



## *Other Chromatic Soups*

### **Chromatic Soup 01**

*A fully collective non-profit zine that explores two settings: a large swampland region and a rice field delta, with a collection of custom character classes, locations ripe for adventure, evocative monsters, and random tables meant to help inspire your own games.*

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# *Hearty Soup for the Hungry Hobo*

By Brian Richmond

Evlyn Moreau put together an amazing collective zine in our first issue of Chromatic Soup, giving us room to create within point crawl of villages, strange rice, and merchant knights. Artists and writers created inspiring material built around a set theme, and from it emerged a wonderous place of intrigue, fey fickleness, and strange magics. Now for a second time we find ourselves with a Chromatic Soup, the goal of which was to be more freeform in its contents than the first. Where we first had rice as our main ingredient, here we had an empty stew pot to make ourselves whatever we saw fit.

No set location, no map, just a matter of seeing what happened and going with what was chopped and left to boil and broil. It didn't take long for a motif to develop among all the carrots and corn, a pastoral blend of folklorish settler tales and insular fear of the unknown took root in our heads and hearts, and thus emerged what we have here.

This issue is about a place of autumnal hilly wilderland. In a rustic Americana of tell-tale tall-tale folklore where man is a wanderer and even demons seek to change their stripes. Where animals play in jamboree, cicada-folk contemplate their bestial end and their Heaven that the insular hue-and-cry halflings call Hell. It is a rolling wild where serpents bite your bones into deadly beautiful crystals, a place where a charismatic man and his dancer wife hold court over wayward wandering hobos, and the

malformed babies of the destitute and the poor watch over the living as backwater bayou cherubs.

The first part of this issue focuses on the people and places of this rural land, while the second part concerns itself with what you might find yourself doing when you get there. Allow yourself to be led by the dusty sun of dusk, under the milky lights of a swollen silvery moon, passed the hills and homes; into the world beyond garden hedge and humbled humanity.

Wander to and through the rolling amber hills of wheat where the wind rises and holds your hand like a lover, beckoning you ever forward into that great unknown. Hear the old flower-rustling hush of the road gods, far from any beaten path, further afield, and towards the stew pot of this eclectic second serving of Chromatic Soup.



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

# *The Hobo*

## *New Character Class*

By Brian Richmond & Evlyn Moreau

Hobos are a wandering folk who don't fit much in with society, don't much need to, and wander these western hills and dells in search of a better tomorrow. Bindle in hand, they glean secrets from the wilderness and read cosmic signs left by whimsical deities and others who walk those weary ways. They might be blessed servants of a road god of those with fortune to find, or they might just be vagrants and vandals who scurry off to the next town before law catches them. Either way, wherever they wander they can call upon a reserve of strange wandering powers and they always seem to find themselves at odds with lawful folk.

A hobo is a hardy individual, no matter what race they were born into, and a life on the road has given them an iron gut meant for steeling themselves against hunger pangs and for safely consuming the detritus of a never-ending stew pot of boiled boots and mushrooms. Perhaps due to their lack of proper-eating, hobos often see mystical "hobo signs" left by ancient road deities in the pareidolia of old trees, fence posts, and stonework. Only hobos seem to see these marks, though those who can sense magic are able to pick up on their vibrations.

Given their less-than-fortuitous position, hobos are only proficient in a single type of weapon and they treat

everything else as though it were improvised and unskilled in the art of.

That being said, they seem to brandish their bindles, frying pans, broomsticks, and heavy stones as though they were trained in the art of using them. None can really explain it, they just go with the flow. They often wear old dirty leathers and broken brocade cloth, though nudity is almost as often. A hobo seems to lose their powers if they're ever dressed in new, clean, fancy clothing.

Of course it would be remiss to not mention the fact that no one truly likes a hobo save for other hobos, and maybe some thieves who can both readily and often easily take advantage of the wandering destitutes and their penchant for rousing up trouble. Hobos themselves walk not the high road of the lawful or the low road of the lowmen, but instead a middle path of doing good when they can and taking what they need but never more than that.

Honest civilized folk see only a bum, and on some cosmic level are reviled by it. Foul and wicked folk see a patsy, and on some cosmic level seek to project blame towards them. This may be why hobos wander so often and frequently.

Sometimes a hobo may revert from this path and return to the civilized world, becoming an ex-Hobo or a productive member of society. While any Hobo may become a normal person again, losing much of their power, only a true hobo banishment ritual can remove one's ability to ever be a derelict wanderer.





*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

## **The Hobo**

**Prime Requisite:** CON

**Hit Dice:** 1d10

**Maximum Level:** 8

**Weapons Proficiency:** Hobos may wield a single type of weapon as though they were proficient in it, with every other type of weapon functioning as though improvised and at penalty. Strangely, when wielding improvised weapons proper (like a frying pan or a broom) they fight without penalty; though such weapons break on a natural 1 or 20 as fortune is fickle.

**Armor Proficiency:** Hobos can wear cloth or leather, but only if they are battered, dirty, or roughed up. A hobo can't just "dirty up" new wear, they have to have it handed-down to them from someone else who wore it in order for it to qualify as armor. Hobos lose their Hobo Signs, Weapon Improvisation skills, and save as a Level 1 Magic-User when they are wearing new armor. A Hobo can use shields, provide the shields are broken, battered, or improvised. These armors and shields break and need to be repaired after battle when they are struck by a natural 20 hit.

**Saving Throws:** Hobos save as Dwarfs, as they are hardy and road-weary like the little men who work the mountains.

**Hobo Signs:** All hobos can see mystical "hobo signs" left by the ancient road deities, oddly enough often in places beyond any road.

These signs can be formally identified at a rate of 4-in-6 under normal conditions. These signs appear when traps are concealed, danger lurks nearby, where there is nearby loot, or when good or safe food can be found.

If properly read a hobo is supernaturally using the *detect* spell, and they can gain a general sense of what it is they might soon be encountering (i.e. “a dropping floor,” “folks who smile but want to eat us,” or “ugly old fish that is good eating.”) A hobo can write a Hobo Sign of legibility a number of times per day as indicated below.

**The Middle Road:** Lawful folk and Chaotic folk each have different subtle urges against hobos. Lawful folk suffer a -2 penalty to believe, trust, or want to aid any Hobo; unless that hobo has proven themselves to be a true friend.

In that same way, Chaotic folk gain a +2 bonus to convince anyone that a recent fault, bad time, or problem is really at the cause of the Hobo. A Hobo can mitigate these problems by dressing like a proper person and bathing, but such things make one cease to be a hobo.

**Iron Gut:** A hobo can go a number of days equal to their Constitution Attribute without proper food and water, though each day they will appear, grimmer, uglier, stinkier, and smellier than before. For each week that a Hobo goes without food or water they must make a Charisma Save or come across as wicked and foul natured due to their appearance; at which point the penalty of walking the Middle Road increases to -5/+5 respectively.

After walking a number of days equal to their Constitution Attribute without food or water, a hobo drops dead. Even a tug of hooch or an old boiled boot can save a hobo from this fate.

**Hobo Fixin’:** So long as a hobo is not actively Evil, they can fix any of their gear, equipment, and most items with just a handful of nails, needle and thread, some old horse hoof glue or a belt. Such items, like a hobo’s armor or shield, become fully functional as they previously were.

Items being fixed for others will function as normal until they next arrive in a settlement or are spoken to by a Lawful or Chaotic entity with more HD than the Hobo.

**Reaching 8th Level:** When reaching level 8 a Hobo may attract 3d20 Level 1 bums in any settlement he ventures to. These hobo followers will be composed of the poor and disenfranchised, and they will be attracted by any talk of a better tomorrow over the next hill, or they may already be homeless vagrants.

These followers will leave when they find a better chance, many of which will happily serve in the strongholds of another party member if given the chance. 1d6 will remain loyal camp followers for the hobo and act as loyal henchmen in exchange for good times, deeds done, and to see the world.



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

## *The Hobo - Character Class*

<i>Level</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Write Hobo Signs/per Day</i>
<b>1</b>	Bum	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	Vagrant	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	Bindlestiff	<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	Tramp	<b>2</b>
<b>5</b>	Vagabond	<b>3</b>
<b>6</b>	Swagman	<b>3</b>
<b>7</b>	Hobo	<b>4</b>
<b>8</b>	Hobo of Note	<b>5</b>

**Starting Goods & Equipment:** A hobo was somebody before they became a hobo, and what they have with them is an eclectic collection of former goods they could stuff in a sack. A hobo begins play with  $2+1d_4$  items from these lists to start with, and  $3d_6 \times 10$  coppers that jingle-jangle in their bindle. All hobos also have one weapon of their choice from their previously life, in one of these 4 conditions. To generate your starting equipment, roll a  $d_4$  to determine the condition of each item and a  $d_{10}$  for the specific item.

## *The Hobo - Starting Goods (d4 & d10)*

	1. <i>Raggedy Old...</i>	2. <i>Fine Lookin'...</i>	3. <i>An Antique...</i>	4. <i>Likely Pilfered...</i>
<b>1.</b>	Stove pipe Hat	Jug of Hooch	Pocket Watch	Frying Pan
<b>2.</b>	Treasure Map	Jar of Glue	Pair of Spectacles	Pair of Cufflinks
<b>3.</b>	Hound Dog	Leather Belt	Military Badge	Fishin' Pole
<b>4.</b>	Miner's Pick	Panner's Sieve	Family Locket	Dress Shoes
<b>5.</b>	Fez Hat	Bandoleer	Bone Die	Ol' Rooster
<b>6.</b>	Satchel	Wedding Ring	Bowler Derby	Metal Tooth
<b>7.</b>	Horseshoe	Gallon Bucket	Brass Flask	Lingerie
<b>8.</b>	Manacles	Hooded Lantern	Needle & Thread	Accordion
<b>9.</b>	Banjo	Deck of Cards	Family Quilt	Wagon Wheel
<b>10</b>	Prayer Book	Shovel	Children's Shoes	Crystal Brooch

**Hobo Bindle Rag:** All hobos carry a ragged bundle that holds their goods, it is a sack of ugly quilted fabric. Roll a d20 twice to determine the materials your bindle is made of.

***Hobo Bindle Construction (d20)***

- |                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Polka-dots on cotton. | 10. Old matty fur.              |
| 2. Over bleached wool.   | 11. Bridal veil.                |
| 3. Duck-patterned linen. | 12. Torn surcoat.               |
| 4. Stinky cheese-cloth.  | 13. Goo-stained flag.           |
| 5. Blood-stained silk.   | 14. Yellowed lingerie.          |
| 6. Rough brocade fabric. | 15. Oddly cut preacher's frock. |
| 7. Fancy twill.          | 16. Knit sock.                  |
| 8. Downy bath towel.     | 17. Unraveled wineskin.         |
| 9. Used bandage linens.  | 18. Striped pantaloons.         |
|                          | 19. Tent canvas.                |
|                          | 20. Frilly lace.                |



## Gaffton:

### *Transient Town of the Hopeful & Displaced*

By Brian Richmond

Over the next hill under a misty Monday moon the hopelessly hopeful hobos and bums who have fallen on bad times will find themselves a Gaffton. Each week it emerges anew, a sprawling town of lean-tos, bivouacs, tipi tents, and tin sheds that surround a great box-car wagon painted in scenes of summer's splendor.

And each morning after a Gaffton is built up in a new location, the Robber-Baron himself, Madds Gaffer, and his lovely lady-wife Mathilda will make a speech to the disenfranchised in which they offer escapism, hedonism, and the hope of a promised land over the next hill and beyond the next forest.

If you want to live in a Gaffton, all you have to do is believe and let the mob mentality of relaxed debauched fool's hope of a better tomorrow take root. You can still fly the flags of your homeland, you can still be who you once were, but you need to be hopeful for something that anyone anywhere else would tell isn't coming. That's the rule, and nobody tells you the rule is a rule; they try to seduce you into accepting it as a truth.

The folk of a Gaffton are eclectic to say the least. They all believe the rumors they hear, and they're all too laidback

and lazy to cause real trouble to anyone who isn't asking for it.

The bulk of the hobos, the Gaffsfolk, are humans from the fallen barge city to the southeast that was taken out in a war between Swamp Duke and a secessionist group. They bring with them strange recipes and a love of wild songs and steamed rice. Reptile-folks are not uncommon amongst the Gaffsfolk, enjoying the collective and its warm beers which make them act as though their blood doesn't run cold.

Former prisoners, slaves, and those who desire hope among all races find their way here and some settle down. Of course, also running throughout the settlement is an animal jamboree of wise creatures with hopes and dreams that seem to manifest now that they're out of the wild and enrapt by the words of the Gaffer.

Things only go bad in a Gaffton when the jingle-jangle of coins in a purse ring too loudly. The wild music of folk musicians and the smiles all fade and all eyes are on the filthy jingle-jangler. The Gaffer makes Gaffton run on a barter economy for a reason, though the violence that occurs to the coin-holder after they make a show of it might be out of slavish devotion to the Gaffer's decree of bartering rather than any supernatural greed. It might be six of one, half-dozen of the other.

