

RuneQuest

SLAYERS

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Introduction

“At such deadly quarters, the long knife was more effective than the scimitars and tulwars. Conan had mastered its every use, whether the downward swing that splits a skull or the upward rip that spills out a man's entrails. It was butcher's work, but Conan made no false motion. He waded through that melee of straining bodies and lashing blades like a typhoon, leaving a red wake behind him...”

—Robert E. Howard, “The Flame Knife”

Considered one of the classic roleplaying games because of its detailed background worlds, realistic combat, and mysterious magicks, *RuneQuest* has been a part of the roleplaying tradition for three decades. *RuneQuest: Slayers* is a completely new game, though it keeps the strengths of the original. The campaign worlds are brand new and the rules reworked from the ground up. Unlike the previous editions, *RuneQuest: Slayers* focuses on only one type of adventurer — the warrior.

But what is a warrior? Is it the half-naked, muscular barbarian? The scarred mercenary who fights for greed alone? The noble knight who sharpens his sword to rescue his love? Or perhaps the girl who picks up her dead father's spear to defend her home against a ravaging troll? All of these men and women are warriors, and *RuneQuest: Slayers* allows you to step into the roles of these brave fighters. Only your imagination will determine what, exactly, a warrior is and is not. *RuneQuest: Slayers* is a game of high adventure. It is a world where impossibly-high towers hold treasures undreamed. It is a world of nefarious sorcerers, mystic symbols, beautiful maidens, and cruel tyrant-kings. Above all, it is a world where steel rules supreme!

Slayers returns the roleplaying game to the imagination. You will not find endless lists of skills and attributes in *Slayers*. Your heroes come from a variety of occupations and professions, but ultimately you decide what they know and how they act. Can a blacksmith's knowledge and abilities be summed in any number of skills or proficiencies? Think of all the tools he knows how to wield, all the knowledge of metals, and heat, and famous blacksmiths that he aspires to meet and talk trade with. In *Slayers*, your character's past is something to draw from and use, not a crutch of special abilities.

Whether you are new to roleplaying games, or a longtime fan, fasten your armor, sharpen your axe and ride for high adventure!

Terminology and Dice

You'll need two different types of dice for *RuneQuest: Slayers* — a handful of ordinary six-sided dice, and several ten-sided dice. You can find these dice at your local hobby or game store. *Slayers* uses some terminology specific to roleplaying games.

Note on this Edition

RuneQuest: Slayers was at the printers when Hasbro bought The Avalon Hill Game Company. The press was, literally, halted. This edition has been reassembled from the original notes and files from the designers with new layout by J.C. Connors.

Basic *RuneQuest* Terminology

Player — You!

Runemaster — The player who controls the game and acts as both narrator, storyteller, and “gamemaster.”

PC — Player Character. A warrior you or your friend plays the game with. Your PC will brave many dangers and deadly traps, though you won't.

NPC — Non-Player Character. A character controlled by the Runemaster.

d6 — One six-sided die. Two six-sided dice would be abbreviated “2d6”, three would be “3d6.” “2d6+1” would indicate two six-sided dice added together, plus one. So, if you rolled a ‘3’ and a ‘4’, the result would be ‘8’.

d10 — A ten-sided die.

From fields of blood rode the Ten
Hearts of iron, Clothes of steel
Wielding weapons forged less fine
Than their own sinews

These are the Slayers
Ten among thousands
Might. Courage. Steel.

None seek the same destiny
Few will see tomorrow
Branded in their minds is the Quest
The search for the symbols that
Make them stronger than Gods

Enter now the RuneQuest

—The Song of Ur D'thar, Martyr of War



KhraghMar

**the elven
retreat**

Rise of the
warclans

RUINS OF WAR

fragments of Empire

betrayal

Chapter I

Khragmar

The city that in ages past sparkled with unearthly lights was no more. The piles of stone were largely overgrown with tall weeds and vines which obscured the timeworn carvings that might have once identified the builders. Shattered obelisks, greater than the works of Man even in their downfall, loomed above wide areas of grass that may once have been roads. Of the towering heaps of debris that littered the city, none could say what their purpose had been: mighty temples and palaces perhaps, or more arcane structures beyond the ken of mortals.

The streets were now silent. Even the animals of the wild did not stray into the eerie silence of the deserted city. Only the cold wind sighed through the fallen stone like the whispered memories of lost souls.

THE TIME OF DREAMS

Much of the recorded history of Khragmar has vanished in the age following the collapse of the Empire of Aratan. Only fragmentary legends remain, over which scholars study and philosophers argue. For many a long age, it is believed, the land of Khragmar was tended by a host of beings known now only as the Ancients. Whether they created the world or were created by it, the legends do not say. Even their form remains a mystery, as they revealed themselves only to the Elves. The Dwarves say that the Ancients created the major races of the world, each with its own special talents and responsibilities.

The cryptic Ancients created the Elves, or Vindanari, as the guardians of their world. Under their influence, the Elves constructed magnificent cities of platinum and gold, the likes of which are never to be seen again. For untold ages the Elves ruled under the tutelage of the Ancients, never doubting that their reign would continue unchanged forever. This perception was shaken, however, by the creation of Humans, who did not seem to fit into the ordered arrangements of the Elves.



“For a thousand years have we maintained this land for our creators. Each according to its own ability, the children of the Ancients fulfill their roles: the Dwarves mine the deep earth, the Gulpi maintain the balance of the woods, the Gracht hunt the prairies, and we, the Vindanari, rule the lesser servants. Myriad are the creatures that the Ancients have created, bizarre in form with purposes known only to us, their favored children. Yet we are troubled, for a new race has awakened whose purpose is a mystery to us. They are of neither unique form, nor are they of definable value. Curious and adaptive, they serve no role that we can discern. This bodes watching.”

-Vindanari scholar on the emergence of Humanity

THE FALL OF THE VINDANARI

The Elves had little time to ponder the role of this new race before a terrible calamity overcame them. In a single night, the Ancients vanished. Whether they fled, perished, or simply felt their role had ended, even the Elves did not know. The great works of the Elves, all created with the magic of the Ancients, collapsed into ruins. A terrible cataclysm rocked Khragmar, leveling mighty mountain ranges and creating others. The southern half of the continent separated along the Great Shear, a huge precipice stretching



for leagues. Many of the exotic, specialized creations of the Ancients disappeared, unable to survive without mana from their creators. Overnight, the entire civilization of the Vindanari tumbled into chaos.

With the failure of Elven power, the subject races revolted. Led by the Dwarves, the major races moved against their former overlords. Only the reclusive Gnomes, themselves descendents of escaped Dwarf slaves, refused to leave their hidden caverns. The Vindanari, shaken by the unexplained disappearance of their masters, were powerless to resist the sudden onslaught of their servants.

“It is said that even the mighty heroes of the Great Revolt did not understand why they rose against their masters. It was as if a single voice called to everyone, driving us to destroy the order under which we had lived and worked for all time. But what matters the reason? The Elves are gone; we are free. That is all that matters.”

-Fratrhar son of Grathrar, Dwarf Stonewarden

In a brief, bloody war, the Vindanari perished. What few survived the revolt scattered into the hinterlands, to vanish from the memories of Man. The surviving races spread across the world, establishing themselves as the new masters of Khragmar. No longer bound by the power of the Vindanari, wars raged as tribes of Men fought the older races as well as each other. From the snowy forests of the north, the apish Gulpi poured forth, spreading fear before them, while the bestial Gracht, stag-headed pillagers, sacked city after city. In this struggle, the ferocity of these wild creatures threatened to overwhelm Dwarf and Man alike. It was at this





time the Tuathae first appeared in Khragmar. It was unclear to all if they were creations of the Ancients or had existed as long as the world itself. They took little part in the war against the Gracht, interested in little beyond protecting their homeworlds.

THE RUNELORD POLMYR

Bound by common cause, the tribes of Dwarves and Humans joined to resist the tide that threatened to sweep over them. Horrific battles raged above and below ground as each side sought the extinction of the other. Even their united strength could not repel the endless hordes of Gracht, and slowly the battered tribes of Man fell prey to their destroyers. Out of the unexplored west, however, came unexpected salvation. When Polmyr and his followers rode out of the barrens claiming to hold the secret wisdom of the Ancients, most accounted him a madman. Yet Polmyr was more than a crazed prophet from the wastelands. All magic had not departed the world with the Ancients. He had discovered the legacy of the Ancients' power, trapped within arcane runes in the deserted ruins of their fallen cities. Polmyr and his warriors wielded weapons of might beyond the comprehension of the stunned survivors of the war. The many tribes of Man rallied to Polmyr and his newfound power, turning the tide of battle.

"I have mastered the works of the Ancients, and no one will stand before us."



-The

Runelord Polmyr

Polmyr's crusade reclaimed the lands lost to the invaders and, in titanic clashes, drove the savage Gracht into the far reaches of Khragmar and hunted the Gulpi nearly to extinction. His fame universal, Polmyr established the Empire of Aratan at the old fortress of Mankato before an assembly of tribal elders. The new emperor forbade all to travel the barrens west of the Everpeaks and set watch upon the fallen cities of the Ancients, declaring them too dangerous to be disturbed. Only Polmyr and his inner circle knew the truth concerning these mysterious sites, and only they knew the secrets of runesmithing.

RISE OF THE EMPIRE

Within a few short years, most of Khragmar fell under the hegemony of Polmyr. At this time, the Dwarves were still allied with Humanity, and many still dwelt above ground. The Stonewards and clan elders of the Dwarves became increasingly nervous as Polmyr consolidated his hold. Slowly but surely, the Dwarves began retreating to their mountain strongholds as the two races grew more estranged. The final break came during the War of Golag, six hundred years after the death of Emperor Polmyr I, when the last above-ground fortresses of the Dwarves struggled against the encroaching tides of the orcs.

Despite every request, the Emperor Halamear II refused to send the imperial legions to aid the beleaguered Dwarves. It has been surmised that the Emperor feared the power of the Dwarves, and wished to allow these two rivals to eliminate each other. Whatever the reason, the absence of this much-needed support doomed the Dwarves. One by one, the Dwarf-holds fell to the ravaging hordes. With the destruction of Shakrar, the remaining Dwarves withdrew from the surface, bearing a distrust of Man as great as their hatred of the orcs.



"Engraved upon our hearts is the short-sighted treachery of Man. Our paths are severed, and let him never look to our people again in friendship."

-Haardor, Master of Durokkshold

With the final retreat of the Dwarves, the way was clear for Halamear's armies to occupy the lands despoiled by the nomadic orcs. The hegemony of Man was complete. Only the fierce tribesmen of the Akata Jungles and the wildmen of the Forest of Mists lay outside the power of the great emperors. Even the power of the Gracht dwindled in the face of imperial might, as the legions marched from the Everpeak Mountains to the Straits of Panir enforcing the will of their overlord. The Gulpi withdrew into the deepest forests, unable to resist the strength of this rising empire. Aided by the rune lore passed down by Polmyr's

Runesmiths, the armies of Man were unconquerable. On all fronts, the shining legions of the Empire protected their sheltered



communities, unchallenged in their strength. Yet beyond the border, savage things watched with hungry eyes, waiting for the day to exact revenge upon mankind.

THE WARS OF RUIN

For nearly three centuries, the Empire of Aratan ruled over the length of Khragmar. The dream of united Humanity died with the last emperor, Jornaan VIII, who died young with no heir. Accusations of murder abounded, and no one was above suspicion. The ten generals of the legions convened at the imperial capital of Mankato, ostensibly to maintain order and to determine a successor. Of what occurred within the closed chambers of the fortress, the truth is obscured by the lies which followed. Each general accused the others of betrayal and deception, and soon the capital swarmed with the soldiers of the sudden rivals.



"To me, loyal servants of our murdered emperor. To me, those who would defend his legacy from the despoilers. To me, all who would see the traitors flayed for their heresy!"

-rallying cry of First General of the Empire Caldëcan, soon echoed by the rival factions

For weeks, bloody fighting raged within the city as each tried to force the others from within the walls, thus "validating" their claim to the throne. Only the ancient fortress, still held by the Runesmiths, remained undamaged in the turmoil. Seven of the ten generals led their troops from the ruined capital to gather supporters from the outer provinces. The remaining three stayed locked in a grueling war of attrition, ensuring the complete ruin of the capital. Eventually, the remaining forces abandoned the blackened shell of Mankato, unable or unwilling to continue the pointless battle amidst the ruins. When First General of the Empire Varnat took the title "Warlord" in a vain effort to establish his legitimacy as defender of the Empire, the others soon followed suit. The last vestiges of imperial unity were dissolving away, with repercussions no one could have predicted. And amidst the war and chaos, the ruined cities of the Ancients remained undisturbed.

The lands of the frontier lay defenseless as the legions answered the calls of their generals to participate in what had become a civil war. The absence of the imperial troops did not go



unnoticed. Into the vacuum left by the warring factions, the frontiers suffered under constant raids from the wilds. As bands of Gracht and other foul creatures poured into the stricken empire, the Warlords withdrew to fortified lands in the provinces, each hoping to preserve his forces for a renewed struggle. Without the unified strength of the Empire, the individual Warlords could do little more than defend their own territories.

THE FRAGMENTED EMPIRE

As months turned to years, the marauding tribes of invaders came and went, yet never could any Warlord gain supremacy over the others. They carved territories out of the dying realm that was the Empire, yet were able only to maintain their own survival. At times, even that was in question. The void left by the crippled Empire was soon filled as city-states established their own order. New kingdoms emerged to take the place of the old. From beyond the Mountains of Torg, the great ogre clan of Tombar devastated the dozens of isolated villages and the old imperial city of Yamgorn before settling on the eastern shore of Lake Aganos. No effort to dislodge them succeeded, and the local inhabitants soon became accustomed to their ogre overlords.

“For seasons beyond number, your people sought to destroy us in their weakness. Now you shall serve our might as it was meant to be.”

-Tombar the Three-fingered at the sack of Nankar

Even the Warlords' factions were not immune to the changes wrought by the conflict. The once-proud imperial legions were mere shadows of their former selves, and years of constant raiding and warfare had put irrevocable marks on them. Distinct cultural identities emerged, based as much on geography as on the personality of their Warlord. As these differences increased, the loyalty to the old Empire died, to be replaced by a new allegiance to Warlord and comrade.

THE RISE OF THE WARCLANS

Khragmar is now a divided land, a changing patchwork of city-states that rise and fall like the phases of the moon. The WarClans still roam the lands, but the quest to reunite the Empire is nothing more than a dream. The clans themselves are scattered about the world, and it is a rare and terrible thing that draws the greater part of a WarClan together. Even within the WarClans there is diversity, as their wanderings have led them to different lands and different customs. Thus, the Medean Guard of the sea-fortress of Matinda bear a quite distinct appearance from the Medean Order of the Jewel in the city of Al'akar. Others, like the Martyrs of War and Red Serpents, have fragmented into smaller factions too numerous to count, some no more than a single ship and crew in search of plunder and glory. Although for some the long war will never end, the old enmities have faded over the years, and the great feud is only mentioned when convenient. Indeed, it is not uncommon to see members of different WarClans travel together, particularly when they believe there is some advantage to be gained from the other. Yet always the warrior's loyalty is with the WarClan, and the day will come again when the clans battle once more for supremacy.

That day may come soon. Foul creatures are once again stirring in the dark forests, waking from their age-long slumber, and travelers tell forbidding tales of shadows lurking in the haunted ruins of the Ancients. Strange ships are seen on the seas of the east, and the storm clouds of war are once more gathering. Even the most deranged prophets cannot peer beyond the dark veil of time to see what the future holds for Khragmar.

THE LAY OF THE LAND

Mankind no longer holds sway over Khragmar as it once did. Where the banners of the Empire once flew, myriad baronies and city-states now stand.



The Duchy of Valden

In the east, along the shores of the Cold Sea, the Duchy of Valden is the last realm to cling to the Imperial traditions. Lying beneath the shadows of the Greae Woods, it stands as a bulwark against the murderous hordes of Gracht from the north. Despite the ever-present threat from the Woods, Port Valden is a wealthy city, largely due to the flow of tradegoods from the Dwarves of Tarnshold.

Tael Isle

The people of Tael Isle enjoy a thriving lumber business, as it is well-known that the strongest sailing ships are made with their timber. They deal with anyone who can meet their high prices, and all respect their neutrality. This may, however, have less to do with their neutrality and more to do with the presence of the sea-fortress of Matinda, the High Keep of the Medean Guard.



The Kingdom of Corvalla

Crude and uneducated by the standards of Valden, Corvalla is a growing power in Khragmar. From the rough-hewn castles of their island, the Corvalla set sail on missions of trade and plunder. They are ever at war with Tatliano, vying for the lucrative trade rights to the Straits of Panir. Scoff as he may in public, the Duke of Valden watches this land nervously.

Anderus

The alabaster towers of Anderus are renowned for both their beauty and the sinister secrets they are

rumored to contain. The priests of Ander rule the city with a scepter of terror, and only the foolish question their authority.

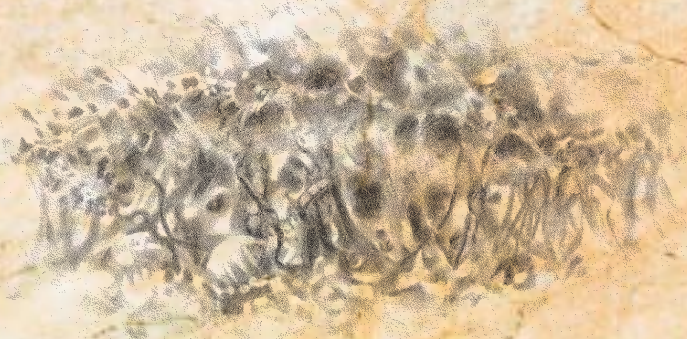
Tatliano

Home of the greatest seafarers in Khragmar, the free city of Tatliano is an immense trading port. All manner of goods and travelers pass through the city, and few care to have their dealings made public. Tatliano remains at war with Corvalla, as the latter strives to replace Tatliano as the premiere seaport of the east.

The Shining City of Bajirr

Bajirr lounges beside the warm waters of the southern seas. Threatened only by the tribesmen of the Akata Jungles, it is a favorite spot for traders in search of spices and exotic treasures.

The Greae Woods



Between the shores of the Cold Sea and the Solen Mountains, the Greac Woods lie like a dark menace above the civilized lands to the south. The forbidding forest is rife with danger, as the Gulpi and Gracht wage continual war under the dark boughs. Other, more dreadful, horrors lurk deep inside, protecting the ruins of the Ancients that are rumored to lie within the Woods.

The Desolation of Sahdi

The dry wasteland of Sahdi is broken only by the occasional oasis and the bleached white bones of those who failed to cross the endless sands. The city of Al'akar is the only settlement of size in the region, and that lies on the shores of the Bay of Fire. Despite its creeping menace, the Desolation is welcomed by the denizens of the north, for only its presence protects them from the raiders of the Akata Jungles.

Al'akar

The fabulous city of Al'akar looks over the Bay of Fire, so named for the brilliance of the setting sun upon its waves. Al'akar is the only great seaport in the west, and as such, it does a thriving business. The Sultan Amjaad Ghaazi dreams of expanding his influence, but to this day his ambitions remain only dreams.

The White Waste

Beyond the Lands of Frost, the White Waste stretches into the unknown north. Stalked by ice trolls and yeti, few travelers survive to bring tales of this region. Old tales tell of temperate lands beyond the Waste, but these are but the mutterings of drunken wanderers.

The Confederation of the Dwarves

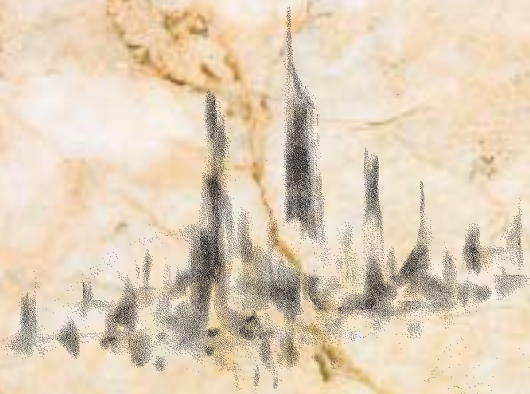
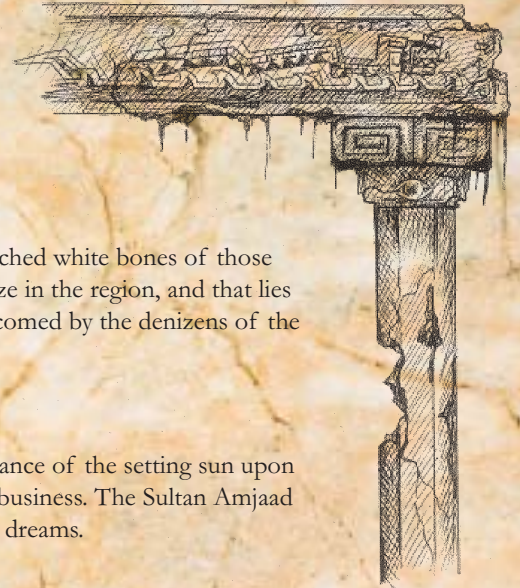
Across the length of Khragmar, the Dwarves have recovered from the chaos of the Wars of Ruin. Indeed, they have done much to expand their realms during Man's weakness. From their mountain strongholds, the Dwarves extend their trading influence throughout the world. They stand united in a confederation in which the problems of one Dwarf-hold are solved by the whole. Every ten years a new Dwarf-hold becomes the capital of the Confederation, allowing new ideas to direct the energies of their people. Durokkshold is the current capital of the Confederation. This is not viewed favorably by the Duke of Valden, as the Durokks are notoriously xenophobic, not having forgotten the "treachery" of Man during the War of Golag.

The Forest of Shadows

Once the heart of the Empire of Aratan, the Forest of Shadows is a haunted land. The Wars of Ruin left the region a skull-laden barren, and few care to return to the site of unspeakable atrocities. Now the old Fortress of Mankato stands like a grim reminder of the failed past. Only the Tuathae visit the old ruins with frequency, as they know the secret ways through the dangerous forest.

Nankar

The only permanent city of ogres, Nankar was a victim of the chaos during the Wars of Ruin. The Imperial legions stood by as a mighty ogre tribe sacked the city, then settled amid the ruins. Many humans still live in the area,



essentially slaves to their inhuman masters. The ogres are often at war with the Dwarves of Kharnshold, and their chieftain, the ogress Juranna, wears a dress woven of Dwarf beards.

The Akata Jungles

The southernmost lands of Khragmar are a dense green maze known as the Akata Jungles. Mostly unexplored, it is home to savage tribesmen and wild beasts. The Cult of the Skull had its origins in this unforgiving land, and its other inhabitants are no less fierce.

THE GODS

Most city-states have their own patron deity or deities. The Duchy of Valden, for example, still worships the old gods of the Empire, while the citizens of Al'akar maintain a pantheon of exotic demigods. These are only some of the gods of Khragmar.

Ander

The priests of this foul god, patron deity of the city of Anderus, sacrifice blood in their efforts to appease him. His servants are seen roving the land in search of victims for his unending appetite.

Borme

One of the oldest gods of the Empire, Borme is still respected in the lands of Man. He is depicted as a stocky old fellow, with a wry grin on his face. He is associated with stone and wealth, which makes him popular with Dwarves as well.

Gorng

Gorng is the spirit of mist that gives life to the Gulpi. He is seen as a large Gulpi of yeti size wielding a large stone mace. He is wrapped in thick mists and is worshipped on nights of dense fog.

Inak

Another hold-over from the days of the Empire, Inak was the patron of warriors. His statues adorned the warrior guilds, and his name was invoked by every warrior of the Imperial legions. His worship has declined much, replaced by local war gods.

Kharax'

The wielder of ice storms, Kharax' is feared by all who live in the north. He was a foe of the old gods of the Empire, and many still burn fires year round to ward off his presence.

Majd Udeen

Majd Udeen is the chief god of Al'akar. He presides over a dozen different gods and demigods, most of whom are devoted to intrigue, mischief and pleasure. Majd Udeen is depicted as a handsome (yet harried) old sultan, always attempting to maintain order in a house of fickle gods.

Oracus

Oracus was the guardian of Justice in the Empire of Aratan and is still the patron deity of the ruling family of Valden. His symbol is carried by the Justiciars who regard him as the first Grand Master of the Order.

Tovar

Worshipped by the people of Corvalla, Tovar is seen as both mighty warrior and patron of sailors. In Morlan City he is known as Padin the Bold, the mythical founder of the city and conqueror of the wrym Daligoth.

Wythnia

The wife of Borme, Wythnia is as vibrant and beautiful as her husband is slow and thoughtful. She is patron to healers and scholars, and many stories are told of her great wisdom.



GLACIER RIFTS

frozen steel

LORDS OF ICE

Runes of Life

frosty dales

FELL SNOWS

Chapter II

The Glacier Rifts

Thaxx wrapped his giant hands around the cold mast of the ice-ship. It was a windy day, but he was sure he did not feel the biting wind as much as the men who stood on the deck below him. Thaxx's thick, winter hide gave him protection from the elements that even the fat King Zul, wrapped in his polar furs, would envy.

The captain of the iceboat had made Thaxx the lookout this afternoon, but the Gulpi wasn't paying much attention. It was no use anyway. If pirates came, there would be no evading them on this narrow river. They'd have to fight, an event that Thaxx was rather looking forward to. More than once had he thrown the corpses of human pirates into the icy waters of this river. He wondered how many frozen bones lay at the river bottom. How many had his sword slain?

The Gulpi took out his rusted, iron sword and began sharpening it against a metal rung set into the mast.

Surrounded by hundreds of miles of ice-topped mountains, the Glacier Rifts is a huge valley of rivers, gray bogs, dark swamps, cold rivers and icy tundras. Much of the day is dark, as the sun does not climb over the high peaks until mid-morning, and sets by mid-afternoon. Dotted the landscape are hundreds of tiny villages and towns, many with barely a handful of poor villagers staking out their lives.

The Glacier Rifts is a formidable land. A hardy man might be able to survive a journey across the valley, dealing with harsh winds, chilling nights and thick woodlands. Wolves and bears roam the tundras—often said to be more common than man—making travel even deadlier. A death curse lies on the traveler who does not carry a sharp blade, for wild tribes of Gracht, man-eating giants, and bands of cutthroats and barbarians look for easy targets in this cruel wilderness.

Civilization, however, does exist in the Rifts. Witness the pale turrets of Whitestone, a great castle that lies in the middle of the land, deep within the nation known as Copernia. Allegiance Keep, the fortified castle of King Zul is nearly as big, with an army four times the size of any other. Even King Zul's summer residence, Pogonip Bastion is a huge, museum-like palace of immense proportions. Vythia, the coldest land in the Rifts, enslaves hundreds of artisans every year to adorn their capital of Doshev with a thousand ice statues of Vythia's royalty, past and present.

There are other great cities as well. Holder's Keep is a great barrier to the wild tribes around the Pass of the Betrayed. Even smaller towns such as Kildarus, Limmer and the Passway hold great opportunities to merchants and thieves alike. Many of the great cities contain unmatched opulence. One finds golden banquet halls with crystal chandeliers hanging from hand-carved wooden ceilings. Master artisans carefully create fine Gnomish rugs, Elven tapestries and marble spiral stairs. Gold-trimmed fireplaces abound,



Varna's Citadel, gateway to the Valley of the Gracht.

and the delicate tunes of a skilled harpsichordist can be heard throughout the palatial rooms. Of course, for every delicate palace in the land, there are a hundred dark, dank and wet keeps with coughing kings trembling upon their thrones.

No one knows the extensive history of this land, nor are the people sophisticated enough to care. Some of the larger cities have historians, but even the best historians have information that conflicts radically with each other over the past half-century, not to mention the past millenium. As a result, no one knows the origin of the many ruins that dot the land, what lies beyond the mountains, the meanings of the runes or even the beginnings of the nations that exist today.

The Glacier Rifts is not a land that gives thoughts to its past, but many men think to rule its future.

The Season of Darkness, the Season of Mirrors

The Glacier Rifts has twelve months, each composed of thirty days. Most days are filled with an eerie twilight as the moon reflects off the white snow and the sun makes an appearance for only six hours.

The third month, however, is known as the Season of Mirrors. This is when the sun slowly rotates over the valley to gleam upon the land for the entire day. The harsh light reflects off of every bit of whiteness in the land, and the light easily blinds travelers. During this season, the frost melts a bit, the rivers flow freely and quickly, trade is increased and many towns hold festivals. This is usually when pilgrimages to the Skeleton of God begin, since foul creatures cannot sneak up upon the helpless pilgrims under the cover of darkness.

The ninth month is the Season of Darkness, where the sun rolls down beneath the mountains, not appearing for a full thirty-three days. The land freezes in the blackness, the snow becomes hard ice and the threat of raiders can be felt in the air. Travel upon the rivers is impossibly dangerous, and few men are courageous enough to travel outside their homes for any length of time.

The WarClans

The WarClans do not rule the Rifts—they are merely warriors with common bonds in a land that wishes to tear the life from every inhabitant. The major WarClans are located throughout the land, and their riders can be found nearly everywhere. Even in the coldest northern regions of the Rifts, people will glimpse the lone Obsidian Templari trudging his way to his next mission, or the Guidesmen who knows the land like a childhood home.

The WarClans live in peace with each other; no jihad or wars have been declared between the WarClans for several centuries. This doesn't mean there aren't any quarrels or bloodshed between the clans—many WarClans have no problems slaying each other, not to mention members of other clans.

The Rune of Life

The runes of the Glacier Rifts are well known. Few men know the meanings of the runes, but everyone in the land recognizes them as symbols of power. Legends tell of a single prophet who came from the mountains and began carving runes in every stone he could find. After a lifetime of nothing but runecarving, the man died and was swallowed by the tundras. This is the origin of the runes, and the few who know this story call this man by his true name, Gylden. Most, however, simply call him The Runecarver.



When Gylden died of old age, the place where his body disappeared became a rune unto itself. It is said that those who tread upon this rune in the coming years gained the final gift of Gylden—the Rune of Life.

The Rune of Life is the most powerful and recognizable inscription in the land. Every man, woman and child recognizes the lines of this rune, and the mere sight of it causes even the bravest warriors to flee or to charge forward in a berserk attack.

The Rune of Life's power is simple. The bearer of the rune will not grow old. The rune is more than a simple carving, however. In order to gain its power, one warrior must kill the one bearing the rune. Once the bearer is slain, the Rune fades from all of his equipment and burns its way into the arms and armor of the new immortal.

Nobody knows how many men bear the Rune of Life. At last count, the number was less than twenty. There may be a few more or a few less — no one really knows. Legend has it that there was once an entire WarClan of Life, but the other WarClans grew jealous and declared the powers of the clan evil. They arranged for the warriors to be killed naturally. Avalanches, wolves, and traps claimed the life of these warriors, giving Gylden's Gift to no man.

The Lands of Man and the Lands of Others

Humans are the most numerous of races, though the vast majority of the land is claimed by none. The Gracht are a close second. Most of them live on the outskirts of the valley, occasionally mounting fierce attacks on the inner lands—which predictably comes through the Valley of the Gracht, thus earning that dreaded place its name.

Men tell the tale of the Great Gracht Wars, an event that occurred thousands of years ago in the Rift. Prior to the end of this long war, the Gracht only fought themselves. The “Goat Gracht,” distinguishable by their great curled horns, were completely destroyed in the civil war by the “Stag Gracht.” Now all Gracht of the Glacier Rifts bear the tree-like horns of the stag. According to this legend, the day after the last Goat Gracht fell dead, the Stag Gracht started their assaults on Mankind.

The lands of Vythia, however, are a strange exception to the warring, barbarian tribes of Gracht. Here, it is said, Gracht live side by side with Humans and work to build huge palaces and castles for the reigning nobility of the land.

Just south of Vythia lies the Frost Pines, an evergreen forest capped with ice and snow. As one travels to the middle of the forest, however, the climate warms significantly. Apparently, the pines insulate the center of the woodlands, and here live the Green Elves, a unique offshoot of the Elven race.

The Vindanari, once the ruling class of the Elves, have long since left the Rifts. According to the Elves, the Vindanari disappeared over the mountains of the Rifts dressed for war. The Elves believe they went to fight a great evil beyond the mountains. Whether they were defeated and massacred or have not yet returned from some epic battle is unknown.



More typical Elves and their brethren, the Tuathae, can be found in the Wood of Ice and the Tallwode, though bands of militaristic men from the City of Stakes have mostly killed and driven the fae races from the Tallwode, a fact that makes Elves and Tuathae extremely angry.

Though the Tuathae share their forests with the elves, they are the least numerous of all the races of the Glacier Rift. A Tuathae village never exceeds a hundred souls. The Tuathae are also a nomadic people, and the same village will move between several forests in a single generation.

Dwarves can be found far to the north of the Rift. Though they have a small population, they are concentrated in several independent Halls. Halls are carved deep into the mountains, and hold training facilities, craft houses, metal mines, and usually several palaces. The location of the Halls of Mithril and the Halls of Adamant are strict Dwarven secrets. Many creatures envy their warm, torchlight tunnels, so the Dwarves guard their homes fiercely. Bands of elite Dwarven soldiers can be found at every known entrance to their underground realms.

A small sect of Dwarves lives in the icy halls of the Hollow Glacier. Dwarves on whole deny the existence of these “Glacial Dwarves,” since most stories of them tell of their cruelty and devious torture techniques to outsiders. Travelers who have passed by the Hollow Glacier often tell tales of “ghost dwarves”—dwarves with stark white skin and silver beards. Surely these are the Glacial Dwarves themselves.

Gnomes can be found under many northern hills as well. It is not uncommon for Gnomish settlements to be gathered around Dwarven mountain homes. Since Gnomes tend to concentrate on non-metal crafts, Dwarves make ideal trading partners. It is commonly known that the closer Gnomes live to human and Dwarven settlements, the more civilized they are. Men that encounter “Wild Gnomes”, as they are known, report cruel and unmatched savagery.



The City of Stakesley of the Gracht.

The Gulpi and Fenoderee are rare peoples. Many humans have gone their whole lives without seeing a single one—or even hearing of these races. Most Gulpi and Fenoderee hail from the Riverlands where they have assimilated into Human civilization to help load the Red Serpent ice ships that travel up and down the rivers, which the yeti-like Gulpi do not fear as they fear oceans and seas. The Red Serpents welcome both strong races on their ships, as their strong arms are ideal for breaking ice and rowing the ships through ice-fraught waters, not to mention repairing the inevitable damage done on these vessels.

The Religion of the Rifts

The Glacial Rifts is a monotheistic world. Everyone believes in one all-powerful God of the Rifts who has no name. The canons that lie in the cathedrals of



the land tell how their god fought and killed dozens of ice demons that sought to overthrow him. The holy god-lord knocked out all the demons with a giant boulder and buried them in the permafrost beneath the land. After the seven-day battle, the god-lord realized he was vulnerable with a corporeal body. To remedy this, he had several loyal mortals cut it away from his soul. His body fell to the ground and his spirit became an omnipresent being that soaked into the land.

The Skeleton of God, located in the northwest of the Rifts, is a spot for thousands of pilgrims to travel to each year to celebrate his spiritual ascension into the earth. Priests lead the faithful to this dangerous area, where they celebrate and pray for healing near the various churches and altars built around the site. Unfortunately, many foul races hunt off these often-defenseless pilgrims, making the journey especially deadly.

The God of the Rifts has five angels who serve him—these were the men who cut his body away from his soul. The Angels of Earth (Skitt), Wind (Vindstot), Fire (Brann), Water (Vann) and Ice (Isbryter) work the One God's ways in the mortal world, and they are reputed to take corporeal form on rare occasions. Isbryter, the Angel of Ice, the most powerful of his seraphim, was once a demon who betrayed his evil comrades and located the boulder that trapped them all. Though the people in the land worship the one god, they also pray to his angels for assistance in more trivial matters.

No one knows where the giant boulder is that trapped the demons. Many stories tell of the demons clawing their way out from underneath the rock; others say that one of the angels will betray the god and move the boulder away, releasing the demons.





"The Death of Ethne," hanging in the Lord of Greenstone's Manor (c.9700)



The Passing of One

Duracht, Son of Deirdre, has lived for three centuries. The son of a great warlord, Duracht lost his parents well before acquiring the Rune of Life. He has become an explorer and wanderer of late, only using his considerable battle prowess when needed. Throughout his exploits, he has learned a small portion of the history of his particular Rune of Life, which makes him somewhat unique among his fellows. Those with the Rune of Life have many enemies, for every warrior who has dreams of becoming an unaging warlord seeks these people out to claim their lives and their Rune.

G'thi (circa 8000 – circa 8900)

Little is known of G'thi, though it is estimated he lived some three thousand years ago. Since similar names exist in the tiny hamlets of the Dark Crag, it is assumed that he hails from that area. Whether he slew another with the Rune of Life or trod over the grave of Gylden himself is not known.



Ethne (circa 8900 – 9431)

Pictures of Ethne can be found in the middle realms of the Rifts. The most intact pictures of the beautiful Ethne can be found in Greenstone, her legendary place of birth. It is not known why she killed G'thi, or how the battle occurred, though there are many pictures of the event. Some show G'thi as a dark knight, others as a hideous man-beast, and a rare few as a wise scholarly figure. Ethne was probably a Medean Guard, though the Martyrs of War and the Guidesmen also claim her.

Geloshe (9431 – circa 9600)

Geloshe slew Ethne murderously. The foul beast—a troll from Northern Vythia—snuck into her bedroom and stabbed her through, pinning her dying body to the bed. The evil creature cut off her head, attached it to his belt and then slew most of the inhabitants of the town. He was the terror of the land and the source of many nightmarish legends.

It took four strong men—all who loved Ethne—to remove the blade from her mangled body. The men formed a WarClan known as “Ethne’s Vengeance” and sought out Geloshe to slay him.

All four men were killed by the powerful troll, but their squires survived to continue the WarClan for many years afterwards.



Dinnsenchus (circa 9600 – circa 9601)

Dinnsenchus was not a warrior. On one of his murderous rampages, Geloshe slew the wife and family of this burly farmer. Geloshe, who had grown lazy with his power, did not imagine that this human farmer could hurt him.

Dinnsenchus’ pitchfork pierced the body of the troll, and his dogs tore the troll to pieces.

Dinnsenchus himself struck the final blow with a cooking knife. Horrified at his new power and unsure what he had become, Dinnsenchus fled into the wilderness carrying no weapons.



Cenchos Vitra (circa 9601 – 10041)

Surely Cenchos Vitra found Dinnsenchus wandering in the wilds and slew the unarmed farmer. Legend has it that Dinnsenchus managed to slice off Cenchos Vitra's leg in the combat, but this is unlikely. It is more likely that Cenchos Vitra had previously lost his leg below the knee in a previous battle. In any case, Cenchos Vitra took Gylden's Gift and a reign of cruelty began again. Cenchos Vitra was a Beastlord and is the first immortal to be positively identified with a WarClan. Like his forerunner Geloshe, Cenchos Vitra traveled alone throughout the wilderness, mostly in Copernia and Caer Drenjin. At first, Vitra tried to be the benevolent monarch of the towns he visited, unifying them together. He gave up in frustration and transformed into a tyrant. He executed his enemies, kept slaves and a one-hundred-woman harem (which included the famous Rhiannon, who later escaped to found the city of Kella), and mercilessly worked his peasants to build the castle of Allegiance Keep. A powerful king, Cenchos Vitra would carve out much of the territory that would become the Borders of King Zul.

Duracht (10041 – present)

Duracht himself has explained what led to the slaying of Cenchos Vitra:

“I didn't want to be a Guidesman. My grandfather had sent me into training with the Guidesmen, but I left after a few months. I wanted to be found by the Obsidian Templari and trained to be a true warrior. I was twenty, and the Templari hadn't found me, so I decided to find them. I was determined to catch their attention.

“Travelling through the Borderlands, I stumbled upon a burning village. One hut in particular caught my attention—it was filled with a dozen screaming peasants, women and children. Outside the hut stood twenty men-at-arms and a one-legged man with a black crown watching with obvious pleasure. Furious, I challenged the man. He laughed and sent a handful of the men-at-arms to capture me. He threatened to stuff me in a burning house of my own. His guards weren't especially well trained and didn't expect me to be a fighter. I downed them quickly, and the one-legged man charged me on his horse.

“Leaping away from the charge, I glanced at the man's armor and saw the Rune of Life emblazoned on it. I knew I would not be an equal to this man, so I ran. Cenchos Vitra rode me down and slashed my leg open. Falling in the snow, he rode up to me. Unable to reach me with his sword because he was on his horse, he decided to trample me. As the horse reared up, I prayed that the horse would buck. Whether the horse detected me as a friend, or I had finally learned the lessons of the Guidesmen, I don't know. Whatever happened in those few seconds, the war-horse of Cenchos Vitra disobeyed all of his years of training and bucked Vitra off his saddle.





“The immortal fell into the muddy ground and angrily struck his horse, killing it in one blow. Ignoring the searing pain in my leg I charged and we grappled and rolled on the ground for what felt like hours. I heard his guards running towards us screaming, seconds before I turned his own rune-scribed knife into his heart. Then I saw each rune on his equipment lift off and with a blast of thunder hover in the air. The runes swept themselves into my own equipment and burned themselves into everything I owned. The impact of the runes sent me flying a hundred paces.

“Fearing for their lives, the men-at-arms fled. I heard that one of them, a lieutenant by the name of Zul, would win a succession war for the kingdoms of Cenchos Vitra. I didn’t care. My first thought was hoping the Obsidian Templari witnessed the battle, but then I realized that the paths of the Guidesmen saved my life and gave me immortality.

“I left the Borderlands to explore the world and became enchanted with its people and history. I have been challenged for the Rune of Life many times over, and I’m sure one day one who is better than myself will find me. But I have sworn since that first day to never make someone want to take my life for honest reasons.”





the
Castle of Madness

The FIRST QUEST

**ICY
DEATH**

ADVENTURE

Chapter III

The Castle of Madness

A harsh wind snapped Arana's cloak and threatened to sweep her off her feet. She spit the snow and ice from her mouth and pulled her hood farther down on her face. She'd rather have her own cloak blind her than the freezing winds.

Coming alone to find the Castle of Madness was perhaps the worst mistake she'd ever made. Still, Arana strongly believed that trekking through knee-deep snow in search of this lost, frozen keep would be the ultimate test of survival. If she could survive here, she could survive anywhere.

Fierce howls pierced through the howling wind like a knife. Arana slipped her gloved hand down to her broadsword. Just wolves, she told herself. Wolves only attacked the weak – they'd have to find another meal today.

The Castle of Madness is an introductory solo adventure for new **RuneQuest** players. You don't need to know anything about **RuneQuest: Slayers** to play this adventure - just pick one of the pregenerated characters below and you're all set. Or, if you've already created a hero from Chapter IV, you can use him to explore the legendary Castle of Madness located far to the west in the cold lands detailed in Chapter II, the Glacier Rifts.

If you've never played a "Choose Your Own Path" adventure before, don't worry - it's easy. Just start with paragraph entry 1. Read it, and choose from one of the choices that it gives you.

Don't read the entries in order! If you find any items you'd like to keep, jot that down on a spare sheet of paper.

Once you play through the Castle, you'll understand all of the basics of **RuneQuest: Slayers**. You can play through it a couple of times, or you can delve into the basic rules of the game, starting with Chapter IV: Creating a Warrior. Likewise, if you're already familiar with roleplaying games, you can skip right to Chapter IV, create a unique warrior of your own, and then play through the Castle of Madness to get familiar with the basic rules and feel of the game.

THE ONE RULE — THE ATTRIBUTE ROLL

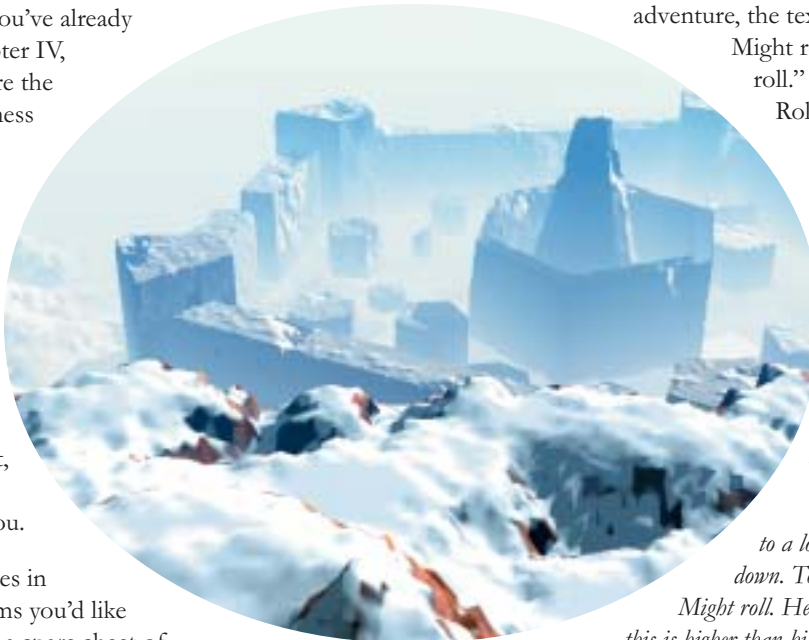
There is only one rule you'll need to know before exploring the Castle of Madness. Oftentimes in the adventure, the text will tell you to "make a Might roll," or "make a Courage roll." These are called Attribute Rolls.

When asked to make an Attribute Roll, roll two 10-sided dice (2d10) and add the results. If you roll equal to or under your attribute, you succeed. If not, you fail. If your 10-sided die has a '0' on a face, that equals ten, not zero.

Example: *Akimba comes to a locked door and must break it down. To do this, Akimba must make a Might roll. He rolls 2d10 and gets a 17. Since this is higher than his Might 16, he fails. He'll have to find another way around the door.*

Sometimes, the text will tell you, for example, "make a Difficult Intellect roll." Difficult rolls mean you need to roll three 10-sided dice (3d10). You still need equal or less than your attribute to succeed.

Example: *Akimba decides to pick the lock on the door, a Difficult task. He has Intellect 10, so he needs a 7 or less on 3d10. He rolls a 7 exactly, so he picks it!*



AKIMBA FURUSA
Human, Cult of the Skull

MIGHT: 16
COURAGE: 12
INTELLECT: 10
AGILITY: 11
PERCEPTION: 10

HEALTH: 28
Speed: 10
Fatigue: 24

Wounds
(damage)

WEAPON
Spear

EXPERTISE
Novice

DAMAGE
4d6 impaling

PROFESSIONS
Apprentice Stonemason
Apprentice Tactician



ARANA HALDANE
Human, Medean Guard

MIGHT: 12
COURAGE: 13
INTELLECT: 13
AGILITY: 13
PERCEPTION: 13

HEALTH: 25
Speed: 10
Fatigue: 26

Wounds
(damage)

WEAPON
Broadsword

EXPERTISE
Novice

DAMAGE
2d6+2 carving

PROFESSIONS
Apprentice Orator
Apprentice Physician

1

It was a cold day when you set out for the Castle of Madness, and the glacial winds of this valley make it seem hundreds of times colder. Both hands tightly wrap your winter cloak around your body, but somehow you can still feel the piercing winds as if on bare skin. You squint your eyes down at your weapon and wonder if it has become frozen to your belt. No matterÉ nothing alive can possibly live in these temperatures, you think, pushing back thoughts of the undead.

In a few minutes, you can barely make out the ruined form of the castle up ahead. Your best guess tells you it's another hour's walk in the freezing cold. Before you have time to grumble about the longer walk, you spot a gaping black opening in the snow. It must be a cave. You've heard rumors of underground tunnels leading into the castle. Could this be one? Or is it the lair of some beast?

If you decide to explore the cave, go to 12.

If you decide to continue your cold trek to the castle, go to 19.

2

Wrapping your hands to protect them from the cold, you dig under some broken statues. In a few minutes you've uncovered a beautiful antique mace. Digging some more, you realize somethingÉ it still has a frozen hand attached to it. A second later, your boot brushes aside the remains of the man's face! The blue skin is cracked and broken. Apparently, some warrior died wielding this mace.

Make a Courage roll. If you succeed, you may pry the weapon loose. Otherwise, you have no stomach for such matters and decide to abandon your search.

If you go through the servant's door, go to 14.

If you go through the guardhouse door, go to 11.

3

The snow crunching underfoot, you jog along the intact half of the castle. Just as you begin to tire some, you spot what you're looking for. A broken gateway, where once armored guards stood with razor-sharp halberds, lies open and shattered. It leads into the courtyard of the castle.

You swing under the broken gate and look around. Dozens of statues - most broken - litter the courtyard. You see two doors beyond the statue graveyard. The smaller one seems to be a servant's entrance; the other seems to be a guardhouse door.

If you search the courtyard, go to 43.

If you go through the servant's door, go to 14.

If you go through the guardhouse, go to 11.

4

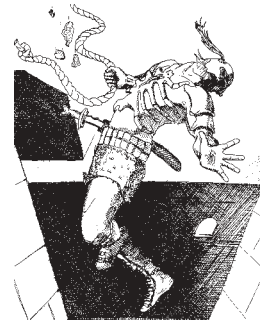
You see a woman, half-dressed, standing in the room. Her skin is icy pale. She picks up the remnants of her clothes and stares at you, her ice blue eyes burning into the back of your head. Before you can even wonder about the true nature of this delicate creature, she disappears in a flurry of fine ice. You shake your head and enter the room.

Go to 45.

5

You manage to loop the grapple around the gargoyle's wing. Confident in your skill, you begin the treacherous climb.

CRACK! The gargoyle breaks away and you plummet to the snowy ground. Roll 1d6-1 (one 6-sided die and then subtract 1 from the roll) and write that number next to your Health. This is a wound. If you ever take enough damage to equal your Health, you'll die.



Tending your sore arm from the fall, you decide to circle around the castle and look for another way in.

Go to 3.

6

As you are about to leave, you spot a ring on one of the skeletons. You pull it off and examine it. Apparently, it was the captain of the guard's signet ring. Pocketing it, you head out the door for the servant's entrance.

Go to 14.

7

You stride forward with confidence and crack open the half-broken door but quickly realize that you can't see – it's too dark to make out anything but dim shapes. You fumble to get a torch lit as you hear a horrible hiss.

Make an Agility roll. If you succeed, go to 38.

If you fail, you can't get your torch lit on time. Write down the word DARKNESS and go to 38.

8

You're in luck – the yeti is too busy with his meal to notice you. You glance around the icy room and notice that there is a small tunnel that continues past the yeti. With any luck, you can get to it without him noticing you.

If you decide to sneak by, go to 44.

If you decide to turn around, go to 22.

Or, you can draw out your weapon and attack! Go to 17.

9

As you quietly move along the dark tunnel, you hear a disgusting noise from up ahead. You hear pained squeals and horrible rending sounds about forty paces in front of you. Your skin crawls at the thought of what lies ahead.

If you turn around and go back the other way, go to 22.

If you quietly venture ahead, go to 31.

If you scream a battle cry and charge, go to 49.

9

You dash past the yeti into the smaller tunnel beyond him. You quickly jog down the cavern leaving the disgusting crunching noise behind you. Your heart is pounding. Subtract 2 from your Fatigue. If your Fatigue ever reaches 0, you'll collapse!

The tunnel winds its way for about twenty minutes until you can make out a bright white light from up ahead. When you come to this exit, you notice a thick layer of snow covering the cave opening. You pull out your weapon and start digging.

Suddenly, from behind you, you hear the roar of the yeti. Dig faster! Roll 1d6 and subtract this from your Fatigue. Make a Might roll.

If you succeed, go to 26.

If you fail, go to 20.

11

You approach the guardhouse door and push on it. No luck. Apparently, the guardhouse door is either locked or frozen shut.

You can use your dagger to try picking the lock. Go to 18.

Or, you can try to force the door open. Go to 40.

12

It feels warmer the moment you step into the cave, though the winds make an eerie whining sound throughout these dark tunnels. Fortunately, you had enough foresight to bring a torch. Stretching your numb fingers several times, you take out your tinderbox and light the torch. The heat seems to melt your very face.

Taking a deep breath, you slowly walk down the winding tunnels making mental notes of rock formations in case you get lost. It seems as if someone, or something, walked these tunnels in the recent weeks. In a few minutes, you see that the tunnel turns and branches.



If you head down the more trodden path, go to 9.

If you head down the icier path, go to 22.

If you trod down the warmer, rock path, go to 54.

13

You spot something unusual – a small trap door in the side of the room. Smiling, and remembering that guardhouses often keep valuable weapons locked away, you head towards the door. Kneeling down, you pry it open easily – the lock has long since rusted away.

26

Inside the cubby hole is a pitted iron shortsword. It probably wouldn't last a single swing, so you toss it aside. Behind the blade, however, is a solid steel shield. Painted on its face are three white bears. Though the paint is a little worn, it apparently protected the shield from the elements. You carefully take it out, brush off some ice, and strap it to your back.

Go to **6**.



You need to duck your head to get into the servant's entrance – the doorframe collapsed years ago. After your eyes adjust to the dim entranceway, you see that some great creature entered the castle here. Giant footprints have cracked through the wood of the floor here, and age-old blood has been splattered against the walls. It gives you a shiver to think of what kind of creature attacked the castle.

Digging through some old supplies, you uncover a skeleton of a dead servant. You're not sure if it was a man or woman, as only tattered cloth lies around its bones.

*If you search the area around the corpse, go to **16**.*

*If you continue onwards, go to **33**.*



The cliff isn't as steep as you imagined, and many of its hand and footholds aren't covered with ice. Make no mistake – this still isn't an easy climb, and you should be careful.

Make a Might roll. Roll 2d10 (two 10-sided dice). You need to roll equal to or under your character's Might score.

*If you succeed, you carefully climb down the mountainside and approach the castle. Go to **36**.*

*If you fail, you plummet down the rocky cliff! Take 3d6 damage. Roll three 6-sided dice and write the total down next to your Health. If you ever take enough damage to reach your Health, you die! If you're still alive, you limp towards the castle. Go to **36**.*



As you rummage through the tattered remnants of the skeleton, your hand scrapes across something razor sharp! You raise your bloody hand to your mouth and probe the wound

with your tongue. Kicking aside some torn cloth, you see a glass dagger half-embedded in the wood.

For your wound, roll 1d6 (a 6-sided die) and write that number next to your Health. This is damage. If you ever reach your Health in damage, you'll die! Be careful...

*If you try to pry the sharp dagger out, go to **24**.*

*If you decide to leave it alone, go to **33**.*



You're in a battle with a yeti, a fierce, 12' snow beast with claws the size of your head. You've heard that most of them aren't hostile, but you seem to have found an exception.

You're going to get to attack the yeti first, since you're a trained warrior and the yeti isn't the brightest of foes. Let the fight begin!

Step A. Grab two 6-sided dice.

Compare your Agility to the yeti's Agility of 12. If your Agility is higher than the yeti's, grab another 6-sided die. Go ahead and roll the dice you have. If you've written down the word AMBUSHED, you automatically miss this first round!

If you roll at least one '6', you hit! The yeti doesn't leap aside — your blow is solid. Your weapon does a certain amount of damage, as listed on the character sheet. Roll that many dice and write down the damage the yeti took. If you do 15 or more points of damage all together, the yeti retreats in pain.

Step B. If you miss the yeti, or if the yeti took a hit but is still around, he has a chance to hit you. The yeti will also roll 2d6, unless his Agility is higher than your own. If so, he'll roll 3d6. If he rolls at least one '6' he bites you and you take 1d6 damage.

Wounds accumulate, so keep track of the damage you take. If you take total damage equal to your Health, you'll keel over, dead!

After the yeti attacks, you get another chance to hit him. Go back to Step A and continue the fight until the yeti retreats, or you're dead.

*If the yeti retreats, go to **21**.*

If you died, your adventure sadly ends here. Perhaps brave adventurers will one day find the half-eaten remains of your frozen corpse.



18

You kneel down in the snow and peer through the keyhole. Just as you suspected... the door is locked with an older type of lock. Several stone pegs keep the door in place. Your knife might be able to do the trick, but it's tricky.

To pick the lock, make a Difficult Intellect roll. Since the door uses an old stone lock, Stonemasons and Thieves will have a better chance to pick it. If you have the Stonemason or Thief occupation, and fail the roll, you may reroll once!

If you succeed, go to 30.

If you fail, you can try breaking the door down. Go to 40.

If you've already failed breaking the door down, or just want to try the servant's door, go to 14.

19

You stumble another half-hour in the snow. The cave was probably the home to a pack of yetis, or ice trolls. It's a good thing you avoided it.

Unfortunately, the cold winds have begun to take their toll. Roll 1d6 (a six-sided die) and reduce your Fatigue that much. If your Fatigue reaches 0, you will collapse on the ground from exhaustion and hypothermia – you'll have to start the adventure over again.

You stare up at the looming castle. Its stone has been covered with sheets of ice as thick as your body. With any luck, you won't have to climb up the walls to find an entrance.

If you decide to circle around the castle looking for an entrance, go to 3.

If you decide to use your pitons and rope to climb the wall to a window, go to 35.

20

You can't dig fast enough. The yeti bounds up the cavern roaring in anger at your intrusion. You turn your weapon on to the fowl beast!

Write the word AMBUSHED on your character sheet. Go to 17.

21

You spit a curse at the retreating yeti. You quickly search the yeti's lair but find nothing of interest other than some bloody yeti teeth. Bandaging up any wounds you may have, and anxious to leave this chamber before the yeti finds the Courage to come back, you push your way down a long twisting corridor.

The end of the tunnel appears about twenty minutes later, but it's been completely frozen shut with ice and snow. You draw your weapon out and start pounding. Subtract 2 from your Fatigue – if your Fatigue ever reaches 0, you drop from exhaustion and die from the cold!

In about ten minutes you manage to break through. You push your body out the hole you've made and feel something hard and stone-like in front of you.

Go to 47.

22

Your body warms as you jog down the icy path. Though the walls of this tunnel are frozen solid, it is much warmer in here than in the cold, biting winds. You glance down at the floor as you run, and are startled to see several large footprints walking in the direction you're going. You draw out your weapon to be on the safe side, and continue your journey down the dim hall.

About a half-hour later, you find the tunnel going uphill. You slow down your pace – no need to get tired before reaching the castle. Suddenly, bright sunlight hits your eyes. You've found an exit! You crawl out the small tunnel and find yourself looking over the edge of a tall cliff! Almost directly below you lies the Castle of Madness. Once you manage to get down the cliff, you'll be near the walls of the castle.

If you try climbing down the icy cliff, go to 15.

If you try walking around the wind-torn cliff, go to 52.

23

Some of the tapestries are still together; others are torn and destroyed. Two, in particular, catch your eye. One tapestry shows a beautiful blond maiden in armor, the other shows a runed axe lying on a table.

28



Make an Intellect roll to examine the tapestries further.

If you have the Clothier profession and you fail the roll, you may reroll once.

If you succeed, go to 57.

If you fail, go to 51.

24

Wrapping some cloth around your hand for protection, you try to wedge the glass dagger out. With any luck, this old dagger will be worth a lot of silvers. Or maybe you'll decide to keep it as a backup weapon.

Make an Agility roll. If you succeed, you carefully pry the dagger out. If you fail, the dagger shatters in your hand. Take 1 point of damage.

You continue onwards. Go to 33.

25

Deciding to head towards the main part of the castle, you skip the bedrooms and head down a long, winding hallway. Much to your surprise, the castle in this part looks sturdy and complete. Perhaps it looked like this years ago when it was a newly built stronghold. You come to a stairway going downwards. The stairs are covered with a slick ice.

Make an Agility roll. If you succeed, you carefully make your way down the steps and into a large, main room of the castle. Go to 33.

If you fail, you slip down the steps and land hard on the hard stone. Take 1d6+1 damage (roll one 6-sided die and add 1 to the result). You curse your clumsiness and stand up. Go to 33.

26

You barely make out the form of the yeti at the far end of the cavern tunnel, but you know he's coming for you. You slam your weapon again and again against the ice and snow. Suddenly, sunlight rushes out to blind you. You leap through the small hole you've created and scramble out. Your head hits against something hard.

You look up and see a crumbled statue of an armored warrior in front of you. You look around... you found a way into the courtyard of the Castle of Madness!

You shake your head and look around. The yeti's roar seems to have died off, so you're safe for now.

Dozens of statues – most broken – litter the courtyard. You see two doors beyond the statue graveyard. The smaller one seems to be a servant's entrance; the other seems to be a guardhouse door.

If you search the courtyard, go to 43.

If you go through the servant's door, go to 14.

If you go through the guardhouse, go to 11.

27

You slowly pad into the icy maze, trying to remember the turns you take. Every once in a while you hear a soft moan from ahead of you. Make an Intellect roll. That is, roll 2d10; You need to roll equal to or under your Intellect to find him.

If you succeed, go to 37.

If you fail, you soon hear the moans die out. You return to the slushy path and decide to turn around, rather than risk getting lost in this cold maze. If you head down the more trodden path, go to 9. If you head down the icier path, go to 22.

28

Unfortunately, most of the bedroom doors have collapsed and now lie blocked with rubble and debris. You go down the hall, pushing and tugging on various doors until you find one that opens.

Peering into the room, you quickly discover that this was once a child's bedroom. Old wooden toys lie on the floor. Many are broken, others are still intact. You pick up a finely carved wooden wagon toy and stuff it into your sack. Your nephew might like one of these.

The small bed in the room is still intact, but as you come closer, you notice a horrible smell coming from the mattress.

If you return to the main corridor and go down it, go to 25.

If you draw your weapon and lift the mattress, go to 58.

29

You carefully climb the steps, but suddenly some of the stone crumbles underfoot. Your chin hits against the marble railing hard as you slide down to the bottom of the steps. Roll 1d6 – you take this much damage. Write that number down next to your Health. Don't forget, if your damage ever reaches your Health, you die!

29

If you're still alive, you can try climbing the steps again. Go to 50.

Or, you can forget the stairs and go down the main corridor. Go to 25.

30

You push the door inwards and hear it slam against the wall sharply. Waiting for your eyes to adjust to the darkness, you look around the room. A dozen skeletons in tattered armor lie against the walls of the room. You swallow hard, and then quickly examine the skeletons. You see no injuries on them—apparently, these men locked themselves in this room and died here.

You let out a small cry when you see a pale blue rat scurry across the floor. You've never heard of ice rats before, but you chide yourself for having been startled so easily.

Searching the room, you find that most of the weapons and armor have rusted away a long time ago. Make a Perception roll.

If you succeed, go to 13.

If not, go to 6.

31

You silently pad up the trodden path. The cave comes to a sharp turn. You peer around the bend and see a bloody yeti chewing apart a half-dead seal. He's licking his claws and seems to be enjoying the pitiful squeals the seal is making. Make an Agility roll.

If you succeed, go to 8.

If you fail, go to 41.

32

The man's leg is broken, but perhaps you can keep him alive until you head back this way. The cave is warm enough to keep him alive, and there's enough water for him to live on.

"I will not live more than a few hours. My goddess visited me just a few minutes ago," he continues.

"Well, she'll make good company until I come back," you say as you bandage and splint his leg. "Listen, I won't be at the Castle of Madness for more than a day. When I come back, I'll

bring you with me. I'd take you now, but unless you can offer me a king's treasure, I can't afford it."

The man nods gratefully, "I appreciate any effort you might make."

You finish bandaging him and leave him some food. "I'd make you a fire, but the creature you mentioned might come back. Wouldn't want you to lose another leg."

The man grasps your shoulder. "Let me warn you—the trodden path leads to the home of the creature. I went down the icier path at first, but found an impassable cliff. The creature attacked me and dragged me to his lair before I escaped."

The warrior closes his eyes to rest, and you decide it is better to leave him now. You head back to the slushy path and go back to the main cavern. Write down the word RESCUER on your character sheet.

If you head down the more trodden path, go to 9.

If you head down the icier path, go to 22.

Or, you can leave the cave and trek to the castle through the snow. Go to 19.

33

You continue onwards, and find yourself in a banquet hall of sorts. Shattered plates and a broken banquet table lie in the middle of the room. Several tapestries hang from the walls, and there seems to be a large hole in the floor under a particularly tattered one.

If you examine the hole, go to 55.

If you examine the tapestries, go to 23.

34

In the bravest voice you can muster, you shout your name and clan. You hear a soft whisper from the passage ahead. "Help me, please. My leg is broken."

You call out to the injured man, "Keep talking so I can find you."

Wisely, you tie a piece of long cord to a nearby stalagmite. You can follow this back to this tunnel branch in case you get lost.

Go to 37.

30

35

You remove your rope and grapple and find a nice target – a broken gargoyle near an open window. To climb up the castle wall, you'll need to make a Might roll. However, this is a Difficult task because of the ice and snow covering the wall.

Roll 3d10 (three 10-sided dice) and add the results. To succeed, you need to get equal to or less than your character's Might.

If you succeed, go to 42.

If you fail, go to 5.

36

A little sore and tired, you stare up at the looming castle ruin. As the wind rushes through the broken turrets, you hear noises that sound like a madman's screaming – no wonder they call it the Castle of Madness.

The castle's stone walls have been covered with sheets of ice as thick as your body. With any luck, you won't have to climb up the walls to find an entrance.

If you decide to circle around the castle looking for an entrance, go to 3.

If you decide to use your pitons and rope to climb the wall to a window, go to 35.

37

You find an injured soldier leaning against a cavern wall. He looks at you, his face pale and frostbitten. "How long have you been here?" you ask.

The wounded man swallows hard, "I don't know. Three days, perhaps? A fierce white creature attacked me and snapped my leg like a branch. I crawled as fast as I could, but now I'm alone and lost."

You look down and see the man's leg twisted at an impossible angle. You grimace. This man will not make it out of these caves alive.

If you have the Physician profession, go to 32. If not, keep reading.

"I know," he answers, as if he heard your statement. "I will not live more than a few hours. My goddess visited me just a few minutes ago. Let me warn you... the trodden path leads

to the home of the creature. I went down the icier path at first, but found an impassable cliff. The creature attacked me and dragged me to his lair before I escaped." The man shudders. "Here, take this ring and give it to my teacher in Winterhaven. He will contact my family to avenge my death."

He hands you an amethyst ring and you nod. The warrior starts shaking and shuddering, and you decide it is better to leave him now. You head back to the slushy path and go back to the main cavern.

If you head down the more trodden path, go to 9.

If you head down the icier path, go to 22.

Or, you can leave the cave and trek to the castle through the snow. Go to 19.



38

You draw out your weapon, expecting danger at any second. The stench from this dark room is choking you. You stare across the litter-filled room and gasp when you see that the whole room is covered in a liquid that can only be blood. In the middle of the room, you can barely make out a skinny, man-like creature wearing practically nothing. You see that his eyes are bloodshot and his skin is a disgusting mottled-red. He lets out a half-hiss, half-cackle and stumbles towards you.

31

You're in mortal combat with this inhuman beast. You're going to get to attack him first, since you're a trained warrior. This infernal creature will not run from you... only one will remain after this fight.

If you found the crossbow, you'll get one free shot at the creature before combat begins. Roll 3d6 (crossbows get an extra Attack Die because of the speed of the bolt). If you roll at least one '6' you hit, doing 3d6 damage to the creature. Write how much damage you did to the creature with the crossbow. Whether you hit or miss, go to Step A to begin the combat.

Step A. Grab 2d6.

Compare your Agility to the creature's Agility of 11. If your Agility is higher than his, grab another 6-sided die. Go ahead and roll the dice you have. If you roll at least one '6', you land a solid blow! The weapon you have does a certain amount of damage. Roll that many dice and write down the damage the blood-creature took. If you do more than 20 points of damage all together, the creature is slain.

Step B. If you miss the bloody creature, or if it was injured but not dead, he has a chance to hit you. The creature will roll 2d6, or 3d6 if his Agility is higher than yours.

If you've written down the word DARKNESS, you're in trouble. The blood-creature can see in the dark, and you can't parry his blows as easily. He can roll an *extra* 1d6.

Roll the blood-creature's dice. If he rolls at least one '6', he drains more blood from your body and you take 1d6 damage.

If you take damage equal to your Health, you'll keel over bloated and dead! Otherwise, it's now your turn to try to hit him. Go back to step A.

If the creature is slain, go to 48.

If you died, your adventure ends here. Perhaps adventurers braver than yourself will return to the castle to defeat this foul creature.



The ice begins to numb your fingers, so you decide to give up your search. There's too much snow in the courtyard to find anything of value.

If you go through the servant's door, go to 14.

If you go through the guardhouse, go to 11.



The old door is heavy, and may even be locked, but you push with all your Might. Make a Difficult Might roll. Roll 3d10 – you'll need to roll equal to or less than your Might. Only the mightiest warriors will be able to budge the door.

If you succeed, go to 30.

If you fail, you can try picking the lock. Go to 18.

If you've already failed picking the lock, or just want to try the servant's door, go to 14.



As the yeti is licking his claws clean, his beady black eyes falls on you. He lets out a roar, slams the mortally wounded seal against the side of the cave, and charges you!

Draw out your weapon and go to 17!



You loop your grapple around the neck of the broken gargoyle. Testing the rope a few times, you hoist yourself and scramble up the thick rope. In a few seconds, you reach an icy window sill.

If you peer into the room first, go to 4.

If you quickly scramble in, go to 45.



You dig around the bases of the various statues, looking for anything of value. Make a Perception roll. Roll 2d10. If the result is equal to or lower than your Perception, you succeed.

If you succeed, go to 2.

If you fail, go to 39.



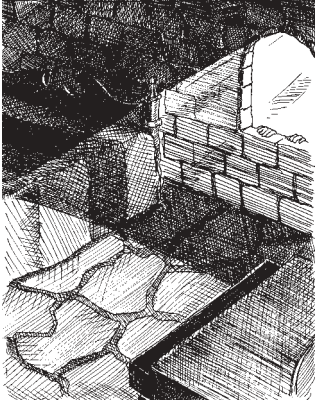
Make another Agility roll to sneak by the foul creature.

If you succeed, go to 10.

If you fail, go to 41.



45



You swing your body over the icy sill of the window and leap into the dark room.

The white light shines through the window and illuminates the remnants of this old bedroom. A broken bed lies in the corner of the room, its decorative blanket still well preserved in the cold. A dresser with a shattered mirror sits opposite the bed, and you can almost feel the ghosts of the nobility who once slept here.

You look through some of the dressers, and find nothing but old clothes. No, wait. Underneath a blue chemise is a tarnished silver tiara. Smiling, you place the jewelry and the chemise in your sack. You walk to the door and peer out. Dark stairs lead upwards into a turret, and to the right, a corridor heads down to more bedrooms.

If you climb the stairs, go to 50.

If you head to another bedroom, go to 28.

If you skip the bedrooms and go down the corridor, go to 25.

