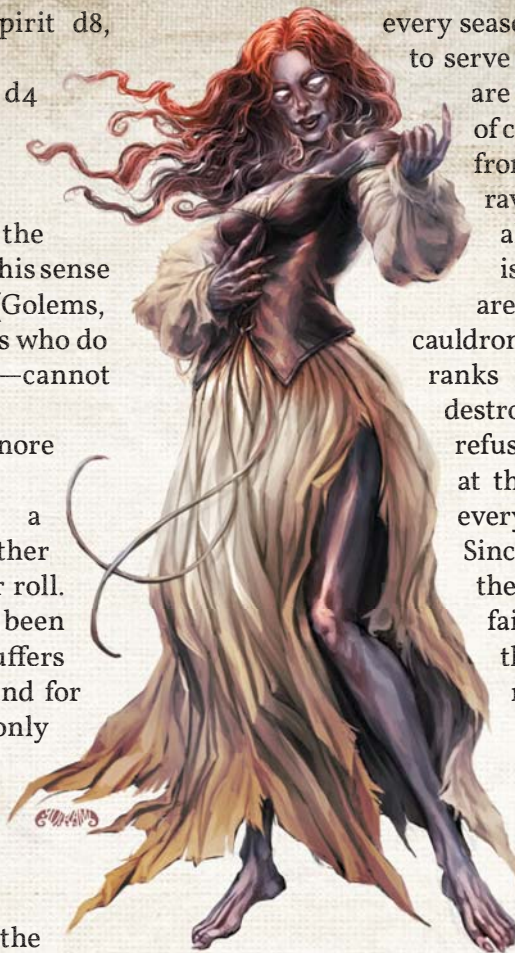
Witchline (Morrigan): Banes of the Morrigan can be sensed by Revenant Accursed within 25 feet. Breathtakers suffer +4 damage from cold iron weapons.

Weather in Cairn Kainen

The climate of Cairn Kainen is often one of extremes. The region experiences almost all of the weather types found in Morden, although Cairn Kainen is often far cloudier, wetter, and windier than other nations. The weather patterns are dependent upon the season, altitude, and proximity to the Darkwall Peaks. Heavy snowfall and blizzard-like conditions can occur on the highest hills, while the lowlands have dry weather. Other times, the highlands bathe in sunshine whilst the moors are covered in mist and low clouds. At times, rain can fall for days on end. When a storm rages, it is said, Cairn Kainen possesses the most passionate—and destructive—tempests of all. Many clanholds use sturdy, squat construction for exactly this reason.

The Morrigan's Tribute

When the Morrigan took full control over Cairn Kainen, she invoked a handful of laws. Amongst these edicts is one that has become a source of seething hatred and unrest within the clans: "A man and a woman shall be provided as tribute from each clanhold at the turn of



every season." The folk who are chosen to serve as tributes to the Morrigan are gathered up by silent groups of cauldron-born, escorted away from their homes by flocks of ravens, and are never seen alive again. Most often, it is believed that the tributes are simply transformed into cauldron-born, replenishing the ranks of undead that have been destroyed. Several clanholds refused to obey this law outright at the beginning, and each and everyone was razed to the ground. Since those first few examples, the remaining clans have never failed to provide a tribute to the Morrigan. However, in recent years, there have been a few occurrences when no cauldron-born appeared, the tributes seemingly spared.

CHOOSING TRIBUTES

In the main, the clans weigh the selection of tributes carefully. Those who are chosen are often regarded with sorrow and regret from others in their clan. This selection is seen as an honor, and the families of the tributes receive both a feast (typically attended by the tributes) and a boon from the clan leaders. Tributes take time to put their affairs in order, considering themselves already dead from the moment of selection. From time to time, the status of a tribute has caused great social upsets, breaking marriages and causing long-hidden truths to come to the surface.

In Clan Moonfar, tributes are selected either through volunteers or by lottery if no men or women step forward. It is generally believed that the lottery is honest and fair, overseen by bards since Cairn Kainen's conquest.

The Reacher selects the tribute for the clan at his sole discretion. In this clan, it is considered foolish to anger the clanlord, for those who disagree most strongly with his policies have a habit of becoming that season's tributes.

Clan Finnoul and Clan Branagh share the same method of choosing men and woman for the Morrigan's tribute. Both clans prefer to abduct outlanders, wanderers, and traders who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. However, this practice has gained some measure of infamy for both clans, as

they have quickly become isolated and shunned by those would otherwise trade and visit their clanholds. Bards have done their part to spread the tales of these disappearances. If no outsiders can be found, both clans prefer to simply pick the two oldest men and women to serve as tributes.

Clan Martigan chooses tributes from the results of a competition known as the trials. These trials are contests of athletic speed and skill, held every season. The winners of these competitions are not chosen as tributes—instead, it is those who come in last in each trial that are selected. Some believe that Clan Martigan's approach strengthens the clan whilst sending the Morrigan only the weak and infirm.

The Dark Cauldron

Few possessions of the Morrigan are as infamous as the Dark Cauldron. This plain and unadorned iron pot is responsible for much of the misery and suffering in Morden, chiefly through its use to create undead minions under the Witch's command. According to stories, the size of the cauldron can change, able to easily fit up to a dozen men within its confines one moment, and only slightly larger than a standard cookpot in another. Freezing cold to the touch, the cauldron is incredibly heavy and burdensome to lift and carry.

The purpose of the cauldron is sinister. Living men and women that are placed within are instantly slain, their bodies animated with black witchcraft and transformed into beings who are no longer wholly dead. These creations are known as the cauldron-born, and they formed the vanguard of the Witch Army during the Bane War. In the decades since, more cauldron-born have emerged from Blackroot Wode in a steady trickle, confirming that the cauldron continues to be used in this ghastly fashion.

The origins of the cauldron are mysterious. There are legends and stories about the Dark Cauldron, but few provide any details or insight into how it came to be. The Morrigan, for her part, actively discourages the spread of such stories. More than a few times, Accursed of the Order of the Penitent have encountered opposition from the Morrigan while researching the cauldron's origins. More than a few clanhold libraries lie in ruins, and several prominent bards and scholars have either vanished or been slain in the pursuit of knowledge that the Morrigan considers forbidden.

One of the most important legends of the Dark Cauldron arose from an interview with a most surprising and unreliable source: an Unseelie Fey by the name of Malikyth. Notoriously fickle and deceitful, the Unseelie shared a tale of the Dark Cauldron with a group of Accursed only a few years ago. According to Malikyth, the Dark Cauldron was originally a creation

of the Unseelie Fey. The pot was forged to settle a wager regarding life, death, and states in between. However, the outcome of the wager was so acrimonious that a duel was then fought, with the loser's soul used to complete the cauldron's creation. Afterward, the cauldron was sealed away and largely forgotten—until the Morrigan discovered it and stole it away from the Unseelie court. Since then, the fey nature of the cauldron has imbued each of its undead children with a vulnerability to cold iron, much as the Seelie and Unseelie themselves.

The truth of this legend is very much in doubt. The Unseelie are hardly unbiased in matters of Morden, and it is far more likely that the fey are simply twisting the tale to suit their own whims. However, Victor Von Drake, the head of the Order of the Penitent, believes there are some grains of truth to be found in this tale including potential seeds for the cauldron's destruction.

The Fey

No place in Morden is more strongly connected with the fey than Cairn Kainen. Both the Seelie and Unseelie Courts have visited this land over the ages, and mortals aplenty have had dealings with the fey folk for generations on end. Of the people native to Cairn Kainen, the folk of Clan Finnoul are particularly close to the fey and have even interbred with them.

The clans of Cairn Kainen hold much lore about the fey. King Stephan Hightower consulted some of the most learned bards of this region before making plans with the Seelie to defeat the Djinn during the Bane War. Much of this lore remains in the clans' oral traditions, passed down from father to son or held by the bards in song and poetry.

According to these legends, the fey of both courts were fickle and prone to mischief, though those of the Seelie were far friendlier towards mankind than the aloof and deceitful Unseelie. Often, a fey boon or curse would have a time limit; typically one year and a day. Many times, these gifts or punishments had many nuances, often imparting a lesson on life, love, happiness, or satisfaction. Whatever the truth, the fey have strongly influenced the culture and art of Cairn Kainen since the beginning.

The fey seem fascinated by humanity, both at its best and worst. The horrific events that ruined Shieldhaven and ended High King Gaelen's reign are particularly juicy to the Unseelie Court, for example. In contrast, the Seelie Court was said to prefer tales of heroism, romance, and sacrifice, though they were also drawn to gossip and salacious details.

BARGAINS AND WISHES

The magics of the fey are little-understood by humanity. Even the learned bards of Cairn Kainen

and the Enochian scholars can do little but speculate as to how the fey's abilities function. What is known for certain is that fey magic is not related to witchcraft. Instead, fey magic seems to be inborn to their race, a natural ability possessed by nearly all of their kind.

Many fey magical abilities seem inextricably linked to bargains, struck either between one another or, more commonly, with mortal humans. These bargains sometimes take the form of granting a wish or satisfying a heart's desire. The Djinn also used a form of magic that depended upon wishing, though many scholars argue that her Witchcraft was similar only on the surface.

Prior to the Bane War, fey of the Seelie court were known to be benevolent with the use of their magic. Several legends of Cairn Kainen revolve around gifts and boons from friendly fey folk, often enriching the lives of heroes from birth or helping them overcome a significant obstacle. However, since the Seelie fey are no more, modern tales recount the Unseelie court's cunning and spiteful acts when engaging in pacts with mortals. The only common moral of these stories is, "take warning from a fey gift, look twice before agreeing to a fey promise."

Places of Power

Cairn Kainen is rich with ancient and occult energies. Flows of power pool and congregate in certain areas, often marked by unique geological formations or man-made constructions. The concentration of arcane energies at these spots helps focus the unnatural powers of Witchcraft, enhancing the effects of spells and charms.

FAERIE RINGS

A circle of mushrooms, a faerie ring is often hidden deep in forest dells or near bubbling streams. It is said that the circle represents a border between the world of Morden and that of the fey. Some claim that Witchcraft cannot affect anyone standing within a faerie ring, while other stories say that faerie rings represent doorways where one can step more easily from one world to another.

STANDING STONES

In high, remote regions of Cairn Kainen, unusual menhirs can be found keeping watch over the countryside. Known as standing stones, these obelisks often serve as landmarks notating the boundary of a particular clan's territory. According to the bards, these stones were present when mankind first made its way into Morden across the lightning bridge, and have withstood the test of time.

