

FOR COIN & BLOOD

SECOND EDITION



JIMBERG '18

ALAN BAHR

FOR COIN & BLOOD

SECOND EDITION

FOR COIN & BLOOD IS AN OLD SCHOOL FANTASY
ROLEPLAYING GAME WITH A TWIST . . .

A TWIST OF THE KNIFE!

EMBRACING THE LITERARY GENRE KNOWN AS
“GRIMDARK”, AND INSPIRED BY STORIES OF
MERCENARIES, SELLSWORDS AND BLACKGUARDS,
FOR COIN & BLOOD KEEPS YOU ON YOUR TOES,
AS YOU TELL STORIES ABOUT THE TERRIBLE THINGS
THAT CAN HAPPEN TO PEOPLE, WHEN THEY HEAD
OUT IN SEARCH OF COIN, PASSION, AND REVENGE . . .



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FOR
COIN & BLOOD
SECOND EDITION

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Layton UT, 84040

DISCLAIMER

While FOR COIN & BLOOD deals with mature themes, it should be vehemently noted that at no point should anyone engage in things such as rape, murder, theft or other sundry behaviors. This is a game, designed to explore and provoke, asking questions about the darker sides of human behavior. This is not an excuse for you to be a shitty person in real life. Period. If you need us to clarify this for you, put this game away and get the fuck out of the store.



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ORIGINAL INTRODUCTION

FOR COIN & BLOOD is a grimdark fantasy roleplaying game in the vein of the classic original editions of the most famous of tabletop roleplaying games.

Inspired by the writings of authors such as Kate Elliot, Joe Abercrombie, Sarah Monette, Glen Cook, Anna Smith Spark, Scott Lynch, and more, FOR COIN & BLOOD is fantasy roleplaying about antiheroes, thieves and assassins, rooted in the darkest recesses of mankind's depredations.

While most roleplaying games hide their murderers under the mantle of "hero" (I mean, what "hero" invades underground complexes in search of treasure and murders the denizens because their whole species is "evil?"), FOR COIN & BLOOD makes no pretenses about what it asks you to be. You're the villains that other campaigns fight. You're the cult leaders, assassins, fallen nobles, murderers, mercenaries, necromancers and thugs.

You are a bad person, doing bad things. For coin. For revenge. Because you can. So, shut the fuck up, grab some dice and drinks, and leave your ethics and morals at the door.

Tonight, blood runs in the streets.

Alan Bahr, 2018

REVISED INTRODUCTION

FOR COIN & BLOOD ruleset is a tabletop grimdark and fantasy horror adventure game. It's written and designed to emulate the feel and tone of old roleplaying games from the early days of the hobby and industry, while still acknowledging modern design and movement forward.

There are a few core concepts around Adventure Games, and we'll talk about them more later, but here's a brief overview:

- The Narrator modifies the rules as she sees fit.
- Surmountable, but risky, perilous challenges are fun.
- Actions have consequences, up to and including death.
- The rules won't and shouldn't cover everything, so trust the Narrator's rulings.
- Settings are weird, strange, and should require travel, as well as feature unexpected events
- It's short, to the point, and easy to teach and understand.

FOR COIN & BLOOD is about the gutter-scum of a early-Renaissance themed world undertaking terrible deeds for poor reasons. Coin, revenge, anger, poor judgement. It's the criminal underworld making itself known. And it's not for everyone.



THE PROFESSION OF VIOLENCE

BY STEVE DIAMOND

The window of the third-floor room was open, letting in a gentle breeze. Casca loved the feel of it on her face. She took a deep breath, hoping the smells of the city would push away the bitter, metallic taste of violence that clung to her senses like tar to skin. The smells didn't make things better. Instead, it was more akin to an old woman who smoked cheap tobacco, then drowned herself in even cheaper perfume.

Casca sighed. Occupational hazard. That was the nature of the spell.

Below, on the street filled with food vendors proclaiming the worth of their vittles, a small girl caught Casca's eye. At this distance, it was impossible to tell if the child was homeless, or just off the proverbial leash. The child smiled and waved. Casca waved back, then reluctantly closed the shutters.

With the sounds of the outside world diminished, the sounds of muffled whimpering became audible once again.

Casca turned an appraising gaze to her two captives. A man and a woman, each tied to a chair, gagged, but not blindfolded.

After all, where was the fun in that?

The man was the one whimpering. The woman—his literal partner in very literal crimes—glared at him above her spit-soaked gag. Her lower lip was split, letting out a trickle of blood that mixed with her saliva. Some people just didn't know when to shut up, and Casca was more than willing to be the educator to that specific type of fool.

She made her way, slowly, behind the man and ran her fingers through his dark, tangled hair. Casca could admit to herself the man was attractive. He had that regal look to him. High cheekbones, to match his strong nose and dark eyes. His skin was just the shade of paleness she liked. He had the build of the sort of person who was naturally athletic without the effort ever having been put in.

And all of it was ruined by his muffled bleating.



She tightened her fist in his hair, eliciting an eye-rolling gasp of pain. How could this sniveling idiot be responsible for so much violence?

“Are we ready to answer some questions, now?” Casca asked in his ear. He nodded.

She pulled his gag down, and fortunately the moron retained enough intelligence to keep himself from screaming. She patted his cheek.

“There’s a good boy. Are you ready to hear the rules?”

“Yes.” A nice, simple answer. Casca approved.

“The rules are easy,” she said. “You answer my questions, and if you tell the truth, I continue letting you live. If you lie, I take you apart piece-by-piece. Do you understand?”

“Yes.”

As he said this, the woman jerked in her chair and almost fell over. Casca didn’t need a spell to read the violence in the other woman’s eyes. Casca stepped over to the woman, grabbed her by the hair, and dug her thumb into the soft place behind the gagged woman’s ear. She dug, pressed, and twisted until blood ran beneath her finger, and muffled shrieks came from behind the gag.

Casca held up her bloody thumb to the woman’s eyes. “This was just one finger. All that pain from one finger. Imagine what will happen when I decide to *really* start in on you.” She paused, then looked back at the man. “Or him. Do you want to hear your rules?”

The woman, tears and rage in her eyes, nodded.

“Every time you try and get loose, or make me angry, or do anything that bothers me, I’ll cut a piece off him. If you really piss me off, I’ll force-feed you the pieces. Do you understand?”

Now very still, the woman nodded again.

“Excellent!” Casca beamed. She returned to the man, who had gone very pale. “Give me one moment to prepare, and we can get started.”

Casca opened her small travel-pack and pulled out a small, worn book. Of everything she owned, this book was worth more than everything else combined. This small book held all the accumulated knowledge and spells she had learned and gathered since becoming a magus. It was how she had been able to trail these idiots to this home. It was how she would know if they were telling the truth.

“Do you know what this is?” she asked. The man’s eyes were suddenly very wide. Wild. Fearful. “I see that you do. A magus’ reputation is said to be overblown. I can tell you it isn’t. We are, in fact, worse in many ways.”

“Did you know,” she continued, as she carefully turned the pages, “that many of my kind would rather pass their days in study? Seems like such a waste. Yes, there are times for that sort of thing, but I find the best way to learn is to practice. Wouldn’t you agree?”

The man stared at her in terror.

“I said,” Casca repeated, “wouldn’t you agree?”

He nodded frantically.

Casca smiled. “I knew you’d understand. Ah, here it is. The spell I was looking for.”

The casting of a spell was a relatively simple endeavor. For most among the magus, the only action required was the intoning of the words. For others, like Casca, a slight bit more was required. She’d learned of her abilities on the streets, in the gutters, in alleys between brothels. She thought of the girls outside. What was her trade, and how did she ply it?

Casca rolled up the sleeve on her left forearm, exposing the skin.

Scars. Scars upon scars upon scars.

Each one told a story in a language only she could read. Full of beginnings, middles, and ends. Full of tragedies, triumphs, sorrows, and horrors...sometimes all those things at once. She pulled small blade, then waited for the...correct... space on her arm to call to her. There, by a scar from a time when she’d found the man who had beaten her as child, and turned him inside-out.

She cut. Deep enough for blood to blossom, but not enough to do any real damage. She wasn’t suicidal. Never had been. But for Casca, blood was always needed.

Casca took some of the dribbling blood, rubbed it between her hands, and said the words to the spell. She stood up, walked to the man, and put one bloody hand around his throat, leaving her hand print there. Then she did the same to the woman. She said the last words of the spell then brought her hands together.

A sudden smell of burnt flesh filled the air, and both prisoners convulsed. The man was too shocked to scream as the handprint burned into his skin. It had been an oversight on her part to leave him ungagged, but luck was on her side.

“There,” Casca said. “Let’s get started.”

She looked around the room, seeing half-carved pieces of wood, and tooled leather. A good enough place to start as any.

“What is your profession?”



The man shook his head to clear away the pain and shock. *He has no idea how bad this will get*, Casca thought. "I'm...I'm a carpenter."

She stared at the handprint on the man's neck. Nothing happened. "Truth. Smart man. What is your name?"

"Arlen."

"Arlen? Are you sure? That's hardly the name of a person I'd attribute to violence."

"Yes. Arlen is my name."

Truth.

"The woman's name?"

"Ralah."

Truth again.

"Did you kill the banker?"

"No," Arlen said. He spoke the denial too quickly, in reflex. The handprint blossomed like a smoldering coal.

"Oh dear." Casca turned to Ralah. "Lies come so naturally to people in this city. Normally I wouldn't care—hell, I'd approve. But I was very clear. I *was* clear, correct?" The woman nodded, and tears spilled down her cheeks. Casca sighed and turned back to Arlen. "See? She agreed that I was clear, and it was the truth."

A carpenter. Ah. Yes.

She crossed the room to a desk and picked up a small chisel and a hammer. She took them to Arlen, shoved the gag back into his mouth, then forced his right index finger out straight on the arm of the chair to which he was tied. "I warned you," she said.

He tried to pull his finger back, but Casca was a lot stronger than she looked. She put the edge of the chisel against the middle joint of the finger. She brought the hammer down in one, swift strike that popped the joint apart, and neatly severed the finger. The finger bounced and rolled until it lay at Ralah's feet. Casca looked from the finger to Ralah's face, and smiled.

Arlen screamed behind the gag, but to his credit, didn't faint. She waited until the screaming was replaced by sobbing, then pulled the gag back down.

"Do you understand now?"

Arlen nodded.

“Did you kill the banker?”

He sobbed, then said, “Yes.”

“And Ralah helped you?”

“Yes.”

“Why did you kill him?”

“He threatened to call in all our loans unless Ralah slept with him.”

She looked down at the handprint again, waiting for it to flare in color, but it didn't. She looked back into Arlen's pleading eyes. She could set him free, if she wanted. In his place, she might have done the same thing. No, she definitely *would* have done the same thing. Only she wouldn't have stopped at beheading the bastard, which was what they had done.

But then, everyone in the city knew that murdering the wrong person risked being tracked down by a magus on the city watch's payroll. She would have expected it had she been in their boots.

Bankers helped get the city watch paid. The city watch paid their magi well. Casca was fond of being paid. Coin was her way of ensuring she could further her studies. Sometimes—often, really—to guarantee that coin came in, blood had to be spilled.

Coin and blood. Two currencies that made the world go 'round.

Hope died in Arlen's eyes as he saw her expression change.

“The banker's guild wants a message sent,” Casca said. “It's nothing personal, I assure you. In fact, I sympathize. Normally, I'd promise you both the head of the man who had threatened you so. But, well, you already took that. Good job. So now, I need to do what I've been paid to do.”

“Wait,” Arlen begged, “we have money! We'll pay you. We'll leave, go to some other city where we won't ever trouble you again. Please?”

Casca looked back at Ralah who was nodding frantically. Casca watched the bloody handprints.

“Well, now,” Casca said. “Truth.”



Casca mounted their heads on pikes at the entrance to the banking quarter of the city. Beneath each of the pikes was a small wagon that held the bodies of the two criminals. *Well*, she thought, *body parts, anyway*.

She almost pitied their landlord, who would soon go to check on her tenants, and find the place a charnel house. Cutting bodies up into that many pieces, even with the aid of magic, was exceptionally messy. And tiring. Casca needed a drink.

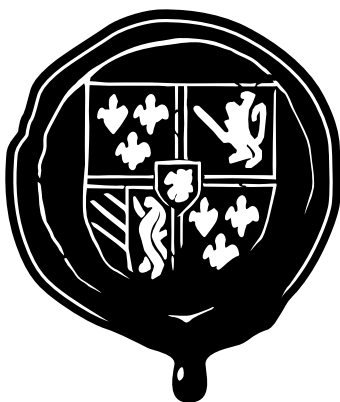
She looked up at her handiwork and nodded in self-appreciation.

Passing denizens averted their gaze from the violence, or retched into the gutters.

They got the message.

Arlen hadn't understated the money they had in their possession. It was a significant amount that was nestled in a blood-stained pouch in her travel-bag. If asked, she'd deny finding any of the banker's loaned money.

After all, coin and blood made for a hell of a retirement plan.



CHAPTER ONE

GETTING STARTED

When you play FOR COIN & BLOOD, each player creates a character and determine attributes, class, and other details. Attributes serve as guidelines for roleplaying and understanding your character, allowing you to interpret their actions through the lens of game mechanics and statistics.

Our base method uses dice to generate your attributes and provide the mechanical foundation that you'll require to understand how the rules and characters work and interact.

THE PRIMARY RULE

The most important concept in FOR COIN & BLOOD is that the Narrator is the final arbiter of all rules and has the right to modify everything. It's a core element of this game, and heavily encouraged. There are gaps in these rules (holes left intentionally), because much of the adventuring gaming fun is being able to make up or create new rules as needed.

There are a lot of suggested ways Narrators can resolve holes in these rules, such as even/odd on dice, to massive charts and complex homebrewed solutions. Throughout this book, we'll call out sidebars where we used some of our house (variant) rules while we created this game.

This is your game now. Play it your way.

DICE

FOR COIN & BLOOD uses several different types of dice, and uses abbreviations based on their number of sides. For example, a four-sided die is noted as 'd4.' If this text requires a player to roll 3d4 that means to roll three (3) four-sided dice and add the results together.





Other die types (six-sided, eight-sided, ten-sided, twelve-sided, and twenty-sided) follow in the same manner. Occasionally players and Narrators may need to roll a d100 (sometimes called a d%). In these instances, select two d10s and designate one die as the ‘ten’ place and another as the ‘singles’ place. Then, roll both dice to represent a single number between 1 and 100. Some sets of dice come with a d10 that showcases the 10s faces (10, 20, 30, etc.); this makes it easier to distinguish between the ‘tens’ and ‘singles’ when rolling.

So, if a player rolled a 4 on their ‘tens’ die and a 2 on their ‘singles’ die, their d100 roll was 42. If a 0 comes up on both the ‘tens’ and ‘singles’ dice, read that as 100.

When playing this game, each player should have access to a full set of dice, which includes all the die types mentioned above, though you can share sets. Random tables, weapons, health, charts, and rolls at times require you to roll dice.

ADVANTAGE AND DISADVANTAGE

Some abilities or rules in the game will refer to rolling with *Advantage* or rolling with *Disadvantage*.

Simply put, it’s this:

- To roll with Advantage, roll two d20s and keep the highest.
- To roll with Disadvantage, roll two d20s and keep the lowest.

You should not (and in case it comes up, cannot) have Advantage or Disadvantage on rolls that are not d20 rolls.

Advantage and Disadvantage always cancel, and never stack. Even if you get Advantage from multiple sources, it still only counts as one instance of Advantage. As an example, if you had Advantage from two sources, and Disadvantage from one, you’d simply cancel both out and roll a single d20 and keep it.

SKILL TESTS

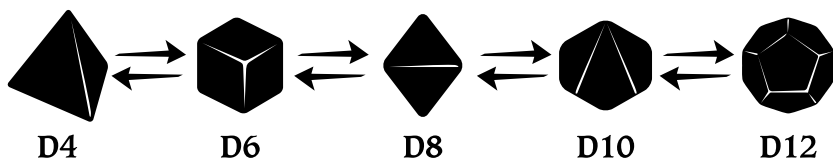
A standard skill test is performed by rolling a d6. If the d6 comes up equal to or higher than the number assigned to that skill test, then it was successful. To keep things concise, most skill tests are written as “make a Difficulty X skill test,” where X is the number the roll needs to meet or exceed.

Narrators often associate a skill test with one of that character’s Attribute Scores. If a skill test is associated with an Attribute Score (as specified by either the Narrator or noted in the rules), the die roll for that skill test gets a numerical bonus (see the modifier rules below). Always add the bonus to the result of the die and compare that total to the skill test’s Difficulty.

Instead of exhaustive lists of skills, the Narrator calls upon the players to make skill tests. All skill tests have a Difficulty associated with them, which represents exactly that: how difficult an action is to perform.

Some skill tests use a die type other than a d6. This is dependent on class abilities (which *upgrade* skill tests) and are in the rules detailed below.

When you upgrade skill tests, you increase the die size, and when you *downgrade* skill tests, you decrease the die size. The graphic below illustrates this:



More information on skill tests are on page 67. Note, that you may never upgrade past a d12.

SAVING THROWS

From time to time, an ability, trap, or some other kind of hazard requires you to make a Saving Throw. A successful saving throw means that the Character avoids a threat or lessens its effect.

Each character class has a saving throw target number which gets lower and lower as the Character gains levels. To make a Saving Throw, roll a d20. If the result is equal to or greater than the Character's saving throw target number, the Saving Throw is successful.

Monsters can also make Saving Throws (as indicated by their write-ups). More details about Saving Throws are on page 75.

CHARACTER SHEETS

A character sheet is a piece of paper designed to organize and contain any and all necessary player character information, for the benefit of both the Narrator and Player. In FOR COIN & BLOOD, the character sheet could be something as simple as a 3x5" index card—with equipment and spells written on the back. We've also included a larger and more detailed sheet in the back of the book (and free on our website).

Feel free to create and share your own designs!

ATTRIBUTE SCORES

The basic attributes are numbers which represent the Might, Learning, Insight, Fortitude, Agility, and Charisma of a character. These are innate abilities that your character has at their very core, elements that are results of intensive training, innate abilities, and more.

First, think of what sort of character you want to play. Identify which skills are important to your concept and note those attributes.

Pick your most important attribute and put a 12 in it. Then, pick your next two most important attributes and put a 11 in them. Put a 10 in the remaining three. Then, roll five six-sided dice, and lay them out from left to right in any order you want. These dice are numbered 1 through 5 from left to right.

Then, pick your most important attribute. Add the number on Dice #1 to it (generating a number between 13 and 18).

Now, pick another attribute. Subtract Dice #1 from it. Then add Dice #2 to that same attribute. Pick a third attribute. Subtract Dice #2 from it. Then add Dice #3 to it. Pick a fourth attribute. Subtract Dice #3 from it, and then add Dice #4 to it. Pick a fifth attribute, then subtract Dice #4 from it and add Dice #5. With your last remaining attribute, subtract Dice #5.

Functionally, you'll do this:

- Attribute 1 (12) + D#1
- Attribute 2 (11) - D#1 + D#2
- Attribute 3 (11) - D#2 + D#3
- Attribute 4 (10) - D#3 + D#4
- Attribute 5 (10) - D#4 + D#5
- Attribute 6 (10) - D#5

This will give you one particularly good statistic, one weak statistic and four that range between average and good.

However, some Narrators allow more flexibility or dislike the time the above method takes. There are other ways to generate attributes. One example is to let the players roll 3d6 a total of six times and arrange the rolls however they want.

If you wanted to be grittier, you might roll 3d6, in order, forcing players to accept some terrible results.

You'll notice that it behooves you to keep your lowest dice for Dice #5. That's intentional. Do that.

We use this form of character creation to generate stable, interesting, but varied characters. It keeps everyone on the same page and power level, while allowing everyone to feel different and unique.

There are all sorts of variations, such as a pool of rolled attributes for the players to share, having them bid on which one they'd like.

The classic way to create attribute scores is to roll 4d6 for each attribute in the previously mentioned order, removing the lowest numbered dice in each roll (leaving you with the 3 best of the 4d6).

After making those rolls, it is often obvious which type of character best fits the abilities; though, the player always has the option to play any class desired. Once the player decides on a class, they may shift points from other attributes, but only into the Prime Attribute of that character class.

However, shifting points around may not lower ability scores below 9.

ATTRIBUTE MODIFIER

Each notably high or low attribute generates a modifier, represented as either a bonus or penalty, allowing characters to gain benefits for their exceptional or dismal attributes. We call these bonuses or penalties *modifiers*. Characters can never have attributes higher than 20.

ATTRIBUTE MODIFIER TABLE

ATTRIBUTE ROLL	DESCRIPTION	BONUS
3-6	Below Average	-1
7-14	Average	None
15-17	Above Average	+1
18-19	Exceptional	+2
20	Astounding	+3

MIGHT

Might represents the Character's physical power, ferocity, and momentum. It is the Prime Attribute for Fighters, so when a Fighter character has Might of 15+, the Character gets a 5% bonus to XP. A high score in Might gives you the modifier to Melee Attack rolls and Melee Damage rolls, as well as skill tests related to raw Might (lifting, climbing, jumping, and more).

LEARNING

Learning represents IQ, reasoning, and the ability to solve puzzles or understand difficult concepts. A high Learning score gives a character an additional language for every two points above 10. Learning is the Prime Attribute for Sages, who will get a 5% bonus to XP if the character's Learning is 15+. A high Learning gives you the modifier to skill tests related to knowledge, such as recalling academic information, repairing broken equipment, and similar tasks.

INSIGHT

Insight determines a character's Insight, perception, and good judgment. Any character with an Insight score of 15+ gets a 5% bonus to XP. A high Insight gives you modifiers to skill tests related to perception, understanding and connecting information to form patterns and processes.

FORTITUDE

Fortitude refers to the health, stamina, physique, and endurance of a character. The higher a character's Fortitude, the more Lifeblood they'll start with. A high score in Fortitude gives you the modifier to skill tests related to stamina, resilience and more (such as holding your breath, running long distances, and similar).

AGILITY

Agility is a combination of coordination, finesse, Agility, and quickness. A high Agility score gives a character the modifier on attack rolls when attacking with a bow or other ranged weapon, as well as damage from ranged weapon attacks, and a low score (8 or less) gives a penalty of -1 to such rolls. It is the prime attribute of Cutpurses, granting them a 5% increase to XP if their Agility is 15+. A high score Agility gives you modifier to skill tests related to nimbleness, agility, and finesse tasks, such as stealth, acrobatics, and graceful movement.

CHARISMA

Charisma refers to a Character's leadership ability. Any Character with a Charisma of 15+ receives a 5% bonus to XP. A high score in Charisma gives you the modifier to skill tests related to personality, leadership, persuasion, deception, and empathy. It also impacts how many hirelings you can take with you, and their loyalty.

CHARISMA BONUS TABLE

CHARISMA	HIRELINGS (MAX NUMBER)	LOYALTY
3-4	1	-2
5-6	2	-2
7-8	3	-1
9-12	4	0
13-15	5	+1
16-17	6	+2
18+	7	+2

INFAMY

Infamy represents a character's notoriety, how far the knowledge of their evil deeds has spread. A character starts with 2d3 Infamy and can gain more by taking actions the Narrator determines to be Infamous.

Every time a character takes an Infamous Action, they must make a Saving Throw (with the modifier indicated). If they fail this Saving Throw, they gain the appropriate amount of Infamy.

A character with Infamy 15+ gains a 5% XP bonus, and a 10% increase to payment for jobs they undertake due to their reputation.

INFAMY MODIFIERS AND CREATION

ACTION TAKEN	SAVING THROW MODIFIER	INFAMY GAINED
Witnessing a Murder	+0	1
Theft	+1	1
Witnessing a Theft	+1	1
Blackmail	+0	2
Killing a Close Friend or Family Member	-4	4
Witnessing powerful Undead	+0	1
Witnessing powerful Demons	+0	1
Defiling a Holy Site	-1	2
Breaking a Holy Vow	-1	2
Being the Victim of Torture	-2	3
Making Demonic Pacts	-3	4
Committing Torture	-4	4
Committing Cold-Blooded Murder	-2	2
Committing Large-Scale Murder or Genocide	-8	8

EXPERIENCE BONUS

Each character gets a bonus percentage to their experience points (XP) that will increase the amount of experience points gained during an adventure.

All characters add together the following:

- 5% if the Character's Prime Attribute is 15+.
- 5% if Insight is 15+.
- 5% if Charisma is 15+.
- 5% if Infamy is 15+.

The maximum attainable bonus is 15%. All awards of XP to the Character during play increase by the amount of the bonus (by 0%, 5%, 10%, or 15%).

LIFEBLOOD

Lifblood (LB) represents the amount of damage a Character can sustain before dying. Lifblood is determined by taking the Character's Fortitude score and adding their level to that score. For example, a first level character with 13 Fortitude would have 14 LB. The same character at second level would have a 15.

PROFESSION

A class determines the general idea of a character, but a Profession gives much more information and color to it. A Sellsword can be a Bodyguard, part of the City Watch, a Mercenary, or any other thing the player can imagine. In the same manner, an Cutpurse can be a Con Artist, a Second-Story Thief, or similar. There isn't really a complete defined list of Professions and the players should be creative when selecting one. In game terms, a character benefits from an upgrade to all skill tests related to their Profession. (See page 15-16 for details on upgrades to skill tests).

STARTING CURRENCY

Each Character starts with some gold pieces they've acquired through their life. They start with gold pieces equal to 60 times their Prime Attribute modifier (minimum 60gp).

Each gold piece is worth 10 silver pieces (sp), and each silver piece is worth 10 copper pennies (cp) (so one gold piece is worth 100 copper pennies).

CHARACTER RETIREMENT

If a Character reaches the highest level listed on the table for that character class, what happens? Does advancement stop? Does the Character have to retire? Each group has its own play style and a preference for a given range of character levels for their games. If the Narrator wants to extend the tables to allow higher-level characters, then go for it!





CHAPTER TWO

CHARACTER CLASSES

The player will now select which of their character classes they wish to play.

Every class provides some background on characters in that class, as well as the class's Damage, Experience Point increases, Lifeblood, Hit Bonus, Saving Throw and any special abilities or features that class has.

Damage is determined by class, not weapon. No matter what weapon you hold, your training is what informs your ability to fight. Weapons do provide modifiers to damage, but the core damage is always based on that class.

There are eleven classes in the game:

- **THE ASSASSIN:** Murder is cheap, and Assassins readily will take your gold in exchange for spilt blood.
- **THE BLACKGUARD:** A dark and twisted servant of the dark gods, a Blackguard is the anti-paladin, who seeks to snuff out good.
- **THE CUTPURSE:** Greed, theft and the long con are the hallmarks of a cutpurse.
- **THE DIABOLIST:** A pack-bound Demon sorcerer, compelled by hellish bargains.
- **THE EXECUTIONER:** Part bounty hunter, part assassin, and singled out by their trademark Executioner blades.
- **THE KNIGHT:** A fallen noble wrapped in dingy armor, the Knight is an example of nobility that's gone rotten.
- **THE MACHIAVELLIAN:** A political player and noble, whose strongest weapons are words.
- **THE MAGUS:** Practitioner of Magic, the Magi are manipulative and devious, solely focused on acquiring arcane power (through magic items, or discovering and recovering spells).
- **THE PRIEST:** A servant of the Gods, a Priest is often as much charlatan or cult leader as holy man.
- **THE SELLSWORD:** A mercenary and blade for hire, Sellswords are forged in blood, violence and death.
- **THE WITCH HUNTER:** A killer of magicians who exchanges blood for coin and hates magic.

The Narrator is, of course, free to invent or allow other character classes in the game. The below tables will provide you details about your character.

THE ASSASSIN

The Assassin is a contract killer, a blade for hire. Not quite as deadly in a stand-up fight as a Sellsword, an Assassin excels at hit and run tactics, focused on skirmishing their opponents away.

Eventually they will become the leader of an Assassins Guild, holding sway over the lives and fates of hundreds or even thousands.

THE ASSASSIN ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS
1	0	Fort+1	14	0
2	1,250	Fort+2	13	0
3	2,500	Fort+3	12	1
4	5,000	Fort+4	11	2
5	10,000	Fort+5	10	2
6	20,000	Fort+6	9	3
7	40,000	Fort+7	8	3
8	80,000	Fort+8	7	4
9	160,000	Fort+9	6	4
10	320,000	Fort+10	5	5

ASSASSIN CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Assassins do a base damage of 1d8.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Assassins are agile and skilled in combat. They may wield any weapon. However, they prefer to rely on their reflexes and quickness over heavy armor which impedes their other abilities. They may only wear leather armor.

BACK STAB

Assassins prefer to catch their foes unaware and strike from positions of advantage. Any time an assassin attacks an opponent who is unaware of their presence, the assassin receives Advantage on that attack. If the attack is successful, the assassin may roll his weapon damage twice to calculate damage from the back stab.



DISGUISE

Assassin's may disguise themselves through dress and manners. A successful disguise will allow the Assassin to conceal his likeness, pass as a member of another class, or assume the guise of someone of the opposite sex.

An Assassin must make a Difficulty 4+ Charisma Skill Test. This roll must be performed 1/day for every day the Assassin wishes to remain disguised.

Victims of the disguise with an Learning score of 13-18 increases the Difficulty of the Assassin's Skill Test by +1.

An Insight score of 13-18 also increases the Difficulty of the Assassin's Skill Test by +1.

For example, a male Assassin trying to pass himself off as a high-born Lady to an astute captain of the guard (both Learning and Insight 13+) will have a chance of success only on a '6' on d6.



POISON USE

An Assassin is always knowledgeable regarding the uses of poison. If he has access to poison, he can apply it to his weapons without any fear of accidentally poisoning himself and receives Advantage to any saving throw made to resist the effects of a poison.

SAVING THROW

Assassins receive Advantage to any Saving Throw made to avoid detection, both magical and mundane.

ESTABLISH GUILD (9TH):

An Assassin of ninth or higher level may choose to establish a secret hideout, often in an urban location. He will attract the attention and service of other, lower-leveled, thieves who hope to learn from a master. He is known as a *Guild Master*, and those who arrive are members of his Assassins Guild.

In return for a cut of their earnings, the Assassin will provide these apprentices with protection from local law enforcement as much as he is able. If the Cutpurse is unable to protect these apprentices, they are likely to turn on him in hopes of finding a more capable guild master.

COST

The payment an Assassin should demand for accepting a mission is given in the table below. The amount to be paid is based on the Assassin's level.

COST TABLE

LEVEL	PAYMENT PER MISSION (GP)	LEVEL	PAYMENT PER MISSION (GP)
1	750/mission	6	2,000/mission
2	1,000/mission	7	4,000/mission
3	1,250/mission	8	8,000/mission
4	1,500/mission	9	16,000/mission
5	1,750/mission	10	32,000/mission

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE POINTS

Upon successful completion of a mission, Assassins receive experience points (in addition to those gained from the assassinated victim) equal to 80% of the gold paid for the mission.

