Daggerheart Open Beta Playtest

Welcome to the open beta playtest for our new game, Daggerheart! Within this document, you'll find the rough draft of a rulebook that should help you to get started. Some important things to keep in mind as you make your way through this manuscript:

- **The game is still in active development.** There are parts that are outright not written yet. There are sections that are only partially written and will continue to expand. Think of this like an early-access video game—you might stumble upon portions that are unpolished, broken, or in flux. This is a look into the development process and an opportunity for you to give us your feedback before the rules are finalized. This manuscript is a living document, not yet put into any semblance of layout so that we can implement as many of your notes as possible and build this game together.
- **This rulebook has not gone through an editor yet.** We have one onboard who will work alongside us during this process, but they will not have the opportunity to polish until the manuscript is finalized. This means you will very likely find errors and omissions. If you spot a typo or grammatical error, please do *not* report this—these issues will be resolved in editing. However, if any information is confusing, missing, in an odd place, or doesn't seem to work as intended, please tell us! We want to fill those gaps and make the rulebook as user-friendly as possible.
- **The balancing of adversaries is still in an exploratory phase.** Up until this release, we've adjusted the combat system numerous times in an effort to make it as fast and cinematic as we can, while also making it feel familiar and fair. Combat will need significant playtesting to ensure we get the right balance on class power, leveling, adversaries, and beyond–we'd love your feedback when you feel like things aren't working.
- **The art is all subject to change.** Some pieces are placeholders, others are closer to finalization, and some are simply not available yet. The domain cards all share one image per domain and all subclass cards within a class currently have the same art. Each will have their own custom art in the final release.
- **We will release new updates periodically during the open beta playtest cycle.** When we do, we'll note the changes in the Change Log so that you can update anything in your current campaign that might need it.
- **Even though we are in beta, you can stream your games.** You can make DPGL-compliant content for the game. We only ask that you make it clear that your project is using the Daggerheart *Playtest*, as the game's mechanics will continue to evolve and we don't want confusion when the final game comes out. Just keep in mind you can't publish and/or sell any Daggerheart-related products quite yet. This is because we don't want your product to become unusable because of a change we made. Once the game is published, this restriction will no longer be in place.
- **There were many inspirations for this game.** We encourage you to also check them out if you like what we're making here. For a list of touchstones and inspiration, see "Touchstones" in the Introduction.

DAGGERHEART
PLAYTEST MANUSCRIPT
VERSION 1.2

Change Log

No current changes.

Daggerheart Team

LEAD GAME DESIGNER: Spenser Starke
ADDITIONAL GAME DESIGNERS: Rowan Hall, Matthew Mercer, Alex Teplitz, Michael Underwood
ADDITIONAL WRITING: Layla Adelman, Carlos Cisco, Felix Isaacs, Erin Roberts, Eugenio Vargas

COMBAT WHEELCHAIR DESIGN: Mark Thompson

DEVELOPMENTAL EDITOR: Laura Hirsbrunner
ARCHIVIST: Dani Gage

SENIOR RPG PRODUCER: Elise Rezendes
JUNIOR GAMES PRODUCER: Alex Teplitz
ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION: Alex Uboldi

ART DIRECTOR: Anthony Jones
ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR: Leesha Hannigan

PLAYTEST PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Brieger Creative

LEAD GRAPHIC DESIGN: Matt Paquette & Co.
ADDITIONAL GRAPHIC DESIGN: John Harper, Vee Hendro

CONSULTANTS: Daniel Delgado, Rue Dickey, Rob Herbert, James Mendez Hodes, David Lezzi, Erin Roberts, Christine Sandquist, Rogan Shannon, Mark Thompson

LEAD CONCEPT ARTIST: Shaun Ellis
CARTOGRAPHER: Marco Bernardini
ARTISTS: Juan Salvador Almencion, Zoe Badini, Paul Scott Canavan, Kristina Carroll, Stephanie Cost, Nikki Dawes, Benjamin Ee, Geoffrey Ernault, Laura Galli, Juan Gutierrez, Leesha Hannigan, Hendry Iwanaga, Anthony Jones, Samantha Joanne Key, Priscilla Kim, Michael Lim, Linda Lithén, Samantha B. Lucas, Julia Metzger, Reiko Murakami, Jess Nguyen, Irina Nordsol, Tamara Osborn, Mike Pape, Simon Pape, Jen Pattison, Marzena Piwowar, Andreas Rocha, Ernanda Souza, Jenny Tan, Rafa Teruel, Mateusz Wilma

Darrington Press Team

HEAD OF DARRINGTON PRESS:
Ivan Van Norman

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CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER:
Ed Lopez

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT - MARKETING:
Rachel Romero

MARKETING MANAGER:
Darcy Ross

SENIOR GAME DESIGNER:
Spenser Starke

GAME DESIGNER:
Rowan Hall

DIRECTOR OF RETAIL PARTNERSHIP:
Katie Lowther

PROCUREMENT DIRECTOR:
Ally De Simone

CRITICAL ROLE EMPLOYEES:
Spencer Aitke, Efrain Alvarez, Sauol Ambriz, Brittney Austin, Leo Baltierrez, Taylor Burke, Diana Jeanne Calalo, Sarah Marie Campbell, Dani Carr, Niki Chi, Adrienne Cho, Shikina Collins, Ally De Simone, Jared Deiro, Shaunette DeTie, Nadia Dilbert, Steve Failows, Maria Flores, Christian Fox, Lana Gotlinskaya, Kyle Hafkey, Alex Hill, Bryn Hubbard, Maxwell James, Christopher Jansen, Megan Karnish, Annie Krueger, Will Lamborn, Tal Levitas, Chris Lott, Jonathan Lott, Sam Maggs, Britton McGrath, Ashley Middlebrook, Aaron Monroy, Khoa Nguyen, Eddie Ochoa, Chyanne Owen, Elia Palacios, Leo Rassool, Jerry Rivas, Rich Romasanta, Max Schapiro, Eli Schiff, Vinnie Singh, Gustin Smith, Dylan Steppeler, Gary Thomas, Jordyn Torrence, Alex Uboldi, Ben van der Fluit, Jen Veloso, Brittany Walloch-Key, Kirby Winslow, Justin Wong, Nicole Yonan

This is a game built by a diverse team of various ethnicities, genders, faiths, sexualities, and identities.
Credits will continue to be updated throughout the development of the project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Daggerheart

Daggerheart is a collaborative roleplaying game set in a high fantasy world; a place of incredible magic and perilous adventure. During a campaign, you may find yourself rubbing elbows with nobles in an attempt to stop an assassination plot, diving deep into an ancient dungeon to keep a powerful creature from escaping and unleashing its power, sailing across a vast ocean to face off against a terrifying sea monster, or protecting a precious relic from falling into the hands of a dangerous enemy. No matter the adventure your party chooses to embark upon, Daggerheart is designed to provide the tools to tell a story that is both heartfelt and epic.

What is a Tabletop Roleplaying Game?

A tabletop roleplaying game, or TTRPG, is an interactive storytelling experience where players take on the role of characters within a shared world, and collaborate to tell a story about those characters. Daggerheart is meant to be played by three to six players, with one of those players taking on the role known as the Game Master (or GM). This player helps to facilitate action amongst the rest of the group, known as the Player Characters (or PCs), who are each responsible for playing a single character during the game. The Game Master is responsible for taking on some of the responsibilities not covered by the role of a Player Character—they may introduce complications or consequences to the narrative, embody any characters not inhabited by the other players (also known as non-player characters or NPCs), and help the story progress during a session.

Like many roleplaying games, Daggerheart uses dice to determine the outcome of some uncertain events, providing an element of unpredictability to the choices you make. Even so, the game also aims to embrace player agency and imagination; the type of character a player chooses to play and the decisions they make about their background and experiences will make their odds better (or worse!) on those dice rolls.

What Kind of Roleplaying Game is Daggerheart?

Daggerheart is a heroic narrative-focused experience with combat as a prominent aspect of play, facilitating emotionally engaging, player-driven campaigns that are punctuated by exciting battles and harrowing challenges. The game takes a more rules-light approach in its design, encouraging players and GMs to focus on the story they're telling rather than the complexity of the mechanics. It asks them to act in good faith with one another to tell the best story they can, and looks to provide structure when it's unclear how things might resolve within that story. The system has a free-flowing approach to combat to avoid stopping down the game into rounds, and it doesn't rely on grid-based movement for the maps and minis. This is all purposeful in creating a game that utilizes the kind of terrain and map-building that miniature-based games are known for while making Daggerheart streamlined, approachable, and focused on delivering a great narrative experience at the table.

Those who prefer a highly strategic, rules-heavy experience with more of a heritage from wargames may find Daggerheart doesn't have all of the crunchy bits they're used to. Those who come from very rules-light gameplay may find some mechanics engage in areas where they're used to a more free-form approach. That's okay! You should always play the types of games that make you and your table happy. That said, if you're looking to tell heroic fantasy stories with a modern approach to mechanics that focus on both the epic battles and the emotional narrative of the characters who fight in them, you've come to the right place.

Daggerheart utilizes an asymmetrical design. That means that it plays very differently for the GM than it does for the players. Many TTRPGs have some asymmetry, with players each controlling one PC while the GM plays everyone else. But Daggerheart's asymmetry goes deeper—players roll the 2d12 Duality Dice for their PCs' standard actions, including their attacks. At the same time, the GM makes moves without rolling for most actions but rolls a d20 when making attacks for adversaries. Each PC gains Hope when they "roll with Hope," while the GM gains Fear when any PC "rolls with Fear." PCs and Adversaries both have a mechanic called Experiences, but they are used in ways at different times. This asymmetrical design is intended to help all participants more effectively contribute to creating a memorable experience together at the table.

Touchstones

Daggerheart gleans inspiration from a variety of sources. Below is an abridged list of media the design team drew from while crafting this game.

TTRPGs: 13th Age, Apocalypse Keys, Apocalypse World, Blades in the Dark, City of Mist, Cortex Prime, Cypher System, Dishonored, Dungeons & Dragons, Flee Mortals!, For The Queen, Genesys, Lady Blackbird, Masks: A New Generation, Pathfinder, Shadowrun, The Quiet Year, Wildsea, Slugblaster
Books: A Song of Ice and Fire series, A Wizard of Earthsea, Sabriel, The Wheel of Time, The Lord of the Rings series
Movies & Television: The Dragon Prince, The Lord of the Rings, The Witcher, The Legend of Vox Machina
Video Games: Borderlands, Dragon Age: Inquisition, Outriders, The Elder Scrolls series

Special Appreciation:
- The Genesys System was a major inspiration for the two-axis results of the duality dice.
- Cypher System's GM Intrusions paved the way for spending Fear to interrupt a scene.
- Among many other things, Dungeons & Dragons' advantage/disadvantage system was particularly inspirational in the dice mechanics of this game.
- 13th Age's Backgrounds heavily inspired the Experience mechanic.
- Blades in the Dark and Apocalypse World helped shape the narrative game flow, and their playbooks inspired a lot of the character sheet development.
- The Wildsea's phenomenal Reaches section provided the chassis for the Regions section of this book.
- Enemy types and ways of managing minions are informed by Dungeons & Dragons 4th edition and the monster design of Flee, Mortals!
- The Quiet Year inspired the map-building section of the campaign kit.
- The sample session zero structure is informed by Apocalypse Keys.

Heart of the Game

In Daggerheart, you'll all take turns speaking at the table, describing what your characters do, the consequences of those actions, and how the narrative evolves because of those consequences. When the rules call for it, or when a situation seems like it needs it, you'll roll the dice to see what happens next. Depending on the result of those dice, the dynamics of the conversation will change.

The dice players use in Daggerheart generally come in two different categories—your Duality Dice and your Damage Dice. Your Duality Dice are two 12-sided dice, referred to as d12s, that are of different colors; one representing Hope and the other representing Fear. These embody the fate of the world around you, and its effect on your success. Your Damage Dice correspond to the weapon or spell you're wielding, and expresses how deadly a successful attack you make might be.

Anytime you're making a roll to see whether you succeed or fail at something, you'll roll your Duality Dice and take the sum of their results, plus any modifiers you have that apply to the action. If that total is equal to or higher than the difficulty set by the GM, it's a success. If it's lower, it's a failure. You'll also tell the GM whether your Hope or Fear die rolled higher, and the situation around you changes based on that result. We'll discuss this more in-depth in the "Core Mechanics" section of Part 2.

Each game of Daggerheart is called a session, and those sessions are typically a small story that makes up part of a larger narrative that plays out over multiple sessions, known as a campaign. Sometimes, in long campaigns, you may also run arcs—multiple sessions that happen within the same campaign, but that put their focus on a specific area of the narrative within it. Many groups enjoy playing open-ended campaigns that last a few months, or sometimes even years, getting together every week or two to continue their characters' stories indefinitely. But you may also choose to designate a certain number of sessions for a campaign and play the game to a predetermined conclusion. Your group may decide you want to play ten sessions or twenty sessions with these characters before making new ones, or you may decide you only want to play one session and see how things go. All of those options are wonderful ways to play— do whatever works best for your group.

There is no winning or losing in Daggerheart, in the traditional "gaming" sense. The experience is a collaborative storytelling effort between everyone at the table. The characters may not always get what they want or achieve their goals the first time around—they may make big mistakes or even die along the way, but there are no winning or losing conditions to the game. If a character dies, the party may seek out a way to bring them back to life, or that player may instead make a new character the party meets along their journey. If the group fails to stop the villain from enacting their plan, perhaps the party must face the consequences of that failure and try to make it right. If they succeeded, they may have angered or emboldened an even stronger enemy who appears to retaliate. If you're working together to craft a narrative that is fun and exciting to everyone, then you've already won.

The Most Important Rule

The most important rule of Daggerheart is that you make the game your own. The rules included in this manuscript are designed to help you have an enjoyable experience at the table, but they should never get in the way of the story you want to tell, characters you want to play, or adventures you want to have. As long as your table agrees, everything can be adjusted to your group's playstyle. If there's a rule you'd rather ignore, or a modification that works better for you, feel free to implement it with your table's consent.

Player Principles

Below is a list of principles for all players to keep in mind while engaging with Daggerheart.

Be A Fan of Your Character and Their Journey

Find ways to show off what your character does best and what they do worst. Push your character's story forward and always strive to make interesting choices. Learn more about who they are through play, and let them grow with the fiction.

Spotlight Your Allies

Look for opportunities to put other characters in the spotlight. Set your allies up for something they do well, look to them for help, or ask them what they do next.

Play to Find Out What Happens

Everything you do should flow from the fiction. Listen to the other players and the GM, and react to what they say and how they act. If you roll the dice, let the results lead you through what happens next. Embrace complications with the same vigor that you celebrate victories.

Address the Characters and Address the Players

Speak to the other characters within the world of the fiction. Lean on your connections, ask them questions, and create a story using your conversations as well as your actions. Speak to the other players outside of the fiction. Ask them what their character might do next, and what they want to see happen in the narrative, and consider their preferences when you play.

Hold On Gently

Improvisational storytelling isn't always perfect, and that's okay. Hold on gently to the fiction, enough that you don't lose the pieces that matter, but not so tightly that the narrative has no room to breathe. Make mistakes and make changes. Smooth the edges and shape them to fit.

Build the World Together

In Daggerheart, every participant is a storyteller, not just the GM. Daggerheart is a very collaborative game—perhaps more so than other games you're used to—and reaches its greatest potential when every player (PCs and GM) is working together. This means actively advocating for the story beats you want to see, offering suggestions to enrich the arcs of the other player characters, creating parts of the world with others at the table, and thinking deeply about your character's motivations.

Following these principles will help to guide players in telling exciting, unpredictable, and meaningful stories together at a table.

World Overview

The world that you explore in Daggerheart will typically be one of great magic, wondrous landscapes, mythical beasts, and powerful foes. In this game, that world is something that you are encouraged to build together at the table. You may, of course, always choose to use an existing location you're already familiar with, or a supplemental setting book. Otherwise, utilize the "Campaign Kit" in Part 4 to generate a campaign world collaboratively at your table.

Because this game has established ancestries, communities, classes, abilities, and spells, some aspects of the world will exist similarly across every campaign. These can always be reflavored or modified to match the style of game you all want to play, but understanding the Core Realms is a good place to start.

Core Realms

The core realms are the starting place of reality for your world in Daggerheart.

The Mortal Realm

Most adventures are likely to take place in the Mortal Realm. This is the land, sea, and sky of the world, where mortals live out the entirety of their lives—the plane where all material beings and objects exist. Stories say this realm was created by the Forgotten Gods during the Earliest Age, and when they were overthrown by the New Gods, many were banished to remain in this realm eternally. This realm is also occupied by the Faint Divinities, the more common lesser gods created by both the Forgotten and the New to oversee the Mortal Realm.

The Hallows Above

The Hallows Above are the collection of realms where many of the Gods reside, having been claimed by the New Gods at the end of the Earliest Age. Because this place is closely connected with most other realms, the Gods here can see and speak with the people of the Mortal Realm without leaving their realm, though their methods of communication may appear strange or obfuscated to those they choose to engage with. There are ways by which the Gods can leave the Hallows Above to occupy other realms, but they must always sacrifice something of importance to them to do so. It's rumored that this sacrifice is the cause behind some of the great calamities that have befallen the Mortal Realm.

The Circles Below

The Circles Below are the collection of lower realms where the Fallen reside. Fallen Gods lost the Divine War with the New Gods during the Ancient Age and have since been deemed "evil practitioners of tainted magic." Thus the beings that were banished alongside them, along with those sired since, bear the weight of that identifier. The Circles Below is considered a place of corruption, destruction, and endless hunger. Stories say this realm is home to some of the most dangerous creatures in the core realms. Most other planes have safeguards against Fallen who may wish to cross over from the Circles Below, Within the Mortal Realm, it's rumored that the use of arcane magic in acts of great evil can open a temporary rift between the two lands, allowing Fallen to pass through.

The Realms Beyond

There are countless realms beyond these—the Elemental Lands, the Astral Realm, the Valley of Death, and endless others. These are not typically accessible or traversable by those from the Mortal Realm, but some in the core realms do carry the knowledge of their existence.

Magic and Spells

Magic in Daggerheart is both very powerful and incredibly dangerous. It permeates the land and dwells within the people here. Magic exists as both a force within you that you may be able to draw on to give you aid throughout your journey, and as a force outside of you that affects the world and can be tapped into by those who know how to harness it. Depending on the kind of character you choose to play, you may or may not have the ability to use magic.

If you do have the gift of spellcasting, you'll use magic through specific weapons, spells, and other magical means. As characters grow, the magic they can perform will grow with them through the additional cards you gain at each level. These will give you the specific parameters around the kinds of effects your magic can take.

Flavoring Your Game

You may always flavor your magic in a way that compliments your character and their style, but, unless the table agrees, that flavor shouldn't offer any mechanical effect.

For instance, you might say that your Rogue's magic takes the form of gadgets and inventions, but it's still magic and subject to the game's rules about magic. Your Ranger's magic might take the form of ancestral spirits drawing forth the forces of nature, but in terms of the mechanics of the game, your Ranger is still the one who makes rolls for the spells and who spends the resources to power them, etc. Maybe magic works in an entirely different way in your world and you want to explain how every class' magic emerges from a different source. But for the mechanics of play, it's all still magic, with costs, Spellcast rolls, domain abilities, etc.

Feel free to re-flavor other elements of the game as well, as long as you maintain their mechanical underpinnings. Your character might have a unique weapon from their heritage, but it uses the statistics of a longsword. Your Wizard's armor might come in the form of a set of empowered runes instead of a chain shirt, but they still have an armor value of 5 and armor slots that you spend to reduce damage. In this case, 'repairing' your armor during a rest might mean replenishing the enchantment. The "Adjusting Abilities and Spells" section of part 1 suggests other ways you might adjust your spells and abilities to fit your character and comfort level.

Use the portions of this book that work for your game, and let the things that don't resonate fall away.

What Do You Need To Play?

Most of what you need to play a session of Daggerheart is included in this book, but there are a few additional components you'll need to gather before you begin.

2-5 *Player Characters*

If you're playing a PC, your responsibilities are to get in the headspace of the character you're playing and decide what they do. You'll be confronting problems and obstacles the GM puts in front of you, and figuring out how to tackle those problems in a way that makes the story you're telling most interesting. As a player, it's your job to shape the story of your character through the choices you make, as well as look for opportunities to spotlight other characters at the table.

A *Game Master*

If you're playing the Game Master, you'll be playing the world as it responds to the PCs' choices. That means you'll set exciting scenes for the characters, manage the flow of the story and its conflicts, play the characters not represented by the players at the table (NPCs), including the various opponents and monsters the characters will face (known as adversaries). The GM will also ask questions of the players that drive forward the narrative. Often, you'll be the one to know the rules and answer any questions about mechanics during play. If a judgment needs to be made during a session about a rule or mechanic that's either not in the rulebook or can't be quickly referenced, you'll be the one to make the final decision.

As a GM, it is important to remember that you are not an antagonistic force against the players. Though you're often the one introducing the dangers and complications in a scene, your job is to challenge their characters in exciting and fun ways that let them showcase their strengths and face their flaws. Be a fan of the characters and a collaborator with the other players at your table.

Game Dice

Daggerheart uses the full set of polyhedral dice: d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20. When referring to dice, the game will usually indicate the amount of dice and the number of sides, like 2d6 (two 6-sided dice) or 3d8 (three 8-sided dice). At the beginning of the game, you'll need two d12 dice of different colors (your Duality Dice), a d6 of a distinct color (your advantage/disadvantage die), and a few sets of the rest of the polyhedral dice to share amongst the table—you may find it easier to have your own. As you level up your character, you may need more dice to represent those advancements.

Character Tokens

Character tokens are small objects that represent the look and feel of your character. Gather about seven tokens per player. Some players may require more or less, depending on their character's needs.

As you play the game, you'll use these to help track several things:
- When you roll dice, you'll add tokens to help you easily count your modifiers on the roll (see "Using Character Tokens" in part 2).
- When you make an action roll while in combat, you'll add one token to the action tracker (see "Action Tracker" in part 2).
- When you use a spell or ability, its card might ask you to place a token on it.

These tokens not only make your rolls and actions easier to resolve, but also provide an opportunity to further express the color palette and style of your character at the table. You can use whatever small objects you'd like as character tokens (plastic gems, pennies, buttons, etc.), but we recommend they be no larger than a quarter and sit on the table without rolling away. They should ideally have a distinct appearance for your character, so they won't get confused for somebody else's tokens at the table.

Game Cards

Along with this rulebook, you'll also need the cards that come with the core set: Ancestry, Community, Foundation, and Domain Cards, as well as an Action Tracker and X-Card. If you don't have access to these cards, all of the information from the core set is located in the "Reference" [pending] section.

Character Sheets & Notes

The "Reference" [pending] section contains character sheets and guides you'll use when building your characters. If you're utilizing pen and paper, you'll want to have these printed out and available for use at the table. If you're planning to use a digital version instead, ensure you have a laptop or tablet available to view and edit your character sheet & guide during the game.

We also recommend paper and writing utensils (or a digital equivalent) to keep notes during the session. This allows you to record important details that the GM or other players share.

Optional: Maps and Miniatures

Using maps and miniatures to represent the scenarios the players are facing, especially during battle, can help to illustrate the scene rather than relying solely on the theater of the mind. When drawing or building a map, scale, distance, and details are not always going to be perfectly accurate, and that's okay. The map and the miniatures should never limit your imagination, only provide extra spatial context so that everyone can picture the scene clearly.

A Table For All

Daggerheart is a game for all ages, races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, religions, and identities. It is the responsibility of every player in the game to ensure that the table you share is a place where everyone is empowered, respected, and safe.

Because of the nature of open-ended storytelling in roleplaying games, it's possible to touch upon topics that might be difficult or sensitive for some players. In games of Daggerheart, no part of the fiction should ever take priority over the health and well-being of any player. It's important to remember that what might just be an imaginary scenario for you could bring up a real life topic that is very sensitive or uncomfortable for somebody else. When you gather your group to play for the first time, make sure that you talk through what kind of experience you are all looking to have, and bring up any themes or topics you're looking to avoid. All players at the table should abide by this social contract, and feel free to add or modify it at any time, as needed.

Introducing safety tools into your game can help you to better navigate any difficult scenarios together, should they arise. We recommend tools like the following, though you can use whatever works best for your group.

Lines & Veils

First developed by Ron Edwards, Lines and Veils are a safety tool designed to be first employed in a Session 0, and revisited as much as is needed throughout a campaign. When discussing the tones and goals for the game, the GM should make a list of player's Lines and Veils.

Lines are topics that players do not want in the game. They should not appear in any form.

> *Tracey lines spiders. That means that, not only will the players never encounter spiders, spiders effectively do not exist in this world. There are no cobwebs or eight-legged monsters. The GM touches base with Tracey about how she feels about other bugs, so she explains that insects and other similar creatures are perfectly fine, her line is specific to spiders. This means, the party may encounter swarms of bees, follow a line of mysteriously colored ants, or fight off a giant beetle.*

Veils are topics that players do not want to feature in the game, but can still exist in the world.

> *Tracey veils spiders. That means that spiders can exist in the world, but they will not be a feature of the game—they will not crawl on characters, and players will never battle a spider-monster. The GM checks in with Tracey and she explains that cobwebs are fine, as long as there are no spiders in them. This means ancient cobwebs could fill an old castle, but there will not be any bugs scurrying within them.*

Though the GM is keeping the list and designing the encounters, they should also announce their own Lines and Veils. This will help set the culture of a safe table, take any stigma off players having topics they wish to avoid, and let other players know what they should not include in their roleplay. It's important to remember that the GM is also a player and deserves the same care.

It's important to remember that Lines & Veils are a "living document," meaning the list can be updated at any point.

> *Tracey initially veiled spiders but just realized in the middle of this session that she would feel more comfortable if they were lined. The GM's giant spider is making her very uncomfortable. She flags her change to lining spiders and the GM simply switches their giant spider out for a giant beetle and continues play.*

Some players may wish to keep their Lines & Veils between them and the GM. To allow for this, a GM can suggest that anyone at the table write down additional topics on scrap paper to share later, send a text, or discuss in a one-on-one conversation.

X-*Card*

Created by John Stavropoulos, this is a tool that allows any player (including the GM) to remove content from the game. This traditionally appears in the form of a physical card, marked with a large letter X, and placed within reach of all players at the table. That said, your table could use a designated item, someone creating an x with their arms, or other symbol that feels best to the group.

To utilize the X-Card, a player only needs to tap the paper (or hold up crossed arms, etc.) and note the moment of play they wish to "rewind" to. It can be helpful to note the detail they're flagging for removal, but this is not a requirement for using the tool. The group will simply go back to the designated moment and play forward, making a new choice.

There are a few important details about the X-Card worth flagging:
- When a player X-Cards a moment of play, they do not need to explain their reasoning, and the process of using this safety tool should not impose that on any player. If someone wishes to go into more detail, the table may break for group or private discussion as needed.
- The X-Card should not be designated as a tool of last resort. No player should feel they need to sit in discomfort until the stakes become too high. Using the X-Card is not an offense, and having the X-Card used during your moment of improv does not inherently mean you made a grievous mistake in play.
- Encouraging use of the X-Card in your game is often just as important as the X-Card itself. Setting up a table with safety tools establishes a culture of caring and helps make the game fun for everyone.

Open Door Policy

The Open Door Policy is a safety tool that is as simple as it sounds. Tell your players that they are welcome to leave the game at any time, for any reason, and reassure them that they will not be punished or judged. This can manifest as calling for a break from play, simply to take a few moments and grab a snack, or someone heading home early if they need to.

For more information about safety tools and how to use them, Kienna Shaw and Lauren Bryant-Monk have an award-winning collection available for free at ttrpgsafetytoolkit.com..

Using This Book

The Daggerheart Core Rulebook is divided into four sections to help navigate the rules efficiently.

Part One: Preparing For Adventure

This covers everything you need to know to make a character in the Daggerheart system.

Part Two: Playing An Adventure

This details the core mechanics of the game you'll need to be able to play a session, as well as how to level up your character, multiclass to access new domains, and a more extensive list of equipment you may discover during play.

Part Three: Running An Adventure

This is the section specifically for the GM of the group, giving them the tools they need to run a session of Daggerheart for a group of players. This is also where pregenerated adversaries and one-shot guidance can be found.

Part Four: Running A Campaign

This section is a deep dive into running a campaign of Daggerheart, including GM guidance for running story arcs, customizable campaign maps, and how to level up the PCs.

Part Five: Customizing Your Game

This area explains how to customize your game, including optional player tools, guidance on homebrew, creating custom adversaries and equipment, and templates for custom cards.

Appendix

Lastly, this is where all character sheets, character guides, domain deck text, and any other reference documentation for the game can be found.

PART ONE

Preparing For Adventure

Preparing for Adventure

In this chapter, you'll learn the information you need to know as a player to prepare for your first game of Daggerheart. This will walk you through creating a character and provide details around each of the game's classes, ancestries, communities, and domains.

Character Creation

Unless you're taking on the role of the GM, the first thing you'll need to do to start playing Daggerheart is create your character. When making this character, you'll be responsible for crafting their physical appearance, personality, and prior experience, as well as their relationships with the other characters. Some of these decisions are purely narrative, meaning they only appear in the game through your roleplaying—but others are mechanical choices that affect the actions you're more (or less) likely to succeed at when rolling your dice.

This section guides you through the steps to build your character. You don't need to complete character creation in the order laid out here, but it's advised you choose the class you're playing first. You can accomplish the rest of character creation in any order you'd prefer.

Getting Started

When you're ready to start creating your character, you'll need a character sheet and character guide. You might also want to brainstorm some basic ideas for your game and character, both alone and with the other players.

Have a Session Zero

If you're preparing to start a new campaign with your group, it is highly recommended that you use your first session together to build characters and talk about the world you'll all be playing in, often called a Session Zero (see "Session Zero" in part 3). This is the best way to ensure that all players are on the same page about the kind of campaign you're going to play, the tone and feel everyone is excited about, everyone is excited about, and creating characters that work well together in a party.

Think About Character Concepts

Before you make any definitive choices, you might want to briefly look at all of the materials available to you and formulate an idea for what kind of character you want to make. This doesn't need to be specific and isn't required to begin, but having a basic concept to start from like "a circus performer who uses magic" or "a captain who lost their ship at sea" might help you make choices as you move through each step.

Get a Character Sheet and Guide

As you begin creating your character, you'll use a **character sheet** and **character guide** to record your decisions and abilities, so make sure you have paper or digital copies of the sheets available to you before you begin. You can see a completed character sheet in the "Example Character" section.

Note that there is not a single, generic character sheet or guide for you to use; they are all customized for the class you are playing (see "Step 1: Choose Your Class"). You can find these available for download online, or you can copy them from the "[Section Pending]" in this book.

Record Your Level

All characters in Daggerheart start at level 1. Record your **level** in the appropriate section at the top of your character sheet, and make sure to change it every time you level up. It's not recommended to start your campaign at a higher level, unless under specific circumstances set out by the GM.

Record Character Details

At any point in the character creation process, feel free to fill out your character's names and pronouns on the top line, as well as the Character Description details on the Character Guide sheet. For some people, naming and deciding on the look of their character comes first, and for others, it takes time to discover what's right. As long as you have a name and description by the time character creation is completed, it doesn't matter what order you do these in.

Step 1: Choose Your Class

The first step of character creation is to choose the **class** you want to play, then take the character sheet and character guide that corresponds to that class (see "Get a Character Sheet and Guide"). You will utilize both throughout the process.

Each class is an archetype of a character that determines what abilities you have access to throughout the campaign. For example, you might choose to play the Guardian if you want to be the tank of your group who runs into fights head first and protects others with their own life. You might choose to be a Wizard if you want to use unique spells that you can use to solve problems and fight off threats.

Once you've chosen a class and taken the appropriate character sheet and guide, you'll also choose a **subclass**. Take that subclass's Foundation card into your hand. The subclasses are subsets of each class that help further define the kind of character you're playing.

Class Feature

Every class begins with a unique **Class Feature** (or several). You don't have to write this down—it's already provided in the bottom left of that class's character sheet. These are unique features available only to your class, so be sure to consider them when building your character.

If your Class Feature asks you to make a selection during character creation, make sure you select one of the options before you transition into your first session. This book details each Class Feature in its respective class section (see the upcoming "Class" section).

Class Options

The available classes and subclasses in the base set include the following. You can learn more about each of these Classes and their Foundations in the upcoming "Class" section.

Bard

Class Foundations: Wordsmith or Troubadour

Play the Wordsmith if you want to use clever wordplay and captivate crowds.
Play the Troubadour if you want to play music to bolster your allies.

Druid

Class Foundations: Warden of the Elements or Warden of Renewal

Play the Warden of the Elements if you want to embody the aspects of nature.
Play the Warden of Renewal if you want to use powerful magic to heal your party members.

Guardian

Class Foundations: Stalwart or Vengeance

Play the Stalwart if you want to take heavy blows and keep fighting.
Play the Vengeance if you want to strike down enemies that harm you or your allies.

Ranger

Class Foundations: Wayfinder or Companion

Play the Wayfinder if you want to hunt your prey using deadly force.
Play the Companion if you want to form a deep bond with an animal ally.

Seraph

Class Foundations: Winged Sentinel or Divine Wielder

Play the Winged Sentinel if you want to take flight and strike crushing blows from the sky.
Play the Divine Wielder if you want to dominate the battlefield with a legendary weapon.

Rogue

Class Foundations: Nightwalker or Syndicate

Play the Nightwalker if you want to use the cover of shadow to maneuver through your environment.
Play the Syndicate if you want to have useful contacts everywhere you go.

Sorcerer

Class Foundations: Primal Origin or Elemental Origin

Play the Primal Origin if you want to extend the versatility of your spells in powerful ways.
Play the Elemental Origin if you want to channel raw magic to take the shape of a particular element.

Warrior

Class Foundations: Call of the Slayer or Call of the Brave

Play the Call of the Slayer if you want to strike down adversaries with incredible power.
Play the Call of the Brave if you want to use the might of your enemies to fuel you.

Wizard

Class Foundations: School of Knowledge or School of War

Play the School of Knowledge if you want to have a keen understanding of the world around you.
Play the School of War if you want to utilize trained magic to enact violence.

Step 2: Choose Your Heritage

Next, choose your character's **heritage**. This aspect of your character includes two elements—their ancestry and their community.

Choose Your Ancestry

A character's **ancestry** reflects their lineage and impacts the way they physically look, as well as granting them a unique ability from their ancestry. Take the card of the ancestry you choose.

Clank	*Galapa*
Daemon	*Giant*
Drakona	*Goblin*
Dwarf	*Halfling*
Elf	*Human*
Faerie	*Katari*
Faun	*Orc*
Firbolg	*Ribbet*
Fungril	*Simiah*

You can learn more about these ancestries in the upcoming "Ancestries" section.

Choose Your Community

Next, you'll choose a **community** from the available Community cards. Your character's community informs the culture they grew up in and might also play a part in the way they look, act, or approach situations. Communities can be influenced by details such as their physical location, values, and goal. Each community also comes with a mechanical benefit that you'll be able to utilize during the game. The communities included are:

Highborne	*Ridgeborne*	*Underborne*
Loreborne	*Seaborne*	*Wanderborne*
Orderborne	*Slyborne*	*Wildborne*

You can learn more about these communities in the upcoming "Community" section.

Languages

In Daggerheart, you're not asked to pick specific languages for your character. This game assumes that everyone speaks a common language (it's up to you whether that's through mundane or magic means), and that sign language is widely understood across cultures and communities. If you'd like to have specific regional languages in your campaign, talk about it with your table.

Step 3: Assign Character Traits

Next, you'll assign values to the **character traits** on your character sheet. These values reflect your natural or trained ability in each of the core six stats—Agility, Strength, Finesse, Knowledge, Instinct, and Presence. The verbs after each trait (such as Sprint, Leap, and Maneuver) are examples of actions you might take that would involve that trait; these words are just inspiration, and they don't limit what that trait might be used for.

Agility: Sprint, Leap, Maneuver

A high Agility score means you're faster on your feet, nimbler on difficult terrain, and quicker to react to danger. You'll roll with Agility to scurry up a rope quickly, sprint to cover, or bound from rooftop to rooftop.

Strength: Lift, Smash, Grapple

A high Strength score means you're better at feats that test your physical prowess and bodily fortitude. You'll roll with Strength to break through a door, lift heavy objects, or hold your ground against a charging foe.

Finesse: Control, Hide, Tinker

A high Finesse score means you're dexterous and accurate. You'll roll with Finesse for tasks that require fine motor control - being precise, careful, and quiet – like using fine tools, escaping notice, or striking with an exacting aim.

Instinct: Perceive, Sense, Navigate

A high Instinct score means you have a keen sense of your surroundings and a natural intuition. You'll roll with Instinct to sense danger, notice details in the world around you, or track an elusive foe.

Presence: Charm, Perform, Deceive

A high Presence score means you have a strong force of personality and a facility with social situations. You'll roll with Presence to plead your case, intimidate a foe, or get all eyes on you.

Knowledge: Recall, Analyze, Comprehend

A high Knowledge score means you know information others don't and understand how to apply your mind through deduction and inference. You'll roll with Knowledge to interpret facts, see the patterns clearly, or remember important information.

Distribute Trait Modifiers

Trait **modifiers** are the values associated with each trait. When you make an action roll using one of these traits, that trait's modifier adjusts the roll's final result by that number.

Distribute the following starting modifiers across your character traits in any order you wish: +2, +1, +1, 0, 0, -1.

When distributing these modifiers, consider what actions you want to be good at, what weapon you want to use during your attacks, and what kind of spellcasting you'll be doing, if any. We'll cover weapons and spells in future sections, but if you don't know how to distribute your stats, you may always refer to the Character Guide for suggested stats. You can also change these stats around as needed during character creation, as well as after your first few sessions of play if you feel like you made a wrong decision.

Step 4: Record Additional Character Information

It's time to take a quick break from making choices, and instead fill out a few sections of your character sheet.

Evasion

Your **Evasion score** reflects how hard it is for enemies to hit you (see "Evasion Score" in part 2). Your class's starting evasion score appears right beneath the Evasion field on your character sheet; record this in the Evasion field. When an enemy makes an attack against your character, the GM rolls against your Evasion score to see if they are successful. Each character's evasion may look different within the narrative—a Wizard may avoid blows with shimmering arcane shields or by batting away an adversary's spells, while a Ranger nimbly dodges out of the way of blows, and a Warrior employs a mix of parries, blocks, and dodges.

Hit Points and Stress

Your character's health and well-being are represented by Hit Points and Stress. **Hit Points** (sometimes called HP) are an abstract reflection of your physical fortitude and ability to take hits, both from blade and from magic (see "Damage Thresholds and Hit Points" in part 2). **Stress** reflects your ability to withstand the pressures of dangerous situations. This includes mental and emotional strain, as well as the physical discomfort that comes from avoiding the dire blows of battle (see "Stress" in part 2).

You can describe your Hit Points and Stress any way you wish, but they generally represent your character's ability to get knocked down and keep coming back. You'll mark your Hit Points and Stress when these situations arise—the fewer marks you have against your Hit Points and Stress, the better.

However, when you're attacked, you don't always have to mark Hit Points. Instead, your class has a certain **Damage Threshold**, indicating how much damage you can endure before marking a Hit Point. Find your class's starting Damage Threshold at the top of the "Hit Points & Stress" section of your character sheet; record these three numbers in the corresponding fields. In the "Damage Thresholds and Hit Points" section of part 2, you'll learn how many Hit Points to mark on your character sheet each time the GM tells you to take damage.

Hope is a currency that represents the way fate can turn in your character's favor during the game. You'll start with two Hope at character creation: mark these in the Hope section of your character sheet.

Any time you "**roll with Hope**" on your Duality Dice—meaning your Hope die rolled higher than your Fear die—you will gain an additional Hope (to a maximum of five). During the game, you can use your Hope to help allies, apply your life experiences to challenges, and empower your spells and abilities.

If you instead "**roll with Fear**" on your Duality Dice—meaning your Fear die rolled higher than your Hope die—the GM records this in their notes, and they can later spend that Fear on certain effects. Sometimes a Fear roll also introduces other complications into a scene (even if you succeed on your roll).

For more information on Hope and Fear, see "[Rolling Hope and Fear](#)" in part 2.

Step 5: Choose Your Starting Equipment

Next, you'll choose starting weapon(s), armor, and other items for your character.

Choose Your Weapons

You can use **physical weapons** to attack your foes—and if you have a Spellcasting Trait (such as from your subclass), you can also wield **magic weapons**. At character creation, you can choose one **primary weapon** and one **secondary weapon**, then equip them (if you wish). Note that if you choose a primary weapon that requires both hands, you won't be able to equip your secondary weapon at the same time.

You can find weapon suggestions at the top of your character guide, but if you'd like to choose your own, you can find all starting (Tier 0) weapons in "[Primary Weapons](#)" and "[Secondary Weapon Tables](#)" in part 2. (These are also available as a separate sheet to print out for your table in [section pending].)

At Level 1, your Proficiency is 1—this means you'll generally roll one damage die for your weapon attacks. This is recorded in the "Active Weapons" section of your character sheet. When you equip weapons on your character, record their details in that section as well. See "[Using Weapons](#)" in part 2 for more details on using weapons.

Tip: On your character sheet in the section labeled "Damage Dice & Type," record your damage dice with the Proficiency value already written in (like "1d6" instead of "d6"), reminding you how many weapon dice to roll. Whenever you increase your Proficiency, also increase the number of dice in the Damage Dice section to reflect this change.

Choose Your Armor

You can use **armor** to reduce incoming damage from attacks. At character creation, you can choose one piece of armor and equip it (if you wish). You can find armor suggestions at the top of your character guide, but if you'd like to choose your own, you can find all starting (Tier 0) armor under "[Armor Tables](#)" in part 2. (These are also available as a separate sheet to print out for your table from the Daggerheart website or in [section pending].)

When you equip armor on your character, record its details in the Active Armor section of your character sheet, then in the Armor box at the top left of your character sheet, record your **Armor Score**. Your Armor Score includes your armor's base value plus any permanent bonuses you have to your armor from other abilities.

When you take damage, you can fill a box next to your Armor Score, then reduce the damage by your Armor Score. (You can even check multiple boxes to negate more damage from a single attack). See "Using Armor" in part 2 for more details on using armor.

Choose Other Starting Items

Your **inventory** can include most anything else you're carrying with you. The top of your character guide lists all your starting inventory items, including the following:

- Torch (useful for things like illuminating a dark room)
- 50 feet of rope (useful for things like rappelling down a cliff)
- Basic supplies (useful for things like camping in the wilderness)
- Handful of gold (record this in the Gold section on the left of your character sheet)
- Your choice of a minor health potion (heal 1d4 Hit Points) or a minor stamina potion (clear 1d4 Stress)
- Finally, the "And Either" option on your character guide is specific to your class (see the "Class" section). You might also be asked to choose what you carry your spells in.

Record these items in the "Inventory" section of your character sheet. You can be creative with how you use these items, though this is subject to GM discretion. In general, your equipment is available for you to use during your adventures in any way that fits your shared story.

You may also talk to your GM about any other items you'd like to have at the start of the game. In general, items that don't provide a mechanical benefit and that make sense for the character you're playing should be permitted, and there aren't rules limiting your inventory to a certain size, but your GM always makes the final call.

Step 6: Create Your Background

Next, explore your character's **background** by filling out the "Background" section of your character guide. Several prompts are provided to jumpstart inspiration, but you or the GM can modify or change these questions to fit the character you're looking to play. Think of the prompts as a jumping-off point if you don't know where to start, but they should never inhibit your creativity.

The decisions you make about your background are purely narrative, but they can deeply impact the kind of character you're playing and the story the GM might prepare for your adventures. Over the course of character creation, feel free to adjust some mechanical choices you've made in earlier steps, allowing them to better reflect this background as the shape of your character comes into clearer focus.

If you are planning to play in a campaign, once you finish the background questions, you can continue developing your character in whatever way works best for you. There are many character backstory tools you may wish to use—just remember to give the GM your backstory as well so that they can work any people, places, or ideas from it into the campaign they're running. You may also choose not to do any more background work, instead finding out more about your character as you play. Whatever you find fun and allows you to play your character in a way that feels appealing and exciting is what you should lean into.

Step 7: *Choose Your Experiences*

In Daggerheart, your Experience is one of the core ways you'll express your character's backstory and expertise through mechanics. An **Experience** is a word or phrase used to encapsulate a specific set of skills your character might have because of the exciting life they've lived.

You start with two Experiences at character creation (one with a +2 modifier, the other with +1), and you'll earn more throughout your adventures. Before choosing, you'll want to have a solid idea of who your character is; the Backstory questions are especially helpful with this. When you're ready, work with your GM to pick two Experiences that have shaped your character.

There's no set list of Experiences to choose from (though some examples are offered below). Instead, choose a word or phrase that embodies something distinctive about your character. Each Experience should be specific. For example, "Talented" or "Focused" are too broad, as they can be applied to almost any situation; instead you might use "Swashbuckler" or "Magic Studies". Additionally, your Experience can't give you spells or specific game abilities. For example, "Take Flight" or "One-Hit Kill" are too mechanically-oriented; you might consider "Acrobatics" or "Assassin" instead.

You are also encouraged to add flavor to your Experience to give it more varied use in play. For example, instead of just "Assassin," you could choose something like "Assassin of the Sapphire Syndicate." This kind of detail gives your GM an exciting faction to weave into the campaign, and also makes it easier to use this Experience outside combat. For example, if you encounter an ally of the Syndicate, you might be particularly adept at negotiating with them based on your Experience.

Experience Examples

> **Backgrounds like:** Bodyguard, Con Artist, Merchant, Noble, Pirate, Scholar, Thief
> **Specialties like:** Magical Historian, Navigator, Sharpshooter, Swashbuckler, Mapmaker
> **Skills like:** Barter, Repair, Tracking, Quick Hands, Incredible Strength
> **Phrases like:** Chef to the Royal Family, I Won't Let You Down, Street Doctor, This Is Not A Negotiation, I'll Catch You

Once you've worked with the GM to decide what your two starting Experiences are, record them in the Experience section of your character sheet; assign +2 to one (likely the one that's most impacted you), and +1 to the other.

Tip: If you're not sure what Experiences to take, consider the style of the campaign you're playing in and the actions you'll want to perform. In a standard, battle-focused campaign, it's never a bad idea to take your first Experience in something that will help you with combat and your second Experience in something outside of combat. As a Warrior, you might choose "Battle Commander" as your first Experience and "I've Got Your Back" as your second—both of these could be useful in combat situations, but aren't necessarily restricted to them. As a Wizard, you might choose to take something like "Mage's Apprentice" and "Inconspicuous"-- the "Mage's Apprentice" will definitely help in casting spells, but could also make you good at analyzing magical effects or ancient scrolls. "Inconspicuous" could keep you out of the limelight back in town so you may be able to perform more clandestine actions where others would normally draw attention to themselves.

Using Experiences

Any time you make an action roll (see "Action Rolls" in part 2), if you feel like an Experience could help you succeed, you can spend a Hope to add its modifier to your roll. Sometimes, you might feel like more than one of your Experiences is a good fit for the situation (for example, if you're trying to sneak past a guard in the dark, and your Experiences include "I Live in the Shadows" and "Stealthy"). If it fits the story, you can apply more than one Experience modifier to a roll, spending a Hope for each.

Changing Experiences

You'll have the opportunity to gain new Experiences as you gain levels (see "Leveling Up" in part 2). But you're also not stuck with the ones you've already chosen, if you later discover during play that an Experience you previously chose isn't feeling right anymore. For example, the GM might notice that the way you're using the Experience isn't a good fit for your group's collaborative story. Or you might feel one of the choices you made doesn't match how you've come to understand your character. That's totally okay! When you or your GM realize this, work together to find the Experiences that best reflect the kind of character you're intending to play, and the kind of actions that character would be good at because of their history and perspective.

Step 8: *Choose Your Domain Cards*

Domains are the core building blocks of a class in Daggerheart. In the Core Rulebook, they consist of Arcana, Blade, Bone, Codex, Grace, Midnight, Sage, Splendor, and Valor. Each Domain has a **Domain Deck**—a deck of cards that contains a set of abilities and spells with a central theme or focus. For details on what each Domain represents and how to use your Domain Cards, see the upcoming "Domains" section.

Each class in Daggerheart is formed by combining two of these Domains —for example, the Warrior is Blade & Bone, the Druid is Sage & Arcana, and the Rogue is Midnight & Grace. This combination is noted on the top of your character sheet, and the colors and symbols are found on your Class Foundation card.

To create your new character, look at all of the Level One cards from your class's two domains and choose two to begin the game, returning the rest to their respective decks. You might take one from each Domain, or choose two from a single domain, whatever you prefer. These cards grant you special spells and abilities; you'll be able to choose another each time you gain a level.

Shared Domains

Every class shares its domains with at least one other class. For example, Blade is shared between Guardian and Warrior, Sage is shared between Druid and Ranger, and Grace is shared between Bard and Rogue. If a fellow player's class has the same Domain as yours, you're encouraged to coordinate with them and choose different cards from that Domain Deck (even if your group has multiple copies). This gives everyone a chance to shine with their own special abilities. However, if the GM and players agree, feel free to make an exception. Sharing cards is especially common when more than one player chooses the same class, or when three (or more) players share the same Domain. As always, it comes down to open communication between the players and the GM.

Step 9: Create Your Connections

You've almost finished creating your character! Now it's time to forge your **Connections.** These represent the relationships and personal history between you and the rest of your party members.

Once all players feel comfortable with their finished (or almost-finished) characters, summarize your characters for each other. At minimum, share your Name, Pronouns, Character Description, Experiences, and the answers to your Background Questions, but feel free to include other details you'd like the players to know.

Once everyone has shared who they'll be playing, work together to decide how your characters are connected and how you feel about each other. The Connections section of your character guide provides inspiration for these connections— it is recommended you pick at least one question to ask another PC— but you're welcome to create new questions. You can always turn down a question or relationship from another player if it's not a good fit or not a relationship you're interested in exploring. While it's great to create Connections with every player, it's perfectly okay if you're not sure about some of them yet— you can always discover your relationships through play. These Connections are just a starting block to build on during the game.

After Connections are complete, you're ready to play! The remainder of Part 1 contains resources to use when building your character, such as information on domains, classes, ancestries, and communities. Part 2 presents the rules you'll use to play the game.

Building Higher-Level Characters

More guidance here coming soon!

Example Character

This section provides an example of how a finished character sheet might look. If you'd rather not go through all steps of character creation, feel free to use the details on this sheet as inspiration for your own character, changing any details you wish.

SORCERER
ARCANA & MIDNIGHT

DAGGERHEART OPEN BETA V1.2

NAME Marlowe Fairwind
PRONOUNS She/Her
HERITAGE Loreborne Elf
SUBCLASS Primal Origin
LEVEL 1

EVASION 9 — Start at 9
ARMOR 5

AGILITY	STRENGTH	FINESSE	INSTINCT	PRESENCE	KNOWLEDGE
0	-1	+1	+2	+1	0
Sprint Leap Maneuver	Lift Smash Grapple	Control Hide Tinker	Perceive Sense Navigate	Charm Perform Deceive	Recall Analyze Comprehend

HIT POINTS & STRESS

Start at MINOR 3, MAJOR 8, and SEVERE 13.

3 ◄ MINOR	8 ◄ MAJOR	13 ◄ SEVERE
Mark 1 HP	Mark 2 HP	Mark 3 HP

HP ☐☐☐☐☐☐ ┆┆┆┆┆┆

STRESS ☐☐☐☐☐ ┆┆┆┆

HOPE

Spend Hope to use an experience or help an ally. ◆◆◆◇◇◇

EXPERIENCE

Royal Mage +2
Not On My Watch +1

GOLD

HANDFULS · BAGS · CHESTS · HOARDS · FORTUNE

CLASS FEATURE

Arcane Sense
You can sense the presence of magical people and objects when you're close to them.

Minor Illusion
Roll with Spellcast (10). On a success, you create a minor illusion no larger than yourself within close range that is convincing to anyone in far range or further.

Channel Raw Power
Once per Long Rest, you can place a Domain card from your Loadout into your Vault and choose to either:

- Gain Hope equal to the level of the card.
- Add magic damage equal to twice the level of the card to a spell attack you've successfully cast.

ACTIVE WEAPONS
PROFICIENCY ●○○○○○

PRIMARY

Dualstaff	Instinct Far	1d8+2 (mag)
NAME	TRAIT & RANGE	DAMAGE DICE

FEATURE

SECONDARY

NAME	TRAIT & RANGE	DAMAGE DICE

FEATURE

ACTIVE ARMOR

Breastplate Armor	5
NAME	BASE SCORE

FEATURE

INVENTORY

Minor Stamina Potion (clear 1d4 stress)

INVENTORY WEAPON

NAME	TRAIT & RANGE	DAMAGE DICE

FEATURE

INVENTORY ARMOR

NAME	BASE SCORE

FEATURE

SORCERER
CHARACTER GUIDE

As a Sorcerer, you were formed and shaped by the will of the arcana, and you've learned how to wield that power to get what you want.

SUGGESTED TRAITS:
0 Agility, -1 Strength, +1 Finesse,
+2 Instinct, +1 Presence, 0 Knowledge

SUGGESTED PRIMARY WEAPON:
Dualstaff - Instinct Far - **d8+2** (Mag)

SUGGESTED ARMOR:
Breastplate Armor - Armor Score 5

INVENTORY:
TAKE:
a torch, 50ft of rope, basic supplies, and a handful of gold.

THEN CHOOSE BETWEEN:
a minor health potion OR a minor stamina potion.

AND EITHER:
a whispering orb OR a family heirloom

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION:
Choose one (or more) from each line, or make your own

Clothes that are: ornate, flamboyant, always moving, inconspicuous, layered, tight

Eyes like: fire, lilacs, endless ocean, night, ivy, seafoam, earth, winter, carnations

Body that's: lanky, tall, curvy, rotund, short, thin, toned, stocky, broad, carved, tiny

The color of: obsidian, rose, falling snow, fine sand, ashes, clover, sapphire, wisteria

Attitude like: a celebrity, a commander, a politician, a prankster, a wolf in sheep's clothing

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BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

What did you do that make the people in your community wary of you?

I tried to harness raw magic before I knew what I was doing and I destroyed a farm, ruining the harvest for that year. After that, I was treated as an outcast.

Who finally taught you how to control the magic bursting forth from you, and why are they no longer able to guide you?

Yarrow, a great mage who served on behalf of King Emeris, heard of the destruction I caused and sought me out. He taught me to harness magic. When he died, I became the right hand to the king instead. I miss him.

You have a true fear you hide from everyone. What is it, and why does it scare you?

On his deathbed, Yarrow said I was the only person who could keep King Emeris safe from the Harrows. I don't know what they are, and everytime I've brought it up with the King, he refuses to tell me. I am afraid in protecting me, he is dooming himself.

Then work with the GM to generate two starting Experiences for your character.

CONNECTIONS

After sharing your characters, ask any of these questions to the others in your party.

Why do you trust me so deeply?

Barnacle - He trusts me because I am the closest thing he's ever had to a mother.

What did I do that makes you wary of me?

Varian - They had a falling out with the King and are worried I might side with Emeris over them if it comes down to it.

Why do we keep our shared past a secret?

Garrick - The King does not allow his inner circle to have personal relationships with anybody for fear they could compromise our work. We broke that rule many, many times.

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.*

☐ *Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.*

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2 or Severe Damage Threshold by +4*

☐ *Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1 and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unused above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +4.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +3.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Minor by +1, Major by +1, and Severe by +4. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

Domains

Domains are the core themes that make up each class. The combination of two domains forms the basis for each class's abilities and spells, which you'll gain from your domain cards. Below, you'll find explanations for each of the nine domains.

Arcana

This is the domain of the innate or instinctual use of magic. Those who walk this path tap into the raw, enigmatic forces of the realms to manipulate both the elements and their own energy. Arcana offers wielders a volatile power, but it is incredibly potent when correctly channeled.

Blade

This is the domain of those who dedicate their lives to the mastery of weapons. Whether by blade, bow, or perhaps a more specialized arm, those who follow this path have the skill to cut short the lives of others. Blade requires study and dedication from its followers, in exchange for inexorable power over death.

Bone

This is the domain of mastery of swiftness and tactical mastery. Practitioners of this domain have an uncanny control over their own physical abilities, and an eye for predicting the behaviors of others in combat. Bone grants its adherents unparalleled understanding of bodies and their movements in exchange for diligent training.

Codex

This is the domain of intensive magical study. Those who seek magical knowledge turn to the recipes of power recorded in books, on scrolls, etched into walls, or tattooed on bodies. Codex offers a commanding and versatile understanding of magic to those devotees who are willing to seek beyond the common knowledge.

Grace

This is the domain of charisma. Through rapturous storytelling, clever charm, or a shroud of lies, those who channel this power define the realities of their adversaries, bending perception to their will. Grace offers its wielders raw magnetism and mastery over language.

Midnight

This is the domain of shadows and secrecy. Whether by clever tricks, or cloak of night those who channel these forces are practiced in that art of obscurity and there is nothing hidden they cannot reach. Midnight offers practitioners the incredible power to control and create enigmas.

Sage

This is the domain of the natural world. Those who walk this path tap into the unfettered power of the earth and its creatures to unleash raw magic. Sage grants its adherents the vitality of a blooming flower and ferocity of a hungry predator.

Splendor

This is the domain of life. Through this magic, followers gain the ability to heal, though such power also grants the wielder some control over death. Splendor offers its disciples the magnificent ability to both give and end life.

Valor

This is the domain of protection. Whether through attack or defense, those who choose this discipline channel formidable strength to protect their allies in battle. Valor offers great power to those who raise their shield in defense of others.

Domain Cards

At character creation and as your character levels up, you'll gain increasingly powerful **domain cards**, which provide abilities and spells you can utilize during your adventures.

Card Elements

Each domain card is composed of five elements: level, domain, recall cost, type, and effect.

Level & Domain. These are located on the top left of the card. When you get a chance to choose new domain cards, you can't choose one with a level higher than your own.

Recall Cost. The top right of the card lists a number next to a lightning bolt symbol. This is the card's Recall Cost. Once you reach level 5, you'll have more cards than you do space in your loadout (see "Loadout and Vault"). When you want to move a card from your vault to your loadout, you'll either need to do so during downtime, or mark the number of Stress indicated on the card to swap it immediately.

Type. Each card's type appears in the center of the card. There are three types of domain cards: abilities, spells, and grimoires. **Abilities** are typically mundane in nature, as opposed to **Spells**, which are magical in nature. **Grimoires** are unique to the Codex domain and are a collection of smaller spells bundled together. Some game mechanics only apply to one of these types of cards.

Effect. The text on the bottom half of the card describes its effect, including any special rules you need to follow when you use that card.

ABILITY

I SEE IT COMING

When you are targeted by a ranged attack, mark a **Stress** to roll your Hope Die and increase your Evasion against this attack by its value.

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Using a Domain Card

Some of your domain cards provide moves you can make, like a unique attack or a spell you cast. Others may be passive benefits that always apply while you hold that domain card. There are also domain cards that provide additional options during downtime or social encounters, while others give a one-time benefit then are removed from the game.

Unless a card states otherwise, you don't remove it from your loadout after you benefit from it. You can use most cards in your loadout as many times as you wish.

Some domain cards have an **exhaustion limit** that restricts how often you can use that card (for example, once per short rest). If you use that card, you'll need a way to remember that it's temporarily unavailable; you might choose to take that card out of your hand and place it face down on the table, turn it around, or any other method to remind yourself that you've already used it. If a card allows for a certain number of uses, you could place a token on it each time it's activated to remind yourself how many times you've done so.

Loadout and Vault

You can only have a maximum of five Domain Cards active at any one time, along with your Subclass, Ancestry, and Community cards. At lower levels, you won't have enough cards for this to be an issue, but once you reach level 5 and above, you'll need to choose which Domain Cards to keep in your loadout and which to store in your vault.

Cards in your **loadout** can be held in your hand or placed on the table next to your character sheet; do whatever makes it easiest to access them. Any cards in your loadout are considered active and can be utilized or benefitted from during play.

Your **vault** holds any domain cards that are inactive and not currently in your loadout. Vault cards should be kept somewhere out of the way, but close enough that they're available if they need to be accessed during a session.

Swapping Cards

If you want to switch a card from your vault into your loadout, you can do so immediately by marking Stress equal to that card's Recall Cost. When you do, switch it for another domain card, placing the other card into your vault.

If adjusting your loadout during a short or long rest (see "Downtime" in part 2), you don't need to pay the Recall Cost. Similarly, if your loadout is full when you level up and gain a new card, you can immediately move one of the previously active cards into your vault, and add the new card to your current loadout at no cost.

If an effect tells you to place a card permanently in your vault, that card is essentially removed from play. You can't move such a card back into your loadout by any means.

Class

During character creation, you'll choose one of the classes in this section, along with one of its subclasses. Your chosen **class** grants the following features:

Domains. Each class lists which two domains serve as the basis for its abilities. This determines which domain decks you can choose cards from during character creation and when leveling up.

Starting Evasion Score. Each class has its own starting Evasion score (see "Evasion"). When the GM makes an attack roll against you, this is the number they need to meet or beat in order to hit.

Damage Threshold. Each class has a unique Damage Threshold (see "Damage Thresholds and Hit Points" in part 2). These determine how strong your class is against incoming attacks.

Class Items. Each class has a unique set of items they begin the game with.

Class Feature. Each class has a unique move (or set of moves) you can utilize during play.

Your chosen **subclass** grants the following features:

Spellcast Trait. If you're a spellcaster, this is the character trait your subclass uses any time you're required to make a spellcast roll.

Foundation Feature. This feature is the unique move you gain from your subclass's Foundation card.

Specialization Feature. As you gain levels, you'll have a chance to choose your subclass's Specialization card, gaining a unique move (or set of moves) from it.

Mastery Feature. As you gain levels, you'll have a chance to choose your subclass's Mastery card, gaining a unique move (or set of moves) from it.

Bard

Those who become bards are truly the most charismatic members of all the realms. Members of this class are masters of captivation and may specialize in any of a variety of performance types, including: singing, playing musical instruments, weaving tales, or telling jokes. Whether performing to an audience or speaking to an individual, bards will excel. There are many schools and guilds where members of this profession come together to bond and train, but there is a fair amount of ego within those of the bardic persuasion. While they may be the most likely to bring people together, a bard of ill temper can just as easily tear a party apart.

DOMAINS

Grace & Codex

STARTING EVASION SCORE

9

DAMAGE THRESHOLDS

Minor 3, Major 8, Severe 13

CLASS ITEMS

A *Romance Novel* or *a Letter Never Opened*

CLASS FEATURE

Rally

At the beginning of a session, place a d6 on your character sheet with the lowest number (1) facing up. When anyone in your party rolls with Fear, turn the Rally die to increase its value by one. When you would increase the value above 6, remove the die, describe how you rally the party, and give every character who listens a 1d6 Rally die. They can spend this die to roll it and add the result to any action roll, reaction roll, or damage roll.

If your Rally die hasn't finished this countdown by the end of a session, distribute the current value shown on the die as Hope amongst your party, splitting it any way you choose, and remove the die.

The Rally die you distribute increases to 1d8 at Level 5.

BARD SUBCLASSES

If you're creating a bard, choose either the Wordsmith or Troubadour subclass.

Wordsmith

Play the Wordsmith if you want to be persuasive and powerful using clever wordplay.
Spellcast Trait: Presence

Foundation Features
Heart of a Poet: Once per short rest, when speaking to a person you're trying to impress, persuade, or offend, if you use at least three rhyming words, you may add 1d6 to the Action Roll against them.
Rousing Speech: Once per long rest, you can give a heartfelt, inspiring speech. All allies that can hear you clear a Stress.

Specialization Feature
You know your moving words can boost the morale of the group. When you use your skills as linguist to raise a member of your group up, once per session you can do one of the following:
- *Allow them to find a mundane object or tool they need.*
- *Help an Ally by spending a Hope as usual, but roll a d8 instead of a d6 for your advantage die.*
- *Give them an additional Downtime activity during a rest.*

Mastery Feature
The Rally die you distribute increases to a d10.
In addition, whenever you Help an Ally, when you narrate the moment as if you were writing the tale of their heroism in a memoir, your advantage die to help them is a d10.

Troubadour

Play the Troubadour if you want to play music to bolster your allies.
Spellcast Trait: Presence

Foundation Feature
When you select this Foundation, describe the instrument you use to produce music. You may perform each song once per long rest:
When you perform a relaxing song during a moment of calm, *you and any close allies heal 1 Hit Point.*
When you perform an epic song during battle, *make a target temporarily Vulnerable.*
When you perform a heartbreaking song at any time, *you and any close allies take a Hope.*

Specialization Feature
Your rallying songs also help steel the courage of those who listen. Anybody who receives a Rally die from you via your Rally ability can also choose to either gain a Hope or clear a Stress.

Mastery Feature
Your craft rivals the greats, your skill and creativity unbounded. You may perform each of your Foundation songs an additional time per long rest.

LEVEL UP OPTIONS

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.*

☐ *Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.*

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2 OR Severe Damage Threshold by +4.*

☐ *Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1 and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unused above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +4.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +1.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Minor by +1, Major by +1, and Severe by +4. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

Druid

Becoming a druid is more than an occupation, it's a calling to those who wish to learn from and protect the magic of the wilderness. Those druids who practice the often quiet work of channeling flora are likely to be underestimated; while those who channel the brutal forces of animals may be a terrifying thing to behold. Druids are known to cultivate their abilities in small groups, often connected by a specific ethos or locale. Through years of study and dedication, druids can learn to transform into beasts and shape the earth and all its organisms.

DOMAINS

Sage & Arcana

STARTING EVASION SCORE

8

DAMAGE THRESHOLDS

Minor 4, Major 9, Severe 14

CLASS ITEMS

A *Small Bag of Rocks & Bones* OR *a Strange Pendant Found in the Dirt*

CLASS FEATURES

Wildtouch

You can perform harmless, subtle effects that involve nature at will. (Ex: causing a flower to rapidly grow, summon a slight gust of wind, start a campfire, etc)

Beastform

Also take the Beastform sheet (available on page here). Mark a Stress to transform into a magical creature equal to your level or lower from the available options. You lose the use of your abilities, weapons, armor, and domain cards but gain the features and trait bonus of the creature. You can drop out of this form at any time.

DRUID SUBCLASSES

If you're creating a druid, choose either the Warden of the Elements or Warden of Renewal subclass.

Warden of the Elements

Play the Warden of the Elements if you want to embody the natural elements of nature.
Spellcast Trait: Instinct

Foundation Feature

Elemental Incarnation: Mark a Stress to embody an elemental spirit from the list below, lasting for up to 1 hour or until you use this ability again. This ability can be used during (and overlap with) Beastform.

> **Fire:** When an enemy in melee range deals damage to you, they take 1d10 magic damage.
> **Earth:** You gain +2 to your Armor Score.
> **Water:** When you deal damage to an enemy in melee range, all other very close enemies mark a Stress.
> **Air:** You can hover two feet up, gaining advantage on Agility rolls.

Specialization Feature

Once per short rest, while in Elemental Incarnation, you can give the area within close range of you an effect from the list below in accordance with that element. This effect follows you until you take Severe damage or the GM spends Fear to end it.

> **Fire**: Whenever an enemy marks one or more Hit Points, they also take a Stress.
> **Earth**: You and your allies gain +1 Armor Score.
> **Water**: After an enemy acts, you can spend a Hope to move them anywhere within close range to them.
> **Air**: If you or an ally get damaged by a ranged attack, reduce it by 1d8.

Mastery Feature

When you use your Elemental Incarnation, you further embody the spirit and gain the additional benefits below based on the element chosen.

> **Fire**: When you deal damage with an attack or spell, you are at +1 Proficiency.
> **Earth**: When you mark an Armor Slot, roll 1d6. On a 5-6, you may clear an Armor Slot.
> **Water**: When you are hit by an attack, you can take a Stress to make the attacker Vulnerable.
> **Air**: You gain +1 Evasion and can fly.

Warden of Renewal

Play the Warden of Renewal if you want to use powerful magic to heal your party members.
Spellcast Trait: Instinct

Foundation Features

Clarity of Nature: Once per long rest, you may create a space of natural serenity around you. After spending a few minutes resting within the space, you can clear Stress equal to your Instinct trait, distributed as you choose between you and your allies.
Regeneration: Touch a creature and spend 3 Hope to heal 1d4 of their Hit Points.

Specialization Feature

You may use any of your Foundation features while in Beastform.
Once per long rest, you may target yourself or an ally in close range to clear a number of Armor Slots equal to your Instinct.

Mastery Feature

Your animal transformation embodies a healing guardian spirit. While you are in Beastform, when an ally within close range marks 2 or more Hit Points, you can mark a Stress to reduce the amount of Hit Points they mark by 1.

LEVEL UP OPTIONS

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

☐☐☐ Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.

☐ Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.

☐ Permanently add one Stress Slot.

☐ Increase two Experiences by +1.

☐ Increase your Proficiency by +1.

☐ Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.

☐ Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.

☐ Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

☐☐☐ Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.

☐☐ Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.

☐☐ Permanently add one Stress Slot.

☐☐ Increase two Experiences by +1.

☐☐ Increase your Proficiency by +1.

☐☐ Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.

☐ Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2 OR Severe Damage Threshold by +4.

☐ Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.

☐ Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.

☐☐ Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1 and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unused above and mark them.

☐☐☐ Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.

☐☐ Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.

☐☐ Permanently add one Stress Slot.

☐ Increase two Experiences by +1.

☐☐ Increase your Proficiency by +1.

☐☐ Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.

☐ Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +4.

☐ Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +1.

☐ Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.

☐☐ Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Minor by +1, Major by +2, and Severe by +4. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

BEASTFORM

LEVEL ONE

AGILE SCOUT
(FOX, MOUSE, WEASEL, ETC)
+1 Agility │ Attack: Agility - d4 (phy) │ Evasion: +2 │ Armor Score: 3

Take advantage on: Sneak, Locate, Dodge

Agile: Your movement is silent and you may spend Hope to get anywhere within Far range without needing to make a check.

Fragile: When you take Major Damage or greater, you drop Beastform.

PACK PREDATOR
(WOLF, COYOTE, HYENA ETC)
+2 Strength │ Attack: Strength - d8(phy) │ Evasion: +1 │ Armor Score: 4

Take advantage on: Attack, Sprint, Track

Pack Hunting: When you make an attack on the same target as an ally right before you, add an additional *d8* to your damage dice pool.

AQUATIC SCOUT
(FISH, EEL, OCTOPUS, ETC)
+1 Agility │ Attack: Agility - d4 (phy) │ Evasion: +3 │ Armor Score: 2

Take advantage on: Navigate, Sneak, Swim

Aquatic: You can breathe and move naturally underwater.

Fragile: When you take Major Damage or greater, you drop Beastform.

LEVEL TWO

WINGED BEAST
(RAVEN, HAWK, OWL, ETC)
+1 Finesse │ Attack: Finesse - d4 (phy) │ Evasion: +3 │ Armor Score: 3

Take advantage on: Locate, Dodge, Deceive

Bird's Eye View: You can fly at will while in this form. When you are flying and look down at the landscape below in an attempt to understand a situation better, make an action roll. On a success, you gain new, useful information here. Take a *d6* bonus die you may use or give to an ally to add to their action roll when acting on this information.

Fragile: You reduce your Armor score by -2 in this form.

BRUTISH BEAST
(BEAR, BULL, MOOSE, ETC)
+1 Strength │ Attack: Strength - d6 (phy) │ Evasion: +2 │ Armor Score: 6

Take advantage on: Navigate, Scare, Protect

Rampage: When you are rolling damage from an attack, for every 6 you roll you may roll another *d6* and add it to your damage roll. Before making an Attack roll, you can take a Stress to gain +1 Proficiency to the attack (once per attack).

Thick Hide: You add +2 to your Armor score in this form.

LEVEL FIVE

GREAT WINGED BEAST
(GIANT EAGLE, FALCON, ETC)
+2 Finesse │ Attack: Finesse - d8 (phy) │ Evasion: +3 │ Armor Score: 5

Take advantage on: Locate, Dodge, Deceive

Bird's Eye View: You can fly at will while in this form. When you are flying and look down at the landscape below in an attempt to understand a situation better, make an action roll. On a success, you gain new, useful information here. Take a *d6* bonus die you may use or give to an ally to add to their action roll when acting on this information.

Carrier: You are able to carry 1-2 people and still maintain flight.

SPEEDY BEAST
(PANTHER, ANTELOPE, HORSE, ETC)
+2 Agility │ Attack: Agility - d8 (phy) │ Evasion: +4 │ Armor Score: 7

Take advantage on: Sprint, Dodge, Leap

Charging Speed: You can move Very Far without having to roll. If you successfully attack a creature after moving Far or more, you can add 2d8 physical damage to the attack.

Carrier: You are able to carry 1-2 person and still maintain speed.

LEVEL SEVEN

AQUATIC PREDATOR
(SHARK, ORCA, ETC)
+2 Agility │ Attack: Agility - d10 (phy) │ Evasion: +4 │ Armor Score: 5

Take advantage on: Track, Attack, Swim

Aquatic: You can breathe and move naturally underwater.

Vicious Maul: When you successfully attack a creature, you can spend a Hope to make them temporarily Vulnerable.

GREAT PREDATOR
(DIRE WOLF, SABERTOOTH TIGER, RAPTOR, ETC)
+2 Strength │ Attack: Strength - d12 (phy) │ Evasion: +4 │ Armor Score: 8

Take advantage on: Track, Attack, Sneak, Sprint

Vicious Maul: When you successfully attack a creature, you can spend a Hope to make them temporarily Vulnerable.

Carrier: You are able to carry 1-2 people and still maintain speed.

LEVEL NINE

MASSIVE BEHEMOTH
(ELEPHANT, MAMMOTH, RHINOCEROS ETC)
+3 Strength │ Attack: Strength - d10 (phy) │ Evasion: +4 │ Armor Score: 10

Take advantage on: Protect, Scare, Damage Terrain

Trample: You can spend a Hope to move up to Far range in a straight line over smaller creatures and make a melee attack roll. All creatures you passed over who your roll successfully hits take damage.

Mighty Carrier: You are able to carry 1-4 people and still maintain speed.

Guardian

Guardians represent an array of martial professions, and such a title speaks more to their moral compass and incredible fortitude than the means by which they fight. Those of this class may choose to join groups of militants, for either a country or cause, but guardians are more likely to follow those few they truly care for, majority be damned. Guardians are known for fighting with remarkable ferocity even against overwhelming odds, and are more likely to utilize defensive tactics that protect their cohort than charge forward with abandon. Woe be unto those who harm the ally of a guardian, as they will not soon forget such a grievance.

DOMAINS

Valor & Blade

STARTING EVASION SCORE

6

DAMAGE THRESHOLDS

Minor 6, Major 11, Severe 16

CLASS ITEMS

A *Stone Totem from Your Mentor* OR *a Secret Key*

CLASS FEATURE

Unstoppable

Once per Long Rest, you can become Unstoppable. Your Unstoppable die begins as a d4. Place it on your character sheet in the designated section of your Class Features, starting with the die's highest value facing up. While Unstoppable, you:

- Gain resistance to physical damage.
- Add an additional d6 to any damage rolls you make.
- Can spend stress to reroll any single die you've rolled.

Anytime you roll your damage dice, reduce the Unstoppable die value by one. When you would reduce the value below 1 or the scene ends, remove it and drop out of Unstoppable. At Level 3, upgrade your Unstoppable die to a d6. At Level 7, upgrade it to a d8.

If you're creating a guardian, choose either the Stalwart or Vengeance subclass.

Stalwart

Play the Stalwart if you want to take heavy blows and keep moving.

Foundation Feature
When you take this foundation, raise all of your Damage Thresholds by +2.
When you take physical damage, you may spend a Hope instead of marking an Armor Slot to reduce the damage by your Armor Score.

Specialization Feature
When you take this specialization, raise all of your Damage Thresholds by +1.
When an ally within very close range takes damage, you can mark an Armor Slot to reduce the damage by your Armor Score.

Mastery Feature
When you take this mastery, raise all of your Damage Thresholds by +2.
When an ally within close distance has 2 or less Hit Points and takes damage, you can immediately mark a Stress to sprint to their side and take the damage instead.

Vengeance

Play the Vengeance if you want to strike down enemies that hurt you or your allies.

Foundation Feature
Gain an additional Armor Slot immediately.
When you are hit by an enemy in melee range and use at least one Armor Slot to reduce the damage, immediately do damage to them equal to your Armor Value.

Specialization Feature
When an enemy damages an ally within melee range, the next successful attack you make against that enemy has +1 Proficiency.

Mastery Feature
Spend a Hope to mark an enemy until your next rest. When you make an Attack Roll against an enemy you have marked in this way, you can adjust your Hope or Fear die by +1.

LEVEL UP OPTIONS

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +3.*

☐ *Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.*

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Severe Damage by +3.*

☐ *Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +2 and Severe by +4. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unused above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +3.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Minor by +1, Major by +2, and Severe by +5. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

Ranger

Rangers are highly skilled hunters who, despite their martial abilities, will rarely lend their skills to an army. Through mastery of the body and a deep understanding of the wilderness, rangers transform themselves into sly tacticians, accustomed to fighting without the aid of an organized military force. Many rangers do, however, fight alongside an animal companion, with whom they've forged a powerful, spiritual bond. By honing their skills in the wild, rangers become expert hunters and trackers, and are as likely to catch their foes in a trap as assail them head-on.

DOMAINS

Bone & Sage

STARTING EVASION SCORE

10

DAMAGE THRESHOLDS

Minor 4, Major 9, Severe 14

CLASS ITEMS

A *Trophy From Your First Kill* OR *a Seemingly Broken Compass*

CLASS FEATURE

Ranger's Focus

Spend Hope and make an attack with your weapon. On a success, you temporarily have Focus on the target along with doing damage from the attack.
While focused:
- You know precisely what direction they are in.
- All damage rolls you make against them add +1d6.
- On a missed attack you make against them, you may end Ranger's Focus to reroll your Duality Dice and take the new result.

You may only hold Ranger's Focus on one creature at a time.

RANGER SUBCLASSES

If you're creating a ranger, choose either the Wayfinder or Companion subclass.

Wayfinder

Play the Wayfinder if you want to hunt your prey using deadly force.
Spellcast Trait: Agility

Foundation Features
Apex Predator: Mark a Stress to increase your Proficiency by +1 when rolling damage. When you deal damage to an enemy, you can never hit below their minor threshold.

Path Forward: When you're headed for a place you've previously visited, or you carry an object with you that has been there before, you can identify the shortest, most direct path to your destination.

Specialization Feature

When a creature that is marked by your Ranger's Focus attacks you, your Evasion is increased against the attack by a number equal to your Agility trait.

Mastery Feature

When you make an Attack Roll against an enemy marked by your Ranger's Focus, you may spend a Hope before the roll. On a success, you remove one Fear from the GM's Fear Pool.

Companion

Play the Companion if you want to form a deep bond with an animal ally.
Spellcast Trait: Agility

Foundation Feature

You have an animal companion of your choice (at GM's discretion).
Take the Ranger Companion sheet. Whenever you level up your character, also choose a level up option for your companion from this sheet.

Specialization Feature

When you take this Specialization, gain an additional level up option for your companion immediately. When an enemy attacks you while in melee with your Ranger Companion, you gain +2 Evasion against the attack.

Mastery Feature

When you take this Specialization, gain 2 level up options for your companion immediately.
Once per long rest, if you and your companion are within close range of each other when the damage from an attack would take you or your companion out of the fight, the other may immediately rush to their side and take that damage instead.

LEVEL UP OPTIONS

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

☐☐☐ **Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.**
☐ **Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.**
☐ **Permanently add one Stress Slot.**
☐ **Increase two Experiences by +1.**
☐ **Increase your Proficiency by +1.**
☐ **Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.**
☐ **Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.**
☐ **Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.**

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

☐☐☐ **Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.**
☐☐ **Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.**
☐☐ **Permanently add one Stress Slot.**
☐ **Increase two Experiences by +1.**
☐ **Increase your Proficiency by +1.**
☐☐ **Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.**
☐ **Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2 or Severe Damage Threshold by +4**
☐ **Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.**
☐ **Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.**
☐☐ **Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.**

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1 and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unused above and mark them.

☐☐☐ **Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.**
☐☐ **Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.**
☐☐ **Permanently add one Stress Slot.**
☐ **Increase two Experiences by +1.**
☐ **Increase your Proficiency by +1.**
☐☐ **Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.**
☐ **Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +4.**
☐ **Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +1.**
☐ **Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.**
☐☐ **Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.**

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Minor by +1, Major by +2, and Severe by +4. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

RANGER
COMPANION

COMPANION NAME:

Work with the GM to decide what kind of animal you have as your companion. Use the space above to draw or attach an image for them, and give them a name. Then mark two companion traits it has from the options below:

COMPANION TRAITS

SNEAK	CLIMB	STRIKE	SCARE	RUN	FLY	LEAP	SWIM
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

EVASION
Start at 10.

You can make an action roll to command your companion using **Instinct**, and take advantage if they are using one of their companion traits.

DAMAGE DICE

○ **D4**   ○ **D6**   ○ **D8**   ○ **D10**

If you command them to attack a target, on a success, their damage roll uses your proficiency and their damage dice.

STRESS

STRESS: ▢ ▢ ▢ ▢ ▢

Anytime your companion would take damage, they mark stress. When their stress slots are full, they drop out of the scene (hide, flee, etc). They are unavailable to you, and will return at your next long rest with one stress cleared.

Whenever you use the Clear Stress downtime action on yourself, it automatically clears that much stress on your companion as well.

TRAINING

Whenever your character levels up, also choose one option for your companion from the list below and mark it.

☐☐ **Intelligent:** *Choose an additional companion trait.*

☐ **Light in the Dark:** *Use this as an additional Hope Slot your character may mark.*

☐ **Creature Comfort:** *When you take time during a quiet moment to give your companion love and attention, you may both clear a Stress or take Hope.*

☐☐☐ **Armored:** *Your armor score increases by +2 when your companion is in melee.*

☐☐☐ **Vicious:** *Step up your companion's damage dice (d4 to d6, d6 to d8, etc.)*

☐☐☐ **Resilient:** *Add an additional stress slot.*

☐☐☐ **Bonded:** *When you mark your last Hit Point, your Companion rushes to your side to comfort you. Roll a number of d6 equal to the available stress slots they have and mark them. On a 6, they get you up. Clear your last Hit Point and return to the scene.*

☐☐☐ **Aware:** *Increase your companion's Evasion by +2*

Rogue

Rogues are scoundrels, often in both attitude and practice. Broadly known as liars and thieves, the best among this class move through the world entirely unknown. Utilizing their sharp wit and blade, rogues may trick their foes through social manipulation as easily as breaking locks or climbing through windows. Rogues frequently establish guilds to meet future accomplices, hire out jobs, and hone heavily-guarded skills, proving that the phrase "there's no honor among thieves" is just another lie added to their arsenal.

DOMAINS

Midnight & Grace

STARTING EVASION SCORE

12

DAMAGE THRESHOLDS

Minor 4, Major 9, Severe 14

CLASS ITEMS

Forgery Tools OR *a Grappling Hook*

CLASS FEATURES

Hide

When you move into a location where no enemies can see you, you are Hidden (you are unable to be directly targeted by attacks and any rolls against you at disadvantage). As a Rogue, when you are Hidden, targets also can't see you, even if they move into line of sight. You are no longer Hidden after you move or attack. When you leave Hidden to make an attack, the roll has advantage.

Sneak Attack

If you have advantage on an attack roll, or an ally is in melee with your target, always add a d8 to your damage roll. When you use Sneak Attack, you may also spend any number of Hope before the attack roll, and if it is successful, also add a number of d8 equal to the Hope spent.

ROGUE SUBCLASSES

If you're creating a rogue, choose either the Syndicate or Nightwalker subclass.

