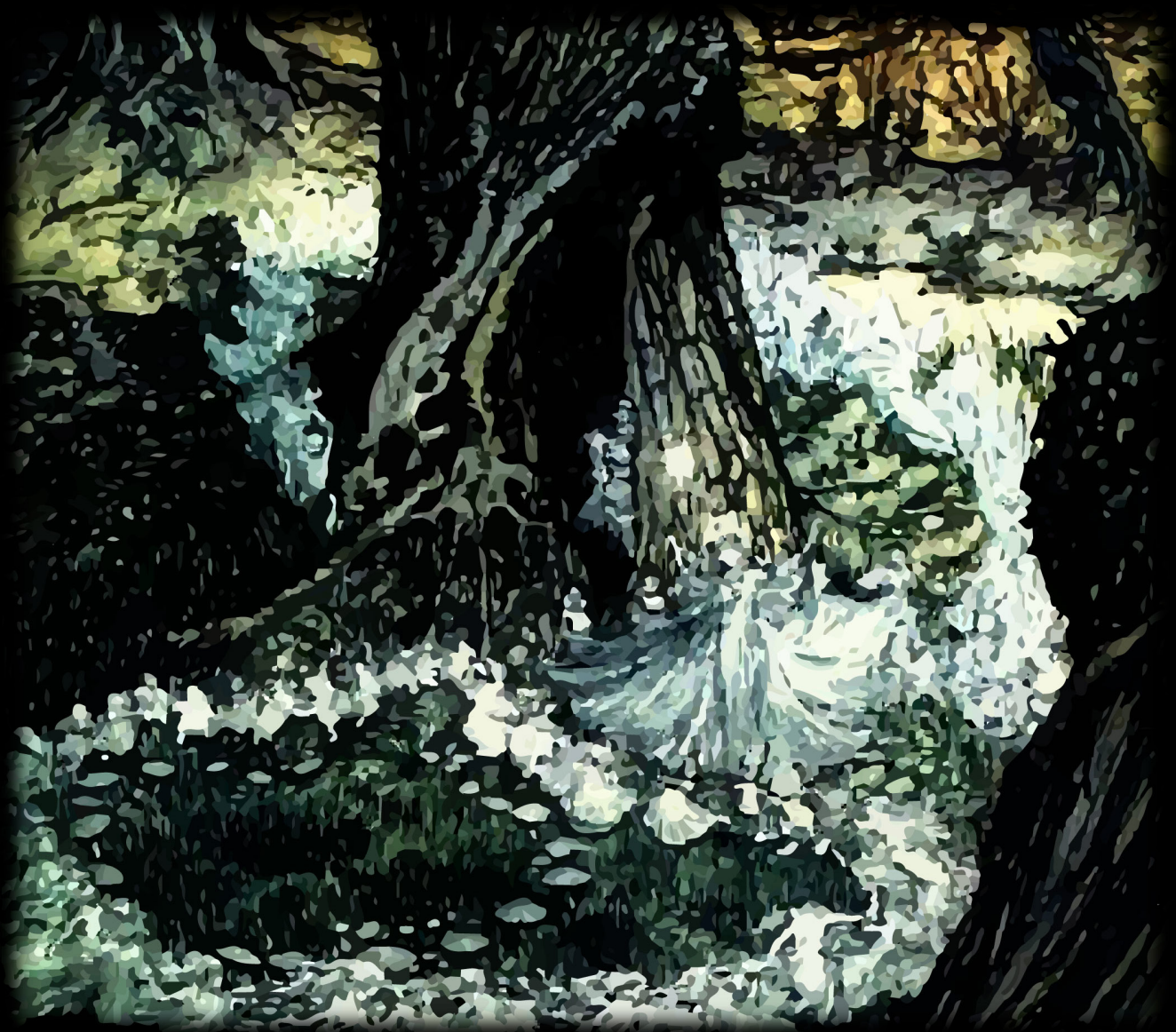


THE DAY WE LEAVE  
OUR FORESTS TO DIE IN  
BEAUTIFUL SILENCE

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# Introduction

Before you play, someone read this aloud:

*There is a place beyond the horizon, a grey land of ash and snow. The fields to the east are stained red with blood, wine, and sin. The orcs live there, clothed in armour of obsidian to ward off the blows of angels. An endless sea lies to the west, human ships sailing off to the edge of the world in search of starmetal to craft a sword that can kill a reflection. The dwarves live beneath, their empire a slow behemoth in the process of digging their way to hell.*