THE BLACKGUARD

The Blackguard is a warrior, clad in the authority and raiment of a priest. Serving themselves and dark gods, a Blackguard is the bloodhound of evil, tracking enemies of cults and churches alike, in order to spill their blood.

A Blackguard is a minor priest, but completely trained in battle, designed to be the bulwark against good. You can find them frequently allied with Diabolists, working towards some dark purpose.

THE BLACKGUARD ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS	SPELLS BY LEVEL		
					1	2	3
1	0	Fort+2	12	0	1	-	-
2	2,500	Fort+3	11	1	2	-	-
3	5,000	Fort+4	10	2	3	1	-
4	10,000	Fort+5	9	2	4	2	-
5	20,000	Fort+6	8	3	4	2	1
6	40,000	Fort+7	7	4	4	2	2
7	80,000	Fort+8	6	4	4	3	2
8	160,000	Fort+9	5	5	4	3	3
9	320,000	Fort+10	4	6	4	4	3
10	640,000	Fort+11	3	6	4	4	3

BLACKGUARD CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Blackguards do a base damage of 1d10.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Blackguards are highly trained combatants and have no restrictions regarding weapons and armor or shields.

CORRUPTING TOUCH

Three times per day a Blackguard may touch a wounded individual and damage them for a number of hit points equal to his current level x2. Alternatively, a Blackguard can use this ability to increase damage from a successful melee attack by the same amount (effectively delivering the Corrupting Touch via weapon).

RELENTLESS FOE

A Blackguard can make a Difficulty 4+ Insight Skill Test to successfully track prey (animal, monster, or humanoid) outdoors. The chance of success increases by 1 for each day old the tracks or signs are.

Blackguards may use their tracking ability to track prey indoors as well (including in dungeons). In order to track a prey indoors, the Blackguards must have observed the prey no more than 6 turns previously. The difficulty of the Skill Test is as laid out below:

TARGET'S ACTION	INSIGHT SKILL TEST DIFFICULTY
Goes down a passage	4+
Goes through a door	5+
Goes through a trap door	6+
Goes through a secret door	8+
Goes through a chimney	7+

SPELL CASTING (4TH)

When a Blackguard reaches fourth level, they may cast a selection of profane magicks, following the rules laid out on page 83.

The Blackguard casts spells using a Spell-casting Die of D6, which increases to d8 at 8th level.

XP BONUS FOR MIGHT

This class bonus is due to a high Might attribute.



THE CUTPURSE

A thief par excellence, a Cutpurse is a rogue, thief, and scoundrel who excels in acquiring goods and coin through unsavory means.

A Cutpurse eventually learns to lead a Thieves Guild, guiding others in the acquisition of wealth, and eventually ruling the underworld of a city.

THE CUTPURSE ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS	THIEVERY
1	0	Fort+1	14	0	1
2	1,250	Fort+2	13	0	1
3	2,500	Fort+3	12	0	2
4	5,000	Fort+4	11	1	2
5	10,000	Fort+5	10	1	3
6	20,000	Fort+6	9	2	3
7	40,000	Fort+7	8	2	4
8	80,000	Fort+8	7	3	4
9	160,000	Fort+9	6	4	5
10	320,000	Fort+10	5	5	5

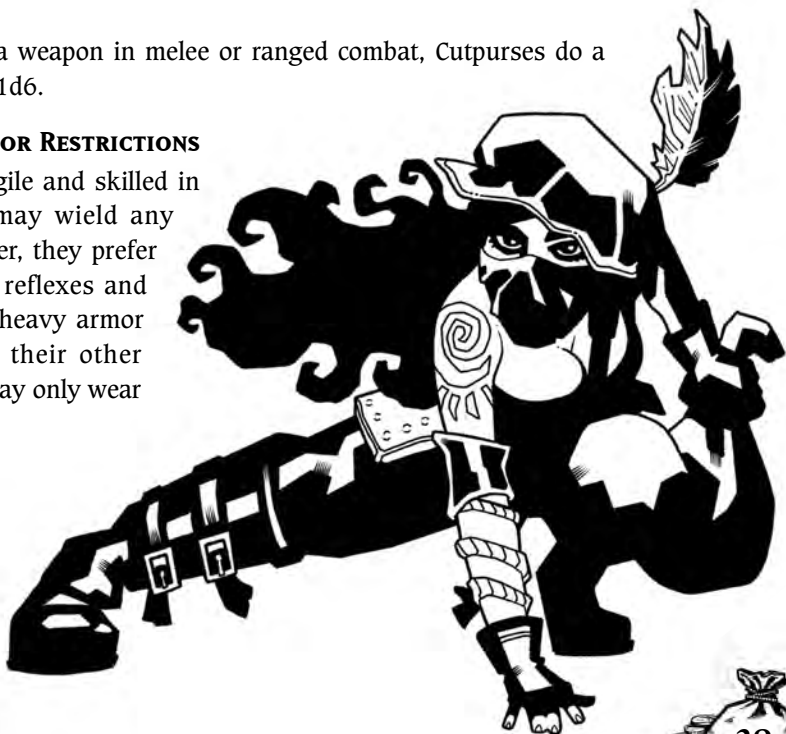
CUTPURSE CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Cutpurses do a base damage of 1d6.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Cutpurses are agile and skilled in combat. They may wield any weapon. However, they prefer to rely on their reflexes and quickness over heavy armor which impedes their other abilities. They may only wear leather armor.



THIEVERY

Thieves are stealthy and light-footed. The thievery ability may be used for any number of clandestine or stealth-based actions.

From picking pockets or locks, discovering and disarming traps, remaining silent and hidden while moving or even climbing walls freehanded – these talents are reflected in the ability of thievery. The referee has the final say as to whether an action falls under the purview of thievery or not.

When the Cutpurse attempts to use this ability, the Cutpurse adds their Thievery Rating to the result of their Skill Test to accomplish the Thievery related task.

When a Cutpurse fails using this ability while free-climbing a wall or disarming a trap, they can endanger themselves with either a great fall or by being in the path of a poisonous dart or concealed trap.

SAVING THROW

Thieves receives Advantage on any Saving Throw made to reduce or avoid the effects of any trap, magical or mundane.

PROFICIENT CLIMBER

A Cutpurse is more skilled at free-handed climbing than at other uses of the Thievery ability. The Cutpurse is considered to be 4 levels higher when Thievery checks are made to climb in this fashion, to a maximum effective level of 10.

READ LANGUAGES (3RD)

At 3rd level a Thief may read most languages (to see if they know a language, make a Difficulty 4+ Learning Skill Test).

ESTABLISH GUILD (9TH)

A Cutpurse of ninth or higher level may choose to establish a secret hideout, often in an urban location. He will attract the attention and service of other, lower-leveled, thieves who hope to learn from a master. He is known as a *Guild Master*, and those who arrive are members of his Thieves Guild. In return for a cut of their earnings, the Cutpurse will provide these apprentices with protection from local law enforcement as much as he is able. If the Cutpurse is unable to protect these apprentices, they are likely to turn on him in hopes of finding a more capable guild master.

USE SCROLLS (10TH)

Upon reaching 10th level Thieves are able to use arcane scrolls. Spells above 6th level carry a 2 in 20 chance (1-2 on d20) of being miscast resulting in the scroll's reverse effect

XP BONUS FOR AGILITY

This class bonus is due to a high Agility attribute.

THE DIABOLIST

Diabolists are terrifying figures, dabbling in dark trades and secrets, summoning infernal and unholy creatures for personal gain.

THE DIABOLIST ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS	PACTS
1	0	Fort+1	14	0	1
2	3,000	Fort+2	13	0	2
3	6,000	Fort+3	12	1	3
4	12,000	Fort+4	11	1	4
5	24,000	Fort+5	10	2	5
6	48,000	Fort+6	9	2	6
7	96,000	Fort+7	8	3	7
8	192,000	Fort+8	7	3	8
9	384,000	Fort+9	6	4	9
10	768,000	Fort+10	5	4	10

DIABOLIST CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Diabolists do a base damage of 1d4.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Diabolists are only proficient with one weapon of their choice and light armor.

PACTS

Diabolists can make pacts with demons. Each pact has innate benefits the Diabolists gains, but requires some terrifying steps. **It's essential to note that while Pacts do not follow the traditional spellcasting set up, the Diabolist does count as a Spellcaster (for the purposes of magic items, the Witch Hunter abilities, or other).**

To gain a pact, a Diabolist must summon a demon, using their Summoning ability.

Then, they must forfeit a number of experience points. This experience is determined by the number of pacts they **already** have. To determine this, simply multiple the number of pacts the Diabolist has by one-thousand, and the Diabolist must forfeit that amount of XP.

Then the Diabolist must make a Saving Throw. If successful, they have bargained and accepted the pact. If they fail, the Pact is inverted, instead

punishing them for their attempt to harness evil powers. (The Narrator will decide the final effect, but usually an opposite of the Pact bonus is acceptable).

Each Demon can provide different pacts, as determined by the Narrator.

Unless noted, each Pact can be selected multiple times, but must come from different demons. The benefits of Pacts are permanent.

LIST OF PACTS

- **PACT OF MIGHT:** +1 to Might.
- **PACT OF AGILITY:** +1 to Agility.
- **PACT OF FORTITUDE:** +1 to Fortitude.
- **PACT OF KNOWLEDGE:** +1 to Learning.
- **PACT OF INSIGHT:** +1 to Insight.
- **PACT OF PERSONALITY:** +1 to Charisma.
- **PACT OF VIOLENCE:** +1 to Base Hit Bonus.
- **PACT OF LIFE:** +2 Lifeblood.
- **PACT OF IMMORTALITY:** If you die, you are returned to life one week later somewhere within 25 miles of where you died. However, while dead, you must make a Saving Throw. If you fail, you are permanently dead, trapped in Hell. Only the most powerful Demons can grant a Pact of Immortality.
- **PACT OF LUCK:** You gain Advantage on all Saving Throws.
- **PACT OF WEALTH:** Every day, you gain 1d10 gold coins.
- **PACT OF GROWTH:** You get a 2% XP bonus on all XP you gain.
- **PACT OF PAIN:** All your attacks deal Brutal n, where n equals the number of Pacts you have.
- **PACT OF MARTIAL SKILL:** You gain Proficiency in a single weapon or armor type of your choice.
- **PACT OF FORESIGHT:** Twice per day, you may reroll any dice. You can not reroll a dice you rerolled.

SUMMONING

A Diabolist can summon Demons. To summon a demon, a Diabolist must spend an hour preparing a ritual, which components cost 4 gold. At the end of that hour, the Diabolist rolls a d6. There is a 5 in 6 chance (1-5 on the d6) that the Diabolist successfully summons the demon. This chance is modified by the difficulty each Demon has in summoning it (see the appropriate Demon entries in the Bestiary), with the summoning modifier subtracting from the final result of the dice roll.

On the result of a 6, the Diabolist hasn't necessarily failed. The Narrator will roll on the following table to see what has occurred.

D6 ROLL	RESULT
1	The magical backlash deals 2d6 damage to the Diabolist
2	The Diabolist loses 1 attribute point (roll a d6 to determine which Attribute).
3	The ritual fails, but no other effect.
4	A weaker demon is summoned.
5	An equal demon is summoned.
6	A stronger demon (Archdemon) is summoned.

Once the Demon is summoned, the Diabolist must bargain with them. The Narrator will take on the role of the Demon. The price must be determined by both parties, but once it is accepted, the Diabolist must make a Saving Throw. If successful, the deal occurs. If failed, the demon vanishes back into the ether.

SAVING THROW

Diabolists gain Advantage on Saving Throws caused by Demons or their own Diabolist Class Abilities.

These systems here don't deal with a lot of the complexity or interesting bits about demon summoning, instead reducing it to simple mechanics. It's up to the Narrator and Diabolist to add in their own flavor and flair to these mechanics, and that is encouraged!

The Diabolist is a strong Class. As a result, they gain no XP bonus from a Prime Attribute.



THE EXECUTIONER

Executioners are a mix between sell-swords and assassins. Often employed as wandering law enforcers, they are merciless killers, drawing their blades for the law that coin can buy, as much as for their own pleasure and the needs of justice.

THE EXECUTIONER ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS	LETHALITY
1	0	Fort+1	14	0	1
2	1,250	Fort+2	13	1	1
3	2,500	Fort+3	12	2	2
4	5,000	Fort+4	11	2	2
5	10,000	Fort+5	10	3	3
6	20,000	Fort+6	9	4	3
7	40,000	Fort+7	8	4	4
8	80,000	Fort+8	7	5	4
9	160,000	Fort+9	6	6	5
10	320,000	Fort+10	5	6	5

EXECUTIONER CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Executioners do a base damage of 1d8.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Executioners are proficient with all weapons but may only wear light armor and may not use shields.

EXECUTIONER'S BLADE

Each Executioner is granted a unique Executioner's Blade. They should name this blade, which generally adheres to the following rules of construction.

The blade is a sword that has the following qualities due a channel in the spine of the blade that contains liquid hydrargyrum: **Brutal 2, Versatile**.

The amount of decoration and flair on each blade is unique, granting each Executioner's Blade a history. An executioner is expected to retain possession that blade.

An individual wielding an Executioner's Blade who is not an authorized member of the Executioner's Guild is branded a criminal and is hunted down until dead.

LETHALITY

An Executioner increases their Critical Hit range by their Lethality rating based on their level. For example: A level 1 Executioner would score a critical hit on a 19 or 20, where as a level 10 Executioner would score a critical hit a 15-20 on the attack roll.

This ability only applies when they are wielding their Executioner's Blade.

Every time an Executioner kills an enemy with a Critical Hit, they gain a +1 Increase to Infamy.

ARTERIAL SPRAY

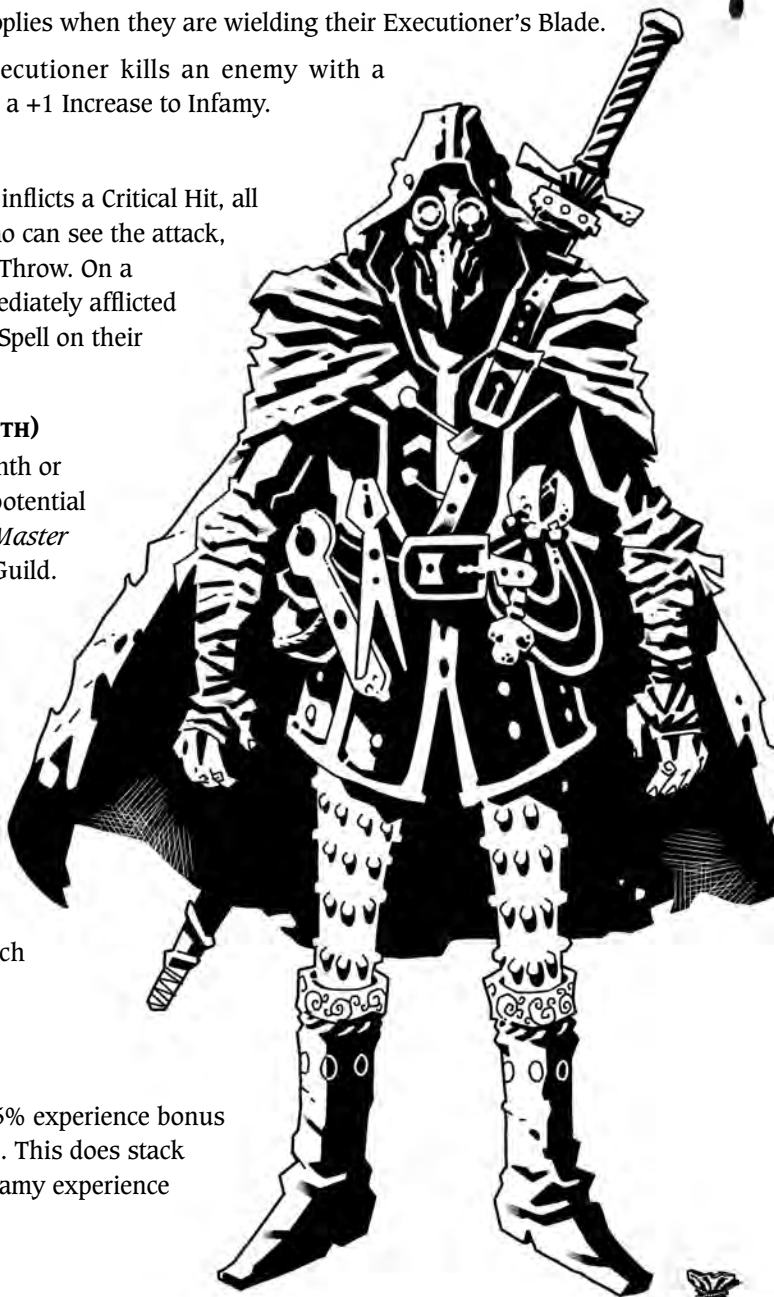
After an Executioner inflicts a Critical Hit, all non-Executioners who can see the attack, must make a Saving Throw. On a failure, they are immediately afflicted as per the *Confusion* Spell on their next turn.

ESTABLISH GUILD (9TH)

An Executioner of ninth or higher level has the potential to become the *Guild Master* of the Executioner's Guild. To become so, they must defeat and kill the previous Guild Master. While as a Guild Master, they are responsible for all aspects of the Executioner's Guild, determining rates, whose laws to enforce, and other such aspects.

XP BONUS FOR INFAMY

Executioners gain a 5% experience bonus if their Infamy is 15+. This does stack with the standard Infamy experience bonus.



THE KNIGHT

A fallen noble, the Knight is part combatant, part politician, and part Warlord. Having left behind their noble life, either by choice or by force, a Knight is capable of holding their own in battle, while still handling themselves in polite company.

Some Knights will find a lord to swear fealty to, in exchange for protection, riches, and safe haven.

THE KNIGHT ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS
1	0	Fort+1	15	0
2	2,500	Fort+2	14	1
3	5,000	Fort+3	13	2
4	10,000	Fort+4	12	2
5	20,000	Fort+5	11	3
6	40,000	Fort+6	10	4
7	80,000	Fort+7	9	4
8	160,000	Fort+8	8	5
9	320,000	Fort+9	7	6
10	640,000	Fort+10	6	6

KNIGHT CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Knights do a base damage of 1d10.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Knights are trained in all forms of weapons and armor – as well as shields. They have no restriction in what weapons they may wield in combat, though they do not regularly use ranged weapons.

ARMS & EQUIPMENT

Knights may begin play with the following equipment for free: chain mail, dagger, mace, riding horse, and a long sword. These represent his knightly gifts before his fall. They are never magical.

HOSPITALITY

When a Knight travels to the realm of another lord and announces themselves, it is expected that they will be granted hospitality. This includes a place to rest in the local lord's hall or castle, as well as attending meals and feasts. He can also expect that his horse will be attended and that basic accommodations will be provided to those in the Knight's retinue.

There is no promise of safety in the lands of enemy lords however, as chivalry only binds so tight.

BATTLE HARDENED

Knights are only surprised on a roll of 1 on 1d6 when rolling for surprise at the beginning of combat.

MASTER SWORDSMAN

Knights receive +2 to their “to-hit” and damage rolls when wielding an arming sword, long sword or short sword.

SQUIRE (4TH)

Beginning at 4th level, the Knight attracts the service of a 1st level Sellsword to serve as his squire. The squire will tend to his steed, weapons, and armor, as well as prepare his meals.

ESTABLISH STRONGHOLD (9TH)

At ninth level, a Knight who chooses to build a castle is considered to have reached the rank of “Lord”, and control a segment of the surrounding countryside. The character may choose to attract a body of men-at-arms, who will swear their fealty as loyal followers.

SAVING THROWS

Knights receive Advantage to all saving throws made to resist fear.



The Knight has a strong advantage on other Characters out of the gate, what with the free gear and strong abilities. To this end, they gain no XP bonus from a Prime Attribute.

THE MACHIAVELLIAN

The Machiavellian is a master manipulator, born of noble stock and willing to do whatever it necessary to increase their power and prestige. Often of noble stock, they favor the subtle barbs of a well-placed word and the machinations of court intrigue.

Eventually they will grow from a minor landholder to a power player in regional politics, ruling their domain with an iron fist.

THE MACHIAVELLIAN ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS
1	0	Fort+1	14	0
2	1,250	Fort+2	13	0
3	2,500	Fort+3	12	0
4	5,000	Fort+4	11	1
5	10,000	Fort+5	10	1
6	20,000	Fort+6	9	2
7	40,000	Fort+7	8	2
8	80,000	Fort+8	7	3
9	160,000	Fort+9	6	4
10	320,000	Fort+10	5	5

MACHIAVELLIAN CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Machivellian do a base damage of 1d4.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTION

Though Machiavellians are trained in a few simple weapons and more refined weapons, they are not match for more martial combatants. They are able to wield clubs, daggers, maces, light crossbows long swords, short bows, short swords, firearms and staves in combat. They may only wear leather armor but may make use of shields.

EXPANDED RETINUE

The Machiavellian may have a number of additional hirelings equal to their experience level above the limit imposed by their Charisma. For example, a 3rd level Machiavellian with a Charisma of 15 can have a total of 8 maximum hirelings. In addition, all hirelings cost half the listed cost when hired by the Machiavellian.

SERPENT'S TONGUE

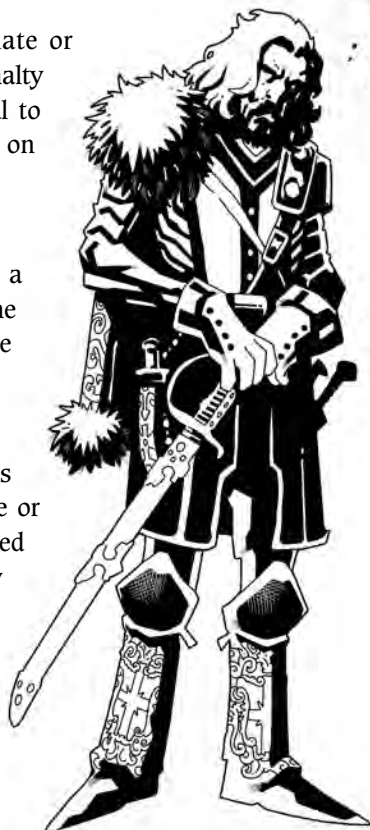
When the Machiavellian attempts to Manipulate or Intimidate a target, that individual suffers a penalty to their saving throw to resist this effect equal to the Machiavellian's level. See page 73 for details on manipulation and intimidation.

SUBTLE THREAT

Whenever a Loyalty check must be made for a Hireling in the service of the Machiavellian, the check is rolled twice and the more beneficial of the two rolls is accepted.

ESTABLISH STRONGHOLD OR ESTATE (7TH)

At seventh level, a Machiavellian who chooses to build a stronghold or estate (such as a castle or urban manor house) is considered to have achieved the rank of "Count." If this is a castle, then they control a segment of the countryside and if it is an estate, then they have subtle influence on the politics and criminal enterprises of the city where the manor is established. In either case, the character will attract the service of one personal bodyguard that is either a Knight or Sellsword of 3rd level — player's choice. In addition, they will attract the necessary staff to run their newly established location. In the case of a castle this will include the staff necessary to run the castle and a body of men-at-arms to protect it. If an estate is established, then servants will be gathered, but instead of bodyguards they will draw the attention of 1d6 1st level Assassins or Cutpurses to act as their own agents and spies throughout the city.



SAVING THROW

The Machiavellian receives Advantage on Saving Throws to resist all forms of mental influence, whether they be magical or mundane.

XP BONUS FOR CHARISMA

Charisma is the Prime Attribute for the Machiavellian, which means a Charisma score of 15+ grants them an additional 5% to all experience points awarded.

REPUTATION

When attempting to gain membership into a gang, the Machiavellian receives a +4 bonus to their Reputation Modifier.

THE MAGUS

The Magus is a mysterious figure, a student of arcane powers and spell casting. They can be devastating opponents. However, at lower levels, they are quite vulnerable and must be protected by the other party members. As Magi progress, they generally become the most powerful of the character classes—holding sway over the political destinies of great kingdoms and able to create wondrous magical artifacts.

THE MAGUS ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	FORSAKEN LORE	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS	SPELLS BY LEVEL				
						1	2	3	4	5
1	0	Fort+1	1	15	0	1	-	-	-	-
2	2,500	Fort+2	1	14	0	2	-	-	-	-
3	5,000	Fort+3	2	13	0	3	1	-	-	-
4	10,000	Fort+4	2	12	0	4	2	-	-	-
5	20,000	Fort+5	3	11	1	4	2	1	-	-
6	40,000	Fort+6	3	10	1	4	2	2	-	-
7	80,000	Fort+7	4	9	2	4	3	2	1	-
8	160,000	Fort+8	4	8	2	4	3	3	2	-
9	320,000	Fort+9	5	7	3	4	4	3	2	1
10	640,000	Fort+10	5	6	3	4	4	3	2	2

MAGUS CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Magus do a base damage of 1d4.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Magi tend to spend their waking hours in study of arcane tomes and scrolls. As such, they have little time to train with weapons or learn how to properly engage in physical combat. Magi may only wield daggers or staves and are not allowed the use of armor.

SPELL CASTING

The Magus can cast spells and create eldritch effects and magicks. Their spell-casting die starts at a d4, and increases to a d6 at 4th level, a d8 at 7th level, and a d10 at 10th level.

The Magus follows all the rules for spellcasting laid out on page 83.

FORSAKEN LORE

Magi have studied folklore, forgotten history and all manner of dark texts and from these words they have gleaned keen insights. This ability may be used to achieve several different effects. Whenever the Magus wishes to use Forsaken Lore, the Magus must make a Difficulty 5+ Action Check and add the Forsaken Lore bonus as indicated by their class table above to the result. If successful, The Magus is then able to recall the lore and history surrounding creatures and objects associated with the undead, the infernal, curses, and other forms of forbidden knowledge. This includes

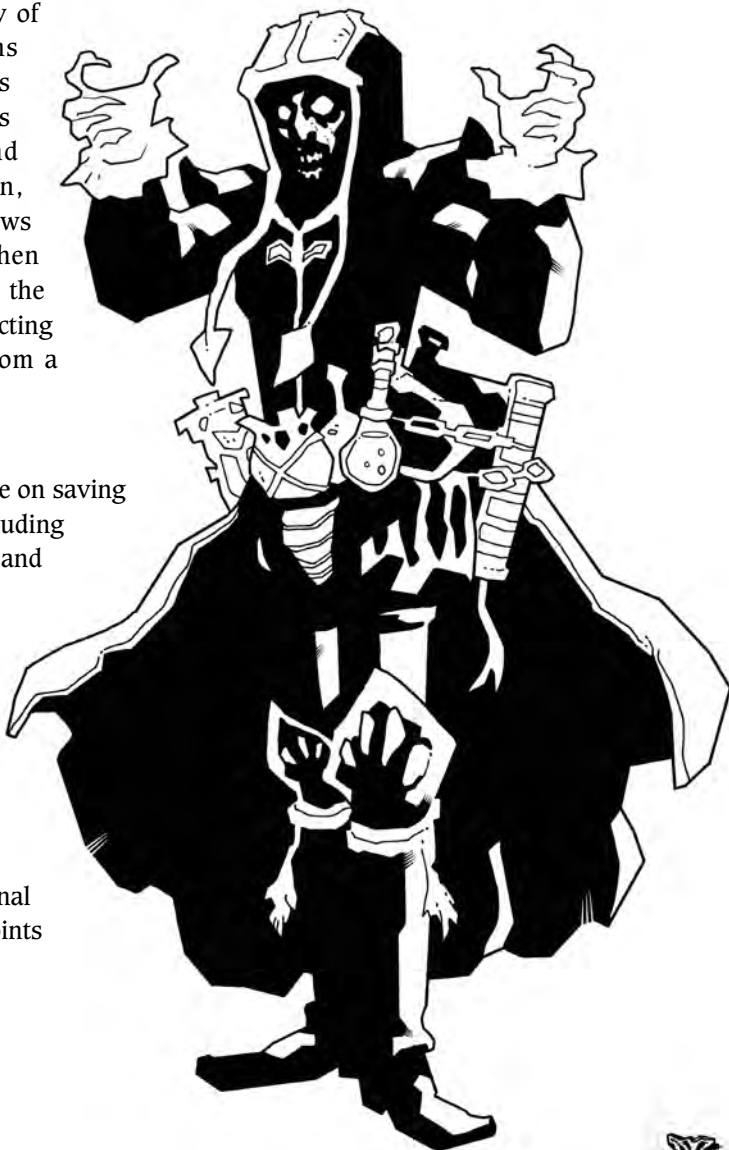
identifying the history of certain magical items and the characteristics of some monsters such as vampires and demons. In addition, Forsaken Lore also allows a Magus to notice when an individual is under the influence of mind-affecting magic or suffering from a curse.

SAVING THROW

Magi receive Advantage on saving throws vs. spells— including those cast from wands and staves.

XP BONUS FOR LEARNING

Learning is the Prime Attribute for Magi, which means that an Learning score of 15+ grants them an additional 5% to all experience points awarded.



THE PRIEST

Priests are armored priests who serve a particular religion, or patron deity. Players may make up the details if the Narrator doesn't use a particular mythology for the campaign. Mythologies and other details of a campaign world often come later if the Narrator is just starting.

Regardless of the details, the Priest is a champion of his faith and/or moral alignment. The character might be a sinister witch-hunter, an exorcist (or Cult Leader serving demons), a dark knight of the faith, or a secret agent of some temple hierarchy. Since many of the Priest's abilities are oriented toward healing, punishing and protecting, they tend to play a support role during combat. However, they are able to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the party's Sellswords if need be—at least for a while.

THE PRIEST ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS	SPELLS BY LEVEL				
					1	2	3	4	5
1	0	Fort+1	15	0	-	-	-	-	-
2	1,500	Fort+2	14	0	1	-	-	-	-
3	3,000	Fort+3	13	0	2	-	-	-	-
4	6,000	Fort+4	12	1	2	1	-	-	-
5	12,000	Fort+5	11	1	2	2	1	-	-
6	24,000	Fort+6	10	2	2	2	1	1	-
7	48,000	Fort+7	9	2	2	2	2	1	1
8	96,000	Fort+8	8	3	2	2	2	2	2
9	192,000	Fort+9	7	4	3	3	3	3	2
10	384,000	Fort+10	6	5	3	3	3	3	3

PRIEST CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Priests do a base damage of 1d6.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Because Priests are forbidden the shedding of blood, they may only use blunt weapons (club, flail, mace, etc). and the only missile weapon they are allowed is oil. Priests have no armor restrictions.

SPELL CASTING

Priests cast divine spells from a specific spell list, as per the Priest Advancement table. Each day, the Priest prays for a certain set of spells, choosing any spells from the standard list. Priests of specific gods might have entirely different sets of spells as designed by the Narrator, but the standard Priest uses the standard spell list.

SAVING THROW

Priests receive Advantage on saving throws vs. poison and paralysis.

HEALER OR WAR-PRIEST

Each Priest must decide how they wish to pursue their agenda, by winning hearts and souls, or through the force of violence.