Syndicate

Play the Syndicate if you want to know somebody helpful everywhere you go.
Spellcast Trait: Agility

Foundation Feature

When you arrive in a heavily populated town or city, you know somebody that calls this place home. Give them a name, note how you think they could be useful, and choose one from the list below:

- They owe me a favor, but they will be hard to find.
- They're going to ask for something in exchange.
- They're always in a great deal of trouble.
- We used to be together. It's a long story.
- We didn't part on great terms.

Specialization Feature

Once per session, you can briefly call forth a shady contact. Immediately choose one of the benefits below and describe the flashback that brought them here to help you in this moment:

- They provide 1 handful of gold, a unique tool, or a mundane object that the situation requires.
- When making an Action Roll, their help lets you shift your Hope or Fear die by +3.
- When dealing damage, they snipe from the shadows, adding 2d8 damage to your damage roll.

Mastery Feature

You can now use your Specialization Feature three times per session. You can also choose from the following options when you use it:

When you mark 1 or more Hit Points, a contact rushes out to shield you, reducing the Hit Points marked by 1.

When you make a Presence Roll in conversation, they back you up. Your Hope die becomes a d20 for the roll.

Nightwalker

Play the Nightwalker if you want to use the cover of shadow to navigate your environment.
Spellcast Trait: Agility

Foundation Feature

Shadow Stepper: You can move from shadow to shadow. When you step into the shadow cast by another person or object, or an area of darkness, mark stress to disappear from where you are and reappear inside of any other shadow within far range.

Specialization Feature

Dark Cloud: Make a Spellcast Roll (15). On a success, create a temporary dark cloud that covers any area within close distance of you. Anyone in this cloud can't see outside of it, and anyone outside of it can't see in. You are considered Cloaked from any enemy it blocks line of sight from.
Slippery: You may spend Hope to immediately slip out of anything that is physically keeping you from moving.

Mastery Feature

Gain +1 to your Evasion permanently, and your ability to shadow step now works at very far range.

Cloaked: At any time, you can mark stress to make yourself cloaked. While cloaked, you take all the benefits of the hidden condition and automatically lose the vulnerable and restrained condition if you have them. Cloaked only drops when you make a roll with Fear, or at your next rest.

LEVEL UP OPTIONS

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

- ☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*
- ☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*
- ☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*
- ☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*
- ☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*
- ☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*
- ☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.*
- ☐ *Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.*

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked from the previous tier.

- ☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*
- ☐☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*
- ☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*
- ☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2 or Severe Damage Threshold by +4*
- ☐ *Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.*
- ☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*
- ☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1 and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked from the previous tier.

- ☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*
- ☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*
- ☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*
- ☐ *Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +4.*
- ☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +1.*
- ☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*
- ☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Minor by +1, Major by +2, and Severe by +4. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

Seraph

Divine fighters and healers appointed by their god, seraphs are imbued with sacred purpose. A wide array of deities exist within the realms, and thus there are numerous different types of seraph. The ethos of each member of this class traditionally aligns with the domain of their god including such missions as: defending the weak, enacting vengeance, protecting a land or artifact, and upholding a faith. Some seraph ally themselves with an army or locale, much to the satisfaction of their rulers, but some of these crusaders fight in opposition to the follies of the Mortal Realm. It is better to be an ally to a seraph, as they are terrifying foes to those who defy their purpose.

DOMAINS

Splendor & Valor

STARTING EVASION SCORE

7

DAMAGE THRESHOLDS

Minor 5, Major 10, Severe 15

CLASS ITEMS

A *Bundle of Offerings* OR *a Sigil of Your God*

CLASS FEATURE

Prayer Dice

At the beginning of a session, roll a number of d4 dice equal to your Spellcast trait and store them to the right. You can exhaust them at any time to use their value in reducing incoming damage, adding to a roll result, or exchanging for that many Hope you may give to any player. Clear these dice at the end of a session.

SERAPH SUBCLASSES

If you're creating a seraph, choose either the Winged Sentinel or Divine Wielder subclass:

Winged Sentinel

Play the Winged Sentinel if you want to take flight and strike hard from the sky.
Spellcast Trait: Strength

Foundation Feature
You may spend a Hope to take flight until your next roll with Fear. While flying, do an additional 1d8 damage to any weapon attack you make. You may spend an additional Hope to pick up and carry another creature that is approximately your size or smaller.

Specialization Feature

Your supernatural visage strikes awe and fear. You have advantage on Presence Rolls while in flight, and if you succeed on this Presence roll with Hope, you may remove a Fear from the GM's Fear Pool instead of taking Hope.

Mastery Feature

When you take this mastery, raise your Severe Damage Threshold by +4 immediately.
While in flight, the additional damage you deal with a weapon attack through your Winged Sentinel Foundation increases to 1d12.

Divine Wielder

Play the Divine Wielder if you want to dominate the battlefield with a legendary weapon.
Spellcast Trait: Strength

Foundation Features

Spirit Weapon: When you have a melee weapon equipped, it can fly from your hand to strike an enemy and return to you. Treat it as though it is a weapon with close range. Mark a Stress to also apply this attack to another target in range on the same Attack Roll.
Sparing Touch: Once per long rest, you can touch a creature and heal 2 Hit Points or 2 Stress.

Specialization Feature

When you take this Specialization, gain an additional Armor Slot immediately.
Your Sparing Touch can now be used one additional time per long rest.

Mastery Feature

When you roll damage for your Spirit Weapon, if any of your damage dice values match, roll an additional damage die per match (8 and 8 rolls +1 die. 5, 5, and 5 rolls +2 dice, etc). Do not count any of these additional dice towards matching.

LEVEL UP OPTIONS

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

- ☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*
- ☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*
- ☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*
- ☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*
- ☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*
- ☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*
- ☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.*
- ☐ *Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.*

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

- ☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*
- ☐☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*
- ☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*
- ☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2 or Severe Damage Threshold by +4.*
- ☐ *Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.*
- ☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*
- ☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1 and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

- ☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*
- ☐☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*
- ☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*
- ☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*
- ☐ *Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +4.*
- ☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +1.*
- ☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*
- ☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Minor by +1, Major by +2, and Severe by +4. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

Sorcerer

Not all innate magic users choose to hone their craft, but those who do can become powerful sorcerers. The gifts of these wielders is passed down through families, though not all families are aware of, much less *choose to practice*, their unique skills. A sorcerer's abilities can range from the elemental, to the illusionary, and beyond, and many members of this class will band together into collectives based on their talents. The act of becoming a formidable sorcerer is not the practice of acquiring power, but learning to control and hone the power one already possesses. The magic within a misguided or uneducated sorcerer is a dangerous force indeed.

DOMAINS

Arcana & Midnight

STARTING EVASION SCORE

9

DAMAGE THRESHOLDS

Minor 3, Major 8, Severe 13

CLASS ITEMS

A *Whispering Orb* OR *a Family Heirloom*

CLASS FEATURES

Arcane Sense

You can sense the presence of magical people and objects when you're close to them.

Minor Illusion

Make a Spellcast Roll (10). On a success, you create a minor visual illusion no larger than yourself within close range that is convincing to anyone in far range or further.

Channel Raw Power

Once per Long Rest, you can place a Domain card from your Loadout into your Vault and choose to either:
- Gain Hope equal to the level of the card.
- Add magic damage equal to twice the level of the card to a spell you've successfully cast.

SORCERER SUBCLASSES

If you're creating a sorcerer, choose either the Primal Origin or Elemental Origin subclass.

Primal Origin

Play the Primal Origin if you want to modify your spells in powerful ways.
Spellcast Trait: Instinct

Foundation Feature
Your primal origin allows you to modify the essence of magic itself. When you cast a spell or use a weapon that deals magic damage, you may mark a Stress to do any of the following:
- Extend its reach by one range.
- Add +2 to the action roll result.
- Reroll any number of Damage Dice.
- Hit an additional target within range with the spell.

Specialization Feature
You can enhance the magical practices of others with your essence. When you Help an Ally on a Spellcast Roll, the advantage die you roll is 1d8. After you help them make their Spellcast Roll, once per long rest, you can swap the values of their Duality dice.

Mastery Feature
You can gather magical energy to enhance your capability. You may become "charged" after taking magic damage, or after spending 2 Hope to do so. When you successfully cast a spell while "charged", you may become no longer "charged" to either gain +2 Proficiency or +2 Evasion Roll Difficulty for that spell.

You are no longer "charged" after a long rest.

Elemental Origin

Play the Elemental Origin if you want to use raw elemental magic in creative ways.
Spellcast Trait: Instinct

Foundation Feature
Your elemental origin lets you manipulate and shape a certain kind of element.
Choose one: WATER · FIRE · AIR · LIGHTNING · EARTH
You can channel this element into unique, harmless effects. You may also spend a Hope to describe how your control over this element helps a current action you're attempting, and either add +2 to the action roll before making it or +3 to the damage.

Specialization Feature
You can call forth your chosen element to protect you from harm. When you are attacked, you may spend a Stress to describe how your element is channeled to defend you and add 1d8 to your Evasion against the attack.

Mastery Feature

Once per long rest, you can transform into an elemental form of your chosen element. When you do, describe your transformation and choose two of the following features to gain until your next short rest:

- +4 to your Severe Threshold.
- +1 to a Character Trait of your choice
- +1 Proficiency
- +2 to your Armor Score
- +2 Evasion

LEVEL UP OPTIONS

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.*

☐ *Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.*

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2 or Severe Damage Threshold by +4*

☐ *Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1 and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unused above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +4.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +3.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Minor by +1, Major by +1, and Severe by +4. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

Warrior

Becoming a warrior requires years, often a lifetime, of training and dedication to the mastery of violence and weapons. While many who seek to fight only hone their strength, warriors understand the importance of an agile body and mind, making them some of the most sought after fighters across the realms. Many warriors will find employment within an army, band of mercenaries, or even within a royal guard, but their potential is wasted in any position where they cannot continue to hone and expand their skills. Warriors are known to have a favored weapon, and to come between one of this class and their blade would be a grievous mistake.

DOMAINS

Blade & Bone

STARTING EVASION SCORE

10

DAMAGE THRESHOLDS

Minor 5, Major 10, Severe 15

CLASS ITEMS

The Drawing of a Lover OR *a Sharpening Stone*

CLASS FEATURES

Battle Strategist

Whenever you are making a roll to physically hinder a creature that isn't a weapon attack (shove, trip, grapple, etc) you can spend a Hope to have advantage. On a success, you can choose to deal 1d8 physical damage to the target.

Combat Training

Ignore burden when equipping weapons, and you may place primary weapons in your secondary weapon slot. Always add additional physical damage equal to the value of your Level when you attack.

WARRIOR SUBCLASSES

If you're creating a warrior, choose either the Call of the Slayer or Call of the Brave subclass.

Call of the Slayer

Play the Call of the Slayer if you want to ensure you strike down enemies with great power.

Foundation Feature

On a roll with Hope, you may choose to place a single d6 on this card instead of taking a Hope. You can store a number of d6 equal to your proficiency, and can pick up any number of these dice and roll them when making an Attack or Damage Roll to add their value to your total. Discard any you use this way. At the end of a session, clear any remaining dice on this card and gain that many Hope.

Specialization Feature

You can wield multiple weapons with dangerous ease. When you make a successful Attack Roll, you may spend a Hope to add one weapon damage die from your secondary weapon to the damage.
In addition, once per long rest, when you roll your Slayer dice, you can reroll any 1s once, taking the new result.

Mastery Feature

You have become an inspirational warrior to all who travel with you. You gain a new Downtime option called **Martial Preparation.**
Martial Preparation: Describe how you instruct and train with your party and gain 1d6 Slayer dice to distribute between you and your allies. Allies can use these Slayer dice to enhance their own weapon Attack or Damage rolls.

Call of the Brave

Play the Call of the Brave if you want to be adept at taking on both harrowing tasks and dangerous enemies.

Foundation Feature

When you fail a roll with Fear, you gain a Hope.
Once per long rest, before you attempt something incredibly dangerous or face off against a foe who clearly outmatches you, describe what ritual you perform or preparation you make to clear 2 Stress and gain 2 Hope.

Specialization Feature

You are vigilant in the face of mounting danger.
While you have 2 Hit Points available or less, your Hope die becomes a 1d20.

Mastery Feature

Your unbending courage is a rallying point for your allies. You can initiate a Tag Team Roll twice per session.
When an ally wishes to initiate a Tag Team Roll with you, they only need to spend 2 Hope to do so.

LEVEL UP OPTIONS

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.*

☐ *Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.*

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2 or Severe Damage Threshold by +4*

☐ *Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1 and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unused above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +4.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +1.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Minor by +1, Major by +2, and Severe by +4. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

Wizard

Those who acquire their magical power through years of study are known as wizards. Whether through an institution or individual study, wizards use a variety of tools—including books, scrolls, or ancient tablets—to hone their craft. Often, wizards will dedicate their life to the mastery of a particular school of magic, while others will attempt to learn from a wide variety of disciplines. Many wizards go on to become wise and powerful figures in their communities, advising rulers, providing medicines, and even leading war councils. While all members of this class work toward the common goal of collecting magical knowledge, it is very often that wizards have the most conflict within their own ranks; as the acquisition, keeping, and sharing of powerful secrets is a topic of intense debate that has resulted in thousands upon thousands of deaths.

DOMAINS

Codex & Splendor

STARTING EVASION SCORE

8

DAMAGE THRESHOLDS

Minor 2, Major 7, Severe 12

CLASS ITEMS

A *Book You're Trying to Translate* OR *a Tiny & Harmless Elemental Pet*

CLASS FEATURES

Prestidigitation

You can perform harmless, subtle magical effects at will. Examples might include changing an object's color, creating a smell, lighting a candle, floating something small, illuminating a room, repairing a small object, etc.

Strange Patterns

Choose a number between 1-12. Anytime you roll that number on a Duality Die, gain a hope or clear a stress. You may change this number on any long rest.

WIZARD SUBCLASSES

If you're creating a wizard, choose either the School of Knowledge or School of War subclass:

School of Knowledge

Play the School of Knowledge if you want to have incredible knowledge of the magical world around you.
Spellcast Trait: Knowledge

Foundation Feature

You've gained priceless knowledge through great study. When you face off against something of great magical power, you may spend a Hope and ask the GM what you know about it that could help you here. They will tell you something useful or interesting about it.

Adept: You may mark a Stress instead of spending a Hope to use an Experience on a roll. If you do, double the Experience modifier when you add it.

Specialization Feature

When you take this Specialization, you may change an existing Experience you have, then add +1 to one of your Experiences.

Once per short rest, you may reduce the Recall Cost of a Domain card in your Vault by 1 when recalling it.

Mastery Feature

When you take this Mastery, choose two Experiences and add +1 to each of them.

Whenever you wish to use an Experience, roll a 1d6. On a result of 5-6, you do not need to spend a Hope to use it.

School of War

Play the School of War if you want to be trained to use magic as a means of violence.

Spellcast Trait: Knowledge

Foundation Feature

You've focused your studies on the shaping of magic in both dangerous and powerful ways. Take an extra armor slot immediately. When you make a successful Attack Roll with Fear, you deal an extra 1d6 magic damage.

Specialization Feature

You can concentrate to maintain a protective barrier of magic to protect you. While you have at least 2 Hope, you can add your Spellcast trait to your Evasion.

Mastery Feature

Your extra magic damage from your School of War feature increases to 1d10.

When you make a successful attack roll with Hope, you may choose to make it with Fear instead.

LEVEL UP OPTIONS

LEVELS 2-4

At Level 2, take an additional Experience.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two available options from the list below and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.*

☐ *Increase your Minor Damage Threshold by +1.*

Then increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +2 and choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower.

LEVELS 5-7

At Level 5, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unmarked above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Major or Severe Damage Threshold by +2*

☐ *Increase your Minor or Major Damage Threshold by +1.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1 and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

LEVELS 8-10

At Level 8, take an additional Experience and clear all marks on Character Traits.

When you level up, record it on your character sheet, then choose two from the list below or any unused above and mark them.

☐☐☐ *Increase two unmarked Character Traits by +1 and mark them.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Hit Point Slot.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Stress Slot.*

☐ *Increase two Experiences by +1.*

☐☐ *Increase your Proficiency by +1.*

☐☐ *Permanently add one Armor Slot or take +1 to your Evasion.*

☐ *Increase your Severe Damage Threshold by +4.*

☐ *Increase your Major Damage Threshold by +2.*

☐ *Take an upgraded subclass card. Then cross out the multiclass option for this tier.*

☐☐ *Multiclass: Choose an additional class for your character, then cross out an unused "Take an upgraded subclass card" and the other multiclass option on this sheet.*

Then, increase your Damage Thresholds: Major by +1, and Severe by +3. Then choose a new Domain Deck card at your Level or lower. If your loadout is full, you may choose a card to swap.

Ancestry

Ancestries represent the lineage of a character that affects their physical appearance. That being said, any character might also possess characteristics that do not fall within what is "standard" or "average" within an ancestry. Each individual within an ancestry will also view the world from a different perspective. For example, one elf might believe they have quite large ears in relation to their siblings, but a Firbolg could find them proportionally small compared to their own.

We hope this provides you with a window into the various physicalities of the creatures that populate Daggerheart. As you continue to play and meet members of each ancestry, you'll have the opportunity to learn about the nuances and unique qualities among them. You'll also notice that within the world of Daggerheart, the term "people" is used to refer to all ancestries. They each possess unique characteristics and cultures, as well as personhood.

Each Ancestry has an **Ancestry Feature**, a unique move or set of moves that are granted to them by their ancestry and can be utilized in play. Some are spells or abilities that can be activated during a session, while others are passive bonuses or unique downtime activities.

If you'd like to make a character that combines more than one ancestry, see "Mixed Ancestry" at the end of this section.

Clank

Clanks are sentient mechanical beings built from such materials as metal, wood, stone, and clay, to resemble humanoids, animals, or even inanimate objects. Like organic beings, their bodies come in a wide array of sizes and may change and adapt based on time and need. Because of their custom construction, many clanks have highly specialized physical features. Examples include clawed hands for grasping, wheels for movement, or built-in weaponry. Many clanks are known to embrace an individual's desires for body modifications—including those based in style or function—and members of other ancestries might turn to clank artisans to construct highly customized mobility aids and physical adornments.

Ancestry Feature

Purposeful Design: Decide who you were created by and for what purpose. When you generate your Experiences at character creation, choose one that reflects this purpose and add +1 to it.

CLANK | Concepts

ALL CLANK HAVE SOME POWER SOURCE THESE CAN TAKE DIFFERENT SHAPES AND FORMS FOR THE INTENDED USE AND PARTICULAR CONSTRUCTION.

ADDITIONAL POWER SOURCE VARIATIONS

CAN HAVE THE APPEARANCE OF ANY ANCESTRY AND BE MADE FROM A VARIETY OF MATERIALS. METAL IS MOST COMMON BUT WOOD, CLAY, PORCELAIN, STONE, ETC...

POWER SOURCES CAN BE STORED ANYWHERE WITHIN THE BODY CHASSIS BUT COMMON LOCATIONS ARE IN THE HEAD OR CHEST.

A VARIETY OF ATTACHMENTS ARE AVAILABLE RANGING FROM TOOLS AND APPENDAGES FOR UTILITY, TO WEAPONS AND PROTECTIVE GEAR FOR COMBAT AND ADVENTURES.

CLANKS HAVE A SELF-REPAIR SYSTEM TO PARTIALLY MEND A SEVERLY DAMAGED BODY AND ATTACHED APPENDAGES HOWEVER THIS IS LIMITED IN IT'S CAPABILITY AND SPEED OF REPAIR.

ANY APPENDAGES OR ATTACHMENTS LOST OR COMPLETELY BROKEN CANNOT BE REPAIRED OR REMADE THROUGH A CLANK'S SELF-REPAIR.

THIS SYSTEM IS MOSTLY USED IN EMERGENCIES AND IS PERFORMED BY A CLANK SUBCONSCIOUSLY.

Daemon

Those of daemon ancestry are the humanoid descendants of the Fallen Gods, who possess sharp canines, pointed ears, and horns that come in a variety of styles. While some daemon horns resemble that of a goat or ram, others bear the shape of a piercing spike. There's no standard number of horns for daemons—though two or four are quite common—and some will have crowns of many horns, or only one. They may also grow asymmetrically, forming unique shapes that daemons are known to enhance with carving and ornamentation. Their skin, hair, and horns come in an assortment of stark and vibrant colors such as rosy scarlet, deep purple, and pitch black. On average, daemons range in height from 5ft to 7ft and are known to have long fingers and pointed nails.

Ancestry Feature

Fearless: When you roll with Fear, you may choose to mark a stress instead of the GM gaining Fear.
Dread Visage: You have advantage on rolls to intimidate other non-daemon creatures.
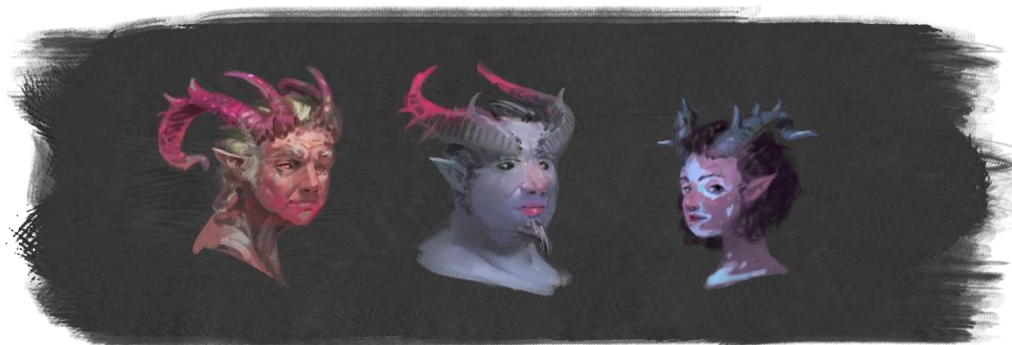
Drakona

Drakona resemble wingless dragons in humanoid form and possess a powerful elemental breath. All drakona have thick scales that provide excellent natural armor against both the forces of nature and attacks. They are large in size (ranging from 5ft to 7ft on average) with equally large and naturally sharp teeth. Drakona teeth are perpetually regrown, and members of this ancestry are never in danger of permanently losing an incisor. Unlike their dragon ancestors, drakona do not possess wings and cannot fly without magical aid. Members of this ancestry each possess elemental breath, the type of which is passed down through the generations of each drakona family.

Ancestry Feature

Elemental Breath: At character creation choose one of the following elements to describe your elemental breath: Fire, Ice, Lightning, Poison, Acid. Spend a **Hope** to make an **Instinct Roll** using your breath against an enemy or group of enemies within close range. Deal **d8** magic damage to all enemies you succeed against.

DRAGON/LIZARD-LIKE BODY

A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 A6

DRAKONA | CONCEPTS

B1 B2 B3
B4 B5 B6

HUMANOID BODY

C1 C2 C3
C4 C5 C6

Drakona | concepts
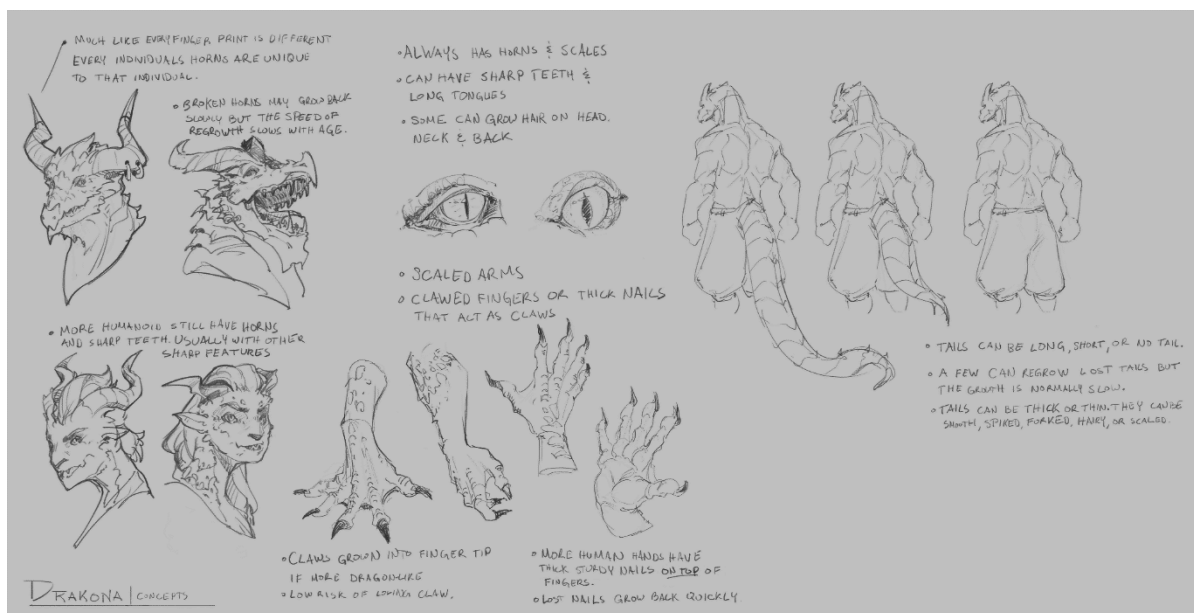
Dwarf

Dwarves are most easily recognized as short humanoids with square features, dense musculature, and thick hair. Their average height ranges from 4ft to 5 ½ft and they are often quite broad in proportion to their stature. Due to a higher amount of keratin in their skin and nails, both are very resilient, and dwarves are known to decorate their bodies with a number of tattoos, unique piercings, and embedded gemstones. Equally, their hair grows thickly, primarily on their head, but across other portions of their body as well, and dwarves of all genders are known to wear facial hair, which may be styled in many intricate patterns.

Ancestry Feature

Increased Fortitude: When you should take physical damage, you may spend three Hope to only take half the damage instead.

Elf

Elves are typically tall humanoids with pointed ears and acutely attuned senses. Their ears vary in size and pointed shape, and as elves age the tips will begin to droop at the tip. While elves come in a wide range of body types, they are all fairly tall, with the shortest among them standing about 5ft 8in and the tallest coming closer to 6½ft. Some elves possess what is known as a "Mystic Form," which occurs when an individual has dedicated themselves to a portion of the natural world so deeply that their physical form has changed. These characteristics can include celestial freckles, the presence of leaves, vines, or flowers in their skin or hair, and more. Sometimes these traits are inherited from an elf's parents, but if the individual chooses to move their focus away from that sphere of influence, portions of their appearance will adjust over time.

Ancestry Feature

Celestial Trance: During a long rest, as one of your actions, you may choose to drop into a Celestial Trance. When you do, roll a number of **d8** equal to the Stress you have marked, and clear all **Stress**. If any of these dice have a matching value, also clear all Hit Points.
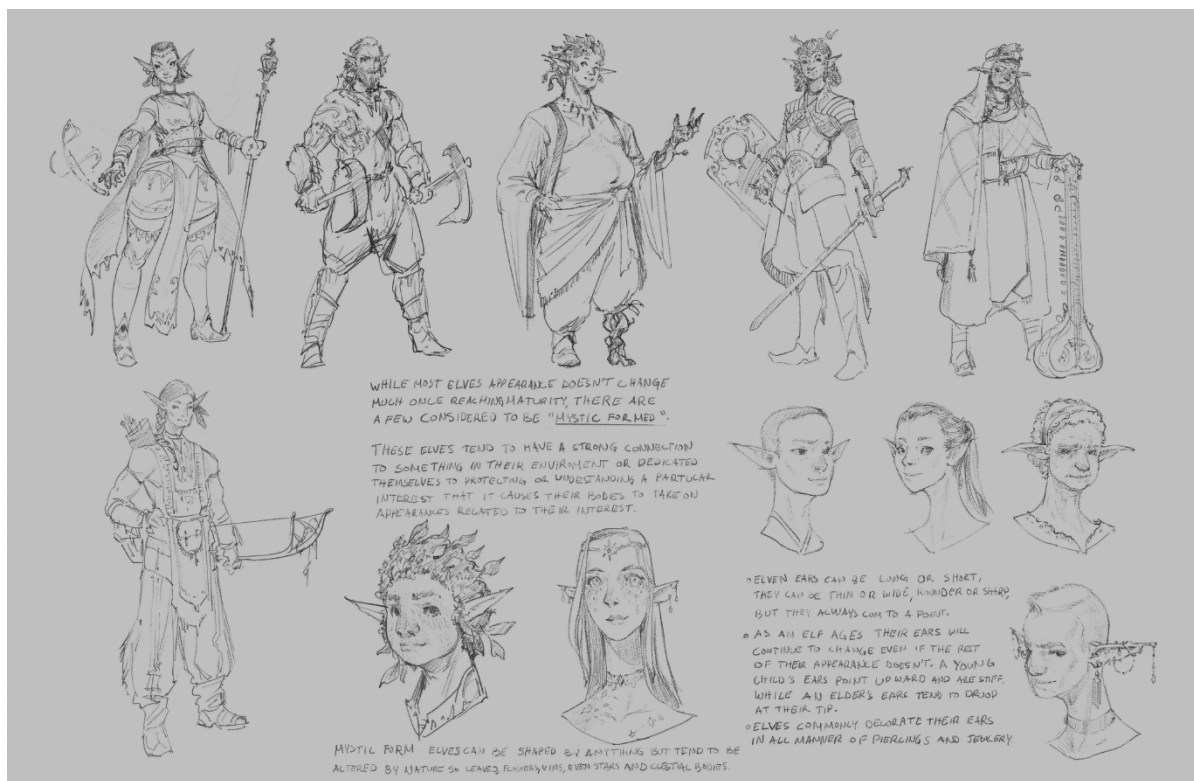
Faerie

Those of faerie ancestry are winged humanoid creatures with insect-like features. Faeries have close ties with the natural world and frequently possess characteristics that allow them to blend in with various plants. Based on their individual heritage, faerie's features might more closely resemble either humanoids or bugs—they may possess additional arms, compound eyes, lantern organs, chitinous exoskeletons, or stingers. The average height of a faerie ranges from about 2ft to 5ft but some faeries grow up to 7ft tall. All faeries possess membranous wings and go through a unique process of metamorphosis throughout their relatively short lifespan, of usually no more than 40 years.

Ancestry Feature

Wings: Mark **Stress** to take flight until you next roll with Fear. While flying, your Evasion score increases by +2.

Luckbender: Once per session, after you or an ally in close range makes an Action Roll, you can mark a **Stress** to allow a reroll of the Duality Dice. If you do, take the new result.

Faerie | Concepts

Given their percieved magical nature, some believe a faerie's capability of prolonged flight, regardless of size and appearance, is assisted by that innate magic.

Faerie appearance can vary widely between an insect and human, so much so that faerie may share very little physical likeness to other family besides their parents or siblings. More insectoid bodies still share human physical characteristics such as bipedal movement and human-like hands/forearms. Faerie always have natural wings and while they usually appear insecting, injured wings can naturally heal over time unlike normal insect wings.

Antenna are common on faerie but not all the more human like a faerie, the less likely they will grow antenna. These antenna are useful in sensing some magical effects.

One Wing   Dual-Wing   Tri-Wing

Faerie usually have two sets of wings but some have one set, and rarely three sets. Occasionally a few faerie can grow up to four sets of wings either as a rare family trait or natural magical mutation. One aspect that is unique to each individual is their wing pattern. While some relatives share the same shape and number of wings, the details on the wing are unique to each faerie. Some faerie belive these wing details foretell the individual's future if read by a soothsayer.

Faerie | concepts

Faun

Those of faun ancestry resemble goats in humanoid form, with curving horns, square pupils, and cloven hooves. Like any ancestry, their appearances vary widely, but most fauns have a goat-like lower body with dense fur and cloven hooves, while their torso and hands are usually humanoid. Faun faces range from humanoid to goat-like, depending on their heritage, and they can have varying ear shapes, horn shapes, and fur thickness. Faun horns range from short with minimal curvature, to much larger and curling. The average faun height ranges from 4ft to 6½ft, which can change dramatically based on the way they stand. The majority of fauns have proportionately long limbs no matter their individual size or shape.

Ancestry Feature

Headbutt: Give the GM one Fear to headbutt an enemy you move into melee with. The target immediately takes d8 direct physical damage and can't be targeted again by this attack during the fight.

FAUNS WILL DECORATE THEIR HORNS, EARS, AND HAIR IN A VARIETY OF WAYS. THEY TEND TO ENJOY KEEPING SENTIMENTAL ITEMS ON DISPLAY SOMEWHERE ON THEIR BODY.

WHEN FAUNS ARE BORN THEY ARE QUICK TO START WALKING AND RUNNING, BECAUSE OF THIS FAUNS WILL LEARN TO BE INDEPENDENT AS CHILDREN AND BE VERY ACTIVE.

FAUNS HAVE FACES THAT TEND TO LOOK VERY HUMAN BUT SOME CAN HAVE MORE GOAT-LIKE FEATURES

THEIR FACES ARE FUZZY WITH GOAT EARS AND THEIR PUPILS ARE RECTANGULAR

AS FAUNS GROW OLDER THEY CAN BEGIN TO LOOK MORE GOAT-LIKE

CHILD

ADULT

ELDER

Firbolg

Firbolgs resemble cows in humanoid form, typically recognized by their broad nose and long ears. Members of this ancestry have more humanoid bodies, which may be more or less covered in hair. Some have facial features that are a blend of humanoid and cow, but others, often referred to as minotaurs, have heads that resemble specific cattle. No matter their other characteristics, firbolgs may possess horns, though many do not. Members of this ancestry come in a range of colors from earth tones to pastel hues like pink and blue. They're tall and muscular creatures, with heights ranging from around 5ft to 7ft, and possess remarkable strength for their size.

Ancestry Feature

Natural Calm: Whenever you should mark a Stress, roll 1d6. On a 6, you take no Stress.

FIRBOLGS HAVE HUMAN PROPORTIONS AND PHYSIQUE EXCEPT IN THEIR FACIAL FEATURES WHICH APPEAR BOVINE-LIKE. YOUNG FIRBOLGS TEND TO HAVE ROUND, SOFT FEATURES BUT AS THEY AGE THEY TAKE ON MORE SQUARE-LIKE FEATURES. MOST ADULTS STAND A FEW HEADS TALLER THAN THE AVERAGE HUMAN BUT CHILDREN DO TEND TO BE THE SIZE OF AN AVERAGE HUMAN CHILD.

SOME FIRBOLGS HAVE HORNS THOUGH MOST DO NOT

FIRBOLG BODIES ARE COVERED IN SHORT FUR. THEIR FUR CAN HAVE COLORINGS OF BROWN, BLACK, GRAY, AND VARIOUS PASTELS.

CHILD   ADULT   ELDER

Fungril

Fungrils resemble a mushroom in humanoid form, bearing the features of the fungus from which they descend. Because of this, their appearance can vary wildly: they may be anywhere from about 2ft to 7ft tall, either more humanoid or more fungus in appearance. They come in an assortment of colors, from earth tones to bright reds, yellows, purples, and blues. Their physical forms are non-standardized, resulting in an incredible variety of bodies, faces, and limbs. Though all fungrils can speak verbally, the vast difference in the appearance of fungrils means those of this ancestry do not have a standard of visual, non-verbal means of communication and may choose to utilize a mycelial array for communication.

Ancestry Feature

Always Connected: To speak with other Fungril across distance to access their hivemind of information, make an Instinct roll. At character creation, describe what ritual you must perform to tap into this connection.

FUNGRIL | CONCEPTS

Galapa

Those of galapa ancestry resemble anthropomorphic turtles, with a large, domed shell into which the head and limbs can retract for defense. On average, they range from 4ft to 6ft in height and an individual's overall shape is dictated by the type of turtle of their heritage. Galapa come in a variety of earth tones, most often shades of green and brown, and they may possess several colorful and unique patterns, especially on their shells. No matter their other physicality, all galapa can draw in their head, arms, and legs to protect them within their shell, using it as a shield when defensive measures are needed. The majority of this ancestry move fairly slowly.

Ancestry Feature

Shell of Protection: The shell on your back always protects you. Add your Proficiency to your armor score.

Giant

Giants are very tall humanoids with long arms, broad stature, and one to three eyes. The smallest adults among this ancestry are about 6½ft, with the largest coming in around 8½ft. In combination with their size, giants are most easily recognized by their long arms that grant them added reach. They tend toward dense musculature, no matter their gender or body type. While the majority among this ancestry have two eyes, it's not uncommon for giants to have one or three eyes. This trait is passed from one or both parents and those with a single eye are often referred to as cyclops.

Ancestry Feature

Endurance: Gain an additional Hit Point Slot at character creation.
Reach: Any melee weapon you wield has its range increased to very close.

GIANTS TEND TO HAVE LONG ARMS, WIDE CHESTS, AN LONG NECKS. HUMAN SIZE

ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT RARE, THERE ARE GIANTS WITH ONE EYE AND SOME WITH THREE EYES. THIS IS GENERALLY A GENETIC TRAIT PASSED ON BY ONE OR BOTH PARENTS

Goblin

Those of goblin ancestry are small humanoids typically recognized by their large eyes and massive, membranous ears. Because of these physical features, they tend to have keen hearing and eyesight that allows them to perceive details at a greater distance, in darkness, or in less optimal environments. Their skin and eye colors are incredibly varied with no one hue, either vibrant or subdued, more dominant than another. Their height ranges from 3ft to 4ft and each of their ears is about the size of the individual's head. Goblins are known to use ear positions to very specific effect within their non-verbal communication.

Ancestry Feature

Danger Sense: Once per short rest, you may mark a stress to make the GM reroll an attack roll. If it still hits you, reduce the incoming value by your Proficiency.

GOBLIN EARS ARE VERY LARGE AND ROUGHLY THE SIZE OF THEIR HEAD.

LARGE EARS

LARGE EYES

SMALL NOSE

SHARP TEETH

BECAUSE OF THEIR SIZE, THE EARS ARE FLEXIBLE AND GOBLINS OFTEN EMOTE USING THEM. CERTAIN GOBLIN WORDS ARE MORE CLEARLY EXPRESSED WITH THEIR EARS.

THE EXPRESSIVE NATURE OF GOBLIN EARS MEANS MANY GOBLINS WILL DECORATE THEIR EARS WITH MANY ACCESSORIES AND MODIFICATIONS.

GOBLIN EYES AR ALSO LARGE AND EXPRESSIVE. MANY GOBLINS DON'T HAVE VISIBLE SCLERA, WHILE OTHERS DO. GOBLINS THAT LIVE DEEP UNDERGROUND MAY HAVE MILKY WHITE EYES

Halfling

Halflings are typically smaller humanoids, with large hairy feet and prominent, rounded ears. On average halflings are 3ft to 4ft in height, with ears, noses, and feet that are larger in proportion to the rest of their features. Halflings are naturally attuned to the magnetic fields of the Mortal Realm, granting them a strong internal compass. They also possess strong senses of hearing and smell and may be more able to detect those who are familiar to them by the sound of their movements.

Ancestry Feature

Little Lucky: At the beginning of each session, give everyone in your party a **Hope**. You may always reroll a **1** on your Hope Die. If you do, take the new result instead.

Human

Those of human ancestry are most easily recognized by their dexterous hands, rounded ears, and bodies built for endurance. Their average height ranges from just under 5ft to about 6 ½ ft. They have a wide variety in their build, with some being quite muscular, others lithe, and everything in between. Humans are incredibly physically adaptable and can adjust to harsh climates with relative ease.

Ancestry Feature

Perseverance: When you fail a roll that utilized one of your Experiences, you may spend a Hope to reroll. You must take the new result.

Katari

Those of katari ancestry are feline humanoids with soft fur and high, triangular ears. They also have vertically-slit pupils, small pointed canine teeth, and long whiskers that perception and navigation. Their ears can swivel nearly 180° to detect sound, adding to their heightened senses. Depending on their lineage, Katari may more closely resemble their cat ancestors, or humans, with an amount of hair and facial structure to match. Equally, they may or may not have tails and their skin and fur possess a wide range of hues, with solid colors, calico tones, tabby patterns, and an array of spots or stripes. Their height ranges widely from about 3ft to 6½ft.

Ancestry Feature

Feline Instincts: On any Agility Rolls, you may mark a **Stress** to reroll your Hope Die. If you do, take the new result instead.

Orc

Orcs are most easily recognized as humanoids with square features and boar-like tusks. These tusks protrude from their lower jaw, and the size can vary between individuals. While they extend from their mouths, tusks are not used for consuming food, and thus many orcs choose to decorate them with significant ornamentation. Orcs have mid-sized, pointed ears and their skin is typically colored in green, blue, pink, and grey tones. Orcs tend towards a muscular stature, no matter their individual size or build, and their average height ranges from 5ft to 6½ ft.

Ancestry Feature

Sturdy: When you should mark an armor slot, roll a d6. On a 5+, you don't mark the armor slot but still reduce the incoming damage by your armor score.

Orc | concepts

AN ORCS TUSKS TEND TO BE FAIRLY PROMINENT AND CAN GROW IN A VARIETY OF WAYS DEPENDING ON THE INDIVIDUAL AND PARENTAGE. THESE TUSKS CAN HOLD SOME CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR SOME GROUPS, AND SO MAY BE DECORATED OR MODIFIED FOR CEREMONIES OR CASUAL WEAR.

A WIDE RANGE OF NATURAL HAIR GROWTH FROM NO HAIR TO THICK HAIR COVERING MOST OF THE BODY.

SMALL TUSKS ARE COMMON WITH ORCS OF MIXED FAMILIES AND YOUNG INDIVIDUALS

LONG TUSKS CAN GROW TO IMPRESSIVE LENGTHS ESPECIALLY WITH SOME ELDERLY. OCCASIONALLY LONG TUSKS ARE REDUCED FOR SAFETY AND CONVENIENCE.

TWO SETS OF TUSKS CAN GROW HOWEVER THE SECOND SET TENDS TO BE SMALLER. A THIRD SET CAN GROW BUT ITS OCCURANCE IS EXTREMELY RARE

ORC SKINTONES CAN RANGE IN SHADES BETWEEN GREENS, BLUES, PINKS, & GREYS

DOWNWARD TUSKS ARE RARE SINCE THEY GROW FROM THE UPPER JAW INSTEAD OF JUST THE BOTTOM JAW. THESE MAY BE SHORTENED FOR SAFETY.

VERY RARELY TWO SETS OF TUSKS GROW WITH ONE GROWN ON EACH THE TOP AND BOTTOM JAW.

DECORATED AND MODIFIED TUSKS ARE QUITE COMMON. SPECIAL JEWLERY AND PIERCINGS TEND TO BE WORN BUT PURPOSFUL CARVING AND SHAPING ARE SOMETIMES PERFORMED.

Orc | concepts

DAGGERHEART
PLAYTEST MANUSCRIPT
VERSION 1.2

Ribbet

Those of ribbet ancestry resemble anthropomorphic frogs with protruding eyes and webbed hands and feet. They have smooth (though sometimes warty) and moist skin, eyes positioned on either side of the top of their head and, while some ribbets have hind legs more than twice the length of their torso, others have fairly small limbs. No matter their size (which ranges from about 3ft to 4½ft), ribbets primarily move by hopping. All ribbets have hands and feet that are webbed, allowing them to swim with ease. Some ribbets possess a natural green and brown camouflage, while others are quite vibrantly colored in an array of bold patterns. No matter their appearance, all ribbets are born from eggs laid in the water, hatch into tadpoles, and after about 6 to 7 years mature into amphibians that can move around on land.

Ancestry Feature

Amphibious: You can breathe and move underwater just as easily as on land
Long Tongue: You can use your long, powerful tongue to grab onto things close to you. You may also mark Stress to unleash it as a Finesse Close weapon that does d12 physical damage.

Ribbet | Concepts

RIBBET | CONCEPTS

Simiah

Simiah resemble anthropomorphic monkeys and apes, with long limbs and prehensile feet. This grants them an appearance that ranges from the largest gorilla to the smallest marmoset, and everything in between. Their size does not align directly with their animal counterparts, as they tend to range from 2ft to 6ft tall. Though the degree varies, all members of this ancestry have prehensile feet and utilize this dexterity in nonverbal communication, movement, work, and combat. This trait also grants them unique agility that can aid them in a variety of physical tasks.

Ancestry Feature

Nimble: Take advantage on Agility Rolls that involve balancing and climbing ,and add +1 to your Evasion at character creation.

SIMIAH TEND TO HAVE AN APPEARANCE OF APES ORANATANGS, GORILLAS, AND CHIMPANZEES, AS WELL AS MONKEYS LIKE BABOONS MANDRILS AND TAMARINS.

THEY ARE WELL KNOWN FOR THEIR ACROBATIC PROWESS WITH CLIMBING AND MOVING THROUGH DIFFICULT TERRAIN.

SOME SIMIAH WALK FULLY UPRIGHT WHILE OTHERS MOVE MORE COMFORTABLY WITH HAND OR KNUCKLE WALKING.

SIMIAH WILL OFTEN HAVE TAILS THAT CAN HELP THEM HOLD ONTO THINGS.

MANY SIMIAH WILL MAKE USE OF THEIR FEET FOR VARIOUS TASKS AS THEIR TOES ARE JUST AS STRONG AND DEXTEROUS AS FINGERS.

SOME SIMIAH ARE VERY TALL AND LARGE, WHILE OTHERS ARE VERY SMALL.

Characters of Mixed Ancestry

Families within the world of Daggerheart are as unique as the peoples and cultures that inhabit it. You may meet characters with a close resemblance to their parents, or those who descend from a line of many different ancestries. The physical appearance and skillset of someone can be shaped by blood, by magic, by proximity, or a variety of other characteristics.

If you decide that your character is a descendant of multiple ancestries, you may use the mechanic below to select their Ancestry and Ancestry Feature:

1. When you choose your Heritage at Level One, write down how your character would identify themselves. For example, your Ancestry could be "Goblin-Orc", or just "Goblin" (with Orc in their lineage), or a name you choose, like Toothling.
2. When you select the Ancestry card for your character, you can choose from any of the Ancestry Features from your lineage to become part of your loadout. Although your family has shaped you in many ways, this skill is the most significant to you.

Community

Your **Community** describes the culture or environment your character grew up in. Though it's likely they were a member of numerous communities during their upbringing, this choice represents the one they feel influenced their personality and current skillset most. Like ancestry, describing the characteristics of a collective is nuanced, as people always view others through the lens of their own experience. For example, while a Seaborne sailor might feel their own community is particularly strict, a character from an Orderborne metropolis might find that group very changeable. An individual's relationship with their community also creates a wide variety of experiences. If your character has fallen out with the place or people that defined their upbringing, they may continue to carry that influence but might be on a quest to live differently than they were taught.

As you explore the following communities, imagine the variety of ways they might manifest in your game. Some community cards reference locations, others an ethos, and still others a common goal. But no two places that fall under the same category are the same. If one Wanderborne caravan travels the world willingly and another was expelled from their home by force, both the material trappings and someone's feelings about their lifestyle would be very different.

When you build your character, you may be inspired by the details from communities different from the one you've chosen to play. As always, this aspect of the game is meant to be utilized in the way that best serves your group's game.

Each Community has a **Community Feature**, a unique move or set of moves that are granted to them by their community and can be utilized in play. Some are spells or abilities that can be activated during a session, while others are passive bonuses or unique downtime activities.

Each community entry suggests several adjectives, which you can use as inspiration when crafting a character. If you'd like to, choose one or more of these words (or roll a d6) to help develop your character's personality, relationship with their upbringing or peers, or even the flavor with which they interact with the rest of their party.

Highborne

Being part of a Highborne community means you were born into a life of elegance, opulence, and prestige within the upper echelons of society. Traditionally, members of a Highborne community possess incredible material wealth. While this takes a variety of forms depending on the community: gold and other minerals, land, controlling the means of production, etc. it always comes with incredible power and influence. Highborne highly value titles and possessions, and there is very little social mobility within their ranks. It's not uncommon for members of a Highborne community to control the political and economic status of the areas in which they live based on their ability to influence the individuals and the economy with their substantial wealth. The health and safety of the less affluent people who live in these locations often hinges on the ability of this Highborne ruling class to prioritize the well-being of their subjects over profit.

Highborne individuals are often: amiable, candid, conniving, enterprising, ostentatious, unflappable.

Community Feature

Inheritance: You have advantage on any rolls you make when consorting with nobles, negotiating prices, or leveraging your reputation to get what you want. Take an extra handful of gold at character creation.

Loreborne

Being part of a Loreborne community means you were brought up in a place that favored strong academic or political prowess. Loreborne communities highly value knowledge, frequently in the form of the preservation of history, advancement of politics, study of science, honing of skill, or collecting of mythology. Because of this, many Loreborne communities are not closely tied to the landscape. Very often, this collective will highly value structures designed to protect physical books and records, and they will only engage with nature and the physical world in a particularly intellectual way. While some Loreborne societies are isolationist, others use their knowledge to make deft political maneuvers in a larger governmental landscape. Some Loreborne communities, such as those surrounding a college or attached to a guild, are smaller enclaves within wider societies and they may operate with a separate and unique ethos.

Loreborne individuals are often: direct, eloquent, inquisitive, patient, rhapsodic, witty.

Community Feature

Well-Read: You have advantage on any rolls you make that deal with the history, culture, or politics of a prominent person or place.

Orderborne

Being part of an Orderborne community means you were raised in a place of great discipline or faith, and uphold a set of principles that reflect your experience there. Orderborne are frequently some of the most powerful among the surrounding communities. By aligning the members of their society around a common value or goal, such as a god, doctrine, ethos, or even shared business or trade; the ruling bodies of these enclaves are able to mobilize larger populations with less effort. While Orderborne communities may take a variety of forms, some even profoundly pacifistic, perhaps the most feared are those that structure themselves around military prowess. In this case, it is not uncommon for Orderborne to provide soldiers for hire for other cities or countries.

Orderborne are often: ambitious, benevolent, pensive, prudent, sardonic, stoic.

Community Feature

Dedicated: Record three sayings or values your upbringing instilled in you. Once per short rest, when you describe how you're embodying one of these principles through your current action, you may roll with a d20 as your Hope Die instead of a d12.

Ridgeborne

Being part of a Ridgeborne community means you call the rocky peaks and sharp cliffs of the mountainside home. Those who've grown up in the mountains often consider themselves hardier than most–likely because they've lived among the most dangerous terrain many continents have to offer. Those who are Ridgeborne grow up scrambling and climbing, making them particularly sure-footed and sure of will. Ridgeborne communities appear in a variety of forms, some cities carve out cliffs, others construct castles of stone, and still more live in small homes on wind-blown peaks.

Ridgeborne individuals are often: bold, hardy, indomitable, loyal, reserved, stubborn.

Community Feature

Steady: You have advantage on traversing dangerous cliffs and ledges, navigating harsh environments, and survival knowledge. Also gain +1 to your Armor Score.

Seaborne

Being part of a Seaborne community means you grew up on or near a large body of water. Seaborne communities are built, both physically and culturally, around the specific waters they call home—some of these groups live along the shore, constructing ports for locals and travelers alike. These harbors may function as both centers of commerce, tourist attractions, or even just a safe place to lay down one's head after weeks of travel. Other Seaborne live on the water in small boats or large ships, with the idea of "home" meaning a ship and its crew, rather than any one landmass. No matter their exact location, Seaborne communities are closely tied to the ocean tides and the creatures that inhabit them. Seaborne learn to fish at a young age, and will train from birth to be able to hold their breath and swim in even the most tumultuous waters. Individuals from these groups are highly sought after for sailing abilities, and many will become captains of vessels, either within their own community, working for another, or even at the helm of a powerful naval operation.

Seaborne are often: candid, cooperative, exuberant, fierce, resolute, weathered.

Community Feature

Safe Harbor: Once per session, when you take a short or long rest, you may take one additional downtime action.

Slyborne

Being part of a Slyborne community means growing up in the underbelly of society, surrounded by criminals and con artists. Members of Slyborne communities are brought together by their position in society; they operate outside the law. Commonly, these communities are comprised of those with a array of skills: forging, thievery, smuggling, and violence. Among the Slyborne there are a variety of social classes, including those who have garnered vast wealth and influence, and others without a coin to their name. To the outside eye, the Slyborne may seem like ruffians with no loyalty, but these communities possess some of the strictest codes of honor which, when broken, may result in a terrifying end for the perpetrator.

Slyborne individuals are often: clever, formidable, menacing, unflinching, shrewd, tenacious.

Community Feature

Scoundrel: You have advantage on any rolls where you're negotiating with criminals, detecting lies, or finding a safe place to hide.

Underborne

Being part of an Underborne community means that you're from a subterranean society. Many Underborne live right beneath the cities and villages of other groups, and others live much deeper; and these communities range from small family groups in burrows, to massive metropolises in caverns of stone. Among many groups, Underborne are recognized for their incredible boldness and skill, acknowledging this community as highly capable of feats of architecture and engineering. Members of this community are regularly hired for their bravery, as even the least daring Underborne citizen is likely to encounter a number of underground beasts in their daily lives, and learning to dispatch such creatures is common practice amongst these societies. Because of the danger of their environment, many Underborne communities develop non-verbal languages that may prove equally useful on the surface.

Underborne individuals are often: composed, elusive, indomitable, innovative, unpretentious, resourceful.

Community Feature

Low Light Living: When you are in an area with low light or heavy shadow, you have advantage on rolls to hide, investigate, or perceive details within that area.

Wanderborne

Being part of a Wanderborne community means that you were raised as a nomad, not having a permanent home but experiencing a wide variety of cultures. Unlike many communities that are defined by their locale, Wanderborne are defined by their peripatetic lifestyle. Because of their frequent migration, Wanderborne are likely to put less value on the accumulation of material possessions in favor of acquiring information, skills and connections. While some Wanderborne are allied by a common ethos, such as a religion or set of political or economic values, others come together after shared tragedy, such as the loss of their home or lands. No matter the reason, the dangers posed by life on the road mean that Wanderborne are known for their unwavering loyalty.

Wanderborne are often: magnanimous, mirthful, inscrutable, reliable, savvy, unorthodox.

Community Feature

Nomadic Pack: Add a Nomadic Pack to your inventory. Once per session, you may spend a Hope to reach into this pack and pull out a common item that is useful in this situation. Work with the GM to figure out what this item is.

Wildborne

Being part of a Wildborne community means you were raised by a clan deep within the forest. While some construct their lodging high in the branches of trees themselves, still others establish their homes on the ground beneath the canopies. Wildborne are defined by their dedication to the conservation of their homelands, and many such communities have strong religious and cultural ties to the plants that thrive among them. It is a hallmark of Wildborne groups to disturb the natural environment as little as possible when constructing their villages or cities, and it's not uncommon for them to remain fairly reclusive and hidden within their woodland homes.

Wildborne individuals are often: hardy, loyal, nurturing, reclusive, sagacious, vibrant.

Community Feature

Lightfoot: Your movement is naturally silent. Take advantage on any action rolls you make to move without being heard. Spend a Hope to also grant this ability to an ally in very close range of you.

Additional Player Tools

Adjusting Abilities and Spells

There are spells and abilities in Daggerheart that designate the use of particular assets and senses including sight, sound, touch, and movement. Like players, characters may be blind, deaf or mute; they may have disabilities or limb differences; or any number of unique qualities that occur within individuals.

Just as there is no set style for weapons combat, there is no set style of casting within Daggerheart. No spell requires spoken language or specific motions. For example, sign language is equally viable for a Wordsmith Bard as any spoken language.

If you read a domain ability or spell, or other instructions in the game, and notice that the directions on a card do not apply to your character (For example the requirement "a target you can see" cast by a blind PC) work with your GM to adjust the requirements of the spell. To execute the directions of the card might:

1. Utilize another sense ("a target you can hear").
2. Specify the mechanical range ("within close range").
3. Add narrative character details (the PC is helped in perceiving a target through magical means or use of an aid).
4. Define World Building (the Mortal Realm is constructed in a way that is more accessible for disabled characters).

Modifying spells, abilities, or other aspects of Daggerheart also extends to supporting the enjoyment of everyone at the table. We invite you to adjust the flavor of cards based on the 'Lines and Veils' established by the group. For example, "Conjure Swarm" may be uncomfortable for a player who has veiled small bugs, but they might still want to utilize the spell in their Druid character build. Discuss other creatures or objects the PC can conjure such as: flower petals, small birds, or even a specific bug (like a butterfly) that feels comfortable for them. All players, including the GM, should abide by the customizations made to accommodate one another.

VISION IMPAIRNESS/BLINDNESS

SEEING ANIMALS

SEEING ORBS

VISION MASK

SENSING CANES

WHEELCHAIRS

WALKING CHAIRS

STURDY METAL LEG
• CAN HANDLE MORE EXCESSIVE USE
• DIFFICULT TO BREAK

DECORATIVE WOODEN LEG
• NOT FOR EXCESSIVE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
• MADE FOR CASUAL SETTING
• LIGHTER AND USUALLY MORE COMFORTABLE

STRONG BIT PLIABLE METAL

SPECIAL FLOWERS CAN BE GROWN IN EARS THAT PICK UP VIBRATIONS AND ALLOW A DEAF INDIVIDUAL TO "HEAR" SOUNDS BY SENSING THE WAY THE FLOWER REACTS TO NOISES.

BECAUSE RIBBETS TEND TO FIND HOPPING MORE COMFORTABLE THAN WALKING, LEG PROSTHETICS ARE MADE TO BE SPRINGY AND COMFORTABLE FOR JUMPING IN DAILY LIFE

Playing Physically Disabled Characters

Section in progress
[Combat Wheelchair coming soon!]

Playing Blind, Deaf, or Mute Characters

Section in progress

PART TWO

Playing An Adventure

Playing an Adventure

In this chapter, we'll cover what you need to know as a player in order to start your adventure. This includes the core mechanics, how combat works, some optional rules to consider adding to your game, and more.

Flow of the Game

In a session of Daggerheart, the players go back and forth describing what their characters do in the fictional circumstances the GM lays out for them, building on each other's ideas and working together to tell an exciting story. The mechanics of the game help to mediate this conversation, providing structure to the discussion and a way to resolve moments where it's unclear what will happen next.

One of the most important aspects of this conversation is asking questions; in Daggerheart, this should go both ways. The players will often ask clarifying questions about the scene: "Are there any guards outside the door?" or "Do you think I can jump across the gap safely?" or "What kind of weapon are they holding?" The GM usually either provides the answer or tells the player to roll to determine the answer. But the GM should also ask questions of the players, and build upon those answers to create the fiction: "How do you sneak around this building so carefully?" or "What does the camp you've set up here look like?" or "You've found a way to scramble up the wall safely—what was here that made it easier than you anticipated?" This back and forth allows for a collaborative conversation where everyone has a chance to contribute to the fiction in a meaningful way.

For those familiar with roleplaying games, the flow of the game is probably something that comes second-nature by now, but for those new to this kind of experience, it may not. Below is a basic look at the procedure of play; the gameplay loop that drives every session.

1. **GM Narrates Details:** The GM gives the players the details of a scene, describing the surroundings, dangers, and any important elements the characters would notice immediately here; what they see, smell, hear, feel, etc.
2. **Players and GM Ask Questions:** The players ask questions to clarify the scene, gathering details to help them take appropriate action. The GM also asks questions of the players to provide added detail to the scene and open the world to be influenced by their perspectives.
3. **Players and GM Answer Questions:** The players should respond to these questions by providing information about their characters and the world that the GM can build on. The GM should respond to these questions by giving the players any information they can obtain easily and without complication. If they want something more than what is readily available, the GM will inform them what they need to do to get it.
4. **Choose and Resolve Actions:** The information the players receive will often spur them into taking action. If it does, the GM will help facilitate the resolution of these actions, and everyone will work together to evolve the fiction based on the outcome. If it doesn't, the GM should provide more detailed information, action, or consequences until it does.
5. **Repeat Cycle:** Because the scene has now changed in some way, this process repeats from the beginning.

Example Interaction

Here's an example of how a GM and player might interact to progress a scene:

Emerson's character has just been caught trying to pickpocket an important letter off of a noble in a busy market square in a medium-sized town.

"How many guards did you say this lordling had?" Emerson asks.

"Two right there with him, and you suspect that there's another two out of uniform back a bit in the crowd."

"Great. I'm by an alley, right? I want to back off and find a place to climb up to the rooftop before anyone can catch me."

"Sure thing," the GM says. Based on the situation, they decide the PC doesn't need to roll to accomplish what they want to do: "You're fast and the noble noticed you rather than the guards, so you can scramble up without a roll. The guards will be following you, though, and once you're all up on the roof, they're going to pull their crossbows and start shooting."

Emerson asks, "How close are the buildings here? Could I run and leap across to the next building's roof?"

"Not that far apart," the GM says. "Certainly not any wider than what you're used to from growing up in Downside. That'd be an Agility roll to escape across the rooftops. But heads up-if you don't succeed here, you'll probably take some serious damage from the fall. It's a long way down." the GM warns him. Emerson has a +2 in Agility, and also chooses to spend a Hope to use his +1 experience "Scoundrel" here to make the leap.

"I know it's dangerous, but I can guarantee I've done this kind of jump before." He gathers 3 of his Character Tokens to represent the "Agility" and "Scoundrel" bonuses, then rolls his Duality Dice and the tokens together. The Hope die lands on a 10 and the Fear die lands on 4. He combines those values together (14) and also adds his 3 Character Tokens for a total of 17. Because his Hope die rolled higher than Fear, Emerson tells the GM: "I rolled a 17 with Hope!".

The GM nods. 17 is higher than the 15 difficulty they had in mind, and a success with Hope means no meaningful consequences for the action. "That's more than enough to escape these guards. They're armored and trying to take shots, but none of them get close to you—and they're not good enough at jumping to risk a fall. By the time you're two blocks away, you've completely lost them. Make sure to take Hope for that roll. But now you're farther away from the noble and his letter you were trying to nab. What do you do?"

What Can I Do On My Turn?

The game has no "turns" in the traditional sense; players don't have a set amount of actions they can take or things they can do before play passes to someone else. Instead, everyone should follow the fiction to figure out what happens next, bouncing around the table to whoever it makes sense to spotlight in that moment. Generally, players in the spotlight will have the chance to describe their **move**—what their character is doing in the scene. If something they describe requires a roll to see whether it works, then play pauses while a roll is made to determine how things play out.

Certain roll results and other situations can prompt the GM to make a **GM move**. These are specific types of actions the GM takes to advance the story. For a full explanation of GM moves, see "Making Moves" in part 3.

Since Daggerheart relies on a flexible back-and-forth conversation between the GM and players, there are no "combat rounds" to worry about. However, in combat scenarios that have the potential to last more than a few rolls, or in any scene where moment-to-moment gameplay becomes important to track, you can use the Action Tracker (see "Flow of Combat").

Core Mechanics

This section covers the core mechanics of Daggerheart and how to utilize them as a player at the table. However, part 1 contains rules for using your domain cards, class, subclass, ancestry, and community, and the "Equipment" section near the end of part 2 presents rules on different types of weapons and armor.

Duality Dice

The core dice in Daggerheart are a pair of d12 dice called **Duality Dice**. These d12s are different colors, one representing Hope and the other representing Fear. Each player chooses two colors of dice that embody these concepts for them, using them any time they make an action roll (see "Action Rolls") during the game. Your Duality Dice don't need to be the same two colors as anyone else's around the table, but they do need to be easily recognizable from each other at a glance.

Example: Kat looks at their choices of d12 dice and decides on a blue die to represent Hope and a red die to represent Fear. Rowan looks at her dice and instead chooses a yellow d12 die to represent Hope and a purple d12 die to represent Fear. Dani thinks about using a black d12 with red inking as the Fear die and a black d12 die with white inking as her Hope die, but decides to go with an orange d12 as her Hope die instead so that it's easier to identify.

The Duality Dice represent the way the world pushes the character back or guides them forward throughout the story. Regardless of whether you succeed or fail on an action roll, your Duality roll will influence how the scene evolves.

Rolling Hope and Fear

Hope and Fear represent the duality of the world beyond the characters, and how the world around them impacts the action they're attempting. One of your Duality Dice is your **Hope die**, and the other is your **Fear die**.

Hope. When you roll your Duality Dice and the Hope die rolls higher than the Fear die, you **"roll with Hope."** When this happens, mark one of the Hope slots on your character sheet, up to a maximum of five. You might also gain Hope from spells, abilities, or other things that happen in the game.

Fear. When you roll your Duality Dice and the Fear die rolls higher than the Hope die, you **"roll with Fear."** When this happens, even if you succeed on your action roll, there are consequences or complications that come from it.

Critical Successes

Whenever you make a Duality roll, if both dice roll the same number, you automatically roll a **Critical Success**, even if you would've otherwise failed because the total is lower than your roll's difficulty (see "Roll Difficulty"). This also counts as a roll with Hope—but not only do you gain a Hope, you also clear a Stress.

Using Hope

Once you've gained Hope and recorded it on your character sheet, you can spend it to power special abilities (erasing it from your character sheet when you do). You can only hold up to five Hope at any given time, so you don't want to save it for too long. Hope can be used in several ways: to **Help an Ally**, to **Utilize an Experience**, or to **Activate a Hope Feature**.

Help an Ally

You can spend one Hope to help an ally who is making an action where you could feasibly aid them. When you do this, describe how you're helping and roll a d6 advantage die (see "Advantage and Disadvantage"). They can add the result to their action roll. If more than one PC wants to help an ally, each spends a Hope to roll a d6 advantage die, and the highest result among all those advantage dice is added to the action roll.

Utilize an Experience

You can spend a Hope to utilize one of your relevant Experiences on an action roll, adding its modifier to the dice results. If more than one Experience could apply, you can spend an additional Hope for each Experience you want to add to your result.

Activate a Hope Feature

Spells and abilities may also allow (or require) you to spend Hope to activate certain effects. A **Hope Feature** is any effect that asks you to spend Hope to activate it. If the text instructs you to "spend Hope," that means you must immediately spend the specified number of Hope, or you can't trigger the Hope Feature.

When using a Hope Feature, if you already rolled with Hope as the higher Duality Die for that action, you can just spend the Hope from that die instead of erasing a Hope from your character sheet. Otherwise, you'll need to spend Hope you've stored from earlier rolls to activate the effect.

Unless an effect states otherwise, you can't spend Hope multiple times on the same spell or ability to increase or repeat its effects. For example, if a feature says you can "spend a Hope to add 1d6 to the damage roll", you can't spend two Hope and add 2d6 to the damage roll.

Tip: Some effects only trigger "on a success with Hope". This doesn't mean you can spend Hope on a successful roll with Fear to get the effect; it instead means the effect only takes place when you roll with Hope and you succeed on your action roll. On this kind of effect, you don't have to spend Hope to activate it—it just happens as long as the conditions of the roll are met.

Using Fear

As a player, rolling with Fear doesn't mean your action roll failed (see "Action Rolls")—but you'll face some type of complication. For example, you might only learn partial information, face a strike from the enemy you just attacked, or encounter an unexpected danger. If you also failed on the action roll where you rolled Fear, you'll instead face major consequences or complications.

When you roll with Fear, you don't record it on your character sheet. Instead, the GM not only determines which complications result from your Fear roll, but they also collect a Fear. The GM can later spend this Fear on effects such as powering adversary and environment moves (see "Fear" in part 3).

Damage Thresholds and Hit Points

Hit Points represent the physical injuries and discomforts experienced by a character during their adventures. Your available **Hit Points**, sometimes called HP, are determined by your class. When you take damage, you mark between 1 and 3 HP, representing that you've lost that much health.

However, each class also has a certain **Damage Threshold**, indicating how much damage you can endure before marking a Hit Point. The dark bars in the "Hit Points & Stress" section of your character sheet show the three tiers of damage you can take: Severe, Major, and Minor.

For example, a Level 1 Guardian starts with the following thresholds and Hit Points:

HIT POINTS & STRESS

Start at MINOR 6, MAJOR 11, and SEVERE 16.

6 ◄ MINOR — Mark 1 HP
11 ◄ MAJOR — Mark 2 HP
16 ◄ SEVERE — Mark 3 HP

HP ☐☐☐☐☐☐

STRESS ☐☐☐☐☐☐
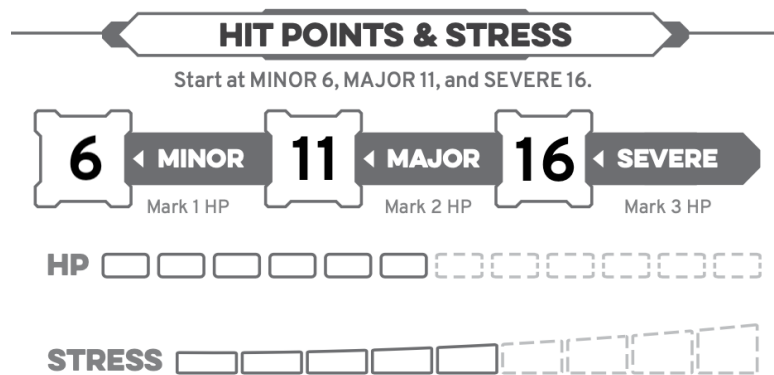
Marking Hit Points

When the GM tells you to take damage (see "Damage Rolls"), compare that number to your thresholds, and mark Hit Points depending on the tier:

- **Severe Damage** marks 3 HP.
- **Major Damage** marks 2 HP.
- **Minor Damage** marks 1 HP.
- **Damage below Minor** marks 1 Stress (see "Stress"), but no HP.
- **Damage of 0** or below marks no HP or Stress.

If you ever mark your final available Hit Point, you must immediately make a death move (see "Death").

Example: In the image above, a Guardian's incoming damage is Severe if it's 16 or higher, and they mark 3 Hit Points. If the damage is 11 or higher (but below 16), the damage is Major and they mark 2 Hit Points. If the damage is 6 or higher (but below 11), the damage is Minor and they mark 1 Hit Point. If the damage is below 6, they don't take any damage and instead mark a single point of Stress.

Clearing Hit Points

Any time you take Downtime actions (see "Downtime"), you have the opportunity to clear some of your Hit Points (and Stress).

Additionally, as you level up your character, you'll be able to permanently increase both your Damage Thresholds as well as the amount of Hit Points (and Stress) you can take, making your character more resilient against incoming attacks.

Optional Rule: Additional Damage Threshold

To make the game more dangerous, the table may implement a rule that if the incoming damage on an attack roll is ever double or more a character's Severe Threshold, the target marks an additional Hit Point.

This would mean, using the example above, an attack of 32 damage (or more) would deal 4 Hit Points to the Guardian.

Stress

Stress represents the mental and physical strain put on your character during their adventures. You can sometimes spend Stress to affect the narrative; when you do, consider the burden your character knowingly accepts. Does your anxiety increase as you use a new tactic in a high-stakes negotiation? Do you accept the impact of witnessing horrors in order to dive back into danger and save an innocent? Are you willing to take minor abrasions to fatally wound your foe?

As with Hit Points, when you take Downtime actions (see "Downtime"), you have the opportunity to clear some of your Stress. Additionally, when you gain levels, you'll be able to increase the amount of Stress you can withstand.

Stress from Damage

You always mark **Stress** when you take damage that's below your Minor threshold but above 0 (see "[Marking Hit Points](#)"). This reflects the impact on your stamina, both physically and psychologically, as you weather the blows, fight to stay on your feet, or maneuver treacherous situations.

If you ever can't mark a Stress slot because your slots are already full, you must instead mark one Hit Point.

Stress from Complications

In addition to marking Stress when you take tiny amounts of damage, your GM can also inflict Stress as the complication or consequence of an action, especially when a roll doesn't go as well as it could have. For example, you might mark Stress when complications result from having a difficult conversation, clashing swords with a worthy foe, or committing an act of incredible bravery.

The GM might also give you the option of marking Stress to avoid an outcome.

Stress from Moves

You might be able to mark Stress to perform certain moves that call for it. Unless otherwise noted, you can't spend more than one stress to apply an effect more than once on a move. For example, if an ability lets you spend stress to add 1d8 to a damage roll, you can't spend 3 stress and add 3d8 instead.

They cannot use any move that requires them to mark stress if they don't have any stress to mark. If a player is ever required to mark stress and their stress slots are full, they must instead mark a Hit Point.

You can't use an effect that costs Stress if you don't have any Stress available to mark.

Action Rolls

In each scene, the GM and players go back and forth describing what happens. When you describe an action your character is performing where the outcome is in question, if both the success and failure of that action is interesting to the story, the GM usually calls for an action roll to determine how that moment unfolds. However, if an action would either be impossible to perform, or it's easy enough to pull off without complication, there is no need to roll—you already know the outcome!

When the GM (or your spell, attack, or ability) asks you to make an **action roll**, you'll do so by rolling your two Duality Dice. These 12-sided dice embody the way the world's chance, luck, and fate play a part in the story. Each action roll follows four basic steps, which are detailed later in this section:

Step 1: Pick a Character Trait. Ask the GM what Character Trait best applies to the roll, and they will set a difficulty for the roll (either openly or privately, at their discretion) based on the details of the scene.
Step 2: Add Extra Dice and Modifiers. Decide if any Experience or other modifiers also apply, and grab any character tokens, advantage/disadvantage dice, or other dice as needed.
Step 3: Roll the Dice. Roll your Duality Dice, any additional dice, and your character tokens. Total their result, telling the GM the total and which Duality Die rolled higher. "I got a 15 with Fear!"
Step 4: Resolve the Situation. Work together to resolve the outcome of your actions.

Step 1: Pick a Character Trait

When the GM calls for an action roll, your character is usually already starting to perform your move. Depending on the situation and how you've described what you're trying to do, the GM might tell you what character trait to use, or your move might require you to roll using a certain trait (see "Trait Rolls"). Other times, the GM might ask you for more information to help decide: "You want to convince this guard to let you through. How are you speaking to them? Are you trying to intimidate them? To trick them?"

Sometimes, more than one trait makes sense—in this case, the GM might ask you which trait fits best, give you a choice between two, or make a judgment call based on the situation at hand. *"As you tell him about the important message you have for the king, I need you to make a roll here to determine whether he can tell you're lying or not. I'd say Instinct is probably what best applies, does that sound right to you?"*

Unless the move you're making requires a certain trait, feel free to suggest one and describe why it's a good match for what you're doing. However, the GM always has final say over which trait applies.

Roll Difficulty

When you decide to make an action roll, the GM always sets a **difficulty**—the number you need to reach when you roll. This number is based on the situation and how effective your approach might be.

The GM can choose to share this number or keep it to themselves. Even if they don't tell you the difficulty, they should make any potential consequences of your actions clear (unless the consequences aren't something your character would reasonably be aware of). For example, "You're putting yourself in melee with this guy, you might take a hit in return," or "If you fail this jump, you might not make it to the other side."

Step 2: Add Extra Dice and Modifiers

Once you know which trait to use, it's time to figure out if any other dice or modifiers apply to the roll. Set aside any dice you need, such as the following:

Duality Dice. You roll your Hope and Fear die with every action roll.

Advantage or Disadvantage. If you have advantage or disadvantage on the roll (see "Advantage and Disadvantage"), set aside that d6 for your roll. Especially if you're rolling with disadvantage, make sure your disadvantage die is a distinct color, so you can remember which die to subtract from the result.

Class Features, Subclass Cards, and Domain Cards. Some class features allow you to add extra dice to your roll (or allow another character to give you a die). For example, a Bard can give you a Rally die, which you can add to an action, reaction, or damage roll of your choice. Similarly, some of your subclass and domain cards might grant you a bonus die. Set these aside for your roll.

Other Dice. Occasionally, other effects might give you an extra die.

Then count the modifiers that apply to your action roll, setting aside that many character tokens to help you keep track (see "Counting Character Tokens" below). Modifiers can include the following:

Chosen Trait. Add the modifier for whichever trait you and your GM chose for this roll.
Experience. If you have an Experience (or several) that you think applies to the situation, describe how your Experience helps your chance of success, then spend one Hope per Experience to add its modifier to your roll. The GM may ask you for more information to justify that Experience, but you have final say (within reason) over whether your Experience applies.
Class Features, Subclass Cards, and Domain Cards. Sometimes these grant you a modifier to your roll, so keep an eye out.
Other Bonuses or Penalties. Add any other bonuses or penalties, such as from the GM, the items you have equipped, and other sources.

Tip: If you consistently use the same Experience on every roll, it's very likely the GM will require you to narrow the scope of your Experience or change it altogether. The purpose of Experience is to reflect the way your character has specialized in something important, not to give you a bonus to all your actions.

Counting Character Tokens

Once you declare what modifiers you're applying to your action roll, grab that many character tokens (see "What Do You Need to Play" in the introduction).

Tokens are never rolled for a random value; they are simply +1 counters you add to your hand to aid in counting your results. Before adding them to a roll, figure out the sum of all of your modifiers, then take that many tokens. For example, if you have a -1 to Agility and a +2 modifier from an Experience you're utilizing, you have a +1 total modifier to the roll, so set aside one token to represent that.

Tip: Sometimes, your total modifier on a roll might be negative; in this case, you can still use the tokens, but remember they'll signify the number you need to subtract from the result, not add.

Step 3: Roll the Dice

Once you've gathered all your dice and tokens from step 2, roll them all at the same time. Counting each token as 1, add all your tokens and dice rolls together (keeping an eye out for numbers you need to subtract, such as your disadvantage die).

Then tell the GM the total number you rolled, along with which Duality Die rolled higher—"I rolled a 15 with Fear!"

Tip: When an effect lets you choose whether to add dice to an action roll (such as choosing to use the Bard's Rally die), you must roll them at the same time as your other dice, rather than waiting to see the numbers on the other dice.

Step 4: Resolve the Situation

Each time you make an action roll, the scene changes in some way. The GM always describes how the world reacts to the action that's been taken, but depending on what your action result is, the situation changes differently.

If your total meets or exceeds the difficulty set by the GM, the action **succeeds**—you get what you want. If the total is below the difficulty, the action **fails**—you don't get what you want—but with one exception! As described in the "Duality Dice" section, if your Duality Dice both roll the same number, you've rolled a Critical Success (even if your total wasn't enough to meet the difficulty).

Based on your roll total, the GM uses the following guide to decide how the narrative moves forward:

On a critical success, you get what you want and a little extra. Take a Hope and clear a Stress. If you made an attack roll, you'll also deal extra damage equal to the maximum value of your damage dice (see "Calculating Damage").

On a success with Hope, you pull it off well and get what you want. Take a Hope.

On a success with Fear, you get what you want, but it comes with a cost or consequence. You might take damage, get limited information, attract danger, etc. Additionally, the GM takes Fear.

On a failure with Hope, things don't go to plan. You probably don't get what you want and must face the consequences. Take a Hope.

On a failure with Fear, things go very poorly. You probably don't get what you want, and there is a major consequence or complication because of it. Additionally, the GM takes Fear.

After announcing your roll's result, always look to the GM to find out what happens next. (See the GM section "Making Moves" in part 3 for details on adjudicating dice results and making GM moves.)

Story Is Consequence

In Daggerheart, every time you roll the dice, the scene changes in some way. There is no such thing as a roll where "nothing happens," because the fiction should constantly be evolving based on the successes and failures of the characters.

A "failure" should never mean that a character simply doesn't get what they want, especially when that would result in a moment of inaction. Every action the players take should yield an active outcome—something that changes the situation they're in.

For example, if you fail a roll to pick a lock, it's not just that the door doesn't open. On a failure with Hope, it might mean you can hear the rumble of footsteps coming down the hall behind you—the enemies you narrowly escaped before are getting close, and you're going to have to act quickly to find a way through. On a failure with Fear, the door might be magically warded to keep thieves away, causing an arcane alarm to trigger. This also applies to a "Success with Fear," where you might succeed in unlocking the door, but opening it reveals an enemy you didn't know was guarding it. These consequences are what make the game interesting and drive forward the adventure you're all on together.

Example Action Roll

Sara's Rogue, Isabella, is trying to run across a narrow parapet to stop the mage that is raining spellfire down on her party. The GM tells Sara to roll with Agility against a difficulty of 15. Isabella's Agility is 2, so Sara rolls the Duality Dice, adds them together, then adds two tokens (representing her +2 modifier from Agility) to get her total.

Here are examples of the five possible results of her roll:

Failure with Fear

Sara rolls 3 on the Hope die and 6 on the Fear die, plus 2 from Agility for a result of 11 with Fear. The GM takes Fear because of the result with Fear, then describes the mage responding quickly to Isabella's maneuver, making an attack roll. It is successful, so the mage knocks her off the parapet with a blast of magical fire and deals damage.

Failure with Hope

Sara rolls 6 on the Hope die and 3 on the Fear die, plus 2 from Agility. That's an 11 with Hope. 11 isn't enough to make it across safely, so the GM describes the mage seeing Isabella coming and makes an attack, which succeeds. The mage's blast knocks Isabella off-balance, leaving her dangling from the parapet, her progress stalled. Isabella gains a Hope, but her friends are still in the line of fire.

Success with Fear

Sara rolls 5 on the Hope die and a 9, plus 2 from Agility. That's a 16 with Fear, a success. The GM takes Fear because of the Fear die rolling higher, then asks Sara to describe how she races across the parapet, dodging the mage's blasts. After her description, the GM says that once Isabella has crossed, she faces her foe head-on, blocking them from attacking the rest of the party. But then the mage reaches out with magic and crumbles the parapet behind Isabella, leaving her trapped. At least the mage isn't attacking her friends, right?

Success with Hope

Sara rolls 10 on the Hope die and 6 on the Fear die, plus 2 from Agility. That's an 18 with Hope, a success. She immediately gains a Hope, then the GM asks her to describe what it looks like as Isabella races across the parapet and interrupts the mage's assault on the party. Since Sara rolled a success with Hope, the GM asks what the players want to do next.

Critical Success

Sara rolls 8 on the Hope die and 8 on the Fear die. That's a critical success! Isabella immediately gains a Hope and clears a Stress. The GM offers Sara a choice of two extras – she can deal damage to the mage or gain advantage on the next roll against the mage. Sara describes how Isabella races across the parapet and lands a telling blow on the mage, not just stopping their attacks on the party, but dealing her weapon damage as well. Since a critical success counts as a roll with Hope, the GM asks the players what they want to do next.

Special Action Rolls

Many action rolls just use the above rules. However, some situations require special types of action rolls—these use the following rules.

Trait Rolls

A **trait roll** is an action roll that specifically calls for a certain character trait to be used. These rolls often appear on Domain Cards, and say something like "Roll With Presence" or "Roll with Agility (12)." If there is a number in parentheses after the trait, that is the difficulty you must meet in order to succeed. If there is no number, the difficulty is up to the GM to decide.

Though a trait roll requires you to roll using that trait modifier, you can still add your Experience and other bonuses to the roll.

Attack Rolls

When you make an action roll with the intent to do harm to an enemy, you're making an **attack roll**. Reference the weapon or spell you're using for the attack to determine what trait it uses. We'll talk more about spellcast rolls in the next section, but for a standard physical or magic weapon attack, use the character trait the weapon requires (see "[Equipment](#)"), as well as any Experience or other modifiers that are applicable, and resolve it as you would a normal action roll.

If you succeed, make a Damage Roll (see "[Damage Rolls](#)") to determine how much harm you do to the target.

By default, each attack roll can only target one enemy. But if a spell or ability allows you to target multiple enemies, roll once and apply that result to all of the enemies the attack can hit. If the roll meets or exceeds the difficulty of any of those enemies, the attack is successful against that target (but not necessarily against other targets).

Unarmed Combat Rolls

When making an attack without a weapon—for example, a punch or kick—make an attack roll as usual. This attack often uses Strength or Finesse, but could be any trait depending on how you describe the attack. On a success, your damage dice are a number of d4s equal to half your proficiency (rounded up). All unarmed attacks deal physical damage.

Spellcast Rolls

Spellcast rolls are a type of action roll that's used when you're creating significant magical effects (often via a Domain Card). These are called for like this: "Spellcast Roll" or "Spellcast Roll (14)". Instead of referring to a specific stat on the character sheet, these rolls use the Spellcast stat of your class (which you can find on the Subclass Foundation card).

As with Trait Rolls, if there is a number in parentheses, that is the difficulty they must pass in order for it to succeed.

If a spellcast roll is intended to damage a target, it's also considered an attack roll.

You generally need to be using a specific spell to make a spellcast roll—you can't just make up magic effects (like forming a bridge out of vines) that aren't on your character sheet or cards. However, at the GM's discretion, they might allow you to creatively apply an existing spell in an unusual way. And you can always flavor your magic to match the kind of character you're playing, but that flavor shouldn't give you access to effects you wouldn't normally be able to perform with your spells.