Using Places of Power

Using any form of the Arcane Background: Witchcraft at or within a place of power as described provides a +2 bonus to any Witchcraft skill rolls.

STONE CIRCLES

First raised during the reign of High King Bran, several circles of stones—stood on end or piled atop each other to form crude arches—are located throughout the realm. Upon the Morrigan's conquest of Cairn Kainen, she ordered several of them torn down for unknown reasons, but there are many stone circles still remaining in the East and North of Cairn Kainen. It is said that King Bran was inspired to create these circles by sights he had seen in the Outlands during his youth.

Ravens

These black birds have always been common to Cairn Kainen, but ever since the arrival of the Morrigan, ravens flock in greater numbers than ever before recorded. Scavengers and thieves, ravens feed upon bodies of the dead. They have been known to snatch small, shiny items—such as broaches, jewelry, or even knives—from nearby humans. Sometimes, these thefts are particularly brazen, grasping worn items only to tear them away with a cacophony of raucous, mocking caws.

Most clansfolk consider the ravens to be vicious and untamable. Swarms of these black-feathered fiends have been known to attack and kill undefended livestock, especially lambs or chickens separated from the rest. Some stories claim that particularly large murders of ravens have swept in and carried away entire clansfolk, targeting the frail, the elderly, and the very young.

SPIES FOR THE MORRIGAN

For all their foibles, ravens are hated and feared in Cairn Kainen for one reason above any other: these birds serve as the eyes and ears of a Witch. The Morrigan, it is said, can control them as extensions of her own will. She can see what they see, hear what they hear, and even—according to many clansmen—speak through them if she chooses. It is said that when the Morrigan took control of Cairn Kainen that she sent ravens to each major clanhold. The black birds uttered her demands in the unmistakable tones of the Witch's own cold, feminine voice, until every clan submitted to the Witch's rule or had been wiped out by her cauldron-born.

For most of the clans, the ravens are at best a scourge to be tolerated. Clansfolk know enough of the ravens and their connection to the Witch to fear the black birds, particularly when they gather into murders. A few clanholds, however, have learned to hide many of their councils and activities from the ravens, preferring the illusion of freedom. So far, only Clan Reacher has truly shown defiance of these black-feathered vermin, offering a bounty upon raven wings and sanctioning open hunting against their kind.

Cursebearer

The most recent form of cauldron-born to emerge from Blackroot Wode are the animated corpses of men and women, often displaying bloodless death wounds that ended their time among the living. These pale banes carry flapping banners of darkest black, borne upon tall poles. The mere sight of these creatures causes icy fingers of terror to race down an onlooker's spine. Far worse is the effect of the banner upon any Accursed who lay eyes upon it. In an instant, the Accursed's witchmark begins to throb with nearly unbearable pain.

Called cursebearers by the Order of the Penitent, these cauldron-born are clearly the product of Witchcraft aimed at disrupting the efforts of Accursed to interfere with the Morrigan's plans. Victor Von Drake, head of the Order, has speculated that these cauldron-born were created in response to a failed raid upon Blackroot Wode by a group of Accursed. If true, it is possible that the Order may have aroused the ire of the Morrigan—and that the cursebearer is but the first sign of her fury.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** II (2)

Gear: Ancient and rusted armor (+2 Armor), rusted sword (Str + d6), banner pole and standard of the Morrigan.

Special Abilities:

Bite/Claws: Str + d4.

Dread Banner: Accursed may not sense banes of their witchline when in sight of this banner. In addition, seeing the banner forces all Accursed to make a Vigor roll at -2. On failure, the Accursed's Witchmark burns with severe pain, inflicting a -2 penalty to all rolls for one hour. (Mongrel and Ophidian Accursed are immune to this penalty.)

Fear (-2): Anyone who sees a cursebearer must make a Fear test at -2.

Low-light vision: Cursebearers ignore penalties for Dim or Dark lighting.

Additional Cursebearer Effects

At the Gamemaster's discretion, encountering a cursebearer can provide the pretext for each Accursed to progress one step towards acceptance or denial of their curse. It is recommended that such an event occur only once per Accursed, no matter how many encounters with cursebearers may take place.

Undead: +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; immune to disease and poison; does not suffer wound penalties.

Witchline (Morrigan): Banes of the Morrigan can be sensed by Revenant Accursed within 25 feet. Cursebearers suffer +4 damage from cold iron weapons.

Shieldhaven

Said to have been constructed by High King Bran, this fortress was once a spectacle unmatched by any other throughout Morden. Soaring towers, arched bridges, and stout walls that could repel any assault were only a few of the features of this sprawling castle. Over the years, a city grew up around the fortress, placing Shieldhaven firmly as the center of Caer Kainen, its capital and hub of craftsmanship, politics, literature, and art.

The madness of High King Gaelen and the Morrigan's rule dealt devastating blows to Shieldhaven. The castle is naught but a ruined shell, and the surrounding city is haunted by scores of cauldron-born. Ravens nest in nearly every abandoned home, with entire sections of the settlement destroyed by fire or decades of neglect. Shieldhaven remains a symbol of the land, but for Cairn Kainen, it represents a grave marker for the slain hopes and dreams of the nation.

The Spoil

This region encompasses the city that once thrived in the shadow of Shieldhaven castle. Markets and guildhouses are empty, crumbling shadows of their former selves. Street after street presents abandoned homes, windows and doorways gaping like the sockets of a skull. Cauldron-born wander the region aimlessly, a few perhaps still carrying out habits from their former life—such as drawing buckets from a dry well or walking a particular pattern from building to building. Ravens gather in great, black clouds, endlessly searching for scraps left behind.



THE PROCESSIONAL

This area encompasses the docks near the shore of Loch Lumond and forms a main thoroughfare that winds its way to the entrance of Shieldhaven castle. Masterfully sculpted statues of the former High Kings line the route, beginning with Bran himself. The statues are much the worse for wear over the decades, many showing cracks or missing limbs. An empty dais at the end was set aside for High King Gaelen's visage.

The Castle

Within, Shieldhaven's former grandeur remains readily apparent. Despite the ravages of war and insanity, the castle is largely whole. Torn banners hang upon the walls, broken weapons lie piled in corners, and empty suits of armor stand sentinel over the brooding silence. The throne room contains a pair of massive thrones carved with images of Caer Kainen's history, while the solar gazes out over the lowlands and possesses numerous stained glass images commemorating heroic deeds. The council chamber's table remains, though the evidence of frenzied battle is far more obvious here.

Shieldhaven's dungeon was said to be an extensive series of corridors and cells to hold prisoners. According to legend, High King Bran boasted that "no

man or beast, no matter how black his heart" could ever escape once brought to justice at Shieldhaven. Some bards sing of other corridors linked to the dungeon, special passageways that loop around to other chambers in the castle or provide a means of swift escape into a hidden cove of Loch Lumond.

Avrendell

Toward the South of Cairn Kainen lies a quaint pastoral farming village named Avrendell. Located next to the banks of the slow, even-flowing Avren river, this community is largely composed of old warriors from Clan Reacher, their families, and a surprising number of outsiders. This is because Avrendell took in many orphans created by the carnage of the Bane War and the Morigan's initial conquest of Cairn Kainen.

Avrendell is peaceful and prosperous compared to many places elsewhere in the nation. Much of this good fortune is due to the steady, pragmatic leadership of the veterans who make up the village council. However, the truth is that Avrendell is also protected by a unique example of unexplained phenomena: the predictions of a particular grey owl named Hewrne.

Hewrne the Oracle

No one is quite certain how long Hewrne has lived in the village. The eldest in Avrendell can recall seeing Hewrne when they were children, and it is certain that the grey owl displays supernatural resilience to the effects of age. Hewrne seems perfectly happy to reside in the village, and he is often treated as a fellow clansman by the citizens who live there. They are proud of their unique resident, and are very protective of him.

Hewrne has a special barn near the center of the village, and is usually found perching upon a tall pole carved with various signs and sigils denoting words, letters, and numbers. When the owl has a prediction to make, Hewrne signs it out by pecking at the appropriate symbols with his beak, an act recorded by specially trained scribes—called Owl-keepers—who also reside in the barn. Hewrne's foretellings have saved the village from trouble many times, warning of imminent visits by the Morrigan's agents, foul weather, and bad seasons for the crops over the last several years. In return, the town council has made it a priority to keep Hewrne's existence a secret. It is believed that should the Morrigan ever discover the owl's presence, she would either take him away to her home in Blackroot Wode or slay the impudent beast in a fit of pique.

In recent years, the owl has indicated that the village is soon to face some profound decision that may alter their way of life forever. The nature of this imminent crisis remains unknown, but it has caused great concern amongst the village council. Some of the town leaders have considered contacting the Order of the Penitent for help to discover just what lies in the town's future.



Legend of the White Hart

In the Highlands of Cairn Kainen, travelers occasionally glimpse an elusive and unique creature known as the White Hart. A stag of magnificent proportions and with fur the color of newly fallen snow, the White Hart's antlers look to be composed of pure, shining silver. According to the bards, seeing the White Hart is an omen of peace and well-being, said to presage events of great import and promise for the land of Cairn Kainen. Those who believe these tales are concerned that only one sighting of this creature has been reported since the Morrigan's conquest of Cairn Kainen.

The bards of the Highlands have many theories—and even more songs—regarding the White Hart's origins. Some say the Hart was once the Prince of Caer Kainen under its first High King, transformed into this shape to guard the realm by his own wish. Another tale hints that the Hart is a familiar for a powerful fey sorcerer, a messenger and herald of the sorcerer's own foretellings. By far the most common tale describes the Hart as a reflection of the land itself, an expression of the spirit of Caer Kainen sent to guide and protect those who seek to benefit the realm before themselves.

These are the most well-known stories of the White Hart:

High King Bran glimpsed the White Hart drinking from the shores of Loch Lumond. The High King was in the midst of searching for his firstborn, Taran, after the young boy had somehow eluded his guardians and wandered off into the wilds. The bards sing that the boy encountered a wicked crone and was spirited away to a deep, dank cave to be prepared for a dire fate. Fortunately, the White Hart leapt and pranced before the High King, leading the anxious father to the hiding place of his son before any harm could befall him.

The most recent time the White Hart was seen occurred during a desperate battle between a group of Accursed and a monster of the Darkwall peaks. This struggle took place on Cairn Kainen's Eastern border, when a misshapen beast named the Fomorian Titan threatened several clanholds with destruction. The Morrigan had ignored the creature's presence, so a group of Accursed took it upon themselves to confront the creature and end its predations upon the people. At the height of this battle, the White Hart was seen high upon a promontory above the fighting. Investigating, one of the Accursed found a loose boulder there, perfectly placed to smash down onto the rampaging behemoth and end the Titan's life.