If they choose **HEALER**, they gain the following:

- While Priests are holy warriors at some level by nature, there are some who are more dedicated to easing the suffering of others and tending the wounded in pursuit of their goals. These healers may, once per day, touch a wounded individual and heal them for a number of hit points equal to twice the Priest's current level. However, because they are not as focused on martial abilities, healers suffer disadvantage on all attack rolls with weapons (spells do not suffer this penalty).

If they choose **VIOLENCE**, they gain War-Priest:

- Some Priests are dedicated to martial deities that require bloodshed. At character creation a Priest may elect to forgo their ability to ever upgrade their Spellcasting Die past a d6 through class advancement (forever remaining at a d6). Though their spell casting abilities are diminished, they are permitted to wield any melee or ranged weapon they choose.

ESTABLISH CULT (10TH)

At tenth level, a Priest who chooses to build and dedicate a temple to a deity may attract a body of loyal cultists who swear fealty to the character.

XP BONUS FOR INSIGHT

Insight is the Prime Attribute for Priests. Priests with Insight of 15 or higher receive a 10% to experience, 5% as normal, and 5% because it is the Prime Attribute for the class.



THE SELLSWORD

The Sellsword is a warrior, trained in battle and in the use of armor and weapons. Your character might be a ferocious raider, a roaming brigand, or a peerless duelist for hire. Because they are the best equipped of all the character classes to dish out and absorb damage, Sellswords often end up on the front lines, going toe-to-toe with dragons, goblins, and rival cultists. If you are the party's Sellsword, the down-and-dirty work is up to you.

THE SELLSWORD ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS	ATTACKS PER ROUND
1	0	Fort+1	14	0	1
2	2000	Fort+2	13	1	1
3	4000	Fort+3	12	2	1
4	8000	Fort+4	11	2	2
5	16000	Fort+5	10	3	2
6	32000	Fort+6	9	4	2
7	64000	Fort+7	8	4	3
8	128000	Fort+8	7	5	3
9	256000	Fort+9	6	6	3
10	512000	Fort+10	5	6	4

SELLSWORD CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Sellswords do a base damage of 1d10.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Sellswords are trained in warfare and, as such, have no restrictions on the kind of weapons or armor they can use.

COMBAT MACHINE

Sellswords gain bonus attacks as indicated by the table above.

SAVING THROW

Sellswords receive Advantage on saving throws vs. death and poison.

WEAPON SPECIALIZATION

At character creation a fighter may elect to specialize one weapon type such as long bow, long sword, or battle axe – but not broad groups like “swords,” “bows” or “axes.”

When wielding their specialized weapon, they receive a +1 bonus to their base hit bonus and damage.

UNWAVERING DEDICATION (4TH)

A Sellsword's dedication to defeat their enemies and their desire to survive is nearly boundless. At 4th level and beyond, when actively engaged in battle, they may remain up and fighting without penalty until they reach a number of negative hit points equal to their level. If they exceed this limit the Sellsword immediately drops dead. After the battle is over, the Sellsword will die in 1d6 rounds unless he receives immediate healing to restore him to at least one hit point.

ESTABLISH MERCENARY COMPANY (9TH)

At ninth level, a Sellsword who chooses to build a castle is considered to have reached the rank of "Captain" and have founded a mercenary company. The character may choose to attract a body of men- at-arms, who will swear their fealty as loyal followers.

XP BONUS FOR FORTITUDE

Fortitude is the Prime Attribute for Sellswords, which means that a Fortitude score of 15+ grants an additional 5% experience.



THE WITCH HUNTER

The Witch Hunter is a servant of hate, a warrior bound to slaying those who use magic, punishing the arcane and divine alike.

THE WITCH HUNTER ADVANCEMENT TABLE

LEVEL	EXP. POINTS	LIFEBLOOD (LB)	SAVING THROW	BASE HIT BONUS
1	0	Fort+1	14	0
2	1,250	Fort+2	13	1
3	2,500	Fort+3	12	1
4	5,000	Fort+4	11	2
5	10,000	Fort+5	10	2
6	20,000	Fort+6	9	3
7	40,000	Fort+7	8	3
8	80,000	Fort+8	7	4
9	160,000	Fort+9	6	4
10	320,000	Fort+10	5	5

WITCH HUNTER CLASS ABILITIES

DAMAGE

When wielding a weapon in melee or ranged combat, Witch Hunters do a base damage of 1d8.

WEAPON & ARMOR RESTRICTIONS

Witch Hunters are proficient in Light Armor. They are proficient with all weapons.

LEFTOVER GEAR

The Witch Hunter begins the game with a pistol and melee weapon of their choice.

BURN THE HERETIC

The Witch Hunter gains Advantage on all attacks against a target whom they've seen cast a spell in the last 24 hours.

TORCHBEARER

The Witch Hunter may use a Torch as a weapon. A target hit must make a Saving Throw each turn or suffer the damage again (until a single Saving Throw is passed).

EXECUTE THE WICKED

If a Witch Hunter kills a Spellcaster with a ranged attack from a firearm, they may immediately reload that firearm.

The Witch Hunter is a strong Class. As a result, they gain no XP bonus from a Prime Attribute.





CHAPTER THREE

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Each Character starts with some gold pieces they've acquired through their life. They start with gold pieces equal to 60 times their Prime Attribute modifier (minimum 60gp).

Each gold piece is worth 10 silver pieces, and each silver piece is worth 10 copper pennies (so one gold piece is worth 100 copper pennies).

EQUIPMENT WEIGHT

A normal level of miscellaneous equipment is assumed to weigh 10 pounds. For any treasure added to this, each coin and gem is assumed to weigh 0.1 pound.

EQUIPMENT DESCRIPTION

This section describes equipment (presented in the table next page) that either has special rules or whose function isn't obvious.

BALL BEARINGS: A character may throw a two-pound bag of 100 ball bearings across a hard, flat surface of about ten square feet as an action during combat. Any approximately human-sized creatures crossing that area must make a Difficulty 4+ Agility-based skill test or fall prone.

BOOK: Assumes a blank book with 100 pages. Books containing information cost more.

CANDLE: Provides light out to 5 feet.

CASE, CROSSBOW BOLT: Holds up to 20 crossbow bolts.

CHAIN: Has 10 Lifeblood. Can be burst with a Difficulty 7+ Might skill test.

CLIMBER'S KIT: Includes pitons, special boots and gloves, and a harness. +1 on skill tests related to climbing.

COMPONENT POUCH: Used to contain materials for spells and rituals.

CROWBAR: You gain +1 on skill tests when using a crowbar to pry something open, and it doubles as a club.



ADVENTURING GEAR

NAME	COST	WEIGHT
Backpack	10 sp	3 lb.
Ball bearings (100)	10 sp	2 lb.
Barrel	15 sp	40 lb.
Basket	1 sp	1 lb.
Bedroll	8 sp	5 lb.
Bell	10 sp	—
Blanket	5 sp	3 lb.
Block and tackle	20 sp	5 lb.
Book (100 pages)	150 sp	3 lb.
Bottle, glass	10 sp	—
Bucket	5 cp	2 lb.
Caltraps (10)	10 sp	2 lb.
Candle	1 cp	—
Case, crossbow bolt	10 sp	1 lb.
Case, map or scroll	10 sp	½ lb.
Chain (10 feet)	50 sp	10 lb.
Chalk (1 stick)	1 cp	—
Chest	50 sp	25 lb.
Climber's kit	250 sp	10 lb.
Clothes, common	5 sp	5 lb.
Clothes, costume	50 sp	5 lb.
Clothes, fine	150 sp	5 lb.
Clothes, traveler's	20 sp	6 lb.
Component pouch	10 sp	1 lb.
Crowbar	20 sp	5 lb.
Fishing tackle	10 sp	4 lb.
Flask	2 cp	1 lb.
Grappling hook	25 sp	5 lb.
Hammer	10 sp	3 lb.
Healer's kit	50 sp	3 lb.
Holy symbol	50 sp	1 lb.
Holy water, flask	25 sp	1 lb.
Hourglass	250 sp	1 lb.
Incense, divine (1 block)	25 sp	—
Ink, vial	100 sp	—
Ink pen	1 sp	—
Jug	2 cp	4 lb.

NAME	COST	WEIGHT
Ladder (10 feet)	2 sp	25 lb.
Lamp	5 sp	1 lb.
Lantern, bullseye	100 sp	2 lb.
Lantern, hooded	50 sp	2 lb.
Lock	100 sp	1 lb.
Magnifying glass	1,000 sp	—
Manacles	20 sp	6 lb.
Mess kit	2 sp	1 lb.
Mirror, steel	50 sp	½ lb.
Oil, flask	1 sp	1 lb.
Parchment (1 sheet)	1 sp	—
Pick, miner's	30 sp	10 lb.
Piton	5 cp	½ lb.
Pole (10-foot)	5 cp	7 lb.
Pot, iron	20 sp	10 lb.
Pouch	2 sp	1 lb.
Quiver	10 sp	1 lb.
Ram, portable	40 sp	35 lb.
Rations (1 day)	5 sp	2 lb.
Rope, hempen (50 feet)	10 sp	10 lb.
Rope, silk (50 feet)	100 sp	3 lb.
Sack	1 sp	2 lb.
Scale, merchant's	50 sp	3 lb.
Sealing wax	5 sp	—
Shovel	25 sp	5 lb.
Signal whistle	1 sp	—
Signet ring	50 sp	—
Soap	2 cp	—
Spell book (100 pages)	300 sp	3 lb.
Spikes, iron (10)	10 sp	5 lb.
Spyglass	1,000 gp	3 lb.
Tent	20 sp	20 lb.
Tinderbox	5 sp	1 lb.
Torch	1 cp	1 lb.
Vial, empty	10 sp	—
Waterskin	2 sp	1 lb.
Whetstone	1 cp	1 lb.

HOLY SYMBOL: A hand-held symbol of a divine being or spiritual philosophy used by the religiously inclined to channel the power of their gods.

HOLY WATER: Deals 2d6 damage to demons and undead and ignores their immunities. At the Narrator's discretion it can also undo fiendish magic (perhaps requiring an Insight or Charisma skill test) or allow another saving throw if someone is under demonic influence (perhaps with a bonus).

INCENSE, DIVINE: Necessary for certain divine rituals, and sometimes burnt while offering sacrifices.

LAMP: Illuminates a 15-foot radius.

LANTERN: Illuminates a 20-foot radius, or a 30-foot cone.

MANACLES: The price assumes you're going to use them on a human-sized (or smaller) creature. Characters can escape from them with a Difficulty 6+ skill test.

OIL: Normally used as fuel for lamps. If you splash it on a creature and they suffer fire damage before they have a chance to clean it off, gain +1 to the Burning condition that has been applied to them. It can also be splashed on the ground: it covers a 5-foot area, and if lit on fire burns for 1d4 rounds and deals 1d6 fire damage to any creature that enters the area.

PORTABLE RAM: Allows two creatures to try bashing in a door and grants an additional +2 to skill tests to do so.

QUIVER: Holds up to 20 arrows.

TENT: Provides enough room for two humans.

TORCH: Illuminates a 20-foot radius. If you use it as a melee weapon, it has the Burning property.

WATERSKIN: Weighs 5 pounds when full.

EQUIPMENT PACKAGES

To keep things quick and easy, you can start with and choose equipment packs at the start of the game:

- **BURGLAR'S PACK** (15 sp): Backpack, bag of ball bearings (100), 10 feet of thread, bell, 5 candles, crowbar, hammer, 10 pitons, hooded lantern, 2 flasks of oil, 5 days of rations, 50 feet of rope, tinderbox, and waterskin.
- **DUNGEONEER'S PACK** (19 sp): Backpack, crowbar, hammer, 10 pitons, 10 torches, tinderbox, 50 feet of rope, 10 days of rations, and waterskin.
- **EXPLORER'S PACK** (15 sp): Backpack, bedroll, mess kit, tinderbox, 10 torches, 50 feet of rope, 10 days of rations, and waterskin.
- **HEALER'S PACK** (57 sp): Backpack, healer's kit, tinderbox, and a vial of antitoxin.

MOUNTS

The main benefit of having a mount is their increased Speed and ability to carry stuff. When you're riding on a mount, you use its Movement instead of yours. Mounts act at the same time as their rider, and they can move and attack like a normal character: if a mount only moves up to its Movement both it and its rider can attack, but even if the mount moves up to twice its Movement its rider can still attack (or take some other action).

MOUNTS

NAME	COST (SP)	SPEED	LOAD
Donkey or mule	50	40 ft.	125 lb.
Horse	500	60 ft.	250 lb.
Warhorse	3,000	60 ft.	500 lb.

LOAD: The maximum amount of weight the mount can carry.

TACK & HARNESS

NAME	COST (SP)	WEIGHT
Bit and bridle	10	1 lb.
Feed (per day)	1	10 lb.
Saddle, pack	30	15 lb.
Saddle, riding	75	25 lb.
Saddlebags	30	8 lb.
Stabling (per day)	5	—

WEAPONS

PROPERTIES

Here are some common weapon properties and what they mean.

ARMOR PIERCING n: The weapon increases the critical range of the attack by n amount. For example, Armor Piercing 2 would take a successful Critical Hit on a weapon from a Natural 20 to a Natural 18-20.

BRUTAL n: A brutal weapon allows you to roll an additional damage die per n and keep the highest. For example, a Fighter using a Great Axe would roll 2d10 and select the highest to keep.

BURNING: A target hit with a Burning weapon must make a Saving Throw immediately. If they fail, they take 1d6 damage at the start of their next turn and must repeat the process as though they'd again been hit by the burning weapon.

DEFENSIVE N: The weapon provides an armor bonus to the character using it by an increase to Defense of n amount. For example, Defensive 1 would give +1 Defense. Multiple Defensive Weapons do not stack.

LIGHT: You can use either your Might or Agility to attack with the weapon. If you use Might to attack, add your Might to damage. Same goes for Agility.

PROTECTIVE N: The item provides a reduction bonus to the Character using it by an increase of n. Multiple protective items do not stack.

REACH: You can attack enemies up to 10 feet away.

RELOAD N: You must Reload this weapon after n attacks with it. A reload takes a turn.

SANCTIFIED: This weapon ignores reduction against Undead, Demons, or other similar unholy beings.

THROWN: This weapon may also be used to make Ranged Attacks and applies the Might modifier to damage (instead of Agility).

TWO-HANDED: You must use both hands to properly wield the weapon

UNWIELDY: This weapon imposes Disadvantage when it is used.

VERSATILE: Even though the Character may wield the weapon with one hand, if you use two hands it upgrades the damage die one step. (For example, a d8 damage die would become a d10, and a d10 would become a d12).

The Simple/Martial designation means nothing mechanically, but it helps when showing folks how weapons can be more complex to use and picking the right weapon for a character.

SIMPLE MELEE WEAPONS

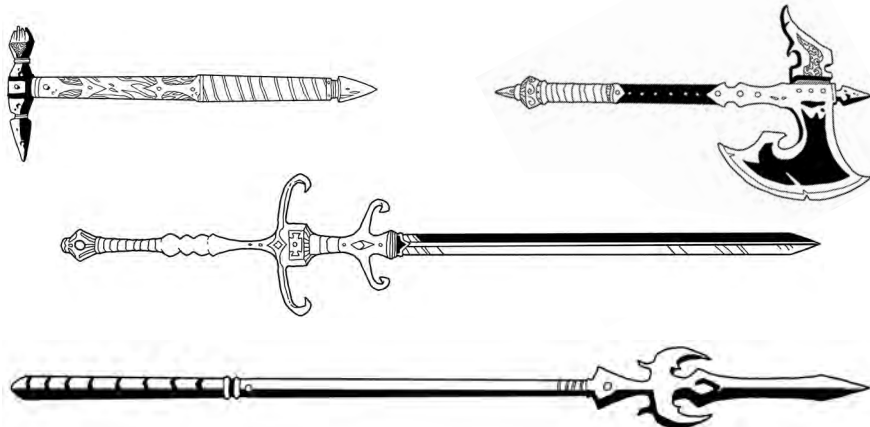
NAME	COST (SP)	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
Club	—	2 lb.	—
Dagger	5 sp	1 lb.	Light, Thrown
Great club	—	10 lb.	Two-handed
Hand axe	25 sp	2 lb.	Thrown
Javelin	5 sp	2 lb.	Thrown
Light hammer	15 sp	2 lb.	—
Mace	35 sp	4 lb.	—
Quarterstaff	—	4 lb.	Versatile
Sickle	10 sp	2 lb.	Light,
Shortsword	30 sp	2 lb.	Light,
Spear	15 sp	3 lb.	Versatile, Thrown

SIMPLE RANGED WEAPONS

NAME	COST (SP)	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
Crossbow, light	100 sp	5 lb.	Armor Piercing 2, Reload 1
Crossbow, light repeating	200 sp	5 lb.	Armor Piercing 1, Reload 8
Dart	1 sp	¼ lb.	Reload 1
Short bow	100 sp	2 lb.	Armor Piercing 1, Reload 1, Two-Handed
Sling	—	1d4	Reload 1

MARTIAL MELEE WEAPONS

NAME	COST (SP)	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
Arming sword	40 sp	3 lb.	Versatile
Battle axe	25 sp	4 lb.	Brutal, Versatile
Flail	100 sp	6 lb.	Two-handed
Glaive	50 sp	6 lb.	Reach, Two-handed
Halberd	50 sp	6 lb.	Reach, Two-handed
Lance	40 sp	8 lb.	Defensive 1
Longsword	150 sp	5 lb.	Two-handed, Brutal
Maul	100 sp	10 lb.	Two-handed
Morning star	40 sp	4 lb.	Armor Piercing 1
Pike	50 sp	15 lb.	Two-handed, Reach
Rapier	100 sp	2 lb.	Light, Defensive 1
Scimitar	50 sp	3 lb.	Light
Trident	75 sp	4 lb.	Versatile, Defensive 1, Thrown
War pick	30 sp	5 lb.	Armor Piercing 1
Warhammer	40 sp	4 lb.	Versatile



MARTIAL RANGED WEAPONS

NAME	COST (SP)	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
Crossbow, heavy	125 sp	10 lb.	Armor Piercing 3, Reload 1
Crossbow, heavy repeating	250 sp	10 lb.	Armor Piercing 2, Reload 8, Two-Handed
Longbow	150 sp	10 lb.	Armor Piercing 1, Reload 1, Two-Handed

RANGED WEAPON TABLES

WEAPON	SHORT RANGE	MEDIUM RANGE	LONG RANGE
Dagger	10 ft.	11-20 ft.	21-30 ft.
Dart	20 ft.	21-40 ft.	41-60 ft.
Hand axe	10 ft.	11-20 ft.	21-30 ft.
Heavy crossbow	100 ft.	101-200 ft.	201-300 ft.
Javelin	20ft.	21-40 ft.	41-60 ft.
Light crossbow	75 ft.	76-150 ft.	151-250 ft.
Longbow	200 ft.	201-400 ft.	401-600 ft.
Shortbow	100 ft.	101-200 ft.	201-300 ft.
Sling	40 ft.	41-80 ft.	81-160 ft.
Spear	15 ft.	16-30 ft.	31-45 ft.
Trident	10 ft.	11-20 ft.	21-30 ft.

RANGES FOR THROWN AND MISSILE WEAPONS: Short Range grants Advantage on all Attack Rolls. Long Range imposes Disadvantage on all Attack Rolls.



ARMORS

NAME	COST (SP)	WEIGHT	REDUCTION
Medium Armor	50	30	4
Light Armor	25	15	2
Heavy Armor	75	50	6
Small Shield	5	10	+1
Large Shield	10	20	+2

WEIGHT: At the Narrator's discretion, magical armor weighs either half of its normal weight or nothing at all

FIREARMS

While the default setting of FOR COIN & BLOOD is expanded on later (see page 136, the Port of Perchoir du Corbeau), FOR COIN & BLOOD has a decidedly Late Medieval feel to it that can often include firearms. To that end, presented here are rules for characters who use firearms.

CRITICAL HITS FROM FIREARMS

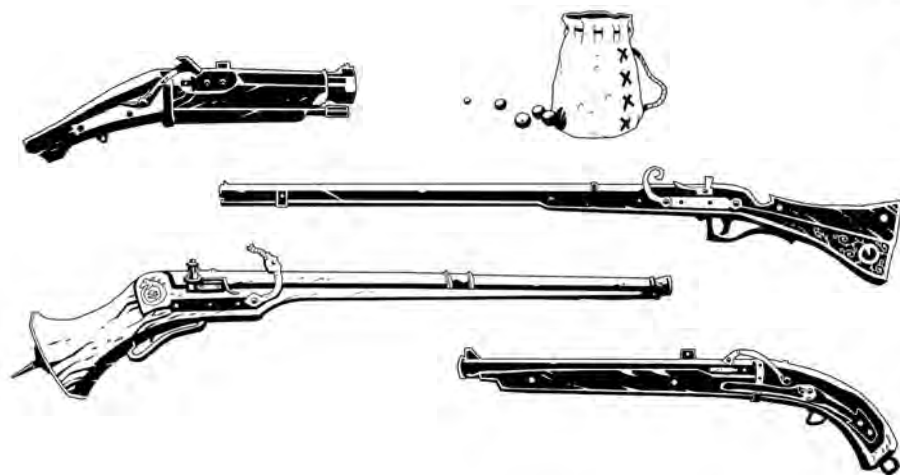
A Critical Hit from a Firearm has some special effects. First, whenever a target suffers a Critical Hit from a Firearm attack, they must immediately make a Saving Throw or die.

If they pass the Saving Throw, the damage from the attack is still counted as a maximum amount and then doubled, as per the FOR COIN & BLOOD rules.

RELOADING

A Pistol takes 4 rounds to reload, a Musket and Arquebus takes 6. These reload times are halved if the individual doing the loading is a Sellsword or Knight.





FIREARMS

WEAPON	RATE OF FIRE	RANGE	RELOAD	COST (GP)	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
Pistol	1	25 ft	4 rounds	50	10	Brutal 1, Reload 1, Armor-Piercing 1
Arquebus	1	35 ft	6 rounds	60	12	Brutal 2, Reload 1, Armor Piercing 2
Musket	1	50 ft	6 rounds	75	15	Brutal 1, Reload 1, Armor-Piercing 1

RANGE: There is a +0 “to-hit” modifier for missile weapons utilized at short range (Range x1), a -2 “to-hit” penalty at medium range (x2), and -4 penalty for long range (x3) attacks.

MELEE: A firearm can be used as a melee weapon, but the wielder's damage dice must be downgraded one step when doing so.

MISFIRE: Any time an attack roll with a Firearm has a final result of a natural “1” on the attack roll, the firearm explodes, dealing its damage to the wielder.

DEFENSE

Every person has a Defense of 10. They then add their Learning, Agility and Insight Modifiers to generate a final Defense. The higher your Defense, the harder it is for your enemies to hit you.

Armor and shields provide Reduction, which prevents incoming damage. Every time you take damage, you reduce the final damage taken by your total reduction. Armor degrades after combats if it's used to reduce damage, but shields do not (see below).

Shields have an additional rule. A character can choose to respond to an attack and sacrifice a shield they are wielding to double the shield's reduction bonus against one attack. This permanently destroys the shield after resolving the attack.

DEGRADING ARMOR

After each combat, armor degrades. If armor reduces damage in a conflict, that armor provides one less reduction until repaired. This is cumulative. For example, after two combats in a dungeon where a suit of armor reduces damage, light armor would provide no reduction, medium armor would provide 2, and heavy armor would provide 4. Shields do not degrade, instead they are destroyed when sacrificed to protect against attacks.

Armor has two methods of repair. First, armor can be repaired in towns or during downtime. Each point of reduction restored requires a knowledgeable metalworker (blacksmith, armorer) or leatherworker (tanner, etc).. The adventurer must spend 10 gold pieces per point of reduction restored, and it takes one day per point of reduction restored before the armor is ready.

Alternatively, the camp action can help restore armor. It takes 1 Repair Camp Action per point of reduction restored. You can read more on camping and camp actions on page 103.

DEGRADING WEAPONS

Weapons also degrade after combats. If a weapon successfully hits a foe during a combat, after the combat is resolved, roll the weapon's damage dice (the printed damage die above). If you roll a 1 or 2, the weapon downgrades its damage dice going forward until repaired. If you would downgrade a d4, the weapon is ruined.

Weapons have two methods of repair. First, weapons can be repaired in towns or during downtime. Each damage die upgrade restored requires a knowledgeable metalworker (blacksmith, armorer) or leatherworker (tanner, etc).. The adventurer must spend 10 gold pieces per numeral on the damage die restored (so 80gp to restore a weapon from d6 to a d8, etc)., and it takes one day per point of numeral on the restored damage die before the weapon is ready.

Alternatively, the camp action can help restore weapons. It takes 1 Repair Camp Action per point of die step restored. You can read more on camping and camp actions on page 103.

MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items aren't crafted, they grow through adventures, exploits, and more. Any item a character wields has the potential to become a magic item.

Magic items should be rare, powerful, and personalized. No +1 swords exist in this world, instead, Hallowbane, an arming sword with Burning 2, Bane (Undead), and Glowing exists and once belonged to a famous hero!

MAGIC WEAPONS

Whenever a character achieves an exploit (natural 20) while using a weapon, they may immediately invest 100 XP into the weapon (thereby reducing their accumulated XP by the same amount). They may not invest this XP if it would cause them to lose a level.

Every 1000 XP invested into a weapon allows it to select a quality from the list below. If an item quality has an 'n' in the title, 'n' starts at 1, and you may select it multiple times (up to a limit of n being applied 3 times to a weapon).

ACCURATE: The weapon grants Advantage on all attack rolls.

ARMOR PIERCING N: The weapon increases the critical range of the attack by n amount. For example, Armor Piercing 2 would take a successful Critical Hit on a weapon from a Natural 20 to a Natural 18-20.

BANE X: When you gain this quality, select a foe (such as giants, goblins, orcs, or dragons). This weapon automatically upgrades its damage die one step against those foes. If this would take you past a d12, instead it gains Brutal 1 against those foes.

BRUTAL N: A brutal weapon allows you to roll an additional damage die per n and keep the highest. For example, a Fighter using a Great Axe would roll 2d10 and select the highest to keep.

BURNING N: A target hit with a Burning weapon must make a Saving throw immediately. If they fail, they take nd6 damage at the start of their next turn and must repeat the process as though they'd been hit by the burning weapon anew. The item also glows like a torch.

DEFENSIVE N: The weapon provides an armor bonus to the character using it by an increase to Defense of n amount. For example, Defensive 1 would give +1 Defense. Multiple Defensive items do not stack.

FROZEN N: A target hit with a Frozen weapon must make a Saving Throw immediately. If they fail, they take nd6 damage at the start of their next turn and must repeat the process as though they'd been hit by the frozen weapon anew.

GLOWING: The item glows like a torch and will illuminate or extinguish itself with a thought from the wielder. The light from this item is not subject to dimming and will always remain Bright Light while it is on.

INSPIRING: When you have an *exploit* with this weapon, you and all allies who can see you recover 1d4 Lifeblood.

POISON N: When struck by a Poison weapon, a target must make n Saving Throws. Each failed save deals the target 1d8 damage, while each passed save deals the target 1d4 damage.

PROTECTIVE N: The item provides a reduction bonus to the character using it by an increase of n. Multiple protective items do not stack.

MAGIC ARMOR

Magic armor is harder to acquire, when compared to magic weapons. Whenever a character survives a Critical Hit, they may immediately invest 100 XP into the armor (thereby reducing their accumulated XP by the same amount). They may not invest this XP if it would cause them to lose a level.

Every 1000 XP invested into an armor allows it to select a quality from the list below. If an item has an 'n' in the title, you may select it multiple times.

DEFENSIVE N: The weapon provides an armor bonus to the character using it by an increase to Defense of n amount. For example, Defensive 1 would give +1 Defense. Multiple Defensive items do not stack.

ELEMENTAL X: When you gain this quality select an element (fire, cold, etc).. When you suffer damage from that element while wearing your armor, your reduction counts double.

EVASIVE N: n times per combat, you may make a Saving Throw after you are struck by a non-magical attack. If this Saving Throw is successful, negate the attack.

HARDENED N: Critical Hits against you are downgraded to normal hits n times per combat.

PROTECTIVE N: The item provides a reduction bonus to the character using it by an increase of n. Multiple protective items do not stack.

RESILIENT N: n times per day, you gain Advantage on a Saving Throw of your choice.

OTHER MAGIC ITEMS

Items like scrolls and staves exist but have unique effects created by the Narrator, as needed.



WEALTH

Characters in *For Coin & Blood* are likely to gather immense amounts of wealth through their criminal and illicit exploits. One of the best ways to safeguard that wealth is by investing in properties to be used as a base of operations for a cohort, serving as a safehouse, a defensible position, or a public front for crime.

Additionally, many political systems during this time require property as a step towards either holding office or participating in the greater city politics. This can grant the players an additional in towards controlling the political elements and outcomes in their cities and provides a whole avenue of story.

MAINTAINING PROPERTY

A character who owns property must upkeep their property, lest it fall into disrepair. This includes items like paying staff, buying food, ensuring supplies, and repairing damage that occurs.

The easiest bookkeeping is to roll all costs for food, repairs, necessary and essential supplies into a single monthly charge of 1 gold piece per occupant (staff, owner or other) at the start of the month.

To keep the physical building and grounds maintained, the owner must pay 2d3% of the property value each year. This is generally spent as one general cost at the start (or end) of the year, to simplify bookkeeping.

TAXES

Some locales require taxes, and some types of businesses are taxed more. Use the following table to determine the taxes on the property. Select and apply all to the total tax that the property must pay.

TAXES MODIFIERS

TAXES	MODIFIER
Starting Taxes	1d3+4% per year.
Tavern or Inn	+1%
Church or Place of Worship	+1%
Docks or Merchant	+1% of total goods processed
Brothel	+1d6% (this is a bribe to officials, not a strict legal tax)
Keep / Fortification	+1d3%
Mercenary Company	+2d6% of total Mercenary income for the year.

The tax table also works well for characters who want to run a protection racket or extort property owners!



Obviously, some characters will want to dodge the taxes and not pay them. A year or two of dodging taxes is not enough to get characters in trouble, but if the total tax owed is 10% of the property value or higher, and the Characters don't pay it, they can expect legal repercussions.

HIRING STAFF

The default cost for hiring a common laborer is 2 silver pieces per day. This can be thought of as a sort of "minimum wage": enough to pay for basic living expenses and not much else a functionally "getting by" sort of lifestyle.

In particularly impoverished neighborhoods or if the characters carry a significantly threatening and powerful reputation, characters might be able to hire unskilled laborers for as little as 1 sp/day, though this obviously is a dramatic impact to loyalty and support in that area.

Inversely, high-wealthy neighborhoods will cost more, even upwards of 5 silver pieces a day.

SKILLED LABORERS

The default cost of hiring a skilled worker is 2 gold piece.

This includes blacksmiths, guards, cartographers, horse breeders and more. Much like common laborers, this can scale up or down, though rarely less than 1 gold piece a day.

These scales also work for bribes, though the severity of the crime or seriousness of the request can scale prices for bribes up as well.