A few examples:

If a Sorcerer is trying to reach a cliff high above him and doesn't have a spell or ability that lets him get there, he wouldn't be able to just make a generic Spellcast roll to have magic lift him up into the air and fly him to the cliff. He would need a specific spell or ability that would provide him that kind of magic.

If a Wizard wants their Rune Circle spell they just picked up at Level 3 to erupt from their wand in sparks, form into a galloping, flaming stallion that circles them-- and this is the reason why the Rune Circle gives them protection from enemies, that's awesome and should be highly encouraged. But if they wanted it to do extra damage to an enemy because of this narration, that wouldn't normally be permitted.

Any time you cast a spell, the text tells you when the effect expires. It might be temporary (in which case the GM can spend Fear to end the spell), at the next short or long rest, etc. If the spell doesn't note an expiration, it stays up until you choose to end it. If you ever want to end a spell earlier than when it would normally expire, you can always choose to do so.

If you ever want to make a Spellcast roll, but you don't have a Foundation that gives you the needed Spellcast ability, you won't be able to make the roll.

Tag Team Rolls

Each player can choose one time per session to spend three Hope and initiate a **Tag Team move** with another PC. When you do, work with your chosen partner to describe how your two characters combine their actions in a unique and exciting way. Both you and your partner make separate action rolls, but before resolving the roll's outcome, choose one of the rolls to apply for both of your results.

If you Tag Team on an attack roll and it succeeds, you both roll damage as usual, then add it together to determine the damage dealt.

Damage Rolls

When you succeed on an attack roll against an enemy, you'll then make a **damage roll** to determine how much damage—and thus what tier of Hit Points—your attack inflicts on that target.

The **damage dice** used to make a damage roll generally are determined by the weapon, spell, or ability you're using to make the attack. If the attack is using a weapon, the weapon's damage dice appear in the "Active Weapons" section of your character sheet. If the attack is coming from a spell on a domain card or class feature, it details the damage dice within the text of the move.

When striking with a weapon, you'll generally roll a number of your weapon's Damage Dice equal to your Proficiency at the top of your "Active Weapons" section (see "Using Weapons"). When striking with a move that does damage (such as a spell), the text of the move will tell you what kind of damage dice should be rolled instead.

Any time you roll damage dice and the text tells you the type of die but not the number of dice to roll (such as "do d8 physical damage"), roll a number of those dice equal to your proficiency.

Calculating Damage

After rolling your damage dice, add all their values together then add any modifiers to determine the result. The GM will mark the corresponding Hit Points based on that damage.

Tip: There's a difference in this game between damage and hit points. Damage is the result of your damage roll, including your damage dice and modifiers. Hit Points reflect how hard that damage affects the creature who's taking it; the number of Hit Points a creature marks depends on factors such as their Damage Threshold, armor, resistances, and immunities.

Damage without Modifiers

Some damage rolls just tell you to roll a certain number and type of die, without any modifiers (plus or minus signs) after it. For example, "1d8 physical damage." In this case, simply roll the necessary number of dice and add the values together.

Example: Kat makes a successful longsword strike with their Guardian against a target using an attack roll of 16. They have a weapon proficiency of 2 and their longsword's damage dice are d8's, so they roll 2d8 and get a 3 and a 7, for 10 total damage.

Damage with Modifiers

Some damage rolls have modifiers on them, like 2d6+2 or 3d8+5. When this is the case, you roll the dice, add their values together, then add the modifier to that total. (This modifier is not affected by weapon proficiency.)

Example: Emerson makes a successful attack with their Improved Shortbow, which deals d8+2 damage. They have a weapon proficiency of 3, so they roll 3d10 damage dice. The results are 7, 5, and 6, totaling 18. They then add the damage dice modifier of +2, and deal 20 points of damage to the target.

Critical Successes and Damage

If your attack roll is a Critical Success, roll damage as usual, then add extra damage equal to the maximum potential value of all your damage dice added together (as if they all rolled the highest number possible).

Example: Rowan makes an attack roll against a target with her shortbow and gets two 7's on the Duality Dice—a critical success. She has a proficiency of 2, so she rolls her bow's damage dice of 2d8, and they land on a 4 and an 8. Because it's a critical success, she automatically does 16 damage (the maximum potential roll on 2d8) plus the additional 12 she rolled, bringing her total to 28 points of damage.

Multiple Sources of Damage

If for any reason damage should be applied more than once to a creature on your turn, that damage should always be totaled together before applying it to the damage thresholds.

Damage Types and Resistance

Sometimes, other circumstances affect how much damage a creature takes. Use the following rules to determine whether special circumstances affect a damage roll.

Damage Types

There are two **damage types** a weapon, spell, or ability can inflict: physical damage and magic damage. Damage types can affect how damage is dealt or received. For example, a spell might double any magic damage, a condition might make a character resistant to physical damage, or a type of enemy might be immune to a certain type of damage all together.

Physical damage represents a hit primarily through mundane physical contact, something that is usually done without the aid of magic. Most standard blades and bows do physical damage.

Magic damage represents a hit that is primarily delivered through magical means. Most spells that deal harm to a target do magic damage.

Direct Damage

Direct damage is physical or magic damage that automatically hits a target. When a PC or GM deals direct damage, they don't have to make an attack roll to hit.

Resistance & Immunity

Some abilities, spells, items, or other effects in the game might limit the amount of damage being done to a player through resistance or immunity. The text will usually specify whether this effect applies to either Physical or Magic. If it does not specify, the effect applies to all types of incoming damage.

When a creature has **resistance** to an incoming type of damage, they divide the damage in half (rounding up) before applying it to their thresholds. For example, you deal 25 damage to them, they would instead only take 13 damage.

When a creature has **immunity** to an incoming type of damage, they do not take any damage or stress from the attack.

Reaction Rolls

Some moves prompt a **reaction roll**. This is a roll in response to a threat or attack, representing the character's effort to avoid or withstand the effect.

Reaction rolls generally work the same as action rolls, and rolls with Hope still give you Hope, and rolls with Fear still give the GM Fear. However, reaction rolls don't generate additional GM moves nor contribute to the action tracker, if it is in play (see "Flow of Combat"). Additionally, another character can't help you on a reaction roll—everything is happening so quickly that you'll have to handle this alone!

Making a Reaction Roll

When you make a reaction roll, the GM will tell you what trait to use, then you'll make a roll with the Duality Dice, as if it were an action roll.

Example: The GM asks Sara to make a reaction roll using Agility in order for her rogue Isabella to avoid being hit by a mage's explosive spell. Sara rolls her Duality dice, adding her Agility, and gets a 19 with Hope. It's a success! The GM asks her to describe how she avoids the attack.

NPC Reaction Rolls

GMs can also make reaction rolls when prompted by a PC's ability or spell. When they make a reaction roll for an adversary or other NPC, the GM rolls a d20 to determine whether the target succeeds or fails. If the GM meets or exceeds the target number, the NPC succeeds on the reaction and avoids the consequences. If they roll below the target number, the NPC fails on the reaction and takes the consequences.

Because NPCs don't have character traits like the PCs do, the GM may also add any of the adversary's relevant Experiences as a bonus to a creature's Reaction roll. If the adversary would be particularly weak against this effect, the GM may impose a penalty on the adversary's roll.

Example 1: Krasz the Wizard casts Fireball on a Zombie Horde and their commander, a Skeleton Knight. The difficulty on the Reaction Roll is 13. The GM rules that a Zombie Horde is particularly ill-prepared to avoid a Fireball, (being both weak against fire and unlikely to dodge given that they move slowly and are bunched up), so they impose a -3 penalty on the roll.

The GM rolls 1d20 for the Zombie Horde, getting a 13. That would have been enough except for the -3 penalty the GM declared, so they miss and take full damage. The GM rolls again for the Skeleton Knight, getting an 18, which passes the Reaction roll. The Skeleton Knight takes half damage, per the mechanics of the Fireball spell.

Example 2: Krasz is chasing a Katari Burglar and unleashes a Fireball to slow them down. The Katari Burglar has the very relevant Experience of Acrobatics +3, so the GM adds +3 to the Reaction roll.

Evasion Score

Each PC has an **evasion score**, which sets the difficulty for any roll another creature makes against them. This represents the character's ability to avoid attacks by adversaries. A character's base evasion score is determined by their Class, but can be modified by domain cards, gear, statuses, and more. Each player gets to describe what their character's evasion score represents, and should take the opportunity to be evocative and use this as another way to deepen their characterization. Your character might be good at acrobatic dodging or precise footwork, you might parry incoming blows, you might disrupt enemy attacks with well-timed counters, or you might have magical shields or enchanted objects that ward off blows. When an adversary misses an attack, this presents the player a chance to enrich the scene by describing how their character avoids the hit.

These descriptions add to the character's development and to the story the group is telling together, but the descriptions of how they avoid the attack will not create any special mechanical bonuses beyond the normal evasion rules.

Advantage and Disadvantage

Advantage on an action or reaction roll represents an opportunity, through either magical or mundane means, that the character seizes upon to have a better chance of succeeding in that action. Rolls the PCs make with advantage add a d6 advantage die to their total.

Disadvantage on an action or reaction roll represents an additional difficulty, hardship, or challenge the character faces when attempting to succeed on an action. Rolls the PCs make with disadvantage subtract a d6 disadvantage die from their total.

The GM may always choose to give a player advantage or disadvantage on a roll, if the circumstances of the fiction make sense for it.

This d6 you roll should be a special color so it's not confused with any d6s you roll for other effects; this allows you to easily spot your disadvantage d6 and subtract it from the result. However, you only need one d6 for rolling both advantage and disadvantage, because you'll never roll both at the same time: Advantage and disadvantage always cancel each other out when applying to the same roll. If, for example, the GM gives you disadvantage on a roll, but you gain advantage from a domain ability, the two cancel one another out. If you have two sources of advantage and one of disadvantage, you instead only have advantage.

The rules for advantage and disadvantage for the GM are different, and can be found under "GM Advantage and Disadvantage" in part 3.

Tip: In some scenarios, you might find yourself in a situation where you should be both adding a d6 to your roll and subtracting a d6 from your roll because of certain moves and effects in the game. If this is ever the case, it should be treated the same way as advantage and disadvantage for simplicity's sake.

Conditions

Some moves may cause a target to take a **condition**. Conditions are effects or circumstances that change the way a target may function. There are three primary conditions in the game: Vulnerable, Hidden, and Slow. These are explained in detail below, but moves may also apply other conditions and their effects are detailed within the text of the move.

Vulnerable

When an effect makes a creature take the condition **Vulnerable**, it means that they are now temporarily in a difficult position within the fiction. This might mean they are knocked over, scrambling to keep their balance, caught off-guard, or anything else that follows the narrative of the scene. The players and GM should work together to describe narratively what happens in that moment to make the creature Vulnerable.

While a creature is Vulnerable, all rolls targeting them have advantage.

A creature who is already Vulnerable can't be made to take the condition again.

Hidden

While a creature is out of sight from all foes, it is always considered **Hidden**. While Hidden, attacks cannot be made directly targeting them (however, some spell attacks that target an area and hit every creature in that area may still do damage to them) and any rolls against them are at disadvantage.

When a Hidden creature moves or attacks, they are no longer Hidden. However, if a creature is Hidden when they begin making an attack, the roll has advantage; the Hidden condition isn't cleared until after the attack is resolved.

Restrained

When an effect makes a creature **Restrained**, it means they cannot move until this condition is cleared. They can still take actions from their current position.

Ending Conditions

Some effects that impose a condition give a specific trigger that will clear the status. If no trigger is given, the affected character must succeed on an action roll (difficulty determined by the GM) to clear the condition. As always, this action roll should be described and negotiated narratively. For example, if a character is Vulnerable, the player might describe how their character leaps through the fire that has trapped them, frees their ally's legs from the vines that have entangled them, etc; whatever fits the fiction appropriately here.

Temporary Conditions

Some moves apply an effect that is "temporary" or that "temporarily" does something in the fiction. If the condition is affecting something the GM controls, they must spend a Fear to end the condition. If the action tracker is active, this spends one token on the action tracker and counts as that adversary's activation. If the condition is affecting a player character, they must make a successful action roll against the effect to end it.

Other Conditions

Some moves apply conditions that aren't temporary, but instead specify a unique kind of action, item, or effect that is necessary to be able to get rid of them. The move or item that inflicts the condition will specify the parameters around what it will take to remove it. The GM may choose to provide alternative ways to remove these as well, at their own discretion.

Countdowns

Sometimes a mechanic or the GM might introduce a **countdown**. Countdowns are a way for the table to keep track of a coming event, and usually utilize setting a die to a certain value, then ticking that number down until it reaches 0. A countdown might tick every time an action roll is made, every time a PC rolls with Fear, during downtime, or any other parameter (either set by the mechanics or by the GM to reflect the fiction). For more about countdowns, see "Countdowns" in the GM section of part 3.

Maps, Range, and Movement

Daggerheart is a game that can be played using both theater of the mind and maps with miniatures. The below section assumes you are using a map for combat, but if you aren't, take the information from it that is relevant to theater of the mind style play and leave behind anything that doesn't serve your table.

Maps

At any point, players or the GM may call for a map to be brought to the table. This might be to clarify positioning, showcase an environment, or simply because the table enjoys using maps and miniatures. When this happens, the GM should create (or reveal) a map of the area, and everyone should place their miniature figures or tokens within it appropriately. This can be as simple as a quick drawing on a piece of paper or as complicated as a fully-designed 3d map, as long as it presents the information players need to be able to navigate the space more clearly than in their minds. If you have the space for it, use the range measurements below as general reference when building out this map.

Some tables may almost never use maps, where others might utilize maps every session—there is not a right or wrong way to implement these in your game. Do whatever best serves the kind of play your group enjoys.

Range

In Daggerheart, rules don't measure distance by feet, but by **range**. Though there are approximations given below for each of the five ranges, this is not something that is to be measured perfectly at the table—the GM will always be the one to determine where something falls in range during a scene, and may adjust the map as needed to reflect this fiction.

If the table decides not to implement a map, you still use range, but in a more abstract way. Distances are simply a part of the theater of the mind-style play to be determined by the GM.

Melee means a character is within touching distance of the target. PCs can generally touch targets up to a few feet away from them, but melee range may be greater for especially large NPCs.

Very Close means a distance where one can see fine details of a target– within moments of reaching, if need be. This is usually anywhere from about 5-10 feet away. While in danger, a PC can usually get to anything that's very close as part of any other action they take. *Anything on a battle map that is within the shortest length of a game card (~2-3 inches) can usually be considered very close.*

Close means a distance where one can see prominent details of a target-- across a room or to a neighboring market stall, generally about 10-30 feet away. While in danger, a PC can usually get to anything that's close as part of any other action they take. *Anything on a battle map that is within the length of a standard pen or pencil (~5-6 inches) can usually be considered close.*

Far means a distance where one can see the appearance of a person or object, but probably not in great detail-- across a small battlefield or down a large corridor. This is usually about 30-100 feet away. While under danger, a PC will likely have to make an Agility check to get here safely. *Anything on a battle map that is within the length of a standard piece of paper (~10-11 inches) can usually be considered far.*

Very Far means a distance where you can see the shape of a person or object, but probably not make out any details-- across a large battlefield or down a long street, generally about 100-300 feet away. While under danger, a PC likely has to make an Agility check to get here safely. *Anything on a battle map that is beyond far distance, but still within sight of the characters can usually be considered very far.*

Anything beyond Very Far is considered Out of Range and usually cannot be targeted.

Using Range

The **range** on a weapon, spell, ability, item, or anything else that uses this mechanic in the game is considered its maximum range, and can be used at any distance closer than that range as well, unless otherwise noted. For example, the Shortstaff starting weapon has "close" range, meaning it can't be used to hit a target at far or very far range, but can be used against an enemy that is close or in melee.

Some weapons, spells, abilities, or items might also denote a special circumstance to their range like "all enemies in front of you". When this is the case, the player should choose a direction they're facing and target enemies in 180 degree field of that direction.

The GM will always let players know what range they are from a target if they ask, and it's important to remember that the map is just an approximation of the scene playing out in everyone's head. Scale, distance, and details are not always going to be perfectly accurate, and that's okay. The map and the miniatures on it should never limit the table's imagination, only provide spatial context so that everyone is on the same page.

Movement

While under pressure or in danger, you can always move to a location that's within your close range if you're doing so as part of something that requires an action roll. If you simply want to move to another spot on the map while danger is present, or if you're trying to move to a location that's far or very far away from you, you'll typically need to make an Agility roll to reposition yourself there safely. On a failure, you may only get partway there, the adversaries might act before you can make it, or something might keep you from leaving where you are. If there is no risk or potential complication in moving a certain distance, no roll is required.

Adversaries activated by the GM can generally move to a location within their close range and still act, like make an attack or grab something important. If they want to move any farther than that, it takes their whole activation to do so (but they don't have to make an Agility roll like a PC does).

Targets and Groups

Often a move will ask you to choose a **target** within range. This means a single creature (or sometimes an object) that will be affected by the effect.

Some move effects may refer to a **group** (or a group of targets). This means any creatures who are clumped together in a common area, no further than very close range from each other. Players may always ask the GM if something would be considered a "group of targets" before they make their move.

When an attack is made against more than one target or against a group, the attacker rolls once and compares that total to each eligible target to determine which creatures they succeed against.

When an attack deals damage to more than one target, the attacker rolls damage once and that total applies to each target the attack succeeded against.

Cover, Line of Sight, and Darkness

Sometimes during a fight, a character may seek **cover**—this might be choosing to dive behind a small barricade, duck behind a tree, or take shelter somewhere a little safer for a moment. When a character takes cover behind something that makes attacking them more difficult (but not impossible), the attack roll is made at disadvantage.

If a target is ever behind something substantial, like a full wall or similar structure, they are not usually able to be targeted directly, even if they are technically in range of the attack.

Some abilities and spells refer to "**line of sight.**" This just denotes whether or not a target can be seen by the character. For alternatives to this rule for characters that are blind, see "Adjusting Abilities and Spells" in Part 1.

Darkness can also make certain actions more challenging. The GM should reflect this in the difficulty of an action roll.

Gold

Gold tracks how much wealth a character has with them on their journey, and can often be spent on things like items, consumables, and equipment. Some campaigns will be more or less focused on gold as a reward, so players should talk with their GM about how much gold will come into play. There are no set prices in this book for weapons, armor, and loot, specifically to serve the purpose of not locking players out of adding exciting equipment to their characters simply because they aren't playing a gold-focused campaign. The GM will determine the prices based on the amount of gold being given out during your sessions.

Gold is measured in **handfuls**, **bags**, **chests**, **hoards**, and **fortunes**. Whenever you have marked off enough slots in a given category that you should reach the next category, you'll mark one in that following category and erase the current one. For example, if you are at five handfuls of gold and you should take one more, instead you will mark a bag of gold and erase all five handfuls. If you have four bags and should take one more, you mark a chest of gold and erase all four bags.

Six Handfuls = One Bag | Five Bags = One Chest | Four Chests = One Hoard | Three Hoards = One Fortune

These values are abstracted so that they do not need to be tracked as closely. If you want to tip a coin to a waiter or flip a coin into a well, you typically won't need to worry about tracking it.

Downtime

A party may choose to rest before they continue forward on their journey, and when they do, they'll have the ability to take **downtime** actions. Though this is their time to recover from the dangers they've faced, it's also an ideal opportunity for characters to have important, emotional scenes with each other—to learn more about one another, and have character-centric conversations that may not be as easy to find time for in big battles or high intensity moments. This is a chance for players to lean on their Connections to the party and explore the story that happens between them in their quiet moments together.

When the party decides they want to move into downtime, they will need to make a choice between a Short Rest and a Long Rest. They can take up to three Short Rests before their next rest has to be a Long Rest. If a Short Rest is interrupted (such as by an enemy attack), characters don't gain its benefits. If a Long Rest is interrupted, characters instead gain the benefits of a Short Rest (even if they've already had three Short Rests).

Short Rest

A **Short Rest** is when player characters are only able to stop and catch their breath, taking a break for about an hour. Each player may swap any domain cards in their loadout for any in their vault and choose two of the options below.

Tend to Wounds

Describe how you temporarily patch yourself up and clear 1d4 hit points. You may also do this on an ally instead.

Clear Stress

Describe how you blow off steam or pull yourself together, and clear 1d4 stress.

Repair Armor

Describe how you spend time quickly repairing your armor and clear two marked Armor Slots. You may also do this to an ally's armor instead.

Prepare

Describe how you are preparing yourself for the path ahead and gain a Hope.

Long Rest

A **Long Rest** is when player characters are able to make camp, relax for a few hours, and get some sleep. Each player may swap any domain cards in their loadout for any in their vault and choose two of the options below.

Tend to Wounds

Describe how you patch yourself up and remove all marked Hit Points. You may also do this on an ally instead.

Clear Stress

Describe how you blow off steam or pull yourself together, and clear all marked Stress.

Repair Armor

Describe how you spend time repairing your armor and clear all of its Armor Slots. You may also do this to an ally's armor instead.

Prepare

Describe how you are preparing for the next day's adventure, then gain a Hope. If you choose to Prepare with one or more members of your party, you may each take two Hope.

Work on a Project

Establish or continue work on a project. The GM might ask for a roll to determine how much to tick down on the completion track.

Working on a Project in Downtime

If a PC wants to pursue a project that would take a substantial amount of time but progress can be made during a long rest, they should first discuss it with the GM. This could involve deciphering an ancient text, crafting a new weapon, or something else. Projects will usually involve a Completion Countdown. Each time a PC takes the Work on a Project move during a Long Rest, they can tick down the completion countdown assigned by some amount. The GM will tell them how much or ask them to make an action roll to gauge their progress.

For more information on projects, see "<u>Downtime</u>" in part 3.

Refreshing Moves During Downtime

Taking a short or long rest may also trigger the refresh of some moves for players. When players have a move with an exhaustion limit, long rests always also count as short rests. For example, if a move says it can be performed once per short rest, when the players take a long rest, they may also refresh this move.

Downtime Consequences

Downtime is designed to narratively allow for quiet scenes between players that encourage personal moments in the story, while also allowing some of their resources to refresh for the coming adventures. On the GM side, it's also an invitation for them to progress events happening in the background that will have consequences down the line. The world doesn't stop when players rest, so be cautious of how many rests a party decides to take.

Death

Facing death is an important part of being an adventurer, and having a character die can be an exciting end to a story and an opportunity for the player to transition into something new. In Daggerheart, when you mark your last hit point, you must make a **Death Move**.

Death Move

Choose one of the options below.

> **Embrace death and go out in a blaze of glory.** Take one action (at GM discretion), which becomes an automatic critical success, then cross through the veil of death.

> **Avoid death and face the consequences.** You drop unconscious temporarily and work with the GM to describe how the situation gets much worse because of it. Then roll your Fear die; if its value is equal to or under your Level, take a Scar. You may not take any actions while unconscious. When you have any number of your marked Hit Points cleared by an ally, or on your party's next long rest, you will return to consciousness.

> **Risk it all.** Roll your Duality Dice. If Hope is higher, you stay on your feet and clear an amount of Hit Points and/or Stress equal to the value of the Hope die (divide the Hope die value up between these however you'd prefer). If your Fear die is higher, you cross through the veil of death. If the Duality Dice are tied, you stay on your feet and clear all Hit Points and Stress.

If a player makes a death move that results in their character dying or no longer being able to play, they should work with the GM before the next session to build a new character at the current level of the rest of the party.

Scars

If you choose to avoid death, you might take a **scar**. If you do, permanently cross out one of your Hope slots. You cannot use this slot to store Hope anymore. The narrative impact of this scar is up to you; for example, you might now bear a physical scar, a painful memory, or a deep fear.

When you put a scar on your last Hope slot, it is time to end your character's journey. Work with the GM to find a graceful and fitting way for the party to say goodbye to them at the end of the session, and prepare a new character for the next time you play.

Resurrection

It is possible to **resurrect** a dead character, though it will likely be a long, difficult, and costly process-- and they likely won't return the same as they died. If a party decides to take this path upon a character's death, the GM will tell the players what it will take to make that happen. For more details on this, see the section for resurrection in the GM's section on page here [*section pending*].

There is also a one-time Resurrection spell available at Level 10 for any class that includes the Splendor Domain. Once this spell is used, it will go into your vault permanently.

Flow of Combat

Combat in Daggerheart has no initiatives, no rounds, and no distinct number of actions you can take on your turn—instead, any fights that happen play out narratively moment-to-moment, just like any other action characters might take. This provides the players opportunities to team up together in their tactics, respond appropriately to narrative changes in the scene, and not be locked into only doing violence once the first strike happens.

Similarly, enemies don't have a set order in which they act-- instead, the GM will make moves in accordance with the fiction. Oftentimes, these moves will happen when a player rolls with Fear or fails the action they were attempting, but a GM can make a move any time the narrative demands it. When they make a move, they will usually escalate the scene in an exciting and dangerous way. A character might take an attack from some enemies, become Vulnerable, or anything else that significantly changes the scene. This creates a back-and-forth conversation that lets the story evolve organically between the players and the GM.

Action Tracker

Whenever there is a combat scenario that is likely to last more than a roll or two (or when play moves to maps and miniatures, at the GM's discretion), the GM should place the **action tracker** card on the table within everyone's reach. Whenever PCs make an action roll, they must place a character token on the action tracker. While on the tracker, these are known as **action tokens.** It's important to note that tokens are not limited—if a player ever runs out, they should just grab more.

The PCs aren't the only ones who use the action tracker, however! The GM spends action tokens to activate adversaries. See "GM Turns" below for details on using it as a GM.

While the action tracker is on the table, it is important to remember that players may still act in any order they'd like and take action multiple times in a row as the narrative flow demands it. The game should continue as normal, the GM just has an additional tool at their disposal to help guide the combat encounter. However, players are encouraged to give others turns with the spotlight; if another player hasn't placed any tokens on the action tracker recently, consider letting them act—if they want to—before you do anything else.

Example 1: Emerson places a character token on the action tracker (bringing the total tokens on the tracker up to three), then makes a roll to strike an enemy he's in melee with and gets a success with Fear. He describes how he comes down with his sword in an overhead swing and deals 12 points of damage-- but because the roll was with Fear, the GM also makes a move.

Example 2: Elise takes the three tokens off of the action tracker, spending the first to end the Vulnerable condition on a nearby adversary, who breaks free from the vines that were binding them. She spends the next token on the adversary Emerson just hit with his sword, describing the enemy's warhammer being pulled out of the mud and swung at Emerson's ribs. Elise rolls for damage and totals it up for 9 physical damage. This falls within Emerson's Major threshold, but he marks two armor slots and rolls 2d6. The total is 5, so he reduces the damage down to 4 and only takes 1 hit point. With the last token, Elise describes an adversary sprinting all the way across the battlefield to get to the massive bell that would call in reinforcements. As he prepares to ring it, Elise turns back to the players, asking, "What do you want to do?"

Activating Adversaries

When the GM makes a move, they may choose to spend any number of the tokens currently on the action tracker. For each token they spend, they can activate an adversary on the battlefield to take an action (this could be casting a spell, making an attack, ending a temporary condition, etc). Think of this action tracker as the GM catching the actions of the adversaries up with where the players are in the fiction. The GM's turn lasts until they have exhausted all available tokens (or all they wish to utilize at this time). Once they are done spending action tokens, play returns to the PCs.

Typically, the GM should not activate the same adversary twice within a single turn, no matter how many tokens they have available. If they would like to activate the adversary again, they should do so on their next turn (when a PC rolls a Failure or with Fear, returning play to the GM).

At any time, the GM may clear two tokens on the action tracker in exchange for one Fear. Similarly, the GM may exchange one Fear to place two additional tokens on the action tracker.

When combat has come to a close or the GM determines the action tracker is no longer necessary for play, any remaining tokens become Fear for the GM at a 2:1 ratio (every 2 action tokens left on the tracker gives the GM one Fear).

Example: The Warrior of the party just made a successful attack roll with Fear against one their adversaries. The party is facing off with a group of bandits trying to steal a chest of treasure the group is transporting for an ally. After the Warrior has dealt their damage, because they rolled with Fear, play passes to the GM. The GM has four tokens on the action tracker and decides to spend them as their move.

There are currently four tokens on the action tracker. On the battlefield are two ribbet bandits and a group of minions. The GM spends one token to activate the first bandit. The GM describes to have this bandit leap down from a nearby tree to slide beneath the party's traveling wagon and breaking off some of the wooden floorboards to get to the treasure inside.

The GM spends a second token to activate the second bandit, a large bullfrog-like figure with heavy armor. They leap down to put themselves between a few members of the party and swing a massive hammer, using an adversary move that lets them hit all targets within range of their weapon. The GM rolls against the PCs' evasion and succeeds. They then roll their damage dice and deal 12 points of physical damage to all of them. Some of the PCs use armor to reduce the damage and each marks their sheet accordingly.

The GM spends the third token and also spends Fear to use the Group Attack move. This moves all the minions into melee range of the warrior. The GM makes an attack, describing the scene and rolling against the warrior's evasion. The GM succeeds, so the horde deals three damage each for a total of 15 points of damage to the warrior. The warrior has no armor slots left, so they take Major damage—marking two hit points.

There is one more token left to spend, but no more adversaries left to activate, so the GM returns play to the PCs.

What is the Purpose of the Action Tracker?

While roleplaying combat using theater of the mind, it's easy to turn our focus from one portion of a conflict to another, knowing that "off camera" other action is occurring and we'll see it when we give our attention to that portion of the battlefield. When we utilize maps and minis, it can feel odd to see portions of the battlefield change while others remain frozen.

The action tracker allows the entire table to keep track of the portions of combat the group has focused on, then center other areas of the conflict and "catch up time." In this way, it helps the GM, and the table as a whole, have an idea of who has acted, and who might need an opportunity to be showcased. For more on using the action tracker to spotlight players, visit the GM section on Sharing the Spotlight.

The addition of tokens to the tracker also provides a clear currency for the players to track and anticipate the GM's moves. When the players take a large number of actions in a row, the tracker fills, providing the GM with more currency to spend on their turn, raising the stakes.

Player Best Practices

This section provides guidance around player best practices and how to get the most out of Daggerheart! As always, take what works for you and your table from this section, and leave behind anything that doesn't resonate with you.

Embrace The Danger

The life of an adventurer is a dangerous one, often filled with treacherous paths, monstrous beasts, and powerful foes. Along the way, it's almost certain that you will face difficult choices and life-threatening peril. It's important as adventurers to embrace this danger as part of the game—playing it safe, not taking risks, and overthinking a plan can often slow the game to a halt.

So don't be afraid to leap in head-first and think like a storyteller—what would the hero of a novel or a tv show do here? Think about not only what might be obvious, but what might also be most interesting or how your character might approach the situation differently because of their background. But no matter what you do, keep the story moving forward—the worst thing you can do as an adventurer is get so caught up in trying not to get hurt that you stop being adventurous at all. You have some control over whether you live or die, and you've got scars you can take if need be. It's important to remember that you are not your character; it's okay to put them into harm's way, push them to their limits, and take big risks if it's what is right for the story. Their trials and tribulations, their failures are not yours. We might always want to *win*, but we do that as players by driving a compelling narrative together, not by having successful dice rolls every time.

Use Your Resources

Player characters in Daggerheart have access to a number of resources that help them in their heroic journeys. Chief among them is Hope, the most liquid resource that will come and go frequently over the course of a session. You'll gain a Hope roughly every other time you make an action roll, so you're encouraged to spend it for Hope Features, to help your comrades, to utilize experiences, and more.

Stress, HP, and armor are chief among your other resources. They interact in varying ways that you can manipulate and optimize with domain abilities, Heritage traits, your Class Feature, and more. For players excited about the crunch of interacting mechanics, look to those resources and think about how managing them helps you get the most out of your character. This will help your character to contribute in conflicts and battles to the best of their potential to enhance the overall story.

Tell the Story

You are an equal partner in telling the story alongside everyone else at the table. The GM will present opportunities and challenges for the party along the way, but they are not the sole author of the narrative you're all exploring. Daggerheart is a collaborative experience where everyone is responsible for bringing the kind of tone, feel, and themes they're interested in to the table. If you want a certain theme or emotional arc to be a part of your story, talk with your GM about finding those opportunities, and take it upon yourself to seize them when they show up. You might also choose to take moments within the scenes you are playing to showcase the driving force of that emotion and make actions that reflect that desire. Your role as a player in Daggerheart is to guide your character along the best story arc you can, not necessarily to always make the most tactical or strategic moves. Think about what you're interested in saying thematically with the narrative, and let that be expressed through your character.

Discover Your Character

It's okay to not know everything about your character when you sit down to play for the first time, or the tenth time, or the hundredth time. When the game begins, you only have a few pieces of information to go off of-- what they might be good at, some backstory about their past, their relationships with a few other characters, what kind of weapon they carry, etc. But all of this doesn't mean you have a firm grasp on who this person actually *is* yet, and that's okay. Think of Character Creation as an ongoing process that continues through every session you play that character. The GM might turn to you to ask something about your past that you may not have worked out or thought of yet; you could take this opportunity to invent something on the spot, or ask them to talk through some ideas with you before you settle on one. Try to use the game's fiction to discover things about your character, and let those discoveries flow into the kinds of decisions they make.

Leveling Up

When a party has accomplished something of significance in a campaign, the GM may tell them that it is time to **Level Up**. How often this happens is up to your GM and your group's narrative preferences, but most groups play at least three sessions (or many more) in between each time they Level Up.
When you Level Up, all the members of the party will raise their Level by +1 and have the chance to upgrade their character's traits and abilities. Generally, characters begin their journey at Level 1 and end their journey at Level 10, but if a party loses a character in the middle of a campaign, the GM may instead choose to have that player make a new character at the appropriate level of the party (if the player wishes).

When a party Levels Up, each player will follow the steps outlined in the "Leveling Up" section of their Character Guide. This section is divided up into three **tier blocks**; the **first tier** is for Levels 2-4, the **second tier** is for Levels 5-7, and the **third tier** is for Levels 8-10. Each tier has a different set of options players may choose from when upgrading their characters. More details about each of these tiers will be detailed in the following sections.

Level Achievements

The first thing players do is take any **Level Achievements** their character has earned. These are given in bold at the top of the tier block. They include:

At Level 2, everyone earns an additional Experience and adds it to their character sheet with a modifier of +1.

At Level 5, everyone earns an additional Experience and adds it to their character sheet with a modifier of +1. They also clear the marks on each Character Trait they've previously increased and marked (allowing them to later increase those traits further).

At Level 8, everyone earns an additional Experience and adds it to their character sheet with a modifier of +1. They also clear the marks on each Character Trait they've previously increased and marked.

*For help with Experience, see "**" in part 1.*

Choosing Advancements

Next, players have a set list of options for upgrading their character. This can be found on their Character Guide or in the class section of this book. They choose two from the list that have an open box next to them (they may choose the same one twice if it has two open boxes), make the changes on their character sheet that reflect this upgrade, then on their Character Guide, mark one of the open boxes on the options they chose. Any options with all of their boxes marked can't be used again.

> *When you choose to increase two unmarked Character Traits and mark them*, you will choose two Character Traits that don't already have marks in them, and increase their values by +1. These stats won't be able to be increased again until the next tier (when your Level Achievement allows you to clear those marks).

> *When you choose to increase an Experience*, you will choose one Experience on your character sheet and increase it by +1.

> *When you choose to increase your Evasion*, raise your evasion score by 1.

> *When you choose to permanently add one or more Hit Point Slots*, you will darken the outline of the next circle in the Hit Point section of your character sheet in permanent marker.

> *When you choose to permanently add an Armor Slot*, you will darken the outline of the next circle in the Armor section at the top of your character sheet in permanent marker.

> *When you choose to permanently add a Stress Slot*, you will darken the outline of the next circle in the Stress section of your character sheet in permanent marker.

> *When you choose to increase your Weapon Proficiency*, fill in one of the open circles in the Weapon Proficiency section, then increase your weapon's damage dice by +1d (for example, increasing its damage from 2d6 to 3d6).

When you choose to increase a Damage Threshold, add the amount indicated in the advancement to the appropriate threshold. For example, if you were to increase your Major Damage threshold by +2, it would bump that threshold from 20 up to 22, or 25 up to 27.

When you choose to take an upgraded subclass card, take the next card in the subclass arc. If you only have the foundation card, take a specialization. If you have a specialization already, take a mastery. You'll also cross out the option to multiclass during that tier of level-ups.

When you choose to multiclass, you can take certain features and domain cards from another class. You'll see a black box around the level-up slots. That is because multiclassing requires you to mark both level-up slots in order to take it as an option. See "Multiclass" in part 1 for details.

Raising Damage Thresholds

After choosing advancements, players then raise their Damage Thresholds as designated by the tier. The amount varies depending on a PC's class, and can be found on the Level Up sheet.

Taking Domain Cards

Finally, all players take a new Domain Deck card of their Level or lower, increasing the special abilities their character can use. They may choose one card from any domain deck available to their class. If they share a domain deck with another player at the table, they'll want to have a discussion with each other to make sure they take each other's preferences into consideration when choosing a card.

In addition, they may also choose to trade out one domain card they already have for a different domain card at a level equal to the chosen card or lower.

Since each player can't have more than five Domain Cards active at a time, players at Level 5 and above will need to choose which Domain Cards to keep in their Loadout and which to store in their Vault, as described in "Loadout and Vault" in part 1.

Multiclassing

Starting at Level 5, you may choose **multiclassing** as an option when leveling up. When you multiclass, you will get to choose an additional class to take a domain from, and gain access to a particular Multiclass Feature. Take the appropriate Multiclass Module and add it to the right side of your character sheet, and then choose a Foundation card from a subclass of your choice. If that Foundation card has a Spellcast Trait on it, you can choose to use that trait when making a Spellcast roll.

When you multiclass, you also must cross out one available "take an upgraded subclass card" option on the level up sheet, meaning you won't be able to gain the mastery card for any subclass. You will also cross out any other multiclass options, as you can only multiclass once during a campaign.

Choose a domain you don't already have access to from the choices on the module. Whenever you get to choose domain cards, you may now always also look at cards that match your additional domain at half your current level (rounded up). This means a Level 5 Wizard who decides to multiclass into Druid and chooses the Sage Domain would also have the option of any Level 3 or below Sage Domain cards.

Any moves or spells you use while multiclassing are always performed at your current level. For example, a level 7 Wizard that multiclasses into a Druid can use the Level 7 Beastform options. If any move you get by multiclassing asks you to use a number of dice equal to your Level, it is the Level on your character sheet. It is only the domain cards that are subject to the half-level restriction.

Multiclass Features

Below are the features that become available to you when you multiclass. Most of them are a modified versions of that class's Class Feature.

Bard

Rally
At the beginning of a session, place a d6 on the appropriate spot on the multiclass sheet with the lowest value side (1) facing up. When anyone in your party rolls with Fear, increase the Rally die's value by one.

When you would increase the value above 6, remove the die, describe how you rally the party, and give every character who listens a 1d6 Rally die. They can spend this die to roll it and add the result to any action roll, reaction roll, or damage roll.

If your Rally die hasn't finished this countdown by the end of a session, distribute the current value shown on the die as Hope amongst your party, splitting it any way you choose, and remove the die.
The Rally die you distribute increases to 1d8 at Level 8.

Druid

Wildtouch
You can perform harmless, subtle effects that involve nature at will. (Ex: causing a flower to rapidly grow, summon a slight gust of wind, start a campfire, etc)

Beastform
Mark a Stress to transform into a magical creature (in the Beastform list) equal to your level or lower. You lose the use of your features, equipment and domain cards but gain the features and attack trait of the creature. You can drop out of this form at any time.

Guardian

Unstoppable

Once per Long Rest, you can become Unstoppable. Your Unstoppable die begins as a d4. Place it on the appropriate spot on the multiclass sheet, starting with the die's highest value facing up. While Unstoppable, you:

- Gain resistance to physical damage.
- Add an additional d6 to any damage rolls you make.
- Can spend stress to reroll any single die you've rolled.

Anytime you roll your damage dice, reduce the Unstoppable die value by one. When you would reduce the value below 1 or the scene ends, remove it and drop out of Unstoppable. At Level 8, upgrade your Unstoppable die to a d6.

Ranger

Ranger's Focus

Spend Hope and make an attack with your weapon. On a success, you temporarily put your Ranger's Focus on the target along with doing damage from the attack. While they are your focus:

- You know precisely what direction they are in.
- All damage rolls you make against them add +1d6.
- On a missed attack you make against them, you may end Ranger's Focus to reroll your Duality Dice and take the new result.

You may only hold Ranger's Focus on one creature at a time.

Rogue

Hide

When you move into a location where no enemies can see you, you are Hidden (you are unable to be directly targeted by attacks and any rolls against you at disadvantage). As a Rogue, when you are Hidden, targets also can't see you, even if they move into line of sight. You are no longer Hidden after you move or attack. When you leave Hidden to make an attack, the roll has advantage.

Sneak Attack

If you have advantage on an attack roll, or an ally is in melee with your target, always add a d6 to your damage roll. When you use Sneak Attack, you may also spend any number of Hope before the attack roll, and if it is successful, also add a number of d6 equal to the Hope spent.

Seraph

Prayer Dice

At the beginning of a session, roll a number of d4 dice equal to half your Spellcast trait (rounded up) and store them on the appropriate spot on your multiclass sheet. You can exhaust them at any time to use their value in reducing incoming damage, adding to a roll result, or exchanging for that many Hope you may give to any player. Clear these dice at the end of a session.

Arcane Sense:

You can sense the presence of magical people and objects when you're close to them.

Minor Illusion:

Roll with Spellcast (12). On a success, you create a minor illusion no larger than yourself within close range that is convincing to anyone in far range or further.

Channel Raw Power:

Once per Long Rest, you can place a Domain card from your Loadout into your Vault and choose to either:

- Gain Hope equal to half the level of the card (rounded up).
- Add magic damage equal to the level of the card to a spell you've successfully cast.

Warrior

Battle Strategist

Whenever you are making a roll to physically hinder a creature that isn't a weapon attack (shove, trip, grapple, etc) you can spend a Hope to have advantage. On a success, you can choose to deal 1d6 physical damage to the target.

Combat Training

Ignore burden when equipping weapons, and you may place primary weapons in your secondary weapon slot. Always add additional physical damage equal to the value of half your Level (rounded up) when you attack.

Wizard

Prestidigitation

You can perform harmless, subtle magical effects at will. Examples might include changing an object's color, creating a smell, lighting a candle, floating something small, illuminating a room, repairing a small object, etc.

Strange Patterns

Choose a number between 1-12. Anytime you roll that number on your Hope die, gain a Hope or clear a stress. You may change this number on any long rest.

Example of Leveling Up

Kat's party has just advanced to level 2 and the group is leveling up together. Kat slides down the Warrior character information sheet to bring Tabby up to level 2.

First, Kat adds a new Experience for Tabby. Because Tabby has been doing a lot of acrobatics and daring jumps, they decide to give her the Experience "Always Land on my Feet". It's a new Experience, so they set it at +1.

Next, they look at the advancement options for Levels 2–4. They know they want to increase Tabby's Agility, since that's her primary trait for combat. So first they mark "Increase two unmarked Character Traits by 1 and mark them." Kat chooses Agility and Instinct, raising each by 1 (Tabby now has an Agility of +3 and an Instinct of +2), then marks the circle by each trait raised as a reminder that they can't be raised again until Tabby hits level 5 and clears marks on all traits.

Next, because Tabby is the front line for her group, Kat marks "Permanently add one Armor Slot." They look at the armor section of Tabby's character sheet and permanently fill in the outline of one of the dotted squares to represent Tabby gaining a new permanent armor slot. That means she'll be able to take more punishment in combat.

Then they go to Tabby's Damage thresholds and increase Tabby's Severe threshold by 2, from 15 to 17.

Lastly, Kat asks for the domain decks for Blade and Bone to pick a new domain card at level 2 or lower. At level 2, their options in the Blade deck are Reckless and A Soldier's Bond. Their choices from the Bone are Strategic Approach and Ferocity. Kat really likes the option to gain and give hope with A Soldier's Bond, and since Tabby's Knowledge trait is only 0, they don't think Strategic Approach is a good choice. They settle on Ferocity to give themselves an evasion boost when Tabby is in the middle of a number of foes and taking a lot of attacks.

New domain card in their loadout, Kat reviews the steps. They added their experience of "Always Land on My Feet" at +1, they picked two advancement options and applied them, they raised their Severe HP threshold, and they selected a new domain card – Ferocity. Kat goes back and writes in "2" for Tabby's level and then updates the damage bonus from Combat Training to +2, since her level has increased.

Now Tabby is ready to continue her journey as a level 2 Warrior!

Equipment

This section details the rules for equipping and using weapons and armor, followed by lists of the weapons and armor in this game.

Equipping, Storing, and Switching Equipment

As a player, you can **equip** weapons and armor to your character by recording them on your character sheet in the "Active Weapon" and "Active Armor" sections. When equipped, you can attack with the weapons, benefit from the armor, and gain any other features of those items.

As you acquire new gear throughout your journey, you can carry one additional weapon (either primary or secondary) and one additional armor in the "Inventory Weapon" and "Inventory Armor" slots; there's only so much room in your pack, after all. The inventory weapon and armor slots hold equipment you don't have equipped, so you can't wield these items or gain their benefits.

If you want to switch to a different weapon or armor than you currently have active while in danger or under pressure, mark 1 Stress per piece of equipment you'd like to swap. If you aren't in danger or under pressure, you can switch weapons and armor freely. If you switch your armor, your armor slots do not refresh.

Using Weapons

Weapons are defined by several details: the trait they use, their range, damage dice, damage type, burden (how many hands it needs), and sometimes a feature. Each of these details are described in later in this sections. Each weapon also has a tier, which indicates what level a character must be to unlock that weapon. See "Primary Weapon Tables" and "Secondary Weapon Tables" for the weapon options in this book (listed by tier).

Proficiency

Your **Proficiency** (shown in the "Active Weapons" section of your character sheet) reflects how skilled you are at wielding a weapon. You'll start at one Proficiency, then have the opportunity to permanently increase this value up to a maximum of 6 over the course of a campaign. The amount of Proficiency you have generally determines how many damage dice you roll on a successful attack with a weapon, though other abilities or spells may use proficiency as well. This value is not weapon-specific, and does not change or reset when you equip a new weapon.

Any time a damage roll denotes the dice type but doesn't tell you the number of dice to roll (ie: deal d8 physical damage), that means you roll a number of those dice equal to your proficiency.

Primary and Secondary Weapons

Weapons fall into two main categories: primary and secondary.

Primary weapons are the main weapons you'll likely be fighting with during an encounter. You can only hold one of these at a time in your primary weapon slot. If you take a weapon with a burden of two hands (see "Burden"), this is typically the only weapon you can have active. To find the list of starting primary weapons, called Tier 0 Primary Weapons, see "Primary Weapon Tables."

Secondary weapons are typically ancillary pieces of equipment that augment your fighting, like shields, daggers, small swords, etc. If you take a primary weapon with a burden of one hand, it is recommended you also take a secondary weapon. However, you can't hold a secondary weapon if your primary weapon requires two hands. Additionally, you can only hold one secondary weapon at a time in your secondary weapon slot. To find the list of starting secondary weapons, called Tier 0 Secondary Weapons, see "Secondary Weapon Tables."

You can make an attack roll with either a primary or secondary weapon you have equipped, allowing for flexibility in the types of attacks you can make. The secondary weapon often also has a feature that augments another aspect of your fighting style as well—a dagger might grant you extra damage to targets you attack with your primary weapon in melee, a shield might add to your armor score, etc. Most adventurers will choose to at least carry a primary weapon, but you're not required to. For guidance on fighting without a weapon, see "Unarmed Combat Rolls."

Throwing a Weapon

When you are using a weapon that could be theoretically thrown (like a dagger or an axe), you can make an attack roll using Finesse to do so. Its range is very close, it does half-damage, and once thrown, you will not have access to using that weapon again until you retrieve it. (See "Weapon Statistics" below for details on what this means.)

Weapon Statistics

Each weapon presented in this book includes the following details:

Name

In your character's early adventures, most weapon **names** are the same as their type—for starting weapons, this is often something straightforward like *Battleaxe* or *Hand Runes*. As characters level up and collect better equipment, this type could become more specific—something like a *Flaming Dragonscale Blade*, *Valiant Bow*, or even a named weapon like the *Wand of Essek*.

Trait

This tells players what **trait** is used when making an attack with this weapon. For example, a Strength weapon will use your Strength Character Trait anytime you use it to make an attack on a target.

Range

Range signifies the maximum distance from which a weapon or effect can hit a target. Distance in Daggerheart is zone-based and relative to a character's location—they may be able to hit something in Melee, Very Close, Close, Far, or Very Far range with an effect or weapon. Distance is covered in more detail with "Maps, Range, and Movement" in part 2.

Damage Dice

The **damage dice** represent how deadly your weapon is against the enemies you face. When a weapon's damage lists a type of die—like "d8"—you roll one of those dice to determine the damage you deal.

As you gain levels, you'll increase your weapon Proficiency (see "Proficiency"), which starts at 1. Unless otherwise specified, you roll a number of weapon dice equal to your Proficiency. When your Proficiency increases to 2, you'll roll two weapon dice instead of one, adding their values together to determine damage, and so on. For example, if your Proficiency is 2 and your weapon die is a d8, you roll 2d8 and add their values together—so if you roll a 4 and an 8 on these dice, you do a total of 12 damage.

Damage Type

A weapon's **damage type** specifies what kind of damage it does to a target; either Physical (Phy) or Magic (Mag). Physical damage is usually damage from any wielded weapon that cuts, stabs, or bludgeons (swords, longbows, war hammers, etc.). Magic damage is usually damage caused or enhanced by magic (Conjure Swarm, Midnight Spirit, Smite, etc.)

Damage type is important because some creatures might have resistance or immunity to one of the two types (something like ghosts may not be as affected by physical damage as they are by magic damage, etc.) For more about resistance, see the earlier "Resistance and Immunity" section.

You typically can't wield weapons that do magic damage unless you can Spellcast (a feature available on some Class Foundation cards).

Burden

The **burden** of a weapon is how many hands it takes to wield it. Weapons are either one or two-handed. When you take a weapon, you'll also fill up a number of hands equal to its burden on your character sheet. If you can't bear the burden of a particular weapon because your hands are already full, you can't equip it.

You're welcome to create a character with any number of hands you wish, or wield a weapon using something other than your hands; however, when tracking burden, each character mechanically has two (and only two) appendages capable of weapon-wielding.

Features on a weapon are any special rules that apply only to that particular weapon. Some might have **tags** (like Heavy or Light) with the effect of the tag listed beside it. Others might specify alternative damage dice to use when attacking from different ranges. The mechanical options will vary, and any weapons with a Feature will include an extra section in their description that provides further details about what it does and how it may be applied. These effects only apply while the weapon is equipped, so if you put a weapon into your inventory or you don't have that weapon anymore, you no longer gain the benefits of that feature.

Using Armor

Armor is defined by three details: a name, a base value, and (sometimes) a feature. Whenever you equip armor on your character, record its details in the Active Armor section of your character sheet, then in the Armor box at the top left of your character sheet, record your Armor Score. (See "Armor" for starting armor, also called tier 0 armor).

Your **Armor Score** includes your armor's **base value** plus any permanent bonuses you have to your armor from other abilities.

When you take damage, you can negate some (or all) of it by marking one of the open **Armor Slots** next to the Armor box, then reducing the damage by your Armor Score. You have three available Armor Slots to start, and can earn more over the course of a campaign.

Each time you take damage, you can mark as many armor slots as you'd like (up to the total you have remaining) when reducing damage. Once all Armor Slots are filled, your armor is considered broken and can't be used again until you repair it, either as an action during Downtime or at a local armor shop.

Primary Weapon Tables

Players may choose any primary weapon at tier 0 during character creation. Other weapons will become available to them throughout a campaign as they level up.

Tier 0 (Level 1) - Starting Primary Weapons

Physical Weapons

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Battleaxe	Strength	Melee	d10+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Warhammer	Strength	Melee	d12+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Heavy (−1 to Agility)
Greatsword	Strength	Melee	d10+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Massive (−1 Agility, roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest)
Mace	Strength	Melee	d8 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Saber	Agility	Melee	d8 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Longsword	Agility	Melee	d8 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Reliable (+1 to attack rolls with this weapon)
Shortsword	Agility	Melee	d10 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Rapier	Presence	Melee	d8 (Phy)	One-Handed	Light (+1 to Agility)
Dagger	Finesse	Melee	d8 (Phy)	One-Handed	Quick (Mark stress to attack an additional target in range.)
Quarterstaff	Instinct	Melee	d10+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Halberd	Strength	Very Close	d10 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Shortbow	Agility	Far	d8+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Crossbow	Finesse	Far	d8 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Longbow	Agility	Very Far	d10+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Cumbersome (−1 to Evasion)

Magic Weapons

Requires the Spellcast Ability

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Arcane Gauntlets	Strength	Melee	d10+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Hallowed Axe	Strength	Melee	d10 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Hand Runes	Instinct	Very Close	d10 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Glowing Rings	Agility	Very Close	d10+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Shortstaff	Instinct	Close	d10 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Wand	Knowledge	Far	d8 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Dualstaff	Instinct	Far	d8+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Returning Blade	Finesse	Far	d8 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Scepter	Presence	Far	d8+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	Versatile (Presence Melee - d10)
Greatstaff	Knowledge	Very Far	d6+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.)

Physical Weapons

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Improved Battleaxe	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Improved Warhammer	Strength	Melee	d12+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Heavy (−1 to Agility)
Improved Greatsword	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Massive (−1 Agility, roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest)
Improved Mace	Strength	Melee	d8+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Improved Saber	Agility	Melee	d8+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Improved Longsword	Agility	Melee	d8+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Reliable (+1 to attack rolls with this weapon)
Improved Shortsword	Agility	Melee	d10+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	-
Improved Rapier	Presence	Melee	d8+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Light (+1 to Agility)
Improved Dagger	Finesse	Melee	d8+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Quick (Mark stress to attack an additional target in range.)
Improved Quarterstaff	Instinct	Melee	d10+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Improved Halberd	Strength	Very Close	d10+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Improved Shortbow	Agility	Far	d8+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Improved Crossbow	Finesse	Far	d8+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Improved Longbow	Agility	Very Far	d8+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Cumbersome (−1 to Evasion)
Gilded Falchion	Strength	Melee	d10 (Phy)	One-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.)
Urok Shortsword	Finesse	Melee	d12 (Phy)	One-Handed	Light (+1 to Agility)
Steelforged Halberd	Strength	Very Close	d10+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Scary (Successful attacks also deal +1 stress.)
Bladed Whip	Agility	Very Close	d10 (Phy)	One-Handed	Quick (Mark stress to make an attack against two targets in range of you.)
War Scythe	Finesse	Very Close	d10 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Reliable (+1 on any attack rolls with this weapon.)
Knuckle Blades	Strength	Melee	d8+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Brutal (For every 8 rolled on a damage die, roll an additional d8 of damage.)
Greatbow	Finesse	Far	d8+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.)
Blunderbuss	Finesse	Far	d10 (Phy)	One-Handed	Reloading (If any of your damage dice land on a 10, you must mark stress to reload this weapon before it can be shot again.)
Finehair Bow	Agility	Very Far	d8+2 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Reliable (+1 on any attack rolls with this weapon.)

Magic Weapons

Requires the Spellcast Ability

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Improved Arcane Gauntlets	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Improved Hallowed Axe	Strength	Melee	d10+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Improved Hand Runes	Instinct	Very Close	d10+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Improved Glowing Rings	Agility	Very Close	d10+4 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Improved Shortstaff	Instinct	Close	d10+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Improved Wand	Knowledge	Far	d8+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Improved Dualstaff	Instinct	Far	d8+4 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Improved Returning Blade	Finesse	Far	d8+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Improved Scepter	Presence	Far	d8+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	Versatile (Presence Melee - d10)
Improved Greatstaff	Knowledge	Very Far	d6+4 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.
Hammer of Exota	Instinct	Melee	d8+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Eruptive (When you hit a creature in Melee, each Very Close enemy must make a React (5) roll or take half damage as well.)
Casting Sword	Strength	Melee	d10+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Versatile (Knowledge Far - d8)
Bonded Staff	Knowledge	Far	d8+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Reliable (+1 on any attack rolls with this weapon.)
Devouring Daggers	Finesse	Melee	d10+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Scary (Successful attacks also deal +1 stress.)
Elder Bow	Instinct	Far	d8+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.)
Wand of Enthrallment	Presence	Far	d8 (Mag)	One-Handed	Persuasive (Mark stress before rolling Presence to add +2 to the result.)
Ego Blade	Agility	Melee	d12+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	Pompous (Must have a Presence score of 0 or less to use this weapon.)
Scepter of Elias	Presence	Far	d8 (Mag)	One-Handed	Invigorating (When you make a successful attack, roll a d4. On a 4, clear a stress.)
Yutari Bloodbow	Finesse	Far	d10+2 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Brutal (For every 10 rolled on a damage die, roll an additional d10 of damage.)

Tier 2 (Levels 5-7)

Physical Weapons

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Advanced Battleaxe	Strength	Melee	d10+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Advanced Warhammer	Strength	Melee	d12+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Heavy (−1 to Agility)
Advanced Shortsword	Agility	Melee	d10+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Rapier	Presence	Melee	d8+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Light (+1 to Agility)
Advanced Dagger	Finesse	Melee	d8+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Quick (Mark stress to attack an additional target in range.)
Advanced Quarterstaff	Instinct	Melee	d10+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Advanced Longsword	Agility	Melee	d8+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Reliable (+1 to attack rolls with this weapon)
Advanced Greatsword	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Massive (−1 Agility, roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest)
Advanced Mace	Strength	Melee	d8+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Saber	Agility	Melee	d8+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Halberd	Strength	Very Close	d10+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Advanced Shortbow	Agility	Far	d8+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Advanced Crossbow	Finesse	Far	d8+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Longbow	Agility	Very Far	d8+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Cumbersome (−1 to Evasion)
Bravesword	Strength	Melee	d12+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Dense (−1 to Agility & +3 to Severe Damage Threshold)
Flickerfly Blade	Agility	Melee	d8+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Soulswift (You may re-roll any damage die that rolls a value lower than your Agility. You must use the new result)
Meridian Cutlass	Presence	Melee	d10+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Quick (Mark stress to make an attack against two targets in range of you.)
Labrys Axe	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Protective (Add +1 to your Armor score.)
Hell's Hammer	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Devastating (Mark stress before your attack roll to use d20s as your damage dice instead.)
Retractable Saber	Agility	Melee	d10+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Retractable (Blade can be hidden in hilt to avoid recognition as a weapon.)
Double Flail	Agility	Very Close	d10+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.)

Talon Blades	Finesse	Close	d10+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Brutal (For every 10 rolled on a damage die, roll an additional d10 of damage.)
Spiked Bow	Agility	Very Far	d8+4 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Versatile (Agility Melee - d12)
Black Powder Revolver	Finesse	Very Far	d10+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Reloading (If any of your damage dice land on a 10, you must mark stress to reload this weapon before it can be shot again.)

Magic Weapons

Requires the Spellcast Ability

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Advanced Arcane Gauntlets	Strength	Melee	d10+6 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Advanced Hallowed Axe	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Hand Runes	Instinct	Very Close	d10+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Glowing Rings	Agility	Very Close	d10+6 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Advanced Shortstaff	Instinct	Close	d10+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Wand	Knowledge	Far	d8+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Returning Blade	Finesse	Far	d8+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Dualstaff	Instinct	Far	d8+6 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Advanced Scepter	Presence	Far	d8+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	Versatile (Presence Melee - d10)
Advanced Greatstaff	Knowledge	Very Far	d6+6 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.)
Mage Orb	Knowledge	Far	d10+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.)
Firestaff	Instinct	Far	d8+4 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Burn (For every damage dice that rolls an 8, deal stress.)
Body Runes	Knowledge	Very Close	d20 (Mag)	One-Handed	Painful (Mark stress every time you roll damage on an attack with this weapon.)
Ghostblade	Presence	Melee	d10+2 (Any)	One-Handed	Otherworldly (You can choose whether to do Physical or Magic damage.)
Axe of Fortunis	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Lucky (Spend stress on a failure to reroll your attack and take the new result.)
Gilded Bow	Finesse	Far	d8+4 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Self-Correcting (Any 1's rolled on the damage dice may be treated as 8's instead.)

Blessed Anlace	Instinct	Melee	d8+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	Healing (During downtime, automatically heal 1 hit point.)
Ilmari's Blunderbuss	Finesse	Very Far	d10+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	Reloading (If any of your damage dice land on a 10, you must mark stress to reload this weapon before it can be shot again.)
Widogast Pendant	Knowledge	Close	d8+2 (Mag)	One-Handed	Timebender (You may choose the target of your attack after making your attack roll.)

Tier 3 (Levels 8-10)

Physical Weapons

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Legendary Battleaxe	Strength	Melee	d10+8 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Legendary Warhammer	Strength	Melee	d12+8 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Heavy (−1 to Agility)
Legendary Shortsword	Agility	Melee	d10+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Legendary Longsword	Agility	Melee	d8+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Reliable (+1 to attack rolls with this weapon)
Legendary Greatsword	Strength	Melee	d10+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Massive (−1 Agility, roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest)
Legendary Rapier	Presence	Melee	d8+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Light (+1 to Agility)
Legendary Dagger	Finesse	Melee	d8+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Quick (Mark stress to attack an additional target in range.)
Legendary Quarterstaff	Instinct	Melee	d10+8 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Legendary Mace	Strength	Melee	d8+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Legendary Saber	Agility	Melee	d8+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Legendary Halberd	Strength	Very Close	d10+8 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Legendary Returning Blade	Finesse	Close	d8+8 (Phy)	One-Handed	Enchanted (this weapon returns to its owner's hand after being thrown)
Legendary Shortbow	Agility	Far	d8+8 (Phy)	Two-Handed	—
Legendary Crossbow	Finesse	Far	d8+8 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Legendary Longbow	Agility	Very Far	d8+8 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Cumbersome (−1 to Evasion)
Double-Sided Sword	Agility	Melee	d10+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Quick (Mark stress to make an attack against two targets in range of you.)

Curved Daggers	Finesse	Melee	d10+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Serrated (Any 1's rolled on the damage dice count as 11 points of damage.)
Swinging Ropeblade	Presence	Close	d10+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Grappling (Spend Hope on a successful attack to temporarily keep the target in place, or pull them into Melee with you.)
Extended Polearm	Finesse	Very Close	d10+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Long (Can target all enemies in a line within range with your attack)
Sledge Axe	Strength	Melee	d12+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Destructive (−1 to Agility, all Very Close enemies mark stress on a successful attack)
Impact Gauntlet	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Concussive (Spend Hope on a successful attack to launch the target into far range.)
Aantari Bow	Finesse	Far	d8+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Reliable (+1 on any attack rolls with this weapon.)
Ricochet Axes	Agility	Far	d8+6 (Phy)	Two-Handed	Bouncing (Spend any amount of stress to hit that many targets in range with the attack.)
Hand Cannon	Finesse	Very Far	d10+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Reloading (If any of your damage dice land on a 10, you must mark stress to reload this weapon before it can be shot again.)

Magic Weapons

Require the Spellcast Ability

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Legendary Arcane Gauntlets	Strength	Melee	d10+8 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Legendary Hallowed Axe	Strength	Melee	d10+6 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Legendary Hand Runes	Instinct	Very Close	d10+6 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Legendary Glowing Rings	Agility	Very Close	d10+8 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Legendary Shortstaff	Instinct	Close	d10+6 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Legendary Wand	Knowledge	Far	d8+6 (Mag)	One-Handed	—
Legendary Dualstaff	Instinct	Far	d8+8 (Mag)	Two-Handed	—
Legendary Scepter	Presence	Far	d8+6 (Mag)	One-Handed	Versatile (Presence Melee - d10)
Legendary Greatstaff	Knowledge	Very Far	d6+8 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.)
Sword of Light & Flame	Strength	Melee	d10+4 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Penetrating (Cuts through solid material.)

Siphoning Gauntlets	Presence	Melee	d10+6 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Lifestealing (On a successful hit, roll a d6. On a 6, heal a hit point or clear a stress.)
Midas Scythe	Knowledge	Melee	d10+6 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Greedy (You may spend one handful of gold to increase your proficiency by +1 on a damage roll.)
Floating Bladeshards	Instinct	Close	d10+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	Powerful (Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.)
Bramblebow	Instinct	Far	d8+6 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Reliable (+1 on any attack rolls with this weapon.)
Wand of Essek	Knowledge	Far	d12+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	Timebender (−1 to Agility. You may choose the target of your attack after making your attack roll.)
Magus Revolver	Finesse	Very Far	d10+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	Reloading (If any of your damage dice land on a 10, you must mark stress to reload this weapon before it can be shot again.)
Bloodstaff	Instinct	Far	d20 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Painful (Mark stress every time you roll damage on an attack with this weapon.)
Fusion Gloves	Knowledge	Very Far	d6+6 (Mag)	Two-Handed	Bonded (Add your Level to the damage result.)

Secondary Weapon Tables

Players may choose any seconday weapon (as long as they have the available hands) at tier 0 during character creation. Other weapons will become available to them throughout a campaign as they level up.

Tier 0 (Level 1) - Starting Secondary Weapons

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Round Shield	Strength	Melee	d4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Protective (Add +2 to your armor score.)
Tower Shield	Strength	Melee	d6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Barrier (Add +4 to your armor score, −2 to Evasion)
Dagger	Finesse	Melee	d8 (Phy)	One-Handed	Paired (+2 to Primary Weapon damage in Melee)
Shortsword	Agility	Melee	d10 (Phy)	One-Handed	Paired (+2 to Primary Weapon damage in Melee)
Whip	Agility	Very Close	d6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Whipcrack (Mark stress to scatter enemies in Melee into close range)
Grappler	Finesse	Close	d6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Hook (On a successful attack, you may also pull the target into Melee with you)
Crossbow	Finesse	Far	d8 (Phy)	One-Handed	—

Tier 1 (Levels 2-4)

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Improved Round Shield	Strength	Melee	d4+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Protective (+3 to Armor Score.)
Improved Tower Shield	Strength	Melee	d6+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Barrier (+5 to Armor Score, −2 to Evasion)
Improved Dagger	Finesse	Melee	d8+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Paired (+3 to Primary Weapon damage in Melee)
Improved Shortsword	Agility	Melee	d10+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Paired (+3 to Primary Weapon damage in Melee)
Improved Crossbow	Finesse	Far	d8+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Improved Whip	Agility	Very Close	d6+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Whipcrack (Mark stress to scatter enemies in Melee into close range)
Spiked Shield	Strength	Melee	d6+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Double Duty (+2 to Armor score, +1 to Primary Weapon damage in Melee)
Parrying Dagger	Finesse	Melee	d6+2 (Phy)	One-Handed	Parry (On an attack against you, roll this weapon's damage dice. If any match the attacker's, they are removed before damage is totalled.)
Throwing Axe	Agility	Close	d6+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Retrieve (Must be retrieved once thrown before using again.)

Tier 2 (Levels 5-7)

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Advanced Round Shield	Strength	Melee	d4+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Protective (+4 to Armor Score)
Advanced Tower Shield	Strength	Melee	d6+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Barrier (+6 to Armor Score, −2 to Evasion)
Advanced Dagger	Finesse	Melee	d8+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Paired (+4 to Primary Weapon damage in Melee)
Advanced Shortsword	Agility	Melee	d10+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Paired (+4 to Primary Weapon damage in Melee)
Advanced Crossbow	Finesse	Far	d8+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Advanced Whip	Agility	Very Close	d6+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Whipcrack (Mark stress to scatter enemies in Melee into close range)
Buckler	Agility	Melee	d4+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Deflecting (On an incoming attack, you may spend an armor slot to boost your Evasion score by your Armor score.)
Powered Gauntlet	Knowledge	Close	d6+4 (Mag)	One-Handed	Charged Attack (Mark stress to increase proficiency by +1 on Primary Weapon attack)
Hand Sling	Finesse	Very Far	d6+4 (Phy)	One-Handed	Versatile (Finesse Close - d8+4)

Tier 3 (Levels 8-10)

Name	Trait	Range	Damage	Burden	Feature
Legendary Round Shield	Strength	Melee	d4+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Protective (+5 to Armor Score)
Legendary Tower Shield	Strength	Melee	d4+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Barrier (+7 to Armor Score, −2 to Evasion)
Legendary Dagger	Finesse	Melee	d8+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Paired (+5 to Primary Weapon damage in Melee)
Legendary Shortsword	Agility	Melee	d10+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Paired (+5 to Primary Weapon damage in Melee)
Legendary Crossbow	Finesse	Far	d8+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	—
Legendary Whip	Agility	Very Close	d6+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Whipcrack (Mark stress to scatter enemies in Melee into close range)
Braveshield	Agility	Melee	d4+6 (Phy)	One-Handed	Sheltering (Using an armor slot reduces damage for you and all allies in Melee with you.)
Knuckle Claws	Strength	Melee	d6+6 (Mag)	One-Handed	Doubled Up (When you make an attack with your Primary Weapon, you also apply that roll to another enemy in range of this weapon.)
Primer Shard	Instinct	Very Close	none	One-Handed	Locked On (On a successful attack with this weapon against a target, the next hit with your Primary Weapon automatically hits that target.)

Armor Tables

Players may choose any piece of armor at tier 0 during character creation. Other armor will become available to them throughout a campaign as they level up.

Tier 0 (Level 1) - Starting Armor

Armor	Base Score	Feature
Leather Armor	3	Light (+1 to Evasion)
Breastplate Armor	5	—
Chainmail Armor	7	Heavy (−1 to Evasion)
Full Plate Armor	9	Very Heavy (−2 to Evasion and −1 to Agility)

Tier 1 (Levels 2-4)

Armor	Base Score	Feature
Improved Leather Armor	4	Light (+1 to Evasion)
Improved Breastplate Armor	6	—
Improved Chainmail Armor	8	Heavy (−1 to Evasion)
Improved Full Plate Armor	10	Very Heavy (−2 to Evasion and −1 to Agility)
Elundrian Chain Armor	3	Reinforced (Increase your armor score by the number of unmarked armor slots you have)
Irontree Breastplate Armor	5	Sturdy (Before you mark your last armor slot, roll your armor die. On a 6, you use the armor without marking the slot.)
Runetan Shield	5	Warded (Each armor slot is worth an extra 2d4 against magic damage.)
Harrowbone Armor	5	Resistant (Mark 2 armor slots to make yourself resistant to the incoming damage instead of reducing it by your armor score.)
Tyris Soft Armor	5	Quiet (+2 to any rolls you make to move without being heard.)
Rosewild Armor	5	Hopeful (Anytime you need to spend Hope, you may mark an Armor Slot instead.)

Tier 2 (Levels 5-7)

Armor	Base Score	Feature
Advanced Leather Armor	5	Light (+1 to Evasion)
Advanced Breastplate Armor	7	—
Advanced Chainmail Armor	9	Heavy (−1 to Evasion)
Advanced Full Plate Armor	11	Very Heavy (−2 to Evasion and −1 to Agility)
Dragonscale Armor	6	Impenetrable (When you mark an armor slot, you cannot fill your last hit point as the result of physical damage.)
Body Runes	10	Painful (Mark stress every time you use one or more armor slots on an attack.)
Bellamoi Fine Armor	6	Gilded (When you mark an armor slot, you may spend any amount of Hope to also reduce the incoming damage by an amount equal to your proficiency per Hope spent.)
Bladefare Armor	9	Physical (You cannot use this armor against Magic damage.)
Monett's Cloak	9	Magic (You cannot use this armor against Physical damage.)
Spiked Armor Plating	6	Sharp (Add 1d4 to any damage rolls you make on a successful Melee attack.)

Tier 3 (Levels 8-10)

Armor	Base Score	Feature
Legendary Leather Armor	6	Light (+1 to Evasion)
Legendary Breastplate Armor	8	—
Legendary Chainmail Armor	10	Heavy (−1 to Evasion)
Legendary Full Plate Armor	12	Very Heavy (−2 to Evasion and −1 to Agility)
Emberwoven Armor	7	Burning (When an enemy strikes you in Melee, they immediately mark a stress.)
Dunamis Silkchain	5	Timeslowing (On any incoming attacks, roll 1d4 and add its value to your Evasion score.)
Veritas Opal Armor	7	Truthseeking (This armor glows when anyone within close range tells a lie.)
Channeling Armor	6	Channeling (While this armor is equipped, take +1 to all Spellcast rolls.)
Savior Chainmail	16	Difficult (−1 to all Character Traits)
Full Reinforced Armor	6	Variable (Add +1 to your armor score for every range beyond Melee the damage is coming from.)

Loot

Loot in Daggerheart consists of the additional items and consumables you might find along your journey. Pull directly from the tables below, or use them as inspiration for your own loot.

Items

Items are loot that you carry in your inventory indefinitely. Unless you choose to get rid of them or something happens in the narrative that causes you to lose them, they will remain with you.

Tier 0: Roll 1d12 or 2d12 | **Tier 1:** Roll 2d12 or 3d12
Tier 2: Roll 3d12 or 4d12 | **Tier 3:** Roll 4d12 or 5d12

01	**Premium Bedroll** - During any rests, you always automatically clear 1 stress.	16	**Skeleton Key** - Use this to make a Finesse roll at advantage when attempting to open a locked door.
02	**Piper Whistle** - A handcrafted whistle. Each that are made have a distinctive sound, and the piercing tone can be heard across a one mile radius.	17	**Arcane Prism** - Position this prism in a location of your choosing. Once activated, any allies that stand within close distance of this prism get +1 to their Spellcast rolls. Once it is deactivated, it can't be activated again until your next long rest.
03	**Charging Quiver** - When arrows for a bow are kept in the Charging Quiver, damage rolls using the bow deal +2 damage.	18	**Minor Stamina Potion Recipe** - During downtime, spend one of your actions and a handful of gold to craft a Minor Stamina Potion.
04	**Alistair's Torch** - A magic torch that lights at will and spreads light much farther than it looks like it should. This could fill a cave with light bright enough to feel like its daytime.	19	**Minor Health Potion Recipe** - During downtime, spend one of your actions and a handful of gold to craft a Minor Health Potion.

05	**Speaking Orbs** - A pair of orbs that allow any creatures holding them to communicate with each other across any distance.	20	**Homing Compasses** - Two compasses that only point at each other no matter how far apart they are.
06	**Manacles** - A pair of locking cuffs with a key.	21	**Corrector Sprite** - A tiny sprite who sits in the curve of your ear canal and whispers helpful advice during combat. Once per short rest, you may take advantage on an attack roll. Do not give them your true name.
07	**Arcane Cloak** - A cloak whose color, texture, and size can be adjusted by any user with the spellcast ability at will.	22	**Gecko Gloves** - You can climb up vertical surfaces and across ceilings.
08	**Woven Net** - A net that can be used to trap small creatures. To use it, make a Finesse roll. On a success, the difficulty to break free is 16.	23	**Lorekeeper** - Store the name of up to three hostile creatures. Next time you face them, take +1 on any action rolls against them.
09	**Fire Jar** - Pour out strange liquid within the contents of this jar to instantly produce fire. The contents regenerate on your next long rest.	24	**Vial of Darksmoke Recipe** - During downtime, spend one of your actions and mark a stress to craft a Vial of Darksmoke.
10	**Suspended Rod** - A flat rod inscribed with runes. When it is activated, it is immediately suspended in place where it is. It cannot move, does not abide by the rules of gravity, and will remain in place until it is deactivated.	25	**Bloodstone** - Attach to a weapon. Adds the following feature to a weapon that doesn't already have a feature: **Brutal** (*If any of your damage dice roll their maximum value, roll an additional damage die of that size.*)
11	**Glamor Stone** - Activate this pebble-sized stone to memorize a look - hairdo, makeup, outfit. You may spend a Hope to instantly re-create this look at any time.	26	**Greatstone** - Attach to a weapon. Adds the following feature to a weapon that doesn't already have a feature: **Powerful** (*Roll one extra damage die and drop the lowest.*)
12	**Empty Chest** - A magical chest that will appear empty, even if there are items being kept inside. The owner can use a specific word, phrase, or other trigger when opening the chest to reveal these items.	27	**Glider** - A small parachute that can be deployed by marking Stress. It allows the user to glide down from a high place safely to the ground below.
13	**Companion Case** - A carrying case for a small animal companion. While they are inside, the case and the animal are immune to all harm.	28	**Ring of Silence** - Spend a Hope to activate this ring until your next short rest. Your footsteps are silent.
14	**Piercing Arrows** - When firing a bow, you may use Piercing Arrows to add your proficiency to your damage roll. 3 uses per short rest. ○ ○ ○	29	**Calming Pendant** - If you should ever have to mark your last stress slot, roll a d6. On a 5+, don't mark it.
15	**Valorstone** - Attach to armor. Adds the following feature to armor that doesn't already have a feature: **Resilient** (*Before you mark your last armor slot, roll a d6. On a 6, you use the armor without marking the slot.*)	30	**Dual Flask** - A flask that can hold two different liquids. A small button on the side allows the drinker to switch between them.

31	**Bag of Ficklesand** - This is a small bag of sand that can be convinced to be much heavier or lighter than it should be with a Presence (10) roll. You can also blow sand in the face of an adversary with a Finesse roll to make them temporarily Vulnerable.	46	**Flickerfly Pendant** - While wearing your melee weapons dealing physical damage extend with a gossamer sheen. You can hit creatures up to very close range.
32	**Ring of Resistance** - Once per long rest, activate this ring to only take half damage on an incoming attack.	47	**Lakestrider Boots** - You may walk along the surface of water as if it were soft ground.
33	**Phoenix Feather** - While you have any quantity of Phoenix Feathers, when you drop unconscious and roll to see if you take a scar, always take +1 to the die result.	48	**Clay Companion** - This ball of clay can be sculpted into various animal shapes and will then behave as that animal (a clay spider can spin clay webs, a clay bird can fly). This companion has continuity of memory and self across different shapes but may adopt some mannerisms with each form.
34	**Box of Many Goods** - A small box that can only be opened once per long rest. When it is, roll a d12. If you roll a 1-6, it is empty. If you roll a 7-10, it contains one random consumable. If you roll an 11-12, it contains two random consumables.	49	**Attune Relic** - Add +1 to your Instinct. You cannot hold any other relics.
35	**Airblade charm** - Attach to a melee weapon to make it able to attack at a Close distance. 3 uses per short rest.	50	**Honing Relic** - Add +1 to one of your Experiences. You cannot hold any other relics.
36	**Portal Seed** - Plant this in the ground to grow a portal in this spot. The portal will be ready to use in 24 hours and you may travel to any other spot you've planted a portal seed. A portal may be destroyed by dealing any amount of magic damage to it.	51	**Mythic Dust Recipe** - During downtime, spend one of your actions and a bag of gold to craft Mythic Dust.
37	**Paragon's Chain** - Once per long rest, you may spend a downtime action to meditate on an ideal or principle you hold dear and focus your will into the chain. Until your next long rest, you can spend a Hope to use a d20 as your Hope die for rolls that directly align with that principle.	52	**Shard of Memory**- Once per long rest you may spend 2 Hope to recall a Domain card from your vault instead of payings its Recall Cost.
38	**Elusive Amulet** - Once per long rest, activate this to go Hidden until you move from this location. Any enemies who move into line of sight with you while you're Hidden don't see you.	53	**Gem of Audacity** - Attach to a weapon to allow you to roll with Presence when using it to attack.
39	**Hopekeeper Locket -** During a long rest, if you have 5 Hope, you may spend 1 Hope and imbue the locket with your bountiful resolve. If you ever have 0 Hope, you may use the locket and gain 1 Hope. The locket must then be recharged during a long rest.	54	**Gem of Sagacity** - Attach to a weapon to allow you to roll with Knowledge when using it to attack.

40	**Infinite Bag** - Items put into this bag are stored in a pocket dimension and can be retrieved at any time.	55	**Gem of Insight** - Attach to a weapon to allow you to roll with Instinct when using it to attack.
41	**Stride Relic** - Add +1 to your Agility. You cannot hold any other relics.	56	**Gem of Might** - Attach to a weapon to allow you to roll with Strength when using it to attack.
42	**Bolster Relic** - Add +1 to your Strength. You cannot hold any other relics.	57	**Gem of Alacrity** - Attach to a weapon to allow you to roll with Agility when using it to attack.
43	**Focus Relic** - Add +1 to your Finesse. You cannot hold any other relics.	58	**Gem of Precision** - Attach to a weapon to allow you to roll with Finesse when using it to attack.
44	**Charm Relic** - Add +1 to your Presence. You cannot hold any other relics.	59	**Ring of Unbreakable Resolve** - Once per session, you may spend 3 Hope to cancel one Fear move made within a Far distance. That Fear is still spent.
45	**Sharp Relic** - Add +1 to your Knowledge. You cannot hold any other relics.	60	**Belt of Unity** - Once per session, you may spend 5 Hope to lead a Tag Team action with 3 PCs instead of 2.

Consumables

Consumables are loot that can only be used one time. You may only hold five of the same consumable at a time.

Tier 0: Roll 1d12 or 2d12 | **Tier 1:** Roll 2d12 or 3d12
Tier 2: Roll 3d12 or 4d12 | **Tier 3:** Roll 4d12 or 5d12

01	**Stride Potion** - Take a +1 to your next Agility roll.	16	**Vial of Darksmoke** - Use during an incoming attack to roll a number of d6 equal to your Agility score. Add the highest result to your Evasion score against the attack.
02	**Bolster Potion** - Take a +1 to your next Strength roll.	17	**Jumping Root** - You can leap to anywhere within far range of you without needing to roll. This effect ends when you land there.
03	**Focus Potion** - Take a +1 to your next Finesse roll.	18	**Snap Powder** - Mark stress and clear a hit point.
04	**Charm Potion** - Take a +1 to your next Presence roll.	19	**Health Potion** - Immediately clear 1+1d4 hit points.
05	**Sharp Potion** - Take a +1 to your next Knowledge roll.	20	**Stamina Potion** - Immediately clear 1+1d4 stress.

06	**Attune Potion** - Take a +1 to your next Instinct roll.	21	**Armor Stitcher -** Use this to spend any number of Hope and repair that many armor slots.
07	**Minor Health Potion -** Immediately clear 1d4 hit points.	22	**Gill Salve -** You can breathe underwater for a number of minutes equal to your level.
08	**Minor Stamina Potion -** Immediately clear 1d4 stress.	23	**Replication Parchment -** When you touch this piece of parchment to another, it will copy it exactly. Once it's made into this copy, it is no longer Replication Parchment.
09	**Grindletooth Venom** - Apply to physical weapon to add +1d6 to its next damage roll.	24	**Improved Arcane Shard** - Use Finesse to throw at a group of enemies within far range. Any you succeed against take 2d20 magic damage.
10	**Varik Leaves** - Immediately gain 2 hope.	25	**Major Stride Potion** - Take a +1 to Agility until your next short rest.
11	**Vial of Moondrip** - See in total darkness until your next short rest.	26	**Major Bolster Potion** - Take a +1 to Strength until your next short rest.
12	**Unstable Arcane Shard**. Use Finesse to throw at a group of enemies within far range. Any you succeed against take 1d20 magic damage.	27	**Major Focus Potion** - Take a +1 to Finesse until your next short rest.
13	**Potion of Stability** - On use, take one additional downtime action.	28	**Major Umbra Potion** - Take a +1 to Presence until your next short rest.
14	**Improved Grindletooth Venom** - Apply to physical weapon to add +1d8 to its next damage roll.	29	**Major Sharp Potion** - Take a +1 to Knowledge until your next short rest.
15	**Morphing Clay** - Spend one Hope. The person using this item can alter their face to change their facial features enough to make them unrecognizable until their next short rest.	30	**Major Attune Potion** - Take a +1 to Instinct until your next short rest.

