

Rakehell

*issue one: The Rift of Mar-Milloir
a perfidious wilderness setting*



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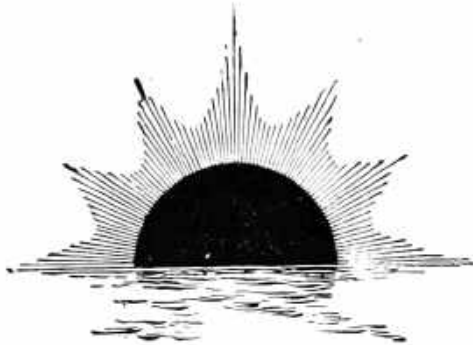
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Mar-Milloir

THE RIFT OF MAR-MILLOIR will always be contested between two kingdoms, though neither will ever have the means or desire to enforce that claim with true rulership. Each year, the representative courtiers will send spies and assassins to one another's court, to beguile, berate, and suffer further insult to see the conflict never ends. No one goes to Mar-Milloir who has a choice, it is a wretched and perfidious region of serpent-haunted mountains, wayward nephilims, and heretical holdouts who refuse the reformation of the Grand Heliopapacy of the Cathedral Tempestuous.

You have been sent here, if not to die then to profit your betters. You are a blaggard, a knave, a blackguard, a rakehell, and an out-and-out scoundrel; whether you desire such a title or otherwise.

Survive. Change your fickle fortunes. Take the Rift for your own. Praise be to the Sun and those who have inherited its grace; with ambition enough, you may be among them.





The Rift of Mar-Milloir



The Rift of Mar-Milloir has long been abandoned by civilized and decent folk, reclaimed by the wild for the perfidious and the vile. The Heliopapacy has had little touch with the abbey of the Rift, and as such no reformation from banal and malign practices has touched the souls of the Riftfolk. The resources of this mountain vale are certainly of worth to scheming nobles and avaricious knaves, but one must compete with insular locals, war criminals in hiding, and the many demons and nephilim who lurk the hills and woods. This is a land where the clouds sleep low, as if the sacred Sun wished to bury the crimes of humanity beneath its foggy foundation.

[d12] **Who sent you to the Rift of Mar-Milloir?**

1 **The Academy of Gartenthrush**, they believe there to be a reliquary of books somewhere in the Rift that is in dire need of burning. You are a member of their faction.

2 **The Hunter's Guild of Grand Vandram**, they paid the travel fees so you might show them there is beast and booty alike to pursue here. You are a member of their faction.

3 **The Order of the Selenite Host**, they want the old abbey brought to ruin and the torch put to any and all who still desire favor with the Heliopapacy. You are a member of their cult.

4 **The Reformist Heliopapist Church**, they want to make sure that no errant priest dares worship a sun which does not glimmer and shine with beatific light. You are a member of their faction.

5 **Some wretched noble**, they claim to have a stake of land here and desire you to butcher any and all who refuse to pay long overdue taxes. You don't get a cut.

6 **The Barghestknecht**, dog-soldiers all. They're looking to set up shop away from the reach of the Kingdoms. They'll grant you full colors in exchange for an empty estate. You aspire to their faction.

7 **The Border Warden**, his eye of obsidian and his rusted meat-hook of a hand made clear you were to go to the Rift. He told you how he'd peel you apart if you ever came back.

8 You heard **the locks, they whispered a terrible song** to you. They never stopped. You must find the keys hidden in Mar-Milloir, or no city shall ever hold you as a sane being.

9 **Your father**, he cast you out. He'll have no more of chicanery and wretched sins. "Find sanctuary among the wilders of the Rift, and never again darken my doorstep you wretch."

10 **Your mother**, she screamed in rage. She'll never again welcome you; she'll never again accept you. "Your sins are unforgivable, and I'd have poisoned you at my breast had I known! Go to the Rift, you've no place among our kin!"

11 **The Chancellor**, that insidious worm of a man. You were to serve as a spy, and you had no means to refuse him. You know your life will be better spent dead in the Rift than ever returning home.

12 **The Norn of Old**, they sang and laughed in your dreams. With golden thread they festooned you with fated promises, and all too quickly, they had a noose around you. You must unravel your thread, lest you be hung with it. You belong to them.

[d12] **Why am I working with these miserable blaggards?**

1 The barrister said if you ever wished to go home without shackles on, you'd have to play nice with these knaves.

2 The crowner said if he doesn't get his piece from some big score, he'd take your family home in addition to your kneecaps.

3 Sometimes doing right by your family means making yourself a weasel among rats, or something like that.

4 The best place to keep yourself hidden is in a den of vipers, so long as your company is vile you'll keep your enemies guessing.

5 You'll admit they're not the most savory band, but surely they'll put the sacred Sun before glory and gold, or at least keep Him in mind while pursuing such things.

6 In this economy? Not much of a choice but to take up a knife and start plundering. Plundering is easier with company.

7 The best way to hide from litigious ex-spouses is to join a band of mercenaries and hideaway in the hinterlands.

8 Better them than staying at home with those miserable children. These folks cry a lot less.

9 The quickest way to ensure your survival is to keep around slow but violent individuals, and these folks are surely not as smart as you.

10 It is often hard to find quality friends who are interested in freelance murder, colonialism, and tomb-robbing. You'll take what you can get.

11 In the event of encountering something horrible that demands a human sacrifice it pays to keep around humans who you are willing to sacrifice. Not that you think this will happen too quickly.

12 Because you are a knave, a blaggard, a scoundrel, a rakehell. You'll do as you damn well see fit, and may the consequences only catch you when you face perdition's flame.

[dzo] **What have I heard about this wretched place?**

1 The people here have eyes like a cat has eyes, ripe with a patient sadistic confidence. They might also be able to see in the dark. So you've heard.

2 Sleeping at night in the woods you'll be visited by the Devil. He'll steal seed and egg alike to implant in witches, and those born of said witches will find their mortal material parents and devour their hearts.

3 The Rift is home to war criminals who fled the Queen's judgment and the King's reckless ambition. They do not trust authority here, and seek actively to kill those who flaunt it.

4 The kestrels of the mountains here whisper in secret tongues to the Norn of Old, and they are known to play favorites and keep safe the strings of fate to those who bribe them.

5 They worship the Old Heliopapacy here, not the reformed kind. They burn their dead, they burn their women, they burn their dogs and their food. They like to burn things here, especially strangers.

6 Each man, woman, and child of this region is host to a demon of the heart whom they can conjure forth at a moment's notice. The region is in dire need of a witchburner.

7 The First Men buried their ancient moonstone weaponry deep beneath the hill mounds and in mountain tombs. They are ripe for the plunder, albeit highly cursed.

8 If you die here, unless your body is dragged to a mountain peak, you will find no Heaven and be cursed to the earth as a specter until the grand eschaton comes to claim you for the hosts of Hell.

9 Giants walk the Rift, born from the earth in a time before the Heliopapacy held dominion. They seek to undo the works of man and bring mankind back to its savage nature. All men of the Rift worship giants.

10 Children who sing songs in the Rift are invoking curses upon their enemies. They sing and they sling forth plagues, fevers, and all manner of wretched impotence upon strangers and passerbyers.

11 Dragons lurk these lands, breathing forth sin and letting it seep down the rift into civilized land, breaking the souls of those worthy of Heaven from a distance. Accept no gift of meat in the Rift, for it makes man an offering to dragons.

12 Bandits and brigands infest the Rift, leftovers from armies which once served the nobility of the land. That nobility has long since fallen into ruin.

[dzo] **What have I heard about this wretched place?**

13 Ancient Gods gamble over the Rift, playing catspaw with foreigners and young maidens. Do not hold love in your heart if you venture to the Rift, for the Ancient Gods will give you only sorrows.

14 An abbey to the old Heliopapacy can be found here, a place where the lies of the new reformation holds no sway. It holds the words of the true Sun God King within. You can buy your way to Heaven here.

15 Many a noble bloodline was offered land here to appease them in generations past. The maps drawn were not kept up to date, and only those who send claimants have any legal right.

16 Many ossuaries can be found here, with ancient spells inscribed upon bone of the First Men and those who followed. Such spells are protected by hateful eyes.

17 Eat no fish within the Rift, the rivers run polluted with dragon's spume and each fish is wretched with their lies.

18 Eat only fish within the Rift, the locals known a particular and delicious means of frying them with wild garlic. It brings out their taste and puts bones easily to rest.

19 The state has no true authority over the Rift, it was granted to foreign invaders as a means of appeasement two decades past. Not many people know this, but it is written of in government bureaucracy, and is therefore certainly true.

20 The Rift, like any hinterland, is filled with many rumors and each of them may as well be a lie. A knave should be cautious of anything some authority has told them, as such sources wish to empower themselves at your detriment.



[d10] **What terrible awful nobility will benefit off the toils of my plunder?**

1 **The King**, most likely, that stubborn, corpulent, arrogant jackal of a man. He will claim your suffering and taming of the wilderness in his name, and damn you to nothingness in the annals of history. He might even kill you to keep his version of truth.

2 **The Queen**, ever the plotter. She'll see you knighted if you dress nice enough, but she'll have you skinned if anything you do up here might reflect badly upon her precarious ego. Her secret police are numerous. They may already be here. They may be among your "allies."

3 **The Duke**. He'll likely exert some claim over the Rift, he wants even more power. He'll probably try to properly colonize it, working the prisoners he'll purchase to the bone and then wage war against his betters. He'll see the Rift bathed in blood.

4 **The Heliopapists** will benefit from your sweat, blood, and tears. If they reclaim the Rift and place in their reformist bishops, they'd regain new strength in the world. They could then raise the Brass Sun, and we'd be weaker for it.

5 **The Barghestknecht** will use any shift in power to exert their dominance. Sellswords and dog-soldiers, they'll use whatever bloodshed you leave in your wake as justification to claw their brand of authoritarian junta further north.

6 **The Baron of Rendelvex**, a good man or so they say. His daughters, all nine of them, have been ill for some time. He's always sought the Rift. Perhaps he will be a good man should he take it. But this would raise the question of what he's been waiting for all this time.

7 **The Countess of Inqkwist**, her lust for blood too well known for her to deny. Her sorceries would benefit if she had enough bones, the older the better. She'd seize power as soon as she hears of the long dead First Men to be found here.

8 **The Guild of Key & Corvid**, for when plunder and loot make their way back to civilized lands, those talon-handed bastards always find a way to get the king's share. If the Rift has wealth at all, they'll begin sending looters and ravagers once they see a first red cent.

9 **The Chancellor**, for he has his fingers in many pies and makes catspaw of any and all who dare exist within the sphere of his influence. The Rift will be his greatest achievement yet.

10 **The Huntmaster**, ever on the look-out for new prey, any news of your exploits will bring petty jealousy and more hunters to the Rift. And if they cannot claim what you've killed, killing you might be good enough.

[d10] **What am I to expect of these backwoods yokels?**

1 They're all false smiles and cannibalistic intent, they might speak the same as you or me, but there's nothing to trust.

2 They're non-reformed Heliopapists, they burn babies and eat the hearts of their fellow man to consume the flame imperishable.

3 No women among them, all the men breed with pig sows to breed forth the next generation of misbegotten youths.

4 Only womenfolk out here, they grow tall and big and burly as any man. They breed only with foreigners, cut them to pieces once they're done harvesting what they want.

5 None of them up here can read and they value wooden chips more than gold or silver. If you pay a man in teeth, he'll make you a king.

6 They're bound by the Ancient Gods to long forgotten rites of hospitality. If you use the wrong fork or spoon, they've got legal right to gouge out your eyes with the right utensil. Don't engage them in commensality.

7 You can discern different family lines among the Riftfolk by the color and quality of their sweaters, their sheep are passed down by generation. Some of them are even half-sheep.

8 In times of famine, which are very often up in the Rift, they eat the skin off their arms and the bark off trees. They'll whip a hide to succulence.

9 You can expect about as much of them as you can from any city-folk. They're just people, with their own customs and their own failings. They aren't monsters.

10 Most of them are utterly unaware of shifting power dynamics in the south, so you can expect that whatever news you tell them will be readily believed; albeit they might not care.

[d8] **What riches have I been led to believe lurk in this misbegotten place?**

1 There's reason to believe crusaders of the old Heliopapist faith brought their treasures here to avoid the reformationists in the south. Plundered goods from the scorched western steppes.

2 The southern kingdom did once rule here, which means a noble must have held an estate here. If they've fallen into ruin, incest, and decay their ancient treasures are ripe for the taking.

3 The First Men dwelled here in the mountains, worshipping terrible things and forging moonlight into pearlescent metal. Sacred knives and wicked mooncalf shields can surely be found deep beneath the mounds.

4 There is a known traditional Heliopapist abbey somewhere in the Rift. They bound their books in brass, but each page was of gold foil. Gems were inlaid upon the covers. Their weight of worth is notable, to say nothing of the spells within.

5 In olden days villages would have great bells hung in their churches made of selenite alloy. Those in the south were melted down to forge the King's Spears during the revolution; but no one knows what became of the bells in the Rift.

6 The Old Baron of Rendelvex once sent a cadre of Hospitaliers in Blue to the Rift, and they were never heard from again. Their cerulean armor glowed in the presence of healing myrrh and blessed springs. Such wealth could easily be reclaimed, as well as the titles of dead knights which are surely worth something.

7 The Bandit-King, Saxon Reiss was said to flee to the Rift after the Queen had two of his five heads put to the guillotine. He must've left clues to his plunder, sure to be found in the Rift. As well as one of his decapitated heads, reclaimed by brigands, and surely magical.

8 Dragons and Giants make their home in the Rift, and both are known to hoard wealth in deep holds beneath the earth. Combating them is a recipe for disaster, but a proper heist could see a poor man made so wealthy as to never work another day in his life.

Armor & Weapons for the Newly Sojourned

WHEN ROLLING UP A KNAVE who has been sent to the Rift, roll to determine their armors and weaponry and then roll on the following Kingdom-noted tables to determine the aesthetic of their equipment. Armor and weapons from within the Rift are strange, haphazard, and antiquated; possibly worth something on the Black Market.

[d6] No Armor [Kingdom]

- 1 Tattered justaucorps with knee-high boots, tarnished and weary from the road.
- 2 Ugly green coat with tiny buttons like clasping hands and a high obscuring collar.
- 3 Waistcoat with sleeves, the fabric has a ruddy and ostentatious pattern to it.
- 4 Hunting costume with orange waistcoat and buckled wooden shoes, speckled with filth.
- 5 Voluminously puffy shirt with a ruffled cravat and an ugly wig, all of which smell of mildew.
- 6 Mud-slathered chest, leather pants, and scars from recent shackling on the wrists and neck.

[d6] Gambeson/Equivalent [Kingdom]

- 1 Snug doublet, overly padded and patterned with striped threads.
- 2 Thick jerkin with bombasted hose and leather boots, lined with weasel fur.
- 3 Cumbersome over-frock coat of black-dyed bear furs, a bit itchy to wear.
- 4 Cavalry-type buff coat with a fanciful sash across the belly. Vaguely noble in look.
- 5 Leather-platelet munition grade armor, mass-manufactured and it tells.
- 6 Overstuffed gambeson with an attached half-cloak, pinned with decorative rondels.

[d6] **Brigandine/Equivalent [Kingdom]**

- 1 Gilt-brass neck gorget with vicious lion embellishments worn over a thick buff coat.
- 2 Ratty jack-of-plates in company colors with ugly twine tightening tassels.
- 3 Well-treated brigandine, water-proofed and newly constructed.
- 4 Jacket of brigandine with wood lamme panels on the arms, painted with monstrous smiles.
- 5 Acid-pocked hauberk and a pair of ridiculous striped pants.
- 6 Cossack's kuyak, with rusted wings of copper upon its back.

[d6] **Chainmail/Equivalent [Kingdom]**

- 1 Long haubergeon with a decorative torc of cockerel embellishments.
- 2 Ceremonial cuirassiers armor, functional but not equivalent to a proper cuirass of plates.
- 3 Schiessjoppe ringmail jacket and trousers, marked with decorative badges.
- 4 Antiquated linothorax depicting icons of a seldom acknowledged Sun of Cerulean.
- 5 Shirt of chains, lined with comfortable satin, and able to be tightly bound in the back.
- 6 Mass-manufactured hauberk from a recent war in the Western Steppes, still smells of blood and fire.

[d6] **Kingdom Weapons [1d6 damage, 1 slot, 1 hand, 3 quality]**

- 1 Vicious flame-tongue shaped razor with a black leather hilt.
- 2 Wooden pernach, polished smooth with iron-banded flanges at the head.
- 3 Sooty hand-hook with guard, jagged and red-stained from brutal use.
- 4 Pilgrim's walking staff with a griff-headed iron cap.
- 5 Kurkel bow [Two-Handed] made from the rib patterns of a traitor from the Kurkel Bridge massacre.
- 6 Make-shift flail composed of a cauldron on chain. Munitions grade mass manufactured.