Cairn Kainen Edges

The following are new Edges available for Accursed characters.

BARD

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8+, Spirit d6+, Any Knowledge Skill at d6+

Bards are a combination of scholar, musician, and storyteller in the culture of Cairn Kainen. Bards receive many privileges amongst the clansfolk and are traditionally accorded great respect. The character gains +1 Charisma (this bonus increases to +2 in Cairn Kainen) and receives a +2 bonus to Common Knowledge rolls.

BERZERKER

Requirements: Novice, Berserk, Strength d8+, Spirit d6+, Vigor d8+, Fighting d8+

Many warriors in Cairn Kainen are renowned for being hot-blooded and aggressive. Some warriors take those aspects to another level by entering a berserk rage during combat. When frenzied, these folk are terrifying combatants, able to strike hard and take hits in return that would drop any normal man. The character does not need to suffer damage to go berserk, and he may choose to go berserk rather than making a Smarts roll.

BOON OF THE FEY

Requirements: Legendary, Luck, Spirit d8+

The fey are not uncommon visitors to Cairn Kainen. In days past, some of the fey even intermarried with clansfolk. Even now, fey of the Unseelie Court sometimes find mortals appealing, granting boons in return for favors. Only the most exceptional mortals are ever favored this way, but those who do gain some of the power of the fey folk themselves. The character acquires 10 Power Points and the ability to use any one Power from the Savage Worlds Rulebook. The character uses their Spirit attribute for the casting die. This ability is not Witchcraft. When using the power, they become Shaken on a natural 1 on the Spirit die, but that Shaken cannot cause a wound.

Cairn Kainen Hindrances

The following are new Hindrances available for Accursed characters.

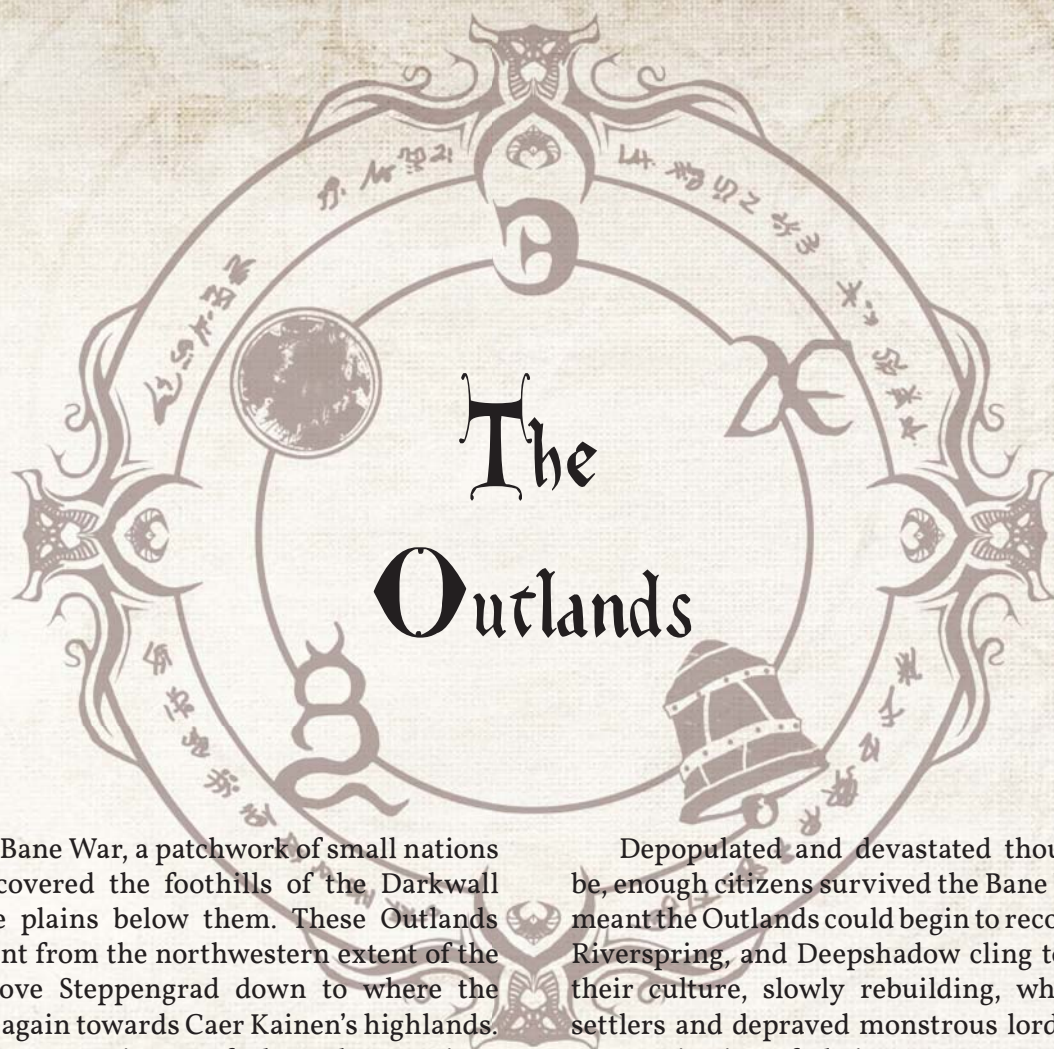
MISTRUSTFUL (MINOR)

The clansfolk of Cairn Kainen are extremely insular and unwelcoming to outsiders. This attitude makes them unpopular at best and is largely responsible for the realm's isolation. Characters from this region are likely to have similar attitudes toward anyone from outside their home clan. Any expression of trust from these characters must be hard-earned, and this character is unlikely to ever truly let down his guard. The character suffers a -1 Charisma penalty with anyone outside of his home clan.

HOT-HEADED (MINOR)

Characters with this hindrance are ruled by passion. Easily angered, rarely calm, and aggressive in social situations (and romance!), these characters have a difficult time fitting in with a more sedate group. Hot-headed characters find it difficult to ignore an insult, and often look for trouble when things are just a little bit too calm. The character suffers a -2 penalty to resist Taunts. When beaten on a Taunt, the character must make a Smarts check or has to attack the taunter with his next action.





Before the Bane War, a patchwork of small nations and colonies covered the foothills of the Darkwall Peaks and the plains below them. These Outlands ran in a crescent from the northwestern extent of the mountains above Steppengrad down to where the land once rose again towards Caer Kainen's highlands. The three most prominent of these lost nations were the port cities of Seaharrow, the hill cantons of Riverspring, and the rolling plains of Deepshadow. Young, vigorous lands though they were, the Witches crushed them and transformed their people into banes and Accursed.

The Dark Queen claimed the Outlands as her own when the Grand Coven's army marched into other realms. Deep in the mountain valleys above Riverspring, she raised Mahsoom Fortress, called the Oubliette for its darkness and danger. From there, she plots to restore the Grand Coven and make herself its new head, though travelling abroad frequently on embassies to her estranged sisters. In the meantime, her ghostly banes watch over her conquests.

The Outlands are a graveyard of dreams and hopes. The wounds of war linger on the land; makeshift barrows to cover mass graves are all too common a sight. The aftereffects of terrible magic show in hillsides gouged by powerful eldritch energies, rivers running red as blood, and unending storms that roam the skies. Yet life thrives even in graveyards, as worms wriggle through the rot and green grass sprouts from the dirt.

Depopulated and devastated though they might be, enough citizens survived the Bane War that its end meant the Outlands could begin to recover. Seaharrow, Riverspring, and Deepshadow cling to what is left of their culture, slowly rebuilding, while daring new settlers and depraved monstrous lords fight to carve out territories of their own. Haunted though they might be—by the ghosts of the past and the spectral banes of the Witch who rules here—the Outlands slowly return to life.

Seaharrow

The oldest of the fallen Outlands, Seaharrow traces its founding back to tribesmen who once numbered among the Gradniki. Legends tell of wars between the founders of Steppengrad and Seaharrow, but the truth of these is lost to the ages. Steppengrad's breadth and might meant the Harrowans depended upon the Gradniki as trading partners, leaving the animosity between the states to linger unresolved through the centuries.

The Harrowans cut out a place for themselves in the lee of the massive fjord that cuts between the northeastern arm of the Darkwall, the Tarayev Wastes, and the northwestern plains of Steppengrad. The skerries of Harrow Bay—the innumerable rocky islets ranging in size from seaborne mountains to stony reefs—proved inhospitable to agriculture. Instead,

Harrowans learned to navigate their maze, enabling them to cultivate the sea like farmers tilling the land.

Fishing, sealing, whaling, and even harvesting seaweed became staples of Seaharrow life. Woodcutters sailed deep into the bay to cut the majestic pines that grew in the shelter of the tallest skerries, while divers greased themselves in bear lard to pluck pearls from the frigid depths. The sea influenced every part of life in Seaharrow; even the farmers who grew potatoes and barley in the stone-filled fields used fish entrails for fertilizer.

While the basic maritime culture of Seaharrow changed little over the centuries—growing mainly in sophistication as new forms of rigging and shipbuilding developed—the political culture of Seaharrow underwent more changes than the other Outlands. Villages led by local chieftains were united under kings, the kings' attempts at conquest led to defeat by Steppengrad, subjugation led to rebellion, and the cycle continued. By the time of the Bane War, hereditary Merevaikken—"amber-lords" or merchant-princes—of the Harrow League ruled Seaharrow. This was an alliance of the larger ports created to dominate the smaller towns and villages.

Chief amongst supposed equals was Mustiline, the westernmost port city. It controlled the whaling trade, selling precious whale oil to Steppengrad and whale meat to its eastern sister-cities. Wealthy connoisseurs from as far away as Hyphrates cherished the intricate scrimshaw of Mustiline's carvers. Adventurous types from across Morden journeyed to Seaharrow to seek their fortunes as whalers.

With the coming of the Bane War, folk of Deepshadow, Riverspring, and the other, smaller Outland nations flooded into Seaharrow with tales of ghosts and monsters. Though the people of the Harrow League cities might welcome the occasional foreigner into their fold, they locked their gates against the refugees, refusing entry to the desperate mobs. Battles broke out on the wharfs between frenzied exiles and Harrowan longshoremen as the former tried to steal ships to flee the oncoming storm.

Then the skies darkened and inhuman howls echoed from the gloom. An impenetrable fog flowed in from the landward side of Seaharrow. The spectral dead emerged from the darkness—ethereal Shades and black-clad shadow riders, diseased noumenons and snowy-skinned yuki-onna—and began to carry off screaming refugees into the darkness.