46

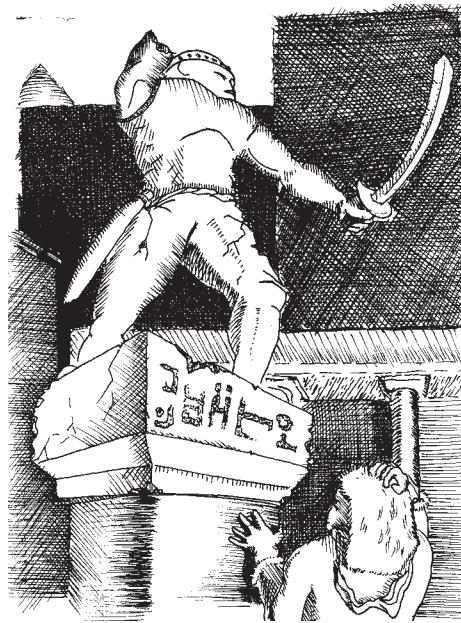
You carefully press your ear to the door, holding your breath to keep the stench from interrupting your concentration. Suddenly, you feel this horrible pain in your ear. You tear your ear from the door only to discover that you're bleeding from hundreds of pores on the side of your face. You gasp and draw out your weapon.

Take 1d6 of damage from the wound. If you're still alive, you can either run from the castle and go to 53.

Or, you can bravely confront this dangerous new menace behind the door. You angrily tear the half-broken door off its hinges, letting light into the dim room ahead. Go to 38.

47

You look up and see a crumbled statue of an armored warrior in front of you. You look around... you found a way into the courtyard of the Castle of Madness! Dozens of statues



— most broken — litter the courtyard. You see two doors beyond the statue graveyard. The smaller one seems to be a servant's entrance; the other seems to be a guardhouse door.

If you search the courtyard, go to 43.

If you go through the servant's door, go to 14.

If you go through the guardhouse door, go to 11.

48

You let out a cry of triumph as the blood creature falls to the ground, dead. Lighting a torch to better see the room, you discover that this was once a servant's chamber. There is an antique picture on the wall of an old bearded noble accompanied by the servant who lived in this chamber ages ago. You're startled to find out that the servant in the picture looks eerily like the half-human creature you just fought.

You rummage around the room looking for anything of value. Make a Courage roll. If you succeed, go to 56.

If you fail, you do not have the stomach to rummage through the room's bloody contents. You decide to come back to the castle some other day - perhaps with friends - and discover its secrets in the safety of numbers. Go to 60.

33

49

You race down the icy corridor, weapon clenched tightly in hand. Screaming a battle cry, you charge headlong into a gruesome sight. A bloody yeti has his teeth half-sunk into a squealing seal. He looks at you in surprise, throws the half-dead seal into the cavern wall, and roars his own battle challenge!

Go to 17.

50

Holding on to a marble railing, you begin to climb up the long spiral stairs that surely leads up to one of the castle's turrets. As you make your way up, you notice that the elements have begun to crumble and freeze the stone steps. Make an Agility roll.

If you succeed, go to 59.

If not, go to 29.

51

You try to stuff both tapestries into your bag, but they're just too heavy. You can pick up one of them. Choose now and write that down. You can take either the maiden tapestry, or the axe tapestry. When you've decided, you wander over to examine the hole in the floor.

Go to 55.

52

The cliff is icier than you expected. You slowly grasp and claw your way around the cliff, the winds constantly threatening to pick you up and toss you over. As you circle around the cliff, a powerful gust picks up and sends you hurling towards the edge!

Make an Agility roll. Roll 2d10 (two 10-sided dice) - you need to roll equal or lower than your Agility.

If you succeed, you catch on to the edge and manage to pull yourself to safety. Go to 36.

If you fail, you plummet down the cliffside! Take 3d6 damage. Roll three 6-sided dice and write the total down next to your Health. If you ever take enough damage to reach your Health, you die! If you're still alive, you plod towards the castle. Go to 36.

53

You run from the castle, glad that you have managed to find the few valuables that you did. Perhaps one day you will gather friends and return to the castle.

Go to 60.

54

As you walk down the rock path, the ground beneath your boots turns to slush. Several minutes later, you find yourself walking through ankle-deep water. You fill up your waterskin from this source - it's better than eating snow. You light a torch, as most of the light from the cave entrance has faded away.

As you continue onwards, the ground becomes steadier and smoother. You kneel to examine it, and find a thick, half-frozen red liquid on the ground. You study it closer— blood!

Before you have time to think about your grisly discovery, you hear a moan from up ahead. You take a few steps forward, but see that the passage you're in twists and turns in a dozen directions. An icy labyrinth lies ahead.

If you shout your name and make your presence known, go to 34.

If you calmly sneak up and try to see what's making the sound, go to 27.

55

Careful of the crumbling floor, you peer down into the dark hole. A horrible reek hits you, and you involuntarily snap your hand over your nose. Even in this cold weather, something down the hole smells really bad.

You look down further into the pit and see that the ground is about ten feet below where you stand. You could jump down.

Make an Agility roll. On a success, you jump down without injury. If you fail, you take 2 points of damage from the fall. Don't forget that if your damage ever reaches your Health, you'll perish.

Brushing yourself off, you look around the dimly lit chamber. A half-broken door lies a few feet away.

34

If you creep up to the door and listen, go to 46.

If you stride forward bravely and push the door aside, go to 7.

56

Gritting your teeth you pull up the bloody, torn mattress that lies on the floor. A silver sparkle catches your eye. You reach down and pick up a beautiful silver and glass scepter. Perhaps it belonged to the noble pictured in this room. Confident that you've found a great treasure, you throw your burning torch on the mattress and let the room ignite. You're determined to clean out the filth of the creature that lived here.

Dashing out of the smoky room, you leave the Castle of Madness behind. Surely more treasure and adventure lies within its walls, but you feel better returning with trusted friends. Perhaps with a party of adventurers, the yetis and blood men will not pose as much of a threat.

Go to 60.

57

You're smart enough to know that it's not the design on the tapestry that is worth gold, but the fabric itself. Carefully examining both tapestries, you see that the runed axe one is cheaper and shoddier than the finely woven fabric of the armored maiden tapestry is.

Satisfied that you've made the right choice, you tuck the heavy maiden tapestry into your bag. You decide to examine the hole in the floor. Go to 55.

58

Grasping your knife tightly – the space around the bed is too small to wield your main weapon – you kick over the mattress. You jump back in shock when you see a half-eaten, bloodless corpse staring up at you. Turning your body away in revulsion, you stagger back before you steady yourself for a second look.

The man has only been dead for a few weeks - he's dressed in a wind-torn cloak and has well-worn boots on the remains of his feet. Apparently, this man was exploring the castle like you. What ate him and stuffed his body in this bed, however, is beyond your imagination.

You leave the room and head down the corridor. Go to 25.

59

Your foot slips up the stairs once, but your tight hold on the railing saves you from a nasty fall down the steps. You have to drag yourself up the last few steps, since the ice is about as thick as your fist.

Pulling your way on to a cold landing, where the wind whips through open windows and chills you to the bone, you glance around this ancient lookout tower. It seems all barren, except for a lone crossbow mounted on the wall. You pull it down and strap it to your back. You've never used a crossbow before, but it may come in handy later.

You kick the dirty snow beneath the crossbow and find what you were looking for – a single, rusty bolt. You'll have one shot with this crossbow. Happy that you found anything at all in this crumbling tower, you carefully make your way down the stairs.

You can go explore the bedrooms more. Go to 28.

Or, you can skip the bedrooms and go down the main corridor. Go to 25.



35

You arrive back in the town of Winterhaven a little injured, but safe. You quickly head to the local merchant's bazaar to sell the wares that you found. The merchants are all very impressed - many of the goods you found were antiques and are quite valuable.

Sell the goods you have (or you can hold on to them for your next adventures) and see how many silvers you made!

If you've written down the word **RESCUER**, you manage to drag the wounded warrior back to Winterhaven. You discover his name is Jrak Kul, a lieutenant in Winterhaven's town watch, and a Martyr of War in good standing with his clan. The Martyr's reward you handsomely for his safe return – 500 silver talents!

Not only have you survived the Castle of Madness, but you now know the basics of *RuneQuest: Slayers*. For more details on creating and customizing your own hero, read on.

Treasures of the Castle

<u>Treasure</u>	<u>Value</u>
Glass dagger	50 silvers
Silver Tiara	300 silvers
Antique Mace	80 silvers
Blue Chemise	20 silvers
Yeti teeth	15 silvers
Guard's signet ring	150 silvers
Polar Bear Shield	150 silvers
Amethyst Ring	200 silvers reward
Maiden Tapestry	100 silvers
Axe Tapestry	10 silvers
Silver-glass scepter	400 silvers
Antique Toy Wagon	25 silvers
Crossbow	75 silvers



the warriors

Characters

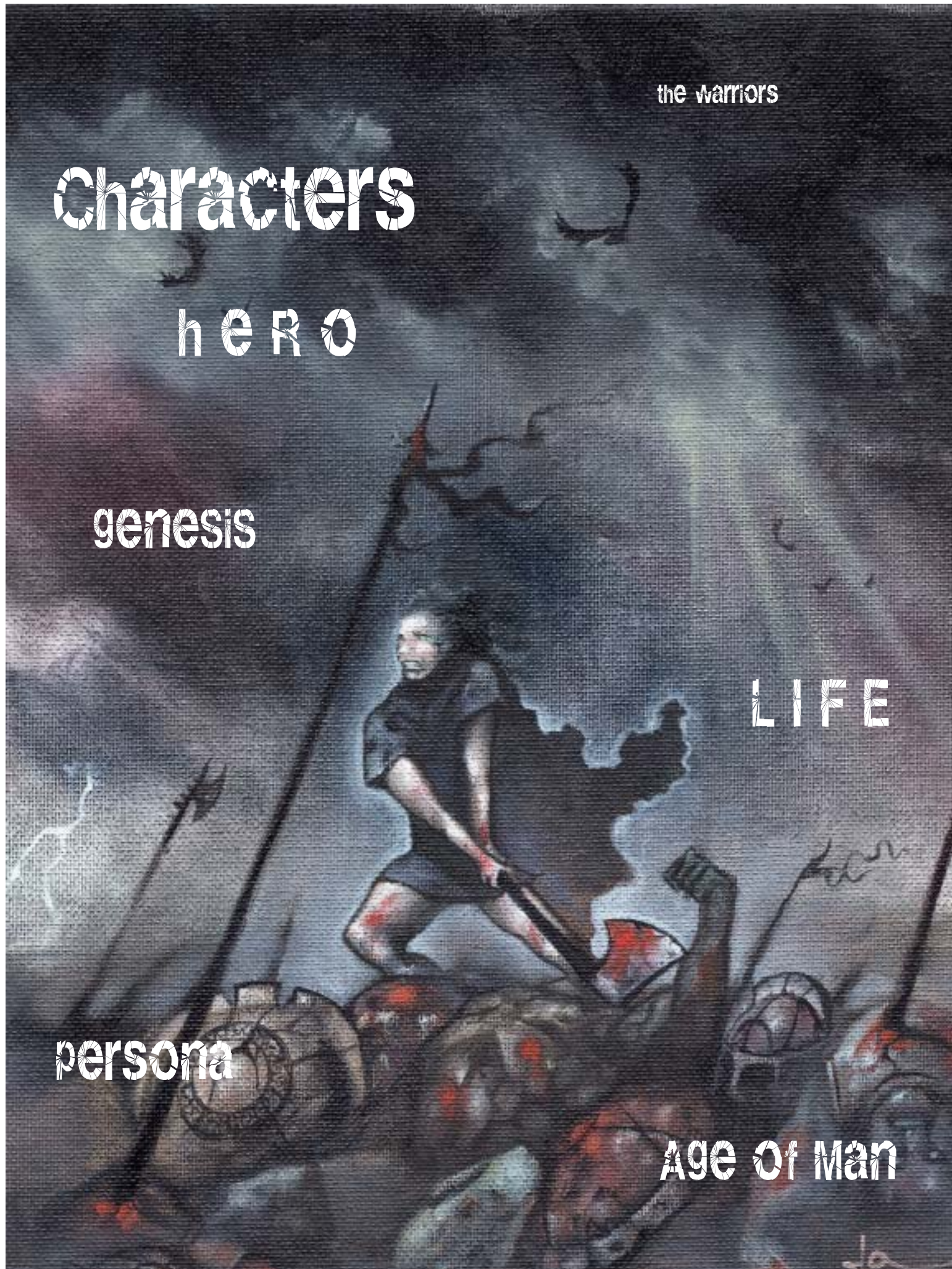
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Chapter IV

Characters

The vultures soared above the quiet field, their shadows crisscrossing over the still forms of the slain. Hours ago the air was filled with the sound of battle as warhorns bellowed and weapons clashed. Now, only the shrill cries of the carrion birds pierced the silence.

Out of the shadows of dusk, a small form slowly picked its way through the wreckage of battle, careful to avoid the innumerable bodies that littered the ground. His eyes searched the faces of the fallen with desperation. His father had come to fight at this terrible place, leaving the young boy behind to wait with the women. He had followed his father for two days, hoping to join him in what he believed would be a glorious victory.

Glory now held no allure for the boy. He had watched in horror at the approach of the Gulpi, the wild ape-men of the northern forests. He stood paralyzed as the ape-men swept down upon the pitifully small band the villagers had called their "army," encircling and destroying it ruthlessly. Now he was alone with the dead.

With a start, he beheld the face of his father, an agonized look frozen on the severed head. Tears fell upon the father's visage, as the boy knelt in silence. Finally, the tears stopped. It was a different person that pried the axe from the dead fingers of the father. An edge like cold iron entered the boy's eyes as he raised the battered weapon aloft in the failing light. A new warrior had been born.

CREATING YOUR CHARACTER

In **RuneQuest: Slayers**, you create your character by spending *hero points* on various characteristics. Hero points are a measure of relative skill. Each player receives up to 30 hero points, depending on their character's race, with which to purchase a character's attribute scores, social status, starting wealth, and background professions. All players of a given race begin with the same number of points, but the manner in which they distribute these points is their decision. For example, one player may put his points into creating a character with high Courage and several background professions, while another may choose to have lower starting attribute scores but more wealth and social status. In this manner, you can create a unique character to your liking.

Choosing a WarClan

Many Slayers belong to the mighty WarClans, guilds or cults devoted to battle. There are ten WarClans in **RuneQuest: Slayers**, each with its own identity. The warriors who follow the ways of the clans seek the ancient runes that bestow the mythical powers of their WarClan. Choosing a WarClan is the first step in warrior creation. This should be noted on the character sheet. The character's WarClan will determine what glyphs and runes he will seek to acquire.

It isn't necessary for every character to belong to a WarClan. Although such characters may not acquire the WarClan runes, they are also free of the obligations that come

with them. It may also be possible for characters who do not initially belong to a WarClan to join one at an appropriate moment later in the campaign, but this should be worked out with the Runemaster.

Rank Requirements

Status in the WarClans is determined by rank and experience. To attain a given rank the character must possess a certain number of glyphs, mentioned in the description of the particular rank. Acquiring glyphs is described in Chapter VII: Runes. Often, the character must also demonstrate to his WarClan his prowess and worthiness to hold the new rank. To do this, he must undergo a task particular to his WarClan. Only after fulfilling this quest is he considered to hold the rank. The Runemaster should decide upon appropriate quests and work them into the campaign.

Rank has its privileges, and a warrior with high status in the WarClan may always count on a more-favorable reaction from his subordinates. High-ranking warriors may also gain loyal followers, allowing him to form his own branch of the clan.

A character is never obligated to pursue status in his WarClan, and may still earn glyphs and create runes. He will not, however, gain any benefits from status with his clan. Indeed, they may scorn him for falling from the path. Rigid WarClans like the Justiciars do not treat such wayward individuals with kindness...

Beastlords

For hours the battle had raged as the beleaguered men of Tatliano struggled to fight their way through the ambush. All about them the warriors of the Beastlords swarmed, shattering the close-ordered formations of the city dwellers and pulling them down one by one. Proconsul Atlius stared hopelessly about as the raiders savaged his army. He watched in amazement as the bare-chested warriors riding upon fanged tigers tore his command to bloody pieces. Every stratagem, every trick, had failed in the face of such a terrible foe. As if without regard to personal danger, the attackers threw themselves upon the men of Tatliano, overwhelming them with barbarous strength and the fearsome charge of their wild beasts.

Hated by many, respected by all, the Beastlords have secret knowledge of mastering, if not quite taming, the beasts of the wild. The greatest warriors of the WarClan often ride such beasts into battle, mounted upon great bears or tigers.

Requirements

Unlike some WarClans, the Beastlords do not accept outsiders into their ranks: only the child of a clan family may become a warrior. It can be assumed that a character wishing to be a Beastlord is the son or daughter of an established warrior.

Ranks

Dogrunner (2 glyphs) — Even the sons of the greatest Beastlords begin their training as Dogrunners. Despite how it sounds, the name is not derogatory. It comes from the use of young warriors as handlers for wardogs during battle. The Dogrunner holds the leashes for one to three dogs, waiting for the command to loose the wardogs and himself upon the foe.

Wolfmaster (4 glyphs) — Those that survive their training as a Dogrunner may be elevated to the status of Wolfmaster. It is customary for such Dogrunners to battle a full-grown wolf barehanded. Those that aren't maimed bear their scars proudly. The Wolfmasters are responsible for controlling the Dogrunners in battle and are often called upon for raids and scouting missions.

Fangwarrior (6 glyphs) — Warriors are often called upon to perform hazardous missions for the good of the WarClan. Wolfmasters that demonstrate skill at stealth and intrigue may become Fangwarriors. They are solitary hunters, spies and assassins who spend long weeks in the wilds in pursuit of their perilous goals. Few return from their dangerous quests, but those that do are fearsome opponents.

Tigerclaw (8 glyphs) — The greatest warriors of the WarClan ride into battle upon huge, fanged tigers. Although most are prominent leaders of the WarClan, they rarely exercise command in battle, preferring instead to come to grips with their foes as quickly as possible. They are chosen from amongst the bravest warriors, those who have served the clan for years and proven themselves in battle.





Beastlord (10 glyphs)— The Beastlords are the rulers of the WarClan and are the direct representatives of the WarLord himself. They are hand-picked by the WarLord from among the bravest of Tigerclaws. It is they who lead the WarClan for major raids and campaigns, often from the backs of rare, magnificent creatures such as the fierce gryphon.

Armor and Equipment

A Beastlord often has the appearance of a wildman, being clothed in a motley collection of armor and furs. The pelts of exotic animals are preferred, the more dangerous to obtain the better. Broad axes and other such brutal weaponry are looked upon with favor, as the Beastlords enjoy nothing more than battering their foes into submission. As even the fledgling Dogrunner hopes to one day master the greatest of beasts, all begin with a spiked collar that bears the Beastlord's personal symbol. This collar will adorn the neck of the

warrior's chosen companion animal, or his cairn if the Beastlord is slain in battle.

Personality

The Beastlords are as varied in their behavior as Nature itself. One moment they may be a playful young tiger, and the next a stalking panther. They glory in life and song, and are ever in search of a challenge.

Glyphs

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Discord | 6. Seeking |
| 2. Fury | 7. Violence |
| 3. Will | 8. Silence |
| 4. Apathy | 9. Endurance |
| 5. Berserker | 10. Pride |

Cult of the Skull

Out of the steaming jungles of the south they came, sweeping across the barrens toward the city of Al'akar in a bloody wave of destruction. Village after village fell before them as they rolled over the pathetic militias sent to stop the oncoming horde. Al'akar, already the largest trading metropolis of the southlands, was swollen with refugees. Upon its low walls stood lookouts, vigilant for signs of the approaching enemy.

After days of dreaded anticipation, a cloud of dust arose on the horizon. Alarms rang throughout the city as men rushed to don armor and man the walls. When all was readied, a silence fell over all, broken only by the tread of the invaders approaching the walls and the creak of the many wagons drawn behind them. The citizen-soldiers of Al'akar waited anxiously in the hot sun for the inevitable attack. They had no illusions as to their chances of withstanding these reavers.

From the lines of the besiegers arose crude, hideous banners adorned with the dismembered pieces of recent and not-so-recent victims. Siege engines were pushed forward and a rain of missiles began to pelt down upon the beleaguered defenders. An audible moan went up from the walls as the people of Al'akar realized the vile nature of the missiles raining down upon them. The besiegers were hurling severed heads over the walls. With a deafening roar, the Cult of the Skull surged over the ramparts and into the city. The slaughter had begun.

The Skullmen were the followers of Jaga Botaki, known as the Skull-taker during the Dark Years. The Skullmen follow this “tradition” to this day, beheading their enemies and displaying the skulls as trophies. The Cult of the Skull draws its followers from the many tribes of the southern jungles. From

there, the Skullmen venture forth to prove their skills by scouring the world in search of dangerous foes. They are wild and uncontrollable, even by their own WarClan leaders. Even the king of the Akata has proven powerless to check the growth of this WarClan.

Ranks

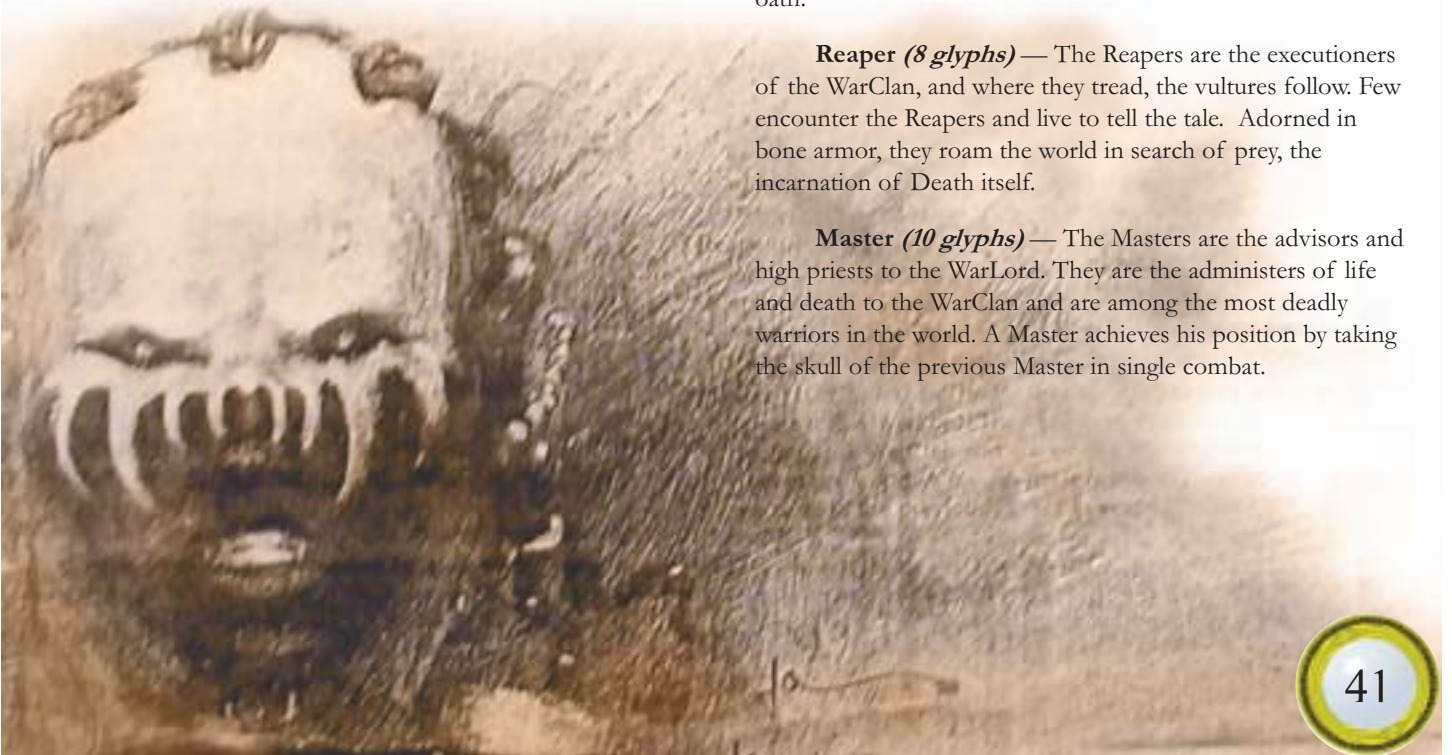
Initiate (2 glyphs) — The shaven-headed Initiates are unproven warriors. Numerous and eager to carve a name for themselves, their lives are spent cheaply in battle. They relish this role, however, as it gives them the opportunity to demonstrate their worthiness.

Disciple (4 glyphs) — The rank and file of the WarClan, Disciples are permitted to grow a single topknot as a sign of their courage. Only Initiates who have collected ten skulls in single combats are allowed to join their ranks. Disciples form the mass of the WarClan's numbers and are feared for their ruthlessness in battle.

Bloodwarrior (6 glyphs) — Those Disciples who have demonstrated their ferocity in battle are called to join the Bloodwarriors. The Cultist must seek out and slay an enemy of the clan, be it another WarClan, a nation or an entire race or species. After preparing the fallen's skull by the dark of the moon, the Cultist drinks the victim's blood from this grim chalice. The Bloodwarrior is forever sworn to seek out and destroy the chosen foe of the Cult wherever they may be. It is said that even death does not release the Bloodwarrior from his oath.

Reaper (8 glyphs) — The Reapers are the executioners of the WarClan, and where they tread, the vultures follow. Few encounter the Reapers and live to tell the tale. Adorned in bone armor, they roam the world in search of prey, the incarnation of Death itself.

Master (10 glyphs) — The Masters are the advisors and high priests to the WarLord. They are the administrators of life and death to the WarClan and are among the most deadly warriors in the world. A Master achieves his position by taking the skull of the previous Master in single combat.



Armor and Equipment

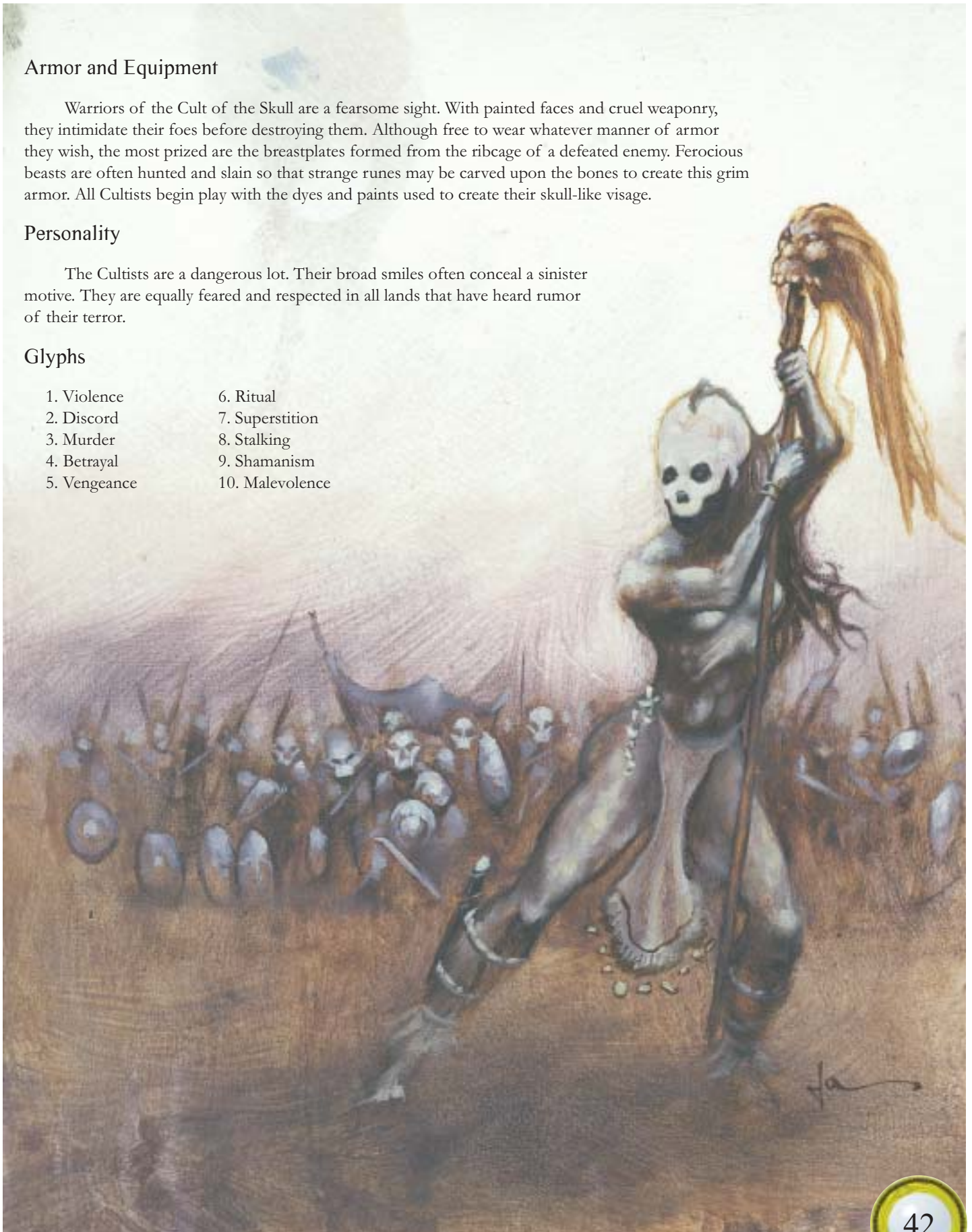
Warriors of the Cult of the Skull are a fearsome sight. With painted faces and cruel weaponry, they intimidate their foes before destroying them. Although free to wear whatever manner of armor they wish, the most prized are the breastplates formed from the ribcage of a defeated enemy. Ferocious beasts are often hunted and slain so that strange runes may be carved upon the bones to create this grim armor. All Cultists begin play with the dyes and paints used to create their skull-like visage.

Personality

The Cultists are a dangerous lot. Their broad smiles often conceal a sinister motive. They are equally feared and respected in all lands that have heard rumor of their terror.

Glyphs

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. Violence | 6. Ritual |
| 2. Discord | 7. Superstition |
| 3. Murder | 8. Stalking |
| 4. Betrayal | 9. Shamanism |
| 5. Vengeance | 10. Malevolence |



Galloglaich

As big as a bear, and every bit as hairy, the man known as Cedric sat down unceremoniously on the big oak bench. Cedric noticed a handful of children staring at him in utter amazement. He bared his teeth at them, which widened their eyes. Cedric could barely hold in his smile.

The large man drew out his greatsword slowly. He purposely put pressure on the steel against the scabbard, so it would make the long screeching sound he knew the children would enjoy. Every eye in the small tavern followed the blade as it withdrew from its sheath.

As soon as the blade was free, Cedric jerked it straight down into the wooden floor. The greatsword buried itself an inch into the hard wood. The children gasped, watching as Cedric let go of the sword, leaving it wobbling upright. Cedric eyed the children, and took another drink of his ale. He licked his lips and drew in a deep breath.

"It was half-midday when this sword cleaved the Ogre of the Wood in two," he began. Cedric ran his finger along the blade. "If ya feel carefully, you'll feel shards o' bone embedded still in the steel. I danced with the beast for seven hours, locked in mortal combat, until I made the blow that sawed him halfwise. An' as he lied dying, I swear to the heavens, his arms n' head tried to crawl its way back to its legs. A full ten paces, mind you... and he got only an inch from his other half when he expired on the ground in front o' my eyes."

A small child started crying in the back of the tavern. Cedric grinned. He knew it was a good story, now.

Farmers, storytellers, savage warriors. These three qualities describe all Galloglaich, from the young recruits to the old masters. All three qualities exist in equilibrium — the men and women of the Galloglaich believe that none of these can be ignored. Emphasis in one over the other two will always result in failure, dishonor and an untimely death.

The Galloglaich are the oldest of the WarClans. They date back thousands of years. Arguments abound over who founded them and when they came into existence.

Requirements

Galloglaich aren't recruited; they are discovered. When a Galloglaich finds someone who meets their satisfaction as a homemaker, bard and skilled warrior, they are welcomed to join the clan. A grand ceremony takes place, where elder Galloglaich mock combat, proclaim the greatness of the clan, and feast all night in honor of their new-found brother.

Ranks

All clansmen and women are considered equals by the Galloglaich, though great respect is paid to the elders of the WarClan.

Chieftains (6 glyphs). Above ordinary Galloglaich, however, are the Chieftains. When a Galloglaich has a reputable bloodline, and has achieved heroic deeds in battle and thought for-and with-his clan, he is often promoted to a Chieftain. Chieftains are the most respected of all Galloglaich.





Armor and Equipment

There is a common story told among the members of the Galloglauch. Thousands of years back, when the art of sewing was unknown to mankind, and all men wore loose one-piece garments, the Galloglauch women invented the pantaloon for their husbands. These pants kept them warm in the cold months, and allowed them great flexibility in battle. Soon, all of mankind copied the designs of the Galloglauch. Outraged that they were no longer unique, the Galloglauch went back to loose-fitting garments. Even today, the Galloglauch kilt is well-known for being the symbol of the men and women of the clan. “True” kilts are always made from moqueshel, a medium linen of unbeaten quality. The kilt can be any color, though Galloglauch warriors who travel together often use the same colors to mark themselves as companions. All Galloglauch begin play with a kilt in their clan colors. If a warrior – even one of another clan – is ever given a moqueshel kilt by a Galloglauch, he should treasure the gift. Not only is it a valuable piece of clothing, but it also symbolizes the ultimate friendship. As fine as their kilts are, however, the Galloglauch wear hardened and boiled leather underneath as armor.

Galloglauch are mighty warriors, and most prefer heavy two-handed weapons. Great axes, greatswords and bastard swords are the weapons of choice.

Personality

Charismatic people, the Galloglauch can be gregarious workmen and silent warriors at the same time. Or, just as likely, quiet workmen and boisterous warriors. Of all the clans, the Galloglauch know how to balance the life of a fighter with the life of a man more ordinary.

Galloglauch are independent -they seldom join mercenary companies by themselves. Instead, they gather several other Clansmen and join together, forming their own specialized company within the other mercenary group.

Glyphs

1. Pride
2. Stubbornness
3. Temperance
4. Generosity
5. Desperation
6. Bravado
7. Carousing
8. Tale-Telling
9. Sanguinary
10. Legends

Guidesmen

Malachy crouched down and examined the snow. The footprints were large. It could have been a big man, maybe a barbarian from Vythia, but it was much more likely an ogre. Maybe even a troll, he thought, though even the ice trolls rarely traveled this far north.

Malachy inched forward. He stuck his finger into the snow about a half-inch. He examined it as the cold wind blew into his face. He squinted his eyes and frowned-fresh blood. Whatever this creature was, he had killed nearby. The Guidesman's eyes wandered across the icy tundra. Several mounds were nearby. Any could be covering a dead animal, or even a dead man.

"What is it?" came a shrill voice from behind Malachy. It was Angela. He had been leading her family through these cold plains. He had accepted only a few silvers as payment, for it was obvious she could not afford his regular fees for a guided trip to Doshev.

"Well, whatever it is," Angela continued, speaking more to her three children, "Malachy's sword will protect us. He's a great warrior, you know."

Malachy sighed to himself. He knew he was no great warrior. He could hold his own in a fight, but he wasn't going to charge into battle with an ice troll or ogre. He had seen one ice troll kill and devour eight fighting men within ten minutes.

He cleared his voice. "Just a big man. Nothing to worry about. Let's push on."

The Guidesmen are a WarClan of rangers, guides, trackers and woodsmen. They can be found anywhere, though they spend most of their lives in the wilderness. Most Guidesmen find jobs in larger cities, such as escorting wealthy people from town to town, helping adventurers find their legendary destinations, and even tracking down escaped convicts and renegades-though most Guidesmen find this activity distasteful.

Requirements

There are no formal methods of training in the Guidesmen. Those men and women who wish to become a Guidesmen apprentice under another. Guidesmen rarely take more than one apprentice, as conquering the dangers and trials of the wild in a group is completely different from handling them alone.

Ranks

Guidesmen do not have strict ranks. As they gain experience and wisdom, they naturally progress through the ranks.

Yearling (2 glyphs) — A young man or woman who is apprentice to an experienced Guidesmen. Yearlings are training to live in the wilderness for months. This includes training in hunting and tracking, shelter building and animal behavior. Yearlings are often left alone for several weeks to become accustomed to the wilderness by themselves. This is an excellent opportunity for adventure.

Tracker (4 glyphs) — Those who leave their masters become Trackers, though most teachers and students remain in contact with each other throughout their lives. Trackers begin to take on jobs for themselves, or become hermits in the wilderness, protecting specific lands, trails or caravan routes. Many enter the service of a king and become protectors of Royal Parks, valuable trade routes, and escorts for the royalty on their hunting trips.

Woodsmaster (8 glyphs) — The most experienced Guidesmen become Woodsmasters. All knowledge of the land, its animals, its plants and its quirks are known to these intelligent and formidable men and women. Woodsmasters are sages to all—many heroes seek them out for help on quests, mapmaking or long-distance travel.

Armor and Equipment

Comfort and protection against the environment is of utmost importance to all Guidesmen. Metal armor is ignored, as it severely hampers wilderness skills, endurance and camouflage. Most Guidesmen wear leather and flocked fabric. All cover themselves with kettlecloth cloaks, the ultimate traveling companion. Cloaks can be used for blankets, pillows, packs and shelter, and the medium weave of the cloth keeps the Guidesmen warm in the winter and cool in the hotter months. Guidesmen that frequent a particular area will vary their cloaks appropriately—cloaks will range from light gabardine to heavy, fur-lined wool capes. All Guidesmen begin play with a kettlecloth cloak.

Guidesmen use all sorts of weapons, though most specialize in the sword and bow, and a great deal carry walking staffs. The sword is the ideal weapon for close combat, and the bow is unbeaten for hunting and long-range defense.

Personality

There is a common saying that “A Guidesman knows his fate.” Though most have no idea what that means and just mumble it from memory, the Guidesmen take pride in the statement. For them, it means that they control their own lives. They choose whom they work with, along with when they work. No other man can tell them how to live. Guidesmen are very possessive of their independence, and many become defenders of humanity’s independence as well. Others become hermits, and still others become mercenaries, but no Guidesman challenges another’s way of life.

Glyphs

1. Seeking
2. Caution
3. Silence
4. Solitude
5. Independence
6. Wanderlust
7. Practicality
8. Curiosity
9. Exploration
10. Humility



Hidden Order of the Justiciars

The huddled peasants waited in terror as the Baron's men marched through the hamlet. They had failed to pay the new tax, and were now facing their liege lord's wrath. They were not disloyal, but the poor harvest this season had left them with precious little on which to survive, let alone pay for the Baron's military ambitions.

The Baron, aloof on his black charger, sneered contemptuously at his groveling minions. Already, several huts were aflame, the work of his malicious soldiers.

"That one." He pointed a mailed gauntlet at a young girl and three of his bodyguards moved to fetch her. She screamed as they wrenched her from her father's arms.

"Now you will learn the price of your treason." The executioner's sword fell, but the blow never landed. As if from nowhere, a mailed figure now stood beside the peasant girl. For a moment, his steel held the soldier's blade in check. Then, with a move almost too fast to see, the newcomer's weapon was in motion, severing the head of the would-be slayer.

He spun to face the remaining guardsmen with a mocking smile.

"Now let justice be served."

The origins of the Justiciars is a long-forgotten memory. Some claim that they have always existed in one form or another, maintaining the Balance of Justice in this world. Whatever the truth may be, the members of the order do not say. All that is known is that the Justiciars travel the lands, always appearing when they deem it necessary to impose their peculiar brand of justice.

Ranks

Arbitrator (2 glyphs) — The youngest members of the order are sent out alone to prove their skill and commitment. Those that perish do so to serve the Balance.

Justicar (4 glyphs) — Arbitrators who have served the Order for a year may become Justicars. Toughened by survival in the wilds, the Justicars are the main strength of the order. They are watched closely by the Masters, however, to insure that they serve the Balance and not themselves.

Executor (6 glyphs) — Even to those whom they aid, the Executors are mysterious and terrifying figures. Their ability to appear where needed is almost magical and causes many sleepless nights for those who fear their wrath. Executors are chosen from those who have obeyed the word of the Order for three years. Typically, they are sent on a quest to prove both their skill and powers of reason. On such a journey, nothing may be as it seems, and the powers of the Justiciar are severely challenged by both intrigue and deception.

Master (8 glyphs) — The smaller shrines of the Justiciars are guided by the Masters. They answer only to the Balance and the Grand Masters. They are hand-picked from amongst the Executors to lead their brothers in their unending cause.

Grand Master (10 glyphs) — The Grand Masters are rarely seen, only leaving their hidden sanctuary in times of dire need. In seclusion, they send their warriors into the world on quests to maintain the Balance of Justice.



Armor and Equipment

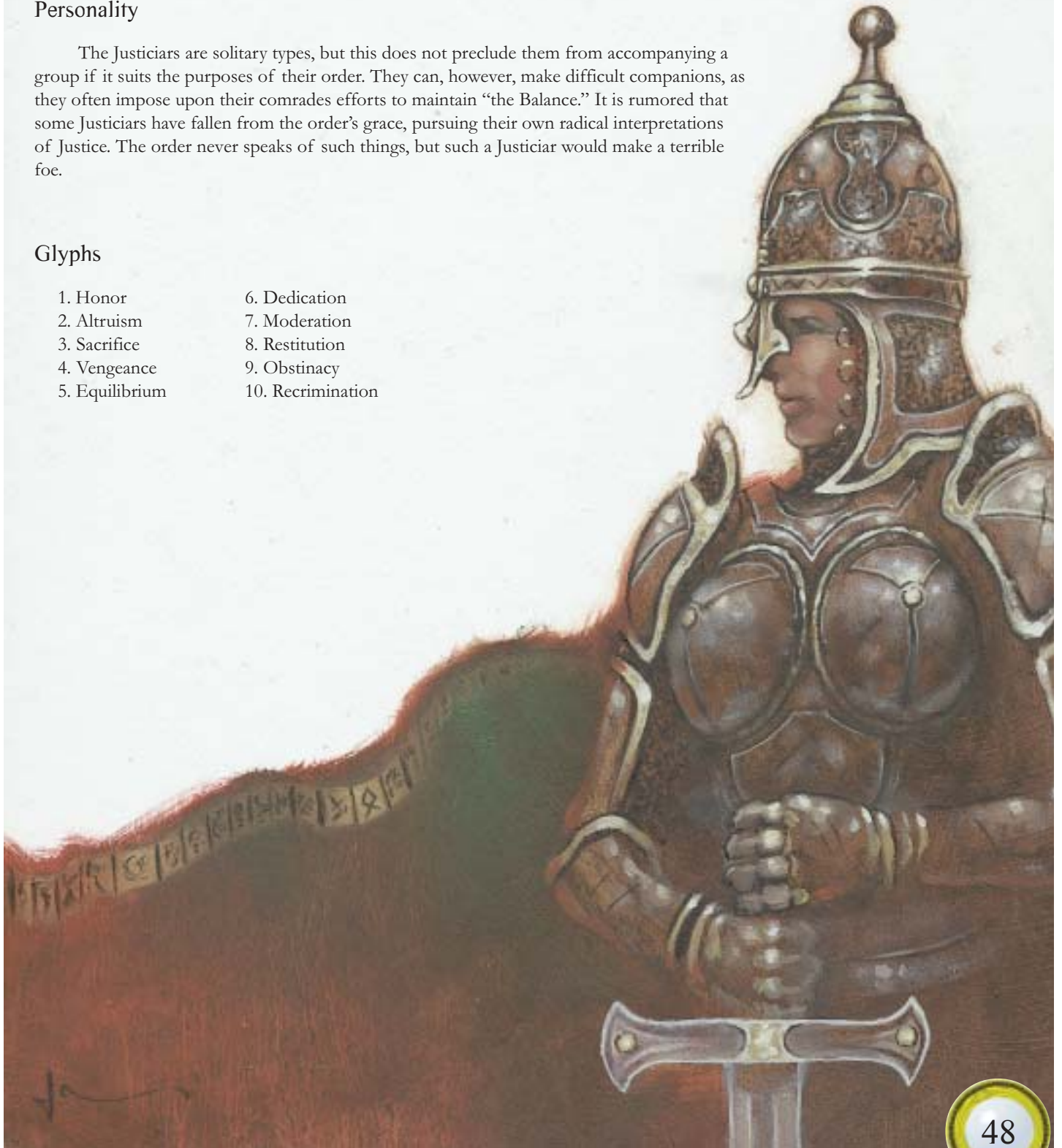
Rarely are the symbols of the Justiciars openly displayed, as the Order prefers to travel in secrecy. Great cloaks often conceal the mail and weapons carried by the far-ranging Justiciar. Some Justiciars, particularly the Executors, carry the various implements of interrogation and torture to aid them in their pursuit of the Truth. Many Justiciars find such tools superfluous, as Justice is often best served with steel. All Justiciars begin play with ink and quill to record injustices they have witnessed and corrected.

Personality

The Justiciars are solitary types, but this does not preclude them from accompanying a group if it suits the purposes of their order. They can, however, make difficult companions, as they often impose upon their comrades efforts to maintain “the Balance.” It is rumored that some Justiciars have fallen from the order’s grace, pursuing their own radical interpretations of Justice. The order never speaks of such things, but such a Justiciar would make a terrible foe.

Glyphs

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Honor | 6. Dedication |
| 2. Altruism | 7. Moderation |
| 3. Sacrifice | 8. Restitution |
| 4. Vengeance | 9. Obstinacy |
| 5. Equilibrium | 10. Recrimination |



Martyrs of War

He had manned this guard tower for eight years, and never had he a cause to sound the alarm bell that hung next to his post. Tonight would be the first, Talon thought, as he eyed the two-dozen orc braves gathering nearby in the woods. Luckily, orcs weren't nearly as stealthy as they imagined themselves to be. But the orc archers made him nervous.

Talon grabbed the bell and swung it hard. The old bell broke loose from its leather strap and fell to the floor with a deep clang. Talon squinted at it and saw a deep crack in the ancient bell.

"Won't wake no one now," he grunted as he turned towards the town. "Orcs!" he cried out. "Orcs!"

An arrow whizzed by his head. He waved his spear angrily. They'd have to fight through him first. Another arrow flew past him. The archers were in position. An arrow pierced through his rusty chain shirt, missing his flesh by less than an inch.

Talon heard the sounds of other guardsmen rising. Hopefully, they would be—

Soldiers, town cards, captains, fighters, men-at-arms—these are all men who have devoted their lives to the art of war. These men know that they will be forgotten in time, or even if they do rise to become a great commander of armies, their name will be forever attached to the wars they fought. These brave soldiers are the Martyrs of War.

Requirements

All warriors are eligible for the Martyrs of War. No matter what their status, birthplace, race, color or sex, anyone that can stand and hold a weapon can become a member.

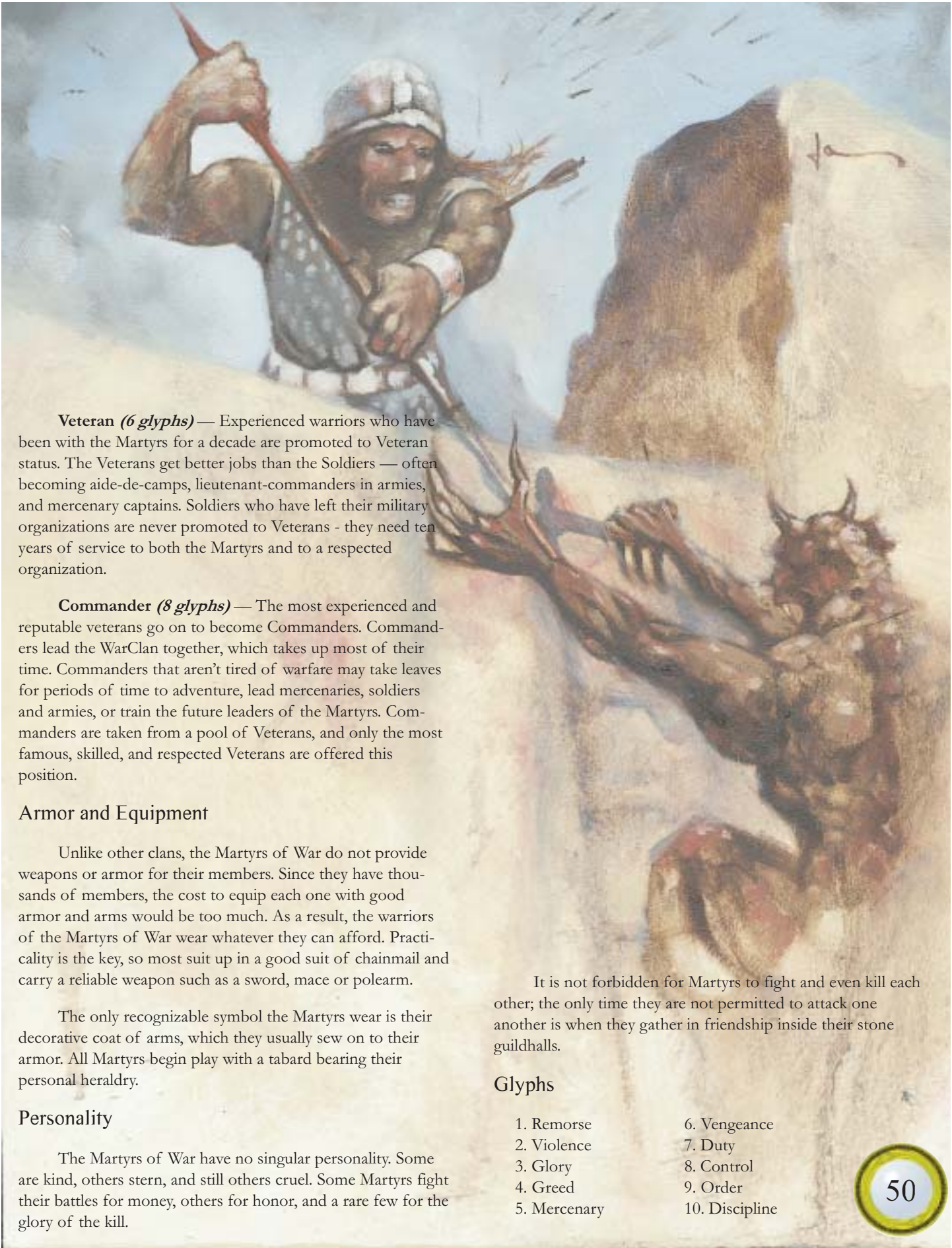
The Martyrs of War are very guild-oriented. In several large cities, the large, square keep of the Martyrs is easily seen. Here, they offer free food and lodging to their members, and even non-Martyrs can join for a small membership fee, usually no more than 25 silvers. These guild outposts typically post jobs for their members and have moderate training facilities for soldiers to hone their skills.

Ranks

Conscript (2 glyphs) — The beginning rank of the Martyrs of War. After joining a military organization, such as the town guard, palace guard, an army or a militia, the Martyrs welcome in those they feel can wield a sword well. Once a week, conscripts are invited to a training session with experienced veterans to hone their skills.

Soldier (4 glyphs) — The Soldiers of War usually have a few years of experience with the Martyrs. From these men and women, towns draw their guard captains, scouts and elite soldiers. Mercenary companies seeking new members, or caravans looking for guards often come to the Martyrs for these well-known volunteers. Conscripts who have left the service of their military organization are not promoted to soldiers.





Veteran (6 glyphs) — Experienced warriors who have been with the Martyrs for a decade are promoted to Veteran status. The Veterans get better jobs than the Soldiers — often becoming aide-de-camps, lieutenant-commanders in armies, and mercenary captains. Soldiers who have left their military organizations are never promoted to Veterans - they need ten years of service to both the Martyrs and to a respected organization.

Commander (8 glyphs) — The most experienced and reputable veterans go on to become Commanders. Commanders lead the WarClan together, which takes up most of their time. Commanders that aren't tired of warfare may take leaves for periods of time to adventure, lead mercenaries, soldiers and armies, or train the future leaders of the Martyrs. Commanders are taken from a pool of Veterans, and only the most famous, skilled, and respected Veterans are offered this position.

Armor and Equipment

Unlike other clans, the Martyrs of War do not provide weapons or armor for their members. Since they have thousands of members, the cost to equip each one with good armor and arms would be too much. As a result, the warriors of the Martyrs of War wear whatever they can afford. Practicality is the key, so most suit up in a good suit of chainmail and carry a reliable weapon such as a sword, mace or polearm.

The only recognizable symbol the Martyrs wear is their decorative coat of arms, which they usually sew on to their armor. All Martyrs begin play with a tabard bearing their personal heraldry.

Personality

The Martyrs of War have no singular personality. Some are kind, others stern, and still others cruel. Some Martyrs fight their battles for money, others for honor, and a rare few for the glory of the kill.

It is not forbidden for Martyrs to fight and even kill each other; the only time they are not permitted to attack one another is when they gather in friendship inside their stone guildhalls.

Glyphs

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. Remorse | 6. Vengeance |
| 2. Violence | 7. Duty |
| 3. Glory | 8. Control |
| 4. Greed | 9. Order |
| 5. Mercenary | 10. Discipline |

Medean Guard

Everyone knows the story behind the founding of the Medean Guard. A fierce army of Nopholster's nyvrogs were traveling many weeks to siege the city of Paradino. In preparation, the castle blacksmiths had worked for sixteen hours for days on end to provide the army with swords and chain for all. The blacksmiths even prepared for the reinforcement army of King Cresius.

Cresius betrayed Paradino and refused to send his army. After three months of a long siege, the defenders of Paradino decided to break the siege. They streamed forth from the castle gates and fought bravely, but were all cut down by the overwhelming forces of the nyvrogs.

Seeing that the warriors of the town had fallen, the nyvrogs planned to assault the city. However, in a fury created by loss and anger, the women of the city donned the extra arms and armor and struck before the nyvrogs could mount their attack. In the bloody battle that followed, the women of Paradino destroyed their foes and emerged victorious. Though the battle was theirs, barely a hundred women survived the combat. These women turned the nearly-ruined castle Paradino into a holy citadel for the training of women defenders and warriors.

As the famous Battle of Paradino faded into the past, great hordes of Gracht and orcs descended upon this citadel. In an epic battle, the Medeans were driven from their stronghold and forced to flee throughout the land. Paradino was lost, and centuries later its exact location unknown. Regardless, Medean knights have founded more than a dozen smaller strongholds throughout the domain. Here, they train new Sisters in the ancient path of warrior-women.

The Medean Guard is a large WarClan, as many of the others scorn women, forcing them to travel to Medean citadels for further training. Today, over a thousand women warriors bear the holy silver necklaces of the Medean Guard.

Requirements

The Medean Guard does not hold strict requirements for training. After all, the women who founded the Guard came from assorted backgrounds and training, from noble princesses to lowly broom girls. As the women of the Guard start progressing in rank, however, the requirements become more strict.

Ranks

Sister (2 glyphs) — This is where all young women start when they join the Guard. They are taught horseback riding, athletics, basic defensive techniques, and hunting and food gathering. No offensive techniques are taught at this stage, mostly to prevent impulsive young women from killing themselves.

Most Medeans become Sisters when they are in their mid-teens. A young girl who approaches the Medeans and asks for training will usually be welcomed. After several months of training, her teachers will decide whether or not she is fit to pursue the path to becoming a true Sister.

Medean (4 glyphs) — After being a Sister for about two years, and no younger than eighteen years of age, promotion to Medean occurs. This promotion will not take place if the woman has not spent considerable time with her fellow Medeans. Most Medean strongholds expect Sisters to spend nine months of the year in service. Once promotion occurs, offensive weapon techniques are taught, along with weapons lore, tactics and history.



Dame (6 glyphs)— Upon completing the training for Medean (which usually takes another three years), the Medean is urged to go out into the world and make a name for herself. Many never return to Paradino to complete their training — they are content using their skills to adventure, lead others, but never to train Medeans, for that honor is reserved for...

Medean Teachers (8 glyphs)— Those few that return to Medean citadels become teachers, educating new Sisters in the way of the order. Not all Sister Travelers are accepted as teachers, and the ones that aren't are usually sent out to recruit new students and lead them back to the Citadel. Medean Teachers must prove their wisdom and battle prowess to others before being fully accepted as an instructor.

Medean Order (10 glyphs)— After many years of teaching, an experienced Guard will either leave the Citadel for a quiet life, return to be a Dame, or become a member of the Medean Order, the circle of women that leads the Guard. This honored role requires a woman to be an exceptional warrior, teacher, and leader. Many are not accepted into this elite circle. Once accepted as a member of the Order, these noble women lead other Dames in great tasks. Common missions include establishing outposts, raising and commanding small armies where needed, and deciding the politics of the Guard.

Armor and Equipment

Sisters of the Medean Guard are given a silver necklace upon entering the order and training for a year. This bears the symbols of both the Medean and her teacher. Medean Guard prefer steel swords in battle. These swords are often decorated with cloth “ribbons,” which can confuse opponents when wielded quickly.

Medean Guard typically wear draping, classical fabrics over their chain. Medeans in the colder areas of the Glacier Rifts wear thin and soft wool sweaters under their armor - this keeps them warm, and also serves to make chainmail more comfortable. Though many warriors laugh at the idea of wearing a soft sweater under their armor, those men who try it will often beg the Medeans to give them a sweater for themselves. The Medean Guard have no official colors, though many women use whites to distinguish themselves from a distance. Hair is usually shoulder-length, and casually let loose. During war, hair is always tied back or braided to keep it out of their faces.

During time of celebration, the Medeans are known for their decorative gowns. Tight corsets combined with a billowing petticoat and skirt make these dresses extravagant and beautiful, if not overly difficult to maneuver in. It takes the finest clothier months to craft a Medean gown, and few are sold to non-Medeans. It is not unheard of for the men of towns close to Medean citadels to whisper and hope that they are asked to escort these fine warrior-ladies to a festival.

Personality

The women of the Medean Guard consider themselves skilled warriors, not amazons, man-haters, or any other nonsense. They are taught to be terse, calm, and always in control. Since they spent most of their training with each other in the isolated Citadel Paradino, they often don't react well when they're not in charge and others are making the decisions. Still, their disciplined upbringing makes them even more unlikely to fail to cooperate with superiors of any kind.

Glyphs

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Loyalty | 6. Stubbornness |
| 2. Piety | 7. Defender |
| 3. Will | 8. Independence |
| 4. Honor | 9. Passion |
| 5. Discipline | 10. Creation |



Obsidian Templari

"I tell you," whispered the woman as she squeezed her corn-yellow hair, wringing out the wetness. "He trembled."

Her companion smiled, half in disbelief.

"Are you saying that Icrates, the 'cleaver of the north,' was afraid of this visitor?" she asked.

"Without a doubt," said Karmin. "When he heard the door burst open, Icrates reached for his axe. But when the stranger entered, I saw a shiver run down his spine. Icrates let go of his axe and took a seat."

"What did he look like? Were you afraid?"

Karmin nodded. "More terrified than Icrates. The stranger wore black armor. It wasn't black iron, though, or painted black. It was as if it was scorched! As if he had stood in a bonfire for hours. His sword dragged behind him, and a part of that was scarred by fire as well. It looked melted in some parts. And the runes! Three crimson runes glowed from his helm."

"Could you read them?"

"One. It was Desolation," answered Karmin, the water now dripping from her hair. She smiled faintly. "Blessed it was that this stranger left so quickly."

"Perhaps he was on a mission," suggested the other woman, now washing her own hair.

"Perhaps. Still... I pray he does not come through this town again."

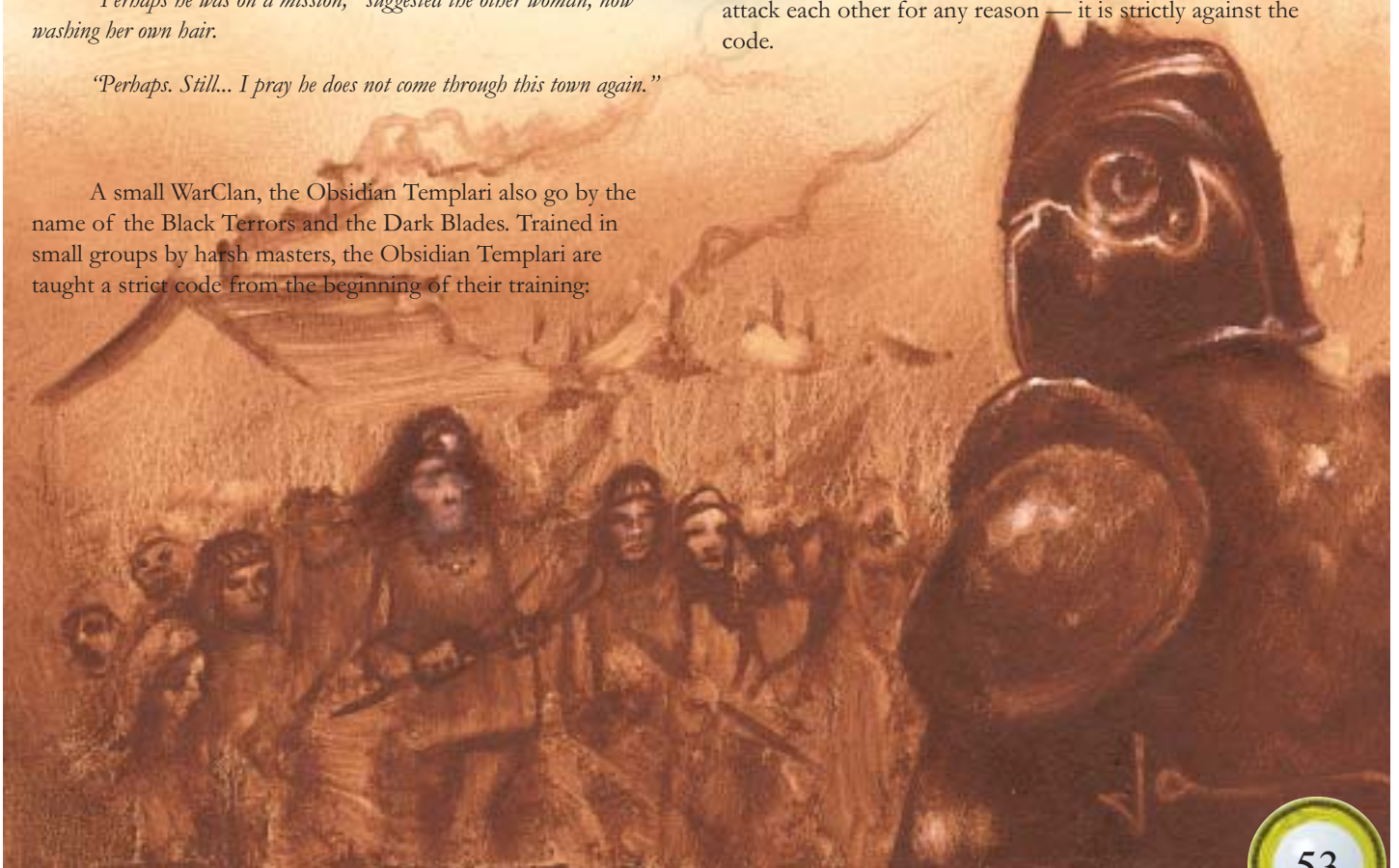
A small WarClan, the Obsidian Templari also go by the name of the Black Terrors and the Dark Blades. Trained in small groups by harsh masters, the Obsidian Templari are taught a strict code from the beginning of their training:

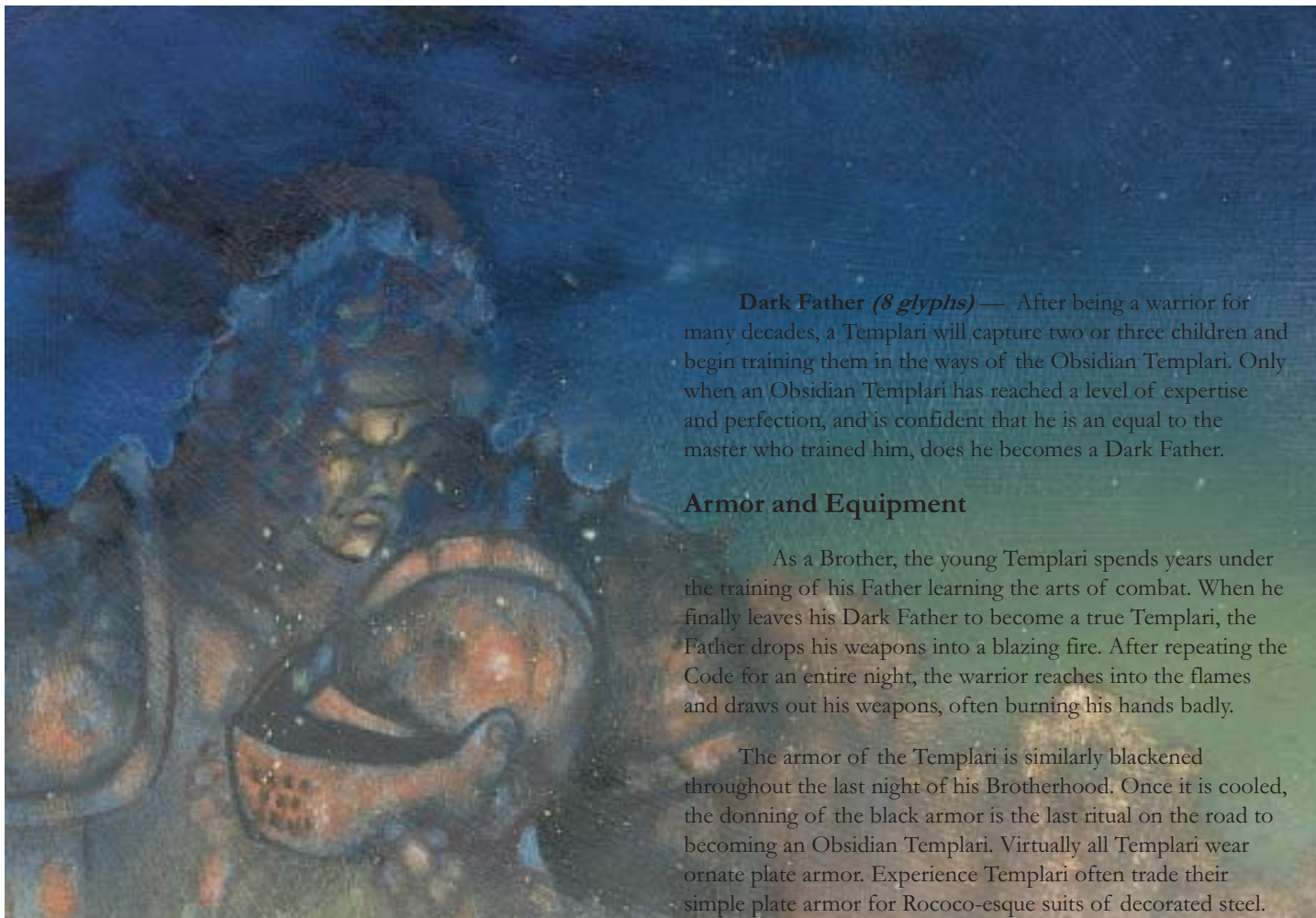
Those who are weak receive one warning; if they persist with their character, they are to be slain quickly. Those who are strong deserve no warning; it would be an insult to warn them before a challenge. Once initiated, a brother of the Templari is never to be attacked... by *anyone*.

Their code tells much about them. They are cold, merciless warriors. Once an enemy is made, the Dark Blades will travel hundreds of miles to kill them. The many villages and towns that they pass through know not to bother them — if the Obsidian Templari have no quarrel with them, he passes through swiftly and without trouble. If anyone dares to challenge the Obsidian Templari, or make trouble for him, it is the warrior's code to give him a single warning. Often times this warning is no more than a hard stare, or a simple word of caution. If the warning is not heeded, the Obsidian Templari have been known to lay waste to entire villages.

Obsidian Templari, however, are rarely quick to anger. They are very deliberate, and often cruel, but they do not fight for the sake of shedding blood. Their code enforces a strict honor upon them.

It is rare that the Obsidian Templari travel in groups. After training they spend little time with one another, though occasionally nod to each other in passing. The Templari never attack each other for any reason — it is strictly against the code.





Obsidian Templari generally don't stay in one place. Rather, they travel about becoming mercenaries, or looting ancient ruins for powerful artifacts and weapons.

Requirements

No one chooses to be in the Obsidian Templari. The Templari capture and kidnap youths at an early age and start their training right away. Obsidian Templari are predominantly men – only a handful of women are accepted into the order.

Ranks

Brother (0 glyphs) — An Obsidian Templari, upon being captured, immediately becomes a brother. They have little knowledge of weaponry, but learn quickly if they survive the upcoming tests. Dark Fathers teach combat techniques and stoicism. A harsh, but ultimately fair parent, Dark Fathers subject their students to grueling tests of endurance and persistence. Occasionally, masters let their students roam free for a few weeks to practice what they have learned alone. These sojourns make good opportunity for adventure. Students *always* return to their masters.

Templari (4 glyphs) — After learning the ways of the Code, as well as training for many years in dozens of weapons and devices, the Obsidian Templari leaves his master to forge his own destiny.

Dark Father (8 glyphs) — After being a warrior for many decades, a Templari will capture two or three children and begin training them in the ways of the Obsidian Templari. Only when an Obsidian Templari has reached a level of expertise and perfection, and is confident that he is an equal to the master who trained him, does he become a Dark Father.

Armor and Equipment

As a Brother, the young Templari spends years under the training of his Father learning the arts of combat. When he finally leaves his Dark Father to become a true Templari, the Father drops his weapons into a blazing fire. After repeating the Code for an entire night, the warrior reaches into the flames and draws out his weapons, often burning his hands badly.

The armor of the Templari is similarly blackened throughout the last night of his Brotherhood. Once it is cooled, the donning of the black armor is the last ritual on the road to becoming an Obsidian Templari. Virtually all Templari wear ornate plate armor. Experience Templari often trade their simple plate armor for Rococo-esque suits of decorated steel. Over the plate armor, heavy crushed velvet cloaks are usually worn. Naturally, blacks and blood reds are preferred colors. The Templari begin play with any weapons and armor blackened in the fires of his Father. It is a personal dishonor to lose these symbols, and the Templari will go to great lengths to retrieve them.

Personality

The Obsidian Templari are true warriors — many of them spend their entire lives training and practicing for battle. Their entire mindset becomes focused around battles, and every task they do becomes a battle in their own mind.

Even though they can be savage warriors, the Obsidian Templari are not ones to throw their lives away. They have been known to fight with sophistication and ingenious battle tactics. Templari have even been known to surrender to superior forces... waiting for the moment that their foes are off-guard so an escape can be made.

Glyphs

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. Intrigue | 6. Persistence |
| 2. Betrayal | 7. Solitude |
| 3. Discord | 8. Deception |
| 4. Murder | 9. Annihilation |
| 5. Madness | 10. TerrorAnnih |

Red Serpents

The waves tossed the ship like a leaf in a stream, threatening with each swell to dash the crew to death upon the black rocks of the Dagger Shoals. Bernadan watched in morbid fascination from the cliffs as the ship pitched closer and closer to land. Although his village was a wealthy one, few traders were mad enough to attempt to reach it in this season of stormy seas. He almost pitied the poor fools who seemed mere moments from death. Even as he began to walk down from the high cliffs above his village, Bernadan could hear their desperate screams.