[d6] **Kingdom Weapons [1d8 damage, 2 slots, 1 hand, 3 quality]**

- 1 Candelieri-style thrusting spear of zebra-patterned iron on an old oak shaft.
- 2 Griff-hilted arming sword with a basket guard and a whalebone grip.
- 3 Phallic brazen war-pick blessed with kisses by two dozen pilgrims. Smells of grease.
- 4 Military fork with cruel twisted spikes. Embellished with a blessing to the Beatific Solar Host.
- 5 Munitions grade crossbow with a stomp-puller for the drawstring. Painted with acrid white.
- 6 A highwayman's flintlock pepperbox, well-used with both grease cartridges and black powder.

[d6] **Kingdom Weapons [1d10 damage, 3 slots, 2 hands, 3 quality]**

- 1 Mighty occidental caber pole, carved with scowling royal faces, wielded like a great club.
- 2 Fiendish spontoon of blackwrought iron, with red yarn draped about it in delicate beauty.
- 3 Hussar Irregular's war company sabre, obviously stolen off a battlefield. Smells of cannonfire.
- 4 Portable colubrinus with a serpent-scrawled barrel. Wooden stockt reads "Hellbelch MX.V."
- 5 Lundvulf-Arms & Son's Grade V Arbalest of sturdy oak make and wolf pack embellishments.
- 6 A beoufborner's partisan spetum, with a ruffled collar of tin around its bladed pike.



Armor & Weapons for the Rift-folk

IN THE EVENT THAT A KNAVE from the Rift joins the party, roll to determine the aesthetic of their armor and weaponry on these tables before. The items of the Kingdom are worth more than the second-hand fabrications of those who dwell in Mar-Milloir, but they don't need to know that.

[d6] No Armor/Equivalent [Rift]

- 1 Itchy goat's wool tunic with vaguely occultic patterns woven in with yarn.
- 2 Summer coat of weasel pelts, utterly primitive in aesthetic.
- 3 Woad from the mountain mud, painted in symbols of ancient star deities.
- 4 Fine pair of doeskin breeches with ample faulds of crowhound feathers.
- 5 Raggedy tattered cloth shawl, made from a mouldering old war banner and spare fabric.
- 6 Pale crowhound leather lederhosen and an itchy grey tracht jacket.

[d6] Gambeson/Equivalent [Rift]

- 1 Blue-threaded crimson gambeson with three silver stars on an underarm rondel.
- 2 Leather-platelet munitions grade armor, embellished with fierce boar imagery on each plate.
- 3 Crowhound feather-pelt doublet under a black jerkin. Incredibly, often uncomfortably, warm.
- 4 Durable jack of cave bone pelt, lined with bone, and fastened with bloody red aglets of brass.
- 5 Ratty jerkin of ram's wool, with leather padding and coins from an old regime stitched upon it.
- 6 Mock-gambeson made of pine bark and golden norn-thread. Surprisingly effective and comfortable to sleep in.

[d6] **Brigandine/Equivalent [From the Rift]**

- 1 Long black jacket of three pelts. Many pockets on the interior, but incredibly cumbersome.
- 2 Desecrated brass norn-faced phalerae over wool jerkin. The faces are scornful.
- 3 Brass krug-style disc brigandine, with a scowling fanged sun upon its belly, supported by a sash of white and orange.
- 4 Wool-padded kuyak with brass scuts designed to look like tongues of flame.
- 5 Antiquated jack-of-plates, brass, copper, and occasionally slate stone strung about with coarse twine.
- 6 Ugly old brigandine, poorly tempered and poorer in its upkeep. Worn once in a battle. Still has the marks to prove it.

[d6] **Chainmail/Equivalent [From the Rift]**

- 1 Coat of mail made from pearlescent metals which seems to squirm in the moonlight. Likely haunted.
- 2 Braided jacket of giant's hair, thick as corded iron bands, hard to don, yet lightweight.
- 3 Long haubergeon of poor repair and upkeep, with many a rusted ring. Smells of blood.
- 4 Thin shirt of chain over a thick bear-pelt jerkin. Feels greasy, but keeps one warm in the cold.
- 5 A clanging affair of copper hand-bells, bolted together with wire and twine. A walking cantankerous din of armor.
- 6 A heavy mail of brass chains, held together in bondage by padlocks with sneering solar faces.

[d6] **Rift Weapons [1d6 damage, 1 slot, 1 hand, 3 quality]**

- 1 Shepherd's castration knife, warm to the touch, ram's head carved into the hilt.
- 2 An ancient stone brick with a belt tied around it, used like a miserable cudgel.
- 3 Misericorde, left over from a war a few decades back. A brutal needle for piercing hearts.
- 4 A family bow [z-Handed], passed down through generations and lovingly tended to.
- 5 Bow of the First Men [z-handed], with carved angry swine-heads which keep the string taut. The wood feels hard as stone, it is hard to keep it maintained unless worked on at night.
- 6 Shovel that has been beaten into "fighting shape", a menacing implement.

[d6] **Rift Weapons [1d8 damage, 2 slots, 1 hand, 3 quality]**

- 1 Notched sabre-bar, pilfered from a wayfarer's shallow grave. Might just be a sharp-edged prybar.
- 2 Devil-horned boar spear whose lugs curve almost to the point of being a trident.
- 3 The hatchet of a half-sprog woodsman long-dead, almost too large to be a battle-axe.
- 4 A vicious goedendag with thorned creeper embellishments engraved upon its girth.
- 5 An imported musket from decades past, kept in great condition for fear it couldn't be replaced.
- 6 A wagoner's axe, beaten into shape by settlers or exiles who knew they could not return to the south. It feels of wicked portents.

[d6] **Rift Weapons [1d10 damage, 3 slots, 2 hands, 3 quality]**

- 1 Bastard sword of a lost Barghesknecht battalion leader, with a goblin-scowl pommel and a fur-trim hilt.
- 2 Petrified wooden pig-sticker of the First Men, it catches mist when used at night and gives the wielder a feeling of sublime purpose.
- 3 Six-razor great-scourge made with discarded wyrm-peel leathers and sharpened coins for blades.
- 4 Shrapnel-blasting bombard made from poorly-welded cookery. Surprisingly efficient.
- 5 A large broken edge from a set of Norn-shears, feels like razor-edged pumice, glows like scintillating opal.
- 6 Battle-axe made from the tooth of a Giant, its enamel drips like a tarry slime when it pierces an enemy. Shaft is made of wrought iron.

Factions in the Rift



NO MAN IS AN ISLAND, not even in the depths of the Rift. Nationalism, jingoism, debts, loyalties, oaths broken and bonded, all hold sway and wage war against the mettle of man like beating hammers.

Joining a Faction

If so desired, a knave may join a faction. The mercenary mind-set does not necessarily see a knave as part of a faction at the start, but it may be reason enough to join one. If your base rolls didn't assign you a faction, roll a d12 and you work for one of the factions listed below. The default assumption is you work for your Homeland, or your personal self-interest.

When joining a faction after play has begun, a knave must generally work a job for a member of the faction who is able to deputize and authorize entry into the group. Doing a job for a faction generally means contributing to the goal which might otherwise give them 50xp and swearing an oath of loyalty. Entry rituals are noted below in each faction entry.

Knives who frequently switch between factions are likely going to end up as known traitors and see mercenaries and assassins sent to cleave their hides.

Faction Interaction

Factions are noted by the following tags; **Guilds**, **Institutions**, **Nations**, and **Religious** groups.

Guilds are cautious not to upset Nations, though secretly they desire power enough to challenge them. They think Institutions are worthy only of billing for services, and could do without them. Guilds try their best not to get involved in Religious disputes, but will proffer off them if possible.

Institutions are indifferent to Nations so long as they are funded, and they'll work for multiple nations at the same time for their own ends. They consider Guilds to be beneath them in the societal hierarchy, ultimately they are competition. Religious groups are often a distraction from what an Institution considers to be truly important in the world.

Nations hate one another and through proxies will attempt to wage subtle wars. Institutions, Guilds and Religious groups are only as important as a Nation deems them in the moment; and so long as they all bow to the correct throne, they are of no consequence.

Religious groups all hate one another, and unless they hide their affiliations in the company of one another they will enact violence upon each other. They think themselves more powerful and important than Guilds or Institutions, as they know a cosmic truth which deserves greater veneration than mortal duties or financial ventures. They know themselves to be better than any Nation, even if said Nation will never admit it.

Specialist Equipment

Each Faction has items for sale which it will gladly sell at-cost to their collaborators and at an exceptionally larger fee to those who do not belong to their group. Certain groups do not have members who can so openly sell items or may only be granted by the completion of rituals, with such things generally only learned in ritual or ancient books.

The Academy Of Gartenthrush [Institution]



Every book has a purpose, and the Academy believes most of those purposes involve fire. Black books threaten the supremacy of man. They are known to exist in the Rift.

If you belong to the Academy...

† You own a black frock coat and an ugly red chaperone hat.

† You possess a red book, listing the names of books you've burnt.

† You have a vial of quickfire (d8 damage when exposed to air.)

† You gain 50xp whenever you burn an important book.

Entry Ritual: Set fire to an enemy upon a pyre of books and research, killing them while destroying all they've ever worked for.

Specialist Equipment:

† *Quickfire* (d8 dmg, glows like a torch when shook, explodes when exposed to air.)
Cost: 50p, 150p to Non-Members.

† *Joss Paper* (100 pages, ignites and vanishes into smoke.)
Cost: 10p, 20p to Non-Members, but will also not explain its property to non-members.

† *Red Book, Replacement*
Cost: 100p, 50p if previous book was filled, 200p to Non-Members.

† *Letter of Good-Standing* (will make you look smart if brandished.)
Cost: 75p, free if actually in good-standing. 300p to Non-Members.

The Hunter's Guild Of Grand Vandram [Guild]



Fantastic specimens are sure to be found in the Rift, and the Hunter's Guild wishes to stuff and mount them before any other group. The glory must be their own, damn to any political incidents that might be had.

If you belong to the Hunter's Guild...

- † You own a tricorn hat, a bandana for your face, and a fine yellow buff coat.
- † You have a harpoon (d8) notched to imply your rank.
- † You must kill any wild beast that you've never seen before elsewhere.
- † You gain 50xp whenever you take a new trophy from a strange creature.

Entry Ritual: Bathe in the blood of a great beast while being witnessed by a fellow hunter, devour its heart, and swear an oath that neither dead nor dreaming will you abandon the hunt.

Specialist Equipment:

- † *Snap-Stone* (Rock which makes a loud crack sound when thrown.)
Cost: 10p, 20p to Non-Members.
- † *Ghililcorp* (Net of leaves and brambles, to be worn over a buff coat for camouflage.)
Cost: 90p, 120p to Non-Members.
- † *Fanged Pendant of Grand Vandram* (Predatory animal appearance, ivory, "Lucky.")
Cost: 100p, 30p to Non-Members, marks them with stolen glory, grants right to rob them.
- † *Hunting Horn* (Can contain blackpowder, wine, or be blown as a signal.)
Cost: 45p, with signal book. 150p to Non-Members, no signal book, will be an inferior horn.

The Order of the Selenite Host [Religious]



Praise be the mooncalf, it will devour the world in serpentine moist and sinister chill. You are a heretic, a cultist, a monster; all for dabbling in the occult. But the whispers bring you joys.

If you belong to the Order...

† You are of unnatural pallor and can see in the moonlight--though this causes a limb to appear tentacular while using such magical vision.

† You can speak with other things that are: *white in color, blue of eyes, possessing tentacles, or which dwell within water.* They seldom have anything to say.

† You gain 50xp when you defile an important item of the Heliopapacy.

Entry Ritual: Drink liver-wine of a Heliopapist from a stone chalice upon a night of the full moon, ask

whatever powers that be enter your body and show you guidance, embrace the whispers that will find you and speak to you in any number of voices.

Specialist Equipment :

† *Ammonite Charm* (Spiral shell, calming to touch, allows members to Attract crustaceans once per week.)

Cost: 50p or an animal sacrifice. 100p to Non-Members. If worn by a Non-Member they will puke up limpets on nights of the full moon.

† *Stone Chalice* (Comfortable, can be worn in many fashionable ways, of ritual importance.)

Cost: 30p or an animal sacrifice. 75p to Non-Members, will be used to coerce conversion if need be.

† *Cerulean Shawl* (Predatory animal appearance, ivory, "Lucky.")

Cost: 200p or an animal sacrifice, 200p to Non-Members, will be used to coerce conversion if need be.

† *Unguent of Blessed Dreams* (Allows communication in dreams with the Mooncalf.)

Cost: 500p, or a human liver. Non-Members pay the same price, but upon imbibing suffer the effects of Babble, speaking the will of the Mooncalf.



The sacred Sun is beatific, golden, pure, and all men hold it in their hearts. Now more than ever does it need gold, to wage wars against foreigners and to allow any man to buy their way into heaven.

If you are a Reformed Heliopapist...

† You have a gold-painted sun necklace, with yellow and red prayer beads.

† You can find comfort in prayer and indulgences.

† You gain 50xp when you refurbish or convert old Heliopapist items or people to the reformed faith.

Entry Ritual: Be baptized in blessed floral wine by a Heliopapist upon a hill at sunrise. Be marked

in sacred inks with mantras of the faithful.

Specialist Equipment:

† *Gold-Painted Sun Necklace & Prayer Beads* (Comfort to the touch, feels warm when weather is cold.)

Cost: 30p, often freely given at devotional chapels. Same price for Non-Members who might convert.

† *Gold Sun Pendant* (Small, but golden. Grants a sense of purpose. Helps resist fear from the unholy.)

Cost: 100p. False painted sun necklace equivalents are sold at the same price to Non-Members in the hopes they will suffer fear enough to turn to the Heliopapcy.

† *Sword of the Solars* (Gilt-edged short sword, tempered in floral wines, sung to be scriptures. Increase damage dice a degree against demons and the undead. 1d8, 2 slots, 1 handed, 3 quality.)

Cost: 500p, though this is a “donation” and it is expected to be used only in the slaying of wicked beings. Not available to Non-Members.

† *Scripture of Floral Sunwheels* (Sacred prayer book, penned in sacred unguents, filled with pressed flowers. Tea brewed from its flowers can resurrect a dying man, who must then consume fire and floral wine daily to remain alive.)

Cost: Priceless, though it is known that two such manuscripts exist in the Rift; one in an ancient library and the other carried by a Hospitalier in Blue.

The Old Heliopapist Church (the Brass Sun) [Religious]



The sacred Sun has spun eternal with no need for man's finite control. The Brass Sun shines in the hearts of all, and those who take efforts to stoke the flame will find themselves brought closer to salvation. Violence is a most kind teacher of this method.

If you are an Old Heliopapist...

† You have a brass sun necklace, worn on a chain of copper.

† You find comfort in self-flagellation and violence.

† You gain 50xp when you suffer a terrible wound and burn the damages shut to prevent further recovery.

Entry Ritual: Forsake the Beatific Gold Sun, burn its wretched book, and demand the Brass Sun grant you an enemy so you may prove your worth.

Specialist Equipment:

† *Brass Handbell* (Sound enough to *enrage* the undead, easily becomes red hot).

Cost: The heart of a reformationist burnt in a brass basin.

† *Brass Sun Necklace* (Burns upon the chest of a true believer, enhances spells of baleful portents so long as they involve fire. Marks one a heretic in the eyes of the weak.)

Cost: The burning of ten books of the reformationists beneath one of their faithful.

† *Brass Face Mask* (Shaped as a sun with a face of malign intrigue, allows the wearer to speak with fire and know what flames and ash have observed once per day.)

Cost: The veneration of fire by self-immolation after decapitating one of the faithful.

† *Shards of the Solar* (A strangely cut piece of metal like those of a decorative sun, ignites into flame when cut upon the palm of the faithful. 1d10, 2 slots, 1 handed, 3 quality.)

Cost: The destruction of a settlement or large religious structure in flames, during which you personally kill the lead preacher. At the dawn of the next day you can pull the shard from your own glowing heart.

The Barghestknecht [Institution]



The dog-soldiers of the Barghestknecht wear toothed helmets that extend off the face in a strange cackling smile. They love their banners, their sashes, and their badges. Many of them are goblins, or make bed with them.

If you aspire to the Barghestknecht...

† You have a leather dog-faced mask and a grey-blue buff coat (Defense +1).

† You can speak to Goblins, provided you hold them purer than yourself.

† You gain 50xp when you conquer a locale, perform a military junta, or take a goblin as a spouse.

Entry Ritual: Sign a contract to enlist in the Barghestknecht for a dog's age, be trained at the hands of a grin-helmed soldiers, kiss at the ape-paw of a Barghest.

Specialist Equipment:

† *Hobberflint Gun* (Vicious hand-rifles which shoot plumes of choking burning smoke which ignite papers or cloth easily. 2d4 dmg, 6 shots, 2 slots, 1 handed, 3 quality).

Cost: 155p, 5p per cartridge of ammo. For Non-Members, 345p, 15p per cartridge of ammo.

† *Pikegun* (A long rifle which shoots jagged iron javelins, 1d10 dmg, 10 shots, 4 slots, 2 handed, 3 quality.)

Cost: 210p, 10p per unit of ammo. For Non-Members, 500p, 30p per unit of ammo.

† *Grin-Helm* (Large horrifying metal helmet like a jackal, with razor-sharp teeth. Defense +2, d4 damage to anyone who physically attacks your head.)

Cost: 100p and a conquest of note. Will never be sold to a Non-Member.