Perhaps the frigid saltwater of Harrow Bay could keep Hecate's spectral army at bay, but she was not alone. The too solid flesh of her allies' banes plunged into the port cities and broke the Harrowan resistance. The Chimera's krakens smashed the ships

of Seaharrow while Baba Yaga's gorge wolves harried the inland villages. Worse than the banes, though, were the men.

Death came unexpectedly from the sea as the ships of the Nord and Sakuran mercenaries sailed into Harrow Bay. Tasked with capturing as many Outlanders as possible to conscript into the Grand Coven's army, the mercenaries boarded escaping vessels and sailed them back into the maw of the Witch armies. They burned Seaharrow ships to the waterline, ending not only any hope of escape, but also a way of life.

Modern Seaharrow

Perversely, the mercenaries saved Seaharrow as much as they destroyed it. Since the Nord and Sakurans required supply lines and other materiel support that the banes did not, the Grand Coven established permanent garrisons in Seaharrow. The Witches spared many Harrowans so that they could continue to fend for the invaders. An ugly life of servitude began, but at least it was life as humans and not Witchmarked.

Many of the mercenaries came from lands surprisingly similar to Seaharrow. The Nord hail from distant, fjord-riven rocky isles where common folk farm and fish much like the Harrowans. The Sakurans also claim a deep connection to the sea; indeed, they happily eat fish raw, forgoing even the pickling the Harrowans prefer. There is no love lost between conquered and conquerors, but at least the common aspects of their cultures forged a tacit understanding.

Completely denying Harrowans access to the sea proved impractical; too much of Seaharrow's food production depended upon the ocean. The remaining mercenary captains allow Harrowans access to rowboats no longer than whaling ships' launches, enabling them to continue to fish, harvest kelp, and even hunt smaller whales amidst the inner bay skerries. This in turn allows the farming villages to continue to eke out a living and provide their crops to the mercenaries.

It wounds the souls of the surviving Harrowans to live in the farming villages miles inland, never seeing the sea they once loved. Life inland is miserable. Frequent inspections from mercenary patrols keep the villagers paranoid; frequent assaults by roving Noumenons and other banes keep the villagers fearful. Stoic resignation seems to be the only choice, but the facade cracks late at night when the elders sing shanties about the life their ancestors lived. Such songs of despair often attract hungry yuki-onna out of the cold.



YUKI-ONNA

Witch Hunters know that a cold spot in a warm room often signifies the presence of the ethereal. Some Shades learn to utilize this chill of the grave as a weapon, but Hecate created the yuki-onna to truly embody the cold of the outer dark. The hearts of yuki-onna are ice-cold, knowing neither mercy nor love.

Named by Sakuran mercenaries after a legend of their homeland, yuki-onna appear as snow-white, ghostly women. They feed on body heat, becoming more solid and more human-looking as they sate their hunger. Draining an average-sized adult of all body heat enables a yuki-onna to become fully solid, recovering the skin tone and hair color they had in life for several days but leaving the victim a frozen corpse.

During the Bane War, yuki-onna served the Dark Queen as moles, infiltrating conquered towns as desperate refugees. The yuki-onna drained just enough body heat from their hosts to maintain their solid forms and informed on the villagers to Shade spies. With Hecate abandoning active governance of the Outlands to concentrate instead upon rebuilding the Grand Coven, surviving yuki-onna either wander Seaharrow's frigid interior as near-feral predators or lurk unseen in inland villages, stealthily preying on unsuspecting neighbors and kin.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Subterfuge d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

Freezing Touch: While grappling an opponent, the yuki-onna can drain body heat. The target must make a Vigor roll every round or gain a Fatigue level. Fatigue levels suffered in this way may be recovered with a Vigor check after the character spends at least 30 minutes in a warm environment.

Immunities: Yuki-onna are immune to cold damage and effects.

Phasing: Due to their partially insubstantial nature, yuki-onna gain a form of Burrowing called Phasing. While Phased, the bane can pass through solid structures and may sink into the ground and travel up to its Pace as an action. It may strike by materializing and taking its opponent by surprise, making an opposed Subterfuge roll versus the target's Notice. If the bane wins, it gains +2 to attack and damage that round, or +4 if it gets a raise. The bane must become fully corporeal to make an attack. If the victim wins and was on Hold, he may try to interrupt the bane's attack as usual. The bane cannot be attacked physically while Phased unless the attacker uses salt, magical items, magical weapons, or supernatural powers. The

bane may not spend more than one consecutive round Phased into or through an object.

Powers: Yuki-onna use Spirit as their casting die, have 15 Power Points and access to the following powers: *barrier* (wall of ice) and *burst* (flurry of sleet with the Cold/Ice Slow Trapping).

Vulnerability (Salt): When in the presence of salt or salt water, yuki-onna suffer a -1 penalty to all Trait tests. Any damage-causing powers with a salt Trapping or weapons coated in salt cause +2 additional damage. Yuki-onna cannot cross salt water, nor can they cross an unbroken line of salt under their own power.

Witchline (Hecate): Banes of the Dark Queen can be sensed by Shade Accursed within 25 feet.

Wolves in the Fold

The sudden collapse of the Grand Coven left Nord and Sakuran mercenaries adrift. Stripped of the magical aid that allowed them to journey so far from their native isles, many mercenary bands turned to banditry or sold their services to the natives of Morden. In Seaharrow, they seized control.

The mercenaries fortified the former great port of Mustiline against both banes and the armies of Morden. The Nord and Sakuran mercenary captains protect their city and its dependent villages from unwanted banes, making their rule seem a beacon of hope to the downtrodden Harrowans. In truth, Mustiline is as vicious and deadly as Port Sorrow far to the south, riven by infighting between mercenaries.

The duty of patrolling the bane-haunted farming villages alternates between the Sakurans and the Nords. Neither faction cares for it, but both begrudgingly accept the necessity. Weekly contests of prowess—archery, shooting, wrestling, and even duels—between the mercenary camps determine who risks their dwindling numbers in the wilds of Seaharrow. The weekly contests are the chief form of entertainment in Mustiline, and novelty is appreciated. Strangers to the city quickly find themselves asked to represent a faction by the bored and brutal former mercenaries.

The Nord warriors make their base in the former Merevaikken's palace, now called Valdrholl ("Wolf's Hall"). General Oleva Valdrsdottr runs her command with charismatic combativeness, drinking harder and fighting fiercer than any of her men. The child of a Nord warrior and a Harrowan woman, she holds little sympathy with her mother's people. She believes them to be compatible with Nordheim blood but self-evidently inferior. She credits her own advancement during the latter days of the Bane War entirely to her father's harsh parenting. Valdrsdottr tolerates no weakness in herself or her troops.

This lust for strength informs her style of command. Rain or shine, cold or heat, the soldiers of Valdrholl are expected to run a mile before breaking their fast. They swim naked in freezing Harrow Bay for fun and stay up all night drinking only to do it all again the next day. They accept no apology from either friend or foe until a duel is fought. Fear of Nord fury keeps the populace in place for now, but their wild excess drains resources and breeds growing resentment.

The Sakurans are every bit as corrupt. They make their camp in a fortress island just inside the harbor, called Genbujima after a turtle-like water demon. While the Nord forces claim the southern half of the harbor and the outer part of the city as their territory, the Sakurans lay claim to the northern half and the inner part of the city. Once they remained aloof from the native Harrowans, but in recent years they have despaired of ever returning home to the Shogunate and instead attempt to remake Mustiline in their image. This means conscripting Harrowan children to learn the peaceful and warlike arts of far Sakurada at the cruel hands of the mercenary officers.

Daimyo Kurotatsu Goro inherited his command from an older brother executed for failing the Grand Coven. The experience made him cautious and exacting, traits that stay with him even in his declining years. He holds no illusions that his soldiers might return to their homeland or even survive two more decades, but he is determined to risk nothing while he still lives.

For now, the old daimyo entertains himself with trying to teach the arts of the Shogunate to frightened Harrowan children. He worries that Valdrsdottr's brash behavior could incite insurrection in Seaharrow, but he dares take no direct action against her. She once saved his life and carries a pair of his family's swords as a mark of honor. Frankly, he wishes some enterprising thief would steal them from her.

Seaharrow Edges

The following are new Edges available for Accursed characters.

DAISHO

Requirements: Novice, Grand Coven Veteran (see *Accursed*)

Characters with this Edge fought side by side with Sakuran forces at some point during the Bane War, earning the trust and admiration of a Sakuran officer who bestowed the character with the daisho: the paired long and short swords of the Sakuran warrior elite. The character owns both a long sword and a short sword, along with beautiful sheaths of lacquered wood or sharkskin leather. These weapons have the



same bonuses to Object Toughness and AP as weapons made of Palmyrian steel, and are just as valuable on the open market.

The character receives a +2 to all Charisma rolls related to dealing with Sakurans. Characters in possession of a daisho receive respect and honorable treatment from Sakuran mercenaries they encounter. Such gift-giving was so rare during the Bane War that the Sakuran may even recognize the character on sight.

If the character ever sells the daisho or allows it to be stolen, word quickly spreads and Sakurans treat the character with contempt. The +2 Charisma bonus changes to a -2 penalty. Recovering the swords from a thief might repair the character's reputation, but nothing helps if the character sold the weapons for petty cash.

DUELING SCARS

Requirements: Novice, Grand Coven Veteran (see *Accursed*)

Characters with this Edge fought side by side with Nord forces at some point during the Bane War and were inducted into their warrior fraternity, earning dueling scars still visible on the character's face. In keeping with their ethos of brutal physicality, Nord soldiers duel not just to settle disputes, but also for the

thrill of battle. Such duels are invariably fought with the korgsvard, a long, straight sword with a massive basket hilt. Duelists wear traditional open-faced, horned Nordheim helms and plate cuirasses but no other armor. The duelists aim to cut each other's exposed faces; the cuts are then usually deliberately allowed to heal badly, resulting in dramatic scars on cheeks and chins.

The character receives the Ugly Hindrance, but ignores the -2 Charisma penalty and instead gains +4 to Charisma when dealing with the Nord. In addition, the -2 Charisma penalty is added as a positive modifier to Intimidation attempts.

OUTLANDS MARINER

Requirements: Novice, Harrowan or Nord, Agility d6+, Vigor d6+

Whether descended from the seamen of old Seaharrow or the Nord mercenaries, this character has saltwater in his veins. The character knows how to survive the unforgiving sea. The character gains a +2 bonus to Survival rolls made to hunt or otherwise endure the frigid waters of the northern Discordian Sea. When making a cooperate roll to assist boat operation, the character does not need to make a check to grant the bonus.