31	**Blood of the Yorgi** - Disappear from where you are and immediately reappear anywhere within very far distance.	46	**Wingsprout -** You gain magic wings that allow you to fly for a number of minutes equal to your level.
32	**Homet's Secret Potion -** After consuming, on the next successful attack you make that deals magic damage, treat the damage as you would on a critical success.	47	**Jar of Lost Voices -** Release the voices to create a deafening echo of sound for a number of minutes equal to your Instinct score. Anyone within far distance unprepared for the sound automatically takes 6d8 magic damage.
33	**Redthorn Saliva -** Apply to physical weapon to add +1d12 to its next damage roll.	48	**Dragonbloom Tea** - Make a fiery breath attack on all close enemies in front of you. Roll with Instinct against the targets. On a success, deal d20 physical damage.
34	**Channelstone -** Take a spell or grimoire from your vault and use it once, then return it to your vault.	49	**Bridge Seed -**Thick vines grow slowly from where you are standing to somewhere else within far distance, allowing you to climb up or across safely. It dissipates at your next short rest.
35	**Mythic Dust -** Apply to a magic weapon to add +1d12 to its next damage roll.	50	**Sleeping Sap -** Puts a willing creature to sleep for a full night's rest. When they awaken, they have all stress cleared.
36	**Acidpaste** - Eats away walls and other surfaces in bright flashes.	51	**Feast of Xuria -** Provides a single meal for the party that clears all hit points and stress, and gives 1d4 of hope.
37	**Hopehold Flare** - On use, allies within close distance always rolls a d6 when they spend a Hope. On a 6, they get the effect of that Hope without spending it. This lasts until your next short rest.	52	**Bonding Honey** - Glues two objects together permanently.
38	**Major Arcane Shard** - Use Finesse to throw at a group of enemies within far range. Any you succeed against take 4d20 magic damage.	53	**Shrinking Potion** - Reduces the drinker's size in half until they choose to drop this form or take their next short rest. Take +2 Agility.
39	**Featherbone** - Control your falling speed for a number of minutes equal to your level.	54	**Growing Potion** - Makes the drinker twice as large until they choose to drop this form or take their next short rest. Take +2 Strength.

40	**Circle of the Void** - Mark stress. Magical spells are temporarily unable to be cast everywhere within far distance of this object. Everything within this range is immune to magic damage.	55	**Knowledge Stone -** If you die while holding this stone, one ally may take a card from your loadout to place in their own loadout or vault. When they take this knowledge, the stone crumbles.
41	**Sun Tree Sap** - Roll 1d6. On a 5-6, clear two Hit Points. On a 2-5, clear three stress. On a 1, see the Veil of Death and return changed, taking one Scar.	56	**Sweet Moss -** Consume during a short rest to clear an additional 1d4 hit points or 1d4 stress.
42	**Dripfang Poison** - Does 8d10 direct magic damage to a creature who consumes it.	57	**Blinding Orb** - Creates a flash of bright light that causes all creatures in close range to be Vulnerable until they next take Hit Point damage.
43	**Major Health Potion** - Immediately clear 2+1d4 hit points.	58	**Death Tea -** Any critical successes on an attack roll automatically kill the creature you're facing. If you don't get any critical successes on an attack roll before your next long rest, you die.
44	**Major Stamina Potion** - Immediately clear 2+1d4 stress.	59	**Mirror of Marigold -** Spend hope to negate all incoming damage, shattering the mirror. You may also mark stress before it shatters to attempt to reflect it back to the attacker. If you do, make an attack roll using Finesse.
45	**Ogre Musk**- Keep from anybody from tracking you by physical or magic means until your next short rest.	60	**Stardrop** - On use, it summons a hailstorm of comets that automatically deal 8d20 physical damage to all creatures within very far range of where it was triggered.

Full Example of Play

Below is a full example of play using the mechanics that have been introduced so far.

We join a party as they embark on a journey to Whitecrest Tower, rumored to be the home of a powerful artifact from an ancient battle.

The party:
Wildborne Clank Warden of Renewal Druid – Shepherd (they/she) – Jess (she/her)
Loreborne Drakona School of War Wizard – Krasz (she/her) – Shaun (he/him)
Underborne Katari Call of the Brave Warrior – Tabby (she/her) – Kat (she/her)
Seaborne Elf Syndicate Rogue – Lavelle (he/him) – Nick (he/him)

Their GM:
Max (they/them)

Max says, "Whitecrest Tower is built into the side of a mountain, forcing attackers to make a dangerous climb to even approach from the valley below. So my first question is – how do you want to get up to the tower?"

Jess, playing Shepherd the Druid, says, "I want to use Nature's Tongue and find a goat or ram or some other creature that lives in the mountains and ask them about the easiest way up to the tower."

Max says, "Absolutely. It's not hard to find some goats tromping around in seeming defiance of gravity. Give me that Instinct Roll, difficulty 12."

Jess rolls the duality dice and adds two modifier tokens to represent her Instinct trait of 2. She rolls 7 on the Hope die and 4 on the Fear die. With her two modifier tokens, that is a 13 with Hope.

"On a success with Hope, the goat is friendly enough and gives you clear information. She remembers the pathway that the last group of two-legs took and will lead you to it. Don't forget to gain Hope."

Jess adds a Hope on her sheet and says, " 'Thank you, friend goat.' Then I fish out some food from my pack and give it to her as she leads us up."

"The food disappears in an instant, then the goat starts scaling the mountain, leading you to the path. We're going to do the ascent as a Progress Countdown, but since you're getting help, I'm going to set it at 3 instead of 5. What's the next move you make in scaling the mountain?"

Kat says, "Tabby is going to take point and set pitons for the others to help make the ascent easier for everyone."

"That sounds like an Agility roll." Max says.

Tabby rolls a 3 on the Hope die, but a 7 on the Fear die. With her Agility of 2, that would be a total of 12, with Fear.

"I'm going to use my Feline Instincts as a Katari to mark Stress and re-roll my Hope die," Kat says.

She rolls the Hope die again, getting an 8. "Nice! That's a 17 with Hope."

"On a success with Hope, you reduce the countdown by 2. It's down to 1, so even a success with Fear will get you to the tower. Take Hope," Max says, then describes the climb. "Tabby scales the mountain, neck and neck with the goat, setting pitons and throwing rope down behind to help the others. You're making quick work, but there's still another hundred feet between you and the foot of the tower. What do you do?"

Shaun says "Oh, I want to try out my new grimoire. Krasz takes some rope and pitons and then she's going to cast Arcane Door to teleport up to the front gate so she can throw down a rope."

"Nice. That's a Spellcast roll with difficulty 13, and you spend a Hope to cast it."

Shaun spends Hope and rolls the duality dice, adding 3 modifier tokens for his character's spellcast trait (Knowledge). He gets a 5 on the Hope die and a 6 on the Fear die.

"That's an 14, so a success...with Fear," Shaun says, slightly nervous.

Max takes a Fear token, adding it to the two already in front of them. "You all see Krasz disappear and then reappear halfway up the remaining distance, then she blinks out again and appears by the front gate. With a rope leading all the way up, it's relatively simple for the rest of you to make your way up."

"I give the helpful goat another nibble of food before I send her off to her own business," Jess adds.

Max nods. "As Shepherd says farewell to the goat, Krasz, behind you something shifts, like the wooden floors of an old house. But this doesn't feel like settling. It feels like something waking from slumber."

"I'm sure that's fine," Nick says, with an expression that says the opposite.

Max continues. "Once you've all made it up the rope, you stand at the shattered front gate of Whitecrest tower, the mountainside wall collapsed and long since worn down by snow or rain or avalanche. The only sounds you hear are the whistling of wind through the ruins as you pass the outer wall of Whitecrest tower. Lavelle, your contact said that the surviving treasure hunter she met last month made it as far as the basement of the castle before her party were killed by a Skeleton Knight."

"So we know to go down once we get inside," Nick adds. "Let's sneak in as far as we can before we catch the attention of whatever's already here."

"Okay, that'll be an Agility roll."

Jess says. "Lavelle, you lead, we'll help?"

"Every person that helps spends a Hope and can roll a 1d6. You'll add the highest result to Lavelle's roll," Max says.

Kat, Jess, and Shaun all spend Hope and roll. Kat rolls a 2, Jess rolls a 1, and Shaun rolls a 3.

Nick says "I'm going to spend Hope to Utilize an Experience – this is definitely the kind of intrusion Lavelle has done as a Treasure Hunter." Nick rolls a 1 on the Hope die, a 5 on the Fear die. Plus Lavelle's Agility of 3, 2 from his Experience, and Shaun's advantage roll of 3, that's (1+5+3+2+3) for a total of 13, with Fear.

Max grimaces. "Thirteen is not going to do it." Max takes another Fear. "You make your way through the outer courtyard of the fortress. Rusted swords, decayed wooden emplacements, rubble from the collapsing stone structure. You take a turn into the inner courtyard, with the keep just ahead of you, when you hear rattling and the sounds of steel on stone."

Max places the action tracker on the table. "All around you, once-still skeletons begin assembling, stacking themselves up into moving figures wielding rusted swords and bows that shouldn't work but do. Since you rolled a fail with Fear, this opening move is going to hurt."

Max spends one Fear to add two tokens to the action tracker. Then, they spend a second Fear for a Group Attack using the three skeleton dredges. "All three of the smaller skeletons surround Lavelle, hacking and stabbing with their rusted blades. Max makes one attack for the group of skeletons according to the text of the Group Attack move. They roll one twenty-sided die and one token for the skeleton dredges' attack modifier of -1. The die comes up a 15, -1 for 14. Lavelle, what is your evasion?

Shaun says, "It's 13."

Max nods. "Then that is a hit. You'll take 9 physical damage as the skeletons surround you, hacking and slashing with rusted blades."

"Yikes," Nick says. "I'll mark one armor slot to try to bring that down." Nick has a 3 armor score from his leather armor, reducing the incoming damage by 3 points. "That's six, a Minor hit." Nick marks 1 Hit Point on Lavelle.

"Now for the archers," Max says, removing two tokens from the initiative tracker. "They're going to attack Shepherd and Krasz." The archers are not using a group attack, so Max makes one attack roll for each of them.

Max rolls 1d20+2 twice (once for each skeleton archer). They roll 3 and 8, for a total of 5 against Krasz and 10 against Shepherd. The attack against Krasz misses (9 is lower than 12), but the attack against Shepherd hits (if an attack total is equal to the target's evasion, the attack hits).

Max rolls 2d6 for the archer's damage. They roll a total of 8, then double it thanks to the Skeleton Archer's Opportunist move, which says "When more than one other friendly skeleton is very close to a target, all the damage Skeleton Archer deals to that target is doubled." Since the skeleton dredges mobbed the group, the archers are able to fire in moments when the heroes are more open.

"That's 16 physical for Shepherd," Max says.

Max turns to Jess to see what she wants to do about the damage for Shepherd. "16 is a lot, that's over my Severe threshold, so I'll mark armor." Shepherd's armor score is 5, so the 16 damage is reduced by 5 to only 11. That's still a Major injury for the Druid, so she marks a second armor slot and reduces the damage by 5 again to just 6, which is a Minor hit. She marks one HP.

Max spends another Fear to add two tokens to the initiative tracker and says, "Once the other skeletons have engaged and the archers have loosed their arrows, the skeleton knight stomps forward and takes a big swing at Tabby."

The skeleton knight has a +2 modifier, so Max adds two tokens to their hand with the d20. They roll a 14, +2 for 16. "I'm pretty sure a 16 hits Tabby?"

Kat says, "It does, alas."

Max notes that since other skeletons are within melee range, the Skeleton Knight's Pack Tactics move applies, and so they roll 2d12+2 for damage instead of the basic attack damage of 2d8+2. They roll a 6 and a 1, +2 for 9 damage. "That's 9 physical damage against Tabby as the knight comes in with a powerful overhead blow."

"That shouldn't be too hard to deal with," Kat says. She marks an armor slot, reducing the hit by 5 for her armor. "That takes it down to 4, which is below my Minor threshold, so I just mark Stress."

"Can we go now?" Nick asks, worried that Max has another trick up their sleeve.

There's still one action token on the tracker, but every adversary has activated during this move, so Max yields play back to the PCs. While returning the action tokens to the PCs, they say, "The skeletons rushed you all at once like it was a practiced maneuver. I wonder how many other groups they've ambushed like this. What do you want to do?"

"This is going to be their last ambush," Shaun says. "Magical flame ignites in Krasz's hands and I hurl it at the skeletons nearby. I'm going to target two of the little ones and the big one with the sword."

"Cool, roll Spellcast as your attack roll, and add your token to the action tracker."

Shaun says, "This is exactly what my War College Prodigy Experience prepared me for." He spends a Hope to add two modifier tokens to the three for his Knowledge. He rolls a 9 on the Hope die, 11 on the Fear die, plus 5 from his modifiers. "That's a 25 with Fear," he says as he adds one of his modifier tokens to the action tracker.

"So you'll get your bonus damage from School of War," Max says. "Let's see that damage roll!"

Shaun rolls 2d6 for the Wild Flame, plus another 1d6 for his Foundation ability. He gets a total of 14 magic damage, which will be compared to each of the three targets' damage thresholds. Since the dredges have the trait Minion 3, each 3 damage kills one of the dredges. 14 damage is enough to kill all four in one blow.

"Nice. With one graceful sweep of your hands, you burn all four of the skeleton dredges to ash and inert bone. Since they were minions, 14 damage was enough to kill all four of them."

Next, Max looks at the Knight's thresholds. 14 is just below the Severe threshold, so Max says, "You turn your fire on the skeleton knight. Its armor begins to melt and slag, melding to the bone. The knight's still coming, but you dealt it a Major blow," Max says as they mark 2 HP on the knight. "Unfortunately, the archers were out of range, so there was no good third target for your attack.

"And since you rolled with Fear, I gain a Fear token and make a move." They add a Fear to their pool. "As the minions collapse, the Knight roars with an unearthly voice, eyes glowing yellow with malice. It raises the greatsword and hacks into the group with huge sweeping blows. I'm spending Fear to attack all enemies within Very Close distance. So all four of you. But, now there aren't any friendly skeletons within range, so the knight does less damage."

Max rolls 1d20+2 for the attack, getting a 9 for a total of 11. That total is compared to each character's evasion. 11 hits Shepherd (who has a 10 evasion) but misses Krasz (12), Tabby (12), and Lavelle (13).

Max rolls 2d8+2 for the knight's standard damage against Shepherd. A 3 and a 2, plus 2 for 7. "Seven damage."

Jess looks at her armor slots and decides not to use armor. 7 is above her Minor threshold but below her Major, so she marks 1 HP.

There's still one action token on the initiative tracker, so Max activates one the archers to attack Shepherd. But this time Max rolls a 4, for a total of 6, below Shepherd's evasion.

All their action tokens gone, Max asks the players, "The knight is rampaging while the archers pelt you with arrows, what do you do?"

"I'd love to get a whack at this jerk," Kat says. The others nod. "I'm going to mark Stress to use Reckless and get advantage on an attack against the big boy. And I'll spend a Hope to utilize my Pit Fighter Experience for +2."

Kat rolls a 10 on the Hope die, 10 on the Fear die, 4 on the advantage die, plus 2 for Agility since she's using a Saber, and another 2 for her Experience. "Her total is 28, but since the dice matched, it's a critical success!

"Amazing," Max says. "Give me that critical damage roll!"

"I just got my second point of proficiency, and the saber has d8 damage dice. So that's 16 plus a normal roll of 2d8, plus two for my level thanks to Combat Training." Jess rolls a 1 and a 4, but re-rolls the 1 thanks to her Blade domain ability Not Good Enough, getting an 8. She adds 8 plus 4 plus 2 (because of Combat Training) for 14, and adds that to 16 because of the critical hit. An amazing 30 points of damage!

That's a Major hit for the Skeleton Knight, who only had 2 HP left. Max looks up and asks, "So Jess, how do you want to do this?"

The table bursts with excitement. Jess says, "The knight has a greatsword, right? I get right up in its face so it can't bring the sword to bear. Then I hack it apart like I'm chopping wood. There goes the tibia, there goes the humorous, then I bring the Saber around and do a backflip, chopping off the knight's head. I land with my shield bracing me as the Knight topples into a shattering pile of bones."

Max adds, "Amazing. Make sure to clear Stress and take Hope from your crit. And as the Skeleton collapses, it has one final move that is triggered when it is defeated– it lashes out with its last gasp of strength to try to bring you with it, clawing at you with a great skeletal hand."

Max rolls 1d20+2 and gets a 16+2 for 18. They roll 2d8+2 for damage and get 14

"The skeleton knight deals 14 physical damage back to you as unlife fades from its bones."

"Oof. That's what armor is for." She marks an armor slot and reduces the 15 to 9, which is below her Major threshold. She marks one HP.

Max says, "As you all look up from the destroyed knight, you see that the archers have collapsed back into piles of bones. Krasz, you remember a passage about groups of skeletons where the spell used to animate them is focused on one of the group, usually the strongest."

"So next time, we go straight for the big one," Shaun says.

With the combat complete, Max looks at the one token on the initiative tracker. That's not enough to convert to a Fear (it takes 2 tokens to convert to one Fear), so they just return the token to its player and set the initiative tracker aside.

"You're alone in the inner courtyard, the destroyed remains of skeletons around you. What do you do?"

"'I'm guessing that's not the last surprise we'll see today,' Shepherd says." Jess looks to the other players. "In we go?"

"Yes, but this time I want to be scanning for threats," Nick says.

"That will be a roll with Instinct," Max replies.

"Krasz will help by listening for more of those strange building-waking-up sounds or anything else suspicious," Shaun says, spending a Hope and rolling a 2 on his d6.

Nick makes a roll with Instinct for Lavelle. He gets a 1 on the Hope die, a 6 on the Fear die, adds 1 for Instinct, 2 for Krasz' help, for a total of 10, with Fear.

Max nods, thinking for a moment and taking a Fear token. "You enter the keep with caution, looking for traps and listening for threats. The base of the tower is littered with the decayed remains of many different kinds of folk, galapa and katari, dwarf and daemon. But none of them stir. You go through a barracks and a kitchen, finding the stairwell that leads you down into the musty basement.

"There's no light here, but you have torches. Here and there are some traps somehow still intact, or perhaps repaired. There's a somewhat-fresh corpses of adventurers that must have been the survivor's companions. At this altitude, they're pretty well preserved. Two are impaled on a wall of spikes that jutted out from one side. The third is wrapped in the embrace of another Skeleton Knight, but that one does not move."

Max continues, saying "But what you don't see, dear adventurers, is the wraith emerging from the wall behind you, looming over Shepherd and Tabby as Lavelle and Krasz take the lead. The wraith grows wide, its midnight eyes devouring the light behind you. The room grows cold as it reaches out toward you...

"And that's where we'll end for tonight," they say, leaning back with a grin. The table erupts into excited chatter as they debrief from their session together.

Questions to Consider for GMs:

Jess's roll with Hope to finish off the Skeleton Knight meant that the PCs would have been able to act again before the archers. Those archers hadn't taken any damage, but Max described them falling apart after the knight died. Do you feel like that was a satisfying end to the combat, or would you have had the archers keep fighting? The explanation Max offered to Krasz could be taken as precedent, so if Max chooses to not end a fight early in the future when the party destroys the most powerful skeleton, they'll want to have an idea in mind why it's different that time to maintain the integrity of the story.

Max allowed Krasz to make two jumps using the Arcane Door spell rather than making him roll for each casting. When a character is using an ability like that, do you want to call for a roll for each use or let one roll represent chaining the ability a couple of times like Max ruled above?

Would you have had the Skeleton Knight deal its dying blow or skipped it to highlight Tabby's critical success? You don't always have to use every adversary's ability. Since she rolled a critical, this might be a place where the 'something extra' the player gets could include Tabby destroying the Skeleton Knight so thoroughly it cannot use its dying move.

In the fight with the skeletons, would you have had them attack the group in the order and fashion that Max did? Picking which adversaries to activate when helps determine the shape of the fight and its rhythm - the ups and downs. How else could that fight have gone? Would you have waited to use the archers until after the Skeleton Knight?

Krasz destroyed all four skeleton minions in one good hit, which meant the attack on the other skeletons was wasted. Would you have allowed Krasz to use that other Wild Flame attack to attack the Skeleton twice, or maybe to hit one of the archers even though it was out of range? Or does losing the extra attack seem like a fair price for the certainty of being able to remove the minions?

What would you have done if Shepherd had rolled a success with Fear when using Nature's Tongue to talk to the goat? What would have been an interesting consequence if Shepherd failed that roll entirely? Would the goat have run off, or would there be another complication during their ascent? Is there some complication that Max could use to help foreshadow the skeletons or the wraith?

PART THREE

Running An Adventure

Running An Adventure

The following section of the book is only required reading if you plan to be the Game Master in a game of Daggerheart. If you're simply reading the book to create and play a character, you've reached the end of all you need to know. But if you're a Game Master, read on!

Being a Game Master can be one of the most fun, exhilarating, and fulfilling experiences at the table– but it can also be intimidating, especially when learning a new system. This section of the book is dedicated to giving you all you need to know about how to run Daggerheart: understanding the core mechanics; creating memorable encounters; planning exciting sessions; how to select, create, and use GM moves; crafting a full campaign; and more.

Overview

Parts of this chapter are much more conversational than the rest of the book. The previous chapters were primarily focused on delivering the mechanics of the game, and don't worry– we're going to cover mechanics here as well– but we're also going to talk about things that lend themselves much better to a conversation; things like story structure and improv and world-building. Because, at the end of the day, the Big Secret™ about GMing is that you get to make it all up. Whether you made it up the week before, the day before, or in that moment at the table, you are always crafting an experience for your players through the decisions you make.

The Golden Rule

Everything in this chapter is presented solely with the aim of running your game successfully. You are free to take from this section what works for you and leave behind what doesn't. Every GM is going to operate differently, make choices specific to their table, and approach the story from their own perspective. Whether you are a first-time GM, a veteran behind the screen, or anything in-between, we encourage you to embrace the parts here that resonate with you and modify any that don't.

For GMs New to Daggerheart

Daggerheart stands on the shoulders of a decades-long tradition of fantasy adventure RPGs that traces back to the beginning of the form as we know it. This game has many things in common with its predecessors–an attention to dramatizing combat, familiar fantasy ancestries and archetypes, shared touchstones from popular culture and folklore, and more.

Like each of the games that came before, Daggerheart has its priorities and tools for telling certain types of stories. As you can see in the "Touchstones" section, Daggerheart draws inspiration from a variety of RPGs inside and beyond the fantasy adventure genre to combine them in a way we hope you will find both fresh and a joy to tell stories with. We're excited to share the game's ideas and to invite you to explore them at your table.

Begin and End with the Fiction

"The Fiction" refers to the world of the story and what's happening within it. Use the fiction to decide when to call for rolls, what the impact of results will be, what GM moves to use, and so on. The rules of Daggerheart exist to facilitate telling a story together with the players, and when a roll or use of the mechanics is complete, the GM connects those results to the fiction so that the story may continue.

Narrative-First

Different fantasy adventure games focus on different aspects and modes of play. Daggerheart is focused on collaboration in building a character-focused story full of emotion. Daggerheart's combats come alive when the dramatic beats and rhythm of the battle highlight the conflicting motivations of the combatants (the PCs and their adversaries) and through highlighting the character's bonds with one another as expressed through teamwork.

Everyone is on the Same Team

When you're the GM, the players are your collaborators. You're all working together to tell an exciting, memorable story where heroes face incredible odds and often win in the end. Antagonism between player and GM should only exist in the fiction of the game, through the actions of NPCs and the world. The GM's main job is to balance presenting credible threats and maintaining the trust of the players required for collaboration.

Collaboration is Key

Additionally, Daggerheart asks the GM to share narrative authority with the players at times. You might ask the player whose character is from this town to describe the market. Rather than describing the critical success of a character's blow, you can ask the player to take the spotlight and narrate their triumph. As the GM, it's your job to maintain the integrity of the world, but ensuring that every players' voice is included will mean that the story is truly representative of the creativity of the whole group.

Every Roll Carries Weight

Action rolls in Daggerheart describe and resolve a moment within a story, which might be as short as a split-second dodge or an entire exchange of blows between combatants, all the way up to a montage of running down leads over the course of an entire evening at a gala.

Because the GM gets to make a move in response whenever the players roll a result with Fear or a failure, and since every roll generates metacurrency used in play (Hope or Fear), only ask the players to roll in meaningful moments to make every roll count. Provide information freely and validate the characters' skills by giving them information they'd easily know or letting them just succeed at tasks that don't present a dramatic challenge. That way, when you do call for rolls in dangerous moments, it carries more weight for all involved. Daggerheart's rolls are designed to create heartbreaking complications or unexpectedly challenging obstacles with failures and exciting triumphs with successes!

The Story Always Moves Forward

Every time a player makes an action roll, the story should move forward, success or failure. On a failure, the GM says how the world responds and keeps the story moving. This is often referred to as 'Failing Forward'. A character might not get what they want if the roll goes poorly, but the story advances through escalation, new information, or some other change in situation. If there aren't any interesting consequences for failure on an action, you don't need to call for a roll.

Follow The Narrative

Daggerheart is a player-driven game, and so the overarching plot of the campaign should emerge from collaboration with the players, tying the characters' stories together with one another and with the world and its major events.

Daggerheart thrives when the GM creates room to be surprised by what the players will do, the choices they'll make, and the people they'll become as they pursue their Hopes and battle their Fears. It's most useful to prepare situations without expectations about the solutions the players will find or create. Preparing adversaries and appropriate maps can help make for exciting scenes, but always know you can adjust or completely throw out plans to follow inspiration when it strikes at the table.

Core Guidance

Below you'll find some core guidance for running Daggerheart: GM Principles, GM Best Practices, and Pitfalls To Avoid. These three sections go together to provide a foundation for how to get the most out of this game. The GM Principles are your guiding star - when in doubt, return to the principles. The Best Practices and Pitfalls sections that follow give you examples of approaches to take and traps to avoid when GMing Daggerheart.

GM *Principles*

Be a fan of the players and the PCs.
Fill the world with life, wonder, and danger.
Ask questions and incorporate the answers.
Hold on gently.
Play to find out what happens.

Be a Fan of the Players and the PCs

As the GM, you get the best seat in the (sometimes virtual) house to witness the ingenuity and heroism of the PCs and their players. Daggerheart is a collaboration between the GM and the players. Neither the PCs or the Players are your 'enemy'. They're the opponents of the adversaries you play, but the GM and the Players are on the same side: the side invested in telling an amazing story together.

Being a fan of the players means consciously including story elements and themes they've expressed interest in. It also means giving them the benefit of the doubt when they forget something small–especially something that their character *wouldn't* forget. And being a fan of the PCs means that while you'll make their life challenging, up to and potentially including death, you're never rooting for them to

lose-you're working with the players to ensure that the characters' story is exciting and the world around them is behaving with internal consistency.

Fill The World with Life, Wonder, and Danger

Daggerheart is a game of action, adventure, and high fantasy. One of your biggest jobs as the GM is to present a world worthy of the heroic tales you've all set out to build together. When running a player-driven game, you can take the backgrounds and connection questions and other character details provided by your players and use those as a palette (along with any other palette discussed in Session Zero) to paint a picture of an exciting world that honors the motivations and personhood of everyone, from high nobility and demigods to everyday artisans and farmers and everyone in-between.

You should throw out hooks of wondrous places, connections to the character's background, and potential threats to see what catches your players' interest, then tease out that interest and present challenges that make the dramatic crucible you'll all use to shape the PCs into heroes of legend.

Ask Questions and Incorporate the Answers

In Daggerheart, the GM doesn't have to do all the heavy lifting in terms of worldbuilding and narration. The players are your collaborators, and you can draw them more fully into the world by handing them the paintbrush to add their own touches and details to the worlds.

In dramatic or even quotidien moments, you might ask questions about the character's motivations, their emotions, and their history to see how the current moment relates. Take the information the players give you and do your best to respect their contributions and fold them into the fabric of the story.

When a player reveals interesting information about their character's history, emotions, or motivation, take those answers as an indication of the player's interest and think about how to use those contributions as a waypoint to help guide your storytelling.

Hold On Gently

Improvisational storytelling isn't always perfect, and that's okay. Hold on gently to the fiction, enough so that you don't lose the pieces that matter, but not so tightly that the narrative has no room to breathe. Let yourself make mistakes and make changes. Smooth the edges and shape them to fit. You'll be the final arbiter and editor, but don't worry if you need to go back and revisit or retroactively change something that's come before.

Play to Find Out What Happens

Daggerheart is a game about heroic adventures and the emotional journeys of the PCs. The group plays together to find out what these heroes will do and what kind of legends they will become. Additionally, 'Play to Find Out' means that everything you do should flow from the fiction. Listen to the other players, and react to what they say and how they act. If you roll the dice, let the results lead you through what happens next.

GM Best Practices

Cultivate a curious table.
Earn your player's trust.
Treat the characters as competent.
Cut to the action.
Help the players use the game.
Create a meta conversation.
Ground the world in motive.
Bring the game's mechanics to life.
Reframe rather than reject.
Work in moments and montages.

Cultivate a Curious Table

Tantalize players with a suspiciously-coded line muttered under a character's breath, illustrate the signs of a lingering magical threat, hint at future danger coming over the horizon. Throw out hooks and see what catches their interest. Fostering an environment of creative inquiry at the table and that curiosity can lead you to incredible places.

Another way to foster curiosity at the table is to practice it yourself - ask questions of the characters to prime the players to think about the world through their character's interests.

Do you think Reyna has run across the Twilight God's inquisitors before? What does she think of them as a Seraph of the Dawn?

Marris, have you been to this town before in your travels as a Bard? What do you remember about the audiences here?

The GM is part of the table, so this can extend to you as well. Follow your own curiosity and share it with the players. *"Did you mean it when you said you'd never go home again?" "How is your character feeling after the confrontation with the inquisitor?"* Asking these kinds of questions also gives the table insight into the PCs' internal monologue, and helps you all to understand these characters on a deeper level.

Gain Your Players' Trust

Trust is essential for a successful game of Daggerheart (or any ttrpg). The GM trusts the players to represent their character's actions thoughtfully while keeping the shared goals of the table in mind. The players trust that the GM is acting in good faith—that when you're introducing challenges and doling out consequences, you're doing so with the interests of the whole table in mind.

Make promises and then follow through on them. Let players' hunches be correct where you can, let them feel like their understanding of the world is correct even if it's incomplete. In resolving an action, deliver on the expectations you set before the roll was made. This also means admitting when you mis-step or mis-speak, and checking in with your players when you're unsure about something.

Strive to believe the players when they bring in their character's Experiences. The bonus they gain is no guarantee of success, and validating a player's vision of their character while still representing the difficulty of an obstacle honestly creates a healthy balance of dramatic uncertainty. *The Rogue is a skilled climber from her years as a sailor, but will that be enough to scale up a siege tower while it's careening down a bumpy hill...and on fire?*

Treat the Characters as Competent

The characters in Daggerheart are skilled adventurers and heroes, even early in their journey. Don't call for a roll when a task is simple and/or without danger. The Rogue probably doesn't need to roll pick a standard lock, especially if they have the Burglar Experience. Now if it's warded by a powerful wizard, that's another story.

Because every action roll can cause consequences and complications, as well as generate Hope and Fear, asking for more rolls or letting players roll for taks that wouldn't require a roll can cause an imbalance of the system. Primarily call for rolls when the characters take bold, dangerous actions. If you don't see an interesting result from either success or failure, you can decline to call for a roll.

"I don't think Arielle needs to roll to cross the bridge, I'm not really interested in what a failure here would be like. What do you think?"

Cut to the Action

Heroic fantasy stories are generally comprised of dramatic scenes, travel montages, and downtempo moments around a camp as the heroes decompress and prepare for what's ahead. If the travel between two places isn't going to result in much danger or interesting challenges, there's no need to depict it in scenes. You could instead say something like, "So you travel to Oldhome. Clear all your marked HP, Stress, and Armor Slots. We pick up on the edge of town. It's only twilight, but you haven't seen anyone in any of the outlying farms. And there's no sound coming from the tavern just ahead on your right. What do you do?"

You might tell the players they can flash back to the details of the plan or get their story straight later. When a scene feels like it's dragging or going in circles, you can always ask the players to trust you to cut away so that you can keep the story moving.

Note that action doesn't always mean combat. Action can be a tense political drama as the party tries to maintain an alliance hanging by a thread. Action can be navigating an archmage's warded and trapped hedge maze. Action here means anytime there is tension and uncertainty—it means situations that will challenge the characters.

If the PCs have an enemy on the ropes and the players' interest seems to be wavering, go ahead and have the foe run off, surrender, or just ask the players how they finish out the fight. You should do your best to not let a scene become a grind where everyone feels obligated to see it through, but no one is having fun. Part of being the GM is picking which moments to focus on.

Help the Players Use the Game

If you're the GM, there's a good chance that you're the person who has spent the most time learning the rules of this game. Regardless, work with players so that everyone understands the rules. If you have a question about something, another player might have the same question. Help players get to the point where they see the game's rules as a toolkit to help tell the story together, not as an obstacle that stands between them and enjoying the experience of play.

The GM plays the opposition to the characters, but the GM is working *with* the players to tell the story. If they're missing something obvious or seem to be forgetting a mechanic or ability, ask if they think that ability might apply here. If they seem stuck, you might outright state that you think they have an ability or item that would help.

Create a Meta Conversation

Ensure that players always feel comfortable utilizing the safety tools in-place for the game and know that it's okay to shift out of character to ask something at the player level as creative collaborators or at the table level as people enjoying a game together.

Additionally, while the characters live in the world and have all their senses to experience it, the players only know what is established at the table together. Help the players by sharing details about their environments, giving them critical information, and offering facts and realities that their characters would easily know or have already discovered.

Ground the World in Motive

The characters in Daggerheart are driven by their motivations. An ambitious baroness wants to gather power and status, so she'll act according to that motivation. A large swamp serpent is motivated by hunger and the desire for safety within its territory, so it will act to repulse outsiders, but it might not chase them beyond its territory if it's full.
The players might not always know a character's true motives, but if you keep motivation in mind, you can depict the world with integrity. Gesture toward NPCs' motives so that the players can make moves to push and pull on those hopes and fears. Show how motivation leads the party's allies to act in solidarity with them even at personal risk.

Action without motivation can feel like choreography, and your story will probably hit harder when a supposed ally's betrayal is both sudden *and inevitable* when the players consider the betrayer's motivations.

Bring the Game's Mechanics to Life

The game's rules are there to help facilitate the storytelling process. Set a good example of how fiction and mechanics work together to enhance the experience of the game for everyone involved. When there's an oncoming storm that will bring disaster to the nearby port town, place a countdown on the table labeled "The storm ravages Port Emerald" to show that the threat is real.

Be clear about stating the risks of an action should something go wrong. When a PC rolls a failure with Fear, go hard with your description of the consequence to convey the gravity of the situation and the difference between a failure with Hope and one with Fear. Embody the enemy's fatigue and desperation as they mark their last Stress but continue to goad the party on.

If the heroes are ambushed by a large band of raiders, lay out your battlemat and set out figures for all fourteen enemies to show how outnumbered the party is.

Reframe Rather than Reject

If a player's suggestion or description is out-of-sync with what has been established in the game or is generally implausible, try to find a way to reframe the situation and work with them rather than rejecting their idea outright. You might ask the table what it would take for an implausible task to become doable, or call out a part of the suggestion that is more workable and encourage the player to build on that aspect.

"Well, you might not be able to fly up to the platform using the Telekinesis spell in your Grimoire, but there are plenty of large rocks here you could move around if you wanted."

Work in Moments and Montages

When framing a scene or proposing a way to play a beat of the story, think about moments and montages. If the stakes are high and you want to zoom in on the flash of blades or the coded language of courtly flirtation, you're working in moments. Give those powerful or climactic moments their due, linger on the emotion and give players time to savor the scene. However, not every part of the story needs to be told in moment-by-moment description or full scenes. In those cases, consider using montage, a sequence of short descriptions or a summary that establishes what happens without lingering on the individual moments. Montage is especially good for actions that take place over minutes, hours, or days.

"You spend the evening working the crowds to find leads on the Scorpion Society, but I don't think we need to play it all out. Tell us a little about what that looks like and then roll with Presence."

Pitfalls to Avoid

Daggerheart is unlike many other heroic fantasy role-playing games, and like any game, there are some things specific to Daggerheart's design that can lead to problems for the group. Everyone starts somewhere, and it's okay to make mistakes sometimes. Here are a few things to look out for when running Daggerheart.

- *Undermining the Heroes*
- *Always Telling the Players What to Roll*
- *Letting Scenes Drag*
- *Singular Solutions*
- *Overplanning*
- *Letting Fear Go Unused*

Undermining the Heroes

Even at level 1, the heroes are accomplished adventurers with talent and experience. This is a heroic fantasy game, and so the characters are assumed to be skilled at the basics of adventuring.

On a failure, things go badly and the character doesn't get what they want. But rather than describing the PCs being incompetent, it's usually better to show how the failure comes from environmental factors or unexpected surprises. An easy way to make this work is to start by describing the cool or smart move the character was making, then saying "but…" and describing a surprise, complication, or escalation.

"Your blade slices through the air with grace, the cut coming in perfectly at the guard's shoulder. But she reacts just fast enough to bring up the haft of her halberd to block your blow, then swings her weapon to try to pin you against the wall. She's way faster than a random guard at an outpost like this should be. What's a soldier with skill like that doing stuck all the way out here?"

If the group has decided on a more silly or goofy tone, this guidance may not apply, but the default for Daggerheart is to assume the PCs competence as adventurers and to make the story exciting by depicting capable heroes struggling with extraordinary challenges.

Always Telling the Players What To Roll

An important part of the creative collaboration in Daggerheart is allowing players to express their character's personalities through creative problem solving. In some situations, there might really only be one trait that's appropriate to roll (traversing a slippery bridge is almost always going to be a roll with Agility). But in many situations, when a challenge or threat is presented to the characters and you know they'll need to roll to address that threat, you can give them the freedom to decide how they're going to handle the challenge and what trait they want to use to accomplish it.

GM: *"The spellrider on the giant bat just broke the enchantment keeping your airship aloft. You're all going to need to give me a roll to deal with the imminent fall. What do you do?"*

Player 1: *"I'm going to jump over and grab a hold of the bat to climb over and wrestle the spellrider out of the saddle. Can I do that with Agility?"*

Player 2: *"I want to roll with Finesse and my Pirate Experience to cut one of the smaller sails free and use it like a parachute."*

Letting Scenes Drag

Many actions can be completed with a single roll, so it's best to only make greater obstacles and threats require a completion countdown. If the Wizard gets a success on a roll with Knowledge to search for a book that will provide answers to solve a specific problem, give them find a useful book, even if it's not the perfect one–especially if just finding an applicable book won't automatically solve their next problem, but is required to attempt that solution. Every roll should aim to move the story forward and build or resolve tension.

If most obstacles take one successful action to address, major obstacles and threats will feel more significant when they take multiple steps to overcome. Many adversaries take several hits to defeat, but if a battle starts to lose its excitement, look for ways to shake things up or create a resolution.

Singular Solutions

If the GM has exactly one idea in mind of how the PCs can solve a given problem, it can become challenging if the players get excited about another idea or solution. You might have good reason for why the solution you have in mind is the best option, but if the players have a good idea, it's often smart to adjust in the moment and think about how to make their approach work – not automatically, but something to work toward with daring actions.

Puzzles are a great example of a situation where a singular solution can cause problems. Everyone's minds work in different ways, and a puzzle or riddle with only one "right" answer can shut down interesting alternatives. If the players get bogged down or frustrated with a puzzle or scene, it's usually wise to find a way to move things along or adjust the situation to let the character's actions advance the story. This might involve showing your hand to give the players more context or to check in to ask how they're feeling about a scene.

Overplanning

Daggerheart is designed to be played with a great deal of improvisation to allow the players a large amount of creative agency - the group builds and discovers the world together. The game is also built to be player-driven, where the PC's background and connections serve as the primary fuel for the game's plot. For these reasons, it's recommended to leave space for the story to breathe.

The game works better when more preparation time goes into situations for the characters to explore and engage with than in scripting entire scenes and a set progression of story beats. Every GM's style is different, and you may find that you benefit with more time spent on certain forms of preparation while still enriching the game through player agency and creativity.

Another reason to be wary of overplanning is that Daggerheart is designed for player agency. Your players will often surprise you with great ideas or by taking daring or unwise actions in keeping with the characters' motivation. When those surprises come up, try to read the energy of the table and see if they're all excited to take that new direction. And it's okay to tell your players, "That took me by surprise. How about a quick 10-minute break while I think about how this exciting change will play out?"

Letting Fear Go Unused

Fear is there to be spent. Sitting on a pile of Fear may make the players scared to take action due to anticipating a harsh backlash on failure. Fear and Hope should flow freely as a way for you and the players to put your thumbs on the scale and push the story in directions you each find interesting.

Using several Fear Moves at the start of a combat or big moment can generate a lot of tension and set the stakes. This helps give shape to the scene, where the PCs are on the ropes, being reactive more than proactive as they fight to get their footing. Then, as they get their equilibrium, they become proactive, directly pursuing their objectives. Once they've made some strides toward those objectives, they may roll with Fear. This creates an opening for you to make another Fear Move to complicate the scene. This back-and-forth creates a dynamic scene, keeping the PCs on their toes, and ultimately making the result all the more satisfying whether it's a hard-earned victory or a heartbreaking defeat.

Spending Fear when you have the chance helps to keep it from piling up. If there isn't a good opportunity to use one of the Fear Moves, think about a GM move on a failure or a result with Fear that could set up a future Fear Move. What's the soft move that provokes action from the PCs before the inevitable follow-through of a harder move using Fear?

Core GM Mechanics

The GM's Die

While the players use 2d12 Duality dice as their primary dice for action resolution, the GM uses a d20. This is because, for players who have to follow specific rules for their characters, the stability and the reliability of their dice roll has a large impact on their experience in play. As a GM, this is not as vital - you are playing the "heel," meaning you are often acting as the bad guys while rooting for the heroes. When you succeed, it creates a new and exciting challenge for the players. When you fail, it is a relief and a boon for the players. The swingy (unpredictable) nature of the d20's results helps to facilitate both of these experiences throughout a session. This unpredictability can always be mitigated as needed, because you are not beholden to the same rules as the players. If you want to give an adversary a +10 or a -10 modifier, you have the power to do that. Utilizing this opportunity to ramp up and down the randomness gives you the chance to represent a whole range of adversary types.

Making Moves

Just like the players have moves they can make during the game, you as the GM also have moves that help drive forward the fiction in response to their actions. Unlike the PCs, you are not typically bound by rules of success and failure on die rolls or given only *certain effects* you can do– your job is to facilitate the fiction, whatever that requires. GM Moves are your guidelines on what kinds of things you might choose to do in order to make that happen.

At its most simple, a GM Move is anything you do that progresses the fiction forward. These Moves often introduce conflict, reveal new information, or put the PC's in further danger, but they don't have to– they are simply your opportunity to change the scene in some way.

Knowing when to make moves and what kind of moves to make are almost certainly the biggest part of learning to GM Daggerheart. How often you make moves and what the severity of that move is will depend a lot on the kind of story you're telling, the kinds of actions your players take, and the tone of the session you're running, but the general rule of thumb is: You can make a GM Move whenever you want. That's right! You're the GM– your job is not to crush the PC's or always act adversarially; your job is to *help tell a story*, so you should be making moves anytime you see an opportunity to do that.

That being said, *always* make a GM move when a PC:
- Rolls with Fear.
- Rolls a Failure.
- Takes an action that has consequences.
- Gives you a golden opportunity.
- Looks to you for what happens next.

These are your opportunities to make things happen in the scene. So what should you do? Well, a lot of these decisions are hard to make in a vacuum; they'll depend on what kind of table you're running, what kind of story you're telling, what has come before this moment and what you think might come after, and lots of other factors. The best tool you have at your disposal for this is listening to your players and responding to the fiction they create with your own. Thinking through what an interesting, exhilarating, or particularly fiction-appropriate moment to describe next in the scene is a big part of your job as the GM.

Rolling with Fear and rolling a Failure are straightforward, cut-and-dry triggers for a GM move, but the other situations can be a bit less clear, relying on your judgment as a GM. Here are some examples of the other times when the GM should make a move:

*An example of the PCs **taking an action that has consequences** would be if a character intervened to save someone from an enraged city guard. The GM describes a guard harassing a townsperson and raising their weapon to strike. If you know that the guard's motive was to feel better about himself by exerting dominance through violence, then when a PC shoots the weapon out of the guard's hand or runs up to keep them him completing the blow, the immediate and incredibly likely consequences are that the still-angry guard turns his attention on the PC that just interrupted him. And he's probably going to escalate with violence.*

*An example of the PCs **giving the GM a golden opportunity** would be if the PCs are discussing a bandit leader's plans while hiding out from the group. Then, one of the PCs says something that could be laden with dramatic irony like "But how likely is it that they'd think to look in the eaves of every barn in the district?" That gives you the perfect opportunity to describe the sound of the barn door swinging open and a bandit stepping inside with a lit torch in one hand and a sword in the other. No roll prompted that move, but it makes for a great dramatic beat. Other golden opportunities include a PC moving close to a trap or waiting predator, a PC lowering their guard or gets distracted when they should be alert, and so on.*

Examples of the **players looking to the GM for what happens next** could be as simple as a player asking "what happens next?" or something more subtle like the players talking amongst themselves during a dinner party scene and reaching a lull in the conversation, looking to the GM as if expecting something to change in the party like waiting for an NPC to speak or take action. This also includes if the PCs seem to be stumped as to what course of action to take in a scene or they're demonstrating frustration about lack of information. *Moves in those situations would more likely be softer moves to help get the scene moving again, but sometimes a harder move is needed to provoke the PCs to action.*

Sometimes, you will know without hesitation how to make a move in a scene. A PC just rolled a success with Fear on a melee attack against a powerful enemy? *They get what they want, but it comes at a cost.* Maybe the enemy strikes the PC back in response, or takes the damage from the PC and then throws them across the battlefield. Maybe you've set up the scene so that they're fighting on a precarious ledge, and the attack from the PC was successful, but momentum carries them dangerously close to the cliff's edge, and they now must make a Agility check to see if they can keep from slipping off.

Other times, the move might not be immediately obvious. In that case, you can refer to your list of example GM Moves on "Making Moves" (or on your GM sheet) for recommendations. Softer moves generally give the party new information about the scene and offer them an opportunity to react to it. Harder moves generally don't give them that chance– the fiction happens without the ability to intercede. This difference can be used stylistically and narratively to convey different types of situations and threats, as well as react to the player's roll appropriately.

Following the "Action Rolls" guide from part 2, we can see that different dice results call for different narrative changes in the scene– changes which will come from your choice of GM Move. Below is a quick guide with suggestions of what to say and how to make moves for each of these results.

"On a critical success, you get what you want, and a little extra. You can clear a Stress."
Let them describe their success, then give the party an additional opportunity or advantage in the scene because of it.

"On a success with Hope, you get what you want."
Let them describe their success, then show how the world reacts to it.

"On a success with Fear, you get what you want, but it comes at a cost."
Work together to describe their success, then introduce a complication or cost. Maybe they take damage or stress from an enemy they're engaged with, get new information that raises the stakes, or realize their ally is in imminent danger. Be sure to never outright negate their success with this consequence.

"On a failure with Hope, things go wrong and there's a consequence because of it."
Describe how things go wrong, then introduce a complication or consequence. Maybe they spot a new danger they must now contend with, take damage or stress from an enemy they're engaged with, or face collateral damage that puts them in a more difficult position.

"On a failure with Fear, things go wrong and there's a major consequence because of it."

Describe how things go wrong, then introduce a major complication or multiple consequences. Maybe the information they get is not good news and also puts them in immediate danger, or they take damage from an enemy and get separated from their party, or an important opportunity is lost for good.

If you're still not sure what to do, you might turn the decision over to the player, giving them an option of two different things or simply asking them what happens next. They will sometimes put themselves in a more interesting situation than you ever would have done on your own! As a last resort, if the scene should have a cost or consequence and you can't come up with something, you can always simply have the player mark stress and move the scene forward.

Something here to keep in mind as well is that making these moves applies to every roll and every situation you're in– combat is often the place where extra attention is paid to when enemies attack, how much damage they do, etc. But this philosophy of making moves applies across every type of scene within your table's story. A tense dinner between rivals, an important negotiation, an emotional confrontation, all of these scenes have a back and forths between the PCs and the GM that you should lean on your moves for. They will help you do the single most important part of GMing– listening to your players and responding in a way that builds on the fiction you've all created together.

GM Moves are your most important tool as a storyteller in Daggerheart. Everyone who picks up the game will interact with them in different ways, and that's okay! The way you make moves truly defines the kind of story you're telling, so no GMs should feel like they have to use them the exact same way as anybody else. As long as you're staying true to the fiction, acting as a fan of your PCs, and the table is having fun, that's what matters.

Example GM Moves

The example GM moves in this section are in a loose order of severity (something we'll sometimes refer to as a gradient from *Soft Moves* to *Hard Moves*), so best practice is to look down the list until you find the move that seems appropriate, then apply that move to the scene. It's important that you don't speak the text of this move– instead contextualize it for the players, describing how it comes to be and why the scene changes because of it.

When making a move while the Action Tracker is active, you'll want to spend a character token for each move you make. If you use the character token to make an adversary act, that adversary shouldn't act again until the next time play returns to the GM.

Show how the world reacts.

When a player rolls a success with hope or a critical success, this is the most common move to make. Simply think about the way their action has affected the world and narrate that change in a way that drives the story forward. You might describe them successfully breaking down a door and give them a description of the next room they find themselves in, or you might make the person they are negotiating with present an option for compromise, or make an enemy they just hit attempt to retreat. This is your opportunity to make the world around them feel real and alive.

Ask a question and build on the answer.

This is perhaps the most collaborative move– presenting the player with a question, and using their answer as truth to build the scene. You might ask them something like, "What do you see here that reminds you of home?" or "What about this place tells you somebody else has been here before you?" Usually utilized when establishing information about a scene or when you're interested in a specific character or player's perspective on the current situation, this can be a great way to get the whole table involved in worldbuilding during the game.

Make an NPC act in accordance with their motive.

When there are characters in a scene that are not the PCs, a move you can make is to spotlight what they are doing in response to the actions being taken. You might show a friendly NPC helping the party in a fight, a group of townsfolk taking cover, or an enemy moving positions. Make sure their actions always follow from their Motive.

Lean on the character's goals to drive them to action.

One of the most powerful things you can do as a GM in a scene is use something personal to the PCs to drive the fiction forward. If they have an NPC they care for, you might reveal something they desperately need or put them in danger. If they are seeking out a specific object or creature, you might reveal where it is and why it's going to be so challenging to get there. Using the PCs' own desires to drive them forward is a great way to reinforce why this scene matters to their characters.

Reveal an unwelcome truth or unexpected danger.

This is a very versatile move that's usually applicable in any scene– you're simply heightening the drama or tension in a narrative way. Maybe someone unexpected steps out of the shadows, or the information they receive is bad news or makes them rethink what they thought they knew. A soft version of this move might be to have a Guard Captain emerge to see what his men are yelling about as you're fighting them, or simply to move a group of dangerous foes into striking range of the party. A harder version of this move could be to have an enemy pin a PC up against a wall or tackle them to the ground, keeping them from moving until they make a roll to escape from their grasp.

Signal an imminent off-screen threat.

The rustle in the trees, an alarm bell being sounded, the clanging armor of reinforcements headed their way– this move creates a ticking clock for your PCs in the scene. They need to get moving *now*.

Offer them what they want in exchange for marking stress.

They can get it done, but it's not going to be easy– this is usually used on a Success with Fear when you're not sure what other consequences could come to bear. It's important to talk about *why* this causes them stress. Is it physically taxing in some way? Does it bring up painful memories? Are they under significant pressure? In cases like this, always try to use narrative description to put the mechanics in context of the scene.

Make a move the characters don't see.

This is usually most useful when you have something happening behind the scenes that you're waiting to reveal. You might mark a GM clock, tick a current Countdown an additional time, add more damage dice to an enemy's upcoming damage roll, adjust a narrative situation the PCs have yet to encounter, or anything else the players don't see the result of immediately. Using this is as easy as saying, "*Everything is fine, for now*" and adjusting the part of your machinations that have changed. This can create fun tension at the table as the party wonders when those consequences will come to bear.

Split up the group.

Usually used as either an environmental hazard or an enemy's trap, splitting up the party can make your players have to think differently than they normally would about how to accomplish a task. It can also make for some fun cutting back and forth in the scene as the two groups work independently before finding a way back to each other.

Show the cost of collateral damage.

This is a great move to use when the player tries to do something powerful, and there's a consequence. That fireball that missed? Maybe it went wide, struck the side of the mountain, and now they hear rumbling from above. An avalanche is headed this way. Whenever the PC does something that could have a significant impact on the world around them, you can use this move to show them the natural ramifications of that event.

Make them mark stress as a consequence for their actions.

In a parallel move to "Offer them what they want in exchange for stress," this is usually used when a player fails a roll and you're not sure what consequence to offer– they don't get what they want and they mark stress because of it. Again, it's important to investigate the *why* here. What about that failure is particularly stressful for them?

Use the Action Tracker.

If the action tracker is active, the GM may spend any amount of tokens currently on it, handing the character tokens back to the player it belongs to once it is spent. Unless otherwise noted, each time this move is made by the GM, adversaries on the battlefield should each only use one token; meaning you typically shouldn't be spending multiple tokens to activate a single adversary over and over. Every token that is spent should be used to spotlight a moment in the narrative where the adversary has an opportunity to act. This often means the GM is making an attack roll, but can be anything that aligns with their tactics and motives. This is also an opportunity to make a move and/or spend your Fear to take unique and dramatic moves with your adversaries or environment. Once you are done spending tokens, play should pass back to the PCs.

Capture someone or something important.

Knocking a weapon from a PC's hand, capturing a fellow party member or ally of the group, stealing an object of power right from under their noses– taking away something the party desperately wants or needs and must now figure out how to get back to get is an exciting, fiction-forward move you can use to ratchet up the tension in a scene.

Use their backstory against them.

Integrating a player's backstory into the kind of move you make can leave a huge impact on the PC and make the story much more personal to them. Maybe someone from their past shows up here, or a mistake they made long ago catches up with them, or the scene simply parallels something they've already been through before– giving them the chance to make a different choice. By grounding the move in a character's own experiences, it makes the moments that happen next in the scene matter even more to them.

Take away an opportunity for good.

When things get really dire, sometimes the PCs lose the opportunity or opening they once had for good. A softer version of this move might be the straight-forward pathway they're on within a cavern collapsing, forcing them to find another, more treacherous way through. A harder application of this move might see a valuable NPC be killed, or an object of power they desperately needed destroyed forever. This kind of move has the power to twist the trajectory of the story in a whole new direction, but it can be utilized to great effect during the right moments in the story.

Avoid Undermining Success

On a success with Fear, one pitfall new GMs can run into is undermining their players' success with the GM move they make as the consequence. For example, if a player makes a Finesse roll in an attempt to move stealthily through a hallway, and they get a Success with Fear as their result, the GM should never use this consequence to do something like sound an alarm bell or have them get noticed. They *succeeded* on the roll, and that success should be honored, even if it comes with a consequence. Instead, you could consider doing something like making the PC take stress to stay hidden or introducing a new obstacle at the place they arrive.

Fear

Where Hope is a PC's core resource, Fear is the core resource for the GM. You gain Fear each time any PC gets a result with Fear, and you can spend Fear in a number of ways. You can track Fear with tokens in a pool (the Fear pool), a die, or other counting methods. It can be useful to keep your fear tracking or the Fear pool visible to yourself and the players for ease of reference. The GM begins a campaign with 2 Fear, just like PCs begin with 2 Hope.

The GM can never hold more than 10 Fear.

You carry Fear in between sessions, just like PCs do Hope, so be sure to note how many you have at the end of every session and take that many at the start of the next game.

Spending Fear

You can spend fear in a variety of ways, most often to augment a GM move you're already making. If you don't have Fear to spend while the action tracker is active, you can always convert two character tokens on the Action Tracker to one Fear.

When you spend fear, you can:
- Do something big.
- Tick a countdown.
- Use an adversary's Fear move.
- Take advantage on a roll.
- End an effect.
- Clear a condition.
- Add additional d6 damage dice.
- Add two tokens to the action tracker
- Interrupt the PCs to take action (2 Fear).

Do something big

You can always spend Fear to make something particularly exciting, dangerous, and narratively impactful happen in the scene. This often overlaps with some of the other moves (make an attack, split up the group, etc), and that's okay– this is about using a moment to dramatically change the story in an exciting way. This is especially useful when you're improvising an enemy or environment on the spot and don't have any established moves to pull from. You can just *do a cool thing.* If you ever feel like it's overpowered, feel free to spend more than one Fear to compensate. Spending Fear is a good way to show players you know what you're doing is a big deal, and you're going to spend your resources to do it.

While the heroes are climbing a castle tower to rescue a captive prince, the GM spends Fear and describes a sudden change of weather as a thunderstorm begins to pummel the castle with powerful winds and torrential rainfall. The GM spent Fear rather than making this as a standard move because they hadn't described the weather at all and they're starting the storm right in time to make trouble (including raising the difficulty of any rolls to climb or descend).

Wisteria, the party's Ranger, is scouting ahead for the group. Wisteria has an Instinct trait of 3 and the Tracker Experience at +3, but the GM really wants to get the drop on them, so they spend Fear and describe a magically-cloaked figure stalking through the woods behind the Ranger. When the GM calls for Wisteria to roll with Instinct against being ambushed, the GM tells Wisteria to roll with disadvantage because of the magical cloak they introduced by spending Fear.

The party is fighting two Zombie Packs, Horde-type adversaries that deal less damage when ½ or more of their HP marked. Both Hordes have 4 of 6 HP marked, leaving them dealing less damage, so the GM spends a Fear and describes the hordes merging as they bear down on the party. The GM adds the Hordes' HP together (2+2 = 4) allowing the combined Horde to deal full damage since they no longer have ½ or more of their HP marked.

Tick a Countdown

When you have a countdown, whether short term (the arrival of reinforcements, etc.) or long term (the usurping of a king, etc.), you can always tick it down by spending Fear. During a long rest, you'll always have the chance to tick long-term countdowns once automatically, but you may tick it down more by spending a Fear– generally one Fear per tick. (See "Countdowns" further in part 3)

The party is sneaking through an airship towards the bridge, so the GM set a Consequence Countdown at 6 called "Shipwide Alarm". The countdown was at 5 when the party ambushed a guard. The Rogue rolls a success with Fear, so while the guard is incapacitated, there is a consequence. The GM chooses to spend Fear to reduce the countdown by 2 rather than just 1 (1 being standard on a success with Fear). Describing a by-the-books officer of the watch, the GM reveals that security is even tighter than they expected. The officer scans all the magical sensors, noticing that the communicator stone of the ambushed guard is not moving. The countdown is down to 3 as the party reconsiders their approach.

A group of heroes intervene as a Kraken attacks the port town home of their pirate ally. When a character rolls a failure with Hope on an attack against the Kraken, the GM sees an opportunity. The pirate ship is docked nearby, the pirates still in the process of getting the ship out into open water. The Kraken's whirlpool countdown is at 3 after the action, and on a failure with Hope, they'd normally only tick the countdown down by 2. Instead, the GM spends Fear to enhance the move and reduce the Kraken's Whirlpool countdown to 0 instead of 1. The GM describes the Kraken diving beneath the water and swirling its tentacles to create the whirlpool, which ravages the pirate ship as the Kraken re-emerges.

After a long day of travel and a fight against a magically-mutated bear, the party settles in for a Long Rest. While the players decide on their downtime actions, the GM looks at their long-term countdowns. They tick each of them down by one, but eying their large collection of Fear tokens, they decide to pipe in between actions to describe a quick scene of the enemy Sorcerer working on breaking the wards protecting the town the party is protecting. The Sorcerer pulls out a glowing purple potion, drinks it, and his eyes and hands flare with magical power as he blasts the ward, straining the wards and cracking their barrier. The GM ticks the "Wards Destroyed" Countdown by 2 instead of 1 for the downtime.

Use an Adversary or Encounter Fear Move

Adversaries, and encounters as a whole, can have moves that require you to spend Fear. During combat, if using an Adversary Fear Move, it typically still costs a token from the action tracker to perform.

Take advantage on a roll

You may also spend any number of Fear when making a roll against a PC to enhance that roll. For each Fear spent, roll one additional d20, always taking the highest single d20 and then adding any relevant modifiers. When you do, be sure to narrate what it is that causes the adversary to have that kind of advantage.

Mike's group is fighting a dragon, and Mike thinks it would narratively appropriate for the Dragon's tail swipe to have a better chance of hitting the PCs given the current situation. They spend 2 Fear and roll 3d20 for the attack (2 extra d20s because of spending 2 Fear). They get 3, 4, and 19. Mike takes the 19 and adds the dragon's modifier for a powerful attack. They describe the dragon snorting out smoke as it turns with fury, spotting and fixing their attention on the group as it nimbly swipes through the air with its tail.

End an effect

Some effects tell the GM to spend a certain number of Fear to end them. You may spend a token on the action tracker and however many Fear required to do this when play returns to you.

Clear a condition

If an adversary is Vulnerable or Restrained, or has some other temporary condition, you may spend Fear to describe how the effect ends and remove this condition.

Add additional damage dice

When making a damage roll, you can always spend Fear to add an additional d6 damage die to the roll. You might choose to do this if something in the narrative presents the PCs with more danger than before, you are rolling against a particularly hearty PC, you need to ramp up the consequences in the scene, or you haven't had the chance to act in some time.

Add two tokens to the action tracker

You can always spend a Fear to add two tokens to the action tracker. This is most useful if you have a large number of adversaries on the battlefield and a decent pile of Fear built up when play returns to you–you can spend a few Fear to put more tokens on the action tracker, and use them to activate those adversaries.

Interrupt the PCs to take action

You may spend **two Fear** to interrupt between PCs acting and make a GM move as if they had rolled a failure or with Fear. This is most useful when PCs have been rolling successfully with Hope for a significant number of turns and you want to act in response. *As a note, this is a great option when more than four tokens have been placed on the action tracker without you getting to spend them. You can convert four of those tokens into two Fear, spend those two Fear to act immediately, and have one or more tokens left on the action tracker to activate adversaries.*

Tips for Using Fear

Below is some additional guidance for using Fear during your session.

Describing Fear Moves

Whenever you spend Fear, describe what changes in the world as Fear manifests rather than just saying you're using such and such effect. What happens that interrupts the PCs? How does the adversary break free of their condition? How does an adversary gain advantage for an attack? What does it look/sound/smell like when you spend Fear to have an avalanche crash down on the PCs?

Using Fear Collaboratively

An important thing to keep in mind when spending Fear is that you should never use it to undermine the fun of the players. The aim of Fear is to enhance the scene, create dramatic tension, and raise the stakes, not outright shut down the heroic actions the players are taking. For example, try to avoid immediately ending an effect a player has cast, even if it says the GM can spend Fear to end it. Let it play out, and when play passes to you and you feel the player has gotten the satisfaction of the effect, you can spend your move to explain how the scene changes, causing it to end. This also buys you the opportunity to, when the right dramatic moment or very powerful adversary demands it, spend Fear to shut down an effect immediately– showing just how dire the scene is.

It's best to think of spending Fear as a way of helping the players feel like your role in the story is fair. As the GM, you can always do anything you'd like, but you can use Fear to retain the players trust in doing so. Swing big, and spend Fear to show them you know the magnitude of impact it has.

Using Fear Outside of Combat

Many of the core Fear moves apply most to combat, but there are a number of things you can spend Fear on outside of a battle. You might spend Fear to describe how a challenge has become especially difficult through an added dimension (*adding to the difficulty or giving the character disadvantage*), you might spend Fear to create an inconvenient coincidence that creates challenges for the players (*the noble you just offended turns the corner in the market with her entourage*), or you might spend Fear to describe the introduction of a story element that plays on a character's background (*when you wake up, the innkeeper has a letter for you, bearing your family's seal...*).

Any time you want to make a harder move outside of combat, spending Fear can help communicate the magnitude of your play and enhance the impact of your efforts to complicate the character's lives.

Using The Action Tracker

The action tracker should come into play whenever an encounter will likely last longer than a dice roll or two. When it is brought into play for the first time, ensure your players know that its presence doesn't mean that violence is the only option left on the table–just that the narrative is scoping down to a more moment-by-moment approach than it normally might be. Anytime a player makes an action roll, they add a character token to the action tracker.

If you've got some Fear built up when the action tracker comes out, consider immediately spending a few to add tokens to the tracker before anything else happens. If it makes sense in the scene, you may also spend two Fear to cut into the action first and activate adversaries before the players. This is particularly useful if you're running an ambush or you are using an adversary who is particularly powerful.

Attack Rolls

When an adversary you're controlling attacks a PC, you'll take a number of extra character tokens equal to their attack bonus and roll them with your d20, then add everything up to get your attack roll total.

Tell the player or players that have been targeted by the attack what the total is. Ask them to compare it against their evasion score and if the attack meets or beats that score, it is successful and deals damage. If it rolls below their evasion score, the attack misses and no damage is dealt. If the attack misses, invite the player to describe how they avoided the blow (blocking, parrying, full-body dodge, magical deflection, etc.)

You can always add advantage to an adversary's attack roll by spending Fear.

When making an attack against multiple targets with the same adversary, you make one Attack Roll and ask if it hits any of the targets. If you are making individual attacks with multiple adversaries at the same time, make an attack roll for each.

Attack Rolls As Story

Whenever an attack roll is made, that is an opportunity for you to show the way that attack changes the scene. When your attack roll hits, you are taking away resources from the PCs (hit points, stress, armor, etc.) so ensure you are providing the context for that change in the fiction. When your attack roll is a failure, it's an opportunity to celebrate the prowess of the PC–it's often a great time to ask the player to describe how their character avoids the attack.

If needed, remind them that Evasion is not just about how quick a character is, it's about how skilled they are at not getting hit. This could manifest as the sorcerer reaching out and stopping an arrow in its tracks mid-flight or the wizard throwing up a magical barrier at just the right moment. It could be the rogue transforming into a swirling mass of darkness for a moment and letting the axe pass straight through them or a ranger doing a backflip out of the way, or anything else that feels like it aligns with the kind of character they have built.

Reaction Rolls

A PC may tell you to make a Reaction Roll when using a specific ability or spell. When you do, you'll roll a d20 and add any Experience that would apply in the situation. You will tell the player the final result and they will tell you whether your adversary succeeded or failed.

Difficulty

When a player makes an action roll, you'll often have to set the difficulty of that challenge to know whether they've succeeded or failed. Setting a target number for difficulty can feel like it relies on a lot of factors, but it's best not to overcomplicate the question– how hard is the thing they're trying to accomplish in the scene? Use the rubric below as a general guideline when setting difficulty.

5 - Very Easy | 10 - Easy | 15 - Medium | 20 - Hard | 25 - Very Hard | 30 - Nearly Impossible

Difficulty values can always lie outside of or between any of these tent pole options as well– it should be treated as a sliding scale in both directions. You may always choose to keep this difficulty secret, or tell the player what they're aiming for upfront, whatever play style you might prefer.

Often, instead of setting a single value for success, you might instead give a player different outcomes based on the value of their roll, especially on rolls to see what information someone spots in a scene or can remember from their past. Simply pick a target number and scale up or down the amount of information you give them based on the player's relative roll result.

Remember to only have players roll when the outcome *matters*. If the thing they're doing is easy, the scene remains the same whether they accomplish what they want or not, and there's no possible consequence to failure, then you can and should just let it happen.

Difficulty Rolls

Sometimes you might choose to have an NPC make a roll to determine the difficulty of a PCs action roll. Though this can add to the time it takes to resolve the scene, it can also be a useful tool in situations where you're unsure what the difficulty should be. To make a Difficulty Roll, roll a d20 and add any relevant experience the NPC or Adversary has to its total.

As a note, if an NPC already has an assigned difficulty value and experience, it's often easiest to add the relevant experience to the current difficulty to get a value instead of rolling.

GM Difficulty vs PC Evasion

Difficulty for NPCs and Evasion for PCs have some cross-over, but their main difference is functionality. The PCs have an entire character sheet and hand of cards that define the scope and power of their characters, and Evasion is a way to measure how often they are hit by an attack. As a GM, you're often creating (or improvising) many characters throughout the course of a session that interact with players in a multitude of way. Therefore, NPCs have Difficulty as a catch all for *any* rolls made against them. The experience they have can quickly augment this difficulty for anything they are particularly adept at. So, in a way, Evasion is bundled into Difficulty for the GMs to help make your job running the game easier.

Example Difficulty

Included here are difficulty examples for each trait. Do not feel the need to refer to these during play– just to use them as a sense for how difficulty works so you can make a judgment call on the fly as your players take actions.

Agility

Sprint

5 = Sprint a Close distance across an open field with an enemy present.
10 = Sprint a Far distance across an open field with an enemy present.
15 = Sprint a Close distance across rough terrain with an enemy present.
20 = Sprint a Close distance through an active battle of multiple enemies.

25 = Sprint a Far distance through a thick battle in rough terrain.

30 = Sprint across the heads of your enemies in a thick battle.

Climb

5 = Scale a high ladder.

10 = Scale a stone castle wall or moderate incline.

15 = Scale a stone castle wall in the rain or a sharp mountain slope.

20 = Scale a siege tower during a battle. Clamber up a massive foe.

25 = Scale a sheer cliff or inverted wall with miniscule hand/foot-holds.

30 = Scale a sheer cliff in a hurricane. Climb the back of a hostile dragon diving through a thunderstorm.

Leap

5 = Running jump of half of your height (about 3 feet for a human)

10 = Running jump of your height (five and a half feet for a human)

15 = Running jump of double your height (about 10 feet for a human)

20 = Running jump of three times your height (about 20 feet for a human)

25 = Running jump of five times your height (about 30 ft. for a human)

30 = Running jump of ten times your height (about 55 ft. for a human)

Strength

Lift

5 = Lift a chair.

10 = Lift a table or small chest.

15 = Lift a grown person or large chest.

20 = Lift the side of a laden cart or carry a large chest up stairs.

25 = Lift a horse, an ox, or a large monster.

30 = Lift a falling portcullis gate.

Smash

5 = Destroy a glass cup.

10 = Destroy a small wooden table

15 = Break through a wooden door.

20 = Break through a stone wall.

25 = Break through a dragon's teeth.

30 = Break a god's grip.

Grapple

5 = Subdue a child.

10 = Subdue a weak adult.

15 = Subdue an average adult.

20 = Subdue a skilled wrestler.

25 = Subdue a large beast.

30 = Subdue a legendary beast.

Finesse

Control

5 = Ride an average horse through easy terrain.
10 = Drive an ox-pulled cart.
15 = Drive a horse through rough terrain.
20 = Drive a cart through rough terrain.
25 = Ride a wild horse through dangerous terrain.
30 = Drive an enraged beast through dangerous terrain.

Hide

5 = Evade notice in full cover on a moonless night.
10 = Evade notice in cover on a moonless night. Sneak through heavy cover.
15 = Evade notice in cover on an average night. Sneak through average cover.
20 = Evade notice in the shadows on an average night. Sneak through low cover or past many guards.
25 = Evade notice with minimal cover in ample light.
30 = Evade notice with no cover in full daylight.

Tinker

5 = Open a sticky lock with the appropriate key.
10 = Open a simple puzzle box.
15 = Disable a standard trap.
20 = Disable a complicated trap.
25 = Open a door locked by a sequence of elaborate locks.
30 = Disable an incredibly sensitive and deadly trap.

Instinct

Perceive

5 = Hear a loud noise twenty paces away.
10 = Hear a speaking voice fifty paces away.
15 = Hear someone walking in the woods fifty paces away.
20 = Hear someone sneaking through the woods fifty paces away.
25 = Hear a prowling animal fifty paces away.
30 = Hear a diving bird a hundred paces away.

Sense

5 = Detect an obvious ambush. Notice an obvious deception.
10 = Detect a looming threat. Notice an average person's lies.
15 = Detect hostile intent from an average foe. See through a merchants' lies.
20 = Detect veiled hostility from a courtier. Detect an assassin's approach.
25 = Identify a spymaster's plot. Read the true intentions of a master courtier.
30 = Sense a shred of doubt within a God's pronouncement.

Navigate

5 = Follow a well-trod path in good lighting and weather.
10 = Follow an average path in good lighting and/or weather.
15 = Follow a subtle path through rough conditions. Find your way in a city.
20 = Follow a subtle path through harsh conditions. Find your way in a crowded city without signage.
25 = Find your way through a city, blindfolded. Find your way through a giant maze filled with hazards.
30 = Find your way through a Trickery god's maze.

Presence

Charm

5 = Win the trust of a friendly neighbor.
10 = Win the trust of a friendly stranger.
15 = Win the trust of a cautious stranger. Talk your way into a noble's party.
20 = Win the trust of a sympathetic foe. Talk your way into an enemy's party.
25 = Turn an enemy against their liege. Talk your way into a fae court.
30 = Talk a hostile god into granting you a boon.

Perform

5 = Earn a meal from a friendly crowd.
10 = Earn room & board in a small town. Impress a small crowd.
15 = Earn room & board in a low-end tavern in a city. Impress a crowd.
20 = Earn room & board in a high-end tavern in a city. Impress a full theater.
25 = Earn your keep in a royal court. Impress a full colosseum.
30 = Save yourself from execution after intruding on the Winter Queen's chambers.

Deceive

5 = Trick a trusting acquaintance.
10 = Trick an average stranger.
15 = Trick an average merchant.
20 = Trick a trained courtier.
25 = Trick a spymaster.
30 = Trick a leader of the Fallen.

Knowledge

Recall

5 = Uncommon facts about your community.
10 = Uncommon facts about a neighboring community.
15 = Uncommon facts about a distant community
20 = Specialized facts about a distant community.
25 = Specialized facts about a fallen kingdom.
30 = Secret information about an obscure historical group.

Analyze

5 = Unpack an obvious metaphor in a simple work.
10 = Identify obvious subtext in a standard work.
15 = Break a standard cipher in a coded message.
20 = Identify the weakness in a complicated battle plan.
25 = Predict the downfall of a nation based on concealed financial misdeeds.
30 = Identify the weakness in a divine champion's fighting form.

Comprehend

5 = Learn simple skills from an excellent teacher.
10 = Learn simple skills from an average teacher.
15 = Learn complicated skills from an excellent teacher.
20 = Learn complicated skills under poor conditions.
25 = Learn complicated skills quickly under dangerous conditions.
30 = Learn complicated skills instantaneously from incomplete information.

GM *Advantage and Disadvantage*

Whenever it seems appropriate in the narrative, you may give a PC advantage or disadvantage on a roll, which grants them 1d6 that either adds or subtracts from their roll total respectively. This is often a tool you can use to explicitly show a player that the situation is helpful or harmful to the action they are attempting. For example, if a player is attempting to sprint through deep mud or knee-high water, you might impose disadvantage on their agility check. If they say something clever to a guard or use knowledge they obtained about an NPC against them, you might impose advantage on their roll.

Additionally, as described in the "[Fear](#)" section, you can spend a Fear to add an advantage (in the form of a d20) to your own die roll against a PC.

Advantage & Disadvantage vs Difficulty

Because you control both the difficulty and the addition of advantage/disadvantage on a roll, why not just raise or lower the difficulty instead? You certainly can, but the advantage/disadvantage system allows there to be some illusion of a defined world, and lets players feel good about their advantage and the chance to roll extra dice - *for any standard adventurer it would be a difficulty of 15 to sneak by the head guard without being noticed. But because you knocked out one of their lackeys and stole their attire, you'll take advantage on a Presence roll to move by them without catching their eye.* The world exists, and the players' actions and/or the current situation they are in modifies how successful they are in interacting with it.

Adversaries

Adversaries are grouped by Tier, representing their general level of threat. Tier 0 adversaries are appropriate for level 1 characters, Tier 1 lines up with levels 2-4, Tier 2 is for levels 5-7, and Tier 3 is appropriate for levels 8-10. A full list of adversaries can be found under "[Adversaries](#)" in part 4.

Adversary Breakdown

Below is an example of how to read an adversary's stat block.

Jagged Knife Bandit - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Escape, Profit, Throw Smoke*

Attack Modifier: +0

Daggers: Melee | 2d8 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 2 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 14

HP: 5

Stress: 3

Experience:
Bandit +2

Moves

From Above
When this adversary makes a successful attack on a target by striking from above, it deals 3d10 damage instead of its normal attack damage.

Type: The Jagged Knife Bandit is a *Standard* type enemy, meaning they comprise the rank and file of their faction's forces. See "Adversary Types" for a list of all adversary types.

Motives & Tactics: This describes this adversary's general motives and tactics in a confrontation - when in doubt, the Jagged Knife Bandit will lie, steal, and throw smoke. There aren't special rules about these—improvise the outcome like you would for a player character.

Attack Modifier: The bonus or penalty you apply to your roll when making a standard attack with this adversary.

Weapon: Daggers Melee 2d8 phy - this indicates that on a regular attack, they use Daggers at Melee range to deal 2d8 physical damage.

Difficulty: Jagged Knife Bandit is Difficulty 12, so any PC attack or action roll of 12 or above will be a success against this adversary.

Thresholds, Hit Points, & Stress: Minor 2 / Major 8 / Severe 14 represents this adversary's Damage thresholds. They have 5 Hit Points and 3 Stress.

Experience: Like PCs, some adversaries have Experiences that make them especially capable in certain situations. However, unlike PCs, these Experiences don't apply to adversary attack rolls. Instead, the GM can use their Experience, either on a relevant reaction roll as a bonus or against a PC's roll to increase the difficulty. When creating and/or applying Experience, the GM should think about how to limit the scope of that Experience to certain impactful moments or situations.

The Jagged Knife Bandit has the Experience *Bandit +2*. This means that on any action rolls the PCs make to target this creature where the Bandit's experience would apply, the GM should raise the difficulty by +2.

Example:
A Tier 0 Merchant has a difficulty of 10, as they're not especially skilled in combat. But their Experience of Shrewd Negotiator +5 could apply whenever a PC is trying to haggle with the Merchant or trick them into taking a bad deal, meaning that if the GM spends fear, the difficulty for such actions would be 15 instead of 10. And if the Merchant was asked to make a Reaction roll related to savvy or social situations, the GM could decide to apply that experience as a bonus to the roll.

Tip: While adversary Experience does not apply to attack rolls, sometimes their Experience might make them especially effective for a specific attack. In this case, you can spend Fear to grant the adversary advantage, describing how the adversary's experience improves their odds in that moment.

Moves: Moves represent the Bandits' capabilities in a conflict. They deal more damage when attacking from above - the 3d10 damage replaces their standard damage of 2d8.

> **Marking Stress:** Some moves will call for the adversary to mark Stress - this can only come from that adversary's Stress, not another adversary.

> **Spending Fear:** Some moves say to Spend Fear. When the GM makes a move, they may spend Fear as described to make this move.

Adversary Tags/Traits

Some adversaries have common moves, listed here for reference. Anywhere X is used below, it is to stand in for a certain value. On an adversary stat block, Relentless (X) would be replaced with something like Relentless (3).

Relentless (X)

A foe with Relentless can activate up to X times during a GM move so long as there are enough action tokens.

The Relentless move is useful if you want an adversary you can activate more than once during a single GM move. This is often best for exceedingly fast or dangerous foes, or for adversaries who are likely to be battling the party on their own.

Slow (X)

A foe with Slow costs X action tokens to activate.

*The Slow move is useful if you want an adversary who narratively takes longer to act than others, like a slug creature or a massive ogre. This is usually most effective when that creature is very powerful when it **does** act, but eats up lots of action tokens to do it.*

Minion (X)

For every X damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within their attack's range.

The Minion move is useful when you want to drop lots of small enemies into the battlefield, knowing the party can swing through them very easily. This move means that if a PC hits one minion and they do enough damage, they also hit a number of others that are in range for them. Because of this, it's often best to have minions crowd a PC–it will feel overwhelming and dangerous until they're able to make an attack against them. If you want that cinematic feeling of the PCs taking out waves of enemies with a single attack roll, minions are a great tool to make that happen.

Horde

Adversaries with the Horde move deal less damage when they've marked ½ or more of their Hit Points. **Creatures Per Hit Point: (X)** denotes the number of creatures in this horde represented by each Hit Point.

The Horde move is useful when you want to represent a group of enemies as a single adversary. This is one step beyond just having a number of minions on the battlefield–maybe you want to represent a mass of zombies or a swarm of deadly insects. Horde allows you to make large numbers of enemies without the overhead of running them all individually. For example, a zombie Horde with 5 hit points and a Creatures Per Hit Point value of 4 would be described as 20 zombies moving in a group together. If a PC deals 2 hit points to this horde, you would describe 8 zombies being taken out as a result.

Group Attack – (Range) (X)

Spend a Fear to activate all adversaries with this name within a certain range of a target. This group can move and make an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal X amount of damage per adversary.

*The Group Attack is useful for making the action tokens more efficient in battle. Because it allows you to activate multiple adversaries at once, it can really help to make a battlefield full of enemies come alive. As a note of clarification, you only make **one attack roll for the entire group** that is attacking, and then **add their damage together** before applying it to the target. Group Attack is often paired up with the Minion move because it allows a number of smaller foes to all have the chance to attack before they inevitably are taken out by the PCs.*

Adversary Types

Adversaries in Daggerheart are listed with types to represent the role they play in a scene. When building encounters, utilizing a mix of types will help present a dynamic and engaging challenge. Social type adversaries are primarily intended for social conflict rather than combat.

The types are: *Bruiser, Leader, Minion, Horde, Ranged, Skulker, Social, Solo, Standard, and Support*

Bruiser - Tough adversaries with powerful attacks.
Horde - A Horde represents a number of foes working in a group.
Leader - Adversaries that command and summon other adversaries.
Minion - Basic enemies that are easily dispatched but dangerous in numbers.
Ranged - Adversaries that attack from a distance.
Skulker - Adversaries that maneuver and exploit opportunities to ambush their opponents.
Social - Adversaries that are primarily interpersonal threats or challenges.
Solo - Designed to present a challenge to a whole party.
Standard - Rank and File adversaries.
Support - Enemies that enhance their allies and/or disrupt their opponents.

Scaling Adversaries

If you want to utilize existing adversaries but adjust them to a different tier, here are some guidelines and examples.

When scaling an adversary, focus on their difficulty, their damage, the attack modifier, and their damage thresholds. If those are scaled properly to your desired level, you may not need to add/subtract Hit Points or Stress. When scaling damage and damage thresholds, you can benchmark by referring to the "Impromptu Damage" section.

If scaling an adversary to a higher tier, you might add a new move to make them a greater threat or just scale up the damage and difficulty of their existing moves. If scaling them down to a lower tier, consider removing one of the most powerful/impactful moves.

Example:
Mike is preparing an encounter for their level 1 group but wants to use the Assassins writeups. Mike could just tweak the Tier 0 Bandits, but decides to scale down the assassins. They start with the Assassin Poisoner, planning on using a poisoner and some minions for this first encounter.

They start with the Tier 1 writeup:

Assassin Poisoner - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Anticipate, Taint Food and Water, Disable, Get Paid*

Attack Modifier: +3

Poisoned Throwing Dagger:
Close | 3d8 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 4 | **Major** 12 | **Severe** 20

HP: 4

Stress: 3

Experience:
Intrusion +2

Moves

Grindletooth Venom Blade
Characters that mark HP from a Poisoned Throwing Dagger attack become Vulnerable until their next action. When they take their next action, they must make a Reaction Roll with Strength (14) or take 2d10 physical damage that cannot be reduced by armor and stay Vulnerable until they regain HP or are treated for poison. Characters that pass this Reaction Roll mark Stress but are no longer Vulnerable.

Out of Nowhere
Assassin Poisoner has advantage on attacks if they are Hidden.