† *Barghestheim Devotional Mane* (Powerful mutton chops of Barghest fur, commands respect, connects into actual hair, makes wearer hirsute as an ape. If married to a goblin, user can transform into a Barghest once per week.)

Cost: 500p and three conquests of note. Will never be sold to a Non-Member.

The Norn of Old [Religious]



They were worshipped once, the fate-keepers, the thread-spinners, beautiful beings. You hold them still, perhaps because they hold your fate tightly and have their snippers at the ready to cut it.

If you hold the Norn of Old in your heart...

† Your hair is golden blond and you are a skilled enough tailor.

† You possess a *Norn-needle* (d6, ignores cloth armor.)

† You gain 50xp when you defy fate or force another into their fate.

Entry Ritual: Bind your wrists in golden thread or hair, meditate upon a mountain top, let the whisper upon the winds tell you of what once was and what will

be. Accept your fate, preordained. You awaken with a Norn-needle in your palms.

Specialist Equipment:

† *Silver Thread of Stolen Destiny* (Needs a Norn-needle or Silver Snippers to use. Casts Filch when the two items touch.)

Cost: The death of an innocent by suffocation. Can only be gained by members.

† *Tangled Thread of Fickle Fortune* (Needs a Norn-needle or Silver Snippers to use. Casts Invisible Tether when the two items touch.)

Cost: Two items of sentimental importance, bound in thread, buried. Can only be gained by members.

† *Silver Snippers* (Long silver shears, d6 dagger if used. Displaces any item touched when used at night, once per night.)

Cost: The fingers of a thief, a tailor, or a liar, bound in gold thread or hair. Can only be gained by members.

† *Cloud Cotton* (A handful of cloud stuff, wet and fluffy. If consumed casts Gravity.)

Cost: Fast for 1d4 days, with teeth threaded in silver thread which is consumed thereafter. Can only be gained by members.

The Kingdom of Your Homeland [Nation]

The most pure, the most noble, the only true civilized place in the world to live. Sure the nobility are terrible, and the commoners are pestilent, but they're your people. They're the best people you can call kin.

If you are so boring as to only care for your Homeland...

- † You are a jingoistic nationalist who likely doesn't enjoy paying taxes.
- † You have many enemies in the Court, they don't like you over petty things.
- † You gain 50xp when you oppress the peasantry or risk things to insult the enemies of your Homeland.

Entry Ritual: Be born in your homeland, hate your homeland's enemies, don't pay your taxes.

Specialist Equipment:

- † *Traditional Foodstuffs* (Hard bread, gritty cheese, legumes, fried frogs.)
Cost: 10p if they don't think it'll be hard to come by up here, 50p if they know.
- † *Quality Southern Wine* (Runny, swirls well, deep red).
Cost: 25p to those who'd appreciate its vintage. 250p to those they think they can swindle.
- † *News From Back Home* (Clearly embellished, tragedies covered up.)
Cost: 5p or fair exchange of information. Nothing truthful is given to "foreign" folk.



The Wretched Foreign Kingdom [Nation]

Those wretched dogs, those perfidious serpents, those cannibals, those baby-eaters, those demons made manifest. They're violent, they cannot be trusted, they're different than us and this means they are certainly evil.

If you somehow find yourself working for the wretched foreign Kingdom...

† You are a traitor, a jingoist, and you don't enjoy paying taxes.

† You have many enemies among your countrymen, and the foreign kingdom doesn't trust you.

† You gain 50xp when you oppress the peasantry or risk things to commit treachery against the Homeland.

Entry Ritual: Forsake your homeland, burn a flag, kill a patriot of your homeland, or be otherwise turned by a member of the wretched foreign kingdom's government or military.

Specialist Equipment :

† *Strange Spices* (Bags of yellow, red and pink powders. Makes food unpalatable.)

Cost: 100p for a bag, it's the good stuff. 500p if they think you'll use it for vile purposes.

† *Fermented Foodstuffs* (Jars of pickled frog, pickled hag sausage, pickled crowhound testes.)

Cost: 5p for a meal, 25p if you say something condescending.

† *News From Foreign Lands* (Clearly fictitious, clearly posturing.)

Cost: 5p or fair exchange of information. Nothing truthful is ever given to "the enemy."



The Guild Of Key & Corvid [Guild]



You made a pact with the Rat-King and the Corvid Queen, to forgive old debts and to assign new secrets. They slither towards the Rift now, seeking to collect both.

If you are of the Guild...

† You have either the teeth of a rat (d4, can cut through metal), or the talons of a raven in place of hands and feet (d4, frightening).

† You own a padlock necklace, embellished with the mark of the Guild. Contained within is a terrible secret.

† You gain 50xp when you learn a terrible secret or force someone into copious debt.

Entry Ritual: Tell a terrible secret to a many-tangled rat-king and offer a gold coin to a crow. Whisper in prayer what you need forgiven, embrace a new secret given to you. If ever your secret is spoken to you by a member of the guild, you take Ld4 damage.

Specialist Equipment :

† *Knowledge of Secrets* (One secret, might be old, might be irrelevant...)

Cost: 25p or a secret in exchange. To a Non-Member, 100p and knowledge of one of their secrets.

† *Knowledge of Debts* (One person's debt information, might old, is unpaid...)

Cost: 50p or a secret in exchange. To a Non-Member, 100p and knowledge of a debt they owe.

† *Corvid Key* (Black tarnished key, can open any cage. Breaks into glass shards after use.) Not sold to Non-Members.

Cost: 300p or a debtor for the guild (will be abducted.)

† *Rat Key* (Pink slimy key, can open any sewer grate. Melts after use.)

Cost: 300p or a person with many secrets in need of coercion (will be tortured.)
Not sold to Non-Members.



Antévol, Gateway to the Rift

AT THE EDGE of the old papal road, on the border of the wild, sits a derelict little burgh upon the top of a hill. Antévol belongs to both kingdoms and neither, it is poorly fortified and little more than occupied ruins. This is where you may yet find shelter and the comforts of home. The factions are present here, acting in secrecy when they must, in tenuous alliance when a public face is required. War is coming to the Rift, and they will back whoever's army arrives first. This is a home base, a black market to the south, and a safe haven for blackguards and mountebanks newly exiled.

Townsfolk of Note

1. Bonn-Bowery the Fence

A tall pale man with thunderstruck scars, wild eyes, and a forced smile. He dresses in a fine white justaucorp with black turtle-embellished buckling boots. His blond hair moves as if attracted to metal, as if he is always undergoing static cling. Bonn-Bowery is a fence, formerly a horse thief, and he fancies himself a profiteer when attempting to enter the good graces of Mad Mottagreu. Bonn-Bowery can offer up the basic equipment and supplies available in KNAVE, though only on special order. Roll on the starting equipment table to determine whatever he has available at any given time as general wares.

2. War-Dame Gourgenhesk the Saw

A she-goblin of narrow bent and wrapped face, she cackles in between her words and sucks crude out from between her teeth and under her nails. She dresses in the full conquistador's plate of an experienced irregular sell-sword, and she claims fear of nothing. She wants information on wyrms so as to increase her glory and teach as an adjunct at the war academy in the steppes. Hates everyone in Antévol, wants a war to break out soon she can be among her own kind. Is a skilled triage surgeon but tries to convince others her name comes from her jagged flamberge. Will assist and sell to Barghesknecht aspirants.

3. Jauffre of Gartenthrush

The Red Librarian, Jauffre is a bitter old man whose hands have long burnt to black crackling claws from numerous acts of arson. Is tenured at the Academy but believes the new faculty don't take the burning of books as importantly as they ought to. Was once befuddled by agents of the Selenite Host and is still long tormented by nightmares of the Mooncalf. Beats his graduate students who act on him hand-and-foot. Will only respect other members of the Academy if they act professionally. Will always consider everyone lesser than him.

4. Dorian Cale

Heliopapist Pilgrim, in truth an agent of their Inquisition. Kind, fresh faced, young and friendly; he harbors a heart built for a fiend. He knows that LaFeub is likely a heretic but desires proof of the full destructive power of the Brass Sun before he acts upon his base and more violent nature. Is a hedonist and a debauched sexual deviant, quick to shame when accounted for this. Believes his coin and duty will save his soul.

5. The Unbidden One

The Hunter's Guild of Grand Vandram did not bid this hunter come to the Rift, but she is here. Decked to the nines in hunting gear, the Unbidden One has taken up roost in Antévol to watch the people here. She might be looking for one of them. Under all her camouflage and armor, she looks like a woman who has lived exhausted in the mud and wild for too many years. Her laughter, while rare, is rich with joy and weariness. She has bullets and black powder, more come every week for her. She has witnesses Dorian Cale torturing peasants, believes him to be a Selenite Cultist.

6. Sickleman Sterling of Good-Standing

Sterling is an agent of the Guild of Key & Corvid, of Good-Standing no less. He bares the claws of a raven and the tail of a rat which he uses to keep his house-jacket bound shut. He wears yellow-tinted glasses and smiles a smile of a man who can afford disgusting cosmetic dental surgery. He likes to make kissing sounds when talking about money. Sterling is the only sane person in Antévol by his accounting, and he's here to help man the Black Market. Sterling will purchase and sell goods depending on his mood and the weather, but he'll always deal in good favor with fellow Guilders and those who wish to assign their loyalty to Rats and Crows.

7. Jaughen the Hay-Sprog

A horrifying sight, Jaughen is the progeny of a giant's spawn and a mortal; though no one is sure which was which. Rippling muscle, hunched posture, nine-feet tall with heavy blond locks which obscures their face. Often nude save for furred boots and a worker's apron, Jaughen barely speaks and cares little for conversation. They enjoy the subtle vibrations of beating metal into shape, of mangling stone into workable shape, and they sound of horses when cuddled too closely. Jaughen serves as the village blacksmith, loyal only to Mad Mottagreu who saved them from being sold off to a menagerie in the south. Jaughen has a crush on Gourgenhesk, often staring at her in silence from afar. It is mere confusion of if Gourgenhesk might be like them, as Jaughen has never seen another non-human beyond the War-Dame and a single baleful parent.

8. Mad Mottagreu, the Boss

Tall with stark red hair braided down to the center of his back, slick with boar's grease. His mustache is similar, going into his sideburns in such a way that his grin seems almost bestial. Tiny black spectacles held in gilded bat-faced filigree wire frames help complete the image of a man who wants everyone to know he's interesting. Mad Mottagreu was a border warden once, he was exiled for imagined crimes (one would hope, as when asked he lists some terrible things, "all bunk" though) and is now an exemplar of what the Rift will do to a man. He runs the black market, and is seen often laying the smack down on Sickleman Sterling and Bonn-Bowery. Just as often he is seen getting them drunk off their asses. Mottagreu is a servant from the Order of the Selenite Host, and in truth has a moon calf half-birthed inside his spine. Someday it'll burst out of him and cause real trouble. Until that day he's all about accumulating wealth and smuggling items for would-be-knaves.

9. Viok LaFeub, the Anchorite

LaFeub lives in the hillside outside of town, in a crude wooden shack, where he sits often in meditation on the nature of human existence. He is rage incarnate, tempered only by a desire to see that fire within him only released when it will hurt the most people. LaFeub is an inheritor of the Brass Sun, but he is no fallen sunseeker; he is righteous in his worship and unclouded in his purpose. He will seek to corrupt reformationists to his creed, and to have scarified those who will not bend the knee. He will provide goods and knowledge of costs to those who worship the Brass Sun. He is a man in his thirties with piercing eyes, scarified symbols of providence, and many brass piercings within his naked skin.



The Black Market

IN ANTÉVOL, as well as perhaps in other locations within the Rift, a black market exists to move goods between the two kingdoms and from the Rift back to civilization. When trying to procure something on the black market, or to sell items back to the south, consult the following tables. Bonn-Bowery, Mad Mottagreu, and Sickleman Sterling grant a +2 bonus to known allies, friends, or accomplices who roll to sell or buy on the black market.

[d12] Response to wanting to sell on the black market...

- 1 "I don't know what you're talking about, this is highly illegal." Fence fears being watched, doesn't trust party.
- 2 "I might know a guy who knows a guy, try back later." Will have 1d4 Bandits if party tries back later.
- 3 "What you're asking for will take lots of time and great risk. This is my cut." Demands 75% of the profits won't budge.
- 4 "I could move that, but you'd need to make it worth my while." Will sell and take 50% cut of the profits, but party must provide double the amount of items or bribe the fence up front.
- 5 "I don't do that kind of thing anymore." Seems frightened, shows signs of a recent scuffle. Will not name culprit.
- 6 "Funny you're selling that, someone else was trying to move the same product earlier..." Will name a faction or faction NPC as culprit, doesn't want to move product lest they flood the market.
- 7 "Tell you what, you do me a skinny and I'll see that moved for you." Demands a favor from the party, will only take 25% of the profits.
- 8 "The kingdoms are prepping for war, so any movement beyond the Rift is dangerous. But if you're selling munitions, I can make it worth your while." Demands 75% of any non-weapons/armor sold, will take only 25% of weapons/armor sold.
- 9 "Last time I took a deal like this I got jumped. Gimme a good reason to trust you're not setting me up." Wants a show of loyalty, re-roll for better results. On rolling 9 twice in a row, they're lying.
- 10 "Smuggler's out since yesterday, if you leave your stuff here I can't guarantee it's safety." 35% chance of item theft if left.
- 11 "I'll move it, but I need to off-load some of this crap. You buy it, I'll move your stuff." Wants party to buy 2d6 pieces of random equipment before they'll take any items offered.
- 12 "I think we can make an agreement here." Takes 40% of the profits but pays the party upfront in good faith.

[d12] Response to wanting to buy on the black market...

- 1 "I might have that in stock, for the right price." 1-in-4 chance of having the item requested or a facsimile, sold for double the price. Item will break after a single use.
- 2 "Sure, I've got that." Has a basic form of it 4-in-6 chance of being filled with drugs or items of espionage. 2d8 Brigands will be looking for it in the next few days
- 3 "Is this what you're looking for? I only have the one." Single version of an item requested at normal quality and base price.
- 4 "Tell you what, make me a trade and we'll talk." Will trade item for another piece of equipment or gear.
- 5 "Don't know what you're talking about. Don't go selling any contrabands here." Shows signs of a recent scuffle. Will name culprit if friendly with the party.
- 6 "Item you want was already delivered to a settlement away from here. Deliver this to them and ask'em to trade." Party will have to trek an item across the Rift to trade for the item they really want. 50%chance they're refused anyway.
- 7 "Fresh from the south, me buckos. Oh and worth every red cent." Quality 3 version of an item, triple the cost.
- 8 "I'm sure I've got the equivalent of it." Oversized/Undersized, Quality 1 version of item requested, 50%chance to break when needed.
- 9 "I've got the next best thing." Quality 1 version of the item request, sold at double price.
- 10 "Bandits are out in force, lost a few of my good suppliers. But these are luxuries you're paying for." Item is sold for triple price.
- 11 "The Kingdoms had this fall off the back of a wagon, figure we ought to unload it while we have time." Item sold at 75%of base price.
- 12 "War's starting up, and lucky you a wagon train was waylaid by a cousin. Got plenty in stock." Item sold at half price.

[d8] Problems with the Black Market

1 A brigand leader has entered into the field and is looking to make a name for themselves, they're undercutting the local marketers and selling quality goods, often stolen from nearby villages. Mottagreu has put out a bounty, but he wants all the goods back unscathed.

2 The Kingdom has sent a small cadre of crowners and hedge knights to break up any smuggling activities. A report does need to be sent back to the south, so the black market is open to ideas on mitigating their losses.

3 A Giant has taken note of wagon trains carrying supplies out of the Rift. That which it hasn't killed has been taken to its sleeping grounds.