Seaharrow Hindrances

The following new Hindrance is available for Accursed characters.

CHILD OF WAR [MINOR]

The Bane War lasted for decades. Some children were born into the war, growing to maturity and dying in battle without ever knowing a day of peace. Some of these children even became Accursed.

A character with the Child of War Hindrance may be the child of foreign mercenaries or of native Morden blood. As long as he can remember, he has held a weapon in his hands, slept in the caves of refugees or the trenches of soldiers, and dined amidst the dead and dying. He is an outsider among outsiders—uneasy with open laughter, unwilling to make friends, unable to accept peace.

The character suffers a -1 penalty to all Common Knowledge Tests and a -1 penalty to Charisma. This penalty can stack with the penalty from Outsider or the optional penalty imposed on all Accursed when dealing with normal humans.

Riverspring

Centuries ago, violent schisms in the Enochian Church drove dissidents in Valkenholm (and some few from Steppengrad) to colonize the hills and valleys between the forest kingdom and the Darkwall. These freethinkers refused to recognize the authority of any church body. Some sects denied that priests of the faith knew the mind of the Creator any better than a layman, while others denied that anyone could claim to know the Creator's plans. Refusing to bow before Church or king, the freethinkers trekked deep into the formidable foothills.

They called the land they settled Riverspring after the hundreds of crisscrossing streams and rivers flowing down from snowmelt in the mountains. The difficulty in traversing the steep hills and rocky canyon walls that separate the fertile valleys meant the settlements grew autonomous. The Springfolk tried to be as self-sufficient as possible, knowing that a harsh winter might isolate the community for months at a time, eventually becoming self-governing cantons (or "orts" in the Valkenholm dialect).

Inevitably, scriptural disagreements between freethinker sects led to conflict between the cantons. Valkenholm seized the moment and tried to invade the divided land, but the pikes and crossbows of the Springfolk successfully defied the knightly orders. Reclaiming their freedom, the orts of Riverspring signed a treaty of mutual protection that united them into a confederation stronger than the sum of its parts.

The Riverspring federation lasted for generations. No would-be invader could march cavalry or cannon through the narrow passes past the pike formations of the Springfolk. No infantry or archery force knew the secret ways of the hills better than those who called them home. Unfortunately, all of Riverspring's traditional defenses were for naught against Hecate's ghostly banes—capable of passing unharmed through hedges of pikes or flying over impassable hills—and the cantons of Riverspring became a perfect staging ground for the Grand Coven's army.

Modern Riverspring

Of the three major Outlands nations, Riverspring is the most fractured. While Hecate's fortress—the Oubliette—sits in the eastern valleys of the Darkwall Peaks, she takes little concern in ruling the foothills adjacent to it. The once-blessed cantons of Riverspring are given over to vicious banes and desperate refugees. The western edge of Riverspring seems doomed to be absorbed into Valkenholm.

Margrave Dorcharadt

The most powerful of the vampire warlords imagines himself as the proud and pious patriarch of the people he rules. Whether this attitude is a delusion or simply self-deception on the part of Margrave Konstanz Dorcharadt is irrelevant to the hardship he inflicts upon his subjects. In the name of rebuilding the moral austerity of his territory, Margrave Dorcharadt imposes absurd privations.

The color blue is forbidden, with red replacing it whenever possible; jays and songbirds are shot on sight for being the forbidden color. All public celebrations are banned. Weekly, all villagers in walking distance must come to his castle to hear him sermonize and sing hymns to honor the Blood Witch; those songs are the only ones allowed in his territory, upon pain of the offender being forced to bite off his or her own tongue. All courtships must be ratified and all marriages sealed with his *droit du seigneur*.

Unfortunately for any would-be rebels, mad Margrave Dorcharadt is a very powerful and fiendishly clever vampire. A former Redhawk Knight, he surrounds himself with an entourage of similarly minded lesser vampires and a well-paid garrison of Nord and Sakuran mercenaries. He keeps mews of specially bred killer bats and *always* wears a plate cuirass.

THE VAMPIRE MARCHES

The Valkenholm freethinkers who left their homeland behind for religious freedom did not sever all ties with their motherland. The border remained porous despite the threat of war. Trade continued between the nations, and families lived on both sides of the border.

Those ties of blood now turn against Riverspring. Countess Sanguinara, the Blood Witch, rules Valkenholm as a feudal queen, maintaining a nobility of vampires and depraved humans. As kings and queens ever have, she rewards her most loyal subjects with lands and titles and disposes of the dangerous ones with exile.

The exiled and the exalted both make up the lords of the Vampire Marches, and few can tell which are the cherished and which are the damned. Between the edge of Valkenholm's forest and the upswell of Riverspring's jagged foothills lay lands the Blood Witch divided between a dozen or so vampires to rule as they see fit. Some are brutal warriors, while others are masters of Witchcraft, but they all rule their petty domains with fickle cruelty.

THE HILLS OF THE DEAD

The dead outnumber the living in the broken hills of Riverspring between the Vampire Marches in the west and the Oubliette in the east. Blasted and burned by war in some places, overrun with bracken and ash juniper in others, the welcoming valleys are now charnel pits filled with the bones of those killed in the Bane War.

Some brave souls ventured past Margrave Dorcharadt and the other vampire warlords after the Bane War ended, desperate to resettle the land of their ancestors, only to quickly find themselves at the mercy of Hecate's ethereal banes. The hills teemed with spirits the resettlers called the haunters of the hills as well as other, fiercer banes. The hardest amongst the returning Outlanders managed to hold out and reestablish the cantons of their forefathers, but most perished at the hands of the restless dead.

Friedrichs Ort is the most populous and secure of the reestablished cantons. Located near a natural salt mine, the Friedrichsfolk defend themselves capably against the Dark Queen's forces. Blocks of salt are worked into the bricks of the homes, carefully resting beneath roofslates to shield them from the rain. While not as secure as an unbroken line of ground salt, the salt bricks still effectively ward off lesser banes. Safe—or at least safe enough—from the restless dead, the people of Friedrichs Ort once again raise swine and goats in the forested hills and make sweet white wines from their late-ripening grapes.

Sadly, salt mining is a dangerous profession. Salt dust in the air of the mine easily leads to dehydration and death. Faced with watching their kinsfolk die to retrieve the precious salt, the folk of Friedrichs Ort made a terrible choice. Travelers who visit Friedrichs Ort receive generous hospitality; they are plied with food and drink while the Friedrichsfolk try to learn all they can about the visitors. Those deemed unlikely to be missed are then taken prisoner and forced to work the mine. Any who escape find themselves alone and unequipped against the haunters of the hills.



Haunters of the Hills

The ragged, war-torn hills and valleys of Riverspring are far more dangerous than their gently-rolling, tree-covered appearance suggests. Stands of ash juniper cling tenaciously to near-vertical hillsides, hiding sheer cliffs that can lead to a broken neck. Fragile limestone terraces crumble suddenly beneath climber's hands and rocks rain down on passing travelers. Dry creek beds become home to swift-moving floods during unexpected downpours.

As they fled the Witches' forces, far too many Springfolk found their homeland turned against them. Hundreds died in flash floods and storms conjured by the Crone or in rock-falls engineered by the Gorgon. The Dark Queen captured the despair and hatred of these victims and set their spirits loose to haunt Riverspring's hills.

Haunters of the hills appear as softly-glowing, pale will-o-the-wisps floating in midair. For a few brief moments, they can also assume the ghostly form of the person they were in life. Usually hunting in packs of three to seven, they use their inviting glow to mesmerize the living into walking to their own doom, leading travelers off of cliffs and into the paths of floodwaters. The Haunters then feed off of the despair and pain of the dying.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d8, Subterfuge d10, Tracking d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities

Darkvision: Haunters of the hills can see in complete darkness; all lighting penalties are halved.

Ethereal: Haunters of the hills are immaterial and can only be harmed by magical attacks. Weapons covered in salt count as magical for the purpose of damaging haunters of the hills.

Flight: Haunters of the hills fly at a rate of 6" with a climb of 1. They may run.

Immunities: Haunters of the Hills are immune to necromantic and cold damage and effects.

Powers: Haunters of the Hills use their Spirit as their casting die, have 10 Power Points and access to the following powers: *blind* (a sudden flash of their natural luminosity), *puppet* (a sudden ache for light and warmth overcomes victims, leading them to follow the Hunter; walking off a cliff counts as committing suicide for purposes of allowing another opposed Spirit roll), and *telekinesis* (often used to shove those who resist *puppet* off of a cliff or to throw stones at opponents; see the **Hazards** chapter in *Savage Worlds* for information on drowning and falling).

Size -2: The will-o-the-wisp form of Haunters is a glowing ball of light only a foot or so in diameter.

Small: Attackers subtract 2 from any attack rolls directed at them.

Undead: +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra damage; immune to disease and poison.

Vulnerability (Salt): When in the presence of salt or salt water, haunters of the hills suffer a -1 penalty to all Trait tests. Any damage-causing powers with a salt Trapping or weapons coated in salt cause +2

additional damage. Haunters cannot cross salt water, nor can they cross an unbroken line of salt under their own power.

Witchline (Hecate): Baner of the Dark Queen can be sensed by Shade Accursed within 25 feet.

THE OUBLIETTE

Beyond the Hills of the Dead lies Hecate's stronghold, Mahsoom Fortress, also known as the Oubliette. Dense, magical fog hides the Oubliette's secluded valley from prying eyes, and scores of powerful banes guard it from the Dark Queen's enemies.

More information about the Oubliette and Hecate's activities can be found in Act VII of *A New Compact*, the Plot Point Campaign included in *Accursed*. If players have already participated in that adventure, they can assume that the Dark Queen has increased her security.

Riverspring Edges

The following are new Edges available for Accursed characters.

FREETHINKER

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8+, Spirit d8+

The early Springfolk left Steppengrad and Valkenholm behind because of schisms in the Enochian faith. Some simply disagreed with the fanaticism of Orthodox Enochianism, while others rejected any belief in the Creator. In any case, they came to regard those who claimed to know the will of the divine with healthy skepticism.

This served freethinking Springfolk well when they were herded into the Grand Coven's prisoner camps. Their distrust of authority made them as doubtful of the Witches' power as they were of the Enochian leadership. Freethinking Springfolk were some of the earliest Accursed to break free of their bonds.

A character with this Edge gains a +2 bonus to opposed rolls to resist Tests of Will from banes, Enochian clergy, and even Witches trying to assert authority over the character. The character also gains a +1 bonus to making and resisting Smarts tricks.

