# EGENDS OF THE GUARD



# A MOUSE GUARD RPG POWERED BY THE APOCALYPSE



#### BASIC MOVES

#### Set Out Into the Wilds (-2 while Starving)

When you and your patrol **set out into the wilds**, the patrol leader will choose a Trailblazer (Courage), a Navigator (Wisdom), and a Lookout (Nature), and each mouse rolls with their assigned station and stat. On a 10+, you perform your duties exceptionally well and add I to the patrol pool. On a 7-9, you have a hard time keeping up, the MC will tell you how this affects you or the journey. On a miss, you've blundered right into danger, brace yourselves!

#### Read a Fellow Mouse (-2 while Angry)

When you spend some time **reading a fellow mouse**, roll with Wisdom. On a 10<sup>+</sup>, you can ask their player any 2 of the following questions throughout your interaction. On a 7-9, you can ask I instead:

- What is your mouse feeling right now?
- ✤ How could I get your mouse to \_\_\_\_?
- ✤ What does your mouse think about \_\_\_\_?
- Is your mouse being honest with me?
- What is your mouse really afraid of here?
- Can I trust your mouse to \_\_\_\_?

#### Trust Your Instincts (-2 while Angry)

When you **trust in your instincts** and what they're trying to tell you, roll with Nature. On a hit, you learn something new and useful about your current situation, and you take +I forward to acting on it. On a 7-9, what you learn is dangerous or unsettling.

#### Get Your Bearings (-2 while Sick)

When you **take a moment to get your bearings**, roll with Wisdom. On a hit, ask the MC any 2 of the following questions. On a 7-9, you've found yourself deeper in trouble than when you started.

- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What's happened here recently?
- ✤ What's the best way \_\_\_\_?
- How can I best get my patrol out of this situation?
- What's my greatest opportunity here?

When you act on the answers given, take +I forward to your roll.

#### Brave The Elements (-2 while Tired)

When you **dare to brave the elements**, roll with Nature. On a hit, you find shelter or endure the worst of it. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose I:

- \* You guide others to safety along with you
- \* You make an unexpected discovery
- \* You add I to the patrol pool
- \* You don't have to mark a condition

#### Strike at an Enemy (-2 while Injured)

When you enter the fray and **strike at an enemy**, roll with Focus. On a hit, you exchange conditions. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose I:

- \* You inflict an additional condition
- ✤ You suffer the condition of your choice
- ✤ You expose or create a weakness
- ✤ You take something from your opposition
- \* Add I to the patrol pool

#### Stand Your Ground (-2 while Sick)

When you **stand your ground** and protect a person, a place or a thing from harm, roll with Courage. On a hit, you succeed, suffering in its place; mark a condition. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose I:

- ✤ You suffer the condition of your choice
- You inflict a condition back onto your attackers
- ✤ You see what you're defending to safety
- ✤ Your efforts inspire or frighten others
- \* Add I to the patrol pool

#### Do Something Dangerous (-2 while Injured)

When you **do something dangerous**, determine if you're acting in accordance with your nature as a mouse (running away, hiding, climbing, etc) or defying it. If you're acting like a mouse should, roll with Nature. If you're defying your nature, roll with Focus. On a 10<sup>+</sup>, you do it with little to no cost. On a 7-9, it's going to cost you, the MC will offer you a worse outcome or a hard choice.

#### Convince Someone (-2 while Demoralized)

When you **hold leverage over someone and try to convince them to do something**, roll with Wisdom. For NPC's: On a 10+, you manage to convince them but they'll want something small in return. On a 7-9, you convince them but they want something more substantial in return. For PC's: On a 10+, choose both. On a 7-9, choose one:

- If they agree to do it, you'll owe them a favour
- If they don't agree, they mark a condition; their choice which one

#### Help Another Mouse (-2 while Tired)

When you're in a position to **help out another mouse** after they've rolled and choose to do so, either spend I from the patrol pool or roll with Courage. On a hit, they add I to their roll. On a 7-9, you expose yourself to fire, danger, retribution or cost. If you spent I from the patrol pool, treat it as a 10+ without having to roll.

#### SECONDARY MOVES ···

#### Patrol Pool

When told to add I to the patrol pool, you're granting yourself and your fellow guardmice an advantage in the near future (a useful piece of equipment or information, a morale boost, a tactical advantage, etc). You can spend points from the patrol pool to help each other out when you most need it (see **help another mouse** for details).