With a start, he whirled back toward the sea. The ship was closer now, impossibly fighting against the massive waves—close enough now that he could clearly hear that the crew wasn't screaming, they were singing. He stood as if mesmerized as the high-prowed vessel cut through the water, warriors waving steel blades from the tattered rigging.

Bernadan turned and ran as fast as his tired legs could carry him. The village had to be warned: The Serpents were coming!

The Red Serpents are an unusual WarClan, as they have no permanent home other than their warships. They are fearless sailors and buccaneers, and have a curious reputation for both ruthlessness and generosity. One day they may be murderous villains, and the next rescuers of shipwrecked sailors. Dangerous and unpredictable, they are the masters of the open seas and all tremble when they see the serpent banner flying.

Ranks

Lubber (2 glyphs) — The least-experienced sailors, they are given the menial tasks aboard ship. Lubbers are eager for loot and fast promotion, which is often gained at the point of a sword. Lubbers only gain recognition after having made a long voyage with the Serpents, proving their value to the ship.

Seadog (4 glyphs) — The majority of crews are known as Seadogs. Hearty rogues, they live for the sea and battle. It may take a year or more for a Lubber to gain the respect of their fellow crewmen. Even then, a show of cowardice in battle can result in a keel-hauling.

Reaver (6 glyphs) — Reavers command boarding parties and raids, and occasionally are found in charge of entire ships. Only a Seadog with proven battle experience will be chosen to lead the Seadogs.

Captain (8 glyphs) — These warriors are commanders of the largest vessels. They are daring and cunning, and few can stand against them at sea. It is the custom among the Serpents to take the captaincy by force, in single combat. Although by tradition even a lowly Lubber may challenge for the position, this is rarely the case, as Captains are amongst the deadliest swords in the world.

Sealord (10 glyphs) — These are the commanders of mighty fleets of pirates. They are rightly feared, for no coastal city is entirely safe from these masters of the blue oceans.



Armor and Equipment

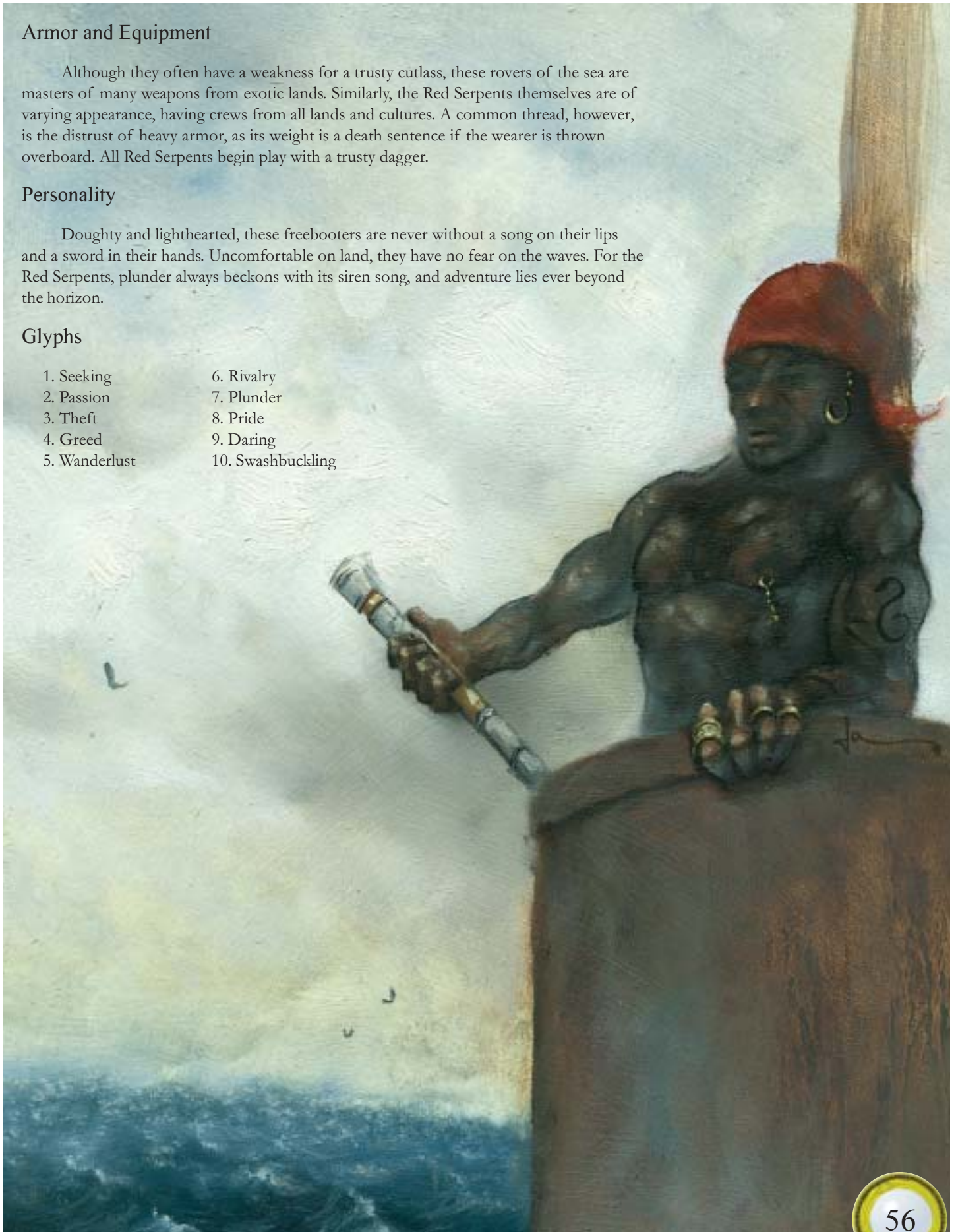
Although they often have a weakness for a trusty cutlass, these rovers of the sea are masters of many weapons from exotic lands. Similarly, the Red Serpents themselves are of varying appearance, having crews from all lands and cultures. A common thread, however, is the distrust of heavy armor, as its weight is a death sentence if the wearer is thrown overboard. All Red Serpents begin play with a trusty dagger.

Personality

Doughty and lighthearted, these freebooters are never without a song on their lips and a sword in their hands. Uncomfortable on land, they have no fear on the waves. For the Red Serpents, plunder always beckons with its siren song, and adventure lies ever beyond the horizon.

Glyphs

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Seeking | 6. Rivalry |
| 2. Passion | 7. Plunder |
| 3. Theft | 8. Pride |
| 4. Greed | 9. Daring |
| 5. Wanderlust | 10. Swashbuckling |



Riders of Caldecan

"This blasted dust will be the death of me," cursed Prince Olorrig. He slapped his mailed glove across his saddle, raising yet another small cloud of the thick, yellow dust which had plagued his army. The winds kept a steady swirl of clouds about him, making his scouts useless.

For days now, the Prince had pursued the band of raiders across the plains. Each day he had come within sight of the fleeing riders, but never close enough to engage them. His own men, mostly garrison troops and militia, were exhausted by the chase and ready to bed down for the evening. The Prince, still furious over the loss of his prize horses in the raid, cursed again and began to dismount. He vowed he would make the Caldecan pay dearly for their audacity.

"Alarm!"

A lookout was pointing into the setting sun. Olorrig cast his gaze about, unable to see anything but a faint shimmer. Then his eyes picked out a horseman. And another. As if by magic, dozens of riders appeared out of the sun, the thunder of their hooves rising over the shouts of panic in the camp. Arrows were falling into the milling soldiers almost immediately, turning the camp into a scene of chaos.

"Form up! Make ready!" Chandrin, the Prince's Sergeant-at-Arms pushed through the mob, striking about himself with the flat of his blade in a vain attempt to restore order. The Prince watched as Chandrin sank to the ground, still clutching the black-feathered arrow that pierced his throat. Riders in multibued cloaks swirled through the clouds of dust like ghosts, loosing arrows at point-blank range into the disorganized mob.

Olorrig had only a moment to draw his blade before he too went down in the hail of arrows.

The raiders returned to their camp, laden with plunder and the story of a generous prince who was not content to let the Riders leave with half his horses, but felt it necessary to bring the other half to them personally.

According to their traditions, the Riders began as the honor guard of Caldecan, the legendary warrior who stole the jeweled crown of the Dwarf-king. Although the full story of Caldecan has long since been lost to the ages, his followers still bear his name. They live from the saddle and boast the best light horsemen in the world. Unlike many of the other WarClans, the Riders no longer have a WarLord. Instead, the clan is divided into several rival bands which war amongst themselves as frequently as they raid others. Their numbers are few, however, and most are encountered as wandering bandits and raiders, keeping alive Caldecan's legacy of plunder and glory.

Special Attributes

Riders with Bow expertise of any level may fire from horseback without penalty.



Ranks

Scout (2 glyphs) — All Caldecan begin as scouts. They are sent on long patrols, often alone, to search for new plunder. Those that survive such trials take their place among the true Riders.

Rider (4 glyphs) — Full-fledged members of the WarClan, the Riders are accomplished raiders and horsemen. They take pride in their horsemanship and the loot they seize.

Plunderer (6 glyphs) — Riders that have shown their skill at banditry may gain the honored title of Plunderer. These hardy warriors are often called upon to lead dangerous scouting missions and raids. Riders look forward to their call, as it brings the promise of loot and glory.

Chieftain (8 glyphs) — Chieftains act as leaders of major raids as well as personal escorts to their Horselord. Occasionally, they are sent out on quests of great importance to the WarClan. Although they are picked by the Horselord, this choice must be approved by the tribe, as all must be willing to obey his word in battle.

Horselord (10 glyphs) — Rarely seen out of a saddle, the Horselords lead the remaining tribes of the Caldecan. They are fierce rivals, and never fail to hinder one another.

Armor and Equipment

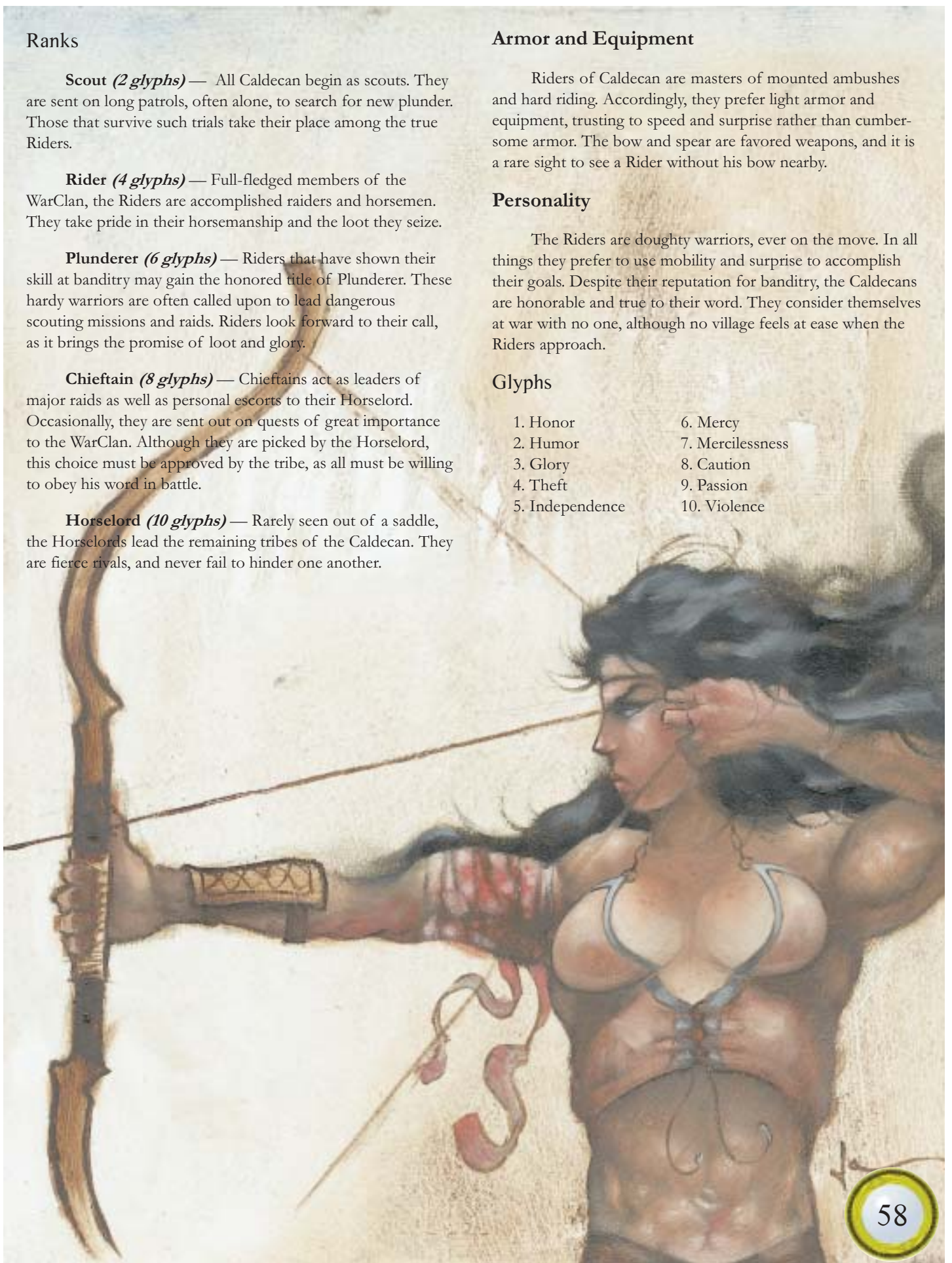
Riders of Caldecan are masters of mounted ambushes and hard riding. Accordingly, they prefer light armor and equipment, trusting to speed and surprise rather than cumbersome armor. The bow and spear are favored weapons, and it is a rare sight to see a Rider without his bow nearby.

Personality

The Riders are doughty warriors, ever on the move. In all things they prefer to use mobility and surprise to accomplish their goals. Despite their reputation for banditry, the Caldecans are honorable and true to their word. They consider themselves at war with no one, although no village feels at ease when the Riders approach.

Glyphs

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Honor | 6. Mercy |
| 2. Humor | 7. Mercilessness |
| 3. Glory | 8. Caution |
| 4. Theft | 9. Passion |
| 5. Independence | 10. Violence |





Choosing a Race

There are many races other than Humans in the world of *RuneQuest: Slayers*. Players may choose to run a Human, Elf, Dwarf, Gulpi, Gnome, Fenoderee or Tuathae character. When compared to Humans, non-human races carry with them certain advantages and disadvantages. Additionally, non-human characters begin with fewer hero points, reflecting Humanity's greater diversity and flexibility. Below you will find descriptions of the major races and their various abilities. For each race there is a list of the base level for starting attributes that is acquired without the expenditure of hero points. Base attributes that begin below 10 may be raised at a cost of one hero point per increase up to an attribute score of 10. Any additional increase is acquired at the normal cost.

Example: *Draluk the Gulpi has a base Intellect 9. To raise this to a 10 costs a single hero point. To raise it to 11, however, will cost 3 hero points: one to raise from 9 to 10, plus two more to go from 10 to 11.*

Base attributes that begin above 10 may be raised by subtracting the value of the starting attribute from the final attribute cost.

Example: *Kelannan the Elf has a base Perception 12. To raise this to a 13 only costs 3 hero points: 8 (the cost of an attribute of 13) minus 5 (the "cost" of the base attribute of 12) equals 3.*

Base attributes may be lowered as well. For every point an attribute is lowered, an additional hero point is gained that may be spent elsewhere.

Humans

This young race was once viewed as nothing more than an upstart by the elder races. Now, Man stretches forth across the world, placing his mark upon the lands and establishing new kingdoms over the ruins of ancient cities. Human characters follow the character creation guidelines given below without modification. They have a Base Speed of 10 paces. They may belong to any WarClan. They also start with more hero points than other races to reflect Humanity's inherent flexibility and diversity.

Hero Points

Human characters receive 30 Hero Points.

Base Attributes

Might	10
Courage	10
Intellect	10
Agility	10
Perception	10

Dwarves

Short, stocky, and stubborn, Dwarves are the kings of the underground world that lies deep under the mountains. Dwarves are a hardy people who thrive on their crafts and their precious metals and gems as well as a hearty battle every few years to stir the blood and warm their souls.

Physical Description

Dwarves are always short, usually averaging a little over four feet tall. Though small, they are very muscular-years of living under the earth digging and tunneling makes them strong. Fit Dwarves weigh over 200 lbs. and don't mind showing humans how immovable they are.

Dwarven hair is very unusual-it is composed partially of metal. Some Dwarves have copper hair, others silver or bronze. A handful of clan kings actually have gold hair. Dwarves value their hair for obvious reasons; men wear long beards and braids, and most Dwarven women keep their hair long and tied up with elaborate metal rings.

The Homelands

Dwarves live under the mountains. In the old days, they used to be lord of the hills, but their cousins the Gnomes have driven them out, though the Dwarves will never admit to it. If you ask a Dwarf, they bestowed the hills to the Gnomes so that they could concentrate on protecting their mountain tunnels from the incursions of the troglodytes and goblins.

Dwarves have carved kingdoms composed of thousands of miles of tunnels. According to legend, all Dwarven kingdoms connect. Unfortunately, hordes of goblins and troglodytes have occupied these connecting tunnels and have made themselves bitter enemies of the Dwarves for centuries.

To a dwarf, a natural cavern is an unfinished one. The Dwarven homes are intricately carved, often inlaid with gems and precious metals. This is one reason the Dwarves rarely let

others into their kingdoms-even the most noble of Humans think about stealing a few gems from a Dwarf tunnel and making them rich for the rest of their lives.

Personality

Dwarves don't especially like members of other races - especially the Dwarves who have never left their mountain homes-but they enjoy trading goods and making money with Humans. Of course, Dwarves never sell their quality goods, only the refuse (which is still better than most Human goods!).

Because of their slight intolerance towards other races, Dwarves are extremely stubborn. If dealing with other Dwarves, however, an immediate hierarchy forms. Dwarves recognize their elders and superiors, and have no problems obeying their orders or listening to their plans. These elders, in turn, realize the importance of listening to the opinions of their subordinates. When dealing with other races, however, Dwarves see themselves as superior thinkers, fighters and tacticians.

All Dwarves are craftsmen, though the elite Dwarven craftsmen are strongly discouraged to visit the outside lands. Dwarven masters are celebrities among the Dwarves -a master may work for decades on a single item, to present it to his people in a grand unveiling ceremony, where every Dwarf gets a chance to inspect and admire it.

In battle, Dwarves are brave and strong warriors, charging headlong into frays against larger creatures. Though easily enraged in combat, and swinging their axes tirelessly, Dwarves are not berserk fighters-they are much too sophisticated for such barbaric techniques. Dwarves prefer weapons that allow them to use their strength to its full advantage. Axes, maces, and flails are the most common weapons.

Characteristics

- ❖ Dwarves get +2 Fatigue because of their strict discipline and musculature.
- ❖ Dwarves have a Base Speed of 6 paces because of their short legs.
- ❖ Dwarves automatically begin play with Apprentice Blacksmith profession in addition to a free profession.
- ❖ Appraisal Ability: Dwarves can identify the value of any metallic item with an Intellect roll.
- ❖ Dwarves begin play with one Wealth Level higher than their Status allows them.
- ❖ Dwarves may not use longbows or two-handed swords.



WarClans

Dwarves who join the ranks of the WarClans tend to fall into the Martyrs of War, the Galloglauch and the Justiciars. Dwarves who join the Guidesman usually restrict themselves to natural caverns and mountainsides.

Dwarves avoid the Red Serpents (though there is an equivalent Dwarven clan that voyages on the underground lakes and rivers of the underworld), the Riders of Caldecan and the Medean Guard.

Hero Points

Dwarven characters receive 20 Hero Points.

Base Attributes

Might	12
Courage	11
Intellect	10
Agility	10
Perception	10

Elves

Mysterious and ancient, the Elves remember days lost in the legends of the younger races. Most remain aloof and isolated, content to live their long lives apart from those they consider less civilized. Occasionally, however, curiosity and wanderlust drive some Elves to travel the wide world, experiencing the quick, and often violent, lives of Man.

Physical Description

Although thinner on average than Men, Elves are very tall, often well over six feet. Most have black or golden hair, although some on occasion have silver locks. Their eyes, whether coal black or icy blue, are nearly hypnotic in effect, being mirrors that reflect the vast ages of time that the Elves have seen pass. Graceful and possessed of an inhuman beauty, Elves are unmistakable figures.

The Homelands

The realms of the Elves remain hidden from prying eyes, often in regions thought inaccessible by others. An Elven city is one with its surrounding element, be it forest, mountain or plain. Through their ancient skills, they create living homes that exist as part of nature, unlike the cities of Man. Forests of massive trees are woven together to create cities of vast, green towers. Sailors tell the tale of Allyrian of the Waves, a mighty Elven seaport built of living coral, hidden from the uninvited by a perpetual mist upon the surrounding waters.

Personality

The powerful presence of the Elves is intimidating to most others, and the Elves make no effort to lessen this effect. Although some are rather haughty, disdaining the younger races, those that leave their hidden sanctuaries are generally well-disposed toward others. Even then, there is often the faint hint of mockery about them, as if they believe the scurrying activity of others is nothing more than child's play compared to the works of the Elves.



Characteristics

- ❖ Elves begin play with Apprentice Actor, Artist, Musician or Singer profession in addition to their free background profession.
- ❖ Elves have a Base Speed of 12 paces.
- ❖ Elves see in starlight as well as Humans see in daylight.

WarClans

Elves that travel the outside world tend to join the more nomadic WarClans. Lovers of the open seas, Elves are often seen in the Red Serpents. They are also attracted to the Guidesmen or Martyrs of War, although tales are told of a sect of the Medean Guard comprised entirely of Elven warrior-women.

Hero Points

Elven characters receive 15 hero points.

Base Attributes

Might	10
Courage	10
Intellect	11
Agility	11
Perception	12

Green Elves

Green Elves are an example of an offshoot race. They are only found in the Glacier Rifts.

The Green Elves consider themselves a separate race, related to the Elves as much as Gnomes are to Dwarves. Unlike those two species, however, the Green Elves consider Elves their brethren. Green Elves look very similar to typical Elves, except that their skin is a pale green, their eyes shine with an emerald hue, and their hair is usually white, blond, dark green or some hue in between.

Green Elves make their homes high in the treetops. Here, they build extensive walkways and multi-leveled cottages layered with spiral stairs that would seem rickety and dangerous to an outsider. Since food is scarce in the canopy, the Green Elves take turns forming hunting and gathering parties that live on the ground for several months. These groups find berries and meat on the forest floor and deliver them to the base of the treetop village, where the food is hauled up on traditional woven, pine-needle baskets.

Green Elves have a very dualistic personality. Most are xenophobic and afraid to leave their forest homes; Green Elves are taught to be highly suspicious of “civilization,” especially

that of mankind. Even the Green Elves who do venture outside the forest seem very stiff and formal to Humans. They keep their distance, and are often silent and passive. The human villages that border Green Elf settlements often refer to these Elves as “the observers,” or “the watchers.”

Those few individuals that grow to befriend the Green Elves know that they are actually talkative, creative, and a tad flighty. They are very honest and open, and never hesitate to voice their opinions. Green Elves love sport, dance, and arboreal acrobatics using their unique branch balance ability. Unfortunately, these traits disappear entirely when a Green Elf is in the presence of so much as one outsider.

Characteristics

- ❖ Green Elves begin play with Apprentice Actor, Artist, Musician or Singer profession.
- ❖ Green Elves have a Base Speed of 12 paces.
- ❖ Branch Balance. Green Elves can balance themselves on the thinnest and weakest of branches with ease. If they ever have to roll to maintain their balance on anything that might be Difficult Agility or Hopeless Agility for another race, Green Elves only have to make a Basic Agility roll.

Hero Points

Green Elf characters receive only 15 hero points.

Base Attributes

Might	10
Courage	10
Intellect	11
Agility	11
Perception	12



Fenoderee

These tall, ugly humanoids have a mysterious past. Few know the origins of the Fenoderee and many of the superstitious call them half-devils and the disformed. Perhaps it is this reason that the orcs and Gracht have long hunted down the Fenoderee in an effort to permanently exterminate the race.

Still, those who grow to understand the few remaining Fenoderee find them to be an intelligent, social race of survivors.

Physical Description

Fenoderee are slightly taller than the average Human is, though they are extremely thin and walk with a slight bend. This appearance conceals their amazing strength and fortitude.



The facial features of the Fenoderee are as varied as Mankind's, except that they are uniformly ugly. Few Fenoderee are actually horrible to look at, but all of them have an unappealing aura that draws frowns and stares from a crowd unaccustomed to looking at them.

Fenoderee possess a unique ability to be able to change their facial appearance. When the sun sets, the Fenoderee may whisper aloud their requested changes in their face. They can change their hair, eye, or skin color, as well as the shape of their face. They cannot change their appearance to look like a specific person, unless that person is another Fenoderee. They cannot change their weight, height or sex using this ability either.

The Homelands

According to Fenoderee legend, they were once the guardians of the streams and rivers that led to the enchanted world of the shadows. In the Fenoderee towns of old, these creatures would set up grand bazaars showcasing the finest in magical and rune-carved goods. Creatures from both the mortal world and the shadow lands would buy and trade with the Fenoderee.

Eventually, the shadow streams dried up and the Fenoderee left their villages to disperse across the land. Through some cruel turn of fate, the Fenoderee became the mortal enemy of the orcs and the Gracht-who butchered and slaughtered any Fenoderee they found. As such, the Fenoderee population is greatly diminished, numbering about a tenth of that of Elves.

Rumors abound of remote villages that still have access to the shadow lands. Every Fenoderee would love to join his fellows in these places, and many have lifelong dreams of finding such a locale.

Personality

The Fenoderee are a talkative, social people by nature. The few that are left join any local village that allows them. Here, they lead lives as any other townsfolk, and many become leaders and mayors of the towns that trust them.

Fenoderee have the reputation of being mischief-makers, and this isn't entirely undeserved. All Fenoderee love experimentation and curiosities. They thrive on variety, which is often seen by outsiders as nothing more than chaos. Fenoderee never walk the same path twice, never eat at the same time, and are extremely hard to track down. It was said that to outguess the plans of Guillian, a Fenoderee general, one would have better luck guessing the number of leaves that fell during the hour of one's birth.

Characteristics

- ❖ Masking Ability: Fenoderee can change their facial appearance, as outlined in Physical Description, above.
- ❖ Fenoderee have a Base Speed of 10 paces.

WarClans

While rare, Fenoderee warriors make fearsome sights. Their great strength allows them to take on monstrosities such as trolls and ogres with ease. Most Fenoderee join the Martyrs of War and become captains of local militias.

The Fenoderee have no interest in the stricter WarClans such as the Justiciars, Medean Guard and Obsidian Templari.

Hero Points

Fenoderee characters receive 15 Hero Points.

Base Attributes

Might	11
Courage	12
Intellect	10
Agility	10
Perception	9

Gnomes

Gnomes are the distant relatives to the Dwarves. Smaller and wirier than their cousins, Gnomes are the inhabitants of the low hills and valleys that surround the Dwarven mountain kingdoms. Like the Dwarves, Gnomes are craftsmen, but the similarity ends there. Gnomes are undisciplined and chaotic. They have no kings or territories, so one Gnome village will be completely different from another.

Physical Description

Gnomes generally have an earthy, yellow-brown skin with coal-black, short beards. Their eyes are wider and more suited to minute tasks—a Gnome can read tiny writing or spot flecks of dust on a table with ease. Their large, pointy ears also give them better hearing than typical Humans.

A typical Gnome stands a little over three feet tall and weighs slightly over 100 lbs.

The Homelands

Gnomes are hill-dwellers. Ages ago, the Gnomes shared the mountains with the Dwarves. For unknown reasons, the Gnomes were ousted from their mountain homes by the Dwarves. The Gnomes responded in the only organized Gnome attack in history: They raided the Dwarven hill settlements and drove them back into the mountains. The Gnomes happily claimed the hills and spread out to build their settlements.

Gnomes build their homes halfway above ground and halfway below ground. A small Gnomish cottage will usually have several underground chambers. The upper chambers are usually used for crafting—Gnomes prefer sunlight to lantern light—and the lower chambers are used for parties, sleeping and other social events.

Personality

The Gnomish population is composed of hundreds of tribes and clans spread throughout the land. There are no Gnome leaders or kings—each village is ruled by anarchy, democracy or some other experimental government of the week. As such, Gnomish personalities vary even greater than Human personalities.

The more remote the Gnomish settlement, the more hostile and xenophobic will its people be. Gnomish towns located in the outlands are extremely hostile. Forming tribes of savage warriors, these villages constantly attack their neighbors regardless of their race. Stories of lone Human heroes being attacked and killed by dozens of spear-wielding Gnomes are common in these lands, and many of these stories provide gruesome details of human-sacrifice and cannibalism.

The Gnomes that live closer to Human and Dwarven settlements are a far friendlier bunch. They enjoy trading and bartering with both, and many Gnome villages have opened up taverns and inns for travelers. Though friendly, these Gnomes are still quite chaotic, and many settlements have odd laws and rules created strictly to embarrass travelers.



All Gnomes love knickknacks and small objects. Wealthy Gnomes are often seen having a thousand baubles dangling from his robes. It is said that rich Gnomes can be heard from miles away as they rattle up to meet you. Gnomes always give knickknacks to each other when they meet a new friend or when they bid farewell to one. Typical objects include small earrings, carved pieces of metal, faerie-sized baskets, et cetera.

Gnomes dislike metals—they're quite content to let the Dwarves boast of their mastery over the forge. Instead, Gnomes excel at more organic trades. Woodcarving and clothmaking are Gnomish specialties, and each Gnomish village is said to have its own type of well-made, unique fabric. Many a traveler has reported walking into an empty Gnomish village, silent except for the whisper of a hundred shuttles flying through as many looms.

Characteristics

- ❖ Gnomes have a Base Speed of 8 paces because of their short legs.
- ❖ Gnomes automatically begin play with the Apprentice Clothmaking profession or the Apprentice Woodworking profession in addition to the normal free profession.
- ❖ Gnomes gain an additional 1 Fatigue point due to their determination.
- ❖ Gnomes may not use two-handed weapons or longbows.

WarClans

Gnomes who join the ranks of the WarClans fall into the Martyrs of War, Guidesmen and (less frequently) the Galloglauch. Some Gnomes have joined the Red Serpents, because they make good sail masters and ropemakers.

Gnomes avoid the Obsidian Templari (too serious), the Riders of Caldecan (horses too big), and the Medean Guard (too prissy).

Hero Points

Gnome characters receive 25 Hero Points.

Base Attributes

Might	9
Courage	10
Intellect	10
Agility	11
Perception	12

Gulpi

They are the haunters of the frozen north, gray shadows in the hills. The Gulpi have lived in stone-age barbarism for thousands of years but now come forth to steal secrets from the other races. Stealthy and strong, they look to reverse the tide that sweeps them from their homes.

Physical Description

As tall as a Man, the Gulpi still appear shorter due to their hunched stature. They are ape-like in appearance but with curiously Human faces. Gulpi are covered in gray fur and rarely wear more than a loincloth.

The Homelands

The Gulpi come from the cold north, where they roam the fog-shrouded woods in relative isolation. They prefer the quiet of the wilds to the bustling cities of Man. In deep forests and lonely hills they hide, carrying on the way they have for millennia. The expansion of Man, however, has forced many Gulpi tribes from their ancestral homes, and these now wander the wilds, sometimes trading and sometimes raiding these intruders.

Personality

Although able to speak the languages of other races, Gulpi often remain silent. When they do speak, their low, growling voices command attention. The Gulpi have no order other than tribal affiliations, and even their chiefs have little sway outside their own villages. Although resentful of the encroachment of others, the Gulpi hold no specific grudges. Instead, they explore the wide world, some in search of new lands for their tribes, others in search of weapons with which to defend their dwindling territories.

Characteristics

- ❖ Gulpi have a Base Speed of 8 paces.
- ❖ Gulpi gain a +3 for skull Toughness, rather than +2.
- ❖ Gulpi may not begin play with the Blacksmith profession.
- ❖ Gulpi begin play with the Hunter profession in addition to the normal free profession.
- ❖ Due to their unique closeness with nature, Gulpi possess a limited form of animal empathy, which allows them to sense an animal's intentions and behavior on a successful Perception roll.



WarClans

The Gulpi make excellent Guidesmen and Beastlords, being at home in the wild. They are also found in the ranks of the Cult of the Skull and Martyrs of War, serving the latter in the role of scouts. The Gulpi fear the vast ocean, and so do not sail with the Red Serpents, nor are they well-suited to travel with the Riders of Caldecan.

Hero Points

Gulpi characters receive 20 hero points.

Base Attributes

Might	11
Courage	10
Intellect	9
Agility	12
Perception	11

Tuathae

The oldest tales of the Tuathae tell of how the Sun would rise in glorious song each morning, only to depart in sorrowful gloom because it had no one to share its song. The Spirit of the Wood heard the Sun's lament and wept, for the Sun was life and the Wood's great love. The Wood wept tears until morning, when the Sun returned yet again. As its brilliant rays touched the Wood's tears, they awoke in song, responding to the Sun with their new-found voices. The Sun, overcome with joy, resolved never to depart. Throughout the endless days the choir sang, the Sun triumphantly leading the tune. Yet the children of the Wood were mere mortals, and they began to drop from exhaustion, unwilling to end their song. Dismayed, the Sun fled from the sky, fearful that he might destroy his choir. Lest the children of the Wood think their Sun had abandoned them, he created the mirror of the Moon to reflect his shining face, so that by day they could sing joyfully with him and by night rest with his light upon them.

Physical Description

Tuathae remain children of the wood, and their appearance reflects this. On the surface, they are still like the leaves, thin and wispy, but beneath they are like the oldest oak. Like the trees from which they come, Tuathae come in all forms: tall, short, thin or thick. Many could pass for green-haired humans or Elves, while others have more exaggerated features like hair of gorgeous vines or long, spindly fingers.

The Homelands

Only from the oldest forests come the Tuathae. Their appearance generally gives away the nature of their birthplace, as they invariably bear the characteristics of their homewood. Tuathae settlements are quite rustic, often without a trace of metal to be found. They are hidden well within the deep woods, protected by the Spirit of the Wood which allows no intruders. The unwelcome rarely catch sight of the Tuathae other than perhaps a glimpse of a laughing shadow or the flash of a speeding arrow.

Personality

The children of the Wood remember their debt to the Sun and sing each morning to greet it. These songs vary with the homewood. Flowering dogwoods sing an airy note of laughter, while people of the oaks sing a low, mournful tune. Like Nature itself, Tuathae present a beautiful face that conceals the danger of the coming storm. Although they bear no specific animosities, they tolerate no one tampering with their homewood and will fight bitterly to protect it.

Characteristics

- ❖ Tuathae have a Base Speed of 10 paces. However, they are never impeded by undergrowth or thick vines and move through them as if they were not there.
- ❖ Tuathae begin with the Master Craftsman (Wood) profession in addition to the normal free profession. By singing stories of the Spirit, they may fashion weapons or other implements from wood in only a few hours ($\frac{1}{4}$ normal time).
- ❖ As Tuathae do not care for metal, they may not take the Blacksmith profession.

WarClans

Although they tend to favor the Guidesmen or Beastlords, Tuathae may belong to any WarClan.

Hero Points

Tuathae characters begin with 20 hero points.

Base Attributes

Might	10
Courage	10
Intellect	10
Agility	10
Perception	10



PURCHASING CHARACTERISTICS

Each characteristic has a corresponding cost in hero points. Points may be spent freely on any characteristic, up to the starting maximum for that race. The tables below show the relative costs of characteristics. Base statistics do not cost hero points; these are “free.” Note that characteristics below base level yield additional hero points that may be spent on other abilities. For example, a Human character with an Agility of 9 gains an additional point that may be spent on any characteristic. It is not mandatory that you spend all of your points, but it certainly may be helpful. Any leftover points may be saved and spent later. You will note that some attribute scores are out of your reach when you create a character. Never fear, you will acquire additional hero points as your adventuring career progresses.

The Primary Attributes

The first step in creating a character is to purchase the primary attributes. There are four primary attributes that are used to define your character’s physical and mental qualities: Might, Courage, Intellect and Agility. These attributes are rated on a scale of 1 (pitifully weak) to 20 (monstrously powerful). The average Human score for any attribute is 10. Scores above 10 may be purchased using hero points. Scores below 10 will yield hero points for use in other characteristics. The primary attributes are described below.

Attribute Costs

Attribute Score	Hero Point Cost
20	45
19	36
18	31
17	26
16	21
15	16
14	11
13	8
12	5
11	2
10	free (1)*
9	+1 (1)*
8	+2 (1)*
7	+3 (1)*
6	+4

** Generally, a score of 10 does not cost any hero points. Certain races have base level attributes below 10. In this case, it costs one hero point to raise each level up to and including 10.*

MIGHT

Might is a measure of physical strength, which includes stamina as well as sheer muscle power. Might is a determinant of Health and Hit Damage. A good warrior, for example, could have Might 13.



COURAGE

Courage is the quality of determination and willpower. A courageous character can continue to fight even after being injured. Courage is a determinant of Health and Fatigue. A character with Courage 16 will still be fighting when a coward with Courage 6 has scurried away.



INTELLECT

Intellect is a measure of intelligence, cleverness, and comprehension. A character with high Intellect is either well-educated or naturally bright.



AGILITY

Agility is a composite of manual dexterity and hand-eye coordination. A tightrope walker might have Agility 17, while a character with Agility 4 is likely to hurt himself walking across the room. Agility is a determinant of Attack and Defense skills.



PERCEPTION

Perception is a measure of alertness, reaction time, and being able to make a decision and act quickly. It is used to determine who strikes first in combat. Perception is also used to spot hidden objects, detect ambushes and otherwise perceive how things truly are.



The Secondary Attributes

After selecting the primary attributes, you can determine the starting level of your secondary attributes. With the exception of Speed, hero points may not be spent on secondary attributes.

HEALTH

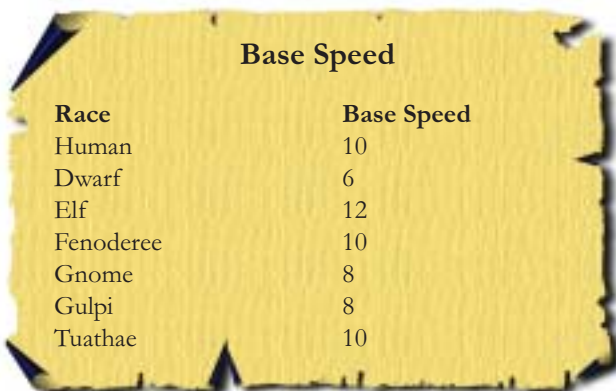
Health is a measure of how much damage a character can take before incapacitation or death. Health is the sum of Might and Courage. Record the total on the character sheet. Also record the amount of damage necessary to reach each of the four levels of damage listed below starting Health. The chart below lists the amount of Health lost necessary to raise a character's level of injury. More information on injury can be found in Chapter VI: Combat.



% of Health Lost	Level of Injury
25%	Wounded
50%	Bloody
75%	Reeling
100%	Dying
200%	Dismembered

SPEED

Speed is the distance in paces a character can move in a single combat round (a pace represents approximately one yard or meter). Speed varies with a character's race and can be modified with hero points.



Race	Base Speed
Human	10
Dwarf	6
Elf	12
Fenoderee	10
Gnome	8
Gulpi	8
Tuathae	10

For every 2 hero points spent, a character's speed may be increased by 1. A character may reduce his speed by 1 and *gain* 1 hero point.

Speed may not be increased or decreased by more than half the base value. Thus, a Dwarf may spend up to 6 points raising his speed to 9 paces, or gain up to 3 points by decreasing his speed to 3.

FATIGUE

A character can only swing his battleaxe like a madman for so long before he becomes exhausted. Each attack reduces a character's total Fatigue. For an explanation of how fatigue works, see Chapter VI: Combat.

The maximum fatigue points a character can have before becoming exhausted is equal to twice his Courage.

Breathing Life into the Character

After determining the physical attributes, you can now begin fleshing out the character by determining what he did before becoming an adventurer, what skills he has and how much wealth he has in his possession. These characteristics are purchased using remaining hero points. Players are encouraged to use these details to better envision their character and what his or her personality might be like.

Background Professions

Background professions represent the character's past experience before becoming an adventurer. For instance, a warrior may previously have been a blacksmith. Although he has left his old life behind, an adventurer retains the skills learned in years past. Thus, a blacksmith can tell the quality of a weapon, repair damaged armor, and (given time and materials) forge new armor, as well as other tasks.

All characters begin with one background profession at Apprentice level at no cost. Additional professions may be purchased at your discretion. Background professions come with one or more example skills with which the character is familiar. Players are encouraged to roleplay the knowledge their character has acquired and devise appropriate ways to utilize their background professions.

Characters attempting to use skills during play will roll against an appropriate attribute. For example, a character attempting to determine what sort of animal made a set of tracks might roll against her Intellect on 2d10. Basic tasks will

require a 2d10 roll, while more complicated actions will require 3d10 or more. For an explanation of how Attribute Rolls work, see Chapter V. While anyone may attempt a certain act, characters actually possessing appropriate skills will benefit from their experience. Skilled characters gain a number of rerolls based on their level of expertise.

Example: *Torgan the Justiciar and his fellows are standing before an old stone bridge that stretches over a gaping chasm. As he was once a Journeyman stonemason, Torgan attempts to inspect the bridge. He makes an Intellect roll on 2d10, which he fails. He uses a reroll and succeeds. The Runemaster informs him that the bridge is unsound and too dangerous to cross.*

Later, Torgan and his comrades are surrounded by Gracht in a partially ruined temple. Noting the piles of rubble, he directs the party to rebuild part of the wall to withstand the attack. As there is ample supply of materials and the task is not too complicated, the Runemaster allows Torgan to succeed without an attribute roll.

Having survived the Gracht attack, Torgan and his colleagues search the temple. The Runemaster asks everyone to make Perception rolls, with Torgan gaining his rerolls for his Journeyman status. He succeeds, noticing that a stone wall is hollow, concealing a secret door.

A fatigued character must roll an additional 1d10 (see Chapter: Combat for more information on Fatigue and the Fatigue Die) when attempting to perform skills. The Runemaster may also modify the score necessary to succeed to account for varying situations and environments. See Chapter V: Attributes and Hazards for more on tasks.

Background Professions

Number of Professions	Hero Point Cost
One	free
Two	2 points
Three	4 points

Hero points may also be used to purchase higher starting levels of expertise. For example, Shagra may use 4 points to purchase two additional Apprentice-level professions, or use the 4 points to raise his free profession to Journeyman level.

Expertise Levels

Expertise	Hero Point Cost
Apprentice	free
Journeyman	4 points
Master	8 points

In addition to possible skills, characters receive free “tools of the trade” that typify that profession.

The following list of professions and their uses is far from exhaustive. If you believe your previous experience as a scribe should allow you to translate a piece of ancient Dwarven text, tell the Runemaster why your character can do so. Of course, that doesn’t mean he will listen...

Acrobat

You have lived as a carnival performer and are skilled at gymnastic feats. Walking tight ropes and performing acts of contortion are stock and trade for you. The traveling life of the carnival has prepared you for the hard road of the adventurer.

Tools: 8’ Pole, Soft Leather Shoes



Actor

Through training or talent, you are a convincing performer. You are skilled at impersonating others and remaining believable. You may use this ability to deceive and confuse the gullible, to entertain the masses, or to recall bits of trivia about plays, both fictional and historical.

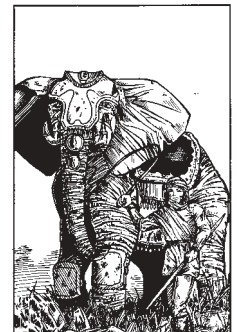
Tools: Mask, Drama Cloak, Makeup, Folio



Animal Handler

You have spent a good deal of your life around animals and are knowledgeable about the care and handling of many types of domestic animals. Some animal handlers find themselves in the service of various warlords, tending their mounts and controlling their more exotic warbeasts.

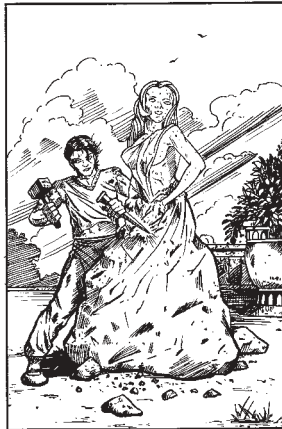
Tools: Lasso, Leather Straps, Saltlick.



Artist*

Before leaving for the adventurer's life, you apprenticed to a master artist, studying the Fine Arts. Your knowledge serves you well in your new life, as you are familiar with appraising art treasures, as well as identifying the works of ancient artists.

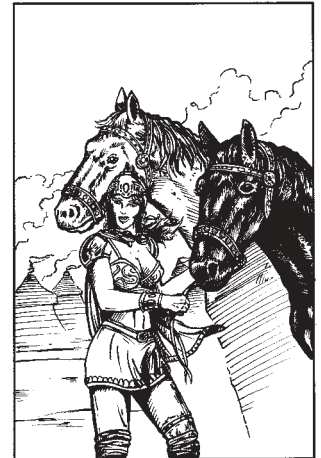
Tools: Sculpting Knives, Paints & Brushes, or Inks and Paper.



Charioteer

You have been taught the difficult skill of chariot driving, perhaps to serve a noble or to compete in the arena. You are at home racing wildly in the unstable chariot and can fight from such a platform with no penalty.

Tools: Whip, Sugar Cubes



Astrologer



Under the tutelage of a sage, you studied the mysteries of stargazing. You can easily navigate by the stars, and can make some predictions based on their positions. Considered by some to be witchcraft rather than science, you must conceal your knowledge from most. In the wilds or at sea, however, you know your way by the stars.

Tools: Rudimentary Telescope, Star Charts



Clothier

You are skilled in the craft of creating and repairing garments, as well as tapestries and other works of cloth. You are also familiar with the intricacies of the art, and are able to decipher the value and origins of such creations.

Tools: Needle, Thread, a few yards of Fabric



Blacksmith

As an apprentice blacksmith you learned to work with common metals and shape them into tools. In a pinch, you may repair armor and weapons and, with proper time, materials, and workspace, may forge your own.

Tools: Hammer, Tongs, Leather Handling Straps



Craftsman*

You have made a living as an artisan creating and selling various everyday items such as rope, wooden tables, or clay jars. Now you use your knowledge to identify fragments of ancient pottery or the origins of common items.

Tools: Any two of Hammer, Nails, Rope, Chisel, Clay Jar

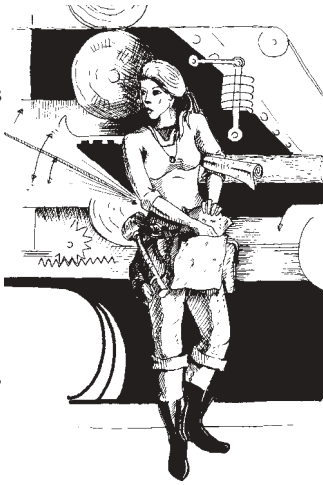


Engineer



Designers of buildings, ships or siege weapons, engineers protect their secret knowledge from outsiders. Your specialized training gives you the ability to design and construct items in your specific field (architectural, naval or mechanical).

Tools: Small Book, Hammer, Nails

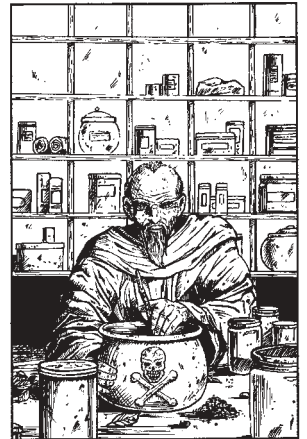


Herbalist



As a student of nature, you are familiar with herbs and their various properties. Plants that heal and harm are your domain, and you are ever in search of undiscovered plants to research.

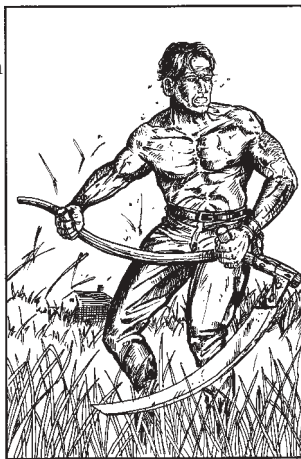
Tools: Three Clay Jars to hold herbs, Stone Mortar, Pestle



Farmer

Although often looked down upon by the nobility, you are the base of society, responsible for keeping the storehouses full. Whether raising livestock or crops, you have used your skills to insure a successful harvest. You have a keen understanding of nature and can “smell” the seasons as they come.

Tools: Rake, Pitchfork, Gardening Shovel



Hunter

More than once you have had to rely on your skills to survive in the wild. You know how to track and hunt, as well as how to prepare and cure meat. Now you seek more dangerous prey, where your skills may be tried to the fullest.

Tools: Ten feet of Wire, Short Bow, Serrated Knife



Fisherman

Not only are you skilled at catching fish, you are able to make your own tackle out of materials on hand. You never need fear starvation where a body of water is at hand.

Tools: Fishing Net, Fishing Tackle, Rowboat



Leatherworker

You are skilled in leathercraft and are able to fashion items of clothing and such from leather. Given time, you may also make and repair saddles, armor and the like. At times a smelly, thankless job, your ability to cure and tan leather may prove invaluable in your pursuit of glory.

Tools: Leatherpunch, Leather Scraps, Serrated Knife



Locksmith

As an apprentice locksmith you learned how to construct and pick locks. As an adventurer, you intend to put these skills to more profitable use.

Tools: Lock Picks, Padlock



Physician

Often called a witch doctor (or worse), you are trained in the esoteric-and feared-arts of the physician. Assuming someone will let you touch them, you may help injured or ill people. You have often sought to overcome the uneducated's fear of your skills, but those less-than-successful operations always dog your reputation.

Tools: Bag of Instruments, Jar of Leeches



Musician*

You have spent much time learning a musical instrument and tuning your composition skills. In your travels, these skills may pay for your bread, as well as gain entrance where swords could not.

Tools: Musical Instrument



Priest

For years you were armed only with faith. Now you go into the world with arms of a different nature. Unshaken in your beliefs, your faith is your strongest armor.

Tools: Holy Symbol, Holy Book



Orator

You have been gifted with the talent of persuasive public speaking. At home in front of an audience, the crowd is your puppet. The ability to incite riots, however, may not endear you to the local authorities, so yours has often been a traveling performance.

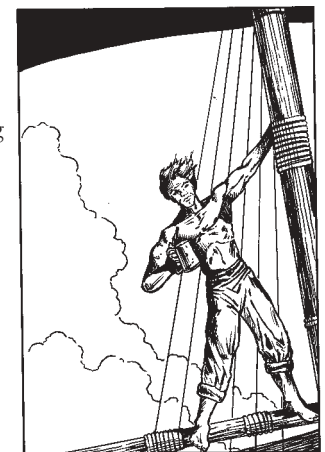
Tools: Small Book of speeches, Writing Quill.



Sailor

Your life as a sailor has given you the skills to survive on the high seas. The complicated art of rigging and sail are no mystery to you, and the rolling deck of a ship is like a kingdom at your feet. A wealth of tall-tales is at your command, some perhaps with an ounce of truth at the core.

Tools: Rope, Serrated Knife



Scribe



A rarity among warrior-types, you received an education and training in your youth, giving you both knowledge of the past, as well as a grasp of other languages.

Tools: Paper, Ink, Quills



Tactician



You have studied the military arts and understand the nature of commanding troops in war. Whether through scholarly research or the harsh rigors of the field, you know how to lead men into battle successfully.

Tools: Three Maps (choose what areas)



Singer



Utilizing your natural talent, you are capable of entertaining others with song. At the oddest moments you may break into song, to the amusement or amazement of others. This is more than whimsical fancy to you, however, as the answer to more than one mystery lies hidden in the ancient songs of the world.

Tools: A small book scribbled with some songs.



Thief

Through choice or circumstance, you have operated in the criminal underworld for several years. As a result, you have many “unorthodox” skills, and your streetwise nature gives you a feel for the city like no other. Unfortunately, you may also have a price on your head, as those in your former profession make far more enemies than friends.

Tools: Starglazer, Black Cloth Gloves



Stonemason

You are skilled at working with stone, both carving and setting. The arduous life of the mason you have left behind, but the secret knowledge of your craft may prove valuable in the new life of the adventurer.

Tools: Hammer, Chisel, Measuring Line



Trader

As a minor merchant or resourceful traveler, you have been able to make a living bartering for the goods and services you need. You realize that everything has a price, and are better than most at determining just what that price is.

Tools: Glass Baubles, Scale

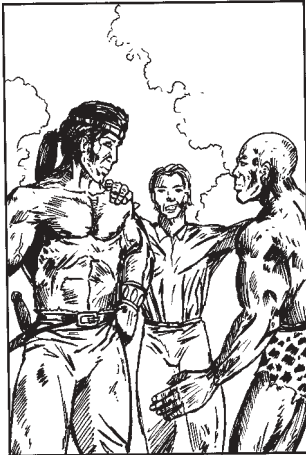


Translator



You have a gift for tongues and have often found employment translating for foreign merchants and other visitors. Their stories of distant lands and exotic treasures lures you now to seek them for your own, and your comprehension of other languages will aid you in your pursuits. For each level of expertise, you know an additional language.

Tools: Small Book of Customs




Woodworker

As a woodworker, you made your living building and repairing furniture, as well as crafting other trinkets from wood. Now your skills are best used shaping arrows, which will reap greater rewards.



Notes

Professions marked with an asterisk (*) require an appropriate specialization. E.g., a musician must choose an instrument with which she is most comfortable. This could be a mandolin, harpsichord, lyre, flute, or anything else the Runemaster allows.

Professions marked with a  denote that it is a Literate profession. Any character with this profession is automatically literate and can read and write in any of the languages he knows. Characters without Literate professions cannot read or write.

Social Status and Wealth

Next, select the character's starting social status. Social status is the character's relative starting position in society. How a character interacts with NPCs (Non-Player Characters) may be influenced by a character's social status. For example, assuming a noblewoman deigns to listen to an NPC of peasant status, she will not be inclined to take him seriously. See Chapter X: The Runemaster for more on social interaction with NPCs.

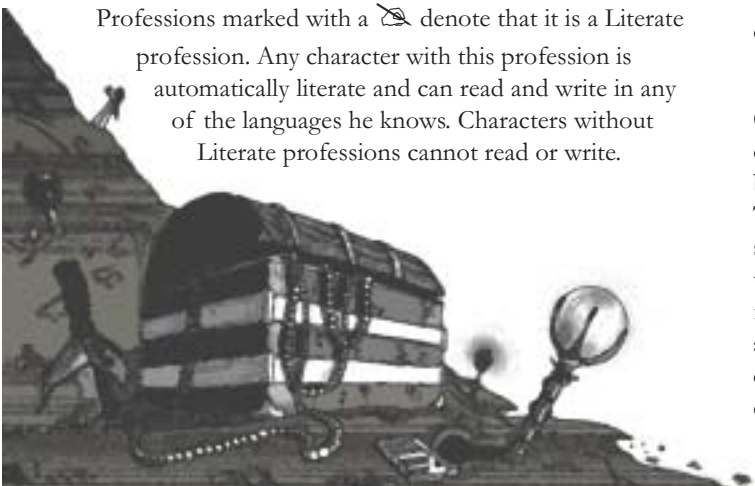
Social Status

Starting Status	Wealth Level	Hero Point Cost
Equestrian	Affluent	12
Merchant	Prosperous	8
Tradesman	Established	3
Commoner	Subsistence	free
Peasant	Poor	+2
Freed Slave	Impoverished	+4
Escaped Slave	Destitute	+6

As characters move beyond their humble beginnings, social status will play a less important role. WarClan rank takes precedence over social status once a character advances above the first rank wherever that clan is known. Social status may still, however, be used as a guide to how a character can communicate with NPCs; remember, just because *you* may be eloquent doesn't mean your escaped slave character is!

Characters of Tradesman status or better are automatically Literate.

Social status also determines a character's starting wealth. Check the chart to determine exactly how much money a character begins with. This money may be used before play begins to purchase weapons and equipment (see Chapter VIII: The Armoury and the Forge). Although starting status and starting wealth are linked, hero points may be spent to increase the level of starting wealth. Additionally, a hero point is gained for each level wealth is reduced. It is possible, for example, for a member of the Equestrian class to be bankrupt, if a player so desires. Players and Runemasters are encouraged to develop explanations for a character's starting position.



Wealth	
Wealth Level	Silver Talents
Princely	25,000
Opulent	13,000
Wealthy	6,000
Affluent	3,000
Prosperous	1,500
Established	800
Subsistence	500
Poor	200
Impoverished	100
Destitute	Broke!

Wealth may be raised one level for every 4 hero points spent. For every level lowered, 1 additional hero point is gained.



Weapon Expertise

It requires more than a strong arm to wield a blade. Training and hard experience are often the difference between glory and brutal death. A character's expertise is the measure of his proficiency with a specific type of weapon. Characters begin with one weapon skill at Novice level.

Additional levels of expertise may be purchased using hero points, as can expertise in different weapons. Higher levels of expertise (even higher than the ranks available to starting characters) allow the purchase of special maneuvers.

Maneuvers cost 5 points for Basic Maneuvers, and 8 points for Advanced Maneuvers. See Chapter VIII: The Armoury and Forge for a complete discussion and list of weapon maneuvers.

- Complete List of Weapon Training**
- Axes
 - Bows
 - Clubs
 - Crossbows
 - Flails and Chains
 - Knives
 - Maces and Hammers
 - Picks and Warhammers
 - Polearms
 - Pummeling
 - Slings
 - Spears
 - Staffs
 - Swords
 - Whips
 - Wrestling

Weapon Expertise		
Expertise	Maneuvers Allowed	Hero Point Cost
Novice	None	2*
Skilled	One	6
Veteran	Two	10

** All characters begin with one weapon at Novice level. This cost is to buy additional weapon skills.*

A person in dark gear is rappelling down a rope against a dark, textured background. The person is positioned in the center-left of the frame, with the rope extending from the top right towards the bottom left. The overall mood is gritty and adventurous.

Hazards

f e a t s

DANGER

ability

against All Odds...

impossibility

the RECKLESS few

Chapter V

Hazards

The alabaster Tower of the Mad Heir was steep, but nothing Ansel didn't know how to handle. Placing his shortsword on his back — he didn't want to worry about it scraping against the cold stone — he coiled the silk rope in his other hand. Using his teeth, he tied a tight knot to his padded grapple.

With a snap of his arm he tossed the grapple up through a fourth-story window in the tower. He heard the padded claws clink gently against the stone. Ansel nodded his head in satisfaction and tested the rope three times. It would hold.

THE ATTRIBUTE ROLL

An “attribute roll” is a 2d10 roll (two 10-sided dice) against a specific attribute. For example, if the Runemaster says, “make a Perception roll,” roll 2d10 and add the results. (a “0” on a d10 equals 10, not zero.) Then compare what you roll to your Perception attribute.

If you roll *equal to or under* your attribute, you succeed. If you roll higher than your attribute, you fail.

Example: *The Runemaster says Ansel needs a successful Agility roll to climb the tower rope. Ansel has Agility 11. He rolls 2d10 and adds the results. If he rolls an 11 or less, he succeeds. If not, he fails and can't get up as high as he would like.*

Difficult Situations

Unfortunately for adventurers, not all situations are equal. Climbing a sheer cliff if ice is more daunting than climbing a dogwood tree in the summertime.

In **RuneQuest**, there are three levels of difficulty: Basic, Difficult, and Hopeless.

Basic situations are typical feats that an average person can accomplish. Swimming across a small lake, climbing a tree, dragging a chest across the floor, or finding a hiding spot in dense woods are all examples of Basic situations. Characters roll 2d10 against the appropriate attribute, as described above.

Difficult situations are tougher for characters, and require extraordinary effort or ability. Picking professional locks, lifting a heavy portcullis, spotting an assassin at night, or tracking a tundra yeti through a blizzard are all Difficult tasks. Characters now roll 3d10 against the appropriate attribute.

Types of Attribute Rolls

Might rolls are used when a character's strength, endurance, or bodily health is concerned. If a character wants to lift something heavy, swim a raging current, or resist a poison, use the Might attribute.

Courage rolls are used when a character must be brave or heroic, whether it's standing firm against an undead horde, climbing the last few yards of a tall mountain, or going back to save a friend in a howling blizzard.

Intellect rolls are used when a character's intelligence, cleverness, or wisdom is in question. If a character needs to decipher a puzzle, research a subject in a candle-lit library, or remember the path he took while running wildly through a cavern, Runemasters should call for Intellect rolls. Professions come heavily into play with Intellect rolls. If a person comes across a scroll written in another language, he won't be able to read it no matter how high his Intellect is. However, if he's a Translator, he's got a much better shot.

Agility rolls are used when characters need to be quick and nimble. When boulders are falling, traps are shooting, and chasms need to be jumped, characters must make Agility rolls.

Perception rolls are very important. A character's Perception covers all of his senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and any extra-sensory feelings such as danger sense, intuition, or hunches. If a thief is hiding in the shadows of a large room, the Runemaster may call for a warrior to make a Perception roll to spot him.

Hopeless situations are reserved for the most impossible tasks. Escaping from a collapsing mountain temple, hiding in a desolate field from a bloodthirsty lion, and climbing a smooth glass wall are examples of Hopeless tasks. Characters roll 4d10 against the appropriate attribute.

Fatigued characters always roll an additional 1d10, no matter what the Difficulty.

Example: *The evil Count Faygane has poisoned the drink of the noble warrior Abnar. The Runemaster calls for the warrior to make a Perception roll to smell the poisonous vapor seeping from his cup. If Count Faygane used an obvious, smelly, sulfurous poison, the roll would be basic. If the poison is especially hard to detect, because it only has a faint smell, the roll is Difficult. If it is magically made, and practically invisible to human senses, the roll would be Hopeless. Fortunately for Almar, Count Faygane has little knowledge of poisons, so the role is basic. However, Almar has come from a long battle and rode hard to report to the Count, so he is Fatigued. He will roll 3d10 against his Perception.*

Situations	
Basic	2d10
Difficult	3d10
Hopeless	4d10
Fatigued	+1d10

Critical Successes and Fumbles

If a player ever rolls all 1's on an attribute roll, he critically succeeds. The Runemaster should allow him extraordinary success. In the example at the beginning of the chapter, Ansel would have scurried up the rope as silently as a cat and as quickly as a squirrel. If there were guards waiting at the top, they wouldn't see him... or perhaps they were drunk that night. Runemasters should be generous with critical successes.

Similarly, if a player ever rolls two 10's (regardless of how many dice he rolls), he has critically failed, or fumbled. Ansel would have gotten most of the way up the rope when the rope snapped, sending him plummeting three stories to the cobblestones below.

PROFESSIONS AND ATTRIBUTE ROLLS

Characters often have professions-jobs that they have done throughout their life that help them in certain tasks. Mountaineers will be able to climb better than most, Sailors can swim with ease, and Translator can translate difficult languages.

Each profession gives a character a wide-range of skills, knowledge, and abilities. A Blacksmith, for instance, might know quite a bit about metal, weapons, armor, horseshoes, forges, and types of bladed weapons. He could certainly craft some quality metal goods, and could probably identify the works of famous smiths. He couldn't build a boat, but his knowledge of crafts would tell him a good place to start if he needed to find a shipbuilder. What, exactly, a professional knows and can accomplish is entirely up to the creativity and imagination of the Runemaster and the player.

A character has three possible levels of expertise in a profession: Apprentice, Journeyman, and Master.

Each level allows a certain number of rerolls on a task in which the profession would help. So, if you fail a roll, and the Runemaster accepts that this type of roll was covered in your training, you may reroll as many times as your skill allows until you succeed. If none of your rerolls are successful, you still fail.

Rerolls are never used in combat – just during exploration, roleplaying, and adventure.

Example: *Chased by several cutthroats, Bentbias comes to a tall stone wall. To climb the wall, the Runemaster says he'll have to make a Difficult Agility roll. However, since Bentbias is a Journeyman Acrobat, and has been climbing things all of his life, if he fails the roll, he may reroll the attempt up to twice more. Since he has Agility 13, he needs a 13 or less on 3d10. He rolls a 17 the first time, failing. He rolls 9 the second time and succeeds-he manages to scramble over the wall. If he had failed that last roll, he still would have had one more chance to make it.*

L	Level	Rerolls
	Apprentice	1
	Journeyman	2
	Master	3

Related Knowledge

Sometimes, professions will provide related knowledge. If a profession doesn't specialize in a certain activity, but has similar skills, the character loses one reroll.

Example: *One of the cutthroats chasing Bentbias is a Master Sailor. He has much experience climbing masts and sails, which will help him to climb the stone wall. He only gets two rerolls if he fails.*

Example: *Duranbeim, a Journeyman Blacksmith encounters a locked door. Since he has some small tools on him, he wants to try to pick it, hoping his experience with metals and tools will help him. He gets one reroll. If he were a Journeyman Thief, however, the Runemaster might rule that this Profession is designed to pick locks, and he'd get the two normal rerolls.*

Professionals and Their Tools

Many professionals require tools to make them fully effective. A blacksmith, for instance, couldn't forge a sword without a forge, anvil, and fire! Likewise, picking a lock without lockpicks is nearly impossible for even the best thief.

If a character doesn't have the required tools to perform a task, the task becomes one level more difficult. Picking a good lock, ordinarily a Difficult task, becomes Hopeless without a set of picks.

Example: *Ansel needs to climb to the top of the icy Mount Redsnow, where his lost love is being held in a mad Obsidian Templari's temple. The icy Mount Redsnow is a Difficult climb, but Ansel lost his climbing ropes and pitons in the last snowstorm. Now, the task is Hopeless.*

Cooperative Attribute Rolls

Sometimes, two or more people will attempt a single action together. If two people charge a door with a bench as a battering ram, or three mighty warriors lift a heavy iron gate for their friends, these are examples of cooperative actions.

Runemasters should keep in mind that not all actions can be done cooperatively. Two thieves can't pick the same lock together. Nor can two strong men lift a grate big enough for only one to heave.

When a task is cooperative, the difficulty is reduced by a level, but two rolls need to be made. So if the two warriors charge at the door with a bench, the Difficult task becomes Basic, but both need to make the roll. If they had four warriors charging the door, two of them would still need to make the roll.

Opposed Attribute Rolls

There are some situations in which two or more people are trying to outwit, outdo, or otherwise directly oppose one another. In these cases, the person who is at a disadvantage (usually because his opponent has better Professional expertise) has the difficulty of his task increased.

It is always the PCs who make these rolls, never the NPCs. If the Runemaster needs to pit two NPCs against each other, he should pick one of them as the active character and roll for him.

Opposed rolls can also be used in tournaments and competitions. Instead of comparing professional levels, compare weapon expertise.

Example: *Two Mountaineers are racing each other up a mountain. Momar is an Apprentice; his opponent is a Journeyman. Climbing the mountain requires a Difficult Agility roll. Since Momar is at a disadvantage (his opponent is more skilled), he must make a Hopeless roll to reach the peak first.*

Example: *An Apprentice Thief is trying to sneak past Momar, who is guarding a cave. To spot the Thief, Momar must make a Basic Perception roll. However, since the Thief is trained and an Apprentice, Momar must make a Difficult Perception roll.*

Example: *Later that year, Momar wants to compete in an archery tournament. Momar is a Veteran Archer. Since this isn't especially important to the plot, the Runemaster decides to handle it quickly using these rules. Momar's first opponent is a Novice Archer. Momar needs only a Basic Agility roll to beat him. He succeeds and moves on to his next competitor-Hiram Knife-Shaft, a legendary Grandmaster Archer. Momar needs to roll a Difficult Agility roll to beat him. Momar does not get to use any rerolls, because he's not using a profession-he's using his weapon expertise which does not give any rerolls.*

Heroic Feats

On the **RuneQuest** character sheet there is a box labeled "Heroic Feats." Anytime your hero does something memorable, jot it down in this box. If your warrior managed to climb the forty-one level Tower of Zahn-Kin, or tracked the elusive White Tiger of Akata, write that down. Players may write down one Heroic Feat after an adventure, and only then if the Runemaster permits it.

If you ever encounter a similar situation to one of your Heroic Feats, you'll receive a bonus reroll.

Runemasters are the final arbiter when it comes to Heroic Feats. Runemasters should feel free to disallow mundane or abusive Heroic Feats. If a warrior hunts a rabbit for lunch one day, he should not get a reroll for hunting a troll the next.

As a general rule, Heroic Feats should be specific acts. “I survived the Death Swamps!” isn’t an appropriate Feat while “I cut a path through the Death Swamps!” would be a good one. Heroic Feats are designed to encourage roleplaying, not to replace well-studied professions.

ATHLETICS

The rules below cover various athletic tasks—jumping, climbing, swimming, et cetera. Most of the rules attempt to be realistic, so you can find out exactly how far your plate-encumbered warrior can jump. This adds some complexity to the game, which some Runemasters may not want. In that case, feel free to ignore these rules entirely.

Above all, the Runemaster should concentrate on keeping things fast. Unless it really matters how far a warrior can jump, you don’t need to use these rules. But if a great hero is being chased by a horde of ghosts, and needs to leap across a bottomless chasm or perish at their hands, you might want to know if he could make the jump.

Each athletic feat has a suggested Fatigue cost listed. Runemasters can assign Fatigue based on these suggestions. For instance, jumping lists 1-2 Fatigue. A short jump may only cost 1 Fatigue, while a running long jump would cost 2 Fatigue.

Climbing (2-4 Fatigue)

The speed and ease in which a warrior can climb a surface depends entirely on the surface and the climber’s skill. The Runemaster should assign Fatigue per hour of climbing.

An easy climb requires the climber to make an Agility or Might roll (whichever is higher).



Climbing Difficulty

Basic: Most trees, bookshelf, rough boulder

Difficult: Sandstone wall, steep mountain

Hopeless: Smooth marble wall, icy cliff

An average person can climb about a foot every second. More difficult climbs will slow this down considerably, and even the best climber may only be able to lift himself a few inches at a time.

Lifting Difficulty

Basic: Small boulder, chest, stone trapdoor, up to 10 x Might

Difficult: Iron gate, cabinet, most furniture, up to 15 x Might

Hopeless: Bronze statue, pillar, up to 20 x Might

Lifting (2-4 Fatigue)

Heavy gates, massive doors, and stone trapdoors always separate adventurers from their treasures.

Lifting an object requires a Might roll. Halve the hero’s Might if he can only lift something with one hand. Double a hero’s Might if he only needs to drag, pry, or slide the object. If an object is on wheels, a hero can pull four times his normal amount!

Jumping (1-2 Fatigue)

If a warrior makes a successful Agility roll, he can leap a long distance. If the jumper fails, subtract 1d6 from the amount of feet jumped! If the warrior has a good run, double his jumping distance.