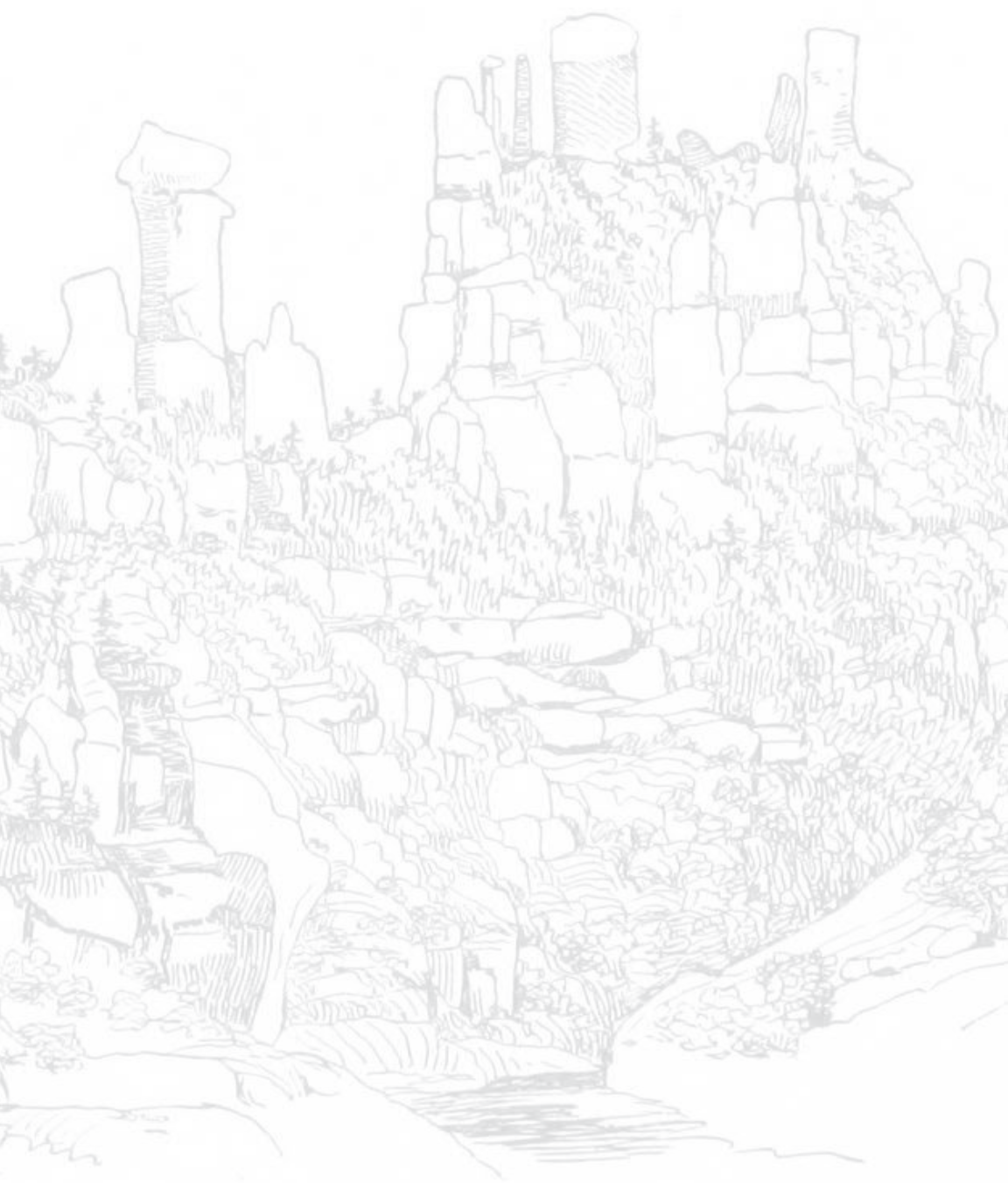
4 Brigands have been taking up teamster work to gather more resources, but they've struck against the Barghesknecht. The goblin mercenaries are going to take down the black market until they get sixteen heads for every dog-soldier lost.

5 Bonn-Bowery torched a wagon on the trail, he hasn't explained why, people aren't willing to trade with the black market if they're risking death by fire. Bonn believed a Fiend to be present within that wagon, he needs proof now. He'll teach a Norn-ritual for aid, offering it openly to those not of the Heliopapacy, calling it his pagan faith of bondage.

6 Sickleman Sterling has been targeted for assassination by brigands, so any smuggler who enters town is getting a long inspection and this might cause violence all the same.

7 Mad Mottagreu's teamsters have been kidnapped by bandits who are holding them and his loot hostage. He wants their heads, and the market cannot operate if he doesn't get them.

8 Bonn-Bowery and Mad Mottagreu are in a spat, as such Sickleman Sterling has taken to bribing and blackmailing teamsters so the Guild can muscle in on the territory. Nobody but Sterling is happy about this.



To Travel the Rift of Mar-Milloir

THE HILLS, VALLEYS AND MOUNTAINS of Mar-Milloir are as treacherous as its people. The roads have gone unused and left to the element for ages, used only on occasion by wanderers, pilgrims, and agents of the enemy kingdom. Potholes, mudslides, and cracks in the cobblestone make fast foes of horses, mules, and wagon wheels.

Travel by foot is made at a rate of **one 8-mile hex** per day when going downhill, or through wood or valley. Travel by foot is made at a rate of a **half hex** or **4 miles** per day when going uphill or across mountainous terrain. With appropriate mounts, guides and equipment overland travel through wood or valley can be made at **two 8-mile hexes** per day, and uphill or over-mountain travel at a rate of **one 8-mile hex** per day.

Hills are hexes that are mostly hilly or when one is heading towards a mountain. Valleys are generic and may be represented however one pleases though generally they are found going downhill. Forests are areas covered mostly in trees regardless of other terrain. Mountains are hexes with mountains in them.

The chance for random encounters is determined by activity as follows:

- † **Hunting or Foraging** — **3-in-6** chance.
- † **Travelling on Road or Path** — **2-in-6** chance.
- † **Travelling through Wilderness** — **3-in-6** chance.
- † **Camping (with Fire)** — **4-in-6** chance.
- † **Camping (without Fire)** — **2-in-6** chance.
- † **Military March** — **1-in-6** chance.

Having henchmen for a watch or keeping watch yourself can reduce the chance of a random encounter at camp by **1-in-6**. Having a borderer or huntsman for foraging or hunting reduces encounter chances by **1-in-6** for each employed (to a minimum of **1-in-6**). Having a guide or accurate map of the region reduces chances of random encounters on the road or through the wilderness by **1-in-6** for each employed.

Guides, huntsmen, henchmen and maps of a local **seven-hex** cluster can be purchased at villages in the Rift, though cartographers may be employed by the enemy to lead people astray or into horrifying traps.



Camping in the Rift

The wilderness of the Rift is abandoned enough that man may find refuge in its clutches. Making camp in safe and hospitable places can help one recover from the ravages and travails of the road.

[d6] **Where shall we camp within the valley?**

- 1 Under the boughs of a solitary tree, to keep away from the elements.
- 2 In a copse of sunflowers, for blessed are those who keep their scent.
- 3 In a clearing not far from an old deer-path, it seems safe enough.
- 4 Under a rocky outcropping, it will keep the heat close to us at night.
- 5 In a long abandoned hunter's shack, its walls will keep out wayward beasts.
- 6 At a long untended shrine to the sacred sun, so as to drive off nightmares.

[d6] **Where shall we camp in these woods?**

- 1 Beneath the poplars and pines, where it smells of pleasant yuletides.
- 2 Near a fallen elm, secure enough for us to easily make our tents.
- 3 By a small babbling brook, so we may easily drink our fill.
- 4 In a circle of stones, clearly constructed by man and thus a place animals will fear to tread.
- 5 In a long abandoned herbalist's shack, it smells strongly of spices and may have resources to plunder.
- 6 In a clearing, so we may gaze up at the night sky and reorient ourselves by the stars.

[d6] **Where shall we camp upon these hills?**

- 1 In the ruins of an abbey, such a place will keep out wayward spirits no matter the strength of its walls.
- 2 Atop the hill, where the wind doesn't seem to blow. We can see for miles from here.
- 3 At the base of the hill, low enough to avoid detection from any would-be wanderers.
- 4 At the edge of the hill, where the ground is level enough to not worry about losing any equipment to a tumble in the high grass.
- 5 In a field of lavender which grows on the shady side of the hill, its balmy aura will keep away parasites.
- 6 In the stony field of First Men dolmens, for our ancestors will watch over us.

[d6] **Where shall we camp upon this mountain?**

- 1 In a small crag, hard enough to see from the path, stable enough to support us all.
- 2 On a small ledge, high enough to avoid detection, wide enough to be secure.
- 3 On the only clear path up the mountain, and damn the consequences.
- 4 In a small outcropping, tenuous though it seems.
- 5 Under a shelf of rock, it will remain dry should rain come.
- 6 Upon a steppe plateau, there is room enough here to spread out and stretch our legs.

Villages in Mar-Milloir

Long abandoned by any true or proper rule, the villages in Mar-Milloir cling to old styles and rustic craftsmanship. Rare is it that they may survive decades enough to have a name. Most have been ruins more than once, and by your hand, may again return to a broken state.

[d8] What does this village look like?

1 A series of decrepit hovels, thatched roves and broken fences. They are built around a hill, atop of which sits a ruined keep which lacks walls enough to protect itself. The folk here whisper to one another, as if fearing an unseen foreign hand might bring about their doom.

2 A chain of homes, signs of exquisite masonry, built precariously upon a curving ridge. Small gardens are interspersed between the homes, and each chimney bustles with sweet smelling smoke at all hours of the day. The folk here don't pay much mind to strangers, but keep their eyes on the weapons they carry.

3 A collective of tents within a large stockade of spear-sharp wood. The tents are constructed around a single large meeting house and a large bonfire sits outside it. The air here reeks of misery and recent strife. Every man, woman, and child here looks like they might die by the rising of the morning sun.

4 The classical architecture of the village is interrupted by the brute and imposing church of the old Heliopapacy, which eclipses the town in darkness with its height. A bell of brass, emblazoned with skulls and tongues of flame hangs limply in its belfry.

5 This village is located upon rolling hills, well-tended for agriculture and growing aubergines and all manner of cabbages. A manor sits upon the highest hill, surrounded by a wrought iron fence; almost entirely devoured by ivy.

6 A bustling little burgh of woodcutters, fur trappers, and beet farmers who live in brick homes made from the deconstructed masonry of an abandoned abbey which sits on the outskirts of the village. The folk here are pleasant enough, or so it seems.

7 An imposing gothic fortress with a prominent brass bell, emblazoned with images of flames, looms over a walled town of broken, derelict houses. Signs of sieges, both recent and antiquated, mar the stonework.

8 A wattle-and-daub village of homes built around an almshouse at the top of a hill. It is surrounded by an orchard and a well-tended wood. Gamefowl and mountain lemons are numerous, though each has an odd reddish tinge to their flesh.

[d8] **On what authority does its leader hold power?**

1 **By ancient noble blood**, the leader holds sway over the populace. They carry a signet ring of antiquated make. They bare all the worst signs of inbreeding.

2 **By virtue of being the eldest**, the leader is respected by the community. But with age comes delusion and fear for change. They are certainly opposed by some upstart.

3 **By might**, and the bloody means to wield it, the leader rules this village. For all their bluster and bravado, they will have enemies. Greater violence will see them deposed.

4 **By beauty alone**. The leader here has beguiled the populace with their beauty and grace. Their words are like a serpent's silver, and the folk are easily seduced by it.

5 **By way of faith**. Hunched and hobbled, a Heliopapist Theotarch holds dominion over the village. His seven pointed hat of brass filigree is tarnished, and his words are doomsaying and hateful.

6 **By way of sacrifice**. Stoic and maimed, the leader here holds the people together in unified purpose having suffered for their sake in the past. The act they were harmed in is better left unsaid.

7 **By way of greed**. The leader is a crowner, a tax collector, who carved out a small fief in the Rift by virtue of having enough coin to bribe and barter for power. The people don't care about them, and when the money runs out, the leader will be run out of town.

8 **By fear and complacency**. The severed head of a giant, chained to a stone slab, speaks wisdom to those who feed it live chickens. It has long fallen into a malaise, but death will not come. It has learned to appreciate the offerings of poultry.



[d8] **What sort of goods do they have?**

1 **Timber**, as hard as iron, yet easily worked. It burns a strange silvery red, but is somehow cold to the touch.

2 **Iron**, as soft as clay when properly handled. It shimmers white when forged under a full moon.

3 **Radishes, beets, cabbages and aubergines**; some as big as your head. They taste exquisite though often take up unpleasant features by way of pareidolia.

4 **Pottery and cutlery**, exquisitely crafted in a style that is beginning to make a comeback in the south but is old hat up here.

5 **Acid and lime**, dredged up from some terrible cave beneath a mound. Very potent, possibly cursed.

6 **Glue**, made from the hooves of stags from the nearby wood. The paste is resilient and waterproof.

7 **Heavy winter clothing**, composed from thick leathers and heavy fur. They all smell greasy.

8 **Bones** from beneath a nearby mound and taxidermied corvids. They are, apparently, quite popular.



[d12] **What on earth are they eating in the tavern?**

- 1 A stew of leeks, drippy cheese, and rabbit squab.
- 2 Braised squirrel stuffed with wild onions.
- 3 A heavy pot of boiled spiral-shelled snails over raw eggs.
- 4 Some wretched broth of boiled bone and egg shells.
- 5 Plump brown mushrooms stuffed with gooey garlic.
- 6 Large salads of endives, chestnut, and escarole.
- 7 Slices from hardened loaves of bread, dipped in a meat sauce.
- 8 A perforated cheese wheel sealed with beef gelatin and brown mountain lemons.
- 9 Pickle tarts with quail meat puffs.
- 10 Strawberry preserves spread over a hearty seeded bun.
- 11 Hard boiled eggs in a cheesy onion glaze.
- 12 Roasted lamb shanks, sautéed in a blueberry sauce.



[d8] **What do they fear most?**

- 1 Being forced to pay taxes to anyone, especially southern dandies who have done them no favors.
- 2 The wicked men who live in the nearby woods who wish to set their homes aflame.
- 3 The perfidious serpent wyrm who lurks close enough to poison all they hold dear.
- 4 The ancient whispers of the First Men, whose spirits dance in the sky and upon the mounds on nights of the full moon.
- 5 Another year of barren wombs and cackling fiends who laugh out curses from the hilltops.
- 6 Foreigners, much like you, who are going to cause all manner of trouble.
- 7 The Heliopapist reformation, which is sure to see at least a few people burned at the stake.
- 8 Military intervention from the south, coming in and breaking the spirits of people who just want to be left alone.

[d12] **What do they call this place?**

- 1 Chateau d'Houngur, or Liebghest.
- 2 Boundelwick, or Slound-et-Muntag.
- 3 Grouspointe, or Grokkenheiss.
- 4 Gundelmount, or Rookery Point.
- 5 Mound d'Avacci, or Hilltopple.
- 6 Tolk-and-Wisecockle, or Crundenmitt.
- 7 Old Sunterrue, or New Heliocopia
- 8 Laccer Roi, or The Village of the Safferous Mill.
- 9 Haupterskilt, or Yandelcombe.
- 10 Heshshigick, or Grykkelrue.
- 11 Bastion d'Prue, or Fort Ondolon.
- 12 Mont-Lemonte, or Stendragg.

Caves & Crypts in Mar-Milloir

The First Men dug deep and struck the earth for its sweet meats, dominating lesser wyrms and consuming all that could be feasted upon. In time they would bury their own beneath the mounds, and later cultures would follow suit.



[d6] How deep does this dark place go?

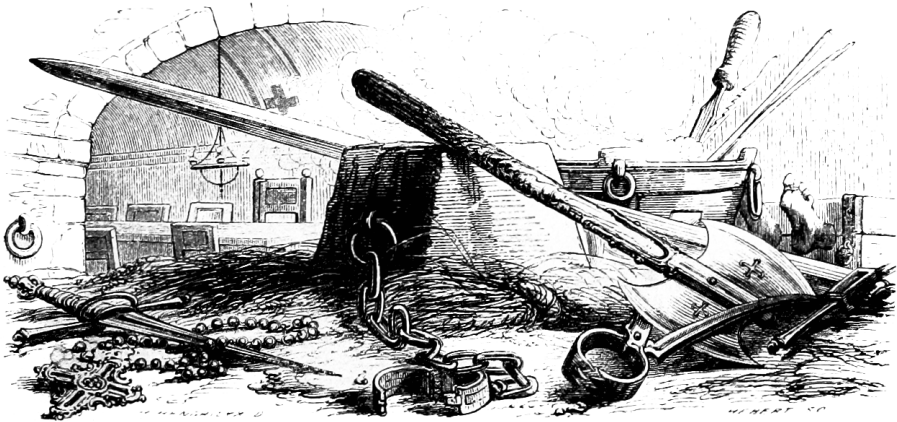
- 1 Not far. This place is not deep, but it is broad. A central chamber like the belly of a jar, with a slightly curled away back chamber where no elements can easily reach.
- 2 A ways. This place is long and narrow, spreading out like capillary veins. It is awkward to navigate through, and the few chambers large enough for habitation offer great resistance to any would-be invader.
- 3 It goes deep. This place is organized in crude chambers which circle around, digging ever deeper, towards a central circular chamber of antiquated masonry. The air here is dry and bitter to the throat.
- 4 Deep and dark it goes. Cave-ins and sinkholes have opened up new chambers, and the walls of loose earth and treacherous stone give no warning when it shall shift again. The air tastes wet and choking.
- 5 Darker and deeper than one could dare, this labyrinthine complex is half-collapsed yet shows recent signs of excavation. Bones of old are occasionally seen in the wall, grasping, clutching, warning of what lurks beneath.
- 6 It goes deep into places where man now fears to tread. Steep stairs of slick stone, natural or otherwise, spiral and slink into shadows. The walls are too tight to move through beyond a sidle. Chambers are built with high perches. The air tastes here like the dying breath of a pauper.

[d12] **What sign of habitation is present?**

- 1 **Candles** can be found, still malleable, wicks still warm.
- 2 **Blood**, still wet, upon the floor. Slick, still smelling richly of iron.
- 3 **Bones**, brittle, hollow; occasionally showing a small tatter of flesh and cloth.
- 4 A few empty **bottles of wine**, a spilled bowl of stew; though ripe with rot.
- 5 The acrid **stench of urine** and other unpleasant spoors of mannish make.
- 6 A few **discarded playing cards**, half-ruined by mildew and moisture.
- 7 **Distant shadows**, as if something is watching.
- 8 An **errant cough**, from just out of sight.
- 9 The **echo of someone calling out**, “Is there someone there?” yet distorted.
- 10 A **sleeping human** being underneath a flimsy blanket, shivering in the cold. Dazed.
- 11 A **prisoner**, terrified, furious, pleading; chained to the ground and recently knifed.
- 12 A **crackling campfire**, though there’s no one around to appreciate it for the moment.