*In the middle of this all is the forests. Verdant greenery sculpted by millenium of biomages to be unnaturally natural. Glass towers where you can meet your family from a dimension that has forgotten you. Dreams roam this land, only to be put down by children with sharp teeth wielding rocks that end imagination.*

*This is the home of the elves. Ageless, sylvan, fey, alien... all of these and more are true. Elves are perfect, at least to themselves. They have brought the skeletons in their closet to life and repurposed them as ornaments.*

*But something has changed. The Grey has come, in one of its many forms. War, the wrath of a god, a plague, or the end of magic... it is here. There is no stopping it.*

*You are an elf: ancient, magical, and strange. The end of your life has come.*

*It is time to leave the forest.*

## Elvenkind

If you haven't heard of elves, you're probably living under a rock, so we aren't going to delve into that. However, we *are* going to talk about what elves are the world where the Grey attacks.

When we're talking elves, we're not thinking Santa Claus elves, or little pixie-like things. These elves are more closely related to Tolkien's smug

forest-dwellers, although they're still further afield than that.

Elves are more like the old stories of fey. Strange, flighty, and dangerous. They are inhuman. Trying to compare an elf to a person is like trying to compare a person to a raccoon. They both have thumbs, but that's about where the similarities end.

Elves are generally around a human size, although their appearance can wildly vary. Some have horns, some have fangs, and some are even stranger. An elf might have blood made of waterfalls and hands built from anger. Another might turn all the vegetation nearby into fractals, and cause anyone who hurts them to fall in love with them. Their shields are made of nightmares and they eat metal like candy.

Elves are alien, elves are magical, and elves are deadly skilled. They are proud, powerful, and beautiful in equal measure.

The younger an elf is, the more magical they are, but also less skilled and... social. People who go looking to kidnap elven children fare poorly. They'll head to the forests where the children are hid, and find themselves hunted down by echoes of themselves that laugh as they cut their tendons, holding them down until a child wearing dirty white rags comes by and tears their throat out with their teeth.

It would be a mistake, however, to think that elven elders are any less dangerous. Although much of their magic has fled, they are incredibly good at... well, whatever they want to be. Imagine a person who spent their entire lives learning how to use a bow. Now imagine they had ten times more time to practice, and were in the peak of physical condition the entire time. Elder elves can break the laws of physics by just being *that good* at something.

Adult elves are somewhere in between the two, and are the most common elves. Their magic has not entirely fled, and they have had ample time to ply their trade however they wish.

This is who you are. Strange and wonderful and terrible in equal measure. This is your tale.

Elven stories are all tragedies.

If you're lucky, you'll make this a good one.

## The Grey

The Grey is a threat. You can let your GM decide what it is, or work it out amongst yourselves. Whatever the Grey is, it is a threat to all of elvenkind. More than a threat, it is a fatal threat. Most likely, elves as a people will not survive the Grey. It's a sad thing, the death of a people.

The Grey has 3 stages: *dawning*, *rising*, and *twilight*, indicating it's severity. Generally, these stages will progress by 1 per session for a 3 session campaign, but you could certainly run a longer game with this.

When the Grey is *dawning*, it has just been widely noticed as a problem, but is not interfering with everyday life yet. When the Grey is *rising*, it is in full force, breaking down elven society and people. When the Grey is in *twilight*, most of elvenkind are most likely gone, and it will be time to watch the dying days of a civilization. These stages can last days, years, or centuries; it is up to you. There are example Greys at the end of this document.

## The Tale You Will Tell

To Die In Beautiful Silence is a game about endings. You play the witnesses to an apocalypse that you cannot stop. Slow, perhaps, or lessen the impact of, but it will come nevertheless.

There is no randomness in this game. Everything is certain. Rather than rolling dice to determine your successes or failures, you will use Moves, which are guidelines to your actions. To use moves, you will have to spend tokens, which can be gained through play. You start with 3 tokens, and can get more by acting in accordance with your playbook.

You should choose your age. Are you a child, an adult, or an elder in elven society? This will determine your magical traits and powerful physical skills.