Fumigation
Spend a **Fear** to have the Poisoner throw a sachet up to Close range that fills a Very Close area with cloying smoke. Anyone in the smoke becomes Dizzied. Dizzied characters add two tokens to the action tracker when they act, then are no longer dizzied.

First, the difficulty of the Poisoner drops 14 to 12 so that level 1 characters can frequently succeed against them when using their stronger traits and closer to a 50/50 chance when using their other traits. The attack modifier drops by 1 since Tier 0 characters will have lower evasion.

Then, their damage drops from 3d8 to 2d8 - still capable of dealing notable hits to a level 1 character.

The Poisoner's damage thresholds drop from Minor 4 / Major 12 / Severe 20 to Minor 3 / Major 7 / Severe 11. The Poisoner is not meant to be tough, but they will still take a strong blow from a level 1 character to deal a Severe injury. Mike leaves the HP and Stress as-is.

Finally, Mike decides to drop the Grindletooth Venom Blade move entirely for Tier 0, but leaves Fumigation as-is, since it does not deal damage or have a reaction roll with a difficulty.

The Tier 0 version of the Assassin Poisoner now looks like:

Assassin Poisoner - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Anticipate, Taint Food and Water, Disable, Get Paid*

Attack modifier: +2

Poisoned Throwing Dagger:
Close | 2d8 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 3 | **Major** 7 | **Severe** 11

HP: 4

Stress: 3

Experience:
Intrusion +2

Moves

Out of Nowhere
Assassin Poisoner has advantage on attacks if they are Hidden.

Fumigation
Spend a **Fear** to have the Poisoner throw a sachet up to Close range that fills a Very Close area with cloying smoke. Anyone in the smoke becomes Dizzied. Dizzied characters add two tokens to the action tracker when they act, then are no longer dizzied.

Tier 2

If instead Mike was scaling the Assassin Poisoner up to Tier 2, they would increase the attack bonus, damage, difficulty, and damage thresholds.

Assassin Poisoner - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Anticipate, Taint Food and Water, Disable, Get Paid*

Attack modifier: +4

Poisoned Throwing Dagger:
Close | 4d8+5 phy

Difficulty: 16

Minor 5 | **Major** 18 | **Severe** 36

HP: 5

Stress: 3

Experience:
Intrusion +2

Moves

Grindletooth Venom Blade
Characters that mark HP from a Poisoned Throwing Dagger attack become Vulnerable until their next action. When they take their next action, they must make a Reaction Roll with Strength (14) or take 2d10 physical damage that cannot be reduced by armor and stay Vulnerable until they regain HP or are treated for poison. Characters that pass this Reaction Roll mark Stress but are no longer Vulnerable.

Out of Nowhere
Assassin Poisoner has advantage on attacks if they are Hidden.

Fumigation
Spend a **Fear** to have the Poisoner throw a sachet up to Close range that fills a Very Close area with cloying smoke. Anyone in the smoke becomes Dizzied. Dizzied characters add two tokens to the action tracker when they act, then are no longer dizzied.

If adapting the Assassin Poisoner to Tier 3, Mike would substantially increase their damage, difficulty, experience, and their damage thresholds, raise the attack bonus, and add up one or maybe two moves.

Tier 3

Assassin Poisoner - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Anticipate, Taint Food and Water, Disable, Get Paid*

Attack Modifier: +6

Poisoned Throwing Dagger: Close | 5d8+8 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 6 | **Major** 25 | **Severe** 50

HP: 5

Stress: 3

Tactics: Anticipate, Disable, Taint Food and Water

Experience:
Intrusion +4

Moves

Grindletooth Venom Blade
Characters that mark HP from a Poisoned Throwing Dagger attack become Vulnerable until their next action. When they take their next action, they must make a Reaction Roll with Strength (14) or take 2d10 physical damage that cannot be reduced by armor and stay Vulnerable until they regain HP or are treated for poison. Characters that pass this Reaction Roll mark Stress but are no longer Vulnerable.

Out of Nowhere
Assassin Poisoner has advantage on attacks if they are Hidden.

Fumigation
Spend a **Fear** to have the Poisoner throw a sachet up to Close range that fills a Very Close area with cloying smoke. Anyone in the smoke becomes Dizzied. Dizzied characters add two tokens to the action tracker when they act, then are no longer dizzied.

Stinging Gas
Mark Stress to toss a sachet up to a Close distance that erupts into stinging gas that grants disadvantage to all targets within Very Close of the eruption. The effect ends at the end of the scene or when the target clears HP.

[Playtesters: We invite your constructive feedback on how the adversaries included work at your table, as well as your experiences with this scaling framework. This extends to difficulty ratings, damage, damage thresholds, moves, etc.]

Countdowns

Countdowns are a GM tool used to move progress along towards a certain event, enemy move, or consequence. They are usually tracked by a die that is set to a starting number, and can be a specific move an enemy makes towards the players, a significant event occurring in the narrative, or anything else that the GM wants to track as an impending moment. Whenever a countdown is in play, it should be implied by the GM through the narration they give (like an enemy preparing for a big attack or a bridge starting to break under them, etc.) or be told explicitly to the players ("There's a countdown going on this, what do you want to do?")

Standard Countdown: When an enemy or event has a Countdown feature, typically it will be set to a specific number (eg Countdown: 4), and tick down every time a player makes an action roll, regardless of the result. When it is reduced to 0, the enemy will make that move or that event will occur after the player's roll is resolved. When the countdown is fairly long (5-8+), it's best used on powerful moves or events that you want to build up towards in the narrative. When the countdown is shorter (2-4), it's best used on moves or events you want to happen often in the encounter, but may not have the chance to trigger off of players' rolls. Enemy Countdowns are usually reserved for the major antagonist of an encounter, and aren't typically on more than one (or a few, at max) enemies in a scene.

Dynamic Countdown: When a certain situation is being actively influenced by the players, you may choose to use a Dynamic Countdown to track it. This differs from a standard countdown in that it doesn't necessarily tick down every time a player rolls– it can instead be influenced by the rolls they make. This is often best used to track larger scale events or situations happening over an entire scene.

For example, if the PCs' skyship is under attack by enemies, you could use a Dynamic Countdown to track their escape. If the PCs are trying to destroy something that wouldn't typically have Hit Points, you may use a Dynamic Countdown to track how close they are to destroying it. If the PCs are chasing or searching for an enemy, you may use a Dynamic Countdown to track how close they are to catching them. Typically, these countdowns have a starting value of 5-10.

If the countdown is something the players want to happen, that is referred to as a **Progress Countdown.**
Success with Fear: Tick 1 - Success with Hope: Tick 2 - Critical: Tick 3

If the countdown is something the players are trying to avoid happening, that is referred to as a
Consequence Countdown.
Failure with Fear: Tick 3 - Failure with Hope: Tick 2 - Success with Fear: Tick 1

All Countdowns should have an "Activate" condition and a "When Triggered" condition. "Activate" denotes when the Countdown should begin in the narrative, and "When Triggered" gives the GM the details of what happens when the Countdown ticks all the way down.

When starting a Countdown, take a die that has the starting value available on it, and place it on the enemy card or countdown sheet. (For example, if your starting value is 5, it's best to use a d6 set to 5 as your countdown die. If the starting value is 8, it's best to use a d8.) When the countdown ticks down, adjust the die accordingly. If you should ever not complete a countdown before the end of a session, make sure to record the current countdown value so that it can be reset at the beginning of the next session.

When the action tracker is on the table, the GM may also spend the available tokens to tick a countdown relevant to the scene.

Advanced Countdown Features

Countdowns can have additional features that make them more complex or unique. Some examples of this include:

Randomized Starting Value: Instead of assigning a starting value, a Countdown might instead use a randomized value, like "Countdown 1d6". This means that you roll 1d6 and use the result as the countdown's starting value. It is most commonly used in situations where the value isn't under direct control by a sentient being, or your intention is to leave the trigger more up to chance.

Loop: Anytime a Countdown has the "Loop" tag attached to it, like "Countdown 5 (Loop)", the Countdown is reset to its starting value after it ticks all the way down and you perform the "When Triggered" action. This is most commonly used on enemy abilities that charge back up over time.

Increasing or Decreasing: Anytime a Countdown has the "Increasing" or "Decreasing" tag attached to it, like "Countdown 8 (Increasing)" or "Countdown 8 (Decreasing), the Countdown is reset to its starting value, +1 or -1 respectively, after it ticks all the way down and you perform the "When Triggered" action. This follows the same rules as "Loop", but with a little more variability. It is best used when the trigger makes sense in the fiction to be scaling up or down in succession.

The cave system the heroes are exploring is collapsing more and more over time, so the GM sets a Consequence Countdown called "Rubble Falling" as a seven-step countdown "Countdown 7 (Decreasing). After the first time the Countdown triggers and rubble falls on the PCs, the starting value would be reset back to 6, the next time to 5, then to 4, etc. until the situation is resolved or the Countdown resets to 0 and the caves have collapsed entirely.

Long-Term Countdowns

Countdowns can also be used to track long-term events that might arise during a campaign; you could make a countdown towards the overthrow of a nation, the death of a powerful mage, a coming storm arriving in town, or anything else that might take more than a few sessions to come to bear. Generally, these are tracked using a Countdown track instead of dice.

To make a Countdown track, decide how far out the event should be (usually between 4 and 12 ticks) and create small boxes for each tick. Then, starting from the first and working towards the last, write some events that may occur along the way that foreshadow the final event. These steps can alternate between softer and harder moves to give a sense of variety and growing tension. During a short rest, you can spend a Fear to tick down a Countdown once.

During a long rest, you always tick down any Countdown tracks that would narratively progress, but may spend Fear to tick it down an additional time.

When you tick a Long-Term Countdown, be sure you bring to bear the consequences of that countdown progressing, letting the consequences ripple down to the PCs. Often, this progression can be displayed through actions that will immediately reach the character's attention, but sometimes you might utilize a cinematic flourish and cut away to a narrate a scene for the players as something happens to accelerate the countdown. This is best done with countdowns where the characters already know about the countdown so that the players aren't asked to completely ignore out-of-character knowledge. Instead use it as a way to build tension and signal to the players that the countdown is progressing with or without the characters.

Example Long Term Countdown

Early in the campaign, the party crossed paths with Marius, a Galapa mercenary captain. The group suspected Mairius would cause trouble, but pressing matters drew them elsewhere in the kingdom. The GM decides to expand Marius' role based on the players' interest, deciding that he's going to make a deal with the expansionist theocracy to the east, tying Marius to an idea the GM already had in mind to spotlight the group's Seraph and her past in the theocracy. Marius agrees to help the theocrats invade, and in return, he'll be named Governor of a county once the kingdom has fallen. The GM wants this invasion to ramp up pretty quickly, so they set the Countdown at 8. They sketch out the beats in the Countdown to make sure they know how to manifest it in a player-facing way.

8 – The deal is struck and Marius' company mobilizes.
7 – Marius' company raids a border town.
6 – The theocracy's troops begin gathering at the border.
5 – Marius' company captures a different border town, having misdirected the nearby militias.
4 – The theocracy's army marches into the kingdom, establishing a beachhead in the captured town.
3 – Refugees flee the region around the border town, bringing news of the invasion with them to the larger settlements.
2 – Marius moves to harry the kingdom's army and give the theocracy time to establish supply lines.
1 – The theocracy re-dedicates a temple in the captured town to their god, magnifying their priests' power in the kingdom.
0 – The invasion becomes an all-out war, with Marius' and the theocracy's army executing coordinated strikes to divide the kingdom's defenders.

The GM identifies steps 6 and 3 as prime candidates for steps where news would reach the party. This gives them at least two clear prompts to get involved before the invasion escalates to a full-blown war. And depending on the party's movements and location as the countdown progresses, the GM may be able to bring the edges of the invasion to the party's horizon or even their doorstep.

Gold

Using gold in a campaign as a reward for a successful quest can be a fun way to give your players something tangible they can utilize to procure new equipment and items for future adventures, as well as show you what they are interested in. There are very few gold values listed on anything in this book to help accommodate whatever pace by which you'd like to use (or not use) gold in your campaign.

If it's not something you want to worry about, you can always just let players go to a shop and talk with the merchant there, giving them access to the weapons at their tier you think would make sense for the location and/or what you think they might like and abstracting the payment beyond the need to track. It's best to limit their options to a few so that they have a reason to go shopping around in different places and see what is available.

If you do want to give some gold as a reward, but not make your campaign particularly driven by it, you could make each weapon worth a number of handfuls of gold equal to double its tier (Tier One is worth two handfuls, Tier Two is worth four, Tier three is worth one bag). You can also vary this up based on their strength as well, subtracting or adding one handful depending on what you feel the shopkeep might do.

If you want gold to play a large part in your campaign, you might instead make each weapon worth a number of bags of gold equal to double its tier (Tier One is worth two bags, Tier Two is worth four bags, Tier Three is worth a chest and a bag of gold).

The important part is that you scale the weapons, armor, and loot as appropriate with your campaign.

GM Styles

There is no one right way to be a GM, and part of what makes TTRPGs a unique experience is that all GMs and players each have their own approaches, preferences, and play styles.

Below you'll find a list of a few different styles and approaches to different aspects of GMing. These are meant to be useful for thinking about different approaches and identifying your own preferences, not to be an official proclamation of the only ways to be a GM. You might find that your approach to these aspects of play are consistent, or you might shift depending on the campaign, the session, or even scene-by-scene. These don't have to be as solid or fixed as a character build, but are rather an examination of some of the many types of GMing styles and approaches. Any recommendations below are for reference rather than any kind of prescription.

If you're GMing with a new group, it may be especially useful to discuss your preferred styles and approaches during your campaign's session zero to ensure that everyone's expectations are set

accurately and that any potential mismatch can be discussed sooner rather than later. But even with players you know well, being explicit about your preferences and expectations can be helpful to ensure everybody's expectations are aligned.

ROLEPLAY STYLE - This aspect relates to the game's mood, the degree to which staying in the fiction is prioritized, how much room is made/used for digression or high comedy/hijinx.

- *Irreverent/Playful -* A game that is relaxed and open to jokes, silliness, and occasionally over-the-top shenanigans. In this style, the GM doesn't take the world or themselves too seriously and makes space for players to engage or roleplay at whatever level they are comfortable. Anachronistic gags and absurd character choices allow for memorably silly moments within the table's communal comfort level.
- *Invested/Dramatic -* Running a game that leans into the drama of the story, asking players to engage in more involved roleplay while in-world. This style usually involves more in-depth conversations and social interactions with NPCs, as well as themes of intrigue and mystery. In this style, the GM asks players to respectfully be attentive and involved throughout the session, keeping side-conversation minimal.
- *Minimal -* Running a game where the "game" is emphasized over the story, allowing players to focus more on adventuring, exploration, and battling dangerous creatures and surmounting challenges without being bogged down with deep conversations or being asked to perform for their friends.

EXPLORATION STYLE - This aspect relates to the GM's approach to exploration - how much there will be, what role it plays in the overall story, and where the focus lies.

- **Cinematic** - This style emphasizes "scenes" of interest over lengthy exploration. In this mode, a fair amount of travel can be skipped over in lieu of rapidly arriving at destinations of interest and getting right to the meat of the story. This can be great for campaigns with limited play time or players who are more invested in a central story than exploration.
- **Exploratory** - This style prioritizes more open-world, player-driven wandering and discovery over a set series of scenes. In this mode, the journey is often as exciting as the destination, allowing for unexpected discoveries and adventures along the way. Deviations from the "main story" can happen often, and are their own joys.
- **Dungeon Crawl** - This style puts the exploration focus of the game on the dangerous locales in question rather than on the journey to the destination. In this mode, groups carefully navigate the entirety of its depths one room at a time. This makes for a slower-but-exciting delve through a series of often intricate maps where the fun of searching for hidden traps or awaiting ambushes around every corner is in the spotlight.

COMBAT/CHALLENGE STYLE - This aspect relates to how the GM presents combats and other action scenes where keeping track of characters and challenges is important. It also relates to a stance regarding how combat is used within the broader story of the game.

- *Theatre of the Mind (Fluid) -* This style focuses on running combat encounters in a dynamic and flexible way without miniatures or maps. The GM can be loose with distances and placement within this shared imaginary space, with ranges/distances being fluid and flexible

based on what seems cool and what players (and adversaries) are trying to do. This style is recommended for groups that want to focus on the drama of combat rather than a tactical approach and where visual aids are not essential for accessibility or enjoyment.

- *Theater of the Mind (Tactical) -* This style involves running combat encounters without maps or miniatures, but being more specific with distances/ranges, locations, and movement. This style is recommended for groups that have a strong shared understanding of how to imagine scenes. This style can be a much heavier load for the GM to run, as being specific is very helpful for many players. In this mode, GMs might find they want to use some visual aids, even just using coins/dice on a sheet of paper if needed.
- *Miniature (Fluid) -* This style involves running combat encounters with maps and miniatures (in person or in a virtual environment), but with the distances/ranges being governed by the needs of the narrative of the encounter more than specific measurements. Player and adversary intent is more important than precision in spatial awareness, and the map is more of an aid to the shared imaginary space. This style is recommended for groups interested in focusing on story but where having specific visual aids enhances the experience of play.
- *Miniature (Tactical) -* This style focuses on running combat encounters with maps and miniatures (in-person or in a virtual environment), enforcing hard measurements for distance and range of abilities, and fostering a deeply tactical combat aspect to the experience of the game. This style is recommended for groups that enjoy being creative in action scenes within spatial boundaries and working within a more rigid combat dynamic.

PREPARATION STYLE - This aspect relates to the GM's approach to preparation and improvisation, how they lay out plans and create or use material to maintain the integrity of the world and story.

- *High Preparation* - This style utilizes extensive preparation between sessions, building setting material, developing or adjusting adversaries, preparing hand-outs, miniatures, maps, and other elements to help bring the game to life. This style is time-intensive but can pay dividends in immersion and in comfort for GMs that prefer not to have to do as much improvisation at the table, who love building out the setting, and/or love creating intricate setpieces with miniatures and maps.
- *Moderate Preparation* - This style combines some preparation between sessions with a notable amount of improvisation at the table. The GM might prepare whole scenarios and encounters, or might prepare NPCS and situations more than full scenes and trust that they know the world well enough to improvise the rest at the table. This style is recommended for GMs that want to give themselves some material to use or fall back on but also enjoy being flexible and adjusting on the fly.
- *Improvisation-Focused* - This style is more focused on crafting the world and the story in the moment at the table. In this mode, GMs might do more of their worldbuilding up-front at the beginning of a campaign or might focus on letting the whole group create the world through play during sessions. This style is recommended for GMs that prefer to lean on improvisation and can work better for GMs that don't have as much time to prepare between sessions as long.

Running GM NPCs

More guidance here coming soon!

Optional GM Mechanics

There are a number of optional GM mechanics you can choose to implement if you or your table prefer them.

Fate Rolls

Sometimes the GM wants to use randomness when deciding something that is not dependent on a particular character's capabilities or some other existing measurement. If the situation seems to be up to fate but GM wants to put their thumb on the scale, the GM could just spend Fear and declare an outcome.

Alternatively, in those situations the GM can ask a player to roll their Hope or Fear die to decide the result. Which die the player uses is more a question of flavor, but the choice should represent the topic. You might roll the Hope die when determining whether fortune smiles upon the character or if there will be a lucky circumstance. You might roll the Fear die when determining if a potential hazard manifests or when deciding how bad a dangerous possibility will end up.

The GM can say that a particular result happens at a certain number or higher or they might say that the higher the number, the more a particular thing has happened.

"Roll the Fear die. On an 8 or higher, the fire spreads beyond this one house."

"I think it's really up to chance whether reinforcements will make it to you in time. Go ahead and roll the Fear die and that will be the size of the Countdown when it activates. When that triggers, they'll arrive at a far distance."

"Go ahead and roll the Hope die to see how big the crowd at the inn is tonight. The higher the roll, the bigger the crowd."

Falling/Throwing Damage

If a character falls from a high distance and hits the ground below or is thrown a distance, you can issue them direct physical damage at 1d20 per range beyond Very Close. For example, a fall from close range would be 1d20 direct physical damage. A fall from far range would be 2d20 direct physical damage. A fall from very far range would be 3d20 direct physical damage. You may always increase the number of d20 being rolled as you deem appropriate to the situation.

Moving & Fighting Underwater

For any creatures that can't breathe underwater, if you want to create tension around how long they can hold their breath, you may choose to create a Breath Countdown die. This should be set to three (or more) and tick down every time a player character takes an action underwater. If the action is with Fear or a Failure, you may take your move to also tick it down an additional segment. If it's a Failure with Fear, you may tick down two additional segments. Any actions taken after the clock is full require the player to mark Stress. (See "Countdown" for more on Countdown Dice.) Attack rolls underwater are usually made at disadvantage.

Character vs Character Adjudication

Sometimes a player might want their character to act against another PC in the scene. Daggerheart does not mechanically support player vs player conflict, so when this happens, it's best to stop down and have a discussion with the two players involved to figure out how best to resolve the conflict. There is often an inclination to jump straight to rolling dice, but be sure to talk about whether a dice roll is necessary to decide the outcome of the event. If both players agree it is, come to a consensus on the terms of the roll before it is made and facilitate the scene after the roll is made in line with those terms.

Session Zero

What is Session Zero?

When preparing to embark on a long campaign that will tell the story of a group across months or years, it's important to get everyone on the same page and set expectations as early as possible. If you were creating an epic fantasy tv show, you'd do this preparation work via the pre-production process, with the creator and showrunner building the writers' room, working with the producers and heads of departments to develop the look and feel and vision for the series, and so on. If you were writing an epic fantasy book series, you might do it by worldbuilding and developing characters, by outlining and making a mood board or whatever else helps you find and maintain your vision for the project.

In tabletop role-playing games, we use what is known as "Session Zero". Session zero means different things to different people, but for Daggerheart, it's the way you plan for success in telling your fantasy epic together as a group. Before making characters, before deciding on your setting, the group talks about what you all want from this campaign and this experience.

The GM facilitates session zero, but all players in the game should be active participants in session zero, advocating for what they do and don't want from the campaign.

There are many tools for structuring your session zero. If everyone in your group has played together before, you may already have a method for conducting your session zero. If you haven't done session zero before or don't have a method you prefer, here are some suggestions:

Laying the Groundwork

An essential part of session zero is choosing your game's content calibration and safety tools (see "A Table for All" in part 1). These tools let the group manage content to ensure that players know that they'll be able to avoid material that would be hurtful or triggering and can, if they want, explore material that can be challenging but everyone has signed up to engage with - to be what we'd call comfortably uncomfortable. In addition to deciding on content the group does and doesn't want in the game, calibration and safety tools also allow for players (including the GM) to communicate during play if something unexpectedly painful or troubling comes up, or to help one another remember existing decisions about elements to avoid or keep "off-screen".

One of many frameworks for discussing content and safety is CATS, created by Patrick O'Leary. You can find it at: http://bit.ly/CATS_Framework

This framework has four elements to discuss what you want from your game:

Concept
Aim
Tone
Subject Matter

Concept

Discuss the concept for the campaign - what's the big picture pitch? If this campaign was a book series, how would you talk about it to a friend you know would love it? Getting yourself and the group excited about the concept for a campaign is a great way to set a guiding star for your creative discussions throughout Session Zero and beyond.

A few examples:

Childhood friends reunite at the funeral of their village elder and uncover a secret that could break the world...or save it.

A science-fantasy romp across the realms with the party as a group of misfits trying to find their origins but end up finding a family in one another.

In a world wracked by powerful disasters, a group of treasure hunters is hired to retrieve the five lost elemental shards so that the balance of nature can be restored.

You might not know the campaign's concept at the beginning, and that's okay. Feel free to return to this conversation at the end of session zero or throughout the first couple of sessions as necessary.

Aim

Aim is about what you want from and for your campaign - your creative, social, and other goals. Do you have a specific creative agenda you're looking to pursue? Do you mostly want to spend a few hours with friends every week making things up together and blowing off steam? Aim is both about format and aesthetic agenda.

Examples:

We're going to play a weekly campaign from level 1-10 with strong individual and group character arcs.

Our aim is mostly to hang out and chat while kicking butt and getting new powers and cool items.

We want to tell a story that explores the relationship between grief and community through an action-fantasy in a world recovering from a near-apocalypse.

Other ways to decide on or describe your game's aim might be to reference touchstones for your campaign or for the kind of character you want to play, drawing from books, films, comics, music, etc. You might create a mood board to help define the aesthetic of your world or a soundtrack to form an aural soundscape for the vibe you want.

Tone

While playing Daggerheart, you will build a world entirely your own. Even if you're using an established setting, since your version of that setting will be distinct and grow through your creativity. One of the important elements of defining a world and a campaign is agreeing on tone - the emotional landscape and tendency of the campaign. Establishing the tone of your game is a fast and easy way to align players' expectations and ensure that everyone has a good time.

A quick way of picking a tone is to set out a piece of paper or note card with the following list of tones. Circle tones everyone is excited for; X-out tones you will avoid or remove. The rest may appear as needed:

Lighthearted | Adventurous | Gritty | Funny | Scary | Whimsical | Intimate | Dramatic | Heart-Pounding | Romantic | Goofy | Intense

Example:
A group is starting their first campaign and decides to use the provided list of tone options. Josie nominates Dramatic to be highlighted and everyone agrees, so that option is bolded to signal that it will be prominent in the campaign. Kyle says he's not interested in a Goofy tone, and nominates it to be X-ed out. Danny doesn't mind Goofy, but isn't against crossing it out. But in exchange, he asks that the group consider bolding Romantic. Sita isn't interested in Romantic being a central tone, but doesn't want to cross it out. She nominates Heart-Pounding for a major tone, and after discussion it gets bolded. The group agrees that they don't want a Gritty game, so it gets crossed out. They also cross out Whimsical.

*Lighthearted | Adventurous | ~~Gritty~~ | Funny | Scary | ~~Whimsical~~ | Intimate | **Dramatic** | **Heart-Pounding** | Romantic | ~~Goofy~~ | Intense*

That leaves them with a game that will be especially Dramatic and Heart-Pounding, sometimes Adventurous, Intense, Funny, Intimate, Romantic, and Scary, but not Goofy, Gritty, or Whimsical.

Subject Matter

Discuss things you actively want in the game as well as subjects you want to avoid. For subjects to avoid, this can be big, broad things like bigotry and torture or very specific elements like avoiding spiders or a particular name that carries big emotional weight for a player.

NOTE:

When discussing social and political issues, it's important to center the desires and needs of marginalized players at the table. For instance, if your group is a mix of some cisgender alloromantic/allosexual & heterosexual players and some LGBTIQIA players, the queer players' preferences should be prioritized when it comes to whether homophobia/transphobia and other forms of oppression against LGBTQIA people are to be included in the game. In heroic fantasy games it can sometimes be empowering to present oppressive forces as part of the evils of the world that can be directly fought and overcome, but that should be a choice actively made by the people that the oppression impacts outside the game. Many marginalized players come to rpgs to escape the everyday frustrations and pains of bigotry they experience in their daily lives, and they shouldn't be forced to struggle with them in a game. Those choices should be made primarily by those most impacted by the subject matter.

If you haven't done so yet, this is a good place to pick the safety tools you want to use for the campaign (see page here). We recommend one tool for managing content to include and avoid (like Lines & Veils or a content palette) and one tool available to players to pause or re-direct play during the session (like the X-Card, Script Change, etc.)

Example:
In their session zero conversation, the group agrees to use Lines & Veils, a content palette, and the X-Card.

Jo says they don't want transphobia, homophobia, or any bigotry against queer people in the game. The GM writes those topics down on the group's list of Lines – elements that won't appear in the game at all. Jo then says that they're excited to explore the different ways communities in the world express gender, so that's added to the game's palette under elements to include.

Olivia says that she'd like to put a veil on real-world politics for the campaign to help the game feel like a break from the worries of everyday life. The game might include some parallels with real-world politics, but that comparison will never be in the spotlight, and the game's table talk will avoid making those comparisons.

George adds a line on tiny swarms of insects, with the caveat that he doesn't mind having insects in the campaign, as long as they aren't ever on his character. He nominates romance for the palette as something he's excited to have in the game.

Asking Questions

During the session zero discussions, it's very useful to ask clarifying questions and dig deeper with suggestions and ideas.

Do you want to use an existing setting or build your own from scratch? Do you have specific themes you're interested in exploring in this campaign? Have you always wanted to play a science-fantasy campaign? One of the best ways to ensure that all of the players in a game are bought-in to a game, invested and excited to play, is to let them bring their ideas and interests to the planning stages in session zero.

Some examples of questions during a session zero process:

Can you talk a little more about what you mean by wanting to make a post-fantasy world?

When you said it'd be cool if elven clans worked like a bee hive, did you mean physiology, or is it more about communication and hierarchy?

What aspect of that fantasy series you mentioned are you most excited to bring into the game? The plot, the setting, the vibes, or something else?

Fostering an atmosphere of constructive curiosity is also useful for interrogating your own assumptions in worldbuilding. This allows the group to ensure that the decisions you're making about the world and the game are conscious decisions instead of unspoken assumptions or just replicating what has come before.

Should all the major players in our region be monarchies, or do we want them to have different forms of government? If they're monarchies, are they feudal, bureaucratic, or some other structure?

How do people think about gender in this world? Do conceptions of gender vary by community, by region, or something else?

What, if anything, do we want to change in the existing setting we're using to make it a better fit for the kind of story we're telling?

Everyone at the table can and should be asking questions to enrich the session zero discussion. The more collaborative the process, the more the setting and game will truly reflect the creative interests and ideas of everyone involved.

Session Zero GM Guide

Throughout session zero, look for hooks and nuggets of ideas to store and use as creative inspiration throughout the campaign. This can be things as small as a turn of phrase or the name of a creature to things as big as a player describing a climactic scene they want for their character at the end of the campaign.

You'll especially want to take notes while players are creating their characters and what they give as their answers for the background and connections prompts. Those answers will form the bulk of the initial material for you to use to tie the story of the campaign to the characters, especially if you want the story to emerge from those characters' worlds and lives.

Be sure to leave room for a player to push back on your additions to their answers and to discuss as needed.

Guardian, how exactly did you get the last remnant of the Dawn Goddess' battle standard? And what does it whisper to you at night before you drift off to sleep?

Wizard, the Warrior mentioned that her sister went off to study magic and was very much the kind who wasn't in it to make friends. What do you think about having that sister be your rival?

Keep your GM principles in mind throughout this process - they apply to all stages of the campaign, not just in-scene play.

Example Session Zero Breakdown

Assuming a 4-hour time slot for session zero, here's an example of how you might structure the session:

Ahead of the session, you'll want to prepare materials for the game: print out/arrange character sheets, character reference sheets, play guides, any maps, a way to take notes, etc. Before the players arrive, prepare the play space (physical or VTT) for the session. Make the space comfortable for yourself and the players as best you can. If you're playing online, you'll want to prepare the virtual tabletop, whatever you're using to track characters and roll dice, and any other digital play aids you need.

Introductions for players (5-10 min)

As the players arrive, if you haven't all played together, facilitate introductions and make sure everyone knows what pronouns to use for one another. If all the players already know one another, you can spend this time catching up and settling in.

Overview of the process (5-10 min)

Explain to the players what all will be involved in this session zero, point out the materials and when they'll come into use. Many people find it useful to browse through materials before using them, but encourage people not to get too far ahead of the discussion.

CATS (40 min)

Discuss what the group wants from the game using CATS (see "Laying the Groundwork") or another framework. This includes what the campaign should be about, what you want from the campaign socially and creatively, how often, when, and where you're going to play, the tone of the game, content to include and exclude, and anything else needed to move on to deciding the setting and then making characters.

Break (5 min)

It's good to take breaks to let everyone move around, refresh themselves, and get a little bit of time to decompress from in-depth creative discussions that can demand a lot of energy and attention.

Worldbuilding (50 min)

Using one of the provided map templates or your own worldbuilding tools, facilitate the process of creating or fleshing out the setting you'll be using for your campaign. During the process, think about the elements (tropes, settings, influences) that were discussed as things people were especially interested in and do what you can to build those elements into the setting. Worldbuilding can be a very engrossing process, but remember that you don't need to define or name every part of the map at this stage. Leave yourself blank spaces to fill in later, as you'll continue building the setting together through play.

Break (10 min)

Since character creation is such an important part of preparing a campaign, it's good to go in fresh, so consider taking another short break between worldbuilding and that step.

Character Creation (70 min)

Walk the group through the character creation process spelled out in the play guide, helping players with their questions and facilitating discussion and coordination between players. This step may also include explaining some of the game's rules so that players understand what the abilities from class, foundation, heritage, and domain cards can do.

Pay special attention to the group's discussion of the character's Background & Connections, as they will play a vital role in your preparations for the campaign. This is a great place to ask questions and encourage players to flesh out their answers.

Break (5 min)

If you've got time left in your session, you can take a short break before doing wrap-up and feedback, or a longer break if you've got the time for a bit more play before finishing for the day.

Introductory scene (30 min) (optional)

If you have the time, you can throw the characters into an initial scene to help them get a handle on the rules and their characters. This scene can be non-canon or serve as a jump-start for the campaign. You might put the characters immediately into a dramatic scene or open with something more calm and slice-of-life.

Wrap-up and feedback (10 min)

With the last few minutes of the session, take the time to check in with all the players, see how they felt about the session, if they have any questions, or if they want to revisit anything in terms of safety tools, content, etc.

If you have more time in your session, you can play an introductory scene. If you have less time or if things took longer than expected, try to complete background questions and at least one round of connections before wrapping up. Those connections are important, so it's good not to rush them.

Preparing A Session

Thinking In Beats

In storytelling, a beat is a moment that changes the trajectory of the narrative - it might be a shift in the world, actions and reactions, an emotional revelation or decision. Not every event in a story is a beat,

As the GM in a collaborative game, you're going to be alternating with the players, narrating a beat and then letting them react and carry the scene forward with their own beats. It's like a dance, a conversation, a game of tennis.

This focus on beats is very useful in preparation–rather than writing out every single thing that is going to happen, you can think in beats, the moments that give shape to the scene or sequence.

If you were preparing a session where a mercenary company seizes control of a border town in a narrow mountain pass to prepare a kingdom for invasion, and thinking in beats for a Countdown, you might do it like this:

8 - The mercenary company makes a partnership with the neighboring kingdom
7 - One of the mercenaries arrives in town and gets a job with the city guard.
6 - The undercover mercenary gets assigned to night duty, as expected for new hires in the guard.
5 - The undercover mercenary ambushes the other night guards and unlocks the town gate.
4 - The mercenaries rush through the opened gate and attack the guard barracks and the mayor's house.
3 - The mercenaries kill or subdue the city guard and capture the mayor.
2 - Under threat of violence to the townspeople, the mayor pledges loyalty to the invading warlord.
1 - The warlord's forces arrive to resupply as the mercenaries hold the town to protect the invaders' supply lines.
0 - The invasion begins.

If the player characters are in the town, they can interrupt this sequence of events at any point. They might see the guard attacking his fellows, or might be in the tavern when the mercenaries stream down the main road, headed for the barracks and mayor's house.

Knowing the major beats of the mercenaries' plan makes it easier to maintain the integrity of the fiction while the PCs are acting. The PCs might stop the attack on the barracks but not the seizure of the mayor. This then leads to the mercenaries fortifying the mayor's house with him as a hostage while the members of the town guard look to the PCs for assistance.

Thinking in beats is also useful for larger-scale planning and off-screen thinking. If the party is racing toward a city to prevent a coup, you can use a Progress Countdown for their progress toward the city and a Standard Countdown to represent the steps of that coup. Set the pace of when the PCs make action rolls to speed up their process based on how long the coup takes - once a day if it takes place over a week, once every few hours if it plays out over the matter of days, etc.

The countdown steps for the coup could look like this (starting at six):

6 - A band of assassins sneaks into the capital city.

5 - The assassins observe and infiltrate the homes of the prime minister and other majority party leaders.

4 - The assassins kill the prime minister and other party leaders. Meanwhile, a fifth 'assassin' stages a fake attempt on the minority party leader to throw off suspicion. The minority party leader is, in fact, the mastermind behind this whole plot.

3 - The minority party leader parades the 'assassin' through the streets and pledges justice for his fellow ministers.

2 - With the majority party leaderless, the minority party takes power in the legislative council and the captured assassin is replaced by a nameless prisoner before being executed.

1 - Under the guise of 'security', the new prime minister pushes a slate of legislation to increase executive power and ensure he retains power.

0 - The prime minister is now a de-facto emperor.

As the PCs take action to complete the Progress Countdown to get to the city, consequences from their rolls will progress the countdown for the coup attempt. The longer it takes the PCs to make it to the city, the farther along the coup will be. This format lets you know what's happening as the PCs burst onto the scene rather than having to plan in the moment.

Downtime Consequences

When players use downtime to rest and refresh, you might take that as an opportunity to progress a countdown happening in the background. This helps to make the world feel alive and also reminds players that the more resting they do, the more the world continues to move along without them. This can help groups that are choosing to use downtime more than would be narratively appropriate.

Prepping Encounters

In Daggerheart, it's important to approach each encounter from the perspective of, "What here best tells the story?" and build out the kinds of hurdles the PCs face around that question. Through this lens, we can start to think about enemies and damage as another tool in our GM toolbox for heightening tension, creating drama, and forwarding the narrative.

Balancing encounters and making appropriate enemies will become much easier as you run more sessions, and you won't have to make as many guesses during prep– but in the beginning, you can't expect to get it perfect, and that's okay. Adjust on the fly as necessary to find the right balance as you play, and you'll naturally figure out what will work best for your table. The most important thing is that the combat the players are in is being used to give them more information about the narrative that's unfolding– It's informing something about the world or the plot or the characters.

That being said, there are some tools included here for you to use when prepping encounters that will make life easier. There is, of course, no way to provide exact directions, given every group will have different characters with different abilities and hit points and experiences, etc. But, using the guidelines below as a jumping off point should help, and making adjustments on the fly as needed will allow you to hone in what works best for your group.

Building Battles

Battles play an important part in high fantasy adventure stories. Many challenges can be answered through cunning and charm, but often, battle serves as the primary vehicle by which obstacles are addressed.

The first thing to consider when building a battle in Daggerheart is the narrative function the battle is playing. Is this battle an obstacle along the way to a larger objective, designed to show the breadth of a villain's influence? Is an ambush the result of failed rolls to notice that the party is being tailed? Is this fight the culmination of a small or larger arc for a character as they confront a figure from their background? Whatever the answer, that narrative role should stay with you throughout the process of building and running a battle.

The next thing to think about is motive. What are the motives of the adversaries arrayed against the party? What would it take for the adversary to surrender? To flee? What objective does the adversary have beyond survival? If given the choice between capturing the artifact the PCs have with them and striking a downed character, which way would the adversary act?

Dynamic battles create suspense - forcing players to choose between their various objectives, following their hopes and fears, and creating the crucible that the players use to forge their characters into legendary heroes.

Other things that can help make for memorable battles are interesting battlefields and compelling adversaries. If the enemies are on their own territory, think about how they'd manipulate their environment to stack the deck in their favor - have they built fortifications on the high ground? Have they blocked off flanking routes to make it hard for attackers to come at them any way but a frontal assault with exposed flanks? How can the battlefield and terrain reinforce the narrative goal of the battle, how can you use it to show the motives of the group's adversaries?

Early in a campaign, the party is traveling through a forest known to have connections to the realms of the Fae. The party includes a Faerie Bard who ran away from her appointed role in court. She carries with her the letter that summons her to assume that role, but Fae custom dictates that the only way for the Summer Court to put someone else in that critical position is to obtain the letter and give it to someone else to take her place.

The GM decides to begin pulling at this character thread by having a group of Winter Court agents try to take the letter. With it in hand, they guarantee that the key role is left empty, weakening their rivals. The Fae are willing to fight, but they'd rather get the letter through intimidation or by demanding the letter be returned to the court.

The group is led by a Winter Court envoy, and with them will be a bloodthirsty acorn knight and three pine needle-wielding foot soldiers. The envoy's motive is to follow orders and gain status, the acorn knight wants glory through combat, and the foot soldiers want to follow orders and survive.

The woods provide some cover for the Winter Court party to sneak up on the PCs, and the path the PCs are taking make it easy for the acorn knight to hold the PCs at bay and protect the envoy while the foot soldiers skirmish through the woods to flank. The GM will ask who in the group is the most likely to notice the group is being followed, and then have them roll Instinct against a difficulty informed by how stealthy the Winter Court party could be in this situation.

Once the GM reveals the fae and makes their demands, since they know the Fae's motives, whether this becomes a battle is largely up to the PCs and how they address the situation. Successful social roles might allow the PCs might dissuade the envoy from pressing the attack, but the acorn knight will not be denied his victory, so there's a high chance of at least some kind of fight. But maybe the group's Guardian will serve as the Bard's champion and the matter can be resolved with a duel between the Guardian and the acorn knight.

The scenario and potential battle gives the GM the opportunity to introduce the habits and strictures of the fae courts, their motives and methods that might be incomprehensible to beings outside the courts, and gives the Faerie Bard the chance to draw on her Experiences and build on her background.

Choosing Adversaries

Part of creating an interesting and challenging encounter is by selecting the right balance and number of adversaries.

Because of the action tracker, the action economy of battles in Daggerheart is different from games where every combatant takes a turn over the course of rounds. The action tracker limits the number of adversaries that can be activated in a single GM move, making it harder to accidentally overwhelm the players by throwing them at too many adversaries all at once. However, it is easy to fall on the other side, limiting your ability to activate adversaries because you can only activate one or two even when there are four or more action tokens on the tracker. To prevent this, consider always including an Adversary with Relentless if using a Solo, or using a small group (like a Solo without Relentless plus a couple of other adversaries).

For an easy encounter, use fewer enemies or a larger number of enemies of a lower tier. Try using a number of Standard adversaries equal to the party size, potentially replacing one with a Bruiser, Skulk, or Support.

For a standard encounter, try using a Solo adversary or number of minions equal to the size of the party plus 2-3 from the Bruiser, Skulk, Standard, and Support types.

For a challenging encounter, try using minions equal to the size of your party and a Leader or Solo. If not using a Leader or Solo, use the minions plus a number of other adversaries equal to the party size.

For a climactic, arc-ending battle, use a Leader, minions equal to one and a half times the party size, and a number of other adversaries equal to the party size.

Max is preparing a road encounter for their group of four to help introduce a new enemy faction. The fight is meant to be easy, so they choose three Standard adversaries and one Bruiser.

Later, the group has followed the faction's trail and confronts a group on patrol near the faction's outpost. This will be a standard encounter, so Max prepares four Minions, a Bruiser, a Support, and a Skulk.

And finally, when the group has fought through the outpost to confront the faction leader, the encounter will include six Minions, a Leader, two Snipers, a Bruiser, and a Support. The Leader also has a move that will bring in more minions as needed.

[Playtesters: We specifically invite feedback on your experiences with encounter design during your playtests. Do these guidelines work for your table? If not, what have you found that does work for you and your group?]

Minions & Hordes

Daggerheart has two different adversary types to represent foes that are a minor threat individually but dangerous in a group. Minions are individual adversaries that can group up for a big combined attack but can also be defeated 2 or more at a time by a single attack. Hordes represent a large group of the same enemy moving and acting as one entity, where each HP dealt to them represents defeating several members of the horde. When you're using Hordes or Minions, be sure to let the players know which ones are which unless there's a specific reason for the players to not know, like if a leader of a group is hiding/disguised within their ranks.

Minions are great if you want to put a lot of figures on the board/field or when you need enemies to spread out and occupy several positions. Minions are a major threat if they can crowd around one target and land a blow, but they fall quickly as they each only have 1 HP and only have a Minor HP threshold. This means that most PCs can dispatch 2-3 in a single blow, sometimes more. Using a large group of minions creates urgency for the PCs to thin out their numbers before they can land devastating group attacks. When making group attacks, minions deal consistent damage rather than rolling damage, meaning you can count on being able to deal a specific amount of damage.

Hordes are good for concentrating danger in one space, for the feeling of a moving group of foes that will crash over a character like a wave. Hordes can hold a chokepoint, as they take several blows to dispatch. Their damage goes down when they hit ½ hp, giving players a reason to make 2-3 attacks against the horde and then potentially shift targets. Hordes have a high variance on their damage, with high potential but a low floor.

Both Minions and Hordes are useful for presenting a large group of foes to a party while planning for the combat to stay fast-paced and to avoid a long drawn-out fight where it takes several blows each to clean up the last 2-3 enemies in a fight once the biggest threats have been eliminated.

Example 1: Minions

Tabby the Warrior is holding a castle gate against attacking zombies while her companions try to complete the cleansing ritual that will cut off the energy animating the zombies. The GM places 5 Rotted Zombies on the board as a group of minions, describing the scattered group converging as they approach the Katari Warrior. Tabby decides to charge them, moving a Close distance and laying into the minions.

Making an attack roll against the Rotted Zombie, Tabby easily hits and deals a total of 11 damage. The Zombies have a Minor threshold of 1 and the trait Minion 4, which means that for each 4 damage dealt to a Rotted Zombie, an additional Rotted Zombie marks 1 HP. Tabby's 11 damage means that with that one attack roll, Tabby defeats 3 Rotted Zombies, as they each only have 1 HP. Tabby's player describes hacking her way through the attackers, chopping limbs and heads.

If Tabby had rolled a failure, granting the Zombies a chance to attack before their numbers were reduced, the GM could use their Group Attack move (Group Attack – Melee – 3). The GM spends a Fear and activates every Rotted Zombie within Melee range of Tabby (all 5) and makes a single attack roll. If the attack succeeds, the Rotted Zombies all five combine, dealing 3 damage for each Rotted Zombie activated and in range, That means the attack deals a brutal 15 damage to Tabby.

If Tabby had succeeded in her roll above and then taken a counter-attack, the 2 remaining Rotted Zombies would only deal 6 damage (2 Rotted Zombies dealing 3 damage each, adding up to 6). You've got to thin out those Minion groups before they can hit you!

Example 2: Hordes

If instead the GM used a Zombie Pack adversary (a Horde), the group of undead would be represented as one adversary. The GM would use a miniature with several zombies on one base and move the Horde all as one unit. The Zombie Pack has the trait Horde: 2d6 with a Creatures Per Hit Point of 2.

When Tabby charges the Zombie Horde, she makes her same attack. That 11 damage is compared to the Horde's HP thresholds. 11 is above the Zombie Pack's Major threshold of 9 but below their Severe threshold of 13. So the Zombie Pack marks 2 HP, leaving them with 4 HP remaining. The Zombie Pack's Creatures Per Hit Point of 2 means that each HP marked represents eliminating 2 zombies, so Tabby describes carving through 4 members of the horde.

But with only 2 of 6 HP marked, their counter-attack against Tabby is made as normal, with their full damage value of 2d10 on a hit.

If Tabby dealt 13 damage instead, that would be a Severe blow to the Zombie Pack and they would mark 3 HP instead of 2. With 3 HP marked (one half of 6), their standard attack damage drops to 2d6 damage per their Horde trait.

Encounter Fear Moves

You can also create Fear Moves for your encounters that apply to the battle as a whole. This is often a good way to spawn new adversaries, change the encounter parameters, or increase the danger. Some examples include:

Spend a Fear to make make all adversaries *desperate*, giving them -1 difficulty and +1d6 damage dice until the end of the encounter.
Spend 2 Fear to have 2 additional adversaries appear in the scene. Add 2 tokens to the action tracker.
Spend 3 Fear to permanently block off the exit the PCs are closest to.

Equipment & Loot

Equipment

At character creation, players have access to all starting weapons and armor. The remainder of the equipment is organized in tiers (Level 1 = Tier 0, Levels 2-4 = Tier 1, Levels 5-7 = Tier 2, Levels 8-10 = Tier 3) and should be made available to players as the party reaches the appropriate level. Often, this looks like choosing a few options to make available at shops along their journey or providing a new weapon as part of an NPC's reward.

There is no set cost in gold for equipment, as some campaigns may focus more or less on gaining gold, but as a general practice, most Tier 0 equipment should be available for a handful of gold, most Tier 1 equipment should be available for 2 handfuls of gold, most Tier 2 equipment should be 4 handfuls of gold, and most Tier 3 equipment should be a bag of gold. Always consider how common a weapon or armor might be in the place its being sold, and how often you are giving out gold as a reward to the players when deciding on the cost of a piece of equipment.

Loot

When giving out loot, the lower the item or consumable is on the list. Consumables are often less powerful just by their nature. So if you're looking to give out something to every player at lower level as an NPC's reward or as something they find hidden in a dungeon, consider low-value consumables. If you're looking for something a little more permanent, consider low-value items. On the other hand, if players are reaching the pinnacle of their campaign and you want to give them something very powerful, consider a few high-value items.

You are highly encouraged to make your own items and consumables as you see fit for your campaign, mix and match loot to make it personalized for your story, or make choices of what to have in your world from the list and what to make unavailable. As with Equipment, there is no set gold cost for these items; instead the cost should reflect how often you are giving out gold as a reward as well as how commonplace that loot might be in the place where it is being sold.

Running A Session

Crafting Scenes

One of your main responsibilities as a game master in Daggerheart is to set the scene for your players. Whenever you start a session, arrive at a new place, or the current scene changes, the players are going to look to you for what they need to know. When you do this, think with all of your senses; not just what this place looks like, but what does it smell, feel, taste, and/or sound like here? What is something unique or unexpected about this place, and what does that say about it? Your players are going to use these details you give them to interact with the world, so it's very important to give them not only enough to picture the scene they're in, but enough that they can use that information to make choices about what they do and where they go.

Downtime

Downtime sequences, in both short and long rests, are an invaluable tool for your adventuring party and for you as a GM. Downtime lets the players recover resources and to zoom in on the relationships between characters and how they process the intense emotions of their adventures. Downtime gives you a pressure release valve to vary the intensity of the story and give the PCs room to breathe.

Empower your players to frame their own downtime scenes - especially for their Prepare actions, which are an especially strong opportunity for characterization. Ask them what it looks like as they tend to their wounds or recover stress together, encourage them to take the reins of the story for that scene and work together with other players whose characters are involved.

One downtime action requires more GM input than the others - **Work on a Project**. If a character is attempting something that would normally take a long Completion Countdown, it may be a good candidate for a downtime project using this move. When deciding the size of the countdown, consider the complexity of the project, the availability of relevant tools, and the impact of the project on the story. If completing the project will give the group essential information they need to move on, you may want to set the countdown at a low # to ensure that the group doesn't have to spend much time waiting for the next clue or beat in the story. If the project is something personal that represents a major step in the character's development, the project may feel more rewarding if it is completed right before or right after a separate big moment for that character. If the project is simply a matter of time, set the number of steps each Work on a Project action will complete. If the project is skill-dependent, you might set a trait for them to roll with or ask how they make progress and then call for a roll based on the approach.

If the PC is rolling to complete a countdown, here are a few ways to avoid having their roll generate a null result with no progress. If they roll a failure, perhaps part of the consequence that emerges provides insight (and advantage) for their next roll? Alternatively, you could use this result structure for Work on a Project rolls, where a character makes some progress even on a failure:

Critical Success: 4 ticks
Success with Hope: 3 ticks
Success with Fear: 2 ticks
Any failure: 1 tick

You should also tick down any long-term countdown tracks you have running for your campaign. For more on this, see "Long-Term Countdowns."

Extended Downtime

If your group is going to have a longer stretch of downtime beyond a Long Rest, it may not make sense to resolve every Long Rest during that time if the action is being done more in montage. For those longer spans of downtime, talk with the players about what they want to accomplish during that time and decide if any countdowns are required to measure the progress toward their goals. It's trivial for a Bard to gather rumors during a week-long stay in the city, but you might ask them to roll with Presence to see whether they learn some especially important information during the process. You might ask your Warrior to roll with Finesse if they're spending a long span of downtime trying to enhance their armor with rare materials obtained in their last adventure.

Sharing The Spotlight

It's rare that every character will organically have the same amount of spotlight time during a given session. In any group, there are likely to be people that are more outgoing or more shy. Your party will probably have characters that are more willing to be instigators and those that are more cautious.

As the GM, you can help ensure that the focus of the story, aka the spotlight, rotates between the characters and that every player has ample time to see their character as the focus of the story. If you know that a given character is going to be in the spotlight for a session or an arc, you can try to more fully involve other characters by thinking about not just those characters' ties to the character in the spotlight but also any other ways you might be able to fold in story elements that appeal to the other players (and/or their characters).

Example:
If the courtier Bard is invited to a debutante ball as a way to build on elements of his background, you might decide that the ball will also be hosting a fencing tournament, which you hope will excite the swashbuckler Rogue; and social dancing, which should interest the noble-born Sorcerer. You're confident that the Warrior will be bought-in on the scene already, as he's sworn to protect the Bard and is not-so-secretly in love with him. Now you have ideas to involve and excite every player and your ball is more fleshed out and not just a party in a large room.

You might also directly engage quieter players by inviting action from them rather than asking "what do you do?" to the whole table. Alternatively, you might ask the quieter player how their character feels about something that has transpired or about the situation in general.

Another approach to balancing spotlight is to use visual aids. You can change your action tracker to have a space for each character and not just one for the group. When a player takes an action, they place one token on the tracker with their characters' name on it. Throughout a session, a quick look at the trackers will show you which players are taking more actions and help you remember to go to the players that haven't acted as much. This visual reminder can also help players to share the spotlight by engaging their fellow players or characters to bring them to the fore of a scene.

A way to ensure that you as the GM are sharing the spotlight is to find times to let the players and their characters speak among themselves and where you can just listen, allowing them to carry out a downtime scene or interpersonal moment without needing to give your input.

Using Conflict

Daggerheart is a game of perilous adventure, filled with conflict. We note that there are many storytelling traditions where conflict is minimized or absent entirely, but Daggerheart is designed to help create stories where conflict plays a central role, so we'll speak about conflict in these terms throughout the book.

Conflict in Daggerheart results from the characters' hopes and actions being met by challenges and uncertainty. If the group's Wizard seeks to become the world's greatest spellcaster, but she's never challenged in that quest, then accomplishing that goal will not be as satisfying as if she'd faced conflict along the way.

Conflicts can be external (where forces from outside the character act against them) or internal (where a character struggles against themselves emotionally or intellectually).

Examples of external conflict for our Wizard would be tests of skill against other mages, solving magical puzzles using knowledge and cunning, and eventually squaring off against legendary beings wielding the most potent magics in the world.

Internal conflicts might be a character struggling with their fears, their self-image, their upbringing, etc. Our Wizard might struggle with the ideology taught to her in her magical academy or struggle against fear of the destructive power of her magic.

The strongest character arcs in Daggerheart will emerge from a combination of internal and external conflicts. Mixing different types of conflicts is very dramatically fruitful: external conflicts can bring up unresolved tensions from internal conflicts, resolving internal conflicts can provide clarity for a character that allows them to overcome external conflict, etc.

External challenges to our Wizard can magnify the emotional impact of her internal conflicts. And external conflicts that push her limits will become all the more memorable by demanding the Wizard grapple with her fear as part of the challenge. When designing conflicts for maximum emotional impact, think about how to challenge characters in a way that ties in their internal struggles - if a character struggles with self-confidence, challenge them to excel. If a character struggles with the ethics of using power, put them in situations where the use of their power has big stakes for other people and not just themselves.

Conflicts like these are the crucible which will forge your characters into unforgettable heroes.

Social Conflict

Battles and armed conflict will be common in games of Daggerheart, but your characters may also trade barbs with courtiers, talk their way past guards, seduce rivals, and plead their innocence to an uncaring monarch. Always keep motive in mind and think about how the characters' request/demand aligns or conflicts with the NPCs' motives.

For everyday social obstacles or foes, a single successful action may be sufficient to progress. Haggling with a merchant, talking your way past an everyday town guard, etc. On a success with Fear, the foe might demand a bribe or set other special terms in order to do what the character asks or demands.

When dealing with more formidable foes/NPCs, one action might not be enough to change their mind. A hostile count probably couldn't be convinced to send troops to help you fight a necromancer with a single roll. You might set a Progress Countdown to represent the party's progress toward convincing the count, with a starting value based on the count's disposition. Since some socially-oriented abilities inflict stress on opponents, you might treat a foe's Stress pool as their willpower, and that if the party can mark all the foe's stress, their resolve is broken and they'll acquiesce.

For NPCs or creatures that aren't hostile but aren't inclined to do as the party asks, it may make sense to think about the scene less as a conflict and more as a collaborative process where both parties are trying to get what they want while maintaining or improving their existing relationship.

If the social situation is especially high-stakes, you might set both a Progress Countdown representing the character or party's objective and a Consequence Countdown representing a negative outcome (the opportunity passes, their patience runs out, they settle on a different course of action.

Running Battles

Using the Action Tracker

When running a battle that is expected to last more than a couple of action rolls, the action tracker will help everyone manage the flow of the battle. The Action Tracker is explained in this section, but here is a quick reminder of how action tokens and Fear interact.

- Add 1 each time a PC makes an action roll.
- Spend 1 to activate an adversary during a GM move.
- Spend 2 to gain 1 Fear.
- Clear all action tokens at the end of a battle. Take 1 Fear for every 2 tokens cleared.

Fear

- Earn 1 each time a PC gets a result with Fear.
- Spend on Fear moves for adversaries.
- Spend 1 or more for a GM move that is particularly big and dramatic.
- Spend 1 to add 2 action tokens to the tracker.
- Spend 2 to make a GM Move without the PC rolling a failure or with Fear.

GM Advice

The most resonant battle scenes aren't about violence, they're about people and motivation. Good battle scenes use the language of violence to inspire emotions and develop characterization. When bandits raid a village, they're not just looking to hurt people – their motive is greed. Violence is just the means to an end.

The main dramatic question of a battle should be something more than "Will the PCs die?" since most of the time, the answer will be "no." The PCs are fighting for a reason – they're pursuing some goal or trying to prevent a villain from accomplishing a scheme. If the PCs have multiple goals in a scene, there's more uncertainty about the result, which makes for greater dramatic tension.

After the Blood Mage Caressa kidnapped the Governor's husband Osten, the PCs have tracked her across the Shattered Mountains. When they confront her in the Ruins of Nix, she's conducting a ritual to seize Osten's latent magical power. The PCs want to stop the ritual, save the Governor's husband, and capture Caressa. But which of those goals is most important? If the PCs are winning the fight, what happens if you put Osten in danger and make the players choose between rescuing him and capturing Caressa?

In this example, the PCs could achieve a partial victory by capturing Caressa only after Osten has been killed; they could rescue the governor's husband but Caressa could get away; or they could stop Caressa in time to capture her and save Osten, accomplishing all of their goals.

During battles, spend Fear aggressively to keep the characters on their toes. The nature of action rolls using the Duality Dice means that there should be an ebb and flow of momentum in the fight as the PCs fail rolls or succeed with Fear.

Even on a lucky streak of success with Hope results, where you're not prompted to make a move, you can interrupt the players' momentum by converting action tokens to Fear (at the 2:1 rate) and then spending 2 Fear to make a GM move so that the fight doesn't become a pushover for the PCs. The math here means you'll never have to go more than four rolls without making a move (4 moves is 4 action tokens, 4 action tokens can become 2 Fear, and you can spend 2 Fear to make a move out of turn). In those cases, think about what move will have the biggest impact on the scene, whether it's a hard hit or some other move that changes the energy or nature of the fight. This might mean activating a powerful foe's ability, it might mean bringing reinforcements into the fight, it might mean changing the battlefield in some way, or it might mean having the foes make a bold move toward their objective in the scene.

GM TIPS

If you find yourself in a scene using the action tracker where you have more tokens than available adversaries, consider other GM moves you could make to enhance the scene, or perhaps convert some tokens to Fear (at the rate of 2:1) to utilize an adversary's Fear Move.

If you end up with a large number of tokens on the Action Tracker and numerous adversaries in play when you begin a GM move, it may become hard to remember which adversary has acted this move. In these cases, you might move the character tokens to each adversary's stat block or by the figure on a map to keep track of which have activated. Then, when your move is complete, you can clear all those tokens and return them to the players as play passes back to them.

Phased Battles

Some other ways to create unforgettable battles involve changing the nature of the foes or the contours of the space to move the fight into a new phase that feels fundamentally different. These phase changes will be most impactful if they're a natural evolution and escalation of the scene rather than coming totally out of left field. Here are three major ways to create a new phase of a battle:

1) **Change the terms of engagement or the nature of the scene.** Turn a fight into a chase, reveal information that turns the group's allies against them, or arrange the circumstances where the party might consider forming a temporary alliance with one of the two factions they're battling in a melee.

Example:
If the group's foe is a thief trying to steal an artifact from the PCs, then you could use a hard move to have them get their hands on the artifact and make a run for it! This will likely turn your pitched battle into a chase, keeping the story dynamic and forcing the players to adapt.

2) **Change the battlefield itself.** If this change is something that can happen more than once (like the earth dragon's avalanche), you can set the move on a Countdown Loop. If it's a one-time thing, you might make it a Fear move on the foe's writeup. If you plan this move ahead of time, you might prepare two maps or two versions of the same map - one for the start of the fight and then one for when the space is fundamentally changed.

Examples:

The earth dragon crashes into the walls of their lair, dropping huge rocks and changing all the contours of the battle.

When fighting in a divine realm, the god's champion smashes the floor, dropping the entire group into a battlefield atop a plane of otherworldly stained glass, surrounded by the rich colors of the cosmos.

3) **Change the foes.** This approach is common in video games - at a certain point in the fight, either when the enemy's HP is reduced to half or they're seemingly defeated, the enemy changes in behavior, form, or both. A heavily-armored enemy throws off their armor and begins moving with blistering speed. A defeated foe calls out to eldritch power, which courses through them, granting them new abilities and a markedly changed appearance.

In Daggerheart, you can create a phase change for an enemy in a few ways. You might give the foe a move that triggers when one half of their Hit Points are marked, or you might prepare two adversary writeups, one for each phase. There are some examples of multi-phase enemies in the Adversaries section to use as inspiration or reference.

If the party is defeating a major foe far more easily than expected and you decide that it's better for them to persist than to just be defeated, you can improvise a phase two. Describe how they seem to be defeated, then have them stand back up or surge with new energy, then clear some of their HP, change some of their statistics or base attack, and make up a new move or two to represent how they've changed. An enemy that throws off their armor might have their Damage Thresholds lowered but gain Relentless and moves about blistering speed. A transformed enemy might have entirely new stats and moves.

When you have an enemy take a new form, try to draw upon what the players already know about the enemy or something established in the fiction to explain the second phase. If the enemy is a Blood Mage, then having them hold out a bloody hand and use a powerful spell to transform into a blood abomination for phase two is both surprising and inevitable. But if the party never learned that the enemy was a blood mage, the enemy, that reveal won't be as satisfying, so you might have to create the connective tissue in the moment, narrating the enemy saying something about not having revealed their full power as they transform.

Impromptu NPCs & Enemies

There's no way to prepare for every eventuality or possibility in a tabletop role-playing game, so it's inevitable that you'll have moments where you need to create an NPC on the fly. Depending on the situation and the character, all you might need is a name, a basic description, and the character's motive, which you use to inform how they act and respond to the players and the events of the story.

If this NPC or foe is directly opposing the characters, you'll need a bit more. Any foe or NPC that comes into conflict with the player characters will need a difficulty so that you have a benchmark for deciding whether the characters' actions against the NPC or foe are successful. You can use the difficulty examples (see "Difficulty") or set this difficulty based on similar foes or NPCs that you've already introduced in the story.

If your party has been tracking a group of elven scouts that came into possession of a magical item the party needs, then when the two groups meet and you flesh out the leader of those scouts to speak with the party, you could use the Elven Scout writeup you'd already created and then just make a couple of changes - give them a name, and adjust one or more of their difficulty, HP, Stress, Damage Thresholds, and/or moves. If you're just fleshing out a leader within an existing group, you might not need to change much - maybe just give them a slightly higher difficulty and a move that reflects their position as the leader. If you're expanding the roster, like if the scouts lead the group to speak with the elven clan's warleader, then you might make more changes.

If you're improvising a creature or foe that isn't interacting with the party socially, it's still important to think about motive, but you'll want to focus more on the information needed to play them in battle. For simple encounters, if you feel confident improvising moves and tactics, all a foe needs is a difficulty and tactics. But if the party took an unexpected route and it makes sense for them to encounter a more substantial foe, you might find a way to give yourself a few moments to come up with a full foe writeup. You might grab the writeup of a similar creature and make some changes, or you might set a benchmark difficulty and use the impromptu damage guide below (see "Impromptu Damage"), then decide their moves when you have the chance to make a GM move. That allows you to decide something that will have the most interesting impact on the scene at that moment.

Different GMs have different interests in and levels of comfort with improvisation. If you're less comfortable improvising in the moment, you might describe the creature bursting out of the underbrush or the like and then set a cliffhanger, calling for a break just as the action begins. That will give you a couple of minutes to create the foe writeup without the pressure of the whole group waiting on you.

Example Adversary Fear Moves & Experiences

The adversaries in this book are written with Fear moves and Experience, but when you're creating adversaries on the fly, you may not have that existing writeup to draw from. Additionally, you might find yourself wanting to improvise a Fear move for an adversary or a scene to move the story in a particular way, or creating an Experience that reinforces the kind of threat the PCs are up against. Below are some generic Fear moves and Experiences you can drop into a scene and to serve as inspiration for creating your own.

Example Adversary Fear Moves

Demoralize
Spend Fear and describe the adversary's disheartening display, which causes all within a Close distance to lose Hope.

Endanger
Spend Fear to make a target within melee distance Vulnerable. Describe how this happens and what it will take to end the condition.

Reinforcements
Spend Fear to add 1d4 additional adversaries to the scene as backup. They appear at a Far distance.

Reposition

Spend Fear and describe how the adversary uses an extraordinary form of movement to move up to a Far distance and then attack.

Scatter

Spend Fear to charge into a group of PCs and knock them away, pushing them each back to a Close distance (in different directions).

Shredding Strike

Spend Fear to make an attack. If it hits, the target must mark an armor slot without taking its benefit (they may still use other armor slots on the damage).

Team-Up

Spend Fear when an adversary is dealing damage. Another enemy within melee range of that target may immediately attack the same target. If they hit, add the two damage rolls together.

Terrifying Blow

Spend Fear to make an attack with an additional +2 bonus to hit. The target marks Stress even if the attack misses.

Scheme

Spend Fear to have an adversary make a big move out of combat using their connections, secrets, and/or magical power.

Experiences

Quick Reflexes	Nobility
Keen Senses	Tracking
Stealth	Navigation
Socialite	Bodyguard
Nature's Friend	Cautious
Barter	Intrusion
Intimidation	Strict
Ambusher	Magical Knowledge

[More coming soon!]

Impromptu Attack Modifiers

When creating adversaries on the fly, you can default their attack modifier to the tier you're creating them for and adjust up or down depending on how likely you want them to be to hit and the evasion scores of your party. An adversary's attack modifier might be as much as 4 points lower or higher than their tier when the foe is meant to be especially likely or unlikely to land a blow. You might balance an adversary with an especially powerful attack by giving them a lower attack modifier or give an adversary that doesn't do as much damage a higher attack modifier so that they wear the PCs down a bit at a time.

Baseline attack modifiers by tier:
Tier 0 (level 1): -4 to +4, averaging at +0
Tier 1 (levels 2-4): -3 to +5, averaging at +1
Tier 2 (levels 5-7): -2 to +6, averaging at +2
Tier 3 (levels 8-10): -1 to +7, averaging at +3

Minion adversaries often have a lower attack modifier than the average, with a Tier 0 minion often having a -3 or -2 modifier. Leader and Skulk type adversaries often have a higher modifier than the average, with a Tier 0 leader having as much as a +3 or +4 modifier.

Impromptu Damage

In Daggerheart, you'll find yourself needing to create a dice pool for damage from a threat or foe that you hadn't already prepared. In these situations, here are some guidelines to follow:

At level 1, most classes have damage thresholds of Minor 4, Major 9, Severe 14 or below.

To have approximately a 50% chance to hit each threshold (as in, damage that hits those average 4/9/13 thresholds on an average roll), you can use the following for impromptu damage:
Minor (1 HP) = 1d3+2, 1d6
Major (2 HP) = 2d8, 2d6+2, 1d12+3
Severe (3 HP) = 2d12, 3d8, or 4d6

To reliably hit each threshold (as in, to hit the average thresholds of 4/9/14 even on a below-average roll), use these damage amounts:
Minor (1 HP) = 1d8+2, 2d6, or 3d4
Major (2 HP) = 2d10, 3d6, or 2d8+2
Severe (3 HP) = 2d20, 3d12, or 4d8

GM Guidance:
In a group of tougher characters (Guardian, Seraph, Warrior), the average damage needed for each threshold is higher. Add +1 to all values to get the same results in a group where the average threshold is 5/10/15.

Additionally, class, foundation, and heritage features can impact hp thresholds, so keep those in mind when tailoring foes to your game's needs.

If you want an attack to have a high variance of damage and a high ceiling, consider using a smaller # of dice that have a higher number of sides (d10s, d12s, or d20s), and avoiding flat damage bonuses.

If you want an attack to hit consistently within a certain range of damage, use a larger # of dice with a smaller number of sides (especially d4s, d6s, and d8s). Alternatively, adding a flat bonus to damage can help more consistently deal damage with a minimum result.

To ensure that an attack cannot do Severe damage, set the maximum damage value of that attack to be lower than the party's lowest Severe threshold.

To ensure that an attack will always deal at least Minor damage, set the minimum damage value of that attack to be equal to or greater than the party's highest Minor threshold.

In a group with a large spread of damage thresholds (a Stalwart Guardian in a group with a Wizard), the damage needed to cause Minor injury (1 HP) to the Guardian might cause a Major injury (2 HP) to the Wizard. You might want to use dice pools that will generate more reliable averages to avoid swingy results that could deal an unwanted Severe blow to one of the more fragile characters. However, in a group with this large range of thresholds, characters with protective instincts/abilities have the opportunity to shine by protecting their comrades.

Scaling Damage

As characters grow in level, their damage thresholds increase as well. Characters' damage thresholds will diverge more over time through players choosing different advancement options and as their characters acquire special items and abilities. But here are some tips & benchmarks for scaling impromptu damage.

Tier 1 (Levels 2-4)
Characters will have Damage Thresholds that rise to an average of 4/12/17.

Adding a flat +1 to existing impromptu dice pools will help your damage keep pace with characters' Minor thresholds, adding +3 will keep pace with Major Thresholds, and adding 2d4 or a flat +4 will keep pace with Severe Thresholds.

Minor (1 HP) = 1d3+3, 1d6+1, 1d8
Major (2 HP) = 2d8+3, 2d6+5, 1d12+6, 2d10+1
Severe (3 HP) = 2d12+4, 3d8+4, 5d6, 2d20

Tier 2 (Levels 5-7)
Characters will have damage thresholds that rise to an average of 5/16/27.

Adding another +1 to Tier 1 dice pools (+2 total compared to level 1) will keep pace with Minor damage, an extra 2d4 damage or an extra +4 (+7 total) will keep pace with Major Thresholds, and an extra 2d12 or +10 will keep pace with Severe damage.

Minor (1 HP) = 1d3+4, 1d6+2, 1d8+1
Major (2 HP) = 2d8+9, 2d6+11, 2d10+7, 2d12+5, 3d12, 5d6
Severe (3 HP) = 4d12+2, 5d8+9, 6d6+6, 3d20

Tier 3 (Levels 8-10)
Characters' damage thresholds are likely to have diverged substantially, but the benchmark for this tier is 7/25/40.

Adding another +3 (+5 total compared to level 1) will keep pace with Minor damage, an extra 2d8 damage or an extra +9 (+16 total) will keep pace with Major thresholds, and an extra 2d12 or +13 will keep pace with Severe damage.

Minor (1 HP) = 1d3+5, 1d6+4, 1d8+3, 3d4, 2d6, 1d12
Major (2 HP) = 4d8+7, 3d6+15, 3d10+10, 2d12+12, 4d12
Severe (3 HP) = 4d12+14, 5d8+18, 10d6+5, 6d10+8, 4d20

Character Death

Adjudicating and overseeing the death of a player character may be among the most difficult tasks for a GM. In a game focused on character relationships, personal story arcs, and heroic adventure, the death of a player character should not be done casually. As the GM, you're charged with honestly portraying the world, and death is a greater threat in Daggerheart than in some other games working in the same genre.

When a character marks their last Hit Point, they're forced to make a death move. In only one of those moves is the character guaranteed to live (Avoid Death and Face the Consequences), and in one of the others (Risk it All), the character has just over a 50% chance of survival.

Two of the three moves give the player full control over whether the character will live or die. With Blaze of Glory, the player is accepting death for the character, and with Avoid Death and Face the Consequences, the player is defying death. Risk it All comes down to a dice roll, with almost a 50% chance of death (it's actually a 44% chance of death, since if the Hope and Fear dice match, the character lives).

When a player is forced to choose a death move, make space for them to talk through their decision. You might move to another character to give the player a moment to think or keep focus on the character on the brink of death to let the player take the reins of the story.

In discussing character death, it's important to keep your game's tone and aims in mind. Would this be a fitting end for the character? Would they have died protecting their friends, pursuing their greatest hopes, or confronting their worst fears? Or did they get unlucky during a battle that leads into a subplot focused on another character?

Character death is not always satisfying in the moment, especially if the character's cause of death isn't directly tied to their personal story. But in a heroic fantasy adventure, death is always a possibility for characters trying to change the world. The death moves give the fatally-injured character a chance for a memorable moment, whether it's going out in a blaze of glory or their fate comes down to one roll of the dice.

Here's some specific guidance for each of the death moves:

Avoid Death & Face the Consequences

This option is the one to take if a player is 100% certain that they aren't ready to say goodbye to their character and does not want to leave survival to chance. The character always survives when using this move, though they have a chance of taking a Scar and losing one of their Hope slots. If the character only has one Hope slot remaining when they make this move, there's a chance the player will have to retire the character. That ending may be preferable for the player, who would rather see their character give up the adventuring life than die, even if the party's tasks are not yet done.

Note that a lower-level character is much less likely to take a Scar than a higher level character, but there is always *some* chance of taking a Scar, even at level 1. This design gives more breathing room to lower-level characters so that their story can play out more fully. But as characters gain levels, the chances of gaining Scars greatly increases, making Risk it All or Blaze of Glory more appealing.

Using this move, the character stays unconscious until healed by an ally or until the group's long rest. Try to give the player chances to participate in play if the group isn't able to heal their character or get to a long rest in short order. This might take the form of inviting the player to depict an NPC or it might involve narrating a scene of the character at the knife's edge between life and death, visited by the spirit of a departed loved one, receiving a vision of a disaster they need to survive to avert, or something else to keep them involved in play.

Even without gaining a Scar, the constant cost of this move is that the situation gets much worse. Whether that's some kind of escalation that happens due to the others in the party tending to the fallen character or whether the character's misfortune enhances the power of Fear in that moment, turning the tide against the heroes. Some guilt for the character is understandable in these situations, but try to make sure that the player does not resent the complication or escalation that happens as a result of taking this move.

Risk it All

This is the move that you as the GM have the least say in. The duality dice decide the character's fate, and with very rare exceptions, that roll of the dice is final. If the player rolls with Hope, help them decide how to divide the value of the Hope die between Hit Points and Stress to clear. You might remind the player that if they choose to clear only a small number of Hit Points, they may be forced to make another death move after just one further blow.

Blaze of Glory

If the player decides that the character will go out in a Blaze of Glory, work with them to ensure that the one action they take is as meaningful as possible without breaking the integrity of the story. You might rule that when the Seraph goes out in a Blaze of Glory, leaping down the throat of the god-shark seeking to swallow the sun, the Guardian can deal a fatal blow to the foe, even if they had more HP left than a critical success could possibly deal. But it might be a bad idea to let that same Seraph shatter the barrier between the mortal realm and the Worlds Above to allow their god to walk freely among mortals. Again, think about the group's agreements about tone when deciding the scale of action the Blaze of Glory can accomplish.

Introducing a New Character

If a PC dies or retires from adventuring, you should work with the player between sessions to develop a new character for them to play at the current level of the party. Instead of having them answer any Connections questions with the rest of the party, ask them to answer any of the questions below, then have a conversation flushing out any further details as needed before the next session.

You have vital information the party needs to continue forward on their journey. What is it, and how did you obtain it?

You are in desperate need of help that only the party can provide. What has you in such danger and what do you have for them in exchange?

You know somebody in the party very well and have searched them out. What connection question should you ask them before the next session, and what do you need them for?

You lost your last adventuring party to something or someone terrible. What caused their downfall, and how is this new party connected to them in some way?

You are part of a faction that has opposed the party, but now you need their help. What problem does your faction face, and how are you going to prove to the party that you can be trusted?

You have been charged to deliver a lost item to a member of the party. What is it, and what personal quest is it tied to that requires working with the party?

Running a One-Shot

If you're looking to run a one-shot of Daggerheart, you can use the guide below to build out a quick collaborative session with your players. First, begin to read the Prologue aloud, and when you reach a blank, have a player fill in the answer using one of the available options. Move around the table having players make decisions until all of the blanks are filled. Then read the completed prologue to the table. Feel free to ask additional questions, clarify ideas, and expand upon the information until you all feel comfortable moving forward.

PROLOGUE

Our story takes place within the kingdom of (1)_____. We are currently traveling through (2)_____, best known for (3)_____ and the (4)_____ that surround it.

1) Atheira | Willowfell | Ruumari | Winter's Sun | Stonefire, Bellsong, Dathari
2) Dawnhollow | Indigo's Shadow | Rathmire | The Wonder | Mistrun | Atlas | Ta'al
3) Its massive spires | The Great Tree | The shimmer hiding it | Its sacred wards | The mysterious powers that keep it afloat
4) Dark Forests | Towering Mountains | Blistering Deserts | Dense Jungles

Now that you know where you're beginning your story. Follow the same process for the Adventure.

ADVENTURE

After last night's (1)_____, many here have (2)_____. This morning, we found out that the events of the previous evening (3)_____. We know to fix this, we'll need to (4)_____. So our story begins as we all prepare to leave for the (5)_____, where we might find what we're looking for.

1) catastrophic fire | attack by the Horde | terrifying storm | assassination of the Queen
2) been badly injured | decided to leave | been caught in a terrible curse | started an uprising
3) left someone we care about here near death | destroyed the town's protection rune | awoken a throng of spirits | angered an ancient beast
4) search for a powerful Moonstone relic | retrieve Magister Kharix | bring an offering to the Grave of the Gods | enlist a tricksome fae
5) Towers of Hyle| Broken Sea | Great Expanse | town of Wildfar | capital of the kingdom | Highland Peaks

Next, give your players a fifteen minute break and answer the questions below to prep your session. Use the answers in the next section as inspiration and build out any necessary details, including any adversaries you think your players might encounter during the session.

Once the party leaves town, they find:

remnants of last night's events | something wild and dangerous | an ominous warning about their destination | they are being followed.

As the party journeys towards their destination:

they find something important that they missed before | an unlikely ally joins them | a dangerous portion of the landscape impedes their path | they unwittingly enter the home of a dangerous creature.

As the party reaches their objective, they discover:

the target is hidden or well-protected | somebody has come to intercept them | this place is unexpectedly dangerous | someone was expecting them.

When the party finally finds what they came for, they learn:

somebody else is looking for it too | it's not quite what they expected | they need something else to succeed | accomplishing their goal will put others in danger.

After you've made these choices, think about the way a character's background might tie into any of the options you and your players have chosen. Maybe the wild and dangerous creature they find outside town is the monster one of the player's referenced in their backstory, perhaps the mysterious land they travel through is a character's childhood home, or the person who is also looking for the target is an NPC one of the players has history with. The more you incorporate players' backstories into the present adventure, the more you empower the members of your table to continue making bold choices. When players have more agency in story construction, not only does it lessen the responsibility of GMing, it welcomes everyone into a shared adventure.

Flesh out any further details as necessary, but don't feel the need to overprep.
Now you're ready to play!

PART FOUR

Running a Campaign

Running a Campaign

This section will cover some guidance on how to run a campaign of Daggerheart, also known as the Campaign Kit.

Using This Campaign Kit

You've got your players, you've made your characters, and maybe you've even played a session to get a feel for the game. *What's next?* Most tables will start a campaign: a series of connected sessions often played weekly or monthly that let everyone explore their character's stories over an extended period of time. When you decide to start a campaign together, you can use the Campaign Kit here to help kickstart your adventure.

Many traditional campaigns will give the GM a predefined storyline to guide the players through, giving options for the different outcomes and letting the characters decide what path to take. Though this can make prepping a session for the party easier, it can often inhibit player freedom, require significant buy-in by the party around events they're not personally tied to, and keep the story from evolving organically. In Daggerheart, campaigns are intended to work a little differently– they should be personal, focused, and responsive. Nothing should be planned until after character creation is complete, and the details players provide about these characters will be the primary scaffolding upon which you'll plan the rest of the campaign. This means you'll often be prepping just the material you need week after week, letting the story evolve naturally through play at the table.

The Campaign Kit will provide some guidance and tools to help make this process easier. If you're an experienced GM, you may have your own method of campaign prep that you use for other games. As always, feel free to utilize the pieces from this kit that help and ignore the pieces that don't.

Building A Map

At the start of a campaign, one of the most important questions to answer is "Where are we?"
To do this, you'll choose one of the maps starting on page here [*section pending*] (or create your own) and print a copy of it out for your table. Digital copies of these maps are available on the Daggerheart website for download. Each of the available maps represent a region of the world you'll be focusing on at the beginning of your campaign.

If you know at character creation that you'll be running a campaign, you can bring the map you've chosen to fill out during your Session Zero (covered here). Otherwise, you may always just introduce it at the top of your next session to integrate into your game moving forward.

To start, place the map on the table and explain to the players that you'll be using it to build the region you're all playing in together. First, you'll choose the name of the region from the options available (or make up your own) and write that name on the appropriate section on the sheet. Once this is done, take a minute to remind the table about any locations that were already invented by them during character creation, and pass the map to the players who generated those locations to label them wherever they'd like on the map. If you've created any locations during character creation or play, make sure to add those yourself as well.

Once all pre-existing locations have been added, take the map back from the players and choose one of the new locations from the pick list on the bottom of the sheet and add it to the map wherever you'd like. Then describe this place for the rest of the table– what is it? Why is it called this? What makes it so significant? Then pass the map to the player on your left and ask them to do the same. Encourage them to tie in their character's backstory or history with this place if they wish. As they tell the table about the location they've chosen, record any important information about it in your notes.

The sheet should continue around the table like this until it feels like the map is populated with enough exciting locations and plot hooks for you to work with. With four players, twice around the table is usually enough. Remember, you can always do this again at the start of another session to fill out the map further, or even introduce a new region that connects to the current one.

After the table feels happy with the details they've added, take the map back and make a choice about where the players currently are in their adventure. Maybe it's somewhere the players have already added, or maybe it's a new place you draw in– whatever the case may be, this will help you as the GM orient yourself for their adventure moving forward.

Filling Space, Leaving Blanks

As part of the prep for your next session, you'll want to review the map your table built together. Think about the way that the locations your players created might affect the region, and add anything you think might be important or relevant to the sheet. For example, if someone labeled a spot with "The Healing Fields", you might consider adding a town nearby that specializes in creating health potions or curing ailments, or a mage's tower that overlooks the fields to protect them. Pay special attention to the area where your players currently are in their journey– where might they consider going next?

It's also important to leave blanks. Don't feel the need to fill everything in, and don't worry about planning out what every labeled landmark or town is like. In the GM section on session prep (see "Preparing a Session" in part 3) we'll talk about flushing out some of these details as they become relevant, but for now, don't hesitate to keep some things vague. Leaving blanks gives you the freedom to adapt on the fly and also reduces the amount of worldbuilding work you have to do for places your players may never visit.

Incorporating Player Backstories

One of the most important tools in a GM's arsenal is to ask questions of your players and incorporate their answers– they will tell you what they find exciting through the responses they give you. The most obvious and important of these in building a campaign are the answers to a character's Background Questions.