#### Recuperate

When you have the needed time and supplies and to and try to recuperate from...

....Starving, eat a really good meal and roll with Nature...

... Tired, sleep it off and roll with Wisdom...

- ... Angry, find a way to blow off some steam and roll with Focus...
- $\dots$ Demoralized, talk to someone about what's bothering you and roll with Courage...
- ....Sick, take some medicine and roll with Nature...

 $\dots$ Injured, get help from someone who knows what they're doing and roll with Focus...

On a hit, you feel better and can remove the condition. On a 10+, you also add I to the patrol pool or can remove a second condition.

#### Sniff Out Answers

When you **poke your nose into things to sniff out answers**, roll with Wisdom. On a hit, you uncover a new clue or make a discovery. On a 7-9, the answers come with trouble attached.

#### **Requisition Supplies**

When you requisition supplies from the guard or shop in a marketplace for something specific, roll with Focus. On a 10+, you get your hands on what you're after and add I to the patrol pool. On a 7-9, what you're after is within reach but has strings.

#### Lead Mice Into Battle

When you **lead a large group of mice into battle** against another group or a predator, roll with Courage. On a hit, you inflict a condition on them and receive one in return. On a 10+, choose 3. On a 7-9, choose 2:

- Your group doesn't suffer a condition but you still do
- ✤ Your group inflicts two conditions instead of one
- Your group seizes or keeps hold of a vital position
- Your group avoids collateral damage

# THE MOVES



Choose your two weapons of choice;

- Sword
- **D** Bow
- □ Shield
- □ Staff
- □ Halberd
- Daggers
- □ Mace
- Hook and Line
- □ Axe
- **D** Spear
- Sling

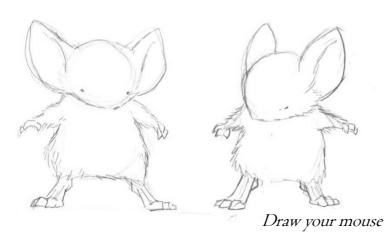
### GUARD RANK

Choose Tenderpaw if you're still apprenticing or Guardmouse if you're a recent initiate.

- □ Tenderpaw
- Guardmouse
- Patrol Guard
- Patrol Leader

#### HOMETOWN

- □ Barkstone: a busy working class town
- $\Box$  Copperwood: one of the oldest cities, home to one of the two mines in the territories
- Elmoss: a once prosperous city, known for its medicinal moss
- □ Ivydale: renowned for its bakers and bread
- $\hfill\square$  Lockhaven: the home stronghold of the Mouse Guard
- Dert Sumac: a busy little port town between Darkwater and Rustleaf
- $\hfill\square$  Shaleburrow: a simple town known for its delicious drinks
- $\Box$  Sprucetuck: known for its scientists, medicine and scent concoctions



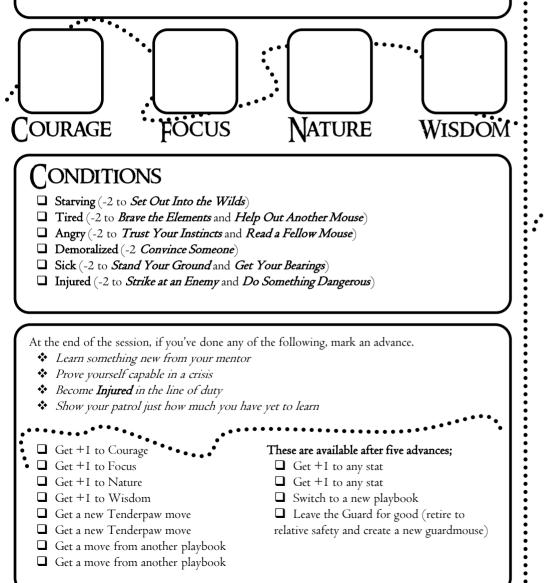
# THE TENDERPAW



Circle as many as apply:

- ◆ Red fur, dark brown fur, light brown fur, grey fur, black fur, white fur
- Stocky body, slim body, athletic body, bulky body, stringy body
- $\bigstar$  Young eyes, old eyes, naive eyes, gentle eyes, stern eyes, eyes that have seen too much
- Red cloak, green cloak, purple cloak, blue cloak, pink cloak, orange cloak, yellow cloak, brown cloak, black cloak, white cloak, no cloak

Starting Stats: Courage +1, Focus +0, Nature +0, Wisdom +0



## THE TENDERPAW MOVES

You get this one:

✤ Protégé: Choose another player's character to be your mentor, someone who you look up to and teaches you what being a guardmouse is all about. When your mentor gives you instructions and you follow them, you take +I ongoing to doing it. You can change your mentor when appropriate, but no more than once per mission.