POISONS

Poisons are a tool that many criminals, killers and thugs embrace. Anyone can use poisons; however, Assassins gain special benefits for theirs.

Assassins can brew their own poisons, which reduces the effective cost of a poison by 20%. Additionally, all Saving Throw penalties from an Assassin's poisons are increased by 1.

If a Saving Throw against poison is failed, its effect takes place. If an effect reoccurs in later rounds, the saving throw may be retried at the end of subsequent rounds. Unless noted poison effects only occur once, and the poison must be reapplied to have its effect occur again.

All of these poisons may be imparted via weapon attack, poisoned food or drink, or other sundry means. Generally speaking, the effects of poison are fairly obvious.

When you apply or use a poison, roll a d6. On a 1, you accidentally poison yourself and apply that effect to yourself (you are allowed a Saving Throw). Assassins roll a d10 when applying poison, and only fail on a 1.

Below is a list of poisons, their costs, their effects, and the modifier to Saving Throws poisons impart.

POISONS

NAME	COST (GC)	EFFECT	POTENCY BONUS
Rotgut	250	1d3 damage per round. This damage can never be healed via non-magical means.	0
Greenbane	50	Target takes +1 damage anytime they take damage for the next 24 hours	-1
The Honest Man's Blood	100	Target inherently trusts almost anyone for the next hour.	-1
Demoncrawl	25	1d3 damage (or +1 damage if applied to a weapon that makes a successful attack. No save needed at that point).	-2
Redbile	25	1 damage per round until a successful save is made.	-2
Red Talon	50	Target loses 1 point from a random attribute each round. (roll a d8, rerolling 8s)	0
Mothermilk	75	Target loses their next turn to vomiting and sickness. They must make two Saving Throws to save against this poison (these are made at once).	0
Quietus	250	Target takes 3d6 damage (Half on a successful Saving Throw against this poison).	-2
Vainglory	175	Target takes 2d6 damage.	-3
Addlemilk	300	Target suffers the Confusion spell.	-3
Wasting Venom	500	Target loses 1d2 from every attribute.	-2
King's Venom	1,500	Target will die in 2d6 days. They don't know they've been poisoned.	-5
Splinter Toxin	5	Target must reroll their next successful check.	-1
Street Venom	5	1 damage and target loses 1 point from a random attribute (roll a d8, rerolling 8s).	-2
Antitoxin	25	+2 on Saving Throws against Poison for d3 hours, or automatically negates one poison already affecting the target automatically.	-
Spiderkiss	500	Target suffers 2d6 damage each round.	0
Last Gasp	600	Target suffers the Feeblemind spell	-4
Lich's Caress	750	Target loses 1d8 Fortitude. If this takes them to 0, they die.	-3
Purple Death	1,000	Instant Death	-5
Eye o' Cain	750	Instant Death. However, once a target has passed three Saving Throw against Eye o' Cain, they are immune to its effects.	-0

LEGACY EXPERIENCE

Frequently, characters die. After such, hirelings or other NPCs might be promoted to an adventurer! Legacy Experience is a mechanical tool to allow such characters to join the group in a way that befits their experience.

Hirelings and NPCs gain Legacy Experience when they travel with and adventure with the group.

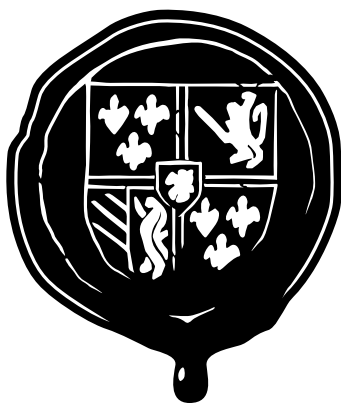
Each adventure that a hireling or NPCs spends a significant amount of time with the party grants them 1 Legacy Experience Point (or LXP). These LXP aren't based on sessions, but actual quests and adventures, and the Narrator will guide you in handing them out.

When an NPC is promoted to a player character, they may trade in their LXP for increased benefits. The table below lists those benefits. Each benefit for the promoted character may only be gained once.

LEGACY EXPERIENCE POINTS

LEGACY EXPERIENCE POINTS	BENEFIT
1*	Start with +1d3 permanent Lifeblood.
2	Start at 2nd level.
6	Start at 3rd level.
10	Start at 4th level
LXPx10	Start with gold equal to LXP x 10.

*This benefit may be gained up to 3 times.





CHAPTER FOUR

THE CORE RULES

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Characters receive Experience Points (XP) for killing enemies and defeating evil! Enemies have set Experience Point values in their descriptions.

The Narrator has final say on how XP is awarded but should do their best to remember the ultimate goal of fun, focusing on the narrative impact of the Character's actions.

Each Character class has a Prime Attribute listed in its description, and the character creation process details how to determine the Character's total XP bonus. There are two separate ways of doing it, but each one results in a percent bonus. If a Character's bonus is 10%, for example, and the Narrator awards 1000 XP to each Character, that particular Character would get 1100 XP (10% of 1000 is 100, so the Character gets a bonus of 100 XP).

SKILL TESTS

Many times, the Narrator just states if the action you want your character to perform is successful. Not every action requires a roll of dice. When success is not a simple enough matter, the Narrator may require you to make a skill test.

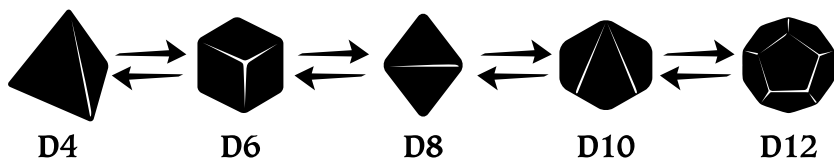
Skill tests are just the roll of a d6. Normally, if you roll 4 or higher (often referred to as 4+), you succeed, though the Narrator might modify this based on the situation, even above 6+ for truly epic difficulties.

Add the appropriate attribute bonus based on the action your attempting. Other modifiers might apply (like gear or your character class abilities).

In many cases, some skill tests use a die type other than a d6. This is dependent on class abilities (which **upgrade** skill tests) and are specified in the rules detailed below.



When you upgrade skill tests, you increase the dice size, and when you downgrade skill tests, you decrease the die size. The graphic below will indicate that for you:



SKILL TEST DIFFICULTIES

HOW HARD?	DIFFICULTY
Easy, with small chance of failure	2+
Some effort required	3+
Average	4+
Difficult	6+
Very Difficult	7+
Exceptionally Difficult	8+

SKILL CONTESTS

If you need to know who does something better, both individuals involved in the test generate a skill test total. However, whoever generates the higher total succeeds. In the case of a tie, the Narrator decides how to resolve it.

COOPERATION

Players can cooperate on skill tests. When a player aids another player's character, add the attribute bonus of each player who assists with the skill test. You can never add more than +3 this way.

GRIM EFFORT

A character who fails a skill test or d20 roll can evoke *Grim Effort* if they wish. They may lose any number of Lifeblood to add an equivalent amount to the result of their roll (reduction does not apply to this loss). This allows them to succeed at the expense of suffering harm.

TIME

The Narrator must make general rulings on the passage of time during a campaign (e.g. “A few hours later...”) and should be governed by common sense. There are, however, two important time measurements that merit brief definitions: the turn and the combat round. A turn (lasting ten minutes) tracks and measures actions, movement, and resources when our intrepid adventurers are in dangerous places. The shorter combat round (lasting one minute) is used amid battle to allow for a faster blow-by-blow account of the action.

MOVEMENT

Base movement rate for all Characters is calculated on the table below in feet per turn, allowing for two moves per turn.

MOVEMENT RATE		MOVEMENT RATE ADJUSTMENTS	
WEIGHT CARRIED (LB.)	MOVEMENT RATE	MOVEMENT TYPE	ADJUSTMENT
0-75	12	Careful	Half of Rate
76-100	9	Normal	Average Rate
101-150	6	Running	2x Average Rate
151-300	3		

COMBAT

When the party encounters enemies, the order of events in the combat round is as follows:

The Narrator determines if one side or the other is entitled to a free attack or move as a result of surprise or simply an upgrade to the Initiative roll; this is either a judgement or a die roll of some kind, depending on the circumstances. Normally, anyone is surprised if they roll a 1 or a 2 on the Initiative roll.

- Determine initiative. One roll is made for each side, not for each individual in combat.
- Party with initiative acts first (missile fire, casting spells, movement, melee attacks, etc). and results take effect.
- Party that lost initiative acts; results take effect.

The round is complete; keep turn order for the next round if the battle has not been resolved.

HOW INITIATIVE WORKS

When combat (or a scene that requires an order of operations) is about to begin, each side must roll for Initiative. Initiative is rolled as a group, allowing allies to work together from turn to turn to aid themselves or tactically approach a combat.

For most Initiative rolls, a d6 is rolled, with the highest result taking the first turn, with any ties being rerolled.

However, some situations can cause a modifier to this roll, which allows one side to upgrade their Initiative die. The Narrator has final say on when this applies.

HOUSE RULE: Our Narrator frequently upgraded Initiative die in ambushes, or defensive situations where one side clearly had an advantage. Momentum still mattered, but it was significantly less impactful.

THE ATTACK ROLL

The most important rule to understand about combat is the Attack roll.

To attack with a weapon, the Player rolls a d20 and adds any bonuses to the result. These attack bonuses most frequently come from classes. Any time a Character wields a weapon not associated with their class's weapon restrictions, they suffer Disadvantage on their to-hit roll.

COMBAT

To attack with a weapon, the Player rolls a d20 and adds any bonuses to the result. These attack bonuses now include the Character's Base Attack Bonus, as shown on their Character Table, and may include a Might bonus (for attacks with handheld weapons), an Agility bonus (for attacks with missile weapons), and any other modifiers the Narrator might determine.

If the result is equal to, or greater than, the opponent's Defense, the attack hits, and damage is rolled.

Additionally, sometimes skill tests are also applicable in combat. More situations are below.

DAMAGE AND DEATH

When a Character (or creature) takes a hit, apply the reduction from armor, then deduct the amount of damage taken from their Lifeblood. When Lifeblood reaches 0, the Character dies.



CRITICAL HITS

When your attack roll shows a 20 (called a natural 20), you have achieved a Critical Hit. Your damage dice for the attack are maxed out and then doubled. A Critical Hit often drops a foe.

EXPLOITS

When you successfully make a Critical Hit, you can often do an *exploit*. There's not a list of exploits, but they are narrative and mechanical advantages you can give yourself.

For example, you could intimidate a foe, shatter a mystical rod, break a wand, or other similar tricks or maneuvers. The Narrator has the final call on what applies.

CRITICAL FUMBLES

When your attack roll shows a 1 (called a natural 1), you have fumbled, and your weapon is dropped and has a 1-2 chance of breaking (on a d6)..

SPECIAL ATTACKS

There are two types of unorthodox melee stances combatants can take, **RECKLESS ATTACKS** and **CAUTIOUS ATTACKS**.

RECKLESS ATTACKS

When a character wishes to Reckless Attack for the turn, all their Melee Attacks gain Advantage for the turn. Additionally, they automatically go before any enemies in initiative order (this doesn't cause their allies to go before enemies). However, all incoming attacks also gain Advantage.

CAUTIOUS ATTACKS

When a character wishes to Cautious Attack for the turn, all their Melee Attacks gain Disadvantage for the turn. Additionally, they automatically go after any enemies in initiative order (this doesn't cause their allies to go after enemies). However, all incoming attacks also gain Disadvantage.

FEINTS & DISARMS

Two frequent combat situations are **FEINTS** and **DISARMS**.

To **DISARM** an opponent and make them drop an item (without destroying it in the attack, though the fall might break it), the adventurer attempting to disarm the enemy must make a Difficulty 4+ skill test. This skill test adds the adventurer's Hit Bonus to the result. The Difficulty of this Skill test increases by the target's Hit Bonus. For example, a target holding a sword with a To Hit Bonus of

+2 would be a Difficulty 6 skill test. When a target has multiple To Hit bonuses, use the highest. If the adventurer is successful, the target drops the item.

To **FEINT** an opponent, the adventurer must make a Difficulty 4+ Agility skill test. The Difficulty of this Skill test increases by the target's Hit Bonus. For example, a target with a To Hit Bonus of +2 would be a Difficulty 6 skill test. When a target has multiple To Hit bonuses, use the highest. If the adventurer is successful, the next attack against the target has Advantage.

HEALING

In addition to the various other means of restoring LB, a Character will recover Lifeblood each day of uninterrupted rest. They recover 1 Lifeblood, + an extra amount equal to their Fortitude modifier. Four weeks of rest restores all a Character's LB—regardless of how many the Character lost.

BINDING WOUNDS

Narrators can allow a Character to bind 1d4 LB worth of wounds following a battle. This can only be done once per battle. If a Character has to bind their own wounds, they only bind 1d3.

Note that the Character can only recover LB lost during this battle. Recovered LB cannot cause raise a Character's Lifeblood to higher than their normal score, causing them to have more Lifeblood than normal.

INVISIBLE OPPONENTS

An invisible opponent can only be attacked if its general location is known, and the attack suffers Disadvantage. Note that more powerful monsters (those with sensitive smell, hearing, or those with more than 28 LB) frequently can detect invisible opponents; the Narrator should determine the chance of this based on the creature and the situation.

MELEE ATTACK

A melee attack is an attack with a hand-held weapon such as a sword, spear, or dagger. Two combatants within ten feet of each other are considered in melee.

RANGED ATTACK

Ranged attacks are attacks with missile weapons such as bows, slings, or thrown axes. When using missiles to fire into melee, it is not possible to choose which opponent (or friend!) will receive the brunt of the attack, unless the Narrator determines otherwise.

MORALE

While some enemies are fearless and will always fight to the death, many more will not continue to fight a hopeless battle and will seek to retreat, surrender, or flee.

The Narrator decides when monsters abandon battle and retreat, based upon the situation and the monster's Learning. Some monsters do not fear death or defeat and so will fight on until fully defeated. Others flee at the very sight of violence.

Narrators should also use morale to determine the actions and loyalty of hirelings or other companion NPCs.

NEGOTIATION AND DIPLOMACY

Some combats can be averted with a few well-chosen words (even lies). If the party is outmatched, or the monsters don't seem likely to be carrying much in the way of loot, the party might elect to brazen their way through to avoid combat or at least delay it until more favorable conditions arise.

MANIPULATION

When a Character attempts to lie to someone, the target of the lie must make a Saving Throw. If they fail, they believe the lie. The Narrator should require some roleplaying around the lie so there's some context for what's occurring.

HOUSE RULE:

At the Narrator's discretion, sometimes an Insight bonus is applicable to the Saving Throw to resist manipulation. The same could be said for Fortitude or Might on Intimidation Saving Throws.

INTIMIDATION

When a Character attempts to Intimidate a foe, it takes their action. Their target must make a Saving Throw. If they fail, they suffer Disadvantage on their next attack roll, unless they lose sight of the individual who Intimidated them.

LOYALTY

The Narrator may wish to make loyalty checks for NPCs put into dangerous situations or ones offered bribes to change sides during a conflict. When making a loyalty check, roll 3d6 and consult the Loyalty table for the result. Remember that a Player's Charisma score can modify these checks.

LOYALTY TABLE

ROLL (3d6)	LOYALTY
3	Traitor
4-5	-2 on next loyalty check
6-8	-1 on next loyalty check
9-12	Average
13-15	+1 on next loyalty check
16-17	+2 on next loyalty check
18	Loyalist



Good treatment, respect, and a fair share of treasure earned should garner bonuses to loyalty checks, while abuse, physical or otherwise, will bring about penalties, abandonment, or worse. NPCs should be treated as distinct individuals, and not mere extensions of the Player Character.

ENVIRONMENT

By its nature, adventuring involves delving into places that are dark, dangerous, and full of mysteries to explore. The rules in this section cover some of the most important ways in which adventurers interact with the environment in such places.

FALLING

A fall from a great height is one of the most common hazards facing an adventurer. At the end of a fall, a creature takes 1d6 damage for every 20 feet it fell, to a maximum of 20d6. The creature lands prone, unless it avoids taking damage from the fall.

SUFFOCATING

A creature can hold its breath for a number of actions equal to 1 + its Fortitude modifier.

When a creature runs out of breath or is choking, it can survive for a number of rounds equal to its Fortitude modifier (minimum of 1 round). At the start of its next turn, it drops to 0 hit points and is dying, and it can't regain hit points or stabilize until it can breathe again.

For example, a creature with a Fortitude of 14 can hold its breath for 3 rounds. If it starts suffocating, it has 2 rounds to reach air before it drops to 0 hit points.

UNDERWATER COMBAT

When adventurers pursue a tyrannical kraken back to its undersea homes, fight off sharks in an ancient shipwreck, or find themselves in a flooded dungeon room, they must fight in a challenging environment. Underwater, the following rules apply.

When making a melee weapon attack, a creature that doesn't have a swimming speed (either natural or granted by magic) has Disadvantage on the attack roll unless the weapon is a dagger, javelin, short sword, spear, or trident.

A ranged weapon attack automatically misses a target beyond the weapon's normal range. Even against a target within normal range, the attack roll has disadvantage unless the weapon is a crossbow, a net, or a weapon that is thrown like a javelin (including a spear, trident, or dart).

Anyone wearing armor that provides more than 1 point of reduction is at Disadvantage on all rolls underwater.

SAVING THROWS

From time to time, an ability, trap, or some other kind of hazard requires you to make a Saving Throw. A successful saving throw means that the Character avoids a threat or lessens its effect.

Each character class has a saving throw target number which gets lower and lower as the Character gains levels. To make a Saving Throw, roll a d20. If the result is equal to or greater than the Character's Saving Throw target number, the Saving Throw is successful.

Saving Throws should be made against magic spells, poison, intimidation, manipulation, or any other events or situations the Narrator chooses.

Monsters can also make Saving Throws (as indicated by their profile).



SACRIFICES

Many dark gods, cults and religions might find reason to sacrifice living beings to their overlords, often for an attempt to gain power. Herein lie the rules for this foul practice.

Most frequently, sacrifices are made to gain power (in this case XP).

To determine the *Potency* of the sacrifice, use the following Table. All Sacrifices start at *Potency* 0. The individual leading the sacrificial ceremony is called the Ritualist, and the participants observing and supporting are called Worshipers.

SACRIFICE MODIFIERS

SITUATION	POTENCY BONUS
Ceremony is not rushed and has ample time.	+1
Ceremony is conducted in or on a religious edifice	+1
Ceremony is conducted in a desecrated or unholy area	+2
Ceremony is conducted in the sight of a significant individual (archdemon, high priest, etc).	+2
Ceremony is conducted publicly, where non-adherents can view it.	+1
Ceremony is conducted before 25+ followers	+1 per 25 followers.
Sacrifice is willing	+1
Sacrifice is unwilling	+2
Sacrifice is a significant opponent to the cult	+2
Sacrifice has been tortured	+1
Sacrifice is level 3 or lower	+1
Sacrifice is level 4 to 6	+2
Sacrifice is level 7 to 9	+3
Sacrifice is level 10	+4
A priest is leading the ceremony	+2
A magus is leading the ceremony	+1
Significant unholy implements are used in the rite.	+1
Sacrificed being is a celestial or good-aligned being of planar origins.	+3

When the sacrifice is completed, roll a d20. If you roll equal to the *Potency* of the Sacrifice or lower, you have successfully accomplished the sacrifice! If you roll higher than the *Potency*, the sacrifice has not been accepted.

Based on the sacrifice result and potency, a benefit is gained from the table below. The Ritualist will select the spell and determine how it's effect is played out (with the Narrator aiding). The Narrator is free to provide additional benefits, and should feel encouraged to tailor the results, appearance, and benedictions

to the ritual that was conducted. The Ritualist and Worshippers each gain Experience Points as indicated by the third column on the table.

SACRIFICE REWARDS

SACRIFICE POTENCY	BENEFIT	EXPERIENCE GAIN (RITUALIST/WORSHIPPERS)
1-3	A level 1 or 2 Priest spell on the Ritualist.	100/50
4-6	A level 3 or 4 Priest spell on the Ritualist, or a level 1 Priest spell on the Ritualist and all the Worshippers.	150/75
7-9	A level 5 Priest spell on the Ritualist, or a level 2 Priest spell on the Ritualist and all the Worshippers	300/150
10-12	A level 3 Priest spell on the Worshippers & Ritualist, or a level 1, 2, or 3 Priest spell on a small location (village, farm, town).	600/300
13-15	A level 5 Magus Spell.	1200/600
16-19	A level 6 Magus Spell	2400/1200
20+	d3+1 level 5 & 6 Magus Spells.	4800/2400

OPTIONAL RULE: You may swap out a level 3 or higher spell for a Diabolist Pact.



ARTIFACTS

CORRUPTION POINTS

Magical weapons gain power not by being forged, but by being part of a character's story. They accumulate Corruption Points based on the wielder's actions, which eventually lead to permanent enchantment. When a weapon first becomes an Artifact, the wielder must name it. The details of how these Corruption Points are earned and what effects they have are detailed below.

Player characters encountering magic weapons, armor, and shields will be unaware of that item's current number of Corruption Points. That is left up to the Narrator, based on the item's current level of power and the nature of the campaign. In some cases, the Narrator may even rule that the legends surrounding an item are so strong that the character's actions cannot increase the Corruption Points of an item in order to grant it more powerful enchantments.

Every time an item or weapon is used in a nefarious manner, it gains Corruption points. See the table below:

ACT	CORRUPTION POINTS
Torture	+1
Critical Hit	+1
Assassination or Murder	+1
Used to Deliver Poison	+1
Used in a Sacrificial Rite that ends in Death	+2

CORRUPTION POINTS	BONUS
1	Glows like a Torch when drawn.
2	Returns to the wielders hand if dropped or thrown.
5	+1 Weapon (Grants +1 to Attack and Damage).
5	+2 Weapon (must be +1 First).
5	+3 Weapon (must be +2 First).
5+	Can cast a single spell once per day. This costs 5 Corruption Points per level of the spell. It costs 5 points per time it can be cast per day after the first.
10	Can attack on its own as long as the wielder concentrates.
10	Bane Weapon. Does +1d6 damage against a detailed type of foe (such as Priests, Angels, Soldiers or more).
15	1 Extra Attack per round with this weapon.
15	Also adds its bonus (+1, +2, +3) to Armor Class.
20	Can shift to any weapon form.

Alternatively, Corruption points can be imparted to an item via sacrifice. If this is done, the Corruption points an item gains are equal the level of the sacrificed individual. The sacrifice must follow the rules above, be successful, and provides no other benefit than the item gaining Corruption Points. The item must be used as part of the sacrificial rite.

SMUGGLING

Often characters will want to smuggle or hide illicit items, either as a job or to avoid getting caught. Use the following table to determine the difficulty of finding an item.

Smuggled goods always start with a difficulty of 1.

SMUGGLED GOODS SEARCH MODIFIERS

SITUATION	INCREASE
Hidden by a Cutpurse	+1
Human-sized or smaller	+1
Can be palmed	+1
Is carefully hidden in disguised containers	+1
Isn't smelly, loud, or alive	+1

To find an item, take the Difficulty (1) and add all the Increases from the above table. The searcher must roll that number or higher on a D6 to find an item.



INVESTIGATIONS

It is a common element of medieval urban and grimdark fantasy fiction that the protagonists embark on an investigation and are required to piece together clues to unravel a greater mystery. Given that life is cheap and player characters of any level can be killed by an unexpected critical hit, investigations can be used to create tension as well as provide direction in a sandbox campaign.

Investigations begin with a Mystery to be solved. This Mystery can be anything from solving a murder, discovering a hidden map or other MacGuffin, or any other information that has been actively obscured by an individual or organization. Once the Narrator has decided the Mystery at hand, they should provide the players with a hook to get them initially involved. Most often this hook is that the player characters have been hired by an NPC to solve the Mystery.

Once the Narrator has decided the Mystery to be investigated, they should roll 1d6-1 (minimum 1) to determine the number of Clues, or simply choose a number of Clues between 1 and 5 as suits the needs of their campaign. Discovering a Clue will provide the player characters with a hint at the true nature of the Mystery at hand. A Clue does not necessarily have to be a physical object. It can also be an individual who has information that will provide the player characters with new information regarding the Mystery at hand.

Searching for a Clue requires 1d6 hours, whether the player characters succeed or fail. This represents the time necessary for the group to search locations, speak to potential information sources, or research the matter at hand. After this time has elapsed the Narrator rolls 1d6. On a roll of 1-2, the player characters have uncovered a Clue, though their roll is modified based on the table below.

SEARCHING FOR CLUES MODIFIERS

SITUATION	MODIFIER
The Clue is Easy to Discover or Obvious	+1
If any player character has a Learning of 15+	+1
The Clue is Concealed or Hidden	-1
The Clue is Magically Obscured or Extensively Hidden	-2

However, such investigations do not go unnoticed and mysteries are hidden for a reason. Every time the characters attempt to Search for a Clue (whether successful or not), the Narrator should roll 1d6. If a 1 is rolled, then they have encountered an obstacle of some sort that is associated with the Investigation. So perhaps if they are investigating a murder, they find themselves ambushed by thugs hired to kill them before they get too close. If searching for clues to the location of a lost artifact, then perhaps they draw down the wrath of a curse associated with the item or the clue they find inadvertently summons some

magical fiend associated with the artifact. For each such encounter, the Narrator should increase the threat to help keep tension high. These encounters should ALWAYS be tied to the investigation.

Once all the Clues have been discovered, the player characters have discovered the truth behind the Mystery at hand. The Narrator is encouraged to write a brief climactic encounter, such as confronting the murderer or mapping out a small dungeon or other dangerous location where an item might be hidden.

USING INVESTIGATIONS

In short, Investigations are a way to link encounters around a central lynchpin to create a unified thematic experience with little prep. Narrators can use Clues found as potential rewards for player characters (perhaps they discover 100 gold pieces that was blood money to pay off a murderer... that's some nice pocket change, now isn't it?) and the adversaries that show up to impede an investigation is a great way for the Narrator to reintroduce old adversaries, unveil new ones, or simply scare the Hell out of the player characters.

Using this format, some creativity, and a few minutes of prep, a full night of adventure can be easily had. Investigations can be the core of a campaign, or used as a springboard to new adventure hooks, or simply a fun one off pick-up game if everyone can't quite make it to the table that night. As the Mystery is revealed new depth can be brought to the table without having to rely on kicking down the door and killing the monster.





CHAPTER FIVE

SPELLS AND MAGIC

Priests, Blackguards, and Magi can cast spells, but the other classes cannot. Spells have 3 phases.

- First, they are **MEMORIZED** (a Character can only memorize a certain number of spells to bring along on an adventure; see the description of the character classes to find out how many, and up to what level).
- Second, they are **PREPARED**, which is the process of saying the magic words and making the magic gestures.
- Third, the spell is **CAST**, which means it takes effect and the magic happens. In the normal sequence of combat, the caster starts preparing at the beginning of the round and casts the spell whenever his/her side has the initiative

PRIEST (& BLACKGUARD) SPELL LIST

LEVEL 1

- Cure (Cause) Light Wounds
- Detect Magic
- Light (Dark)
- Protection from Violence
- Purify (Putrefy) Food and Drink

LEVEL 2

- Bless (Curse)
- Find Traps
- Hold Person
- Speak with Animals

LEVEL 3

- Cure (Cause) Disease
- Light (Dark), Continual
- Locate Object
- Remove Curse

LEVEL 4

- Cure (Cause) Serious Wounds
- Neutralize Poison
- Protection from Violence, 10 ft. radius
- Speak with Plants
- Sticks to Snakes

LEVEL 5

- Commune
- Create Food and Drink
- Dispel Violence
- Insect Plague
- Quest
- Raise Dead

MAGUS SPELL LIST

LEVEL 1

- Charm Person
- Detect Magic
- Hold Portal
- Light
- Protection from Violence
- Read Languages
- Read Magic
- Sleep

LEVEL 2

- Detect Violence
- Detect Invisibility
- Detect Thoughts (ESP)
- Invisibility
- Knock
- Levitate
- Light, Continual
- Locate Object
- Phantasmal Force
- Web
- Wizard Lock

LEVEL 3

- Alter Time
- Crystal Ball
- Darkvision
- Dispel Magic
- Fireball
- Fly
- Hold Person
- Invisibility, 10 ft. radius
- Lightning Bolt
- Protection from Violence, 10 ft. radius
- Protection from Normal Missiles
- Suggestion
- Water Breathing

LEVEL 4

- Charm Enemy
- Confusion
- Dimensional Portal
- Hallucinatory Terrain
- Massmorph
- Plant Growth
- Polymorph
- Remove Curse
- Wall of Fire or Ice
- Wizard Eye

LEVEL 5

- Animal Growth
- Animate Dead
- Cloudkill
- Contact Other Plane
- Feeblemind
- Hold Monster
- Magic Jar
- Passwall
- Telekinesis
- Teleport
- Transform Rock/Mud
- Wall of Stone or Iron

LEVEL 6

- Anti-Magic Shell
- Control Weather
- Death Spell
- Disintegrate
- Move Earth
- Move Water
- Project Image
- Quest
- Reincarnation
- Transform Stone/Flesh

SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

Contained herein are all the Priest and Magus spells, in alphabetical order.

ALTER TIME

SPELL LEVEL: M3

RANGE: 240 ft.

DURATION: 30 min.

The caster must announce which of the two options is being cast. Both options have a 60-foot radius area of effect:

As a Haste spell, as many as 24 creatures may move and attack at double normal speed.

As a Slow spell, as many as 24 creatures failing a saving throw may only move and attack at half speed.

ANIMAL GROWTH

SPELL LEVEL: M5

RANGE: 120 ft.

DURATION: 2 hours

This spell causes 1d6 normal creatures to grow immediately to giant size. The affected creatures can attack as per a giant version of the normal animal.

ANIMATE DEAD

SPELL LEVEL: M5

RANGE: Narrator's discretion

DURATION: Permanent

This spell animates skeletons or zombies from dead bodies. 1d6 undead are animated (per level of the caster above 8th). The corpses remain animated until destroyed or dispelled.

ANTI-MAGIC SHELL

SPELL LEVEL: M6

RANGE: Caster

DURATION: 2 hours

An invisible bubble of force surrounds the caster, impenetrable to magic. Spells and other magical effects cannot pass into or out of the shell.

BLESS (CURSE)

SPELL LEVEL: P2

RANGE: Target PC or NPC (out-of-combat)

DURATION: 1 hour

The caster must announce which of the two options is being cast. The recipient of this spell cannot be in combat when it is cast.

As a Bless spell, the recipient is granted a +1 bonus to all attack rolls and, if the target is not a Player Character, improves overall Morale.

As a Curse spell, the recipient is cursed with a -1 penalty to all attack rolls and, if the target is not a Player Character, suffers a decrease to Morale.

CHARM ENEMY**SPELL LEVEL:** M4**RANGE:** 60 ft.**DURATION:** Until dispelled

This spell operates in the same manner as Charm Person, but can affect more powerful foes. Up to 3d6 monsters of fewer than 18 Lifeblood are affected.