The Background Questions are designed specifically to generate story hooks the players care about that can be leveraged for narrative fodder when doing prep for the campaign. You'll want to ensure you not only take good notes about each of the characters during character creation, but also ask important follow up questions. Don't be afraid to dig deeper into anything the player offers up during this process. If they make up a person, ask them for their name. If they make up a place, ask them what it's called, and maybe what it's like there if it's unclear. You'll want to make sure with each player, you're recording at least one or two things about the world that are important to them. The more you are able to incorporate these things into the campaign, the more invested that player tends to become.

After character creation, take some time to lay out any important narrative elements the players have given you into a simple list sorted by character.

Example Backstories

Marigold Seok (Wildborne Faun Rogue)

- Born in the floating city of Bloomfare. Had to leave her mother behind to go on the run.
- She is being chased down by the leaders of the four elemental kin for stealing their stone of power during the last ceremony.

Barnabas (Loreborne Simiah Wizard)

- Obsessed with finding relics, treasures, and bones of legendary creatures. He thinks these should be used for their given purpose, not stashed away into museums. Wants to gather as much knowledge as he can in his lifetime. Uses bone runes to cast magic.
- Served as the advisor to King Guthril, but failed to protect the King's daughter Nira from being killed by wild beasts during her first hunt with him, and left the kingdom in shame.
- Is chasing down the fang of the great dragon Krugthar, because it is said to contain knowledge of every creature it's ever consumed.
- Is rivals with Maverick, a snobby gnome treasure hunter who is trying to collect all the bones of legendary creatures to put them in a museum.

Jasper Flores (Highborne Halfling Bard)

- Grew up in The Sunbearer's Crescent with the royal Galamore family of gnomes. Was in a secret relationship with the princess, Astrid Galamore. They had a secret place they would meet.
- Astrid and Jasper were supposed to run away together, but she never showed up. Jasper still wonders what happened. There are rumors that she was forced to marry someone else.
- Was trained by Mage Yaro within Illiat's Tower. Yaro is the one who convinced them to travel the world and learn all they can.

- They look up to a fellow bard named Quill who plays at the Golden Goose in The Sunbearer's Crescent. Jasper met Quill through Yaro.

Geffrin Hilldweller (Wanderborne Fungril Druid)
- They use their fungril network to connect to others like them by digging their feet into the ground.
- Was chased out of the city of Branishar because they accidentally spent too much time there and decimated the environment around them. They've learned they have to keep moving, they can't stay in one place for too long or bad things happen.

Now start to identify which of these pieces of information could be related– how these stories could potentially cross paths– and draw some connections between them.

Maybe Maverick, the snobby gnome treasure collector that Barnabas is rivals with, could be the same person that Astrid Galamore, the gnome princess, was forced to marry? And if that's the case, what if Maverick was now forcing Mage Yaro to use his magic to invade the fungril network in order to seize more great treasures around the world without having to leave the kingdom? This would create a cross-over between Astrid, Geffrin, and Barnabas, so it seems like a good place to start our campaign. But let's keep thinking.

This type of conflict would likely *eventually* lead them to return to the Galamore Kingdom to stop him, where we could find out what actually happened to Astrid. And perhaps she convinced Quill, her and Jasper's bard friend, to use shapeshifting magic to take her place right under Maverick's nose, so she could leave the kingdom and search for Jasper? Could be a fun opportunity to flip the "princess in peril" trope on its head, and provide an unexpected reveal once they reach the kingdom. If this is the case, I'll also want to start to brainstorm a clue Astrid could leave behind at the secret place her and Jasper used to meet, that way they can go after her. But that's down the road, no need to flush that out immediately.

Marigold still needs some love– maybe we could put the floating city of Bloomfare in the path of destruction by the great dragon Krugthar? This would push Marigold to return to her home and face the consequences of her actions in order to save her mother's life, while giving Barnabas an opportunity to chase down the dragon he wants so badly. But given they'll have to face a *dragon* here, this should probably be later in the campaign. So perhaps in the interim, to keep Marigold's backstory involved, we could put some elemental creatures on the party's trail intermittently as they travel. This will keep the threat of her home and the reminder of what she did relevant until she must return there to confront them. Maybe we even make that our *first* encounter of the campaign, to set up that long-running danger from the very beginning and tie Marigold in at the start.

A few extra tendrils to tie up– Geffrin should probably have to deal with what he did in Branishar, whether that's something he faces by showing signs of the same thing happening somewhere else, or we actually make him return here. Barnabas should probably discover something unexpected about Nira's death– could she still be alive? If so, maybe she finds him to reveal that her father King Guthril secretly set up an ambush to have her killed. That it wasn't his fault, and she wants revenge.

That's more than enough for now! As the campaign plays out, there will be plenty more to work with and some of these plans may change drastically– but, for now, that's a decent foundation to work from.

Planning An Arc

Now that we have some ideas of what could potentially happen in our campaign, it's time to start talking about arcs. Arcs are a connected series of sessions within a campaign that focus on a specific objective, theme, character, or idea. We can perhaps best think about this like a season of a tv show– most of the time, characters want something in the first episode, work to get over the course of the episodes within the season, and either succeed or fail by the finale.

You want to think about your arc in a similar way. Though you won't know for sure the path your players will take, by preparing the structure of the arc, you can ensure that you're giving them the adequate narrative fodder for a satisfying story. Arcs are typically between 3-5 sessions in length, though they can be longer depending on how large of a campaign you're running. It's usually good to start small and build up to larger arcs as players get more invested in the story you're all telling together. But no matter the length, building out an arc's structure is generally pretty similar.

There are a few different structures that stories often take, but we're going to use the Three Act Structure as our framework here, because it is the most common and is the easiest to identify in many of today's movies and tv shows, so it's not hard to find references. As always, feel free to experiment with your own style of storytelling and only use the things from this section that help you at your table!

The Three Act Structure is pretty straightforward– Act One is the introduction, Act Two is the trials and tribulations, and Act Three is the finale. If we were planning a four session arc, it would probably break down as:

<div align="center">

[GRAPHIC]
Session One = ACT ONE
Session Two & Three = ACT TWO
Session Four = ACT THREE

</div>

This is something we see *everywhere*, in almost every popular movie or tv show– a character wants something, they work hard and face challenges to get that thing, and finally succeed or fail– but always change because of the journey they went through. Because of this, it's often what players *expect* out of a good story, even if they don't know it. It's what feels satisfying to us, because it's the way we're used to seeing stories. We can utilize that expectation in our prep to make our work easier.

Let's take the example from our conversation in the previous chapter about our players' backstories to form our first arc. Given how much cross-over potential Maverick has between our players, he is going to be our focus here, since that will give almost everyone a chance to have their backstories interwoven into the story at the start. As a reminder from the example player's backstories, Maverick is a snobby gnome treasure collector who is a rival to Barnabas, and we've made the decision that Maverick is the one who has stolen Astrid Galamore's hand in marriage, even though she has been in love with our party's bard Jasper since childhood. Because Maverick is now residing in the kingdom with her, we've also decided that he is forcing Jasper's old mentor, Mage Yaro, to use his arcane powers to tap into the expansive fungril network and hunt for treasure remotely.

ACT ONE - COLLISION

We'll want to think through how to make this event collide with our party in a way they can't ignore. It's often best to go to the most obvious answers first, then complicate things from there. For this situation, the low-hanging fruit is Maverick going after an artifact that the party has been asked to protect. If he's using the fungril network to do it, then perhaps he is having Yaro create plant-like creatures filled with the fungus that can be controlled by him! There's our first act encounter– and the rest of the act can build out from there.

The most important thing to keep in mind about Act One is that you want to use it to introduce a bigger conflict the party will encounter down the road– give them a taste of what's to come and draw them into the arc's story in a fun way. Using the techniques in the *Preparing A Session* section, you might end up with something like the below:

Beat One: On their way to a new city, the party runs across the collateral damage left behind by elemental creatures– something that tells Marigold that the people searching for her are close by.

Beat Two: As they arrive in a new city, they notice that plants have overgrown everything. They also meet some kind townsfolk who tell them about the attacks on the city by plant creatures at night. Upon inquiry, they'll be taken to the place where the attacks are the worst– the University.

Beat Three: At the University, the students all know who Barnabas is– they're studying his work with bone runes. The headmistress, Amelia Rose, who is a big proponent of the work Barnabas is doing, takes the party in and shows them what the plant creatures have been after: The Eye of the Strix, a massive owl creature from the hidden island of Boga Tiren. Her parents disappeared searching for Boga Tiren when she was a kid, and she's spent her life trying to find where they went. If she can extract the memory of its location from the Strix's eye, then maybe she can figure out where they ended up.

Beat Four: Amelia preserved part of the plant creature that attacked. If they investigate it, Geffrin will notice it's using the fungril network to function, and is full of tiny mushrooms. If they connect to it, they will notice flashes of a powerful mage controlling it.

Beat Five: The plant creatures descend on the University. They must hold them back and defend the Eye of the Strix. When Geffrin attacks the creatures or tries to tap into their fungril network, they get flashes of the mage that become more clear. He cries out for help, looks like he's in pain. Another voice echoes through the connection, telling him to get to the eye. As the final creature goes down in battle, the party hears the mage's voice seep through it– the voice calls out to Jasper by a nickname only Yaro used to call them.

Though the session may change from the prep you've done, and you may have to adapt some of this to a different context than what's above depending on what your player's decide to do, the important thing this first act does is that it sets up the rest of the arc. It creates questions for the PC's to search after– why is Yaro doing this? Why did he look scared? Who was that other person giving him orders? If it's somebody looking for relics, could it be Maverick? And also– what is Boga Tiren? Where is it? Why is it hidden? These dramatic questions are all the things that drive PCs forward in a campaign. Finding out what questions they want to answer next will push you into Act Two.

ACT TWO - COMPLICATIONS

In act two, players are thrust forward into a journey to answer their big questions. Before the end of act one, you can't plan too far ahead because you can't be sure which direction they're going to go– they almost certainly will want to figure out what's happening with Mage Yaro, but what if they decide to instead escort Professor Rose to Boga Tiren? Or maybe something else entirely? It's often best to lead from behind as you approach Act Two– let the players show you the questions they want to answer the most, and fill in the gaps as they move towards finding those answers.

Once they're off on this quest, act two is all about the complications that get in the way. And as you prep for these next sessions, the complications should matter– they should be personal, and speak to the themes and tone of the campaign you're building together. If, for example, the party decides to head north to the Gallamore Kingdom to find out what's happening with Mage Yaro, we know they'll be on the road for a few days to get up there. It might be tempting to throw in a few random encounters with wild animals, some people asking for help with unrelated issues, or some rolls to see how well they're able to survive the distant travel– but Act Two is all about the build up to a climactic finale. So what can we do instead to make it feel like a *story*, rather than just time that's passing before we get to the Gallamore Kingdom?

We know Barnabas is searching for the legendary dragon Krugthar, and we're likely going to have a future arc (when the players are higher level) centered around it's attack on Bloomfare (Marigold's home), so one option is to foreshadow that event on the journey to show the dragon's power. Maybe we put a village that has been absolutely decimated by fire, with massive claw marks dug into the ground, and the city's powerful mage killed. Those alive talk about an attack by a massive flying beast that disappeared into the sun– something Barnabas will immediately recognize as Krugthar. But to give the players something to act on *now*, maybe the beast had small companions or minions that leapt down into the city and are creating havoc, or dragged somebody important into the forest, or have shapeshifted to look like normal citizens. Depending on what kind of challenge your table enjoys, you can change what kind of encounter this is.

We also know from Geffrin's backstory that if they stay somewhere too long, they will rot away everything around them– perhaps we see the devastating effect that Maverick and Yaro have had on the environment by growing lots of these plant creatures filled with fungus. They could have difficulty traversing this broken land, and encounter the remnants of these twisted arcane creatures. This could serve as a reminder to Geffrin of the place he decimated and the destruction he left behind. He could have the chance at a bit of redemption here, or at least knowledge of this kind of blight that helps keep his friends safe.

Another option to drive players forward might be to encounter an additional place where an artifact of power has been successfully stolen by Maverick's fungril creatures– but this relic is something that can be consumed to steal another's arcane power. Perhaps we decide this was the plan along, for Maverick to use Yaro until he could absorb his magic himself. Even without knowing the full context here, this kind of powerful object being in the wrong hands will likely push the PC's to get to Gallamore Kingdom as fast as they can.

Whatever the journey may entail, once the PC's have reached the Kingdom to confront Yaro (and learn about Maverick), we're now breaking into the final act of our arc.

ACT THREE - CLIMAX

Act Three will see our PC's resolve some of the big questions they have, and often face off against the powerful force they've been preparing for through Act One and Act Two. It's important here to identify what the players are most excited about finding answers to, and providing at least some of those answers in this act– even if that means the answers spur even more questions. Oftentimes, these answers are what launch the next arc of your campaign, so having an idea of what they are going into this act will help you prepare for what's to come.

Though not absolutely mandatory, it's also always a good idea to plan some sort of reveal, surprise, or twist in this act– something that isn't quite what it seems. These kinds of plot twists keep the players on their toes and can make them excited to find out what will happen next. In the case of our current example, we have a few twists prepared– Yaro is acting against his will, under the control of Maverick, who has squirmed his way into the kingdom by marrying Astrid Gallamore, Jasper's childhood love.

As we prepare this act, we should identify the questions we are going to answer– things like: "Who is forcing Yaro into doing this?" and "What happened to Astrid?" It's important to think through what Maverick would do to keep himself safe and Yaro under his control. Perhaps he orders the King's Guard to attack the party when they enter the city, putting Jasper in conflict with the very people she grew up with. Maybe the kingdom is locked down, the drawbridge pulled up, and the group has to find another way in. Think about how you can create a last set of complications that ramps up the tension until the final confrontation is inevitable.

At some point, there will be a showdown between Maverick and the party. Maybe he still has Yaro under his control and uses him as a weapon against them. Maybe he's absorbed Yaro's arcane power using the relic he stole, and is now attacking the party with magic himself. Maybe he's gone coward and is attempting to flee with Astrid through a secret tunnel beneath the castle. Whatever it is, it should probably be a big, exciting, and dangerous ending to the arc in a way that ties up some of the loose ends, while creating an opportunity for more adventure in the next arc.

A Living World

One of the most exciting aspects of gameplay is having the world change as the PCs move through it. After you finish each session, think about how the world at large has been affected by the events that unfolded and what story beats in the future might reflect those changes. What NPCs have been the most impacted? What adversaries or allies might come into the story because of what happened? Letting the story unfold naturally based on what the PCs have done and showcasing how the world has changed because of their actions, both good and bad, can remind your players that what they do in the game truly matters.

Leveling Up Your Party

WHEN TO LEVEL UP

When your party reaches the end of an arc, that's usually a good time to have them level up their characters. All players should level up at the same time, following the Level Up guide specific to their class. Ask them to reflect on what their character has learned in the previous arc and how it might have changed who they are, then choose two options from the level up list. For more information about leveling up, see "Leveling Up" in part 2.

If you are running a short campaign, you may instead have the party level up every other sessions instead, or whatever cadence feels appropriate for your campaign length. This will accelerate the power growth of your PCs, but also allow them to experience the full arc of their characters before the campaign ends.

GM GUIDANCE

Your PCs will have new abilities, spells, damage thresholds, experience, etc. so be sure to review what has changed for them, and make notes about how to plan some opportunities for them to use those new pieces of their character over the next arc. For example, if a PC has taken an ability that lets them eavesdrop on conversations easier, you could start next session with an espionage mission that could make use of that skill. If another PC has taken the experience "Animal Whisperer," you may also want to incorporate some wild animals that can potentially be tamed during the upcoming arc.

Additionally, review your adversaries for the coming sessions and adjust them to align with the level up, especially if they need to be increased in tier. Getting familiar with what adversaries of the current tier are usually built like will help you to improvise on the fly as needed.

Locations

Daggerheart includes a number of locations for you to pull inspiration from, repurpose for your own game, or use whole cloth. Each location has a number of themes that give you a high overview of what it will be like, and is designed at a certain tier so that you have a campaign path built in if you'd like one.

Tier 0 is for Level 1, Tier 1 is for Levels 2-4, Tier 2 is for Levels 5-7, and Tier 3 is for levels 8-10.

Sablewood - *Verdant, Serene, & Ancient* - Tier 0 - A dense forest known for its bustling economy and hybrid animals. *Starts here.*

Rime of the Colossi - *Frozen, Desolate, & Haunted* - Tier 1 - A hostile stretch of frozen wastes where colossal metal limbs reach toward the sky while their bodies remain encased in the ice below. *Starts here.*

Gindalia - *Opulent, Urban, & Haunted* - Tier 2 - A fabulously wealthy city whose obsession with debt haunts its citizens long after they've shuffled off this mortal coil. *Starts here.*

The Kinekozan Jags - *Mountainous, Underground, & Strange* - Tier 3 - A moving mountain where the stone dances by day, slumbers by night, and the deep mines provide only questions. *Starts here.*

(More locations coming soon!)

Themes

Below you'll find a palette of themes to utilize when crafting locations for your Daggerheart adventures. We recommend choosing 1-3 words to use as jumping-off points when you need to expand upon or build a location, landmark, settlement, or faction whole cloth.

When building a campaign, you might choose or create locations that have overlapping themes in order to preserve the verisimilitude of the world you're playing in together. For example, the starting themes above all share ancient or strange between them.

A city that is "verdant and serene" is very different from one that is "verdant and martial." That difference is made even more pronounced when "devout" is added to the themes. How would a militarized community protect the forest home of their god vs. a quiet collection of worshippers that make a home in the remote woods with little outside disturbance?

Ancient - Artifactual, awe-inspiring, excavated, fossilized, hushed, irreplaceable, lost, preserved, primeval, risky, ruined, sacred.

Aquatic - Abyssal, bioluminescent, briny, calm, endless, enigmatic, monstrous, navigable, overpowering, peaceful, stormy, tumultuous.

Arid - Dry, golden, inhospitable, parched, remote, sunbaked, tranquil, unbroken, unforgiving, vast, waterless, windblown.

Desolate - Abandoned, conquered, desperate, expansive, hazardous, hopeless, lonely, polluted, ravaged, ravenous, remote, weary.

Devout - Ancestral, ascetic, blessed, fanatical, heartfelt, isolated, obedient, pristine, restrictive, sanctimonious, sincere, unyielding.

Frozen - Beautiful, bitter, bleak, breathtaking, brittle, crystalline, frigid, harsh, pristine, remote, stark, uninhabited.

Haunted - Alluring, captivating, covert, cryptic, cursed, eerie, gloomy, harrowing, lethal, nightmarish, terrifying, unfathomable.

Impoverished - Alienated, blighted, collaborative, disadvantaged, empathetic, enterprising, forsaken, hardened, resilient, restive, scrappy, tenacious.

Martial - Austere, dutiful, fortified, honorable, lethal, overbearing, regimented, safe, stoic, strategic, trained, violent.

Mountainous - Alpine, barren, formidable, jagged, majestic, perilous, remote, rocky, scenic, towering, unexplored, valuable.

Opulent - Artistic, comfortable, elegant, exaggerated, insatiable, lavish, privileged, stratified, superficial, treacherous, vibrant.

Scholarly - Acquisitive, assiduous, curious, cultured, deliberate, dismal, innovative, obsessive, progressive, refined, sinister, strict.

Serene - Bucolic, communal, euphoric, harmonious, innocent, insincere, placid, quaint, quiet, riant, specious, welcoming.

Strange - Devouring, ethereal, illogical, imposing, monstrous, paradoxical, playful, spellbinding, surreal, uncanny, uncharted, weird.

Tropical - Balmy, bountiful, breezy, coastal, deceptive, flowering, infested, invigorating, teeming, tempestuous, tranquil, vivid.

Underground - Cavernous, claustrophobic, cooperative, dark, foreboding, hazardous, inaccessible, precision-engineered, resourceful, secretive, secured.

Urban - Bustling, efficient, industrial, innovative, labyrinthine, lively, multicultural, noisy, political, rapacious, utopian, wrathful.

Verdant - Biodiverse, dense, feral, flourishing, fragrant, harmonious, hushed, picturesque, unrelenting, unspoiled, vulnerable, wild.

Sablewood

Verdant, Serene & Ancient
Tier 0
A dense forest known for its bustling economy and hybrid animals.

DISTINCTIONS

The Sablewood is an ancient, expansive forest where the trees are rumored to be older than the Forgotten Gods, standing hundreds of feet tall. This dense wood is widely known, throughout the mortal realm and many who visit are surprised to learn that the stories they believed were exaggerated legends are, in fact, stark truths.

Endless Verdance

As far as the eye can see in all directions, and farther still, there is an endless verdancy. The canopy is so thick that one often cannot tell if it is day or night, and those who travel through must be careful not to lose their path. Anyone that moves through the treetops could easily make it from one end of the Sablewood to the other without touching the forest floor. The soil of the Sablewood is notoriously dark and fertile, and though it is a dangerous place, it is the welcome home of a number of communities and creatures.

You might find:
- An entire village taken over by Hunting Trees in the night, now abandoned.
- The deafening whispers of a thousand leaves rustling in the wind.
- The scent of sweet honey-like nectar leaking from between the cracks of the sablewood.

Hybrid Fauna

The fauna of the Sablewood are never quite what unseasoned travelers expect. Always a blend of two familiar beasts, or even animals and elements, they operate in unfamiliar ways. These creatures range from docile and friendly to territorial and aggressive. Many are larger than might be expected, by virtue of their profoundly long lives. Some say the animals that live within the Sablewood are the emissaries of the Forgotten Gods.

You might find:
- Tiny cat-squirrels jumping from limb to limb as massive giraffe-deer move gingerly along the forest floor.
- The hooting-howl of strix-wolves calling in the night.
- The whoosh of air passing over you as a lemur-toad swings by in the darkness.

The Spires

Within the Sablewood there are a number of Spires with attendants that are granted the position any time the previous tower tender dies, causing their signal fire to extinguish. To become a Spire Keeper, one must run through the woods, entirely off of a known path, and make it to the unattended Spire to

light the signal fire. No one knows the true job of these Keepers, only that someone must always reside in each tower within the forest.

You might find:
- Twisting towers of stone that reach beyond the canopy of the Sablewood.
- The soft clatter of Spire stones falling from great heights to toss among the trees.
- The ozone smell of powerful magic.

Well-Worn Pathways

The pathways of the Sablewood are worn so deep that they are sunken into the rich soil of the forest undergrowth. Those who live on the edge of the woods will warn travelers not to leave the path, as those who do never return and their bodies are never found. Maps leading through the Sablewood are handed down through generations and are quite costly to acquire.

You might find:
- New travelers walking with their heads and eyes down, while experienced merchants whistling common tunes.
- The creak of wooden cart wheels passing over packed dirt.
- The smell of campfire as strangers crowd to scare away the darkness.

Underroot

Because the surface of the uninhabited Sablewood is dangerous, many people choose to live in the network of subterranean tunnels carved in and among the roots of the Sablewood trees. Each community keeps the entrance to their underground home secret, and many maps leading to Underroot communities are coded.

You might find:
- The winding stairways and tunnels, lit only by faerie lights.
- Raucous laughter over meals shared with small communities.
- The acrid scent of roots and herbs brewing over a fire.

GM PRINCIPLES

Make the world lush, vibrant, and awe-inspiring - The wood is full of life in all forms, every corner occupied by strange and unusual creatures. What is terrifying is also beautiful, and the risk for such a sight may offer incredible reward.

Show how the natural and the fabricated interact - Travelers must adapt to the wood, it does not adapt to them. Those who live in the Sablewood must learn the rhythms of the trees and animals. In the end, foresight and cleverness beat out brute force every time.

Put the power of nature on full display - Nature knows no good nor evil, only need. The Sablewood is too long established to bow to any power but that of the Forgotten Gods. There is neither guile nor guilt, no blow withheld, or storm corralled.

LANDMARKS

The Titan's Steps

Height of the Highest Pillar: 1,189 vertical feet
Number of Bridges Built Between the Pillars: 562

Stories say that in the time of the Earliest Age, there was a fight between the Old and the New in the place where the Sablewood now grows. During this battle, numerous portions of the Mortal Realm were razed, and others were crafted afresh. One such craft is known as the Titans Steps, or the Pillars of the Sablewood, that stand within the forest at variety of incredible heights. Some say one of the Forgotten Gods was foiled in an attempt to craft a stairway leading to the Hallows Above.

The rocky cliffs of the formation stop neither plants nor creatures from climbing their height. Wooden structures old and new cling to the rock with nets strung between pilars like cobwebs, while flying creatures and massive beasts hunt within the reaches.

Duskwatch Outpost (Settlement)

One of the many encampments hanging from the edges of the Titans Steps. This outpost is known to be the largest and easiest to reach, due to a network of bridges and steps that are reasonably well maintained (if you know which planks to avoid.) Within the economy of the Steps, Duskwatch serves as the primary market for merchants willing to travel from the Sablewood below. *There is a rumor that the Duskwatch Outpost is establishing a militia, though for what purpose, no one will say.*

Mountain Crabs (Threat)

Many people who've climbed the pillars have been killed before they even knew what got them. Sometimes confused as rock fall when they awaken, the giant Mountain Crabs are a unique hybrid of crustacean and stone that camouflage themselves with their unique grey shells. They can be small enough to carry, or as large as a building, and will continue to grow until they are killed. *These massive hunters move with incredible speed and adventurers must be wary of the clicking of their steps over rock.*

Dilapidated Nets (Feature)

Many of the Step communities craft nets below their buildings and walkways as a last resort for those who misstep or fall through a rotten plank. Very few, if any, of these nets are intact, as rain and age causes rope to deteriorate and flying creatures will tear through the fibers when caught. Some communities string nets between the pillars specifically to trap birds and other animals to eat, and among those groups there is an entire economy built around the buying and selling of strongly crafted rope and the materials required to make it. *Sablewood custom dictates that anyone who falls off a walkway into a net pay for its repair in order to pay forward the lifesaving presence of such a tool.*

The Lucent River

Common Modes of Transportation: Riverboats, many of which employ chameleon-crayfish to pull their vessels by scurrying on shore or underneath the surface.
River's Nickname: Lucy

The Lucent River cuts a luminous ribbon through the Sablewood, at parts deep and clear and other parts rocky and tumultuous. It is the primary source of fresh water in the area, and may be one of the key reasons the trees and plants grow so lushly. The common mythology of the Sablewood describes the river as the everflowing tears of the Forgotten Gods, and once their true names are remembered the river will run dry.

The waters of this river are famed for their healing ability, likely due to their moonglow. The alchemists of Root's Hollow brave dangerous portions of the wood to access the regenerative waters. In distant regions Lucent Water sells for incredible sums.

Moonglow (Feature)

The Lucent River is so named for the soft blue glow it gives off when the moon rises, though the moon itself is barely visible through the canopy above. This feature allows travelers to navigate by night and is an excellent means for keeping time when the sun and the moon are not discernable through the trees. *The water of the Lucent River keeps its moonglow, even when removed and placed in other containers.*

Eeligators (Threat)

The largest predator in the Lucent River is the Eeligator. They sleep in the deepest portions of the river, but can travel both in the water and on the shore, making them a ferocious predator to combat. They have slick skin covered in a number of spots that can be used to dictate their age, if the swimmer could survive long enough to calculate. *The large eggs of the eeligator are a delicacy in some portions of the Sablewood.*

The High Falls (Feature)

In the mountains of the Sablewood, the Lucent River transforms from small stream into the cascade that creates the massive High Falls. This waterfall is formed of an incredible drop that, when examined, covers a large cave system that shows evidence of once having been a home to a large community, though no one knows why it was abandoned. Directly behind the High Falls there is a massive cavern with nothing but a carved stone throne. *Moss covers an illegible series of symbols and and ancient blood stain decoates the cave floor.*

Open Vale

Unique Flora: Sunfire Lily, a flower that only blooms once a year for eight days. It is harvested to make a powerful hallucinatory tea.
Memory: Everyone who has ever entered.

A perfect clearing within the middle of the Sablewood; no one knows why the trees will not grow here. It is covered in a layer of particularly lush grass and receives an incredible amount of sun in comparison to the rest of the thick forest. This meadow is resistant to farming efforts, and those crops that manage to thrive grow in their own seasonal patterns.

The Open Vale is the site of numerous spiritual rituals, performed by a variety of communities that live in and around the Sablewood. "The Meadow Demands Peace" is a common phrase, and fighting within the bounds of the Vale is punishable by banishment in the wood—off train and without a map.

The Miremist (Feature)

The Open Vale seems to contain its own weather system, resulting in a perpetual fog. This mist permeates the nearby portions of the Sablewood and adds to the confusion of any who lose their way nearby. The fog is so thick and wet that numerous creatures that live in the Lucent River will come ashore to hunt when otherwise they would not. *"When the moon is low, they dance in the miremist and are neither seen nor heard, fully in the mortal realm, nor passed into the realms beyond…"—From the Song of the Vale*

The Stones of the Vale (Feature)

The standing stones dedicated to the Forgotten Gods mark the edges of the Open Vale. They are carved with a variety of symbols that come from a wide range of languages. The secrets of their magic are lost to the Mortal Realm, but they are rumored to glow with soft blue light when the eyes of the ancient gods turn upon the Sablewood meadow. *Travelers that find the clearing are warned to leave an offering at the base of one of the Stones of the Vale, lest the Forgotten Gods send their animals to find the mortal that ignored their power.*

The Claravale Market (Festival)

Unlike the spiritual practices that take place within the Open Vale, there is one celebration with a focus on the material world. Once a year there is a market established within the meadow and all who know how to find their way are invited to come, trade, and celebrate. It takes place over three nights, during which time no gold or coin of any kind is permitted to change hands. Traders are expected to give one another a fair deal, and those who do not follow the tenets of the Claravale Market are removed from the premises. *The merchant was thrown into the trees, the sound of coins clattering in her pockets. She attempted to return the next year, but her map was wrong, and she could never find the clearing again.*

Settlements

Hush

Village Leaders: The Faceless Six
Known for: Welcoming travelers with food and drink.

The small village of Hush sits nestled into the heart of Sablewood. It's quaint and quiet, renowned for its friendly residents who are accustomed to providing room, board, food, and drink for any travelers and merchants who need a place to stop off during their journey.

Wards maintained by the Whitefire Arcanist keep the most dangerous animals from disturbing anyone within the four dwarven-stone pillars assembled at the edge of town. This provides a haven for those who wish to get a good night's rest and fill their bellies with delicious food.

The Sunless Farms (Location)

On the southern end of Hush is the community farm that grows fruits, vegetables, grain, and more without the need for direct sunlight. These unique crops have been adapted over centuries to grow in symbiosis with a dark blue-green moss that covers them. This moss must be cleaned off before the food can be consumed safely. *When the Faceless Six arrive to meet with the Whitefire Arcanist, the sunless farms grow a three-month cycle in one day.*

Guest Privileges (Feature)

There are no inns or traveler's camps in town. The culture of Hush dictates that when any outsiders come to visit, they are taken in by a family and given shelter for three nights. During this time, the guests have priority over everyone else in the family for anything that belongs to them. After three nights, the visitors must trade families or leave Hush. *Those who prey on the kindness and selflessness of the residents of Hush often find out the meaning of the town people's common phrase "leave it to the trees".*

Clover's Tavern (Location)

At the center of town is a massive six-story tavern built around the trunk of an ancient tree. Considered by most to be the oldest building in Sablewood, this is the hub of activity and socialization in the city. When newcomers arrive, they must take off their shoes and hang them over the clothing line that runs down the center of the bar. It is not uncommon for the shoes to be polished and for trinkets to be left in them by the residents of Hush. The sixth floor of the tavern requires a counterweight lift to access and is in the highest branches of the treetop, providing a glimpse of sunlight and a stunning view of the forest beyond. *Regulars of Clover's Tavern will sometimes take travelers they've made friends out of to the Inner Rings, a private drinking lounge in the center of the ancient tree.*

The Refuge

Local Habit: On-duty guards watching the Sablewood will spit over the wall if they believe something in the forest is watching them in return.
Most Popular Drink: Fire Wine, a strong golden liquor that is not made from grapes.

The first stop before entering the Sablewood from the east, or the last (grateful) stop if you've made your way out after a journey from the west, this community considers itself to be the last bastion of "civilization" before one enters the wilds. The large town is walled on all sides, and the townsfolk are forbidden from entering the Sablewood.

In order to "stop the progression of the all-consuming trees" firewatchers burn the edges of the Sablewood to keep it from growing beyond its bounds. The most devoted among the firewatchers speak of their efforts like battles, and their lives like a war with the woods. Every so often, these arsonists do not return to the Refuge after a day of burning.

The Fire Walk (Festival)

There is a yearly festival to initiate new firewatchers that is welcome to all who wish to witness, but few to participate. Those invited to join the ranks of the Refuge "soldiers" must walk through a massive pyre of Sablewood and live to tell the tale. Many die from their excruciating burns, but those who survive are immediately invited to live and work in the enclave. *After healing from the Fire Walk, initiates will have their burn scars read by the elder firewatcher to learn details about their fate.*

Fly Fishing (Custom)

Off-duty guards and trusted townsfolk will climb to the watchtowers of the Refuge and cast long lines into the canopies of the Sablewood. In this way, they catch a wide variety of animals to eat including town favorites such as rabbits-gliders, moth-possums, and turtle-mice. *Fishers must be wary of badger-hawks that will pull their catch from the line, or pull the fisher off the tower.*

The Ash Quarry (Location)

Because of the number of trees burned, the Refuge sits adjacent to a vast field of charred Sablewood. The Refuge claims, cleans, and sells the Sablewood ash as a remedy for any ailment a person might want curing, though there is a general consensus among the residents of the forest that the ash does nothing when sold alone. The firewatchers of the Refuge struggle to protect the Ash Quarry, as the heat and nutrients from the burned trees attract spider-manders that enjoy coating their skin in the black soot. They use this as a reason to justify burning more of the forest, creating an endless cycle of retaliation. *If a citizen of the Refuge comes upon a spider-mander dozing in the ash, they are likely to be snatched and consumed, with the beast moving little more than a single limb.*

Root's Hollow

Legendary Beast: Hellbender, an ancient spider-mander known for its impeccable ability to sense anything moving underground.
Combat Style: Citizens of Root's Hollow are known to fight with sharpened shovels.

Although reclusive, there is a thriving Underroot community carved into the roots of the northern Sablewood trees. Root's Hollow is one of the few known villages within the inhospitable forest, but though it is hard to get to, it is famed for its size. Few merchants know the locations of the hidden doors within

the trees, but those that do make a fortune trafficking specialized potions and medicines from the Root's Hollow apothecaries.

Those who live in the deepest levels of Root's Hollow must contend with the giant bugs that make their homes deep in the ancient dirt of the Sablewood. Though Root's Hollow is practiced at deterring the centi-beetles and spider-manders, occasionally these mammoth crawlers destroy entire portions of the underground village. Once they carve their way through the earth, people will use the giant tunnels to form new portions of the village.

The Latch (Location)

There is an elevator within Root's Hollow that leads deeper underground than any level of the village currently reaches. Only members of the Village Council and their guests are allowed to enter this lift, and it is only utilized once a season. No one outside the council knows what lies at the bottom of the lift. *There is a rumor that the Village Council sacrifices outsiders to a behemoth spider-mander that guards the community. Stories describe the ancient beast's nest in a secret pit beneath the city.*

The Sable Stills (Feature)

The apothecaries of Root's Hollow are known across the Realms for their powerful potions and healing concoctions. They would never reveal any details of their process, but a key ingredient is the sable sap that is harvested and fermented in the large stills that lay beneath the earth. *When improperly fermented, sable sap is highly toxic and imitators of this process are often revealed when they cause a client's death.*

Knock Wood (Custom)

When people venture into the far reaches of Root's Hollow, or even into uncharted territory, they communicate via the tree roots that lace through the soil of the Sablewood. By knocking on roots in specific patterns, they're able to relay complex messages to one another, in particular, signaling that they are safe and well. Outsiders have attempted to utilize this form of communication to no avail. *Members of Root's Hollow have come to believe that the Sablewood trees are helping their messages travel vast distances.*

FACTIONS

Thistlefolk

Most Commonly Sighted: In the underbrush and bramble, off-trail.
Misconception: They are a rogue band of anarchists and criminals.

The Thistlefolk take up residence in the place where nobody else dares—within the thickest, thorniest bramble of the Sablewood. They are known for wearing armored clothing made up of thousands of tiny polished stones that have been cut to fit together seamlessly, like scales. This attire allows them to move through the barbed thickets without being caught up in its tangle.

Because the only Thistlefolk who emerge from the seclusion of their hidden villages are often thieves coming out to steal goods from unwitting travelers or sleeping merchants, they have received a

reputation for being a syndicate of criminals. In actuality, most of the Thistlefolk are quite docile and vulnerable, choosing to live within the safety of the bramble for their own protection from the large predator species who stalk the woods looking for an easy meal.

Eclectic Villages (Feature)

Though functionally invisible to outsiders, the villages within the bramble are vibrant, sprawling, and eclectic. The mudstone walls holding back the dangerous thorns are typically painted with abstract strokes of green to camouflage the villages from any passerbys who might noticing them. Within, the buildings and walkways are typically painted in bright hues and large murals and lit by bioluminescent moss. When not armored for traveling out into the open forest, most of the Thistlefolk dress in a similar artistic fashion, with self-dyed and sewn garments. *An abandoned Thistlefolk village near Hush was discovered after a large fire cleared some of the thicket that it was hidden within. It has since been co-opted as a local hangout for the young people of Hush when they want to get away from their elders.*

The Wandering Briar (Threat)

A living thicket of briars estimated to be more than fifty feet tall, one hundred feet thick, and about a mile long, it crawls its way through the endless forests of Sablewood, frequently blocking routes and forcing travelers to take a different pathway to their destination. This moving tangle also serves as a home for a group of traveling Thistlefolk who live within its ever-shifting walls, known as the Wanderers. The Wanderers have learned that when the Wandering Briar draws blood with its thorns, it can absorb the blood to move at a more rapid pace. *Clever poisoners may grind the thorns of the of the Wandering Briar and feed the powder to a target. It inhibits the clotting of blood, turning minor wounds major injuries.*

Tumblers (Technology)

When approaching the tangles of thorny vines that grow along the shoreline of the Lucent River, it is not uncommon to hear an ominous rattling coming from within. Though this scares many inexperienced travelers who might think it's a creature of some sort warning them to stay away, in fact, the sound derives from the stone tumblers built by the Thistlefolk. They utilize the water's powerful current to tumble stones in the sentiment of the river's edge until they are as smooth as glass. Thistlefolk must brave the less dense underbrush to retrieve the stones, which can be cut and placed into their specialized armor. *The lapidary of each village is responsible for choosing and then cutting the stones that go into the tumblers. They are said to have hands so densely calloused that they could catch the edge of a sword in their palm without bleeding.*

Principles

The Thistlefolk tend to be reserved and insular, focused on preserving the safety of their home above all. Those who leave the safety of the bramble are viewed by some members of their community as brave and others as foolish.
- *The thorns only catch those who let them.*
- *"Look over your shoulder. You don't know who you are leading home."*
- *Combat the darkness of the world outside with the brightness of life within the bramble.*

Proven Navir of the Sixspire Tangle, Stone Retriever [Wildborne Fungril, they/them]
Difficulty: 12
Quiet, Focused, Dedicated
Experience: Navigation +2, Engineering +1
Description: A small, rotund fungril with bulging eyes covered by goggles to keep them safe from the thorns. They carry a bag twice their size when retrieving stones from the river.
Motive: Open a trade route with the Ninespire Tangle across the river.

Xen, Lapidarian of the Highbrush [Wildborne Dwarf, she/her]
Difficulty: 8
Cocky, Practical, Discerning
Experience: Rocks +10
Description: As wide as she is tall with a shaved head and fasceted nails, Xen has an assortment of finely polished and cut emerald stones embedded into her right arm.
Motive: Get her hands on a mountain crab's shell to polish and use as armor.

Yikyik Trahll, Driftwood [Wildborne Katari, he/him]
Difficulty: 14
Curious, Charismatic, Daring
Experience: Out of Sight +3, Dodge +2
Description: A humanoid cat covered in black fur, with a tail that's shorter after a childhood fight and a mischievous glint in their eyes.
Motive: Visit every Thistlefolk village in the Sablewood.

Story Hooks

- A Thistlefolk stole something of importance from a merchant and they need help to get it back.
- The Wandering Briar has cut through a small village, decimating homes and causing them to relocate.
- Three kids have gone missing after sneaking off to the abandoned Thistlefolk village outside of Hush.

The Sable Sinecure

Highest Earning Settlement: The Refuge
Motivation: Gold

The Sable Sinecure got their name from years of joking by the fireside—for such a dangerous job, accomplishable by so few, to look easy? Well that's just a walk in the woods! This merchant's guild closely guards their territory, in that they will protect any traveller that walks the Sablewood paths, rather than try to run them out of town. In this way, they have an incredible number of members in proportion to the size and danger of the region they transport goods through.

The Sable Sinecure is home to the only merchants willing to transport their goods up the Titan's Steps–as the guild will guard any goods left or lowered to the forest floor so that the merchant might reclaim them and go about their business.

Fire-falcons (Feature)

Cousin to the phoenix, but by no means immortal, fire-falcons are the preferred companions of the most powerful merchants in the Sable Sinecure. They use the birds to fly the path ahead, both leading the way with their natural light and signaling danger approaching. *Though small, they are violent adversaries. Fire-falcons will hatch only one clutch of eggs in their lifetime, and the locations of their nests are a closely guarded secret.*

Secret Caches (Location)

To keep their packs and carts as light as possible, the Sable Sinecure utilizes a number of secret caches throughout the forest. These locations are not guarded by members of the guild but by a number of other hidden traps. Those who attempt to steal their wares will have their eyes removed and fed to the fire-falcons. *Thieves come shopping with nothing to pay, so they pay with the poor sense that led them there.*

Wood Wage (Feature)

Only within the bounds of the Sablewood, members of the merchant's guild and surrounding communities will use a phrase known as "wood wage," which is a way of asking the cost of something that quantifies the danger it took to acquire and transport the item. The higher the wood wage, the more costly the barter. *"You earned your wood wage today," is a phrase tossed at weary travelers when they come to a campfire worse for the ware.*

Principles

The Sable Sinecure does not have a written code of conduct but rather operates by an unspoken code of ethics.
- *"All goods to the highest bidder, even death pays our price."*
- *One must make reasonable efforts to protect those around them. This does not extend to anyone who strays from the well-worn paths.*
- *Do not sell that which was not earned. Gifts must gifted anew.*

NPCs

Helena Corain [Ridgeborne Human, she/her]
Difficulty: 12
Straight-shooter, Affable, Brave
Experience: Climbing +3, Strike a Deal +2
Description: An elderly human that free climbs the Titan's Steps to collect mountain crab eggs to sell. She's not from around here but commands more respect than most locals of the wood. She can get free lunch just about anywhere she goes.
Motive: Reach the top of the Titan's Steps.

Will Scild [Wanderborne Galapa, he/him]
Difficulty: 15
Unphased, Dry, Fair
Experience: Merchant +2, Retaliation +7
Look: A Galapa of indeterminate age. Though he moves slowly through the Sablewood with goods of exceedingly high value, no one dares disturb his journey. He carries no weapon, but he is known to toss a small stone back and forth between his hands.
Motive: Find the lost treasure rumored to be in Cradle of the Forgotten Gods.

Simrith Luhaj [Loreborne Giant, he/they]
Difficulty: 14
Coy, Intelligent, Flirtatious
Experience: Out of Sight +3, Dodge +2
Description: The premiere trainer of fire-falcons. He has an old burn scar covering one of his arms, and when asked, claims a "giant eeligator got me" with a smirk.
Motive: Find and train a Phoenix to join his ranks.

Story Hooks

- A traveler just ahead is attacked by raiders that come down from the trees. They scream for help.
- Members of the Sable Sincecure come to a party, asking for volunteers to join the guard of a particularly precious cargo they're carting through the Sablewood.
- Claiming a nest of recently hatched fire-falcons perched high in the Titans Steps has become the only goal of every member of the Sable Sinecure, and they'll kill anyone who stands in their way.

Resources

	MOMENTS OF HOPE		MOMENTS OF FEAR
1	*A friendly merchant invites you to their fire and shares a story.*	1	*A merchant's cart overturned, wheel spinning, only viscera left behind.*
2	*A map of the Briar, only slightly torn.*	2	*The snapping of twigs directly behind you.*
3	*A fox-bat takes refuge within your coat for the evening.*	3	*The wind roaring through the canopy, in its echoes reverberates your name.*
4	*A young hunter arrives back in town carrying her first kill.*	4	*A set of animalistic eyes watching from just off the path, waiting for the perfect moment to strike.*
5	*The standing stones of the Forgotten Gods glowing many shades of blue.*	5	*Thistlefolk bandits cutting coin purses and disappearing into the underbrush.*

6	A tree branch reaching down to catch you from falling.	6	A tiger-elk tearing its prey limb from limb.
7	A harvest of fresh twilight plums, ripe and pungent.	7	A wicked smile, then a hand snuffing out your lantern.
8	An ancient wooden chest buried beneath hundreds of years of overgrowth.	8	Skeletons skewered on tree limbs, old tatters of clothes blowing in the wind.
9	A Spire being ascended by its keeper, their nightly hunt over their shoulder.	9	A pit trap covered in leaves, hungry for its next victim.
10	A lively marketplace full of handcrafted goods and freshly baked pastries.	10	A tangle of thorns dripping with fresh blood slowly absorbed.
11	An ornately decorated carriage pulled by a fleet of goat-horses.	11	A shattered sword left behind in pieces, its hilt grown over in moss.
12	Endless drinks poured over merry music and hearty laughter.	12	Massive trees uprooted and thrown by something enormous.

Rumors

Every spring there is a part of the forest that expands six inches in radius, consuming the wider landscape. In one such expansion, a rare weapon known as the Sableblade grows from the ground.

An ancient faerie lives in a small cottage deep within the woods. It is said she will accept items of value in exchange for something the visitor is seeking. Her definition of "value" is unique.

While digging out their tunnels, Underroot communities found massive stone strongholds buried deep within the ground with no clear way to gain access inside.

If you fall asleep in the Sablewood without a campfire, you wake up in a different place than where you fell asleep.

Ember Lake, on the western side of the forest, is a hot spring lake heated by the still-burning forges of the Forgotten Gods.

If a creature you encounter has an extra eye on the back of its neck, it was captured and released by the Glimpse, a Faint Divinity covered in eyes who cares for injured animals in the Sablewood.

Equipment

Sableblade - Agility Melee - d10 (phy) - One-Handed
Feature: Ancient Power (Mark stress before a damage roll to increase your damage total by +3.)
Primary Weapon

Eeligator Scale Shield - Finesse Melee - d4 (phy) - One-Handed
Feature: Sharp (Add +2 to your armor score, add +2 to your damage rolls.)
Secondary Weapon

Thistlefolk Armor - Base Score: 4
Feature: Seamless (If you should take damage below your minor threshold, roll a d12. If you roll your level or lower, you don't have to mark a stress.)
Armor

Items

Returning Stone: This small stone can be placed anywhere, and will teleport to your hand under one of the following conditions: somebody comes within close range, somebody within very close range is dealt damage, a certain amount of time passes, when you speak a keyword.

Ward of the Whitefire Arcanist: A carved figurine in the shape of a humanoid. While carrying this in the Sablewood, it gives you +1 to your Evasion.

Sableleaf Shoes: A set of shoes sewn out of the leaves of the Sablewood trees. They are light and flexible. Wearing them lets you spend Hope to take advantage on agility rolls while in Sablewood.

Consumables

Bugbane Berry: A delicacy among the residents here, this is a large, red-orange berry with a small insect floating in its center like a pit. When consumed, it provides resistance to magic damage until your next short rest.

Sable Sap: The sweet sap from the Sablewood trees can be drizzled over food or eaten by the spoonful. Once per long rest, when you have a calm moment to consume this, you may clear two stress.

Vial of Briarpowder: Made from shaving thorns of the Wandering Briar, when used on an enemy, it inhibits the clotting of blood. After coating a blade with this powder, the next successful attack you deal one additional hit point.

Bull-Frog

As large as a standard bull, but three times as powerful, this horned beast is most dangerous due to the speed and height at which it hops at its attackers. Its skin is smooth and warty, and its natural green and brown camouflage allows it to blend in with the trees of the Sablewood to deliver a surprise attack.

Bull-Frog - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Leap Out of Danger, Spear with Horns, Strike with Tongue*

Attack Modifier: +1

Horns: Melee | 2d6+1 phy

Difficulty: 11

Minor 2 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 13

HP: 4

Stress: 2

Experience:
Territorial +5

Moves

Leaping Dodge
Leaping Dodge
Whenever an attack against this creature misses, the bull-frog may leap anywhere within far range.

Togue Strike
Spend Fear to make an attack against a target within close range. On a success, deal 2d10 physical damage and pull them into melee.

Powerful Gore
Spend 2 Fear to leap forward, making an attack with the bull-frog's horns against all enemies in a straight line within close range. Any that are hit take 2d8+1 physical damage and must mark one armor slot without taking its effect.

Strix-Wolf

Strix-wolves are one of the most populous predators of the Sablewood. They hunt in packs, equally fast on land and in the air. Their heads can turn 270°, which grants them impeccable tracking capabilities, as they can follow sight, sound, and scent with ease. Strix-wolves prefer to hunt at night when their prey is at a visual disadvantage and are best detected via their musical call.

Strix-wolf - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Stalk, Surround, Protect Pack*

Attack Modifier: +2

Bite & Claw: Melee | 2d8+1 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 1 | **Major** 10 | **Severe** 20

HP: 5

Stress: 2

Experience:
Tracker +4

Moves

Pack Tactics
When attacking in melee, if another Owl-Wolf is also in melee range, deal 2d10+1 (phy) instead.

Fly
Spend a Fear to make the Strix-Wolf take flight until the next time you activate the action tracker, increasing their Difficulty by +2 and making their attacks worth +2 damage until they land.

Powerful Senses
This creature ignores the Hidden condition on anyone within close range.

Relentless (2)
The Strix-Wolf may activate twice in a GM move (this still takes 2 tokens)

Eeligator

Adult eligators can range in size from as short as one foot up to forty feet in length. As far as anyone knows, eeligators will continue to live and grow unless killed, and they seem to possess unique healing abilities. The scales and teeth of this river monster are exceptionally tough, and are used to craft unique weapons to use against the creatures themselves.

Eeligator - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Confound, Destabilize, Transmogrify*

Attack Modifier: +3

Snapping Jaw: Very Close | 2d10 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 5 | **Major** 12 | **Severe** 25

HP: 4

Stress: 3

Experience:
Hide +2, Quick Reflexes +3

Moves

Healing Skin
Spend 2 Fear to heal one hit point.

Pull Under
Spend 2 Fear when this creature is within close range of a body of water to make an attack on a melee target. On a success, deal 2d8 phy damage. Then move both the Eeligator and the target into the water that's within close range. The eeligator pulls the target under, giving them the condition drowning. While drowning, every token that is added to the action tracker causes them to mark a stress.

Death Grip
Spend 3 Fear on a successful Snapping Jaw attack to lock this creature's jaw onto the target, dealing 1 additional hit point and making them Restrained until the Eeligator is dealt Major damage. When it releases, the target marks a Stress.

Rime of the Colossi

Frozen, Desolate, & Haunted
Tier 1
A hostile stretch of frozen wastes where colossal metal limbs reach toward the sky while their bodies remain encased in the ice below.

DISTINCTIONS

The Rime is a vast stretch of frozen wastes, bordered by impassable mountains and accessible only by sea at certain times of year. It's a place unwelcoming to most life, as resources are perpetually tight and weather conditions are rarely better than terrible. Still, life seems to have eked out a stubborn existence among frigid winds, ice-boring chaldworms, howling wraiths haunting the ice pack, and the limbs of the mysterious metal colossi encased in hundreds of feet of ice.

Infinite White

This is not a place of verdance and really only comes in three varieties: Rocks, thick ice covering rocks, and snow covering thick ice. It's mostly flat, a great white plane extending to meet a gray-white sky, the horizon blurred. It's often hard to orient without a compass due to the lack of topographical variance and visibility destroying blizzards that are more common than not. Travelers have described it as being not far off from the blasted, empty wastes of the Circles Below just much, much colder.

You might find:
- A churning snow storm miles away, moving slowly through the Chaldwastes.
- The crunch of snow under boots.
- The sharp pain of frigid air filling the lungs.

Dangerous Survivors

From the fauna native to the Rime, to the hardy folk who adopted it as their home, it takes a certain type to survive in this climate. Predators hunt for hundreds of miles to get their next meal, and won't part with them easily. Similarly, settlements out here are hardscrabble and community-minded. Sickness and weather make no distinction between who lives or dies. Because of this, everyone and everything that lives here has hardened to acclimate. Most folk know how to jab a spear in the spot that hurts, and the animals are cunning and lethal hunters.

You might find:
- A chaldworm exploding out from underneath a mammoth, burning the pachyderm's thick hide with its superheated headplate.
- Nightly howls of winter wolves on their nocturnal hunts.
- The hardened ice vibrates beneath, ominous and terrifying.

Colossal Limbs

The titular namesake of these frigid badlands. Throughout the Rime explorers and travelers will stumble upon pockets of warmth and calm. Places where the temperature is balmy and the weather is tolerable.

The unifying quality is that they're all near one of the myriad metal limbs, appendages, or heads poking out of the ice. All seeming to reach towards the heavens. Each belongs to a metal colossus that is hundreds of feet tall and buried in solid ice. Despite the warmth they radiate, the ice around them is no less solid or cold. No one knows their true origins, if they're alive, or what they're reaching for.

You might find:
- A small encampment has formed underneath the outstretched hand of the colossus.
- A stark transition, like walking through a membrane, between the bitter cold and the balmy warmth surrounding a protruding head.
- Five long shadows extend further and further as the sun rises behind metal fingers.

Cryomantic Beautification

Travelers braving the Chaldwastes have returned with reports of exquisitely sculpted statues of ice and snow that seem to defy the laws of nature. Often attributed to the same weirdness as the Colossi, the true artists are a sect of druids known as the Cryomantic Assemblage. Their ancient charge was protecting the beauty and sanctity of the Rime. With such a harsh and unforgiving climate, few despoilers find the risk worth the meager reward. So they took the beauty aspect to heart and began to dot the landscape with these Cryomantic Assemblages. Any who disturb or destroy these works of art will be met with swift, frigid justice.

You might find:
- A sculpture that defies logic. Four spears of ice, whose points are touching, are balanced on the corners of a cube of powder snow.
- The crunching of ice and snow as a sculpture springs to life, with limbs made of frozen shards.
- A broken statue. Nearby is a dead body, suspended in the air by whorling spirals of jagged red ice. The victim's blood. A clear warning.

GM PRINCIPLES

Embrace the beauty in desolation - Most think of lush forests or jungles when picturing nature's majesty. But the stark emptiness of a seemingly lifeless ice field, or a remote glacier pushing into the ocean come with a special beauty all their own. It's the beauty of the bleak and barren but also of tenacious endurance. Every animal that thrives here and every plant pushing through the tundra are miracles of their own making.

Make clear that survival is a struggle - The desolation is punctuated by the stark reality that most things that are living in this climate will soon be dead. The nights are colder than imagination can comprehend, and days are only marginally better. Food of any type comes at a premium in trade, or requires specialized skills to hunt or gather. Resources for building are scarce, so civilization's hold here has been and will continue to be tenuous at best.

Define how nature's harsh indifference has shaped life here - The people of these climes are a hardy and resourceful folk. No where else in the realm can you see rations stretched further, or more creative uses for traditional supplies. Travelers to these frigid climes will find folk are wary of outsiders, but should they make a true friend it will be one for life. Survival is paramount, and those not helping that cause are probably working against it.

LANDMARKS

Icecage Passage

Number of Unsuccessful Attempts to Chart Passage via Ship: 134
Number of Survivors That Have Returned from Unsuccessful Attempts: 3

Sailors and traders have looked at the frozen seas for years, hungering for a faster way around the continent. The Icecage Passage perpetually tempts them as they calculate costs and travel time, easily able to shave off weeks at sea. But it's not without its pitfalls. To start, one needs a specialized icebreaker vessel to even hope to pass through. Second, no one has been able to properly chart it with as the topography changes with the whims of the sea ice.. Even if progress is made, it's impossible to turn back as the ice seals the path behind them every night Running out of supplies is one of the more common ways crews have been lost... And there are things out in the ice floes worse than any natural danger.

Frozen Egress (Feature)

For three quarters of the year, this stretch of water just outside of Rimelock Bay is frozen solid and impossible to cross via ship and those foolish enough to cross it on foot deserve whatever is coming to them. In those few months where the ice pack is broken up, it's not uncommon to see a number of ships docked at Rimelock Bay while they stock up on last minute supplies before attempting to push through the Icecage Passage. Locals in Rimelock Bay are happy to see the money roll in during the warm months, but it's always with a tinge of guilt. *It's always a sad day when a regular merchant decides they want to cut corners and take the passage this year. They rarely see them the next.*

Dorne Mike'los, Captain of the Shattersquall [Seaborne Daemon, they/them]
Difficulty: 15
Brave, dashing, loquacious
Experience: Commander +2, Navigation +2, Witty Repartee +1
Look: A consummate explorer and ship captain who is too handsome for the amount of frostbite they've endured.
Motive: Chart the Icecage Passage. And be the first.

Haunted Ice Pack (Threat)

When the sea freezes over it creates walkable, albeit dangerous and chaotic, plates of jagged ice known as an ice pack. It can seal in ships, collapse randomly, and eventually crush anything held by it. It's a place most locals warn would-be explorers away from. Do they listen? The menagerie of ghosts, shades, undead crews, and haunted ships evidences that they did not. Even for the most robust ships this isa danger filled trip through frozen waters, but the dead that stalk the floes of solid ice make it downright harrowing. Nightly attacks are common, and ships passing through these waters must be prepared for that inevitability as well. *The cryomantic assemblers in the Rimegrove keep the worst of this place from crossing onto shore. Still, it's always a nightmare to encounter a Graveship that has wandered into the Chaldwastes.*

The Rimegrove (Settlement)

A small forest of trees made of ice, with a canopy of fresh snow, that skirts the borders of the Chaldwastes and the ice pack of the IcecagePassage. In the heart of this crystalline forest is a small walled enclosure full of huts, above a small network of tunnels that pop up throughout the forest. While they can be found all over the Rime, this place is the home of the druids of the Cryomantic Assemblage. *They do not appreciate outsiders entering their grove, but have been known to entertain invited guests with shows featuring live sculpting and sweet delicacies made from flavored ice.*

The Chaldwastes

Worm Runs: Local hunters can often be found partaking in fiercely competitive group hunts to take down roving clews of chaldworms.

Beautified Landscape: The Cryomantic Assemblage has used this flat, bleak landscape as a blank canvas and filled with icy wonders beyond compare.

What most folks picture when tales are told of the Rime. Flat, endless, white wastes cut through with frigid winds and blistering cold. Those stories are true, but they don't paint the whole picture. Massive metallic heads, outstretched arms, hands, fingers belonging to the myriad of colossi dot the landscape and create pockets of warmth making travel conditions just a hair below unbearable. Pair this with the frozen statuary that peppers the ice and the right vista affords one of the most breathtaking views this realm has to offer... on the rare day a blizzard isn't raging across it. Conversations between friends have been cut off mid sentence, only for the other to discover their traveling companion fell down a chaldworm hole.

Chaldworm Hunting Grounds (Threat)

With their huge bodies, superheated head plates, unerring tremor sense, and pack mentality travelers passing through the Chaldwastes are under constant threat from below. Moving in clews of three to six, these predators will attack anything smaller than them and regularly feed on mammoths... just to give a sense of scale. Still, their oil and armored plates, and delicious meat are in high demand, and hunters frequent these icy plains to get a cut of the action. *Many make their livelihood hunting these worms, passing techniques from generation to generation. Young Wormhunters who have yet to earn their first burn scar from a worm are known as 'Clew Chew.'*

The Glass Gardens (Outpost)

One of the Cryomantic Assemblage's outposts is surrounded by a wall of ice, polished clear, flanked on both ends by gates of solid snow that collapse into powder and reassemble when opening and closing. Inside is an impossible place. A fruit orchard and vegetable garden surrounding a small farmstead. All of it is ice but it's extremely edible and is some of the most savory, succulent, and sweet produce if one can get past the universally crunchy texture and icy temperature. *The druids who live here are happy to feed anyone seeking a meal, and are very proud of their unique culinary concoctions. It's always delicious but sometimes unpleasant to eat when all one wants is a hot meal... but they do excel at cold soups.*

The Cryoclast (Location)

Surrounding a large mining encampment, built over an exposed vein of platinum, are six humanoid skeletons clutching staves and made entirely of solid ice. The encampment is the size of a small village, complete with a clockwork mining rig, storage warehouses, company housing, store, infirmary, and the people who live and work there. To say it's all frozen is an understatement. Everything has been changed, on a molecular level, into ice. There is no flesh or wood or iron. Nothing but solid ice. It's haunting to pass through this place, doomed for their trespasses against the Assemblage. *Every detail is preserved perfectly: the pores on someone's nose, each individual beard hair, the slight warping of the wood on the side of a house, the intricate cog-work of the drill.*

The Blood Glacier

Cult Activity: Many cults frequent this place, performing strange rites in the crimson waters
Feeling of Being Watched: Dark figures lurk at the borders of peripheral vision, disappearing when looked at.

The Blood Glacier is always a disturbing sight to come across when leaving the Chaldwastes, a crimson stain on a canvas of pure white. Situated at the edge of a mountain range at the far end of the Rime. This glacier is a craggy mix of black rock and red ice, as runoff from the glacier pools like blood in the snow. Because of its macabre appearance, most locals avoid the place, considering it cursed.

Sanguine Falls (Location)

A partially frozen waterfall that cascades down a cliff over 200 feet tall. The waters that flow from the top are tainted with a ferrous substance that turns the water a brilliant crimson color, and looks like flowing and frozen blood. It's enough for most to get one look and turn away… in either fear or wisdom. This is a place where travelers always feel watched, where light moves in ways it shouldn't, and where gravity behaves poorly. *Explorers have returned with reports of strange cults performing rituals in the waters of the falls. The details of their tales are fuzzy and almost always end with them joining in the festivities somehow.*

Ferrous Giant (Location)

Atop the falls are a series of massive, tiered hot spring pools and the source of the sanguine waters. Splayed over the springs are the bones of a colossal humanoid, pierced through with a spear three stories tall. The bones are solid iron, and the rust mingling with the spring water creates the flowing "blood" that is seen from below. *This is the only colossus in the area that does not have a metal outer shell, leading some to speculate what is actually underneath the frozen colossi in the wastes.*

Strange Happenings (Feature)

From the weird cults that flit about the crimson waters, to the odd occurrences of gravity reversal, to the giant bones that bleed rust into the water, to the piles of frozen bodies at the base of the falls dissuading climbers… this place is full of weird, eldritch energies. So much so that animals stay away from it, and even the biting wind seems to avoid the glacier. *Some have claimed to feel like they are being watched the whole time, and they likely are. But by whom… that remains up for debate.*

Awaken the Giant Countdown

A consequence for a miss can always be a mark against the countdown.

8 – Nine mysterious figures appear around the ferrous giant, chanting.

7 – Arcane runes and symbols light up the sky around the falls.

6 – Gravity begins to act strange around the falls as the figures bodies dissolve into liquid.

5 – A new star appears in the sky... no. A moon. The sun does not ascend that morning.

4 – The moon descends into low orbit, held aloft by thirteen wings.

3 – The moon warps, turning into a giant head from which it extrudes a proportionate body.

2 – The moon person pulls the spear from the giant, ascending back into space, disappearing.

1 – The iron skeleton awakens, its organs sprouting as sinewy flesh regrows over it. Skin callusing as the sun, rising again, passes over it.

0 – Fully reformed, the impossibly tall colossus pulls itself into the sun, curling into a fetal position inside its cosmic womb.

Settlements

Rimelock Bay

Severe Markups: Merchant's and explorers wanting to cut through the Icecage Passage will find the price of goods soaring.

Worm Meat, Four Ways: Chaldworm hunters often return here to preserve, process, and sell the meat, oil, and carapace from the worms. When a successful worm hunt coincides with a provision shipment there's always an impromptu town-wide cooking contest.

The biggest settlement in the region and really the only place with frequent visitors. Situated at the mouth of the Icecage Passage, a half-ring of basalt pillars, rising hundreds of feet tall juts out into the water, creating a large and welcoming bay free from rough waters and easy to keep clear of ice. It's often called the last stop before the pole, as it's the first and last spot anyone is able to reliably resupply in the Rime. It's a safe community that watches out for its own and doesn't have a watch. Criminals are dealt with swiftly, often bagged and left out in the Chaldwastes to fend for themselves with only a blanket, flint, and a handful of jerky. The locals here get on well with the nearby Assemblage, leaving them be and respecting their art by appreciating it from afar.

Rimelock Gateway Bazaar (Market)

A massive warehouse down by the docks, this is where all the moving and shaking happens. A boisterous place with its own meadhall, locals and visitors gather to eat and drink even if they have no trade to do. Worm headplates are competitively weighed at market, with the hunters taking home hefty purses from merchants eager to purchase the winning carapaces. *Those looking for work can always find someone who needs an extra hand with a supply run or a rescue mission in the Bazaar.*

Quentin 'Qube' Hubert, Frigid Wizard [Ice Elemental, he/him]
Difficulty: 16
Curious, unassuming, good-humored
Experience: Ancient History +1, Forbidden Knowledge +2 Magical Knowledge +2
Look: A block of solid, polished ice who can crush a portion of itself to form a face and limbs. He wears a bright yellow toga, wrapping around what would have been one of his shoulders if he had any.
Motive: Exploration. Qube was once a mortal man. But by discovering a powerful, frozen, and eldritch tome, managed to turn himself into an ice elemental permanently. Which suits him, honestly, as he uses his new form to explore the furthest reaches of the Rime.

Jaded Locals (Feature)

Locals have seen so many come and go through here, only to never return, that they don't invest much in new faces. It's not that the people of Rimelock don't care, but they can't afford to. If they start getting to know that fresh-faced adventurer they may come to realize they like them. If they like them they're inevitably going to have to go find them when they fall down an ice chasm, get pinned down by worms, or frozen up to their necks by angry druids. It's just not worth it. *A true friend here is worth a thousand in a warmer climate. They are few and far between, so those that find them hold them close.*

Cinthia Trin, Ice Runner [Ridgeborne Halfling, she/her]
Difficulty: 14
Tireless, indomitable, fierce
Experience: Athlete +1, Bloodhound +1, Quartermaster +2, Tracking +1
Look: Never without her snow hounds. Scarred, weary, and always draped in heavy pelts to ward off the cold.
Motive: The Loop. Take the package. Bring it to the destination. Take the next package. Bring it to the destination. Keep moving. Can't stop. Too many rely on her.

Last Stop (Location)

While most inns have their own tavern below, the stewards of the Last Stop would just as soon send its tenants to the bazaar's mead hall, or one of the many fine establishments around town if they need a meal. But if they need any last minute supplies... Some rope and pitons? No problem. A jar of worm oil? They probably have at least one. Some snow shoes? They'd love to offer some Friction Boots but sold their last pair to a sickly looking explorer just yesterday. If anyone happens to stumble onto those boots, they'd happily buy them back. All of their merchandise is branded so it's easy to spot. *Some people see the proprietors as shady and cold, but the truth is they are just incredibly practical. Out here it's all finders keepers, they just make sure to let everyone know what a generous buyback policy they have.*

Krulhatch

Fish Focused: Visitors to Krulhatch better have a taste for fish, because they aren't likely eating much else around here.
Harder Partiers: Despite the harsh conditions, the folks who call Krulhatch home are a boisterous bunch who love an excuse to party.

A town situated at the outer reaches of the Chaldwastes, built on stilts atop a lake frozen all but two weeks out of the year. The lake below the small village is home to a unique fish that returns once a year to spawn in its unfrozen waters. The types of folks it attracts are those that loathe civilized society… or those that civilized society has summarily rejected. The families that rule the town are more like loose knit clans, composed of both blood kin and not. It's hard living here, but those two weeks when the fish spawn make the rest of the year all worth it.

Krulfish (Feature)

A bullet shaped fish about three feet long with iridescent orange scales and knifelike spines on their tails. It gives off one of the worst smells ever smelled, but the gland can be removed making processing it much more tolerable. The Krulfish wine, smoked jerky, and pickle exports support the entire community. The oil from the fish is both flammable and pyrophobic, a valuable alchemical component. *Foreign Krulfish orders are put in years in advance, in hopes of getting a delicious cut of the action. In such demand that even kings and queens have had their orders turned down.*

The Spawnarch Festival (Festival)

The Spawnarch Festival takes place over the week leading up to the thaw of the lake and the two weeks after while the krulfish spawn in the waters below the town. It's the most important time of year, and a bad festival portents a hard year to come. The whole town lays out nets on the ice, divided by family teams, and waits for the ice to crack. When the nets fall into the water the festival is in full swing. When the spawn finishes, the nets are drug up and the fish are sorted, counted, and processed. It all ends with an incredible feast where fish are prepared in more ways than could be imagined. The games at this feast are legendary. Competitors greased up with krulfish oil lit on fire and try to push one another out of the ring before the oil burns off. Families offer up fiercely competitive krulfish recipes for judgment with prizes awarded. Competitors flyt with one another, trading increasingly hilarious and personal barbs. *The Trivig Family "Krul-Krunch Wafer" is the recipe to beat, remaining undefeated three years running. And don't even try to go toe to toe, flyting, with anyone from the Gauso Family.*

Spawnarch Festival Countdown

A consequence for a miss can always be a mark against the countdown.

8 - The town begins preparations. Colorful nets with weights and family markings are placed on the ice.

7 - Elaborate fish themed decorations are put out.

6 - The ice cracks, and the nets sink. The whole town gets really drunk that night.

5 - The falls at the end of the lake begin to flow again. The whole town gets really drunk that night.

4 - The first krulfish arrives to spawn. The whole town gets really drunk that night.

3 - The egg sacks float to the surface and begin to float down river, signaling the end of the spawn. Everyone… gets a good night's rest.

2 - A brutal three day process of pulling the nets up before the krulfish are counted and weighed. The majority is packed in salt or put into fermentation barrels.

1 - A great fish feast where the town's families and guests compete in cooking contests, feats of strength, and flyting.

0 - The Spawnarch is crowned! The whole town gets really drunk that night.

Family Champions (Feature)

Each family team is led by a champion. These champions are responsible for the performance of their team that year, and their decisions make or break their chances of victory. A mostly ceremonial win, but one that gives the winning family first press and pick on the krulfish goods they will sell. From where to position the nets, to leading the harvest pull, to choosing competitors (or participating themselves) in the feast games, it's a position with a lot of inherent pressure. *Families are very fierce about their internal selection process every year, as one bad champion can send their annual haul into a spiral they may not recover from.*

Homer Noft, Noft Family Champion [Orderborne Dwarf, he/him]
Difficulty: 16
welcoming, cheerful, fiercely competitive
Experience: *Animal Handling +1 , Athlete +1, Swimming +2, Wrestling +1*
Look: Dresses for comfort and warmth, but always displays his family's color (orange).
Motive: Sustainability. The krulfish count is lowering every year. They need to find a balance or their way of life will disappear. As long as he wins the Spawnarch crown the Nofts can can set the trade agenda for the year.

Yarla Boch, Trivig Family Champion [Orderborne Firbolg, she/her]
Difficulty: 15
ambitious, uncompromising, gutsy
Experience: *Athlete +2, Keen Senses +1, Wrestling +2, Witty Repartee +1*
Look: Unusually tall and sturdy, even for a firbolg. Either out of misplaced insecurity or genuine hardiness, she doesn't dress for the cold.
Motive: Humiliate the Nofts. She doesn't care if she wins the crown or not. The Nofts have looked down on the Trivig Family for years and it's time they got their comeuppance.

Barit Gauso, Gauso Family Champion [Wildborne Human, she/they]
Difficulty: 17
cocky, amorous, dashing
Experience: *Acrobat +2, Commander +1, Flirting +2, Witty Repartee +2, Wrestling +1*
Look: More put together than they've any right to be out here. Great hair, especially. And shoulders. Gams too.
Motive: Spark joy. She just wants to have a good time and put on a good show for the village. Life is hard enough around here. She cares about Krulhatch so much and longs for a way to attract those who have left back to its way of life.

Klim Lanz, Stray House Champion [Slyborne Elf, he/him]
Difficulty: 14
Cunning, unscrupulous, nasty
Experience: *Bandit +2, Feigned Incompetence +1, Intrusion +1, Spy +1, Witty Repartee +1*
Look: Unkempt mountain of a man, with arms like tree trunks.
Motive: His house holding the crown means first tap on all fish oils and wines, which always go for the highest price. He doesn't care what happens to Krulhatch, only what he can extract in the short term.

Silver Salvation (Excavation Site 2-A)

Silver Colossus: With just its fingertips poking out, encased in hundreds of feet of solid ice, is a humongous statue of a human cast in solid, untarnishable silver.
Faint Stirrings On the rare night, when the howling wind prefers to whisper, some say they can hear a soft, slow beating in the giant's chest.

While there is always a tent, or small cluster of shanties that form around the myriad limbs of the metal colossi, Silver Salvation is the only town that has managed to last. Situated in the middle of the Chaldwastes, the founders of Silver Salvation discovered a colossus that was surrounded by tunnels bored through the ice, all around its body and descending down to its waist. What's not known to the folk who make this home is it was one of the first excavation sites, carved into the ice by the Ramiform Ecclesiarch Network, and where they found the first Prophetic Discs. Long abandoned, and for reasons the Network refuses to discuss, it has become a bustling community complete with a small underground ice farm, courtesy of the Assemblage, who keeps a watchful eye on this place.

Ice Tunnels (Feature)

When the folks who decided to make this a permanent home found it, they were surprised to find a network of tunnels snaking around the colossus. These tunnels are perfectly smooth and round, with a flat bottom. Some sort of tool and a LOT of worm oil were probably used to make them. Regardless, they connect all over the body, with larger chambers around the waist, left hand and arm, the chest, and the neck. *Personal homes, shops, and even a little pub can be found tucked away, nestled in the comfortable warmth radiating off the colossus.*

Wee Finger's Pub (Location)

An open floorplan pub, built into a large chamber around the left hand, which is curled into a fist other than the little finger, which extends downward into the ice. The bar is built in a circle around the finger, which is stacked with shelves of spirits. Locals and visitors alike dine here, as it's the only public house in the tiny settlement. *There's not really an owner, and the locals just take turns running the bar depending on who has the energy that day. Service ain't great but what else is there?*

Ice Farm (Location)

A gift from the nearby Cryomantic Assemblage. While the temperature makes it comfortable to live around the colossus, farming is still impossible and initially made for some months of empty stomachs. The Assemblage took pity on the small town and gifted them an Ice Farm, similar to the one in the Glass Garden. At least one assembler is always on hand to tend to the garden. In exchange, the populace has

agreed to report any strange visitors seeking artifacts, cracks forming around the colossus, and not to dig any deeper around it. *While the folks who call this place home are not inherently suspicious of visitors, their deal with the druids forces them to report on anyone entering and leaving.*

FACTIONS

Ramiform Ecclesiarch Network

Inscrutable Mythos: Depending on who is asked results in an entirely different answer as to "what it all means."
Decentralized Network: This is not a group that gathers often, and it shows. Most don't care for the others.

A loose knit group of powerful individuals who call themselves Ecclesiarchs, seek to quash the evils of this realm and bring about a new age. But their methodology is strange at best… and downright eldritch at worst. They base their beliefs around the writings from a disc made of a metal not found in the Mortal Realm. Through careful study of ancient texts and prophecy they created a translation cypher and extrapolated their core beliefs from there. They have fingers everywhere, seeking out powerful sources of magic and sites of ancient prophecy. Their search has become unified for the first time in many years, converging in these ice blasted plain to find… something.

Cure for Stagnation (Feature)

No one believes themselves to be the bad guy, and the Network is no exception. Where their goals converge is in the idea of a new genesis. Starting over from scratch with, presumably, themselves as the architects of a new era. This decision, of course, to reshape the realm is made while paying no mind to the people who actually live in it. *What does this mean for this epoch? None of them care. This age is over, a decaying husk not fit to support life, progress, or meaning.*

Artifact Caches (Feature)

They are nothing if not fastidious and efficient collectors. From auction houses to dungeon delves to secure vaults, the Network can always be found where the ancient and powerful surfaces. No one knows, even within the network, why they need such a robust collection of magical items. But they have them all the same. Stranger still, these same items are rarely utilized… even in instances that would further their goals. They are saving them for something. But what? *The Ecclesiarchs exploring these wastes have been known to travel with massive sealed caches. Some of their expeditions have been less than successful, forcing them to abandon these treasure troves among the ice.*

Excavation Sites (Locations)

The first prophecy disc was found at Excavation Site 2-A, clutched in the left hand. The second was found lodged in the eye of Surface Site 4-F. The Ecclesiarchs have been sourcing the colossi of the Chaldwastes and beyond, hoping to find more answers, context, or direction. They have enough collective wealth that when a site becomes too hostile or doesn't turn up anything of value they have no problem leaving the entire operation behind and starting from scratch on the next one. *The myriad of outposts and homes*

surrounding the colossi, along with Silver Salvation are all the results of abandoned Network excavation sites.

Principles

As the Ecclesiarchs are as varied as they are distant from one another, there are very few guiding principles, but below are a few of the translated lines of prophecy that seem to guide their hand and thoughts.

- *"The New Age, birthed by the benevolence of the Ecclesiarch…"*
- *" The fallen giant, sanguine and ferrous, holds the key. It must be made whole again…"*
- *"Call forth the moon above the land of unshed blood that always falls, only she can unpierce the cold heart of the realm…"*

NPCs

Varlan Borillos, True Believing Ecclesiarch [Slyborne Daemon, he/him]
Difficulty: 14
fanatical, compassionate, immovable
Experience: *Wisdom of the Centuries +2, Divination +1,*
Look: Practically but impeccable, with everything showing the newness and quality of the material and make.
Motive: This realm holds so many evils… The prophecy states that by becoming the living vessel for change they can start the mortal realm anew, washing away the sins of the previous age. So why shouldn't they?

Oskar Zahk, Wary Ecclesiarch [Loreborne Katari, he/they]
Difficulty: 14
paranoid, brilliant, volatile
Experience: *Magical Knowledge +3, Bloodhound +2*
Look: Eccentric scholar chic. It's clear he has great wealth so he chooses to look *that* way. Too many straps and buckles for books and scrolls.
Motive: Progress has stagnated. Innovation has died. We have failed as an age. Gods. Mortals. All of it. Starting over from scratch is the only way to make things right again.

Dara Mutte, Disillusioned Ecclesiarch [Highborne Faun, she/her]
Difficulty: 15
Meticulous, hedonistic, assured
Experience: *Socialite +3, Luxury +5*
Look: A fashionable woman of luxury who looks delightfully out of place in this climate. She has gold and platinum facial tattoos that snake down from her chin to, presumably, her hooves.
Motive: There is nothing in this life left for her. She's ready to move on, and doesn't care if the rest of the realm isn't, as long as whatever waits on the other end of it is something decadently different.

Story Hooks

A clade of crymantic assemblers guards an esoteric tablet he requires for one of his rituals but their ice fortress is seemingly impenetrable. Varlan needs a large supply of Worm Oil in order to get in.

Oskar needs assistance in breaking an ancient language cypher that may reveal key points of prophecy they've yet to unlock.

Dara has heard of a village at the far reaches of civilization reliant on a special kind of fish. She needs a champion so that she may assume the crown of the Spawnarch and, presumably, control the village's trade.

Rimeblood Orphans

Genuine Heroes: It's often hard to tell who the real "heroes" are. These folk are. Rarely staying in one place for too long, the Orphans wander the Rime searching for those in need.
Life of Service: Almost all of the Rimeblood Orphans began their training as children, but are not forced to continue as adults. Almost all of them choose to.

Settlements collapse, settlers go missing, travelers fall victim to chaldworm attacks... What unifies all of these is that the children traveling with these folk had no choice in this matter. Losing one's parent to a misguided hunt, or a botched supply run is all too common. The Rimeblood Orphans are a group of wandering do-gooders who were all once victims of similar circumstances, childhood orphans who lost their parents for reasons beyond their control. No one knows how they started, but the Rimeblood Orphans continue their good work of rescuing lost, abandoned, and orphaned children in the wastes. If they have no kin to reconnect with, they are taken into their order and fed, housed, and trained in the ways of the Rime. They serve under a mentor until they come of age after which they are given a choice. They can leave and make a life of their own, or they can stay and continue their good work: serving and protecting the lost children of the frozen wastes.

Bear Sledges (Feature)

The Rimeblood Orphans are hard to mistake, and one of the main reasons is they have trained a large maul of snow bears to pull their heavy camp sledges. The bears are surprisingly docile and friendly, unless unleashed in a fight. The sledges they pull are laden with supplies, and even have places for several wee folk to sleep comfortably and warm while the sledge continues on its journey. *It's always cause for celebration when a bear sledge pulls into Rimelock Bay and five or six children come pouring out of every nook, cranny, and satchel on the sledge.*

Peerless Guides (Feature)

If one needs a guide, travelers could do much worse and not much better, than employing a Rimeblood Orphan. They've learned how to read the path of blizzards, know where ice fishing is easiest, what parts of the ice pack to avoid entirely, and how to tell if a cryomantic assembler is friendly or not. Their services don't come cheap, as these proud do-gooders need something to fund their mission. *It's not uncommon to see deals struck between adventurers and a Rimeblood Orphan where they will serve as guide, but should they need to rescue someone, their contracted mission will be put on hold at the orphans discretion.*

Rimeblood Charity (Feature)

No Rimeblood Orphan pays for food or lodging anywhere in this area. The locals know who they are and what they do, and it's become a long standing tradition to offer room and board to any who ride into town regardless of if they have children with them or not. In turn, the Rimeblood Orphans hold it sacred that they must be consummate guests. *Even the gruffest and most misanthropic among them turn into charming guests, swapping stories, songs, and life lessons for their meals and board.*

Principles

There is nothing written in stone, or ice, about the way a Rimeblood Orphan should or should not behave. Instead, these lessons are passed from mentor to initiate over multiple cycles, so much so that they may as well be permanently engraved somewhere.

- *"Never forget that one guaranteed life saved is worth a dozen possible lives if it means you can still rescue someone tomorrow."*
- *"Extend the same charity extended to us when hosted. Leave the bitter cold that surrounds your heart with the bears, and open yourself up to the warmth of companionship and friends."*
- *"Every child deserves a choice. Arm them with the knowledge and skills to choose their life's direction. Even if it diverges from ours."*

NPCs

Nicto Greel, Silent Savior [Wanderborne Drakona, he/him]
Difficulty: 12
Stoic, Focused, Mute
Experience: *Wrangle +2, Navigation +2, Quartermaster +1*
Look: Ebony of scale, tall and wide of build. His face is covered with lacerations. He's old, and been at this a long time.
Motive: Save whole families. Nicto doesn't care to mentor anyone, and endeavors to rescue families along with their children.

Valah Sharpe, Wandering Songsmith [Seaborne Dwarf, she/her]
Difficulty: 8
Boisterous, Talkative, Nurturing
Experience: *Bloodhound +2, Witty Repartee +1*
Look: Brightly dyed furs, easy to spot. Wildly dyed hair and styled beard. She definitely has a distinct and unmistakable flare, and stands out as a bright spot of warmth in the endless fields of white. **Motive:** Give the kids a good time. Losing a parent is terrible. She would know. The least she can do is make them laugh.

Gunge Halfjaw, Worm Bait [Wildborne Goblin, they/them]
Difficulty: 14
Thrill seeking, Brave, Selfless
Experience: *Ambusher +2, Keen Senses +2, Tremor Sense +1*
Look: Encased in worm carapace armor, his pale orange skin contrasting nicely with the gray-blue of the worm-shell. Half his jaw has been replaced by wormbone scrimshaw.
Motive: Keep the wormways safe. They'd rather prevent tragedy to begin with, so they focus their efforts in the Chaldwastes where chaldworms are most frequent.