To those who get a meeting with the Robber-Baron and his lady-wife, the pair are unflappably positive. Which is not to say they are incapable of anger, but that they

respond to it with trickery, jokes at the expense of those who have roused their bad vibes, and by offering up copious amounts of alcohol.

The Gaffer is a handsome devil of a man with a trimmed thin mustache, stoic steely eyes, a white winning smile and hair coiffed elegantly with a palm-aid. He wears a long sweater-jacket and the pants of a former prisoner, embroidered with patterns of fish and fox.

Mathilda is a thin waifish belle who dresses in a dress of many colors that she has embroidered with patterns of flowers and bees. Her hair is long and a rich honey buckwheat in color. Her eyes are blue as a summer sky and her smile could melt the ice in a properly made glass of liquor.

They'll sell you the stories of the promised land and what is over the next hill, and they're always willing to let people who have a kernel of hope in them stay in a Gaffton. If they truly have hope in their heart, they'll always find a Gaffton.

Curiously though they will always subtly attempt to get information on the politics of other homelands and knowledge of money-changing-hands between powerful factions.

Any thief worth her salt can tell the Thieves Cant peppers their language at these points, but if asked about this or accused the Robber-Baron will simply say it is the local dialect and not to worry.

In short, a Gaffton is an eclectic place of eclectic people of all colors, classes, races, creeds and origins, all who hope too much and are too lazy and debauched to do much of anything beyond that.

What services and events that occur within it are sure to change daily, and even more sure to shift whenever a Gaffton moves its location. Any disappointment at these delays in common service should be met with the proprietor drinking, having fun, and telling the offended party to loosen their britches and enjoy the whimsy of the moment.

Certainly it will always be a good town to hire cheap henchmen who are in it for less greedy reasons than most.



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

# *The Cicadamen*

*A Tragic Folk of the Western Wild*

By Christopher Mennell

Cicadamen are creatures of instinct, at least when encountered above ground. Their emergence to the surface world represents the final stages of their lifecycle, where they are guided solely by instinct to molt, mate, lay eggs, and die. While not much of a threat, their egg laying can kill young trees, as female cicadamen dig grooves in large roots and lay their eggs in the channels, where the larvae emerge and feed on juices from inside the tree. The song of male cicadamen is also loud and disturbing. The molting process also leaves shell-like carcasses clinging to surfaces, usually large tree trunks or limbs.



*Art by Richie Cyngler*

Cicadamen emerge in broods in periodic cycles; each brood living for the same length of time, roughly 30-50 years. While underground they are extremely active, creating massive structures with dedicated centers for education and worship. Cicadamen value knowledge and are zealous protectors of their knowledge and worship centers, because they know they will eventually succumb to the mindless mating ritual that brings them to surface where, within a few weeks of molting and mating, they die.

Elder cicadamen work hard to ensure the knowledge is passed on to the next generation, believing this passing of knowledge ensures a kind of immortality. All cicadamen spend their lives as either priests or scholars.

It is worth noting that cicadamen are not aggressive by nature, but they are defensive of their underground lairs; especially their temples and libraries. They resent being compared to their swarming cousins, the locustmen, as they neither swarm nor devour crops like locustmen. Cicadamen respect plants and feed on the juices stored in their roots, making fine *xylem soups*, and they seldom kill trees or other plants with such unfortunate situations occurring during their mating throes.

The Cicadamen's shed skin casing can be fashioned into light armor, shields, or works of art by those willing to collect them. The Poikvin Gven consider such sheddings to be unclean and won't touch them, but hobos are known to like them.

Cicadamen have been known to sell their old shells when they venture aboveground, returning back home with traded supplies so that their kin might remember them fondly. Those few are in the minority, as most choose to remain below ground and spend their fading days praying and studying.

Those who do venture out before their mating time often do so in search of the “Metal Bloom” in this world rather than the next one. It is not known if any have ever been successful, but those who die near a certain sycamore grove sing a sad but peaceful dirge before they drift away.

### **Cicadamen**

**HD:** 1, **AC:** As Leather (as Cloth if freshly molted)

**Attack:** by Weapon. Moves as humans.

**Morale:** As Humans, unshakable if defending their home or in a mating frenzy.

**Special:** Thrumming Songs of the Cicadamen, when intoned, grant all Cicadamen within a mile a +1 bonus to all attacks, damage, and saving throws. Those attempting to attack a singing Cicadaman in melee suffers a -1 penalty to hit due to the painful and disturbing tone.

**No. Appearing:** 1d6+1 in Mating Frenzy, 1d3 searching for Metal Bloom, Solitary or Pair wandering for knowledge, or 3d6+10 +1d4 Elders in Lair.

# *The Poikvin Gven*

*An Alternative Halfling Race-as-Class*

By Brian Richmond

In the deep west they call to one another from autumnal forest to muddy field, raising the hue and cry of "Hoi Poikva" and "Poikvin Hoi" to let it be known that they are present and no threat has yet been detected. The offshoot halflings who go by the clannish name of the Poikvin Gven lack the gentle nature and fun-loving nature of their eastern brethren. These halfling are insular, spending much of their time performing service to their communities and disdaining all outsiders.



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*



These halflings spend their scarce spare time in deep prayer and reflection, the Folk Faith forcing them to contemplate the prey position they occupy in the world beyond their homesteads.

The Poikvin Gven is smaller than a dwarf but often taller and more lithe than their eastern kin, attaining a height of around 3 and a half feet and often weighing no more than 50 pounds. Their skin is ruddy, their hair often wavy and kept long in order to form long sidelocks most often seen over the ears of the Longshanks and Longhairs. Beards are grown only once a Poikvin Gven has reached the rank of Patriarch, while a Matriarch will at such a time shave her head to a payot in devotion to the Folk Faith. They abhor gaudy displays of wealth and do not wear gemstones, but precious metals panned from rivers are fair game and high ranking members will often wear a gold bangle of office.

Only reckless buppei-children and young'in who know not a proper fear are made to leave the lands of the Poikvin Gven by the order of the Poikvin Rumsh on the holy journey of the Folk Faith; the Agham Gnosta, which roughly translates to "*Folk Journey into Truth and Fear.*"

Such young ones are prone to vice and sin until they suffer hardship enough to come fleeing back to the homestead. These young ones as well as proselytizing fire-and-brimstone older Poikvin Gven looking to bring eastern kin into the flock are the most commonly encountered on the roads as "adventurers."

**Poikvin Gven** have the following abilities in replacement/addition to traditional Halfling class features.

**Uncanny Hiding in Wilderness & Underground:** As Halfling.

**Size Penalty to Larger Creatures:** As Halfling.

**Words of Warning:** The Poikvin Gven know complex coded words that they shout at great distances (2 miles in the wilderness, 1 mile in a rural environment, half a mile in a city but a 50% chance of misunderstanding). These codes can be understood by all Halflings on an instinctual level (1-2 on a d6), though only another Poikvin Gven can discern truer meanings from them (1-4 on a d6).

**Cache-Seeker:** Poikvin Gven are good at squirreling away items for a rainy day. Poikvin Gven have a 2-in-6 chance to hide any item the size of their palm in a place that only others actively looking for it or with a talent in noticing hidden places will find (such as an Elf or Dwarf). In addition, they have a 2-in-6 chance to notice hidey-holes in wood or stonework structures.

**Reaching 8th Level:** Much like a halfling proper, when a Poikvin Gven reaches level 8, he may construct a stronghold. These strongholds will be built in the deep hidden forest hills, and those who are pious to the Folk Faith and who know to Fear the Wider World will come here and settle. These halflings are known as Patriarch or Matriarch, and are seen as a moral authority.

## *The Poikvin Gven - Character Class*

<i>Level</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Words of Warning</i>
<b>1</b>	Buppei	<b>2</b>
<b>2</b>	Young'in	
<b>3</b>	Huer-Crier	<b>+1</b>
<b>4</b>	Poikvin Gven	
<b>5</b>	Good'un	<b>+1</b>
<b>6</b>	Poikvin Rumsh	
<b>7</b>	Longshank/Longhair	<b>+1</b>
<b>8</b>	Patriarch/Matriarch	<b>+1</b>

**The Words of Warning:** The hidden language of the Poilvin Gven is a complex thing seldom understood by those not raised fully within the community.

1. **Poikvin Hoi** - *"The Folk Calls For Safety"* is responded with Hoi Poikva which means roughly *"The Safety is Called."* The Poikvin Gven can always tell when the response is given in poor faith or under duress, granting them a +1 to Initiative in such situations.
  
2. **Gven Rumsh** - *"Many wearing"* with the allotment in seconds and heaviness of the syllables giving the information of how many in number and what color/material are being worn.

3. **Bupp-Rum-Vin-Hoi** - *“They carry with them”* with the detail they carry with being their mood, a weapon type, prisoners or slaves, or something like a sack or other container in rough terms.
4. **In’in Hoiva Kvin** - *“Predator to Folk, Eater to Folk”* a serious allegation that raises the hackles of even eastern halfling who may not understand the full meaning. Using this term increases the difficulties of the named party having a positive interaction with halflings by 1 level.
5. **Poikvin in’in Rumsa’vin** - *“Folk Faith Hospice and Hearth, No Alarm”* an equally serious allegation that informs a named party means no harm and is deserving of hospitality the Poikvin Gven seldom give outsiders. Much like the call of Poikvin Hoi, it can be understood when this is made in poor faith or under duress, allowing time for the halfling to prepare for a fight. When made in good faith, increase the chance of a positive interaction with halflings by 1 level.
6. **Poi Hoiva Rum’Vin’veu** - *“Falsehoods Cloud Not the Folk of Faith”* which is called to alert other halfling that illusions, deceptions, liars, and things not being as they seem are about. This may grant Advantage on Saves made to resist illusions or to suss out a lie, though it makes any listener who obeys the call seem paranoid and suspicious of others.

# *Bog Babies & Bog Wraiths*

*Cherubs and Chernobogs of the Bayou*

By Edchuck Sockmonkey

Weeping Willows gather around the banks of the rivers of the wilderland, dipping their aching branches into the bog waters and swamp streams, feeling great love for those who dwell nearby and the company their presence provides. In those fledgling swamp villages, when babies are born with deformities so severe they cannot survive, they are brought to the bog and placed under the Weeping Willow.

The Weeping Willow looks down at the baby and in its knobs and burls it sees the love the parents have for their crippled infant, and it accepts this deformed soul into the warm mud and nurturing roots of the river bank. It is then that the Bog Baby, formed of love and regret for misfortune, is created. It is a benevolent spirit that helps the lost and protects the innocent along the banks of the river and in the muck of the bog.

The shape it takes will vary for what is needed at the time. It will appear like a floating lantern as bright and warm as the fires of a childhood hearth, always in the distance leading a stray soul back to where it needs to be. It will sometimes appear as a child, malformed and stretched as though made of clay and left to sag in sun, drying wrong; and in such appearances it sits on the boughs of the Weeping Willow and plays a whistle-game and gives directions in exchange for polite words.

It is possible its natural form is a malformed glob of muds and roots in vaguely human form, with a kind mandragora's fey face and willow locks like hair which fall over its face. Regardless these spirits are known to push boats out of mud, give buoyancy to those stuck in quicksand, and to climb up on the boats of lost travelers and point them in the right direction until they are no longer needed.



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

...But sometimes a perfectly healthy baby is left at the Weeping Willow by cruel kidnappers, hateful elders, or uncaring parents. The Weeping Willow watches in horror but can do nothing to prevent such things, as it is but a conduit of the love and hatred of those who keep it company.

These babies are pulled down deep into the dark mud of the river bank and arise shortly as Bog Wraiths, foul spirits of malevolence that seek only to bring misery and pain to those who got to live their lives.

Bog Wraiths are tall and narrow, and from certain angles they look like healthy and perfect specimens of their race. But all it takes is a slight turn of their head or a shift in their step to realize how utterly twisted and deformed they are, as if stretched into a mockery of the most attractive elements of their parents.

They are utterly hateful, with teeth like a crocodile and eyes like a demon wolf. They will stalk to the edges of communities like a boogeyman and raise hell by putting leaks in boats, scorpions in shoes, rotting food, curdling milk, and screaming at children in the night.

They have fingers like scissors, spray venom like a rattlesnake when they spit insults, and carry a haversack on an old oar which contains the full weight of their wasted potential

Bog Wraiths don't get along with anyone, not even lowmen. They are good at lying and pretending to be someone's friend, for a moment or two, but eventually they will either seek to commiserate or to vent their frustrations upon fair weather friends by way of physical abuse.

## **Bog Baby**

**HD:** 2, **AC:** As Leather (Only Damaged by Evil Folk, when Will o'Wisp only damaged by Magic/Magic Weapons), **Attacks:** 1, Mud Slaps (d6.)

**Moves:** as Ghost. **Morale:** Unshakable when defending Weeping Willow, Cowardly when near a Bog Wraith, N/A at other times.

**Special:** A Bog Baby can repair boats, move boats on the safe pass, and provide aid from swamp hazards unnoticed at a rate of 2-in-6.

On a success a Bog Baby allows for any item damage, sickness, or disease to stall until such a time that the target is out of the swamp or harm's way.