MOUNTAINEER

Requirements: Novice, Athletics d6+, Survival d6+

The people of Riverspring once delighted in mountain climbing, making a sport of what others would consider an arduous danger. The Springfolk developed techniques almost unknown in Morden to scale even the tallest of the Darkwall Peaks. A character with this Edge gains +2 to any Athletics or Survival rolls made to climb mountains or survive their hostile environments.

Riverspring Hindrances

The following new Hindrance is available for Accursed characters.

APOSTATE [MINOR/MAJOR]

However helpful the Enochian Church was in ending the Bane War—and regardless of how it leads the resistance movement to reclaim Morden—there are those who still begrudge the Creator's faith for not preventing the invasion in the first place. These people vent their frustrations on Enochian clergy and the faithful since they cannot bellow their curses in the Creator's face.

With the Minor version of this Hindrance, the character suffers a -2 to Charisma during any dealings with Enochian clergy and devotees (including the Order of the Penitent). The rift caused by the character's barely-sublimated anger and snide asides increases to -4 with the Major version of the Hindrance.

Deepshadow

While the rest of Morden wakes as the sun rises in the East, the fallen nation of Deepshadow remains shrouded in darkness. The looming mountains of the Darkwall block the sunlight from illuminating Deepshadow's hills and plains until noon. Depending on the season, two-thirds to three-quarters of every twenty-four hours is spent under the cover of night or gloaming shadow.

Even before the Grand Coven's army arrived, the long hours of darkness made Deepshadow a grim, unforgiving land. Exiles and outlaws from Caer Kainen were the earliest settlers of the land, and they brought their feuds and rivalries with them. Prosperity came slowly to the darkened countryside as the settlers fought amongst themselves over land and grazing rights, but it came nonetheless.

Surprisingly, the heroes who helped tame Deepshadow were the worst villains of Caer Kainen. The Cavendish clan was exiled nearly three hundred years ago for consorting with creatures beyond the Darkwall. Truth existed in these accusations, but it was not the whole truth. Early scouts for the Grand Coven's forces approached the Cavendish leadership, teaching them rudimentary Witchcraft and offering vague promises of power, but these temptations were barely made before the Cavendish clan found itself exiled.

Insulted by the suggestion they had foresworn strength of arms for sorcery, the Cavendish clan swiftly set out to make themselves lords of Deepshadow. They clothed their knights in black, mourning their lost honor and swiftly ended all feuds they encountered

through overpowering force. Quickly, the desperate farmers of Deepshadow hailed them as heroes, and the Cavendish clan rose to the call. Soon they began to recruit new knights—new Shadow Riders—from their allies and Deepshadow finally knew peace.

While there were always those who thought them little more than brigands, most credit the Shadow Riders with ushering in Deepshadow's short-lived golden age. The knights of the Shadow Riders foreswore loyalty to kith and kin to instead protect all of Deepshadow, riding near and far to bring justice to the wicked. Their black cloaks and pennons brought hope as swift as the wind.

Under the Shadow Riders' protection, the grain fields of western Deepshadow—where the sun lingered longest—became Morden's breadbasket. Great herds of shaggy cattle and wooly sheep grazed the foothills of the Darkwall Peaks. The feuds of generations past were long forgotten. It seemed peace had come to a contentious land.

Unexplained disappearances marked the beginning of the end for Deepshadow. Woodsmen, shepherds, even entire families began to vanish in the Darkwall foothills. Accusations flew about black magic or feuds renewed, and the hill country communities of Deepshadow turned upon one another. Internecine violence stretched the Shadow Riders thinly across the nation. Nobody was prepared when the Witch armies descended on the land.



Shadow Riders

As the citizens of Deepshadow fled before the Grand Coven's hordes, the six hundred knights of the Shadow Riders charged recklessly into the enemy forces, desperate to buy their countrymen any chance to escape. Instead the Dark Queen conjured a fog of roiling darkness that swallowed the Shadow Riders whole. They never even clashed with the foe.

Brigadier Macduff Cavendish, commander of the Shadow Riders, knew his family's secret history. All the Cavendish clan leaders were taught the secret bargains, the oft-denied alliances that the Witches offered long ago. Rather than die a hero, Macduff agreed to the long-forgotten bargain.

Several weeks later, the pikemen of Riverspring gathered in their foothills to face the invaders. As they braced to repel the Grand Coven's banes, the black fog appeared again. Out of the fog charged the Shadow Riders, carrying ragged banners and bearing the marks of horrific wounds. The undead knights were incorporeal enough to pass through the pikes unharmed, but solid enough to deal death with their swords.

Less than a full company of Shadow Riders remains today, most of them destroyed during the Bane War. A platoon of Shadow Riders serves Hecate as an honor guard at the Oubliette, while the other platoons crisscross the Outlands, wreaking terror on any they encounter.

Attributes:

Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6, Riding d10, Tracking d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: II (3)

Gear: Cavalry carbine (Range: 5/10/20, Damage 2d8, RoF: 1, 2 actions to reload), cavalry saber (Str+d6), lance (Str+d8; AP 2 when charging, Reach 2), plate corselet

Special Abilities

Darkvision: Shadow Riders can see in complete darkness; all lighting penalties are halved.

Immunities: Shadow Riders are immune to necromantic damage and effects.

Improved Charge: Shadow Riders ignore the standard multi-action penalty for Running when making a fighting attack. They may also initiate an attack at the end of an All Out Move (see **Setting Rules** in *Accursed*). If the Shadow Rider moves at least one inch past its normal Pace, it gains +2 to damage.

Phasing: Due to their partially insubstantial nature, Shadow Riders gain a form of Burrowing called Phasing. While Phased, the bane can pass through solid structures and may sink into the ground and travel up to its Pace as an action. It may strike by materializing and taking its opponent by surprise, making an opposed Subterfuge roll versus the target's Notice. If the bane wins, it gains +2 to attack and damage that round, or +4 if it gets a raise. The bane must become fully corporeal to make an attack. If the victim wins and was on Hold, he may try to interrupt the bane's attack as usual. The bane cannot be attacked physically while Phased unless the attacker uses salt, magical items, magical weapons, or supernatural powers. The bane may not spend more than one consecutive round Phased into or through an object.



Shroud of Fog: Shadow Riders are surrounded by a swirling cloak of dark fog that imposes a -2 penalty on all sight-based attacks against them. This fog emanates outward from the Shadow Rider to the size of a Small Burst Template.

Spectral Steed: Shadow Riders can command the dark fog that suffuses them to manifest as a smoky black horse. This unnatural steed has the same statistics as a war horse but vanishes when the Shadow Rider dismounts or is Incapacitated. It can phase with the rider.

Steady Hands: As the Edge

Undead: +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra damage; immune to disease and poison.

Vulnerability (Salt):

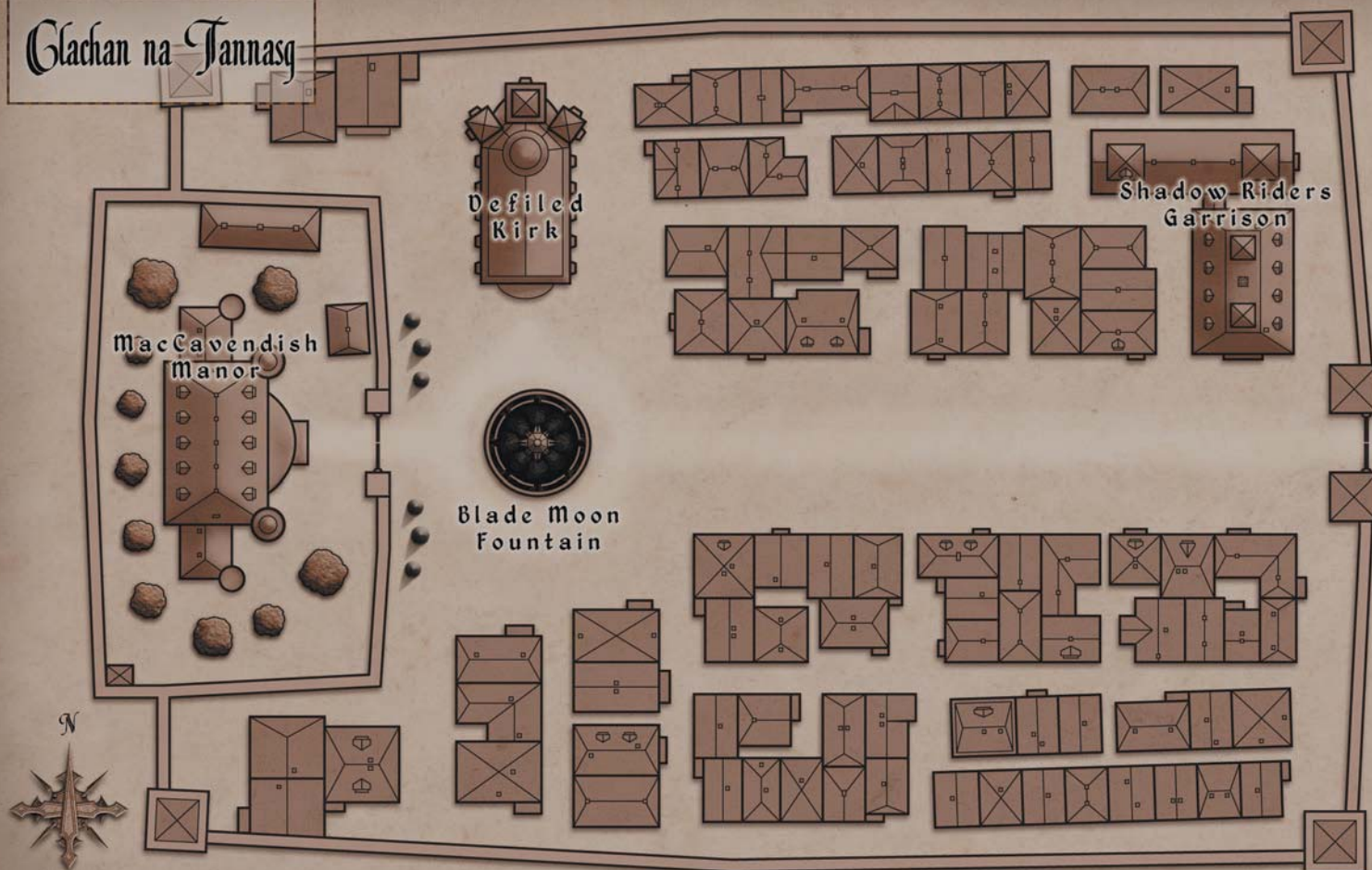
When in the presence of salt or salt water, Shadow Riders suffer a -1 penalty to all Trait tests. Any damage-causing powers with a salt Trapping or weapons coated in salt cause +2 additional damage. Shadow Riders cannot cross salt water, nor can they cross an unbroken line of salt under their own power.