Story Hooks

A caravan, composed of four families, destined for Silver Salvation didn't cross the third checkpoint and some fear the worst.

The runaway child of a monarch has gone missing out in the wastes, and a hefty reward will be bestowed on whoever can reunite him with his family.

In defiance of regional custom, a small outpost in the Chaldwastes is refusing to grant charity to passing Rimeblood Orphans. The Orphans seek no repudiation, just an outsider to figure out why and report back.

Resources

	MOMENTS OF HOPE		MOMENTS OF FEAR
1	*A clear, crisp, blue morning.*	1	*A blizzard so thick it blots out the sun.*
2	*A warm fire after a cold day.*	2	*The ice rumbles and cracks beneath.*
3	*A huddle of penguins waddles past on the way to a fishing hole.*	3	*Unholy howls drift onto land from the icepack.*
4	*A swig of fine whiskey to warm the bones.*	4	*A body whose blood is drained and frozen in a macabre sculpture above it. A warning.*
5	*Sunrise glints off an outstretched, colossal hand.*	5	*Mysterious figures, chanting under an unscheduled lunar eclipse.*
6	*Fresh catch roasting on a nearby fire.*	6	*A maul of snow bears taking down a supply sledge.*
7	*A group of hunters bring down a massive ice worm in the distance.*	7	*A corpse, frozen and preserved for many years.*
8	*The sun sets, painting the white landscape in vivid pinks and oranges.*	8	*A Rimeblood Orphan gently explains to a child what happened to her parents. She weeps.*

9	*The howling wings abate, giving purchase to peaceful silence.*	9	*A roiling blizzard moves in quickly from the horizon.*
10	*A raucous mead hall, full of celebration and song.*	10	*A distant avalanche grows closer and closer still.*
11	*Ice sculptures, whose craftsmanship is beyond compare.*	11	*A group of frozen poachers, each in their own personal column of ice.*
12	*A lost child reuniting with their parents, their rescuer nearby.*	12	*In the distance, a ship is crushed into splinters by the shifting icepack.*

Rumors

Someone is attempting to sabotage the nets during Krulhatch's Spawnarch festival. The town elders need someone to investigate it quietly.

A mysterious group has been excavating a frozen colossi for unknown reasons. Some of the locals are scared of what could happen if the colossi gets fully uncovered.

The Rimeblood Orphans aim to take down an ice dragon that destroyed a small outpost in the Chaldwastes, and are seeking some extra hands.

Locals say that sleeping next to a colossi results in terrifying dreams. Some tell of a moon becoming a face. Others of a sun cracking open like an egg. Some even say they've seen metal giants wade through seas of blood and fire in their nightmares.

A merchant in Rimelock Bay was thrown in jail for selling tainted rations to an icebreaker frigate attempting the Icecage Passage. The Magistrate wants to make it right, and send a supply run of food to the ship… but it's likely trapped deep in the Haunted Icepack.

Equipment

Rimeshot Crossbow - Agility Close - d6 (magic) - One-Handed
Feature: Iceburst Bolts (*Mark a Stress before an attack roll to also attack any other creatures within melee range of the target.*)
Primary Weapon

Worm Shield - Finesse Melee - d4 (phy) - One-Handed
Feature: Self Sealing Carapace (*Add +3 to armor score. Repairs itself 1d4 armor slots during a long rest*)
Secondary Weapon

Cryoclast Armor - Base Score: 7
Feature: Shattershard (When marking armor slots, deal 1d10 magic damage to the attacker per armor marked. This armor cannot be repaired.)
Armor

Items

Pocket Fire. The magic isn't actually the fire, but rather the small square of magically treated cloth that it's wrapped in. The flame can be removed from the cloth and placed on flammable material to instantly create a small campfire that lasts up to 8 hours unless doused. The cloth can be used to grab a handful of fire to be stored for future use.

Icesight Goggles. Many beasts of the frozen wastes use the ice and snow as camouflage. These goggles detect minute heat signatures in blood and breath while also sharpening focus and giving a more detailed view of the monochromatic landscape, giving advantage on instinct rolls when in icy climates.

Friction Boots. Heavy, warm boots with fantastic ankle support and magically attuned soles that adjust the friction to adapt to difficult surfaces of all kinds. The wearer is immune to slipping and falling on hazardous surfaces, and has advantage on rolls to keep themselves from being moved against their will.

Consumables

Hunter's Ice. A small tab of black ice that, when placed under the tongue, lowers their body temperature to the same as the air around it, making detection by temperature impossible and renders them immune to the effects of extreme cold weather for the next 8 hours.

Ice Mansion. A tightly packed snowball that upon closer inspection is covered in complex creases and lines. When thrown it unfurls creating a large shelter made of ice. Inside is a bed, a cook pot, and some fur blankets. It can safely house up to 4 people for a long rest before it collapses into powdered snow.

Worm Oil. Excreted and distilled from the heat glands of the chaldworms, this oily substance can be used to coat an object or small area. Once applied, that object or surface is superheated, dealing 2d6 magic damage to any creature that touches it for the next hour. It will rapidly melt any ice it is pressed against, allowing creatures pushing or holding a superheated object to move at half speed through solid ice.

Chaldworm

A dangerous reality of hunting in the frozen climates, as well as a well kept secret delicacy enjoyed by those that live on the fringes of the realm. They are armor plated, with a large, thick, spade-shaped plate covering their heads. They can secrete an oil from a specialized gland that coats their armor, super heating it, enabling them to rapidly travel through solid ice and strike their prey from below. These massive worms, when felled, provide a delicate meat, powerful glandular oil, and armor plates that can be formed into fine shields with the right crafter.

Chaldworm - Ambusher

Motives & Tactics: *Separate, Ambush, Retreat*

Attack Modifier: +2

Thrash: Close | 3d8 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 2 | **Major** 10 | **Severe** 20

HP: 6

Stress: 4

Experience:
Stealth +3
Tracking +1

Moves

Frozen Delicacy
When killed the worm can be harvested with a Finesse (14) roll for its succulent and highly nutritious meat, glandular oil, and armored plates. The glandular oil can be processed into Worm Oil, and the armored plates can be crafted into a Worm Shield.

Superheat
Spend Fear to secrete oil from its glands and superheat its headplate for the next hour. It glows white hot, dealing an additional 1d8 magic when it uses Thrash. The Chaldworm can only use its other abilities superheated.

Tunnel
While superheated, the Chaldworm can move through solid ice at a rapid speed. It leaves a large tunnel in its wake.

Ice Breach
While superheated, mark a Stress to accelerate rapidly while under a target, bursting out of the ice and launching them into the air. As the ground rumbles, the target must first make an Agility (14) reaction roll or be made Vulnerable. Then, as the worm bursts out of the ice, it makes a melee attack with a +6 attack modifier. On a success, the target takes 2d10 phys and 1d10 magic damage, and is thrown into far range.

Cryomantic Assembler

When exploring the frozen poles, travelers have whispered tales of impossible and beautiful sculptures and structures formed from ice and snow. These are the work of cryomantic assemblers, an ancient druidic order dedicated to preserving this desolate landscape. But the truth is… nature sort of deals with its own problems up here. So there isn't much for them to do besides beautify. But when called upon to defend their works, they do so with the abandon of an artist in the throes of creative inspiration.

Cryomantic Assembler - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Summon, Surround, Observe*

Attack Modifier: +3

Cryomancy: Close | 2d10+5 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 3 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 15

HP: 5

Stress: 4

Experience:
Preservation +3
Navigation +2

Moves

Living Ice
Spend a Fear to bring nearby ice to life. Roll 1d6 and create a number of humanoid sized chunks of ice animate as constructs based on the result. They use the following stats:

Animated Ice – Standard
Bash: *Melee | 1d6 phy*
Difficulty: *10*
Minor 1 / *Major* 4 / *Severe* 6
HP: *3*

Whenever the cryomanic assembler activates, they activate as well.

Frigid Detonation
Mark a Stress to choose up to 3 living ice constructs to detonate. Each one does 2d6 direct magic damage to all creatures in close range that are not living ice or cryomantic assemblers.

Icepack
Spend a Fear when 3 or more living ice are adjacent to an enemy. The target is *restrained* as the living ice grows over them. At the start of their next turn they must use their action to make a **Strength (14)** reaction roll or become frozen solid. When frozen solid they are incapacitated and cannot move, act, or speak until someone breaks them free.

Sad tales tell of exploration vessels lost to the unfeeling and dangerous icepack of the frozen seas. Whether they charted it for fame or trade they all ended the same. Starving, crushed, and frozen. These graveships are their terrifying legacy. Their business unfinished, the entire crew becomes a necromantic vortex that possesses the entire ship as a singular being, and transforms it into a macabre mockery of a giant humanoid form made of ship parts.

Icepack Graveship - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Bombard, Shed, Consume*

Attack Modifier: +4

Ice Hull: Melee | 3d12 phy

Difficulty: 16

Minor 7I | **Major** 16 | **Severe** 25

HP: 6

Stress: 6

Experience: Sail +5

Moves

Cannon Fodder
Spend a Fear to load the cannon with someone or something on deck. Roll a 1d6 to load the cannon with the following: 1-2: Skeleton Warrior. 3: Skeleton Archer. 4-5 Boloshot. 6: Explosive barrels.

Fire!
Mark a Stress to fire the contents of your cannon. Choose a target and make an attack. On a success, they take 6d6 phys damage. When fired:

- A skeleton warrior/archer then appears adjacent to the target.
- A boloshot restrains the target.
- An explosive barrel does 4d6 direct magic damage to everyone in close range of the target.

Skeleton Crew
Whenever the graveship takes HP damage it knocks loose one skeleton dredge.

Ship Shape
When the graveship has 3 or less HP available it can mark a Stress to reform into a ship to quickly escape. It cannot attack but can move quickly across and through solid ice, leaving a wake of broken ice chunks behind it. Difficult to follow, easy to track.

Soul Shackle
Creatures with a soul that are killed by the graveship or its crew are added to its roster and unable to be revived until the graveship is destroyed.

Gindalia, City of Obligation

Opulent, Urban, Haunted
Tier 2
A fabulously wealthy city whose obsession with debt haunts its citizens long after they've shuffled off this mortal coil.

DISTINCTIONS

Gindalia's rigid class system allows for little in the way of upward mobility. A sprawling and bustling city carved directly into the side of a sheer cliff overlooking a lush valley, rich in veins of unique metal that attracts spirits like a magnet. When refined, this metal can store souls indefinitely. This is not a place for people who adhere to more traditional moral frameworks. Excess and avarice are held up as prime virtues alongside fortitude and hard work. The class system is enforced very seriously by those with a vested interest in preserving power.

Power of Capital

Nowhere is the power of the coin more apparent than Gindalia. Between its influential banks, the immortal Debtguard that walk its walls and patrol its streets, and its vast disparity between the rich and poor, this is one of the best places to live for the wealthy. Magnates populate the highest levels of the city, and represent legacy wealth and wield unmatched power in Gindalia. Merchants, financiers, and wealthy entrepreneurs make up the Mercentalia. Below them are the Essentialia, which is just propaganda-speak for 'laborers.' Finally are the debtors, or insolvents as they are referred to, whose arrears follow them long after death.

You might find:
- The Debtguard patrolling the upper levels of the city, harassing anyone not dressed well enough.
- The jingle of a heavy coin purse
- Cloying, expensive perfume… and too much of it.

Political Parties

Lavish balls, treacherous masquerades, and decadent carnivals all serve to delight and intoxicate the senses, on the surface. It's not in the halls of any senate but rather the drawing rooms and grand balls of the elite. Here politicians shake hands with bank owners, who are in turn whispering advice into the ears of military commanders, who can strong arm merchants, and the chain goes on and on and on. Appearances are paramount here, and fashion is as much a weapon as it is a statement.

You might find:
- A grand masquerade ball where each outfit is more exquisite and ostentatious than the last.
- The peaty smell of whiskey and cigar smoke.
- Low lights and lower whispers.

City of Splendors

Expensive furniture, exotic pets, and lavish decor are all commonplace in this nexus of wealth. Fine dining is easily accessible to those who can afford it. High fashion and art galleries can be found in ample supply. This city caters to the wealthiest of the wealthy, and anyone with substantial coin who's willing to flaunt it will blend in quite nicely.

You might find:
- A luscious cocktail lounge full of beautiful servers and exquisite delicacies.
- Soft throw pillows and heavy velvet curtains.
- The dulcet notes of a string quartet drifting out from an open sunroom.

Debt Weight

Pneumatite, the spirit caging mineral this cliff face is known for, has birthed one of the most exploitative practices the city is known for: Death Relief When a person of any class dies with debt to the state remaining, they are bound to serve out their remaining payments in death. They work most commonly as a Debtguard, soul animated armor that acts as city watch and military. But personal debts are often fulfilled in much more humiliating ways, depending on the relationship between debtor and lender.

You might find:
- Empty shells of gleaming gold armor patrolling the streets
- The soft scratch of quill on parchment, a deal struck.
- The pale, white glow of pneumatite, as a spirit possesses it.

GM PRINCIPLES

Make the world lavishly wealthy, exploitative, and treacherous - Gindaliawhere coin is considered equally divine to the gods—may seem stable and orderly, but it harbors an undercurrent of exploitation and malfeasance that is hardly divine. Money can buy respect, but how one pursues that wealth is just as important.

Show how capital and class interact. - In order for the fabulously wealthy to exist, there must be those with nothing to their names. The wealthy live lives of luxury, power, and potential. Those without are subjected to exploitation, invisible to the ruling class, and seemingly powerless to change their station.

Wealth is power, and power is displayed openly - The latest dress styles from far-off lands, a coat cut with elemental threads that glow with power, and expensive body modifications that defy logic and reason. Fashion may seem frivolous to those who lack it, but for those lucky individuals who can burn money on luxuries, fashion becomes a form of political warfare and power.

DISTRICTS

Coinhalls

Financial District: Most of the city's wealth ends up in the Coinhalls at some point along its journey… usually forever.

Designer Pets: One will run into all manner of exotic, strange, and hybrid pets both on sale and on walks with their owners..

The Coinhalls contain everything from luxury shopping, exclusive auctions, fine dining, and prestigious banks. All it needs to cater to the ultra-wealthy populace and keep them spending money. The buildings here are made of imported marble and gilded with gold. The cloying smell of expensive perfume hangs in the air. Every interaction is laced with a profit motive. The people further enrich themselves simply by moving numbers around on spreadsheets as opposed to actually working, deciding the fates of thousands with the thoughtless stroke of a pen. Banks and businesses alike are guarded by lockdown automata, each ornately designed to suit its owner's taste.

Jewel Alley (Location)

Less an alley and more of a cascading thoroughfare featuring some of the most luxurious stores that cater to the bourgeoisie and ultrawealthy. Clothing made from rare wildlife. Galleries and museums filled with art stolen from far-off lands. Banks as large and exquisitely built as any god's temple. Most impressive of these banks is the Arkvault, a bank with magically entangled vault that has interconnected branches across the Mortal Realm. *A playground for the rich where those who work to make this place possible are invisible and the products sold result from suffering and exploitation.*

Debtguard (Threat)

"In debt you serve. In death, relief." A saying coined by one of the first Magnates, and a clever bit of wording that sounds relatively benign. If a debt is owed, it must be paid in full… but at least in death there is relief to be found… right? In truth, the relief means "relief of debt." For those who pass while holding the shame of debt in their heart and over their accounts, will continue to serve until their debt is paid. The Debtguard is both the standing army and the city watch of Gindalia, composed of soul-animated armors made from pneumatite alloy that house the souls of debtors. *It's a sad existence, that of the Debtguard. Riding like a passenger in one's own soul, granted agency but once a year.*

Madame Ulia's Auction House (Location)

One of the most notorious auction houses in the entire mortal realm. Renowned for the exquisite art, curios, and artifacts that go up for sale. Whispered rumors of illicit procurement tactics are brushed under the rug. The people who can afford to purchase these items care not how they were acquired. Just that they are now afforded the ability to acquire them. "*I once saw a king's crown go up for auction. And that king is still very much alive and quite unhappy about it.*"

Precious, Objectively Beautiful [Highborne Clank, they/them]
Difficulty: 16
Curious, Extravagant, Naive
Experience: *Aristocrat +2, Magical Knowledge +1, Socialite +1, Witty Repartee +1*
Look: A luxurious and ancient clank composed entirely of thin strips of precious metals woven together around masterfully cut gems.
Motive: Self Improvement. Precious is determined to achieve perfection at all costs, but their view of what that means is skewed by the stratified, wealthy society that created them.

Gaol of the Insolvent

Working Dead: Laborers are often replaced by Debtbound spirits known as insolvents, whose cobbled together forms are a far cry from the ornately armored Debtguards. Kept out of sight, commonly working in foundries, mines, and warehouses.
Lifetimes of Servitude: Most will find their lives were not worth much and woefully discover upon death that they will serve as Debtguard much longer than they lived.

Sometimes called the Soulcage or Debtor's Woe, the Gaol of the Insolvent is a brutalist testimony to the weight of debt. It's where spirits in arrears are drawn and bound into pneumatite armors to serve among the Debtguard or as an insolvent. The massive structure is positioned at the base of the city so all who look down upon are reminded of how far they can fall, and how quickly debt can overtake them. Because of this, most prefer to keep their view fixed upward.

Pneumatite Gyre (Location)

Located deep within the Gaol, the Gyre is a two story obelisk of pure pneumatite, with meticulous necromantic rune carvings running its entire length. Surrounding the spire is a howling vortex of spirit energy. Spirits of the dead coalesce here, joining the vortex. Actuarians are assigned to read the debt of the deceased, allowing spirits free of obligation to pass on. *Those burdened by debt will often attempt to flee Gindalia so as not to die within the gyre's reach. The punishment for absconding on one's debt is eternal servitude.*

Insolvency Jubilee (Festival)

One of the most important local holidays in Gindalia. It's a day when the dead, both Debtguard and insolvents, are granted a day of agency and freedom. It's a day where they are released from service and may do with their time whatever they desire. While some use this agency to get as far as they can from Gindalia, only to be snapped back into service upon the day's expiration... Most use their time to reconnect with their families. Some families are visited by indebted spirits from generations long past. On this day, and on this day only, the indebted can collect Arrear Tithes from family, friends, and descendents to help pay down their balances and shorten their terms of service. It's a day of joyous grief. *Visitors who sojourn to Gindalia during the jubilee are often taken aback or horrified by the casual relationship with the dead that many in the city have.*

Pneumatilurgic Forge (Location)

Positioned near the Gyre, the Pneumatilurgic Forge is where Isolvents work day and night smelting pneumatite alloy ingots and pressing them into Debtguard armor molds. It's a place of raging heat as pneumatite has a much higher melting point than iron or steel. The smoke that results is highly toxic and quickly kills any living creature that comes into contact with it. The insolvent laborers, constructed from mispoured armor cast-offs, do the dirty work of creating new armor, further entrenching the city's status quo in an eternal cycle of debt and repayment. *Living laborers used to do this dangerous work, in the early days of Gindalia, but so many of them died that it led to the city's first uprising, known as the Three Days of Gold Tears.*

The Lush Descent

Hedonistic Hotspot: A popular place to unwind after a hard day's work... for those that want to lose themselves for a week diving into their basest pleasures and hidden desires.
Customers Served Daily: [Redacted]

This long and curvaceous stairway is somewhat of an anomaly in Gindalia. This is a place where class holds no sway and a purse only goes as far as the imagination of that who carries it. A place of art and music and pleasure. While coin is still king the true power sits with the queen, pleasure. Artists, sex workers, and musicians have carved out a life of freedom and fulfillment here. Folks from all walks of life ascend or descend this grand, spiraling staircase in hopes of finding sensations, the likes of which exist nowhere else in the realm. So come take a journey of pleasure beyond compare. Of pain beyond comprehension. An ecstatic exploration beyond the limits of rhapsody.

The Veiled Gaze (Location)

Housed in one of Gindalia's first pneumatite mineshafts, now decommissioned, is a perpetual dance party. No matter the hour of the day patrons will find this naturally occurring cavern filled with pulsing music, undulating bodies, and the smell of old sweat. There is no charge for entering, but leaving can prove difficult. The lack of any natural lighting makes it hard to tell time underground and folk often lose themselves for a day or two, enchanted by the music and lost in a labyrinth of pulsing debauchery. *The rich and poor alike rub shoulders in this cavern of abandon. It's one of the few egalitarian businesses in the city.*

Palace of Enterprise (Location)

A palatial structure with no known owner whose interior changes and warps to suit the most secret, debaucherous, and violent desires of the elite. Rumors swirl about this place... whispers that some who enter do not leave. Some say they've seen bones littering the grounds around it. Despite any ugly gossip, it's still a favorite location to host grand soirees and clandestine meetings. The Palace of Enterprise is well known but rarely accessible but for the privileged few. *Some say the Palace is alive, but they're often laughed out of polite company.*

Unwelcome Guests Clock

An action roll's consequence can always be a mark against the clock

8 - Unregistered intruders are detected
7 - Registered guest rooms are sealed
6 - Entrances, exits, passages, and hallways are shuffled
5 - Passageways narrow making traversal difficult
4 - The trappings of opulence bleed away, revealing fleshy walls underneath
3 - Digestive fluid floods the halls
2 - Bone spears plunge through the fleshy walls, piercing intruders
1 - Tooth-filled maws in the walls and floors swallow any remaining intruders
0 - Intruders are digested

Power of Pleasure (Feature)

The Lush Descent holds a fascinating grip on the people of this city. It's as if everyone acknowledges that while coin makes the realm go round... The axis on which it spins is pleasure, play, and fun. Impossible to separate one from the other. For in Gindalia hedonism serves a dual purpose. For the wealthy, who have it all, it's one of the few sources of exploration and novelty. For the poor, it's bread and circuses, a means of release... and control. *The Magnates understand that cutting the poor off from pleasures and distractions makes them grow angry. Then they organize. Then the whole thing falls apart.*

The Goldband

Working Rich: The fierce competition and high rate of failure sees the business owners of this city working harder than most... should they want to keep their station.

Crab Bucket: If anyone starts to rise too fast and far, the rest of the Mercantalia will conspire to ruin them. No one rises, but plenty fall. As cutthroat as the Magnates designed it to be.

Making up a substantial portion of the central cliff face is the district known as The Goldband. Here the Mercentalia capitalize and innovate in order to rise above their station. It's a place of fierce competition and hard work. Even those who would be wealthy anywhere else in the realm are beholden to their businesses and are caught up in the endless grind of achieving ever-increasing profitability.

The Counting House (Location)

A fine inn by any city's standards, this retreat wouldn't rate among the most luxurious domiciles in Gindalia. It's a new establishment, and there's still some construction going on as the owner is renovating his recently purchased gambling house next door. Currently, the dealers and games have been moved into the tavern, crowding it and cutting down on the available space. *Horton insists that once the renovations are done this place will have the dead skipping the Jubilee to come gamble here instead.*

Horton Grippe, Owner of The Counting House [Ridgeborne Galapa, he/they]
Difficulty: 18
Churlish, Hardworking, Scorned
Experience: *Bureaucracy +1, Intimidation +1, Shrewd Negotiator +1, Temptation +1*
Look: A heavy-set galapa who, in a citythat wholly embraces form, entirely embodies function. They're unafraid of an apron stain or other indicators of hard work.
Motive: He'd see The Counting House become the premier inn and gambling house in the Goldband, but his rivals at the Hucked Bones and the Platinum Paten have been sabotaging his renovations.

Broker's Row (Market)

One of the most famous merchant promenades in the realm. While the stores in Jewel Alley boast some of the most exquisite shopping, Broker's Row is for the more practical consumer. Highly organized, and laid out in a tiered grid where all merchants of a certain type are clustered together. This has led to some customer windfalls when merchants begin competitive price drops. But price gouging and fixing in times of tragedy and hardship is just as common. *Poorer locals prefer to wait until they hear whispers of cascading price drops before they do any shopping, sometimes waiting years to replace worn-out equipment or clothing.*

Yorb Gameer, Owner of Yorb Logistics [Wanderborne Ribbet, she/her]
Difficulty: 17
Sly, tenacious, covetous
Experience: *Animal Handling +1, Quartermaster +2, Shrewd Negotiator +3*
Look: A new money ribbet, who's dressed as if she's trying a bit too hard to fit in with the old money crowd.
Motive: Driven by insecurity and a covetous nature, she wants to amass so much wealth with her shipping company that she'll be accepted into the Magnates.

Unshackled Debt (Threat)

This place of business is often one of the unfinished. Merchants will spend their whole lives pushing to accrue more wealth, sacrificing their families, livelihoods, and souls in the process. Some become vaultgeists; hollow, angry shells that consume vast hordes of wealth in their grief. This city, obviously, is no stranger to or is afraid of the dead. Vaultgeists are disturbingly frequent here, as many of the Mercantalia tie their entire self-worth to their wealth. In death, they follow the same path. *Unshackled misers are common here. Angry spirits so bound to their wealth that the pull of pneumatite can't even drag them away from it, resulting in vaultgeists... or worse.*

Platinum Point Vistas

2%: The percent of the population that resides in this district.
90%: The amount of the city's wealth that the 2% of the population controls and hoards.

If the Coin Halls are where the ultra rich go to play and... work... presumably... Platinum Point Vistas is where they return to their palatial homes to lay their heads down on pillows filled with rare bird feathers, nestled into their ornate canopy beds. The top of the cliff, literally. It's gated, obviously, and is as secure as some of the most well-guarded banks in the city. After all, they can't have just <u>anyone</u> getting in. The

Magnates all reside here, concentrating almost all of the power in the city into the top of the cliff. As always, this is by design.

Gilded Enclave (Location)

Guarded day and night by the Debtguard, this is the closest thing to a government building that Gindalia has. This stronghold is often where the most influential Magnates gather to discuss policy in a formalized setting before they disseminate to various parties, balls, and secret vaults where the wheeling, dealing, bribes, and even assassinations dictate how policy will be decided in Gindalia. *Positioned on an outcropping that can be seen from below, it's a constant reminder of what most wish they could achieve but likely never will.*

Regimar Poss, Entrenched Magnate [Highborne Orc, he/him]
Difficulty: 15

Calculating, authoritarian, exploitative

Experience: *Aristocrat +5, Religion + 2, Bureaucracy +4, Nobility +10, Veiled Threats +2*

Look: Accentuates his albinism with a combination of exquisite makeup and gleaming facial tattoos inked with precious metals. His clothing boasts unassailable silhouettes and design, tailored to his broad form. He's as striking as he is influential.

Motive: Maintaining the status quo. The top down arrangement of this city works for Gindalia. Or at least for him. Either way, he has no interest in change or upheaval and delegates effectively to keep it that way.

Camila Coruska, Leveraged Magnate [Slyborne Firbolg, she/her]
Difficulty: 16

Paranoid, miserly, bullying

Experience: *Deception +3, Shrewd Negotiator +7, Spy +2*

Look: Always a season behind the latest Gindalia fashion in looks that would kill anywhere else. Always one or two hairs out of place in an otherwise immaculate stylings.

Motive: Keep her place. She's one of the few members of the Mercantalia who has risen to be among the Magnates. But it was the Radiant Obligation that got her there, and she knows full well the weight of that particular debt.

Restricted Access (Feature)

Those not among the Magnate class will find their entrance to this district barred by the elite Debtguard who serve as its watchmen. Laborers who work here r must undergo an extensive screening process, looking at their financials, personal ties, and political leanings. Solicitors are unheard of.*It's rumored that someone in the Goldband is selling forged passes. No one has yet discovered their identity.*

Austentatious Opulence (Feature)

Something about extreme wealth rots the brain, especially when it comes to decor. It's uncanny how quickly taste goes out the window in favor of gaudy and garish displays of prosperity. It's as if each family is trying to outdo their neighbors. Statues, fountains, gates and hedgework surround homes plated in solid gold or encrusted with fine gems. It's competitive maximalism and excessively wasteful. *Those who*

have visited Platinum Point vistas joke that if the rest of the city ever saw those hideous houses, the Magnates would lose all credibility and be laughed out of the city.

Kaligrasto'flymmar'duk (Kaligra), Dithering Philanthropist [Highborne Dragon, she/her]
Difficulty: 20
Generous, indecisive, fabulous
Experience: *Aerial Predator +2, Ancient History +2, Magical Knowledge +2, Spy +2, Wisdom of Centuries +3*
Look (Dragon): A serpentine, wingless dragon with scales graduating from mother of pearl to a burnished gold. Every subtle shift or movement sheds coins that were trapped beneath her scales.
Look (Katari): When moving about the city she often dons the disguise of a gold-furred katari bearing the markings and ear tufts of a caracal cat.
Motive: Accumulation and redistribution. There is nothing that Kaligra loves more than the accumulation of wealth… other than redistributing it to those who need it. But she suffers from choice paralysis and cannot often decide who to help. So she helps no one.

Silvercrown Estates

Misleading Nomenclature: Sure, Silvercrown Estates sounds like a great place to live… It's not.
Dreams of Delusion: Most who live here have bought into the twisted philosophies of Gindalia, believing themselves to be temporarily embarrassed members of the plutocracy instead of simply poor and easily exploited.

The base of the cliff and the foundation that keeps it standing. The name "Silvercrown Estates" is a clever piece of propaganda making a district that is packed with company housing, rife with crime, and with very few of the amenities the rest of the city enjoys. This is the neighborhood of the exploited. Of the labor class. Still, it's not a place devoid of joy. The folk living under this authoritarian capitalist regime still create art, sing songs, and raise children. Their lives are ones of toil and hardship and many buy into the illusion that they could one day be among those at the top of the cliff. As many of their jobs are disappearing, and being handed over to the insolvent, more and more folks are getting desperate. Some turn to crime. But it's here that a burgeoning labor movement threatens to upend the delicate social order the Magnates have so carefully constructed.

Pneumatite Mines (Location)

Once a bustling mine, where laborers could be seen entering and exiting at all hours of the day, now folks never see a living soul enter or exit. After a series of accidents, the Magnates have cut back on the number of laborers working in the mines, slashing their hours and laying off hundreds of folks only to be replaced by insolvent workers. Today, the mines are almost entirely devoid of living workers. While this is cited for safety reasons, the truth is that the Magnates no longer saw any reason to pay the living when the dead already owe a debt. *Recently it's been more and more common to see protests outside the mine. The picketers wave signs and sing songs about the power of living labor.*

Company Housing (Feature)

The labor class of Gindalia resides in a state of perpetual precariousness. No one who lives in Silvercrown Estates owns their house. They are all leased to the worker as part of their job. Depending on what kind of job that is, that could mean anything from a comfortable single family home to an overstuffed dormitory.

Because the laborers live under the threat of homelessness should they lose their job, they are often obedient and efficient workers. But the stress takes a toll, leaving most in poor health and with shorter lives. *A business shuttering almost always leads to a cascading series of predatory loans, failed repayments, and an ocean of debt. Working exactly as the Magnates intended, this is how the Debtguard maintains such robust numbers.*

Burgeoning Solidarity (Feature)

The people have had enough. There is a growing undercurrent of rage spreading through the Essentialia like wildfire. And it's different than just the typical dissatisfied grumbling. People are waking up to the fact that it doesn't have to be this way. This is a city of immense wealth and somehow it all ended up at the top, with the people who do the least. In secret places, hidden from the gaze of the Magnates and the cold grip of the Debtguard, meetings are taking place. The tavern workers compare pay stubs beneath Viridian Field's Pub. The tailors and textile laborers discuss worker safety in the back room of the Trench Goat Tavern. The former miners, and their now adult children, discuss plans to seize the means of production. Unions are forming. Solidarity is growing. And the Magnates are oblivious. *The Magnates have unintentionally set the kindling, and built the bonfire, of their own demise. All it needs is a powerful spark to ignite into a conflagration that will burn this system to the ground. Even ash is better than this.*

FACTIONS

Radiant Obligation

Infinite Growth: There is no peak high enough or sea deep enough that the Radiant Obligation would not have designs of exploiting it in some way.
Versatile Leverage: Money isn't the only way to control someone, especially those who don't need to worry about it. Reputation, scandal, blackmail, and forgery are all common tools in their kit.

A villainous organization with designs on soft domination of the entire mortal realm, through controlling the ebb and flow of currency. Their temples are banks. Their gospel is coin. Their priests… they're accountants. They idolatrize and extoll those born into or who have achieved wealth while scorning and ignoring the struggles of those that have not. They spread throughout the realm like a malignant, capitalistic tumor by way of their Arkvaults. Some believe them to have founded Gindalia, though the Radiant Obligation would take no such credit, preferring their names to be left out of historical records. Numerous Magnates in the city fall among their ranks, and many more are pressed under the thumb of obligation, usually a scandalous debt weightier than gold. They prefer to exploit the debt of the living, rather than the dead, largely eschewing the service of the Debtguard unless absolutely necessary.

Entangled Arkvaults (Technology)

Boasting a security force that rivals that of the most powerful monarchs in the realm, and an arcane trap-laden approach to a locking mechanism designed by the greatest minds at Brightmark University. No one has ever robbed an Arkvault successfully. While some have made it inside, surviving the escape has, so far, proven impossible. Most of the realm's wealth flows in and out of this bank and its subsidies, all of which are magically entangled and share the same enormous vault in an undisclosed location. The local branch

is competitively placed in Jewel Alley among the Coinhalls. *Should the Radiant Obligation need something to disappear it's as easy as moving it through an Arkvault to another part of the realm.*

Capital Control (Threat)

The Radiant Obligation prefers soft power and veiled threats over overt shows of violence and force. If you can pay someone to look the other way once, it's a sure bet it can be done a second time. They understand that dominance requires patience, time, and investment. What most see as the long game is the short game for them. Where most are concerned with their day to day survival, they're, reading the flow of the markets and making moves that will impact generations to come. But most folks will never realize the true source of their problems or misery. *Bribes, blackmail, fabricated scandals, and forged claims of lineage or ownership are the bread and butter of the Radiant Obligation. Why get their hands dirty when just a few coins keeps those white gloves clean?*

Boundless Coffers (Feature)

The Radiant Obligation has wormed its way into most major metropolises, and even some smaller but economically viable locations. Once they sign a new customer, they immediately begin using that money to grow their own coffers. Imagine this being done by Actuarians in every city across the realm to multiple wealthy clients. Through investment portfolios, real purchases, and hostile acquisitions they are in a constant state of growth. *The Radiant Obligation requires its Actuarians to bring in increasing profit margins every quarter, lest they quickly lose station within the organization.*

Principles

The Radiant Obligation is not a consortium with a strong moral foundation, but it is a place of conviction and staunchly held beliefs. Even if those beliefs lead to a near universal disdain towards those they see as lesser than them. And those lesser merely exist to be exploited.

- *A life without expansion, growth, and prosperity is not a life worth living.*
- *Everyone has a price. Everyone.*
- *Those beneath you are merely rungs on the ladder to your own greatness. Do not hesitate to step on them.*

NPCs

Fortinbras Le'Quain Relkist III, Grand Actuary of the Radiant Obligation [Highborne Human, he/him]
Difficulty: 16
Calculating, Avaricious, Authoritarian
Experience: *Aristocrat +3, Bureaucracy +3, Commander +2, Nobility +3, Shrewd Negotiator +2*
Look: A rail thin man dressed like a cross between a high priest and a bank executive whose gaunt features betray expensive magical anti-aging treatments.
Motive: He seeks control of the realm's purse strings so that he continues his agenda of "effective altruism" which is just him controlling where and what is funded, supported, and who holds power.

Nama Ho'o, High Vaultmaster [Highborne Giant, she/they]
Difficulty: 18
stubborn, imposing, effective
Experience: *Ambusher +2, Forbidden Knowledge +1, Military Scholar +2*
Look: Conservatively lavish, favoring practically valuable items over gaudy opulence.
Motive: Forever tuning and improving the defenses of the Arkvault, she'll never be satisfied.

Jek Yamas, Radiant Mouthpiece [Highborne Faerie, he/they]
Difficulty: 17
Duplicitous, charming, haughty
Experience: *Aristocrat +3, Nobility +2, Spy +2, Socialite +2, Veiled Threats +1*
Look: Effervescent and effortlessly fashionable. Not one hair out of place, nor a stray thread.
Motive: Overseeing their network of blackmail, bribes, and political dominance to ensure their power never wavers.

Story Hooks

A regional Arkvault has gone dark, untangling itself from the central bank. They need to know why and how.

One of the Magnates the Radiant Obligation has leverage over has begun speaking out of turn and they need them silenced. Permanently.

A state Actuarian's audit has determined that a recently deceased member of the Radiant Obligation will serve out their arrears as a Debtguard. Jek needs someone to free the soul from its weighty dues.

The Bankskimmer Union

Banks Robbed: Said to be hundreds but actually ten. But they do nothing to dissuade the rumors. It's great street cred.
Just Stumbled Into It: They, like most folks here, are motivated by gold. At least they were. They had no intention of becoming labor heroes… but here they are.

When a group of out of work friends and colleagues realized their particular set of skills would be a quite useful combination when it comes to robbing banks, they did just that. Starting small, at one of the lenders in the Goldband, they quickly moved up to the Coin Halls and gained a reputation as compassionate criminals. They rarely took lives unless they were forced to, and were generally convivial with any hostages. When escaping, they became known for using portions of the gold they stole to help throw off the Debtguard by dumping bags into the streets of Silvercrown Estates and slipping away through the crowds. They had no intention of becoming the nexus of communication and resources that is bankrolling the various burgeoning unions. What started as a group of friends trying to make a purse for themselves has become a tight-knit union working to better the lives of everyone in Gindalia. Even if it means burning the whole system to the ground.

Crack Team (Feature)

While their fingers and influence reach throughout the Essentalia, their membership consists of only five people. Exra and Pallas Finn are the masterminds behind the group and have been married a long time. Crem Golsimer is a former Magnate who fell into disgrace after they tried to make some labor-favoring public policy changes. Tula Garr is the prodigal daughter of one of the most influential merchants in the Goldband and a brilliant arcanotechologist. Nolo Finn is the great, great, grandfather of Exra and one of the few Debtguard that has managed to unburden himself of his debt. Unlike most, instead of moving on, he purchased his armor and stuck around in hopes of ending this barbaric practice. *They are small but mighty, and any touched by their efforts are immensely grateful. A local bard wrote a song called "Bankskimmer's Cut" that's sung on picket lines and wildly popular in taverns throughout Silvercrown Estates.*

Multiple Hideouts (Locations)

The advantage of only having five members is it's easy to stay mobile. They have hideouts peppered throughout the Silvercrown Estates, along with hidden caches of equipment and supplies, and friendly faces that will turn a blind eye or open the right door at the right time. They don't enjoy as much influence in the Goldband but the owner of the Counting House has let them stash tools and supplies among the renovations of their gambling hall. The Coin Halls have a single point of safety for them, inside a gallery on Jewel Alley owned by Crem's cousin. *These hideouts are little more than back rooms or tiny apartments. They aren't elaborate or trap filled fortresses. Decentralization and ease of movement has been the key to their success and they have no intention of changing things.*

Galvanizing Force (Feature)

With every success their power and influence grows, but so does the morale and spine of every laborer in the city. Being born into an exploitative and unjust system can make it hard to see what better life could lie outside of it. It's not the fault of the oppressed that the systems that they prop up keep them down by design. When the people see someone standing up to the broken system and creating change, it empowers them to do it themselves. *The Bankskimmer Union has become a mote of hope for those without... that things can be better.*

Principles

The Bankskimmers union holds no formal code of conduct or ethics. They simply operate under the simple assumption that everyone who is wealthy is that way because they have exploited someone else. Thus, relieving them of their wealth is simply balancing the scales.

- *Only take from those with too much and take as much as possible when doing so.*
- *Give the people their cut. It's already their money to begin with anyway.*
- *Power belongs to the people, not the coin. But coin still feeds people.*

Exra Finn, The Organizer [Slyborne Simiah, she/her]
Difficulty: 18
sneaky, driven, inexorable
Experience: *Ambusher +2, Commander +2*
Look: Similar to a Vervet monkey, with gray and white hair covering her body. Draped in loose fitting clothing, giving her a full range of movement with a dagger hidden in every fold.
Motive: Redistributing wealth from the rich to herself. If there's time they can get to everyone else.

Pallas Finn, The Alchemist [Slyborne Drakona, she/her]
Difficulty: 16
Unpredictable, volatile, loyal to a fault
Experience: *Alchemist +2, Forbidden Knowledge +1, Intrusion +3*
Look: A stout, violet scaled drakona wrapped in voluminous robes containing a seemingly endless supply of alchemical bits and bobs. Always smells of smoke and sulfur. Singe marks on the edges of her robes and a couple of missing fingers suggest somewhat unpredictable working conditions.
Motive: Break the class system that is holding everyone down and keeping Exra focused on the bigger picture.

Crem Golsimer, The Face [Highborne Orc, they/them]
Difficulty: 17
sly, comforting, stoic
Experience: *Aristocrat +1, Nobility +1, Intimidation +1*
Look: An older silver tongued orc (literally) dressed in fineries that suggest a few stations above "petty criminal" —pretty criminal is closer to the mark.
Motive: A quiet life. But also revenge on Regimar Poss, the Magnate who destroyed their life.

Tula Garr, The Tech-Wiz [Slyborne Halfling, she/her]
Difficulty: 15
brilliant, nimble, tenacious
Experience: *Alchemist +2, Feigned Competence +2*
Look: A teenage halfling, alchemical prodigy, saddled with a strange metallic rig that looks like it contains a multitude of attached tools.
Motive: Learn as much as she can from Pallas in order to build a better tomorrow. Even if that build results in some explosions today.

Nolo Finn, The Muscle [Unshackled Debtguard, he/him]
Difficulty: 19
gullible, fearsome, undeterred
Experience: *Huge +4*
Look: The hollow armor of a Debtguard, painted over with flowers, dragons, and a few too many dead tax men. He humors the children in Silvercrown Estate, letting them paint him regularly.
Motive: Free the Debtguard. He knows firsthand what it means to be bound into service after death. He wants that practice to end.

Story Hooks

The Union is planning a heist of the Arkvault, and looking for reliable help to fill the gaps in their team.

The Magnates have gotten wind of the Tavern Workers union's meeting location and have sent the Debtguard to round them up. The Bankskimmers would see them protected.

Tula thinks she can reverse the flow of the Pneumatite Gyre, but needs some assistance testing her newest invention: the Deblifter.

Resources

	MOMENTS OF HOPE		MOMENTS OF FEAR
1	*An aristocrat empties his coin purse on the street, attracting a crowd.*	1	*A passing merchant kicks a beggar. No one bats an eye.*
2	*A Debtguard knocks on the door of their family home, eager for a reunion.*	2	*The hard clink and heavy footfalls of Debtguard armors approaching.*
3	*A home cooked meal, surrounded by friends.*	3	*A family is forced out of company housing and onto the streets.*
4	*An unexpected, and rather large, Writ of Inheritance is delivered.*	4	*The Debtguard round up protestors, carting them off to prison.*
5	*The clinking of Debtguard armor falling to the ground, empty. Its occupant freed of obligation.*	5	*A Magnate sends down a tithing decree, forcing the already impoverished to scramble for any extra coin.*
6	*A robust wine of exquisite and rare vintage.*	6	*A lockdown automaton swivels its head ominously.*
7	*A stylish fur-lined coat that feels perfectly tailored.*	7	*A blaring alarm sounds as shadowy figures flee from a bank.*
8	*A merchant offers an excellent deal on scrolls and potions.*	8	*A man close to death tries in desperation to unload some of his debt.*

9	*The cliff glitters in the morning sun, glinting off all the precious metals that cut through the sheer face.*	9	*The staff of a tavern was just replaced by insolvent workers.*
10	*Songs of solidarity from protesters outside the mines.*	10	*A state Actuarian performing door-to-door, pre-death audits.*
11	*Children playing stickball in the streets offer an invitation to join.*	11	*An unhoused family is swept off the street by the Debtguard.*
12	*Bottle service at a swanky lounge, poured by an exquisitely beautiful server.*	12	*The acrid scent of the toxic fumes spewed out of the Pneumatilurgic Forge.*

Rumors

A vaultgeist has overtaken one of the personal vaults of the wealthiest Magnate in the city.

A burgeoning union among tavern laborers is forming, but the Magnates would see it quashed.

As whispers of war drift in from a neighboring nation, one of the Magnate's has been offering reduced arrears if citizens will join the Debtguard today. The poorest of Gindalia have been offering their lives too early in hopes of a shorter term of service.

A lockdown automaton has malfunctioned and trapped a bank full of customers and employees inside.

A member of the Mercentalia has petitioned for entry into the Magnate class, and must unload some incriminating debt before Actuarians discover it.

Equipment

Pneumetic Spear - Agility Melee - d10 (phy) - Two-Handed
Feature: Soulshear *(For 24 hours after a person is killed with this spear, spend Hope to add an additional 1d10 magic damage to attacks)*
Primary Weapon

Miser's Bulwark - Finesse Melee - d4+4 (phy) - One-Handed
Feature: Avaricious Hunger *(Mark a Stress to feed the shield 1 handful of gold that adds +3 to your armor score until the next long rest.)*
Secondary Weapon

Magnate's Tunic - Base Score: Variable
Feature: Liquidity Bastion (Your base armor score is equal to the handfuls of gold you are currently carrying. This armor cannot be repaired.)
Armor

Items

Savings Pouch. A magically entangled set that includes a coin pouch and a gilded chest. When coins are deposited into the pouch they are instantly transferred to the chest, so long as the two objects share the same plane of existence. This effect is one way only and coins can only be recovered directly from the chest.

Fast Fashion. Enchanted threads woven through these garments allow the user to shift the color, structure, and silhouette of whatever they're wearing on a whim. However, when removed the garments instantly revert to their original form.

Silver Tongue. A hollow metal tongue with attached molar bands. When worn over one's own tongue they are granted the advantage on Presence checks to persuade or deceive.

Consumables

Propagator Coin. When this seemingly unremarkable coin is thrown at an object or creature it doubles itself, then both doubles again, and again, and again... This continues until a ten foot cube is filled with coins. Once thrown, the propagator coin and all resulting duplicates disappear after 1 hour.

Promissory Note. A devious enchantment created by the mortal realm's greatest con artist. The holder can walk into any bank and hand this ensorcelled piece of parchment to a teller who will relinquish the contents of one random safety deposit box. Feel free to make up your own or use the following table of safety deposit boxes:
- 1-2: A box containing birthright papers and detailed lineage reports of what appears to be an illegitimate goblin royal heir.
- 3-4: An old thief's forgotten stash containing detailed plans to crack the Arkvault.
- 5-6: A cursed necklace that emanates power and refuses to let go of the wearer.
- 7-8: A powerful magic weapon whose previous owner still seeks control of it.
- 9-10: A deed to a local manor that has lain empty for years and is presumed haunted.
- 11-12: A mysterious egg.
- 13-14: An invitation to an exclusive party at the Palace of Enterprise, addressed directly to the adventurers.
- 15-16: A dangerous prophecy that, once read, marks the party for death at the hands of a mysterious cult.
- 17-18: A forbidden scroll of magic contains a spell outlawed long ago.
- 19-20: A box of gold and gems worth 1 chest of gold.

Showstopper Elixir. Whoever drinks it will feel no direct effects, but to everyone around them, they will suddenly be stunning, terrifying, or awe inducing. Used most commonly by those who wish to make an entrance. Within one hour of drinking this potion, you can choose to make a Presence Roll at advantage against a close target whose attention you want to capture. On a success, you do it, narrowing their field of view and drowning out any sound but your voice.

Debtguards

Soul infused armor inhabited by debtors in service to the state. Acting as watch and the standing army for the nation that shackled them to service beyond death. They lack any agency, and must follow the whims of the Magnates. For the soul housed inside, it is a harrowing experience. Moving about the realm like a passenger in their own spirit, committing immoral acts in service of a deeply unjust state while being fully cognisant of the effects. It's not a happy unlife, by any measure. But it's almost certain to be a long one.

Debtguard - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Crush, Extract, Put their Might on Display*

Attack Modifier: +3

Warhammer: Melee | 3d8 phy

Difficulty: 15

Minor 5 | **Major** 12 | **Severe** 20

HP: 5

Stress: 4

Experience:
Intimidation +1
Unveiled Threats + 1
Veiled Threats +2

Moves

Magnetic Accounting
When the Debtguard deals HP damage it may mark 1 stress to cause the target to lose 1 handful of gold per HP dealt. The gold adheres to the head of the warhammer, increasing its damage by 1d8 for every 2 handfuls of gold stuck to it.

Leverage Assets
Spend Fear to detonate the head of the warhammer, sending gold flying like shrapnel. For every handful of gold adhered to it dealing 1d8 damage to all other creatures within Close range.

Lockdown Automatons

Massive statues plated in precious metals, whose style and design vary by the locale and tastes of their owners. These constructs are designed to prevent theft and bring their adversaries quickly to heel. Hidden in plain sight until activated, they are often placed at the entrances of banks and treasure vaults.

Lockdown Automaton - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Slow, Apprehend, Decimate*

Attack Modifier: +4

Massive Sword: Very Close | 4d10 phy

Difficulty: 17

Minor 8 | **Major** 15 | **Severe** 25

HP: 8

Stress: 4

Experience:
I See You +3

Moves

Heavy Pockets
Spend 2 Fear to weigh down their opponents by using their wealth against them. Choose a target within close range, for every handful of gold they are holding temporarily reduce their Agility score by 1. This condition ends when they reach Very Far range from the Lockdown Automaton or they drop all their gold.

Golden Arc
Spend Fear to make a Massive Sword attack against all enemies within close range.

Conductive Metal
When attacked with magic damage, mark 1 Stress to add 2d8 magic damage to this adversary's next attack.

Vaultgeist

When the exceedingly wealthy die, their spirits are often so emotionally bound to their wealth that they cannot bear leaving it. What results is often a terrifying and deadly encounter for their inheritors or debt collectors. Entire treasure rooms can become possessed, with coins, gems and art coalescing into a whirling and howling nightmare of excess and opulence.

Vaultgeist - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Decimate, Spread, Regenerate*

Attack Modifier: +6

Coin Spray: Far | 3d10+8 phy

Difficulty: 18

Minor 15 | **Major** 25 | **Severe** 40

HP: 5

Stress: 6

Experience:
Intimidation +1
Unveiled Threats + 1
Veiled Threats +2

Moves

Loose Gold
During this encounter there may be preexisting piles of Loose Gold or ones created by the vaultgeist. Assign an HP value to these equal to the amount of handfuls of gold they are comprised of. The vaultgeist can absorb up to 5 hp beyond its maximum.

Hostile Acquisition
Spend Fear to suck in the wealth around this adversary to heal it. All PCs within close range holding gold must make reaction roll with Strength (16) to hold onto their money. Failure results in the loss of 1 handful of gold. The vaultgeist heals 1 HP for every handful of gold stolen in this way. If there is Loose Gold within close range the vaultgeist absorbs it, gaining HP equivalent to its value.

Fiscal Irresponsibility
Spend 2 HP to shift this adversary's form into a heavy orb of gold coins, making an attack roll to smash down on a target within very close range. On a success, deal 4d10+8 phy damage. This creates a pile of Loose Gold worth 2 handfuls on top of the target.

Covetous Howl
Mark a Stress to emit a howl that causes all gold within close range to vibrate violently until the Vaultgeist is defeated. Each creature within range that has gold can take 1 damage for each handful they're holding, or choose to cut their coin purses loose, creating a pile of Loose Gold at their feet (that the Vaultgeist can use for HP).

Miserly End
Upon its death, the vast treasure horde comprising the vaultgeist tarnishes to worthless tin, but any gold stolen during the encounter is available to take.

The Kinekozan Jags

Mountainous, Underground, & Strange
Tier 3
A moving mountain where the stone dances by day, slumbers by night, and the deep mines provide only questions.

DISTINCTIONS

A living mountain of rough, hard-edged grandeur. The rocky slopes of the Kinekozan Jags spring to life with each sunrise, an outer shell of stone shards flowing and reshaping around a deeper lithic mind.

The Waltz of Stone

Though there's much to be said of the mountain's interior, it's the mantle that first draws the eye—shards and slabs, boulders and scree, a ponderous avalanche of stone that coats the peaks in constant movement. The inhabitants of the jags refer to this as the mountain's dance or, more properly, the waltz of stone—a dance that travelers would do well to learn the steps of if they want to survive. This monumental mobility only slows as the light fades, dusk bringing a geological calm that lasts until the first rays of the next day's sun.

You might find:
- Chains of arcane power glimpsed deep in the space between stones, the mechanism behind the mountain's restless nature.
- A cockatrice call, slowly fading into the distance as the beast's nest is carried from base to summit.
- A feeling akin to seasickness, quelled only through familiarity with the mountain's movements.

Patterns In The Flow

While the movement of an individual shard may at first seem random, the infrequency of collisions speaks to a broader pattern in the seething shale. Those who watch for long enough, or who make regular trips out across the slopes to fish, farm, or scavenge, come to understand the mountain's whims and rhythms; one might identify a copse of pines that circles one of the greater cities twice a year, or a twisting spire of stone that always reaches one of the peaks at high noon. The most experienced dwellers of the Kinekozan Jags can scale an entire mountain in a handful of strides, stepping from piece to piece as they ascend.

You might find:
- A faded chart printed with mathematical equations and careful observations.
- A sudden jolt, evidence that the shard you're riding has fallen out of sync with its fellows.
- A guild member of the Here-To-There's, ascending the slopes with minimal effort by stepping from stone to rising stone.

Industries of Dusk & Dawn

As confusing as the slopes might be for newcomers, long-time denizens of the Jags have adapted to their environment admirably. Settlements are built on larger slabs that frequently pass shards containing

fertile earth or pooling water, allowing farmers to hop from home to field and back again as the dance dictates. And, as the moon rises, heavier industry comes into its own—segmented rail lines snap into place as the mountain-skin settles, allowing passage between areas otherwise kept distant by the dance, and miners light their lanterns as they descend into the calmer heart of the mountain, eager to take what they can and return to the outer layers before the next day's motion covers the mouths of their tunnels.

You might find:
- The hiss and creak of a funicular locomotive, racing toward the nearest summit before the dawn pulls the rails it travels on apart.
- Sweating labourers relaxing in the shade, hampers full of harvested produce balanced on the edge of a bridge that, for now, leads nowhere.
- Coded whistles, miners counting down the moments until nightfall opens up a valuable shaft.

A Mountain-Hewn Mind

The dancing slopes aren't the only wonder of the Kinekozan Jags. The deepest mysteries, suitably enough, are found in the quiet stillness of the mountain's interior. It's there that miners' tunnels and natural caves converge, leading to the dwelling place of an ancient intelligence, the Mesolith—a sculpted shepherd of questions and stone.

You might find:
- A brief, yawning gap between the moving slabs that beckons incautious visitors beneath the mountain's skin.
- Miners carefully sawing calcified questions free from tunnel walls.
- A scrape of stone on stone, that might be a sigh. A grinding echo that sounds remarkably like a good-natured chuckle.

The Shatterwood

There was a time before the mountain moved. None remember it, but the signs are there—some structures so weathered by time that you can barely see the split in their walls, the occasional unsettlingly barren shard that still bears the mark of a long-dry riverbed. But there's no other piece of evidence as singularly compelling as the shatterwood, a great forest that must once have covered the mountainside, now split into distant fragments doomed never again to touch.

You might find:
- Predatory birds making daily migrations, hunting in one copse and nesting in another tens of miles away.
- A whiff of toxic musk—the sure sign of Kinekozan hogs.
- Delicious fruit that can only be eaten within the shade of the tree it grows upon, withering to dust if carried across the gap between stones.

GM PRINCIPLES

Use landmarks to aid groups as they traverse the shifting slopes - One jag of stone looks much like another, and sometimes it might even be difficult to tell which direction a piece flows in. But towers, farmlands, rail-lines, and the distant peaks? They're all worth navigating by, points of the world you can anchor description to as well as direction.

Highlight the ingenuity and adaptability of the locals - It would be easy for those who dwell in such an unstable landscape to carve out their own niche and stay there, but the various communities of the jags develop new techniques that make their lives easier, share them without a second thought where they can, and stay in contact through even the toughest times. It's a hard place to live, but not a barren one.

Respect the mountain as a living creature, one that permits passage by default but that can also choose to revoke it - The Mesolith dwelling in the mountain's core has its own wants and needs, only rarely aligned with those of the folk that make a home for themselves on its flanks. It has moods too, and opinions—it can be bargained with, outsmarted, bribed, or offended, but it will almost always have the upper hand.

LANDMARKS

The Iron & Blue

The Jarbone Inversion: Considered bad luck to mention near an aqueduct.
Gallons of Water Shuttled Down From The Peaks Each Night: Too many to count.

A confusion of raised rail lines and staggered aqueducts built over centuries, each section anchored to (and looming over) one of the larger slabs of moving mountainside. Though these sections admittedly spend most of their time disconnected due to the waltz, every sundown brings a new opportunity; great gears turn, bridges spin, and elevated tracks snap together in drunken, temporary forms.

With each reconnection, the Iron & Blue opens for business. Sluices open as aqueducts are levered into place, sending a deluge of snowmelt and captured rain careening into the water storage towers of a hundred settlements. The air fills with the sound of train whistles and squealing brakes as passengers and produce are shuttled, sometimes almost vertically, from place to place. The network lights up the Kinekozan nights, a friendly reminder of connection and cooperation amid the geological whirl.

Sunpeak Station (Settlement)

Resting atop one of the mountain's many peaks, on one of the few craggy stones too massive for even the mountain to move, Sunpeak Station is the domain of rapid-response repair crews and water-wise alchemists. Whenever there's a problem on the lower sections of the Iron & Blue, you can bet the workers of Sunpeak will be on their way there in a heartbeat. *While most Sunpeak Station employees work the night shift, where travel is at its easiest, a rare but venerated few brave the unconnected rails of the daily dance in order to help when they're most needed—when nobody else can.*

Tethered Balloons (Feature)

A convention created by a single lower settlement that has since spread throughout the range, most smaller stations run a tethered balloon of lighter-than-air gas from their rooftops, acting as an elevated watchtower. Actual stone towers were used in the past, but the lessons taught by the Jarbone Inversion have most definitely stuck. *Rarely spoken of in the modern day, Jarbone was an oversized settlement that built one too many towers for holding stored water, eventually overbalancing and completely inverting the shard it was built upon, with catastrophic results.*

Funicular Raiders (Threat)

Riding scrappy but cleverly-designed trains that can hop the spaces between disconnected rails, these piratical types race up and down the Kinekozan by day, hoping to ambush stranded trains and distracted farmers. The raiders rarely kill, but they have absolutely no problem with taking everything they can in a single swooping pass, then circling back around (sometimes even hours later) to do the same thing to any rescue crews that might have been called in the wake of their first assault. *The most famed of these raiders, a Clank known as Mortuko the Swift, is said to have adapted her entire body into something that can run the rails faster than any scrap-built train.*

Lake Ladenscree

Largest Stone in the Lake: Breaker's Isle, the size of a small cart.
The Colours Beneath: Raw. Chameleonesque. Dissembling.

Another source of water perhaps, fed by some determined spring? If only the Kinekozans were so lucky. Lake Ladenscree is a miles-wide stretch of broken stones, each no bigger than a fist, tumbling endlessly up and down the range in a manner that defies expected patterns. It's a place more dangerous than most—these unmoored rocks will barely take the weight of a smaller creature, let alone something as heavy as a giant—but also of outstanding beauty, with passing communities having painted as many of the rocks as they could reach with a variety of colours over the years. Lake Ladenscree is a stone rainbow, lit from below by skeins of arcane force.

Raw Magic (Feature)

Though never far underfoot, the thicket of magical energy that keeps the surface of the Kinekozan jags in motion is rarely visible. A traveler might catch the glow of it at night if they're close to the gap between stones, and miners will carefully pick their way through it when digging to the mountain's calmer heart, but it's only on the shores of the Ladenscree that it can be seen with any real clarity from the surface. *Scholars argue back and forth over the nature of the forces beneath them, some positing that they're threads, others veins, others chains... And the taciturn nature of the Mesolith ensures debate will continue for decades to come.*

The Ladenscree Swell (Threat)

Unlike with heavier sections of stone, the arcane forces that keep the mountain moving have less of a grip on the Swell—when they come into contact with a larger shard, the smaller stones are just as likely to move over and through this new obstacle as they are under it, shredding foliage, smashing trees, and

hammering like horizontal hail against windows and walls. *More than one settlement that drifted out of the pattern of the dance has been leveled by contact with the Swell.*

Adding To The Lake (Festival)

A common pastime for local youths, settlements that pass close to the Lake will often find smaller objects going 'missing'—pots, cups, silverware. This is all in aid of adding to the lake, a somewhat delinquent tradition of drinking too much, painting whatever you've stolen bright colors, and seeing if it stays near the surface when thrown in amongst the smaller stones. *It's rare that anything does, almost vanishingly rare, but every child seems to have a sister, brother, cousin, or best friend that managed it once. You wouldn't have met them, though. But they definitely did it.*

The Asking-Mines

Shortest Question Ever Mined: "Why Only Twelve?"
Number of Active Shafts: 32

There's an old joke about the asking-mines, the kind that makes philosophical sorts wince and travelers furrow their brows, if they have them: "Why dig for an answer, when a question is worth its weight in stone?"

The miners of the jags realized long ago that the mountain's ores and crystals were of secondary concern. The real bounty is the stone itself, not of the ever-moving outer layer but of the mountain's heart, stone shot through with weighty curiosity, drenched in arcane thought.

Heavy With Questions (Feature)

The closer one draws to the Mesolith, the heavier with questions the stone around them becomes. Just under the surface of the slopes a hewn block may, if you run your hands over it, seem to ask why the clouds move so strangely, or how you got such a shine on the buttons of your lapel. Move further from the light and you might find a pebble asking how one might train a cockatrice to sing, or a lump of quartz laden with complex, unsolved equations. And, deeper still, the truly insightful—questions that open the mind to arcane potential, divine revelations, secrets of a lost age, or the truths behind myth. *The issue is with the mining; the more potent a question, the weightier the stone. More than one group of miners have found themselves wrestling to drag a hyper-dense chunk up through their tunnels, convinced that the question it contains, when posed to the right wizard, might grant them the kind of rewards that only an adventurer could usually earn.*

Day-Delvers (Threat)

There are some for whom profit outweighs the value of honesty. Day-delvers are mining scavengers, small bands equipped with pickaxe and drill who track the movement of tunnels through outer stone, risking their lives to enter the mountain's heart while the waltz is in full progress. Many are crushed between stone walls, torn apart by unexpected contact with bands of raw magic or simply lost to the darkness of a poorly-chosen tunnel, but the activity offers bounty enough that there are always some willing to try. *The Ancient Mind promises, in the Contract, that no citizen of the slopes shall ever be harmed on purpose. This may, or may not, be true.*

Settlements

HOGNITO

Closest Dance To The Summit: Spitting distance, they swear.
First Settled By: An irate hog-herder on his way to Sunpeak Station, who put down roots and never left.

While settlements on the Jags are hardly a rarity, Hognito stands out due to its sheer size. An entire city, complete with multiple districts and its own overground rail system, taking up every available inch of the moving stone it's built onto. The foundations run deep enough that basements thrum with the mountain's magic, and blocky tenements shift their positions throughout the year, sliding and grinding their way through the city to carefully balance it no matter where the waltz takes it.

Directional Districts (Feature)

Smaller settlements don't have to worry too much about weight distribution. The stones upon which they move are far heavier than a cluster of houses, and even the steepest slopes aren't enough to tip them over. But the designers of Hognito learned from Jarbone's catastrophic capsizing, and the local architectural guild have essentially created a city that moves much like the mountain does—as weight shifts and directions change, districts rearrange themselves like the segments of a sliding puzzle, ensuring the city stays upright. *Districts are named after the compass point they're closest to, but this might change several times a day thanks to the movement of the waltz and the counter-movements of Hognito's foundational mechanisms.*

The City That Chases The Sun (Festival)

The residents of Hognito are a diverse bunch, but they hold one thing in common—a desire to reach the summit of the Jags, to equal the heights of Sunpeak. The dance of Hognito's stone takes it from the base of the mountains to so close to very highest points, but always turns them away in the very final moments. But still they hope—every time they draw close to the peaks the entire city is drawn into a raging festival, complete with chants and dancing, feasting and fireworks. *The festival always ends on something of a whimper, but by that point most residents are too caught up in the celebrations to care.*

Hogling Heights (Location)

With cramped streets and shifting architecture, Hognito doesn't have much room for the greener side of life. Most farmers leave at dawn to tend orbiting shards of tilled soil and greenery, but a trusted few are elevated to work among the Hogling Heights—rooftops given over to barns and piggeries, where tamed hogs are fattened, milked, and butchered in a never-ending cycle. Their lives, though cut short by the necessity of an omnivorous society, are often seen as far more free than those of the average citizen. *For while none among the citizenry have ever reached that fabled peak, the rooftop hogs gaze over the mountains and out to the world beyond with every failed ascent.*

THE CRAWLING VILLAGES

Settlements That Have Passed Close to Hognito: Racketattle, Day-By-Day, Tortoiseholme, Steam Town
Most Famous Derailment Site: Track 187B, Spar 46 (which has claimed two villages in only twenty years)

The Kinekozen waltz is undeniably beautiful, but it's also fickle—settlements may spin apart from their fellows for weeks, months, or even years at a time, thrust into the wilderness of the outer peaks and away from larger centers of habitation. For some, this is a fact of life on the slopes. For others, it was a problem to be solved.

The denizens of the Crawling Villages are firmly in that latter camp—rather than trust the dance, they put their faith in the engineering prowess of the Iron & Blue. Their homes are constructed around heavy-duty railcars, flatbeds carrying farmland and hog-pens, markets and village squares. And while their lives are no less movement-driven than any other Kinekozan, at least they choose where they travel... When the rails are willing, of course.

Life on the Rails (Feature)

Every Crawling Village has an oversized steam locomotive pulling it along, usually acting as a combination of town hall and courthouse. Many also have additional, smaller engines providing more torque, essential for when the Iron & Blue turns steep. The average railcar holds four to six houses, their fixtures bolted to the floor to absorb the constant rattling sway of the village's movement. *Hammocks are the preferred sleeping accoutrement for all but the most stubborn of villagers.*

Lazy Days (Custom)

The Crawling Villages are named more for their speed than their mode of transport—as impressive as these trainback settlements are in terms of engineering, their uphill speed is rarely faster than an amble. Inhabitants tend toward the same sedate lifestyle, their rhythms set by the engines that pull them. There are definitely hours where a passing grove spurs apple-pickers into action, or a brace of wild hogs sets hunters swinging down from the elevated rails, but on the whole the villagers busy themselves only when they absolutely need to. *Work fast or work slow, as the saying goes, we'll always get where we're going eventually.*

Derailment (Threat)

'Stable' is a word few would use to describe the Iron & Blue. It's a marvel of engineering, but it's still an imprecise system. All it takes is for a set of tracks to not *quite* mesh after the nightfall adjustments, or a heavy train to push them out of alignment, and an entire village is at risk of toppling onto the drifting stone below. *Instances of derailment are actually quite rare, thanks both to the attentions of the network's engineers and the slow pace of most travel, but there's more than one village left shattered and abandoned on the mountainside from an unfortunate choice of path.*

CONTRACT

Hands of the Mesolith: One fewer than there should be.
Attendants: With their eyes reverentially lowered at all times, their hands running across the scarred floors.

A huge, hollow space deep within the mountains, Contract is the dwelling-place of the Mesolith. While it started as a natural fault, generations of Hollowing Hands miners have expanded the space into an ordered settlement, rooms hewn straight into the stone walls and connected by twisting walkways. The floor is kept clear of habitation and machinery, reserved for the Mesolith's dais, and those making pilgrimage to read the scrawls that surround it.

It's these scrawls, as much as the presence of the mountain's geological overseer, that draws visitors into the lamp-spoiled darkness. Contract is also home of the Kinekozan rules, spiraling text carved into the floor by the very first miners, under the direction of the unmoving Mesolith itself. These are the tenets by which the entity has chosen to operate, part contract, part declaration, part warning.

The Mesolith (Individual)

Though barely larger than the average giant, the physical form of the Mesolith is still an overwhelming presence—a reclining, faceless figure swaddled in carven robes, posed as if waking from an eternal dream. It's not quite a statue, not quite a god, immobile save for the movements of a hundred flexing hands. And it's these hands that hold the tethers of the mountain slopes, strands of raw magic leading up and out into the fissures of Contract's carven ceiling. The steps of the dance follow the Mesolith's whims, and some spend entire lifetimes trying to decrypt them. *Close observers may notice that one of the arms ends in a rocky stump, the strand once held by that missing hand now hanging untouched.*

Reading With Fingers (Custom)

With enough of a vantage point (such as could be gained from standing on one of the many walkways or bridges), one could read the carven rules of Contract by the light of lamps and magic alone. But that, the knowledgeable proclaim, would be to miss their intent. For a true understanding of the scrawled words that give this place its name, one must start at the outer edges of the room and work along the spiral, hands on the floor, reading each rune with fingers and palms. *It takes hours of shuffling motion to do so, but each turn brings you closer to the dais of the Mesolith—and closer to understanding its wishes.*

Hidden Histories (Feature)

Few working miners ever make it to Contract—there's nothing to be taken here without the Mesolith's direct permission, and communication is hit and miss when you're working on a geological timescale. But some come anyway, eager to take in the history of the place or pay their respects—it's here in Contract that the principle of trade was first established, that the entity first spoke with the head of the Hollowing Hand... *And that the First Deep Theft, so shameful as to have been scrubbed from the history books, was committed.*

FACTIONS

The Hollowing Hand

Preferred Tools: Steel picks for the newcomers, diamond-edged fingersaws for the experts.
Current Leader: Flexile, technically, though it's Dashan that makes all of the daily decisions

It doesn't take much in the way of specialist equipment to tunnel down into the innards of the Kinekozan Jags, but it does take years of training to do so safely. The Hollowing Hand are more than an experienced group of miners—they're cartographers of a shifting skin, delvers into stone and thought, merchants of the Mesolith's bounty.

The Contract Fundamentals (Custom)

Anyone can steal a stone from near the surface, if they get lucky, but the Hand pride themselves on following the first fundamental rule of Contract with every stone they take: a question must be traded for an answer. Luckily for those of a less metaphysical bent, the Mesolith has made it clear that 'an answer' can really be anything from the outside world that it finds interesting. Groups of miners can often be seen approaching their tunnel entrances laden down with gifts to be left in the tunnels, anything from finely-crafted blades to rocking chairs, alchemical mixtures to books of poetry. *Some members of the Hollowing Hand put a lot of thought into these items of barter, others tend to grab whatever's lying around as they leave the house. One in particular, Utherin Glasbenit, takes great pride in boasting that he's swapped over a hundred shoes for question-heavy stone.*

Riddler's Eve (Festival)

Once a month, at the start of a moonless night, the miners abandon their usual tasks and come together for a celebration of all they've acquired. Stone after stone is brought before local townsfolk, and their questions released into the world by the eldest of the Hand, read by their ungloved fingers and spoken through their ale-wetted lips. Stones containing simple questions that the crowd can answer are set aside, but those that pose queries fit to set a mind afire are cataloged and packaged up, ready to be sold onto wizards, tutors, and traveling philosophers of all stripes. *Every sale is final, even if the eventual buyer answers their question before they leave the mountain's slopes.*

Flexile (Absent Leader)

A nearly skeletal figure dressed in the remnants of mining gear archaic by the standards of the modern day, immediately identifiable thanks to the stone hand that clutches his face, covering every one of his features save a single eye glimpsed between two fingers. Flexile spends his time in a converted balloon watchtower, unwilling to touch the stone of the mountain the Hollowing Hand spend their lives exploring. *It is Flexile, or the person he once was, that committed the First Great Theft – the breaking and looting of one of the Mesolith's own stone hands. It's said that if the question it contains is ever answered, it may relax its grip—but Flexile refuses to let anybody other than him ever touch it.*

The Hollowers are revered by the Kinekozan locals, their work bringing in the majority of outside funding for the building and maintenance of settlements. Along with their lofty position comes a certain level of arrogance—earned, perhaps, but sometimes representing an organizational weakness. The principles are there to keep newer Hollowers in check.

- *No stone is yours – it merely passes through your hands.*
- *No shaft is yours – each exploration is shared with your fellows.*
- *No question is yours – and if the Mind wanted your answers, it would ask for them.*

NPCs

Dashan, the Never-Exiled [Underborne Ribbet, he/him]
Difficulty: 19
Cheerful, Exuberant, Meticulous
Experience: Storekeeping +3, Mining +2
Look: A squat ribbet with a 'beard' of floating stones, Dashan's small stature doesn't get in the way of him ordering larger miners around. He's respected throughout the Hollowing Hand as having a cool head in a crisis, a propensity for catching small but important details, and a laugh that booms as if he were three times his size.
Motive: Ensure that miners aren't just equipped for the journey down into the dark, but the path back up as well.

Quirrelus Kivian, Historian of Hollow Places [Underborne Orc, she/her]
Difficulty: 12
Long-Suffering, Haunted, Quizzical
Experience: Patience +4
Look: Orc history speaks of the Stone Father, and the hands that brought the entire ancestry into being. Who better to answer questions on such matters than the Mesolith? If only it wasn't so taciturn…
Motive: To have her questions about the Stone Father answered.

Story Hooks

The Flexile wishes to walk the Asking-Mines once more, but requires an escort to do so.

A powerful mage has summoned an answer of great import, but it struggles for freedom—she must match it to one of the mountain's unmined questions before it tears free.

A band of errant locals have taken to stealing the barter-goods left by the Hollowing Hands, hoping that if there are any consequences they'll fall on the miners themselves.

The Nomadic Guild of Here to There

Where is Here?: The place you have no love for now the sun has set.
Where is There?: The place you want the day to meet your brow.

Anyone that intends to put down roots on the moving mountains will, inevitably, come into contact with the Nomadic Guild of Here to There.

They're cartographers of a sort, though some prefer to call them artists, or engineers, or mystics. No term quite encapsulates their totality, their skills at once so diverse and so specific. For it's the Guild that chart the flow of the dance, and predict the next steps, entirely independent of the Mesolith. Who lick quartz and tell others which way the rains are going to come. Who decide where the newest extensions of the Iron & Blue are planted, and how those tracks are designed to swing.

The Guild see the mountain as few others can; as answers, rather than questions.

Absent a Mind (Feature)

Unlike the members of the Hollowing Hand, the Guild prefer to leave the Mesolith to its own devices. In fact, as a rule, they stay out of the interior tunnels of the Jags whenever they can help it. They're there to interpret and discern, not to mine more questions that may never have an answer. *The Guild and the Hand have forged an uneasy alliance over behavior and beliefs, meeting only to discuss the most effective spots to begin drilling a new shaft entrance.*

Meat, Milk, & Paper (Custom)

With the mountain spurring a question-based economy, the Guild are perhaps alone in being paid purely for the answers they provide. When they can be found, that is; membership requires a huge amount of dedication, and acolytes are lost almost as often as they progress through the ranks. This results in a huge amount of respect and power commanded by a relatively small number of individuals, which would be a recipe for disaster if the Guild's nomadic lifestyle didn't prevent them from accepting gifts of material value or weight. *Meat and milk are the two most common gifts for a member of the guild, though clothing, paper, and charcoal are also gratefully received.*

A Stumble in the Waltz (Threat)

A nomadic lifestyle spent on the Jags comes with its own host of dangers. Stilt scorpions step delicately from shard to slab in search of warm prey, venomous hogs snuffle through flimsy tent flaps, and railway pirates are opportunistic enough to strike even the loneliest of figures. But the worst fate a member of the Guild can come to is with a stumble, a misstep that sends them sprawling through the gaps between stones and into the sizzling magic that moves them. *And at that point, death is a kindness—there are tales of stumblers that manage to pull their way back up onto the outer slopes, changed in mind by what they've learned and in body by what they've endured.*

Principles

The principles of the Here-To-There are never written down. Why waste paper on such banalities when there are other, more pressing answers that warrant the space?
- *No puzzle is impossible to solve.*
- *Pose only questions, take only answers.*
- *Match the mountain's rhythms with your own.*

Long-Strider Levine [Ridgeborne Katari, they/them]
Difficulty: 15
Gentle, Precise, Focused
Experience: Navigation +4, Pathfinding +6
Look: Long of wooden limb and even longer of stride, Levine lost their first set of legs in an unfortunate jag-related collision. Their replacements, whittled from the boughs of the shatterwood, are made for sure purchase on even the least stable of surfaces.
Motive: Chart the mountain's movements, learn the waltz of stone.

Evening Over Low Lakes, Hog-Hustler [Seaborne Halfling, she/her]
Difficulty: 16
Belligerent, Brusque, Caring
Experience: Hogling Affairs +10
Look: Stones and rails? That's the easy stuff. Evening Over Low Lakes has dedicated her life to the tracking and training of venomous hogs, and she's *quite* happy with her progress, thank you very much!
Motive: Wrangle a kingly beast.

Story Hooks

A rare meeting of the Guild - they're asking for visitors to attend as well, particularly those that have arcane potential or an eye for cartography.

A member of the Here-To-There's has been tasked with tracking down a child, carried far from home on a flow of the mountain's stone. They know where to go, but they're not sure they can make it through the intervening territory alone.

An argument between the workers of the Iron & Blue and the miners of the Hollowing Hand has erupted over a proclamation by the Guild on where a new shaft should be sunk.

Resources

	MOMENTS OF HOPE		MOMENTS OF FEAR
1	*A passing stone from the Shatterwood, laden with unique fruits.*	1	*The Ladenswell arrives without warning, a cascade of painted stones traveling at dangerous speeds*
2	*A shout of greeting from a passing train, followed by the thump of a bag of supplies hitting the ground nearby.*	2	*A jarbone spirits rising from the glow between stones.*
3	*A diminutive figure sits atop a distant rock, playing a delicate flute.*	3	*Two tracks of the Iron & Blue haven't quite meshed together...*

4	A scorpion-wrangler passes by, pack laden down with unusual venoms.	4	The soft clucking of a cockatrice as it hunts for fresh meat.
5	A stone-soaked question is read, one that sets your mind on the path of an answer.	5	A drawn-out crunch, of two moving islands grinding together.
6	A chance meeting with one of the Nomadic Guild, an elder with answers you sought without meaning to.	6	A question escaping from a split stone, a question about something you'd rather forget.
7	A nearby village is holding a festival. The smells of fresh milk and roasting meat are unmistakable.	7	Whistles blare in the distance. A train is under threat.
8	Rail workers share secrets from upslope.	8	The creak of beams overhead, and the miles of rock above them.
9	A Sunpeak train clatters overhead, toward the very threat you were facing.	9	The corpse of a Guild member, still aglow with raw power.
10	Tucked into a cairn of balanced stones, a detailed map of recent movements and careful predictions.	10	Movement without sunlight, a denial of the natural order.
11	A swift-moving shard passes close, on an unerring route to the peaks.	11	The stinger of stilt-scorpion glimpsed briefly through the trees.
12	An eclipse stills the waltz for precious moments.	12	A sudden loss of balance—the shard you're on is sinking.

Rumors

While the citizens of Hognito desire more than anything else to catch that rising sun at its zenith, doing so would likely crash the entire city into Sunpeak Station.

The First Deep Theft may have been erased from the history of the region, but the Mesolith still remembers, and hasn't yet forgiven the exiled head of the Hollowing Hand.

A painted glass jug is sometimes seen bobbing in the Ladenswell Lake - what are the limits of stone, one wonders?

An oracle of the Here to There, captured by funicular raiders, was close to discerning the greater pattern of the waltz.

A dissident group is working toward derailing one of the crawling villages over a crack beneath two plates of stone, sending the whole settlement tumbling into the raw magic running beneath them.

One building of Contract is off limits to all but the highest ranking members of the Hollowing Hand, the walls within scrawled with rules that have been unwittingly broken.

Each portion of the Shatterwood, though still divided by miles, is drawing closer - the wood yearns to reform, and to still the stone of the mountain once more.

Equipment

Diamond-Saw Glove - Strength Melee - d4+2 (phy) - One-Handed
Feature: Delicate Touch (Mark stress to add your Finesse to any damage rolls made with your Primary Weapon)
Secondary Weapon

Asking-Stone Staff - Knowledge Far - d12+5 (phy) - One-Handed
Feature: Curious (During a rest, you must spend one of your downtime actions answering its questions, or every attack made with it until your next rest is at disadvantage.)
Primary Weapon

Ladenscree Swarm - Base Score: 8
Feature: Coruscating (Your armor score is increased by your Proficiency against ranged attacks.)
Armor

Items

Strand of Raw Magic: This animates an object temporarily when wrapped around it, causing it to move erratically and (sometimes) take on sentience. *Do not touch this with your bare hands. Ever.*

Untethered Tent: A floating tent weighted down with stabilizing stones, the perfect place to rest for one that wants to stay just off the ground while they sleep. During a long rest, you always gain a Hope.

Jag-Striding Boots: Boots with soles of stolen stone. Heavy, but they remember the motion of the waltz. Mark stress to increase your Evasion by +2 until your next roll with Fear. When you avoid an attack, you can immediately move anywhere within close range.

Consumables

Hollower's Folly - A hand made of quartz, shaped to resemble the one stolen from the Mesolith. On a successful Spellcast (16) roll, it will skitter along the ground and up onto a target's face, latching on and making them temporarily Vulnerable and giving them disadvantage on any attack rolls until they are no longer Vulnerable.

Hogling Crunch - Sweet and savory, fatty and acidic - if you can get past the mild dose of toxins it contains, it'll perk you right up. Mark 2 Stress when you consume. You can move anywhere within far range when taking an action (instead of within close range) until your next short rest.

Crushed Questions - These are less than fragments, sand-like stones containing the offcuts of larger questions. Sprinkling them into the wind provides questions on a topic you wouldn't have thought to ask. Use this when making a Knowledge roll to make your Hope die a d20 instead of a d12.

Adversaries

Toxic Hog

Bristling with irritant hairs almost as much as they are with barely-contained rage, the hogs of the shattered slopes are a far cry from the tamed beasts of the Hognito piggeries. Toxic hogs have few known predators, even among the harsh and unusual ecosystem of the mountains—even if you get past the venomous tusks, the meat you win is laced with potent poison unless cooked to a crisp.

Toxic Hog - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Charge with Wild Abandon, Catch and Toss, Trample*

Attack Modifier: +4

Tusks: Melee | 4d12+6 phy

Difficulty: 17

Minor 15 | **Major** 35 | **Severe** 80

HP: 5

Stress: 2

Experience: Cliff Hopping +4

Moves

Charge Like a Train
The charge of a Toxic Hog hits like a freight train. When charging a PC, spend a Fear to slam the player back into far range. When they land, they take d10 damage.

Bristles
Spend a **Fear** to have this adversary counterattack when hit in melee or very close range, dealing 3d8+4 damage from its poisonous bristles. The PC must also mark a stress from the poison before they act until their next roll with Hope.

Stilt Scorpions

Well adapted to the shifting stone islands of the Kinekozan, this local breed of scorpions uses harrier tactics to take down prey—tracking it until it nears a fault or gap, and launching itself bodily at any unwary target that strays too close to the edge. In the struggle that follows, the fear of falling often leaves targets open to quick jabs from stinger and pincers both.

Stilt Scorpions - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Shadow, Surge, Use Terrain*

Attack Modifier: +5

Pincers: Melee | 3d8+12 phy
Stinger: Very Close | 5d10+5 phy
Difficulty: 18

Minor 12 | **Major** 50 | **Severe** 90

HP: 3

Stress: 2

Experience: Tracker +5

Moves

Out of the Shadows
On the first attack a Stilt Scorpion makes against a target, their attack modifier is increased by +3.