A Bog Baby may also turn into a Will o'Wisp at any time, often doing this immediately if struck.

Bog Babies have a 15% chance of hearing any cries for help made within sight of their river.

**No. Appearing:** Solitary, or 1d6 Bog Babies at a Weeping Willow near a village.



## **Bog Wraith**

**HD:** 5, **AC:** As Chain, **Attacks:** 2, Scissor-Fingers d6+1 and/or Flail of Sorrows d8+2.

**Moves:** as Ghost/Human. **Morale:** Insane, Cowardly when near kindly parents or pregnant mothers.

**Special:** If a Bog Wraith is given a chance to state why it hates the world, the individual closest to it must make a Save against Poison or take 1d4+1 points of poison damage from its spiteful spit, which stains any and all clothes with red-black bile.

If it is allowed to rant, the Flail of Sorrows does -1 damage for each round it grumbles and a Save against Poison is made. Bog Wraiths are spirits who can walk through solid obstacles when in the swamps or rivers, but they move as humans when on the edge of civilization.

Bog Wraiths have a 25% chance of hearing any crying within sight of their river.

**No. Appearing:** Solitary, a Pair of Misbegotten Twins or 1d4 Bog Wraiths and 1d6 newborn kidnapped babies they wish to parent "properly."

# *Crystalline Snakes*

## *A Beautiful Blight of the West*

By Vincent Quigley

The crystalline snakes are a blight on those who walk these wild hills. These dangerous predator live in caves among strange crystalline formations where they can easily hide from plain sight. While not made of crystal proper, their large scales have a mirror-like shine that reflect and distort any ambient light much like the prism of a quartz crystal. They deftly strike their victim under the cover of stealth, trying to bury their fangs into any expose flesh. Once the fangs connect, they inject a potent poison who quickly turns the blood and skin into jagged glass-like crystal.

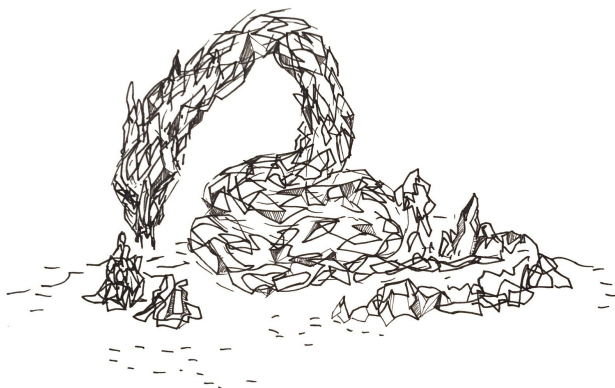
In the lair of crystalline snakes, expert trappers can easily discern strange formations of shattered and prone humanoids and animals. Crystals made of such flesh is of desire for many folk in the wilderness.

It is said that crushing the crystals, binding them in wet cloth, and wrapping them around one's brow allows the "third eye" to lead you into the Metal Bloom while also providing a cosmic high that only arch-mages usually get to enjoy when glimpsing into the beyond.

Seers, fortune tellers and charlatans know that these crystallized "souls" can allow one to better attune themselves to the spirit world; making communication with the dead all the easier and more showy.

The native locals of the region don't care for these benefits, hating the creature for the blight vermin it is. Cicadamen often have to deal with the serpents burrowing deep into their subterranean realm, causing beautiful but notably disruptive destruction to their temples of learning.

The Poikvin Gven view these serpents (or more specifically their venom) as a manifestation of the sin of lust and greed; those who find beauty in jewelry deserve to be consumed by such things. What's more they believe and loudly proclaim that, any and all who try to protect those with those sins in their heart deserve their fate by crystallization.



*Art by Richie Cyngler*

## Crystalline Snakes

**HD:** 3, **AC:** As Cloth, **Attacks:** 1, Envenomed Bite (d4)

**Moves:** 30'. **Morale:** As a simple predatory animal.

**Special:** The bite of a crystalline snake requires a Save vs Petrification or else the bit appendage stiffens rigidly.

After one minute the limb itself will begin to see jagged growths from under its skin as glass-like sharps begin to poke out through the flesh, dealing d8 damage (Con save for Half).

After five minutes a second Save vs Petrification must be made with a failure seeing the limb that was bit will becoming crystallized.

A successful Save will prevent further crystallization but the limb will still be mostly destroyed and numb depending on how long the crystallization has been going on.

A bite to neck or head will kill the individual if they fail their second Save vs Petrification in a death that is unfortunately, not instant. Lowmen describe it like being choked to death with a broken bottle of whiskey.

**No. Appearing:** Solitary (sunning itself), d6 coiling together for warmth, or nest of 2d6 and protected hoard of "gemstones" (200 GP in precious stones per snake, 2-in-6 chance of them actually being snake eggs).

# *The Tarry Baunbak*

*The Lowest of the Lowmen, a Dreadful Dealer*

By Brian Richmond

The Tarry Baunbak is a salesman of the western wilderness, a man of odd proportion and unusual style. His legs and arms are tall and long, thin as a pit viper and with an unusual elasticity. His chest is barrelous, a central nucleus that seems to hold him all together. His head is a broad stump, bubbling up with blackness.

The whole man is made of a vile blue-purple-black tar-like substance that seems to only vaguely obey the rules of biped momentum. He sways like an octopus trying to walk on two legs whenever he walks, but he strolls with unusual fastness.

The Tarry Baunbak is a lowman, a devil or demon of these western wilds who's put on a change of clothes and tried to find his own stars. Whether he's a good representation of other lowmen, or just an outlier who can't best his nature is open to interpretation. Other lowmen don't much like how open he is.

His face is composed of teeth in tar, always at least 3d12 of them, some of them gold, some of them fangs, some of them stones that just look teeth-like. None of them surely his own, certainly not by any natural means of having teeth.

He wears a skull stuck-in the tar to serve as his eyes, even though the empty sockets grant him no sight--it might

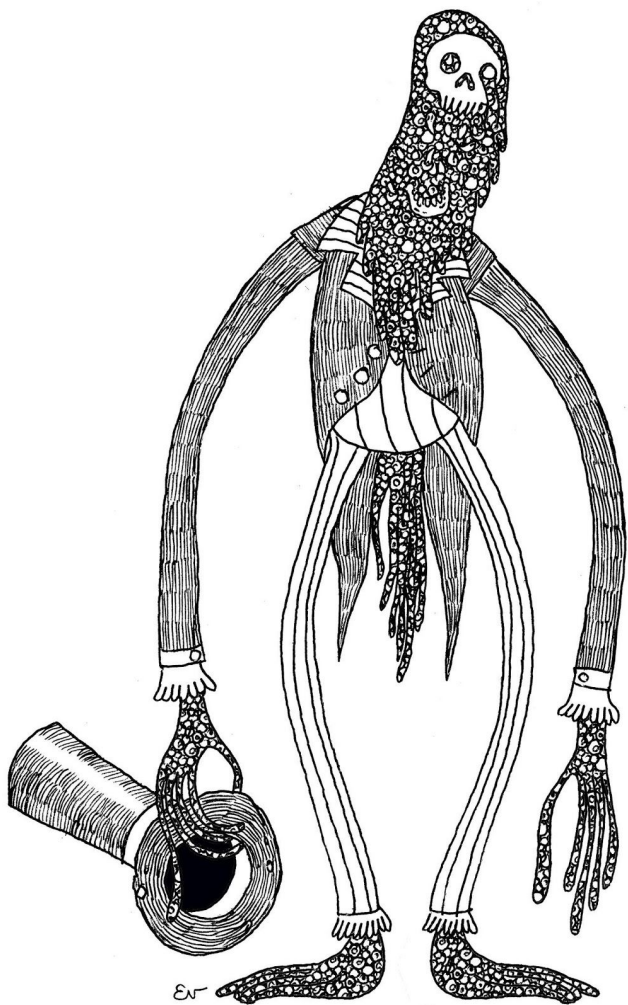
just be a social thing. He can shuffle and bubble out new skulls to replace his current one from his central mass.

The Tarry Baunbak would look like a great bogun monstrosity if not for the trappings of civilization that cling to him. He wears a violet pinstripe suit and a long frock coat of similar make. A stovepipe hat sticks to his head and he seems to enjoy tipping it at folks.

His voice is guttural and deep, like the voice of a man whose life was spent chugging hard liquor, smoking heavy tobacco, and gargling broken glass. It echos softly on the wind with the faint screaming of the damned, which he occasionally notices and will denegratingly refer to them by comenting "*Mosquitos out in full, ain't they?*"

The Tarry Baunbak always wants to cut a deal. He's a demon of sorts, one who has bubbled up to the surface. He doesn't want your soul, he wants your luck and fortune. He'll take your soul if you're done with it or "*most unfortunate,*" but he'd rather your luck. In exchange, he can cast spells or offer up several items he's collected over the years. To take your luck he'll bop you on the head with his tarry amber-tipped sheleighleigh.

You can always meet him at a crossroads in the country on the thirteenth night of the month, if it is under a Full Moon and also a Friday he'll be in mighty good spirits. On such a night he'll offer you a proper suit with any deal, as "*you're in business with me, and that means you need to be dressed mighty fine for a good bad time.*"



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

### **The Tarry Baunbak**

**HD:** 7, **AC:** as chain, **DMG:** Tarry amber-tipped sheleighleigh for 2d6 damage, or tarry whipping-limb for 2d4 damage (on an 8, STR save or lose your weapon to the tar-flesh). **Move as elf** (leaves no footsteps, but drips tar lightly). **Morale:** Unflappable (low in the face of the truly pious). **Saves:** as a Cleric of 7th Level.

**Spells:** As a 5th Level Cleric, but all the effects are tarry, sticky, and disgusting.

**Alignment:** Wickedness and Pettiness more than Evil or Chaos.

**Special Abilities:** Will use stolen Fortune and Luck to allow itself to re-roll, and these re-rolls are visible as time reverses with stringy tar-lines on that which goes back to moments before.

If no one in the party has given him their Fortune, he will have 1d4 Fortunes currently stolen from elsewhere and at the ready. He can also expend an additional +1 Fortune, that being his own. Expending this causes him to be banished back to Hell in a puddle of soul tar, re-emerging in 1d8 Months. Anyone in the party who has given up their Fortune to him rolls with Disadvantage against the Tarry Baunbak.

**Loot:** The Tarry Baunbak will always have one of his dark and dastardly baubles on him, though he won't use them as they'll always find a way back to him and are meant for paying customers. He may use them if he feared being banished for eternity back to Hell.



## **Skull Masks & Attitudes of the Tarry Baunbak (d6)**

To be picked at random, or to switch about interchangeably during conversation or when talking to new people.

1. Man's skull, worn to look gentlemanly and refined. He will smoke a cigar with this skull on.
2. Child's skull, worn to look sinister and spooky. He will move his fingers too much when he talks.
3. Dinosaur's skull, worn to look predatory and ancient. He will drip a lot more tar than usual.
4. Pig's skull, worn to look friendly and deal-worthy. He will laugh a bubbling laugh more often.
5. Giant Catfish Skull, worn to look solemn and tired. He will sigh most often while wearing this one.
6. Noble belle's skull, worn to look pretty and to mock. He will put on a debutante's accent and talk all fancy-like in a condescending manner.

## **Darkly Dealt Baubles of the Tarry Baunbak**

As a fiend, or lowmen as his folk prefer to say, the Tarry Baunbak has plenty of foul goods to give away in trades. Though these goods are certainly wicked.

Anyone who can sense magic can see unfortunate souls chained to these items in states of torment. Most of whom are drowning in tar.

The Tarry Baunbak has a story for each, which he'll tell a grim half-truth about in the name of full transparency between the sacred relationship of customer and proprietor.

### **Wicked Baubles for Barter (d6)**

1. **Forsaken Folk Faith Falcata** - d8 damage, slows enemies by 25% by infecting wounds dealt with a black sticky tar. Blood causes steam to arise from the wounds.

The spirit of a Longshank is attached to the blade, drowning in tar. *"Little man wanted to hurt'em like he was big. Bet you'd have fun with this. Lotta fun, ya hear? Lotta fun."*

2. **Maniacal Monocle of Monty Moloch** - A golden monocle in the shape of a tormented demon's mouth. Wearing it allows the wearer to see spiritual entities, though their alignment seems reversed.

The spirit attached to it is a blind nobleman, his eyes ripped out by claws of tar. *"Monty worshipped the Old Scratch, didn't pay mind to the Lowmen. Now he been brought lower than'em."*

3. **Lover's Lock** - A locket and chain of fine make that if you put in a memento of a loved one will allow you to always know if they are safe. However it will also slowly drives the loved one insane with paranoia and feelings of being stalked.

The spirit attached to it is a man hanging from a noose at an altar. *“If you love’em set’em free, marriage is a cage as much as it is a castle m’man.”*

4. **Zebra Gold** - A set of electrum bars that reveal the true colors of whoever holds them, the greedy become blatantly avaricious, the generous become foolishly so (1-in-6 chance to give up the Zebra Gold first).