CHARM PERSON**SPELL LEVEL:** M1**RANGE:** 120 ft.**DURATION:** Until dispelled

This spell affects living bipeds of human size or smaller, such as goblins or dryads. If the spell succeeds (Saving Throw allowed), the unfortunate creature falls under the caster's influence.

CLOUDKILL**SPELL LEVEL:** M5**RANGE:** Close**DURATION:** 1 hour

Foul and poisonous vapors boil from the thin air, forming a cloud 15 feet in radius. The cloud moves away from the caster at a rate of 6 feet per minute unless its direction or speed is affected by winds. Unusually strong gusts can dissipate and destroy it. Poison-laden, the horrid mist is heavier than air, and thus sinks down any pits or stairs in its path. Anyone affected by Cloudkill takes 5d6 damage each round. This spell affects only creatures with 15 Lifeblood or fewer.

COMMUNE**SPELL LEVEL:** P5**RANGE:** Caster**DURATION:** 3 questions

Higher powers grant answers to three questions the caster poses. Higher powers don't like being constantly interrogated by mere mortals, so the spell should be limited to one casting per week or so. The Narrator may rule that a caster may cast a double strength Commune spell composed of six questions once per year.

CONFUSION**SPELL LEVEL:** M4**RANGE:** 120 ft.**DURATION:** 2 hours

This spell confuses people and monsters, making them act randomly. The effects of the confusion may shift every 10 minutes or so, and the dice are rolled again to determine any change. Roll 2d6 to determine the creature's behavior:

CONFUSION REACTION TABLE

ROLL (2d6)	REACTION
2-5	Attack the caster (and his allies)
6-8	Stand baffled and inactive
9-12	Attack each other

The spell affects 2d6 creatures, plus an additional creature for every caster level above 8th.

Creatures of 14 Lifeblood or fewer are automatically affected by the spell, and it takes effect immediately.

Creatures of 15 Lifeblood or more automatically resist the confusion effect until it reaches its full power, which takes a number of minutes equal to 1d12 minus the caster's level.

These creatures must make a saving throw when the effect reaches full power and every 10 minutes thereafter or become confused for the remainder of the spell's duration.

CONTACT OTHER PLANE

SPELL LEVEL: M5

RANGE: None

DURATION: See table

The caster creates a mental contact with the planes, forces, powers, and geometries of the beyond, in order to gain affirmative or negative answers to the questions he contemplates. The spell's effect depends on how deeply the caster wishes to delve into the planes of existence.

CONTACT OTHER PLANE TABLE

PLANE	INSANITY	RIGHT	WRONG
1	1-2	3-11	12-20
2	1-4	4-13	14-20
3	1-6	7-15	16-20
4	1-8	9-17	18-20
5	1-10	11-18	19-20
6	1-12	13-19	20

The **PLANE** value is the "depth" at which the caster chooses to seek the truth: it is the number of Yes/No questions asked.

Temporary **INSANITY** lasts for as many weeks as the depth of the plane where the caster's sanity failed.

WRONG represents the possibility of being misled or misinterpreting an answer.

Roll a d20 when the caster uses this spell. Based on the number the d20 rolled, and the number of questions they intended to ask (which must be declared when the spell is cast and before the d20 is rolled), see what result occurred.

CONTROL WEATHER

SPELL LEVEL: M6

RANGE: Narrator's discretion

DURATION: Narrator's discretion

The caster can summon or stop rainfall, tornadoes, create unusually high or low temperatures, clear the sky of clouds or summon clouds into being.

CREATE FOOD AND DRINK

SPELL LEVEL: P5

RANGE: Close

DURATION: Instantaneous

This spell creates a one-day supply of simple food and drinking water for 24 men (or horses, which drink the same amount as a man for game purposes).

CRYSTAL BALL

SPELL LEVEL: M3

RANGE: 60 ft.

DURATION: 2 hours

The caster must announce which of the two options is being cast. A two-foot thickness of solid stone or a thin layer of lead blocks both options.

As a Clairaudience spell, the caster can hear through solid obstacles.

As a Clairvoyance spell, the caster can see through solid obstacles.

CURE (CAUSE) DISEASE

SPELL LEVEL: P3

RANGE: Touch

DURATION: Instantaneous

As a Cure Disease spell, the recipient is cured of all diseases, including those magically inflicted.

As a Cause Disease spell, the recipient is inflicted with a disease to be determined by the Narrator.



CURE (CAUSE) LIGHT WOUNDS**SPELL LEVEL:** P1**RANGE:** Touch**DURATION:** Instantaneous

As a Cure Light Wounds spell, the caster cures 1d6+1 Lifeblood.

As a Cause Light Wounds spell, the caster causes 1d6+1 damage.

CURE (CAUSE) SERIOUS WOUNDS**SPELL LEVEL:** P4**RANGE:** Touch**DURATION:** Instantaneous

As a Cure Serious Wounds spell, the caster cures 3d6+3 Lifeblood.

As a Cause Serious Wounds spell, the caster causes 3d6+3 damage.

DARKVISION**SPELL LEVEL:** M3**RANGE:** Touch**DURATION:** 1 day

The recipient of the spell can see in total darkness. The recipient should roll 1d6 on the table (see below) to determine the range of his vision.

DARKVISION RANGE

ROLL (d6)	RANGE OF VISION (FT.)
1-2	40
3-4	50
5-6	60

DEATH SPELL**SPELL LEVEL:** M6**RANGE:** 240 ft.**DURATION:** Permanent

Within a 60-foot radius, up to 3d4 creatures with fewer than 15 Lifeblood perish.

DETECT VIOLENCE**SPELL LEVEL:** P1, M2**RANGE:** 120 ft. (P),
60 ft. (M)**DURATION:** 1 hour (P),
20 min. (M)

As a Detect Violence spell, the caster detects those with violent enchantments, intentions, thoughts, or auras within the spell's range. Poison is not inherently violent and cannot be detected by means of this spell.

DETECT INVISIBILITY**SPELL LEVEL:** M2**RANGE:** 10 ft./caster level**DURATION:** 1 hour

Caster can perceive invisible creatures and objects.

DETECT MAGIC**SPELL LEVEL:** P1, M1**RANGE:** 60 ft.**DURATION:** 20 min.

The caster can perceive in places, people, or things the presence of a magical spell or enchantment. Magical items or secretly placed charms may be discovered with this spell.

DETECT THOUGHTS (ESP)**SPELL LEVEL:** M2**RANGE:** 60 ft.**DURATION:** 2 hours

The caster can detect the thoughts of other beings. The spell cannot penetrate more than two feet of stone and is blocked by even a thin sheet of lead.

DIMENSIONAL PORTAL**SPELL LEVEL:** M4**RANGE:** 10 ft. casting,
360 ft. teleport**DURATION:** Instantaneous

Dimensional Portal is a weak form of the Teleport spell that can be managed by lesser magicians. The caster can teleport himself, an object, or another person with perfect accuracy to the stated location, as long as it is within the spell's given range.

DISINTEGRATE**SPELL LEVEL:** M6**RANGE:** 60 ft.**DURATION:** Permanent

The caster defines one specific target such as a door, a peasant, or a statue, and it disintegrates into dust. Magical materials are not disintegrated, and living creatures (such as the aforementioned peasant) are permitted a saving throw. The Disintegrate spell cannot be dispelled.

DISPEL MAGIC**SPELL LEVEL:** M3**RANGE:** 120 ft.**DURATION:** 10 min.

Dispel magic can be used to completely dispel most spells and enchantments. As an example of how one might Narrator this spell, the chance of dispelling magic could be a percentage based on the ratio of the level of the caster trying to dispel over the level of the caster who hurled the original magic. Thus, a fifth-level Magus attempting to dispel a charm cast by a tenth-level Magus has a 50% chance of success ($5 / 10 = 50\%$). If the 10th level Magus were dispelling the 5th level Magus's charm, the dispelling caster's chance of success would be 200% ($10 / 5 = 200\%$).

DISPEL VIOLENCE**SPELL LEVEL:** P5**RANGE:** 30 ft.**DURATION:** 10 min.

As a Dispel Violence spell, the spell is similar to the arcane spell Dispel Magic, but works against items, spells, or agents of violence. However, unlike Dispel Magic, this spell also functions against violent sendings, possibly including dreams or supernatural hunting-beasts.

If a living being with violent intentions is targeted with this spell, they just make a saving throw with a -4 penalty. If they fail, they must abandon those violent intentions for 24 hours.



FEEBLEMIND

SPELL LEVEL: M5

RANGE: 240 ft.

DURATION: Permanent until dispelled

Feeblemind is a spell that affects only Magi. The saving throw against the spell is made at a -4 penalty, and if the saving throw fails, the targeted Magus becomes feebleminded until the magic is dispelled.

FIND TRAPS

SPELL LEVEL: P2

RANGE: 30 ft.

DURATION: 20 min.

Find Traps can allow the caster to perceive both magical and non-magical traps at a distance of 30 feet.

FIREBALL

SPELL LEVEL: M3

RANGE: 240 ft.

DURATION: Instantaneous

A missile shoots from the caster's finger to explode at the targeted location in a furnace-like blast of fire. It has a burst radius of 20 feet and damage is 1d6 per level of the caster. The blast shapes itself to the available volume. A successful saving throw means that the target only takes half damage.



FLY**SPELL LEVEL:** M3**RANGE:** Touch**DURATION:** 1d6 turns + 1 turn/level

This spell grants the power of flight, with a movement rate of 120 feet per round. The Narrator rolls for the duration of the spell in secret and does not disclose this information to the Player.

HALLUCINATORY TERRAIN**SPELL LEVEL:** M4**RANGE:** 240 ft.**DURATION:** Until touched by an enemy or dispelled

This spell changes the appearance of the terrain into the semblance of what the caster desires. A hill can be made to disappear, or could be replaced with an illusory forest, for example.

HOLD MONSTER**SPELL LEVEL:** M5**RANGE:** 120 ft.**DURATION:** 1 hour + 10 min./level

The caster can target either 1d4 creatures (saving throw applies) or may instead target a single creature who must make their save at a -2 penalty.

HOLD PERSON**SPELL LEVEL:** P2, M3**RANGE:** 180 ft. (P),
120 ft. (M)**DURATION:** 90 min. (P),
1 hour + 10 min./level (M)

The caster can target either 1d4 persons (with the same parameters as Charm Person; saving throw applies) or may instead target a single creature who must make their save at a -2 penalty.

HOLD PORTAL**SPELL LEVEL:** M1**RANGE:** Narrator's discretion**DURATION:** 2d6 turns

This spell magically holds a door or gate in position for the spell's duration (or until dispelled). Creatures with magic resistance can shatter the spell without much effort.

INSECT PLAGUE**SPELL LEVEL:** P5**RANGE:** 480 ft.**DURATION:** 1 day

This spell only works outdoors. A storm of insects gathers, and goes wherever the caster directs. The cloud is approximately 400 square feet (20 × 20 feet, with roughly corresponding height). Any creature with fewer than 8 Lifeblood exposed to the cloud of insects will flee in terror (no saving throw).

INVISIBILITY

SPELL LEVEL: M2 **RANGE:** 240 ft. **DURATION:** Until dispelled or an attack is made

The object of this spell, whether a person or a thing, becomes invisible to both normal vision and to Darkvision. If the Narrator is using the invisibility rules unchanged, the result is that an invisible creature cannot be attacked unless its approximate location is known, and all attacks are made at -4 to-hit.

INVISIBILITY, 10 FT. RADIUS

SPELL LEVEL: M3 **RANGE:** 240 ft. **DURATION:** Until dispelled or an attack is made

Identical to the Invisibility spell, which makes the target creature or object invisible to normal vision and to dark vision, except that it also throws a sphere of invisibility (with a 10-foot radius) around the recipient, which moves along with the target.

KNOCK

SPELL LEVEL: M2 **RANGE:** 60 ft. **DURATION:** Instantaneous

This spell unlocks and unbars all doors, gates, and portals within its range, including those held or locked by normal magic.

LEVITATE

SPELL LEVEL: M2 **RANGE:** 20 ft./level **DURATION:** 10 min./level

This spell allows the Magus to levitate himself, moving vertically up or down, but the spell itself provides no assistance with lateral movement. A wall, cliff side, or ceiling could be used to move along hand-over-hand.

Levitation allows up or downward movement at a rate of up to 6 feet per minute (60 feet per turn), and the caster cannot levitate more than 20 feet per level from the ground level where the spell was cast (such range being applied both to movement into the air and to downward movement into a pit or chasm).

LIGHT (DARK)

SPELL LEVEL: P1, M1 **RANGE:** 120 ft. **DURATION:** 2 hours (P),
1 hour + 10 min./level (M)

As a Light spell, the caster targets a person or object which then produces a light about as bright as a torch with a radius of 20 feet.

As a Dark spell, the caster instead causes night-time darkness to fall upon the area with a radius of 20 feet.

LIGHT (DARK), CONTINUAL**SPELL LEVEL:** P3, M2 **RANGE:** 120 ft. **DURATION:** Permanent until dispelled

As a Light, Continual spell, the caster targets a person or object which then produces a light about as bright as a torch with a radius of 20 feet.

As a Dark, Continual spell, the caster instead causes night-time darkness to fall upon the area with a radius of 20 feet.

LIGHTNING BOLT**SPELL LEVEL:** M3 **RANGE:** 60 ft. **DURATION:** Instantaneous

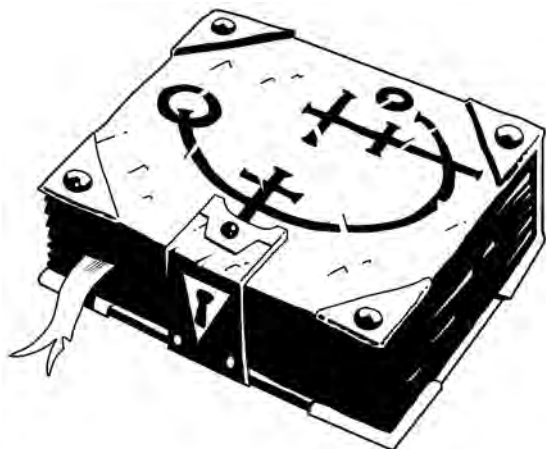
A nearly 10-foot-wide bolt of lightning extends 60 feet from the fingertip of the caster. Anyone in its path suffers 1d6 points of damage per level of the caster, though a successful saving throw halves damage. The bolt always extends 60 feet, even if this means that it ricochets backward from something that blocks its path.

LOCATE OBJECT**SPELL LEVEL:** P3, M2 **RANGE:** 90 ft. (P),
60 ft. + 10 ft./level (M) **DURATION:** 1 min./level

This spell gives the caster the correct direction (as the crow flies) toward an object the caster specifies with a description. The object cannot be something the caster has never seen, although the spell can detect an object in a general class of items known to the caster: stairs, gold, etc.

MAGIC JAR**SPELL LEVEL:** M5 **RANGE:** See below **DURATION:** See below

This spell relocates the caster's life essence, Learning, and soul into an object (of virtually any kind). The "jar" must be within 30 feet of the caster's body for the transition to succeed.



Once within the magic jar, the caster can possess the bodies of other creatures and people, if they are within 120 feet of the jar and fail a Saving Throw. The caster can return her soul to the magic jar at any time, and if a body she controls is slain, her life essence returns immediately to the jar. If the caster's body is destroyed while her soul is in the magic jar, the soul no longer has a home other than within the magic jar (although the disembodied Magus can still possess other bodies as before). If the jar itself is destroyed while the Magus's soul is within, the soul is lost. The Magus can return from the jar to her own body whenever desired, thus ending the spell.

MASSMORPH

SPELL LEVEL: M4 **RANGE:** 240 ft. **DURATION:** Until negated or dispelled

One hundred or fewer man-sized creatures are changed to appear like innocent trees. The illusion is so perfect that creatures moving through the "forest" will not detect the deception.

MOVE EARTH

SPELL LEVEL: M6 **RANGE:** 240 ft. **DURATION:** Permanent

This spell can only be used above ground. It allows the caster to move hills and other raised land or stone at a rate of 6 feet per minute for 1 hour.

MOVE WATER

SPELL LEVEL: M6 **RANGE:** 240 ft. **DURATION:** See below

The caster must announce which of the two options are being cast:

The spell lowers the depth and water level of lakes, rivers, wells, and other bodies of water to 1/2 their normal levels. Used this way, the spell lasts for 10 turns.

Alternately, this spell creates a gap through water, but only to a depth of 10 feet. Used this way, the spell lasts for 6 turns.

NEUTRALIZE POISON

SPELL LEVEL: P4 **RANGE:** Narrator's discretion **DURATION:** 10 min.

This spell counteracts poison, but does not bring the dead back to life.

PASSWALL

SPELL LEVEL: M5 **RANGE:** 30 ft. **DURATION:** 30 min.

This spell creates a hole through solid rock. The hole or tunnel is up to 10 feet deep and is large enough to allow the passage of an average sized man.

PHANTASMAL FORCE

SPELL LEVEL: M2

RANGE: 240 ft.

DURATION: Until negated or dispelled

This spell creates a realistic illusion in the sight of all who view it. The illusion disappears when it is touched, but if the viewer believes the illusion is real, he can take damage from it.

PLANT GROWTH

SPELL LEVEL: M4

RANGE: 120 ft.

DURATION: Permanent until dispelled

Up to 300 square feet of ground can be affected by this spell; undergrowth in the area suddenly grows into an impassable forest of thorns and vines. The caster can decide the shape of the area to be enchanted. An alternate version (Narrator's decision) would allow the spell to affect an area of 300 × 300 feet, for a total of 90,000 square feet.

POLYMORPH

SPELL LEVEL: M4

RANGE: See below

DURATION: See below

The caster must announce which of the two options are being cast:

The caster assumes the form of any object or creature, gaining the new form's attributes (the use of wings, for example), but not its Lifeblood (LB) or combat abilities. The Narrator might allow the benefit of the new form's armor class, if it is due to heavily armored skin. A great deal of the spell's effect is left to the Narrator to decide. This form of the spell lasts for roughly one hour plus one additional hour for each level of the caster.

Alternately, this spell allows the caster to turn another being into a different type of creature (such as a dragon, a garden slug, and of course, a frog or newt). The polymorphed creature gains all the abilities of the new form but retains its own mind and Lifeblood (LB). Used in this way, the range on this spell is 60 feet. This form of the spell lasts until dispelled.

PROJECT IMAGE

SPELL LEVEL: M6

RANGE: 240 ft.

DURATION: 1 hour

The caster projects an image of his person to a maximum range of 240 feet. Not only does the projected image mimic the caster's sounds and gestures, but any spells he casts will appear to originate from the image.

PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE

SPELL LEVEL: P1, M1

RANGE: Caster only

DURATION: 2 hours (P), 1 hour (M)

As a Protection from Violence spell, the caster creates a magical field of protection around herself to block out all violent intent, who suffer a -1 penalty "to-hit" against the caster, and the caster gains +1 on all saving throws against such attacks.



PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE, 10 FT. RADIUS

SPELL LEVEL: P4, M3 **RANGE:** 10 ft. radius around caster **DURATION:** 2 hours

As a Protection from Violence spell, the caster creates a magical field of protection around himself to block out all violent intent, who suffer a -1 penalty “to-hit” against the caster, and the caster gains +1 on all saving throws against such attacks.

In this version its effect covers an area rather than an individual.

PROTECTION FROM NORMAL MISSILES

SPELL LEVEL: M3 **RANGE:** 30 ft. **DURATION:** 2 hours

The recipient becomes invulnerable to small non-magical missiles. Only those missiles projected by normal humans and/or weapons are affected.

PURIFY (PUTREFY) FOOD AND DRINK

SPELL LEVEL: P1 **RANGE:** Close/Touch **DURATION:** Instantaneous

As a Purify Food and Drink spell. the caster causes enough food and water for up to a dozen people to be made pure, removing spoilage and poisons.

As a Putrefy Food and Drink spell. the caster causes enough food and water for up to a dozen people to be made putrid, creating spoilage and poisons.

QUEST**SPELL LEVEL:** P5, M6**RANGE:** 30 ft.**DURATION:** Until completed

If the victim fails her Saving Throw, the caster may set a task for her. If a Magus casts this spell the victim will die if she ignores the Quest altogether. If a Priest casts this spell the victim's failure to obey will result in a curse to be determined by the Narrator.

RAISE DEAD**SPELL LEVEL:** P5**RANGE:** Line of sight**DURATION:** See below

Raise Dead allows the Priest to raise a corpse from the dead, provided it has not been dead too long. The normal time limit is 4 days, but for every caster level higher than 8th, the time limit extends another 4 days. Characters with low Fortitude might not survive the ordeal; and even for those with a strong Fortitude, a period of two weeks is required before they can function normally. This spell only functions on races that can be used for Player Characters (i.e., "human-like").

READ LANGUAGES**SPELL LEVEL:** M1**RANGE:** Reading distance**DURATION:** 1 or 2 readings

This spell allows the caster to read directions, instructions, and similar notations that are written in unfamiliar or even unknown languages. It is especially useful for treasure maps.

READ MAGIC**SPELL LEVEL:** M1**RANGE:** Caster only**DURATION:** 2 scrolls or other writings

This spell allows the caster to read magical writings on items and scrolls. Magical writing cannot be read without the use of this spell.

REINCARNATION**SPELL LEVEL:** M6**RANGE:** Touch**DURATION:** Instantaneous

This spell brings a dead Character's soul back from the dead, but the soul reappears in a newly formed body.

REMOVE CURSE**SPELL LEVEL:** P3, M4**RANGE:** Close/Touch**DURATION:** Instantaneous

This spell removes one curse from a person or object.



SLEEP

SPELL LEVEL: M1**RANGE:** 240 ft.**DURATION:** Narrator's discretion

This spell puts enemies into an enchanted slumber (no saving throw is permitted). It can affect one creature per Magus level.

SPEAK WITH ANIMALS

SPELL LEVEL: P2**RANGE:** 30 ft.**DURATION:** 1 hour

The caster can speak with animals within range. There is a chance that the animals will assist him, and they will not attack him or his party (unless he's got something particularly offensive to say).

SPEAK WITH PLANTS

SPELL LEVEL: P4**RANGE:** 30 ft.**DURATION:** 1 hour

The caster can speak to and understand the replies of plants. Plants will obey his commands as far as they are able (e.g. twisting or bending aside to ease his passage, etc.).

STICKS TO SNAKES

SPELL LEVEL: P4**RANGE:** 120 ft.**DURATION:** 1 hour

The caster may turn as many as 2d8 normal sticks into snakes, each one having a 50% chance of being venomous. The snakes follow his commands, but turn back into sticks at the end of the spell (or when killed).

SUGGESTION

SPELL LEVEL: M3**RANGE:** Shouting distance**DURATION:** 1 week

The caster speaks a hypnotic suggestion to the intended victim. Victims who fail a saving throw will carry out the suggestion, as long as it can be performed within a week. The suggestion might not call for the action to be carried out immediately, and can be contingent upon something else happening first. A suggestion that the victim commit suicide is only 1% likely to be obeyed.

TELEKINESIS

SPELL LEVEL: M5**RANGE:** 120 ft.**DURATION:** 1 hour

The caster can move objects using mental power alone. The amount of weight he can lift and move is 20 pounds per level.

TELEPORT

SPELL LEVEL: M5**RANGE:** Touch**DURATION:** Instantaneous

This spell transports the caster or another person to a destination that the caster knows (at least knowing what it looks like from a painting or a map). Success depends on how well the caster knows the targeted location:

If the caster has only indirect experience of the destination (known only through a picture or map) there is a 25% chance of success, with failure resulting in death. If the caster has seen but not studied the destination there is a 20% chance of failure. Half of failures will place the traveler $1d10 \times 10$ feet below the intended location, possibly resulting in death from arrival within a solid substance. The other half of failures will place the traveler $1d10 \times 10$ feet above the targeted location, possibly resulting in a deadly fall.

If the caster is familiar with the location or has studied it carefully there is a 5% chance of failure, with 1 in 6 failures arriving below and 5 in 6 arriving above the targeted location. In either case, the arrival is $1d4 \times 10$ feet low or high.

TRANSFORM ROCK/MUD

SPELL LEVEL: M5**RANGE:** 120 ft.**DURATION:** 3d6 days, or spell reversal

This spell transforms rock (and any other form of earth) into mud, or mud to rock. An area of roughly 300×300 feet becomes a deep mire, reducing movement to 10% of normal.

TRANSFORM STONE/FLESH

SPELL LEVEL: M6**RANGE:** 120 ft.**DURATION:** Permanent until reversed

This spell transforms flesh into stone or stone into flesh, as desired by the caster. A saving throw is permitted to avoid being turned into stone, but if the spell succeeds the victim is transformed into a statue.

WALL OF FIRE OR ICE

SPELL LEVEL: M4**RANGE:** 60 ft.**DURATION:** Concentration

The caster must announce which of the two options are being cast:

As a Wall of Fire spell, the caster conjures a wall of fire that flares into being and burns for as long as the caster concentrates upon it. Creatures with 3 or fewer hit dice cannot pass through it, and no creature can see through it to the other side. Passing through the fire inflicts $1d6$ Lifeblood (LB) of damage (no Saving Throw) and undead creatures sustain twice the normal damage. The caster may choose to create a straight wall 60 feet long and 20 feet high, or a circular wall with a 15-foot radius, also 20 feet high.

As a Wall of Ice spell, the caster conjures up a 6-foot-thick wall of ice. The caster may choose to create a straight wall 60 feet long and 20 feet high, or a



circular wall with a 15-foot radius, also 20 feet high. Creatures with 3 or fewer hit dice cannot affect the wall, but creatures of 4+ hit dice are able to smash through it, taking 1d6 points of damage in the process. Creatures with fire-based metabolisms take 2d6 instead of the normal 1d6. Fire spells and magical effects are negated in the vicinity of the wall.

WALL OF STONE OR IRON

SPELL LEVEL: M5 **RANGE:** 60 ft. **DURATION:** Permanent (stone) or 2 hours (iron)

The caster must announce which of the two options are being cast:

As a Wall of Stone spell, the caster conjures a wall of stone 2 feet thick, with a surface area of 1,000 square feet.

As a Wall of Iron spell, the caster conjures an iron wall from thin air. The wall is 3 feet thick, with a surface area of 500 square feet.

WATER BREATHING

SPELL LEVEL: M3 **RANGE:** 30 ft. **DURATION:** 2 hours

This spell grants the ability to breathe underwater until the spell's duration expires.

WEB

SPELL LEVEL: M2 **RANGE:** 30 ft. **DURATION:** 8 hours

Fibrous, sticky webs fill an area up to 10 × 10 × 20 feet. It is extremely difficult to get through the mass of strands; it takes one turn if a torch and sword (or a flaming sword) are used, and creatures larger than a horse can break through in 2 turns. Humans take longer to break through—perhaps 3 to 4 turns or longer at the Narrator's discretion.

WIZARD EYE

SPELL LEVEL: M4 **RANGE:** 240 ft. **DURATION:** 1 hour

The caster conjures up an invisible, magical "eye," that can move a maximum of 240 feet from its creator. It floats along as directed by the caster, at a rate of 120 feet per turn.

WIZARD LOCK

SPELL LEVEL: M2 **RANGE:** Close **DURATION:** Permanent until dispelled

As with a Hold Portal spell, but it is permanent until dispelled. Creatures with magic resistance can shatter the spell without effort. Any Magus three levels or higher than the caster can open the portal, and a Knock spell will open it as well (although the spell is not permanently destroyed in these cases).



CHAPTER SIX

EXPANDING THE GAME

CAMPING

Heroes and Adventurers will often have to make camp while travelling. Camp can be a boon, as well as a bane, providing safety and recuperation, or risk and danger.

At the end of a day (or journey) the heroes can choose to set a camp. The benefits and goals of Camp are about providing heroes with a chance to repair, recover their health and wits, and reassess their actions and plans.

CAMP DEFENSES

A Camp's safety depends on both guards, look-outs, locale and natural environment. When first selecting a location and setting their camp, the heroes may choose to assign a guard or a scout (each of which requires one camp task; see below).

After the camp decides whether they are using camp actions to set guards, the Narrator rolls a Saving Throw, with the Saving Throw difficulty equal to the equal to the number of characters in the camp.

Each character who is on guard increases the Saving Throw difficulty of the Narrator's roll by 4. If a character is scouting, the Narrator's roll as Disadvantage.

The danger the camp faces is up to the Narrator but should reflect the ongoing struggles and events of the heroes. It can be weather, monsters, a raid, traitors or more. The table below has some ideas, but the Narrator should feel free to create their own.

DANGER	
ROLL (d6)	POTENTIAL DANGER
1	Bandits
2	Severe Weather
3	Wandering Monsters
4	Another Adventuring Party
5	A mysterious ruin
6	Betrayal

CAMP TASK

Each hero can take two camp tasks while Camp is set up.

AID

An Aid Camp action allows a hero to heal $1d4+1$ Lifeblood from another character. You cannot use the Aid action on yourself.

COOK

An adventurer can cook. This is a Difficulty 4+ skill test, which allows them to feed $1d3+2$ individuals. After a meal, each adventurer who partook gains the benefit of Advantage on one roll of their choice. This benefit expires when the next Camping Phase starts (or a day has passed in full).

GUARD

A hero can guard, patrolling the camp and its surrounding area. This increases the Narrator's camp danger target number by 4 for each Guard Action (see above).

HUNT

A hero might hunt to find food for themselves. This is a Difficulty 5+ skill test. If successful, the hero finds enough food to feed themselves, plus $1d3$ other characters.

Note, that if a character runs out of food, the effects are up to the Narrator, but you can safely assume that the Narrator will penalize you (perhaps hunger gives you Disadvantage for the next day, and you start taking damage in the days after that. The Journey rules provide greater detail).

REPAIR

A hero can attempt to repair broken items. This is a Difficulty 5+ skill test.

- A small item (dagger, belt, etc). takes one camp task to repair.
- A medium item (arming sword, cloak, etc). takes two camp tasks to repair.
- A large item (longsword, spear, wagon, etc). takes three camp tasks to repair.

This can restore damaged items, or degraded armor!

REST

A Character may rest. Resting restores $1d3+1$ Lifeblood to the character. A character can only rest to affect themselves.

SCOUT

A Character may scout the local area, granting Disadvantage to the Narrator's saving throw to determine camp dangers.

TELL A STORY/SING A SONG

A Character may tell a story or sing a song, bringing joy and comfort to their compatriots. This is a Difficulty 5+ skill test. If the skill test is successful, 1d3 heroes other than the storyteller gains one additional camp action.

TRAIN

A hero can train during camp. If they do so, they may select one Attribute and gain +1 to all skill tests that use that Attribute during the next day.

JOURNEYS

FOR COIN & BLOOD is built to be a tool that enables a style of adventure gaming called hex crawling. Hex crawls are large adventures that play out over a map as the heroes and adventurers explore. They can be underground, through creeping forests, over frozen mountain passes, or across wine-dark seas.

The idea of a hex crawl is to abstract long, tedious travel (which would be exceptionally boring if you followed the movement rules in the combat section), into a more accessible play mechanic. Hex crawls are a great tool to evoke a feeling of frontier exploration, the unknown, and the weird.