Witchline (Hecate): Banes of the Dark Queen can be sensed by Shade Accursed within 25 feet.

Modern Deepshadow

The battles of the Bane War blighted Deepshadow's landscape less than its neighbors, but the Grand Coven's army still scoured the countryside clean. Once, great herds of shaggy cattle provided the backbone of Deepshadow's economy. Now unshepherded flocks of feral goats and sheep pick their way through piles of long-horned skulls. Ramshackle villages and lonely farmsteads gleam in the too-brief sunlight, crusted with caked-on salt. Every man is out for himself before all others. No one lifts a hand in friendship.

Most of the few settlements lingering in Deepshadow lie in the sun-kissed western plains, farmsteads made up of dugout homes cut into the soil and small fields surrounded by low rock salt walls. Farmers keep little livestock and drive off wildlife,



partially for fear the animals might damage the lines of salt surrounding their homes and partially for fear their cries might attract unwanted attention. Travelers unused to the low profile of the sod houses pass them by unseen—and that is how the settlers want it.

Larger villages are home to traders, craftsmen, and bandits. Brigands offer tribute to the Dark Queen's spectral forces for the right to call themselves lords over frightened blacksmiths and casket makers. Farmers give up their crops and even their children to bandits or otherwise see their fields trampled beneath horses' hooves. The brigands provide some protection from rival gangs, but such territorial disputes are more often disastrous for the noncombatants than for the bandits.

Amidst the bandit territories and scattered farmsteads, two major settlements jockey for position as the dominant power in Deepshadow: the Accursed-inhabited towns of Clachan na Tannasg and Sestina. Clachan na Tannasg is home to clan mac Cavendish, happy to return to their sorcerous roots rather than perish before Hecate's power, while Sestina is a foothold in the Dark Queen's land for her rival Melusine.

CLACHAN NA TANNASG

Clachan na Tannasg—the City of Shades—sits in the foothills of the Darkwall Peaks, looming over the shadowy plains below. The Cavendish clan, granted power as Shades and Shadow Riders by Hecate, rule from here over all the settlements within a half day's ride. Several platoons of Shadow Riders and sundry banes enforce Macduff Cavendish's word, lording it over nearby farmsteads and driving off adventurers trying to end the Shades' rule.

A powerful ritual conducted by the Cavendish clan makes the very stone of Clachan na Tannasg ethereal. Shades and ethereal banes can interact with the structures and implements present in the city as if they were solid, but to all other visitors, the town is as insubstantial as a ghost. The price of this magic, though, is that direct sunlight causes the City of Shades to vanish.

When the sun finally creeps over the Darkwall late each day, Clachan na Tannasg and all its inhabitants disappear into the otherworld. Efforts to hem in the Shades by sprinkling a line of salt about the city's boundary while it is vanished are stymied by the fact that Clachan na Tannasg does not reappear in the same place. The city shifts whenever it reappears, sometimes returning a few hundred feet from its

last location, and sometimes appearing miles away. Assaults by Shadow Riders prevent Order of the Penitent scouts from determining if there is any pattern to the city's movements.

SESTINA

On the far western edge of Deepshadow, almost in the Cairn Kainen highlands, lies a complex of caves; an interlacing network of caverns that the Ophidian inhabitants call Sestina. Warmed by underground hot springs and coal-fed firepits, Melusine's subjects spy on her hated rival and make a nightmare of Deepshadow's short days even as Hecate's Shades haunt her nights.

Unrestricted by lines of salt or other mystic wards, the Ophidians of Sestina extend their caverns through careful tunneling. Narrow passageways that only serpents and Ophidians can fit through extend for miles beneath Deepshadow's plains. These allow the Ophidians to tunnel up into bandit towns or dig right into dugout homes.

During the swiftly passing daylight hours and the heat of Deepshadow's summer, the snake-men come to the surface to trade salt mined from Sestina's caverns with wary farmers and brigands. They offer absurdly low prices, asking more for news about Clachan na Tannasg and other agents of Hecate than for trade goods or supplies. The residents of Deepshadow are wary with such bargains, but there are few other ways of obtaining salt in Deepshadow.

Deepshadow Edges

The following new Edges are available for Accursed characters.

EYES ON THE HORIZON

Requirements: Seasoned, Notice d8+, Shooting d8+

The feuds of Deepshadow are rarely fought fairly. With the advent of firearms, in particular, it became commonplace for gunmen to lie in wait for their enemies for hours and shoot them down from long distances.

When this character takes the Aim maneuver, he may double the Long range distance range of his weapon. Range penalties still apply as normal.

SPECTRAL BEAST

Requirements: Seasoned, Shade, Spirit d8+

A Shade's Unnatural Aura condemns them to a life without the simple comfort of animal companionship. No mount bears them, no dog hunts for them, and no cat lets them stroke its fur. Some lonely Shades find refuge in the company of an unnatural creature instead.

The Shade can imbue some of its spectral energy into the corpse of an animal—usually a cat, dog, or horse—and give it a gruesome approximation of life. The half-rotted or skeletal animal has the usual statistics for its type, with the addition of the Undead monstrous ability. If the spectral beast is destroyed, it takes 2d6 days of waiting beside the unburied corpse of a new animal to grant it undeath.

Deepshadow Hindrances

The following new Hindrance is available for Accursed characters.

FEUD [MINOR/MAJOR]

The folk of Deepshadow inherited a long memory for rivalries and wrongs from their Caer Kainen kinsmen. This character is caught up in one of the many feuds burning amongst the surviving inhabitants of Deepshadow.

With the Minor version of this Hindrance, the character is subject to the Minor version of the Enemy Hindrance while within Deepshadow's borders, as members of her rival clan constantly try to attack her. She also suffers a -2 to Charisma when interacting with members of the rival clan and their allies.

With the Major version of this Hindrance, the feud spills out beyond Deepshadow's borders. More skilled and vicious members of the rival clan (equivalent to a Major Enemy) harry the hero across Morden. There is almost no hope of negotiating with them either, as the Charisma penalty increases to -4.

Other Outlands

A patchwork of bandit kingdoms, isolated villages, and well-armed city-states make up the Outlands today. Even during the apex of Deepshadow, Riverspring, and Seaharrow, other smaller Outland nations dotted the landscape. The Bane War scoured the names of these small states from the maps, but new border kingdoms arose to reclaim the blighted Outlands, springing up in lands either once claimed by the three greater Outlands or formerly home to lost nations.

Travel through the Outlands can easily lead heroes into these minor Outland nations. Crossing a stream in Seaharrow might mean entering the borders of a kingdom with no allegiance to the Harrowan culture. Cresting a ridge in Riverspring might mean looking down on a valley ruled by dark fey instead of Springfolk refugees. Riding the plains of Deepshadow might mean crossing lands disputed between three different bandit clans. The borders of the post-Bane War Outlands constantly shift and change.

The following tables can help Game Masters generate new Outland states. The tables make use of the *Accursed* 108-card double poker deck, but a d8 can be used instead—though this prohibits obtaining a joker. Draw five cards (or roll a d8 five times) and resolve them consecutively as follows. Alternatively, a Game Master may wish to draw two or three cards for each table, building a more complex Outland.

Theme

Themes are not a separate draw. Expanding off of the **Interludes** rules in *Savage Worlds*, every suit has a theme tied to one of the Witches, informing the results available in each table. Game Masters might use the themes to inspire the direction of adventures in a randomly-generated Outland (a hand dominated by hearts suggests a romance for one of the heroes) or add them to the list of interlude options.

Clubs: Tragedy



Clubs represent the Crone and her control of weather. Nothing is more tragic than the unpreventable losses of life and prosperity caused by the uncontrollable forces of nature.

Diamonds: Desire

Diamonds represent the Djinn and the way she manipulates wishes. Unfettered desire leads many fools into choices they regret or bad bargains with dark fey.



Drops: Independence



Drops represent the Gorgon and her aloofness from her sisters. Reptiles make their own way in the world, and no stone is as hard as the heads of the stubborn.

Hearts: Love

Hearts represent the Blood Queen and her manipulation of both the passions of her subjects and their very heart's blood. Love can lift up hearts, and it can crush them.



Moons: Unity



Moons represent the Dark Queen and the shadows she controls. Cooperation can lead allies to success, but the dark shadow of oppression can unite nations beneath its rule.

Mortars: Corruption

Mortars represent Baba Yaga and her powers of entropy. Even the noblest of heroes must make morally-complicated decisions, and such quandaries can easily lead to corruption.



Needles: Transformation



Needles represent the Chimera and her fascination with transformation. Change can lead to healthy growth, but mere change for change's sake leads nowhere.

Spades: Victory

Spades represent the Morrigan and death, for death is the ultimate victor.



Joker

Jokers may represent whichever suit is topmost when the card is drawn, or the Game Master can simply draw a new card (or two, if she wishes to create extra complications).

Geographic Features

The first card in the hand represents a geographic feature dominating the local landscape. Deepshadow, Riverspring, and Seaharrow were named for their most prominent geographic features; a Game Master may consider doing the same for a randomly-generated realm. See **Hazards** in *Savage Worlds* for ideas on handling drought, hunger, storms, and the like.

1. Clubs: Storms

Incessant storms (sea squalls near Seaharrow, floods near Riverspring, windstorms near Deepshadow) plague the region.

2. Diamonds: Want

The region suffers from drought or a similar scarcity (such as limited game animals or crop devastation). Water and food are scarce.

3. Drops: Crag

A prominent hill or stone outcrop rises above the land, threatening falling rocks or offering shelter to the daring.

4. Hearts: Water

A lake, river, or swamp lies at the heart of the realm. This body of water might provide for the inhabitants, or it might be an undrinkable salt lake or dangerous morass.

5. Moons: Darkness

Perhaps even the noonday sun cannot dispel the shadow of the Darkwall Peaks, or lowering gray clouds constantly shroud the sky. The land is beset by shadows.

6. Mortars: Rot

The land is diseased. Swarms of insects devour the crops, mold and fungi cover the plants, or the citizens are plagued by leprosy.

7. Needles: Mutations

Magical aftereffects from the Bane War twist this realm in strange and unusual ways. Mutant beasts hunt crystal forests, magma pits, or rivers of liquid metal.

8. Spades: Wasteland

The land is blighted by the passage of war. The craters of cannonballs and explosions riddle the plains, only charred husks remain of the forests, and even the mountainsides are shattered.