The spirit attached to them is a banker who has starved to death, bloated upon tar. *“Money is everything. Makes a blind man see, makes a rich man poor, makes a poor man rich.”*

5. **Baundak’s Breastplate** - A fine conquistador’s chestplate, burnished with medals of rank and heroism. Counts as Full Plate, increases the morale of any demonic or Evil character by two degrees. All Good folk see you as coated in tar and see fire spout from your mouth when you speak.

The spirit attached to this is a foolish knight who has been flogged by his servants. *“Lowmen metal keeps you safe, keeps you sure. But y’all need to know it is for lowmen first and firstly for them always.”*

6. **Grandfather’s Pocketwatch of Regrets** - A silvery pocketwatch of exquisite make that tick-tocks in reverse. That which uses it may reverse fortune (and allow for the re-rolling of saves) at the cost of 1d6 Wisdom per use. Upon reaching 0 Wisdom the character is catatonic and will constantly turn the crown.

Any who try to stop this will be attacked by the character who has become beastly and insane. The spirit attached to this is an old man sitting in a rocking chair, turning the crown of the watch. *“Time makes fools of us all, but what’s a lil’ foolishness for a lil’ more time?”*

**Destroying Baubles:** The Tarry Baunbak must be in Hell, the item must be placed in a sacred circle of wards maintained by faithful and honest Hobos, and struck with a silver tack hammer on the back of a tortoise under the mid-day moon (whatever that means). Only a few folk know this ritual, most notably the Gaffer and Lady Mathilda.

**Banishing the Tarry Baunbak:** Killing the blighter only removes him for a period, and whether it returns stolen fortunes is still an unknown. He doesn’t fear most clerics, though the truly pious make him a bit caustic and uncomfortable. Somehow dragging the Tarry Baunbak away from the west and into a hallowed and pure space could change things, but that is also uncertain.

Other Lowmen give the Tarry Baunbak a wide berth, though some are forced to do business. In these infernal minds might be clues and inkling ideas as to how to truly kill the demon and keep it from darkening the hunting trails and doorsteps of those who make their homes out here in the west.

*The Metal*  
*Blooms of Tartarust*  
*A Strange New Promised Land*  
By Eric Nieudan

Beyond the sycamore grove lies a narrow plain of sand the colour of dried blood called Tartarust. Gigantic flowers grow there, shining blooms under a dark sky. Flowers made of the purest metals.

Going into this Hell of rust is easy. One minute you are among the trees, wondering why the air is shimmering. The next, you're running from a violent sun, a swarm of gigantic insects, or your own fears.

Nevertheless, the foolish and the enterprising who venture into Tartarust are many. Those who come back have with them chunks of shiny iron, huge petals of platinum, or thorns of gold the size of a shield.

They talk of inestimable, ever growing treasure, but also of freezing nights, of deadly winds, of the hungry creepers that lay dormant in the rocks, waiting for their next meal.

They talk about thirst so painful that some men try to drink quicksilver from tulips. They also talk about the flowers' voices and the way their companions went mad trying to talk to a 60-foot tall daffodil made of silver.

**Why would we go?**

No sane individual would ever cross the sycamore line. Adventurers, on the other hand, aren't sane. Here are a few reasons for visiting Tartarust in search of profit:

## Uses for Bloom Metals (dr2)

1. Petals from **iron dandelions** make superior, stylish scale armour, according to **Jane Jann**, a Gaffton hobo who used to be a blacksmith.
2. **Doctor Olsen** pays up to 1000 gp per pound of stigmas from a **quicksilver orchid**.
3. Depending on their size, thorns from an **aluminium rose** can be fashioned into very light arrow heads, or polearm blades. **Lirien the half-elf trader** is buying all she can.
4. **Pete Oakenhead**, the greenhorn dwarf smithy, will accept any part of a **tin pimperl** for his alloys.
5. Petals from **Zirconium hyacinths** can be made into scary, hypnotic sculptures by the **Tarry Baunbak**.
6. **Farmer Brown** is convinced he can plant the seeds of a **platinum sunflower** in his holy field.
7. Filaments from a **gold buttercup** are easily fashioned into jewellery by **Istorius Johnson**, metal dealer extraordinaire.
8. The sepals of **sodium daffodils** are deadly, explosive weapons in the hands of the **Antiquarian Assassins**.
9. **Iron stalks** from any flower are used as nails by most **swamp settlers**.

10. The stamen of **copper snapdragons** are an important ingredient in **Wise woman Artusia**'s cordial soups.
11. The outcast cicada-folk **Xyix** makes poisons and remedies from the pollen of **lead tulips**.
12. The petal-like bract of a **tin lily** can be hammered into a shiny metal cloak by **Rütger Storn** the Anvil Priest.

### **What do they say about Tartarust?**

These rumours are just that – you (or the players, or a die, or the course of play) decide which ones are true. Use them for inspiration for more content than we can put in these pages.

Cross out the entries as you go. When rolling a number again, use the closest uncrossed result.

### **Rumors (dr2)**

The following rumors are held by most within the autumnal wilderlands. If asking a Hobo about such a place, roll a dr2, if asking a Poikven Gven roll a d6, if asking a Cicadamen roll a d6+6 to determine your results.

1. Hell itself I'm tellin' ya! Full of locusts and fake wonders to lure the sinner in for all eternity. Repent!
2. The prophet Cornegidius travelled through Tartarust once. It's in the Twelfth Book of Forbidden Things.

3. Don't listen to the flowers' voices! They will enslave you for all eternity!
4. Them cricket-folk fall over themselves for the tiniest metal leaf. Hedonism that even demons kill themselves for! Seek it not!
5. If you breathe their pollen, you will become a bloom-zombie, and come back to kill us all.
6. Dragons! That place is home to dragons. What kind? The wicked, hungry kind!
7. Always peek under the largest stones. There's a kind of white moss you can eat. Remember this! It'll save yer life!
8. There is an underground library somewhere in Tartarust. Look for a chimney as high as a flower.
9. The gold flowers are traps. Not even made of metal.
10. A hermit has taken residence in Tartarust. She went there to gather psychic power from the blooms.
11. Cicadamen are native from there. Their hell-caves are the only safe spots over there. Just don't let them eat you.
12. Tis a bloom rush! There's at least three parties on their way already. You should leave soon or expect to find nothing left...



13. Our souls shall drift as pollen, after the bleak dirty business and the quiet end. If you seek it out, honor the pollen there lest it haunt you.

### What dangers are on the way?

The weather of Tartarust changes every few hours. What creatures are met is directly linked to the conditions outside.

Roll d6 to decide how bad the weather is (or choose yourself):

- 1, terrible (roll d4 for *Events* & *Encounters* below);
- 2-3, bad (roll d8);
- 4-5, fair (roll d12);
- 6, good (roll d12, disregard odd results).

If you just need an encounter, roll a d12. On an odd result, use the entry immediately below, and assume it is far away or distracted.

### Events & Encounters (d12)

1. **Pollen storm!** Save or lose d6 Wisdom from invading alien thoughts. 2-in-6 chance of encountering 1d3 Pollen Sprites.
2. **Lost seeds (d4).** 1 hp, AC as plate, save or become mind controlled by a nearby bloom.
3. **Miniature tornado.** Save or get flown d100 metres. Roll again every round until the save is passed.
4. **Corroding grubs (d10).** HD 1, AC as chain, slow movement, consumes the metal it touches.
5. **Fierce winds.** Move rate is halved, ranged attacks are impaired. 2 in 6 chance of a gust carrying

sharp sepals (2d6 damage, save for half).

6. **Floating petals.** Roll a metal below and apply its magical effect on one character.
7. **Rusty rain.** Corrodes armour and weapons. -1 to AC and damage per hour of exposure.
8. **Undead cicadamen husks (d4).** HD 3, AC as leather, bite d6, save or be paralysed for an hour.
9. **Hot spell.** Consume water or lose 1d4 in a random stat every half day until you can drink again.
10. **Outsiders (dr2).** A gathering caravan, or what is left of it. May be carrying bloom metal.
11. **Scorcher!** Save or take d10 damage every hour from the burning sun, unless hiding underground.
12. **Cicadamen (d20).** Most probably mating – 2 in 6 chance they are explorers or outcasts.

### **What is the bloom like?**

Like immortal, silent gods in their deadly desert, the metal blooms have an alien form of consciousness. They fill their empty lives with constant plotting and bickering. Each flower has a personality and an agenda. Each has a magical power and agenda related to their metal.

Blooms talk to each other by sending their pollen onto the capricious winds. If a living being breathes in a metal seed, it can hear the bloom's thoughts and communicate with it.

A typical bloom is  $d10+d20$  metres in height. Use the die closest to this number (for example  $d12$  for a 14-metre flower) for damage when a bloom does a psychic attack (once per round - no attack roll or save). Damaging the flower is very easy (melee attacks always succeed), but damage from most weapons is halved. A bloom has as many hit dice as its height in metres.

### **Bloom Flowers ( $d12$ )**

1. **Buttercups** want riches. They hoard non-metallic treasure on the ground around them.
2. **Daffodils** are proud and chivalrous. They always work towards a greater cause.
3. **Dandelions** are oracles. They offer prophecies in exchange for dreams or treasured memories.
4. **Lilies** want power, and are often surrounded by slaves. They cajole, threaten, and dominate visitors into submission.
5. **Hyacinths** are playful blooms. They delight in seeding discord and playing tricks on blooms and outsiders alike.
6. **Orchids** are driven by vanity. They seek to acquire parts of other flowers to improve their beauty.
7. **Pimpernels** thirst for revenge. They want to vanquish a rival or right a wrong, real or imaginary.

8. **Poppies** get a thrill from blood seeping in the soil. They want you to kill for them – unless you'd rather die instead.
9. **Roses** want to know secrets. They may offer to take over your body and use it to travel.
10. **Snapdragons** want works of art, poetry, or music. Deliver that well and you will be rewarded.
11. **Sunflowers** are thinkers. They crave a good argument, and will keep you around if you can give it to them.
12. **Tulips** are full of despair. They want to be comforted, or pushed to self-destruction – which they can't perform by themselves...

Metals from Tartarus have magical powers. With some alchemical training, you can use them to craft potions or items. Sometimes, arcane effects happen spontaneously (5% cumulative chance per kilogram carried by the same person, animal or vehicle). These effects last one day.

### **Mystical Metals (d12)**

1. **Aluminium (luminomancy)**: the metal and its carrier becomes invisible; items dropped stay invisible.
2. **Antimony (medicinal magic)**: when the carrier takes an odd amount of damage, they take an additional d6. When they take an even amount of damage, they heal d6 hp.
3. **Copper (illusion)**: the carrier appears d20 years younger.

4. **Gold (charm):** the carrier adds d8 to their Charisma.
5. **Iron (necromancy):** the carrier deals +1 damage and can hit incorporeal creatures with any weapon, or even unarmed.
6. **Lead (poison magic):** the carrier becomes toxic to others. Save after any skin contact, or take d4 damage.
7. **Platinum (prescience):** the carrier has terrible nightmares about the future. Also +1 to save against most physical threats.
8. **Quicksilver (transmogrification):** the carrier's appearance changes drastically. Decide or roll for random race and features.
9. **Silver (astrology):** the carrier is blessed with great luck. Once per hour, roll any die again, taking the new result.
10. **Sodium (entropymancy):** the carrier gains an insight about everything's final doom. +1 to act towards someone's demise.
11. **Tin (universal empathy):** the carrier's Wisdom doubles. If the score is 30 or above, they are left with a permanent mental disorder.
12. **Zirconium (astral magic):** the carrier has limited teleportation abilities. This requires a save, and can easily lead to disaster.

Lastly, the areas within the Metal Bloom are weird beyond simply what grows there. Roll a d12 and consult these results to add further flavour to the area.

### *Weirdities (d12)*

1. A field of stone idols, looking like farm animals covered with spikes.
2. This bloom has possessed an innocent traveler.
3. A spiked idol the size of a tower. A bloom is growing inside it.
4. Under a flat stone, stairs lead deep below the roots.
5. The nearest bloom sings beautifully upon the wind.
6. This bloom is in love with another, distant one.
7. A skeleton clutching an encoded journal wrapped in oiled leather.
8. This bloom is slowly dying, its roots poisoned by parasitic eggs.
9. A winged form high in the sky. Could it be a metallic dragon?
10. This bloom is levitating. Only a few thin roots prevent it from flying away.
11. A purple fire is devouring the petals of the nearest bloom, but the rest of it is untouched.
12. This bloom is a dream-thief. It'll take yours, and you might catch someone else's while you sleep.

# Appendix I

*Random Encounters, Tables,  
Monsters & Generators*



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

# *Foreign Words & Name Generator*

*For Portraying a Pidgin Polyglot*

By Christopher Weeks

Given the preponderance of wanderers leaving old kingdoms and foreign nations as they head into the endless western wilds, provided is a generator for foreign words or names.

To begin, first roll 1d6 to determine the two syllable scheme:

- 1) cv+cvc,
- 2) cvc+cvc,
- 3) r+cv,
- 4) r+cvc,
- 5) cvc+r,
- 6) cv+cv.