THE NARRATOR

The hardest bit of a hex crawl is on the Narrator of the game. They must prepare before any adventurers arrive by building a map of the area that is to be explored, as well as establishing a starting place.

The Narrator should carefully remember the following when building a hex crawl:

- Each hex has a dominant type of terrain, but that is rarely the only type in that hex.
- Each hex represents roughly 8 miles. The average healthy adult human can walk 24 miles per day without exceptional fatigue (or 3 hexes).
- A starting location on the map edge is ideal.
- Numbering either each hex (in a letter/number fashion) or only hexes that contain significant items should be done on the Narrator's copy of the map.

Maps are easily available online, through a variety of generators, as well as blank pages you can use to create your own maps by hand!

PROVISIONS

Each hex that a party traverses requires a 1/3rd of 1 day's provisions (so a full 3 hexes is one day of trail rations). If a party runs low on supplies, scavenging or hunting is required to feed them. Any day where a party member cannot consume one day's worth of rations leaves them fatigued and hungry and

suffering Disadvantage on any roll the Narrator feels is applicable. After 3d3 days, they start to lose health (1d8 cumulative per day).

TERRAIN

Terrain can impact travel. The table below indicates how to calculate terrain. The Hex Modifier column calculates how much each dominant terrain type impacts the hex for determine how far a party can move.

TERRAIN MODIFIER

TERRAIN TYPE	HEX MODIFIER
Plains/Prairies	x0
Roads	x0.5 (every two "road" hexes count as 1 hex)
Thick Forest/Very Hilly/Marshlands	x1.5
Thick Jungle/Swamps/Desert	x2
Mountains	x3

THE HEX CRAWL IN PRACTICE

Hex Crawls can be difficult to enact successfully without a full adventuring party, so each adventurer needs to pitch in to make a hex crawl successful.

Some hex crawls have a set destination, where as some will ramble around the country side with no discernable plan.

Each adventurer must select a role in the party while adventuring. An adventurer may have multiple roles, but only after all adventurers have at least the same number of roles.

GUIDE

The Guide is responsible for finding the way. The Narrator will request a Learning skill test every hex to ensure the party remains on track. This Difficulty begins at 2+ and is modified as indicated below (modifiers stack).

LEARNING TEST MODIFIER

SITUATION	LEARNING TEST MODIFICATION
Dense Terrain (Forest, etc).	+1
Light Bad Weather	+1
Medium Bad Weather	+2
Severe Bad Weather	+3
Attacked On this Hex	+1
Magical Interference	+1

LOOKOUT

The Lookout is responsible for ensuring the party is aware of their surroundings. Every hex the party travels, the Lookout must make an Insight skill test (usually difficulty 3+, but the Narrator will escalate this difficulty based on the hex and its contents) to avoid wandering into traps, monster dens, or other dangers.

QUARTERMASTER

The Quartermaster ensures supplies, gear, rations and resources remain safe, plentiful and useful. Once per hex, the Quartermaster can make a Difficulty 5+ Charisma Test to gather equipment or supplies the group might use. If successful, they can recover some of the following:

- 2d3 days of rations
- 1 extra Repair Action (see the Campaign Rules)
- 1d3 sundry items (that cost 10 silver or less)

GUARD

A Guard ensures that the party remains safe in and works to intercept each threat. An adventurer in guard stance gets a Difficulty 5+ Agility skill test to avoid being surprised while the party is adventuring through hexes.



LIGHT

For assassins, thieves and adventurers, it's essential that characters have light, especially in dim caverns and grim caves. There are a few elements to light, but essentially, light diminishes over time, causing problems. Light is a resource that must be maintained, upkept, and watched carefully.

Anytime a character lights or starts a new source of light, it defaults to Bright Light. A character can keep a Bright Light stoked and bright by making a Difficulty 5+ skill test every hour (this becomes 6+ in dungeons, night-time, or similar situations where resources are a problem).

A character can only attempt to stoke a light once per state (so once per Bright Light, once per Dim Light), but multiple characters may make multiple attempts or work together. Resources such as exceptionally flammable material might provide a bonus to the light.

There are certain actions that cause Light to downgrade:

- Tossing a light source to the ground (or dropping it) always causes that source to downgrade immediately.
- Forgetting to feed a fire hourly causes that fire to downgrade immediately.
- Using a light source as a weapon in combat causes an immediate downgrade.

Based on the size of the light, there's a limit to how many characters can benefit from it. The table below serves as a reference for that.

LIGHT SOURCES

LIGHT SIZE	№ OF ADVENTURERS	EXAMPLE
Small	1	Single Candle
Medium	3	Lantern, Small Fire, Torch, Light Spell
Large	5	Camping Fire, Bonfire

TOSSING A TORCH

When a Torch is tossed to the ground, it immediately downgrades, and can only benefit two characters instead of three characters.

When a Lantern is set to the ground, it does not downgrade if it's not knocked over or attacked and continues to benefit three characters.

BRIGHT LIGHT

Bright Light is where torches, lanterns, fires, and more start at. When Bright Light is the default, all characters benefiting from the Bright Light source can see out to 120 feet (180 with Disadvantage) and suffers no penalties.

Bright Light downgrades after an hour, or after the first combat it's involved in. Bright Light always downgrades to Dim Light.

Creatures with **Light Blindness** suffer Disadvantage on all rolls while in Bright Light.

DIM LIGHT

Dim Light is light that is starting to wane, and characters not completely covered in light or dark are considered to be in Dim Light.

Dim Light increases the difficulty of all skill tests by +1, and to stoke Dim Light back to Bright Light requires a Difficulty 6+ skill test (7+ In dungeons, night-time, or similar situations).

After an hour, or a combat that involves Dim Light, Dim Light downgrades to Flickering Light.

FICKERING LIGHT

In Flickering Light, the lights are starting to go out. All skill tests gain a +2 Difficulty, and all attacks made by creatures without night vision, Darkvision or similar abilities gain Disadvantage.

To stoke Flickering Light back to Dim Light requires a Difficulty 6+ skill test (7+ In dungeons, night-time, or similar situations).

DARKNESS

In darkness, characters cannot undertake any skill tests that require sight (reading, cartography, etc). and all other skill tests suffer a +3 Difficulty increase. All attacks made by creatures without night vision, Darkvision or similar abilities gain Disadvantage.



MASS BATTLES

STARTING A MASS BATTLE

Each side in a Mass Battle has an Army Might, an attribute that represents the cohesion, training and positioning of each army.

Each side starts at 10 Army Might and modifies their result as the table below:

SITUATION	ARMY MIGHT MODIFICATION
Outnumber Opponent's Forces	+2
Terrain Advantage	+2
Fighting on Home Turf	+1
Most of your Force is Mercenaries	-2
A uniquely powerful relic or individual on your side (wizard, magic sword, high king, etc.)	+3
Has suffered significant defeat in the last month.	-2
Enemy is known for leaving none alive/taking no quarter.	+4
No option to retreat	+2
Enemy is ambushing you.	-2
Player Character has their own loyal followers (a Sellsword's mercenary company, etc.)	+1 per Character with followers
Extensive Fortifications You're Defending	+2

Once you've calculated the Army Might on both sides, combat is ready to begin.

PLAYER ACTIONS

At the start of each round of Mass Battle, the player characters decide what they're doing. Their actions will be worth 1, 2, or 3 Battle Points. The Narrator and the players work out what the action will be and what the Battle Point reward is worth. These actions might attempt to take down a banner, snipe enemy leaders, cave in a tunnel, or more.

Most actions are worth 1 or 2 points, with exceptional actions being worth 3 points.

The players then have their Characters attempt to enact their actions, fighting enemy troops or obstacles as appropriate.

OUT OF BATTLE ARMY MIGHT?

It's important to remember that players can take actions to affect Army Might before combat even starts. Disrupting supply lines, scattering mounts, and spreading rumors are all great ways to undermine enemies before engaging them in direct battle. The Narrator should adjust enemy Army Might accordingly.

Generally, these play out as normal turns in the game, but the Narrator may reduce it to a single skill test or have them use attack rolls, as desired.

COMMAND CHECKS

After the players have taken their actions and attempted to enact their plans, it's time for Command Checks! Each side rolls a d6. If the players enacted their actions successfully, increase their result by their Battle Points. If they failed, decrease their result by their Battle Points.

The lower result loses Army Might equal to the difference between the two Command Checks.

RETREAT

When one force's Army Might reach 0, they are in a state of Retreat. Instead of losing Army Might, they must roll a d6 after each Command Check. They have a 1 in 6 chance of remaining in place (a 1 on a d6). Any other result and their army will break, rushing away fleeing.

RECOVERING ARMY MIGHT

Anytime a Command check result is a 6 on the dice, the force that rolled the 6 recovers d3 Army Might as their Commander rallies them.



CHAPTER SEVEN

ENEMIES AND THREATS

Enemies have the following defining attributes, and the Narrator should populate them as needed.

- **NAME:** The name of the creature or threat.
- **LIFEBLOOD:** The threat's lifeblood.
- **DEFENSE:** The creature's defense.
- **SAVING THROW:** The creature's Saving Throw.
- **ENVIRONMENT:** Where the threat normally resides.
- **ATTACKS:** Standard attacks and abilities the enemy has.
- **QUALITIES:** Qualities are special rules each enemy has. Qualities are below.
- **XP:** The amount of experience points a creature is worth.

QUALITIES

ARMORED N: This creature has Reduction equal to its Armored number.

AQUATIC: This creature can survive underwater.

CRAVEN: This creature attempts to flee when reduced to half health.

DARKVISION: This creature does not suffer Disadvantage in Darkness

FAST: This creature tests for Initiative with 1d8 instead of 1d6.

FLY: The monster can fly.

HORDE: These creatures gain Advantage on attack rolls when attacking a target engaged with another creature with their same name.

LIGHT BLINDNESS: This creature suffers Disadvantage on all rolls in Bright Light.

POISON N: When struck by a Poison creature, a target must make n Saving Throws. Each failed save deals the target 1d8 damage, while each passed save deals the target 1d4 damage.

REGENERATE N: At the start of its turn, this creature recovers n Lifeblood.

SLOW: This creature rolls a d4 for initiative.

TOUGH: Once this creature reaches 0 Lifeblood, it can make a Saving Throw. If successful, it immediately recovers half its Lifeblood. A creature can only do this once per conflict.



UNDEAD: This creature is Undead. Certain magics or items might be more potent against it (such as Holy Water).

UNHOLY: This creature is an abomination against life, born from the pits of hell. Certain magics or items might be more effective against it (such as sanctified weapons or holy water).

The Narrator should feel free to use qualities to define and modify enemies to make them feel different. This list of qualities is not exhaustive, and more will be forthcoming in future products.

BEAR

LIFEBLOOD: 24

DEFENSE: 12

SAVING THROW: 10

ENVIRONMENT: Forests, Tundra

ATTACKS: Claws, Attack +1, 1d8 damage, Brutal 1. Bite, 1d6, Armor Piercing 1.

QUALITIES: Tough

XP: 50

DRAGON

LIFEBLOOD: 50

DEFENSE: 14

SAVING THROW: 6

ENVIRONMENT: Underground, Mountains, Forests, Deserts, Tundra

ATTACKS: Breath Weapon, Attack +5, 1d10 damage, Brutal 1, (choose based on type of dragon: Burning 1, Frozen 1, Poison 1)

QUALITIES: Armored 3, Darkvision, Fly, Tough

XP: 1000

GIANT

LIFEBLOOD: 35

DEFENSE: 12

SAVING THROW: 9

ENVIRONMENT: Forests

ATTACKS: Club, Attack +3, 1d8+4 damage, Brutal 2. Rock, 1d6, Thrown (60-meter range).

QUALITIES: Tough

XP: 100

GOBLIN

LIFEBLOOD: 16

DEFENSE: 14

SAVING THROW: 15

ENVIRONMENT: Underground, Forests

ATTACKS: Rusty Blade, Attack +0, 1d6 damage

QUALITIES: Craven, Darkvision, Horde, Light Blindness

XP: 15

HORSE

LIFEBLOOD: 20

DEFENSE: 14

SAVING THROW: 14

ENVIRONMENT: Forests, Plains

ATTACKS: Hoof, Attack +1, 1d6 damage

QUALITIES: Fast

XP: 15

KRAKEN**LIFEBLOOD:** 50**DEFENSE:** 12**SAVING THROW:** 8**ENVIRONMENT:** Aquatic**ATTACKS:** Tentacles (8 attacks per turn), Attack +2, 2d6+2 damage.**QUALITIES:** Aquatic, Darkvision, Light Blindness, Tough**XP:** 1000**LICH****LIFEBLOOD:** 40**DEFENSE:** 14**SAVING THROW:** 10**ENVIRONMENT:** Underground**ATTACKS:** Magical Ray, Attack +4, 2d4 damage, choose one: Burning 2, Frozen 2, Poison 2, Range 30 meters. Cursed Blade, Attack +4, 1d8 damage, Brutal 2**QUALITIES:** Darkvision, Light Blindness, Tough, Undead**XP:** 500**ORC****LIFEBLOOD:** 18**DEFENSE:** 13**SAVING THROW:** 14**ENVIRONMENT:** Anywhere**ATTACKS:** Orcish Blade, Attack +2, 2d4 damage, Brutal 1, Poison 1**QUALITIES:** Armored 1, Horde**XP:** 20**SKELETON****LIFEBLOOD:** 10**DEFENSE:** 10**SAVING THROW:** 16**ENVIRONMENT:** Anywhere**ATTACKS:** Broken Weapon, 1d6 damage.**QUALITIES:** Darkvision, Slow, Tough, Undead**XP:** 10**SNAKE****LIFEBLOOD:** 6**DEFENSE:** 14**SAVING THROW:** 15**ENVIRONMENT:** Anywhere**ATTACKS:** Bite, 1d8 Poison 2**QUALITIES:** Fast**XP:** 25**TROLL****LIFEBLOOD:** 20**DEFENSE:** 12**SAVING THROW:** 14**ENVIRONMENT:** Aquatic, Forest, Underground**ATTACKS:** Club, Attack +2, 2d4 damage.**QUALITIES:** Armored 2, Aquatic, Darkvision,

Regenerate 3 (negated by damage from Fire)

XP: 150**WOLF****LIFEBLOOD:** 12**DEFENSE:** 15**SAVING THROW:** 12**ATTACKS:** Bite, Attack+1, 1d6 damage**QUALITIES:** Darkvision, Horde**XP:** 25

DEMONS

Below are a sampling of potential demons, both as enemies, patrons, or summoning for the Diabolist. These demons follow normal enemy rules, but also contain a small list of pacts they can offer, as well as Summoning modifiers for the Diabolist.

GHEZKRIM, THEY WHO BIND

LIFEBLOOD: 40

DEFENSE: 16

SAVING THROW: 6

ENVIRONMENT: Summoned

ATTACKS: Spear, Attack +4, 1d12 damage, Brutal 1.

QUALITIES: Armored 3, Unholy, Tough

XP: 2,500

PACTS: Pact of Might, Pact of Fortitude, Pact of Life, Pact of Martial Skill, Pact of Violence

SUMMONING DIFFICULTY: -1

JHUURIM, THEY WHO WATCH

LIFEBLOOD: 35

DEFENSE: 14

SAVING THROW: 7

ENVIRONMENT: Summoned

ATTACKS: Bite, Attack+2, 1d8 damage, Brutal 1.

QUALITIES: Armored 1, Unholy, Tough

XP: 2,000

PACTS: Pact of Agility, Pact of Insight, Pact of Pain, Pact of Foresight

SUMMONING DIFFICULTY: -0



JHUURIM



GHEZKRIM



SSELIZ

MIKISSSIM**DRRUM****QIMASFIN****SSELIZ, THEY WHO GIBBER****LIFEBLOOD:** 80**DEFENSE:** 12**SAVING THROW:** 5**ENVIRONMENT:** Summoned**ATTACKS:** Slam, Attack +6, 1d6 damage, Brutal 2**QUALITIES:** Armored 2, Unholy, Tough**XP:** 4,000**PACTS:** Pact of Luck, Pact of Wealth, Pact of Growth**SUMMONING DIFFICULTY:** -2**MIKISSSIM, THEY WHO ROAR****LIFEBLOOD:** 30**DEFENSE:** 12**SAVING THROW:** 10**ENVIRONMENT:** Summoned**ATTACKS:** Headbutt, Attack +2, 1d12 damage, Brutal 1.**QUALITIES:** Armored 1, Unholy, Tough**XP:** 1,500**PACTS:** 1 random pact each time they're summoned.**SUMMONING DIFFICULTY:** 0**QIMASFIN, THEY WHO SCREAM****LIFEBLOOD:** 100**DEFENSE:** 18**SAVING THROW:** 5**ENVIRONMENT:** Summoned**ATTACKS:** None**QUALITIES:** Armored 5, Unholy, Tough**XP:** 6,000**PACTS:** Pact of Immortality, + 5 other Pacts.**SUMMONING DIFFICULTY:** -4

DRUM, THEY WHO GRASP

LIFEBLOOD: 60

DEFENSE: 16

SAVING THROW: 7

ENVIRONMENT: Summoned

ATTACKS: Tentacle, Attack +3, 1d8, Brutal 2.

QUALITIES: Armored 3, Unholy, Tough

XP: 3,500

FACTS: All pacts but Pact of Immortality

SUMMONING DIFFICULTY: -4

HIRELINGS

The below hirelings are examples of the sort you can hire to go with you. The hirelings listed in the equipment chapter do not comprise a comprehensive list, as it's not necessary to codify all their abilities. Generally, the Narrator should assume a hireling can spend time to make a Difficulty 4+ skill test related to their job to provide a benefit (such as repairing items, etc). Additionally, a hireling provides an upgrade their employer on skill dice related to their area of expertise.

ALCHEMIST

LIFEBLOOD: 11

DEFENSE: 14

SAVING THROW: 15

ATTACKS: Potion, Attack +3, 1d8 damage, Poison 2, Thrown

QUALITIES: Grants an upgrade on skill tests related to potions, tinctures, and salves, or can create potions if materials are provided.



ANIMAL TRAINER**LIFEBLOOD:** 11**DEFENSE:** 14**SAVING THROW:** 15**ATTACKS:** Club, Attack +1, 1d6**QUALITIES:** Grants an upgrade on skill tests related to training and raising animals and can make a Difficulty 4+ skill test to heal an animal 1d4 Lifeblood.**ARMORER****LIFEBLOOD:** 14**DEFENSE:** 14**SAVING THROW:** 15**ATTACKS:** Forge hammer, Attack +2, 1d10, Brutal 1**QUALITIES:** Can restore armor with a difficulty 5+ skill test (as per the Repair Camp Action).**ASSASSIN****LIFEBLOOD:** 14**DEFENSE:** 16**SAVING THROW:** 12**ATTACKS:** Jagged Dagger, Attack +4, 1d10, Brutal 2, Poison 2**QUALITIES:** Thievery 2 (as per the Thief ability), Armored 1.**NON-COMBATANT (SERVANT, TORCHBEARER)****LIFEBLOOD:** 10**DEFENSE:** 10**SAVING THROW:** 15**ATTACKS:** Unarmed, Attack +0, 1d4 damage.**QUALITIES:** None**SOLDIER****LIFEBLOOD:** 18**DEFENSE:** 12**SAVING THROW:** 13**ATTACKS:** Sword, Attack +3, 1d8 damage, Brutal 1**Qualities:** Armored 3.**CONVERTING OTHER ENEMIES**

Converting other enemies to the **FOR COIN & BLOOD** Ruleset is fairly easy. Weapons translate over well for the most part, and qualities can be intuitive to create and move over.

To generate the Saving Throw, simply take the total number of Hit Dice the enemy has (so the 3 in 3d6 hit dice), subtract that number from 15, and you have the new Saving Throw (this system isn't perfect, and you might need to massage or adjust those numbers).

To generate Lifeblood, simply take the total number of Hit Dice the enemy has (so the 3 in 3d6 hit dice), multiply that number by three (so 3d6 hit dice becomes 3x3, or 9). Add 10 to that result, and you have the Lifeblood of that enemy.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ORGANIZATIONS AND GANGS

Dark Fantasy has an obsession with criminal gangs and organizations. Here are the rules for managing them.

Characters can join an existing gang, or start their own. To start their own, they must have a combined Infamy of 5x the number of members between all characters who are founding the gang.

EARNING MEMBERSHIP

Membership in a gang or criminal organization is earned. Any character, regardless of class, their background, or past deeds can join a gang. Usually a gang will have some sort of test or rite that the pledge must pass through, something focused around the theme or area of expertise the gang maintains.

To determine if a character can join a gang, roll a d20 and add the appropriate Reputation Modifiers below. The total of the roll after modifiers must be 20 or higher to allow for entry into a gang. A roll of a natural 20 will always allow entry to a gang.

A character with Infamy 15+ will be sought out by gangs to join, and offered a position.

A character should write down their Reputation modifier on their character sheet. It will come up frequently when dealing with their gang. A Reputation Rating represents both how much the gang will provide for the character, and how they're regarded by others in the gang.

RANDOM GANG FOCUSES

ROLL (D6)	FOCUS
1	Theft
2	Extortion
3	Assassination
4	Protection Racket
5	Smuggling
6	Roll Twice and Combine

REPUTATION MODIFIER

CHARACTER INFAMY	MODIFIER	CHARACTER INFAMY	MODIFIER
0-5	+0	11-15	+2
6-10	+1	15+	+3
CHARACTER CLASS	MODIFIER	CHARACTER CLASS	MODIFIER
Knight	-5	Blackguard	+2
Priest	-2	Executioner	+2
Cutpurse	+0	Witch Hunter	+2
Machiavellian	+0	Magus	+3
Assassin	+1	Diabolist	+3
Sellsword	+1		

CHARACTER REPUTATION	MODIFIER
Character is known as a brutal, effective criminal	+2
Character is known for a Code of Honor or Conduct	-4

DEEDS	MODIFIERS
Deeds are hidden or unknown	-2
Deeds are known by some	+0
Deeds are well-known	+2

Once a character has joined an organization, they gain bonuses based on their total Reputation Rating. This rating will determine what benefits they are provided by the organization, and what they can gain.

A character gains all the bonuses they qualify for upon entry based on their roll.

GANG BONUSES

REPUTATION RATING	BENEFITS
20-25	-2 to all saving throws for those the Character decides to Intimidate. 100 gold pieces.
26-30	A magic weapon or armor with 1 quality. 100 gold pieces.
31-35	1000 gold pieces.
36-40	1D6 1st level Characters who will work under the Character. 100 gold pieces.
41+	A small safe house somewhere of the Character's choice. 100 gold pieces.

REFUSING MEMBERSHIP

A character can refuse membership in an organization, but they're unlikely to take it well, and the character should tread carefully thereafter. They will always have a Charisma of 3 when dealing with that gang and its members in the future.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Once a character is a member in a criminal organization, they are expected to train, donate their earnings (in part), and keep quiet about the secrets of the organization.

Organization members are expected to tithe 50% of their earnings to the Organization. This is used to pay for protection, bribes, safe houses and more.

GANG TRAINING

TRAINING	XP Cost	BENEFIT
Assassin Training	1000	Character gains the Back Stab feature as though they were an Assassin. (No benefit for Assassins)
Chain Mail Training	1000	Character can wear chainmail armor
Crossbow Training	500	Character can wield a crossbow without penalty
Dagger Training	500	Character can wield a dagger without penalty
Firearms Training	500	Character can wield Firearms without Penalty
Investigator Training	250	Character gets +1 when Searching For Clues under the Investigations Rules.
Leather Training	750	Character can wear leather armor
Manipulation Training	500	Saving Throws to avoid Manipulation from this character are made a -2.
Poison Training	1000	Character counts as an Assassin when using Poisons.
Ritualist Training	250	Character always gets +1 to Sacrifice Potency
Shrewd Negotiator	500	You gain a 10% increase to payment for jobs you undertake.
Smuggler Training	250	Character gains +1 to the Difficulty of finding Smuggled Goods they hid.
Stealth Training	1000	Character can successfully hide on a 1-5 (on a d6).
Street Tactics Training	1000	All hirelings, thugs and servants gain +1 to all "to hit" rolls.
Sword Training	500	Character can wield a sword without penalty
Thieves' Cant	250	Character Speaks Thieves' Cant

Characters are also required to spend experience gaining new abilities they learn from their allies in the organization (see the table on the previous page). They must invest 25% of their experience into these new abilities. This experience does not count for leveling up or calculating your new level.

A character must train in all of these that they do not already have (from class or other abilities). Once they've acquired all of them, they gain +d3 to their Reputation Rating and +1 Infamy.

ORGANIZATIONAL POSITIONS

After they've completed their training, gang members can choose to focus on particular roles inside the organization. They simply choose a role inside the gang, and then they must invest 25% of their experience into these new abilities. This experience does not count for leveling up or calculating your new level. Some Roles have requirements a character must fulfill.

Once a Role has been completed they may choose another role, or cease to invest. Each time a character completes a Role, they gain +d3 Reputation, and +1 Infamy.

BODYGUARD

Your job is to keep your allies alive. Make sure they keep moving and get the job done.

1000 XP: You gain +1 Defense when fighting alongside an ally.

2500 XP: You may cast *Cure Light Wounds* once per day.

5000 XP: Once per day, grant one ally you can see +2 Defense bonus for d6+2 rounds.

ENFORCER

You are the brute muscle that makes sure your streets remain under your control.

1000 XP: +1 to all "to-hit" rolls.

2500 XP: +2 to Defense.

5000 XP: If you successfully hit an opponent with a critical hit, they're automatically knocked prone.

FACE

Your job is to do the talking. Get the job, negotiate the pay, make a good impression. You're the silk clad socialite of the gang.

1000 XP: +1 to Loyalty for all hirelings in your gang.

2500 XP: You can cast *Charm Person* once per day, but it only lasts for 1 hour.

5000 XP: Permanently increase your Charisma by 1 point. It can not be increased past 18.

REAYER

You're the muscle that is used to threaten. When they tell children stories of the monsters in the street, that's you.

1000 XP: +1 to all damage rolls.

2500 XP: All Intimidation checks you make impose a -4 on their Saving Throws.

5000 XP: After you successfully drop an opponent to 0 LB, you may make an immediate attack.

ROVER

Your job is to roam the streets, looking for opportunities, targets, and potential jobs for the gang.

1000 XP: When traveling through your city, you can never get lost.

2500 XP: When out of your gang's territory, you gain +3 Defense.

5000 XP: When only moving on your turn, you gain +3 Movement.

SPYMASTER

You keep tabs on everyone. You make sure they stay focused, alert, and ready for what's coming.

1000 XP: +2 to the Loyalty of your spy hirelings.

2500 XP: Twice per day, you can find someone who can give you a minor piece of information on something that occurred in the city.

5000 XP: When you meet someone for the first time, they must make a Saving Throw. If they fail, you can know one secret about them (you may decide what it is, or the Narrator can. Work it out).



CHAPTER NINE

CRITICAL HITS CHART

The goal of these few pages is to provide a flavorful ruleset to make critical hits a bit more “splatter-y”. These tables are graphic and violent, and should be used with care if folks at the table have concerns about these sorts of things. These effects replace the usual “maxed out and doubled” damage of the standard critical hit.

If a critical hit occurs, roll to see where on Table 1.

After you’ve determined where the Character was hit, roll on the appropriate table below to determine the effects.

TABLE 1: CRITICAL HIT LOCATION

ROLL (D6)	CRITICAL HIT LOCATION
1	Head (Table 2)
2-3	Torso (Table 3)
4-6	Limbs (Tables 4a & 4b)

TABLE 2: HEAD

ROLL (D10)	CRITICAL HIT EFFECT
1	DECAPITATION! Blood sprays everywhere, as the target of the attack instantly dies.
2	SEVERED ARTERY. The target has an artery severed. They will die in d3 rounds unless subject to healing magic.
3	MISSING FACE. The targets face is mostly erased by the attack, leaving them horribly scarred. They forever suffer a -4 to all social checks and loyalty tests for those they hire. However, they impose a -4 penalty on the Saving Throws of anyone they try to Intimidate.
4	LOST EYE. An eye is horribly gouged out. The target suffers a -2 on all checks related to sight and all Ranged Attacks (no penalty on Melee.)
5	SCARRED VISAGE. Normal Damage, but the target has a deep and vicious scar.
6	MISSING EAR. The target loses an ear, causing them to permanently suffer -2 on all checks related to hearing.
7	BLOOD IN THE EYES. The target suffers a -2 on all actions they take until they are healed.
8	CONCUSSION. The target suffers a concussion, leaving them unable to act for d4 rounds.
9	SHATTERED JAW. The target’s jaw is shattered or removed completely. While they don’t die, they are forever mute.
10	SLASHED THROAT. The target dies immediately as their throat is slashed, emptying their body of blood.

TABLE 3: TORSO

ROLL (D10)	CRITICAL HIT EFFECT
1	HEART SHOT. The Target dies immediately as their heart is pierced or stopped by the blow.
2	PIERCED LUNG. The target will die in d8 rounds unless they receive healing magic.
3	BROKEN RIBS. Until the target receives healing, they will have a 1 in 10 chance of dying every time they take a strenuous action (attacking, casting magic, etc.). Walking and staggering home is not strenuous.
4	INTERNAL BLEEDING. The target takes d3 damage every turn (on their turn) for the next d6 turns unless they receive healing.
5	RUPTURED SPLEEN. The target takes 1 damage every time they take an action until they are healed.
6	CRACKED RIBS. The target suffers a -2 to any rolls they make until they are healed.
7	FLAYED FLESH. The skin over the torso is flayed and stripped, causing intense pain. Until healed, every time the target takes an action, they must roll a d6. On a 1, they can't take the action.
8	LASTING WOUND. Even after healed, any more critical hits against the torso add +1 to the d10 roll on this chart. This effect can stack.
9	LOST BREATH. No extra damage, but the target loses their next action.
10	GUTTED. The target is split open from throat to groin, killing them instantly as their ribcage empties its contents all over the ground.

LACK OF RULES?

Some of the options here don't provide full rules (what happens if you lose a limb, etc.) because it's up to the Players and the Narrator to determine the long-term ramifications of some of these options. Be creative and allow these results to help you tell a cool and dramatic story!



TABLE 4A: WHICH LIMB?

ROLL (D4)	LIMB	ROLL (D4)	LIMB
1	Left Arm	3	Left Leg
2	Right Arm	4	Right Leg

TABLE 4B: LIMBS

ROLL (D10)	CRITICAL HIT EFFECT
1	SEVERED LIMB. The target loses the limb in question, with all the attendant issues. They will die in d3 rounds without treatment.
2	SHATTERED BONES. The limb is useless until healed and anything held in that limb is dropped. The target takes d3 extra damage.
3	CRIPPLED. The target immediately falls prone, clutching that limb and losing the use of it until healed. Anything held in that limb is dropped.
4	DEEP GASH. The target takes double damage.
5	LINGERING PAIN. Even after healed, any rolls that utilize this limb primarily suffer a -2.
6	CRUSHED. The target drops whatever they were holding in that limb. If it's a leg, they fall prone.
7	PERMANENT NERVE DAMAGE. The target loses 1 Might and 1 Agility permanently.
8	SLASHED FLESH. The target takes double damage.
9	SPRAIN. No permanent damage, but the target suffers -2 to appropriate rolls for the rest of the combat.
10	SEVERED LIMB. The target loses the limb in question, with all the attendant issues. They will die in d3 rounds without treatment.