[d8] **What sort of treasure might I find here?**

- 1 A beetle-consumed skeleton, they've left behind anything of metal. A **golden tooth**, a **wedding band**, and a **few iron nails** where a heart once beat.
- 2 A half-buried foot locker, the padlock aged and easy enough to break. Contains a **journal**, a **knife**, and a **pouch of 2d12 golden coins** from a long antiquated regime.
- 3 An altar to some ancient, hellish cult. A **black book**, bound in human flesh, containing profane spells. A **wicked knife** that feels like cancer for your soul when touched.
- 4 A **collection of paintings and objet d'art** from one of the kingdoms, kept here under canvas. They appear to be freshly stored here, and likely freshly looted.
- 5 An **iron circlet**, stylized with embellishments resembling boars and eels. A tell-tale trophy of the First Men.
- 6 A **ring of keys**, placed upon a spire of stone, they are of a pristine cleanliness. It is unclear what they might unlock.
- 7 Broken crates, having fallen in here off the back of a wagon. The wine bottles within are shattered, but the **cheese wheels** have aged to a strangely exquisite vintage.
- 8 A **fine bit of barding** for a horse, located a few feet away from the rime-damaged corpse of the previous wearer.



[d8] **What manner of creature lurks within?**

1 Rabid and ruinous are the **cave bears** of the Rift, ancient enemies of the First Men, their doomful claws scraped once at the sky to paint the auroras in the blood of the void.

2 Insane and wicked are many who seek out the doctrines of the old Heliopapacy, these **fallen sunseekers** seek out the dark places so as to see the light of their innermost glow.

3 A pack of **wolves**, denning here, appreciating the sanctuary and safety as best they can.

4 **Brigands**, seeking out some temporary refuge whilst they plot their next move.

5 The wretched **sprot** of the nephilim, mannish in size, but bestial in intellect.

6 **Crowhounds**, wild and wretched. They've eaten the marrow out of any old nearby bones, and surely hunger for more. Their tattered hides dance with the glints of stolen gold trinkets.

7 A **wyrm**, a dragon, it rests here for the moment. It is aware of any interlopers. It will remember their scent. It will obsess over devouring them once its slumber is over.

8 **The restless dead**, spirits which stir like lime smoke and run ragged like a lover's hand over long nameless bones. The moon demands they spite those who hold in their hearts the sun.



Brigands

Men find their way into wickedness too easily, even in lands without such dire conflict. Brigands and bandits run ragged through the Rift, participating in acts of horror that can never be undone.



[d6] What made these men turn to brigandry?

- 1 **Famine.** Without enough food to go around, they ate their horses, and when things grew dire still they turned to wicked means to fill their bellies.
- 2 **Greed.** The glint of gold and stolen wealth stirs the hearts of these wicked men. They take personal trophies, sentimental things; things that no one can ever get back.
- 3 **Nationalism.** They started by killing the enemies of their kingdom, but the bloodlust and the plunder kept them going. They think themselves patriots, entirely in the right.
- 4 **Retribution.** Vengeance is a poison to the soul, one imbibed richer than any alcohol. They killed hated foes, and in that killing found new slights to avenge.
- 5 **Hate.** Few can conceive of a being who lacks the capacity for love to such dastardly ends. They desire violence, the release they feel while engaged in it provides them the only small comfort their hearts will hold.
- 6 **Despair.** They suffered at the hands of one of Mar-Milloir's many calamities, and in desperation turned to violence and theft. They feel great shame, but cannot absolve themselves of their guilt.

[d8] What manner of unrelenting horror is their leader?

- 1 A sadist beyond measure, wielding a razorous scourge, too much joy in their eyes.
- 2 A burnt slab of a man, with crushing hands and great sorrow in his eyes.
- 3 A woman with a crossbow, with detached coldness that says she will never again suffer.
- 4 A young man with a sabre, he knows he's right, he's never been wrong yet.
- 5 A soldier, still half-dressed in uniform, burdened greatly by the weight of actions taken.
- 6 An ogress of a noble, her hair up too high; those who do not lick her boot have their eyes gouged.
- 7 A horse thief, craven and cruel. He received this position through no desire of his own. He wants to flee.
- 8 A mercenary, still furious about payments never received. They'll butcher anyone to get the red cents they were promised.

[d6] What would make them capable of bargaining?

- 1 Burn down a village, crucify their leader; then they'll respect you.
- 2 Food of exquisite quality and fine alcohol, small comforts they've not enjoyed in a long while.
- 3 A few well placed rumors, enough to sow dissent, enough to make them open to negotiate.
- 4 The head of their enemies, on a silver platter. Literally.
- 5 An overwhelming show of force would make them consider calling any conflict a draw.
- 6 A display of magic, something that would make them believe the Sun yet shines for them.



The Wurm

MUCH AS A DEVIL OR FIEND is born from primal powers and fallen angelic hosts, a dragon is born from the collective energy of sin; of harsh and harmful desire to achieve something beyond the divine plottings of the sacred Sun and man's holy interpretation.

[d8] **This serpent, this wyrm, of what sin was it born ?**

- 1 Pride. Born of a pride that the divine did not deserve, born of a pride that would cast the world in flame for one's own petty pleasures.
- 2 Born of a carnal desire to hold that which it deemed beautiful in bondage, it usurped and consumed all those it could not control.
- 3 Of long-waiting hate, this serpent was born to behold the start and the end of all things, to squander lives of lesser beings in fear of its presence.
- 4 For desire of temporary things, for gold enough to bribe any god or gatekeeper, to hoard such things until it rivals even the highest mountain that scrapes the firmament.
- 5 Gluttony.
- 6 This wyrm was born from perdition's flame, to serve as lash and scourge to any and all who question its dominion.
- 7 This wyrm was born of misplaced desire turned venomous, it desired to be greater than what it was; to hold even more power.
- 8 This wyrm sought to usurp the Sun, it sought to devour it and be worshipped in its stead. It desires apotheosis and will destroy anything to achieve it.

[d8] **Of what sickly sallow is its flesh ?**

- 1 Pale as a corpse's flesh, with a waxy sallow to it. It has no scales, it is like a great naked cat.
- 2 Red as a flushed and humiliated nobleman who'd put a thousand cities to the torch.
- 3 Green as a leper left to die in a bog, with scales like those of some serpent of ancient times.
- 4 Gold, gold enough to shimmer and drive the mind's of man into reckless ambition.
- 5 Brown and shaggy, with hints of yellow and damnable circles and patterns like the glatisant.
- 6 Blue, hexagonal scales, they shift in coloration in hue like the ocean in a storm.
- 7 Tawny, furred, riddled with cysts and gnats; like a lion left to rot after choking to death on a battlefield.
- 8 Black, as black as any night held without stars. Black as a night when the abyss stares back, watching, waiting, hoping to snuff out any light which dare interrupt its void.

[d8] For what does it hunger?

1 The dragon must remove from their prey their innocence to gain any sustenance. They will butcher a family while locking eyes with a child, so as to feast on the growing fear of the future.

2 Sorrow sustains the wyrm, the relentless abuse and terror of a pain that will never cease, of an agony that will only begin again once it seems to finally end.

3 The wails of the maimed are a feast to the wyrm. The screams of a man when his bones buckle, when his ribs break, taste sweeter than the meat ever would.

4 The dragon must feast on bones of the long dead, only the fermented marrow will give them sustenance.

5 This serpent feeds off the prolonged agony of the diseased, it cultivates contagion and drinks deep the pain they inflict.

6 Smoke is drunk deeply by the wyrm, intoxicating as any wine. Those who choke to death on smoke are especially delicious.

7 Shattered loyalties, broken oaths, and creating treacheries provides the wyrm with something fiercer than the most aphrodisiacal high.

8 Hope. To consume hope, to let mortal man know they will never oppose it, grants the dragon bliss and sustenance.

[d6] How can it be killed, if the legends are to be believed?

1 It must be throttled with a noose of virgin's hair.

2 It must be impaled upon a church spire.

3 It must be drowned in blessed waters after its tongue is consumed.

4 It must be gouged in the eyes and locked in a cage of brass where every bar cuts its flesh.

5 It must be pulled apart by wild horses who were born on a moonless winter night.

6 It must swallow a church bell, which will cause it to speak with the voice of the Sun, before immolating.

Giants

ANCIENT GODS BORE CHILDREN WITH MORTALS, though too large for their mothers they burst forth and had to be nursed in the womb of the world. Nephilim, giants, wretched man-eaters, scourges of the world. They defy the sacred Sun, they bring ruin to the world of man.

[d6] **This wretched nephilim, this giant of old; how does it defy the sacred Sun?**

1 Its unearthly frame mimics the moon in its craterous and pock-marked hide.

2 Its hairy mane dances in manifold ways, mocking the bursts of the Sun.

3 Its massive size calls clouds to it, blotting out the most holy of lights.

4 Its breath steals away the heat of life from those in its domain, driving them insane.

5 Its existence condemns morality, its presence preaches in thrumming drums, an atavistic truth.

6 It bares the marks of ten-thousand attempts at its execution. It is a walking genocide of heroes, a graveyard made mannish. It is the futility of aspiration.

[d8] **Of what malign purpose is its shape?**

1 Its body appears constructed by hands and claws of stone, wrapped and interlocked.

2 It is giant and shaggy, like a cave bear stuffed inside the loose frame of a man.

3 It is fleshless, eternally bleeding pollutants of black ichor which grow teeth upon the land.

4 It has seven breasts which hang limp, nursing carrion birds. It crawls like an animal.

5 Its body is solid, rough but solid, with a texture similar to iron. It delights in crushing things.

6 Built like a bull, with the hands of a man, it tears into the land with brutal, defiant strength.

7 It appears to be made of rime and frozen air, stolen words appear carved into its dermis.

8 It has the great shell of a tortoise upon its back, with undead knights impaled upon its scutes and worn on its fingers like horrible rings.

[d8] **Of what wicked mein is its visage?**

- 1 Its **smile is as big as the moon**, its teeth like spears, narrow, eternally grinning.
- 2 It bares a **single eye** which gazes manifold into life, death, and pre-birth. Men see terrible reflections in its glow.
- 3 Its head appears like that of a **lion**, with thick mane and hateful fangs meant for feasting on meat.
- 4 Its face appears like that of a **regal noblewoman**, its lips stained with blood, its eyes hypnotically calm and detached.
- 5 Its face is featureless, like a **lump of clay**. It painfully develops jaws, eyes, and whatever feature is needed when it so deigns to.
- 6 Its head is like **the gripping claw of an angry god**, with no eyes or ears or mouth; yet still it speaks and sees and knows.
- 7 Its head is **decapitated** and carried at its side, it mourns the world, it belches forth bats and apocalypse.
- 8 Its visage is like that of **an old man** who has committed every crime and found only bitterness in his pursuit of yet unknown, unthought of travesties.

[d6] **What trophy does it carry, in mockery of man?**

- 1 A **gilded chariot** of antiquated make, worn as a codpiece.
- 2 Its ears are pierced with **mighty swords** kept in a bundle, bound in entrails.
- 3 **Shields and spears**, crudely made into ankle-guards, with a dead body crushed in for paste.
- 4 A large bag of man-leather and other furs, containing in it **children, pilgrims, and horses**, crudely piled upon one another for a snack later this day.
- 5 A rather nice **boulder**, which they like the shine of. Contains **gold and rubies** if properly mined.
- 6 A **warchest** of the kingdoms, worn on the belt due its beautifully lacquered wood. Contains **several hundred gold coins**, and the **skull of an officer**.



The Fiend

OF THE MANY UNTETHERED HORRORS which lurk the world, those of spirits fallen from grace. Wicked things, scorched in perdition's flame, scorned by the sacred sun; too often do they find sanctuary in the hateful ambitions of mortal men.

[d12] **This fiend, in whose hoary heart does it find sanctuary?**

- 1 It has found a home within a **pilgrim**, stoked by hatred of where he's been.
- 2 In the mind of an **antiquarian**, who hates the modern world.
- 3 In the heart of a **cossack**, who desires the obliteration of hated foes.
- 4 It lurks behind the smile of a **village rake**, who the women fear for good reason.
- 5 It dwells in the eyes of **the tavern maid**, who lusts for a better life.
- 6 In the deep recesses of a **black goat**, who owes the fiend a grand favor.
- 7 In the flesh of a **holy-man**, long corrupted by ancient heretical texts of a brass Sun.
- 8 In the wicked heart of a **little girl** who has watched her father smack her mother too many times.
- 9 In the laughter of **the kind old seamstress**, who wishes to live most deliciously.
- 10 In the heavy heart of **the oldest man in the village**, who fears death more than damnation.
- 11 In the cunning of a **fox**, who watches in windows and plots dire schemes.
- 12 In the hand of a **foreign assassin**, who fears where this new talent for death-dealing has come from.

[d6] **According to sacred scripture, what can be done to stop it?**

- 1 The possessed must be prayed over while the fiend has projected away from the body. This can stun the fiend in its tracks.
- 2 The one who bares the fiend must be crucified and swallow a glass of holy flame, this will make the fiend manifest.
- 3 Death by drowning is the only way to keep the fiend from escaping and possessing a new host.
- 4 The host must be bound and blindfolded and placed under a church bell, which must then ring for thirteen hours straight. This will shatter the fiend.
- 5 Seal every orifice of the host shut with sacred wax, this will prevent the demon from escaping.
- 6 The fiend must be challenged on unhallowed ground, this is the only way it will willingly depart a host.

[d8] Of what sin and betrayal was born its fall?

- 1 It coveted the sun, and in knowing it could never be so luminous, lost its mind.
- 2 It coveted the warmth granted to the First Men, and cultivated fire for which it must be punished.
- 3 It saw the love mankind received and feared there would not be love enough for itself. Such fear turned to hate.
- 4 It was predestined to fall, and upon realization, fell from malaise into madness.
- 5 The prayers of man drove its fall, it heard wicked things and blames humanity for it.
- 6 It defied the sun and sought to be its own star, to warm man. It was stripped and thrown to Earth, and out of fear was reviled and hated by humanity.
- 7 Disgusted by humanity and the change to a reformed Heliopapacy, it descended and suffered every indignity as a result.
- 8 It was a Norn of Old, stripped of fated thread and burnt into fiendish form by the sacred Sun.

[d4] What will become of the soul of that which bore it?

- 1 The soul of the possessed is obliterated, sucked back into Hell with the fiend.
- 2 The soul is damaged beyond repair, sending the possessed into a state of permanent flesh-peeling madness.
- 3 The soul is tempered by such intrusion, granting the possessed a stoked flame imperishable and the means to sense other demons.
- 4 The soul will forever harbor the seed of evil, and from it will be born a new fiend every thirteen months.



The First Men

RESTLESS DEAD of man's ambitious birth form, crypt things and specters, the undead. Scabrous and rotting, they seek to avenge old crimes, to herald dark times, and to feel for a moment, the joys of life long lost.

[d10] **What horrific form does this specter of a more primitive age manifest as?**

- 1 An amalgamated mass of broken bodies, melded together with spectral Norn-thread.
- 2 Skeletal with its flesh and muscle pulled back like a cloak caught by a gust of wind.
- 3 Petrified flesh and gristle cling tight to bone, its eyes shine with baleful flame.
- 4 Spectral save for organs which linger in mid-air, and a torc upon its neck.
- 5 A nude form of opalescent flesh, its face masked in a waxen shroud.
- 6 A spectral form composed of red flies and grave dust, its human form a mere figment.
- 7 Bestial crouching form, its head a cobbled together mass half-wolf and half-man.
- 8 A jawless skull which floats, a body of fog and starlight appears beneath it.
- 9 A hunched skeleton form, burdened with jewelry, its eyes embedded with golden coins.
- 10 A muscular form of raw-red muscle and bloody bones, ghoulish and hateful.

[d6] **This ancient dead yet lingers, what shackles it to this mortal realm?**

- 1 Vengeance upon an old foe, it must strike down their descendent or be broken by them.
- 2 Its mound was robbed, it cannot rest until each ancient coin is returned to the earth.
- 3 A Giant's black milk drowned out its grave. It must see mortals destroy the nephilim.
- 4 One of their descendents has brought dishonor to the clan, they must be broken.
- 5 They are not to be freed until a wyrm-born apocalypse. It seeks to rouse the monsters.
- 6 Its fate was stolen by a Fiend which yets walks the Rift. It must be broken.

[d6] **The First Men worshipped profane and ancient gods, what boons were they granted?**

- 1 They can taste the hidden visceral wants of mortal men on the winds.
- 2 They know always the location of stolen lucre, and to make such coinage filthy with a whim.
- 3 To force a dread secret to be spoken by those they touch.
- 4 To snuff out flames with a rasp of their breath.
- 5 To chill metal to brittleness with a clutch of their hand.
- 6 To curse mortals such that all food turns to ash in their mouth til a boon is done.