You have your playbook, where you will determine how you fit into elven society. A list of playbooks is at the back of this document. This will determine the specifics of how you play the game, and your methods of gaining tokens.

Finally, detail what you look like, what you carry with you, and your pronouns (if any). Tell us what your name is, and why it's important.

## Moves

### Act

**When you take action in a risky situation**, describe what you wish to do, and how you want it to play out. It is so. In addition, choose up to your tokens spent in additional options.

- *You perform with perfect elegance, executing your act flawlessly.*
- *There aren't any unintended consequences.*
- *You don't have to pay a price, either now or later.*
- *You can help other people along with you.*

You can choose to instead fail at what you attempted. In that case, take a token and ask the GM what happens.

### Sway

**When you convince someone that your word is truth**, tell them what you wish of them. Choose a number of options equal to your tokens spent, and ask the GM if they accept.

- *When you ask the GM if they accept, they must answer 'yes,' even if they otherwise wouldn't.*
- *They hold no reservations in their heart.*
- *They will ask or demand nothing of you.*
- *You can get something else out of them, such as a reaction, information, or a coin purse.*

### Fight

**When you attempt or threaten to injure or kill someone**, describe what you do, and choose 1.

- *Hurt them gently, such as a bruise, small scar, or lock of hair, and let them know you could have killed them.*
- *Hurt them viciously, such as a large scar, lost eye, or bloody gash, and tell us why you didn't kill them.*
- *Kill them, and ask them how they die.*
- *Take something from them. Describe what you do with it.*
- *Put yourself in a better position or escape from them.*
- *Protect someone or something from them.*

In addition, choose a number equal to your tokens spent that *don't* happen.

- *You lose something, such as a friend, your courage, or an item.*
- *You don't have to give up an advantage.*
- *You become injured. If you do not get help within a few days, you will suffer and die.*

## Remember

**When you look back on the past**, describe a scene from your history that relates to your current situation, working with the GM. The other players can be other people in the scene. Play through the scene for a few minutes. You have 3 tokens to spend in this scene, although you can gain more in it as normal. At the end of the scene, ask your fellow players these questions:

- *Did I learn something from the past?*
- *Did I shed light on a new revelation about myself?*
- *Was what I did important?*
- *Was the scene interesting and memorable?*
- *Did I suffer?*
- *Did the scene reveal information about the current situation?*

For every time the predominant answer is 'yes,' take a token. Each player can only do this once per session.

## Wield

**When you call on the magic in your blood**, describe how it manifests itself and what you do with it. Choose a number of options equal to your tokens spent.

- *It is quick.*
- *You don't have to sacrifice anything.*
- *It is as effective as you expected.*
- *It can last a long time.*
- *It does exactly what you want.*
- *You aren't changed from using it.*

## Die

**When you cannot continue on, and let your long life end**, choose 1, then join the GM in narrating the end of your race.

- *Die in beautiful silence. Describe how your corpse is laid to rest.*
- *Die in violent raging anger. Describe the last thing you do, and how your fellows leave you to your ugly death.*
- *Flee from the world in shadow, wandering far away and leaving your fate uncertain. Describe your parting words.*
- *Abandon yourself to grief, and describe where you spend the rest of your days in mourning over your race.*

## Character Creation

All elves are magical, and all elves are skillful. It is what comes from being born into a body bursting with sorcery and then living for a thousand years.

As an elf ages, their mastery of their mundane skills grow, while their magical power dwindles. A young elf can make boulders move with a flick of their wrist, while an elder elf could scale sheer glass walls with ease.

When you create your character, you must choose your age, which determines your magical domains and your mastered skills. Whenever you act in a way that exploits your magical domains or your mastered skills, you can treat any move you make as though you spent 1 more token than you actually did.

A **child** will have intense magical power. You will choose 3 domains of magic from your playbook, and 1 skill you have mastery over.

A **adult** will be more-or-less perfectly balanced. You will choose 2 domains of

magic from your playbook, and 2 skills you have mastery over.

A **elder** will be immensely experienced in the ways of the world. You will choose 1 domain of magic from your playbook, and 3 skills you have mastery over.

Do not feel constrained by the listed skills and domains. If you can come up with one that makes more sense for your character, go for it.