And choose one more:

**□** Eager to Please: When you *set out into the wilds* and your patrol leader assigns you a role, add I to the patrol pool regardless of your result.

**Young and Reckless:** When you *strike at an enemy*, before rolling you can suffer a condition to treat your roll as a 10<sup>+</sup>.

**Lots to Learn Yet:** Get +I to any stat of your choice (Maximum of +3)

□ Small and Quiet: When you do something in secret, roll with Nature. On a 10+, no one notices what you're doing. On a 7-9, no one see's you, but something unrelated goes wrong. On a miss, the wrong eyes see you in the act.

Choose your two weapons of choice;

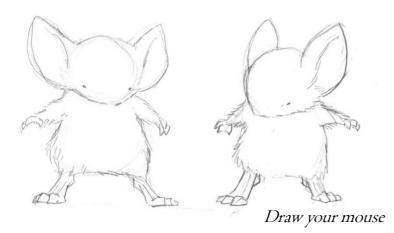
- □ Sword
- **D** Bow
- □ Shield
- □ Staff
- Halberd
- Daggers
- Mace
- Hook and Line
- □ Axe
- **D** Spear
- Sling

### Guard Rank

- □ Tenderpaw
- Guardmouse
- Patrol Guard
- Patrol Leader (start here by default)

### HOMETOWN

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# THE PATROL LEADER

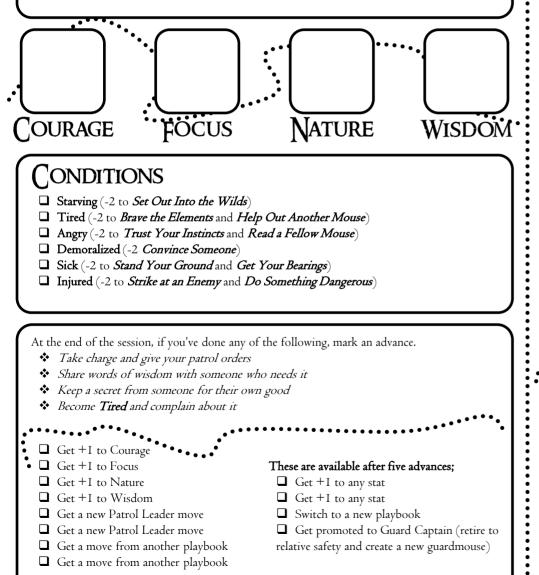


# Notes

Circle as many as apply:

- ◆ Red fur, dark brown fur, light brown fur, grey fur, black fur, white fur
- Stocky body, slim body, athletic body, bulky body, stringy body
- $\diamond$  Young eyes, old eyes, naive eyes, gentle eyes, stern eyes, eyes that have seen too much
- Red cloak, green cloak, purple cloak, blue cloak, pink cloak, orange cloak, yellow cloak, brown cloak, black cloak, white cloak

Starting Stats: Courage -I, Focus +0, Nature +I, Wisdom +I



## THE PATROL LEADER MOVES

Choose two:

□ What You Fight For: When you *stand your ground* in defence of other mice, roll with Wisdom instead of Courage.

**Captain:** When you lead your patrol into battle against a predator, roll with Wisdom. On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7-9, hold I. Spend your hold I-for-I during the battle to do any of the following:

- Choose the condition someone is about to suffer instead of the MC
- ✤ Give someone +2 to their roll (choose before rolling)
- Suffer a condition in someone's place
- Expose a weakness in the enemy's tactic

On a miss, hold I anyways, but there's a nasty surprising waiting for you.

**D** United We Stand: When you *help another mouse*, you add +2 to their roll instead of +I.

□ Voice of Reason: When you advise caution to another mouse that you fear is about to act foolishly, roll with Wisdom. On a hit, they choose I. On a 10+, you take +I forward with them.