Jumping Difficulty

Basic: Small crevice, leaping on a chair, distance of Might -2 feet

Difficult: Wide pit, leaping on to a table, landing on a horse from above, distance of Might feet

Hopeless: Gaping chasm, distance of Might +5 feet

Running and Chasing (1-3 Fatigue)

Heroes will constantly find themselves running. Hopefully, they'll be chasing after villainous creatures more often than running away from them. Unfortunately, this isn't usually the case.

Chasing after something is treated similarly to Initiative. Each participant rolls 1d10 and adds his Speed, rather than Perception. The high roller will either catch up to his target, or escape.

The Fatigue cost for running depends on the type of terrain. Open plains would cost only 1 Fatigue, while a jungle or swamp might cost 3 Fatigue. Especially long runs (anything longer than a minute or so) will cost considerably more Fatigue.

Example: *A Swamp Raptor (Speed 18) launches itself at Yansho the Guidesman (Speed 10). Yansho hurls himself towards a river, knowing that the raptor is unlikely to follow. The Runemaster rolls 1d10 for the Swamp Raptor. He rolls a 3, resulting in a 21. Yansho rolls an 8, for a total of 18. The Swamp Raptor catches up to Yansho and is able to attack him. If Yansho had a higher result than the raptor, he could have escaped into the river.*

Swimming (1-3 Fatigue)

If the water is calm, assume most heroes can swim in it without danger. In raging waters, characters must make Might rolls to stay atop the waves. Fatigue should be assigned for every hour of swimming.

If the Might roll is failed, the character is pulled under the water for 1d6 seconds. After this time, the character can make another Might roll to climb back to the surface.

After Might or Courage seconds under the water (whichever is higher), the character will drown – see Drowning and Suffocation on p.83.

Fighting in any amount of water adds 1 Fatigue to all maneuvers. Fighting completely submerged in water adds 2 Fatigue to all maneuvers.

Traveling (2+ Fatigue)

When asked what he disliked most about being the hero who slew the Dread Hydra of Avernus, Jord the Brave answered, "Walking there. The journey took twenty days, the fight took ten minutes."

Unless adventures are based solely in a large city, characters will soon venture out into the world. This takes time and energy. Of course, Runemasters should only keep track of journey time if it really matters to the adventure. But if the characters are ambushed halfway through a day's hard march, Runemasters might want to know how Fatigued the characters will be.

Halve the distance if the terrain is difficult, such as places without roads, mountains, forests, et cetera.

Halve the distance and double Fatigue if the character is travelling in extreme temperatures (less than 30-degrees or more than 80-degrees). This is assuming the characters have adequate supplies, such as water and appropriate clothing. Without such supplies, the base Fatigue cost is quadrupled!

Fatigue through marching recovers after a night's rest. Without supplies, only half the lost Fatigue will come back. The most anybody can survive without water is three days. Without food, a week.

If a character collapses due to extreme temperature, he immediately takes 2d6 damage due to freezing and frostbite, or heat exhaustion.

Example: *Horodwyn is traveling through the Desolation of Sadbi, one of the hottest deserts in Kbragmar. He is on camel. This means he can travel about 12 miles per day. Each day's march costs 2d6 Fatigue. If he didn't have any water, he'd still travel 12 miles each day, but it would cost him 4d6 Fatigue!*



A Day's March

	Distance	Fatigue
March	20 miles	2d6
March with mounts	25 miles	1d6
Hard March	30 miles	3d6
Hard march with mounts	35 miles	2d6

HAZARDS

Falling

Falling is a painful and often deadly experience. The amount of damage a warrior takes from a fall depends on the height of the fall.

Armor Toughness protects from falls only if it is soft armor. Plate armor won't help a warrior in a fall, though well-padded winter clothes will.

Falls also break bones and shatter limbs. For unintentional falls, or ones over 5 yards, roll 1d6 to randomly see where damage is taken. Any damage more than the amount required to crush the limb goes to the torso area.

Falling Damage

Height	Damage
1 yard	1d6-2
2-3 yards	1d6
4-5 yards	2d6
6-7 yards	3d6
8-9 yards	4d6
10-11 yards	5d6
12-13 yards	6d6
+2 yards	+1d6

Acrobats and tumblers can reduce a fall by 2 yards per level of their profession. Thus, Apprentice Acrobats subtract 2 yards, Journeymen subtract 4 yards, and Masters subtract 6 yards.

If the floor is soft (such as grass, sand, mud, water, human bodies) reduce the damage by 1 point per die. Spikes make the damage Impaling!

Falling Objects

Sometimes the best tactic is just to drop a heavy rock on someone from a cliff. Giants and cyclops rely heavily on this technique, and any adventurer that would confront them should watch the skies carefully.

Use the table from above to determine damage from a falling object. Assume a 10-lb weight is being dropped. If the object dropped is soft subtract 1 per die.

If the object is heavier than 10 lbs., treat it as falling from a yard higher per additional 10 lbs.

Thus, dropping a 50-lb rock from 10-yard cliff is the same as a 14-yard drop — 7d6 damage. Dropping a 100-lb sack of soft flour from the same cliff would do 9d6-9 damage.

Falling

- 1-2: Leg
- 3: Arm
- 4: Back
- 5: Chest
- 6: Head

Falling People

If a warrior drops down on another, they both take falling damage.

Example: *A warrior in platemail drops down onto a rogue from a small building (3 yards). The warrior in platemail takes 1d6-1 damage (he's landing on a soft target); the rogue takes 1d6.*



Tilting Objects

While equally as likely to crush hapless heroes, treat tilting objects as falling from 1 yard on to a soft object.

Fire

Fire is a deadly weapon and its potential immeasurable. Small fires might just singe a careless person — larger fires might consume them in seconds. Siege engines hurl balls of fire into castles, and archers often light their arrows aflame to cause massive damage with just one shot.

For all intents and purposes, there are two types of fire in **RuneQuest: Slayers**. Flames are small blazes, such as a candle, torch, or flaming arrow would cause.

Anyone hit by a flame takes 1 point of damage. Only metal armor protects against this damage. Flames can be extinguished by patting it or dowsing it with water.

If there are flammable materials around, especially papers, cloth, dry leaves or crops, flames will become infernos. Each round amidst such materials, a flame has a 1 in 6 chance of becoming an inferno. Infernos do 1d6 damage each round, and will quickly kill a man or ravage a whole building. No armor protects against an inferno. Infernos usually burn themselves out or must be quenched with buckets of water.

A person wearing flammable clothes can be turned into an inferno himself! Anyone taking damage from fire has a 1 in 6 chance of become an inferno himself! A person that is an inferno must either immerse himself in water, or roll on the ground — this has a 1 in 6 chance of putting out the inferno each round.

For simplicity's sake, flames spread slowly, perhaps a few feet every minute. Infernos will usually spread rapidly — a few feet each second.

Cold and Heat

Whether trudging through the scorched Desolation of Sahdi, or huddling around a tiny campfire on the Bloodsnows, temperature can seriously affect a hero's journey.

In addition to the traveling penalties on p.81, any physical activity (especially weapon attacks) in extreme heat over 80-degrees costs 1 extra Fatigue. If the temperature is over 100-degrees, all actions cost 2 extra Fatigue.

If a character ever collapses from exhaustion due to hot or cold temperatures, he immediately takes 2d6 damage.

Drowning and Suffocation

A warrior can hold his breath for 2 x Might (or Courage, if that's higher) rounds. A Fatigued warrior — or one that is actively struggling or fighting — can only hold his breath for Might (or Courage) rounds.

Once a warrior runs out of breath he falls unconscious. In four minutes he'll be dead. A Physician may revive the person by making a Difficult Intellect roll.

Losing Sleep

Anyone who doesn't get at least 6 hours of sleep each night will lose 1d6 Fatigue points from his maximum Fatigue. A hero getting no sleep at night loses 2d6 Fatigue points from his maximum Fatigue. Fatigue lost from lack of sleep does not recover until the person has slept 6 hours.

Example: *Beitor has spent three rough nights at sea. He only slept a few hours each day, so his maximum Fatigue is reduced by 3d6. When he finally gets a good night's sleep, his maximum Fatigue goes back up to full.*



POISON AND VENOM

Generally, poisons are harmful substances that must be eaten, touched, or ingested. Venoms are injected into the blood by a creature, though sometimes they can be secreted. A snake, for example, is venomous while a flask of hemlock is poisonous. Poisons and venoms are treated the same way.

When a character is exposed to a poison or venom, he must make a Might roll or suffer its effects. If the Might roll succeeds, the victim takes half damage from the poison or venom. If not, he takes full damage. Most poisons take effect 1-6 hours after being exposed to them; many venoms take a few

minutes or even seconds.

Some weaker toxins do Fatigue damage instead of physical damage. This Fatigue is recovered normally. Strong toxins require Difficult Might rolls to resist their effects.

Un-chivalrous warriors coat their blades or spears with poison. Always roll to see if the poison takes effect after combat.



Sample Poisons

Cobra venom does 4d6 damage. It only works if it gets in the bloodstream.

Wolfsbane does 3d6 damage and can be ingested or gotten into the bloodstream.

Arsenic does 3d6 Fatigue and then 3d6 damage. It must be ingested in a decent amount to take the desired effect.

Hemlock does 4d6 Fatigue and then 4d6 damage. Like arsenic, it must be ingested.

Nightshade does 5d6 damage and requires Difficult Might rolls to resist its effects. Both must get in the bloodstream.

Tirari poison is found on poisonous frogs and does 5d6 damage if it gets in someone's blood.

FRIGHT

"Warriors fear little. Now we fight."

This is the entirety of the speech made by General Tears shortly before the War of the Bloodsnows. His warriors fought bravely and showed no fear. Still, few returned home to tell of their courage and determination on that autumn day.

It takes many years to become such a fearless warrior, and those years are often filled with abject terror, fright, and bloody horrors.

There are two types of Fright — Revulsion and Terror.

Revulsion covers most grotesque sights. Rotting bodies, blood-covered walls, and human-skin books all cause Revulsion. Terror, on the other hand, represents the fear of dying. An army of skeletons appears from nowhere, a person is trapped in a dungeon all alone, a demon appears from a smoky cloud—these are situations that cause Terror.

In both situations, a person needs to make a Courage roll. If the sight is especially horrifying, the roll is Difficult. If a warrior sees a dead body, it may not phase him. If he realizes the dead body is his own brother, he may have to make a Difficult Courage roll. If a peasant who doesn't believe in dragons suddenly sees one burning his town, he'll get a Difficult roll, while the old man who knows they exist might not.

If the subject succeeds his roll, he is not phased by this horror and may act normally. If he fails, he is scared and will suffer ill effects. Roll 2d10 on the appropriate table.

Once a subject succeeds a fright roll against a particular thing, he won't have to make one again against it. Runemasters should use common sense here. Even if a warrior overcomes his fears of a skeletal warrior, an entire army of them might still scare him!



Revulsion

2 - Victim's stomach turns, but there are no ill effects.

3-4 - Subject gasps and is Surprised for a round.

5-6 - Subject yells out and is Surprised for 1d6 rounds.

7-8 - Subject screams in horror. He breathes heavily, takes 1d6 Fatigue, and is Surprised for the same amount of rounds.

9 - A scream to wake the dead. Subject takes 2d6 Fatigue, and is Surprised for the same amount of rounds.

10 - Gagging. Subject takes 1d6 Fatigue. Subject stumbles and becomes immobile for 2d6 rounds.

11 - Subject vomits all over himself. He takes 2d6 Fatigue. He is immobile and unable to do anything for 10 rounds.

12 - Subject runs from the area as fast as he can. He'll continue to run for 1d6 rounds.

13 - Subject runs screaming and bawling for several minutes. He takes 3d6 Fatigue.

14 - Feint. Subject takes 2d6 Fatigue and feints. He can be woken in 1d6 minutes.

15 - Collapse. Subject takes 2d6 Fatigue and feints. He can be woken in 10 minutes.

16 - Subject starts babbling like a fool. He takes 1d6 Fatigue and will continue to speak like a madman for an hour. Treat him as being Surprised for this entire time.

17 - Subject's hair turns stark white, or he looks like he's aged 10 years. Subject is Surprised for the next 1d6 minutes.

18 - Subject falls into a coma. Each day he must make a Courage roll to wake up. If he's in a coma for more than 10 days, he dies.

19 - Subject falls into a deep coma. Each day he must make a Difficult Courage roll to wake up. If he's in a coma for more than 10 days, he dies.

20 - Heart attack. Subject falls to the ground and dies in a few moments. If a Physician gets to him immediately, a Hopeless Intellect roll will save him.



Terror

2 - Victim is startled, but there are no ill effects.

3-4 - Subject's heart skips a beat and is Surprised for a round.

5-6 - Subject yells out and is Surprised for 1d6 rounds.

7-8 - Subject screams in terror. He takes 1d6 Fatigue, and is Surprised a round.

9 - A scream to wake the dead. Subject takes 2d6 Fatigue, and is Surprised for the same amount of rounds.

10 - Subject falls into a wide-eyed daze. He takes 1d6 Fatigue and becomes immobile for 1d6 rounds.

11 - Subject runs from the area as fast as he can. He won't scream, won't talk, he'll just run. He'll continue to run for 1d6 rounds.

12 - Subject freezes. He takes 2d6 Fatigue and becomes immobile for 1d6 rounds.

13 - Subject thrusts the nearest person – or failing that, object – at the cause of his fear. He takes 2d6 Fatigue.

14 - Subject launches himself at the cause of his terror. He'll fight it until it dies, he dies, or it's out of his sight.

15 - Subject flees, laughing or crying hysterically. He'll run as far as he possibly can until he collapses from exhaustion.

16 - Subject goes berserk. He attacks everything in sight, starting with the closest person or object.

17 - Subject falls down on his knees and pleads for his life. He's completely useless for 1 minute.

18 - Madness. Subject develops severe mental problems. The Runemaster should assign one or more nasty effects such as twitches, megalomania, phobias, paranoia, schizophrenia, depression, and more. Subject takes 1d6 Fatigue. The madness will usually manifest itself in a manner related to its cause. For example, if the maniacal breakdown is caused by a horde of attacking zombies, the poor victim will most likely suffer from acute necrophobia, an irrational fear of death and dead things.

19 - Raving lunatic. Subject develops most of the above mental problems, plus a few creative quirks of his own. Subject takes 1d6 Fatigue and will be completely uncontrollable. He is a menace to himself and his companions. Once per week the victim may attempt a Courage roll to recover. If he succeeds, the madness will be replaced by a permanent phobia as mentioned above. If he fails to recover after three weeks, the madness is too severe. A mercy-killing may be in order...

20 - Heart attack. Subject falls to the ground and dies in a few moments. If a Physician gets to him immediately, a Hopeless Intellect roll will save him.

TRAPS AND PITFALLS

True warriors use their gold to train themselves and to purchase fine weapons and armor. Cowards use their gold to buy deadly traps designed to kill or maim without a thought. Unfortunately, tremendous amounts of wealth tend to turn even the bravest warrior into a coward. Woe to the warlord who enters enemy fortresses, ancient ruins, and dark towers without the tools to detect and disable these nefarious pitfalls.

Detecting Traps

Most traps have some visible sign that they are deadly—a crack in the floor, a hole in the wall, or an oddly refracted beam of light.

Concealed traps require a Difficult Perception roll to detect.

Deathtraps designed to be nearly invisible are almost impossible to detect. Examples include traps that use magical illusions or are designed to work on pure stupidity. A dark pit with spikes at the bottom is detectable only as a pit. If some fool jumps into it and is impaled on the spikes, he should not complain about not detecting them.

A warrior has almost no chance to detect these traps. The Runemaster should roll secretly for the warrior to detect this kind of trap. These rolls are always Hopeless.

Once a trap is set off, the victim often has a chance to scramble out of the way. This usually calls for a Difficult Agility roll, since he didn't know the trap was coming.

Darkness

Darkness is often the best way to conceal traps. Any roll in darkness is automatically one level more difficult than it would normally be. If a Thief is trying to pick a lock — which is normally Difficult — in the pitch blackness of a dungeon, the task becomes Hopeless.

Torchlight and lanterns will cancel darkness. Candlelight, however, will not (though it does help people from bumping into walls).

Disabling Traps

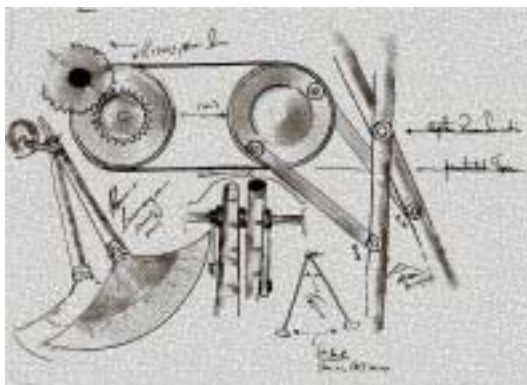
After a trap is detected, a person may try to disable it. Usually this requires a Difficult or Hopeless Intelligence or Agility roll (Runemaster's option, depending on the nature of the trap). Disabling a trap many times requires tools, even if it is no more than a hammer and stake. Some rare traps can only be disabled by pressing certain buttons, activating specific levers, and the like. Puzzles where a character's life hangs in the balance have always been staples of fantastic adventure.

Diabolical Traps for Runemasters

These traps are intended to be examples for Runemasters and warnings to heroes.

Pendulum Trap

A large, swinging blade blocks a tunnel. Leaping under or over the blade requires a Difficult Agility roll. If the roll fails, the blade slams into the warrior, doing 5d6 carving damage.



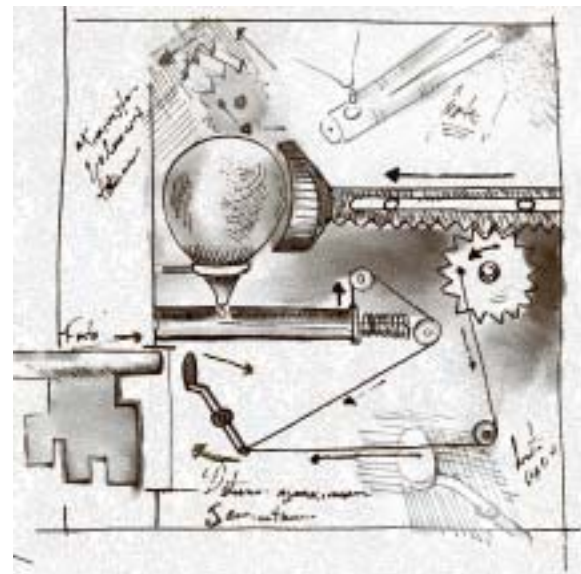
Guillotine Trap

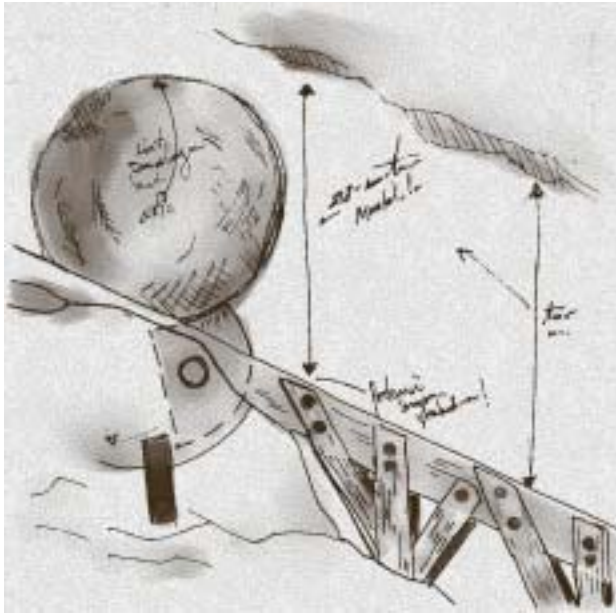
A thin tripwire runs the width of a corridor. Detecting this tripwire requires a Difficult Perception roll. If a person walks across the wire, roll 1d10. On a 1-6 he hits it, which activates a large guillotine to slice down upon him. The victim may try to dodge with a Difficult Agility roll. The guillotine does 6d6 carving damage to a specific body

location (use the Falling Table on p.82 to determine which part gets hit).

Needle Trap

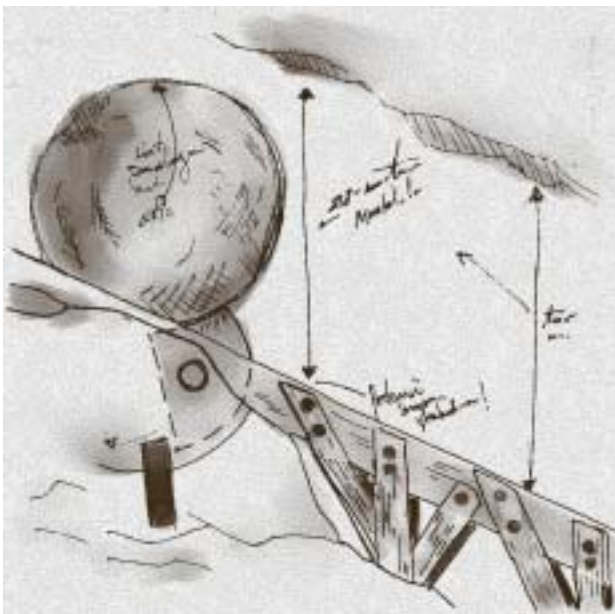
This treasure chest is unlocked, but its "lock" is actually a spring-loaded poison needle trap. The hole that contains the needle is nearly invisible. Anyone investigating the chest needs to make a Hopeless Perception roll to detect the trap. If it's not detected and the trap is triggered by opening the chest, the victim must make a Difficult Agility roll to dodge the needle. The needle does 1d6 damage and injects its poison (p.83).





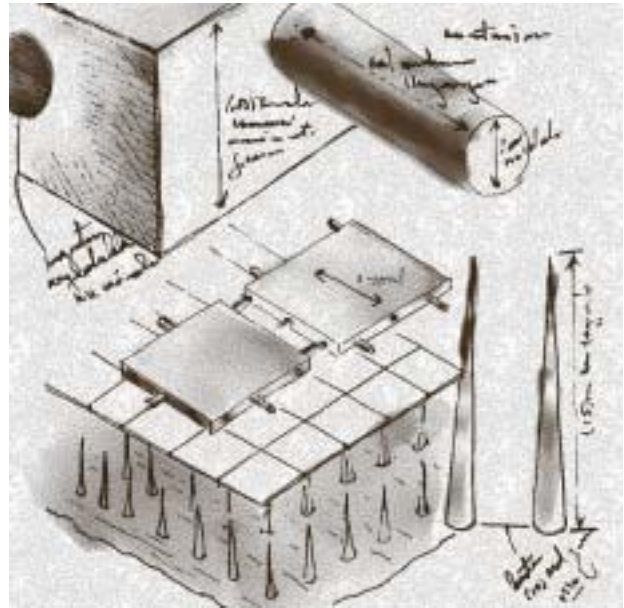
Rolling Boulder

In dramatic fashion, a large, 10 ton boulder rolls its way down a corridor. The boulder has Speed 12! Use the Chase rules to see if the victim can outrun the boulder. If not, the boulder does a bone-crushing 20d6 damage (about 70 points!) to the hapless victim. Some nasty dungeon builders spike their boulders – which does carving damage.



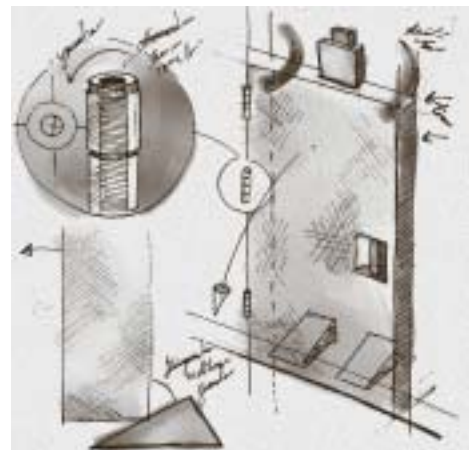
Covered Pit

Thin tiles cover this 10-yard pit, which drops onto a stone, spiked floor (5d6 impaling damage). Detecting the fall-away floor requires a Difficult Perception roll. If a person falls through, they can make a Difficult Agility roll to scramble and grab the ledge.



The Falling Door

This large, stone door looks ordinary enough. However, when the latch on it is pulled, the heavy, 600-lb door falls on top of the hapless adventurer below. The door is guaranteed to crush anyone below it (even though it is only falling from about a yard up, its mass alone does 31d6, or about 108 points!), though he has a chance to leap out of harm's way – make a Difficult Agility roll. Detecting this trap is nearly impossible. Only a Hopeless Perception roll will spot the fake hinges.



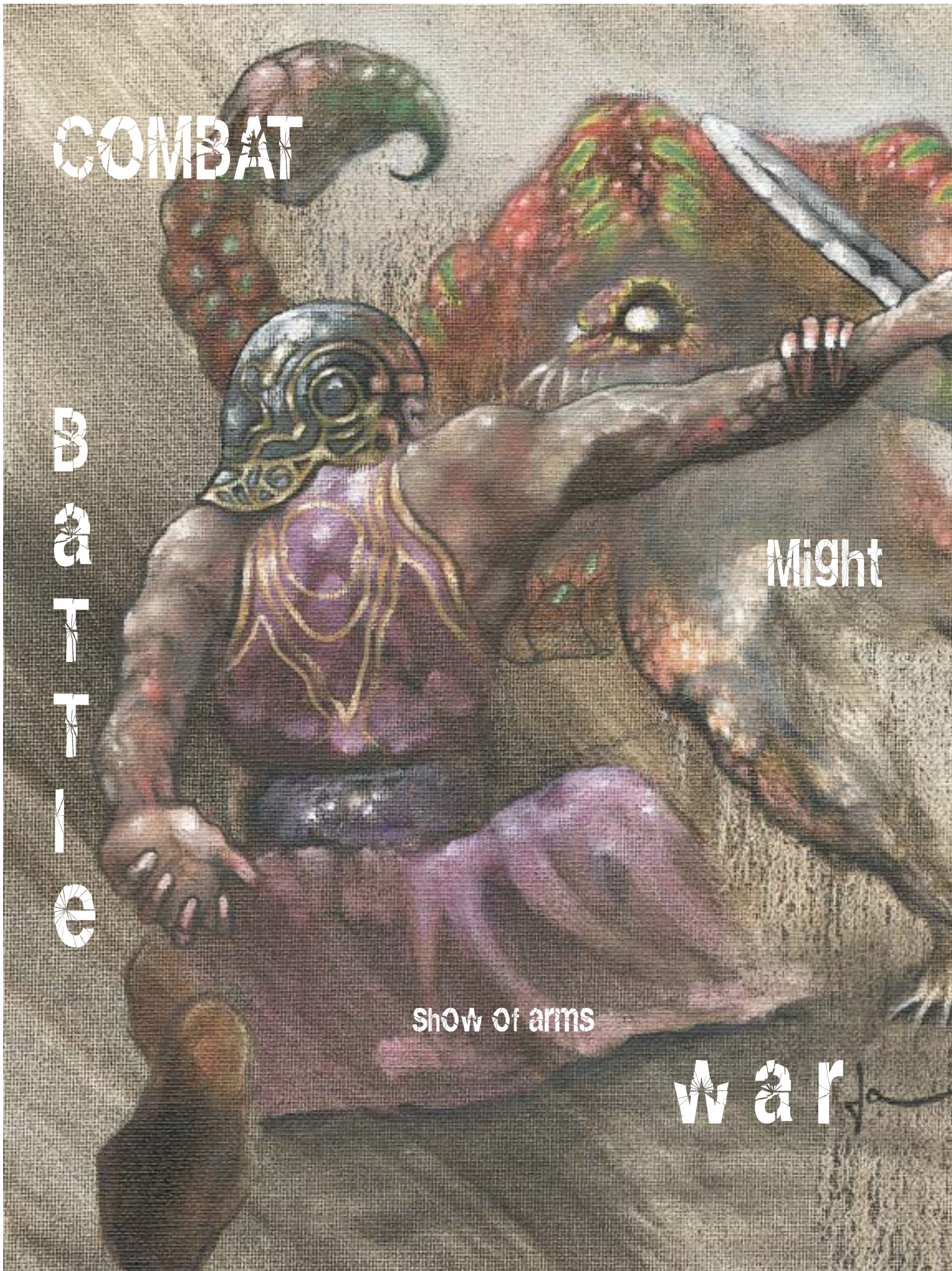
COMBAT

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Might

Show of arms

war



Chapter VI

Combat

Krilane the Violet slowly moved his gloved hand to the hilt of his sword. Fortunately, the wind had blown his heavy cloak over his slender frame, allowing him to move his hand beneath the cloak's folds. With a bit of luck, the hunched creature in front of him wouldn't see—or wouldn't be intelligent enough to know what he was doing.

Krilane wasn't sure what kind of beast stared at him. He had traveled the lands for years, but never had he heard stories of this scaly, humanoid creature. Its red eyes were wide and bloodshot. Krilane could see the hatred in them. Its mouth was opening and closing like a shutter in a gale, and its serrated teeth had bits of rotted crimson flesh stuck between them.

The creature leapt without warning. Krilane ducked low and kicked to his rear. He felt a satisfying whump as his hard boot hit the creature as it sailed over him. Krilane sensed the counterattack and dropped to the ground and rolled. Seconds later he was on his feet, his silver, rune-carved shortsword dancing in front of him in a guard his master had taught him over twenty years ago.

The world of **RuneQuest: Slayers** is a dangerous one. Though fierce monsters and abominations inhabit the far corners of the world, adventurers must also be on the lookout for thugs, cutpurses, assassins, mercenaries and anybody else who would kill them for their silver. And the most dangerous foes care nothing for treasure, and instead want a hero's body for its dark purposes.

As characters adventure throughout the world, they will encounter those who stand in their way. Unfortunately, not all villains will launch themselves at the characters with sword in hand. The more dangerous ones use their snake tongues and devious minds to bring the heroes to ruin. Good Runemasters will throw all types of foes against characters – those who fight with tooth and claw, cowards who would sooner run than battle, and those who seek to undermine adventurers with a labyrinth of plans and deception.

Sometimes, battle is inevitable. Though the warriors of RuneQuest are well trained and deadly, even the most inexperienced peasant can thrust a pitchfork into the throat of a battle-hardened king. Warriors should always keep in mind that more people walk into battle than walk from it.

STARTING COMBAT

Combat begins the moment a person (or monster) declares he is attacking a target. As soon as the mysterious “scaled creature” – a deadly Wyvrog – leapt at Krilane the Violet, combat began.

Initiative

If five gladiators charge each other, one will certainly land a good blow before his comrades. It takes more than speed, agility, and cunning to strike the first blow – it takes the mental acuity to find a weakness or opening in a foe's guard, and strike without telegraphing the attack. This ability is measured by a character's Perception, which reflects his ability to react, analyze, and initiate an action before an opponent.

When combat begins, each player involved rolls 1d6 and adds his Perception. This is an Initiative roll. The combatant with the highest result will observe what his opponents intend to do, and react accordingly.

If the Runemaster is controlling several monsters, he should roll 1d6 for each *type* of monster. For simplicity, a horde of one type of monster all attacks at the same time. Thus, if the brave PCs face a band

of orcs and a single minotaur, the Runemaster will roll initiative once for the orcs and another time for the minotaur.



If a combatant is Fatigued (p.92) or Surprised (p.96), he does *not* roll an extra 1d6 to determine his Initiative – he must use his unmodified Perception score.

Once Initiative is determined, you never roll for it again until the next combat begins.

Example of Initiative: *The Wylvroq has Perception 10. Krilane has Perception 12. Each rolls 1d6 and adds it to his Perception. The Wylvroq gets a '5' for a total of 15; Krilane rolls a '1' for a total of 13. The Wylvroq won the Initiative.*

COMBAT ROUNDS

Combat occurs in “rounds,” each lasting three to four seconds. During a single round, all PCs and NPCs (the characters controlled by the Runemaster) get to act. When everyone has taken a turn, the round ends and a new one begins.

Rounds are not static. Within a round, everyone gets to take an action, but the order in which characters take their turns depends on two main conditions – Initiative and Posture. As combatants change their Posture during a combat, turn order becomes a fluid, shifting thing. Runemasters are encouraged to write down the Initiative of the PCs and NPCs at the beginning of a fight for quick reference later on.

During a round, characters will usually attack a single foe. In some circumstances, however, characters won't want to attack. They may want to run (as many paces as their Speed score – excellent for fleeing from battle!), shout a few words, dig around in their pack for a specific item, or anything else they can imagine. Runemasters should allow any action that takes less than a few seconds. Longer actions take several rounds, and might require an attribute roll.

POSTURE: STRIKE HARD, HOLD

Each character has two “combat postures” to choose from before the combat round actually begins: Strike Hard or Hold. The character with the *lowest* Initiative declares his action first (warriors with high Perception will spot their opponents' techniques first and react accordingly). The Runemaster declares the posture for NPCs.

If you Strike Hard, you grip your weapon, roar a battle cry, and run headlong at your foe. You are concentrating on wounding your opponent. You get an extra 1d6 Attack Die when you roll to hit your foe because you're fully committing yourself to the attack.

If you Hold, you wait for an attacking foe. When one approaches, you quickly step aside and strike viciously. Hold means that you are totally prepared for an attack – you'll even get a shot in at the quickest opponent before he gets to hit you.

In this way Hold allows you to seize the Initiative – you may attack any foe before he attempts to strike you! If you are not attacked during this turn, however, you may not attack at all. This is a good posture to take when you lose Initiative, or are heavily wounded.

You are not required to seize the Initiative when you're Holding. For example, if a weak orc attacks you, and you know an ogre is going to follow up his attack, you might choose to ignore the orc's attack and wait to seize the Initiative from the ogre.

If you are attacked from behind when you Hold, you cannot seize the Initiative. If you cannot see a foe, you cannot use a Hold.

You may never strike more than once per turn, unless you have a special combat maneuver or ability that says otherwise.

Strike Hard and Hold are only declared if you are actively participating in the combat. If you do something else, like read a magic scroll or dash for a treasure, you will not call Strike Hard or Hold. Instead, you perform your action when it's your turn in the round (based on Initiative).



Example of Posture

Since Krilane lost Initiative, he must declare his posture first. Realizing an unknown - and potentially dangerous - creature is attacking him, he decides to take a more defensive position. He declares Hold.

The Wÿvroq declares Strike Hard. The Wÿvroq is not intelligent enough to care about careful combat tactics. It wants to kill and devour Krilane immediately. Even though the Wÿvroq won the Initiative, Hold allows Krilane to attack before the Wÿvroq.

ATTACK DICE

When it's your chance to attack a foe, roll 2d6. This is the basic number of "Attack Dice" a fighter rolls. Certain situations, however, increase the number of Attack Dice a warrior rolls. Some reduce the number of Attack Dice you use. Combatants never roll less than 2d6.

Hand-to-Hand Attack Dice

Your Agility is greater than your foe's	+1d6
You have greater Expertise than your foe's*	+1d6
You chose Strike Hard	+1d6
Your opponent is Fatigued	+1d6
Your opponent is Surprised	+1d6

* This only applies to humanoid opponents. Hydras and giant leeches have no measurable "Expertise," so completely ignore this modifier when in battle with such a creature.

Example of Attack Dice:

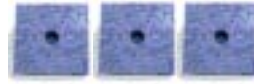
Krilane has Agility 15. The Wÿvroq has Agility 14, so Krilane will roll an extra d6 Attack Die. Krilane is a Skilled Swordsman, and the Wÿvroq is also Skilled, so neither receives a bonus. The Wÿvroq chose Strike Hard, so he'll use another d6.

Both Krilane and the Wÿvroq will be rolling 3d6. Krilane will get to attack first, since his Hold allows him to seize the Initiative and go before the Wÿvroq.

SOLID SHOT, VITAL SHOT

Before an attacker rolls any dice, he declares what kind of attack he's trying to accomplish - a Solid Shot or a Vital Shot. Vital Shots do more damage, but are harder to accomplish.

If you declare a Solid Shot, you need to roll at least one '6' to hit your foe.



Fumble! See table, p.00



Solid Shot. Normal damage



Vital Shot (if called).
+2d6 damage



Critical Hit! See tables, p.00

If you declare a Vital Shot, you need two or more '6's to hit. Vital Shots do an extra 2d6 damage because you're aiming for the head, heart, or other vital organ.

However, if you declare a Vital Shot and roll only one '6', you miss. Likewise, if you declare a Solid Shot and roll two '6's, you still only accomplish a Solid Shot - not a Vital Shot.

If you ever roll three (or more) '6's, you do Solid Shot or Vital Shot damage as declared, but you also immediately roll on the appropriate Critical Hit table. These types of hits can be extremely grisly.

If you ever roll all '1's, your hero is buried under the boulder of misfortune. Immediately roll on the Fumble table.

Shields

Shields provide protective cover for warriors.

Obviously, warriors using a two-handed weapon cannot use a shield, too.



Shields subtract a number of Attack Dice depending on the size of the shield. Most shields subtract one Attack Die. Enormous tower shields subtract two Attack Dice. Remember, no one can ever roll less than two Attack Dice.

If your hit is successful, you will damage your foe. If not, you miss, and it is the next character's turn.

Once everyone has taken a turn, a new combat round begins. Everyone chooses a new posture, based on the original Initiative roll (see above, p.89).

Example of Attack:

Krilane decides to play it safe and declares a Solid Shot. He rolls 3d6 and rolls no 6's – he cleanly misses. The Wyyvroq lunges, also rolling 3d6 and gets no 6's – he misses, too.

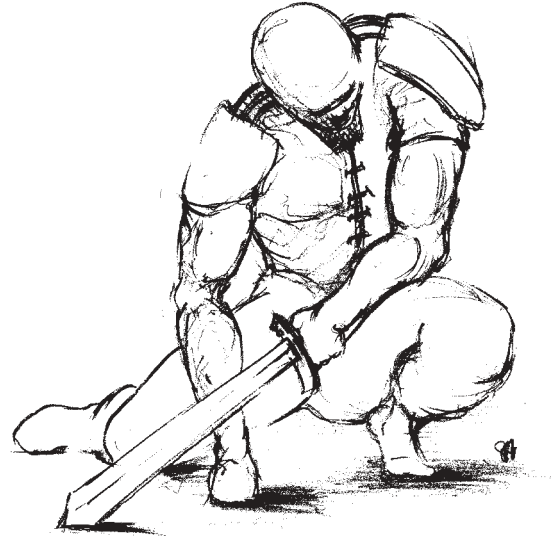
Since both opponents have taken their turn, a new combat round begins.

Krilane must declare his posture first because he lost Initiative.

Krilane, sensing he's got an advantage in Agility over this creature, declares Strike Hard. The Wyyvroq declares Strike Hard again. They will attack in Initiative order.

The Wyyvroq attacks first – he won the Initiative – going for a Solid Shot. He rolls 3d6 because he's Striking Hard. He doesn't roll any 6's – he shrieks as he misses again.

Krilane rolls 4d6 (2d6 plus 1d6 for his higher Agility, plus 1d6 for his Strike Hard) and goes for a Solid Shot. He rolls two 6's, so he gets his Solid Shot (he doesn't get a Vital Shot, because he announced he was going for a Solid Shot). Krilane will damage the Wyyvroq – with any luck, it will be enough to seriously wound the beast.



FATIGUE, FATIGUE DICE, DEATH DICE

Fighting is a difficult business. Even if warriors don't get injured, they tire quickly in mortal combat. Their strong arms soften and their weapons become lead weights.

Every time a warrior strikes a blow – even if he misses – he reduces his Fatigue by a certain amount, depending on the weapon he is using. When a warrior reaches 0 Fatigue, he is exhausted. Any opponents who attack him get an extra Attack Die, called a Fatigue Die. No one rolls more than one Fatigue Die in an attack.

A Fatigue Die is a different color from the rest of the attacker's dice. If the Fatigue Die ever rolls a '6', you immediately fall to the ground, helpless and exhausted until your Fatigue is recovered.

Even if you're not tired, you can get a Fatigue Die by taking enough damage to make you Reeling. When you are Reeling, your foes get a Fatigue Die. If your foes ever roll a '6' on this die, you drop unconscious.

If you reach the Dying level, the Fatigue Die becomes the dreaded Death Die. If your foes ever roll a '6' on this die, you cough up your last few words and perish immediately.

You get rid of the Fatigue Die by resting and recovering Fatigue. After an hour of rest, you'll get all your lost Fatigue back. If your foes use the Fatigue Die because you're Reeling, they lose it as soon as you're healed above Reeling.

Fatigue Costs

Wielding weapons in combat costs Fatigue for each attack (weapons and their Fatigue costs are covered in Chapter VIII: The Armoury & the Forge):

Small, one-handed weapons such as knives, rocks, and punches – along with most ranged weapons and thrown attacks – usually cost 1 Fatigue per combat round.

Ordinary one-handed weapons such as swords, maces, and axes cost 2 Fatigue. Grapples also cost 2 Fatigue.

Heavy two-handed weapons – greatswords, double-bladed axes, and the like – cost 3 Fatigue.

The heaviest weapons, such as polearms, cost 4 Fatigue.

Special weapon maneuvers and techniques increase or decrease Fatigue costs (see Chapter VIII).

Fatigue is also gained through physical activity. See Chapter V: Attributes & Hazards for details.

DAMAGE

When someone is hit, they usually get hurt. Deadly weapons, strong arms, and magical enchantment can make a big difference between a small cut and a gaping wound. Two factors will affect how much damage you can inflict on a foe.

Your **Might** is the most important. A weak shepherd is not able to inflict as much damage as a blacksmith with ten years in the trade. Each hero has an attack damage based on his **Might**. This is the basic damage you will roll.

Your weapon is also important. Hitting someone with a great axe is going to hurt someone more than with a stone. Weapons increase your **Might** for damage purposes. A sword, for instance, increases **Might** by +3 for damage. Therefore, if you had a **Might** 10 (1d6 damage) and wielded a sword, your damage would be the same as a warrior of **Might** 13 (2d6 damage).

When you hit your opponent, roll the dice to see how much damage you do.

Types of Damage

Three types of damage – Smashing, Carving, and Impaling – categorize weapon maneuvers. Each of these has a certain special effect on damage to living creatures.

Smashing is the most basic type of damage. It includes crushing blows, such as clubs, logs, boulders, punches, et cetera. Smashing blows do no extra damage.

Carving includes slashing and cutting weapons, such as swords, knives, and axes. Since carving weapons slice through muscle and bone, any damage that gets through armor does an additional 1d6 damage!

Impaling weapons are the most deadly, piercing internal organs and tissue. Spears, stakes, arrows, and pikes do impaling damage. Impaling weapons that bypass armor do an additional 2d6 damage. Impaling attacks on limbs (arms, legs, hands, and feet) do not get this damage bonus.

Example of Damage:

*Krilane has **Might** 12, which means he does 1d6+2 attack damage. He's attacking with a shortsword (+2 to his **Might** on damage), so he will do 2d6+1 carving damage. He rolls a 3 and 5, plus 1, and inflicts 9 points of carving damage to the **Wyvroq**.*

Combat and the Runemaster

When the Runemaster is pitting monsters and thugs against the PCs, he should be trying to keep the combat fast and furious. Most foes will **Strike Hard**, not content to wait for characters to attack them first.

Runemasters do not have to track the **Fatigue** that enemy monsters and foes expend, as this would slow the game down too much. Likewise, when a monster or foe takes enough damage to be **Dying**, he's out of the combat for good – no need to use a **Death Die**. When monsters reach **Reeling**, however, they still automatically get a **Fatigue Die**. This is why the monsters in Chapter IX only list two **Health** levels – **Dying** and **Reeling**.

In some rare circumstances, Runemasters may want to keep track of enemy **fatigue**. If the bold knight **Taliesyn** is confronting the **Lord of Assassins**, his arch-nemesis, in one-on-one combat, the Runemaster may want to keep track of every tiring blow the **Lord of Assassins** makes.

*If **Krilane** had hit the creature with a mace, which does **Might** +3 damage, **Krilane** would have inflicted damage as though he had **Might** 15. **Krilane** would have done 2d6+2 smashing damage with a mace!*

ARMOR

If the victim of an attack is wearing armor, he'll take less damage. Each piece of armor has a **Toughness** value, which subtracts from the damage the victim takes. With good armor, you can take no damage from a successful attack.

Light armor, such as leather, has a **Toughness** 3, which will subtract a little damage. Full plate armor has a **Toughness** 12, which will ward off all but the most powerful of attacks. The head has a natural **Toughness** 2, due to the hardness of the skull.

Example of Armor:

*The **Wyvroq** isn't wearing any armor, but his lizard-like scales are worth **Toughness** 2. So, instead of taking 9 points of damage from **Krilane's** sword, he takes only 7. Since this bypasses his "armor," he'll take an additional 1d6 damage because **Krilane's** weapon does **Carving** damage. **Krilane** rolls a '3', resulting in 10 total points of damage.*

Might	Damage
6-	1 point
7	1d6-3
8	1d6-2
9	1d6-1
10	1d6
11	1d6+1
12	1d6+2
13	2d6
14	2d6+1
15	2d6+2
16	3d6
17	3d6+1
18	3d6+2
19	4d6
20	4d6+1
21	4d6+2
22	5d6
23	5d6+1
24	5d6+2
25	6d6

INJURY

As you are injured, mark down how much damage you take next to your Health.

Fighters have 5 levels of Health, and as they take hits, they progressively become more and more injured:

Wounded: You're bruised, battered, and hurt, even though serious injury hasn't occurred yet.

Bloody: You look bad. Blood oozes from a few places and large, purple bruises tattoo your body.

Reeling: Your sight has clouded over, you feel dizzy, and you can't feel some parts of your body because of the numbness. At this level, your foes automatically get a bonus Attack Die - the Fatigue Die (see above).

Dying: You're in bad shape, and are about to get a visit from the Grim Reaper. The Fatigue Die becomes the Death Die (see above).

Dismembered: You're dead and not entirely whole. Women faint when they see your body; most men lose their last meal. Gravediggers don't have to dig very deep to bury what's left.

You should have numbers next to each of these levels, as determined in Chapter IV. For example, Krilane has:

Wounded	6
Bloody	12
Reeling	18
Dying	24
Dismembered	48

When he takes less than 6 hits of damage, Krilane is just scratched and isn't really wounded. When he takes 6-11 hits, he's Wounded. When he takes 12-17, he's Bloody, and when he takes a total of 48 points of damage, he is very, very dead.

When you are Wounded and Bloody, you may want to think twice about charging into battle. Still, your adrenaline is keeping you strong and capable.

When you are Reeling, you're in trouble. Your opponents gain a Fatigue Die due to your wounds. Don't forget that if your foe ever rolls a '6' on this die, you fall unconscious.

When you are Dying, you are on Death's Door. Your opponents keep the Fatigue Die, but now it becomes the dreaded Death Die. If a '6' is rolled on the Death Die, you perish. If you survive the combat, you may live... but not necessarily.

If you ever get to the point where you are Dismembered, you're an unmoving piece of meat and can do nothing except hope your companions say a kind prayer for your soul.

COMBAT TACTICS

Easy target, thought Cruleus, as he dug his dirty fingernails into the bark of the tree. He and his roving band had been up in these trees for barely an hour when he spotted his target.

He was obviously an Imperial knight, or perhaps a well-to-do mercenary. Cruleus peered deeper into the woods. Were there more? How could any warrior trot on his horse into these woods without friends or escorts?

Cruleus sighed. Either way, the man would be dead in a few minutes and any coins he was carrying would be in his own pocket. He made the signal to Rimreek, who was hiding in the bushes with his crossbow. Then he gave the look to the others in his group.

The knight's horse reared up in shock as three men fell from the trees in front of it. The knight let out a cry and his hand fumbled to his sword hilt.

If you've read through the previous pages in the Combat chapter, you now know how to handle basic combat situations. If a thief attacks a lonely warrior in the woods, you know how to handle it.

However, what if the attack was at night? What if the thief decides to ambush the warrior? What if the warrior leaps atop a boulder and slashes at the cutthroat's head?

These are all situations which players will come across, and even initiate. This section of Combat will teach the Runemaster how to handle these special situations. Many of these rules are optional and simply add more detail to combat. You can certainly play an entire game of **RuneQuest** without knowing any of these rules. Likewise, if you find a particular rule too detailed to your liking, ignore it!

Grappling

Many fighters are as skilled without weapons as they are with them. In addition to punching and kicking, which many warriors consider "uncivilized, barbarian techniques," warriors can use their strength and agility to wrestle their foes.



If you ever want to grab, wrestle, or pin a foe, use these Grappling rules.

Characters may not attempt to Grapple foes that are more than double their weight. If weight is unknown, use Might as a measure of weight.

Grappling Modifiers

Your Agility is greater than your foe's	+1d6
Your Might is greater than your foe's	+1d6
You have greater Expertise in Wrestling	+1d6
You are using a net	+1d6
You chose Strike Hard	+1d6



Grab: Hold your foe. He must grapple you on his next turn.



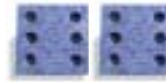
Break Hold: Breaks out of an opponent's hold.



Strangle: Strangle your foe for Might damage. Half of this damage is Fatigue.



Throw or Pin: Throw your opponent for Might damage, or pin him.



Break Pin: Break out of a pin.

Like ordinary combat, if you decide to Grapple a foe, declare a Grapple maneuver, and roll 2d6, modified by the following:

Example of Grappling:

Marcus the Legionnaire (Might 14, Agility 12) grapples Hugo the Strong (Might 16, Agility 10). Both are equally trained and Striking Hard - so they will each roll 4d6. Marcus won the Initiative, so he'll go first. Marcus tries to Throw Hugo. He needs two '6's. He rolls 4d6 and gets them. Hugo is thrown and takes 1d6 damage! On Hugo's turn, he must stand up. This takes a whole turn since his Agility is less than 15.

Adverse Conditions, Darkness, Invisibility

Often times, combat occurs in places that are less than ideal for a good fight. Fields, glades, and arena floors may be good for fighting, but brush, water, and even darkness can make fighting difficult.

If you're fighting on rough or difficult ground, you receive no bonus for being more Agile than your foe.

If you're fighting in inky darkness, treat all attacks as being Surprise (see below). Torchlight will negate this penalty, but something as small as a candle won't help at all.

If you're fighting an invisible foe, subtract 2d6 from your Attack Dice. Don't forget, the minimum you can ever roll is 2d6.

Fighting on Horseback

In order to fight on horseback at all, you either need a profession, maneuver, or WarClan that teaches you how to ride or Agility 12 or higher.

Maximum Ranges

Thrown weapons	Short Range
Slings	Medium Range
Spears	Medium Range
Most bows	Long Range
Crossbows, longbows	Far Range
Ballistae, catapults	Far Range

If you charge a foe on horseback, your weapon does an extra 1d6 damage. You need ample space to bring your horse up to a charge. Once you're in combat, it usually takes two rounds to set up for another charge.

Likewise, if a ground warrior hits a charging foe, the mounted warrior takes an extra 1d6 damage. Two riders charging at each other will do an extra 2d6 damage to each other!

SURPRISE AND AMBUSH

Usually, it's pretty obvious when one side of a fight is Surprised. If several assassins leap upon your bed when you're asleep, you're Surprised. If you stuff pillows under your covers and wait for them in the closet, then it's likely they'll be Surprised... unless they hear you unsheathing your sword in the dark of the closet.

Detecting the Ambush

Ambushes can usually be spotted with a Perception roll.

If the ambushers have appropriate professional skills that allow them stealth or hiding, they can use their rerolls to force the victim to try to fail. The amount of rerolls depends on the skill of the person who set the ambush.

Example: *Peridyn is walking in the woods, unaware that three thieves are hanging in the trees above him. Peridyn has Perception 11. He rolls 2d10 and gets a 13, so he fails to see them. They jump down and surprise him!*

Surprise

If a fighter is Surprised, he does not get to roll an extra d6 to determine his Initiative and he may perform no action

during the first round of combat. In addition, his opponents receive a bonus Surprise Die when they attack him on the first round.

The Surprise Die

There are several situations that call for a Surprise die. Like a Fatigue Die, the Surprise Die gives your foe an extra 1d6 when attacking you. Woe to the warrior who is both Fatigued and Surprised; he usually doesn't have too long to bemoan his condition.

Multiple Opponents

Fighting two or more warriors at the same time is a deadly and tiring affair. Skilled warriors know that the art of fighting multiple opponents is simple-keep one warrior between the other, so the defender must only fight one man at a time.

When a second warrior attacks a foe in a round, he gets a bonus Surprise Die, even if the first attacker missed. Don't forget – nobody can have more than one Surprise Die at the same time. So, if four warriors attacked a lone hero, the first attacker would make a normal attack. The three others get a bonus Surprise Die.

A character fighting multiple opponents can only strike one opponent per turn, unless he has a special maneuver that says otherwise.

Usually, only three people can attack a single foe during the same turn. If the defender has his back against something, only two people can attack him each turn.



FLURRIES

Sometimes, one warrior will be so much faster than another that he'll be able to land several blows on his opponent before he can respond. This is called a flurry.

Flurries occur when one warrior's Initiative is double his opponent's. Treat the victim as being Surprised throughout the entire combat!

RANGED COMBAT

It's far safer to use a crossbow and hit somebody from a distance than going toe-to-toe with him carrying nothing but knives.



Ranged Combat

Opponent is Surprised	+1d6
You attack with a bow or crossbow*	+1d6
Your Agility is higher than your opponent's	+1d6
You are in Ideal Range	+1d6

* This also applies to any weapon that is faster than a thrown weapon. A skilled warrior can jump out of the way of a thrown rock, but dodging an arrow or bolt is extremely difficult. Ballistas, fireballs, and poison needle traps will all get this bonus, too.

Hitting with missile weapons is exactly the same as hitting with melee weapons, except that you do not call Strike Hard or Hold. You always fire according to your Initiative.

As normal, roll 2d6 to hit, and declare either a Solid Shot or a Vital Shot. There are slightly different modifiers for the roll, however.

Example of Ranged Combat:

Peridwyn dispatches one of the rogues who attacked him. However, another one was hiding in the bushes with a loaded crossbow. He stands up and fires. Peridwyn sees this rogue, but crossbow bolts are nearly impossible to dodge (+1d6). Both have the same Agility. Peridwyn is also within Ideal Range of this Veteran crossbowman, adding another 1d6. The bandit rolls 4d6.

Ideal Range

	Point Blank (1 - 10 yards)	Short (<50 yards)	Medium (<100 yards)	Long (<150 yards)	Far (<200 yards)
Unskilled	All weapons	None	None	None	None
Novice	All thrown	Slings, bow	None	None	None
Skilled	All thrown	Spear, sling	All bows	None	None
Veteran	All thrown	Spear, sling	Bows	Long, x-bows	None
Expert	All thrown	All thrown	Spear, sling	All bows	None
Grandmaster	All thrown	All thrown	Spear, sling	Bows	Long, x-bows

“Ideal Range” includes shorter distances as well. Thus, Ideal range for a Veteran shortbow archer is anywhere from Point Blank (a few feet away) up to Medium range (100 yards).

A weapon’s *maximum* range, regardless of skill, is listed in red on the Ideal Range table.

Cover

If your hero finds himself under attack by archers, slingers, or a boulder-hurling cyclops, the best tactic is to quickly take cover. Cover will subtract Attack Dice from an assailant’s roll:

Light cover (most shields, a bush, under the water, a small rock, lying prone) -1d6

Hard cover (a tower shield, a large boulder, a window, a stone parapet) -2d6

KNOCKDOWN

Enough damage sends the mightiest of men tumbling to the ground. If an attack ever takes enough damage to equal a warrior’s Might (damage before the armor is penetrated), the victim rolls 2d10. If he rolls equal to or under his Agility, he maintains his balance. If not, he falls to the ground! Even if he doesn’t fall down, he’s knocked back several steps. If it matters, assume the fighter falls back one yard. Add another yard for each additional Might damage.

FIGHTING POSITIONS

There are three basic positions a fighter can maintain. The first, and most usual, is standing. Most fighters start combat standing, though most don’t finish that way.

When crouched, kneeling, sitting, or crawling, Speed is halved. Reduce Agility by 3.

When prone, or lying down, Speed is cut by three-quarters. Your Agility is halved!

Some maneuvers are designed for fighting when sitting, lying down, or crouched. If a maneuver specifies this, no penalties apply.

Warriors may drop to a lower position instantly. It takes a turn to raise from a lower position to any higher one. Anybody with Agility 15+ can change positions instantly!

Sometimes, a warrior will be higher than a foe. Leaping atop tables and stairways are good tactics – it is difficult defending against a warrior with height advantage.

If you are ever significantly higher than your foe and still within striking distance (usually between 2 and 3 feet), gain an extra Attack Die.

CALLED SHOTS

In the basic combat rules, fighters are assumed to be aiming for each other’s torsos – vital shots are going towards the head, throat, or heart. Sometimes, fighters want to be even more specific where they hit.

Already, the Vital Shot is a “called shot,” because you’re aiming for an opponent’s head or heart. This is why Vital Shots do an extra 1d6 damage.

When a warrior declares a Vital Shot, they can specify a specific part of their opponent’s body they are attacking. Like a normal Vital Shot, it only hits on two ‘6’s. Vital shots to the limbs, however, do not do an extra 1d6 damage.

Attacking a foe’s hands or feet is considered bad form among most civilized countries. Unfortunately, just because a technique is bad form doesn’t make it unusual.

Crippling, Breaking, Severing

Attacking limbs is a nasty way to defeat a foe. Each part of a person’s body can take so many hits before it is broken or even severed. Generally, smashing and impaling weapons crush or break bones; carving weapons sever limbs.

Damage to limbs is subtracted from your Health, but you can’t take more damage than the limb can take. Armor Toughness protects against limb hits.

For example, a hand can take Bloody damage before being severed or broken. A fighter with Health 24 has a Bloody wound level of 12. That means if his hand takes 12 points of



damage from a sword, it's cut off. However, if you took 18 points of damage to that hand, you'd only subtract 12 from your health, as the excess damage is lost.

Arms can take Reeling damage before being severed or crushed. A severed arm falls to the ground, and the person instantly takes another 1d6 damage and is Surprised. A crushed arm is broken. Might is halved from the pain and broken limb.

Legs can take Reeling damage before being severed or crushed. A severed leg falls to the ground, and the person instantly takes another 1d6 damage and is Surprised. The victim falls to the ground and his Speed is 1/4 of its normal value. A crushed leg is broken. He falls to the ground and his Speed is quartered.

Hands can take Bloody damage before being severed or broken. Severed hands flop to the dirt, and the person instantly takes another 1d6 damage from shock and is Surprised. A broken hand cannot hold anything, and reduces the Might of the victim by 2.

Feet can also take Bloody damage before being severed or broken. A severed foot causes a person to fall, and take another 1d6 damage from the shock. Severed feet Surprise the victim. Speed is halved. A broken foot will halve the victim's Speed as well.

The head can be severed or crushed if it takes Dying damage in one blow. Heads are the usual targets of Vital Shots. Obviously, anyone with a severed head dies instantly. No last words allowed.

The torso (chest or back) can also be broken or severed - neither is common or pretty. A smashing blow to the back that does Dying damage in one hit will break the back, paralyzing the victim. A smashing blow to the chest caves in the ribcage, killing the person slowly but surely. If Dying damage is done in one blow by a carving weapon, the poor victim is cut into two pieces and dies instantly.

Example of Called Shots

During the battle with the rogues, Peridwyn decides to try to cripple the leader of the thieves so he can take him back to town for questioning. With a good spinning sword attack, he aims for the leg: Peridwyn has Agility 12, which is higher than the bandit's. Their training is equal. Peridwyn will be rolling 3d6. He Strikes Hard, making it 4d6. He needs two 6's to hit the bandit's leg. He hits! Peridwyn has Might 13 with a sword, which does an attack damage of 3d6 carving. He rolls 15 points of carving damage! The thief has Health 18, which means his leg can take 12 points of damage. He has boiled leather armor with Toughness 4. He takes 11 points of damage, but since this penetrates the armor, he takes another

1d6 carving damage. The bonus turns out to be another 2 points of damage, for a total of 13. This is enough to sever the leg, so the thief actually takes only 12 points of damage. The thief falls to the ground grasping a bloody stump!

SUBDUAL

Often times, warriors don't want to kill their foes - they simply want to knock them out. Smashing weapons are ideal for this kind of attack - carving and impaling weapons kill too easily. Sword-wielders can hit with the flat of their blade to do Might smashing damage. Furthermore, warriors can always pull their punch, doing less damage. Attackers striking to subdue can reduce their damage by one or two dice, but no less.

Once a victim gets to the Reeling level, all attackers get the Fatigue Die against him. If a '6' is rolled on this die, the victim is knocked out cold.

FUMBLES

Luck can play an extraordinary role in combat, and even the best of fighters can drop their weapon, trip, or even hit themselves. Fumbles, or critical misses, occur when a warrior rolls all '1's on his attack. This is a disastrously poor maneuver, and will usually result in some calamity befalling the clumsy individual. Roll 1d6 and consult the Fumble table:

Fumble Results

- 1:** In the heat of battle, you overexert yourself. Take an additional 1d6 Fatigue.
- 2:** Your weapon flies out of your hand in a random direction, landing 2d6 paces away.
- 3:** Your wild swing connects with someone other than your intended target. The nearest person (preferably a friend!) is struck by a Solid Shot. If he was far away, your weapon flies from your hand and hits him!
- 4:** Maybe you shouldn't have bought that rusty blade. It shatters in your hand, leaving you unarmed. If it was an especially fine weapon (mithril, or made by a master craftsman), or if you are unarmed, it's your hand that shatters, doing 1d6 damage.
- 5:** You slip on the bloody ground and fall down, knocking your head in the process. You're out cold and at your opponents' - or your friends' - mercy.
- 6:** You slam yourself into your opponent's weapon. Your foe hits you immediately with a Vital Shot!



CRITICAL HITS

A lowly squire may hit an armored knight and kill him in one blow – it's not likely, but it can sometimes happen. A critical hit – an exceptional blow – takes place when a fighter rolls three or more '6's. You apply the normal damage for the hit as declared (Solid Shot or Vital Shot), but you also consult the Critical Hit table appropriate to the type of damage inflicted: carving, smashing or impaling. The number of dice you roll on the Critical Hit table (to determine the result) is based on the severity of the attack. If the critical hit was caused by three '6's, roll 1d6 on the appropriate chart. If it was caused by four '6's, roll 2d6. If it was caused by five '6's, roll 3d6, and so on. The gruesome results are applied immediately.

Carving

Die roll:

- 1 Your blade caresses your foe for an additional 1 damage.
- 2 Your flashing blade startles your foe. He loses his next attack.
- 3 Your attack shatters your opponent's weapon. If the target has no weapon, he takes 1d6 additional damage.
- 4 Your blade finds the target's chest, doing an additional 1d6 damage.
- 5 The cold steel slices an ear from your target's head, doing an additional 1 damage.
- 6 A cruel slash to the abdomen spills your foe's ropy entrails upon the ground. Both of you must pass an Agility roll or trip in the slick gore. The victim dies in two rounds - consider him at the Dying Health level.
- 7 Your blade finds a weak spot in his armor. He is treated as having a Toughness of 0 for this attack.
- 8 The clean cut does an additional 1d6 damage and leaves a wicked scar.
- 9 A wicked slash to the throat spills blood in a torrent. Until treated, the victim will take 1d6 damage per round. If he survives, he will be unable to speak for 2d6 days.
- 10 You slash a gaping wound in your foe's chest, doing an additional 2d6 damage.



11 The mighty slash does an additional 1d6 damage and stuns him severely, leaving him unable to defend himself. All attacks will automatically hit next round, and the stunned foe may not counterattack.

12 A clean strike to the neck severs the head, sending it flying into the air on a fountain of blood.

13 A flick of the blade severs your foe's hand, sending it and his weapon to the ground. Your foe takes an additional 1d6 damage per round until treated, and must pass a Courage roll.

14 With a huge effort, your swing severs a leg, leaving the poor victim wallowing in his own blood. He will take 2d6 damage per round until treated.

15 Cutting through flesh and muscle, you eviscerate your foe, sending his vital organs pouring to the ground. All remaining opponents must pass a Courage roll or roll on the Revulsion table (see Chapter V: Attributes & Hazards).

16 Your flashing blade cuts through bone as it slices off a limb, then buries itself in your foe's torso. He takes an additional 2d6 damage per round until treated, and you must spend a round wrenching the blade free from his chest.

17 A vicious strike lops off your opponent's arms. Blood sprays in jets from the stumps as the "disarmed" victim drops to the ground. He will die in two rounds if not treated immediately.

18+ With a mighty effort, you carve your foe from skull to crotch in a flourish of blood. As the two halves fall to the dirt, all remaining opponents must pass a Courage roll or flee.

Impaling

Die Roll

- 1 The thrust pierces your foe for an additional 1 damage.
- 2 The force of the strike knocks your opponent off balance. He must miss his next attack.
- 3 The force of the blow lands on the target's weapon, which falls from his hand. If the target has no weapon, he takes 1d6 additional damage.
- 4 A swift stab gouges a chunk of flesh from your foe, inflicting an additional 1d6 damage.
- 5 Spiked in the abdomen and screaming in pain, he must attack with one less Attack Die than normal for the remainder of the combat.

6 A pierced lung brings a bloody froth to your opponent's lips. Gurgling, he will die in two rounds. Consider him instantly at the Dying level.

7 With unerring accuracy, you find an open spot in his armor. Your opponent is treated as having a Toughness of 0 for this attack.

8 A solid jab spits your foe like a pig. He takes an additional 2d6 damage.

9 Tearing through muscle, the blow cripples your foe's weapon arm. His weapon falls to the ground, and he may only attack with one less die than normal.

10 With great skill, you pluck the eye from your foe. He takes an additional 1d6 damage, and must roll one less Attack Die than normal.

11 A vicious stab punctures an artery, spewing blood upon the ground. Until treated, the victim takes an additional 1d6 damage per round. All within three feet of the body must pass an Agility roll or slip in the bloody mire.

12 Rammed in the chest, the victim takes an additional 1d6 damage. The weapon, however, is lodged firmly in the wound. The warrior may either release it and draw another weapon (which takes a round), drag it loose (which takes a round) or wrench it back and forth, which does an automatic 2d6 damage each round.

13 A ravaging blow pierces the femoral artery, spraying blood in all directions. Until a tourniquet is applied, the victim will suffer 2d6 damage per round.

14 Gored through the vitals, your opponent will drop over dead in two rounds. Until then, he may continue to fight but rolls one less Attack Die than normal.

15 Viscous fluids and blood pour from the wound as the quick stab cracks through the eye socket and enters the brain. Death is mercifully almost instant. Almost...

16 Transfixed through the heart, the victim gasps like a fish out of water, then sinks dying to the ground. All other opponents must pass a Courage roll or lose their next attack.

17 A cruel shot pins your foe to the nearest wall (or ground, in the absence of a suitable wall). He writhes in agony, unable to move as he bleeds quickly to death. All other



opponents must pass a Courage roll or roll on the Revulsion table (see Chapter V: Attributes & Hazards).

18+ The ferocious stab skewers the victim, lifting him off the ground. He dies slowly as he slides down the weapon, gasping in horror as his life drains away. All remaining opponents must pass a Courage roll or flee.

Smashing

Die Roll

1 A glancing blow does an additional 1 damage.

2 The bone-jarring impact sends his weapon flying. If the target has no weapon, he takes 1d6 additional damage.

3 The forceful swing drives your foe to the ground. He loses his next attack as he climbs to his feet. If he has Agility 15+, he can jump up immediately!

4 The stunning impact inflicts an additional 1d6 damage.

5 With an audible crack, his arm breaks, sending his weapon clattering to the ground. Until healed, he will roll one less Attack Die than normal.

6 Bones snap under the blow, driving the victim to the ground. He will die in two rounds from internal bleeding.

7 The shot lands squarely in the face, mangling your opponent's nose. He will be permanently disfigured, and children will scream at the sight of him.

8 The strike to the groin crumples your foe. He takes an additional 1d6 damage and misses his next attack as he attempts to stand up. This takes an entire turn, even if he has Agility 15 or more!

9 He screams in agony as his hand is pulped by the swing. He may no longer use that hand, and must roll one less Attack Die than normal. The hand will need to be amputated.

10 Bone fragments protrude from the battered flesh as your foe screams in anguish. He takes an additional 2d6 damage.



11 A crushing blow to the head bursts an eyeball in its socket. Blinded in one eye, he must use one less Attack Die than normal.

12 Like an eggshell, the victim's skull caves under the mighty blow. He dies instantly as blood and brains ooze from the shattered remnants.

13 A sickening snap resounds as the target is given a compound fracture. He takes an additional 1d6 damage and must roll one less Attack Die than normal.

14 The devastating strike drives his jawbone straight into the brain, killing him instantly.

15 A horrific blow turns the victim's limb to pulp (determine the limb randomly if a called shot was not used). The target will be unable to defend himself for the remainder of the combat. This will necessitate amputation of the limb.

16 Organs burst under the crushing strike, slaying the victim after two rounds of agony. Until then, he may continue to fight, but must use one less Attack Die than normal.

17 Driving downward, the blow squashes his head like a ripe melon, spraying the contents in all directions. All other opponents must pass a Courage roll or roll on the Revulsion table (see Chapter V: Attributes & Hazards).

18+ A tremendous impact crushes the chest of the target, splintering bone and showering blood. All in close proximity are drenched in gore as the poor victim collapses in a heap. All remaining opponents must pass a Courage roll or flee.

HEALING

Even the most invincible of warriors falls prone to injuries, wounds, and worse. Veteran warriors know that the wounds that don't kill only make them stronger, and the ones that do don't hurt for very long.

Recovering Fatigue

After an hour's rest, any Fatigue a warrior has lost is completely restored. During this hour, the warrior can do no more than walk slowly, or sit down and talk to his comrades. Runemasters may slowly restore Fatigue to tired warriors, depending on how long they've rested.

If the fatigued warrior is forced to march or travel, Fatigue will come back about half as fast. If the hero is on a forced march or hard journey (through a thick jungle or blizzard for instance), he regains no Fatigue at all!

Broken Limbs

Broken limbs usually heal slowly. Assume a broken arm, hand, foot, or leg will heal in 20 minus Courage weeks.

If the limb was badly broken or shattered (this is the Runemaster's option. Any attack that does double the amount of damage required to break a limb will probably shatter it), it may not heal at all. Make a Courage roll. A success will heal the limb in 30 minus Courage weeks. A failure leaves it crippled permanently.

Bandaging and Treatment

Anybody can bandage a wounded person with some success. Assuming they have some clean strips of cloth, bandaging will restore 1 Health point to the injured person. If a person is Dying, and bandaging brings him to the Reeling status, he'll live. If not, he gasps a few meaningful words and dies.

Real medicinal treatment is much more useful. Physicians using their medicinal skills will restore more Health to the victim, depending on their skill:

Apprentice: Heals 1d6-2 damage

Journeyman: Heals 1d6 damage

Master: Heals 1d6+2 damage



Medicinal treatment includes bandaging, so you can't bandage someone after they've received treatment. Medicinal treatment won't always save a Dying man, but it's helpful.