The main difference between skills and magic is control vs power. Magic is unconstrained and wild. It's going to solve all your problems, but it'll probably cost you in the process. Skills are practiced and beautiful. It's the difference between ripping the words out of someone's mouth forever and cutting their sentence in half before they can speak it.

# Playbooks

## The Bound

Yours is the power and words and oaths. The fey, those who came before, could not tell lies. You believe in the power of truth, binding it to your body and soul. You enforce your will on the world around you, forcing it into shapes to suit your needs.

*Play a bound if you want to be eldritch, martial, and determined. Bound are good at both warfare and diplomacy. However, when the Grey comes, you may find that your truths begin to falter...*

## The Hunter

Other elves sometimes forget, but your roots are not just roots of magic and spells. You consider yourself one of the true elves, those who follow the tenets of the wild. Yours is a faith of savagery, of predator and prey, and the world will fall in line.

*Play a hunter if you want to be savage, vicious, and wild. Hunters are good at killing things and moving throughout the forest. However, when the Grey comes, you may find it harder to adapt to your new way of life...*

## The Shadowed

There is always a counterpart to perfection. Those who hide in the shadows of others, lives full of poison and malice. You are the dark reflection of most elves, but no less your own person for it. Those things that others dare not touch are your kindred, and you will bring them into the world.

*Play a shadowed if you want to be dark, secretive, and different. Shadowed are stealthy and watchful, always hidden from prying eyes. However, when the Grey comes, you may find it does not care for your hidden ways...*

## The Weaver

To be an elf is to be perfect, and you embrace this to the fullest. Your body and mind are sculpted to be immaculate, allowing you to weave social and physical webs in any situation you happen upon. You attach strings to the world, and it dances to your tune.

*The a weaver if you want to be controlling, beautiful, and manipulative. Weavers are socially adept and masters of charms and spells. However, when the Grey comes, you may find your web more fragile than you expected...*

## The Wise

Elves live for thousands of years, becoming more intelligent and skilled than any mortal could expect, or even understand. You know that knowledge is power, and you hoard it like another would hoard gold or magic. You know the world, and to know something is to have control of it.

*Play a wise if you want to be intelligent, powerful, and respected. Wise are masters of the ways of the world, and have excellent skill in whatever they choose. However, when the Grey comes, you may find your knowledge means little...*



## The Bound

### Magic and Mastery

*If you are a child, choose 3 domains and 1 skill. If you are an adult, choose 2 domains and 2 skills. If you are an elder, choose 1 domain and 3 skills.*

**Magic.** Alteration, Binding, Blood, Space, Time, Winter

**Mastery.** Blacksmithing, Diplomacy, Promises, Protection, Swords, Warfare

### Replenish

Once per scene, you can get 1 token by upholding an oath or promise.

Once per session, you can get 3 tokens by making a costly oath you fully intend to keep.

### Moves

*Choose 2 of the following.*

#### **Army of One**

When you fight, you can add the following option you can choose from:

- *You kill many opponents, leaving them broken and scattered.*

#### **All the World a Stage**

*When you follow your life according to story tropes, tell us what story you are replicating, and your role in it. As long as you continue acting out the role, you get an extra token for all your actions.*

### **Rule of Thirds**

*When you ask someone a question three times, they must answer the opposite the last time of how they answered the first time (yes if they at first said no, and no if they at first said yes). If they answer with an in-between such as maybe or perhaps, they must make their decision when you ask for the third time.*

### **The Last Battle**

*When you take a stand against overwhelming odds, say who or what you are protecting. Then, choose a number of options equal to the tokens you spend.*

- *You are only wounded to the point of having to run, and not to the point of death.*
- *Nobody slips past you.*
- *The enemy force is defeated.*
- *You gain the respect of someone important.*

### **All That Glitters**

*When you offer someone what they desire, tell them what they have to give you in return. They will accept your deal gleefully, and give you just enough time to slip away smiling before they realize they've been had.*

## The Hunter

### Magic and Mastery

*If you are a child, choose 3 domains and 1 skill. If you are an adult, choose 2 domains and 2 skills. If you are an elder, choose 1 domain and 3 skills.*

**Magic.** Animals, Body, Divination, Fire, Metal, Plants

**Mastery.** Bows, Forestry, Knives, Medicine Traps, Vision

### Replenish

Once per scene, you can get 1 token by performing a successful hunt.

Once per session, you can get 3 tokens by refusing to submit to the rules of someone else.