CHAPTER TEN

UNIQUE MAGIC ITEMS

FOOL'S COIN

This gold piece is engraved with a smiling theater mask but a keen eye reveals a sad theater mask instead whenever the coin is flipping in the air.

A Fool's Coin is a single gold piece that looks just like its beneficial sibling, a Fortune's Coin, complete with the smiling Theater Mask stamped onto its face. Once per day, a Fool's Coin allows for a single reroll of any dice. However, after that first use, a Fool's Coin begins drawing unluck to the bearer. It still provides its once per day reroll as if it were a Fortune's Coin but now also increases the odds of a critical failure (a critical miss now happens on both a 1 & 2, rather, than just a 1). **Every time you use the daily reroll ability, the critical fumble range increases by 1 (from 1-2 to 1-3, and after another reroll to 1-4.).**

Once gained, a Fool's Coin cannot be simply discarded. Any attempts to do so results in the coin appearing on the bearer's person the next dawn with it's curse worsened (critical failures now happen on a 1, 2, or a 3; or a 1, 2, 3, and a 4; etc.). The only way to break the curse is for another person to willingly relieve you of it. And if you know it is a Fool's Coin, the person accepting it must also believe that the Fool's Coin is, in fact, a Fortune's Coin.

SERPENT'S BOW

This finely crafted bow looks like a snake, with the string as its forked tongue extending between mouth and tail.

A Serpent's Bow is a +1 Longbow worth 100gp due to being made of fine materials. When first grasped, the owner hears a voice in their mind asking them if they're willing to pay the price for power. If the owner say no, the snake's tongue lashes out, dealing 1d8 damage and forces them to drop the bow. If the owner says yes, the snake's eyes flash an emerald poison green and the bow becomes attuned to the bearer.

Thereafter, whenever used to shoot an enemy, a Serpent's Bow deals an extra 1d4 poison damage to the target but also deals half that same amount to the user (minimum 1), as the venom used by the snake's arrows drips from the snake's mouth down the string.

When used to attack an ally, a Serpent's Bow deals no damage to the wielder, but deals double the normal amount of poison damage, as the snake spirit is pleased by the betrayal.

BOOTS OF TSK-TSK-TSK

These boots, seemingly aged and worn from use, are midnight black and make almost no sound when walking.

These boots provide advantage to any checks made to sneak past or hide from others. However, if the wearer should try to do something without the target's permission (e.g. pick a locked chest, steal keys from the oblivious guard), a voice bellows from the boots berating the wearer for what they are doing. This voice, which sounds to each listener as if their own individual grandmother, makes anyone within 30ft aware of exactly where the wearer is.

BROKEN PROMISE KEY

This Skeleton Key looks like any other but a close inspection shows that the Skeleton's fingers can move.

This Skeleton Key not only provides advantage to picking locks but once per day it can automatically open any non-magical lock, no roll required. However, if this once per day power is used, the lock that was opened re-locks 1 minute later, with the relevant object closing before locking if it was left open (e.g. a door). This drawback is not apparent at first, not even to magic, but once the curse has activated the Skeleton crosses its fingers, allowing visual confirmation of its true nature and magic to reveal its curse.

Once triggered, the Skeleton slowly uncrosses its fingers such that by dawn of the next day, it again looks like any other Skeleton key and magic/appraisals once again fail to identify it as a cursed item.

RING OF CONFLICT

This ring is made of iron and is adorned with the image of two people wrestling one another.

Once per day, the wearer of this ring can focus on two people within 30 feet and whisper a command word. The targets must each make a successful saving

throw or fall under the charm of a Hate Person effect, with the other victim as their target. The Hate Person effect lasts for one minute.

When casting this spell, the ring's wearer can instead speak openly to his two targets, explaining why they should be opposed to one another. The reason can be as simple as "Doesn't his helmet look funny?" or "She's wearing red you know". The ring's targets suffer disadvantage to their saves against this effect if the wearer speaks openly but the targets will know that the ring wearer caused their conflict once the effects end or if they successfully save against it. Whether anyone else will believe them is another story.

RATIONS OF LIFE STEALING

This simple leather pouch somehow contains delicious bread and meal every day.

Rations of Life Stealing are simple rations which magically regenerate every day, allowing the wearer to have an infinite supply of food. However, this pouch produces the food by stealing life from its surroundings. Flowers wilt, animals grow sick, and if the wearer should find themselves in a desolate locale, they'll find that the rations even steal from them. Someone who spends at least one day with Rations of Life Stealing in an inhospitable region (desert, wasteland, etc.) can still eat heartily but will become weaker by the day as the pouch knows of no one to steal from but themselves. (In effect, dealing 1d6 damage each meal to the user.)

EVERFULL MUG

This stout tavern mug is somehow always full of the finest local ale.

When first set on the table, an Everfull Mug is empty. But when filled to the brim with alcohol, it can thereafter be re-filled with that same alcohol with the command word of "Another!" This refill of alcohol is in fact stealing, though, as the mug's magic allows it to drain the nearest supply of that same alcohol in order to refill the mug. Anyone with sight to such a source of alcohol (e.g. the barkeep overlooking the barrel tap) and who has also seen the Mug's owner use it can make a saving throw to realize what is happening. A simple *Detect Magic* spell will also reveal the thievery, with magical lines drawn between the Mug and the source it is draining from.

The Mug can "remember" up to three different brews at a time and names the drink currently being consumed at the bottom of the empty tankard, allowing anyone to know what they're drinking (someone who is able to see this text gains a bonus to the saving throw).

BELT OF OPPRESSION

Cruel tyrants have been known to wear this belt as a visible sign of their dominion of the land.

This belt provides a -2 penalty to anyone who is the target of the bearers Intimidation checks and on any saving throws for any mind controlling effects the bearer casts. If the target is or has ever been enslaved, or is part of an oppressed class then this penalty increases to -4.

This bonus becomes a single reroll (allowing the bearer to choose the better of the scores) on rolls made to tame a non-magical animal or force it to accept the wearer as a rider.

PRIEST'S ZUCCHETTO

This symbol of religious rank fits snugly on one's crown.

When donned by the devious, this headpiece allows the wearer to disguise themselves (as per the Assassin class ability.) If the wearer is an assassin, they gain a single reroll on each disguise attempt.

If worn by a true believer, however, this hat additionally provides a +1 bonus on Saving Throws.

SCROLL OF REVELATION

This single sheet of rolled parchment has buried more rebellions than a thousand armies.

To anyone viewing this Scroll it appears as an old map detailing the grounds of some castle or village. A successful Saving Throw shows that the property detailed in the Scroll is accurate. However, the power of this item is that the owner of the grounds detailed on this scroll can use this as the focal point for scrying, as though it were through a Crystal Ball at-will by focusing on a sliver of paper cut from the scroll when it was created.

In this way, numerous Crowns and Nobles have quashed nascent threats to their power by feeding their rivals the very information those plots needed to proceed.

A *Detect Magic* spell reveals only that the Scroll is a magical item of the Divination school and that a piece of it appears to be missing...

Burning the piece of parchment cut from the Scroll (and used as the focus) destroys the companion Scroll as well.

BACKPACK BASTION

This densely stuffed pack seems to almost burst at the seams.

This military-style pack is quite large, even for its class of use, and contains nearly every tool imaginable for constructing a camp, but is still capable of being worn by a single Medium-sized humanoid.

When the proper command word is spoken the Backpack magically unfolds and lays itself out, then neatly begins digging trenches, setting up tents, and performing all the necessary work to establish a defensible camp as if an invisible army of laborers has appeared to pick up the tools in the Backpack and set to work. Construction takes two hours and when finished, the camp can house up to 20 soldiers comfortably or 50 in tight company, with a wooden palisade surrounding the grounds and illumination out to 30 feet from the walls.

While the Camp has been constructed the Backpack is inert inside the owner's quarters. Speaking the same command word that built the Camp begins the process of taking it down, which only requires an hour. Taking the Backpack further than 100 meters away from an active Camp causes the magic inside the Backpack to collapse, bringing the Camp down with it immediately.

SWORD OF CONVENIENT TRUTHS

This longsword's pommel is stylized as Lady Justice carrying the Scales of Balance. This Lady Justice, however, is not wearing a blindfold.

The Sword of Convenient Truths is a +1 longsword that, when wielded, can cast *Detect Thoughts* 3 times per day. However, the wielder of this Sword is not subject to the *Detect Thoughts* or other scrying attempts. Blatant lies will obviously stand out but otherwise, anyone using *Detect Magic* or similar divination to track who is being affected by the *Detect Thoughts* will find that the wielder seems to be affected normally.

INESCAPABLE MANACLES

These steel handcuffs are magically reinforced, tightening further the more a prisoner struggles.

These Manacles are magically crafted to actively resist attempts to escape them. The initial check to slip out of them or simply break them is saving throw but on a failed check the saving throw permanently suffers a -5 penalty for the wearer. These failure penalties stack, meaning that an unfortunate soul struggling endlessly against the Manacles will find themselves hopeless in escaping.

Even a casual glance at these handcuffs reveals that they do not have a lock. Rather, they are opened and closed via a Command word that only works when spoken from directly behind the wearer.

The Manacles do have one flaw. If the Manacles are brought in front of the wearer for any reason, the wearer counts as “behind” the Manacles for the purposes of using the Command word to open and close them.

LANTERN OF WARNING

This lantern's candle burns brightly, its flame moving as if blown by an unfelt wind.

The Lantern of Warning functions as your normal Lantern, providing illumination out to 30ft and dim light out to 60ft. However, the true use of a Lantern of Warning is that the candle's flame bends towards anyone who bears hateful thoughts against whoever carries it. The Lantern's detection power functions out to 100ft, allowing bearers to know of potential danger before the threats are visible. The candle cannot be put out by normal means if the bearer does not wish it but this protection is lost if the lantern is dropped.

Due to its powers, Lanterns of Warning are found in most noble caravans and many of the richer merchant caravans as well.

CULTIST'S PRAYER BOOK

This font of foul worship serves as the meat and drink for countless followers across the land.

A Cultist's Prayer Book functions as a +1 divine magical focus for followers of the God the book is keyed to. Any Character not following that God takes 1d4 damage per round simply for handling the book.

Furthermore, followers of the Dark Power keyed to the book may cast *Cause Light Wounds* 3 times per day without consuming a spell slot.

Survivors of these evil followings speak in hushed tones of a Head Cultist's Prayer Book, though surely no such volumes exist. If by some terrible luck they did, such tomes might instead have the following abilities:

- At will - Inflict Light Wounds
- 3/day - Inflict Serious Wounds
- 1/day - Death Spell

Additionally, the head priest of an area's cult can open a High Cultist's Book to a specific page and, through following a vile and terrible ritual, leave it on proud, unholy display in a target area. If the ritual is cast successfully (and the

relevant God is pleased), the book is consumed after a month's display, resulting in the target area becoming *Desecrated*. The head priest is marked thereafter by a token of his unholy patron's blessing, though how this priest deals with the consequences is another matter entirely...

ASSASSIN'S DART

This arrow may appear shorter and thinner than normal but the doom it portends is far greater.

An Assassin's Dart is a +1 arrow whose tip is agreeable to being coated in poison. Moreover, a user can key themselves to an Assassin's Dart via ritual, which takes 24 hours of focus, meditation and prayer over the corpse of someone murdered for coin.

If a Dart hits and damages a target, it becomes lodged in their body. Attempts to pull it out cause the wounded to have to make a Saving Throw with failure leaving the arrow tip inside the victim, preventing normal natural healing. Even magic healing does not eject the arrow tip; only allowing the target to make a new Saving Throw.

While the tip of an Assassin's Dart is still inside a target, the person keyed to the Dart can cast *Locate Object* 3 times per day and *Detect Thoughts* once per day, with the victim (or arrow tip) as the target of both spells. The ability to cast either of these spells ends when the arrow's tip is extracted successfully.

LENS OF THE SUN

This monocle is thinner than you expected and seemingly fragile but is greatly treasured by magistrates in the crown city for some reason...

Should the bearer of a Lens of Seeing close one eye, they can use the other to see through the Lens. This inflicts a -2 penalty on any rolls or checks related to perception or senses, but allows the user to see all things through the Lens as if they were perfectly illuminated. The Lens is usable at-will, though using it for more than 3 rounds at a time results in the user being disoriented for 1 round after stopping its use.

CROWN OF COMMAND

This impressive headpiece clearly denotes authority and power.

The wearer of a Crown of Command provides a +1 bonus to attacks, AC, and saving throws for everyone under his or her command. Moreover, the wearer can inspire their followers to the heights of effort and zeal - in game terms, once

per day the wearer of the Crown can grant a number of followers equal to his Charisma modifier a bonus action for the turn.

This +1 bonus becomes a -1 penalty if the wearer of the Crown is slain. Furthermore, if the wearer is slain on the same turn they used the once-per-day power, those provided a bonus action are instead stunned from the terrible turn of events unless they make a Saving Throw.

BLADE OF HERO'S BANE

This masterfully crafted sword seems to hunger for the blood of the daring and righteous.

When first gripped, the sword whispers the following to the bearer:

“When they step up, I will help you cut them down”

A Blade of Hero's bane is a masterwork sword that provides a +1 attack and damage bonus against most targets, but against Officers, Champions, or anyone who could be perceived as a noteworthy Leader it is a +2 sword.

Every kingdom has its savior; every prophecy, its chosen one. Against this one person, the Blade of Hero's Bane magnifies its cruelty, instead becoming a +3 sword that somehow seems to anticipate the Chosen One's attacks, providing a +1 bonus to AC. Should the Chosen One attack the wielder of the Blade of Hero's Bane and miss by 1 (e.g. scored an 18 against the wielder's 19), the wielder of the Blade may immediately make an attack of opportunity against the Chosen One.

In addition, once per day the Blade of Hero's Bane can allow its wielder to automatically ignore a successful attack roll against themselves, with the sword magically blocking the blow on its own.

Should the Chosen One defeat the wielder of the Blade of Hero's Bane in single combat, the Blade shatters into a thousand shards, killing its wielder if they were not already slain from the duel.

ROD OF REBELLION

This ruby rod, capped with a raised fist, is the nightmare of Kings across the land.

Cut from a single ruby, the Rod of Rebellion is a foot-and-a-half long source of powerful Illusion and Enchantment magic.

First off, the Rod of Rebellion allows the wielder to cast *Suggestion* 3 times per day (as though it were a Crystal Ball of Suggestion.) If the same person is

targeted by this *Suggestion* power all three times in the same day and fails all three saves, the wielder of the Rod is provided a special 4th *Suggestion* casting, with the target having a -5 on the saving throw. On failing this 4th save, the target comes to believe that the idea Suggested to them on this casting is one they truly believe in and that they came up with themselves.

Second, anyone who fails all three *Suggestion* saves in one day is affected by a permanent *Charm Person* spell favoring the Rod's owner, regardless of how the 4th *Suggestion* casting goes.

Third, the Rod of Rebellion allows the wielder to at-will see the thoughts of anyone influenced by a 4th casting of *Suggestion* (see above) and know their exact location (as if seen through a *Scry* spell) by holding the Rod and concentrating on the person in question.

Fourth, the wielder of a Rod of Rebellion can focus on the idea of all the people they've influenced with a 4th casting of *Suggestion* and, once per month, use a special *Suggestion* power to command them all towards a singular goal. This power is often used to overthrow local powers once enough people have been influenced by the Rod, earning it its name.

Lastly, a Rod of Rebellion can be used one per day to cast *Massmorph*, making a crowd appear much larger than it really is. This power is often used to foment riots or intimidate local militias into thinking they are outnumbered.

The Rod of Rebellion's mass influence can only be broken by convincing a crowd gathered by its 4th power (see above) that its current course of action is self-damaging. Simply killing the wielder of the Rod of Rebellion or even snapping the Rod itself causes all of its victims to suffer a psychic backlash as the subtle mental link between them all is severed, dealing 4d6 damage to all affected, making violence a terrible option for solving this artifact's abuse.



THE PORT OF PERCHOIR DU CORBEAU

BY DARREN W. PEARCE

“By the time you insult my friend again, sir, you will taste both cold steel and the iron of your own blood as you drown in it.”

~ Nicole Amelle (Lady of Perchoir du Corbeau)

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PERCHOIR DU CORBEAU

“What is a city, but a miserable collection of secrets?”

The Port City of Perchoir du Corbeau (pronounced *Pair-Shwahr Duh Corbo*), known to the local pirates, smugglers, wreckers, and other folk as: Crow’s Rest is just that – a hotbed of the most disreputable folk you’d ever want to meet. Every single person in the city has a skeleton in their wardrobe, and many of those skeletons are not metaphorical either.

Situated on a storm-wracked peninsula, the port city has grown fat over the years on the ill-gotten gains of hundreds of raids conducted by the ruling family of the city: the Amelle’s which are currently led by the dark-skinned, Insight, and clever Lady Nicole.

Make no mistake about it, these are rough cut folk who’d rather bleed you dry than help you. Unless you belong to their fraternity of course, then you’re as good as saved.

Perchoir du Corbeau bears the scars of its lifetime, mostly in the poorer districts where the less-fortunate congregate for company and warmth. Some of the buildings nearer the shoreline have been damaged by cannon fire, when rival factions come-a-calling and show just how strong the construction is. Yes, they might have been damaged, but they still stand strong.

The city itself is a melting pot of cultures and people, with folk of all walks of life thronging through the streets, plying their trades, looking for work, and enjoying the many diversions which are plentiful – from the seedy bars, high class card games, and raunchy shows at the Rouge Theatre there’s something for everyone in Perchoir du Corbeau.



THE AMELLE WATCH

The Amelle Family has been the guardians of Perchoir du Corbeau for a long time; they have risen from scoundrels of the highest order to as sort-of pirate royalty and have a reputation for ruthless, yet fair treatment when they engage in both piracy and business. They have a large mansion which overlooks the docks and a hand in many of the goings on in the port city, from the smallest racket to the biggest gang of crooks this side of the Oriana Straits.

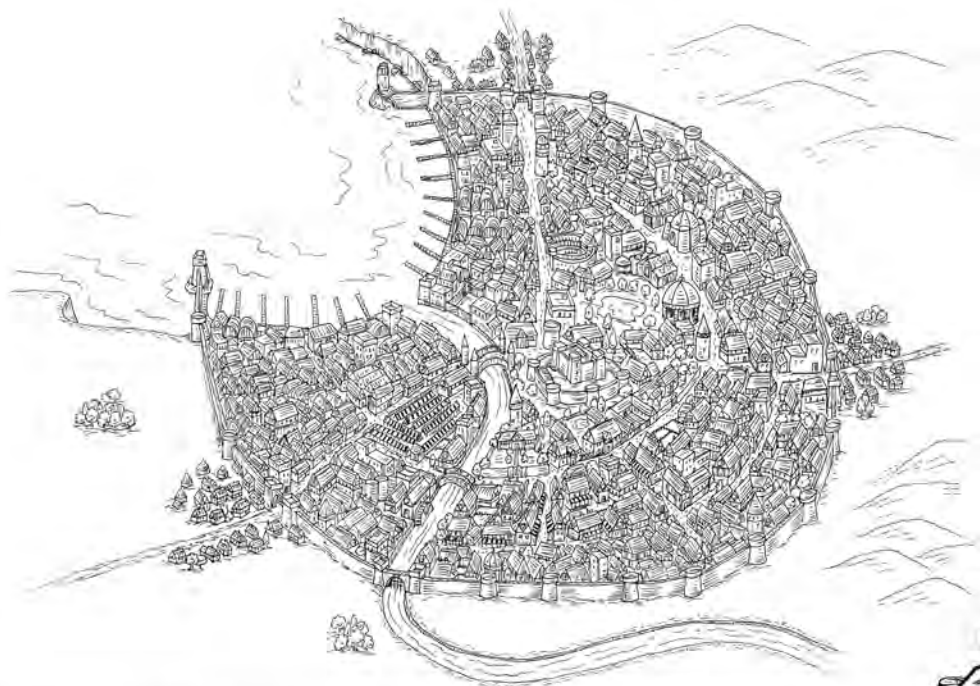
Nicole is just one of a long line of her family to rule the city. Yet, she is one of the most successful rulers since she understands how to balance her need for personal wealth and adventure, with her people's many needs. Not above delegating responsibility to the rest of her siblings, Nicole is a shrewd businesswoman and a capable leader when she's ashore.

On the sea, she's a ruthless but fair captain aboard her ship the Silver Gale.

There are a few other members of her family of note, a couple of brothers, and an adopted sister who seeks to follow in Nicole's footsteps one day, which might be harder since she's not a true Amelle by blood.

A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PORT

The earliest Amelle Family members were two sisters and a brother; all three of them plied the seas as swashbuckling rogues. One, Anton Amelle, was more mercantile minded than his two siblings and quickly realised they needed a



place to call home where they could moor their ships, fix their hulls, and draw like-minded folk to a common banner. So after a rum-soaked evening of plotting and planning, they decided to pool their resources and focus their efforts on the creation of a pirate haven which would serve as a home away from home.

Anton, Sasha, and Gabrielle Amelle settled upon a piece of land where there were numerous crows, the birds nested nearby and rested amongst the many thin-limbed tree branches. This spot became known as Perchoir du Corbeau, or in the commoner tongue – Crow's Rest.

It did not take long for the three family members to gather their crews, their friends, and anyone who dreamed of a life devoid of the rules and regulations of the towns and big cities where the aristocrats and governments strangled the people down to their last coin.



Family and fraternity became the new watch-words and the first foundations of a tiny settlement were laid. Now, piracy is its own reward, especially when you're as good at it as the Amelle's are. The settlement grew from a few wooden houses, to a few more, with a bit more structure and better materials. More people flocked to the island; more folk came with their goods, their money, their crews, their wants and needs.

It was a time of expansion, of growth, and turbulence.

External forces sought the destruction of their way of life, from pirate hunters, to the other factions who saw a unified pirate haven as a dangerous factor in their way of life. The growing settlement had many battles, both internally and externally as time went on. Anton was killed in an ambush by a fearsome pirate known as the Red King.

Gabrielle (the oldest) and Sasha vowed revenge, hunted the Red King down and set his galleon to the bottom of the sea. They took his riches and used them to further create their dream, gathering more of the Amelle family to their banner and in time starting their own. They bore fine sons, wily daughters, all... a legacy which shaped an island and hundreds of fates.

Time passed and the settlement evolved, from a spit of land, to a port town, and eventually into the city which many know and love today. There are of course many events between now and then, and just as many chronicles of history which lay down the foundations for the Port of Perchoir du Corbeau, they would fill a tome three times the size of this one and are beyond the scope of this book.

The port is safe in the expert hands of Nicole Amelle and her family, perhaps for at least a hundred or so years.

GRIM AND DARK

FOR COIN & BLOOD is a fantasy Grimdark take on swashbuckling, and the port city is a place full of secrets and shadows – you can see a lot of those in the later pages of the book listed by the port location they appear in for easy reference. Suffice it to say, if it can happen, it probably will and there are plenty of opportunities for creative Games Masters to flex their imaginations by using this section to spin some truly awesome tales.

FROM THE DOCKS TO THE STOCKS (THE CITY)

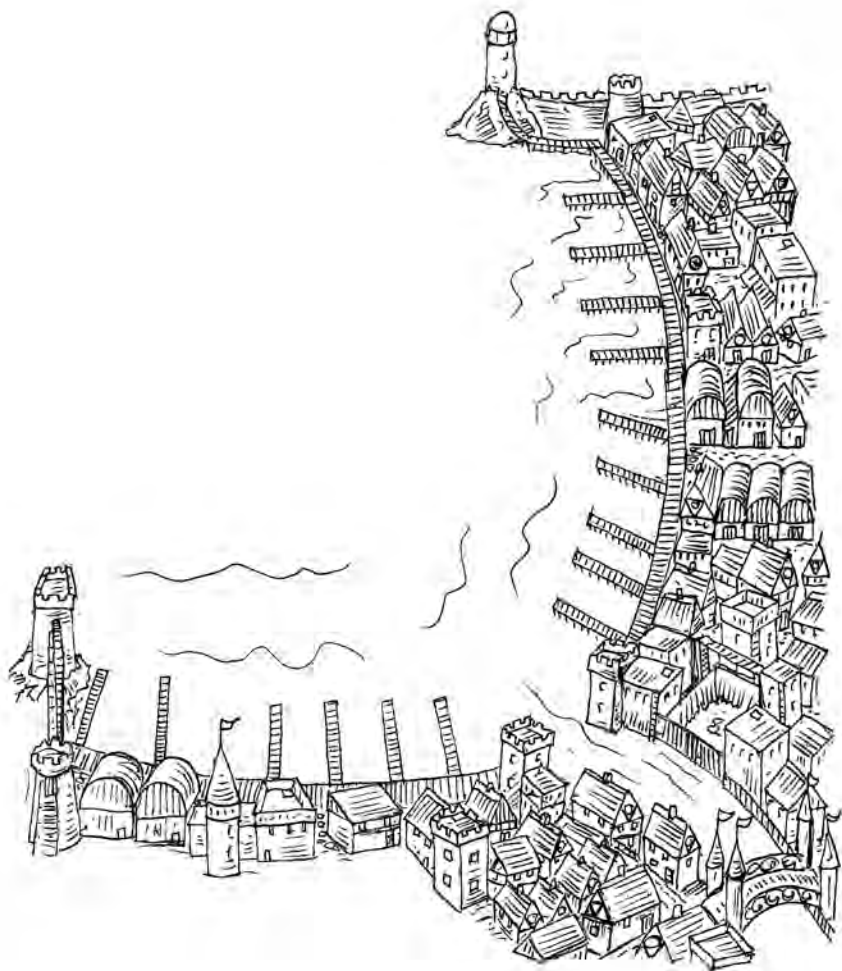
The various quarters and wards of the port city are packed with their own secrets, fair share of strange and interesting characters, and places for the errant explorer to find themselves (or to find themselves in trouble).

Here then, is a short stroll through the wards and quarters, highlighting some of the more interesting locations and turning up the lantern to illuminate some of the more colourful residents of Perchoir du Corbeau.

THE PORT WARD (THE DOCKS)

From the tall masts of galleons, to fishing boats that dip and bob amongst the rolling ocean near the many piers which line the docks, the Port Ward is a bustling place day and night. The harbour master, a fellow called Dickens, keeps a sharp eye from his building at the very end of the southern jetty, he ensures captains pay a docking fee and makes sure their ships are looked after.

The many dock hands and burly folk who carry cargo, shift loads, and keep things functioning are well-paid and hardy. They're out there in all kinds of weather, including the vicious storms which often batter the coastline of the port



city. Genna Gurdain is the unquestioned master of the docks, she ensures the dock-hands all do their job and she's a strong woman, strong enough to pull an Ox several feet by its horns, they say she has either Ogre or Giant blood flowing through her veins.

Lastly, one requires a strong stomach to stay on the docks since it has a thriving fish market and the smell of salted produce wafts on the air day or night. It is also packed with dockside alleys and warehouses for storing goods, many murders happen here if the wrong person picks the wrong time to enter the wrong alley.

LOCATIONS

GREY SAIL: There are a few stand-out locations upon the Port Ward; most notable is the Grey Sail, a notorious bar open to those who ply a smuggler's trade upon

the waters. The Grey Sail is owned by a man known as Jules Cray. He keeps a couple of bouncers to ensure trouble is ended quickly before it starts, a pair of twins, two adept women, one skilled with swords and the other an accomplished Magus with a roster of spells at her command.

THE RUSTY CUTLASS: not a tavern, a bar, or inn, but a place where one might find the right weapon at a good price. The name is an in-joke by the proprietor, an accomplished man known as Jacq du Blades. Jacq is a bit of a mystery, a secretive man who came to the port ten years ago, settled there and established a swordsmith on the docks. Rumours abound that he was once an assassin who killed an aristocrat before retiring to the port

THE NORTH WIND: A canny woman runs this shop on the far side of the dock, she sells all kinds of things that sailing folk need. She also has a well-stocked supply of fishing tackle and materials to repair sails. Farah Sules took the shop over from her husband who was killed by a shark a few years ago, though folks have always said it was Farah's know-how which really made the store successful before she took it on.

THE CREAKY MAST: A jovial drunkard, Mister Charles Boss looks after the staff, guests, and clientele of this down-market inn on the docks. In fact, since the Copper Coin burned down (mysteriously) the Creaky Mast is the only inn on the docks.

THE CITY CENTRE (AMELLE WARD)

The architecture and quality of buildings, as well as life improves the further into the centre of the port city. There's a smell of living and people, with an adequately functioning sewer system and drainage the stench is tolerable. Many have said it's better than being close to the fish stink which hangs about the docks, like a badly made cloak drapes about the shoulders.

Here there are well maintained homes, as well as numerous lanterns and lamps which keep the riff-faff firmly in the shadows at night. Not as though many folk here fear the shadows, since the majority of those who do live in the City Centre are just as dangerous as the crooks which hide in alleys and lurk in shadowed doorways.

Many a new crook to the city has come unstuck when they sought to ambush a noble couple, only to find out they were accomplished duellists, or trained in the arts of assassination. The Crows, the city's so-called Watch are regularly pulling bodies out of the water the next day.

The City Centre is also home to the pirate nobility, those of higher rank than the regular citizens, which also include the ruling family, the infamous Amelle Family.

LOCATIONS

There are numerous taverns, inns, shops, stalls, markets, and other such places of interest in the port – they are all of a muchness barring a few select places which bear further inspection.