[d6] **On nights of the full moon they appear upon the mounds. How do they move?**

- 1 It dances, limbs outstretched to embrace the starlight. It laughs and leaps.
- 2 It lays upon the mound and gazes up at the heaven, dead fingers brush the grasses.
- 3 It stomps the war-dance of a hunter, cackling and boasting of boars and beasts once devoured.
- 4 It slinks through the air like an eel of the ether, like smoke, like wind. It rolls and twists.
- 5 It strolls casual, comfortable, and mist follows it.
- 6 It lurks in the shadows, leaping from point to point without sound. It breaks twigs in its hands to see mortal things jump in shock.

Random Encounters in Mar-Milloir

Below are 20 generic random encounters for the Rift, as well as 10 random encounters for Hills, Forests, and Mountains.

- 1 A small river runs through here, with ample savory eels making their home within. Wolves can be seen in the distance, hunting a deer as it flees. It is likely they've spotted you.
- 2 An abandoned cottage, filled entirely with clocks on every conceivable surface. A fiend will emerge at 3:33 in the morning to make sure each clock still ticks. It will follow any clock thief to the nearest village and begin a series of murders.
- 3 Brigands, scouting for their master, have set up a toll station. They demand an unfair wage, but will speak openly about their master as if to impress you.
- 4 A pilgrim sits on the side of a hill, observing the sky and pressing wildflowers into a book.
- 5 Crowhounds gather around a lonely pine, atop which sits a crowner from the south, sent to collect long unpaid taxes. The crowhounds hunger for gold and marrow-meat. The crowner is crying.
- 6 There's a small campsite of travellers, a Guildsman and a Barghestknecht with his horrible goblin wife. The Guildsman keeps trying to bite the toothed helm of the Barghestknecht. The Barghestknecht keeps licking his flustered wife's stubby fingers as a show of devotion. None are drunk, though will claim to be in order to save face.
- 7 Agents of the foreign kingdom, wandering around in search of myrrh and blessed springs. They're willing to trade in rumors (all lies) in exchange for information they will also assume are lies.
- 8 A wayward Sprot has flipped over a wagon, spilling wool and dairy everywhere. It has just begun pulling apart the driver of the wagon when the party sees this. His wife shrieks in horror.
- 9 For a brief moment, spectral shapes can be seen on the wind. They seem to sing a request for the party to dance with them upon the nearest hill. If rebuked, they'll call the party cowards.
- 10 A rockslide caused by a fissure begins to tear up the land, breaking trees, rousing up mountains, and opening new caves to dark places beneath the earth.
- 11 The sky reveals the Norn, beautiful beings of golden hair, lounging about. A string of gold lays limp, dangling down to the earth. They watch with casual interest to see if someone might tug on the strings of fate.
- 12 A set of dolmens built by the First Men, stand here. A crypt thing has been dragged to the surface. Its head is buried underground during the day. At night it sits and bemoans a rock it cannot move so it may yet again slumber. It assumes anyone not as tattooed and scabrous as it to be tomb robbers.

13 A wyrm sits on a large fallen tree, watching like a cat as the world passes it by. It will engage in conversation, even offer to go kill everyone the party has recently met. It is incredibly bored. It will leap into a rage if made further bored or if insulted.

14 A tree and a stone, with a large length of chains between them and a dozen or so locks hung upon the chain. If somehow unlocked, a chill rattles through the air and a distant mountain collapses into nothing, its dust clouding the sky for the next two years.

15 A merchant and her family from a nearby village, on route to the next village. Is easily intimidated. Is also the cause of one of the rumors originally heard by the party. Offers goods at a fair enough rate.

16 A group of fallen sunseekers, posing as anchorites of the reformed papacy. They will speak kindly to any religious type until it becomes clear they are of on other sides of a schism. They will then fight until dead or routed.

17 A cave bear, sleeping after having gorged itself too deeply on blueberries.

18 A Huntsman and Academic, unhappy agents of the Chancellor, they seek to find a way to have someone else do their dirty work for them. They know the location of a nearby dark place, which they will trade for information on a nearby village. They will claim to be following a map left by Saxon Reiss, but they both think it to be a forgery.

19 A giant slumbers here, half-consumed by the landscape. If one were to wake it, it would commit destruction on the surrounding hexes, devouring villages, and pulping up people. It is very much asleep.

20 The corpse of a Hospitalier in Blue sits against a poplar, barely more than a skeleton in armor now. Flowers and mushrooms grow where flesh once was. Such items can make a fine healing poultice. The knight was killed by long gone crowhounds, her bones break brittle when touched.



[d10] **Random Encounters [Hills]**

1 **Resurrectionists** out of Inkqwist, agents of the Countess. They're looking for First Men, to bottle their dead and boil their bones.

2 **Kestrels** circle high in the air, whispering dooms to those who know the tongue of the Norn. The doom is fast approaching, a giant is stirring from its slumber in a nearby hex.

3 The **restless dead** dig into the earth but gain now headway, the door to their mound is sealed with blessed scarlet wax. They are furious at this intrusion and further furious at its broader implications.

4 An abandoned campsite, food still left on the roasting spit, tents still filled with goods. Blood lingers on the periphery of the camp, almost in a perfect circle. Screams echo over the moot of the hill, but no one is around to make such sounds.

5 **Cave bears**, a mother and several cubs, they feast on wild berries and the young ones play. Any who approach the cubs will enrage the mother, and she will pursue until any threat is dead, mutilated, and devoured.

6 **Black marketeers**, burying goods in the side of a hill until "time's are tough enough." Will make small talk and share in rot-gut whiskey with anyone willing to assist with the shovel work.

7 A derelict battleground, corpses and rusted irons litter the hillside. **Corpse pickers** go about with shovels and wagons, some take the dead, some take their armaments. They're of meager spirits but wish the work done before something foul comes to feast on these bones.

8 **Young lovers** from a nearby village sit on the hillside, picnicking and having a day of it. They'll be terrified by violence or unkind demands. They have precious little to their wealth, save for a grandmother's blanket, a fine birch basket, and high quality egg toast with ham and wine.

9 **Wolves**, dozens of them, running through the hills. Lead by a vicious black wolf, its soul playing host to a **Fiend**. This wolf can talk, and it hungers. In exchange for the location of a nearby village or other, less armed travellers, it will provide a malign truth about existence.

10 A young woman wearing the armor of a **Hospitalier in Blue**. She knows not of its history, save that it belongs to an old blind man in her village, he pawned it to her in exchange for some papers. This woman is staunchly against getting involved in politics or the south, and if the party tries to coerce her she'll call them carpetbaggers and seek to poison their food.

[d10] **Random Encounters [Forests]**

1 A babbling brook which leads to a small pond filled with all manner of **luminescent mountain crayfish**, each about the size of a child's hand. When bothered they can bring the water around them to a boil. Discarded cookery on the edge of the pond reveal this is a commonly visited site.

2 **Huntsmen** from Grand Vandram are participating in marksmanship training, and festooned upon the trees are all manner of yellow ribbon that has been ripped ratty with buckshot. The lead hunter sits upon a tree bough, smoking a pipe and reading a book of propaganda as the young hunters do their best. They don't wish to be interrupted, but the young hunters will be enthralled by any fellow Hunter and offer rations in exchange for bold boasting tales.

3 A **votive shrine** in the form of a chalice basin carved half-way into a tree. Its waters taste of sappy but sweet liquors. Coins left in the basin will reveal the face bared upon it as a selenite moon beast. Those of uncertain faith who consume the water will begin to hear the whispers of the Mooncalf, until next they rest in the arms of civilization.

4 **Fallen Sunseekers**, lurking in a burnt out pit of wood, slathered in ashes, they beseech the Brass Sun for worthy opponents and fire enough to set the world ablaze. They rant insanely in their pit, and unless approached, will not hear any travellers over the sound of their reckless prayers.

5 **Deer** scamper through the woods, as if performing dressage. A **great white stag** with horns that glow like candles upon their tip, lays in court with doe to watch the performance. If struck with an arrow, the stag leaves behind only its antlers; its body fades into seafoam. It will then enter a period of *the Long Grey*.

6 By some unfortunate circumstance a **lost Sprout** is wandering through the woods, bawling like an insane baby and clawing up everything in its path. Its head is too heavy to fully lift off the ground, so it scrambles on all fours and gnaws on the duff of the forest floor.

7 A den of **crowhounds** beneath a fallen pine, their nest is littered with the corpses of brigands and villagers alike. They are currently dazzled by a beautiful silver sword, which they nuzzle and lick to a spit shine.

8 **Knight Botanists** out of Rendelvex, categorizing the flora and asking questions about the long-lost Hospitaliers in Blue. They are a more militant organization than their predecessor, and those who look of sickly bent to them will be burnt. They wear plague doctor's masks upon their helmets, and keep an arquebus at the ready. Even their horses are masked.

9 A lonely **woodsman**, tending to his copse outside a cabin. Seems a gentle sort. Subscribes to a faith of ancient deities, marks the trees with their marks before he fells them as sacrifice. Doesn't care for the Heliopapacy, nor any other faith. Wants to be left alone, but will tend to wounds and serve squab stew out of ancient hospitality traditions.

10 **Shadows**, the size of children, dance behind trees and bushes, just far enough to obscure if they are merely children or something more malign. If someone is singing or playing a song, they will stop their games to watch. Those who brandish items of the First Men will have small stones and toadstools thrown towards them from a distance, as well as hearing cursing intonations in some ancient tongue ululated from the mouths of babes.

[d10] **Random Encounters [Mountains]**

1 **Rock and mud** crashes down from the mountain, miles away from where you are certainly, but devastating to any and all located in the adjacent hex downhill. From the dust cloud emerges the sight of a great and horrifying elder wyrm, who bedraggled and senile, is either engaged in coitus or devouring a cloud whale. Possibly both.

If watched long enough, the wyrm eats its fill and the burrows deep beneath the earth, hopefully to rest for a few hundred years. The hellmouth to the underground it leaves behind will surely be occupied by its spawn within a matter of months.

2 A **kestrel's** nest, littered with stray norn thread, eggs, and the bones of small animals. The bird sings of the dooms of man when it is coming and going from its nest, and those wise enough to listen my glean of wicked fortune to come.

3 Upon a ledge on the edge of the mountain sits an **elderly cossack** playing his triangular guitar and singing in his own special tongue a love ballad to the clouds. He knows what the weather will be on any given day, he was betrothed to a norn once but struck her in jest and lost her to the heavens. He doesn't care about the war, because love is what makes a war worth fighting.

4 One of the **Hospitaliers in Blue**, gaunt as a corpse but still alive. She has found an opalescent rose which she believes may save one of the good baron's daughters. She doesn't trust anyone else to return the item to the south, but firmly expects to die from starvation and exposure within the next few hours. If properly treated, she will reveal she found the flower in an icy meadow atop this mountain. There is a 75% chance this flower, when brewed in a tea, can cure plagues of exhaustion.

5 A group of **pilgrims** carrying handbells are wandering through the mountains. They offer little more than accusations and an annoying ringing of bells when they wish to interrupt "heathens." If the party abandons them or lets them "go on ahead", there is a 50% chance they will be dead by an avalanche or rock slide within the next day.

6 A triad of **Norn** sit upon a nearby cloud, feasting upon the ambrosia of the heavens. They are in good spirits and singing tales of heroes from ages past. If they realize someone is watching or if the party attempts to catch their attention, they will become irate and conjure up a Dire Frost as their banquet becomes a food fight.

7 **Brigands** have set up a toll road along the mountain path at the behest of their leader. They have fortified the route with a proper barricade, and while they will charge an egregious sum for travel permission, they can easily be swayed by offers of food and wine.

8 A large cavern can be found here, within it dwells a dozen **cave bears** who are hibernating until the coming war makes the landscape ripe with bodies for the scavenging. They've consumed and pooped out a number of items from the last time they devoured the remains on a battlefield; but getting such goods present many issues.

9 **Black Marketeers** from that dreadful foreign kingdom are making their way through the mountain, they carry strange goods and should not be trusted as they might be spies. In truth they report to **The Chancellor**, and are attempting to locate a famous painting for him. They'll trade lesser goods for any rumors about "objet d'art."

10 A **giant** sits upon the edge of the mountain, smoking a pipe constructed from a furnace and other well-crushed metals. Smoke bellows out of its orifices and it seems quite content to ignore anyone who'd bother it. The first person who speaks to it loses the first word they say, it is erased from their capacity to speak; and should they try to speak it aloud, horrible iron-scratching static emerges from their lips (deals d4 to creatures with sensitive ears).

If someone asks the giant what it has done, it'll roll its eyes and offer them a toke of its pipe. Constitution Save if partaking, on a pass, the party can now view fractal sky beings who gossip across the stars. Their voices are spoken in stolen words and music.



Weather in the Rift

Only the true and original *Star Almanac* held within the Cathedral Tempestuous of the Heliopapacy contains the unfailable and preordained truth of all weathers to come for the next five hundred years, allegedly offered up as dowry between a nun and the Norn.

Weather here is bizarre, and entirely optional. Roll here whenever it fits your whimsy.

[dr2]

1. Creeping Cold

A fog that spreads down from the topmost heights of the mountains, crisscrossing the ground like spectral rabbits being chased in a wild hunt. The Creeping Cold slows travel by gumming up boots with slush and freezing all water they touch with bitter snowy shrapnel. During a Creeping Cold it is best advised to sleep on a platform at least a foot above the ground, drink warm milk beer, and to be prescient that frost imps and lesser cold predators will lurk in the misty fog.

2. Dire Frost

The Norn and the occasional Giant are known to make their dinner plates in the flat clouds one can see sitting in the firmament above the dark glacier. Seldom is it that they have a peaceful meal, and during their tirades and petty domestic rages, they have a habit of flinging things from their proper places. During a Dire Frost, the sky rages with thunderstorms and spectral titanic limbs. Snow falls in strange sizes, big as trees, and stinking of honey mead and ozone. It is best advised to ignore the falling snows as best as one can, to reinforce any roof one might be under, and to harvest any snow that smells of food as it can be melted for use in healing teas.

3. Sky Serpents

In the dark night skies the sky serpents dance and play at romance with one another. Green and yellow, blue and scarlet, violet and orange when they make a perfect union; they brandish their scales which scintillate like the stars. Omens can be better discerned during the dancing of the Sky Serpents, but their love grows fickle when they realize mortals are watching their motions.

4. Cloud Whalings

The First Men first fed their kind by casting their spears into the pale blue sky and dragging down a bloated cloud. They cut it apart and from its fluffy nature he found blubber and sweetmeats enough to allow his people to survive a year and a day. When the weather is said to be Cloud Whaling, the sky is pale and blue and the clouds seem bloated albeit at a distance. If one can call the cloud down, it can be consumed for a good long while. If the clouds are not whaled, they will rain down a thick sappy rain for 1d10 days. This rain attracts predatory creatures who will lick it off trees and stones, but far more enjoy eating it off meat which it seasons like a fine gristle.

5. The Long Grey

One of the most common weathers in the north is the Long Grey, a period in which the sky is covered in thick turgid grey clouds for 20 days and nights. The sun doesn't shine brightly through, casting the land in monochrome ugliness. During such a time those who pay attention to the Long Grey find themselves succumbing to intense depression and unpleasant malaise.

6. Rime Curdles

During a period of Rime Curdles the night winds batter against structures and nature like fierce waves upon a broken shore. The cold wind churns and swirls and the harsh whisper of ancient ice spirits who once were venerated by nomadic tribes murmur their curses on an agrarian world. Dairy items curdle into stinky cheese curds, turning a faint blue with red blisters. Cows and goats, even giants; any that might be producing milk are also likely to fall into a ghastly bloated fever for 18 days during which time they will cough up ungodly amounts of curdled phlegm. Rime curdled milk is however cultivated by boreal cultists who have learned that slathering themselves with such a membrane of gunk can prevent undeath from taking them.

7. Pine Shavers

Bitter tempestuous winds that bluster like an army of devils on the warpath for a few minutes throughout the day. These strange wind storms, some of which last up to twenty minutes, are called Pine Shavers due to their habit of knocking all the needles off of pine trees. Whether or not there is anything truly spiritual behind a Pine Shaver gust is hearsay, though tramps and vagrants speak tall tale that Pine Shavers don't dare walk upon any proper road.

8. Bone Boilers

Some days the sun does not set in the north, it just stares down upon existence with bored contempt. During a Bone Boiler, the world seems to sweat. Condensation causes thick, uncomfortably hot fogs to choke at the ground level of the boreal forests in the north. Black flies and mosquitos, stirges and fouler parasites emerge en masse from their hiding places looking to drink the warm marrow of any and all they can find in the sweltering heat.

9. Black Winter

It comes only once a decade, but it is far and away the most unpleasant of winter weathers. The Black Winter chokes the sky with black storm clouds which rain a thick, jelly-like sooty snow which is highly flammable and the smoke of fires caused by it are said to unleash ancient contagions. The Black Winter lasts for 13 months, during which it is advised those living through it make peace with their gods and find a way to avoid the plagued black jelly.