- They listen to you and stand down
- They attack you
- They ignore you and take -2 forward (or get themselves hurt if they're an NPC) On a miss, they do what they want and you take -I forward with them.

□ **Hidey Hole:** When the chips are down, you can declare that you've hidden away a few supplies nearby and roll with Nature. On a 10+, everything is right where you left it. On a 7-9, some things are missing or you encounter trouble on the way, your choice. On a miss, the supplies are gone and you're left Demoralized!

Choose your two weapons of choice;

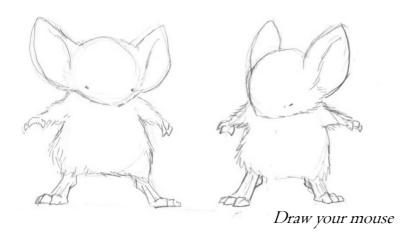
- □ Sword
- **D** Bow
- □ Shield
- □ Staff
- Halberd
- Daggers
- □ Mace
- Hook and Line
- □ Axe
- Spear
- Sling

## GUARD RANK

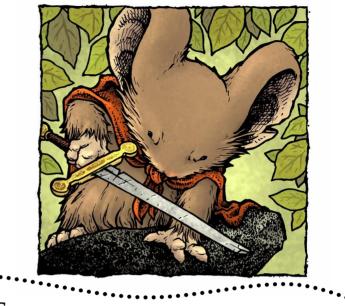
- □ Tenderpaw
- Guardmouse
- Patrol Guard
- Patrol Leader

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- $\hfill\square$  Sprucetuck: known for its scientists, medicine and scent concoctions



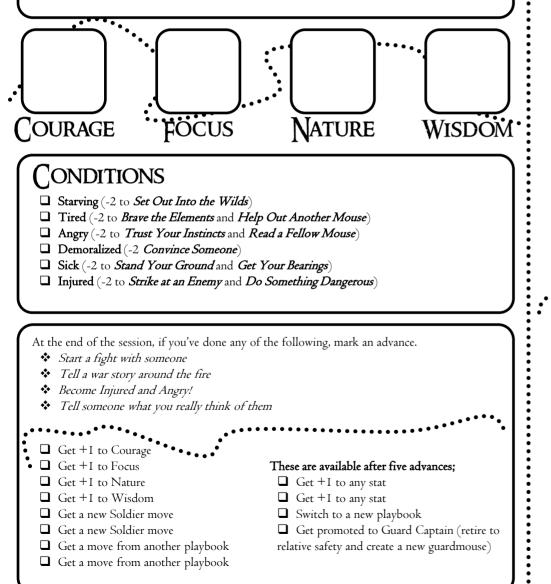
# THE SOLDIER



Circle as many as apply:

- ◆ Red fur, dark brown fur, light brown fur, grey fur, black fur, white fur
- Stocky body, slim body, athletic body, bulky body, stringy body
- $\diamond$  Young eyes, old eyes, naive eyes, gentle eyes, stern eyes, eyes that have seen too much
- ✤ Red cloak, green cloak, purple cloak, blue cloak, pink cloak, orange cloak, yellow cloak, brown cloak, black cloak, white cloak

Starting Stats: Courage +1, Focus +1, Nature +0, Wisdom -I



# THE SOLDIER MOVES

Choose two:

**Battle Cry:** When you charge headlong into battle, shouting out a cry, add 2 to the patrol pool.

□ Champion of Many Battles: When you successfully *strike at an enemy* or *stand your ground*, choose an additional option from the list.

□ Throw Your Weight Around: When you try to *convince someone* by using threats and violence, roll with Focus instead of Wisdom.

**Sharpen Your Blades!:** When you share a rousing speech with your patrol before an upcoming battle, choose 2:

- Anyone able may choose to mark Angry and clear off another condition
- Add 2 to the patrol pool
- \* Anyone present that is Demoralized can clear the condition

**Craftsmouse:** You practice a trade, such as blacksmithing or pottery, choose what it is. When you have the time and supplies and set to make something special with your craft, roll with Focus. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose I:

- \* It can help your mission; add I to the patrol pool
- \* It's a masterpiece; durable, beautiful, or pristine
- Whoever you made it for loves it
- It doesn't cost you much to make

On a miss, it costs you dearly or you fail to complete it, your choice.