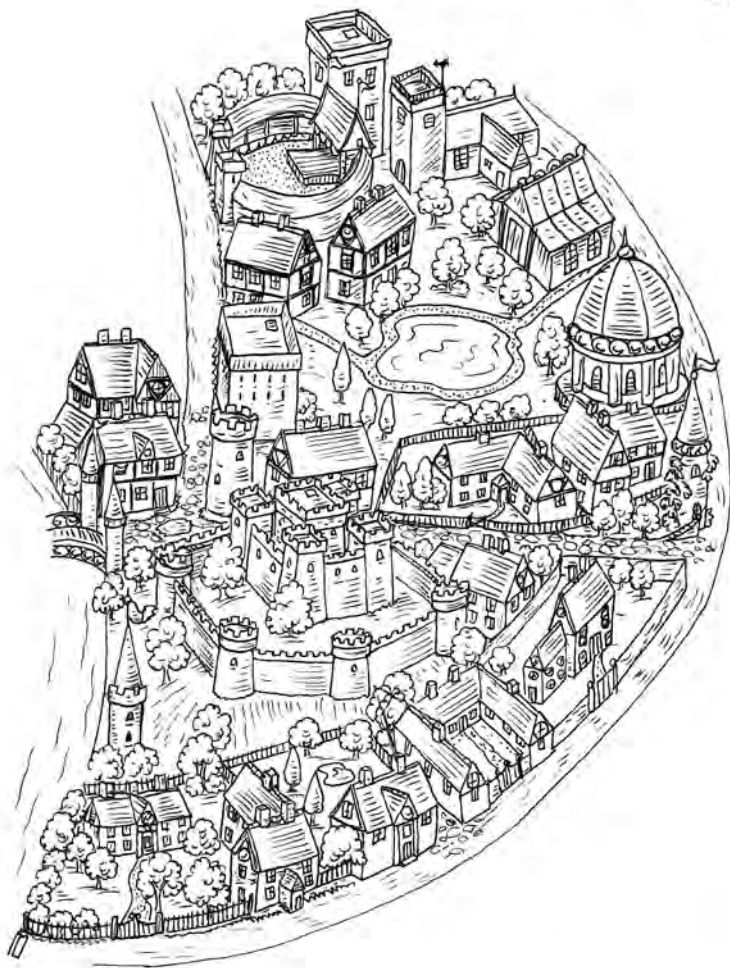
THE ROUGE THEATRE: “All the world’s a stage,” and the players here are accomplished actors and entertainers – it also serves as a base of the assassin’s guild for the port, the Black Feather’s. It is possible to find many diversions at the Rouge theatre, some legal, and some downright bawdy depending on who you know. The current Master of Ceremonies and owner of the Rouge is a woman who keeps herself masked and hooded – she answers to the name of Crimson and many think she might be one of the younger Amelle sisters.

CITY CENTRE: Where everyone comes to play and converse, the very life of the city appears to be focussed here – it has the largest concentration of markets, shops, stalls, and street entertainers in the whole port. There are also numerous inns, taverns, bars, barbers, surgeons, and more to be found spread out in the City Centre, all connected by the famous Rue d’or, or Street of Gold. This is the perfect place to drop in a shop or weapon smith if you require the Player Characters to gain access to something specific for your campaign, or you need to introduce an even darker theme such as demonology or necromancy.

AMELLE ESTATES: Not content with one or two sprawling manors or mansions, the Amelle Family has a sprawling eight estates through the upper area of the City Centre. Each manor is more impressive than the last, with the most decadent and opulent of the manors reserved for Nicole and her entourage. Each estate has lots of land, sub-buildings, and is protected by a hand-picked force of highly trained militia who serve the current master of the estate. Some of these men and women are taken directly from the most trusted of the pirate crews.

THE QUEEN OF THE DEEP: One of the most famous, if not the most famous inns in the city is the Queen of the Deep. This is a high priced, sumptuous and very clean establishment which is kept in tip-top condition by a crew of capable staff who tend to the guests every need. The fastidious Jean-Paul Illere runs the establishment like clockwork, and treats his guests to very personal attention at any time of day or night.

EXQUISITE CURIOS: If you need something unusual, something strange, or even perhaps something akin to magic then you have come to the right place. Aunt Renata Cauville charges a lot of coin for her goods, but many of them are worth it. If you are straight with her, expect to be treated as a valued customer, play her for a fool and watch the price rise like a sudden storm-born tide the next time you come to visit. Her back room houses the hidden workshop and study she keeps as a practitioner of the mysteries of magic. Amongst the jars



and containers, the perceptive might notice the corpse of a tiny creature here and there – creatures which can only be summoned by a Diabolist.

THE CORBEAU: The tavern to which all Amelle's eventually flock, a place of dark smoky rooms, hushed voices, exquisite décor and food and drink which is described by many as: divine. Sante Cherise Amelle and her lover, Luc Devan ensure the tavern is well kept and the drink flows like water from a sacred spring. Sante was once a highwaywoman who went by the moniker of the Velvet Hand and gained a reputation of being dashing. She used her money to build the tavern and retired there when she was almost caught and hanged. The prices are high, but the quality and product are more than worth it.

MILLICENT'S TOMES: If you need a specific book and you cannot find it in elsewhere, then there's a good chance you'll discover the tome you're looking for in the shadows of this musty old bookshop. Where a wizened old man who speaks

slowly and carefully keeps his court amongst the smell and tang of leather bound paper.

GOVERNMENT BUILDING: The government, as such as it is, all overseen by the Amelle's and those loyal to them can be found here. From the City Hall, to the Les Salles du Juste (The Halls of the Just), and the impressive Grand Library of Corbeau, the City Centre's government district comprises a dozen or so magnificent buildings.

THE CROW'S TOWER: Amelle's own privately owned city guard, the Crows, stand watch over the port city and ensure law and order is kept. Of course law and order changes sometimes based on what Nicole thinks is law and order at the time. She tries to keep a fair and even hand, but her family's blood is strong and the pull of the scoundrel isn't always ignored. In other words, she's not above using the Crows to settle a personal matter she doesn't have time for. To facilitate this, her part-time lover and best friend Captain Ariane Dance keeps the Crow's functioning at peak performance, ensuring they are mostly beyond reproach and loyal to the Amelle's.

The Tower also houses the cells and the blood-drenched execution dock, which serves as a highly public spectacle where offenders are executed in various ways. Those who truly want a spectacle cannot wait to see the criminals torn to pieces by a magically summoned monster, or in some very rare cases: a demon. Player Characters who like to get hands on could find work with their Diabolist or Executioner class here. In a less lethal manner, there are also the stocks, which are dotted about near the Tower and come with various baskets containing all sorts of goods to be hurled at the unfortunate victim caught in the embrace of wood and iron.

Finally, there's a fight pit attached to the Tower where gladiators can come and challenge each other, as well as fight condemned criminals for the amusement of the masses. A man called Cleaver oversees the fights, he was the first person to win his freedom by killing every challenger and the previous pit master.

THE QUARTER OF MANY VICES

The smell of perfume mixes almost imperceptibly with drug smoke and blood which wafts through the air, the Quarter of Many Vices is an Entertainment Ward in the most literal sense of the word, and boasts a cornucopia of sensation for all the senses – a feast for mind, body, spirit, and soul. There are purple lanterns, red curtains, lace and velvet drapes by the dozen and every single street has someone out to earn a coin or three from some form of pleasure.

The port doesn't care a jot for this kind of thing, to them, it's not a crime and those who want to drown in an excess of narcotics, sex, violence, and fantasy are more than welcome. However, these are all conducted under a code which

demands consent from all parties. This is the one and only law here, and those who break it can find themselves severely punished and shipped to the Crow's Tower to await a trial which is likely to find them charged and executed without any hope of rescue.

One could argue that the best architecture has been reserved for these winding streets, which are just as coiled as the many embraces to be found beyond the closed doors and inviting shadow-play windows which promise many delights for everyone.

Dark magic is at play in some of these establishments, combined with narcotics and sex; they provide a dangerous but ultimate fantasy for anyone brave enough to step across the threshold.

LOCATIONS

THE MASQUE: If you asked anyone in the port, where the most impressive and notorious bordello would be in the city they'd reply: the Masque. Not only do the workers there keep their identities hidden with physical masks, they employ magic to hide other aspects of themselves and the person who holds court as the proprietor of the Masque is an ever-shifting figure who employs illusions and costumes to conceal who they really are. They are known only as the Playwright. What you want, what you need, and what you get are mutable once you step within the Masque and agree to the terms of the establishment. It is a dangerous place, and some who have delved too deeply into their own fantasies have never come out, been driven mad, or died under mysterious circumstances.

THE VEIL OF SHADOWS: Part bawdy production, part play house, and part gambling hall. The Veil of Shadows is rife with all kinds of vice, and has little virtue. Madame Karess saw to that, and whilst no one will say it to her face, there are rumours she's a creature from elsewhere who escaped a Diabolist's circle and fled into the city attracted to the darker side of the port to be found in the Quarter of Many Vices. The Veil specialises in shadow plays, which are meant to titillate and arouse, drug-laden alcohol and games of dice and cards.

THE MORGUE: When Doctor Felix Rebau set up his unique premises within this quarter, many thought he was mad; however he's attracted a unique sub-set of followers and eager students all willing to learn the ins and outs of human anatomy in his hands on demonstrations and lectures. Rebau has cornered the market on public autopsies and elevated this science into a fine art. His ticket prices are high, and his subjects are often those who are given to him by the Tower after he pays a suitable transfer charge or Corpse Tax as they like to call it. The establishment both functions as a serious scientific institute for autopsies as they are practised, as well as a gruesome spectacle enjoyed by the more bloodthirsty of the port's inhabitants. His findings are passed on to

Tower's captain if he's asked to investigate a murder, in which case, the price is ramped up and the guest list is very exclusive.

THE COURT OF MIRACLES: What do you get when you combine thieves and magic, you get magic using pick-pockets and cut-purses, cat-burglars who might actually be transformed cats and more! This is the closest to a 'thieves' guild that one can get in the port city, ruled by the unquestioned Jester of Shadows himself Marcelle Grace. Grace is a consummate thief and trickster, a master of illusion, deception, and mirage. Grace has eluded the Crow's attempts to catch him on numerous occasions and has stolen priceless jewels from the very neck of Nicole Amelle. She doesn't know whether to admire the man, or kill him, perhaps both. Grace's people are well trained and they operate in the shadows as well as the open, they are not killers, and despite the presence of an assassin's guild they have resisted the urge to ply that side of trade as well.

Amongst these places of vice, and little virtue, there are taverns, inns, small shops where they sell food and drinks alongside narcotics and many other locations beyond the scope of this tome.

THE DOWNTRODDEN (THE POOR WARD)

It is a sad fact of life, and city life especially, there are those who have very little who huddle together in ramshackle homes. They might be looking to climb the social ladder, only they begin on the very first rung amongst the squalor and hopelessness of the poor. The buildings all have seen better days, there's very little sanitation and the smell is enough to turn even the strongest stomach – yet there are a few places here in the dimly lit streets and pitch-dark alleys which are worth mentioning.

There are small flop-houses where only the desperate could stay, ruined buildings where near-do-wells gather and packs of wild dogs which chase people through the streets. It is here where the more nefarious magic users can get a ready supply of ingredients, especially for such paths as Diabolist or worse.

THE SLUM KINGS: A gang of murderous hobos who lurk in amongst the ruined buildings, operated by a one-eyed teenager called Giskert Ratlin. They have no fixed abode, but they rob, kill, and steal to survive – anyone is a target and they use traps and tricks to confuse and purloin from unfortunate victims. They are not averse to luring city folk into the Poor Ward to rob them blind either, through various nefarious and underhanded means.

THE SISTERHOOD OF WHISPERS: What better place to hide a feared assassins guild, the Sisterhood of Whispers does not operate out of a building in the city centre, or even in the other wards, they hide away amongst the poor and downtrodden, working in disguise as various roles within the poor communities. They engage the help of urchins and beggars to act as their eyes and ears, bringing



any lucrative contracts to the attention of the one who commands them: Sister Monica of the Wolf. Not much is known about this woman, save for she is a highly trained assassin, has killed from the shadows since she was a young girl and delights in confounded authority by arranging clever murders. The Sisterhood can also arrange a fake death, for a higher price, allowing the victim to escape the contract freely. This is on a case by case basis and always involves the Monica's final say in the matter. Their headquarters is beneath an old ruined church in the caverns and tunnels under it.

ASPECTS OF CITY LIFE

No tour through the City of Perchoir du Corbeau would be complete without a brief look at the people, their cuisine, their lives, and the secrets of the city. Here you'll find all of that laid out for your edification and perhaps you might learn a thing or two about the darker aspects of the port.

THE PEOPLE

Whilst they play at being more than they are, many of the folk who make up the port city's populace are drawn from scoundrel and pirate stock. They have airs

and graces which have been mimicked from their time with those upper class people of other places; perhaps because they find it amusing, perhaps they're mocking those people, or even affecting these mannerisms because they truly want it to be known they're more than just scum.

They wear the height of fashion as long as they can afford it, drink the finest wines, and eschew grog unless they come from the dockside part of the city. They dine on the best food they can afford, and many of them are considered soft and portly by the folk of the docks. There's a saying which goes something like, "Better a life hardened by salt, than an arse softened by lard."

They live life to the full, play hard, fight harder, and even the lowliest of them have a fair few machinations on the go at one time. They are always looking to gain the upper hand and even that which is given freely, always comes with a price, especially magic.

THE LAWS

The laws are laid down by the ruling family, and they haven't changed overly much in years. They have been refined, altered, co-opted from other cities which have prospered and are enforced by the city's Crow Guards. There's no hard and fast list, as long as there's not a public murder every single day, and the guard are overworked ... or no one steals from the Amelle's it's they turn a blind eye to most cases of law-breaking.

Those things which break consent are punished harshly, and unleashing a demon into the city by design or accident is likely to get you executed by magic in kind.

When in doubt, apply a scoundrel's train of thought and rule a law as you see fit... it's what Nicole tends to do.

SIGHTS, SOUNDS, AND LIFE

The hardest part of any setting is bringing that thing to life, so it's good to have a few pointers for a place like the port. It's dark and grim with the odd splash of colour, everyone likes to adorn their clothing with gold or red and they mix flamboyant with gothic design quite well. Big hats are a fashion statement, men, women, anyone in a big hat is considered to be at the pinnacle of fashion. Feathers on the other hand, they're for the nobility and anyone who wants to show off. Swords are worn openly, as are other weapons, and long flamboyant coats are also worn alongside turn-top leather boots.

Perchoir du Corbeau is not a quiet place by day, it's loud, boisterous, thronging with all kinds of people doing all kinds of things and a visitor is going to be assailed by a positive cacophony of sound which hammers their ear-drums.

By night it's quieter in most places, but there's still that heady murmur which touches the air and keeps the place alive. The sound of struggles carries further at night, so one might also hear the impending thrust of a weapon as another person dies in a shady alley.

COSTLY SECRETS

Our tour of the city is almost at an end, but there are a few things left to say before we sail off in search of adventure, coin, blood, and riches beyond compare.

SMALL PLOT HOOKS FOR THE CITY

- Nicole Amelle is not who she appears to be, she is a creature who has taken the real woman's form and disposed of the body a long time ago. Nicole's body is still mouldering in a swamp somewhere, ready to be turned into a walking dead servant of the creature who masquerades as the ruler of the port.
- There is a demon on the loose and not one which has been mentioned earlier. It won't start killing men straight away, but it's an incubus, and a foul tempered one at that. Angered by mistreatment at the hands of a former Diabolist, the creature begins a killing spree which can bathe the city in blood.
- There's a coup in the planning stages, a rival family, the Lestard Family, has begun to take steps to oust the Amelle's. They plan to kill off the family slowly, using the services of a rival assassin's guild known as the Crescent.
- Deep beneath the port there's an ancient secret, a portal, a treasure, a vault which only opens every vernal Equinox. Whatever this secret is, a rival pirate faction has heard about it and plans to sack the city in an attempt to get at the riches and goods which lie beneath – as an added wrinkle, the treasure is an ancient mind-bending entity which has been whispering in the dark: free me.
- There's a rumour floating about that the Morgue will pay well for corpses, but will pay even more for live specimens. A gang of newly arrived thugs have heard of this and they have taken a shine to the Player Characters. They can expect an ever-escalating series of attacks which seek to capture and disarm them.
- The Coin of Misfortune: A drunken pirate is convinced she's been cursed by a bloody coin, ever since she stole the treasure of a rival her life has been plagued by misfortune and death. Is there any truth to this curse, or is it just a steady stream of albeit highly improbable coincidences?

APPRENTICE OF DUSK ROAD INN

BY MARI MURDOCK

Clim scratched at the oozing sore beneath his trousers with the pommel of his dagger. The healer said ten copper for a salve, and he'd laughed in her face. That much could get him at least a couple of cheap whores or keep him drunk for a week.

Coin was scarce at the moment, anyway. The underside of Gleeton was filled to the brim with scabby thieves, bruisers, and killers for hire, and no one was contracting a single mercenary, let alone a sell-sword duo like him and Kiarann.

He looked at his partner. Her dirty brown hair was knotted into a semi-presentable braid that clung to her neck like a serpent. She eyed the inn's patrons as she drummed nimble fingers on the table top, the knife in her boot only a wrist-flick away if there was trouble. He sighed, going back to itching his leg. He couldn't ditch her to go solo even if he wanted to. She was the brains and the beauty. She'd gotten them in every door they passed through and signed into every contract they got paid for since they were children.

Even this one. Well, hopefully.

A short man with a freckled scalp wrapped in wormy white hair emerged from the back of the tavern. He wore a stew-spattered apron and grimy spectacles. After handing a stack of clean though grey rags to the plump barkeep, he limped out into the common room, heading directly toward their table. Behind him tottered a tiny girl, possibly only six or seven, his apron strings tightly clutched in her bony hands. She wore a dirty dress, and her hair was shorn for lice. The pair looked Clim and Kiarann over before the old man smiled with yellowed teeth.

"Welcome to Dusk Road Inn," he croaked. The lass sniffed, obviously offended by their Clim's smell. "How might I be of service?"



“Fish stew and some brown ale to drown the bitterness out of it,” Kiarann said, her fingers still drumming, the rogues’ cant rolling off her tongue like her own name. “We heard on Gutterspit Street that you had the best of both for a couple of fellow commoners with only an orphaned coin a piece.”

Clim’s eyes narrowed. This graybeard tavern owner hardly looked like the man they were looking for.

“Oi, Kiarann,” he murmured. “This can’t be Amarus. You got the wrong—”

Stars rattled in his eyes before melting into stinging tears. His hand sprang to his newly split lip, a bead of blood running down his chin. Kiarann dropped her hand slowly back to the tabletop after shooting him a venomous glance.

She returned the old man’s smile. “Forgive my friend, sir. His knife’s sharp but he’s tactless with his tongue.”

Amarus nodded, rubbing one lens of his glasses with a grimy finger. “I know his type well, lady. Many a man of his stench on the streets of Gleeton. They have their place. I’ll bring you your ale and stew.”

The man and child disappeared back into the kitchen, and Kiarann snatched the front of Clim’s shirt. “We’re here to get an apprenticeship with the greatest assassin this side of Stonebridge, and you start our negotiations with some fool’s babble? Esh-Tuar’s bloody temple.”

“Sorry, Kiarann. I didn’t know it was him! He’s nothing like the stories. He’s so old and—”

“—Keep your voice down!” she hissed. “Of course he’s old, you lout! That’s why he’s looking for apprentices.”

Kiarann had spent weeks digging that information out from under the blood-slicked bottom of the Assassin’s Guild. Very few knew that Amarus Crow-Marked, famed killer of individuals like King Largos the Conqueror or Bloodwitch Shehmain, was getting too old for his trade and was looking to pass on his secrets. Fewer still knew where to find him. Kiarann somehow tracked him down to Dusk Road Inn, where he had taken up ownership, a façade for retirement after half a century of gory success.

Clim pouted. “Well it’s not my fault that old geezer isn’t six casks tall with eyes like Death’s glare and clothed in raven corpses.”

Her dark brown eyes softened. She let go of his shirt. The streets had made him her brother, and only in taking that familial-bond seriously had they survived this long. Together.

“You baby,” she sniggered. “Those old stories turned him into a legend, but he’s still a man.”

"What about that little girl?" Clim asked. The itch had returned. This time he used the blade to scratch through the pantleg. It didn't help. "I don't remember any of the stories saying Amarus had a brat."

Kiarann drummed her fingers again. "That is strange..." she whispered.

Clim folded his arms, the gesture he made when he wanted Kiarann to take him seriously, to think he was smart. "Risky business having a child this side of the wharf. Most get stolen."

"Who's going to steal a child from the Lord of Assassins?" she scoffed

Clim smiled. "Well, if we aren't getting that apprenticeship, like you said..." He paused to slap his leg hard to make the itching stop. A warm, runny wetness bled through his pants. It smelled horrid. He wrinkled his nose, like that little girl had. Maybe he did need a salve. "We could take her. I heard the Cutpurse Guild buys children for five gold a piece. Fifty if they're nobility."

"Really?" Kiarann scoffed. "Fifty for a lord's whelp? Why so much?"

"They know their way around castles," he continued.

His partner laughed. "That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard. A milk-bellied lordling patted each day with golden fingers could never be a thief."

"It just takes training. Like what we're doing," Clim concluded, nodding. He smiled to himself. Maybe Kiarann wasn't the only brain.

The innkeeper returned carrying a tray with two steaming bowls and a flagon, the child behind him. The dishes rattled as his old wrists shook under the slight weight, but he made it to the table.

"For the lady and her gentleman," he said with a bow. Kiarann grimaced but thought better of contending the distinction.

"Thank you," she replied.

Clim sucked down his share of the ale flagon without tasting it and picked up his spoon to peel apart thin strings of vegetal matter looking for the fish. Not much besides bones. The little girl watched him, her fingers still knotted tight in the apron strings. He spat a bone back into the bowl, and she sniffed again.

"This is a nice inn you keep here," Kiarann continued. "Nicer than most this end of Gleeton."

The old man's dried up cheeks grew a tad yellower as he blushed at the compliment. "Thank you, lady. Tadeon the barkeep and I work hard."

"And your daughter?" Clim chimed in.

"Yes, my daughter, Mazelina." The old man pulled her out from behind him and showed her off. "She's a good girl. Quiet. Obedient. Just what you'd hope

when they could come out screaming and bawling. Her mother's dead, but I think that makes her all the more attached to me, poor thing." He rubbed the top of her cropped head in pride. "Are you two from here in Gleeton?"

"No. We're from the capital."

"Oh," the innkeeper said with polite interest. "Here visiting family?"

"No, we've got no family. We actually came here looking for work."

"Work, you say," the innkeeper said, taking his spectacles off and cleaning them with a clean spot of his apron. "Not much here in Gleeton, I'm afraid. Too many workers, not enough coin to go around. That's why I'm in this business. Heads always need a place to rest."

Kiarann's eyes narrowed in excitement. "Perhaps we can find a way to be useful to you here. I'm sure we could learn a lot from you."

The girl was now staring down at the dark wet patch on Clim's pantleg. Without warning, she jabbed at it with a sharp finger. Clim howled, smacking her hand away and drawing his dagger.

"You little slut-scum worm," he screeched, pointing the blade at her face. "You're gonna lose that hand!"

The girl took a step back, but Kiarann had already snatched the dagger from his grip before he finished his sentence.

"Fool," she hissed. Several patrons in the inn's common room were drawing their own weapons, sizing one another up. Tadeon ran out from behind the bar with several bottles in his arms, passing them around as he eased people back down into their seats. He shared a worried glance with the innkeeper, but the peace teetered back into place. The girl, a guilty frown curling her bottom lip, was back hiding behind her father. He put his hand down against her cheek, pressing her head into his thigh. Clim glared down at the little wench.

"There there," the innkeeper murmured. "Just a child's curiosity. No harm meant."

"No harm done," Kiarann growled, tucking Clim's knife into her belt and banging two coins down onto the table. The sourness in her voice curdled the stew in his stomach. Clim swallowed. He'd cost them. "We'll be on our way."

The innkeeper lifted his hands pleadingly. "Now, wait. We would be doing you a wrong if we let you leave in such an anger. Please, let me make it up to you. Perhaps a free room tonight? It's the best I can do."

"And another flagon?" Clim blurted out, pointing to the other patrons who had by now completely forgotten the outburst in their new ale cups. "Like those bastards got."

Kiarann ignored Clim. "Ah, yes. A free room would do well," she stuttered. "And we will leave early in the morning."

"No, that is not necessary," the innkeeper continued, the apology tipping his voice lower into tones too quiet for the other patrons to hear. "Perhaps, as you said, I can find some use for you here."

Kiarann only gawked for one second before nodding. "Thank you," she managed. She shoved Clim.

"Oh," he mumbled. He wasn't sure what was happening. "Uh, thank you."

The innkeeper signaled to the barkeep for Clim's extra flagon. "Mazelina will show you to your room. Please, pray to Esh-Tuar with fondness for us, and rest well." He waved them good night before clearing the dishes and wiping down the table with a grey rag.

Clim followed Kiarann and the girl up the stairs, a fresh bottle of beer in his hands. This time, he drank it slow, letting the flavor wash over his tongue. Not bad, though a little too bitter right at the end.

"I don't know how we did it, Clim, but I swear by Esh-Tuar's seven wives and his big fat head that if you ruin this for us, I'm going to cut your throat and leave you for the crows," Kiarann whispered.

"Wait," he mumbled. "We did it?"

"It looks like it. No thanks to your fool mouth."

Kiarann snatched the flagon playfully from his hands and finished her half and the rest of his. Clim nodded dumbly in apology, scratching at his leg again.

"Climmeran Woolcap," he mumbled to himself. "Apprentice to Amarus Crow-Marked."

With clout like that, he could afford a hundred salves.



A flicker of light tickled the back of his eyelids. Clim squeezed his eyes tighter. He tried to let the leaden heaviness of his exhausted body sink him back into slumber. But his head was pounding, and the flicker tickled again. He slogged one eye open. Sleep still clouded his vision, but he could make out unfamiliar outlines.

The room was shadowy, windowless, lit by several candles in sconces. A staircase ran up one wall, like he was in cellar. Dark lumpy shapes hung from the rafters. Two figures emerged, one tall and one short. Clim tried to sit up. He couldn't.

"You did well finding a weak spot on his leg, Zee, but you struck too early," a man's voice sliced through the dark in a sinister baritone. "He could have cut your hand off."

"But I knew he wouldn't, Papa," a girl's voice rang back. "The woman controls everything he does."

"Another good observation, my pet. You noticed where the power was. Even so. What about the rest of the room? Did you see how many patrons had swords? And what if Tadeon got suspicious? Enemies are everywhere, and what must we always remember?"

"Shadows are secrets. Secrets keep us safe," the child recited.

"And secrets must be kept with patience. Good girl."

Clim's head was pounding, and his eyes weren't clearing like they normally would after blinking dozens of times. He groaned.

"Papa, the stupid one is awake!"

There was a pause. "Don't call him stupid, Zee. You can't underestimate him."

"Did the var... varley... valerian and poppy not work?"

"It did work. Remember how the woman didn't move when we hung her up? She must have drunk more ale than him. What can we learn from this mistake?"

"People who share sometimes may not always."

"Good, so what should you do?"

"Two flagons next time? One for each?"

"That could work."

Clim groaned again. "Kiarann?" he moaned.

Silence answered him, so he tried to sit up again. With shaking limbs, he rolled onto his side. He reached a trembling hand up to the nearest dark shape to pull himself up. His hand grazed fabric. A curtain? He grabbed it but recoiled and fell back. It had been soft and warm. An animal?

"Should we do it now, Papa? Before he stands up?"

There was another pause. "You've never killed a conscious one before... Why don't we try it?"

"Okay," the girl said, her voice a bit feebler. "Will he scream?"

"He might. If you go for his throat, he won't."

A rope slithered around Clim's neck, and in a spasm of fear he lashed out with a powerful fist. His punch struck the nearby curtain, landing hard, but it swung heavy with his blow, like sack of suet.

"Esh-Tuar!" he swore. He clutched at the swinging object, steadying it. He could feel the rough spun and leather textures of clothes, a belt, a boot. Kiarann.

The noose around his throat tightened, but Clim spun, roaring like wounded beast. He jerked at the loose end of the rope and heard a stumble. He snatched at the sound. His hands only clawed at empty air. He felt at his hip. No dagger. Kiarann had taken it. Tearing the noose from his neck, he backed up against the wall, blinking. Slowly, his vision cleared.

All around him hung bodies from the rafters. Sell swords, pick pockets, spies, and even a few blood magi. Like drying hams in a butcher's window, they hung on little nooses, their asphyxiated faces bloated and purple. Nearest him hung Kiarann.

A wet sob crawled from deep inside Clim's throat. He stretched his hand out. He wanted to touch her... But...

He wheeled to face the murderers. In the corner, on a spindly iron stool, lounged a tall bloodless man. Every angle of his skeleton pried through his papery skin, and wisps of ghostly hair seemed to float around his skull. Around his shoulders hung streams of oily black raven feathers sewn onto a dusky tunic, and a bird beak swung from his left earlobe. Thick, grub-like lips coiled around his sharp white teeth, and his pale eyes caught the candle light, scattering it like a dozen knife points. This was the Lord of Assassins, Amarus Crow-Marked.

Next to him stood the small girl, same dirty dress and shorn head. She clutched at Amarus's gloved hand, her own baleful gaze locked onto Clim.

"Let's take a test, shall we, my pet?" Amarus said, addressing the girl. He handed her Clim's dagger. Though it was too big for her tiny hand, she hefted it with practiced muscles. "You know what his weak points are. Remember, he won't let you have his life, so you have to steal it."

A tinge of fear nettled the girl's eyes, but she approached, dagger in hand. With a determined thrust, she stabbed at his leg, aiming for the sore.

"Esh-Tuar!" Clim hissed, only just moving out of the way.

The girl stabbed again. And again. Her speed drove the dagger forward like a dozen arrows, aimed at his thigh, his groin, his knee, his belly. The sell sword could only evade the dagger so many times. He swung a blow at her head, but she stooped, slashing upward to bite deep into his forearm. He kicked at her in reflex, catching the child in the ribs. The wind knocked from her, she wheezed, but as he reached for his knife, she sliced at him again, still aware of her surroundings.

"Good," Amarus called. "Finish him quickly. Before he gains his rhythm."

Mazelina stood, still gasping for breath she could not catch, but she readied the weapon once more and lunged. Clim kicked at her again, but she ducked under his foot and plunged the knife into his standing leg. His knee buckled and he snarled in pain, but she had already lunged into another fury of stabs. One caught him in the side. He rolled to avoid more, bumping into Kiarann's dangling corpse.

"You fool," he thought he heard her say.

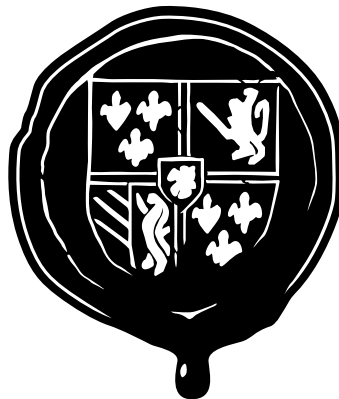
He snatched Kiarann's hidden dagger from inside her boot and threw it. The blade caught the child with a meaty *thwack* right in the chest. She cried out in a pathetic wail and crumpled to the floor.

Clim stumbled toward her body and wrenched his dagger from her limp little hand. A rope seized him around his neck. Instantly the noose ripped taut, a master behind its snare this time. Clim gargled on his last bit of air as the cord lifted him up toward the rafters. He kicked, but that only spun him round in a slow, suffocating circle. Kiarann had been wrong. The Lord of Assassins still plied his trade well.

Amarus tied off the end of the rope to a hook on the wall and let his victim dangle. He lifted the small body off the floor with both arms. Flicking the knife out of her chest, he poured a green vial of liquid into her wound. The little thing whimpered.

"There, there. I told you not to underestimate him," Amarus crooned. "But not bad for your first battle. We'll try again with something easier next time. I heard you can buy a lord's son for only fifty gold."

Clim almost laughed, but his lungs sucked spasmodically for air that would never come. He had been right too. He would have to tell Kiarann once he saw her in Esh-Tuar's temple.



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