### Moves

*Choose 2 of the following.*

#### **Call to the Wild Hunt**

*When you sound your horn and summon the Wild Hunt, tell us which way you direct them. Choose a number of options equal to the tokens you spend.*

- *The Wild Hunt don't run rampant, destroying and pillaging all in their wake.*
- *They won't turn on you next.*
- *They will leave after they're done.*

#### **Stubborn Oak**

When you are prepared to push yourself to the brink, put any number of tokens in reserve, then double your tokens in

reserve. As long as you don't stop pushing yourself, you can spend those tokens 1-to-1 to avoid exhaustion or injury. If you stop pushing yourself, your remaining tokens are lost.

#### **The Old Ways**

*When you Wield magic, you draw on the ancient ways of casting spells, revelling in their brutality. You get an extra token to cast your spell with for every one of the following conditions you fulfill.*

- *A blood sacrifice.*
- *A ritual feast.*
- *The burning of a symbol of civilization.*

#### **Stalker of Prey**

*When you run someone down, tell them whether you hunt them for survival, for joy, or for some other reason. Then, choose a number of options equal to the tokens you spend.*

- *The chase does not take long.*
- *You can catch them wherever you wish.*
- *They are on the verge of collapse when you find them, barely able to stay on their feet.*

#### **Traveller of Ancient Lands**

*When you discover someplace new, tell us about the time you've been here before, and something interesting about this place.*

## The Shadowed

### Magic and Mastery

*If you are a child, choose 3 domains and 1 skill. If you are an adult, choose 2 domains and 2 skills. If you are an elder, choose 1 domain and 3 skills.*

**Magic.** Darkness, Demons, Earth, Illusions, Insects, Rot

**Mastery.** Deception, Murder, Poison, Sadism, Stealth, Theft

### Replenish

Once per scene, you can get 1 token by making someone else distrustful or wary of you.

Once per session, you can get 3 tokens by showing how there is more to you than what appears on the surface.

### Moves

*Choose 2 of the following.*

#### **Treacherous**

*When you betray someone, describe what you do to them, and choose a number of options equal to the tokens you spend.*

- *They don't see it coming or have time to react.*
- *You shake their confidence.*
- *Your betrayal wounds them terribly.*

#### **Simmering Rage**

*When you truly hate someone, tell us who. They must have done something to genuinely wrong you. You can only truly hate one person at a time. If you ever stop, you can never muster that same rage against them again. Reserve any*

*number of tokens, putting them aside. Whenever you act against that person, you can spend one of those reserve tokens, which count for 2 tokens instead of 1.*

#### **Back to the Shadows**

*When you Fight, you can always choose to put yourself in a better position or escape from them as well as any other option you choose.*

#### **Embrace Ugliness**

*When you abandon beauty for just a moment, tell us what it looks like, and choose a number of options equal to the tokens you spend.*

- *Shock, terrify, or upset someone.*
- *Tell us who you hurt in your ugly display.*
- *Break something precious.*

*Then, choose 1.*

- *Those nearby, even your friends, are repulsed by your actions.*
- *When you return to beauty, you will retain some imperfection for a short time. Tell us what.*
- *You are disgusted and upset by your own display. Spend an additional token if you have one to spend.*

#### **Revenge From the Dark**

*When you take revenge on someone who has wronged you or your loved ones, tell us how you break them, but leave them alive, at least for the moment. When you are done, regain a token*

## The Weaver

### Magic and Mastery

*If you are a child, choose 3 domains and 1 skill. If you are an adult, choose 2 domains and 2 skills. If you are an elder, choose 1 domain and 3 skills.*

**Magic.** Colour, Connection, Emotions, Enchantment, Healing, Thought

**Mastery.** Art, Beauty, Leadership, Movement, Persuasion, Poetry

### Replenish

Once per scene, you can get 1 token by getting someone under your control, however that looks to you.

Once per session, you can get 3 tokens by showing your true feelings for someone when it is inconvenient.

### Moves

*Choose 2 of the following.*

#### **Weaver of Hearts**

When you sway someone, you can add the following options you can choose from. You may always pick one of them without spending tokens.

- *They fall in love with you.*
- *They are terrified of you.*

#### **Puppet Strings**

*When you sink your hooks into someone, they are devoted to you. Whenever you ask them to do something, you can*

spend 1 token to make them obey you without question or resentment.