Then determine the syllables from the following three 1d20 lists:

r: 1) aun, 2) aur, 3) ub, 4) ug, 5) ull, 6) up, 7) ugh, 8) ab, 9) all, 10) an, 11) am, 12) ar, 13) av, 14) er, 15) em, 16) eeb, 17) eer, 18) oph, 19) oop, 20) oot

cv: 1) ba, 2) boa, 3) fa, 4) fe, 5) fee, 6) fo, 7) foo, 8) ka, 9) ke, 10) koo, 11) ra, 12) rea, 13) sta, 14) stoo, 15) pa, 16) pee, 17) po, 18) pua, 19) ya, 20) yoo



cvc: 1) bab, 2) beg, 3) ber, 4) fat, 5) feet, 6) feck, 7) lam, 8) led, 9) leem, 10) raz, 11) reck, 12) ret, 13) vor, 14) youp, 15) yoll, 16) tool, 17) tuz, 18) ros, 19) rov, 20) rot

Some examples: batuz, vorfat, emra, eebvor, rotar, pora, fofeet, youpber, ugstoo, eebreack, begav, yooapa, peebeeg, ledrov, avpo, avrov, reckaur, foopo, reafeet, yollber, ophboa, avlam, yolloot, para, feerov, fatbeg, eerfee, arros, yolloop, koopee

You may also roll less than the d20, maybe a d8 and add some value for different venues.

You need names of the people in each village in a region, maybe: d8 for this village, d8+1 for the next, d8+2 for the next, d4+4 for a particularly small one, and d20 only for the local trade center.

Or maybe portion out the initial roll -- only demons' names use cvc+cvc or surnames always follow either r+cv or r+cvc

Swap out syllables from the tables, observing and maintaining the forms (r has a vowel onset, cv is consonant-vowel, etc) to suit your needs.

# *Goings On in Gaffton*

*Beliefs, Services, and Random Encounters*

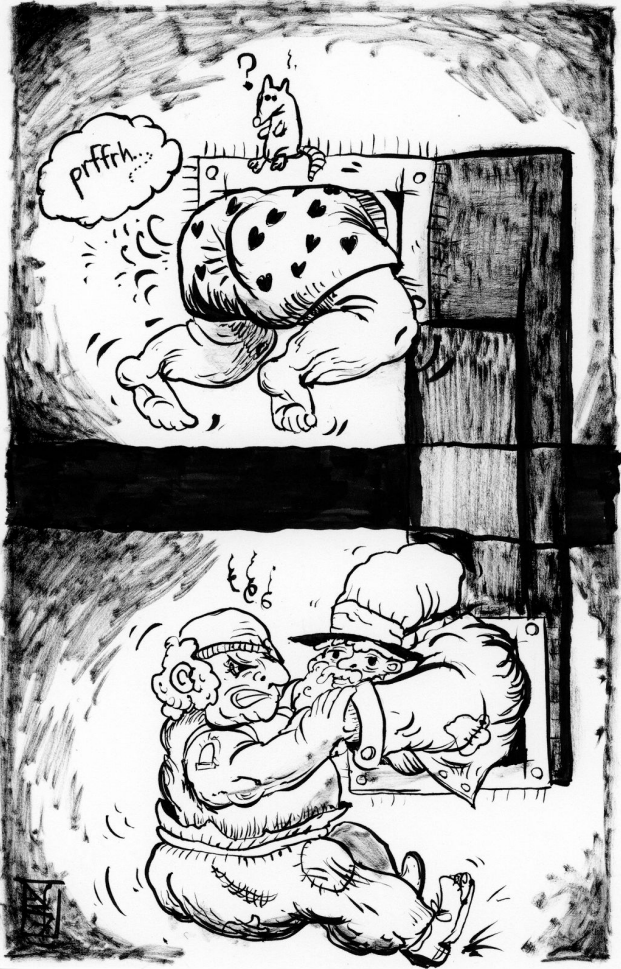
By Brian Richmond

Gaffton is a strange place, eclectic and absurd almost by design. Freaks, hobos, criminals, and all manner of wanderers gather here to plot their schemes, barter goods, and enjoy a little taste of culture away from the great wide open empty expanse. What follows are a set of random encounters, a notice as to what services might be open within Gaffton (to be rerolled anytime the party returns or the Gaffton moves), and a list of odd beliefs the locals hold about their Robber-Baron leader.

## **Gaffton Random Encounters (dr2)**

1. Hobos engaged in a lively drinking song that becomes increasingly raunchy and slurred until everyone is laughing. Anyone who suggests a rhyme gets a free beer!
2. Id4 Lowmen in suits trying to blend in by “acting hee-oo-mein.” Nobody has the heart to tell them they stick out like a sore thumb on a fish. Will react violently towards anyone who has a holy symbol out.
3. A bounty hunter with a fine crossbow and saber, causing all sorts of ruckus because the hobos won’t turn in his quarry. He’ll offer promises of coin to anyone willing to assist.

4. A Poikvin Gven preacherman bemoaning the lax values and sinful ways of the Gaffsfolk. Blames them for wayward eastern kin. Secretly wishes he could be having fun.
5. Dogs chasing cats chasing a hoop snake. id8 children are also chasing after this because they're curious who'll catch who-or-what first. They are taking bets using apples and plums as currency. A fat child is running after them, playing the broker, and he'll accept imagined promises from the party.
6. id6 chain-gang criminals trying to find someone to break their shackles. They buried a treasure a few dozen hexes from here, and they promise they'll pay you if you can get someone to break their bonds.
7. Hobos engaged in a scheme to get something for free, using chicanery and bad acting in an attempt to distract the party who are their mark or to get the party in on their scheme. They're probably trying to steal a pie. They always seem to be out for pie.
8. Some children stick-poking a caged crocodile that is labelled "Dragon" in cute backwards letters on a wooden sign. Will not be convinced it isn't a dragon, but will sell it for something equally childish and fun to poke with a stick.



*Art by Thomas Novosel*

9. Cicadaman in a fine petticoat and bombin hat who wanted to see all the commotion before he “goes through a most uncivilized change.” Will sing and dance with womenfolk and offer soup to anyone who wants to share a meal. Will flee at night to the hills; screaming horrific, monstrous and discordant tunes.
10. An amputee with a pegged leg he keeps sticking into a barrel. When he removes it from the barrel it is apparently made of fine crystal. He’ll “en-glassen” items for you in exchange for live small mammals and tobacco for his long pipe. Anyone who looks in the barrel will see 1d6 angry crystal snakes.
11. 2d6 literate men and women of fine dress and scholarship who are trying to compile a proper thesis on how a hobo town can function and to secure an interview with the Gaffer who half are starting to fall in love with and the other half believe to be a charlatan. There is a 50% chance that if they are encountered again they will have had their thesis stolen and made into paper hats and that 75% of them will become hobos themselves.
12. An animal jamboree of dogs, cats, frogs, and goats who are howling, croaking, squeaking and bleating out a musical tune. Every time this encounter is rolled the jamboree has grown

larger, they will begin wearing clothing, they will begin playing instruments, and eventually they will begin charging audiences for the joy of their song. They will hate anyone who stands in their way, bards, or those who try to join them.

### **What Services are Open in this Gaffton? (d20)**

1. A highwayman who will gladly let you know what roads are filled with bandits and thugs in exchange for a beer and a song.
2. A cobbler's daughter who makes feet for children's shoes, and who is adept enough at repairing the boots of adults. She'll do either for a nice meal and a poem.
3. Id4 juvenile delinquents who wanted to join the circus but are more than willing to act as torchbearers or scouts. They want an unreasonable cut of the treasure and bragging rights of anything you kill
4. A Blade-sharpener with wheel who will sharpen any blade to near-vorpal sharpness in exchange for a wheel of cheese and some chicken wattle. Could make a blade masterwork if you find him true love.
5. Soothsayer who can't predict the future but can read your mind to tell you exactly what you want to hear to feel better about any situation. Will

share gossip in exchange for syrup, gems or love.

6. A dancing bear who dreams of being a wilderness tracker, escaped from the circus. Will aid anyone who can understand him or feeds him butter-fattened foods. Will scare away any bullies or enemies under 2HD in exchange for a dashing hat and a sash that declares his career intents.
7. Mushroom-hunting teenage girl and her 1d8 pigs who can hook you up with drugs and foraged food rations, but in exchange she wants you to groom her pigs. She can get you royal truffles, but only if you can get her a myconid. She wants to marry one, and she's not picky so long as they're pungent.
8. A reptile-training swordswoman who will teach you how to understand the subtle language of lizard licks in exchange for crane eggs, pocket soup, or jars of sands from foreign lands.
9. A false-Gaffer who can host you a proper party and tell you tall tales of "his" deeds in exchange for treating him like the Robber-Baron and kissing his ring.
10. River-maiden cloth washers who will clean your clothes and bathe you in exchange for being allowed to poke and prod your body with a switch once you fall asleep.

11. A buppei-child of the halfling Poikvin Gven who will teach you about the Folk Faith and the surrounding flora in exchange for hard alcohol and vice. The more he talks about the Faith the more likely it is he'll give up his habits and run back home.
12. A man-whispering old mutt hound who will convince others to act on their best behavior in exchange for old bones from beasts, charging one bone per person he whammies.
13. A matchmaking belle will find you true love among the transients in exchange for fabrics and frilly lace. Its up to you to make that love work, of course.
14. A stink-eyed man who will give others the heebie-jeebie bad vibes in exchange for shaving his twitchy Adam's apple and polishing his bald pate to a mirror shine.
15. Swagman of some renown who will give you a random grab from his tuckerbag in exchange for a random grab out of your rucksack. No take-backsies. Willing to fence goods for more grabs to and from various containers.
16. A haberdasher of the mad variety who will deal in absinthe, mercury and fine topped hats in



exchange for religious iconography. Flees or enters the fetal position on talk of lowmen.

17. Little boy selling river shells and crawdaddies in exchange for buttons and bits of fabric. Will tell you where you can find Ol'Shagrat the Big Fish No Man Can Catch in exchange for making his sister a dress out of those buttons and fabrics he's collected.
18. A short-haired individual of indeterminate gender who is selling "absolute top percentage quality rats" who can sniff out whatever you send them to sniff out and steal away bits of goods for you. Wants pins, earrings, and corn husk silks, an arm-full of each is the cost of a good rat. All their rats are good.
19. A crooner of love songs who will write a piece for your funeral, your deeds, or your love with a melancholic voice and a jovial tone. He wants replacement teeth as he's lost many of his and sold a few to the Tarry Baunbak for inspiration.
20. A bounty hunter from a foreign land who will pay for information on his quarry in arrows, bolts, bullets, and promissory notes for civilized lands which allow for economics beyond bartering. Will track for you in exchange for a fine cooked meal

## What do the people believe about the Robber-Baron? (d20)

1. He's a famous singer! He won Lady Mathilda's heart with his voice which he stole back from a lowman who stole it from an angel!
2. He's actually one of the fey folk, but he got sick of them being all stodgy and decided to join us mortals in a bacchanalia so we might remember the good times even when things are harsh! He keeps his elf ears in his tuckerbag!
3. He hung the jerk who invented work, but alas he couldn't put that back into its terrible box so we all have to live with it. It's what we call "original sin" and all that. We used to have everything we needed before that jerk opened the terrible box!
4. He's sweet as molasses candy, and he always has some to give to the children. He can conjure it up like a wizard because he made a deal with the Honeysuckle Fairies of the Big Rock Candy Mountain, which is somewhere in the Promised Lands of course.
5. He's the patron patriarch of all noble lines! But his old wife, The Iron Maiden-Missus, didn't let her sons ever see why people liked the Gaffer. All the problems of nobility come from those kids not knowing their father loves the people!

6. Madds Gaffer seduced the King of Hell by wearing a frilly dress and the King was so embarrassed about being caught with his pants down he melted into tar. The Gaffer did it so we can see a lowman for what they are, they always leak the black stuff!
  
7. He's the master thief of the world. He had six fingers on his left hand but gave one away so he could give us all a five-finger discount when we need it. He robbed a Baron for his title and stole Lady Mathilda from the Heavens, but she was charmed by his roguish wit and stayed mortal!
  
8. He's a politician who knows what it means to be polite! He won the hearts of the first town named for him in an election. While his opponent kissed baby cheeks with disgust, Madds used a favor from a Bog Baby to make every cloth diaper eternally clean! He spent a magic wish on the babies, bless him!
  
9. The Lady Mathilda was actually the Queen of Hell until he shoved her in a tuckerbag while looting the Capital of the Down-Underworld. He gave her alcohol, a cigar, and sucked all the wickedness out of her with a kiss. She broke off her horns and made some bangles with them which she wears when she dances oh-so wildly.