Choose your two weapons of choice;

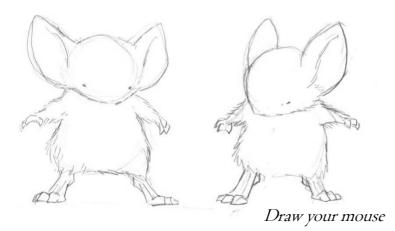
- □ Sword
- **D** Bow
- □ Shield
- □ Staff
- 🛛 Halberd
- Daggers
- Mace
- Hook and Line
- □ Axe
- □ Spear
- Sling

### GUARD RANK

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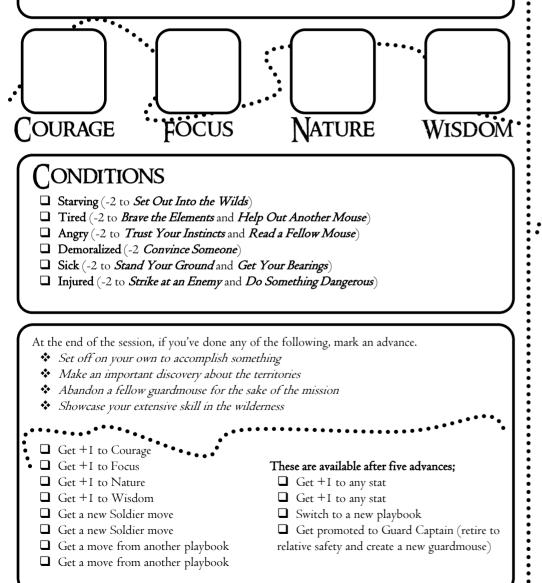
# THE FAR RANGER



Circle as many as apply:

- Red fur, dark brown fur, light brown fur, grey fur, black fur, white fur
- Stocky body, slim body, athletic body, bulky body, stringy body
- $\bullet$  Young eyes, old eyes, naive eyes, gentle eyes, stern eyes, eyes that have seen too much
- Red cloak, green cloak, purple cloak, blue cloak, pink cloak, orange cloak, yellow cloak, brown cloak, black cloak, white cloak

Starting Stats: Courage +0, Focus +0, Nature +1, Wisdom +0



## The far Ranger Moves

Choose two:

**Hunter-Gatherer:** When you forage for food or medicine, roll with Nature. On a hit, you find enough food for a good meal or medicine for you and your patrol, your choice. On a 10+, you find plenty of both. On a miss, you find it but stumble right into trouble.

**Dauntless Guardmouse:** When you *stand your ground* from a superior position, roll with Nature instead of Courage and choose an additional option from the list.

**Like the Back of my Paw:** When you are chosen as the Trailblazer while *setting out into the wilds*, you treat a miss as a 7-9 and all others get +I to their rolls.

**Sniff 'Em Out:** When you track someone through the wilderness, roll with Nature. On a 10+, you are able to follow their trail without any trouble and learn something interesting about your quarry. On a 7-9, you can track them but it's hard work; mark a condition. On a miss, you follow the trail but they're waiting for you.

□ Any Port In a Storm: When you enter a mouse settlement or city, you can declare you have a friend who lives here. You and any guardsmice with you, take +I ongoing with them for the duration of your stay.

Choose your two weapons of choice;

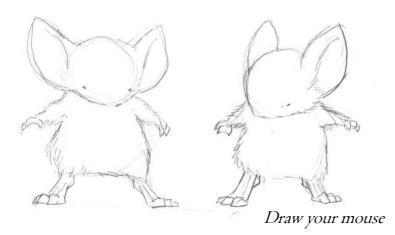
- □ Sword
- **D** Bow
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- □ Staff
- Halberd
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## GUARD RANK

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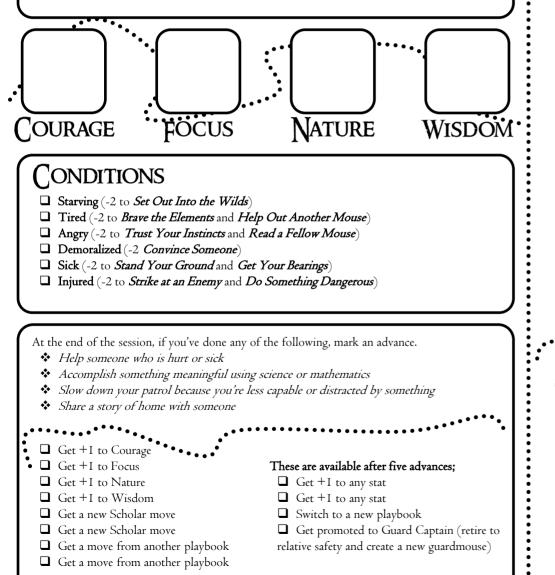
# THE SCHOLAR