Treat Herbalists as though they have Related Knowledge to Physicians. That is, they can heal people as if they were one level less skilled. For example, a Master Herbalist will heal as if he were a Journeyman Physician. Herbalists cannot use their healing ability without the appropriate medicinal herbs.

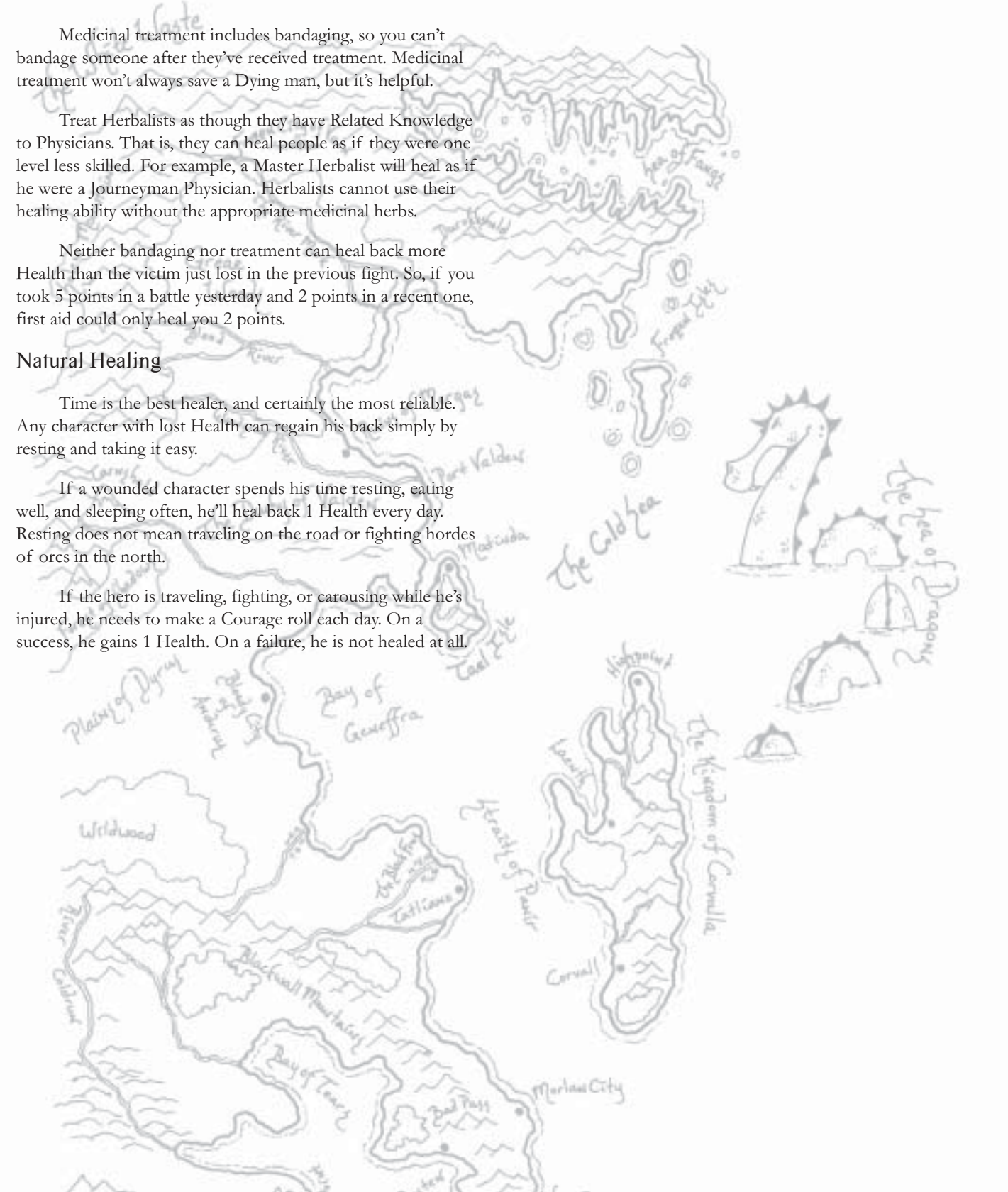
Neither bandaging nor treatment can heal back more Health than the victim just lost in the previous fight. So, if you took 5 points in a battle yesterday and 2 points in a recent one, first aid could only heal you 2 points.

Natural Healing

Time is the best healer, and certainly the most reliable. Any character with lost Health can regain his back simply by resting and taking it easy.

If a wounded character spends his time resting, eating well, and sleeping often, he'll heal back 1 Health every day. Resting does not mean traveling on the road or fighting hordes of orcs in the north.

If the hero is traveling, fighting, or carousing while he's injured, he needs to make a Courage roll each day. On a success, he gains 1 Health. On a failure, he is not healed at all.



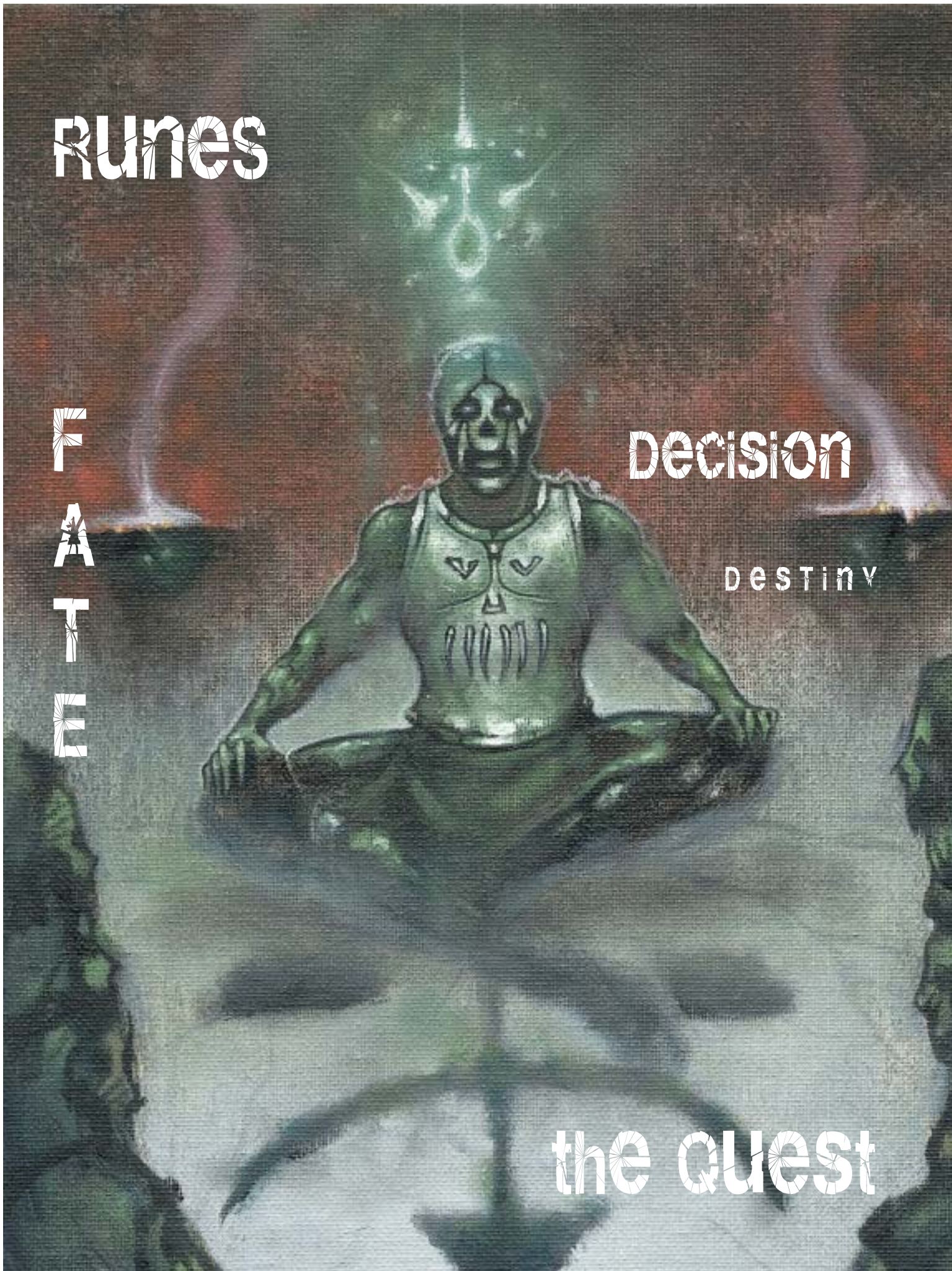
RUNES

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DECISION

DESTINY

the quest



Chapter VII

Runes

All was quiet in the longhouse as the young warriors waited patiently for their chief to speak. Only a few glowing coals were left to cast a dim light in the smoky air, yet all was not dark. Above the chief, a faint glow slowly took shape, mirroring the glow which radiated from the symbol etched into his armor. Whispering voices, only half-heard, seemed to swim through the smoke. The chief, sitting as still as stone, listened intently.

"They ride through the pass," he hissed in a voice not his own. "They ride unknowing." The warriors remained still, lest the slightest sound break the Ghost Talk.

"The sun sets on fire." The chief's breathing was labored and irregular.

"The sun sets on a field of blood!"

The chief's eyes opened as the rune's gleam faded into the murky air.

"Tonight we ride," he said. "Tomorrow we count the skulls."

His deep laugh was lost in the chants that filled the hall.

Runes are strong symbols used to trap and harness the powers of Magic. Some may be found inscribed upon armor and weapons, others are formed from lesser glyphs. Irrespective of their form, runes fall into one of three major categories: runes of enchantment, WarClan runes, and glyphs.

Runes of Enchantment impart power to objects when engraved upon them. These effects are many and varied. Such runes are frequently used on swords to make them more powerful in combat, and on armor to make it more resistant to blows. Less common runic items might take the shape of lamps that cast light but need no oil, or saddles that negate the weight of the rider. The sheer number of possible item runes precludes an exhaustive list, but several examples are provided for the Runemaster. The pursuit of runic items is often the object of adventures or quests.

WarClan runes are quite unusual in that they are created from the glyphs earned through roleplaying as mentioned below. These runes impart the legendary powers unique to the individual WarClans. As characters gain glyphs, they form them into WarClan runes.

These are quite rare, however, and for every rune chosen others are forever lost.

Glyphs are lesser forms of runes. There are ten glyphs for each WarClan. They represent the fundamental nature of the WarClans and serve as examples for members of the respective clans. Use of glyphs is described below.



RUNES OF ENCHANTMENT

When engraved by a master Runesmith, common items may be imbued with magical powers. Most runic powers are constantly in effect. Some, however, may only be used for limited duration or a limited number of times. It will not be readily apparent how frequently a rune may be used. Trial and error will be required to determine the specifics for each item. Players must keep track of how often their characters use these items.

The following is not to be taken as an exhaustive list of runes, nor is it required that each be used in a particular campaign. As the name implies, the Runemaster is the final arbiter of the rules, and as such feel free to adapt or invent additional runes to fit your campaign.

RUNES OF LESSER ENCHANTMENT



***Adhipa*, Rune of Protection**

One of the more common runes, this strengthens armor. This rune increases armor Toughness by +2.



***Exacuo Mucro*, Rune of Sharpness**

A weapon carved with this rune will cleave through armor with ease. This reduces the target's armor Toughness by 2.

***Anima-Aufero*, Rune of Soul-Knowledge**

This rune traps part of someone's knowledge, erasing it from the poor individual in the process of the carving. For game purposes, these runes contain a Profession at a certain level of mastery. For example, the famous Hammer of Halls has a rune that bestows the abilities of a Master Stonemason. The Windlasher Chariot of Apollon contains runes of the Master Charioteer profession.



***Forma*, Rune of Beauty**

This rune is almost always tattooed into someone, though sometimes it is found carved on crowns, tiaras, or earrings. It's a small rune, usually the size of a thumbprint. The rune makes the bearer preternaturally beautiful or handsome. The bearer may not be scarred or disfigured while the rune is worn – all such wounds heal up almost instantly.



***Aranea*, Rune of the Spider**

This rune is often carved into the heel of boots or other such sturdy clothing. It empowers the wearer to climb surfaces as if a spider, moving up sheer walls with ease. The bearer will never fall from a climb.



***Haastig*, Rune of Fleet Foot**

This rune, usually carved on shoes, increases the bearer's Speed by 2.



***Dava*, Rune of Water-Walking**

The bearer may cross water as if it were dry land. Rough water will cause the bearer to make several Agility rolls to keep his feet. This rune will not activate if the bearer is submerged in water!



***Illustro*, Rune of Light**

The bearer of the runic item may command it to cast a radiant light at will. It will illuminate a 40' area as if by strong torchlight.



***Dukhataram*, Rune of Pain**

A weapon bearing this rune will twist and writhe when it strikes, causing +2 damage.



***Infernus*, the Rune of Fire**

This rune keeps whatever it is carved on permanently on fire. Padded gloves must be worn when wielding weapons and items with this rune or else the user will take 1 point of damage every turn he wields it. The weapon does +1 damage due to its flame, but no extra damage if the defender is wearing metal armor. After a hit to non-metal material, the target has a 1 in 6 chance of turning into an inferno (see p.82) and taking 1d6 damage per turn.

***Equina Velociter*, Rune of Swift Steeds**

Usually this rune is carved upon a saddle, bridle, horseshoes, or other such riding implements. It increases a mount's Speed by 50%. It does not, however, increase its stamina, and the steed will tire twice as quickly.



***Misethron*, Rune of Charm**

The bearer of this rune will appear astute, attractive, and persuasive to others, and gains +2 on all NPC rolls.



***Pikros*, Rune of Accuracy**

Engraved upon a weapon, this rune helps to guide the bearer's hand. The wielder may roll an additional 1d6 when attacking.



***Sanatatea*, Rune of Health**

This rune keeps someone strong and healthy all their lives. It adds +2 to Health and makes the bearer immune to most ordinary diseases.



***Subeo*, Rune of Stealth**

This rune is unique in that it is most often embroidered with spider silk in an enveloping garment such as a cloak. Anybody who successfully makes a Perception roll to detect someone sneaking past them with this rune must immediately reroll and use the new result.



***Sustole*, Rune of Limitation**

This rune is always used in conjunction with other runes. It limits the amount of times another rune can be activated. The limitation is usually a number (ten "charges" is usual) or a specific amount per day (three times a day is also very common). No matter how many uses an item may have, this rune's appearance is the same, so it is impossible to tell the limitations of this rune without the carver around to explain it.



***Timor*, Rune of Alarm**

This rune will activate and usually glow whenever someone nearby attempts to approach in secret. This rune is commonly enchanted to only activate when specific individuals approach – demons, undead, wild beasts, ogres, red-haired women, et cetera.



***Umbra*, Rune of Shadows**

When activated, this rune creates a 40' sphere of darkness around the bearer. This area of impenetrable shadow moves with the character and lasts until deactivated or magically countered. Note that this rune does not grant the bearer immunity to the darkness, so he will be just as blind as anyone else.



***Zogreo*, Rune of Mighty Burdens**

This rune imbues the wearer with the strength of a titan. He may lift a load equal to 100 times his Might and bear this load for an hour. It does not increase combat damage or Health.



***Velociter*, Rune of Quickness**

This rune is commonly found on weapons. It makes any item extremely light (about 1 lb.) and easy to wield. This increases a character's Initiative by 2.

GREATER RUNES OF ENCHANTMENT

***Abeo*, the Rune of Vanishing**



This unusual rune is always the last rune to be carved into an item. Upon its completion, all runes completely disappear from the item. The runes can only be seen by individuals chosen at the time of the rune-carving. Usually, the carver picks a specific individual (often himself) or a certain lineage or bloodline. The runes on the item cannot even be used by anyone except those specified when the rune is carved.

***Achilles*, Rune of Invulnerability**



This powerful rune, usually carved on a helmet, shield, or breastplate, gives the bearer Toughness 12 (this includes any armor he might be wearing). Even unarmored spots will have Toughness 12, except for a single spot which has Toughness 0. This could be a specific foot, hand, throat, whatever – the carver of the rune specifies when it is made. In addition to the lack of Toughness at the vulnerable spot, any successful attack does an additional 2d6 damage.



Condoleo, Rune of Agony

Any wound inflicted with a weapon bearing this rune will cause an additional point of damage in each following turn until the wound is banded and cleaned.



Eukamatos, Rune of Fatigue

This powerful rune is usually carved on weapons, though rarely on weapons larger than a shortsword. The damage that the weapon does not only injures the victim, but drains his Fatigue the same amount.



Iadul, Rune of Terror-Hell

This is a powerful weapon enchantment, and is very rare and usually limited to a specific race or type of people. Whenever someone is struck with the weapon, they must make a Courage roll. Failure reduces their Courage by 1d6, success reduces it by 1. The victim's Courage will slowly raise back up to his normal rate at 1 per day. If his Courage ever reaches 0, he dies from fright.

Interfeci Interfectum, Rune of Slaying



This powerful rune is almost always race-specific (e.g. Rune of Gnome-slaying, or Rune of Undead Slaying), and will cause a weapon to inflict double damage on such a target (after armor Toughness). Merely bearing a weapon with such a rune is a cause for great offense to a member of the named race.



Krig, Rune of War

Almost always woven into a banner or flag, this powerful rune increases everyone's Courage by +2. Only those who fight for the banner and who can see it are affected.

Mwendo, Rune of the Map



This intricate rune constantly changes its form. As the bearer explores a place, the rune changes its shape to map where he has been. The map is difficult to read (it requires an Intellect roll) and only keeps track of the last hour or so worth of travel.

Oraculum, Rune of Vision

This rune is most often engraved upon a faceted crystal ball, silver looking glass, or other such item. Depending on the whims of the creator, the rune may impart varying abilities, although a single item will generally only possess one:



Telepathy – Items with this rune are created in pairs and make powerful tools for communication. Two users may exchange thoughts at will across any distance. May be used as long as both viewers concentrate on maintaining a link.

Scrying – By force of will, a viewer can create an image of a particular individual or location. The degree of clarity varies with the user's familiarity with both the subject of the scrying and the item.

Prophecy – After entering a trance, the viewer receives a vision of his future. As such prophetic dreams are generally vague and mysterious, the Runemaster may take the opportunity to be as confusing and imprecise as she wishes.

Destiny – A more powerful version of prophecy, this rune provides a clear view of a future event. Because destiny is unavoidable, this event will always happen, no matter what the precautions a character may take. Many a great hero tries to avoid his downfall, only to spend the rest of his life madly avoiding the inevitable.

Uendelig, Rune of Multitude



This rune is commonly carved onto scabbards, quivers (and according to rumor, wardrobes of the fantastically rich). Whenever a particular item is removed from the object, another one appears in its place.

The items are always decent quality, but it's impossible to have more than two of these items in existence at a time. If, for example, one drew a sword from a scabbard, dropped it on the ground and drew another one, the one on the ground would vanish.

Viaggi, Rune of Travel



This rune is usually carved into boots, shoes, staffs, or even traveling cloaks. Bearers of this rune do not become fatigued from walking, riding, or swimming. They can travel forever without getting tired at all. Furthermore, they arrive at their destinations 25% faster than a normal man.

Visum, Rune of Sight



This rune takes many forms, each initially indistinguishable from the others. It is not uncommon to find an item inscribed with multiple versions of this rune.

Eaglesight – May see over long distances, ten times normal.

Owlsight – May see clearly by starlight.

Batsight – May “see” in total darkness.

Wolfsight – May sense nearby warm-blooded creatures.

Fishsight – May see clearly underwater, even if the water is murky.

Viata, Rune of Life



An extremely rare and coveted rune, the Rune of Life can only be obtained by slaying another with this rune. Upon the killing, the Rune immediately carves itself into every item of the slayer’s equipment, and often tattoos itself into his skin. The Rune gives the bearer immortality. He will not age, or be affected by disease or poison, though weapons will kill him as easily as any man. This rune is only known in the

Glacier Rifts

MULTIPLE RUNES

Some items are inscribed with more than one rune. Only the most powerful of Runesmiths may construct such artifacts. It is possible that two runes of the same type will be engraved upon an object. Multiples of the same rune add or subtract 50% of the original value to the enchantment. Thus, a weapon with two Runes of Sharpness will reduce a foe’s armor by -3, not -4. Many runes do not, however, function well in conjunction with others. The effects of these items are often unpredictable and not always beneficial to the bearer. Many remember the story of Roragan of Antium, who was tragically slain whilst sneaking into the golden palace of King Farwan II when his cloak bearing the Rune of Alarm began alerting Roragan (and everyone else) that his Rune of Stealth was working properly...

RUNES OF DARK ENCHANTMENT

Adreaneia, Rune of Weakness



This rune automatically reduces the bearer’s Fatigue by 5. It is usually linked with another rune, so whenever it is activated, the bearer becomes tired and slow.

Akromanes, Rune of Madness



The bearer of this rune slowly starts to go insane. This should be roleplayed thoroughly, with the effects slowly taking hold over the course of several months. The first quirk the bearer gains is refusing to give up the item that will cause his coming madness.

Andha, Rune of Blindness



This rune blinds the bearer. He must roll a Surprise Die with every task he tries to accomplish. Usually this rune is activated in conjunction with another. The legendary lost broadsword of the hero Xavius Carusus blinded him, but activated a rune of Man Slaying. Only his prowess as a warrior kept him alive while he wielded the sword.

Coactum, Rune of Compulsion



If the Lesser Rune of Charm is the gentle caress of suggestion, the Rune of Compulsion is the mailed fist of threat. The subject of the Compulsion must make a Courage roll at -4 to resist any suggestion. This powerful rune is almost always coupled with the Rune of Limitation.

***Deimos*, Rune of Fear**



A creeping dread follows the bearer of this rune. The longer he possesses it, the more certain he becomes that some fearful fate awaits him. For each month, beginning within hours of finding the rune, the character's Courage drops by 2. This will also reduce related attributes such as Fatigue. If the character's Courage reaches 0, he dies from terror.

***Deleo-Letum*, Rune of Annihilation**



This rune is always carved deeper than any other rune. Any warrior who discovers this rune had best be wary. When some trigger is set (usually a spoken word, sometimes after a certain period of time) the item disintegrates into some nether realm. Anything touching the item when it annihilates takes 6d6 damage.

***Fogo*, Rune of Treacherous Fire**



Usually carved upon armor and delivered to a foe in the guise of a gift, this rune burns any wearer who dons the item. This does 1 point of damage every turn, and furthermore has a 1 in 6 chance of turning the wearer into an inferno (see p.82). Getting out of this item (which constricts as it burns) requires three successful Agility rolls. One roll may be made each turn, though a friend can help the victim by making a roll himself *and* taking damage himself.

***Kor*, Rune of Aging**



This dreaded rune ages the bearer one year for every day he carries the item.

***Kronk*, Rune of Mighty Ineptitude**



Named after a brave, but unfortunate adventurer, this rune adds +2 to the bearer's Might. However, the bearer's first miss in combat will automatically turn into a Fumble!

***Mal Quies*, Rune of Nightmares**



This rune is feared by all, especially since its shape and form comes in thousands of variations, each with a different nightmare to plague the victim with. Each night the bearer owns this item, he has a horrible nightmare. He must make a Terror check in the middle of the night, and only regains half his normal Fatigue.

The item with this rune must change ownership for the curse to stop. The owner cannot just bury the item and be rid of the plague – he must give it to someone who willfully takes it.

***Odysseus*, Rune of the Journey of Curses**



A strange curse follows the bearer of this rune. The bearer may succeed a roll anytime he wishes (up to five times per adventure), but each time he does so, all of his friends and fellow adventurers will automatically fail a roll. This roll is usually the first made in the next dangerous situation.

***Proditio*, Rune of the Betrayer**



This rune is rightly feared, as it takes many forms and manifests itself in devious ways. The bearer of the rune is bound to betray his comrades at a critical moment and manner calculated to cause the most harm. The specifics are to be worked out by the Runemaster and player secretly. The Runemaster should take care to use this powerful rune to advance a storyline, not merely to cause mayhem.

Ideally, an item with this rune should be instrumental in an adventure, and the character affected should not be irrevocably stained by the betrayal.

***Shrenkhalaa*, Rune of Chains**



This dark rune binds the enchanted item to the bearer permanently. A ring will not come off, a sword will be stuck to a warrior's hand, and a crown will be a permanent burden.

GLYPHS

Glyphs are the lesser runes that are used to form the legendary WarClan runes. They symbolize the essential nature and personality of the clans, with each WarClan having its own set of ten glyphs. For instance, the glyphs of the Medean Guard tend to express order and loyalty, while those of the Red Serpents lean toward piracy and plunder.

The glyphs play a significant role in *RuneQuest*: **Slayers**. They are a method of character advancement, as well as a means of encouraging roleplaying. At the beginning of a **Slayers** session, the Runemaster randomly selects a single rune for each player character from the pool of ten specific to his WarClan. This is given to the player face down. Only the Runemaster and player will know the type of rune given to each character. From the moment the rune is drawn, the player must incorporate the glyph's attributes into his character's behavior. How specifically it manifests itself is up to the player. Thus, a character with the glyph of Glory might act with daring and seek great odds to fight against, or he might denigrate the actions of others and take credit for their accomplishments.

Example: *Narandel the Swordmaiden drew the glyph of Discord at the beginning of the session. She should now attempt to contradict and antagonize those that she encounters or otherwise sow discord. The nature of how the glyph of Discord is roleplayed is up to her, and it is the Runemaster's responsibility to determine if she is roleplaying the rune successfully. Successful role-playing of a glyph earns Narandel hero points as well as the glyph itself.*

At the conclusion of the session, the Runemaster may award a number of hero points to the character based on how successfully the player roleplayed the glyph. The Runemaster may also allow the character to record the glyph on his character sheet. Acquisition of such glyphs is a prerequisite for advancing within WarClans. Although no hard-and-fast rules can be made to govern awarding glyphs, it is better to reward good attempts at roleplaying rather than be too demanding of someone's acting ability.

It is important to remember that glyphs are tools to encourage and reward good roleplaying, not a means to drastically alter a character's established behavior. A player should not redefine his character's personality with a glyph. Rather, a player should determine the meaning of a glyph by the character's existing personality.

Over a number of sessions it is likely that a character will draw the same glyph more than once. When this occurs, the player must still abide by it. Although he cannot gain the glyph

Adventure Sessions

You will find frequent references to the phrase "adventure session" throughout this chapter. Although typically this might be an evening's gaming, the Runemaster should feel free to vary the actual time between glyphs. If your gaming sessions run short or if you feel the players need more time to fulfill the requirements of their respective glyphs, don't feel compelled to hand out new ones at the start of a session. The Runemaster is the final arbiter of what defines an "adventure session" and should use this to control the pace of character advancement in the campaign.

a second time, he can still gain hero points from good roleplaying. The player is not under any compulsion to roleplay the rune in the same manner each time, and may vary it to fit the different circumstances of each session. Indeed, a Runemaster is more likely to reward new and original ways of roleplaying with additional hero points.

See the Glyphs and WarClan Runes section below for a description of how glyphs may be used to gain runic powers.



MASTER LIST OF WARCLAN GLYPHS

Below are brief descriptions of the different WarClan glyphs. These glyphs are ideas that typify the behavior of the WarClans. These should be taken as examples and guidelines rather than concrete definitions. As mentioned before, players do not necessarily need to roleplay these glyphs as written, but adapt them to their characters' personality.



Abandon

Restraint and control are unknown to you. What others call recklessness is merely the ultimate freedom.



Altruism

The welfare of others is more important than your own. Personal satisfaction comes through the success of others; personal gain is a thing to be avoided.



Ancestry

Your forefathers are your heroes and you must show them respect. You strive to accomplish what they accomplished. You must be no less a man, and even hesitate to be a greater one. Knowing the history of your fathers is as important as making your own.



Annihilation

It is the ultimate destiny of all things to decay or die and resisting this fact is as pointless as casting stones at the sea. Rather than oppose this force, you embrace and aid it whenever possible.



Apathy

You are as uncaring as the forces of nature that rule the world. The concerns of others are not your own, nor do you ever seem to show emotion of any sort.



Arrogance

Your superiority is evident, if only to yourself. Others should defer to you by virtue of your importance.



Berserker

The killing madness is upon you. Nothing can withstand your ferocity, nor should anyone attempt to restrain you.



Betrayal

Those who put their faith in others are fools who deserve their fates. Not only do you have no trust for anyone, it pleases you to show how their faith in you is equally valueless.



Bravado

Although some may be put off by your swaggering boldness, you know that you have the courage and skill to back up your tough talk.



Carousing

Whether in recognition of the brevity of life, or in a vain attempt to ignore it, you easily lose yourself in wine, song, and women.



Caution

The hasty decision is most often the incorrect one. Success comes through forethought and planning, not rash actions.



Compromise

A decision achieved by force is never as stable as one achieved by diplomacy. Even with the most stubborn of foes, a middle ground is always preferable to contention.



Deception

Why speak the truth when a lie will serve as well? It is best never to reveal too much, as power comes from secrecy.



Confrontation

Compromise is for the weak of spirit. Only through conflict can success be achieved.



Dedication

Be it to a cause or person, you are devoted to it unto death. No adversity can deter you from the object of your devotion.



Control

Too much freedom is a dangerous thing. Either through mastery of personal passions or the dominance of others, you seek the stability of control. Even if you are not the controlling power, you are most secure when the reins are held tightly.



Defender

Sometimes it is necessary to protect others from the savagery of the world. You would lay down your life to defend that which is most dear to you.



Cooperation

The strength of the group is greater than the sum of the parts. In unity do the many find their greatest success.



Desperation

A cornered animal is the most dangerous, and you will do anything to overcome the long odds against you.



Creation

The obligation of life is to create that which will last beyond oneself. Be it art, edifice or reputation, such creation is its own immortality.



Discipline

Only through training and organization can victory be achieved. You live by a strict military code and expect the same from others.



Curiosity

There is always a mystery to be solved or knowledge to be learned. Who cares how many cats it kills, curiosity always gets the better of you.



Discord

Unity and harmony are anathema for you. Conflict and strife are always to be promoted, organization to be combated.



Daring

Action and heroism come naturally. No matter the odds, you can always be found in the midst of danger.



Duty

Your position carries certain responsibilities that must be upheld, regardless of your personal feelings. Fulfilling your obligations is your foremost goal in any matter.



Elusiveness

It is wise to keep others unsure as to your intentions. Security is founded on misdirection and evasion.



Endurance

In mind and spirit you are prepared to fight on in pursuit of your goal. Even when the road is most difficult and no end is in sight, you will carry on relentlessly.



Equilibrium

There is a balance that must be kept, a natural order that must be maintained. All things have their place, and you do your part to keep them there.



Exploration

The world is a great mystery, filled with the unknown. For profit or knowledge, you seek new discoveries and new adventures over the horizon.



Fury

You burn with the fire of anger, and woe to those who cross your path! Your rage gives you strength, and drives you onward.



Generosity

Joy is in the giving, and those who hoard wealth are poorer than they think.



Glory

What matters a man if no one sings his praises? Heroic deeds are the way to immortality, and no price is too great for everlasting glory.



Gluttony

Your appetites cannot easily be satisfied. Be it for money, fine foods or companions, you are always in search of more.



Greed

Wealth is the way to success, and you must let nothing prevent you from acquiring it. Sadly, there is not enough gold in the world, so every bit must be gathered and hoarded.



Haste

Time is of the essence, and is not to be wasted in idle discussion. In each moment wasted success becomes more distant.



Honesty

You do not believe in dishonesty and lies. It is against your very nature and offends your spirit. Truth is the ultimate virtue.



Honor

What is the luster of gold if your honor is tarnished? Personal honor is of paramount importance, and you will not allow dishonor to stain your name.



Humility

Pride and arrogance are snares for the foolish. Personal skill and success are not to be touted, merely accepted and used.



Humor

If laughter is the greatest music in the world, you must be the orchestra. You can find humor in even the most horrifying situations, often to the amazement of others.



Independence

You do not allow yourself to be ruled by others, nor do you care to accept aid from your companions. If this makes cooperation difficult at times, this is the price of freedom.



Ingenuity

You take great pride in your cleverness and creativity. New ideas must be constantly put to the test. You cannot let yourself fall victim to the stale ideas of the past.



Intrigue

Only the rash or mad take the obvious path. Crafty plans and machinations are the key to any success, and only with subtlety can success be achieved.



Legends

The heroic stories of the past are both history and inspiration. There is power in recounting such legends, as well as the hope of becoming a legend yourself.



Love

Man would be another animal without this virtue. Your heart feels it necessary to appreciate others, and to treat them better than you treat yourself.



Loyalty

In a world of betrayal, loyalty is more valuable than gold. You will stand beside your friends through any danger, and always demand the same of them.



Lust

The body cannot be ignored. You long for carnal pleasure, your one, true desire.



Madness

Seemingly, there is neither rhyme nor reason to your actions. In battle, you may rush a thousand foes alone, or flee in panic when victory is assured. You are unpredictable and bewildering to both friend and foe.



Malevolence

Mischief and mayhem are your goals. Every action has a sinister motive, designed to cause harm.



The Mercenary

Your loyalty is for hire to the highest bidder. Although some consider you without honor, you recognize the practical nature of commerce, and your sword is your most marketable asset.



Mercilessness

Mercy is for the weak, and the defeated do not deserve to live. You neither give nor ask for quarter.



Mercy

You are generous in victory, and will spare life when possible. Unnecessary bloodshed is the mark of a villain.



Moderation

In all things you seek to avoid excess. Extreme action or emotion is offensive and potentially dangerous.



Murder

With malice and determination you stalk your prey. Only the death of your chosen victim will suffice in this bloody quest.



Obstinance

No matter what others may say, you know that you are correct. Your unwillingness to compromise is a source of pride for you and a source of frustration for others.



Pride

You are well-aware of your own value and importance. What others may deem arrogance, you consider just appraisal of your own attributes.



Order

Efficiency and structure are natural and desirable in all things. Discord and anarchy are to be fought, and proper order restored where needed.



Recrimination

Those who are falsely accused you will defend, bringing justice to their accusers. False witness must be sought out and scourged.



Passion

Be it love or hate, strong emotion dominates you. Whatever the object of this passion, it often borders on obsession, driving you to extreme limits.



Remorse

Your own misdeeds haunt you, and guilt follows along like a shadow. You will never sleep soundly until you make amends for your crimes.



Persistence

Nothing will shake you from the trail of your quarry, no matter to where it leads. Once you have set yourself on a quest, only the grave will stop you.



Restitution

Compensation must be given to those wronged by others. Those who violate the law must pay for their crimes, both to their victims and society.



Piety

Devotion to the gods is the principle duty of life. Veneration of a particular deity is not necessarily important, only the recognition of their supremacy.



Ritual

To everything there is an order and a proper way of performing. These rituals may take many forms and serve many purposes, but they are the center of your life and must be observed.



Plunder

The road to riches is paved with blood. You live by the raid and take by force what you want.



Rivalry

Competition never hurt anyone. Whether friendly or unfriendly, a rivalry may take shape with anyone over anything; all that matters is ultimate success.



Practicality

You are not encumbered by sentimentality. People and possessions serve their roles, but undue attachment to such things is wasteful. Simplicity and expediency are your goals.



Sacrifice

The success of the group is of greater importance than its individual members. At times it is necessary to put the survival of the many above that of the few.



Sanguinary

You are ruled by the fires of blood. At times cheerful and joyous, at others eager to shed blood, you travel a tempestuous road.



Seeking

Complacency is as certain to annoy you as an unsolved mystery. Adventure is ever around the bend, and success is always over the next hill.



Serenity

All fires that burn in your spirit must be extinguished. When the body and mind is calm and tranquil, your thought is as clear as a sheet of Elven glass.



Shamanism

The world is full of magic, like a well waiting to be tapped. You seek to wield this magic through the use of totems and charms. Even if the spells do not seem to work, you are certain the right combination of elements will one day bring success.



Silence

Perhaps you believe stealth is the key to survival, or maybe you just don't have that much to say. Regardless, you care little for speech or noise, nor do you tolerate it from others.



Solitude

Isolation is solace for you. The company of others is more hindrance than help. You tolerate rather than encourage the presence of others, but remain reserved and distant, even in a group.



Stalking

You know your prey, and will not stop until it is yours. It's not the kill, however, but the thrill of the chase that drives you onward.



Strength

Your body is iron and your mind is focused. Only by pushing body and mind to their farthest limits will you feel your own strength.



Stubbornness

Even when wrong, you are unyielding. You will never admit to a mistake, rationalizing every action, no matter how extreme or ridiculous.



Superstition

Disaster waits for those who fail to honor the ways of the spirit world. Even the most trivial act can have grave consequences, and it is best to avoid bringing a hex down upon yourself.



Swashbuckling

It takes no imagination to enter a room through the door. Wouldn't swinging in through the window be more exciting? Nothing about you is dull or humorless, nor will you suffer boring people to impede even your ordinary actions.



Tale-Telling

There is a story to everything, and you just happen to know it. What matters it if the tale grows in the telling? As long as the yarn is a good one, your listeners will never tire of it.



Temperance

You have lived and loved more wildly than most, but now you seek a middle ground in your pursuits. Your enjoyment of these things is not lessened, only more deliberate than in the past.



Terror

There is no greater sensation than that of stark terror. You revel in causing fear, as well as feeling it yourself.



Theft

Only fools pay for what they might otherwise steal. Easy plunder is your lodestone, and you see the road to your future paved with gold.



Trust

Your best asset is your friends and compatriots. You would place your life in their hands and not give a second thought to it. Even the lowliest peasant deserves your trust until he proves otherwise.



Valor

Cowardice has no place in your world. Your deeds and your words must show bravery, else you think yourself a dastard.



Vengeance

Blood cries out for blood. A past wrong must be avenged, and you will not allow anything to prevent you from evening the score.



Violence

The only way to survive in this world is through violence. Violence both starts and ends conflicts. The weak only survive on the sufferance of the strong.



Wanderlust

In the wide world there is nowhere you do not wish to see. As soon as you reach it, however, it seems to lose its allure. The siren song of the journey beckons you always,








Will

The mettle of a warrior is known by his forceful nature. You are unbending as an oak, and your will is of iron. By comparison, the opinions of others are of little value.

Glyphs and WarClan Runes

By acquiring glyphs, characters gain access to the mystic powers of the WarClans. As glyphs are earned, they are combined to form the WarClan runes. These runes grant the character the legendary powers specific to their WarClan. For example, a Beastlord may possess a rune that gives him the terrifying roar of the lion. There are four runes for each WarClan, each with its own power. As these runes are acquired, more powerful combinations of runes may be formed.

The first WarClan rune is obtained when the character possesses four separate glyphs. The rune chosen may be any one of the four available to that WarClan. This rune is recorded on the character sheet. After a character acquires a sixth glyph a second WarClan rune is chosen. The character does not gain the power normally associated with this rune. Rather, it is combined with the first rune to form an entirely new rune. The character will still possess the first rune and its power. Thus, she may use the power of the first rune and the power of the combined first and second runes, but not the individual power of the second rune. The process is repeated when the character gains her eighth glyph and again after the tenth glyph. At each step, the new rune combines with the existing runes to form larger and more powerful combinations. Again, the third WarClan rune does not yield its individual power, but is added to the combination of the first two runes. This three-part rune is recorded on the character sheet. After the fourth and final WarClan rune is obtained the character will possess four runes: the first single rune, and the combinations of the first and second; first, second and third; and first, second, third and fourth.

Example: *Rathgar, a fearsome Beastlord, possesses the rune Silence of the Mist* . *After acquiring additional glyphs, he earns a second WarClan rune. This time he chooses* . *This does not yield the Battle Frenzy*  *power. Rather, Rathgar will have gained the Reflexes of the Cat*  . *Note that the order in which Rathgar acquired the runes is unimportant when determining the runic power.*

Players should choose carefully each time a WarClan rune is earned, as the choice of one runic power will exclude the possibility of acquiring certain others. These decisions become increasingly important in a character's career as the player decides what rune are most suited to his character's personality.

Glyphs Held	Runes Earned
4	first
6	second
8	third
10	fourth

BEASTLORDS



Silence of the Mist

The Beastlord may become as still as any forest creature, undetectable to any but the most wary. Anyone attempting to spot him must roll an additional 1d10 to their Perception roll.

Animal Instincts

The Beastlord's awareness is that of a wild animal. He may always reroll a failed Perception roll. Only one reroll may be made per attempt.



Shout of Terror

The horrific roar of the Beastlord is a terror to the beasts of the jungle. Once per adventure session he may use this cry to frighten any animals within hearing distance. Common (i.e. non-magical) animals must pass a Courage roll or flee.



Lion's Courage

Even the most fearsome creature cannot shake the Beastlord's resolve. He does not fear any beast of the wild, and may reroll failed Terror or Revulsion rolls.



Battle Frenzy

Savage in battle, the Beastlord is a fearful opponent. Once per round, he may expend 2 Fatigue to roll an additional Attack Die.



Lord of the Pride

The fearless battle call of the Beastlord steadies his friends and terrifies his foes. In battle, the Beastlord and his allies receive Courage +2, increasing fatigue and making allies more likely to stand firm and hold their ground.



Companion Beast*

The Beastlord may summon an animal to serve as guardian and companion. A wolf, warhound, or jackal may be called from the wild. The animal will serve faithfully if well treated, protecting its master at the cost of its own life.



Tiger Claw

The Beastlord's attacks rend and tear his foes like the powerful paws of a ferocious tiger. His unarmed attacks do Carving damage.



The Stalker*

Obeying his call, a great cat will fight by the Beastlord's side. Be it a leopard, jaguar or tiger, the cat will obey the word of its lord unto death.



Reflexes of the Cat

How can the sword strike what is not there? The Beastlord's speed allows him to whirl out of the path of attacks. All foes roll one less Attack Die die when attacking him.



Rhino Charge

The Beastlord's attack is as unstoppable as a rushing rhino. Whenever he has the Initiative advantage over his foe in battle he may roll an additional 1d6 damage for each successful hit.



Battle Roar

The spirit of the wild gives the Beastlord a terrifying battle cry. Once per battle the Beastlord may utter a bestial cry, forcing his opponent to pass a Courage roll or be treated as Surprised for the remainder of the combat, or until the Beastlord no longer participates in the battle.



Beastlord*

The final mark of the true Beastlord, he may summon a magical beast to carry him into battle. A well-treated gryphon, pegasus or wyvern will serve loyally the Beastlord unto death. Furthermore, this creature has an extraordinary additional 1d10 points of Courage.



The Colossus*

From the depths of the primordial woods comes a creature of monstrous size to act as mount for the Beastlord. An animal of prodigious size and strength may be summoned: a mastodon, rhino or enormous kodiak bear, certain to strike fear into any foe.



Berserk Fury

The Beastlord can surrender to the frenzy of battle, becoming a whirlwind of destruction among his enemies. He may roll an additional two Attack Dice. The Beastlord neglects his own safety, however, and opponents gain a Surprise die against him for the duration of the combat.

Totem Beasts

Rune powers noted with an asterisk* have the following additional rules:

Upon gaining each rune, the Beastlord must choose a totem animal from those listed. For example, a warrior with the rune "Companion Beast" must immediately choose a wolf, warhound or jackal as his totem companion. The chosen creature will then appear to serve him at the first opportunity (usually within 1d6 days). Totem choices are irrevokable. If a wolf is chosen, for example, the Beastlord may never summon a warhound or jackal, even if his wolf is slain. If the totem animal dies, another may be called whenever deemed appropriate by the Runemaster, again, usually within 1d6 days. Beastlords celebrate their companions' deaths with honorific pyres and songs of battle.



CULT OF THE SKULL



Spirit Track

By calling upon the spirits of the wild, the Cultist is able to follow a trail as if a master Tracker (when trying to find or identify a trail, he may reroll his Perception three times).



Call of Death

Once per adventure session the Cultist may use the Call of Death. This bone-chilling cry paralyzes enemies, preventing them from rolling an Initiative die.



Shadow Armor

The Cultist's chants summon dark spirits to surround and protect him. If the Cultist passes a Difficult Courage roll at the start of battle, opponents roll one less Attack Die.



Skull Grin

The unnerving, skull-like smile of the Cultist gives +3 to intimidation NPC reaction rolls, but -1 to all others.



War Trance

A vengeful spirit takes control of the Cultist's weapon, striking of its own volition. All maneuvers are at one less Fatigue. Attacks may be made even in the dark or against invisible foes as the spirit can see things hidden to mortal eyes.



Ghost Skull

The Cultist summons a wandering spirit of the dead to dwell within a skull. The skull will warn of approaching danger at night, and can be used as a lantern with its glowing yellow eyes.



Strength of Ogue Ashedah

The Cultist may call upon the power of the great warrior Ogue Ashedah to revive him. Once per day, the Breath may be summoned to restore 2d6 Fatigue points, even in the midst of battle.



Skull-Taker

The Skullmen are quite proficient at removing the heads from their victims. When striking for an opponent's head, any critical hit is resolved with 3d6.

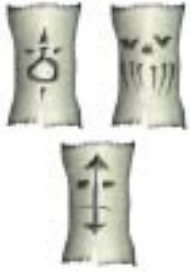
Totem Call

A totem animal is summoned to serve the Cultist. This will be a spirit in the shape of a small animal (cat-sized) that will follow its master wherever he goes. The Cultist may see through the eyes of this creature at will. If slain, a new totem spirit may not be summoned until the next equinox.



Bone Forge

Carved upon bones, this rune allows the Cultist to mold them into weapons and armor. Weapons may be formed in hours, and armor may be crafted in a few days given a supply of good bones. Crafting such items takes 1/4 normal time.



Ghost Talk

By entering a trance, the Cultist can communicate with the spirit world. Once per day, the spirits will answer a single question. This answer will be brief and cryptic (as provided by the Runemaster), but usually correct.



Witch Doctor

The Cultist may call upon the spirits to heal others. If the injured person passes a Courage test, he recovers 2d6 Health immediately. If he fails, however, the spirits try to take his life, and he loses 1d6 Health. The second time this is performed on a patient per day, it becomes a Difficult roll. The third (and final) time, the roll is Hopeless.



Battle Frenzy

In battle the Cultist may become a whirlwind of flailing blades. He rolls an additional Attack Die, and does an additional 1d6 damage.



Spirit of Damballah

Once per adventure session the Cultist may enter a trance and summon an avatar of Damballah. This spirit, summoned only after sunset, will possess the Cultist until the following sunrise. While possessed, the Cultist has expends no Fatigue and may perform feats of strength and endurance beyond his normal ability. Might and Courage are increased by two during the possession.

Curse of Ogue Baba



Once per adventure session, the Cultist may call down a dreadful curse upon a foe. The unfortunate victim must succeed at a Courage roll or suffer a horrifying fate. This innards will turn to jelly, oozing from his pores like bloody sweat. Each subsequent round, the afflicted must pass a Difficult Courage roll or take 2d6 damage with no reduction for Toughness. The curse may only be lifted by passing three consecutive Courage rolls, or by slaying or appeasing the Cultist. A victim slain by the curse will melt into a noxious pile of horror. To perform the Curse of Ogue Baba, the Cultist must either touch his victim, or be in possession of a piece of the victim (hair, toenail clipping, et cetera).



GALLOGLAICH

Sa Diabhol



The Galloglaich may reroll any one of his own failed attack rolls during a single battle.

The Farmer's Burden



The Galloglaich can carry more and tire less than an average man. In game purposes, the Galloglaich takes one less Fatigue penalty for carrying equipment. Therefore, he can carry Might x3 without penalty, Might x5 for +1 Fatigue, and Might x10 for +2 Fatigue.

Eye of Honesty



Anytime someone lies to the Galloglaich, the Runemaster can make an Intellect roll for the character to see if he detects the lie. If the liar has a greater Intellect than the Galloglaich, the roll is Difficult. Woe to the man who thinks he can lie to the clan leaders of the Galloglaich.

Inspiration



The Galloglaich is a master speaker. He can inspire, cause anger, invoke fear, or provoke almost any emotion he wants from a crowd. On a successful Courage roll, he can even inspire a crowd to action, whether it be revolt, celebration, or a pilgrimage. Galloglaich with this ability are often such inspirations that they do not have to make a speech or talk to start a reaction. Tales are told of the Galloglaich Wallach, who lost a terrible battle on the fields of Banregh-Tide. He returned to his village, and the look on his troubled face caused a hundred villagers to sign up at that instant to form a new army. Within days – and without having spoke a word – Wallach had an army of 1,400 to lead against his foes.

Child No More



The Galloglaich becomes studier, growing several inches and gaining muscle mass. This gives the Galloglaich a permanent +2 to his Might. Galloglaich men grow a thick beard and a barrel chest; women become more toned and sturdy.

Call of the Clan



The Galloglaich is extremely respected among his family members and is considered to be their patron. He is immediately given three groups of 1d6 family members capable of fighting. If he can contact his homeland, they will immediately come to his call and aid him. If these allies die, they will not be replaced anytime soon; the Galloglaich gains one additional familial ally every year.

Loremaster



The Galloglaich has become a master of song, storytelling, legends, and myths. He knows about the animals, the trees, the weather, the people, the past. All things that have happened in the world are within his understanding. The Galloglaich may make an Intellect roll to try to recall any piece of history, a bit of an unknown language, the mating call of a swamp raptor, or just about anything the Runemaster deems he may know through millennia of oral tradition.

Memory of the Ancestors



The Galloglaich's memory becomes infallible. He never forgets a name, face, or spoken word; he can't get lost in a maze, cave, or dungeon. Even if his memory is affected through magical or alchemical means, a successful Intellect roll negates the effect.

Endurance of the Mule



"Strong as a bear and the endurance of a mule," is a favorite saying of the Galloglaich and a common epithet of a famous hero. A Galloglaich with this runic ability gains 6 Fatigue points.

Wisdom of the Fathers



The years have taught the Galloglaich well. He gains a permanent +1 to his Intellect and Perception.

Najoree



The Galloglaich have always considered themselves warriors of the natural world, and many are suspicious of anything that seems otherworldly. Galloglaich with this rune ability have been chosen to become the defenders of the natural world. When fighting demons, undead, devils, or any other "unnatural" creature, the warrior does an extra 1d6 damage. Additionally, he receives an additional 3 points of Toughness as protection against these evils.

Mire-Chath



A great fury envelops the Galloglaich in battle. While in a battle frenzy, the Galloglaich may roll as many extra dice as he wants for damage. However, each point of extra damage takes away the same amount of Fatigue. Once out of Fatigue, the Galloglaich may not use this runic ability.

Example: *The warrior Conary goes into his dreaded Battle Madness. After hitting his foe, he decides he wants to do an extra 2d6 damage. He rolls a '9', which means he does 9 extra points of damage, but this costs him 9 Fatigue!*

Slainte



The years are kind to the Galloglaich, and if he survives his battles, his longevity will be unmatched. The life-expectancy for one with this gift is 100. Furthermore, he receives a permanent natural Toughness 2, and +1 Courage.

Faithful Hound



A giant hound always accompanies the Galloglaich. He is loyal and faithful as only a dog could be, and he will always obey and protect his master. The hound is extremely intelligent and understands basic commands. He recognizes his master's friends – and enemies. Many Galloglaich swear that these Hounds are from the faerie lands, and are not natural dogs. If the hound dies, a puppy will soon find the Galloglaich and replace the lost dog.

The Hound has Might 11, Courage 15, Intellect 7, Agility 11, Perception 15, Health 26.

Green Heart



The Galloglaich's heart becomes the source of his power and his liveliness. He can never die from any wound, no matter how serious. He can take the worst blows and still recover, though slowly. For game purposes, a roll of '6' on the Death Die does not kill the Galloglaich, just knocks him out. However, any Vital Shot to the heart that takes the Galloglaich below the Dying health level will kill him. Likewise, any blow that severs the Galloglaich's head or torso will also kill him.

The Galloglaich with Green Heart can also be killed by old age, drowning, or any other source of injury that does not directly wound.



THE GUIDESMEN



Recovery

The Guidesman has been toughened greatly. He will always heal one point of Health each day, even if he travels hard, fights off a field of giants, and climbs a legendary mountain. Furthermore, on a successful Courage roll, he'll heal an additional point.



Athletic Triumph

Whenever doing an athletic event (swimming, running, climbing, jumping, lifting, et cetera) the Guidesman gains +1 to all of his attributes.



True Trail

When the Guidesman finds a trail, he knows the exact details of it. He can determine its freshness, how many men passed (or how many creatures), even what they ate for breakfast. He can identify virtually all types of tracks (only truly unique animals will stump him) and has no problem following them as long as they are still visible. This power also lets the Guidesman find water sources with ease.



Wood Whispers

While in the wilderness (cities and dungeons don't count; caverns would), the Guidesman becomes alert to threats. Whenever any danger approaches, the Runemaster should make a Perception roll for the Guidesman. On a success, his spirit warns him of the upcoming danger. The details and proximity of the danger, however, won't be apparent.



Healing Moss

The Guidesman can quickly find healing herbs in the wilderness. Even the most stark outdoor environment, such as a desert, will be able to supply the Guidesman with helpful medicines. In addition, all bandaging and Treatment attempts heal an additional point.



Lightfoot

The Guidesman becomes able to walk and not leave any visible trail. Only another Guidesman of greater Perception will be able to find traces of a Guidesman using this ability.



Wilderness Hide

While in the wild, the Guidesman may hide himself seamlessly. No mortal can see him unless they walk on top of him, or make a Hopeless Perception roll. Hiding so perfectly takes 3 rounds, during which the Guidesman cannot be attacked. For stark environments, double the time.



Unending Alertness

The Guidesman needs only two hours of sleep each night. If he misses a night's sleep, he loses only 1d6 Fatigue (rather than the usual 2d6). Furthermore, he only needs a third of the amount of food and water a normal man needs. Finally, the Guidesman can see perfectly in starlight; only pitch blackness blinds him.



Winter Coat

The Guidesman becomes immune to frost and extreme heat. He can live in the coldest of tundras or the hottest of deserts without discomfort. He takes no extra Fatigue from foul weather attacks, and even takes half damage from flames and magical ice attacks.



Nature Empathy



The Guidesman can understand animals. He can't talk to them, or even understand exact "words." Instead, he can empathize with their emotions and fears. He'll know when a wolf is hungry, or when a rabbit is hiding from a hawk. He'll know if a bird has seen a group of men recently, though the bird

won't be able to tell him what they were talking about. Runemasters should remember that animals aren't especially intelligent – a sheep won't notice much of anything, while a crafty raven would understand a great deal more.

Master Aim



The Guidesman is a master of the bow, and uses all of his senses to anticipate account wind direction, arrow defects, and target movement. He rolls an additional two Attack Dice when using his own, personal bow. If he uses an unfamiliar bow, the bonus is reduced to one Attack Die. For a Guidesman to become familiar with a new bow, he must

make a Difficult Perception roll each day. After three successes, he is as familiar with the new bow as his old.

Shadow Seeing



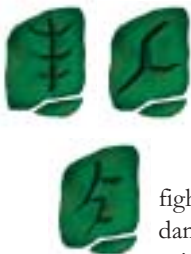
The Guidesman is a master of the senses. He can see through inky blackness and can spot the smallest shadows on the ground. He never gets a Surprise Die due to darkness or fighting an invisible foe. He suffers no penalties due to adverse conditions, such as fighting in water or on rocky ground (see p.95). Lastly, he gains a permanent +1 Perception.

Animal Form



By spending 1d6 Fatigue, the Guidesman can transform himself into any ordinary, non-magical animal (he couldn't, for instance, transform himself into a dragon, or unicorn). All of his attributes become that of the beast he transforms into, except for his Intellect which stays the same. He is able to fully communicate with other animals of that kind. Remaining in Animal Form costs 1 Fatigue every hour, which is not recovered until he rests in human form.

Instinctual Berserk

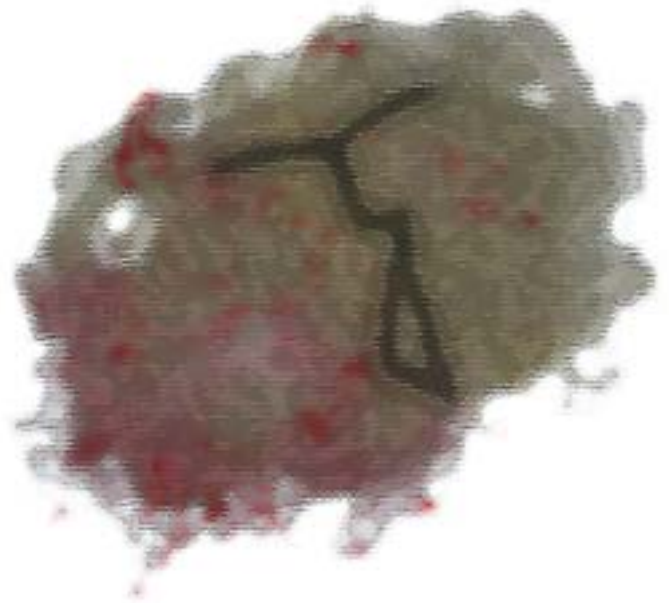


The Guidesman can rid himself of his "civilized" emotions and go back to the instinctual fighting style humans once possessed. The first round of this type of fighting costs 1d6 Fatigue, but increases his damage by 1d6 regardless of the weapons he is using.

Animal Speak



The Guidesman can talk to and fully understand all sorts of animals. If the animal doesn't have a reason to fear the Guidesman, it will obey simple commands. Animals will quickly befriend a Guidesman who is able to speak with them (+2 on the animal section of the Reaction Table); he may have two such animal companions with him at all times.



THE HIDDEN ORDER OF THE JUSTICIARS

Secret Script



The Justiciars possess a secret language that may be inscribed on any solid surface. This language may be seen and deciphered only by other Justiciars, allowing them to leave messages for one another beyond the detection of the uninitiated.

Hand of Order



The Justiciar uses the force of Law to crush those who oppose him. An extra point of damage is inflicted with each successful strike.

Ancient Lore



The Hidden Order imparts the knowledge of the Balance to the Justiciar. He may make an Intellect roll to recognize the origins or validity of legends and obscure information.

Strength of Presence



The Justiciar presents a formidable opponent to those of weak spirit. He receives +2 on intimidation and combat imminent reaction rolls (see p.00). This ability only works during negotiations, not combat.

Swift Justice



With blinding speed Justice is dealt. The Justiciar may reroll his Initiative roll at the beginning of combat and use the new result.

Secrets Revealed



Languages and codes are no defense against the discerning eye of the Justiciar. *Any* book, scroll, or written message may be read and understood on a successful Intellect roll.

Stamina



The Justiciar fights for the Balance, and the strength of this purpose allows him to go beyond the endurance of mortals in order to succeed. He recovers 2d6 Fatigue points following combat. He cannot regain more Fatigue than he lost in the battle.

Eye of the Champion



The discerning eye of the Justiciar allows him to see weaknesses in a foe's defense. He may roll an additional Attack Die in combat.

Unity



The righteousness of his cause affects those around the Justiciar. The Justiciar receives a permanent +1 Courage. Additionally, those who are allied with him receive +1 to all Courage rolls.

Truthsense



Lies and deception defy the Balance and are easily detected by the Justiciar. The Justiciar may attempt to detect a lie at any time. The Runemaster should make a

hidden Intellect roll for the Justiciar. A success reveals that an untruth has been told, but does not disclose the exact nature of the lie.



Executioner

Once per combat, the Justiciar may find a critical weakness in a foe's armor. After a successful attack roll, the Justiciar may declare that he has struck this weak point, ignoring the defender's armor Toughness for the attack.



Scales of Justice

Once per day, the Justiciar may tip the Scales in his favor, stealing a runic power from a warrior. A single 1- or 2-rune power may be taken and used by the Justiciar. Furthermore, if the Justiciar wishes, the subject is left without the use of the power for the rest of the day. After 24 hours has passed, the Justiciar loses the ability, and the subject regains his. Allies of Justiciars often volunteer their runic abilities to their friend.



Hand of Recrimination

The Balance itself fights for the Justiciar. Each time the Justiciar is injured in battle, he may immediately make an attack roll against his assailant using 2d6. This strike does not expend any Fatigue.



Truthtell

Under the scrutiny of the Justiciar no falsehood can stand. If subjected to his interrogation, a person must pass a Courage roll or confess the truth; it is Difficult if the subject has less Courage than the Justiciar. This roll should be made in secret by the Runemaster. Furthermore, the Justicar gains a permanent +1 Perception.



The Balance of Life and Death

As the ultimate interpreter of the Balance, the Justiciar holds the power of Life and Death. As surely as he deals death in battle, he may heal anyone short of Dismembered, restoring them to life and perfect health. This comes at a price, however, as a Justiciar will *never* aid someone a second time in this manner, as this would gravely upset the Balance.



MARTYRS OF WAR

Way of the Wood



The Martyr of War has studied and attuned himself to weapons of wood, which includes spears, clubs, staffs, bows, crossbows, and other weapons that primarily use wood. The Martyr does +1 damage with such weapons.

Regicide Protection



The Martyr becomes immune to all poisons and venoms, whether they are ingested, blood or skin agents, or spread through gases.

Way of Steel



The Martyr has become one with steel - the ultimate natural metal. Any weapon that uses steel (swords, axes, maces, et cetera) does +1 damage when wielded by the Martyr.

Way of the Bow



The Martyr gains an additional Attack Die when using a bow or crossbow.

Scarred Veteran



The many battles of the Martyr have toughened and scarred his skin. The Martyr's skin is considered to be armor with Toughness of 1. This Toughness is cumulative with any other armor he wears.

Will of Cold Iron



The Martyr is truly fearless. He permanently gains +1 to Courage. Furthermore, anytime the Martyr fails a Revulsion or Terror roll, he may reroll his Courage and take the new result.

Lightning Reflexes



The Martyr's reflexes have been honed. He gets +2 to all Initiative rolls.

Spectacular Warfare



The Martyr of War becomes an expert in his weaponcraft. He can mightily sweep his weapons in lightning-quick patterns, switching them between hands with ease. Anybody seeing him fight will think he is the finest warrior to ever trod the land.

Touch of Blood



The Martyr uses his instincts to strike his foes fast and hard in vital places. Once per adventure session, the Martyr may turn any regular hit into a critical hit (roll 1d6 on the appropriate critical hit table).

Hands of the Art



The Martyr of War can identify the properties of magical weapons and armor. He can generally tell what they do, though Runemasters may withhold game statistics until the items are actually used.

Any rune-enchanted weapon he wields does an +1 damage.

Mercenary King



The Martyr is surrounded by 1d6 mercenary bodyguards during each adventure. Even if the bodyguards die, new ones will take their place as soon as they can reach him.

Master of the Open Hand



The Martyr may now learn the Weaponless Art profession. While an Apprentice, his punches do smashing damage based on Might +1. Journeymen do damage based on Might +3, and Masters do damage based on Might +5.

Tireless Warrior



The Martyr has experienced pain so much that he is numb to it. His opponents do not receive a Fatigue Die when he is Reeling.

Warrior of the Twin Blades



The Martyr of War becomes a master of ambidextrous fighting. Whenever he is wielding two weapons (usually through a maneuver), each attack is not penalized by one Attack Die (see p.167).

Legendary Arms



The Martyr of War has become the ultimate warrior in the eyes of his people. He gains an item symbolizing his history and his lineage. Everybody in the land links him with his item, and he is respected as a lord. The item he gains (usually a weapon or piece of armor) is not necessarily magical, but it is always of Master craftsmanship. Whether it gives any powers to the wielder – like Excalibur gave to King Arthur – is entirely up to the Runemaster.

Example Legend: Sir Dunsinane and Fasnagard

After leading an army to victory, Dunsinane gained his fourth rune and became a hero worthy of mythology. After the battle, the monk Astarius bestowed him with Fasnagard, a legendary greatsword. In addition to being a mithril greatsword fashioned by a master, the sword provides Dunsinane with the steadiness of age-old heroes. While his sword is in hand, Dunsinane is immune to Terror and Revulsion rolls.



MEDEAN GUARD



Guardian Shield

The Medean's whirling blade allows no room for her foes to strike. All humanoid, weapon-wielding melee opponents roll one less Attack Die when fighting her.



Athletic Triumph

Whenever doing an athletic event (swimming, running, climbing, jumping, lifting, et cetera) the Medean is at +1 to all of her attributes.



Calming the Storm

The Medean begins to lose her emotions; she becomes calm and peaceful. Rare are smiles upon her face. This power also affects others around her. On a successful Courage roll, she may calm somebody down. How much they calm down is up

to the Runemaster, though he should measure the results by the player's roleplaying.



Gift of Beauty

As the Medean begins runic perfection, her body becomes more beautiful. She will not scar, no matter how bad a wound (though she will not regenerate), and she always catches the attention of those around her. How she uses her looks is entirely up to her. All attractiveness reaction roll modifiers are doubled.



Proving Matters

The Medean becomes a champion for her fellow sisters. Whenever she fights a non-Medean, she gains +1 Might and +1 Agility. This only applies to sentient beings with principals – she won't get this bonus when fighting an animal, monster, slime, et cetera.



Protection of the Eye

The Medean is able to detect danger from afar, using her calmness and affinity with nature to position her body away from harmful objects. Bows and crossbows lose an Attack Die when attacking her.



Mesmerize

As long as the Medean keeps her eyes on a person – and makes a Courage roll – the subject finds himself unable to move or to act. Victims can stammer, twitch, but make no great actions. Medeans may not do anything else while using this power, including attacking the subject.

Many Medeans use this to give uninterrupted lessons or speeches. If used on anything non-human, the roll is Difficult.



Leap of Lions

The Medean becomes extremely agile and flexible. If she expends 1d6 Fatigue concentrating, she can double her jumping distance and climbing speeds. Furthermore, she gets a permanent +1 to Speed.



Spectacular Warfare

The Medean becomes an expert in her weaponcraft. She can spin her ribboned weapons in dazzling patterns, maneuvering them in a deadly dance. Anybody seeing her fight will think her to be the finest warrior to ever trod the land. This gives +3 on intimidation and combat imminent reaction rolls.

Eyes of the Fierce



The Medean's stare is one of icy chills. Even the most audacious of men will respect and even fear this glance. If the Medean makes a successful Courage roll, she may give somebody this cold look. This surprises them for a round in combat and forces them to make a

combat imminent reaction roll. The Medean permanent gains +1 to all intimidation and combat imminent reaction rolls

Art of the Fortunate



The Medean's wisdom and experience has bestowed her luck and fortune. Five times in an adventure session, the Medean can reroll any failed roll. Each roll can only be rerolled once (she may not reroll a single failed roll three times).

She may also "give" one of her rerolls to an ally, though this counts as two of her rerolls.

Healing Hands



The Medean knows the mystical energies of healing. Once per day, she can heal a single person 1d6 Health. If both the

Medean and subject make a Courage roll, the healing is doubled. First aid, bandaging, and physician skills can improve the victim's condition further. A Medean may never heal herself with this ability.

Wise Woman



The Medean has learned the art of leadership and is able to command her troops and comrades to the best of her ability. She and all her companions within eyesight gain +2 Initiative.

Regeneration



The Medean can recover from the gravest of wounds. After a combat in which she was wounded, the Medean recovers 1d6 Health immediately. She may not recover more damage than she lost in the previous combat.

Youth Eternal



The Medean does not age and will never grow old. When this power is attained, roll 3d6+10. This is the age that the Medean will "age" to and then forever take that appearance. If the Medean is older than the new age, each year she ages "backwards" one year. Diseases will not affect her, and lost limbs will even slowly heal back. The Medean can still die of wounds, however, as most are

fated to do. Furthermore, each day she is blessed with an additional 1d6-2 Toughness (minimum 1).



OBSIDIAN TEMPLARI



Dark Feelings

The Obsidian Templari will always be able to detect another Templari within 100 feet of him. No matter how hidden – even through supernatural means – the Templari will detect another. He cannot, however, detect the identity of the Obsidian Templari he senses, though he will know how many there are.

Diabolic Attraction



The Obsidian Templari becomes incredibly handsome (or beautiful) in a dark way. The Templari is irresistible to the opposite sex. Templari use this to lure innocents into their Machiavellian plans. Those with Diabolic Attraction do not scar (though they can lose limbs). Double attractiveness modifiers for reaction rolls.



Face of Darkness

The Obsidian Templari is horrifying and hideous. Children scream when they see him, men and women are forced to look away. He gains +4 on intimidation reaction rolls, but -2 on all others.

Unnatural Arms



The Obsidian Templari has learned ancient secrets of weapon and armor care. By carefully preparing the blood of his enemies with the earth of his homeland, he can create a brew that keeps his weapons and armor in perfect condition. After being treated, all of the Templari's metal weapons do +1 damage, and all his metal armor has +1 Toughness. The treatment must be repeated each week. Obsidian Templari refuse to treat the weapons of other WarClans.



Dark Seduction

The Obsidian Templari becomes a master of seduction. They can convince the opposite sex to do just about anything that is not directly harmful to them. Victims may resist with a successful Courage roll.



Dread Curse

When the Obsidian Templari barks out a loud curse, he stuns his foes with fear. If shouted before combat, the Templari gets a +3 to his Initiative roll.



Summoning the Sword



Once the Templari has killed someone with his weapon, it becomes bonded to him. If he ever drops it, loses it, or has it stolen, a mere thought will summon the weapon back to him. The weapon will drag itself along the ground with great speed until it reaches the Templari's hand. If the weapon is a few yards away, it jumps to the Templari's hand in no time. If it is beyond that range, it takes longer. How long it takes is up to the Runemaster.



The Shroud

The Templari gains the ability to change his facial features. He can transform his face to look like anyone he's seen. Though he can make his face look like one of the opposite sex, his voice stays the same and his body will not change height or build.



Sacrificial Dagger

The Obsidian Templari inherits a deadly, rune-carved knife. This is treated just like a regular dagger, but always bypasses any armor Toughness the opponent may have. If the knife is lost, broken, or stolen, the Templari may craft another one only if he has the Blacksmith profession.





Demon Horse

The Templari acquires a jet-black warhorse as an ally. The horse will obey his every command – even if given mentally – and will attack viciously in combat. See p.203 for the statistics of an Obsidian Templari warhorse.



Sanguine Armor

The Templari's armor becomes a pulsing, living thing. Throbbing veins can be seen running through the metal, and if pierced, the armor itself bleeds. Any metal armor the Templari dons will transform into Sanguine Armor, though a few hours after it is taken off it will rot away. Armor of Blood has 50% more Toughness than normal armor (round up).



Obsidian Ebony

The Templari's skin becomes as hard as stone and as black as ebony. By expending 1d6 Fatigue, his skin gives him a natural Toughness 4 for 10 rounds of combat.



Fear of the Devil

The Obsidian Templari is terrifying, and an aura of fear surrounds him. If the Templari wishes, any intelligent mortal who looks upon him must make a Terror roll. Once per day, the Templari may make the roll Hopeless...