10. The little folk say he's the reason their eastern kin don't want to come back to the flock. He says to them that a halfling ain't a goose and those who stick together are better with friends than they are hiding from the world. That's also why we don't build big houses! No need to hide from the world!
11. He's why the Cicadamen don't bother anyone no more! He heard them angry at being unable to find their Heaven and he'd passed through it the day before, so he rattled a tribe of them, led them there, and they all got drunk on flower petal hooch. Of course he let'em keep having that loud angry mating thing, because sometimes passion ain't pretty.
12. He once insulted a knight who challenged him to a duel. The duel involved further insults at the knight and his mother, and unable to back down from the challenge the knight said some foul things. The Robber- Baron made sure his mother heard, then he got them both drunk and convinced them to buy a boat and treat their peasants nice.
13. He's either one of the old "road gods" or Mathilda is, because they get awful wistful when one of the hobos talk about them and it'd sure explain a lot!

14. He stole the legs off Sharp-Eyed Sam, meanest bounty hunter west of the Black Snake River! Replaced them with two boat oars and now the poor bastard has to waddle on his stilts as he pursues his prey!
15. He saved a bunch of chickens from a giant's castle! Ol'Gaffer couldn't get to them before they lost their ability to lay golden eggs, but he saved'em before they could get cooked. Now all his chickens lay soft-boiled eggs, and he pickles them for our pleasure. Mighty tasty!
16. He swindled the Merchant Knights into selling a cursed black fly to the Swamp Duke down in the south! Did it as a joke so that those of good luck and good nature would find riches and those afflicted by evil men would get bitten by black flies til they die. Ain't been bitten since I left that hell, and riches abound us in Gaffton!
17. A wicked king (you know the one!) tried to have the Gaffer and his bride mauled to death by dogs! The Gaffer stole all their teeth when they weren't looking and replaced them with ol'gum rubber. Dogs like the Gaffer for letting those bad hounds still eat, and they're all too scared of being robbed again for a dog to even snap at the pair!

18. I heard he once challenged a mad golem to mine out a mountain overnight! The golem won in the end and took its prize in pride, but the Gaffer took all the gold and money and bought out every slave and servant's contract he came across for ten score acres til he got here. That golem wanted a share, but he'd have to give up his prize of pride to claim it!
  
19. He was a swashbuckler down in those warm south seas! Bashed up a heinous pirate right and true, because that dread scourge would use storm magic to wreck his foes. The Gaffer boxed his ears in until all the pirate could say was okra-coke-kay, which Gaffer took as him saying "okay-dokay" and left the man to reconsider his life choices. South don't suffer storm magics now!
  
20. One time a group of copper-badged bounty hunters came to town with their bloodhounds and the Gaffer said he'd give them what they desired if they could best him in a contest of lies. Those boys sinned their tongues off in silver, and the Gaffer bested'em all by saying he'd never told a lie. The bounty hunters couldn't come up with a better lie and left, never to return lest they face their shame!

# *Pocket Soup of the Poikvin Gven*

*A Halfling's Hearty Trail Treat*

By Brian Richmond

The Poikvin Gven, especially those about to undertake a journey, will reduce down several months of meal down into bars of pocket soup. These thick, sturdy gelatinous bars can be boiled in a pot of soup and brought back up to a proper meal that fills a whole cauldron. The Poikvin Gven boil down the meal with a side garnish inside the stewpot in order to help preserve a unique flavor. A single bar of pocket soup can serve as enough rations for a party of five to consume in a day, though only if they boil it up.

The Poikvin Gven are able to eat pocket soup raw, though they don't enjoy it. Others who try to consume pocket soup are prone to dehydration, diarrhea, and hallucinations of bonny halfling belles dancing on their chests--which helps mirror the pangs of trauma their guts feel.

Pocket soup costs the same as two days worth of cheap rations, which makes it a wise investment to purchase before a trip.

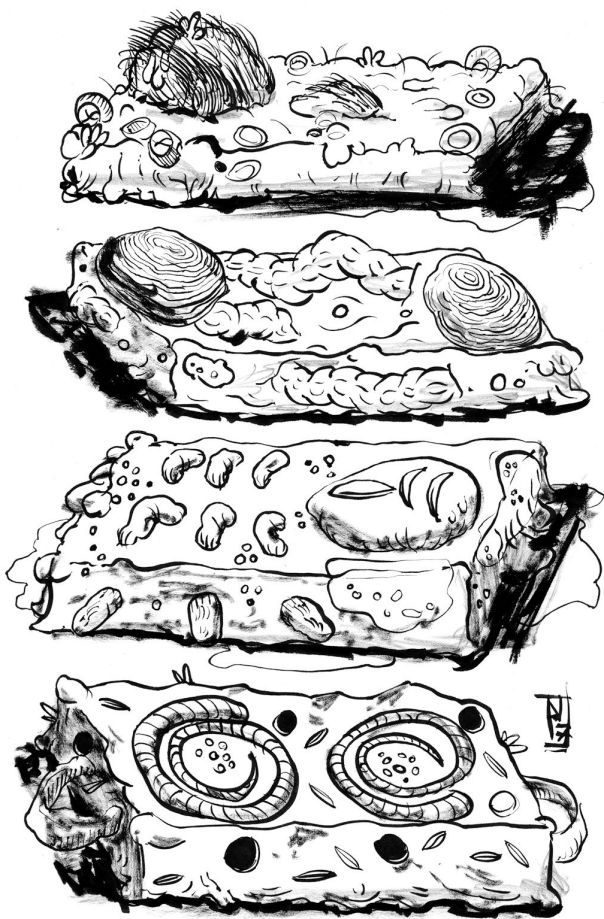
It is worth noting that Poikvin Gven only make 3d10+5 Days worth of pocket soup at a time for sale.

To determine your pocket soup, roll a d8 for each category, or simply roll it once and keep all the results across the row.

### *Pocket Soup! (d8)*

d8	<i>Glace de Viande</i>	<i>Color of Glew</i>	<i>With a Side of...</i>	<i>Smells of...</i>	<i>Tastes...</i>
1.	Squirrel	Red White	Diced Carrots	Sweet Meats	Glorious
2.	Fox Veal	Grey White	Green Onions	Salt & Blood	Gamey
3.	Full Squab	Chunky Yellow	River Oyster	Wood Chips	Chunky
4.	Oxblood	Dull Red & Grey	Okra & Hoof Gristle	Iron & Viscera	Boney
5.	Pig Gut	Piss Yellow	Bog Beer	Spiced Leaves	Stringy
6.	Lemone d Rat	Grey w/ Green Spots	Broiled Mayflies	Yeast & Salt	God Awful
7.	Spider Paste	Orange Yellow	Fowl Wattles	Wood Smoke	Tough
8.	Hagfish Vittle	Blue Grey w/ Mold Spots	Tobacco Stems & Wild Flowers	Musty Beef & Lime	Salty & Evil





*Art by Thomas Novosel*

# *Xylem Soups of the Cicadamen*

*Spiritual & Psychedelic Broths of the Bug-folk*

By Brian Richmond

Unlike the little Folk of the west, the subterranean folk known as the Cicadamen do not make soup for long journeys into the terrible unknown but rather so that they might engage in shared meals with friend and reach a high consciousness with the thrumming of the earth that sets them on their path.

The base stock for their soup is xylem, the vascular tissue of plants that allow water and dissolved nutrients to go upwards; and as such it is easy to tell where an underground warren of Cicadamen might be because the plants around that area will not have the finest quality of leaves.

Xylem soups are made of this universally woody-tasting material, but also lesser tubers, chthonic creatures, and subterranean mushrooms. These soups can produce a number of solemn and religious after-effects on the Cicadamen which allow them to better contemplate and accept their lot in life; while in other humanoids the results are unfortunate bordering on the horrific.

To determine the construction of the Xylem soup, roll a d10. You may choose to roll a d10 for each column or simply roll it once and choose the results across the row.

### *Xylem Soup! (d8)*

<i>d8</i>	<i>Xylem Base</i>	<i>With...</i>	<i>Tastes...</i>
1.	Aged root of Birch	Shaggy Bristle Worm	Oaky & Thick
2.	Young Melon Vine & Root	Mole Veal & Shrew Toes	Sweet & Slimy
3.	Violet-Blue Maize & Silk	Tarry Baunbak Residue	Sharp & Weighty
4.	Pepper Plant Root & Stalk	Diced Cricket Legs	Spicy, with a Kick
5.	Sunflower Stalk & Powdered Seeds	Sugared Pumpkin Vine & Boisonberries	Salty, but Savory
6.	Onion Petal & Poison Ivy Vine	Sage's Thistle & Salt Brine	Bitter & Loose
7.	Juvenile Root of Oak	Sun Mold & Vole Gristle	Woody & Gritty
8.	Root of Apple Tree, Thunderstruck	Poikvin Gven's Long Lock & Daisies	Stringy & Limp

Now constructed, the psychedelic effects must be determined for both types of consumers.

You may choose to roll a d6 for both consumers of a single brew, or every time an individual sups upon some Xylem soup for a surely strange and random set of effects.

### **Xylem Soup Insight Trip - Cicadamen (d6)**

1. You see visions of your young and the great things they will do. The terrible end seems easier to accept.
2. You feel the thrumming of the world reaching circadian rhythms with your soul. It is a calming joy.
3. You see your final shell filled with the beautiful bronze and iron pollen of the Heavens. You shall know paradise.
4. You see the breeding mate to whom you shall become atavistic and die besides. You feel comfort, knowing you will not be alone.
5. You hear the song of those who bore you forth for generations, they sing hymns of Heaven and let you know your mind will not remain animal after death.
6. You feel a greater sense of community with your peers, even though this soup did not provide you with greater insight into what it is that will come. It was a kindness to be part of this cultural act.

## **Xylem Soup Insight Trip - Non-Cicadamen (d6)**

1. All of your clothing appears to be made of gnashing hungry grubs. You need to get naked or they'll surely eat your flesh!
2. Everything appears to be vibrating and it is hard to keep your balance. The world is spinning and you can see it shake. This lasts for 1d4 hours.
3. You can no longer perceive your flesh, only your bones. You can feel the weight of invisible muscle and dermis upon them. This lasts for 1d4 hours.
4. You have visions of your true love making passionate sex with you, though slowly their form becomes bestial and what was once erotic is now visceral and deadly.
5. You hear the screams of your ancestors who shame you for all you have done. They burn in Hell, and all in Hell is repetition; endless cyclical hate and malice. They want you there.
6. Your skin feels tight and the faces of your allies seem monsterful and insectoid. All food appears as maggots. Their words are contrarian to what you would expect them to say. This lasts for 1d4 hours.

# *Fire & Brimstone Preachery Of the Poikvin Gven*

*Chastisements from On Knee High*

By Brian Richmond

The Sins of the Folk Faith are many, each is carved into the wooden pillars of the village priory and new ones are added when needed; which has seen many a priory expand deep underground. The Sins themselves are manufactured piecemeal, orders and morals that are meant to keep the community assembled and united and to inform the Folk of the myriad horrors and predators that lurk beyond their borders as well as the rot that may grow from inside.

Clerics who are invited into a priory (a rare situation indeed!) will notice on 4-in-6 chance that many of the sins are the same as those in their own religion; regardless of what religion that cleric is from. The Folk Faith has had many proselytize to it, and it has pilfered the parts that allow its parishioners to survive. They won't take kindly to being told they're ripping off someone else's good book, but they will acknowledge similarities when they are "wise."

There is a 1-in-4 chance that anytime a Poikvin Gven is found outside the homestead it is preaching the Folk Faith to other halflings or preaching sins which sound like common sense taken a bit too far. Below is a list of potential topics and sins being covered, things like not robbing, calling up demons, loving your property too

much, lying, premarital sex, dancing too loosely, et cetera. It sounds like a lot of nonsense doom and gloom to nearly anyone but the Poikvin Gven and other halflings who feel some shame in the depths of their heart about these things they ought not be doing.

Any Poikvin Gven selling harvest festival fatty foods will certainly be accompanied by a preacher if not preaching themselves to anyone who will listen to their angry rhetoric.



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

## Fire & Brimstone Preachery (dr2)

1. "Shame upon the tomb robber and the light-fingered east-kin, they invite the dead to bloodhound and the tallmen to anger!"
2. "Hate upon who clucks their tongue like a chicken waddle! Foul lowmen hear those guttural calls, they bring with them fire!"
3. "Disgust upon those who love their metalwork too pridefully, they will see it devoured by avaricious swarm and bitter labors!"
4. "Contempt upon those who make false friends, an arrangement of ostracism or acceptance is pure! No half-oath-friends or foes!"
5. "Mites-teeths upon you who plunder and supplant authority! A despot with irons is no better than a despot with blood!"
6. "Hagsfat upon you, women who dance too wildly without a love to allow it! A lowman will take you in the night and rot your womb!"
7. "Dog Piss at you, men who wear not the sidelock by choice! The Black Shank will tear off your cheeks and eat them like sweet meats!"



8. "A thousand cramps to you, He who does not engage in commensality! If you will not eat with or cook with, you are not friend with!"
9. "Molded-flesh to you, the fornicator before marriage! Lowmen guide your loins, make your babies eat your genitals with razor teeth!"
10. "Shattered fingers to you, who touch a woman without her smile to guide you! May your ancestors dance upon your rib cage, fiend!"
11. "Cicada shriek shatter your ears, she who makes good with vermin! They blight our stocks and despoil our women! Out with you!"
12. "Locustmen rend you to bone, he who makes false hue and cry! Let you drown in tar and let your bones be gnawed upon by all manner of Beast, you most cardinal sinner!"