Circle as many as apply:

- ◆ Red fur, dark brown fur, light brown fur, grey fur, black fur, white fur
- Stocky body, slim body, athletic body, bulky body, stringy body
- $\bullet$  Young eyes, old eyes, naive eyes, gentle eyes, stern eyes, eyes that have seen too much
- Red cloak, green cloak, purple cloak, blue cloak, pink cloak, orange cloak, yellow cloak, brown cloak, black cloak, white cloak

Starting Stats: Courage +0, Focus -1, Nature +0, Wisdom +2



# THE SCHOLAR MOVES

Choose two:

□ Healer: When you tend someone wounds or sickness, they treat a miss as a 7-9 result when *recuperating* from Injured or Sick.

**Bee.F.F.'s:** You have a faithful insect companion who you've trained: a beetle, bumblebee, small spider, or ladybug; choose one. When you *do something dangerous* with their help, roll with Wisdom instead.

□ Science Mouse!: When you consider an easy situation and how you can fix it using academics or innovation, roll with Wisdom. On a hit, the solution presents itself and you take +I to all rolls toward fixing the problem. On a 7-9, you're missing a key and hard-to-find component. On a miss, the solution still comes to you but it's going to be extremely dangerous to pull off.

□ In Your Element: When you research something in a library, roll with Wisdom. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1:

- ✤ You find what you were searching for
- \* Add I to the patrol pool
- You unlock clues to a new mystery
- \* You find a rare volume that you know someone was looking for

On a miss, someone has been here before you and removed what you're looking for, but you can tell who it was.

**Pack Rat:** When you set off on a new mission from a settlement, hold 3 for the duration of the mission. Spend your hold I-for-I to go into your pack and do one of the following, but only once per scene:

- Add I to the patrol pool
- Pull out exactly what someone needs

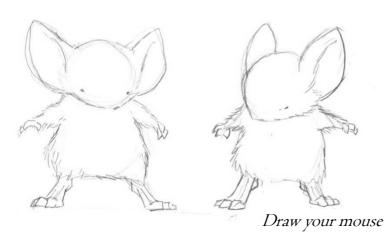
- Choose your weapon of choice;
- B-Sword
- **B**-Bow
- -Shield
- Halberd
- **D**aggers
- **H**-Mace
- Hook and Line
- -Axe
- **B**-Spear
- **H**\_Sling
- □ Legendary weapon (define it)

### GUARD RANK

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- Guardmouse
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- Patrol Leader

#### HOMETOWN

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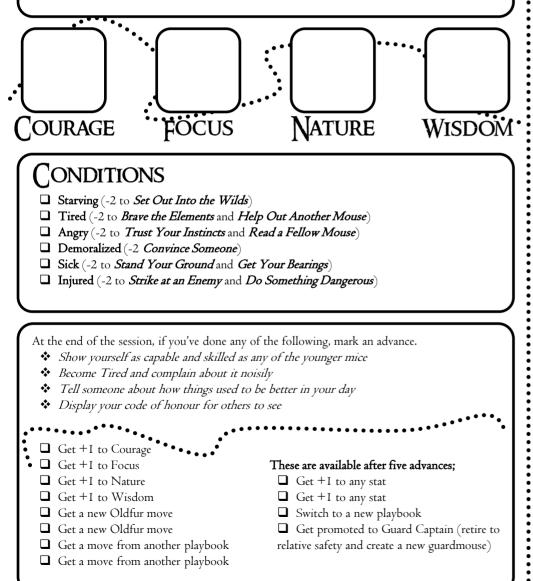
# THE OLDFUR



Circle as many as apply:

- ◆ Red fur, dark brown fur, light brown fur, grey fur, black fur, white fur
- $\clubsuit$  Stocky body, slim body, athletic body, bulky body, stringy body
- $\diamond$  Young eyes, old eyes, naive eyes, gentle eyes, stern eyes, eyes that have seen too much
- ✤ Red cloak, green cloak, purple cloak, blue cloak, pink cloak, orange cloak, yellow cloak, brown cloak, black cloak, white cloak

Starting Stats: Courage +0, Focus +1, Nature -1, Wisdom +1



# THE OLDFUR MOVES

Choose two:

□ Legend in Your Own Time: When you meet someone important (your choice), roll with Wisdom. On a hit, they've heard of your exploits and will give you comfort and aid, according to their nature. On a 7-9, they will need some convincing that you are who you say you are. On a miss, they know exactly who you are and have been looking for you, best keep your head down!