10. Blood Water

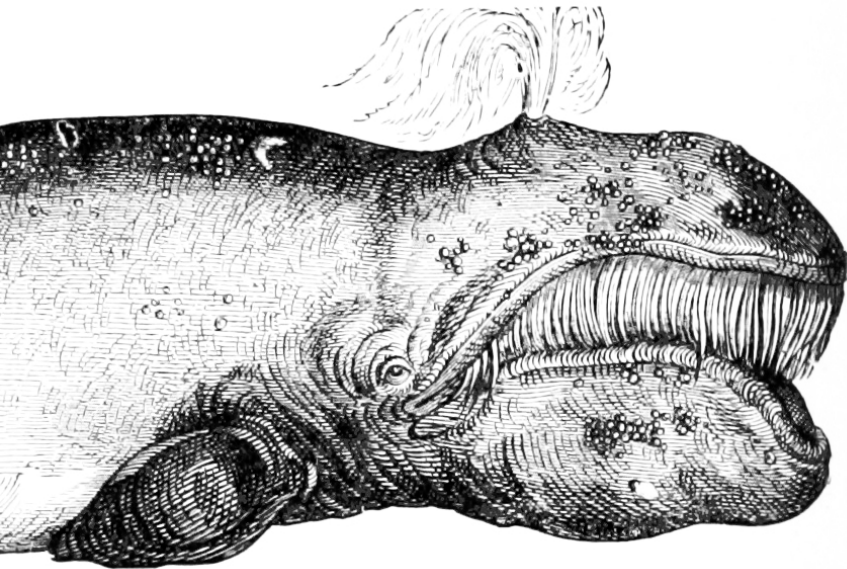
The mountain tops leak red algae in its fissures and cracks, and this algae has begun to plant itself within the groundwater of the Rift. Occasionally a tremor of the goopy fungi will find its way into the surface lakes of the north for a few weeks. During a time of blood water it is unhealthy to drink anything that has been touched by the algae or that has feasted upon the algae. If properly prepared blood water proper can make for a hearty tea and broth. Consuming it otherwise leads to hallucinations and the inability to see the skin of any living thing for 1d4 weeks.

11. Moon Wanders

When the Sky Serpents are not at play and the night sky can be seen, on occasion one can watch the Moon wander. It takes the form of a one-horned maiden or a great-jawed man, dancing at the age of the firmament and laughing a hearty laugh at the wonders man has built. During a night of Moon Wanders, wolves and moon beasts are in rare form, attacking with greater vigor as though blessed. It is said a folk of forlorn heart can be whisked away by the Moon for a night of pitied romance, only to eventually be forsaken and left abandoned on the moon itself.

12. Regal Shivers

The First Men had many days of celebration, and the Regal Shivers was that which marked the start of a true winter. On such a day their King would come down with an illness that would turn his hair white, his nose would drip ice, and he'd be red in the face. Somehow this tradition has continued even beyond the grasp of their King, striking heroes and tribal leaders with an affliction of sneezes and chills for a day.





Threats of the Rift of Mar-Milloir

Brigands, Generic

Desperation plays darkly in the hearts of man. Brigands are but a symptom of a large disease. They gather in groups 1-to-4d6, around a leader who they both respect and fear.

HD 1 AD 11 Speed 30'

ATT 1d6 (Sword or Flintlock)

Morale 6

Brigand, Initiate

Wayward youth and reckless toughs, jumped into a life of crime with the hopes of improving their station. Disposable, tragic, human lives; born into poor circumstance and pettier opportunity.

HD 1 AD 9 Speed 30'

ATT 1d6-1 (Improvised Weaponry)

Morale 5

Brigand, Leader

Those who find themselves in control of wicked men must colonize their hearts with even greater cruelty lest they find themselves dethroned or in a ditch.

HD 3 AD 12 Speed 30'

ATT 1d8 (Vicious Weapon, Crossbow, or Blunderbuss)

Morale 9

Cave Bears

Powerful beasts with bones as strong as stone and muscles able to easily rend a man in twain.

HD 4 AD 16 Speed 50'

ATT 2d6 (Vicious Claws)

Morale 5

Cook

An army marches upon its stomach far more than upon its boots. Cooks in the rift are often press-ganged into the service of brigands or the Barghestnecht, regardless of skill.

HD 1 AD 10 Speed 50'

ATT 1d4 (Knife or Implement)

Morale 4

Crowhounds

A beaked lupine monstrosity the size of a coyote, with feathered pelt that glints with gold dust. Must deal maximum damage with a Bite before being able to use its Marrow-sucker.

HD 2 AD 9 Speed 45'

ATT 1d8 (Bite) or 1d4 STR dmg (Marrow-sucker)

Morale 5

Fallen Sunseekers

They sought the sun too deeply and in their blasphemy, ignited their hearts. They look like ragged lepers, their chest glows too brightly, even in the dark.

HD 3 AD 8 Speed 30'

ATT 2d4 (Inner Flame) or 1d6 (Jagged Weapon),

Morale 8 (11); Fallen Sunseekers do not suffer morale issues from fire.

The Inner Flame attack of a Fallen Sunseeker deals 1d4 damage to the creature.

Fiend

Ghostly shadows take many forms, many eyes, many hands, always fanged. They whisper terrible truths to drive men mad. They seek hosts in the weak, the angry, the desperate. Killing the host does not mean the same thing as killing the fiend.

HD 6 AD 14 Speed 40' (Flight, Intangible)

ATT 2d6 (Maddening Whispers) or 1d4+1 (Curse)

Morale 11

Can only be harmed by blessed or magical weapons, can only be killed when sealed inside a mortal body or in combat within a spiritual plane.

Giant

Titanic creatures of horrifying make, long though they slumber their threat cannot be ignored. Their hides nigh impenetrable, their swiping fists able to destroy platoons. They crave ruin and for the sun to be snuffed out.

HD 8 AD 16 Speed 90'

ATT 1d12+3 (Crush, Targets in 15' cone)

Morale 12

Can only suffer the effects of a Critical Hit when struck by weapons of great magic or Norn make.

Giant, Sprots

Wayward viscera and seed of the nephilim, wretched and slug-like creatures of stone and malformed flesh. They desire only the black ichor, man's flesh and the praise of their parentage.

HD 3 AD 11 Speed 30'

ATT 1d8 (Crushing Fists)

Morale 7

Hound, Common

Man's boon companion, of fierce loyalty and flesh-rending bite. So often subjected to a life of cruelty and uncertain danger. Even the most slavering mongrel hound was made this hateful way by man's unkind hand.

HD 1 AD 9 Speed 45'

ATT 1d4 (Vicious Bite)

Morale 5

Mortal Man

Mortal men walk many paths, some more sinister than others.

This statline should serve as a basis for representatives of any of the factions listed in the section that follows. Customize as desired. Morale is 14 when acting towards the goals of their faction.

HD 4 AD 16 Speed 50'

ATT 2d6 (Vicious Claws)

Morale 6 (10)

Restless Dead, Spirit

Spirits of the dead sometimes stir, taking the form of smoke and starlight. They walk through walls, dance on the midnight winds, and steal the warmth of the sacred Sun from mortal man.

HD 2 AD 10 Speed 40' (Flight, Intangible)

ATT 2d4 (Deathly Chill)

Morale 9

Can only be damaged by magical items or blessed items. Morale is only challenged by items of Norn or Heliopapist make. Must return underground by the sun rise.

Restless Dead, Crypt Thing

The dead of the First Men sometimes dance upon the mound, wearing their scarabous and tattered flesh, swirled and whorled with sacred signs. Their claws dig deep into enemy flesh, as if intangible.

HD 2 AD 13 Speed 25' (Flight, Intangible)

ATT 1d6+2 (Claws of the First Men)

Morale 9

Morale is only challenged by items of Norn or Heliopapist make. Must return underground by the sun rise.

Wolves

A common threat in any hinterland or weald. They gather in packs of 3d6, though it is told of terrible throngs of wolves numbering in the hundreds which can ravage a nation.

HD 1 AD 13 Speed 45'

ATT 1d6 (Bite or Takedown)

Morale 6

A wolf that has dealt maximum Bite damage can immediately knock their prey prone or drag them in a direction of their choosing.

Wyrms

Dragons, serpents, sin made manifest. Vicious and often unkillable. To slay one is an accomplishment worthy of legendary deed and the spoils of a mighty hoard.

HD 7 AD 17 Speed 90'

ATT 1d8 (Swipe), 2d4 (Claws or Teeth), or 1d10+1d4 (Breath of Ancient Fire)

Morale 10

The Breath of Ancient Fire for a Wyrms sprays out in a 45' cone, damaging all within. Those affected by the fire must roll a CON save or age, painfully, a number of years equal to their damage.

Wyrms, Broodling

Broodlings, the half-formed tadpoles of a Wyrms, their limbs are uncertain in their numbering, their eyes barely perceive the world. With food and time enough they will come to possess a malevolent intellect...

HD 3 AD 13 Speed 20'

ATT 1d6 (Gnashing Teeth), or 1d8+1d4 (Breath of Profane Sulfur)

Morale 6

The Breath of Profane Sulfur from a Broodling sprays out in a 25' cone, damaging all within. Those affected by this chemical breath must roll a CON save or be tarnished by scalding burns that will itch away at the flesh, forming scale-like boils.



The Bandit's Manse

"THESE MALEFACTORS! BRIGANDS!

They've taken up roost in the manse upon yonder hill. They swoop from it like carrion birds, to bloat themselves on the misery of the Riftfolk and those exiled here. Put them to the knife, to the torch! You're a knave afterall, use your devilish ambition for the greater good, for once in your life!"

"The Bandit's Manse" is a short adventure for starting Knaves, taking place near the ruined border settlement of Antévol. It pits the knaves against the local brigands and their leader, who have taken up residence in a derelict mansion.

Deposing the brigands will see the black market expand its operations, as well as offering the ruined manse as a potential hub of operations for those blaggards with ambition enough for usurpation!

The Manse

It was beautiful once, a stone villa of two floors upon a hill top. Ostensibly, the lordling who once held Antévol must have lived here. It was a place of warm hearth in this bitter hinterland, of festive yule tidings and feasting days. Ruin fell upon it quickly, bitterly.

The Manse now stands half-toppled and further collapsed; its second story partially collapsed in the rear of the structure. Its courtyard is barricaded by the brigands who now make this place their base. They burn the family portraits and other such objects in a grand bonfire which clouds the sky with thick, heavy smoke.

It is, however, defensible. This could be turned to your purposes, if you had the means to take it.

Exterior

15 foot tall stone walls of ancient make. Reinforced wooden doors, carved with the scowling frescos of crowhounds. Partially collapsed roof of broken shingles in the rear of the mansion, exposed timbers. Rear stable door to the courtyard has been barricaded with fallen rocks from the broken second story.

Kitchen

Shelves are stocked with old sacks of grain, clay-sealed jars of pottaged meats, and the odd wheel of cheese which has grown maggoty. Three fireplaces blaze, iron salamanders holding up stewpots. Grease is everywhere, on the floor, on the walls. Only the chefs have learned where to avoid the spills. Smells of fresh butchery, of offal and exposed bones. The good silver is still in the cupboards (50p in treasure, 1 slot, jangles loudly if you move quickly.)

Dining Hall

The tables have been crudely cobbled together from various coffee tables, end tables, and wooden planks so as to extend the length of the main dining table. Benches, ottomans, the odd kitchen stool and other inappropriate seating implements help serve the table. The wallpaper is floral and ugly. A statue of a stuffed crowhound, standing viciously, lingers in the corner by the windows.

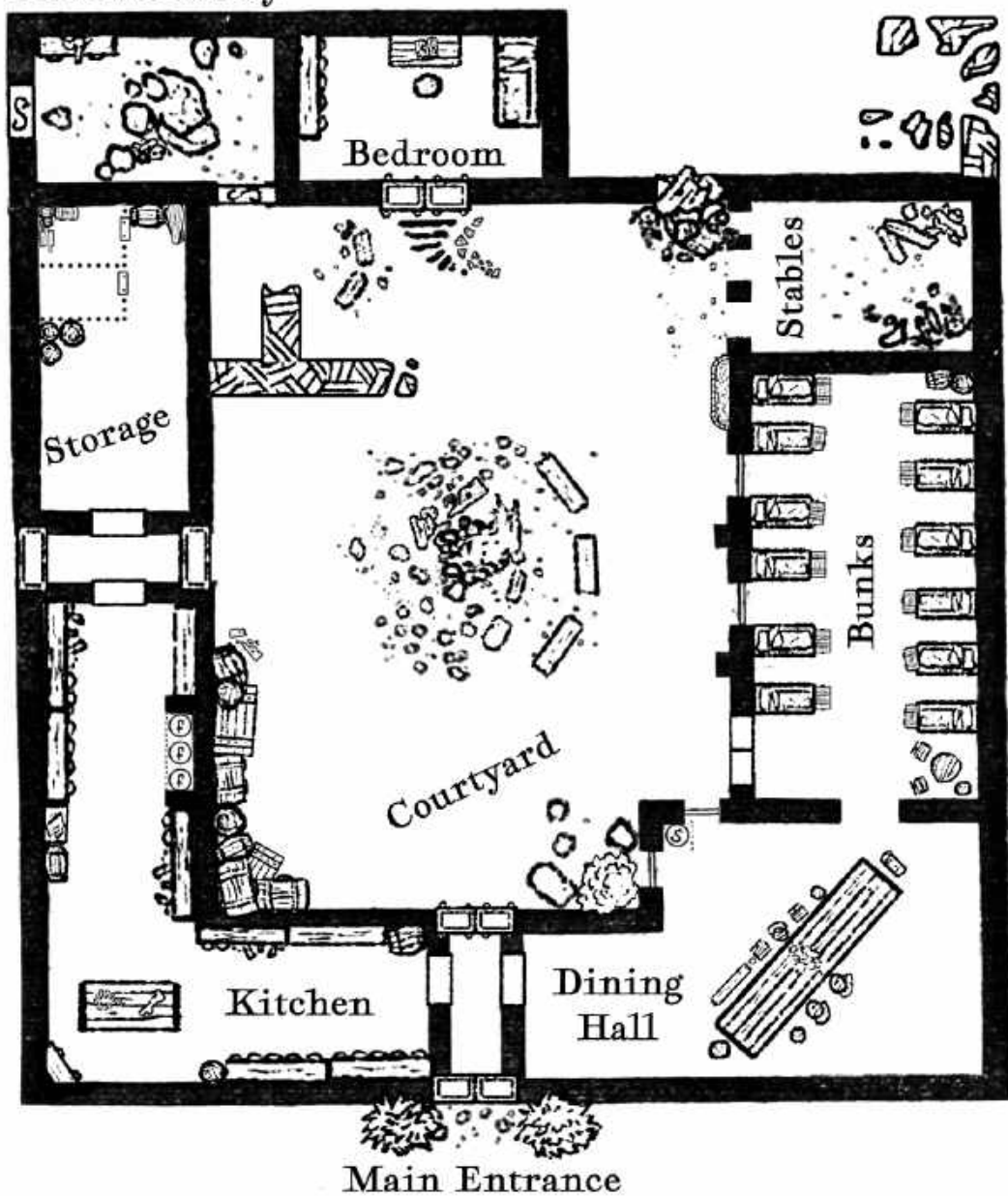
Courtyard

The bonfire in the center smells of pine smoke and falls over the yard like a blanket, barely over the heads of any seating brigand. Reinforced doors of wood are present at the exits and towards the Bedroom. 2d10 General Loot from recent raids can be found in container. At night, the visibility is terrible.

Bunks

Twelve lumpy hen feather mattresses, draped in stolen quilts. Footlockers contain minutia and dust, nothing of value beyond extra bedding materials and the odd bottle of spoiled rotgut rum. A table where cards are played sits in the corner, beneath the table are a few good cards for the occasional cheat. Brigands toss and turn in their beds, they sleep in shifts.

Butler's Pantry



Storage

A former wine pantry, left to languish. Barrels of the stuff sit here in rank fermentation, buckling with an acrid bloat that strains the wood. The vinting cells can be locked, provided one has the keys. Floors are of relatively lovely flagstone.

Stables

Collapsed partially, perhaps during a fire or during a storm. The proud mare, darling Charlemangle, rots beside fallen timbers; her flesh like leather and her bones exposed. Her shoes are gilded silver, if one is willing to defile her corpse (8op, 1 slot, clang heavily if you move too fast without securing them).

Bedroom

A former office, its upper floor now lost. It now serves as the master bedroom to the Brigand Leader, who appreciates the goose-down mattress, bedding composed of several fur blankets, and displaying 1d8 Promised Treasures upon shelves in the room. At the desk is a journal, languishing poetics and deep regrets fill its pages.

Butler's Pantry

Collapsed and hidden behind servant doors, meant to look like a sealed chimney shaft on either side. Hard to move through due to collapsed roofing and floors from the upper story, now derelict. Keys and lewd poetry can be found in the cupboard here, as well as a few spoiled bits of ham. The room smells of old pork and mildew.



When entering a room for the first time, roll a d8 on the following list to determine how many brigands are in any single room or area.