#### **Bearer of Gifts**

*When you offer someone a gift, they must accept, and you may choose 1:*

- *The gift carries some unspoken obligation with it.*
- *They find themselves indebted to you for the gift.*
- *They insult you by not honouring the spirit of the gift, showing themselves to be rude and ugly in front of everyone.*

#### **Opener of the Door to the Mind**

*When you prod and poke at someone's insecurities and weaknesses, tell them how you do it, and choose a number of options equal to the tokens you spend.*

- *Learn what they want most in this moment.*
- *Learn who they want to kill and why.*
- *Learn what you can do to utterly destroy them.*
- *Learn who they care most about.*

#### **Come to Me**

When you speak the name of someone who you have in the palm of your hand, they will appear immediately beside you.

## The Wise

### Magic and Mastery

*If you are a child, choose 3 domains and 1 skill. If you are an adult, choose 2 domains and 2 skills. If you are an elder, choose 1 domain and 3 skills.*

**Magic.** Death, Dreams, Light, Reflections, Sound, Symbols.

**Mastery.** Craftsmanship, Influence, Instruction, Music, Watchfulness, Writing

### Replenish

Once per scene, you can get 1 token by learning an important bit of knowledge.

Once per session, you can get 3 tokens by giving advice that could damn you if it goes wrong.

### Moves

*Choose 2 of the following.*

#### **Thousand Years of Practice**

*When you act, you can add the following option you can choose from:*

- *You learn from your experiences. If you ever must undertake this task again, you do not have to spend any tokens to get the result you want.*

#### **They of Many Skills**

*When you pick this move, take an extra skill or domain.*

#### **Welcome Home**

*When you enter a settlement, you always have a home or someone to accept you in and give you a place to rest. In*

*addition, while in a place you consider home, you can choose 1.*

- *You are hidden from all who would search for you.*
- *However long you rest will be long enough to recuperate and heal, even if it is only for a few minutes.*
- *There will be something useful there you can take with you.*

#### **Teacher of Ancient Knowledge**

*When you teach someone what they need to know, choose 1, and put any number of tokens into reserve, then double your tokens in reserve. Whenever your student makes use of their lesson, they may spend tokens from your reserve.*

- *With many hours of discussions and displays of skill, you teach them humility and compassion.*
- *With long nights of darkness and blood, you teach them fear and silence.*
- *With petty jabs and harsh words, you teach them anger and control.*
- *With a blade in one hand and flower in the other, you teach them beauty and violence.*

#### **Dancer on Razor's Edge**

*When you walk a dangerous line, tell us how you walk between two extremes, and describe how you make it out without straying too far to either side.*

# GM's Section

## GM Philosophies

- Show them the wonder and beauty in the world, and make them happy to have seen it, if even for just a few moments.
- Let them be great and terrible and tragic.
- Always show the consequences of their actions.
- Show the relentless advance of the Grey.
- Let everyone die, if that's how the story is going.
- Give them something to fight for.

## Example Grey: The Duke from the Sea

**Premise:** The Duke from the Sea is invading the forests with his armies.

**Dawning:** The Duke slaughters all outlying elves, burning the ones who will burn and drowning those who will not. Elves begin to flee the forest.

**Rising:** The Duke burns the forests. For however long this takes, the world is full of ash, smoke, and fire. Strange magics dance in the flames, and trees uproot themselves in their haste to escape. Most elves die with their forest.

**Twilight:** The Duke hunts the last few elves through the cooling ashen lands of their home. Most of his armies either return home or lay down roots in the now-fertile farmland. The last of the elves are cornered and slain.

## Example Grey: The Death of Magic

**Premise:** Magic is dying off.

**Dawning:** There is no new magic in the world. Children stop being born, as their bodies cannot be created without new magic. Some elves leave the forests to seek help.

**Rising:** Magic other than what already exists is dead, and is not coming back. Elves begin to hunt each other down in desperate attempts to drain the already-existing magic from each other. Contact between elves and humans becomes more common.

**Twilight:** Magic completely flees from the world. The last elves holding onto scraps of their power hide in the forests for years, jealousy hoarding it, while others join humans and live their lives with them. Those too magical for their bodies to sustain themselves biologically die.

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Thanks for reading!