□ Old Mouse, New Tricks: When you try to follow the example of a younger guardmouse, roll with Focus. On a hit, you get one of their playbook moves to use right now. On a 10+, you can use it once more in the near future. On a miss, you can still use the move now, but if you do, you'll have to mark a condition.

**These Old Bones:** You can mark Tired after missing a roll to turn the roll into a 10+.

□ If this Axe Could Talk: When you talk about your legendary weapon like an old friend and share a story about your past with another mouse, roll with Wisdom. On a 10+, you and anyone who listens intently clears off Demoralized or Angry, their choice. On a 7-9, only you or another mouse listening can clear a Demoralized or Angry, your choice for each.

□ Solid as an Oak: When you recuperate, roll with Focus instead.

#### **A**GENDA

- ✤ Make Legends of the Guard feel dangerous and heroic
- ✤ Fill their lives with adversity and camaraderie
- $\boldsymbol{\diamondsuit}$  Play to find out what happens next

### THE PRINCIPLES

- ✤ Scale everything down to a mouse's size
- ✤ Address yourself to the characters, not the players
- ✤ Make your move, but misdirect and never speak its name
- ✤ Give your villains a sympathetic side
- $\boldsymbol{\bigstar}$  Name everyone, make everyone real, and showcase their culture
- $\bigstar$  Ask provocative questions and build on the answers
- Respond with adversity and intermittent rewards
- ✤ Be a fan of the players' characters
- Think off screen too
- ✤ Sometimes, disclaim decision-making

## YOUR MOVES

- ✤ Separate them
- Put them together
- $\clubsuit \ \ {\rm Reveal} \ {\rm an} \ {\rm unwelcome} \ {\rm truth}$
- ✤ Expose them to nature's fury
- ✤ Capture someone
- Expose a dangerous secret to the wrong person
- $\clubsuit$  Put someone in a spot
- Trade conditions
- ✤ Announce off-screen or future badness
- Inflict a condition
- ✤ Take away their stuff
- Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost
- Turn their move back on them
- ✤ Make a threat move (from one of your fronts)
- ✤ After every move: "what do you do?"

## DON'T FORGET TO ...

- $\boldsymbol{\bigstar}$  Turn questions back on the asker or over to the group at large
- Digress occasionally, but not too often
- $\diamond$  Elide the action sometimes, and zoom in on its details other times
- $\boldsymbol{\bigstar}$  Go around the table, make sure everyone gets their spotlight
- $\boldsymbol{\bigstar}$  Take breaks and take your time

# THE MATRIARCH OF CEREMONIES



## DECISION MAKING

In order to play to find out what happens, you'll need to pass decision-making off sometimes. Whenever something comes up that you'd prefer not to decide by personal whim and will, don't. The game gives you three tools you can use to disclaim responsibility: you can put it in your NPCs' hands, you can put it in the players' hands, OR you can create a countdown.

## NAMES

Robin, Quentin, Zalli, Arick, Clair, Raymonn, Alladre, Morgan, Deanna, Lucius, Aneta, Boyd, Kris, Thurstan, Sullivan, Melville, Cordell, Rylan, Jess, Steven, Rudy, Benson, Deacon, Jerrard, Ewart, Lawrie, Barrie, Hildred, Wilmer, Levi, Alden, Kelsey, Kendrick, Teagan, Harper, Riley, Chase, Linden, Adele, Wynne, Fran, Auberon, Greer.

#### ENEMIES

To create an important enemy, do following:

- Choose its species (mouse, owl, snake, fox, etc.)
- Choose one to five enemy moves
- Choose one to five conditions

#### ENEMY MOVES

Choose one to five enemy moves. Enemy moves are things they do, both in and out of fights. Make them specific and focused. Not "Swoop down" but "Swoop from the skies and snatch a mouse".