Of course, any and all who want to scare off a preacher need only sin and show their capacity for malice and violence. There is a good 4-in-6 chance that it will frighten away the preacher, with a 2-in-6 chance of him responding with louder preachery. If he does run off, there's a 10% chance he's going off to rouse a mob to kill the heretic who has so blatantly presented themselves to the justice of the Folk Faith.

# *Fatty Foods of the Folk Faith Harvest Festival*

*Woe Becomes the Consumer of Such Confections*

By Brian Richmond

While the Poikvin Gven aren't very hospitable to outsiders, they are not ignorant that such people can be placated and used to the benefit of their community. The Poikvin Gven will attend festivals in villages near enough to their homesteads in the hopes of trading fine food for resources and to lure eastern kin Halfling back to the path of the Folk Faith and the safety of the community.

These foods are all ordained by the Folk Faith and blessed by a Patriarch or Matriarch before they are taken out of the homestead.

In the case of food that must be prepared fresh, they are blessed by the chefs and this is deemed non-sacrilege provided an eastern kin Halfling is brought back to the homestead as a result.

To determine the Fatty Food available at a Festival, roll a d10. You may choose to roll a d10 for each column or simply roll it once and choose the results across the row.

Once the item has been consumed, roll on the additional chart to see the horrific results of such hedonistic earthly delights.

## *Fatty Fair Folk Festival Fare (d10)*

<i>d</i> 10	<i>Main Ingredient</i>	<i>Method of Cookery</i>	<i>Served Upon...</i>	<i>How it Tastes...</i>
<b>1.</b>	Baked Apple	Deep Fried	Chicken Breast	Utterly Divine
<b>2.</b>	Cherry Nut Blend	Double Baked	Iced Creme	Better than Sex
<b>3.</b>	Butter	Spit Roast	Waffles	Nostalgic
<b>4.</b>	Whisked Cornmeal	Dough Wrapped	Vulture Wings	Decadent & Savory
<b>5.</b>	Flayed Beef	Popped & Battered	Popped Corns	Spicy as Heck
<b>6.</b>	Pork Shank	Pulverized Pounded	Cinnamo n Sticks	Hearty & Rich
<b>7.</b>	Lamprey Bloat	Rotisserie Roasted	Drunk Crawdad dies	Like a fever dream
<b>8.</b>	Fox Brisket	Wine Broiled	Flapjacks	To die for
<b>9.</b>	Snake Roast	Beer Boiled	Poached Pork	Bland,
<b>10.</b>	Ox Tongue	Sugar Coated	Breaded Herring	Tough & Gamey

### *Indigestion, Regret, and After Effects (d6)*

<i>d6</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Aftermath</i>
1.	<i>"I could vomit up oil."</i>	You feel very gross.
2.	<i>"I will be in the outhouse. Whatever you hear DO NOT OPEN THIS DOOR"</i>	You need to use the lavatory. You will be done in 1d8 hours. You lose 1d6 pounds.
3.	<i>"That's what the main ingredient was? So zesty. I hope this didn't awaken something..."</i>	You grow a taste for the main ingredient are are compelled to seek it out.
4.	<i>"How do they do that? Do they eat like this all the time? It must be their little hands!"</i>	You start to think that all of the shorter races must be good cooks.
5.	<i>"Sure, it was good. But the portion size was made for little folks.. I'm sure I could make this myself and it'd taste even better!"</i>	You believe you can make this recipe yourself. You will waste 1d6 coins of money trying to replicate this recipe.
6.	<i>"Didn't really last with me. I mean it was good, but I'm still hungry..."</i>	Go eat more. You gain +1d6 pounds.

# *I'll Trade Ya!*

*Market Opportunities from the Gaffton Derelicts*

By Brian Richmond

Be it in Gaffton or when encountering any hobo, barter is simply a way of life in these western autumnal wilds. Not all trades are equal and plenty of them are made at a disadvantage or in exchange for an equally apparently worthless item. What follows is a d30 list of things the unwashed masses are willing to trade in exchange for something you have.

## **I like what you're offering. I'll trade you my/a... (d30)**

1. Lucky socks my grandma made!
2. Favorite coin, all my wishes came true on it!
3. Palm-aid, got it before I moved out here, make your hair nice and sassy!
4. Full slice of my famous twenty eggs and garlic pie, with a lemon glaze.
5. Kiss from a lizard, makes them think you're beautiful!
6. Jar of lucky savior's milk. Rub it on your muscles to make'em shine!
7. Lowmen Cigarillo. Lets you spit tar up to 30 feet away, my man!
8. Fancy top hat, from when I what was a senator!
9. A siren's ever-dampened nightgown. Don't ask me how I got it.
10. One of these puppies. No I'm not trying to unload them on you. Take two and shut up!
11. Get-Outta-Jail Free Card, 100% Guaranteed! Tell'em the Gaffer gave it to ya!



*Art by Thomas Novosel*

12. Gummied fruit skins made with genuine horse-hooves! No pig hooves in here, no sir!

13. Snake oil, only the finest snake oil! Smell like a snake, polish your goods, has a nice shine to it!
14. Preaching Pamphlet from those lil'folks. Makes the lowmen uncomfortable...
15. Fine quilt, made it up of flags and old lucky pants. You'll love it!
16. Pair of iron-toed boots for working the mines and kickin' at fairy folk.
17. My cousin's shovel, always struck true! He cracked himself in the face with it too, so he won't miss it!
18. Two gallon clay jug with some hooch inside. Mind the fire around the jug, the spirit of these spirits don't like it hot and they can be...volatile! Boom volatile!
19. Fine service as a dance teacher, so that you might look sophista-ma-cated and woo your lover at a mighty fine ball or some such.
20. Respect, which I doubt you could gain otherwise. I assure you, tis a commodity of a rare vintage.
21. Set of milk crates, no milk left and no bottles either. But you can always use more crates.
22. An everispice jar, of spices upon spices. Zest up whatever you cook, but you can't use too much or it'll drive you looney.
23. Ghost paints. Paints in a shade of color that only ghosts and dead folk can read. Trust me.
24. A few pairs of smoked lenses and some reading glasses. Gaffer cured my eyes, but they're still fine glasswork.

25. A basket of hamsters, my sister caught them out in the field. Might be a few voles in there too.
26. Rabbit-fur gloves, fine and velvety soft. You'll be begging for them in winter if you don't take them now!
27. Grinning lowmen mask. Least I think it is a lowman mask. Makes me want to pick up a hatchet and...maybe don't put it on right here?
28. Big puffy powdered wig. Such vanity I once embraced! Bald is beautiful! Still, that's fine shaved hog's hair with some orphan locks.
29. My voice in a jar, but you can only use it once. You can even keep the jar!
30. Pickled witch foot. Wasn't a magic foot til we pickled it. Lowmen want it bad.



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*



# *Encounters in the Western Autumnal Wilds*

*Strange Encounters in the Western Wilds*

By Evlyn M, Brian Richmond  
& Max Vanderheyden

The endless west is filled with many a strange encounters in its hills and roughlands. Some work well when rolled more than once, others might only work once organically. Cross out and amend things as you feel fit!

1. Two lowmen engaged in a union election with a group of 2d20 bums whom they both wish to lead. They're making loud promises and occasionally throwing eggs at one another from atop their milk crate podium stands. They demand the party take place in the election to better represent the working man, or else they'll strike.

2. A stream is nearby which pours into a river, from the boughs of a willow tree old dirty songs can be heard being sung in ruddy crusty voices. At night the tree looks to be filled with little lanterns. Dogs and children seem hypnotized by it, and there is a 1-in-6 chance that one or the other will be staring at the tree at any hour of the day.

3. 1d6 Antiquarian Assassins with loud-stick weapons and porcelain masks trying to decipher a glyph on a long-abandoned fence post. They are reviled and will not listen to any Hobo. Any Hobo can easily read this glyph

which means “Enemies of freedom see enemies everywhere.”

4. Three halfling children catching toads in an ol’swimming hole. If there is not a halfling in the party they will scream and run away as soon as they spot the party. There’s a 1-in-10 chance an angry mob of Poikvin Gven will come to attack the outsiders, having heard only how scary they looked and that they were “heading this way.”

5. A snakeoil salesman offering basic level 1 spells in potion and contraption form, though he charges double what they’re normally worth and there’s only a 1-in-6 chance that said item will work if the party buys it. Any demonstration items are the real deal. The salesman is a level 2 thief, his cousin who stays in the wagon is a level 3 magic-user in way over her head.

6. A hobo camp of an old crate, a fire pit, and a never-ending stewpot of questionable sweet meats and boiled leather.

Roll a d6 to determine events going on. 1) Two hobos loudly making love in the crate. 2) 1d6 hobos playing instruments and singing old love songs. 3) 1d4 hobo and an ugly old dog having a discussion about if the food is still good to eat. 4) A foreign law-man (Level 1 Warrior) hassling the hobo for crimes both real-and-imagined. 5) 1d4 hobos trying to figure out how to get to Gaffton. 6) A Lowman and a hobo engaged in a fiddle contest for the fun of it.

7. A man in a heavy frock coat and bandana is selling pocket-watches on the side of the road. He sits on a milk crate (which he produces bottles from when he gets thirsty). He is a lowmen demon, the pocket-watches are fine timepieces but anyone who asks for a bottle of milk is served a *geas*-infused serving which demands the mortal act outside his usual morality.

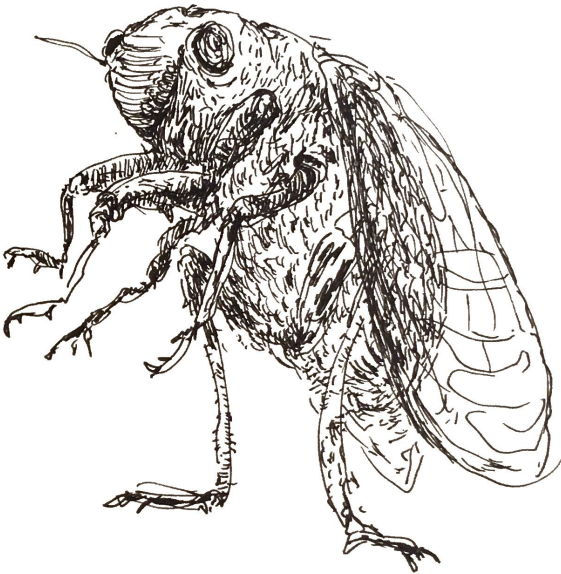
8. Id6 highwaymen and Id4 bandits having a loud dispute in the middle of the road on the importance of appropriate terminology and who has the right to rob travellers. The highwaymen will ask the party if it is better to “pay a road tax” and the thugs will ask the party if it’s “better to be honest and just club a berk?” The opposing side will attack once the party makes a choice. If the party says either is fine, or either is bad, the sides will get upset and begin drinking. They will debate this for the rest of the day, allowing the party to pass unmolested.

9. A hobo parade of humans venturing towards the edge of the wild where they heard there’s honest work, good hooch, and fine company. They’ll trade produce and alcohol, but if they hear the jingle-jangle of coins, Id4 of them will try to rob you blind in the night.

10. A group of Id8 juvenile delinquents with unfashionable pants and shovels, loading up scat and coal into a mining cart. They don’t want to get whipped by the boss and they will throw stones at any who bother them, along with hurtful remarks.

**11.** A group of 2d10 miners with dwindling supplies and a writ of authority from a foreign kingdom contemplating what happened to their foreman who is now a glass sculpture of a man in a scolding position. They want to get back to work, get paid, elect a new foreman, go home, and figure out what happened here.

**12.** 1d4+1 Cicadamen trying to get as far away from anyone before the mating frenzy. They are very upset you found them and will beg for you to flee, as in 1d6 rounds they are going to turn bestial. They will not have time to explain.



*Art by Richie Cyngler*

**13.** A gallow noose tied to the limb of an old dried willow tree in the middle of a dusty field. At night voices on the wind call for sinners to swing and to repent from one's wicked ways. Characters who have broken a Law of the Folk Faith or done anything "Evil" will be attacked by **1d4** ghosts made out of dusty soil and burial cloth sacks.

**14.** A swarm of Locustmen sleeping off a night spent devouring a few acres of food. Their look-out is barely a grub and wants to play cards with passerbyers and share in a meal as they hardly got any last night.

**15.** A gaggle of **1d4** Merchant Knights from distant lands following a hobo who keeps promising to give them buried gold to pay off her debt. They are hard up for supplies and want to cut-and-run from this venture, meaning they'll sell at a discount but they won't be happy about it. If you help them find their treasure, you might earn a friend for life.

Either way they will constantly grumble about just killing the damn hobo.

**16.** An Animal Jamboree band looking for an audience for their experimental phase. They only play sad songs, which they claim are meant to be happy, and get increasingly angrier the sadder their audience becomes. Anyone who resist their song and can explain to them why their lyrics aren't really "happy" will get a ballad written about them, but there's a **1-in-10** chance that they'll accidentally break up the band.