Sword of the Leech

Any weapon the Templari wields becomes a blood-sucking nightmare. Anytime it strikes flesh, it sucks blood from the victim, coating it in disgusting red plasma. This does an additional 1d6 damage, and drains the same amount of Fatigue from the victim.



Decrepitude

The Obsidian Templari's body becomes shriveled and grotesque. His bones begin to show through his muscles, and his eyes glow a preternatural red. This has two effects on the Templari – he does not age until he reaches 100, and he gains 10 Fatigue points from his reduced, preternatural mass.



RED SERPENTS



Weathersense

The warrior can sense upcoming weather, and can forecast it sometimes days in advance. This also gives a permanent +1 Perception.



Stormcry

The warrior's deafening shout may be heard above the roar of the sea or battle. Even the thickest wall can't stop the Red Serpent from being heard.



Sea Drifter, Star Gazer

Even in armor, the Serpent can stay afloat for hours. Only in rough seas need he fear drowning. The Serpent's gains +5 Agility on any swimming roll. Also, even under the cloudiest sky, the Serpent can sense the stars and navigate by them unerringly.



Barracuda Strike

The warrior acquires the power of the lightning-fast strike. She may reroll her Initiative roll once per combat.



Sailor Strong

Years of hauling ropes and steadying masts has given the Serpent strong, lithe arms. He gains a permanent +1 Might. Furthermore, he may expend 1d6 Fatigue to raise his Might by half that amount (minimum 1) for one minute.



Blue Pete's Ballad

Once per adventure session, the Red Serpent may sing a boisterous song of bloody, bold piracy. All foes must pass a Courage test or cower in terror; allies gain an extra Surprise Attack Die against them each turn until they succeed at a Courage roll. Naturally, the player is encouraged to sing an appropriate sea shanty!



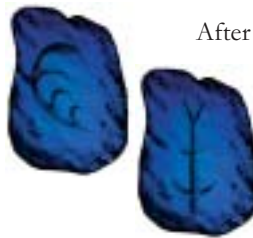
Serpent's Tail

The Serpent masters the art of disarming an opponent. On a successful Vital Shot, the Serpent may choose to do no damage and disarm his foe. As the weapon flies free, the Serpent may snatch it from the air with a successful Difficult Agility roll.



Windmaster

The Serpent may use any breeze, no matter how slight, to sail as if under a strong wind. Even in a doldrums, his ship will move as if a light wind were behind it. The Serpent also gains spirit from the winds. Athletic feats never expend more than 1 Fatigue; after a battle, the Serpent gains 1d6 Fatigue back on a successful Courage roll.



Feeding Frenzy

After inflicting a wound on a foe, the Serpent goes wild with bloodlust. He gains an additional Attack Die when attacking that foe. He may not withdraw from the combat, no matter how injured, until he *fails* a Courage test, which may be taken voluntarily at the beginning of each combat round.



Rat's Balance

The Serpent is uncannily sure-footed. Even on a pitching deck, she is never off-balance. When making an Agility roll that requires balance (climbing, jumping, et cetera), she may reroll the first failed result.



Coiled Serpent Style

The Serpent is untouchable in combat, leaping and twisting about. For the cost of 1 Fatigue per round, all foes roll one less Attack Die when attempting to hit him, while he adds an extra Attack Die when attacking.



Sailor's Luck

A lucky star always seems to shine on the Red Serpent. Twice per adventure session she may reverse a failed roll, automatically critically succeeding even when her abilities would normally fail her.



Dolphin Swim

If unencumbered by armor, the Serpent can swim as fast as a dolphin, moving at full Speed in the water. Such exertion doubles Fatigue costs. Foes also roll one less Attack Die when trying to Grapple the Serpent; his body is as slippery as a fish in such situations.



Thunder Song

Once per adventure session the Red Serpent may summon a sea storm. Although his own ship will weather the tide, other ships will not be so lucky. Small craft will founder, while larger vessels may be driven before the winds. On land, the storm is lighter. Battles during the storm are considered to be in adverse conditions (see p.95).



Athirat's Breath

The Serpent's spirit becomes a part of the sea, allowing her to breathe water as well as air without harm. The spirit of Athirat also gives the Serpent an additional 5 points of permanent fatigue; 10 when in sight of an ocean, sea, or large river or lake.



RIDERS OF CALDECAN



Horse Archer

The Rider is a master of archery from horseback. He suffers no penalty for firing while riding.

Bagra's Endurance



At home in the saddle, the Rider will not lose Fatigue for hard riding and may "sleep" in the saddle by gently dozing, even at the trot.

Dust Shadow



The Rider may camouflage himself and blend in with his surroundings. If alone or with others with this ability, passersby must make a Difficult Perception roll when attempting to spot him. This may not be used when mounted.



Eye of the Eagle

The Rider is of keen vision, and may roll an additional Attack Die when using a *bow* (not crossbow).

Wild Rider



The Rider may perform feats of trick-riding that make others pale. Dangerous stunts and mad gallops are a way of life for the Rider. His horse gains +2 Speed and +2 Agility while he is on it. Also, while mounted, he may use his horse's Agility in combat instead of his own.

Speed of the Wind



The Rider's speed with weapons is astounding. His sword leaps from the scabbard and arrows fly unseen from his bow. He may reroll his Initiative die once per combat.

Called Shot



So skilled is the Rider that any critical hits inflicted with his bow are resolved with 3d6.

Raghan's Trick



The Rider may command his horse to lie upon the ground, hidden with its master (use the rules for Dust Shadow). If alone or with others with this ability, the Rider will Surprise any foe. At a word from the Rider, the horse will rise up, carrying its master with it.

Strength of Caldecan



The Rider, accustomed to hardships and labor, recovers quickly from exertion. He may regain 2d6 Fatigue points immediately following combat. After further combats that day, he only regains 1d6. He may not gain more Fatigue than he exerted in the previous battle.

Sixth Sense



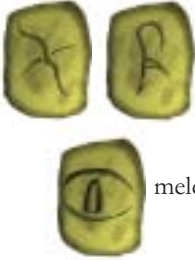
Living by the hunt, the Rider is always aware of his surroundings. Even when he fails to detect an ambush, he is never Surprised.

Loyal Mount



If the Rider owns a horse for a month he develops a telepathic bond with it. When he calls it will come, regardless of the danger. The trusty mount may be summoned from any distance, even if it requires days for the horse to reach its master. The horse receives +1 to its Courage and Perception.

Punishing Strike



The Rider may focus his strength into a mighty attack which does an additional 1d6 damage. This may be used with missile or melee attacks.

Night Guide



By sound and fortune, the Rider can use her bow even in darkness. She suffers no penalty when attacking in the dark. When attacking in the dark with her bow, she *gains* an extra Attack Die.

Sirocco



The consummate archer, the Rider may loose an extra arrow in each combat round without penalty. This is in addition to any extra arrows gained from maneuvers. This extra arrow may be fired at a different target than the first.

Ghost Ride



Once per adventure session the Rider and his horse may become insubstantial, taking on a ghostly appearance. While in this form, neither man nor beast may be harmed, nor even stopped by solid objects. They move with alarming speed, leaving a fiery trail in their wake. Vast distances may be covered in this manner, as the Rider may travel hundreds of miles in mere moments.

Riders may not use Ghost Ride if unaccompanied by her horse. The Ghost Ride lasts as long as it takes to get to one, particular destination.





WEAPONS

**Sharpened
blades**

fine workmanship

IRON

steel

ARMOR

delving gear

Chapter VIII

The Armory & Forge

Kron stared hard at the blade he gripped in his strong hands. After a few moments, he focused his gray eyes on the merchant. He spoke calmly and very slowly.

"You say this cleaved a hundred men in the War of the Bloodsnows?"

"On my mother's grave it did."

Kron nodded his head. He needed a new sword. His last one was lost when he was knocked overboard from a pirate ship. Damn Red Serpents. He lost his sword but was able to swim to this nearby isle.

He stared back at the sword. It looked like strong iron, and was sharp. The price was a bit steep, but he had kept a pouch of silvers from the pirates.

"It's fine. I'll carry it out," he said with a slight smile.

There is an old saying among warriors—the only thing a man can trust is his weapon. This is true... unless the warrior buys cheap weaponry with a handful of tin from a fat merchant.

When you create your hero in Chapter IV, he starts with a certain number of silver Talents, the most common coin of *RuneQuest: Slayers*. With this money, he may purchase weapons, armor, and equipment.

FORGING WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Many warriors in *RuneQuest: Slayers* begin their lives as craftsmen. Whether working over a hot forge, or using their strong fingers to sew through leather, these talents require fortitude and skill. In creating weapons and armor, many craftsmen slowly learn how to use them. These strong artisans often have no problems picking up their own equipment and setting out for a life of adventure.

In order to create his own weapon or armor, a craftsman needs raw material, tools, lots of skill and practice, and some time.

Raw Material

A lump of steel costs 10 silvers a lb. Cheaper materials cost less (see the material chart on p.151; bronze, for instance, would only cost 5 silvers a lb.) but are prone to bending and breaking. If a blacksmith lives farther away from an ore source, the cost of the metal may be increased further (see Cost Modifiers, p.142).

Quality wood costs 2 silvers a lb. Leather costs 4 silvers a lb. Cloth and fabric varies from 1 silver (burlap and horsehair) to 20 silvers (silk) a lb. Cotton and wool cost about 4 silvers a lb.; furs cost about 6 silvers a lb.

Tools

Blacksmiths need access to a forge and anvil, tongs, hammers, aprons, and other miscellaneous equipment. Without these tools, a blacksmith won't be able to do much more than hammer a shield back in shape.

Woodworkers need saws, carving tools, and ample table space.



Leatherworkers and clothiers need needles, sheers, and room to work. Weavers need a loom, which is pricey and takes up a lot of space.

Skill

An Apprentice craftsman can create 5 silvers of material a day (based on the actual cost of the item). A Journeyman can work 10 silvers a day, and a Master can work an amazing 15 silvers a day. Master craftsmen also produce better equipment. Their swords will be sharper and their armor tougher (see p.151).

In order to work metal weapons and armor, a craftsman needs to be a Blacksmith. Leather armor requires Leatherworker, and Cloth armor requires the Clothier profession (though those two can be considered related knowledge). Woodworking is used to craft wooden weapons, spears, bows, and arrows.

Example: Fashioning a Great Helmet

Thorg is a Journeyman Blacksmith who will be forging a great helmet for the captain of the local guardsmen. A great helmet weighs 10 lbs., so it will cost him 100 silvers in material. A great helmet ordinarily sells for 150 silvers. As a Journeyman, Thorg can craft 10 silvers' worth a day. He'll finish the helm in 10 days.

ENCUMBRANCE

Warriors would love to be able to walk into a king's treasure room, carry out millions of silver coins on their back, and easily wield a sword and shield to slay the guards on the way out. Unfortunately, this is an impossibility for all but the most legendary of heroes.

Common Objects and Treasures

Sack of 1,000 silvers.	5 lbs.
Average man.	150 lbs.
Average woman	120 lbs.
Average child.60 lbs.
Empty chest.50 lbs.
Full chest.	200 lbs.
Potion.	½ lb.
Man-sized statue.	900 lbs.
Large tapestry.30 lbs.
Dusty tome.	4 lbs.

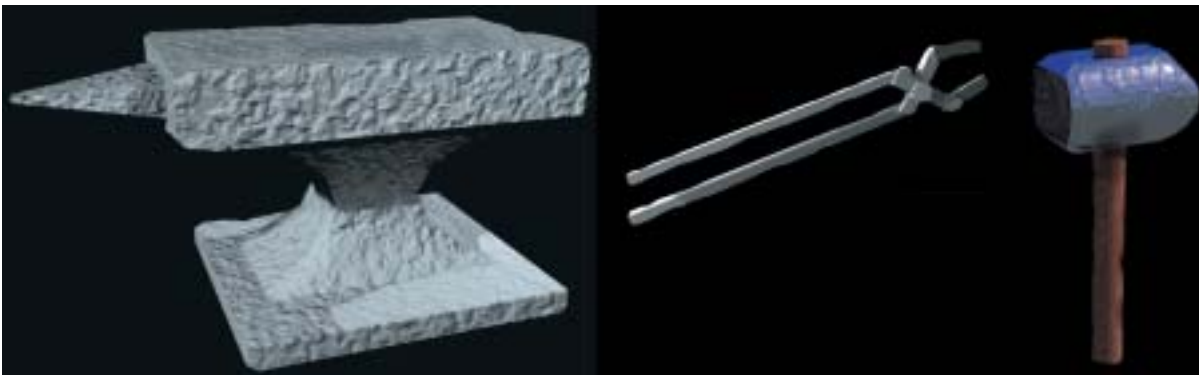
Warriors may carry up to Might x 3 lbs. before slowing down. As soon as they are carrying Might x 3 or more, all of their maneuvers cost +1 Fatigue.

Warriors carrying Might x 5 or more have their Speed reduced by 3. Furthermore, all Maneuvers cost +2 Fatigue.

At Might x10, Speed is halved and all Maneuvers cost +3 Fatigue! The most a person can carry is Might x20. More than that, he just can't move and will probably collapse in a moment.

This system adds some complexity, as players need to record how much each piece of equipment weighs.

RuneMasters are free to ignore encumbrance rules and use common sense instead.



Cost Modifiers

In large, urban areas, finding any item is easy. In smaller towns and villages, equipment will be hard to come by, and it will be much more expensive than in a larger settlement. These cost modifiers generally refer to anything but the most basic equipment (food, rope, ale). Anything else-especially armor, weapons, and adventuring equipment-should be modified by the following:

Town Size	Cost Modifier
Village	x5
Hamlet	x3
Town	x2
Large Town	x1
City	90%

Note that hamlets and villages will often not have all items in this chapter for sale there. More valuable or exotic equipment (such as fine quality swords, plate armor, polearms, and crossbows) won't be found anywhere but in larger towns. Simple weapons and armor (such as leather, bows, axes, and knives) are available almost anywhere.



Round Shield



ARMOR AND SHIELDS

Armor must be bought in pieces - only the largest towns sell armor that can be bought as full "suits," and those that can are usually purely decorative, or outrageously expensive. Most fighters spend their silver on good torso armor, relying on inexpensive, and comfortable, leather and cloth to protect their limbs.

Armor cannot normally be layered effectively; warriors may not, for instance, wear plate and chainmail torso armor together (though he could have a plate breastplate and chain arm-wear). Besides, most metal armor, such as scale, chain, and plate, already includes a layer of soft cloth or leather underneath the metal to avoid skin chafing.



Tower Shield

Armor and Shield Statistics

Toughness is the amount of damage the armor absorbs from a blow.

Cost is the price of a piece of armor in silver talents.

Weight is the weight of the object in pounds.

Defensive Bonus is used for shields. This is how many Attack Dice someone loses when attacking someone with this shield.

Description is what the armor looks like and how it is crafted. Many types of armor, however, can look radically different and still function in the same basic way. There are probably dozens of types of lamellar and plate for instance, even though they all protect a warrior the same amount.

Spiked Gorget



<u>Torso Armor</u>	<u>Toughness</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Description</u>
Light Cloak	1	5	1 lb.	Covers back only
Heavy Cloak	2	10	2 lbs.	Covers back only
Winter Cloak	3	15	3 lbs.	Covers back only
Padded Cloth	2	10	2 lbs.	Layered cloth
Soft Leather / Hide	3	25	5 lbs.	Untreated leather
Boiled Leather	4	50	6 lbs.	Hardened and often reinforced with straps
Brigandine	5	200	10 lbs.	Leather or cloth with metal rivets
Lamellar	6	300	15 lbs.	Metal plates sewn together
Chainmail	8	400	18 lbs.	Linked metal rings
Scalemail	10	600	25 lbs.	Overlapping metal plates
Breastplate	12	800	25 lbs.	Hard metal. No back protection.
Plate	12	1000	35 lbs.	Back-and-breastplate

<u>Helmets</u>	<u>Toughness</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Description</u>
Cloth Hood	2	2	n/a.	Layered cloth
Leather Hat	3	5	n/a	Untreated leather
Reinforced Leather Cap	4	10	1 lb.	Boiled with some metal studs
Chainmail Hood (coif)	8	50	4 lbs.	Linked metal rings
Metal Pothelm	10	75	5 lbs.	Rounded helmet. Often worn with coif.
Sallet	10	100	7 lbs.	Protects face as well. -2 Perception when worn.
Great helmet	12	150	10 lbs.	Hard metal. -2 Perception when worn.
Spiked Gorget	8	50	4 lbs.	Light metal neck collar

<u>Gloves</u>	<u>Toughness</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Description</u>
Cloth Gloves	1	2	n/a.	Heavy cotton
Leather Gloves	2	5	n/a	Soft leather
Chainmail Gloves	5	25	3 lbs.	Linked metal rings
Plate Gauntlets	8	50	5 lbs.	

<u>Footwear</u>	<u>Toughness</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Description</u>
Sandals	1	2	n/a	Leather straps and soles
Cloth Boots	1	2	n/a.	Heavy cotton with leather soles
Fur boots	2	5	1 lb.	Warm
Leather	2	5	1 lb.	Soft leather
Plate Sollerets	8	50	5 lbs.	Metal boots



Boiled Leather



Brigandine



Chainmail



Scalemail



Plate Armor

Arm Protection

	<u>Toughness</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Description</u>
Padded Cloth arms	2	5	1 lb.	Layered cloth
Soft Leather / Hide	3	10	2 lbs.	Untreated leather
Boiled Leather	4	20	3 lbs.	Hardened and often reinforced with straps
Brigandine	5	100	5 lbs.	Leather or cloth with metal rivets
Lamellar	6	150	7 lbs.	Metal plates sewn together
Chainmail	8	200	9 lbs.	Linked metal rings
Scalemail	10	300	10 lbs.	Overlapping metal plates
Plate	12	500	12 lbs.	Called “vambraces” or “rerebraces”

Leg Protection

	<u>Toughness</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Description</u>
Padded cloth pants	2	5	1 lb.	Layered cloth
Soft Leather / Hide	3	10	2 lbs.	Untreated leather
Boiled Leather	4	20	4 lbs.	Hardened and often reinforced with straps
Brigandine	5	100	6 lbs.	Leather or cloth with metal rivets
Lamellar	6	150	8 lbs.	Metal plates sewn together
Chain	8	200	10 lbs.	Linked metal rings
Scale	10	300	12 lbs.	Overlapping metal plates
Plate	12	500	15 lbs.	Called “greaves”

Shields

	<u>Defense Bonus</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Ruin</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Buckler	-1 Attack Die	20	2 lbs.	1-3	No bonus in ranged combat
Wooden Round or Kite Shield	-1 Attack Die	30	5 lbs.	1-2	
Metal Round or Kite Shield	-1 Attack Die	40	10 lbs.	1	
Metal Tower Shield	-2 Attack Dice	50	15 lbs.	1	
with Shield Spike		+20	+1 lb.		Can attack for Might +1 damage

WEAPONS

Weapon Statistics

Might Bonus measures the overall mass of a weapon. Add this to your Might for purposes of calculating damage with that weapon.

This table is appropriate for humans as well as anything that's humanoid – elves, dwarves, goblins, orcs, et cetera. Monstrous creatures, or distinctly non-human creatures, such as dragons, squids, or slimes, don't use this chart – refer to the monster descriptions in Chapter IX: Bestiary & Rogues' Gallery.

Example: *If you have a Might 12 (1d6+2 damage) and are using a shortsword (Might +2), you'll actually be doing damage as though you had a Might 14 (2d6+1 damage).*

Type is the kind of damage the weapon typically does. Carving weapons do an extra 1d6 damage after armor is bypassed. Impaling weapons do an extra 2d6 damage. Runemasters can always rule that a weapon does another type of damage depending on the situation. Most swords, for instance, will do smashing damage if the warrior uses the flat of the blade.

Hands is whether the weapon is designed for one-handed use, two-handed use, or both:

1H = Designed for one hand. Can be used two-handed for +1 damage, but maximum of 2 Attack Dice.

1H / 2H = Designed for either one or two hands. When used two-handed, +1 damage.

2H = Must be used two-handed for listed damage.

Cost is the price of the weapon in silver talents.

Weight is the weight of the object in pounds.

Minimum Might is the minimum Might required to wield the weapon. If you have less than this, each swing costs +1 Fatigue.

Notes lists what the weapon looks like or how it is crafted. Like armor, many types of weapons can look very different and still kill things in the same basic way. There are dozens of types of maces and polearms for instance, though they don't differ from each other very much.

Master Weapon Table

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Might</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Hands</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<i>AXES (2 Fatigue, 3 Fatigue when two-handed)</i>							
Battle-axe	+3	Carving	1H / 2H	50	5 lbs.	11	
Double-headed axe	+6	Carving	2H	100	10 lbs.	13	
Hatchet	+2	Carving	1H	10	3 lbs.	—	Can be thrown
Woodsman's axe	+3	Carving	1H / 2H	20	4 lbs.	10	No Expertise bonus; not balanced for combat

Might and Damage

<u>Might</u>	<u>Damage</u>
6-	1 point
7	1d6-3
8	1d6-2
9	1d6-1
10	1d6
11	1d6+1
12	1d6+2
13	2d6
14	2d6+1
15	2d6+2
16	3d6
17	3d6+1
18	3d6+2
19	4d6
20	4d6+1
21	4d6+2
22	5d6
23	5d6+1
24	5d6+2
25	6d6



Battle-axe



Double-headed axe



Metal Club



Shillelagh



Warhammer

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Might</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Hands</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Notes</u>
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CLUBS AND BLUDGEONS (2 Fatigue, 3 Fatigue when two-handed)

Metal club	+3	Smashing	1H / 2H	10	6 lbs.	—	
Shillelagh	+1	Smashing	1H	5	3 lbs.	—	Short and heavy-about 12 inches
Wooden club with Spikes	+2 +1	Smashing	1H / 2H	free +10	4 lbs. +1 lb.	—	Any club can be spiked

FLAILS (2 Fatigue, 3 Fatigue when two-handed)

Ball and Chain	+2	Smashing	1H	50	6 lbs.	10	Blunt head
Chain	+1	Smashing	1H	15	5 lbs.	—	5 feet of chain
Flail	+3	Smashing	1H	80	8 lbs.	11	Spiked head
Thresh	+1	Smashing	1H	20	5 lbs.	—	Made of heavy wood
War Flail	+4	Smashing	2H	100	10 lbs.	13	Usually with multiple heads

KNIVES (1 Fatigue)

Butcher cleaver	+1	Carving	1H	10	1 lb.	—	Clumsy. No Expertise bonus.
Dagger	0	Impaling	1H	10	1/2 lb.	—	Can also be thrown
Hunting knife	0	Impaling	1H	15	1/2 lb.	—	Has a serrated edge for cutting

MACES AND HAMMERS (2 Fatigue, 3 Fatigue when two-handed)

Ceremonial mace	+2	Smashing	1H / 2H	100	5 lbs.	—	Often laced with gold or silver
Gilded mace	+4	Smashing	1H / 2H	50	8 lbs.	10	
Greathammer	+6	Smashing	2H	50	12 lbs.	13	Often called a “maul”
Hammer	+3	Smashing	1H / 2H	40	5 lbs.	—	
Morningstar	+4	Smashing	1H / 2H	60	8 lbs.	10	A spiked mace



Greathammer



Flanged mace



Mace



Flail



Ball and chain

Weapon **Might** **Type** **Hands** **Cost** **Weight** **Min** **Notes**

MAKESHIFT WEAPONRY (maximum 3 Attack Dice, 2 Fatigue, 3 Fatigue when two-handed)

Beer mug	+1	Smashing	1H	4	n/a.	—	
Hammer (tool)	+1	Smashing	1H	10	1 lb.	—	
Haunch of beef	0	Smashing	1H	1	1 lb.	—	Good barroom weapon
Large legbone	+1	Smashing	1H / 2H	free	2 lbs.	—	
Log	+3	Smashing	2H	free	5 lbs.	—	
Rock	+1	Smashing	1H	free	1 lb.	—	Held in the hand
Small tree limb	+1	Smashing	1H / 2H	free	2 lbs.	—	
Stool	+2	Smashing	1H / 2H	free	4 lbs.	—	
Table leg	+2	Smashing	1H / 2H	free	1 lb.	—	

PICKS AND WARHAMMERS (2 Fatigue, 3 Fatigue when two-handed)

Climber's pick	+1	Impaling	1H	10	2 lbs.	—	
Pick-axe	+1	Impaling	1H	10	2 lbs.	—	Small pick used by miners
Mattock	+3	Impaling	2H	40	6 lbs.	11	Fighting pick
Horse warhammer	+3	Impaling 1H		50	8 lbs.	12	+1 Attack Die when mounted
Warhammer	+4	Impaling 2H		50	10 lbs.	13	

POLEARMS (4 Fatigue)

Bardiche	+6	Carving	2H	90	10 lbs.	13	
Glaive	+5	Impaling	2H	80	9 lbs.	12	A "light" polearm
Halberd	+6	Impaling	2H	100	12 lbs.	14	Also called a bill, lochaber axe, or partisan

SHORTSWORDS (1 Fatigue)

Serrated sword	+2	Carving	1H	60	3 lbs.	—	Also a cutting tool
Shortsword	+2	Carving	1H	50	3 lbs.	—	
Machete	+1	Carving	1H	15	1 lb.	—	Single edged; good for clearing trails



Halberd



Spear



Bardiche

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Might</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Hands</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<i>SPEARS (2 Fatigue)</i>							
Javelin	+1	Impaling	1H	20	2 lbs.	—	Can also be thrown
Lance	+4	Impaling	2H	40	8 lbs.	12	Only used mounted with stirrups
Lance, practice	+2	Impaling	2H	30	6 lbs.	11	Like a lance, but breaks if it does 10 points of damage. If it breaks, actual damage is halved
Pike	+4	Impaling	2H	40	8 lbs.	12	Unwieldy spear. No Expertise bonus. 12' long
Pitchfork	+1	Impaling	1H / 2H	10	4 lbs.	—	Not terribly sharp
Pole-axe	+5	Impaling	2H	80	8 lbs.	12	Actually a polearm, but uses Spear maneuvers. Also called a <i>lucerne hammer</i>
Spear	+3	Impaling	2H	30	4 lbs.	10	Can also be thrown
Trident	+4	Impaling	2H	40	8 lbs.	10	Shorter throwing range than spears (treat as <i>Thrown</i>)
<i>STAFFS (1 Fatigue)</i>							
Quarterstaff	+2	Smashing	2H	5	3 lbs.	—	Made of heavy wood
Walking staff	0	Smashing	2H	free	2 lbs.	—	
<i>SWORDS (2 Fatigue, 3 Fatigue when two-handed)</i>							
Bastard sword	+3	Carving	1H / 2H	150	5 lbs.	10	
Broadsword	+3	Carving	1H	100	4 lbs.	9	
Falchion	+3	Carving	1H	140	4 lbs.	9	Thicker blade than a broad sword
Greatsword	+6	Carving	2H	300	8 lbs.	12	Also known as a claymore
Hand and a half sword	+4	Carving	1H / 2H	200	6 lbs.	11	
Saber	+2	Carving	1H	120	3 lbs.	—	
Scimitar	+3	Carving	1H	120	5 lbs.	10	Exotic, curved blade



Broadsword



Bastard sword



Hand and a half sword



Greatsword



Serrated Sword



Scimitar

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Might</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Hands</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Notes</u>
UNARMED ATTACKS (covered by the Pummeling Expertise, 1 Fatigue)							
Punching	-1	Smashing	n/a	n/a	n/a	—	+1 damage with gauntlets
Brass Knuckles	0	Smashing	n/a	5	1 lb.	—	
WHIPS (1 Fatigue)							
Riding Whip	0	Smashing	1H	10	1 lb.	—	2 feet long
Whip	+1	Smashing	1H	20	2 lbs.	—	10-12 feet long
NETS (1 Fatigue)							
Hand Net	None	—	1H	20	4 lbs.	—	Adds 1 Attack Die in grappling
Two-man Net	None	—	2H	50	10 lbs.	—	Adds 2 Attack Dice in grappling; Requires two men

Missile Weapons

BOWS (may be fired every other turn, 1 Fatigue)

Short bow	+1	Impaling	2H	30	2 lbs.	—	
Curved bow	+2	Impaling	2H	50	3 lbs.	—	A “typical” bow
Recurved bow	+2	Impaling	2H	75	3 lbs.	—	Usually used on horseback
Composite bow	+3	Impaling	2H	75	3 lbs.	10	
Longbow	+4	Impaling	2H	100	3 lbs.	11	
10 arrows				15	3 lbs.		Weight includes quiver



Sporting Crossbow



Heavy Crossbow



Short bow



Recurved Bow



Longbow

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Might</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Hands</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<i>CROSSBOWS (may be fired every other turn, 1 Fatigue)</i>							
Light crossbow	0	Impaling	1H	50	3 lbs.	—	Usually used to hunt birds
Sporting crossbow	+2	Impaling	2H	75	5 lbs.	—	
Heavy crossbow	+3	Impaling	2H	100	7 lbs.	—	
with Windlass	+3			+150	+1 lb.		Increases load time by 2 turns
with Goatsfoot	+2			+25	n/a		Increases load time by 1 turn
10 bolts				15	3 lbs.		Weight includes quiver

Sporting and Heavy Crossbows can be modified with a Windlass or Goatsfoot. Each adds to the damage of the crossbow. A crossbow cannot use both.

ROCKS AND SLINGS (1 Fatigue)

Thrown Rock	0	Smashing	1H	free	1/2 lb.	—	May throw one rock per turn
Sling	+1	Smashing	1H	10	n/a	—	May fire every other turn

CRAFTSMANSHIP AND MATERIALS

Armor and weapons can be made of almost any material - wood, ivory, silver, et cetera. Different materials make armor and weapons cost, weigh, and perform differently from “standard” steel equipment.

Ruin

Ruin is the chance that armor (or shields) will be ruined after battle. This is an optional rule that adds some realism to armor, but RuneMasters are free to ignore it. After a battle in which the armor was penetrated or a shield was used, roll a 1d10. If the Ruin result is rolled, the armor is *Worn*. Its Toughness is reduced by 1 (if it was a shield, it is destroyed). Worn armor can be repaired by a blacksmith for a cost of 25% of the armor cost. If Worn armor is degraded again, the armor is nearly useless and considered *Ruined*. Halve the Toughness of the armor, rounding down. It costs 75% of the cost of the armor to repair Ruined armor.

<u>Craftsmanship</u>	<u>Armor Toughness Modifier</u>	<u>Weapon Damage Modifier</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Elvenhand	0	0	x5	-25%	
Dwarfhand	+1	+1	x5	-	Metals only
Master Craftsman	+1	+1	x5	-	
Decorated	0	0	x5	+10%	Intricate

<u>Material</u>	<u>Armor Toughness Modifier</u>	<u>Weapon or Arrow Damage Modifier</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Ruin</u>
Bone	n/a	-1	-80%	-	1-4
Flint	n/a	-1	-90%	+20%	1-4
Ivory	n/a	-1	-60%	-	1-3
Obsidian	n/a	0	-80%	+15%	1-4
Glass	n/a	0	-50%	+10%	1-5
Copper	-3	0	-75%	+15%	1-3
Bronze	-2	0	-50%	+10%	1-2
Iron	-1	0	-30%	-	1
Steel	0	0	-	-	0
Silver	-3	0	x5	x2	1-2
Mithril	+1	+1	x5	-20%	0
Adamantine	+2	+2	x10	-20%	0
Diamond	+3	+3	x500	+10%	0

Always round cost and weight up.

Only metal armor can be constructed out of the above materials. Likewise, the RuneMaster should only allow normally-metal weapons to be crafted out of these unusual materials as well. An item such as a silver quarterstaff is extremely rare, and probably only crafted through special requests.

Shields are usually wooden, or wood plated with metal. See the Shield listing on p.144 for proper materials.

Example: Suspecting evil fey creatures lurking in the woods, Kron decides he needs to purchase an iron weapon as proof against them. He asks a blacksmith to forge him an iron serrated shortsword (normally 60 silver talents, 3 lbs.). An iron one would cost him 42 silver talents and weigh 3 lbs. Later on, if he decides to make a silver one to fight the were-creatures of the Frostlit Plains, it would cost 300 silver talents and weight 6 lbs.

Material Descriptions



Bone

Dried and sharpened, bone equipment is usually made from the remains of large (and often domestic) animals. Truly massive bone weapons (such as dinosaur or dragon bone) should be treated like bronze.



Flint

Sharpened rock. Basic flint weapons can be manufactured with few tools and raw material.



Ivory

Ivory weapons are made from elephant tusks or whalebone. Sturdier than normal bone weapons, and when polished, quite beautiful.



Obsidian

Obsidian is an extremely hard, glass-like rock. Cut obsidian is razor sharp, though it shatters easily.



Glass

Glass weapons are very unusual since they are very fragile. Many noble women carry glass knives for their beauty - they're considered less crude than metal weapons.



Copper

The most basic metal used for weapons. Copper is soft and heavy.



Bronze

Lighter and stronger than copper. Bronze weaponry and armor was crafted by most ancient civilizations.



Iron

Extremely tough and durable, iron can be smelted and hammered into weapons, tools, containers, armor and shields. Extremely versatile.



Steel

The ultimate "normal" metal. Steel is difficult to craft, and only expert blacksmiths know how to handle it on the forge.



Silver

A very poor metal for anything more than cosmetic weaponry, silver is often thought to have supernatural qualities. Weaponry can also be plated in silver, for ten times the cost. Silver plated weapons weigh 10% more than ordinary ones, and have no chance of Ruin.



Mithril

Mithril is an extremely rare, white metal. Found deep in the earth, blacksmiths capable of fashioning mithril require blazing temperatures and tools of steel. Mithril is often thought to have magical and spiritual qualities.



Adamantine

The "metal of the gods." Adamantine is ultra-rare and as hard as diamond. Adamantine weapons have a slight, pale glow to them in low lighting. Because of this feature, adamantine weaponry can be identified quickly.



Diamond

An extremely rare, if not entirely legendary material. Like the precious jewels, diamond weapons are practically unbreakable and never lose their edge. These weapons are as beautiful as they are deadly.

EQUIPMENT

Every good adventurer carries more than his weapons. Tools such as a rope, torches, rations, and other equipment are vital to explorers.

Cost is the price of an item in silver talents. Most of these are available commonly everywhere, so only in the smallest of cities would these be any more expensive.

Weight is the weight of the object in pounds.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Basics	1	n/a	Utensils, a few inches of string, a button, a needle
Bottle	2	½ lb.	Glass bottle ideal for holding liquids
Blanket	5	1 lb.	Wool or cotton
Candle, Tallow	1	n/a	Smoky - burns for a half-hour
Candle, Wax	3	n/a	Burns for an hour
Chain	30	20 lbs.	10 feet of heavy chain, capable of holding 2,500 lbs.
Cord	5	n/a	20 feet of light rope, capable of holding 150 lbs.
Crowbar	5	5 lbs.	Excellent for prying open stuck doors or chests
Flint and steel	4	n/a	Quickly lights fires
Grapple	10	4 lbs.	Attached to ropes for easy climbs
Hammer	3	1 lb.	Universal tool
Haversack	8	1 lb.	A backpack that carries up to 50 lbs. of equipment
Journal	10	n/a	A small, 30-page booklet. Ideal for notes and maps
Lantern	5	1 lb.	Provides light, negates any darkness penalties
Lantern Oil	2	n/a	Provides a lantern with six hours of light
Lockpicks	10	n/a	Required to pick locks
Map case	10	1 lb.	Waterproof tube for holding several maps
Quill and Ink	4	n/a	Useful for writing
Pole	3	3 lbs.	About 6-feet long
Piton	2	1 lb.	Metal spike driven into walls to hold ropes usually
Rations	2	1 lb.	A day's worth of food
Rope	5	5 lbs.	20 feet of heavy rope, capable of holding about 1,000 lbs.
Rope, Long	5	15 lbs.	50 feet of heavy rope, capable of holding about 1,000 lbs.
Sack	3	1 lb.	Holds up to 20 lbs. Ideal for looting
Small Pouch	1	n/a	Useful for carrying small items
Stake	1	½ lb.	Classic wooden stake
Tent, two-man	8	10 lbs.	Good shelter; requires two poles
Torch	2	1 lb.	Provides light, negates darkness penalties, lasts an hour
Wand	2	n/a	Not magical; basically a small 1-2 foot stick
Whetstone	4	n/a	Keeps blades sharp
Wineskin	3	1 lb.	Provides a gallon of water. Wine costs double

Tavern Prices

Cheap meal	1 silver	It's been dead for several days
Jug of Wine	1 silver	A decent drink
Traveler's meal	2 silvers	Freshly cooked
Feast	3 silvers	All-you-can-eat
Room and board	3 silvers	One night, one meal. Some inns are more or less expensive
Horse Feed	5 silvers	Oats and water for mounts
"Company"	6 silvers	Somebody to stay warm with
Ale on me!	10 silvers	A hearty glass of ale for everyone in a typical tavern

The Herbalist's Shoppe

Make a Difficult Intellect roll to find a dose of herbs in the wild. Naturally, Herbalists can use their rerolls. Of course, if the Runemaster rules that certain herbs aren't available in certain areas, even a successful roll won't find the herbs. Additional rules on poisons can be found on p.83.

As a general rule, only one dose of herbs will work each day. Non-herbalists who try these treatments must make an Intellect roll to correctly use the herb.

Aconite	5 silvers	A deadly poison, similar to Wolfsbane (3d6 damage).
Agrimony	3 silvers	Treats skin problems and ulcers. Rumored to reverse evil spells.
Amaranth	1 silver	Used to treat stomach problems.
Angelica	2 silvers	If you drink this every day for a year, add 1 to your Might roll to resist aging.
Anise	2 silvers	Chases away nightmares.
Arsenic	6 silvers	A deadly poison (3d6 Fatigue and 3d6 damage).
Basil	3 silvers	Treats fevers and headaches. Also heals 2 points of poison damage.
Bay Laurel	2 silvers	Supposedly gives visions.
Belladonna	5 silvers	Widens the eyes. Also used as a poison (5d6 damage).
Black Cohash	2 silvers	Insect repellent.
Boneset	3 silvers	Treats severe fevers.
Chamomile	2 silvers	Helps one sleep.
Elder	3 silvers	Prevents infection and repels insects.
Garlic clove	2 silvers	Add 1 to a Herbalist's healing rolls. Protects against some supernatural creatures.
Ginseng	2 silvers	Relieves depression.
Hazel	3 silvers	Supposedly makes one wise.
Heather	1 silver	Reduces coughing.
Hemlock	7 silvers	A deadly poison (4d6 Fatigue and 4d6 damage).
Henbane	2 silvers	Relieves pain from wounds.
Jasmine	4 silvers	Attracts love and is rumored to bring prophetic dreams.
Lotus	7 silvers	Relieves 2d6 Fatigue. Make a Courage roll. If failed, you become addicted. While addicted, Lotus only relieves 1d6 Fatigue. If you cannot take a dose each day, lose 2d6 Fatigue. Each day, a difficult Courage roll may be attempted to break the addiction.
Mandrake	4 silvers	Cures diseases, but if used improperly (Difficult Intellect roll), it's a poison! (see p.84)
Mugwort	2 silvers	Treats nervousness, and heals 1 point of poison damage.
Myrrh	5 silvers	A dose heals someone an additional 1 point each day.
Nightshade	8 silvers	A deadly poison (5d6 damage).
Plantain	2 silvers	Heals 1 point of poison damage.
Purple Echinacea	6 silvers	This powerful herb treats most diseases.
Rosemary	3 silvers	If eaten with a meal that is poisoned, add 1 to your Might to resist the poison.
Rue	4 silvers	Heals 2 points of venom damage.
Sage	2 silvers	Relieves mental exhaustion and headaches.
Thyme	2 silvers	Treats tooth and gum diseases.
Valerian	2 silvers	Relaxes the user without affecting him adversely.
Willow	2 silvers	Relieves pain like aspirin.
Witch Hazel	4 silvers	Reduces bleeding. Heals 2 points of damage for someone who is Reeling or Dying.
Wormwood	2 silvers	Helps digestive problems.
Wolfsbane	4 silvers	A poison (3d6 damage). Protects against some supernatural creatures.
Yarrow	3 silvers	Reduces bleeding. Heals 1 point of damage for someone who is Reeling or Dying.

The Stables

See Chapter IX for descriptions and more information on these animals. Horses can usually be found anywhere in the world. More exotic animals, such as camels and elephants will only be found in settlements where they are indigenous to the surrounding area.

<u>Livestock</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Riding Horse	1,500	All horses cost 5 silvers a day to feed and water
Draft Horse	750	
War Horse	3,000	
Mule	500	
Camel	1,800	
Elephant	12,000	Only found in desert and dry areas Eats 25 silvers a day worth of food and water

<u>Gear</u>	<u>Cost</u>	
Feedbag	10	
Howdah	1,000	Platform for riding an elephant
Saddle	250	
Saddlebags	25	

Clothier's Shoppe

Fabrics and Craftsmanship

<u>Fabric Quality</u>	<u>Cost Modifier</u>	<u>Sample Fabrics</u>
Cheap	x $\frac{1}{2}$	Broadcloth, burlap, muslin, horsehair
Ordinary	x1	Cottons, wools, mohair
Well-crafted	x2	Bombazines, moqueshel, plaid
Expensive	x5	Velvets, challis wool, organdy, sharkskin, furs
Extravagant	x10	Silks, chiffon, organza
Opulent	x100	Jeweled, goldlace, elven silk, dragonwing

Outfits for All Customers

Bolero	3 silvers	A short vest, usually worn open by sailors
Cloak, Heavy	10 silvers	A billowing, padded cloak
Dalmatica	5 silvers	A simple, loose-fitting, almost priestly, robe
Falling Band Collar	2 silvers	A broad collar (usually lace) that drapes over the shoulders
Gloves	2 silvers	Light hand gloves
Knee Breeches	4 silvers	Pants that stop at the knees
Leg-of-mutton Shirt	8 silvers	A tight-fitting shirt with bulbous sleeves
Mantle	5 silvers	A decorative, light cloak
Surcote	4 silvers	A loose, short cloak worn over armor; designed not to impair movement
Tabard	10 silvers	A knee-length, single-piece cloth, painted and draped over armor
Tunic	5 silvers	A loose shirt, usually gathered and sewn at the waist
Winter cloak	15 silvers	A fur-lined, heavy padded cloak

Women's Specialties

Bodice	15 silvers	The upper section of a dress, often strengthened with whale-bone
Bustle	40 silvers	A billowing skirt with padded and gathered cloth in the back
Chemise	5 silvers	A loose "sun" dress, worn without a belt; used as an undergarment, too
Corset	25 silvers	An undergarment tightened with laces and string; shapes the upper body

Farthingale	300 silvers	Large skirt and petticoat ringed with whale-bone hoops
Fontange	10 silvers	A headdress made of ribbons; used by the Medean Guard
Full-length Skirt	5 silvers	Smooth, ankle-length skirt
Gable Hood	3 silvers	Triangular hood that drapes down the neck
Gathered Skirt	15 silvers	Billowing, ankle-length skirt
Gored Skirt	8 silvers	Full-length skirt made of several vertical, horizontal pieces of cloth
Gorget	20 silvers	A decorative ruff worn around the neck
Halter	4 silvers	Ranges from revealing bikini tops to more comfortable, form-fitting tops
Hennin	5 silvers	A simple headdress
Hoop skirt	200 silvers	A smaller, less heavy and extravagant farthingale
Jabot	10 silvers	A decorative frill worn on a bodice
Knee Skirt	4 silvers	Shorter skirt drawn up to the knees
Paniers	300 silvers	A whale-boned skirt that flares out the hips
Petticoat	10 silvers	An underskirt, worn under a skirt, though often visible
Templars	15 silvers	A billowing single-piece cloth, often painted and draped over armor
Veil	4 silvers	Covers the face. Expensive ones are translucent.
Wimple	10 silvers	A nun-like headdress, covering the chin, head, and neck

Men's Clothes

Bombast	50 silvers	A padded (and usually more decorative) doublet
Broad-based hose	15 silvers	Tight, formfitting pants which need to be laced
Chiton	3 silvers	A short tunic, worn as a shirt or as an undergarment
Chlamys	3 silvers	A shorter toga, clasped at one or both shoulders
Codpiece	5 silvers	A decorative device covering one's "manliness"
Colobium	4 silvers	A simple, sleeveless tunic often worn by monks
Colobium, Jeweled	500 silvers	Worn by kings during coronation
Cothurnus	50 silvers	A decorative boot, often embroidered with legendary creatures
Cravat	5 silvers	A decorative frill worn on a shirt
Doublet	30 silvers	A tight, ornate shirt
Gaiters	10 silvers	Usually attached to shoes, gaiters cover calves
Jabot	8 silvers	An ornate, decorative frill worn on a shirt
Jerkin	10 silvers	A vest, usually formfitting
Kilt	5 silvers	A single-piece of cloth wrapped around the lower body
Loincloth	1 silver	A cheap piece of cloth wrapped the groin
Liripipe	3 silvers	A hood with a long, waist-length backing. Worn by clergy.
Mask	2 silvers	For men who want to be mysterious, or executioners
Miter	40 silvers	An ornate, bishop-like hat
Pallium	3 silvers	A short waist-length cape
Pants or Panes	5 silvers	Comfortable pants or breeches
Surplice	15 silvers	A flowing priest-like robe, usually white and draping
Toga	5 silvers	A semi-circular piece of cloth draped around the body

The Jeweler's Shoppe

Everybody, men and women, Dwarves and Elves, appreciate precious gemstones, golden necklaces, and pearl bracelets. Jewelry and gemstones are the most valuable of treasures. A handful of gems can be worth as much as a castle, and a treasure chest full of jewelry can buy an army.

Gems weigh next to nothing. 1,000 carats weigh ½ pound.

<u>Gem</u>	<u>Cost per carat</u>	<u>Color</u>
Amethyst	25	Violet
Amber	50	Golden yellow
Aquamarine	200	Blue-green
Bloodstone	2	Speckled black and red
Diamond	5,000	Usually clear
Emerald	500	Green
Garnet	100	Orange or red
Golden Sapphire	350	Deep yellow
Jade	5	Dull green-white
Moonstone	5	Gray or white
Onyx	1	Banded, usually black
Opal	120	Milky white
Pearl	10	White, rarely black
Purple Sapphire	250	Violet
Ruby	600	Deep red
Sapphire	500	Blue
Topaz	60	Clear yellow

Jewelry

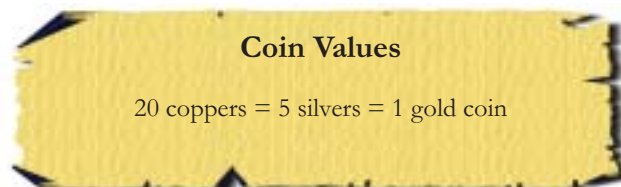
Jewelry is perhaps the ultimate treasure, since fine gems are usually found inlaid into these precious metal trinkets. The following table prices the average cost for a basic piece of jewelry. The cost does not include any gems, jewels, or decorations that a master craftsman might put into a valuable piece.

	<u>Gold</u>	<u>Silver</u>	<u>Ivory</u>	<u>Bronze</u>	<u>Copper</u>
Armband	1000	200	150	75	50
Ankleband	1000	200	150	75	50
Belt	1500	300	225	125	50
Bracelet	500	100	75	50	25
Crown	2500	500	400	200	125
Earrings	500	100	75	50	25
Necklace	1250	250	190	150	75
Ring	500	100	75	50	25
Tiara	1500	300	225	125	50



The Money Changer

Scorned by some, coveted by most, hard coin is the most common form of wealth. The dime-sized silver Talents are the most common coins in circulation, but are not the only currency to be had. Copper is common in poor lands, while the luster of gold, that rare and sought-after treasure, is found only in the wealthiest hands. Although most coins are freely traded across borders, it is not unheard of for a coin in one land to be devalued in another. In these cases, a traveler may find that he is not as wealthy as he may have thought. A local money changer will be only too happy to solve this problem for a small fee, of course...



Weapon Maneuvers

The blood man lunged at Cedric, his mottled hands reaching for the Galloglaich's broad chest. Cedric sidestepped and ducked his head low, narrowly avoiding the attack. He quickly backpedaled away several steps, giving him more room to maneuver his large, double-headed axe.

Cedric glanced down at the creature, who quickly reversed direction and stomped towards him. Cedric grimaced when he saw the bloody footprints the bloodman was leaving behind him.

"By Skitt," muttered the Galloglaich as he swept his axe upwards. The bloodman leapt towards him, impossibly fast. The huge warrior, however, was ready for the unnatural creature's speed and slashed his axe towards the creature's mid-section. As soon as he felt the axe hit flesh, Cedric tensed his thighs and dropped to the cold ground, avoiding the creature's clawed hands.

Cedric yanked his axe free. From the bone-crunching sound it made, he imagined he had sunk his axe in at least a hand's length. He leapt to his feet and spun around. The blood creature's back was towards him, hunched over and gasping. Black gore pored from the creature's mid-section.

Without a second thought, Cedric charged the creature. It was time to finish this battle.

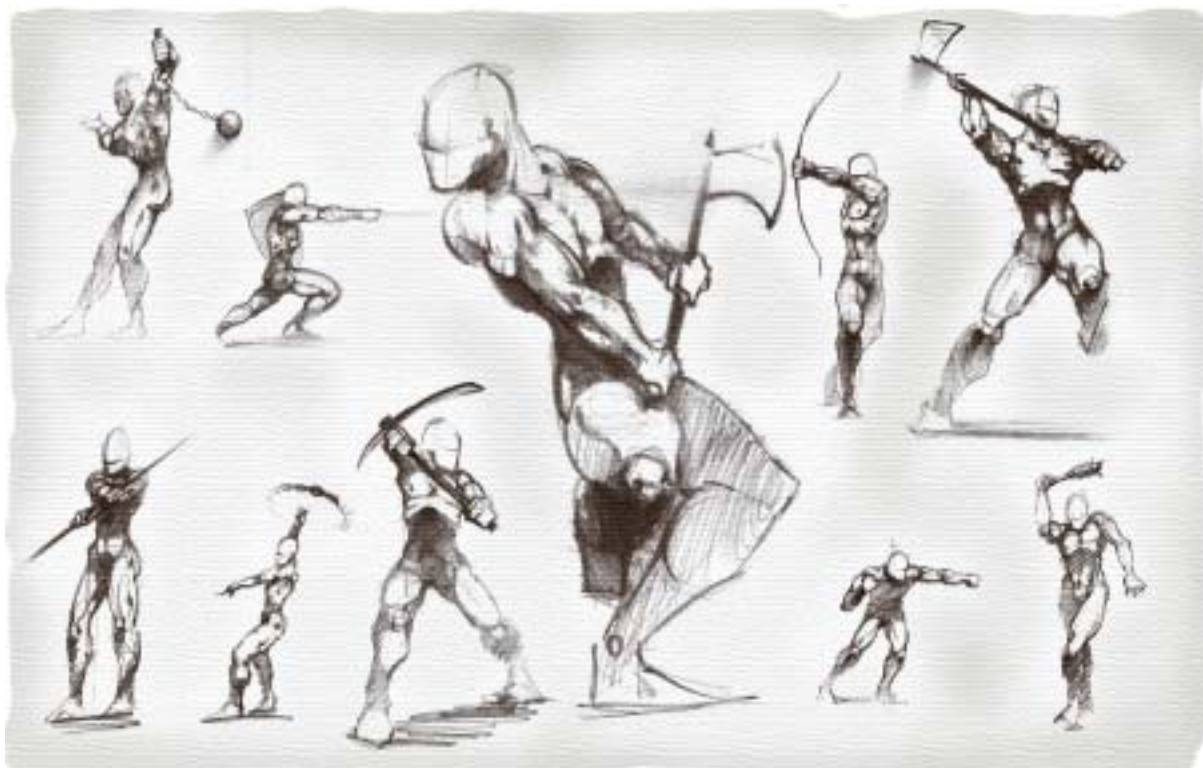
As warriors learn the art of their weapon, they become more skilled. They become faster and stronger with practice, and soon they learn advanced techniques. Swordsmen know how to spin their weapons around in an expert defense. Halberdiers can cut a man open and send him to the ground in one blow. Knife-wielders know how to find holes in their foe's armor. These special techniques are called Maneuvers.

Warriors may learn maneuvers when they become more skilled with their weapon. Depending on their level of Expertise, they can purchase one or more maneuvers.

The Maneuvers

Maneuvers are weapon specific. An Expert swordsman, for instance, cannot learn knife maneuvers unless he also has Expertise with the knife.

There are two categories of maneuvers - Basic Maneuvers and Advanced Maneuvers. Warriors may never have more Advanced Maneuvers than Basic ones.



Expertise	Maneuvers Allowed
Novice	None
Skilled	One
Veteran	Two
Expert	Three
Grandmaster	Four
Runecarver	Five

All Basic Maneuvers cost 5 Hero Points. Advanced Maneuvers cost 8 Hero Points.

Many of the maneuvers below list a Fatigue cost. When the maneuver is used, it immediately costs the character Fatigue. If the warrior cannot pay the Fatigue cost, the maneuver cannot be used.

Some maneuvers are techniques. These maneuvers have no Fatigue cost and give the character a special ability that he can use at any time.

Complete List of Weapon Training
Axes
Bows
Clubs
Crossbows
Flails and Chains
Knives
Maces and Hammers
Picks and Warhammers
Polearms
Pummeling
Slings
Spears
Staffs
Swords
Whips
Wrestling

Maneuvers may not be combined with each other, though techniques can be combined with any number of other techniques or maneuvers.

Runecarvers

The final level of weapon advancement is that of Runecarver. Finally, at this level of mastery a warrior has learned the basics of his craft, and he can start learning the advanced art of rune crafting. The mysteries of the Runecarvers can fill an entire tome. For now, it is entirely up to the Runemaster as to which lesser runes from Chapter VII a Runecarver can learn. Each rune should cost a certain amount of Hero Points - no less than 8 apiece is recommended.

Wyrms-Slaying – Technique

This maneuver is a special case – any warrior can learn it as a Basic Maneuver. Wyrms-Slaying is also the only maneuver to apply to any and all of the warrior's weapons. If a warrior has Wyrms-Slaying, he can use the technique regardless of whether he's using a bow, a knife, or an axe.

Wyrms-Slaying represents the experience a warrior gains after years of fighting a single type of creature. It teaches the vulnerabilities of the monster – a weak spot in the scales, or a blind spot, for example.

When a warrior learns Wyrms-Slaying, he specifies which monster he has this experience with – doesn't have to be Wyrms! For example, a warrior could have Chimera-slaying, Yeti-slaying, or even Lion-Slaying. The particular monster – or animal – cannot have an Intellect more than 7, because intelligent creatures' tactics vary too much between individuals.

Warriors with Wyrms-Slaying gain an extra Attack Die when fighting his chosen beast.

After a character has learned this as a Basic Maneuver, he may pay 8 Hero Points to upgrade it to an Advanced Maneuver. As an Advanced Maneuver, he gains two bonus Attack Dice.

AXES

Basic Maneuvers

The Lumberjack – Fatigue Cost: 4

Swinging your axe mightily, you envision that your opponent is nothing more than a dead tree. By concentrating on cutting through your foe, you may do just that.

The Lumberjack swing does an extra 1d6 damage.

Spinning Foot Weights – Fatigue Cost: 3

Men who have used the axe for years know the secrets of effective axe throwing. The arm alone cannot hurl an axe as strong as the whole body. By using their feet as weights, and spinning their heavy bodies around, they can hurl an axe farther and stronger than other men can.

Spinning Foot Weights allows an axe-man to roll an extra Attack Die when throwing an axe.

Breaking the Steel Back – Fatigue Cost: 2

Axes were created to break solid objects, and opponents' weapons are no exception. This technique allows an axe-man to chop a weapon in two.

Wooden weapons require a Solid Shot to break it. Metal weapons require a Vital Shot. Weapons made by a master need an additional '6', as do any magical or runed weapons.

Advanced Maneuvers



The Hedgecutter – Fatigue Cost: 5

This legendary axe attack allows a skilled warrior to slice through many nearby foes. One Galloglaich warrior known as Cedric is said to have cut through three men with one swing.

This hit requires a Vital Shot. If successful - and another foe is within range of the warrior - the axe-man may try to hit another foe on the same turn. There is no limit to how many foes can be hit, as long as they are all within close range.

Oakcutter – Fatigue Cost: 5

An old saying goes, "Face a dragon with naught but an axe, and ye have the best chances of all." The power of the axe is excellent against large and monstrous creatures.

When this epic swing is used against large creatures (anything more than 1,000 lbs.), the axe-wielder does an additional 2d6 damage.

Armorsplitter – Fatigue Cost: 3

Skilled axe-wielders look for weak spots in their opponents' armor. Using the carefully-honed edge of his great weapon, an expert can easily cut through the most carefully crafted armor with ease.

This technique halves the Toughness of hard armor, such as plate (round up).

BOWS

Basic Maneuvers

Snap Shot – Technique

Skilled archers learn to aim with their minds and their feelings, rather than with their eyes and guesses.

The Snap Shot lets an archer fire an arrow every turn.

Horse Archery – Technique

Most archers cannot imagine firing bows from horseback - the jolts and bumps of a horse's gait makes most shots simply impossible.

This ability allows an archer to fire from horseback with a short or recurved bow. Longbows and curved bows may not be used from horseback - they are too unwieldy. Riders of Caldecan receive this maneuver free as soon as they become a Novice archer.

Overpull – Technique

Strong archers know how to pull their bows for maximum effect and damage. All of the archer's attacks do +1 damage.

Advanced Maneuvers

Eye-Death – Fatigue Cost: 1

This shot sends an arrow speeding towards an opponent's eye. It requires a Vital Shot and does an additional 2d6 damage, instead of 1d6.

Flight of Leagues – Fatigue Cost: 2

Using wind and advanced geometry, an archer with this ability can put a certain twist on an arrow that lets it fly farther than an arrow should normally.

This ability increases the Ideal Range for a bow by one level. Normal bows can shoot up to Long Range (150 yards), and longbows can shoot up to Far Range (200 yards).

Flurry of Wood, Feather, and Stone – Fatigue Cost: 4

This technique allows bowman to launch two arrows in one turn. Archers with this ability are truly rare. One story tells of a Rider of Caldecan that slew a hundred-man army before they could reach him in their charge.

CLUBS

Basic Maneuvers

Thunderous Sweep – Technique

Screaming a loud cry, the club wielder slams at his opponent's legs. The force of impact, combined with a sweeping wrist motion, throws the foe to the ground.

If the club wielder successfully attacks a foe's legs (this requires a successful Vital Shot) - his foe is bowled over onto the ground in addition to taking damage. He must spend an entire turn getting up, unless he has Agility 15 or more.

Windless Thrust – Fatigue Cost: 4

By thrusting the club strongly at the opponent's chest, this attack knocks the wind out of him. If successful, your next attack on this foe will be treated as if he were Surprised.

Rat Smash – Fatigue Cost: 2

By lifting a heavy club high and slamming it down in an earsplitting blow, this attack can easily crush smaller creatures. Giants and cyclops who bother learning the intricacies of their tree-stump weapons often learn this maneuver.

Anything considerably smaller than the club wielder (under half his height) will take an additional 1d6 damage.

Advanced Maneuvers

Earth's Pull – Fatigue Cost: 4

This legendary club attack allows a fighter to hit with tremendous force. After a successful hit, the poor victim is sent flying back several feet (roll 2d6, if it matters) and falls down. He must spend an entire turn getting up, unless he has Agility 15 or more.

Bonecrusher – Technique

Warrior-barbarians who wield clubs have been known to slam aside dozens of men in battle. Those who are hit by their mighty clubs crumple under the force of their blows.

Whenever a warrior rolls a Critical Hit with the Bonecrusher Maneuver, he may roll twice on the Critical Hit Table and take the best result.

Memory Eraser – Technique

Anytime you hit someone in the head (perform a successful Vital Shot) and do damage, he must immediately make a Might roll or collapse unconscious.

CROSSBOWS

Compared to the bow, crossbows are easy to use. Perhaps it is this reason that not many special maneuvers exist for these weapons.

Basic Maneuvers

Wooden Nail – Technique

This odd technique takes advantage of the crossbow's ability to fire at close range. If close enough for melee combat, the crossbowman can press his weapon up to his opponent and fire at point blank range. This does an extra 1d6 damage.

Advanced Maneuvers

Eye-Death – Fatigue Cost: 1

This shot sends an arrow speeding towards an opponent's eye. It requires a Vital Shot to hit, but does an additional 2d6 damage instead of 1d6.

KNIVES

Basic Maneuvers

Assassin's Whisper – Technique

Using the razor tip of your knife, you can feel out chinks and holes in your opponent's armor and slide through them. This maneuver automatically halves the Toughness of any armor.

King's Murder – Fatigue Cost: 2

Grasping the knife with both hands, raising it high above your head, and stabbing downwards viciously, this technique has cut short many lives. This technique can only be used on prone targets. The attacker does an additional 1d6 damage.

Scarring Cross-stitch – Fatigue Cost: 1

Rogues know that it is always best to leave their victims with a parting gift. Nothing instills anguish more than an ugly scar... especially on the pretty ones.

Using the maneuver requires a successful Vital Shot. The attack does only 1 point of damage, but inflicts a nasty scar on an unarmored part of the foe's body.

Advanced Maneuvers

Main-Gauche – Technique

This maneuver allows a skilled knife fighter to use a one-handed weapon in his dominant hand, and a knife in the other. This knife serves as a defensive measure, mostly, but can strike with deadly precision.

While using both weapons, the first attacker who attacks you each round loses an Attack Die. The knife-fighter may strike with his main weapon, or with his knife, but not both in the same turn.

Manticore Blades – Fatigue Cost: 3

Skilled rogues can let loose a hail of knives, striking their foes' hearts in mere seconds. This technique, named after the fabled creature's tail spikes, allows a knife-wielder to throw two knives in one turn. They may even be thrown at different foes. The only limitation to this maneuver is that the knives must be easily accessible - they can't be located in a sack and thrown quickly.

Throat Slasher – Fatigue Cost: 2

Commonly picked up by thugs, cutthroats, and brigands, this technique requires a knife-wielder to sneak up behind a foe. Using the razor-edge of his blade, he slices his opponent's neck open.

Throat Slasher must attack a foe from behind, or one that is helpless. If the knife attacker makes a successful Vital Shot, he successfully hits his foe's neck. This does double normal damage!

FLAILS & CHAINS

Basic Maneuvers

Reverse Techniques – Technique

By making use of tension and slack in a flail's chain, wielders can seemingly defy momentum and gravity. The flail's movements easily confuse defenders, and it can clear their parries.

Flail users with this technique roll an extra Attack Die.

Coiling Topple – Fatigue Cost: 4

You lash out with your flail, wrapping the chain around your opponent's leg and tossing him to the ground.

If a successful Vital Shot is made, your foe takes 1d6 damage to his leg and is thrown to the ground. It takes him an entire turn to get up unless he has Agility 15+.

Weapon Wrap – Fatigue Cost: 2

Flails and chains are ideal for wrapping around opponent's weapons and wrenching them from their grasps.

If a successful Vital Shot is made with this attack, the opponent takes no damage, but his weapon falls to the floor. If the opponent has a significantly higher Might than the flail-user (twice as much), this maneuver cannot be attempted.

Advanced Maneuvers

Chain Strangler – Fatigue Cost: 3

You swing your flail and wrap it around your opponent's throat, yanking on it to strangle him. A successful Vital Shot will do normal vital damage and 1d6 of Fatigue to your foe before he manages to get untangled.

Shield of Chains – Fatigue Cost: 3

You spin your flail in a circle, using the mesmerizing dance of the chains to keep your opponents at bay. If you Hold, you gain an additional Attack Die while using this maneuver. This may be combined with Reverse Techniques.

MACES AND HAMMERS

Basic Maneuvers

Deafening Bells – Fatigue Cost: 2

Used against foes with metal helmets (pothelms and greathelm), you swing hard and hit the helmet just right, deafening your opponent. If you perform a successful Vital Shot with this blow, your foe is Surprised for a turn in addition to the damage you do.

Sacrifice Charge – Fatigue Cost: 3

By lifting your great weapon over your head and screaming a loud battle cry, you charge your foe intending to smash his body in one mighty downward swing.

When used with Strike Hard, this does an additional 1d6 damage. However, during this entire turn, you are Surprised.

Swing of the Fallen King – Technique

This maneuver is named after a king who lost his throne to an advisor's trick. The king, whose name is now lost, attacked his advisor with a ceremonial mace. After a series of merciless attacks, the advisor's body was no longer recognizable. The advisor's comrades, sadly enough, impaled the noble king hours later.

This technique does +1 damage.

Advanced Maneuvers

Bonecrusher – Technique

Borrowed from the barbarian club warriors, this maneuver focuses on shattering bones and breaking limbs.

Whenever a warrior rolls a Critical Hit with the Bonecrusher Maneuver, he may roll twice on the Critical Hit Table and take the best result.

Gully Swing – Fatigue Cost: 3

You swing your mace with one hand, curving it upward like a clock pendulum. The mace usually scrapes against the ground - thus the name of this maneuver.

This swing is particularly hard to defend against. You get 2 extra Attack Dice when you Strike Hard, but because of the odd striking angle, you do 1d6 less damage.

Hew of Sieges – Technique

This technique allows a mace or hammer user to throw his weapon with accuracy. If used with a throwing hammer, which is designed for this kind of attack, this does an extra +1 damage.

PICKS AND WARHAMMERS

Basic Maneuvers

Charge of the Dwarf King – Fatigue Cost: 3

By lifting your warhammer over your head and screaming a loud battle cry, you charge your foe intending to impale his body in one mighty downward swing.

When used with Strike Hard, this does an additional 1d6 damage. However, during this entire turn, you are Surprised.

Lung Puncture – Fatigue Cost: 4

You land a great blow, driving your pick into your foe's chest. Wrenching it, you tear it free doing even more damage.

After doing damage with this attack, on the next round you twist and remove your pick from your foe's body. This does an immediate 1d6 damage – armor Toughness does not protect.

Pick-Thrust – Technique

Using the top, blunt end of your weapon, you thrust at your foe. This does normal damage, but it is smashing. If you hit, your opponent is knocked back several steps. This is a good technique used to subdue opponents with an otherwise-deadly weapon.

Advanced Maneuvers

Blacksmith's Lament – Technique

Skilled warriors can use their picks to puncture armor easily. This type of armor damage is extremely hard to repair, thus the name of this maneuver.

This technique halves the Toughness of plate, scale, and chain armor. Round up.

Pendulum Swing – Fatigue Cost: 3

You swing your pick hard, curving it upward like a clock pendulum and striking your foe from below.

This swing is particularly hard to defend against. You get 2 extra Attack Dice when you Strike Hard, but because of the odd striking angle, you do 1d6 less damage.

Pick Hurl – Fatigue Cost: 2

Picks and warhammers are unwieldy, and normally cannot be thrown. This maneuver lets you throw a small pick (pick-axe or climber's pick) and do normal damage.

POLEARMS

Basic Maneuvers

Giant Slayer – Fatigue Cost: 3

The technique a famous man-at-arms named Calowel used to slay an evil giant, this maneuver uses the ground to brace the blunt edge of the polearm as the sharp end slices into sinew and flesh. This will do an extra +1 damage to foes that are significantly larger than a man.

Quarterstaff's Lesson – Technique

By carefully balancing the polearm between your two hands-like a staff-you use both ends as levers to deflect your opponent's blows.

Any opponent who has more Expertise than you will not receive a bonus Attack Die.

Three-man's Length – Technique

By using the length of the polearm to your advantage, you can strike foes before they even think about landing a blow on you.

This adds +2 to your Initiative while using a polearm.

Advanced Maneuvers

Downing the Dead – Fatigue Cost: 5

This sophisticated maneuver allows a polearm user to thrust at a foe's throat while simultaneously kicking his legs out from under him. This requires a successful Vital Shot. The hit does normal vital damage and throws your opponent to the ground. It takes a full turn for him to stand up, unless he has Agility 15+.

This maneuver won't work on creatures significantly larger than you.

Pole Chop – Technique

By using the polearm as both a shield and a weapon, you can strike foes from a defensive stance. This negates a foe's Hold. Against you, he must strike in Initiative order, and cannot seize the Initiative from you.

Spinning Cleaver – Fatigue Cost: 5

You spin your body and arc your polearm, slicing it down hard upon your foe. This does an additional 1d6 damage.

PUMMELING

Basic Maneuvers

Kick – Fatigue Cost: 1

Brawlers know how to use their legs. While most people can attempt a kick, pummelers know how to maximize the force of their kicks without the danger of losing their balance.

Kicks do damage based on Might. Thus, someone with Might 10 using a Kick does 1d6 damage.

Stomp – Fatigue Cost: 2

The brawler launches himself into the air and lands, feet first, on top of his opponent. The opponent cannot be standing for this technique to work. This attack does Might +2 damage. If the

attacker is wearing metal boots, +1 damage. If the attacker is jumping from a bar or table, +1 damage.

Tempest of Fists – Fatigue Cost: 3

This technique allows a brawler to punch a single foe twice in one turn. If the brawler knows Kick, he may do two Kicks instead.

Advanced Maneuvers

Bloody Fandango – Fatigue Cost: 5

This crazed blood-dance is taught rarely and seen even less frequently. The brawler leaps from foe to foe, biting, kicking, and punching. The brawler may attack up to three times with punches or Kicks. He may attack the same subject three times or up to three nearby foes at once.

Burrowing Knuckles – Fatigue Cost: 2

By focusing the mind and willing his fists to harden, the brawler channels all of his energy into a single, explosive punch. This does an extra 1d6 damage.

Unstoppable Fist – Fatigue Cost: 4

The brawler focuses all of his warrior's spirit into a single, powerful punch. After an entire round of concentration, the brawler launches himself forward and punches. He gains an extra Attack Die and does an extra 1d6 damage.

Wind Defense – Fatigue Cost: 2

This subtle defense allows a skilled brawler to roll with attacks, conforming his body to his opponents' blows.

Against a successful Smashing attack, if the brawler chooses to use the Wind Defense, he immediately loses 2 Fatigue and halves the damage. Against any other weapon attack, he immediately loses 2 Fatigue and subtracts 1 from the damage. Non-attack damage, such as fire, acid, falls, et cetera cannot be defended against.

SLINGS

Slings are simple weapons – few weapon maneuvers exist for them.

Basic Maneuvers

Double Load – Technique

This maneuver lets a slinger load two rocks into the sling and throw them at a single target. The most attack dice he can roll, however, is 2d6 – it is extremely difficult to guide such missiles.

Advanced Maneuvers

Fall of Giants – Technique

This technique teaches a slinger to plant his slingstone squarely between the eyes of a foe. A well-aimed shot can kill greater foes with one such blow.

The slinger does an extra 2d6 damage on a Vital Hit, rather than 1d6.

SPEARS

Basic Maneuvers

Advanced Horsemanship – Technique

This technique allows a spear wielder to use a spear or lance from horseback, even if the horse does not have stirrups.