#### CONDITIONS

Choose one to five of the conditions for the enemy to be able to mark. The possible conditions are **Starving, Tired**, **Angry, Demoralized**, **Sick**, and **Injured**. The more conditions you give them, the greater their capacity to stay in the fight or confrontation is, and the more dangerous they'll be.

- I condition: Barely a threat
- ✤ 2 conditions: A bit of a fight
- ✤ 3 conditions: A threatening enemy
- ✤ 4 conditions: A dangerous enemy
- ✤ 5 conditions: A true nemesis

#### ENEMIES IN A FIGHT

 $\diamond$  When an enemy gets hit hard, make them mark a condition as appropriate.

♦ When an enemy marks a condition, have them make a move from the condition moves list immediately.

- When you need to say what they does next, look to your MC moves.
- $\boldsymbol{\bigstar}$  When an enemy needs to mark a condition but can't, they are definitively defeated.

 $\clubsuit$  Enemies can flee or give up long before all their conditions are filled, don't think they have to fight to the bitter end.

Enemies, and NPCs in general, will always try to clear conditions whenever possible.

# ENEMIES



# CONDITION MOVES

#### ANGRY

Vent through unthinking violence Destroy something nearby Shut everyone out Escalate the situation dangerously

#### DEMORALIZED

Hide out of harm's way Flee from danger or difficulty Lash out without thought Plead for mercy

#### INJURED

Give up suddenly Fight with reckless abandon Drag you down with them Retreat to safer ground

#### Sick

Spread sickness with or without intent Stagger away toward safety Target the wrong person for revenge Turn to the unthinkable

#### STARVING

Devour more than its fair share Overreact to what's before them Pursue until sated Make a rash decision

#### TIRED

Surrender unexpectedly Cause collateral damage Strike when thought defeated Retreat down the easiest path

#### THREATS

### TYPE

Threats come in five types; Predator, Weather, Disaster , and Rebellion. Each also includes a subtype, which further describes the threat and its impulses.

#### PREDATOR

- Striker (Impulse: to devour all mice in its path)
- ✤ Stalker (Impulse: to pursue its quarry endlessly)
- ✤ Burrower (Impulse: to rise from below and strike)
- Pack (Impulse: to surround and harry)

#### WEATHER

- Thunder Storm (Impulse: to wash away and isolate)
- ✤ Blizzard (Impulse: to immobilize and trap)
- ✤ Heat Wave (Impulse: to exhaust supplies and willpower)
- Cold Snap (Impulse: to hit without warning and destroy)

#### DISASTER

- Drought (Impulse: to drive animals to panic)
- Flood (Impulse: to drown and submerge)
- \* Wildfire (Impulse: to burn and choke everything in its path)
- ✤ Famine (Impulse: to squeeze the life from nature)

#### REBELLION

- Strike (Impulse: to cease all work and production)
- Uprising (Impulse: to attack those above in revenge)
- **Coup** (Impulse: to replace a leader with someone new)
- ✤ War (Impulse: to stamp out another faction)

## CAST

Every threat needs a cast of characters, the people responsible for, directly affected by, or in the know of the threat's existence and play a part in it are its cast.

## DESCRIPTION

A short description is recommended to record your thoughts on what the **threat** represents, is aiming for, and what those involved are up to. You can add as much or as little details as you like, this area is for your reference.

# THREATS



## CUSTOM MOVES

Custom moves are a fantastic way to add mechanical heft to your threats. By writing one or more custom moves, you solidify the threat's existence in the world, grounding it in the rules. This is also a great way to give your NPC's unique advantages when the protagonists confront them.

# COUNTDOWN CLOCK

Arguably the most important part of your threat is the countdown clock. Countdowns allow you to build a timeline for your threat, a step-by-step process from which it begins and completes. Countdowns typically have six stages: 3:00, 6:00, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, and 12:00.

3:00 and 6:00 represent the opening plays, a planning stage: the first signs or warnings. A threat in these stages is still young and can prevented by the right interference. 9:00 and 10:00 are the middle stages of the threat, where it gains serious momentum and begins to affect real change in the galaxy. By this point, the threat is very difficult to prevent and will have lasting effects even if stopped. 11:00 and 12:00 are the end points, where the threat reaches its full potential and is irrevocable. Perhaps its effects can be lessened or endured with enough luck and skill, but it's too late to prevent what is coming.