Fumbling Sting
The poison of the Stilt Scorpion's stinger is disorienting. Any targets hit by a Stinger attack also mark a stress and on their next action, the target must place an additional

Grapple
Spend a **Fear** to catch a Very Close target in the scorpion's pincher. (You may spend 2 Fear to grab two if both claws are free.) Targets cannot attempt to escape until the next time the scorpion marks a hit point, at which time they must make a Strength or Agility (18) reaction roll. On a failure, immediately perform the Drag move.

Drag
When a target fails to escape from Grapple, you may immediately move the Stilt Scorpion anywhere within Very Far Range, bringing any Grappled targets with it.

Kinekozan Cockatrice

Cursed, wheezing beasts that blend elements of wyverns, chickens, and centipedes, cockatrices spend their days hanging on the underside of the mountain's moving stones, feathers soaking up the raw magic of the waltz. When night falls and the dance begins to slow, a cockatrice will crawl up from its daytime perch and treat nearby slabs as its new hunting ground; though physically frail, discharging the energy built up in patches of feathers gives them the ability to turn stone to slurry, trapping prey in one place to better receive their final 'gift'.

Kinekozan Cockatrice - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Isolate, Ensnare, Leech*

Attack Modifier: +7

Beak & Mandibles:
Very Close | 8d10+3 phy

Difficulty: 19

Minor 5 | **Major** 25 | **Severe** 80

HP: 4

Stress: 2

Experience: The Waltz +8

Moves

Stone Snare
Spend **2 Fear** to turn an area of stone within close range of the cockatrice in to a quicksand-like slurry, trapping (or slowing) anyone who moves through it. Any PCs who attempt to pass through must succeed on an Agility (19) roll or become Ensnared. While Ensnared, the PC is Restrained and their Evasion score is halved (rounded up).

Leech Moisture
Spend a **Fear** when this creature is within close range of an Ensnared target to move into melee range and make an attack. On a success, deal 4d20 mag damage. The cockatrice sinks its mandibles into its victim and sucks all liquids from the flesh around the wound, turning affected areas to stone as it does so. Until their next long rest, they cannot heal Hit Points.

Keening Dive
Once this adversary only has one hit point left, spend **3 Fear** to have it keen, discharging large amounts of raw magic and diving into the stone. From there it acts like an aquatic hazard, swimming through the stone. Its difficulty becomes +3.

Adversaries Reference

This section contains key information for creating and using adversaries, including common adversary moves, a list of adversaries by tier, and more.

Common Adversary Moves

Some adversaries have common moves, listed here for reference. Anywhere X is used below, it is to stand in for a certain value. On an adversary stat block, Relentless (X) would be replaced with something like Relentless (3).

Relentless (X)

A foe with Relentless can activate up to X times during a GM move so long as there are enough action tokens.

The Relentless move is useful if you want an adversary you can activate more than once during a single GM move. This is often best for exceedingly fast or dangerous foes, or for adversaries who are likely to be battling the party on their own.

Slow (X)

A foe with Slow costs X action tokens to activate.

*The Slow move is useful if you want an adversary who narratively takes longer to act than others, like a slug creature or a massive ogre. This is usually most effective when that creature is very powerful when it **does** act, but eats up lots of action tokens to do it.*

Minion (X)

For every X damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within their attack's range.

The Minion move is useful when you want to drop lots of small enemies into the battlefield, knowing the party can swing through them very easily. This move means that if a PC hits one minion and they do enough damage, they also hit a number of others that are in range for them. Because of this, it's often best to have minions crowd a PC–it will feel overwhelming and dangerous until they're able to make an attack against them. If you want that cinematic feeling of the PCs taking out waves of enemies with a single attack roll, minions are a great tool to make that happen.

Horde

Adversaries with the Horde move deal less damage when they've marked ½ or more of their Hit Points. **Creatures Per Hit Point: (X)** denotes the number of creatures in this horde represented by each Hit Point.

The Horde move is useful when you want to represent a group of enemies as a single adversary. This is one step beyond just having a number of minions on the battlefield–maybe you want to represent a mass of zombies or a swarm of deadly insects. Horde allows you to make large numbers of enemies without the overhead of running them all individually. For example, a zombie Horde with 5 hit points and a Creatures Per Hit Point value of 4 would be described as 20 zombies moving in a group together. If a PC deals 2 hit points to this horde, you would describe 8 zombies being taken out as a result.

Group Attack - (Range) (X)

Spend a Fear to activate all adversaries with this name within a certain range of a target. This group can move and make an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal X amount of damage per adversary.

*The Group Attack is useful for making the action tokens more efficient in battle. Because it allows you to activate multiple adversaries at once, it can really help to make a battlefield full of enemies come alive. As a note of clarification, you only make **one attack roll for the entire group** that is attacking, and then **add their damage together** before applying it to the target. Group Attack is often paired up with the Minion move because it allows a number of smaller foes to all have the chance to attack before they inevitably are taken out by the PCs.*

Adversaries by Tier

Tier 0 (Level 1)

Jagged Knife Bandits (Shadow, Hexer, Minion, Sniper, Mauler)
Beasts (Bear, Dire Wolf, Swarm of Rats, Giant Rat, Giant Scorpion, Glass Snake)
Mercenaries (Sellsword, Harrier, Spellblade, Blademaster)
Oozes (Green, Tiny Green, Red, Tiny Red)
Grove Guardians (Oak Treant, Sylvan Soldier, Deeproot Defender, Young Dryad)
Skeletons (Dredge Minion, Warrior, Archer, Knight)
Guards (Bladed Guards, Archers, Head Guard)
Zombies (Shambling Zombie, Minion, Horde, Brawny, Hulk)
Elementals (Chaos, Fire)
Pirates (Horde, Tough, Captain)
Construct
Acid Burrower
Minor Demon
Cave Giant
Socialites (Merchant, Courtier, Petty Noble)

Tier 1 (Levels 2-4)

Assassins (Minion, Poisoner, Master Assassin)
Battle Box
Chaos Skull
Giant Eagle
Juvenile Flickerfly
Mortal Hunter
Failed Experiment
Gorgon
Minotaur
Katari Burglar
Giant Mercenaries (Brawler, Minion, Beastmaster)

Tier 2 (Levels 5-7)

Elementals (Greater Water, Greater Earth, Fire Spark)
Flickerfly
Huge Green Ooze
Hydra
Vampires (Dire Bat, Vampire, Vampire Leader)
Young Ice Dragon
Vault Guardians (Turret, Sentinel, Cage)
Verdant Defenders (Dryad, Oak Treant, Treant Sapling, Stag Knight)

Tier 3 (Levels 8-10)

Arch-Necromancer's Host (Arch-Necromancer, Zombie Legion, Perfected Zombie)
Fallen Host (Fallen Shock Troops, Fallen Sorcerer, Fallen Warlord)
Hallowed Forces (Soldier Minions, Archers, High Seraph)
Oracle of Doom
Outer Realms Monstrosities (Abomination, Corruptor, Thrall)
Kraken
Volcanic Dragon

[There will be narrative descriptions added to all of these adversaries in a future update.]

Jagged Knife Bandits

Jagged Knife Bandit - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Escape, Profit, Throw Smoke*

Attack Modifier: +0
Daggers: Melee | 2d8 phy
Difficulty: 12
Minor 2 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 14
HP: 5
Stress: 3
Experience:
Bandit +2

Moves
From Above
When this adversary makes a successful attack on a target by striking from above, it deals 3d10 damage instead of its normal attack damage.

Jagged Knife Shadow - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Ambush, Conceal, Divide, Profit*

Attack Modifier: +1

Dagger: Melee | 2d6 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 1 | **Major** 4 | **Severe** 8

HP: 3

Stress: 1

Experience:
Intrusion +3

Moves
Cloak of Darkness
Spend a **Fear** to cover everything with a Very Close distance in shadow. The Shadow and any ally inside the area become Hidden. All attacks by non-Jagged Knife creatures from within the area suffer disadvantage. Jagged Knife Shadow has advantage on any opponent within a Cloak of Darkness.

Midnight Hunter
Jagged Knife Shadow has advantage on attacks while Hidden.

Backstab
If Jagged Knife Shadow has advantage on an attack, that attack deals 2d10 physical damage on success.

Jagged Knife Hexer - Support

Motives & Tactics: *Command, Hex, Profit, Warp*

Attack Modifier: +2

Staff: Far | 1d10 mag

Difficulty: 13

Minor 2 | **Major** 5 | **Severe** 9

HP: 4

Stress: 3

Experience:
Magical Knowledge +2

Moves

Curse
Spend a **Fear** to target a creature within Far distance. The target is hounded by bad luck and becomes Vulnerable for the scene or until the Hexer is defeated. When a cursed character makes an action roll with Hope, it is instead with Fear unless the PC marks a Stress to negate this effect.

Chaotic Flux
Make an attack against up to three targets within Very Close range. On success, mark Stress to deal 2d6 magic damage to each.

Jagged Knife Sniper - Ranged

Motives & Tactics: *Hide, Ambush, Profit, Reposition*

Attack Modifier: –1

Shortbow: Far | 2d6 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 1 | **Major** 4 | **Severe** 7

HP: 3

Stress: 0

Experience:
Stealth +2

Moves

Unseen Strike
If the Sniper hits an enemy while Hidden, the attack deals 2d10 phy instead of its normal damage.

Jagged Knife Lieutenant - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Bully, Command, Profit, Reinforce*

Attack Modifier: +4

Javelin: Close | 1d8+2 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 2 | **Major** 5 | **Severe** 10

HP: 6

Stress: 3

Experience:
Area Knowledge +2

Moves

Tactician
When this adversary activates, you may also activate two allies within Close range of them.

Sturdy
When this adversary takes Minor damage, they may mark a Stress instead of HP.

More Where That Came From
Spend a **Fear** to summon 3 Jagged Knife Lackeys, who appear at Far range.

Jagged Knife Lackey - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Escape, Profit, Throw Smoke*

Attack Modifier: -2

Daggers: Melee | 3 phy

Difficulty: 9

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Experience:
Bandit +2

Moves

Minion 3
For every 3 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within their attack's range.

Group Attack - Close 3
Spend a **Fear** to activate all adversaries with this name within close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 3 damage per adversary.

Jagged Knife Kneebreaker - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Intimidate, Grapple, Profit, Steal*

Attack Modifier: -3

Club: Melee | 2d6+2 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 4 | **Major** 10 | **Severe** 14

HP: 7

Stress: 3

Experience:
Bandit +2
Unveiled Threats +3

Moves

Hold Them Down
Mark Stress to make a melee attack. If successful, instead of dealing damage, hold the target in place, making them Restrained and Vulnerable. A PC can break free of these conditions by rolling with Strength (12) or are let go automatically when Major damage or higher is dealt to the Bruiser.

PCs Restrained by this adversary take double damage from attacks by other adversaries in the scene.

Bull Rush
Spend a **Fear** to move into melee with a close target and make an attack. On a success, all armor used against this attack is halved (round up). The target is then knocked out of melee into very close range.

Beasts

Bear - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Climb, Defend Territory, Pummel, Track*

Attack Modifier: +1

Claws: Melee | 2d10 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 4 | **Major** 10 | **Severe** 16

HP: 7

Stress: 2

Experience:
Keen Senses +2
Ambusher +3

Moves

Bite
Spend a **Fear** to move into melee with a target within Close range and make an attack to bite and hold them. On success, the target takes 3d8 phy damage and becomes Restrained. The target may escape by rolling with Strength (14).

Overwhelming Force
Creatures that mark HP from a Claws attack by this adversary are knocked back to Very Close range.

Dire Wolf - Skulker

Motives & Tactics: *Defend Territory, Harry, Protect Pack, Surround, Trail*

Attack Modifier: +2

Claws: Melee | 2d6 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 1 | **Major** 5 | **Severe** 9

HP: 4

Stress: 0

Experience:
Keen Senses +3

Moves

Pack Tactics
When making a Claws attack, if another Dire Wolf is also in melee range of the target, deal 2d10 phy damage instead.

Hobbling Strike
Make an attack roll against a target within very close range. On a success, spend a **Fear** to reach out with a gnashing of teeth to deal 4d6 phy and make them Vulnerable until they regain a Hit Point.

Giant Rat - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Burrow, Scavenge, Hunger, Wear Down*

Attack Modifier: -4

Bite: Melee | 3 phy

Difficulty: 10

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Experience:
Keen Senses +3

Moves

Minion 3
For every 3 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within their attack's range.

Group Attack - Very Close 3
Spend a Fear to activate all adversaries with this name within very close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 3 damage per adversary.

Swarm of Rats - Horde

Motives & Tactics: *Consume, Swarm, Obscure*

Attack Modifier: -3

Claws: Melee | 2d10 phy

Difficulty: 10

Minor 2 | **Major** 6 | **Severe** 10

HP: 6

Stress: 0

Moves

In Your Face
All enemies within melee range of the swarm have disadvantage on attacks against any target other than the swarm.

Horde 2d4 - Creatures Per Hit Point: 10
This adversary deals 2d4 instead of their normal damage when they've marked ½ or more of their HP.

Giant Scorpion - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Ambush, Feed, Grapple, Poison*

Attack Modifier: +2

Pincers: Melee | 2d8 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 3 | **Major** 7 | **Severe** 11

HP: 6

Stress: 2

Experience:
Camouflage +2

Moves

Double Strike
Mark Stress to make a Pincer attack against an additional target in range.

Venomous Stinger
Make an attack roll against a target within very close range. On a success, spend 2 **Fear** to do 2d8 phy damage with your stinger. The target also becomes poisoned until their next short rest or a PC succeeds on a Knowledge (16) roll to remove the poison. While poisoned, before they make an action roll, they must roll a d6. If the result is a 4 or below, they mark a stress.

Giant Snake - Ranged

Motives & Tactics: *Climb, Feed, Keep Distance, Scare*

Attack Modifier: +1

Fangs: Very Close | 1d8+3 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 3 | **Major** 12 | **Severe** 20

HP: 8

Stress: 3

Moves

Armor-Shredding Shards
Any successful melee attacks against this creature also marks an armor slot on the attacker.

Spinning Serpent
Mark Stress to make a Fangs attack against all targets within Very Close range.

Glass Spitter
Countdown 4 (Loop). Activate when a hostile target is spotted. This countdown reduces every time a PC rolls with Fear. When triggered, this adversary shoots sharps of glass at all targets in front of them within far range. Any targets the attack roll succeeds against take 1d8+1 phy damage.

Mercenaries

Sellsword - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Charge, Overwhelm, Lacerate, Profit*

Attack Modifier: +0

Longsword: Melee | 4 phy

Difficulty: 10

Minor 1 (Minion)

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Moves

Group Attack Close 3
Spend a Fear to activate all adversaries with this name within close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 3 damage per adversary.

Minion 4
For every 4 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Harrier - Ranged

Motives & Tactics: *Harry, Kite, Flank, Profit*

Attack Modifier: +1

Javelin: Close | 1d8+2 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 4 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 12

HP: 3

Stress: 2

Experience:
Athlete +3

Moves

Maintain Distance
Mark Stress after making a Javelin attack to immediately move anywhere within far range.

Fall Back
When a PC moves into melee to make an attack, you may spend 2 **Fear** before they make the attack roll to move the Harrier anywhere within close range and instead make a Javelin attack on them.

Slippery
Spend a **Fear** to end the Restrained condition on Harrier and move them up to a Close distance without spending an action token. Spend an additional **Fear** to have them make a Javelin attack with a +2 modifier.

Spellblade - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Blast, Command, Endure*

Attack Modifier: +3

Empowered Longsword: Melee | 2d8+2 phy/mag

Difficulty: 14

Minor 4 | **Major** 9 | **Severe** 14

HP: 6

Stress: 3

Experience:
Magical Knowledge +3

Moves

Arcane Steel
Damage dealt by their Empowered Longsword is considered both physical and magic. Only targets that are resistant to both are resistant, and only targets that are immune to both are immune.

Suppressing Blast
Spend a **Fear** to choose three targets within Very Close range of each other and up to Far range from this adversary. These targets all must make a reaction roll with Agility (13) or take 2d12 mag damage. Targets that succeed on the roll take half damage. Add an action token to the tracker for each target that marked HP.

Weaponmaster - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Taunt, Hone Prowess, Retaliate, Target The Strongest*

Attack Modifier: +2

Greatsword: Very Close | 2d8+2 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 4 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 12

HP: 6

Stress: 2

Moves

Disarming Strike
When you make a successful Greatsword attack against a target, you can spend a **Fear** to also have the PC make a reaction roll with Agility (12) or have their primary weapon knocked out of their hands to Very Close range. They must retrieve it before they can use it again.

Adrenaline Burst
Spend 2 **Fear** to heal 2 HP (once per day).

Oozes

Green Ooze - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Creep up, Envelop, Camouflage, Consume & Multiply*

Attack Modifier: +1

Ooze Appendage: Melee | 2d8 mag

Difficulty: 8

Minor 4 | **Major** 9 | **Severe** 14

HP: 5

Stress: 2

Experience:
Camouflage +3

Moves

Slow (2)
The GM must spend two action tokens to activate this adversary.

Acidic Form
Any PC damaged by this adversary must also mark one Armor Slot.

Envelop
Spend a **Fear** to make an attack roll against a creature within Very Close distance. On a success, deal 2d10 magic damage. If that creature marks HP, they are stuck in the ooze and Restrained until they break free (Strength 14). A creature that takes an action while Enveloped suffers 2d8 direct magic damage before acting.

Split
When this adversary has marked 3 of its hit points, it splits into two Tiny Green Oozes (with no marked HP or Stress) that instantly activate.

Tiny Green Ooze - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Creep up, Envelop, Camouflage, Consume & Multiply*

Attack Modifier: –1

Ooze Appendage: Melee | 1d6 mag

Difficulty: 10

Minor 3 | **Major** 5

HP: 2

Stress: 0

Moves

Acidic Form
Any creature damaged by this adversary must also mark one Armor Slot.

Red Ooze - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Ignite, Start fires, Camouflage, Consume & Multiply*

Attack Modifier: +1

Ooze Appendage: Melee | 2d8 mag

Difficulty: 10

Minor 4 | **Major** 9 | **Severe** 14

HP: 5

Stress: 2

Experience:
Camouflage +3

Moves

Spread Fire
This adversary only moves up to very close range when it moves and lights any flammable objects it touches on fire.

Split
When Red Ooze has marked half of its hit points, it splits into two Tiny Red Oozes (with no HP/Stress marked) that instantly activate.

Ignite
Spend a **Fear** to make an attack roll against a creature within Very Close distance. If they mark HP from the attack, they are lit on fire, becoming Vulnerable until they put out the fire (Finesse 14). Any creature that has the Ignite condition takes 1d6 direct magic damage every time a token is placed on the action tracker.

Tiny Red Ooze - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Blaze, Camouflage, Consume & Multiply*

Attack Modifier: –1

Pseudopod: Melee | 1d6 mag

Difficulty: 11

Minor 3 | **Major** 6

HP: 2

Stress: 0

Moves

Burning
Any creature that damages this adversary with an attack from melee range takes 2d6 direct magic damage.

Minor Treeant - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Crush, Overwhelm, Protect*

Attack Modifier: -2

Claws: Melee | 4 phy

Difficulty: 10

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Experience: Nature's Friend +1

Moves

Minion 4
For every 4 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack - Melee - 4
Spend a **Fear** to activate all adversaries with this name within close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 3 damage per adversary.

Sylvan Soldier - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Ambush, Overwhelm, Protect, Trail*

Attack Modifier: +0

Claws: Melee | 2d8+2 phy

Difficulty: 11

Minor 1 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 12

HP: 4

Stress: 0

Experience: Tracker +2

Moves

Pack Tactics
When making a Claws attack, if another Sylvan Soldier is also in melee range of the target, deal 2d10+4 phy damage instead.

Forest Control
Spend a **Fear** to pull down a tree within close distance. Anyone within Very Close of the tree must make a Reaction roll with Agility (13) or take 1d20 phy damage.

Blend In
After a successful attack, mark Stress to become Hidden until this adversary's next attack or a PC rolls Instinct (14) to find them.

Deeproot Defender - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Ambush, Grab, Protect, Pummel*

Attack Modifier: +2

Vines: Close | 1d10+3 phy

Difficulty: 10

Minor 1 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 16

HP: 7

Stress: 2

Experience: Huge +3

Moves

Ground Slam
Spend a **Fear** to slam the ground and knock any foes within very close range into far range. Each character knocked away marks Stress.

Grab and Drag
Make an attack roll against a close target. On a success, mark stress to deal 2d8+3 damage and pull them to Melee range, where they are Restrained. The creature can break free by rolling with Strength (11) or automatically breaks free when the Deeproot Defender suffers Severe damage.

Young Dryad - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Command, Nurture, Prune the Unwelcome*

Attack Modifier: +4

Wand: Far | 2d8+2 mag

Difficulty: 9

Minor 1 | **Major** 5 | **Severe** 10

HP: 4

Stress: 3

Experience: Leadership +3

Moves

Voice of the Forest
Spend a **Fear** to activate 1d4 allies in range of a target they can hit with their weapon. They all deal half damage on their attacks.

Thorny Cage
Spend 2 **Fear** to grow a thicket of brambles that fills a Close area anywhere within Far range of this adversary. All creatures within the bramble must make a Reaction roll with Finesse (12). On a success, they mark Stress and move out of the bramble. On a failure, they become Restrained. Creatures can break free of this condition by rolling with Finesse or Strength (12).

Any opponents moving within the bramble area must roll with Finesse (10) or take 2d6 phy damage.

Skeleton Dredge - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Play Dead, Overwhelm, Fall Apart, Steal Skin*

Attack Modifier: -1

Rusty Sword: Melee | 3 phy

Difficulty: 8

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Moves

Minion 4
For every 4 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack - Close 3
Spend a **Fear** to activate all adversaries with this name within close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 3 damage per adversary.

Skeleton Warrior - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Gang Up, Feign Death, Steal Skin*

Attack Modifier: +0

Sword: Melee | 2d8 phy

Difficulty: 10

Minor 1 | **Major** 4 | **Severe** 8

HP: 3

Stress: 0

Moves

Only Bones
This creature is resistant to physical damage

Won't Stay Dead
When this adversary marks their last hit point, start a Countdown (6). Tick it down everytime a token is placed on the action tracker. When it is triggered, if there are still other skeleton adversaries fighting on the battlefield, this adversary reforms itself and returns to battle with no hit points marked.

Skeleton Archer - Ranged

Motives & Tactics: *Steal Skin, Gang Up, Feign Death*

Attack Modifier: +2

Shortbow: Far | 2d6 phy

Difficulty: 9

Minor 1 | **Major** 3 | **Severe** 7

HP: 3

Stress: 0

Moves

Opportunist
When two or more other adversaries are very close to a target, all the damage this adversary deals to that target is doubled.

Deadly Shot
Spend a Fear after successfully attacking a Vulnerable target to deal 2d10 damage instead.

Skeleton Knight - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Play Dead, Lead Troops, Overwhelm*

Attack Modifier: +2

Rusty Greatsword: Melee | 2d8+2 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 3 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 15

HP: 5

Stress: 2

Moves

Pack Tactics
When making a Rusty Greatsword attack, if another Skeleton Knight is also in melee range of the target, deal 2d10 phy damage instead.

Cut to the Bone
Spend a **Fear** to make a Rusty Greatsword attack against all enemies within Very Close range. On a success, they also mark Stress.

Dig Two Graves
When this adversary is killed, before it dies it makes an attack against an enemy within Very Close range (prioritizing the enemy that killed it). On success, the target takes 2d10 phy damage and loses 1d4 Hope.

Guards

Bladed Guards - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Arrest, Close Gates, Pin Down, Make it Through the Day*

Attack Modifier: +1

Longsword: Melee | 2d6 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 1 | **Major** 6 | **Severe** 12

HP: 5

Stress: 0

Experience:
Local Knowledge +3

Moves

Shield Wall
The difficulty to move through anywhere within close range around this adversary is increased by 1 for each Bladed Guard within melee range of one another.

Detain
Mark Stress to make an attack roll against a target within Very Close range. On a success, the target is Restrained. They can break free on a successful attack against the adversary or on a roll with Strength or Finesse (12).

Archer Guards - Ranged

Motives & Tactics: *Close Gates, Pin Down, Arrest, Make it Through the Day*

Attack Modifier: +1

Longbow: Far | 2d8 phy

Difficulty: 10

Minor 1 | **Major** 5 | **Severe** 10

HP: 3

Stress: 0

Experience:
Local Knowledge +3

Moves

Hobbling Shot
Spend a Fear to make a Longbow attack against any target in Far range. On a success, deal 2d8 phy damage and give them disadvantage on all Agility rolls until they clear at least one marked HP.

Head Guard - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Command, Close Gates, Pin Down, Arrest, Seek Glory*

Attack Modifier: +4

Mace: Melee | 3d6 phy

Difficulty: 15

Minor 3 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 22

HP: 7

Stress: 3

Experience:
Commander: +2
Local Knowledge: +2

Moves

Rally Guards
Spend a **Fear** to move all Bladed Guards into melee with the nearest target they are chasing and make that target Vulnerable.

On My Signal (Countdown 5)
Activate when this creature sees any number of hostile targets. It ticks down anytime a PC makes an attack roll. When triggered all Archer Guards fire at their nearest target with a +3 attack modifier.

Zombies

Shambling Zombie - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Hunger, Mob Enemy, Shred Flesh, Devour*

Attack Modifier: +0

Bite: Melee | 3d8 phy

Difficulty: 9

Minor 1 | **Major** 4 | **Severe** 6

HP: 4

Stress: 0

<u>Moves</u>

Too Many to Handle
When making a Bite attack, you can spend a Fear after the roll if any other Zombie is within close range to prevent the target from spending Armor Slots to reduce the damage.

Horrifying
When this creature deals hit point damage to a target, the target also loses a Hope. If the target doesn't have any Hope, they mark an additional Hit Point instead.

Rotted Zombie - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Hunger, Maul, Surround, Eat Flesh*

Attack Modifier: -3

Bite: Melee | 4 phy

Difficulty: 7

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

<u>Moves</u>

Minion 4
For every 4 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack - Very Close 4
Spend a **Fear** to activate all adversaries with this name within very close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 4 damage per adversary.

Zombie Pack - Horde

Motives & Tactics: *Hunger, Maul, Consume Flesh*

Attack Modifier: -1

Bite: Melee | 2d10 phy

Difficulty: 8

Minor 5 | **Major** 9 | **Severe** 13

HP: 6

Stress: 3

<u>Moves</u>

Overwhelm
When a creature within melee range deals stress to the Zombie Pack, you may spend a **Fear** to have the Zombie Pack immediately make an attack against that creature.

Horde: 2d6 - Creatures Per Hit Point: 2
If the Zombie Pack has 3 or more of its Hit Points marked, its attack only deals 2d6 damage.

Brawny Zombie - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Destruction, Crush, Slam, Hail Debris*

Attack Modifier: +2

Slam: Very Close | 2d12 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 5 | **Major** 11 | **Severe** 17

HP: 7

Stress: 4

Experience: Throw +4

Moves

Devastating Blows
Mark Stress to make a Slam attack that also forces the target to mark one armor slot on a success.

Grab & Rend
Spend 2 **Fear** to make an attack against a target in melee. On a success, the target becomes Restrained and takes 2d10 phy damage as this adversary tries to rip them in two. The target can clear Restrained by rolling with Strength or Agility (14) or they will automatically break free when Brawny Zombie takes Severe damage.

Juggernaut
Spend a **Fear** to destroy part of the environment within a Very Close range of Brawny Zombie. Any character within Close range of the destroyed element must make a Reaction roll with Agility (15) or be knocked over, making them Vulnerable. They can clear Vulnerable by rolling with Agility (13).

Patchwork Zombie Hulk - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Hunger, Flail, Absorb Corpses, Terrify*

Attack Modifier: +4

Too Many Arms: Very Close | 3d6+5 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 4 | **Major** 10 | **Severe** 20

HP: 9

Stress: 3

Experience:
Tear Things Apart +2

Moves

Destructible
Whenever Patchwork Zombie takes Major damage or worse, it marks +1 HP.

Another For The Pile
Spend a **Fear** when the Patchwork Zombie Hulk is within Very Close of a corpse to add it to the hulk, healing 1 HP and clearing 1 Stress.

Tormented Screams
Spend a **Fear** to cause all PCs within Far range to make a reaction roll with Presence (13) or lose one Hope. PCs that succeed still mark Stress.

Flail
Mark **Stress** to make a Too Many Arms attack against all targets within Close range.

Elementals

Minor Chaos Elemental - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Confound, Destabilize, Transmogrify*

Attack Modifier: +3

Warp Blast: Close | 2d10 mag

Difficulty: 14

Minor 5 | **Major** 12 | **Severe** 25

HP: 6

Stress: 3

Moves

Sickening Flux
Mark **Stress** to cause all PCs within Close to make a reaction roll using Instinct (14). Those that fail are sickened and become Vulnerable until they take a short rest or clear at least one marked HP. Those that succeed still mark Stress.

Remake Reality
Spend a **Fear** to reshape a Close area around the Minor Chaos Elemental to a different biome (forest into desert, city into lake). Any creature within that Close area must make a reaction roll with Instinct (14) or take 2d10 direct magic damage that cannot be reduced by armor (due to the ripping of reality around them). Spend an additional **Fear** if any targets fail the reaction roll to also make them Vulnerable until the end of the scene or until they clear Stress.

Minor Fire Elemental - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Start Fires, Encircle Enemies, Grow in Size, Intimidate*

Attack Modifier: +3

Elemental Blast: Far | 2d6 mag

Difficulty: 13

Minor 2 | **Major** 7 | **Severe** 13

HP: 7

Stress: 3

Moves

Scorched Earth
Mark a Stress to choose a point within Far distance. The ground within Very Close distance of that point immediately burst into flames. Anyone within this area must make a reaction roll with Agility (15), or take 2d10 magic damage from the flames.

Fearsome Conflagration
Spend a **Fear** to force all characters within Close distance make a reaction roll with Presence (13) or be frightened and made Vulnerable until they succeed on an action against the fire elemental. A PC that succeeds on this roll still marks Stress.

Pirate Raiders - Horde

Motives & Tactics: *Gang Up, Raid, Plunder*

Attack Modifier: +1

Cutlass: Melee | 1d8 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 2 | **Major** 5 | **Severe** 10

HP: 4

Stress: 3

Experience:
Sailor +3

Moves

Powerful
On an attack against this adversary, any result of 15 or below causes the attacker to mark Stress.

Horde 1d4 - Creatures Per Hit Point: 3
If Pirate Raiders has marked 2 or more of its HP, they deal 1d4 phy instead of their normal damage.

Pirate Captain - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Command, Raid, Plunder, Make 'em Walk the Plank*

Attack Modifier: +4

Cutlass: Melee | 2d8 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 3 | **Major** 6 | **Severe** 11

HP: 7

Stress: 3

Experience:
Sailor + 3
Commander + 2

Moves

Lead by Example
When this adversary activates, mark Stress to also activate another Pirate within Close range.

Powerful
On an attack against the Pirate Captain, any result of 16 or below causes the attacker to mark Stress.

Out of the Holds
Spend 2 **Fear** to summon a Pirate Raiders Horde that enters at Far range. This can only be done once per day.

Pirate Tough - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Raid, Plunder, Smash, Terrorize*

Attack Modifier: +1

Massive Fists: Melee | 2d10+2 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 4 | **Major** 9 | **Severe** 13

HP: 4

Stress: 2

Experience:
Sailor +2

Moves

Powerful
On an attack against this adversary, any result of 15 or below causes the attacker to mark Stress.

Clear The Decks
Spend a **Fear** to make a Massive Fists attack against a target within Very Close range. On a success, move into melee with them and deal 2d12+2 damage and they are also thrown back to Close range.

Construct - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Serve Creator, Smash Target, Destroy Environment, Trample Groups*

Attack Modifier: +4

Fist Slam: Melee | 3d8 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 1 | **Major** 5 | **Severe** 10

HP: 9

Stress: 3

Moves

Shifting Amalgamation
Physical damage dealt to the Construct does +1 Hit Points. You may mark Stress to add an additional +10 to a damage roll this creature makes. Spend a Fear to activate this Construct even if it has already activated this move.

Trample
Make an attack roll against a group of targets within Close range. On a success, spend a **Fear** and move the Construct into melee with them, dealing 3d10 physical damage.

Death Quake
When this creature marks its last Hit Point, the magic powering it ruptures in an explosion of force. Make an attack roll with a bonus of +9 against all targets within Very Close range. On a success, it deals 3d20 magic damage.

Acid Burrower - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Burrow, Drag away, Feed, Reposition*

Attack Modifier: +3

Claws: Very Close | 1d12+3 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 5 | **Major** 10 | **Severe** 15

HP: 7

Stress: 3

Experience:
Tremor Sense +2

Moves

Relentless (2)
This adversary may activate twice in a GM move (still takes 2 action tokens).

Earth Eruption
Mark **Stress**. This adversary bursts up out of the ground, causing anyone within Very Close to make an Agility (14) reaction roll or be knocked over and Vulnerable until they next act. The area within Very Close of the eruption becomes rough terrain, requiring an Agility roll (12) to pass through it.

Spit Acid
Spend a **Fear** to make all targets in a line up to Close range away make an Agility (15) reaction roll or take 2d10 physical damage and are Vulnerable until their next rest. On a successful reaction roll, they take 1d10 phy damage. Armor is half as effective against damage from this attack.

Grapple
Spend a **Fear** to have this adversary make an attack roll against a Very Close target. On a success, they grab them with their Claws, doing attack damage and making them Restrained and Vulnerable. A Strength (15) roll will release them.

Acid Bath
When this adversary takes a Severe injury or goes drops below 4 HP, all foes within Close range are bathed in acid. They must make Agility (12) reaction roll or suffer 2d10 damage. On a successful reaction roll, they still mark Stress.

Minor Demon - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Torment, Corral Targets, Relish Pain, Act Erratically*

Attack Modifier: +3

Claws: Melee | 4d6 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 3 | **Major** 6 | **Severe** 15

HP: 7

Stress: 2

Moves

Hellfire
Spend a **Fear** to make an attack roll to rain hellfire upon a group of targets within Far range. On a success, deal 4d8 magic damage.

Reaper
When rolling damage, mark a Stress to add the Demon's current number of marked Hit Points to the value of the damage inflicted.

Cave Giant - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Throw Enemies, Bite Off Heads, Feast, Rip Limbs, Stomp*

Attack Modifier: +1

Club: Melee | 2d10 phy

Difficulty: 15

Minor 4 | **Major** 10 | **Severe** 20

HP: 6

Stress: 1

Moves

Relentless 2
The Cave Giant may activate twice in a GM move (still takes 2 tokens)

Rampaging Fury
When this creature takes Major Damage, it rampages. Make an attack roll against all enemies within close range. On a success, deal 2d12 physical damage.

Bone Breaker
When a PC uses an Armor Slot to reduce incoming damage from the Cave Giant, it is only half as effective.

Crush
Make an attack roll to pick up large, heavy objects and throw them at all targets in front of this creature within far range. On a success, spend a **Fear** to deal 1d20+10 damage to each.

Merchant - Social

Motives & Tactics: *Buy Low/Sell High, Create Demand, Inflate Prices, Seek Profit*

Attack Modifier: -4

Club: Melee | 2d4 phy

Difficulty: 10

Minor 2 | **Major** 5 | **Severe** 8

HP: 3

Stress: 2

Experience:
Shrewd Negotiator + 5

Moves

Preferential Treatment
A character that succeeds at a social action against the Merchant gains a discount on purchases (reduce all costs by one handful of gold). Any character that fails on a social action against the merchant must pay one handful of gold more and is at disadvantage on future social actions against the Merchant.

Courtier - Social

Motives & Tactics: *Discredit, Gain Favor, Maneuver, Scheme*

Attack Modifier: -4

Dagger: Melee | 2d4 phy

Difficulty: 9

Minor 2 | **Major** 6 | **Severe** 10

HP: 2

Stress: 3

Experience:
Socialite +5

Moves

Mockery
Mark Stress to say something mocking and force a target within Close range to make a reaction roll with Presence (14) to see if they can save face. If they fail, they mark 2 Stress and are Vulnerable for the remainder of the scene until they succeed on a social action against the Courtier. If they succeed, they still mark Stress.

Scapegoat
Spend a Fear to convince a target crowd or notable individual that one person or group is responsible for some problem facing the target. The target becomes hostile to the scapegoat until convinced of their innocence.

Motives & Tactics: *Gather Resources, Mobilize Minions, Abuse Power*

Attack Modifier: -3

Rapier: Melee | 2d8 phy

Difficulty: 12

Minor 3 | **Major** 7 | **Severe** 11

HP: 3

Stress: 3

Experience:
Aristocrat +5

<u>Moves</u>

My Land, My Rules
All social actions against the Petty Noble on their land are made at disadvantage.

Exile (Long-term Countdown 6)
Spend a **Fear** to activate when the Petty Noble becomes hostile to a target. When the countdown triggers, the target is exiled from the noble's territory. Spend an additional **Fear** for any additional targets to be exiled as well. While exiled, the target has disadvantage in all social situations within the Noble's domain.

Guards, Seize Them
Once per scene, mark Stress to summon a group of guards to enforce the Noble's will.

Tier 1 Adversaries (Levels 2-4)

Assassins

Assassin Poisoner - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Anticipate, Taint Food and Water, Disable, Get Paid*

Attack Modifier: +3

Poisoned Throwing Dagger: Close | 3d8 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 4 | **Major** 12 | **Severe** 20

HP: 4

Stress: 3

Experience:
Intrusion +2

Moves

Grindletooth Venom Blade
Characters that mark HP from a Poisoned Throwing Dagger attack become Vulnerable until their next action. When they take their next action, they must make a Reaction Roll with Strength (14) or take 2d10 physical damage that cannot be reduced by armor and stay Vulnerable until they regain HP or are treated for poison. Characters that pass this Reaction Roll mark Stress but are no longer Vulnerable.

Out of Nowhere
Assassin Poisoner has advantage on attacks if they are Hidden.

Fumigation
Spend a **Fear** to have the Poisoner throw a sachet up to Close range that fills a Very Close area with cloying smoke. Anyone in the smoke becomes Dizzied. Dizzied characters add two tokens to the action tracker when they act, then are no longer dizzied.

Apprentice Assassin - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Ambush, Maim, Fade into Crowds, Develop Skills*

Attack Modifier: -1

Thrown Dagger: Very Close | 5 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 1 (Minion)

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Experience:
Intrusion +2

Moves

Minion 6
For every 6 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack - Close 5
Spend a **Fear** to activate all adversaries with this name. If any are within close range of a target, they move into melee and make an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 5 phy damage.

Master Assassin - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Ambush, Command, Dispatch, Profit*

Attack Modifier: +5

Serrated Dagger: Close | 2d20 phy

Difficulty: 15

Minor 4 | **Major** 12 | **Severe** 25

HP: 7

Stress: 4

Experience:
Intrusion +3

Moves

Strike as One
Mark Stress to activate a number of Assassins equal to the Master Assassin's unmarked Stress.

Won't See It Coming
Master Assassin can spend their activation taking cover to become Hidden. Master Assassin deals +10 damage on standard attacks while Hidden.

Coup De Grace
When Master Assassin successfully makes a Serrated Dagger attack against a character that is Vulnerable, spend a **Fear** to deal damage equal to the target's Major damage threshold + 2d8 instead of rolling 2d20.

The Big Reveal
Spend a Fear to reveal the Master Assassin as having been disguised as another character (not a PC) in the scene. They immediately make an attack roll against a target within Very Close range. On a success, the Master Assassin deals 2d10+15 damage.

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Motives & Tactics: *Wait in Disguise, Trample Foes, Change Tactics*

Attack Modifier: +2

Slam: Melee | 3d8 phy

Difficulty: 15

Minor 4 | **Major** 9 | **Severe** 15

HP: 7

Stress: 6

Experience:
Camouflage +2

Moves

Shifting Amalgamation
Mark Stress to add +1d10 to the damage of any of the Battle Box's attacks. You may spend a **Fear** to activate Battle Box even if it has already activated this GM move.

Randomized Tactics
Mark Stress and roll 1d6. The Battle Box uses the corresponding move. You may spend a Fear and override the roll to make the move of your choice.

1. **Mana Beam**
   The cube turns and fires a searing beam. Make an attack with a +3 modifier against a target within Far range. On a success, deal 2d20 mag damage.
2. **Fire Jets**
   The cube shoots into the air, spinning as it releases jets of flame. Make an attack against all targets within Close range. Any you succeed against take 3d6 physical damage.
3. **Trample**
   The cube rockets around a Close area, attacking all within this range. Any it is successful against take 3d10 physical damage and are Vulnerable until their next roll with Hope.

4. **Shocking Gas**
   The cube sprays out a silver gas sparking with lightning. All creatures within Close range must make a Reaction roll with Finesse (15) or take 1d12 magic damage and drop all items held in their hands. On a success, targets still mark Stress.
5. **Stunning Clap**
   The cube leaps and its sides clap, creating a small sonic boom. Any targets within Close range must make a Reaction Roll with Strength (15) or become Vulnerable until they clear Stress or this adversary is defeated.
6. **Psionic Whine**
   The cube releases a cluster of mechanical bees whose buzz rattles mortal minds. All targets within a Close distance must make a reaction roll with Presence (15) or take 2d10 mag damage. Armor cannot be used to reduce this damage.

Death Quake
When this adversary marks its last Hit Point, the magic powering it ruptures in an explosion of force, dealing 3d20 magic damage to all creatures within Very Close range. Targets may make a Reaction roll with Instinct (15) to sense the buildup of magical power in time to evade and take half damage, or no damage on a result of 20 or more.

Chaos Skull - Ranged

Motives & Tactics: *Serve Creator, Cackle, Consume Magic*

Attack Modifier: +0

Energy Blast: Close | 1d12 mag

Difficulty: 16

Minor 2 | **Major** 8 | **Severe** 18

HP: 4

Stress: 2

Moves

Levitation
Chaos Skull levitates several feet off the ground, and is immune to attacks that move through the ground and effects that would knock it prone.

Wards
Chaos Skull is resistant to magic damage.

Magic Burst
Mark Stress to attack all targets within Close range.

Siphon Magic
Mark **Fear** to attack a target within Very Close range. If that target has a Spellcast trait, they also mark Stress and the Chaos Skull clears Stress.

Giant Eagle - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Hunt Prey, Strike Decisively, Stay Mobile*

Attack Modifier: +1

Claws and Beak: Very Close | 2d8 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 3 | **Major** 10 | **Severe** 19

HP: 5

Stress: 2

Experience:
Intrusion +3

Moves

Flight
Giant Eagle's Difficulty is +3 when flying.

Deadly Dive
Spend a **Fear** to attack a target within Far range. On a success, the target takes 2d12+4 damage and is knocked over, making them Vulnerable until they next act.

Take Off
Spend 2 **Fear** to make an attack on a Very Close target using this adversary's large talons. On a success, the target takes 2d8 phy damage and must make a Reaction roll with Agility (14) or become Restrained within this adversary's massive claws. If they are Restrained, the Eagle immediately lifts into the air to Very Far range above the battlefield while holding them. A Restrained target may roll with Strength (14) to escape.

Motives & Tactics: *Collect Shiny Things, Hunt, Swoop*

Attack Modifier: +3

Wing Slash: Very Close | 4d6+2 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 7 | **Major** 16 | **Severe** 29

HP: 7

Stress: 4

Moves

Relentless (3)
Flickerfly may activate three times in one GM move (still costs 3 action tokens).

Soulswift Wings
Due to the Flickerfly wings' incredible sharpness, armor is only half as effective against damage from their Wing Slash attack.

Flight
Juvenile Flickerfly's difficulty is increased by 3 when flying. Juvenile Flickerfly may move up to a Far distance as part of an activation while flying.

Uncanny Reflexes
Flickerfly may mark Stress when taking damage from an attack within Close range to take half damage (rounded up).

Mind Dance
Spend a **Fear** to create a magically dazzling display that grapples the minds of its targets. All creatures within Far range must make a Reaction roll with Instinct (15). On a failure, the target adds a token to the action tracker, this adversary is Hidden to the target until they mark their next Hit Point, and this adversary learns a fear the target has.

Hallucinatory Breath (Loop 1d6)
Activate when a hostile target is spotted. When triggered, the Flickerfly breathes a cone of hallucinatory gas on all targets in front of them up to Far range. Targets must make a Reaction roll with Instinct (15) or be tormented by fearful hallucinations. Targets whose fears are known to the Flickerfly have disadvantage on this roll. On a failure, the target marks Stress and loses a Hope. On a success, the target still marks Stress unless they rolled 20 or higher.

Giant Mercenaries

Giant Brawler - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Overwhelm, Slam, Topple, Make a Living*

Attack Modifier: +2

Warhammer: Very Close | 2d12+4 phy

Difficulty: 15

Minor 6 | **Major** 14 | **Severe** 30

HP: 7

Stress: 2

Moves

Bloody Reprisal
Spend a **Fear** when the Giant Brawler marks one or more HP to immediately make a Warhammer attack against the attacker, if they are within Very Close range.

Battering Ram
Spend a Fear to have this adversary charge at a target within Close range, destroying it unless it would take a Difficulty 20 or higher roll to Smash.

Giant Recruit - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Overwhelm, Batter, Terrify, Make a Living*

Attack Modifier: +1

Warhammer: Very Close | 6 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Experience:

Moves

Minion (7)
For every 7 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack - Very Close 6
Spend a **Fear** to activate all adversaries with this name within very close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 6 damage per adversary.

Giant Beastmaster - Support

Motives & Tactics: *Command, Maneuver, Pin Down, Make a Living, Protect Companion Animals*

Attack Modifier: +2

Longbow: Far | 2d10+2 phy

Difficulty: 16

Minor 6 | **Major** 13 | **Severe** 28

HP: 5

Stress: 3

Experience:
Animal Handling +3

Moves

Pinning Strike
Make a Longbow attack against a target in far range. On a success, deal damage and spend a **Fear** to pin them to a nearby surface. They are Restrained until freed with an Agility or Strength Roll (15).

Deadly Companion
Spend 2 **Fear** to summon a Bear, Dire Wolf, or similar Tier 0 Beast under this adversary's control. That beast immediately activates.

Two as One
When this adversary activates, you can mark Stress to activate a Tier 0 Beast currently under this adversary's control.

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Katari Burglar - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Hide, Profit, Pilfer, Evade*

Attack Modifier: +3

Longbow: Far | 2d10+2 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 3 | **Major** 15 | **Severe** 25

HP: 5

Stress: 3

Experience:
Acrobatics +3

Moves

Quick Hands
Mark **Stress** to make a dagger attack against a target in Melee range. On a success, deal 2d10 phy damage and this adversary steals one item or consumable from their inventory.

Escape Plan
Spend a **Fear** to reveal a snare trap set by the Katari Burglar. All targets within Very Close range of the trap must make a reaction roll with Agility (13) or be pulled off their feet and suspended upside down. They are Vulnerable and Restrained until they get free (Finesse or Strength 13).

Mortal Hunter - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Devour, Hunt, Track*

Attack Modifier: +5

Tear At Flesh: Very Close | 2d20 phy

Difficulty: 16

Minor 4 | **Major** 19 | **Severe** 40

HP: 6

Stress: 4

Experience:
Bloodhound +3

Moves

Deathlock
Spend a Fear to put a deathlock on a target within Very Close range. Any future attacks made on that target by this creature deal direct damage. This creature can only hold one deathlock at a time.

Terrifying
Every time this creature makes a successful attack, all PCs within Far range lose one Hope.

Rampage (1d6 Loop)
Spend a **Fear** to activate while a hostile target is within sight. When triggered, move in a straight line to somewhere in Far range, and make an attack against all enemies in the path. Deal 2d20 physical damage to any you succeed against..

Failed Experiment - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Devour, Hunt, Track*

Attack Modifier: +1

Bite and Claw: Melee | 2d6+5 phy

Difficulty: 13

Minor 3 | **Major** 12 | **Severe** 30

HP: 3

Stress: 2

Moves

Inhuman
This creature is resistant to physical damage.

Overwhelm
When one or more allies are also within very close range of a target this adversary is attacking, Failed Experiment's damage is doubled.

Lurching Lunge
Spend a **Fear** to activate Failed Experiment even if they have already activated this move.

Gorgon - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Corner, Hit-and-Run, Seek Vengeance, Petrify*

Attack Modifier: +4

Sunsear Shortbow: Far | 3d8+2 mag

Difficulty: 15

Minor 5 | **Major** 13 | **Severe** 25

HP: 8

Stress: 3

Experience:
Stealth +3

Moves

Relentless (2)
This adversary can be activated twice in a GM move (still uses 2 action tokens).

Sunsear Arrows
Targets damaged by Sunsear Shortbow give off bright light within a Close distance until the end of the scene and cannot become Hidden without a magical effect. All attack rolls against a target glowing this way gain +2.

Crown of Serpents
Make an attack roll against a target in melee range using this adversary's protective snakes. On a success, mark stress to deal 3d10 phy damage to the target.

Petrifying Gaze
Spend a **Fear** when the Gorgon takes damage from an attack within Close range to force the attacker to make a Reaction roll with Instinct (15). On a failure, they begin to turn to stone, taking 1 hit point of direct damage and starting a Countdown (4). This countdown ticks down every time the Gorgon is attacked. When triggered, the target must make a death move.

If the Gorgon is killed, all countdowns end.

Minotaur - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Gore, Overpower, Pursue, Navigate, Consume*

Attack Modifier: +3

Battleaxe: Very Close | 2d12+4 phy

Difficulty: 16

Minor 7 | **Major** 16 | **Severe** 30

HP: 7

Stress: 3

Experience:
Navigation +2

<u>Moves</u>

Charging Bull
Spend a Fear to make an attack roll on a target within Close range, moving the Minotaur into melee with them. On a success, the Minotaur knocks them back to Close range, dealing 4d10 phy damage. If they are knocked into a solid object or another creature, they take an additional 2d10 phy.

Gore
Mark Stress to make an attack on a target within Very Close range, moving the Minotaur into melee with them. On a success, deal 3d10 damage to the target. Armor is only worth half its standard value against this attack.

Tier 2 (Levels 5-7)

Elementals

Greater Water Elemental - Support

Motives & Tactics: *Disperse, Deluge, Drown*

Attack Modifier: +3

Crashing Wave: Very Close | 3d12 mag

Difficulty: 17

Minor 10 | **Major** 19 | **Severe** 35

HP: 6

Stress: 5

<u>Moves</u>

Living Tides
On a successful attack roll, the target is also knocked back to Close range.

Waterlog
Mark Stress to attack a Very Close target with a jet of water. On a success, deal 2d8 and their next action has disadvantage. On a failure, the target must mark a Stress.

Drowning Embrace
Spend a **Fear** to make an attack with a +5 bonus within Very Close range. If successful, the target is Restrained as they begin to drown–as if submerged in water. While drowning they are Vulnerable. The target may end this condition by rolling with Knowledge (17).

Elemental Spark - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Burn, Buffet, Overwhelm*

Attack Modifier: +0

Bursts of Fire: Close | 7 mag

Difficulty: 15

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Moves

Minion 7
For every 7 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack - Close 7
Spend a Fear to activate all adversaries with this name. If any are within close range of a target, they move into melee and make an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 7 phy damage.

Greater Earth Elemental - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Pummel, Knock Over, Avalanche*

Attack Modifier: +4

Boulder Fist: Very Close | 2d6+11 phy

Difficulty: 17

Minor 11 | **Major** 21 | **Severe** 40

HP: 9

Stress: 4

Moves

Immovable Object
Any attack that would move Greater Earth Elemental moves it two fewer ranges (Far becomes Very Close, etc.) Whenever Greater Earth Elemental takes physical damage, reduce that damage by 2d6.

Rockslide
Spend a **Fear** to create a rockslide in the Close area in front of Greater Earth Elemental. All creatures in the area must make a reaction roll with Agility (19) or take 4d20 physical damage and become Vulnerable until their next roll with Hope. On a successful reaction roll, they just take half damage (rounded up).

Huge Green Ooze - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Creep up, Envelop, Camouflage, Multiply*

Attack Modifier: +3

Ooze Appendage: Melee | 2d8+9 mag

Difficulty: 15

Minor 8 | **Major** 16 | **Severe** 30

HP: 7

Stress: 3

Experience:
Blend In +3

Moves

Slow (2)
The GM must spend two initiative tokens to activate Huge Green Ooze.

Acidic Form
Any creature damaged by Huge Green Ooze must also mark one Armor Slot.

Envelop
Spend a **Fear** to attack a creature within Very Close distance. If that creature marks HP from this attack, they become Restrained and are Vulnerable until they break free (Strength 18). A creature that takes an action while Enveloped suffers 2d12 magical direct damage before acting.

Split
When Huge Green Ooze has marked half of its hit points, it splits into two Green Oozes (with no marked HP or Stress) that instantly activate (no action tokens needed).

Hydra - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Devour, Regenerate, Terrify*

Attack Modifier: +3

Bite: Close | 3d12 phy

Difficulty: 18

Minor 12 | **Major** 20 | **Severe** 42

HP: 9

Stress: 5

Moves

Many-Headed Threat
Hydra begins with three heads. Spend a **Fear** to make a number of Bite attacks equal to the Hydra's current number of heads. Each time the Hydra takes Major or worse damage, it loses a head.

Terrifying Chorus
Mark Stress to cause all targets within Far range to lose a Hope.

Regeneration
If the Hydra has lost at least one head this scene, Spend a **Fear** to grow two new heads, clearing 2 HP and 1 Stress.

If the Hydra takes magic damage, activate a Countdown (3) that ticks down every time a token is put on the action tracker. Until that countdown triggers, the Hydra may not use Regeneration and is immune to magic damage.

Flickerfly - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Collect Shiny Things, Hunt, Swoop, Nest*

Attack Modifier: +3

Wing Slash: Very Close | 4d10+5 phy

Difficulty: 16

Minor 10 | **Major** 25 | **Severe** 55

HP: 8

Stress: 5

Moves

Relentless (3)
Flickerfly may activate three times in one GM move (still costs 3 action tokens).

Soulswift Wings
Due to the Flickerfly wings' incredible sharpness, armor is only half as effective against damage from their Wing Slash attack.

Flight
Flickerfly's difficulty is increased by 5 when flying. Flickerfly may move up to a Far distance as part of an activation while flying.

Uncanny Reflexes
Flickerfly may mark Stress when taking damage from an attack within Close range to take half damage (rounded up).

Whirlwind
Spend a **Fear** to fly to a spot within Close range and spin, slashing all Very Close targets. Make an attack with a +5 modifier against all targets in range. On any you succeed against, deal 3d12+10 physical damage. Armor is only half as effective when reducing this damage.

Mind-Dance
Spend a **Fear** to create a magically dazzling display that grapples the minds of its targets. All creatures within Far range must make a Reaction roll with Instinct (18). On a failure, the target adds a token to the action tracker, this adversary is Hidden to the target until they mark their next Hit Point, and this adversary learns a fear the target has.

Hallucinatory Breath (Loop 1d6)
Activate when a hostile target is spotted. When triggered, the Flickerfly breathes a cone of hallucinatory gas on all targets in front of them up to a Far range. Targets must make a Reaction roll with Instinct (18) or be tormented by fearful hallucinations. Targets whose fears are known to Flickerfly have disadvantage on this roll. On a failure, the target marks Stress and loses a Hope. On a success, the target still marks Stress unless they rolled 20 or higher.

Dire Bat - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Hide, Divebomb, Protect Leader*

Attack Modifier: +2

Claws & Teeth: Melee | 5d6 phy

Difficulty: 15

Minor 10 | **Major** 40 | **Severe** 60

HP: 6

Stress: 3

Moves

Screech
Spend 2 **Fear** to send a high-pitch screech out toward all targets in front of the Dire Bat within Far range. They must mark 1d4 Stress.

Flying
Attack rolls against this adversary while it is flying are at +5 difficulty.

Guardian
When any Vampire allies mark HP, you can mark Stress and have this adversary fly into melee with the attacker to make an attack with a +5 bonus. If successful, the attack deals 3d20 phy.

Vampire - Standard

Motives & Tactics: Bite, *Charm, Deceive, Feed, Intimidate*

Attack Modifier: +3

Rapier: Melee | 5d6 phy

Difficulty: 16

Minor 5 | **Major** 40 | **Severe** 70

HP: 5

Stress: 3

Experience:
Nocturnal Hunter +3

Moves

Mistform
When taking physical damage, this adversary can mark Stress to make a reaction roll (13). On a success, they only take half damage from the attack.

Draining Bite
Spend a **Fear** to bite a target in melee range. On a success, it deals 3d10 phy. A target that marks HP from this attack loses Hope and marks Stress, then the Vampire clears 1 HP.

Head Vampire - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Intimidate, Command, Charm, Fly, Create Vassals*

Attack Modifier: +5

Rapier: Melee | 5d8+10 phy

Difficulty: 17

Minor 10 | **Major** 50 | **Severe** 80

HP: 10

Stress: 6

Experience:
Aristocrat +3

<u>Moves</u>

Feed on Followers
When this creature is in melee with a follower (any allied adversary), they may deal 1 HP to them to clear 2 HP on themselves.

Lifesuck
Countdown (5 Loop)
Activate when this creature has a hostile target in sight. It ticks down anytime a token is placed on the action tracker. When triggered, all targets within close range must make a Reaction roll with Instinct (17). On a failure, they mark 2 HP. You may spend a Fear to make this attack within Far range instead, and clear ½ as many HP as were marked by targets (round up).

Vault Guardians

Vault Guardian Turret - Ranged

Motives & Tactics: *Concentrate Fire, Mark, Lock Down, Protect*

Attack Modifier: +3

Magical Cannon: Far | 4d10+8 mag

Difficulty: 18

Minor 7 | **Major** 25 | **Severe** 50

HP: 6

Stress: 2

<u>Moves</u>

Slow (2)
It takes 2 action tokens to activate this adversary.

Concentrate Fire
Spend 2 **Fear** when another adversary does damage to a target within Far range of the Turret to add the Turret's damage to the total.

Mark Target
Spend a **Fear** to mark a target within Far range. All attacks any adversary makes against a marked target gain a +3 bonus.

Detonation
When this adversary is destroyed, it explodes to deal 3d20 magic damage to all targets within Very Close range. Targets may make a reaction roll with Agility (17) to take half damage. If they roll a critical success, they take no damage.

Vault Guardian Sentinel - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Pummel, Surround, Expunge, Protect*

Attack Modifier: +2

Charged Mace: Very Close | 3d12 phy

Difficulty: 19

Minor 7 | **Major** 28 | **Severe** 50

HP: 8

Stress: 3

Moves

Kinetic Slam
Targets damaged by a Charged Mace attack are knocked back to Very Close range.

Box In
Mark Stress to choose a target within Very Close range to focus on. That target adds two tokens to the action tracker each time they make an action roll while they remain within Very Close range of this adversary.

Mana Bolt
Spend a **Fear** to lob explosive magic at a spot within Far range. All targets within Very Close range of that spot must make a Reaction roll with Agility (19). On a failure, they take 2d20 magic damage and are knocked back into close range of where they were before. On a success, they take half damage. If they roll a critical success, they take no damage

Vault Guardian Gaoler - Support

Motives & Tactics: *Pummel, Entrap, Carry Away, Protect*

Attack Modifier: +1

Shield Bash: Very Close | 2d8+5 phy

Difficulty: 16

Minor 5 | **Major** 20 | **Severe** 35

HP: 6

Stress: 1

Moves

Lock Up
Spend a **Fear** to make an attack at Very Close range. If successful, the target is trapped within the center of the Gaoler. Entrapped targets are Restrained and can only attack the Gaoler until broken out with Strength (18) or until the Gaoler is destroyed.

Blocking Shield
Any targets in Melee range have disadvantage on attack rolls. Targets trapped inside this adversary (using the Lock Up move) are immune to this effect.

Oak Treant - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Pummel, Root Down, Hide in Plain Sight, Preserve the Forest*

Attack Modifier: +1

Branch: Very Close | 2d10+7 phy

Difficulty: 17

Minor 10 | **Major** 36 | **Severe** 60

HP: 9

Stress: 4

Experience:
Forest Knowledge +3

Moves

Acorn Barrage
Spend a **Fear** and make an attack against up to three targets within Close range, pummeling them with giant acorns. Each target hit by the attack takes 5d6 physical damage.

Just a Tree
Oak Treant may mark Stress when Hidden to be indistinguishable from other trees around them until they next act or are identified by a roll with Instinct (17).

Take Root
Mark Stress to have this adversary settle into place and extend its roots. Activate a Countdown (4 - Loop) when Oak Treant becomes rooted. It will tick down every time a token is placed on the action tracker. When it triggers, the Treant clears 2 HP and 1 Stress. Any damage Treant takes while rooted is reduced by 3d4. Treant is Restrained while rooted but may still attack, and can end its rooted state when it activates.

Dryad - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Command, Cultivate, Drive Out, Preserve the Forest*

Attack Modifier: +4

Deadfall Shortbow: Far | 2d10+3 phy

Difficulty: 16

Minor 8 | **Major** 29 | **Severe** 45

HP: 9

Stress: 5

Experience:
Forest Knowledge +4

Moves

Bramble Patch
Mark Stress to target a spot within Far range. You can create a patch of thorns that covers everywhere within Close range of that spot. All creatures within that area suffer 2d10 damage whenever they act, and can escape by rolling with Agility (18) or dealing 20+ damage with an attack.

We Are All One
When another adversary dies within Close range, spend a **Fear** to clear 2 HP and 2 Stress on this adversary as the fallen ally's life force is returned to the forest.

Grow Saplings
Spend a **Fear** to instantly grow three Treant Sapling Minions, who appear at Close range and instantly activate.

Treant Sapling - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Surround, Pummel, Blend In, Preserve the Forest*

Attack Modifier: +0

Branches: Melee | 8 phy

Difficulty: 14

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Moves

Minion 8
For every 8 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack Very Close 8
Spend a **Fear** to activate all adversaries with this name within very close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 3 damage per adversary.

Stag Knight - Standard

Motives & Tactics: *Maneuver, Isolate, Weed the Unwelcome, Protect the Forest*

Attack Modifier: +3

Bramble Sword: Melee | 5d6 phy

Difficulty: 17

Minor 6 | **Major** 35 | **Severe** 65

HP: 7

Stress: 5

Moves

Canopy Dive
When this adversary attacks from a height advantage, deal 6d6+15 damage on a success.

Thorny Armor
When a creature attacks this adversary in Melee range, spend a **Fear** to make them take 2d12+9 direct physical damage.

Blade of the Forest
When this adversary is Very Close to at least two other adversaries, spend a **Fear** to make an attack at against a target in melee range. On a hit, it deals physical damage equal to the target's Major threshold + 2d12.

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Young Ice Dragon - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Fly, Freeze, Maul, Avalanche, Gather Horde, Defend Lair*

Attack Modifier: +4

Bite and Claws: Close | 6d6+6 phy

Difficulty: 18

Minor 12 | **Major** 40 | **Severe** 70

HP: 12

Stress: 6

Experience:
Aerial Predator + 3

Moves

Relentless (3)
Young Ice Dragon may activate three times in one GM move (still costs 3 action tokens).

Rend and Crush
All armor used against Young Ice Dragon's attacks is reduced by 1/2 (round up). Targets hit by Young Ice Dragon are chilled, giving them disadvantage on Agility rolls until they clear a Stress or an HP.

Terrifying
Any character that rolls a result with **Fear** within Far range of this adversary loses a Hope.

Blizzard Breath (Loop 1d8)
Activate this countdown when this adversary sees a hostile creature. It ticks down every time a token is placed on the action tracker. When it triggers, all creatures within Close range in front of the Young Ice Dragon must make a reaction roll with Agility (18). On a failure, they take 4d12+10 magic damage and become Restrained by shards of ice until they break free by rolling with Strength (18). Targets that succeed the reaction roll must mark 2 stress or take half damage. Targets that roll a critical success take no damage but still mark a Stress.

Tier 3 (Levels 8-10)

Arch-Necromancer's Host

Arch-Necromancer - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Disable, Corrupt, Resurrect, Flee to Fight Another Day*

Attack Modifier: +6

Necrotic Blast: Far | 4d12+5 mag

Difficulty: 23

Minor 16 | **Major** 35 | **Severe** 70

HP: 12

Stress: 8

Experience:
Ancient Knowledge +2
Wisdom of Centuries +3

Moves

Dance of Death
Mark Stress to activate 1d4 additional adversaries. Any attacks they use deal ½ damage. You may also spend a **Fear** per attack to have them attack deal full damage instead.

Beam of Decay
Countdown (Loop 8). Activate when Arch-Necromancer spots a hostile target. This ticks down anytime a PC makes an attack roll. When triggered, target any number of creatures within Close range in front of this adversary and anything behind them within Far range. Targets must make a Reaction roll with Strength (21) or suffer 4d20 magic damage (half damage on success). Any target that suffers Major or worse damage also marks 2 Stress and becomes Vulnerable until after their next action.

Your Life Is Mine
Countdown (Loop 2d6) Activate when Arch-Necromancer has marked 6 or more of their HP. It ticks down every time a token is placed on the action tracker. When triggered, deal 2d20 direct magic damage to a target within Close range. Arch-Necromancer clears a number of Stress or HP equal to those marked by the target from this attack.

Open the Gates of Death
Spend a **Fear** to summon a Zombie Legion at Close range, which instantly activates.

Not Today, My Dears
When this adversary has marked 8 or more of their HP, spend 2 **Fear** to have them teleport away to a safe location to recover. A character may roll with Instinct (22) to trace the teleportation magic to its destination.

Zombie Legion - Horde

Motives & Tactics: *Surround, Shred Flesh, Consume Target's Brain*

Attack Modifier: +2

Bite and Claws: Melee | 10d6 phy

Difficulty: 17

Minor 18 | **Major** 30 | **Severe** 50

HP: 8

Stress: 5

Moves

Unyielding
Zombie Legion has resistance to physical damage.

Relentless (2)
Zombie Legion may activate twice in a GM move (still takes two action tokens).

Overwhelm
When a creature within melee distance deals damage to Zombie Legion but it does not cause Zombie Legion to mark Hit Points, spend a **Fear** to have Zombie Pack immediately make an attack against that creature with advantage.

Horde 5d6 - Creatures Per Hit Point: 6
If Zombie Legion has half or more of its Hit Points marked, its attack only deals 5d6 damage.

Perfected Zombie - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Consume, Hound, Maim, Terrify*

Attack Modifier: +4

Greataxe: Very Close | 4d12+10 phy

Difficulty: 20

Minor 18 | **Major** 40 | **Severe** 70

HP: 9

Stress: 4

Moves

Memento Mori
Spend a Fear to make a Greataxe attack against all targets within Very Close Range. Targets damaged by an attack from Perfected Zombie are knocked back to Close range and must mark an armor slot after taking damage. If they can't, they mark an additional hit point.

Patience of the Dead
When another adversary damages a target within Very Close of Perfected Zombie, mark Stress to have Perfected Zombie add damage from their Greataxe to that attack.

Kraken - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Crush, Consume, Grapple, Drown*

Attack Modifier: +4

Tentacles: Close | 4d20 phy

Difficulty: 20

Minor 15 | **Major** 30 | **Severe** 60

HP: 15

Stress: 10

Experience:
Swimming +3

Moves

Relentless (2)
May activate twice in a GM move (still requires 2 action tokens).

Many Tentacles
Because of its many tentacles, this adversary makes two attacks per activation. If this adversary takes Major damage or higher, it loses one of its tentacles. When it does so, place a token on this adversary. If it ever has three or more tokens, it makes only one attack per activation.

Grapple & Drown
Mark Stress to attack roll against a target within Close range. If successful, the Kraken grapples them in one of its tentacles, dragging them beneath the water. While grappled, they are Restrained and Vulnerable. They can break free by rolling with Strength (16). If the tentacle holding them is destroyed, they automatically break free.

Whirlpool (Countdown Loop 3d4)
Activate when this creature sees a hostile target. It ticks down every time a token is placed on the action tracker. When triggered, all targets within Close range must make a reaction roll using Agility or Strength (18) or be sucked into a deadly whirlpool. Anyone trapped in the Whirlpool suffers 2d12+5 physical damage and puts two tokens on the action tracker the next time they take an action. If the Whirlpool targets a vessel or building, it suffers 4d20 damage.

Boiling Blast
Spend a **Fear** to have the Kraken spew a line of boiling water at any number of targets in a line up to far range. All targets must make a reaction roll with Agility (20). On a failure, they take 3d20 physical damage. PCs must mark a stress in order to use any number of armor slots to reduce the damage. Targets that succeed on the Reaction Roll mark Stress unless they rolled a critical success.

Oracle of Doom - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Toss Aside, Change Environment, Dishearten, Condemn*

Attack Modifier: +5

Psychic Attack: Far | 3d20+10 mag

Difficulty: 20

Minor 10 | **Major** 50 | **Severe** 100

HP: 14

Stress: 8

Experience:
Boundless Knowledge +4

<u>Moves</u>

Knockback
Anytime this adversary marks HP, they send any targets within Very Close range flying back to Far range, dealing 5d10 damage. Damaged targets may make a reaction roll with Agility (20) to take half damage, or no damage if they roll a critical success.

Walls Closing In
Any time a target within Very Far of Oracle of Doom rolls a failure with **Fear**, they mark a Stress.

Pronounce Fate
Spend a **Fear** to present a target within Far range with a vision of their greatest fear. The target must make a reaction roll with Presence (20) or lose all Hope and take 3d20+10 magic damage that cannot be reduced by armor. On a success, they take half damage and lose only 1 Hope, or no damage if they roll a critical success.

Summoner (Countdown Loop 8 - Decreasing)
Activate when the Oracle spots a hostile target or turns hostile against a character. It ticks down everytime a token is placed on the action tracker. When triggered, summon minions relevant to a character's fears at close range to them.

Outer Realms Abomination - Bruiser

Motives & Tactics: *Demolish, Undermine, Warp*

Attack Modifier: +1d8

Massive Pseudopod: Very Close | 10d6 mag

Difficulty: 21

Minor 11 | **Major** 38 | **Severe** 72

HP: 11

Stress: 5

Moves

Disorienting Presence
Targets damaged by this adversary must make a reaction roll with Instinct (17). On a failure, they are also Disoriented and Vulnerable until they clear a Stress or take a rest. Disoriented characters add two action tokens to the tracker when they act.

Unreal Form
When this adversary takes damage, reduce that damage by 1d20. Each time this adversary attacks, roll 1d8 and use that as their attack modifier (as reflected in the attack modifier section).

Reality Quake
Spend a **Fear** to rattle the edges of reality near this adversary. All targets within far range must make a reaction roll with Presence (20). Any who fail become un-stuck from reality until the end of the scene. While an un-stuck target spends Hope or Armor Slots or marks Hit Points or Stress, they must always spend/mark double the amount. Targets that succeed mark a Stress.

Outer Realms Corruptor - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Dishearten, Disgorge, Destroy, Transmogrify*

Attack Modifier: +5

Corroding Pseudopod: Very Close | 2d20 mag

Difficulty: 20

Minor 9 | **Major** 32 | **Severe** 60

HP: 8

Stress: 3

Moves

Will-Shattering Touch
Targets damaged by Outer Realms Corrupter lose a Hope.

Disgorge Reality Flotsam
Spend a **Fear** to spew partially-digested portions of consumed realities at all targets within Close range of this adverary. Targets must make a reaction roll with Presence (18) or mark 2 Stress. For each Stress they are unable to mark, they mark 1 HP.

Outer Realms Corruptor - Skulk

Motives & Tactics: *Dishearten, Disgorge, Destroy, Transmogrify*

Attack Modifier: +5

Corroding Pseudopod: Very Close | 2d20 mag

Difficulty: 20

Minor 9 | **Major** 32 | **Severe** 60

HP: 8

Stress: 3

Moves

Will-Shattering Touch
Targets damaged by Outer Realms Corrupter lose a Hope.

Disgorge Reality Flotsam
Spend a **Fear** to spew partially-digested portions of consumed realities at all targets within Close range of this adverary. Targets must make a reaction roll with Presence (18) or mark 2 Stress. For each Stress they are unable to mark, they mark 1 HP.

Outer Realms Thrall - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Disorient, Disgust, Destroy, Warp*

Attack Modifier: +1

Claws & Teeth: Very Close | 2d6 mag

Difficulty: 17

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

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Moves

Minion 9
For every 9 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack - Close (2d6)
Spend a **Fear** to activate all adversaries with this name within very close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 2d6 damage per adversary.

Volcanic Dragon: Obsidian Predator - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Hunt, Fly, Divebomb, Intimidate, Defend Lair*

Attack Modifier: +5

Obsidian Claws: Close | 3d12+10 phy

Difficulty: 19

Minor 15 | **Major** 45 | **Severe** 70

HP: 7

Stress: 5

Experience:
Military Scholar +5

Moves

Relentless (3)
This adversary may activate three times in a GM move (still takes three tokens).

Flying
Attack rolls against this creature while it is flying are at +3 difficulty

Avalanche Tail
Mark Stress to make a tail attack with a +10 modifier against all targets within Close range. Any hit by Avalanche Tail take 2d20 phy damage and are knocked back to Close range, becoming Vulnerable until their next roll with Hope.

Divebomb
If this adverary is flying, spend a **Fear** to pick a spot within Far range. Make an attack roll with a +7 modifier against all targets within Very Close range of that spot. Any you succeed against take 3d20+5 phy damage. Targets hit by Divebomb also mark a Stress and lose a Hope.

Obsidian Scales
Any time Obsidian Predator takes damage, it reduces that damage by 2d8.

Erupting Rage (Phase Change)
When Obsidian Predator marks their last HP, replace them with Molten Scourge. You may spend a **Fear** to have them activate immediately.

Volcanic Dragon: Molten Scourge - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Incinerate, Douse with Lava, Repel Invaders, Reposition*

Attack Modifier: +6

Lava-coated Claws: Close | 5d10+15 phy

Difficulty: 21

Minor 13 | **Major** 42 | **Severe** 65

HP: 7

Stress: 5

Experience:
Military Scholar +5

Moves

Relentless (4)
This adversary may activate four times in a GM move (still takes four tokens).

Shattering Might
Mark Stress to attack a target within Very Close range using a +8 modifier. If successful, it deals 10d6+10 phy damage. Creatures hit by Shattering Might are knocked away to Close range and add a token to the action tracker.

Volcanic Breath (Countdown Loop 1d8) Activate when a hostile target is spotted. This ticks down every time a token is placed on the action tracker. When triggered, this creature breathes a flow of lava on all targets in front of them within far range. They must make a Reaction roll with Agility (21). On a failure, they take 3d20 phy damage, mark 1d4 Stress, and are Vulnerable until they heal a hit point. On a success, they take half damage and mark 1 Stress.

Eruption Countdown 6 (Loop-Increasing)
Spend a **Fear** to activate this countdown. It ticks down every time a PC makes an attack roll. When triggered, this creature unleashes a torrent of lava on the entire area within Far range, dealing 3d10 direct phy damage to all targets.

Lava Splash
Whenever Molten Scourge marks HP, molten blood gushes forth from the wound and all creatures within Very Close range must make a Reaction roll with Agility (19). On a failure, they ttake 6d6 phy damage. Creatures that succeed take half damage, or no damage if they roll a critical success.

Cracked Scales
Any time Volcanic Dragon takes damage, it reduces that damage by 1d8.

Ashen Vengeance (Phase Change)
When Molten Scourge marks their last HP, replace them with Ashen Tyrant. You may spend a **Fear** to have them activate immediately.

Volcanic Dragon: Ashen Tyrant - Solo

Motives & Tactics: *Choke, Fly, Intimidate, Kill or Be Killed*

Attack Modifier: +7

Claws and Teeth: Close | 4d12+20 phy

Difficulty: 20

Minor 10 | **Major** 36 | **Severe** 60

HP: 7

Stress: 5

Experience:
Military Scholar +5

Moves

Relentless (3)
This adversary may activate four times in a GM move (still takes four tokens).

Injured Wings
Attack rolls against this creature while it is flying are at +1 difficulty

Fiery Death
Whenever a target within Close distance of Volcanic Dragon gets a result with **Fear**, they lose Hope. If they can't, they mark a hit point.

Desperate Rampage
Mark Stress to make an attack roll against all opponents within Close range. Any target hit by this attack marks Stress and is knocked back to Close range.

Ashen Cloud
Spend a **Fear** to smash the ground and kick up ash everywhere within Far range. Ranged attacks through this area are at disadvantage. Any creature taking an action within the ash cloud adds two tokens to the action tracker.

Apocalyptic Thrashing (Countdown Loop 2d6-Decreasing)
Spend a **Fear** to activate. This ticks down every time a token is placed on the action tracker. When triggered, Ashen Tyrant thrashes about a Far area, causing environmental damage (earthquake, avalanche, collapsing walls, etc.) All targets within Far rajge must make a Reaction Roll with Strength (22) or suffer 3d20 phy damage and become Restrained and Vulnerable due to being buried in rubble.

High Seraph - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Enforce Dogma, Fly, Smite, Pronounce Judgment*

Attack Modifier: +7

Holy Sword: Very Close | 4d12+12 phy

Difficulty: 22

Minor 15 | **Major** 40 | **Severe** 85

HP: 15

Stress: 5

Experience:
Divine Knowledge +3

Moves

Relentless (2)
This adversary may activate twice in a GM move (still takes 2 tokens).

Divine Flight
High Seraph can fly a Far distance as part of an activation.

Judgment
Spend a **Fear** to mark a character as Guilty in the eyes of the High Seraph's god. Only one character may be marked by High Seraph at a time. While so marked, the target does not gain Hope on a result with Hope. When High Seraph hits a target marked as Guilty, they deal physical damage equal to 20+the target's Major threshold (instead of their normal attack damage).

God Rays
Mark Stress to reflect a sliver of the majesty of High Seraph's god as a searing beam of light that hits up to twenty targets within Very Far range. Anyone hit by the beam must make a reaction roll will Presence (21) or suffer 10d6 magic damage. Targets marked as Guilty have disadvantage on this roll. Anyone that succeeds on the roll takes half damage. Targets that roll a critical success take no damage.

Hallowed Soldier - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Obey, Swarm, Outmaneuver, Punish*

Attack Modifier: +2

Sword and Shield: Melee | 10 phy

Difficulty: 18

Minor 1

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Moves

Minion - 12
For every 12 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack - Very Close 10
Spend a Fear to activate all adversaries with this name within close range of a target. This group moves into melee and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 10 damage per adversary.

Flight
Hallowed Soldier can fly up to Far range as part of activating.

Hallowed Archer - Ranged

Motives & Tactics: *Obey, Volley, Reposition, Focus Fire*

Attack Modifier: +3

Longbow: Far | 2d10+7 phy

Difficulty: 19

Minor 10 | **Major** 30 | **Severe** 60

HP: 3

Stress: 2

Moves

Punish the Guilty
Hallowed Archers deal double damage to characters marked by the High Seraph as Guilty.

Divine Volley
Mark Stress to attack up to three targets with one Longbow attack.

Fallen Horde

Fallen Shock Troop - Minion

Motives & Tactics: *Command, Cultivate, Drive Out, Preserve the Forest*

Attack Modifier: +2

Cursed Axe: Very Close | 13 phy

Difficulty: 18

Minor 1 (Minion)

HP: 1

Stress: 0

Moves

Minion (13)
For every 13 damage a PC deals to this adversary, they also deal 1 HP to an additional minion within this attack's range.

Group Attack - Very Close 13
Spend a **Fear** to activate all adversaries with this name within close range of a target. This group moves into Very Close range and makes an attack roll against that target. On a success, they deal 13 damage per adversary.

Aura of Doom
A character that marks HP from an attack by this adversary also loses Hope.

Motives & Tactics: *Dominate, Acquire, Dishearten, Torment*

Attack Modifier: +4

Corrupted Staff: Far | 3d12 mag

Difficulty: 20

Minor 12 | **Major** 30 | **Severe** 50

HP: 9

Stress: 5

Experience:
Forbidden Knowledge +3

Moves

Slippery
When this adversary takes damage from an opponent, they fly away up to Far range.

Shackles of Guilt
Countdown (Loop 2d6)
Activate when a hostile creature is spotted. It will tick down every time a token is placed on the action tracker. When triggered, all targets within Far range become Vulnerable as they relive their greatest regrets. All targets immediately mark Stress. They may roll with Presence or Strength (18) to try to break free. Each time a character fails to break free, they lose Hope.

Conflagration
Spend a **Fear** to make an attack roll to unleash a firestorm that consumes all opponents within Close range. Any you succeed against take 4d12 magic damage. The firestorm persists for a Countdown (4) and each character that begins their action in the firestorm takes 2d20 direct magic damage.

Nightmare Tableau
Mark Stress to create a powerful illusion that traps a target within Far range in a tableau of their worst fears. While trapped they are Restrained and Vulnerable, but may break free by succeeding on a roll with Instinct (18). On a failure of any kind on that roll, the GM takes a **Fear**. Each time a trapped character makes a roll to escape, the Fallen Sorcerer must mark Stress or 1 HP.

Fallen Warlord: Realm-Breaker - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Corrupt, Dominate, Punish*

Attack Modifier: +7

Barbed Invective Whip: Close | 4d12+15 phy

Difficulty: 22

Minor 18 | **Major** 50 | **Severe** 80

HP: 7

Stress: 5

Experience:
Break The World +3
History +2

Moves

Relentless (2)
This adversary may activate twice in a GM move (still requires two action tokens).

Doombringer
When a character marks HP from an attack by this adversary, all PCs within Far range of the target lose Hope.

Firespite Plate Armor
Any time Realm-Breaker takes damage, reduce that damage by 2d10.

Tormenting Lash
Mark Stress to make a Barbed Invective Whip attack against all targets within Very Close range. Each use of armor to reduce damage from this attack requires marking two armor slots.

All-Consuming Rage
Countdown (Loop 12 - Decreasing)
Activate when a hostile creature is spotted. This ticks down every time a token is placed on the action tracker. When triggered, create a torrent of incarnate rage that rends flesh from bone. All other creatures within Far range must make a Reaction roll with Presence (19). Any that fail take 3d20 magic damage. Creatures that succeed take half damage. For each HP marked, summon one Fallen Shock Troop within Very Close range of the injured target.

I Have Never Known Defeat (Phase Change)
When Realm-Breaker marks their last HP, replace them with Undefeated Champion. You may spend a Fear to activate them immediately.

Fallen Warlord: Undefeated Champion - Leader

Motives & Tactics: *Rant, Punish the Defiant, Secure Victory at Any Cost.*

Attack Modifier: +8

Heart-Shattering Sword:
Very Close | 5d10+20 phy

Difficulty: 20

Minor 15 | **Major** 42 | **Severe** 70

HP: 8

Stress: 5

Experience:
Unflinching +3
Intimidation +6

Moves

Relentless (3)
This adversary may activate three times in a GM move (still requires three action tokens).

Doombringer
When a PC marks HP from an attack by Undefeated Champion, all characters within Far range of the target lose Hope.

Faltering Armor
Any time Undefeated Champion takes damage, reduce that damage by 1d10.

Shattering Strike
Mark Stress to make a Heart-Shattering Sword attack. Targets hit by this attack lose Hope equal to the HP marked from the damage.

Endless Legions
Spend a **Fear** to summon a number of Fallen Shock Troops equal to twice the number of players. They appear at Far range.

Circle of Defilement - Countdown (2d4)
Activate when a hostile creature is spotted. This ticks down every time a token is placed on the action tracker. When triggered, activate a magical circle covering any area within Far range. All opponents within the area are now Vulnerable. This circle can be removed by completing a Progress Countdown (6) with a difficulty of 22.

PART FIVE

A large portion of TTRPG play includes the act of customization based on the needs and desires of your table–personalization doesn't stop after the act of character creation. Below you will see the beginnings of some recommendations for ways to modify Daggerheart based on your needs and desires.

You'll notice portions of this section are currently unavailable. As our team continues to refine mechanics, we'll update and expand upon this text.

EVERYTHING BELOW IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THIS VERSION OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Homebrew Guide

Balance

Custom Domain Cards

Custom Adversaries

Custom Equipment

Card Templates

Appendix