Set Charge – Technique

Used in conjunction with a Hold, this maneuver allows a spear wielder to quickly set the blunt end of his spear into the ground. By pivoting, the spearman guides his opponent right onto the spear.

If this attack is successful against a foe who is charging or running at the spearman (usually the case in the first round of combat), the opponent takes an additional 1d6 damage. This is ideally used against a charging, mounted foe. A foe on horseback would take an additional 2d6 damage!

Running Strong-arm – Fatigue Cost: 2

The spear wielder runs several paces to build up momentum, and then launches his spear at his opponent. As long as the spearman has enough room to gain some speed, any thrown spear does +1 damage.

Advanced Maneuvers

Spear Leg Sweep – Fatigue Cost: 2

You twirl your spear in your hands like a staff and use your arm strength to sweep an opponent's legs. This requires a successful Vital Shot. Leg Sweeps do no damage, but throw your opponent to the ground. It takes a full turn for him to stand up, unless he has Agility 15+.

Leg Sweeps don't work on creatures significantly larger than you are.

Spear Wall Defense – Technique

You lower your stance and keep your spear between you and your opponent. By keeping him afar, you can easily defend against his attacks.

Any opponent who has greater Expertise than you will not receive a bonus Attack Die.

Torturous Impale – Fatigue Cost: 4

You charge your foe, striking his belly from below with the tip of your spear. Driving the shaft upwards, you attempt to pick him up off the ground.

To perform this technique, your Might must be at least 5 higher than your foe's. If you successfully damage him, the Impaling damage bonus is 3d6 (rather than 2d6) as he slides down the shaft. On the next turn, you can drive the shaft into him further, doing an automatic 2d6 damage (armor Toughness does not protect).

STAFFS

Basic Maneuvers

Leg Sweep – Fatigue Cost: 2

You twirl your staff in your hands and use your arm strength to sweep an opponent's legs. This requires a successful Vital Shot. Leg Sweeps do no damage, but throw your opponent to the ground. It takes a full turn for him to stand up, unless he has Agility 15+.

Leg Sweeps don't work on creatures significantly larger than you are.

Staff Parry – Fatigue Cost: 2

While combat assumes that combatants are doing their best to parry and deflect blows, this is a complete and total defensive posture. Instead of declaring a Hold or Strike Hard posture, warriors with this maneuver can declare a Parry. During the combat round, the Parrying warrior may not attack. If an opponent hits him, he immediately rolls his own Attack Dice. If he rolls a '6', he parries the blow and takes no damage. Only one attack may be Parried each round.

Strongman's Push – Fatigue Cost: 2

After thrusting at an opponent, you use all your Might to push him backwards. This does +1 damage, and will send an opponent back several paces, unless he is significantly larger than you are.

Advanced Maneuvers

Double Feint Strike – Fatigue Cost: 2

Skilled staff wielders can feint with one end of their staff, and quickly strike with the other. Even experienced opponents have a difficult time defending against this.

The staff wielder gets a bonus Attack Die with this maneuver. He may not use this maneuver against another staff wielder who has equal or more Expertise than he does.

Iron Bar Defense – Technique

You lower your stance and keep the staff between you and your opponent. By keeping him afar, you can easily defend against his attacks.

Any opponent who has greater Agility than you will not receive a bonus Attack Die.

Vault – Fatigue Cost: 2

This non-combat maneuver allows a staff wielder to use his staff like a pole vault. This allows him to long-jump Might feet.

SWORDS

Basic Maneuvers

Ars Steel – Technique

This style of training teaches warriors to use elaborate guards, stances, and defenses against foes. Any weapon-wielding opponent who is more Agile than you will not receive a bonus Attack Die. This only applies to man-sized foes. Ars Steel will not help defend against a crazed giant wielding a tree.

Disarm – Technique

True warriors know that tremendous power lies in the subtle curves and edges of their swords. Combined with a precise twist of the wrist, a swordsman can easily disarm a skilled foe.

Instead of doing damage on a successful Vital Shot, you may disarm your foe. Naturally, this only works against weapon-wielding foes.

Net of Steel – Fatigue Cost: 3 for short-swords, 4 for one-handed, 5 for two-handed swords

By twirling your sword in an intricate dance, you threaten to slice open any opponent that comes near. Net of Steel is used in place of Hold – it allows you to strike a single opponent twice. You suffer the fatigue even if not attacked.

Parry – Fatigue Cost: 1 for short-swords, 2 for one-handed and two-handed swords

While combat assumes that combatants are doing their best to parry and deflect blows, this is a complete and total defensive posture. Instead of declaring a Hold or Strike Hard posture, warriors with this maneuver can declare a Parry. During the combat round, the Parrying warrior may not attack. If an opponent hits him, he immediately rolls his own Attack Dice. If he rolls a '6', he parries the blow and takes no damage. Only one attack may be Parried each turn.

Piercing Blade – Fatigue Cost: 1 for short-swords, 2 for one-handed and two-handed swords

You have learned to thrust your sword outwards with as much force as you can swing it. This maneuver allows you to do Impaling damage with your sword.

Advanced Maneuvers

Twinblade – Fatigue Cost: 3 for short-swords, 4 for one-handed swords

This maneuver allows a warrior to fight with two one-handed swords at once. Warriors with Twinblade can strike a single foe twice in a turn. Each attack is penalized by one Attack Die.

This maneuver can be combined with Net of Steel, which allows a warrior who Holds to attack four times in a turn! The fatigue cost for the combined maneuvers is 6 (5 for short-swords) even if you are not attacked.

Whirling Dervish – Fatigue Cost: 3 for short-swords, 4 for one-handed, 5 for two-handed swords

By spinning your body around and around and using your weight to enhance the strength of your blows, you charge headlong into your opponents.

Whirling Dervish can only be used when you Strike Hard. You do an additional 1d6 damage.

Chinks – Technique

Using the sharp edge of your sword, you can feel out chinks and holes in your opponent's armor. This maneuver automatically halves the Toughness of any hard armor, such as plate.

WHIPS

Basic Maneuvers

Burning Lash – Technique

Whip experts can make subtle adjustments to their techniques. By snapping the whip directly on your foe, you will do +1 damage.

Lash of Pain – Technique

You crack the whip hard on your opponent's skin. If you do damage to him, he cries out in pain unless he has Courage 15+.

Scarlash – Technique

You know just how to flick your whip to slice open your foe's skin. If you do damage to him, you leave a permanent scar where you hit him.

Advanced Maneuvers

Cracking Thunder – Fatigue Cost: 1

You snap your whip in front of your foe's eyes, stunning him. If you successfully make a Solid Shot on your foe, you do no damage, but your foe loses his next attack and is Surprised. This is an excellent technique to use against wild beasts.

Crackling Thunder does not work on subjects with Courage 15+.

Disarming Lash – Technique

Whip masters can entwine their foes' weapons in the leather coils of their whips. With a good yank, the foe is easily disarmed.

Instead of doing damage on a successful Vital Shot, you may disarm your foe. Naturally, this only works against weapon-wielding foes.

Leg Coil – Fatigue Cost: 2

You lash at your opponent's legs, coiling your whip around him. A good strong yank will take him right off his feet. This requires a successful Vital Shot. Leg Coils do no damage, but throw your opponent to the ground. It takes a full turn for him to stand up, unless he has Agility 15+.

Leg Coils don't work on creatures significantly larger and stronger than you are.

WRESTLING

Basic Maneuvers

Arm Lock – Technique

You grab your opponent, spin him around, and bind his arm in a painful, joint-wrenching lock.

Instead of throwing your opponent in a grapple, you may get him into an Arm Lock. This holds your opponent in one place. He may only attempt to break out by using the Break Pin grappling technique. At anytime during your turn, you may do 2d6 damage to his arm. Armor Toughness does not protect against this damage unless it is hard armor such as plate.

Breakfall – Technique

You know how to relax your body when you fall or are pushed to the ground. By absorbing most of the blow, you take 1d6 less damage from falls and throws.

Wrist Wrench – Technique

Skilled wrestlers know how to bend joints in ways they are not meant to bend. The Wrist Wrench is used to disarm foes. If a successful Hold is used against an armed foe, his weapon falls to the ground. He must spend an entire turn picking it up, unless he has Agility 15+.

Advanced Maneuvers

Iron Stance – Fatigue Cost: +1

By strengthening your muscles and gripping the ground with your toes, you can hold your position as firmly as a bull.

This lets you roll an additional 1d6 attack die in a Grappling attack or defense.

Necksnapping Throw – Technique

Grabbing your opponent's body, you flip him so he lands square on his neck.

Whenever you throw an opponent, he takes an additional 1d6 damage, for a total of Might + 1d6 damage.

Strength of Chains – Technique

You know how to use your body weight and might to extreme advantage – you can bind up a foe to the point where he can't even think of escaping your grasp.

After a victim is pinned with this maneuver, only a critical success (three '6's) will break the pin.

BESTIARY

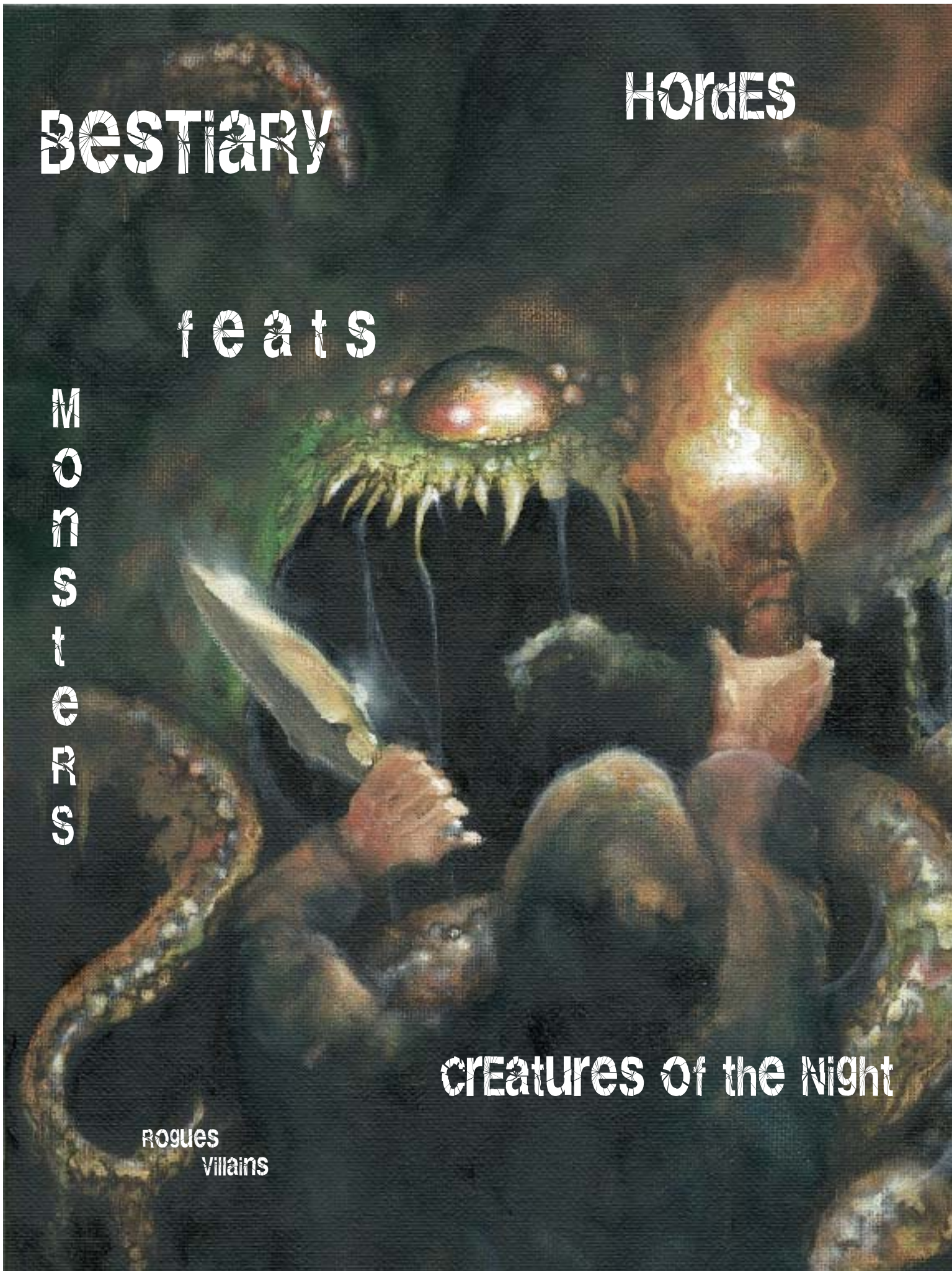
HORDES

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CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

ROGUES
VILLAINS



Chapter IX

Bestiary

Yet again, a weird howl pierced the darkness, sending chills through the intrepid thief. He had assumed the ancient masters of the forbidden temple had left guardians behind, but he could imagine no beast that could make a sound like that. Yet Kandir, proud son of a family of thieves, was accustomed to danger. Where his companions were, he did not know, and this disturbed him more than the slowly dying echoes of this unknown creature. Steeling his nerves, he continued down the cold stone passage alone, the promise of long-lost treasures overcoming his instinct for self-preservation.

Kandir froze, still as the musty air. A new sound came echoing down the corridor. A bizarre flapping noise, as if someone were slapping pieces of raw meat upon the stone floor, came rushing toward him. He paused for another moment, lifting his torch higher to see in the gloom. And that was his undoing. The Guardian descended on him out of the darkness, a writhing mass of tentacles and oily stench, rending Kandir to bloody tatters even before he could voice the horror building in his throat.

Yet again, a weird howl pierced the darkness.

This chapter details dozens of creatures that the heroes of **RuneQuest** will stumble upon in their adventures. Many of these creatures are brutal, unintelligent monsters that simply want to devour anything that stumbles into their lairs; others are more intelligent, scheming creatures.

Runemasters should always play these monsters differently. Not all of the creatures in the bestiary will charge headlong at the PCs in a massive charge. Some prefer ambushes, others will plant traps for the PCs before attacking, and the smarter ones will talk before drawing weapons.

STATISTICS

Beasts and monsters in **RuneQuest** are treated just like characters. They all have five attributes, which are identical to the ones described in Chapter IV.

Creatures have a Health listed along with a Reeling statistic. There's no need for a Runemaster to keep track of other levels of Health, such as Bloody or Wounded. For simplicity, when a creature takes his Health in damage, he's dead.

While a handful of creatures wear armor, many have natural protection such as thick fur, scales, or leathery skin which gives them Toughness.

Finally, many monsters have a variety of Attacks. Gryphons, for instance, can attack with either a bite or a claw – Runemaster's option. Almost all monsters use two Attack Dice, modified normally (see p.91). A few monsters—those with large mouths, incredibly fast attacks, or other advantages—will sometimes have more than two Attack Dice.

Only weapon-wielding creatures have normal Expertise. Runemasters may vary Expertise from individual to individual. Monstrosities such as wyrms, gryphons, and dungeon slimes have no listed Expertise, in which case human Expertise has no bearing on the combat.

THE CREATURES

All manner of creatures roam the wilds, and no accounting can ever record the full number of species that exist. The enemies of civilization are many, and not all are mindless monsters. Some possess malign intelligence bent upon the destruction of mankind.



ANKHAR - *The Crocodile Men*

MIGHT	14	HEALTH	26
COURAGE	12	Reeling	20
INTELLECT	12		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 10 (land and water)	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 2 (8 with lamellar, 12 with scale armor)	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 smashing	
Sword	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 carving	Expertise: Veteran
Javelin	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+2 impaling	Expertise: Skilled



The Ankhari are reptilian creatures with the body of a muscular man and the head of a crocodile. They are an ancient, wicked race whose origins are lost in the distant past. Few in number, they dwell far from civilized lands, inhabiting forsaken ruins and isolated oases. Known to most races simply as crocodile men, the Ankhari are intelligent and crafty, and are masters of subversion and ambush. Often the first sign of danger is a shower of javelins from the shadows followed by a rush from all sides. An Ankhari warrior prefers to strike when least expected and when superior numbers are on his side. Although individually brave, the Ankhari recognize that they can ill-afford to fight wars of attrition. Therefore, when possible they use slaves or allies in battle to do their bloody work. More often, they use unknowing dupes among other races to cause strife and division, always mindful of their desire to bring the world under their sway.

Primitive cousins to the Ankhari are the Ankhari-Sipi – the alligator men. Living in swamps, the Ankhari-Sipi coexist with deadly marsh creatures, making them extremely hard to find. Fortunately, the xenophobic Ankhari-Sipi rarely leave their marshland homes.

BASILISK

MIGHT	25	HEALTH	35
COURAGE	10	Reeling	26
INTELLECT	5		
AGILITY	10	Speed : 8	
PERCEPTION	11	Toughness: 3	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6+1 carving
Claw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 carving



The basilisk is the much-feared denizen of the desert. The size of a horse, its sharp talons and rending teeth are deadly to those that fall into its clutches. The basilisk, however, possesses an even more terrifying form of attack. Those that meet the gaze of the basilisk are turned to stone, their horrified expression frozen forever on their stony faces. It is possible to avoid the lethal gaze. If surprised by the basilisk, a character must *fail* a Perception roll or look upon the creature, thus turning to stone. Anyone aware of its presence can automatically avoid meeting the eyes of the basilisk by closing or otherwise averting one's gaze. This can be very difficult, as the basilisk tends to bury itself in the sand, waiting for its victims to draw near. There is a legend that when a basilisk is killed all of its victims turn back into flesh and blood. The few that have survived basilisk attacks doubt this rumor, but ultimately it is up for the Runemaster to decide.

BLOOD BLOAT - or *Giant Leech*

MIGHT	22	HEALTH	32
COURAGE	10	Reeling	24
INTELLECT	3		
AGILITY	9	Speed: 6	
PERCEPTION	8	Toughness: 3	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 impale*
Slam	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+1 smash

** If the Bite attack injures someone, the leech can hold on to the victim and suck 1d6 of vital fluids each turn (armor, naturally, doesn't protect). A Difficult Might roll will pry the creature loose. This often requires two strong men!*

No one knows whether the dreaded Blood Bloats are natural creatures of the swamp, or if they were created by some diabolical sorcerer. In any case, these leeches will occasionally wander from the swamp in search of warm-blooded meals – the swamps seldom provide them with all the sustenance they need. In fact, swamp travelers often report seeing dead leeches quite often. Fortunately, these rotten leech bodies are far more common than live ones.



CENTAUR

MIGHT	16	HEALTH	26
COURAGE	10	Reeling	20
INTELLECT	9		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 18	
PERCEPTION	11	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Kick	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6-1 smashing	
Club	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6+2 smashing	Expertise: Skilled
Bow Loose	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6+1 impaling	Expertise: Skilled

Centaurs are generally rowdy, half-man, half-horse creatures who love to roam free, raid villages, and enjoy the wilderness. Centaurs usually use the weapons they find in their various raids, especially clubs and bows. Centaurs are very xenophobic, and dislike and distrust all two-legged strangers.

As centaurs age, their wild tendencies dwindle, and they become calmer and less suspicious. Elder centaurs are known for their wisdom and sage advice to young adventurers.



CHIMAERA

MIGHT	46	HEALTH	62
COURAGE	16	Reeling	47
INTELLECT	6		
AGILITY	14	Speed: 12 running / 30 flying	
PERCEPTION	12	Toughness: 3	



Attacks

Lion Bite	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 2d6+2 carving
Fire Breath	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6
Serpent Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 carving*
Claw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+1 carving

* A bite from the serpent head carries the threat of venom. Anyone bitten by this head must make a Might roll or instantly lose 3d6 Fatigue.

The chimaera is a hideous, three-headed amalgamation of lion, goat and serpent. While possessing the head and body of a lion, a second head, that of a fire-breathing goat, protrudes from beside that of the lion. A third head, that of a venomous snake, snaps from the end of the chimaera's serpentine tail. It is a whirlwind of destruction in battle, as it may strike twice in each combat round using two different attacks. These may be directed at two different opponents. The fiery breath of the goat head may be used twice per day, and may strike a target up to 30' away.

Chimaeras are usually found in the mountains, feasting on everything in sight. Only when the local food source is devoured do they move on to a different lair.

CYCLOPS

MIGHT	25	HEALTH	35
COURAGE	10	Reeling	26
INTELLECT	7		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	9	Toughness: 1	

Attacks

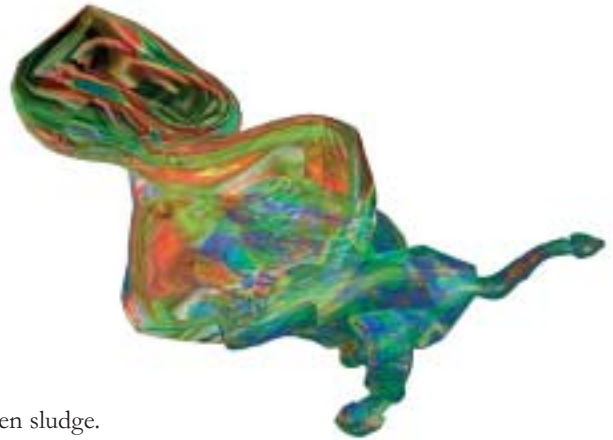
Stomp	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 smashing
Grapple	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: no damage, but cyclops can then use Dirt Pound
Dirt-Pound	Attack Dice: 5	Damage: 3d6+2 smashing



A cousin to the ogres, cyclopes are hairy, one-eyed, simple giants (many tower up to 20'). Most live quietly, herding their livestock and making simple toys for themselves. Cyclopes rarely fight with each other, though they become foul-tempered and nasty when confronted by strangers... especially ones who think themselves smarter than these giants. They have no patience for cleverness or guile; it disgusts them. Cyclopes typically relieve this anger by grabbing their victims, "dirt-pounding" their skulls against rocks (usually using a Vital Shot) and eating the gooey remains.

DUNGEON SLIME

MIGHT	4	HEALTH	22+
COURAGE	18	Reeling	17+
INTELLECT	2		
AGILITY	9	Speed: 5	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 1	



Attacks

Slam Attack Dice: 3 Damage: Suffocates victim

The dungeon slime is an overgrown mass of reeking, bacteria-laden sludge. Somehow, the millions of organisms in it combine to form some sort of intelligence. The slime attacks by leaping onto the faces of unfortunate adventurers. It then crawls down into the lungs of the hapless victim, suffocating him. In game terms, once the slime successfully Slams the victim's head (Vital Shot), the victim has Might (or Courage, whichever is higher) turns to kill it or else he'll collapse to the ground unconscious. The slime then eats his internal organs (1d6 damage every hour), jellifying the victim's innards, and gets larger in the process – slime will gain half their victim's Might in Health. Some large slimes are known to have Health 100 or more!

Some rare slimes are acidic – in addition to suffocating their foe, they do 1d6-1 damage each turn they are attached to his head. These usually leave horrid scars – if the victim survives.

Slime lairs are often laden with the weapons and treasures of their victim. However, the more treasure the slime has, the bigger it's likely to be!

GARGOYLE

MIGHT	18	HEALTH	33
COURAGE	15	Reeling	n/a
INTELLECT	6		
AGILITY	9	Speed: 8 running / 10 flying	
PERCEPTION	15	Toughness: 8	



Attacks

Swipe Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 3d6+2 smashing

Winged Swoop Attack Dice: 3 Damage: 4d6+2 smashing

Gargoyles are living, man-sized statues that adorn churches and other holy sites. Some look positively monstrous, while others are crafted to look like odd combinations of man and animal. Gargoyles are neither good nor evil, but all protect the grounds that they call home. It is said that when a man dies on holy ground, his spirit inhabits a nearby gargoyle statue. Depending on his demeanor, a gargoyle can terrorize and slaughter visitors around the church, or protect them from evil.

Gargoyles are never affected by their wounds, and thus have no Reeling attribute. Gargoyles cannot heal naturally, nor do they expend any Fatigue. When they are damaged, they must return to the high perches of their holy ground where they heal 1 Health every night. Many gargoyles possess the ability to fly – those that have wings have Speed 10.

Gargoyles typically attack by leaping on an enemy from a high distance. After the initial swoop—which gives them an extra Attack Die because they are above their foe—they stay on the ground and swipe with their huge, stony fists.

GOBLIN

MIGHT	8	HEALTH	15
COURAGE	7*	Reeling	11
INTELLECT	6		
AGILITY	11	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	6	Toughness: 3 (leather) or 6 (lamellar)	



Attacks

Sword Slash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6 carving	Expertise: Novice
Loose (Short Bow)	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6-2 impaling	Expertise: Skilled

These short, swarthy humanoids are often encountered in the wilds, preying upon unwary travelers and small caravans. Most goblins are semi-nomadic, staying in a particular area until driven out or until the land is devoid of food and loot. Although rather cowardly individually, goblins can be fierce in large numbers. Whenever a goblin band outnumbers its foe by 2:1 or more, the Courage of the band is considered 14 (rather than 7) for purposes of morale. This does not affect its wound levels.

Goblins are typically under five feet tall, with twisted, greenish faces. Their appearance is one of disorder, as goblins live by raiding and scavenging. Armor and clothing occasionally may be splashed with a tribal insignia but is otherwise an amalgamation of what can be foraged from victims.

"They swept down from the hills at dusk, the sun setting fire to their shields. We had thought ourselves safe from attack, as we were a large company traveling in good order. No sooner had we stopped to make camp did they pour down upon us. Only I escaped, and that by hiding under the bodies of my fallen companions."

- Volkar, late of the FreeSwords Brotherhood

GORGON - *The Medusa*

MIGHT	14	HEALTH	28
COURAGE	14	Reeling	21
INTELLECT	7		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 10 running / 12 flyin.	
PERCEPTION	12	Toughness: 4	



Attacks

Claw Rend	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+2 carving
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Gorgons are scaled, winged women with snakes in the place of hair. According to legend, Medusa was only one of three gorgons, though it is very likely that more gorgons exist in isolated ruins across the world. Gorgons are horrifying creatures with the ability to turn men into stone. Anyone gazing upon their faces will turn to stone instantly. If a gorgon surprises her foe, the victim must make a Perception roll. On a *success*, the character sees the gorgon's face and turns to stone!

Gorgons attack by surprising their foes and swooping into their view. Foes that refuse to look at them are quickly torn apart by their razor claws. Gazing upon a gorgon with a mirror or other reflective face is safe, though the gorgon gets a Surprise Die while fighting opponents who use this technique. Gorgon heads retain their petrification ability after death, until they rot away.

Gorgons also have acidic blood, which will do 2d6 damage on contact. Anyone that kills a gorgon with a bladed or piercing weapon must make a Basic Agility roll to avoid being sprayed by the blood.

GORNITHAR- *The Winged Devils*

MIGHT	24	HEALTH	40
COURAGE	16	Reeling	30
INTELLECT	7		
AGILITY	14	Speed: 12 running / 16 flying	
PERCEPTION	14	Toughness: 4	

Attacks

Talon Slash	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 4d6+1 carving
Fang Rend	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 5d6 carving

Attacking in a howling frenzy of sharp teeth and vicious talons, the gornithar is a fearsome predator. Thankfully rare, it is a mass of powerful muscles and natural cunning, leading some to believe it is more intelligent than a mere animal. It is a relentless hunter, often following its intended victim for days before striking for the kill. The gornithar is taken by many to be an ill omen, not only for its brutal nature, but for the madness and chaos which seems to follow in its bloody wake.



GRACHT

MIGHT	13	HEALTH	27
COURAGE	14	Reeling	20
INTELLECT	8		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	9	Toughness: 1 (hide) / 4 (leather)	

Attacks

Head Butt	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 smashing	
Sword Slash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 carving	Expertise: Skilled
Axe Chop	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6+1 carving	Expertise: Skilled
Harpoon	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 impaling	Expertise: Veteran

The Gracht are a plague upon the world, vicious and all-too common in the wilds. They are hairy humanoids, standing taller than a man, with bestial heads. Stag and goat heads are common among the Gracht, but others have been seen as well. All, however, possess horns or antlers, the size of which is often an indicator of tribal status. They are fiercely predatory, and will form large raiding bands in order to tackle strong prey. Even well-defended cities tremble with fear at the approach of a great Gracht migration.

"In the Second Year of Ereke Redsword, the Gracht horde of Hoorlak Man-Slayer came upon the city of Mergas. The port was filled with refugees from the countryside, and starvation quickly stalked the grim streets. Fierce winter storms, more violent than any in years, kept ships from bringing relief to the beleaguered city. For nearly two weeks, the desperate defense kept the Gracht from the walls. On the thirteenth day, the city gates fell to a ram wielded by blood-mad minotaurs. In strode the horrid beast-men over the bodies of the defenders. In but a few hours, the city of Mergas was dead."

- Artan II, "The Troubled History of the Grand Duchy of Valden"



GRYPHON

MIGHT	40	HEALTH	54
COURAGE	14	Reeling	41
INTELLECT	5		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 12 running / 40 flying	
PERCEPTION	14	Toughness: 2	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6+1 carving
Talon Rend	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 4d6 carving

The gryphon is a predator of great strength, with the head and foreclaws of a massive eagle and the hindquarters and tail of a lion. It is the hunter of the high mountain passes, swooping down upon its prey in a flurry of beating wings and slashing talons. Feared by most, the gryphon is the prized mount of those who are skilled or lucky enough to survive taming such a rare, wild creature. These riders, usually known as The Lion Talons, almost always hail from the Beastlord WarClan. Wild Gryphons are respected and honored by the BeastLords; those who hunt or kill them for pleasure earn the wrath of the WarClan.



HARPY

MIGHT	10	HEALTH	18
COURAGE	8	Reeling	14
INTELLECT	6		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 14 (flying)	
PERCEPTION	12	Toughness: 1	

Attacks

Talon Rush	Attack Dice:2	Damage: 1d6 carving
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Harpies are half-women, half-bird creatures that crave the flesh of young men. Harpies are disgusting, unintelligent creatures who enjoy picking on the weak, hurting them, and defecating on their food. Harpies rarely attack something that looks more dangerous than an old man or child, unless they greatly outnumber their foes.

After being wounded by a harpy, the victim must make a Might roll or catch their infectious disease. The disease, which lasts 2d6 days, reduces maximum Fatigue by 2d6 until the character has completely recovered.



HYDRA

MIGHT	70	HEALTH	82 / 10
COURAGE	12	Reeling	62
INTELLECT	4		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	15	Toughness: 5	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+1 carving (+2d6 venom)
Tail Lash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 smashing

Hydras are large (16'), lizard-like monsters with six writhing, venomous heads, four legs, and a finned tail. Hydras live in wet, marshy areas and venture out into the civilized world only when food runs low in their homelands. Hydras are bloodthirsty creatures – if attacked, they lash out with all of their heads and tail, killing and dismembering everything in their path. Heroes should not start fights with hydras unless they know – for certain – that they will win.

Hydras can attack up to six times in one round, though a single warrior can only be attacked three times. Because of the multiple attacks, hydras gain a Surprise Die if they attack a warrior using more than one head. Hydras are smart enough to use their heads to attack different body locations – often one head goes for their opponent's throat as the others aim for lower parts.

Hydra bites are extremely painful. If the hydra bite wounds someone, its burning venom does an additional 2d6 damage. Warriors pay great amounts of silver for hydra venom – it is used to coat weapons and arrows, though if it stays on the weapon for more than a few hours, the weapon will be ruined.

If a hydra's head is severed (it takes more than 10 points of damage by a carving weapon), two more will take its place the next rounds. Warriors facing hydras usually use large clubs or maces and aim for the heads. If all of the hydra's heads are killed, the hydra dies instantly.

Sailors tell stories of sea hydras (Speed 12 swimming). Legends also tell of the *dodecahydra*, a 30' monstrosity with twenty heads! If true, warriors should only approach these only with a fearless army behind them:



HYDRA - *The Dread Dodecahydra*

MIGHT	450	HEALTH	465 / 12
COURAGE	15	Reeling	351
INTELLECT	4		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	16	Toughness: 8	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 5d6 carving (+2d6 venom)
Tail Lash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 6d6 smashing

LAMIA - *or, Serpent Concubines*

MIGHT	12	HEALTH	21
COURAGE	9	Reeling	16
INTELLECT	9		
AGILITY	13	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	11	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 carving
Strangle	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 smashing

Lamia appear as shapely, nude women, and are beguilingly beautiful. Beautiful, that is, until seen from the waist down. The lower half of the lamia is that of a serpent, a mass of slime-covered scales. Despite their human appearance, lamia cannot speak, only sing. They use this melodic song to bewitch their victims, luring them close that they may satisfy their craving for human flesh.

Anyone hearing the song of the lamia must pass a Courage roll or be beguiled. A beguiled victim will be unable to defend himself or do anything other than walk toward the lamia. The victim may attempt to break the enchantment once per round by passing a Difficult Courage roll. Anyone who sees the hideous serpent body of the lamia and passes this roll will not have to test again for a full day. When it becomes apparent that her lure has failed, the lamia will attempt to flee rather than fight, often discarding the treasure of previous victims as a distraction. Tales are also told of sea-lamia, the dreaded sirens, who lure ships to their doom upon reefs that they may feed upon the corpses of drowned sailors.



LEONTAUR

MIGHT	35	HEALTH	50
COURAGE	15	Reeling	38
INTELLECT	9		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 16	
PERCEPTION	11	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Spear	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+1 impaling	Expertise: Skilled
Claw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 carving	

Similar to centaurs, leontaur possess the body of a lion and the torso and head of a man. They are more savage than centaurs, roving the wilds in hunting packs. They wear no armor and use only primitive weapons (spears being the most common choice). Leontaur are fearless raiders, sweeping down on travelers and caravans with no mercy. This is not to say, however, that leontaur are universally hostile. They sometimes travel to cities with exotic furs and assorted plunder to trade for weapons and other such things that suit their wild fancy.



Minotaur

MIGHT	22	HEALTH	40
COURAGE	18	Reeling	30
INTELLECT	7		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 14	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 5	

Attacks

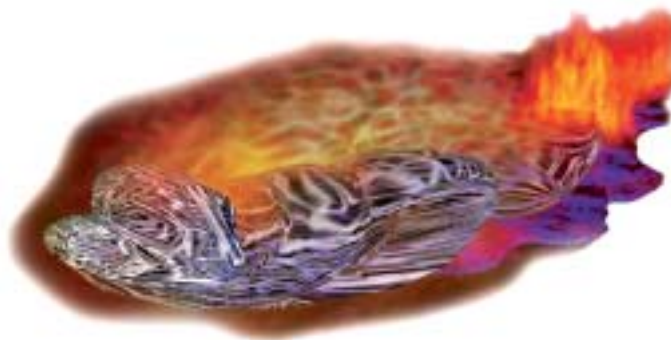
Gore	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 5d6 impaling	
Smash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 4d6+2 smashing	
Kick	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 5d6 smashing	
Great Axe	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 6d6+2 carving	Expertise: Veteran



Ferocious in battle, minotaurs are a fearsome sight to behold. Towering well over twice the height of a man, these creatures have the torso of a powerful man and the bestial head of a bull. Although most often encountered as solitary wanderers, minotaurs sometimes band together for a short time, ravaging a region until their savage nature leads to fighting amongst themselves. Far worse, minotaurs are occasionally found roving with large tribes of Gracht, where their brute strength can be directed by the greater intelligence and organization of the Gracht.

MOLTEN

MIGHT	10	HEALTH	24
COURAGE	14	Reeling	18
INTELLECT	4		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	11	Toughness: 6	



Attacks

Burning Touch	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 fire(half armor Toughness protects)
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Moltens are related to dungeon slimes, but these infernal creatures are made of a silvery, hot molten metal. They typically spread themselves out in caverns and ruins, waiting to drop upon unsuspecting prey. Because of their body composition, moltens always smell like burning metal, and can be detected from quite a distance. Moltens attack by spreading their fiery tendrils on to their victims. In addition to the regular damage, the victim has a 1 in 6 chance of becoming an *inferno* (see p.00).

Their intense heat melts any weapon that strikes them on a roll of 1-6 on d10. The best way to kill moltens is to submerge or splash them with water. A full bucket of water does 2d6 damage to a molten. Their Toughness does not protect against water.

Red Serpents have reported islands of moltens ruled by Talos. Here, the stories tell, the moltens form into statues and wait for the orders of their rulers before attacking.

NIGHT HORROR

MIGHT	18	HEALTH	26
COURAGE	8	Reeling	20
INTELLECT	5		
AGILITY	15	Speed: 4 running / 30	
		flying	
PERCEPTION	13	Toughness: 2	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+2 carving
Wing Buffet	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6 smashing



Night horrors are huge, black-furred monster bats that fly by night in search of blood. They are cave-dwellers, but fly forth nightly to feed upon cattle and other warm-blooded creatures. When hunting, the near-sightless night horror uses its unique form of echo-location to spot moving prey from a distance. When they draw closer, their keen sense of smell leads them to the blood of their victims. It is possible to avoid the attention of the night horror by remaining motionless while it is still at a distance. However, if it passes close enough to detect the scent of blood, such prey will be defenseless when the horror strikes. Once a night horror successfully bites a creature it will stay attached, inflicting an additional 1d6 points of damage automatically each round. They are rarely encountered in packs larger than four, but tales are told of caverns thick with night horrors, their shrill cries echoing in the vast darkness.

OGRE

MIGHT	26	HEALTH	44
COURAGE	18	Reeling	33
INTELLECT	7		
AGILITY	9	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	8	Toughness: 5 (hide and furs)	

Attacks

Fist Smash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 6d6 smashing	Expertise: Skilled
Club Bash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 7d6 smashing	Expertise: Veteran



Misshapen, enormous and always hungry, ogres lead solitary lives in the less-traveled parts of the world. Although not too bright, they possess a whimsical sense of humor, usually involving the torture and dismemberment of potential food. This is not to say all ogres are necessarily evil. They can be quite amiable if well-fed, and so find employment with other races. When hungry, however, ogres are like battering rams smashing their way through opponents, leaving in their wake a trail of crushed and mangled bodies. In battle, they prefer no weapon more complex than a sturdy tree with which to pulp their foes, and no armor other than the rags and furs with which they cover themselves.

ORC

MIGHT	12	HEALTH	22
COURAGE	10	Reeling	17
INTELLECT	8		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	9	Toughness: 3 (leather) or 6 (lamellar)	

Attacks

Sword Slash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+2 carving	Expertise: Skilled
Spear Thrust	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+2 impaling	Expertise: Skilled
Axe Chop	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 carving	Expertise: Skilled

Orcs are kin to goblins, but are larger and more fierce. They stand nearly man-size, and are broad by comparison. Their faces are twisted and bestial, with skin so green as to be nearly black. Orcs are covered in tufts of coarse hair, as well as whatever skins or armor they scavenge. Malicious to the core, they delight in murder and torture. Although skilled and knowledgeable, they prefer to live by raiding and plundering. Orcs equate fear to respect, and are thus ruled by whomever or whatever inspires the most terror. They will often be found in the service of a powerful creature of another race rather than another orc. This is not to say orcs will not obey a powerful chieftain of their own. Rather, orc chieftains survive only so long as they are successful at providing loot and crushing their underlings.



SPIDERKIN - *The Great Spiders*

MIGHT	20	HEALTH	36
COURAGE	16	Reeling	27
INTELLECT	4		
AGILITY	18	Speed: 16	
PERCEPTION	11	Toughness: 1	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 4d6+1 carving (venom)
Web	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 0 (ensnared)



Right out of an arachnophobe's nightmares, the horse-sized spiderkin is a horror of spindly legs and dripping fangs. It hides in the darkness of its thick webs, waiting for prey. It has no fear of man, and relishes his hot blood. Typically, it sprays a stream of silk from its spinnerets at its intended victim, who, if successfully hit, must pass a Might roll or be ensnared. Ensnared characters may make a Might roll each round to break free, but may otherwise only dodge enemy attacks. If webbed a second time, they must make a Might roll on 3d10 to escape. Spiderkin will move in on an ensnared victim with alarming speed to subdue the unfortunate meal with its paralyzing venom. A bitten character must make a Might roll or be totally paralyzed for 1d6 hours. Those that succeed are instantly Fatigued for 1d6 hours. After subduing its meal, the spiderkin will attempt to scurry away to a safe place to feed. The paralyzed victim can do nothing more than watch in mute horror as his innards are sucked dry by the gleaming fangs of the hideous spiderkin.

SWAMP RAPTOR

MIGHT	15	HEALTH	27
COURAGE	12	Reeling	20
INTELLECT	4		
AGILITY	15	Speed: 18	
PERCEPTION	12	Toughness: 3	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 carving
Toe-claw Slash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 carving



Swamp raptors are predatory reptilian creatures that hunt in packs. Fast and maneuverable (though not much bigger than the average human), swamp raptors frequent the isolated marshlands and swamps of the wild. Evolving alongside oversized alligators, poisonous amphibians, and giant carrion insects, swamp raptors are one of the most deadly carnivores of the swamps. Swamp raptors have adapted to creeping along in the murky waters of marshes. Swamp travelers will occasionally see a male hunting in the cold bogs, but more feared are the packs of females that stalk prey together. Female swamp raptors rarely attack a target alone; when some poor soul is picked as the raptors' next meal, he'll usually find himself facing two or three of them at once. Swamp raptors always approach their victims cautiously at first, waiting for the ideal moment to attack viciously. This behavior often gives them the illusion of intelligence, though they are actually not much smarter than the average swamp lizard.

TALOS - *The Bronze Men*

MIGHT	50	HEALTH	62
COURAGE	12	Reeling	47
INTELLECT	8		
AGILITY	8	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 9	

Attacks

Trample	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 5d6 smashing
Swat	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 4d6 smashing
Sword Swing	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 5d6 carving Expertise: Novice



This ancient race of bronze men are gigantic mutes, most towering over 50' tall. When not moving, they are completely indistinguishable from giant statues. They are not entirely metal – their inside is hollow and filled with a watery red blood. Talos are peaceful guardians who tend to live in remote, once-civilized islands and valleys. Despite their calm nature, Talos will not hesitate to destroy intruders and strangers who mean them or their territory harm.

TROGLODYTE

MIGHT	21	HEALTH	35
COURAGE	14	Reeling	26
INTELLECT	8		
AGILITY	8	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	6*	Toughness: 8	

Attacks

Smash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 smashing	
Stone Axe	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 4d6 carving	Expertise: Veteran



Troglodytes are large, slow creatures that dwell deep below ground. They are creatures of the dark earth, large humanoid forms with rock-hard skin. They wield primitive stone axes, but possess no higher technology. Although not particularly aggressive, they will ruthlessly pursue those that invade their territory. Troglodytes are accustomed to total darkness and thus suffer when exposed to light. If fighting in total darkness, troglodytes have a Perception of 16. Otherwise, they have a Perception of 6 for purposes of Initiative. Troglodytes are good warriors, as they must frequently defend their mineral-rich homes from invasion.

TROLL

MIGHT	25	HEALTH	42
COURAGE	17	Reeling	32
INTELLECT	6		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	9	Toughness: 6	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 5d6 carving	
Smash	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 5d6+2 smashing	



Trolls are hideous creatures, towering over 13' in height, with iridescent scales covering massive muscles. They lurk in the wild, dark places of the world, striking without warning. Their rending claws are immensely strong and are used to draw prey into their gaping maw where they are torn to bits by the horrid array of teeth. The regenerative powers of the troll are legendary. Unless reduced below Dying status with fire, the troll will regain 1d6 Health each round.

These horrific creatures plague all climes. In the southernmost jungles, the amphibian Serpent Trolls slip through the black waters with their webbed limbs to attack boats and unwary swimmers. In the cold north, white-furred Ice Trolls lie buried in snow drifts, unmoving for days, waiting in ambush. Only when they sense prey nearby do they move, calling out with their eerie hunting cry. During the long, dark months of winter, the inhabitants of the wastelands wait huddled in their homes, fearing the weird, haunting cry of the hunting Ice Trolls.

UNICORN

MIGHT	25	HEALTH	40
COURAGE	15	Reeling	30
INTELLECT	7		
AGILITY	14	Speed: 18	
PERCEPTION	15	Toughness: 0	



Attacks

Kick	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 smashing
Horn Impale	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 impaling
		<i>If charging at full speed, 3d6 impaling</i>

Unicorns are gentle horses with a single, spiral horn atop their forehead. Almost all unicorns are pure white, though midnight black unicorns are spotted on a rare occasion. Smaller unicorns are said to look more like goats. No one is sure if these unicorns are simply young foals, or if there is a separate breed that is more goat-like in nature.

Unicorns are somewhat intelligent, and can comprehend the intentions of those who approach them with their innate empathy. They can detect whether a person is good or evil in nature. Unicorns will allow goodly people to observe them for a while. Evil people will find themselves in mortal combat with these creatures. Unicorns attack ill-intentioned men and creatures ferociously, impaling them with their horn and trampling them with their strong legs. Unicorns are wild creatures, and cannot be tamed. Sometimes a unicorn will allow itself to be ridden by a pure, virgin maiden, though a unicorn will never allow a saddle to be put upon its back.

The horn of the unicorn is reported to have several magical powers. If it touches a wounded, diseased, or poisoned person, it will heal them completely (if severed from the unicorn, the horn only has one use of such a healing power before withering away). Some say the unicorn can use its horn to teleport itself up to a mile away.

WEREWOLF - *The Loup-Garou*

MIGHT	15	HEALTH	30
COURAGE	15	Reeling	23
INTELLECT	10		
AGILITY	14	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	14	Toughness: 1	



Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+2 carving
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Cursed for any of a thousand reasons, werewolves are men and women that transform into wolves and can sometimes stop the transformation halfway which results in a malformed, "wolf-man" creature.

Mythology holds that anyone who sleeps in an open field during the full moon will become a werewolf. Other ways to become a werewolf is to be bitten by one and contract the disease of the werewolf, lycanthropy. If someone is bitten by a werewolf, they must make a Courage roll or transform into a wolf on the next full moon. Legend also has it that if one dons the skin of a previous werewolf, and smears a certain combination of herbs on him, he'll contract lycanthropy as well. Of course, offending a god is another good way to be afflicted by this curse.

Every night of the full moon, a werewolf will turn into a full-fledged wolf (see p.00 for statistics). Transforming takes 1d6 turns. The wolf will act as a normal wolf – terrorizing livestock, howling at the moon, and scaring any people who see it. While in wolf form, the werewolf remembers nothing of his regular life. Likewise, when he turns back, he won't remember the exploits of the wolf. Many werewolves take on physical traits of their human selves when in wolf form – hair color, eye color, and any scars.

After someone has been a werewolf for a full year, he gains the ability to transform into a wolf at will – even during the day. Also, he gains the ability to transform into a wolf-man, whose statistics are above. Werewolves can only transform into the wolf-man at night, and then only when they are angry. Wolf-men cannot talk or use tools – they run throughout the land looking for blood and death. They have no problems eating humans, and many prefer small children. They transform back into a human when the sun rises. Wolf-men share none of their memories with their human forms, and vice versa.

After each week that a werewolf turns into the wolf-man, he must make a Courage roll. If the roll is failed, the rage of the curse has begun to affect his mind. No longer can the werewolf control his transformations. Once the curse has affected his mind, he must make a Courage roll each night. If he fails, he transforms into the bloodthirsty wolf-man. On nights of the full moon, he automatically turns into a wolf.

Werewolves take damage from normal weapons, but cannot go below Reeling except through the use of a silver weapon or fire. Werewolves are known for their natural regeneration as well – each turn, werewolves heal 1 Health point.

Other were-creatures are purported to exist in different parts of the world. Wereshark myths are common around tropical islands, and many jungle societies tell stories of werejaguar warriors. Cities have stories about wererats, and barbarian cultures tell tales of heroic werebears. All of these lycanthropes – the *garou* – share similar regeneration and transformation traits. Runemasters can adjust the statistics for the “man-creature” as he sees fit.

WYVROQ

MIGHT	15	HEALTH	27
COURAGE	12	Reeling	20
INTELLECT	8		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 4	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6-1 carving	
Axe Chop	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6+2 carving	Expertise: Skilled
Tail Lash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6-2 impaling (venom)	

Wyvroqs are an abomination of nature. Created a thousand years ago by some mad wizard, these foul, humanoid reptiles are horrible combinations of man and wyvern. Though their sharp teeth are capable of tearing somebody apart, most wyvroqs are intelligent enough to use and prefer weapons. Their long, scorpion-like tail contains a nerve venom – anyone injured by the tail must make a Might roll or suffer 3d6 Fatigue.

Wyvroqs have nasty temperaments. Speaking in their harsh language of hisses and clicks, wyvroqs are just as likely to kill each other as they are an intruder into their territory. Fortunately, this lack of society has dwindled the numbers of these beasts. There are only a few packs of wyvroqs living in the wilderness. These surviving packs have secluded themselves in mountainous or gully regions, waiting for any hapless travelers to wander into their homeland.



WYRM

MIGHT	400	HEALTH	430
COURAGE	30	Reeling	323
INTELLECT	7		
AGILITY	9	Speed: 15 running / 12 slithering	
PERCEPTION	11	Toughness: 12	



Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 11d6 impaling
Claw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 8d6 carving
Wing Buffet	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 2d6 smashing
Tail Swipe	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 7d6 smashing
Entangle	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 smashing

Wyrm are huge, serpentine relatives of dragons. Unlike dragons, however, wyrms lack wings, or the wings they have are too small for them to fly. Wyrm come in many forms, some with as many as six limbs, while others are entirely limbless. Those that lack limbs slither along the ground like sidewinders, covering ground quite rapidly. Wyrm are vicious carnivores with voracious appetites. They require a good deal of food, and are thus constantly on the hunt.

Wyrm make dangerous foes, and they possess a variety of weapons with which to fight. Winged wyrms may batter opponents with their appendages, while limbless wyrms may entangle their prey in their scaly clutch. On a successful Entangle attack, the victim is wrapped in the writhing coils of the wyrm. In each combat round, the entangled character automatically takes 2d6 points of damage until freed. This is in addition to the wyrm's normal attack. A victim may only be freed by killing the wyrm. Wyrm are truly devastating in battle, as they may use all of their attacks in a single combat round. These may be directed against multiple opponents as long as they are within reach of the wyrm.

YETI

MIGHT	30	HEALTH	42
COURAGE	12	Reeling	32
INTELLECT	5		
AGILITY	11	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	13	Toughness: 3	



Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6 carving
Slap	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+2 carving
Grapple	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: Allows Crushing Squeeze
Crushing Squeeze	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 3d6+2 smashing

Also known as "Abominable Snowmen," the yeti are giant, ape-like creatures. Probably a distant cousin to the prehistoric Gigantopithecus, yeti are gregarious and live in the highest mountains of the land. Their thick white coat provides them protection against the winds and snow of the glaciers, as well as the claws of the ice trolls – the yeti's most hated of enemies. Yeti are shy creatures and will tend to avoid strangers to their icy homelands.

Yeti are related to the more intelligent gulpi, though yeti are much larger than the gulpi. Yeti grow to about 10' tall, and can weigh over a thousand pounds.

Creatures of the Deep

The vast oceans contain beasts beyond the imagination of most land dwellers. Rarely do these horrors rise up to ravage the surface, but none can mistake their passing when they do. Yet not all that dwell beneath the waves are foes, and the endless seas await bold explorers who will reveal their secrets.

KRAKEN

MIGHT	500	HEALTH	517 / 75
COURAGE	17	Reeling	388
INTELLECT	6		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 50 swimming	
PERCEPTION	8	Toughness: 4	

Attacks

Beak Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 6d6 carving
Tentacle Lash	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 3d6 smashing



Old sailors speak in hushed whispers of the mighty kraken, and never while at sea, lest the very mention of its name bring its wrath upon them. At home in the coldest waters, the kraken is an enormous squid-like creature with vicious, flailing tentacles. It feeds on anything it can find, lashing its victims with spiked tentacles, then drawing them into its gaping maw. Ships caught in its grip are not crushed, merely held motionless as the kraken scoops its prey from the decks. The kraken may use up to four of its ten tentacles to attack different targets in a single combat round. No more than a single tentacle may attack a man-sized target in a combat round. On a successful Vital Shot with a tentacle, the kraken has succeeded in dragging its prey into its beaked mouth. On each successive round, the unfortunate person will be bitten while held squirming in its clammy grip. The kraken may continue to attack with three other tentacles while feeding. A character may be freed from the kraken's clutches by inflicting 75 points of damage on the tentacle, severing it. The kraken will continue fighting if it loses an appendage, but will submerge if it loses two or more.

SEA SERPENT

MIGHT	400	HEALTH	416
COURAGE	16	Reeling	312
INTELLECT	4		
AGILITY	14	Speed: 60 swimming	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 6	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 8d6 impaling
Blinding Spit	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 1d6 blinding*
Tail Swat	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 3d6 smashing



Sea serpents are denizens of the deep oceans, rarely appearing in coastal waters. They are predators of the sea, feeding on whales and other large aquatic creatures. Sea serpents are a menace to ships as well, sensing the warm-blooded prey aboard. They surface without warning, ensnaring vessels in their coils, then crushing the entrapped ship into splinters. It is then an easy task to snatch the struggling sailors from the wreckage and devour them. Some serpents have the ability to spit a blinding acid at their prey. Anyone struck must fail a Perception roll or be blinded. Assuming they are not eaten, victims will recover their sight in an hour.

SHARK

	<i>Tiger and Bull</i>	<i>Whitetip</i>	<i>Great White</i>
MIGHT	25	22	42
COURAGE	10	9	11
INTELLECT	2	2	2
AGILITY	13	12	12
PERCEPTION	14	14	14
HEALTH	35	31	53
Reeling	n/a – sharks are not affected by their wounds		
Speed:	16	16	16
Toughness:	4	4	5

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 carving
Bump	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6 smashing Great Whites do an additional 1d6 damage.



Sharks are the great predators of the seas, and have been king of their domain for hundreds of thousands of years. Intelligent enough only to eat, sharks are known for their cold gazes and berserk “feeding-frenzies.” Sharks range between 10’ and 15’, with great whites growing up to 20’ long. Their rough skin, cartilage skeleton, and great mass gives them excellent protection against predators – usually other sharks. Tiger sharks and great whites generally stalk shorelines, while whitetips are open ocean sharks – victims of shipwrecks often fall prey to these sharks. All but a few species of sharks are saltwater – bull sharks can live in both freshwater and saltwater.

WHALE AND DOLPHIN

	<i>Dolphin</i>	<i>Killer Whale</i>	<i>Gray Whale</i>
MIGHT	14	35	200
COURAGE	14	14	11
INTELLECT	6	5	5
AGILITY	14	14	10
PERCEPTION	14	13	12
HEALTH	28	49	211
Reeling	21	37	158
Speed:	14	16	10
Toughness:	0	3	5

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+2 carving (killer and gray whale)
Bump	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 smashing (dolphin), 2d6+2 (killer whale), 4d6+4 (gray whale)



Warm-blooded mammals, whales and dolphins are intelligent (and occasionally friendly) creatures of the sea. Dolphins and porpoises can be found in warm and temperate waters. Extremely intelligent and friendly, dolphins live off of local fish varieties. They have been known to help humans, especially shipwreck victims, though they can be hostile to anyone who threatens them. Dolphins attack by ramming and bumping.

Killer whales grow to about 25’ long, and can weigh up to four tons. They usually feed on seals, fish, whales, walrus, and other animals that live near cold water. Their teeth are designed to grasp – they usually swallow their meals whole. Killer whales hunt in pods (usually five or more) and they will work cooperatively to bring down their prey.

Gray whales are more “typical” of baleen whales. They live in all types of water, from the arctic to warm seas. They filter feed on plankton, and rarely attack anything larger.

The Undead

For most, death is the end of their struggles. For the unfortunate others, the afterlife is a nightmare of endless agony and servitude. Spawned by twisted necromancers, the foul practitioners of the black arts, or created by beings of their own kind, the undead are doomed to walk the earth without rest.

BLOOD MEN

MIGHT	10	HEALTH	20
COURAGE	10	Reeling	15
INTELLECT	8		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 0	



Attacks

Blood Burst	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6 smashing + the same amount of Fatigue (no armor Toughness protects)
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It is said that when a wicked man dies alone, he becomes one of the blood men. Shortly after death, all of the blood vessels in his body burst, and his whole body becomes a disgusting, bloated, crimson red. Three days after dying, blood men live again. Since their brains burst as well, blood men are completely insane, with glimpses of their former intelligence now and then.

Whenever a blood man comes within a few inches of another living organism, he causes their blood vessels to burst. Blood men attack by lurching after their victims, trying to put his hands on them. After killing their victims, blood men usually do something gruesome to the blood-bloated corpses.

Anyone made Bloody by a blood man attack will have a permanent, crimson scar where he was attacked.

GHOSTS AND SPIRITS

MIGHT	0	HEALTH	10
COURAGE	10	Reeling	n/a
INTELLECT	10		
AGILITY	15	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 0	



Attacks

Horror	Attack Dice: n/a	Damage: see below
Poltergeist Throw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6-1 smashing

Ghosts are the restless spirits of the dead. Men, women, and children who die under suspicious or agonizing circumstances are doomed to wander the place of their death searching for absolution. Many ghosts are completely invisible, unable to speak, make noises, or affect the physical world in any way. Others can make themselves visible for only a few seconds, or to moan or make rattling sounds throughout the night. Still others are completely visible and can talk and tell stories with the best of mortals. These details are always up to the Runemaster.

Most ghosts cannot affect the physical world. They pass through walls and objects (and even people) freely, and are never affected by their wounds. Ghosts can, however, frighten mortals with ease. Depending on the nature of the ghost when he died, ghosts can either cause Revulsion or Terror (see Chapter V) when they scare people. Generally, evil ghosts cause Revulsion and ghosts of a lighter bent cause Terror. Unless the victim is used to dealing with spirits, encounters with ghosts are particularly horrifying – a victim must make a Courage roll with a Surprise Die to resist the effects of Revulsion and Terror.

Rare ghosts are *poltergeists*, and can use their significant spiritual powers to hurl objects around the room. Poltergeists cause great amounts of property damage, and can batter any mortals who earn their wrath.

Some ghosts can be slain with holy weapons blessed by a pure priest; others must be dealt with in more unique ways. Most ghosts will only leave a site when they achieve what they desire. What ghosts want is as varied and complicated as a mortal's desires. One ghost might want his killer slain, another might want to give a message to a loved one. An evil, twisted ghost may have desires that can never be accomplished – so he can avoid the afterlife forever. These ghosts can be banished with a strong heart and a holy weapon. Ultimately, it is up to the Runemaster to decide how ghosts are vanquished.

GHOU

MIGHT	13	HEALTH	18
COURAGE	5	Reeling	n/a
INTELLECT	4		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	8	Toughness: 3	

Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 carving
Claw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+2 smashing

Ghouls are foul creatures that inhabit the charnel houses and crypts of the world. They feed on corpses and the flesh of those unlucky enough to fall prey to their rending talons. A more insidious threat is the toxin that slowly cripples those that fall afoul of the ghou. Anyone who takes damage from a ghou equal to or greater than their Bloody status in a single blow is infected by the ghou. Anyone reduced to dying by a ghou will be similarly infected. Those dismembered by ghouls are in no shape to do anything but lie there and moan.

The infected character will develop a high fever, and become very ill. At each following dawn and dusk, he must pass a Might roll or lose a point from Might, Courage and Agility. These reductions will reduce all related characteristics such as Fatigue and maneuver scores. If any of the three primary attributes listed above reaches zero, the character will die. He will not rest long, however. A short while later, the deceased will rise forth as a ghou, ravenous for the flesh of the living. His Courage will be halved and Intellect reduced to 4, while his Might and Agility will remain the same. He will no longer recognize his former friends as anything other than food. The newly created ghou may spawn other such horrific monsters in the same manner as the original ghou.



MUMMY

MIGHT	16	HEALTH	30
COURAGE	14	Reeling	n/a
INTELLECT	14		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	14*	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Claw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 carving + 2d6 fatigue
Sand Devil	Attack Dice: 4	Damage: 1d6 smashing

In life they were great kings, priests and magicians. In death, mummies had their organs removed their corpses dried and wrapped, and then blessed with magical ointments so that they rise again in a thousand years.

Contrary to popular belief, only newly-awakened mummies are plodding, bandage-wrapped monstrosities. When mummies awaken after being in hibernation, their Intellect is 1. The only instinct they have is to kill to survive. Mummies have the ability to regain soul essence from anyone they kill. After killing a person, a mummy's Intellect raises by 1 until it reaches the level it was at during life. Soon after regaining their intelligence, mummies remove their wrappings to reveal their old – if not somewhat withered – bodies. Mummies then use their considerable magical powers to regain their lost power and wealth.

A mummy's claws both damage and tire their foes. Many mummies also give their victims horrible diseases. If a mummy is disease-ridden, the victim must make a Might roll after being wounded. If failed, one random attribute drops by a point for 1d6 weeks. Mummies can also summon small, man-sized sand storms, called Sand Devils, which they unleash upon their enemies.

Once unconscious or killed, a mummy's victim is often used in some dark magical ceremony often involving sacrifice and torture. The purpose of these ceremonies is entirely up to the creativity of the mummy. Many involve the resurrection of dead gods or lost loves; others involve rebuilding ancient empires.

Most dreaded of the mummy's arsenal is the "mummy's curse." Mummies can perform this curse on anyone they have seen. The curse involves complicated rituals and takes at 12 hours to perform. The curse instantly ages someone 1d6x10 years! Anyone who kills a mummy is automatically affected by the curse unless they make a Difficult Courage roll.

Because mummies are dried corpses, any fire attack automatically turns them into *infernos* (see p.83). Powerful mummies use mystic charms and amulets to protect them against fire.

SKELETON

MIGHT	9	HEALTH	29
COURAGE	20	Dismembered	58 (immune to Fatigue and Death Die)
INTELLECT	1		
AGILITY	9	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	4	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Sword Slash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+2 carving	Expertise: Novice
Spear Thrust	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+2 impaling	Expertise: Novice

Eventually, even a zombie succumbs to the ravages of time. In due course, the remaining flesh rots away leaving behind the bare bones. Yet a final peace still escapes the unfortunate undead. His bones continue to serve as an animated skeleton. Although somewhat weaker, the skeleton is more agile than the zombie. The skeleton makes a gruesome foe, as it must be shattered into pieces before it perishes. Due to their brittle bones, skeletons take double damage from Smashing attacks.



VAMPIRE

MIGHT	18	HEALTH	32
COURAGE	14	Reeling	24
INTELLECT	12		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	12	Toughness: 2	



Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 carving
Bloodsuck	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 1d6 – armor does not protect; only after successful bite.
Claw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+1 smashing

The lords of the undead, vampires are immortals who must drink from the blood of the living to become stronger and more powerful. Vampires can pass for ordinary humans, though they look pale and gaunt. Their skin is always cold and clammy. Vampires who have just fed recently have a more lifelike appearance, with rosier, warmer skin.

As vampires age, they become stronger. Every 50 years of their un-life, they may raise an attribute by 1. As the vampire ages, however, his appearance becomes older and more grotesque. Extremely ancient vampires look more like withered and twisted monsters than humans. Only if they feed every day can vampires regain their appearance at the time of their death. Vampires must make a Courage roll to avoid feeding every night – the desire for blood is unquenchable.

During the day, vampires must rest in coffins – or other dark compartments. If the coffin contains the dirt of the vampire's homeland, the vampire will heal all damage he sustained from the night before. Otherwise, given fresh blood supplies, vampires heal normally – 1 Health every day.

Vampires possess a wide variety of preternatural abilities. Vampires can turn into a wolf or a bat at will. They can also transform their bodies into a noxious mist, which is immune to all physical damage. Transforming takes 1d6 turns.

Vampires can control animals with ease. Rats, canines, cats, and even insects are under their command. Even humans aren't totally immune to powerful vampires. If a mortal fails a Courage roll, a vampire can plant a suggestion in the mind of his victim. Vampires possess many unknowing servants.

Some ancient vampires have been known to fly through the air, or to suck blood while in mist form. Other stories tell of vampires able to ignite people and objects into infernos, and to cause their own bodies to turn to stone. Regardless of the truth of these legends, elder vampires always have vampiric and mortal servants that keep them safe when they are vulnerable.

Vampires can be injured with normal weapons, but they cannot go below Reeling unless the damage is due to sunlight or fire. Direct sunlight does 1d6 damage to vampires every turn, and a foggy day will still do 1d6-1 damage every turn. Vampires who are over five centuries old take no damage from sunlight or fire, though they can use none of their supernatural powers during the day. These predators should be feared like no other.

The only other way to kill a vampire is by driving a wooden stake through his heart and then decapitating him.

Holy water is also a good weapon against vampires. Any water blessed by a pure priest will do 1d6 of burning damage to a vampire. Similarly, garlic acts as a decent vampire repellent. Any vampire must make a Courage roll to approach a person or area laced with garlic.

There are a variety of other myths about vampires that may or may not be true. It is said that vampires cannot willfully cross running water, or enter a home without being invited first. Vampires also have no reflections in mirrors, and are unable to drink normal food and water, though the truth of any of these rumors is entirely up to the Runemaster.

WRAITH

MIGHT	0	HEALTH	15
COURAGE	15	Reeling	11
INTELLECT	11		
AGILITY	15	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	15	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Icy Touch	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 Fatigue
Terror Gaze	Automatically causes a Terror Roll with a Surprise Die.	

Wraiths are the ghosts of evil men and women who have been cursed with formless bodies. Unable to speak, though they can make horrible screeching noises, wraiths cannot affect the physical world in any way. They can, however, torture the minds of their victims.

Wraiths are translucent. Their glowing eyes are easily seen in dim lights, but seeing their bodies is very difficult and requires a Perception roll. Wraiths attack by touching their chilling hands on their victims, which drains Fatigue. Wraiths try to drain enough energy that the victim falls unconscious. Unconscious victims immediately age one year. The wraith will continue to keep the victim unconscious by continually draining Fatigue until they die from lack of nutrients and water.

Wraiths also enjoy driving men insane. To this end, they use their Terror Gaze, which reveals their evil soul to the victim.

Killing a wraith is difficult. Normal weapons have no effect on wraiths. Silver and holy weapons, however, do full damage. Holy water blessed by a pure priest does 1d6 damage to a wraith. Once a wraith is “killed” it is banished from the world for a time. When banished, a wraith makes a Courage roll. If the roll is failed, the wraith is destroyed forever. Otherwise, the wraith materializes where he was banished in 1d6 days.



ZOMBIE

MIGHT	10	HEALTH	30
COURAGE	20	Dismembered	60 (immune to Fatigue and Death Die)
INTELLECT	1		
AGILITY	8	Speed: 6	
PERCEPTION	4	Toughness: 1	

Attacks

Claw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6-1	
Rusty Sword	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 carving	Expertise: Novice
Severed Limb	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+2 smashing	Expertise: Novice

Zombies are the unfortunate dead whose bodies have been reanimated by a necromancer. These rotting corpses are mindless killing machines that can only be stopped by dismembering them. Until then, they will ignore wounds that would cripple a living creature and continue relentlessly pursuing their intended victims until completely incapacitated. They will obey their master's command to any lengths, even if it results in their own destruction.

Heroes tell stories of masterless Zombies who prowl graveyards and villages looking to eat the internal organs of the living and the dead. Frighteningly enough, this has been documented by many travelers.



Rogues and Mercenaries

BARTENDER / INNKEEPER

MIGHT	12	HEALTH	24
COURAGE	12	Reeling	18
INTELLECT	10		
AGILITY	8	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Club Smash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+2 smashing	Expertise: None
Punch	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 smashing	Expertise: None

He may have grown fat on success, but the bartender is accustomed to dealing with trouble-makers in his establishment. The host to many travelers, he is the eyes and ears of the community and the source of all rumor and gossip.



DRUNKEN BRAWLER

MIGHT	11	HEALTH	21
COURAGE	10	Reeling	16
INTELLECT	9		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	8	Toughness: 2 (usually heavy cloth)	

Attacks

Punch	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+2 smash (beer mug)	Expertise: Novice
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These brawlers can be found in any tavern, pub, or inn throughout the land. They seldom mean to seriously harm anybody, but do their best to look like fierce barbarian warriors to impress the barmaids. A few brawls get nasty – a drawn blade can cause a bloody mess. Most bartenders carry a large club and brutally attack anyone who dares draw a real weapon in something as simple (and traditional) as a barroom brawl.

Because they're intoxicated, the opponents of a Drunken Brawler may use a Fatigue Die against them, representing their drunken stupor



MERCHANT

MIGHT	8	HEALTH	17
COURAGE	9	Reeling	13
INTELLECT	12		
AGILITY	9	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	11	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Knife Thrust Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 1d6-2 impaling Expertise: None

Merchants are rarely encountered alone. In town, they are usually accompanied by a few laborers or apprentices. When journeying between towns, it is not uncommon to see them in large caravans guarded by mercenaries. The precautions are warranted, however, as many a thief would like to relieve a fat merchant of his precious wealth. It is extremely rare to find a merchant who is willing to risk his life in a fight. Most of the time, they will try to run away from a confrontation, perhaps tossing some golden coins behind them to distract pursuers.



PEASANT

MIGHT	10	HEALTH	20
COURAGE	10	Reeling	15
INTELLECT	10		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 2 (cloth)	

Attacks

Punch Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 1d6-1 smash Expertise: None
Club Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 1d6+2 smash Expertise: None
Pitchfork Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 1d6+2 impaling Expertise: None

Peasants represent the vast majority of humankind in the worlds of *RuneQuest*. Peasants, if they are persuaded to attack, usually charge with nothing more than their fists or heavy tools. Laborers, peasants accustomed to heavy work, usually have a significantly higher Might. Laborers are more formidable than ordinary peasants – they usually aren't far from tools that double as weapons, such as pitchforks, hammers, and axes.



OLD MAN

MIGHT	8	HEALTH	18
COURAGE	10	Reeling	14
INTELLECT	12		
AGILITY	8	Speed: 8	
PERCEPTION	12	Toughness: 0	

Attacks

Punch Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 1d6-3 smash Expertise: None

Old men are ideal messengers and victims. Thugs often beat them for their knowledge, and adventurers seek them out in taverns for their wisdom, maps, hints of treasure.



SOLDIER MERCENARY

MIGHT	12	HEALTH	24
COURAGE	12	Reeling	18
INTELLECT	10		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 8 (usually chainmail)	

Attacks

Sword Slash Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 2d6+2 carving Expertise: Skilled
Mace Smash Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 3d6 smashing Expertise: Skilled

Professional soldiers fight for a thousand reasons. Whether a poor mercenary looking for an extra meal, or a veteran of a short war, soldiers are ideal companions... and enemies. A man such as this usually costs approximately 3 silvers a day to hire. Soldier mercenaries all have experience in combat. Soldier mercenaries are brave men and will often fight to the end; more experienced soldiers, however, know when to retreat.

The elite of these fighters are the knights, who usually equip plate armor (Toughness 12), shields, and are at least Veterans in their weapon of choice.



THIEF

MIGHT	10	HEALTH	22
COURAGE	12	Reeling	17
INTELLECT	11		
AGILITY	13	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 3 (leather)	

Attacks

Knife Stab Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 1d6+1 impaling Expertise: Skilled

These fellows are usually found burglarizing houses at night, picking pockets during the day, and snatching valuable items whenever they can be found. Thieves are a varied lot. Some are courageous, others cowards, some smart, some unbelievably dull. Thieves are rarely prepared to fight and usually carry a sharp knife for intimidating the ladies.