[d8] **Bandits Per Room**

- 1 1d3 Brigands + 1d4 Initiates.
- 2 2d4 Hounds + 1d3 Bandits.
- 3 1d6 Cooks + 1d2 Hounds.
- 4 2d6 Bandits.
- 5 2d6 Initiates.
- 6 Brigand Leader (Unique) + 1d8 Initiates.
- 7 1d3 Initiates + 1d2 Hounds.
- 8 1d2 Brigands.

If Kitchen: +2d4 Cooks. 50% Chance that any Initiates are engaged in Chores.

If Bunks: +1d3 Initiates. 50% Chance of all occupants sleeping, save for two engaged in Recreation at the table.

If Dining Hall: 50% Drunk.

If Courtyard: 50% Distracted.

If Night: 25% Drunk or Distracted. Engaged in Foolishness or Recreation.



When encountering brigands outside of combat, roll a d6 followed by the noted die type on the following lists...

[d4] **1. Chores**

- 1 Gathering burnable tinder and scraps.
- 2 Sweeping up debris.
- 3 Cleaning dishes or scrubbing floors.
- 4 Grooming oneself.

[d6] **2. Recreation**

- 1 Playing cards.
- 2 Shooting dice.
- 3 Drinking wine.
- 4 Telling bawdy tales.
- 5 Crudely drawing lewd images.
- 6 Playing "Would You Rather."

[d6] **3. Foolishness**

- 1 Nude hazing ritual.
- 2 Play fighting.
- 3 Boasting of sexual conquests.
- 4 Slam poetry.
- 5 Body art puppetry.
- 6 Singing loudly and obnoxiously.

[d4] **4. Cruelties**

- 1 Giving a subordinate the lash for perceived slights.
- 2 Viciously kicking a hound.
- 3 Threatening a cook with graphic language.
- 4 Howling obscenities at an underling.

[d4] **5. Miseries**

- 1 Nursing a chest wound, wincing miserable.
- 2 Sick with fever or infection.
- 3 Morose over recent criminal actions.
- 4 Mumbling prayers for forgiveness.

[d6] **6. Duties**

- 1 On patrol.
- 2 Taking inventory of loot.
- 3 Target practice.
- 4 Feeding hounds.
- 5 Explaining anatomy for murderous intent.
- 6 Combat drilling with a partner.

[d8] **General Loots**

- 1 zdzo Pennies.
- 2 Dungeon Gear (see *Knave*).
- 3 Rations.
- 4 1d4 Pieces of Jewelry.
- 5 Metal File or Lockpick.
- 6 General Gear 1 (see *Knave*).
- 7 General Gear 2 (see *Knave*).
- 8 Promised Treasure.

Promised Treasures

The Black Market will pay well for those who can recover any of these stolen items. The brigands may have them still. Roll a d4 and then the indicated die type to determine the specific nature of the treasure...

[d6] 1. Stolen Arts

- 1 Gilded Shoes.
- 2 Topaz Tea Set.
- 3 Painting of Hellmouth.
- 4 Ivory Brushes.
- 5 Regency Music Box.
- 6 Wax Saint Head.

[d6] 2. Pilfered Resources

- 1 Box of flintlock munitions.
- 2 Glue bottle.
- 3 Box of iron nails.
- 4 Cutlery set.
- 5 Bag of horse feed.
- 6 Scrap iron bars.

[d6] 3. "Missing" Goods

- 1 Salted kippers in tin.
- 2 Flask of rotgut.
- 3 Vial of acid.
- 4 Block of bear lard.
- 5 Satchel of radishes.
- 6 Fancy abacus.

[d8] **4. Absconded Minutia**

- 1 Silvered monocle.
- 2 Lover's locket.
- 3 Signet ring.
- 4 Noble's letter opener.
- 5 Counterfeit gold coins (4d8).
- 6 Bottle of teeth.
- 7 Tome of Diablerie.
- 8 Brass Sun pendant.





The Maw of the Mountain

MOUNT CHARCHADOXIS, woe betide those foolish enough to enter the MAW OF THE MOUNTAIN! The Wyrms, it lairs within; its brood propagates. Long has it been since we offered up virgins to the beast, casting them screaming into the Pit of Supplication. Our sins cannot be absolved until the Wyrms is slain and its filthy lucre removed from this despoiled earth!”

A short adventure for starting Knaves, taking place within a mountain located in the Rift of Mar-Milloir. The Maw of the Mountain sets the Knaves off into the lair of a dragon, slumbering though it may be. The Wyrms may awaken at any moment, eager to feast on the man-flesh of would-be thieves.

The Wyrms will not be easily slain, but its spawn may be. And even if the Wyrms is not killed, plundering its lair and escaping with stolen treasure might see you money enough to flee this wretched hinterlands!

What Rouses the Wyrms?

This sinful serpent yet slumbers, but the greed in a man’s horrible heart and the fires of their ambition will awaken the beast. Whenever one of the following events occurs, roll a d6. On a 4+, mark a box until the Wyrms is awake and on the hunt. Thematically, one mark for each sin of man.



The Dragon Stirs when...

- † When a knave first speaks of treasure.
- † Whenever there is an argument.
- † Whenever gold coins are recovered or touched, including putting them in a purse.
- † Whenever a Broodling is slain.
- † Upon entering the Prowl or the Pit of Supplication.
- † If a woman is in the party, but only if she is here with hate in her heart.
- † If a virgin is in the party, but only if they are in other ways impure.
- † When something is stolen from the Hoard.
- † If a party member claims themselves a dragonslayer.
- † If a spell is cast.
- † If the Sun is praised, beatific or brass.
- † If one can be smelled by the Wyrms.
- † If one enters with desires for heroism.

The Maw

Huge entrance, filled with bones and rocks; smells of rot and sulfur. Slight decline, lose footing on bold actions (d4 damage). Many hiding places. General air of dread and unease...

The Coils

Narrow, occasionally winding passageways. Easy for the Wyrms to lay in ambush or lay a clutch of broodlings. 2-in-6 chance of Broodlings eating old bones.

The Broken Path

Narrow, sharp rocks, low ceiling. The Wyrms cannot enter here, but can breathe ancient flame within. All but delicate movement is painful (d4 damage, sound rouses Wyrms.)

The Roiling Rocks

Sulfur pools and latent bubbling magma. Broodlings frolic in the shadows here, hunting and prowling for fresh meat. Unbearably hot (CON save or 1d4 damage per turn). Slips and falls can be deadly (d8 damage).

The Prowl

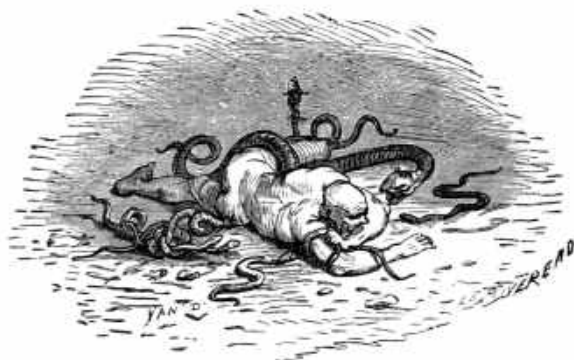
Almost an arena, a personal hunting ground. Battered skeletons and old wreckage strewn about. High ceilings and utter darkness. Ghosts wail for you to run. Sounds here echo towards the Hoard (and rouse the Wyrms.)

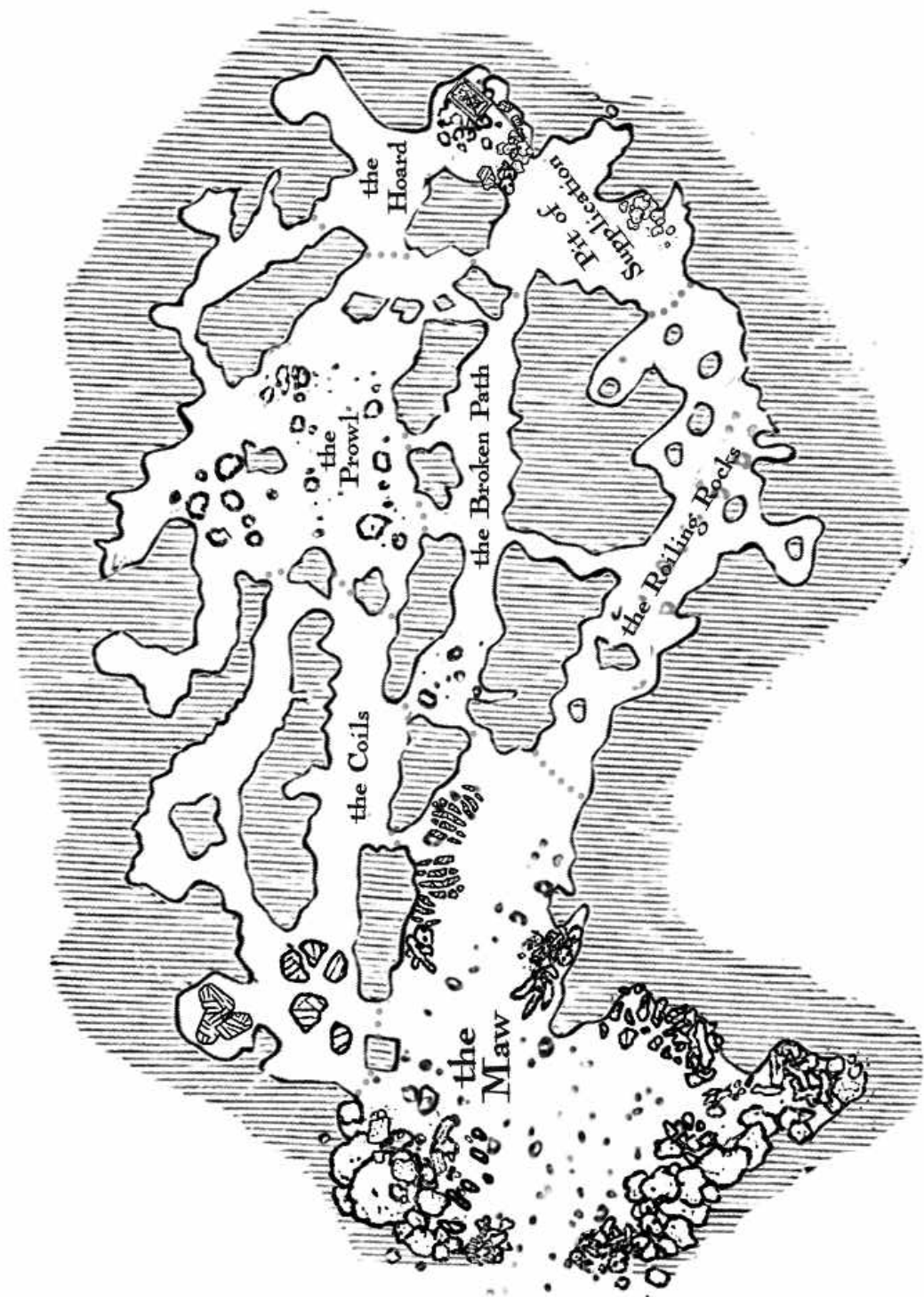
The Pit of Supplication

Low dipping basin beneath the plateau of the Hoard. Filled with corpses, many baked and left to ferment. The Wyrms watches down from its ledge, slumbering and malicious.

The Hoard

Upon a rise, this treasure lies. Atop it slumbers the Wyrms, waiting for those foolish enough to steal a coin. It dreams darkly, desiring so greatly to awaken and consume all of mankind's aspirations in baleful fire...





The Hoard

Upon a rise, this creature lies. Atop it slumbers the Wyrms, waiting for those foolish enough to steal a coin. It dreams darkly, desiring so greatly to awaken and consume all of mankind's aspirations in baleful fire...

[d12] Scraps in the Maw

- 1 Burnt sword.
- 2 Spade.
- 3 Broken shield.
- 4 Quartz chunk.
- 5 Human skull.
- 6 Silver ring.
- 7 Wedding veil.
- 8 Sacrificial dagger.
- 9 Rum bottle.
- 10 Horse bones.
- 11 Wagon Wheel.
- 12 An infant.

[d6] Prowl Detritus

- 1 Tarnished Sun-patterned Shield.
- 2 Flamberge Sword.
- 3 Charred Knight's Skeleton.
- 4 Corpse of a Mangled Virgin.
- 5 Dragon's Scale.
- 6 Scattered Coins (2d12).

[d8] **Roiling Refuse**

- 1 Cracked broodling egg.
- 2 Glowing warmstone.
- 3 Melted sword (as axe)
- 4 Devoured bandit mess.
- 5 Dragon's scale.
- 6 Mutilated broodling runt.
- 7 Sulfurous crystal.
- 8 Strange black key.

[d12] **Suppliant Spoils**

- 1 Insane virgin, burnt but alive.
- 2 Silver dagger.
- 3 Errant coin (3d20).
- 4 Dragon's tooth.
- 5 Half-consumed man, still alive.
- 6 Dragon's scale.
- 7 Black book (1d3 spells).
- 8 Golden hair rope (30').
- 9 Brass hand bell.
- 10 Golden bull amulet.
- 11 Horned helmet.
- 12 Giant's severed hand.

[dzo] **The Hoard**

- 1 Petrified Golden Head of Saxon Reiss.
- 2 Gog-Molochian Silver Sun Crown.
- 3 Chest of 4d100 in coinage and gems.
- 4 Mystic's Scrying Orb (1d3 spells).
- 5 Red Garnet Torc of the First Men.
- 6 Statue of a King carved from Topaz.
- 7 Coral-encrusted Blunderbuss.
- 8 Electrum Brooch depicting the king.
- 9 The ever-bleeding awl of a Gristleman.
- 10 Selenite Tentacle of pure moonstone.
- 11 Brass Sun Church Bell, lightly singed.
- 12 Pontifex War Helm with gilded mempo.
- 13 Obsidian eyeball fit for a Giant.
- 14 Screaming fiend, bound in an iron book.
- 15 Fine tapestries from the foreign kingdom.
- 16 An infant statue, carved from marble.
- 17 Fossilized aurumvorax in repose.
- 18 Mummified Heliopapist Pilgrim, from times of antiquity.
- 19 Blue Flowers, a cure for the plague if properly prepared.
- 20 An Intact Wyrmm Egg, warm to the touch.



Endnotes

The original version of this zine was written in about three days and was compiled on short notice by Arielle so as to ensure it didn't look shabby. The sale money of this product goes to paying for cheap food to keep me alive, namely PB&J and poorly constructed beet soup. The intended price of this product is \$3.00 as a PDF, with print costs to be determined by what would still allow for that \$3.00 in profit.

This edition of Rakehell is published under SoulMuppet Publishing. For more information and their product catalog, see: <https://www.soulmuppet.co.uk>

Revision Endnotes

The Rakehell Revision which added two pamphlet adventures in a slightly more detailed form to this document, as well as fixing monster information and adding more random encounters for various parts of the Rift. The Revision was written over the course of around eleven days, but suffered from many false starts. In an attempt to perfect a finished project, I unduly burdened myself and in the end, while satisfied, I stalled on publishing it until I had all I felt I could show for it. It ended up being closer to fourteen days of work overall, and even then I wish there was more I could give to this.

During the course of the revision and the layout, I went through the ending of one dead end job, writing for hire, working on comics semi-professionally, working another dead end job which left me fairly injured, and a roommate moving on short notice which greatly increased the cost of living. Family strife and other housing issues prevented things from being done as we'd have liked, but here it is finalized, eight months after first publication.

If you like this product, you can follow the writer, **Brian Richmond**, at:

www.goatmansgoblet.com

<https://goatmansgoblet.itch.io>

Or read a comic he makes at: at <https://tapas.io/series/The-Sisters>.

This zine's layout and design was done by **Arielle**. You can find and listen to her podcast, **Shadows in the West**, the Legend of the Five Rings game she GMs at: www.sitwlr.com.

Art that was not in the public domain was provided by **Lulu VanHoagland**, whose work can be found at: www.luluvanhoagland.com.

Appendix N

I'd be remiss to not mention a few other items which can help better flesh out an experience with Rakehell, none of which I have a personal stake in and mention only out of a desire for readers to have the most fulfilling game they can possibly have.

The Fabulous Mini-Guild as well as other products by Evlyn Moreau capture the spirit and whimsy of the setting, as well as providing excellent art and ideas. Most of her work is available for free and can assist in stocking random events upon your sandbox.

Cash Cults as well as most of the content produced by Zedek Siew, a writer who is able to capture some of the more bizarre and interesting ideas regarding human greed and divine curiosity. *Cash Cults* could easily find their way into the Rift as a means for the Heliopapacy to further extend themselves into corruptive indulgences.

Feudalism for People in a Hurry, and the other work of Skerples should also be noted for their ease of use in making Mar-Milloir more populated or at least less bastardized in its weird French/German borderland hybrid state.

The *NOD* series of zines in general by John M. Stater, which have wonderful ideas for populating hex maps, a good density of content, and have progressed in interesting ways since its inception.

What Comes Next?

What comes next is a trip to the big city, to Gog-Moloch! An urban second issue of Rakehell is underway and the character generation rulings are readily available for free at the following link:

<https://goatmansgoblet.itch.io/rakehell-z-teaser>

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Custom Faction Art © Lulu Van Hoagland, 2019.

Map of the Region created with assets from K.M. Alexander, blog.kmalexander.com.

All other images procured from the digital archives of the British Library.