Economic Level

The second card in the hand determines the economy of the realm. See *Accursed* for more on the personal resource die, gear availability, and gear value.

1. Clubs: Wretched

Whether because of lack of resources, interdiction by neighboring lands, or simply the greed of its rulers, all gear suffers a -4 penalty (maximum of -6) to both availability and value. Barter (especially food and necessities) is preferred to coin. Alchemical compounds and devices, cannons, firearms, and technological advances simply are not available.

2. Diamonds: Desperate

Conditions here mean all gear suffers a -4 penalty to availability (maximum of -6) but at least the prices are normal. Barter in luxuries is preferred to coin, as the citizens are eager for some way to show off their personal wealth.

3. Drops: Combative

Citizens in this realm squabble over what few resources they possess. All gear suffers a -2 penalty to availability (maximum of -6). Bartering weapons for other gear removes this penalty; buying with any coin except Manreian duchats adds a -1 penalty to the gear's value.

4. Hearts: Insular

The local rulers protect their economy products with outrageous tariffs. Any gear with a specific foreign point of origin (such as the de Acosta Model IV or the Maucher swivel barrel) is rare (-6) and suffers a -2 penalty to its value (maximum of -6).

5. Moons: Cooperative

The economy here is stable enough—and the people open-hearted enough—that there are no penalties to gear value or availability.

6. Mortars: Usurious

Corrupt local officials require all transactions be made in the valueless local currency. Characters must change their coins, suffering a -2 penalty (to a maximum of -6) to the value of the first set of purchases they make in another realm of Morden.

7. Needles: Booming

This realm benefits from a recent windfall. Perhaps a rich vein of gold was discovered in a nearby mine, or a lost treasure hoard was discovered after a landslide. Regardless, all gear gains a $+2$ bonus to its availability (maximum $+2$) as traders flood the market.

8. Spades: Wealthy

Sustained good fortune characterizes this lucky realm's economy. For now, at least, all gear benefits from a $+2$ bonus to both value and availability (maximum $+2$). If this realm is not ruled by an agent of the Witches, its prosperity undoubtedly attracts their interest.

Government

The third card in the hand determines the type of government that rules the realm.

1. Clubs: No Government

The realm has no functional government; instead, it is a ravaged warzone. It may be the territory of powerful bestial banes that terrorize desperate villagers, or disputed between two (or more) nearby states.

2. Diamonds: Plutocracy

Powerful merchants—or perhaps a single wealthy patron—rule here. The area is rich in some natural resource (gold, unspoiled old growth forest), perhaps even creating a “gold rush”-type atmosphere.

3. Drops: Anarchy

The citizens of this realm have no fixed leadership. The anarchy may be the civil self-government of equals who need no masters, or it may be the brutal dog-eats-dog world of rival bandit gangs.

4. Hearts: Despot

A cult of personality surrounds the ruler of this realm. This leader may be benign (an Enochian missionary who does not even realize how blindly her followers obey her) or malevolent (a bigoted so-called prophet).

5. Moons: Cooperative

The citizens of this realm share power with each other. It may be a democratically-elected council such as in many of old Riverspring's cantons, or a bureaucratic oligarchy that serves only to enrich those at the very top.

6. Mortars: Bandit Kingdom

Criminals openly rule this realm. They might be "honest" bandits who raid passing caravans and use the stolen wealth to local farmers or deluded robber-knights who hide their criminality beneath a veneer of civility.

7. Needles: Immigrants

The citizens brought the ways of their homeland with them to the Outlands; they might be from other lands of Morden (such as the distant realms as Hebron and Hyphrates) or Sakuran or Nord mercenaries.

8. Spades: Stable Government

In the time since the Bane War ended, this realm weathered challenges and emerged victorious. It may be a tiny kingdom whose ruler inherited it from a parent or a gerontocracy long-lived enough to actually have elders to rule it.

Allies

Despite the darkness covering Morden, hope springs eternal. Anywhere heroes travel, they find allies in the battle against the Witches. The fourth card in the hand determines the personality characteristics of the most prominent such ally. If a face card is drawn, the ally is a fellow Accursed.

1. Clubs: Bereft

The ally fights the Witches because of a personal loss. Perhaps the ally saw too many innocent lives lost in the Bane War and now seeks to lose himself in battle, such as a grim Witch Hunter whose children were murdered. On a face card, the ally is a Golem.

2. Diamonds: Criminal

Greed motivates this ally, though he would probably call it enlightened self-interest. Perhaps the ally hides a heart of gold under a lust for money, like a cynical Knave who fought one losing battle too many. On a face card, this ally is a Mummy.

3. Drops: Freedom Fighter

The ally serves the cause of freedom, seeking self-rule for her people above all else. Perhaps a native-born Outlander, she tries to preserve the ways of her shattered homeland against both new colonists and the Witches' hordes. On a face card, this ally is an Ophidian.

4. Hearts: Errant

Pursuit of love motivates this ally. This quest might be metaphorical or dangerously literal, such as a former Knight of the Redhawks following the trail of bandits or banes who kidnapped her true love. On a face card, this ally is a Dhampir.

5. Moons: Preacher

The ally preaches the word of the Creator, seeking to return Morden to the grace it knew before the Witches. Perhaps this ally seeks to convert others or instead seeks to expunge his own sins, such as a Penitent Witchmarked seeking absolution. On a face card, this ally is a Shade.

6. Mortars: Mercenary

While she might claim she goes where the money leads, love of battle truly motivates this ally. Perhaps a foreign mercenary or perhaps a native Grand Coven Veteran, she might be a sword for hire or lead a band of warriors. On a face card, this ally is a Vargr.

7. Needles: Revolutionary

The ally wants to remake the world, creating a new and better Morden. Perhaps the ally is an Adherent of Aliyah, a rogue Enochian prophet leading her congregation to found an Accursed homeland. On a face card, this ally is a Mongrel.

8. Spades: Implacable

The Bane War is not over until every last Witch and bane is dead and this ally makes sure of that personally. The ally might stalk the night alone or be an Officer of the Alliance raising a secret army. On a face card, the ally is a Revenant.

Enemies

Despite the heroes who roam the land, darkness still covers Morden—especially in the broken, scarred Outlands. The primary enemy in an Outland realm may be the sinister ruler of the land or simply a monster terrorizing the citizenry. Most horrifyingly, it may be a human collaborator. Regardless, the presence of the enemy is a stark reminder of the Witches' power,

If a Jack or King is drawn, the Game Masters may wish to simply use that Accursed or bane type as the enemy. If a Queen is drawn, then the enemy follows some plot directly in the Witch's name—or may even be the Witch in disguise!

1. Clubs: Destroyer

This enemy revels in destruction for its own sake. If human, the enemy might be a cruel bandit lord who promises protection and then burns crops anyway or a serial killer with uncontrollable bloodlust. If a bane, it might be a berserk colossus tearing up the landscape or a hate-filled Golem murdering any who see its hideous face.

2. Diamonds: Tempter

This enemy turns others' desires against them. If human, he might be a moonraker charging exorbitant prices for liver-killing gin or a panderer luring innocents into the local lord's seraglio. If a bane, it might be a Mummy gathering an army of slaves to build its pyramid or a dark fey twisting the wishes of spinners and seamstresses.

3. Drops: Wayward

This enemy acts recklessly, heeding nothing of the consequences of its own actions. If human, she might be a mad warlock pursuing knowledge man was not meant to know. If a bane, it might be a rampaging hydra devouring village after village or an Ophidian duelist who knows she can kill her way out of any trouble she makes.

4. Hearts: Manipulator

This enemy plays games with the lives of others. If human, he might be a rich merchant setting farmers and herders against each other for his own profit or a lothario stealing hearts and purses. If a bane, it might be a vampire warlord whose realm is a mirror of the Blood Queen's court or a seductive Dhampir with no qualms about drinking human blood.

5. Moons: Oppressor

This enemy may not be the ruler of the realm, but it seeks dominion nonetheless. If human, she might lead a movement trying to purge other ethnicities from the realm or be a ruthless thieves' guild leader. If a bane, she might be a yuki-onna ruling a steading as its self-appointed ice queen or a Shade spymaster who runs a realm from behind the scenes.

6. Mortars: Corrupter

This enemy exults in delving the depths of depravity. If human, he might be a sadistic, spoiled aristocrat who simply enjoys watching people bleed or a decadent warlock seeking to make himself into a Witch on par with the Grand Coven. If a bane, it might be a rusalka with a lake filled with drowned lovers or a Vargr gladiator pit master.

7. Needles: Mad Scientist

This enemy loves to take things apart just to see how they work, unconcerned with whether this breaks the object of her interest. If human, she might be a student of Doktor von Nachtmachen, continuing his dangerous weapons research. If a bane, she might be a Mongrel vivisectionist, dissecting the living and the dead to regain her humanity.

8. Spades: Conqueror

If this enemy is not the ruler of the realm, then it is poised to become so soon. If human, then it might be a mercenary captain backed by an army of grim, determined men or the favored agent of a Witch. If a bane, it might be a grave knight of unusual intelligence leading an army of cauldron born or an unkillable Revenant who rules with an iron fist.

Example Outland

The Game Master draws a three of clubs (Storms), four of moons (Cooperative), eight and nine of hearts (Despot and the Errant), and king of mortars (Corrupter or gorge wolf).

The presence of storms and a bane of Baba Yaga suggests a location near Seaharrow and Steppengrad; the cooperative economy and despotic government further this with echoes of Stalinist Russia. That the enemy is the Corrupter prompts the idea that the dictator indulges in Caligula-like levels of perverse cruelty. The presence of the Errant as the ally, however, inspires the thought that this was not always so.

STORMKEEP

On the coast of Harrow Bay, southwest of Seaharrow, sits the fortress-village of Stormkeep. Orderly fields and square stone walls belie the turmoil at its heart. Founded by the charismatic ex-soldier Ilya Roslov as a refuge for his fellow Gradniki, the original intent was for the residents of Stormkeep to pool their resources and evenly share their burdens. After recovering from a gorge wolf attack three years ago, Roslov changed. He became cruel and capricious, indulging to excess and favoring his fellow ex-soldiers over the rest of his charges.

Now the citizens of Stormkeep go warily about their days, watchful of the eyes of Roslov's inner circle. While food is still plentiful, more and more goes to feed Roslov; more and more of foreign trade goes to luxuries only he enjoys. His wife, Lara, is bewildered by his change and eager for any help. No one knows that Ilya Roslov has become a gorge wolf in spirit. Soon he is fated to transform in body, and then he plans to paint the walls of Stormkeep red with blood...