THUG

MIGHT	13	HEALTH	24
COURAGE	11	Reeling	18
INTELLECT	9		
AGILITY	11	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness: 3 (leather)	

Attacks

Club Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 2d6+2 smash Expertise: Skilled
Shortsword Slash Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 2d6+2 carving Expertise: Skilled

Nasty, brutish, and built like a brick wall, thugs are employed by the rich to beat up or kill their lower-class enemies. Thugs normally carry bludgeons like clubs to cripple or wound their victims. Thugs intent on assassination often carry easy-to-conceal shortswords. Thugs rarely carry more than a handful of silvers. A few stupid thugs carry their pay with them, which could range from 5 to 50 silvers, depending on who they've been hired to beat.



Common Animals

ALLIGATOR AND CROCODILE

	<i>Alligator</i>	<i>Crocodile</i>	<i>Prehistoric</i>
MIGHT	20	25	50
COURAGE	10	12	12
INTELLECT	3	3	3
AGILITY	10	11	11
PERCEPTION	12	12	12
HEALTH	30	37	62
Reeling	23	28	47
Land Speed:	6	6	6
Water Speed	10	10	10
Toughness:	4	5	6



Attacks

Tail Whip	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6 smashing*
Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 carving*
Grapple	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6 carving*

*Crocodiles do +1 damage on all attacks; prehistoric crocodiles do +2d6 damage, and their bites are *impaling*.

Remnants of a prehistoric age, alligators and crocodiles are deadly stalkers of rivers, bayous, and swamps. Alligators prefer freshwater, though crocodiles can be found in both fresh and saltwater. Crocodiles are bigger and decidedly more vicious than their freshwater cousins – many are man-eaters and some even prefer human meat! Prehistoric crocodiles are huge – some even growing up to 50' long! These relics of an ancient age are extremely rare and probably co-existed with dinosaurs.

These reptilians attack the same way – they bite and attempt to drag a victim underwater. Once underwater, they Grapple and toss and spin their bodies. Humans unable to break the Grapple will drown in Strength or Courage turns (whichever is higher).

BEAR

	<i>Black</i>	<i>Grizzly</i>	<i>Polar</i>
MIGHT	18	25	30
COURAGE	9	11	10
INTELLECT	4	4	4
AGILITY	12	12	12
PERCEPTION	12	12	12
HEALTH	27	36	40
Reeling	20	27	30
Speed:	10	10	10
Toughness:	1	1	3



Attacks

Bite / Swipe	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+1 carving (black bear); 1d6+2 (grizzly); 1d6+3 (polar)
Bear Hug	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6 carving (counts as a Grapple)

Bears are usually shy creatures, but if provoked (the bigger the bear, the easier it is to provoke!) they can be dangerous, berserk creatures. Bears usually attack by biting and grabbing with their long claws. Once they Grapple a foe, they bite with their strong jaws. Bears are omnivores, and most prefer to feed on berries and fish.

BOAR

MIGHT	18	HEALTH	33
COURAGE	15	Reeling	25
INTELLECT	5		
AGILITY	12	Speed: 10	
PERCEPTION	11	Toughness: 1	



Attacks

Tusk Gore	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6-1 carving
Running Slam	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 smashing

Ornery, bestial, and ill-tempered, wild boars are dangerous creatures that roam thick forests and jungles in large packs (sometimes up to forty animals!). Although satisfied to eat grubs and leaves, wild boars usually don't hesitate attacking anyone who bothers them. Boars will wildly charge anything—men, horses, ogres—with their sharp tusks. Once they down a foe—usually with their Running Slam attack—they bury their long tusks into their victim and continue to gore him until they get tired.

DEER

	Deer	Reindeer / Caribou
MIGHT	14	20
COURAGE	8	9
INTELLECT	4	4
AGILITY	14	12
PERCEPTION	14	14
HEALTH	22	29
Reeling	17	22
Speed:	14	12
Toughness:	0	2



Attacks

Kick	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6+2 smashing
Headbutt	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 smashing (bucks and reindeer; Reindeer do +1 damage)

Ideal animals to hunt for food, deer are quiet, skittish creatures. Very rarely do deer fight. At any sign of danger, deer usually bound away at top speed. If cornered, deer will lash out kicking and butting with their antlers. Only male deer have antlers.

Reindeer and caribou are bigger versions of the deer, and can be found in the far northern regions of the world. Reindeer can be domesticated as sled carriers and pack animals. Both sexes of reindeer and caribou have large, heavy antlers.

DOG

	<i>Small</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Large</i>	<i>War</i>
MIGHT	4	7	11	12
COURAGE	11	11	11	13
INTELLECT	5	5	5	5
AGILITY	10	10	10	11
PERCEPTION	14	14	14	14
HEALTH	15	18	22	25
Reeling	11	14	17	19
Speed:	8	10	10	12
Toughness:	0	0	0	0



Attacks

Bite Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 1d6-2 carving (small dog); 1d6-1 (medium dog); 1d6 (large and war)

Dogs come in dozens of shapes, colors, and sizes, and serve just as many purposes. Dogs are used as hunting companions, herders, guards, trackers, and loyal friends. Dogs are easily trained and – if treated well and paid attention to – will obey and protect their masters.

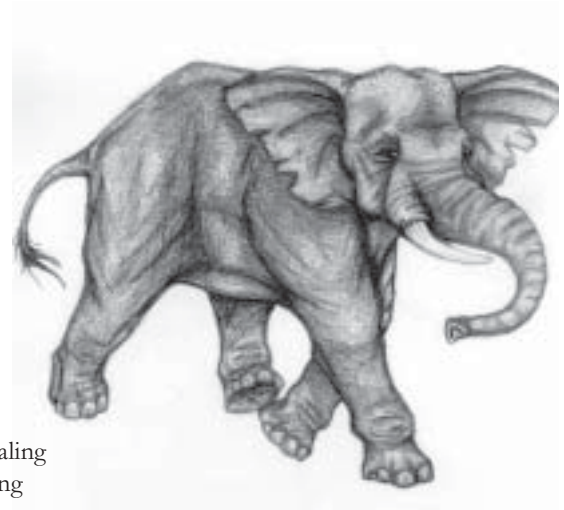
Small dogs include breeds such as poodles, small terriers, schnauzers, and beagles. These are mostly indoor dogs, used to kill rats and other vermin.

Medium dogs include most terriers and hounds and are usually used for hunting, tracking, and herding.

Large dogs include shepherds, dobermans, sheepdogs, and great danes. These dogs are excellent trackers and guard dogs. Large dogs with long coats, such as sheepdogs, will have Toughness 1.

ELEPHANT

MIGHT	200	HEALTH	214
COURAGE	14	Reeling	161
INTELLECT	5		
AGILITY	10	Speed: 12	
PERCEPTION	12	Toughness: 4	



Attacks

Tusk Impale Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 2d6+1 impaling
Trample Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 6d6 smashing

The largest land mammal, elephants are massive (approximately six tons!) vegetarians that are gentle unless provoked. Roaming the savannas and plains of hot and dry regions, elephants move from one water source to another. Elephants can be trained and domesticated by men. Most are used for draft purposes; few are trained to be war elephants. Once donned with armor and a *bowdab* – platforms on which bowmen and spearmen ride – elephants are mammoth war machines capable of terrifying the bravest of warriors. Horses, in particular, are frightened of elephants, and most will buck their riders to get away.

GREAT CAT

	<i>Leopard/ Panther</i>	<i>Lion</i>	<i>Tiger</i>	<i>Smilodon</i>
MIGHT	22	28	36	30
COURAGE	9	10	11	13
INTELLECT	4	4	4	4
AGILITY	14	14	14	12
PERCEPTION	15	15	15	15
HEALTH	31	38	47	43
Reeling	23	29	35	32
Speed:	16	16	16	14
Toughness:	0	0	0	0



Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+1 carving
Claw	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 carving
Pounce	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 smashing; 2d6+1 (lions, smilodons); 3d6 (tigers)
Sabertooth Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 impaling (smilodons only)

The great cats are formidable killing machines. Their sheer muscle mass, combined with razor-sharp claws and teeth, allow them to take down large foes with ease. Most great cats attack by leaping onto their victims and then biting and clawing at the same time. After a successful pounce, Runemasters may allow great cats to attack their victims twice, once with their claws and another with their teeth.

Cats are careful predators and will only attack when they are hungry and when they think they can win. They prefer remaining camouflaged in the terrain and stalking their prey for some time before they launch their killing strike.

Smilodons are the dreaded sabertooth tigers. Though not as strong or nimble as regular tigers, smilodons have no fear for man and won't hesitate to attack with its foot-long, serrated teeth.

HAWK AND FALCON

MIGHT	3	HEALTH	15
COURAGE	12	Reeling	11
INTELLECT	4		
AGILITY	15	Speed: 18 flying	
PERCEPTION	18	Toughness: 0	



Attacks

Talon Slash	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6-1 carving
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These birds of prey are coveted and expensive hunting companions. Raised from hatchlings, hunting birds are taught to locate and kill game for their noble masters. A hawk or falcon rarely attacks anything bigger than itself, but if protecting its young, it will try to claw out the eyes of its attacker.

HORSE

	<i>Riding</i>	<i>Draft</i>	<i>Warhorse</i>	<i>Obsidian Warhorse</i>	<i>Pegasus</i>
MIGHT	25	30	28	35	25
COURAGE	9	9	14	14	12
INTELLECT	4	4	5	7	5
AGILITY	12	10	13	13	14
PERCEPTION	12	12	13	14	14
HEALTH	34	39	42	49	34
Reeling	26	29	32	39	26
Speed:	18	15	18	18	18 fly
Toughness:	0	0	0	3	0



Attacks

Kick	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6 smashing
Trample	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 2d6+2 smashing (Warhorses only)
Fire Breath	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 3d6 fire (Obsidian Warhorses only)

Horses come in dozens of breeds and types and vary greatly in strength and speed. The above three are the most common types, though Runemasters should feel free to vary Courage and Might by a few points – especially if adventurers are willing to pay more for their mounts.

Horses are skittish creatures and if they see something frightening, they must make a Courage roll to avoid bolting. War-horses are trained to be braver than their domestic counterparts and don't frighten very easily. See p.95 for rules on charging and fighting from horseback.

Obsidian Templari warhorses, also known as Demon Horses, are always ebony. Once per combat they are capable of breathing a 1-yard jet of green fire. This does 3d6 damage and has a 1 in 6 chance of turning the victim into an inferno (see p.82).

Pegasi are magical horses, gifted with the wings of giant eagles. While slightly braver than their more mundane cousins, pegasi are very xenophobic and fly away at the sight of humans. Even the Beastlord Clan has a difficult time befriending these creatures.

SNAKE AND SERPENT

	<i>Rattlesnake</i>	<i>Asp</i>	<i>Boa</i>	<i>Giant</i>
MIGHT	3	2	15	26
COURAGE	10	10	10	10
INTELLECT	3	3	3	3
AGILITY	13	13	12	12
PERCEPTION	12	12	12	12
HEALTH	13	12	25	36
Reeling	9	8	18	27
Speed:	6	6	6	8
Toughness:	1	1	1	4



Attacks

Bite	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: 1d6-3 carving*
Grapple	Attack Dice: 2	Damage: allows constriction*
Constrict	Attack Dice: 3	Damage: 1d6 smashing*

* Giant snakes always do an additional 1d6 damage.

Above are several sample snakes. Snakes come in dozens of varieties, but are basically categorized into harmless snakes, venomous snakes (the rattler and the asp, above) and constrictor snakes (boa constrictors, anacondas, et cetera). The giant snake is a fantastic creature – often worshiped by nefarious snake cults – which has a 1’ diameter serpentine body. Giant snakes can be venomous or constrictors, and are rarely both.

Constrictors attack by successfully grappling, then squeezing their victim to death. Only hard armor (such as plate) protects against this damage.

If a venomous snake bites its victim, the victim must make a Might roll. Failure indicates that the venom does damage. If the roll is succeeded, the venom does half its normal damage. Always roll for the venom’s effects after combat – very few snakes have enough venom to kill someone instantly (giant snakes being a possible exception).

Add 1d6 damage to the venom for each subsequent bite during that combat.

Especially deadly snakes (the black mamba, for instance) instantly Fatigues the victim after a bite, thus making the Might roll a lot more difficult.

Asp and coral snake venom is fairly weak because the snakes themselves are small. 3d6 damage.

Rattlesnake, cobra and viper venom is deadly. 4d6 damage.

Black mamba, bushmaster, or death adder are Fatigue venoms that Fatigue the victim before doing damage. 6d6 damage.

WOLF

	Wolf	Dire Wolf
MIGHT	10	15
COURAGE	10	10
INTELLECT	5	4
AGILITY	12	12
PERCEPTION	14	14
HEALTH	20	25
Reeling	15	19
Speed:	12	12
Toughness:	1	2



Attacks

Bite Attack Dice: 2 Damage: 1d6 carving; 1d6+1 (dire wolf)

The wild kindred of dogs, wolves are timid pack animals that scavenge for weak or wounded prey. Occasionally, wolf packs will try to work together to take down stronger animals such as deer or moose. Wolves rarely attack humans, though cornered or injured wolves will defend themselves ferociously. Wolves are rarely seen alone. A typical wolf pack consists of an alpha male and female, approximately ten other wolves, and an omega – the scapegoat of the wolves.

Ancestors of the modern wolf, the prehistoric dire wolves are larger and not nearly as cunning as their cousins. Dire wolves have tremendous strength and can weigh up to 200 lbs. Dire wolves are not afraid of humans, and won’t hesitate to attack them.

A dramatic illustration of a warrior on a dragon breathing fire. The warrior, with a beard and long hair, is mounted on a dark dragon. The dragon is breathing a stream of fire from its mouth. The background is a dark, stormy sky with a bright light source, possibly the sun or moon, partially obscured by clouds. The overall tone is epic and adventurous.

the RUNEMASTER

survive the
QUEST

Adventure

author

invention

Chapter X

The Runemaster

*A*cross the dry plains they could see a column of dust rapidly receding into the rising sun. A look of grim satisfaction passed between the members of the weary band. Dranmar and his despicable cohorts had escaped once again, but this time there would be a final reckoning. Without a word, the battle-hardened slayers mounted their horses and rode east.

The hunt was on.

In ***RuneQuest: Slayers***, one player takes the position of the Runemaster, the moderator of the adventure. The Runemaster is both storyteller and arbitrator for the group. He will create the adventures that the player characters (PCs) will pursue, as well as act the part of the non-player characters (NPCs) and monsters they will encounter. Although the players will have a part in determining the nature of adventures and quests, it is the Runemaster's responsibility to maintain continuity in the scheme of his campaign.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

You've decided you want to be a Runemaster and aren't sure where to start. No problem. First off, you want to get familiar with the rules. If you've never played a roleplaying game before, play through the *Castle of Madness* a few times since it teaches you the basics of the game. Then, read through Chapter V: Attributes & Hazards, and Chapter VI: Combat, to get a better understanding of the game. Once you've tackled those two chapters, you'll know everything you need to know to start a game of ***RuneQuest: Slayers***.

Once you think you have a good idea how to play, you'll need an adventure scenario. You can create your own, or use the one provided at the end of this chapter, "Mountain of the Mud God." It contains all you need to begin your adventures, and can be used whether you set your campaign in the chaotic lands of Khragmar or the icy wastes of the Glacier Rifts.

As a new Runemaster, you won't need to know every rule and guideline presented in this book – you just need a basic idea of the rules and the plot of the adventure you'll be running. Don't feel like you have to memorize every single rule – your players will understand if you need to look up a rule when they try a crazy stunt... and they will! And if you can't find a rule, make it up!



Once you've gathered a handful of willing players, they'll need to create characters. Guide them through Chapter IV so they can quickly generate heroes. You may want to make copies of the character sheet and the Warrior Creation Reference to make it easier for your players to get started.

After everyone has created a character, hand out a random glyph to each character based on his WarClan. The easiest way to do that is to roll 1d10, look it up on the appropriate WarClan table (p.39-58), and scribble it down in secret for the player to look at. Encourage the players to roleplay these glyphs and keep them secret from each other as well.

DESCRIBING THE LOCATION

Once everyone has created characters, you want to set the mood. Briefly describe the world in which the characters were born. Describe to them the ancient wars of Khragmar or the chilling winds of the Glacier Rifts.

The adventure that you chose describes characters and events. You'll want to impart this information to your players.

If the adventure begins in the king's throneroom, you can tell them about the lush carpets and coughing, fat monarch tearing off pieces of cold turkey leg. If the king wants to set up a trap for the characters, you won't tell them that, of course! But maybe you'll tell them that he treats them without respect, and talks to his slobbering dog with more appreciation.

Eventually, the players will tell you what they want to do. Maybe a wry Red Serpent wants to insult the king. Perhaps the young Martyr of War wishes to hurry on the quest the king offered. Maybe the older, veteran Justiciar wishes to ask the king more details on the quest.

Be patient and deal with each player one by one. If the adventure doesn't tell you what happens when a character insults the king, you decide! Maybe the king will ignore the remark, or throw the character in the dungeon for a night. When the Justiciar asks for more information, the adventure will provide you with more details. You can explain where the quest will lead them and what the heroes would expect to encounter. If you have no more information to give out, make something up! The king might tell of orc brigands that they can expect to meet. Now there may not be any orc brigands the journey ahead, but it will keep the players on their toes.

ROLLING THE DICE WELL, OR CHEATING

Sometimes the Runemaster will need to cheat to make better adventure. Runemasters shouldn't make a habit out of cheating, though it is sometimes necessary.

Let's say in the first ten minutes of the adventure, the party comes to a pit and sees treasure down below. They all jump in. You had written down in the adventure that the pit a hundred feet deep. Now that everyone jumped in, they should all be dead, right?

Maybe. If you're a cruel Runemaster, you'll laugh with glee and describe the crushed corpses of the characters as they slam into the stone floor down below. Maybe one of them was alive for a few moments and saw a troll lope in and lick the bones of his companions clean. You smile happily, warn them about jumping into dark shafts, and ask them to create new characters.

If you're not as cruel as that, you can quickly change your scenario. The pit suddenly becomes only twenty feet deep. That's enough to hurt them, but it probably won't kill anyone and they'll learn their lesson. And they still have the hungry troll to deal with.

This isn't to say that Runemasters should allow stupid acts to go unpunished. If a wounded character charges up to the troll and stabs at him with a puny knife, the Runemaster reserves the right to mercilessly kill and eat the character. Just remember, people play *RuneQuest* to have fun, so if a particular situation kills the fun, change it.

DESIGNING YOUR OWN ADVENTURES

You've run the two adventures in this book and your players want more. What to do?

RuneQuest Adventure supplements contain several adventure scenarios for Runemasters to use. Just read through a scenario and you're ready to go.

Many Runemasters enjoy designing their own adventures. This isn't as hard as it looks. You've probably seen several movies or read books that have given you ideas about heroic fantasy adventures. Players also give good suggestions. Maybe one of them wants to explore the Alabaster Tower of the Mad Heir that you've mentioned in one of your adventures. Now it's up to you to design the adventure.

Adventure Ideas

Stuck for an idea? Here are some vague ideas ready for you to flesh out:

The Black Obelisk: As the PCs are exploring a local town, a giant obelisk emerges from the ground underneath them. After scrambling away, the PCs are faced with the mystery of this monument. Walking around it reveals a rune-carved door, and a strange creature guarding the door. Town officials become suspicious of the PCs and encourage them to get rid of the thing.

Citadel of Gems: While wandering in the wilderness, the PCs come across a small, ruined citadel. After bypassing a few traps, they discover a giant-sized chest filled with gems. Shortly after dancing with glee, they become alerted to several Gracht scouts who knew about this place. The Gracht scouts are several hours ahead of a large Gracht army that is coming to claim the treasure for their own.

This Time, It's Personal: A long-lost relative reveals himself to the characters. He's found a map to his grandfather's old home, a place of personal value to him. He wants his relative to accompany him so they can get to know each other. Unfortunately, a band of brigands suspects he has a treasure map and kills him for it. Now it's up to the PCs to avenge his death and journey to their lost home.

THE SETTING

To begin creating an adventure, jot down some ideas. Where will the characters be exploring? A desert pyramid? A Beastlord jungle? A large city with hundreds of shops, inns, taverns, and a tyrant as king?

You may want to draw a quick map of the surrounding area. The pyramid might be a labyrinth filled with traps and lairs of undead hordes. The city might have a score of buildings.

Part of designing the adventure is deciding who lives in the area. If the characters will be exploring a deserted pyramid, the answer might be simple – no one. If the characters are going to be traveling in a city, the Runemaster might want to come up with some NPCs – Runemaster controlled, non-player characters – that the PCs might meet. They'll probably come across a burly innkeeper. You might just want to jot down his name and his personality. You can detail the innkeeper's life as much as you want, or you can keep it simple – "Prinz the Innkeeper, gruff but friendly."

THE GOAL

After deciding the adventure location, create a goal for the players. Goals can be as simple as "rescue the princess," or "find the mystic flagon of the Dwarf king." Runic items are often the objective of an adventure. Goals might not be nearly as concrete. Perhaps the adventurers need to escape the tyrant's city, or become more famous.

Once you have decided on a goal, you need to decide how to introduce this to your players. The easiest way to do this is to have an NPC stumble upon the characters and offer them a reward. The time-honored tradition of an old man in the tavern who offers a reward to the characters for rescuing his daughter always works well. But there are more sophisticated, less heavy-handed ways of introducing the adventure's goal to the players. What if the adventurers are suddenly attacked in the night by an unknown cult? Why is the cult after them? Who are these masked intruders? The characters will have to discover this for themselves, probably following a trail of clues left behind.

Don't hesitate to start characters off in the middle of the action. If you begin the adventure with the players running out

of a castle, guards chasing them furiously, because they stole the Holy Goblet of Gianna, the players won't have time to ask questions. They need to escape! Of course, you'd better have good explanation, or "backstory" as to why the characters did what they did. Maybe they were blackmailed, or needed this to heal an ailing companion. The players won't be mad at you as long as you put them in a believable situation. If your players have all Medean Guard characters and you start them off sacrificing young virgins to the Frog God, you'd better have a fantastic backstory!

THE OPPOSITION

After you have a setting and goal, you need opposition. What's stopping the characters from achieving their goal?

There are several types of opposition. The easiest are villains! Villains are a wide range of thugs, thieves, evil cultists, et cetera who want nothing more than to kill the heroes. Villains can also be monsters. Chapter IX gives a wide range of classical and fantastic monsters to challenge the PCs.

You don't want to *only* have villains challenging the adventurers, though. Otherwise, the game would be a long gauntlet of fights which gets boring after a while.

Another type of opposition is environmental opposition. If the goal lies in a trapped tomb, players will have to plan carefully to break in without getting seriously injured or killed. Mazes and labyrinths are good examples of environmental opposition. So are weather conditions, or terrain. Forests and swamps make exploring more difficult, and surviving a mountaintop blizzard might be harder than fighting a dragon!

Environmental opposition should also add flavor to your adventure. Imagine a city in the countryside, with a hundred people milling around in the marketplace. Maybe the adventurers must find a man named Ochli to get information. Now imagine the same city in a hot desert, where the sun bleaches the colorful tents and sand constantly whips in the characters' eyes. Environment can completely change the feel of an adventure. If used well, your players will be able to imagine their surroundings as if they've been there themselves.



The environment doesn't have to be deadly to cause problems for the PCs. The culture and people of the place can be hard to understand. If the desert city has odd laws – women may not talk unless they have one knee on the sand – and harsh penalties, the characters will find themselves in strange situations. They will learn to use their minds to figure out a solution, rather than just their sword arms.

Puzzles are excellent ways to exercise players' minds. Dungeons are always filled with riddles that, if answered successfully, open up secret doors or show the way to great treasure. Or perhaps the puzzle is a mystery. If the characters find a man dead on their doorstep, with no clues around, they'll have to use their brains and professional skills to find out what happened. Maybe the Orator in the group can persuade nearby residents to talk of what happened? Or the Clothier can trace the man's oddly-colored cloak.

THE REWARD

After risking life and limb, most players will have their greedy hands outstretched for their "pay-off." Most often this takes the form of hard currency. A small fortune in silvers is something no self-respecting adventurer would ever pass up! Care, however, must be taken when determining such treasures. A deluge of silver talents will take away a good deal of motivation for players, particularly early in a campaign. Giving players enough money on which to survive, plus some new equipment now and again, is perfect for new characters. Silver talents are not the only coins a band of adventurers may acquire. Exotic coins from different lands may prove more valuable, or possibly less. Gold coins, exceedingly rare, are worth ten times or more their weight in silver.

Material rewards do not necessarily need to be coins. A used, but functional, chain hauberk can be worth much more than a handful of silvers, particularly if found at the right time. Other items such as provisions, rare spices or even livestock may prove valuable to the appropriate buyer. Never hesitate to devise interesting ways to distribute treasure.

Example: *After defeating the Mad Duke Glamorgas and driving his bandits from their lair, the victorious adventurers rummage through the Duke's hideout for loot. They leave carrying away several pack animals, two horses, a fine tapestry (from the Duke's ancestral residence) and several casks of wine, in addition to a bag of silver talents.*

Runic items are also popular treasures. As mentioned above, these are often the object of a quest, and are thus ready-made rewards. These may also prove an excellent means of developing a long-term campaign, as previous owners may also be interested in "acquiring" a character's favorite runesword. Again, care must be taken when deciding when to give players such items, as you don't want to see your well-developed campaign unbalanced by unbeatable player characters.

Good adventures combine many different elements of opposition. Excellent adventures have several ways to achieve the goals. Players want to have choices presented to them. Let them choose between traveling to the far-away city of the oddly-colored cloaks in search of information, or following the trails the local people can provide. Hopefully, you've written up some information for both situations. If not, feel free to make it up, or delay the PCs with a small encounter so the next time they adventure you'll have something prepared.

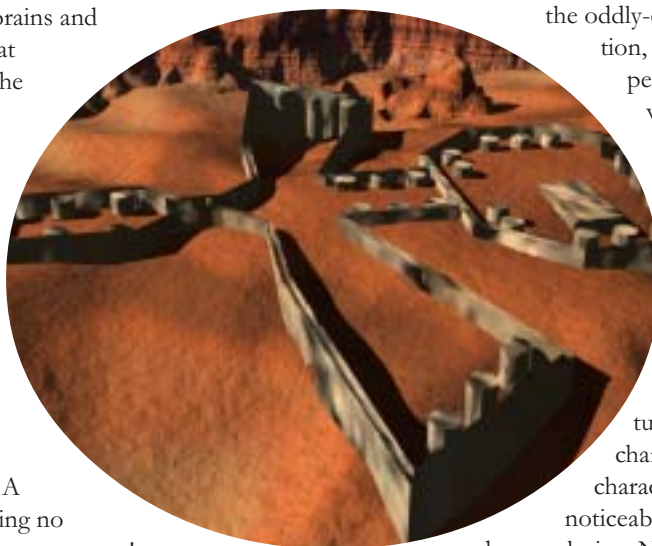
CAMPAIGNS

After you've played a few adventures, your players will have found characters that they enjoy playing. Some characters will have died, others are now noticeably stronger than they were when they began playing. Now is the ideal time to start a campaign.

A campaign is nothing more than a linked series of adventures. The adventures logically follow the characters, similar to the way a trilogy of movies follows the characters. Each movie can be enjoyed separately, but to really appreciate them someone has to watch all three, in order.

Roleplaying campaigns are the same way. Players use the same characters, and the adventures are logically linked. After exploring the desert wastes of Adoun, the character's next adventure begins in that same desert - right where their previous quest left off. Of course, a Runemaster might opt to "cut" to a different time. He may explain to his players that several weeks have passed, and the characters are now enjoying their new-found wealth in a nearby desert village.

Campaigns leave a lot of the plot development up to the players. They guide their characters and tell the Runemaster where they will go, how they will travel, and what they're looking for. One player might announce that he wishes to find the great Stone of Tranquility, a legendary artifact. The



Runemaster would then design adventures that lead the characters towards that ultimate goal. It may take several gaming sessions, or even several months, for the players to actually find the Stone! Depending on the characters' actions, each adventure can take them closer to their goal... or sometimes farther away.

Characters will still come and go in campaigns. Some might retire; others will die at the hands of monsters. Players can always introduce new characters into the game, and might have to rely on the protection of the veterans to survive the dangers ahead. As the campaign progresses, characters will get to know each other and work better with each other. Stories will be told, and memories of past heroics will be whispered in the taverns.

CREATING ATMOSPHERE

Gaming sessions always benefit from an appropriate atmosphere. Setting the proper mood encourages good roleplaying and enhances everyone's enjoyment of the game. The use of props and music are two ways to enhance a gaming session. Props may take many forms. Maps, scrolls and jewelry are just a few examples of items that can be used in a game. Rather than tell the players what the scroll contains, let them try to decipher the code themselves. Give them a piece of cosmetic jewelry to examine, and then watch as the players try to decide which one of them should put on the ring, risking a dreaded curse!

Maps are particularly easy to create and provide the most benefit during play. These may be as simple as a penciled sketch on a sheet of paper or, with the assistance of readily-available software, an intricate color diagram. Maps make descriptions of adventure areas readily understood, as well as provide a "real" focus for players' imaginations. Coupled with miniatures, maps also speed combat resolution, as their use eliminates confusion over who can attack what.

Parchment paper (available from most art supply stores) can be used to provide a more authentic look to maps and scrolls. Runemasters that wish to provide scrolls with an ancient or damaged look can stain the sheets with coffee or lemon juice. The sheets can then be placed in an oven on very low temperature (be careful!) for a few minutes. These stained and wrinkled sheets make very good props, particularly if the players need to decipher the writing partially obscured by the effects of "time."

Music is another element that can add to the gaming atmosphere. All manner of appropriate classical pieces or movie soundtracks are available to lend themselves to whatever feeling a Runemaster wishes to create. Be it stirring marches for times of war, or brooding dirges in a horror adventure, music can be used to set a suitable mood.

USING MINIATURES

Although not required, many gamers enjoy using miniatures, floorplans, or other props in their games. In addition to the aesthetic value, miniatures provide an excellent visual reference during play. It certainly cuts down on the number of "so who can I attack this round?" questions. When using miniatures, assume one tabletop inch (or square, or hex if a play mat is being used) is equal to one pace. Thus, if two miniatures are 8" apart on your table or map, from the character's point of view they are 8 paces apart. Characters may move up to their base speed in paces each combat round, making it easy to determine exactly who can reach who in battle.

More Adventure Ideas

Stuck for an idea? Here are some vague ideas ready for you to flesh out:

Burning Hearts: A beautiful young woman approaches the PCs and angrily asks them to kill her ex-lover. She offers little money, but attempts to seduce willing PCs that are open to her suggestions. Her lover, however, is a powerful mercenary who leads a renowned company. Furthermore, he suspects the woman is a witch and has his own assassins out to kill her!

The Heritage Sword: A cruel noble has found a secret sanctum in the underground tunnels of a city. Beyond a magically-sealed door is a rune-etched sword. The noble desperately wants the sword, but cannot open the door because he is not of the same bloodline that built it. He shortly discovers that one of the PCs is of that bloodline, and devises a plan to lure him (and his friends) into the tunnels, trick him into opening the door, then stealing the blade!

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Most players wish to see their characters' skills and attributes improve over time, reflecting their growing experience and the benefits of their heroic achievements. Hero points are a means of representing a player character's continuing experience and proficiency. These points may be earned through good roleplaying and accomplishing adventure objectives as set by the Runemaster. A character's hero points may then be used to raise attribute scores, improve weapons expertise, and otherwise reflect

the character's growing skill. One of the Runemaster's most important tasks is to regulate the pace of character advancement. Too slow, and your players may feel they are getting nowhere. Too fast, and the campaign's play balance may be ruined. Below are some guidelines for rewarding the players. Keep in mind these are recommendations, not iron-clad laws. Runemasters should always feel free to alter these suggestions to suit their particular campaigns.

HERO POINT GUIDELINES

The most frequent hero point awards will come through good roleplaying of a character's WarClan glyph. Hero points are generally awarded at the end of an adventure session. A number of roleplaying points may be earned at the Runemaster's discretion, usually ranging from one to four, depending on the effort put forth by the player. In general it is best to encourage players for their effort than punishing them for a lack of acting ability. For this reason, it is also recommended that roleplaying awards be given secretly (e.g. written and passed as a note) rather than announced to the group.

Roleplaying Guidelines

- Player plays himself and ignores glyph — 0
- Little effort toward playing glyph — 1
- Good, if literal, roleplaying of glyph — 2
- Creative interpretation of glyph — 3
- Player is the Marlon Brando of his WarClan — 4

Hero points may also be awarded for accomplishing adventure objectives or making progress toward those objectives. Generally, no more than three hero points should be given per adventure session for quest progress, with one or two being the norm. The exception is the completion of a multi-session quest. These points are in addition to those gained for good roleplaying. When designing an adventure, the Runemaster should keep in mind the actions and achievements that should be undertaken in order to complete the adventure's goal. Deciphering an important riddle and foiling a villain's schemes are examples of possible achievements that further a quest. Not every session need be rewarded with hero points.

Session Points

- Making progress toward a major quest — 1
- Defeating a major foe in a quest — 2
- Completing a major quest or objective — 3

USING HERO POINTS

Players may use their hero points to improve their characters in a number of ways. Points may be spent increasing attributes, acquiring and improving maneuvers, as well as learning new professions. Attribute scores may be increased by spending a number of hero points as shown below. Characters must always purchase attribute scores incrementally. For example, a player wishing to raise his character's Intellect from 11 to 13 must first pay the points necessary to rise from 11 to 12, then pay the points to go from 12 to 13.

Attribute Costs

Attribute Score	Hero Point Cost
20	15
19	12
18	12
17	10
16	10
15	8
14	8
13	5
12	5
11	5
10	2
9	2
8	2
7	1
6	1

New professions may be learned during the course of one or more adventures. These professions are learned at the Apprentice level at a cost of 5 hero points. Additional levels of expertise may be earned at a cost of 5 points per level. In order to learn or increase a new profession, however, it is not sufficient to merely expend the requisite hero points; characters must actively study or practice the relevant skills during an adventure session. The Runemaster must decide whether a character must find a master to train him in the necessary arts, or is able to learn through disciplined self-study.

Characters may purchase new weapon expertise with hero points as well. As with professions, the character must actively train with the necessary weapon before gaining expertise with a weapon type. A new weapon expertise begins at Novice level. Additional levels beyond Novice may be purchased using the chart below. As with professions, it is only possible to advance one level

of expertise per adventure session, even if the character has sufficient hero points to advance further.

Maneuvers can be bought once the required level of expertise is reached. Basic maneuvers cost 5 points, Advanced ones cost 8 points. Don't forget, you cannot have more Advanced maneuvers than Basic ones. See Chapter VIII for descriptions of maneuvers.

Runecarvers may learn individual runes to carve. Runes cost 10 hero points apiece. Runecarvers must find a teacher or other source of knowledge before learning the art of runecarving, and only lesser runes can be learned.

NPCs: NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

As a company of heroes travels throughout the land, they will encounter many men and women who do not wish to fight them. From the sturdy innkeeper who gruffly nods at the adventurers every time they stop in his tavern to the lonely waif who watches them from afar, characters will meet a wide range of individuals.

These personalities are called NPCs — Non-Player Characters. The Runemaster creates and controls all of the important NPCs in an adventure, and he will have determined many of their personalities ahead of time. The more important an NPC is to the plot of an adventure, the more the Runemaster needs to flesh out his appearance, personality quirks, and goals.

The vast majority of NPCs, however, won't be detailed any more than their names or jobs. When the heroes walk into a store and want to barter the fat merchant down a few silvers, the Runemaster must create much of the merchant's personality from scratch. How will he react to these bold youngsters demanding lower prices? What if one of them is a beautiful, shapely Red Serpent begging for "just a small discount"?

Often times, the Runemaster will simply make things up. Maybe the merchant is a miser, and would sooner burn his shop down than lower his prices. Or perhaps he's a pushover when it comes to gorgeous blonde women and he'll give a discount on torches... just for her.

Weapon Expertise		
Level	Hero Points	Maneuvers
Novice	2	None
Skilled	4	One
Veteran	6	Two
Expert	8	Three
Grandmaster	8	Four
Runecarver	10	Five

AGING AND DEATH

Even the bravest warriors succumb to the slow poison of aging. Aging is not very typical in roleplaying games - most campaigns focus on the characters' younger years, not when they are old and gray. After characters reach old age for their respective race, they must pass a Might roll once a year or lose a point from an attribute as listed below. If an attribute is reduced to zero by aging, the character passes away. Elves never suffer such reductions in attributes due to age.

Attribute Loss	
d6	Attribute
1	Might
2	Intellect
3	Agility
4	Perception
5	Fatigue (1d6)
6	Player's choice

Aging	
Race	Old Age
Dwarf	150
Fenodorec	60
Gnome	125
Gulpi	40
Human	60
Tuathae	100



THE REACTION TABLE

The Reaction Table is intended to help Runemasters judge the impressions the PCs make on his NPCs. This table shouldn't be used for all NPCs - only the ones that aren't integral to the adventure. If Duggin, the Dwarven Clan King, is supposed to be suspicious of all the heroes, then don't roll on this table for him. He'll be suspicious no matter what the PCs do, simply because that's important to the Runemaster's adventure.

When this table is used, the Runemaster should roll 2d10 for the party, or for each character individually. There are several situations covered by the Reaction Table, which may modify the die roll.

Orators can use their professional rerolls on the Reaction Table.

First Impression

This is the NPC's general reaction to the character when he meets him for the first time.

- +1 if the hero is beautiful or incredibly handsome. +2 if talking to a member of the opposite sex.
- +1 if the hero is of higher status than the NPC.
- 1 if the PC is being openly hostile or insulting.

Combat Imminent

When an NPC (or group of them) is in a potential combat situation with the characters, use this as a reference to see whether they attack, hold, or even run in terror.

- +2 if the heroes significantly outnumber their foes.
- 1 if they really want something the PCs own - silver, a runed item, a princess, whatever.
- 3 if the two foes hate each other (Dwarves and orcs, for instance).

Bargains

When a PC is trying to get a discount.

- +1 if the hero is beautiful or incredibly handsome. +2 if talking to a member of the opposite sex.
- 1 if the PC is being openly hostile or insulting.
- 1 if the hero is of higher status than the NPC and looks like he can afford it.

Information

When a PC is trying to ask for help, information, hints, or directions.

- +1 if the heroes offer to pay the NPC. +2 if it's over 50 silvers. +3 if over 100 silvers
- +1 if the hero is beautiful or incredibly handsome. +2 if talking to a member of the opposite sex.
- +1 if the hero is of higher status than the NPC.
- 1 if the PC is being openly hostile or insulting.
- 1 if giving out the information might get the NPC in trouble.
- 1 if the NPC actually has to join the PCs.

Intimidation

When a PC is trying to scare, terrify, or otherwise intimidate the NPC.

- +1 if the hero is beautiful or incredibly handsome, and is talking to a member of the opposite sex.
- +1 if the intimidator is ugly!
- +1 if the hero is of higher status than the NPC.
- +1 if the victim is currently in visible danger.
- +1 if the intimidator is noticeably stronger than his victim.
- 1 if the victim is noticeably stronger than the intimidator!
- 5 if the situation is laughable (a lone hero intimidating a dragon!).

Animals

Sometimes the PCs will encounter an animal in the wilderness. This could also apply to unintelligent "monsters." Use this to determine its reaction to them.

- +2 if the character is a Beastlord.
- +1 if the character offers food.
- 2 if the animal is hungry - and is a predator.
- 5 if the animal is defending its territory or young, or is cornered.



Die Roll: 0 or less

First Impression: Everlasting hatred. The NPC wants to tear the very soul from the so-called “hero” and see it lashed by demons in the foulest pit of Hell.

Combat Imminent: The NPC attacks in rage. He will not retreat from this battle, and will fight to the death.

Bargains: The shopkeeper kicks the PC out of his store, threatening him to never return. He may even call the guards and accuse the PCs of stealing.

Information: The NPC spits in the PC’s face and threatens him never to talk to him again.

Intimidation: If the victim could kill himself now, he would. He gives no information out to the PCs, and won’t ever.

Animals: The animal attacks the PC in a berserk rage.

1 - 2

First Impression: Hatred. The NPC insults the character and wouldn’t mind seeing him dead.

Combat Imminent: The NPC (or group of them) attacks furiously. They won’t retreat unless they’ve done noticeable harm to the PCs... like kill one of them.

Bargains: The shopkeeper explains that he has nothing the PCs want, and asks them to leave his store.

Information: The NPC lies to the PCs, even to the point of trying to endanger them. “Looking for the great temple? Go right, past the Nightshade Slums. Don’t worry, it’s perfectly safe this time of night.”

Intimidation: The NPC lies through his teeth. He comes up with an intricate, deceptive tale in an attempt to mislead the characters.

Animals: The animal attacks.

3 - 4

First Impression: Severe dislike. The NPC tries to get away from the PC as soon as he can. He’ll be snide and insulting if provoked.

Combat Imminent: The NPCs attack.

Bargains: The shopkeeper politely explains that a strange shortage in this area has caused him to double his prices!

Information: The NPC claims he knows nothing, even if he does.

Intimidation: The NPC laughs at the PCs. He gives no information out.

Animals: The animal attacks in an attempt to scare the PCs away.

5 - 6

First Impression: Poor. The NPC doesn’t especially like the PC’s company. He’ll be quiet and reserved, but try to keep his thoughts to himself.

Combat Imminent: The NPCs attack, though they certainly won’t fight to the death.

Bargains: The shopkeeper sadly tells the PCs that his whole village is poor, and he has had to raise his prices by 50%.

Information: The NPC might say something useless, but he’ll try to keep any useful information to himself.

Intimidation: The victim gives out some harmless information. Anything he sees as being vital or important will be held back.

Animals: The animal growls and threatens the PCs, but makes no attack. It waits for the PCs to react. If the PCs threaten it or its home at all, it attacks.

7 - 13

First Impression: Neutral. The NPC doesn’t feel one way or the other about the PC. In an hour, he’s probably forgotten about him.

Combat Imminent: The NPCs spit a few insults at the PCs, but wait for them to act. If the waiting drags on, the NPCs attack.

Bargains: The shopkeeper shakes his head and offers no discount.

Information: The NPC offers a little help to the PCs, but nothing especially useful.

Intimidation: The NPC gives out much of the information he knows, but not all.

Animals: The animal growls and threatens to attack. If the PCs advance, the animal runs away.

14 - 15

First Impression: Favorable. The NPC likes the PCs and sees them as friendly strangers.

Combat Imminent: The NPCs shout a few insults, but if the PCs don't attack, they threaten them and leave.

Bargains: The shopkeeper offers a 10% discount.

Information: The NPC will offer as much information as he knows.

Intimidation: The NPC spews out everything he knows, except for one piece of information he deems as important.

Animals: The animal dashes away.

16 - 17

First Impression: Excellent. The NPC likes the PCs a lot, and will befriend them if he has the chance.

Combat Imminent: The NPCs decide better than to attack. If they can save face and leave the situation, they will.

Bargains: The shopkeeper offers a 20% discount.

Information: The NPC honestly tries to help the PCs in any way he can.

Intimidation: The NPC bawls out everything. However, it takes him a really long time to get to anything useful.

Animals: The animal leaves the PCs alone and watches them from a distance, curious.

18 - 19

First Impression: Amazing. The NPC sees the PC as family and treats him as such.

Combat Imminent: The NPCs surrender to the PCs.

Bargains: The shopkeeper offers a 25% discount and brings out a "special" item he's been keeping for a while.

Information: The NPC will go out of his way to help the PCs and answer any of their questions. He'll show them to places and point out other people who might help.

Intimidation: The subject gets right to the point and completely follows the PCs instructions.

Animals: The animal befriends the PC. He'll stay with him and watch over him while the PC is in the home territory of the creature. If the PC leaves the area, he will not follow.

20 - 22

First Impression: Celebrity. The NPC practically worships the PC. Every night he brags to all of his friends that he's met and befriended this great hero.

Combat Imminent: The NPCs poke fun at themselves and laugh at the fight that almost happened. They offer friendship. If attacked, they will run.

Bargains: The shopkeeper offers a 50% discount and any special items he may have.

Information: The NPC will become the obedient servant of the PCs while they are in his town. He'll follow them, do errands for them, and even fight for them.

Intimidation: The subject falls unconscious from fright. When he wakes up, he'll follow any instructions the PCs have.

Animals: The animal befriends the PCs. He follows them and fights for them, even if it means leaving his home territory.

23+

First Impression: Fanatical worship. The NPC truly worships the PC. He'll follow him and do anything he asks.

Combat Imminent: The NPCs solemnly swear their allegiance to the PCs.

Bargains: The shopkeeper will *give* the PCs anything they request, as long as it is reasonable.

Information: The NPC worships the PC and gathers 1d6 friends to do the same. The PC now has his very own cult.

Intimidation: The victim dies from fright.

Animals: The animal becomes a lifelong companion.

A FINAL WORD

Although your primary responsibility is to keep things fun, remember that your word is law. Some players will try to get away with all sorts of things; they'll claim to know every possible skill and bit of information ("of course I can read ancient Kk'lick'klickian..."). Never be afraid to say 'no' and stick to your guns: you are the Runemaster. That said, keep things fun and fair. No set of rules can cover every possible situation. When an odd situation comes up, make the best decision you can and keep playing. Don't be afraid to listen to your players, but remember: The Runemaster's word is law.

Mountain of the Mud God

An Adventure for 3 - 6 Slayers

INTRODUCTION

Mountain of the Mud God is a sample adventure for new or experienced Runemasters. Only read this adventure if you're planning on running it as a Runemaster. If you think you might play it, don't read any further!

If you're going to Runemaster this adventure, read through it first and get familiarized with the various NPCs and events that will occur. There's plenty of opportunity to improvise or expand on this adventure, too. Feel free to use your own creativity and imagination to add new situations or encounters.

Campaign Setting

Mountain of the Mud God is designed to take place in either Khragmar or the Glacier Rifts.

In Khragmar, this adventure takes place in the swamp of the Black Fens, located in the City-State of Tatliano. In the Glacier Rifts, this adventure will occur in the Dark Fens, north of the Borders of King Zul.

The Fens

On the west edge of the swamp is the tiny village of Graymist. Barely fifty villagers eke out a meager life in this muddy town. Most of their income comes from swamp fishing and basket weaving – the greenish-black “ash reeds” in the

swamp make ideal weaving materials. Expert craftsmen can even weave baskets capable of holding water.

Lately, Graymist has had a problem. Three times in the last month, a great demon-beast has loped out of the swamp dragging a great wagon behind him. The beast would smash open a house and throw its terrified inhabitants into a cage on the wagon. Once filled, the monster would drag the wagon back into the swamp, and disappear.

Graymist has contacted their local overlord, Thulan, to aid them with this terrible force.

King Thulans Stronghold

Thulan resides in a small stronghold two days northeast of the Fens. About two hundred peasants live in the damp fields around his laughable castle. He has an army of fifty soldiers residing around the stronghold and a dozen advisors and captains.

Thulan wants the PCs to investigate Graymist. How Thulan knows the PCs is up to the Runemaster. The PCs may be local heroes, or perhaps cheap mercenaries. Another option is that they are members of his guard.

When the PCs arrive, he will hold a banquet for them and his advisors. He tiredly tells them the situation in Graymist:



"It seems that one of my villages is having a problem. . . a great demon carrying off their people in the night, if you believe in that sort of thing. My army commander here, Bruul, thinks it's a feeble attempt at an uprising. Well, I can't spare a division to burn the town down for treason, so you go investigate. Bruul will come with you. If there's any evidence of treason, kill everybody and burn the village. If not, well, do what you can. Oh, and if this turns out to be a plan of that damned King Kabsam, kill as many of them as you can, but make sure someone gets back to me. I've been itching to march my men and kill that gruel-worshiper. Oh well. Enough talk. Eat."

Thulan is about fifty years old, a dark, gray-streaked beard adorning his scarred face. Commander Bruul is bald, about forty, and very muscular. Both tear at their food like vultures.

After the feast, Thulan commands his astrologer to give the party a map to Graymist. The astrologer, Mez-Zoth, tells the party that he has been authorized to give the party leader a sign of protection. He will take out a knife and quickly carve a rune in one person's shoulder, mumbling something about "Spiritual protection when the time is right." Anybody in the party who makes a Difficult Intellect roll will notice that this is a very unusual protection spell! This rune, however, is not one of protection, but rather one of location. He can instantly locate that person, no matter where they are!

Mez-Zoth is actually the high priest of the Mud God, an ancient deity of the area. He is trying to summon the Mud God from the earth, which requires many sacrifices.

The paranoid overlord Thulan will take Bruul aside and tell him that he has reason to believe that the PCs are plotting against him. He is sending an elite guard to help him kill the party in five days hence.

THE JOURNEY

Because of the rough terrain, the characters can expect to make the journey to Graymist in about two days.

The Meeting with Jahrdane

Sometime during the journey the PCs will stumble across Jahrdane. A Perception roll will spot this large and well-muscled rider, dressed in the scorched plate of the Obsidian Templari. He will not stop to talk, unless, of course, the PCs halt him. In this case, he dismounts, smiles, and asks what he can do to help!

Jahrdane will attempt to discover which PCs are worshipers of the mysterious Mud God by giving them a small hand-signal. Anybody making both a Perception and an Intellect roll will recognize that Jahrdane is giving them some sort of secret sign.

If no one responds, he says that he is a traveling merchant, happy to sell his wares. Of course, he has no real items to sell, so he offers his own scimitar for an outrageous 5,000 silvers, his pot helm for 1,000, his silk black cloak for 1,500! He won't bargain too much from these prices — after all, he's just trying to appear like a merchant, not be one!



If any of the PCs return his hand signal, Jahrdane will give him a scroll that he explains has directions to his shop on them. In reality, the scroll reads in an ancient tongue, "Mount Uth-Morgh, three days hence, the Son of Dust." The ancient language requires a successful Difficult Intellect roll to read.

If the PCs end up fighting Jahrdane, he has Might 14, Courage 12, Intellect 11, Agility 14, and Perception 11. Health: 26, Reeling 20. He is a Veteran swordsman, and does 3d6+1 carving damage with his scimitar. His plate armor gives him Toughness 12.

Fergus the Sage

Another encounter the PCs may meet is Fergus along with his donkey friend, Busikomi. Fergus tends to avoid travelers, so only a Difficult Perception will spot this old sage who passes them in the night.

If confronted, Fergus claims to be a powerful sorcerer. He is well versed and friendly as long as he is not threatened.

Besides offering philosophy, Fergus can help the PCs in more material ways. He will offer a scroll of exceedingly tiny writing, which, when read outloud and backwards, will cause a distraction (sadly, the distraction is the person reading a tiny scroll outloud!). If the PCs tell him that they are on the way to the Fens, he tells them he has a small hut there, which is safe and well stocked with food and freshwater. He can draw up the PCs a rough map to the hut.

Fergus is also a Master Herbalist, and if asked he will boil a powerful concoction of witch hazel and yarrow. This tea heals 3 points of damage to anyone who is Reeling or Dying. Fergus' brew, however, tastes terrible. It takes a Courage roll to gulp it down!

THE VILLAGE OF GRAYMIST

The Arrival

When the PCs arrive at Graymist, they find a frightened village. Most of the inhabitants are locked in their houses, praying for their lives. Many won't even bother talking to the PCs – warning them instead that the demon-beast will come and devour them.

After being in the village for several hours, one villager, Anton the Blacksmith, works up the courage to approach the visitors. He explains that at dawn the previous day, a black-armored fellow who asked to buy a horseshoe approached him. Anton noticed that the rider's horse had three horseshoes shaped like mud snakes – poisonous adders that live in the swamp. Anton replaced the missing horseshoe, but finding this very unusual, he followed the mysterious rider. He spotted the rider giving a scroll to the village herbalist, Varnith.

Varnith is home, but acts extremely afraid. He refuses to come out or even to talk to the PCs. If the PCs find a way to search Varnith's home, it looks normal. A Perception roll (Difficult if the PCs only get a glance at the hovel's interior) will spot a trap door on the floor. Under the door is a dirty chamber littered with several totems of some horrible, tentacled god-thing. If questioned or otherwise threatened, Varnith will leap forward with a snake-venom dagger and strike. If the knife breaks the skin, the victim will take an additional 2d6 damage after the fight (1d6 if a Might roll is succeeded)! Varnith will fight until captured or killed.

The scroll that was given to him can be found in the underground chamber. It is written in an ancient language - a Difficult Intellect roll must be made to read it.

The note reads:



Varnith will not explain this note, although everyone knows that Uth-Morgh is a small mountain in the southern part of the swamp.

Other Sources of Information

After Varnith is revealed for the worshiper that he is, the village will open up slightly to the PCs. If the characters ask around, some more information will be discovered.

Graymist's unofficial lord, Ultor, is an old man, once a military commander. He tells that the spawn of the devil itself comes forth from the swamp to carry away its people. Eighteen people have disappeared so far. If asked about anything else unusual, he explains that a small band of hunters followed the beast into the swamp one night, but lost the demon.

If asked about the swamp itself, he directs them to Malencore, a wizened farmer. Ultor himself has not ventured into the swamp for years.

Malencore tells the PCs that the swamp is very dangerous. Quicksand can drag one under the earth in a matter of seconds. Fierce beasts swim in the murky waters, and many of the pools are poisonous or even acidic. Dark, winding trails confuse even the most intelligent of travelers. Worst of all are the swamp raptors. These foul prehistoric creatures tend to stay at the center of the swamp, but they'll occasionally venture near the edges.

A year ago, the inhabitants of Graymist started a road through the swamp. Called the Sand Trail, this road is easily distinguishable from the murky swamp paths. The Sand Trail leads halfway through the swamp, when the trailblazers were killed and eaten by giant leeches and the swamp raptors.

Malencore encourages the party to stay on the Sand Trail at all costs.

The Swamp Attack

During the night a giant swamp leech, a Blood Bloat, disturbed by the happenings in the swamp, arises out of the murky waters and attacks the town. Unless the PCs are watching the swamps that night, it will attack silently.

A scream rings out, and a village woman says that she found her husband dead at the edge of the swamp. An examination will reveal that the man was drained of blood. Moments later, the Bloat emerges from the swamp to feast on the village. At first, everybody screams that it is the demon-beast, the monster that carries away its people. After the leech is destroyed or chased away, the peasants will admit that it was not the demon-beast.



Unfortunately, the danger is not over. Minutes after the swamp leech attacks, a strange howl echoes throughout the village. All PCs must make a Terror roll as they see the silhouette of a large troll-like creature emerging from the swamp dragging a spiked wagon. Mounted on the wagon is a bloody cage.

Demon-Beast

The Demon-Beast (actually, a large, malformed troll; use the troll's statistics) has two basic attacks. If extremely angry, he will claw. Otherwise, he will grapple the nearest person, and attempt to throw them in the cage (this requires two '6's on his grappling Attack Dice).

The bottom of the cage is lined with short spikes. Getting thrown in does 2d6 damage. The Demon-Beast will leave the cage and flee into the swamp when his Health reaches 10. Or, if he has gathered eight or so people in his cage, he locks the door and goes back into the swamp.

The cage itself is made of iron. A Difficult Might roll is required to bend the bars. Each individual bar has Health 20, Toughness 10. The latch might be able to be lockpicked, although it is a Difficult task.

After the battle, the PCs can see a clear trail showing the origin of the demon-beast. The wagon marks can be followed straight into the Fens.

THE FENS

A disgusting, gray and murky mess, the Fens is the home to green-gray wolves, blackened horrors, and dangerous pools of quicksand, poisonous snakes, and more. The wagon trail leads straight along the Sand Trail, which continues to the middle of the swamp, which is a day's journey.

Leaving the Path

If anybody leaves the path, they must make a Vision roll immediately, and every hour thereafter. If the Perception roll is failed, roll a die to see what they encounter!

- 1: Tripped over a root; take 1d-3 damage to a body part. Armor will not protect.
- 2: Fell into a sinkhole; take 1d-2 damage to a leg. Armor will not protect.
- 3: Bitten by a poisonous insect. 1 point damage, make a Difficult Might roll or take 1d6 Fatigue.
- 4: Poisonous gas arises from a hole in the dirt. Make a Difficult Might roll. If failed, take 1d6 damage and 1d6 Fatigue.
- 5: Attacked by poisonous snake.
- 6: Stumble into quicksand (Roll 1d10. If 1-8 is rolled, this is normal quicksand. A '9' indicates poisonous, '10' indicates acidic)!

Quicksand

Anyone falling into a pool of quicksand must roll against Might, or he will be halfway sunken in 30 seconds. Once sunk halfway, the Might roll becomes Difficult. If this one is failed, the poor soul will be sunk up to his neck. At this point, the Might roll is Hopeless! A vine, rope, or branch rope will add +2 Might.

Some quicksand pools are acidic! Take 1 point of damage every turn (armor does not protect; make a Ruin roll each turn for equipment)! Others contain a strange sleeping poison that Fatigues the victim if he fails a Courage roll.

The Path Ends

After twenty miles of winding paths, a hard rain begins to fall. A few hours later, the Sand Trail ends. Two paths still exist beyond. One is clear, sandy, and a tad overgrown, as if road construction had begun. The other is thorny, twisted, and dangerous looking.

A Hopeless Perception roll will spot the wagon trail leading down the thorny path. If the PCs have met Fergus the sage, an Intellect roll will show that his hut lies towards the clear path.

The Thorny Path and the Great City

The thorny path leads to the great circular chasm. A bridge once spanned this 50-foot ravine, but it has collapsed along the characters' side. In the center of this pit a great rock pillar rises up, and on it lies a sprawling ruined city, its buildings covered by slime, vines, and dirt.

The two stone posts that once held the bridge are engraved with runes. Anybody making an Intellect roll to read the scarred text will discover: "Behold the City of the Earth, Home to the Mud God."

If the players go around the chasm, they will discover that it encircles the entire city. On the other side, there is a bridge that is intact. It, however, is very weak and can only support one person at a time. For every person on the bridge, there is a 1 in 10 chance of it collapsing (2 in 10 if the person has Might 14 or more). If the bridge falls with someone on it, the victim must make a Difficult Agility roll to grab on to the rungs. Otherwise, they fall 50 feet to a rocky valley below.

There is a 50% chance of the bridge swinging towards the city when it collapses.

The city itself is ruined and empty. Various buildings can be searched. The Runemaster may give out some small treasure (a few ancient silvers or gems, or perhaps even a runed knife) to Perceptive PCs here. The central building of the ruined city contains spiral stairs that leads downward, into the Tunnels.

The Chasm Bottom

If the characters find themselves at the bottom of the chasm, they may wish to explore it, or they may wish to climb up. It is a 50-foot climb to the city itself. Climbing this rocky chasm (up or down) requires a Difficult Agility roll.

Exploring the valley results in the characters finding a huge stone door, marked with the words starting with "The Mud God's Underworld." Inscribed on the door is the story of the Mud God, a terrible demon-lord that once owned a great part of these lands. He was eventually slain by a great warrior, but is prophesied to return to the world. His picture is also shown, an earthen tentacled thing! Opening the door requires it to be lifted (Hopeless Might roll).

The Tunnels

Inside the door are dark, cavernous tunnels. Following the tunnels will lead the characters underneath the swamp to a small cave about an hour from Mount Uth-Morgh. The exit is blocked by rubble. It takes about three hours to dig out (and 10 fatigue, divided between diggers). The sounds of swamp raptors can be heard throughout this area, for this cave marks the center of their territory.

At this point, if the Runemaster feels that the players could use some battle, he can throw some angry swamp raptors at them. On the other hand, if the PCs are already tired or wounded, he may let them rest in peace.

The Clear Path

The clear path gets less clear as it progresses. It becomes muddy, thorny, and extremely smelly. Terrible sounds penetrate the ugly darkness, and soon the characters find the path blocked by a slimy river.

The River

The river looks disease-ridden and disgusting. An ancient dock can be seen prying out into the muck, although no boat lies at the end. A bell sits at the end of the dock, a lit torch beside it.

If anyone rings the bell, they will hear something coming through the water. Suddenly, bursting through the muck is an old boat, which empties itself of mud and water and waits patiently by the dock.

The boat is enchanted by a powerful wizard, Bannen-Koth. Bannen-Koth resides in a two-story tower at the end of the river. He uses the boat to capture people and then to sacrifice them to the Mud God, who he hopes to bring to life.

The Tower of Bannen-Koth

The boat will magically take the PCs down the river and deposit them at a large and grayish tower. The door to this tower is made of pure glass, and the inside is elaborately decorated.

Anybody entering this tower (prying open the door requires a Difficult Might roll; up to two people may attempt this feat) will find a meal prepared for them, as well as comfortable beds. No one is present.

As soon as everyone enters, the glass door slides shut again, and is locked! Breaking it requires some mighty blows - it has Health 35, Toughness 8.

The food and drink are poisoned with a sleeping agent. Roll a Difficult Might roll or suffer its effects; sleep for 2d6 hours. If some characters resist, they will see their comrades mysteriously rise through the ceiling itself!

The top floor of this tower can be reached by climbing the outside and dropping in through the main window. This requires an Agility roll. There is also a hidden door on the ceiling of the room - a Difficult Perception roll will spot this.

The Top Floor

Bannen-Koth resides here, and is prepared to slay all the sleeping PCs. He has them tied to the wall (Difficult Might roll to break free) and is working in a small study preparing a separate dagger for each of them.

If the other PCs spend too much time on the bottom floor, Bannen-Koth will slowly walk to the first sleeping character, pray to the mud god, and impale him with the knife, killing him instantly! It is always preferential to kill NPCs first (if there are any with the PCs), or to give the PCs some chance to rescue their captured comrades!

Bannen-Koth has Might 10, Courage 12, Intellect 12, Agility 11, Perception 14. Health 22, Reeling 17. He is a master knifeman and does 1d6+1 impaling damage with it. His leather outfit gives him Toughness 3.

The most obvious thing in the room, other than Bannen-Koth's elaborate knives, is the east wall, which is carved with a strange prophecy:

"And with the nineteen and first life cast into the darkness of death, the Mud God will awaken and take back his domain of earth and water. His allies will become his warriors, his enemies will be ground into the mud and suffocated."

Below the inscription are tally marks — exactly eighteen of them.

Leaving the Tower

After the PCs leave Bannen-Koth's tower, they will find themselves near the hut of Fergus, and about an hour from Uth-Morgh.

The Hut of Fergus

If the PCs have encountered Fergus, they can locate his hut with ease after leaving the tower of Bannen-Koth.

Surprisingly, Fergus can be found inside the hut. After offering them food and water, he explains to the PCs that the servitors of some dark lord have been capturing prisoners and have been sacrificing them to the Mud God. According to his research, once twenty prisoners have been sacrificed, the Mud God will rise to life and retake the lands that were once his.

Fergus can show the PCs the way to Mount Uth-Morgh. He'll accompany them as far as the base of the mountain.

MOUNT UTH-MORGH

The entrance to the mountain's ancient tunnels is several hundred yards up the rocky slope. This requires three climbing rolls (Might or Agility). Failure indicates injury (1d6, no armor Toughness protecting), and the roll must be made again. A rope adds +2 to these rolls.

At the top of the mountain is the entrance, guarded by two servants of the Mud God! Use the Soldier-Mercenary statistics from p.197. Each servant carries 10 silver pieces on them, undoubtedly looted from Graymist.

The mountain itself is a twisting trail of cavernous mazes.



The Sacrifice Chamber

The tunnels lead one way — down. The PCs will encounter the sacrifice chamber, a large room with a stone slab at the center. The stone slab is encrusted with a black crusty substance — obviously blood.

A young woman, perhaps 20, is chained to the altar. The high priest of the Mud God, Mez-Zoth, stands above her, knife upraised to slay her! He will bring his dagger down in seconds! Time for the PCs to hurry!

If the PC's interfere, the priest sends his three guards to dispatch them. One of the guards is the Obsidian Templari, Jahrdane. If the NPC Bruul is with the PCs at this point, he reveals himself as a traitor and joins the guards!

The young girl, Mariana, is the second-to-last sacrifice. However, unknown to the PCs, anybody killed in this chamber counts as a sacrifice! This includes guards, Mez-Zoth, or even the PCs!

The Mud God

If the final sacrifice is made, a great trembling resounds throughout the cavern. Suddenly, an elemental-like tentacled being rises from the earthen floor! It is the Mud God! Everyone should make Terror rolls at this point. The Mud God will do anything to kill everybody around him, including the priest! Time for the mightiest to stop him!

The Mud God			
MIGHT	34	HEALTH:	48
COURAGE	14	Reeling:	36
INTELLECT	8		
AGILITY	10	Speed:	9
PERCEPTION	10	Toughness:	1

Attacks: See following

The Mud God can make two tentacled attacks each turn. Each attack does 3d6 smashing damage. If the Mud God sees any dead or unconscious bodies, he will use an attack on the following turn to devour the body. The Mud God will always attack the PC who has the sign of Mez-Zoth carved into him first.

VICTORY!

Once the Mud God is destroyed, the mountain temple starts collapsing! Only the Mud God's hatred has kept it intact. The PCs must rush out, making an Agility roll to avoid the rocks (2d6 smashing damage), and finally leap from the mountain into the disgusting swamp!

The Mud God defeated, the secret of the swamp discovered. A mighty task indeed for those worthy of becoming heroes!



WARRIOR CREATION REFERENCE

- **Start with 30 hero points**
- **Purchase Primary Attributes**
 - MIGHT
 - COURAGE
 - INTELLECT
 - AGILITY
 - PERCEPTION
- **Secondary Attributes**
 - HEALTH = Might + Courage
 - FATIGUE = Courage x2
 - SPEED = 10 paces
 - 2 hero points = +1 speed (max +50%)
- **Weapon Expertise**
 - Choose weapon type
 - Receive one Novice type for free
 - Additional Expertise:*
 - Novice 2 points
 - Skilled 6 points
 - Veteran 10 points
- **Background Professions**
 - Number of Professions*
 - One free
 - Two 2 points
 - Three 4 points
 - Expertise*
 - Apprentice Free
 - Journeyman 4 points
 - Master 8 points
- **Status and Wealth:**

Wealth Level	Silver Talents
Princely	25,000
Opulent	13,000
Wealthy	6,000
Affluent	3,000
Prosperous	1,500
Established	800
Subsistence	500
Poor	200
Impoverished	100
Destitute	Broke!

Starting Status	Wealth Level	Hero Point Cost
Equestrian	Affluent	12
Merchant	Prosperous	8
Tradesman	Established	3
Commoner	Subsistence	free
Peasant	Poor	+2
Freed Slave	Impoverished	+4
Escaped Slave	Destitute	+6

Attribute Costs	
Attribute Score	Hero Point Cost
20	45
19	36
18	31
17	26
16	21
15	16
14	11
13	8
12	5
11	2
10	free (1)*
9	+1 (1)*
8	+2 (1)*
7	+3 (1)*
6	+4

Damage Table	
Might	Damage
8	1d6-2
9	1d6-1
10	1d6
11	1d6+1
12	1d6+2
13	2d6
14	2d6+1
15	2d6+2
16	3d6
17	3d6+1
18	3d6+2
19	4d6
20	4d6+1
21	4d6+2
22	5d6
23	5d6+1

Weapon Types
Axes
Bows
Clubs
Crossbows
Flails and Chains
Knives
Maces and Hammers
Picks and Warhammers
Polearms
Pummeling
Slings
Spears
Staffs
Swords
Whips
Wrestling

Background Professions	
Acrobat	Locksmith
Actor	Musician
Animal Handler	Orator
Artist	Physician
Astrologer	Priest
Blacksmith	Sailor
Charioteer	Scribe
Clothier	Singer
Craftsman	Stonemason
Engineer	Tactician
Farmer	Thief
Fisher	Trader
Herbalist	Translator
Hunter	Woodworker
Leatherworker	

Health Quick Reference			
Health	Wounded	Bloody	Reeling
18	5	9	14
19	5	10	14
20	5	10	15
21	5	11	16
22	6	11	17
23	6	12	17
24	6	12	18
25	6	13	19
26	7	13	20
27	7	14	20
28	7	14	21
29	7	15	22
30	8	15	23

COMBAT QUICK REFERENCE

INITIATIVE

Roll 1d6 + Perception
 Lowest Initiative declares posture first
 Combat round proceeds with highest Initiative going first

CHOOSING POSTURE IN MELEE COMBAT

Strike Hard +1d6 Bonus Attack Die
 Hold Seize Initiative from an attacking opponent
 Other Use missile attack or perform another action



Fumble! See table, p.00



Solid Shot. Normal damage



Vital Shot (if called).
 +2d6 damage



Critical Hit! See tables, p.00

DAMAGE

Smashing No extra damage
 Carving +1d6 extra damage after armor Toughness
 Impaling +2d6 extra damage after armor Toughness

FIGHTING POSITIONS

Crouched, kneeling, or sitting Speed is halved; Agility -3
 Prone or lying down Speed quartered; 1/2Agility
 Higher than a foe (on a table) Bonus Attack Die

CRIPPLING, SEVERING, AND CALLED SHOTS

Need Vital Shot to hit a limb; no extra damage

Hands and Feet Bloody damage to cripple
 Arms and Legs Reeling damage to cripple
 Head and torso Dying damage to cripple

HEALING

Apprentice Physician 1d6-2
 Journeyman Physician 1d6
 Master Physician 1d6+2

Hand-to-Hand Attack Dice Modifiers

Start with 2d6

Your Agility is greater than your opponent's	+1d6
You have greater Expertise than your opponent	+1d6*
You chose Strike Hard	+1d6
Your opponent is Fatigued or Reeling	+1d6**
Your opponent is Surprised	+1d6
Opponent using a shield	-1d6
Opponent using a tower shield	-2d6

* This only applies to humanoid opponents

** If a '6' is rolled on this die, opponent falls unconscious or dies (if Health at Dying)

Ranged Attack Dice Modifiers

Start with 2d6

Your Agility is greater than your opponent's	+1d6
Your opponent is Fatigued or Reeling	+1d6**
Your opponent is Surprised	+1d6
You are attacking with a bow or crossbow	+1d6
You are within Ideal Range	+1d6
Opponent using a shield	-1d6
Opponent using a tower shield	-2d6

** If a '6' is rolled on this die, opponent falls unconscious or dies (if Health at Dying)

Grappling Dice Modifiers

Start with 2d6

Your Might is greater than your opponent's	+1d6
Your Agility is greater than your opponent's	+1d6
You have greater Expertise in Wrestling	+1d6*
Your opponent is Fatigued or Reeling	+1d6**
Your opponent is Surprised	+1d6
You are using a net	
Opponent using a shield	-1d6
Opponent using a tower shield	-2d6

* This only applies to humanoid opponents

** If a '6' is rolled on this die, opponent falls unconscious or dies (if Health at Dying)