**17.** Several wizards have captured a Pollen Sprite in a glass jar and are camped out by a stump trying to pry the secrets from the fey by way of cruel tactics. The Sprite is disgusted by their urban, civilized, flower-less ways and wants to get out of the jar so it may smother them to death and raise them as Bloom Zombies.

If the party assists the Sprite, it will give them lore and insight on to the Metal Bloom. If the party allows the Wizards to continue tormenting the Sprite, it will eventually escape and lead them into the Metal Bloom to die.

If the party steals the Sprite for their own ends, it will be helpful so long as promises are made to let it out of the jar.

**18.** A kettle of  $1d6+1$  Hobocho have achieved sentience and taken control of a group of  $3d4+2$  hobos and vagabonds, attempting to get them to build a proper village (which by the designs scratched into the dirt, seems more like a giant chicken coop...) The birds want carrion to eat and more stew pots for things to be cooked in, and all but a single one of them is easily distracted by their usual dumb bird behavior.

A single Hobocho however, has grown cruel and sprays acid on those who displease him. He's stolen a top hat and wants to speak with Lowmen about a deal. Any party who can assist him in this or building the town will get to eat some very gamey eggs (which he claims the hobos laid.)

**19.** A Longshank of the Poikvin Gven, assisted by a Poikvin Rumsh, are doing their best to string up a heretic to a tree. The issue being the heretic is an obese human woman, who easily outweighs the both of them 6-to-1. She has her legs and hands bound together but makes loud promises of spells and favors to anyone who will assist her and kill these “wee pitiful little men.”

The Poikvin Gven will demand the party leave them be or prove themselves righteous and help them hang her (she’s pretty much just standing up right the way they have her now.) If the party helps the heretic, she is a Level 2 Magic-User who will cast spells and help the party but attempt to rob them in the night and vanish over the hills.

If the party helps the Poikvin Gven, they will share a meal with the party, provide directions, and be relatively good company (even breaking out a fiddle to play a jaunty tune of victory around the camp fire.) If the party just stands by and watches, after 2 hours the halflings will finally get her to the point of being throttled by the noose; but she will break the bough and fall on the both of them; killing them. Vultures who have been circling overhead will make short work of her soon after.

**20.** The Tarry Baunbak has built himself a debtor’s prison out of tin in the middle of the wilderness. He buys criminals at a reasonable rate (1d4 gold pieces per HD of prisoner) and runs bounty posters for foreign authorities (offering the same amount).

He's looking for someone who might run the debtor's prison while he waits for another lowmen to fill the position, and as such the party might make perfect temporary wardens. He'll give tin badges and bicorn hats of blue felt to anyone who agrees to watch his shackled prisoners until his lowmen compatriot to arrive. If the party accepts, he pays them a wage of 2d10+4 silver pieces a day (out of a safe that contains 3d100+60 silver pieces altogether.) If the party declines, he gets grumpy but understands: after all, he doesn't want to be here any longer either. If the party accepts and waits more than 1d4 days, the prisoners will begin to tell them that they just tried to break their bargains with the lowmen and many are innocents who have been starved and dehydrated by the Tarry Baunbak.

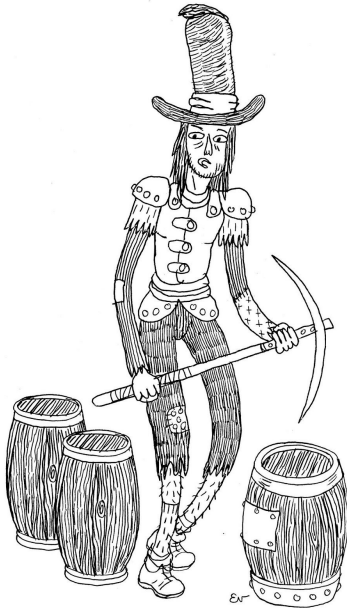
If the party releases them, there is a 1-in-6 chance they are in the moral right and have done a good thing; with any other roll meaning they've released dangerous individuals out into the world. Either way, the Lowman replacement arrives in 1d8 days, none-the-wiser to anything that might have transpired at the jailhouse.

**21.** 1d6 Earthworms gold diggers, who are in fact simply large sentient earthworms who seem enlightened as animals often are in these lands. The bulk of them are simply prospectors and miners, picking at the earth and panning at streams. There is however a 1-in-6 chance that any of them know geomancy and intestine magic ("hieromancy" in the fancy tongue of those in the know.) Regardless, they like hats of all kinds (they seem to fool birds and small children) and are always willing to trade in



terms outside their own favor in exchange for the pleasure of wearing a fine chapeau for a couple of hours.

**22.** A heavily mustached trapper stands on the side of a road near a mule. He hoots in a thick accent and is berating a taxidermied raccoon who is riding upon the mule. The mule itself is covered in various animal furs and disassembled traps. The taxidermied raccoon seems to respond belatedly to the man, in a whispering foreign tongue. If attention is brought to the delay or the man's accent, the other will respond "*Don't be rude.*"



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

**23.** A bootleggers outfit with 2d6 tents, half as many barrels, and a rusty, rickety old still that seems to have been converted from a foreign war construct.

Two men are circling one another with their fists raised, shouting out what set of rules they will be using. *“Port-Sain-Argus, ya yellow belly!” “Bah! Marisbell rules or I’ll bop ya mum all the same!”*

An uplifted weasel with a fine sweater is taking all bets on the outcome of the fight. If anyone touches the still, even during the fight, the entire camp will loudly shout *“DO NOT TOUCH THAT!”*

There is always a 1-in-10 chance that any non-bootlegger who touches the still will cause it to explode (2d10 Damage, those caught will be blinded for 1d6 days and smell eternally of hooch.) 1-in-6 chance for bootleggers, as they like to smoke pipes and drink heavily.

**24.** In a ditch there lies a corpse. Roll a d6. On a 1) the corpse is that of a hobo. On a 2) the corpse is that of a humanoid creature, like a cicadaman or lowmen. On a 3) it is the corpse of a known Gaffsman or other western townsfolk. On a 4) it is the corpse of a stranger, a drifter, someone no one will ever know of or miss. On a 5) the corpse is that of a known NPC or an escaped convict. On a 6) it is an utterly misshapen being, hardly even a corpse given the wounds and the rot but most assuredly dead.

Regardless, the corpse is found with a random playing card sewn into its mouth (such that the face of the card is readily visible).

There is also a 1-in-3 chance that a seed from the Metal Bloom will be placed under the tongue, behind the card.

Gaffsfolk won't speak of this if asked about it, and Lowmen seem impressed but will comment that "*we don't need amateurs spoiling the prosperity.*" The killer could be mundane or supernatural, it could be a ritual or merely a calling card.

Hobos will notice this to be an omen used in ancient times by those who want to ward away the Road Gods and their wandering whimsy. It might have something to do with people who search too hard for paradise, and how they might not like what they find or what it does to them.

**25.** A hobo runs through the party holding a chicken with a wrung neck. Two adolescent boys chase the hobo, one wielding a sling and the other a quarterstaff. The older boy shouts "*Our paw will kill you, you old git!*"

The younger is shrieking a battlecry, which he will continue to shriek even if he gets the chicken back to his pappy. If the party retrieves the chicken and returns it to the boys' father, he will acknowledge that "*lil'un is always like that. Dunno how you could tolerate that screamin', dunno how I do it myself.*"



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*

**26.** A babbling stream can be heard nearby, where an old man is fishing alongside a young man. The old man is mid-story, talking about a giant catfish who used to visit him in his dreams called "Granddaddy Whiskers." He doesn't get the dreams anymore since they left the swamp-lands. Any who might bring him tell-tale of the catfish will make him ornery, jealous, and put-off as he'll simply assume them to be trying to usurp his nostalgia and his narrative.

A Sister of the Black Pot might get him to believe what they're saying, but he'll inform them they're interrupting time with his boy. If a member of the party reveals themselves to be a Swamp Marine, the old man and the young man will invite the party to enjoy a night in their homestead; during the night they will attempt to murder the Swamp Marine in exchange for a slight against their relatives.

**27.** A saloon with bright painted doors and signs is open for business, even if the party has walked through this place before and saw no sign of construction. The place is lively with piano and bawdy laughter, card games between rough types, and heavy drinking. An observant witness would notice that everyone moves in seemingly preset patterns, never straying from their preordained footwork.

The bartender, a real sad sack, will try to warn the party to leave the saloon once they've had 106 bottles of hooch in them. The place will vanish in the morning and they'll be trapped forever. If the party suspects lowmen chicanery he'll just nod sadly and tell them to pay their tab before dawn because he can't carry them out of there.

Any party member left inside for more than a month will eventually encounter a group of lowmen who are willing to let them out in exchange for an honest review of the establishment, a fully paid tab, and their middle names to be forever stricken from the record.

**28.** The Lady Mathilda out and away from Gaffstown and the Gaffer, putting orange roses at a small, ancient, stone shrine. She sings a sad little song in the back of her throat in a long dead tongue. Anyone who approaches will be ignored until she's done dressing the shrine with roses; at which point she'll invite them to Gaffstown.

Those who act violently towards her will cause her to flee and if the shrine is defaced she'll bite her lip and say "*Now we're all going to be lost.*" Before walking away into the wilderness, vanishing within 106 rounds of being out of sight.

If she is caught before then, she'll tell her pursuer that "*You can't make the Gaffer jealous.*" Any who remain and try to converse with her will find her utterly vapid, a little depressed, and willing to confirm or deny any rumors said about her or her husband with increasing amusement and discomfort.

**29.** An election of Hobos and Lowmen for sovereignty over "Beldam County." The candidates claim to represent the Rabbleists, the Babbleists, the Hugger-Muggerists and the Blanksmen. They are all gossips, liars, cheats, scoundrels, thieves, and willing to pay off the party to harm the other party candidates.

They are vehemently anti-union, unless that will get them more voters; and anyone who brings up a previously rolled election of lowmen (and its potential results) will be pelted with eggs and small rotten fruit, called a "filthy Historicist Party Boob" for daring to bring up precedent,

and find themselves threatened by each of the political parties.

30. The party stumbles across a Hobo Banishment Ritual. 2d6 Vagrants, a Cicadaman and a Swagman are beating a well-groomed but clearly former Hobo with bindles filled with filth. They shout “*Geegle-Gamble, We Reject You. Carpetbagger, Profiteer! Grimble-Gungle, Road Rejects You, Never Again Wander Here!*”

They will perform this ritual for 1d10 minutes if left uninterrupted, at which point they will all take turns kicking the former Hobo in the rump.

If the party interrupts, the former Hobo will get upset and plead that this is their only way to get away from all the mistakes and make some new ones. Regardless, in the aftermath, there is much sad fiddling and hooch consumption.

If a Hobo in the party is present for such an event, they will be asked to assist. If they do so, they will get to drink a mystical hooch that will let them see ghosts, spectres, and all people who care only about money or love for 1d6 days, as though all such entities just appeared too clean and out of place with the world.

# *Mentioned Monsters of the Western Autumnal Wilds*

*Deserving of Attention, But Not Their Own Articles*

By Brian Richmond

Certain creatures from this issue of Chromatic Soup weren't able to get articles all their own, but for statline purposes needed to be included. What follows are those creatures.

## **Animal Jamboree**

**HD:** 1HD+2, **AC:** As Cloth, **Attack:** Bites (d6) or Claws (1d4).

**Move** as Dog, Toad, Cat, Bear, etc. **Morale:** Proud when Performing, as Animal at other times.

An Animal Jamboree knows a collection of songs which they seek to play and be applauded for. They can also talk, though their voices either sound uncannily human or poor due to speaking through non-human mouths.

They fight as animals when forced to, but they like wearing their band clothes and playing music better. They take requests in exchange for good food, favors, or 1d6 gold admission in areas that allow for currency to be used rather than barter.

**Special:** An Animal Jamboree can play on of 8 types of songs, all of which require a Charisma Save for an audience to be affected by.



If the benefits effect a group, only one person needs to pass their save; though they will hum it so others gain the benefit. The types of songs are as follows and are randomly determined on a d8 unless requested.

### **Songs of the Animal Jamboree (d8)**

- 1. *Love Song*** - Grants a +2 bonus when speaking when speaking to members of the sex you're into. Lasts 1d4 hours.
- 2. *Work Song*** - Grants a +2 on all Constitution or Strength saves for 1d4 hours after hearing the song.
- 3. *Drinking Song*** - Increases the potency of all alcohol, making one cup of beer equal to 1d4+1 in terms of potency. 50% chance to make even angry drunks jolly.
- 4. *Road Song*** - Allows the party to travel an additional 1d6 miles within a day of hearing the song, but the party will hum it all the while.
- 5. *War Song*** - Grants a +2 bonus to all Saves made by individuals who have fought in a war for the next 1d8 hours.
- 6. *Folk Ballad*** - Grants a +2 bonus to all Saves made by individuals who have lived a peaceful life for the next 1d8 hours.
- 7. *Sad Song*** - Individuals affected by this song have a 1-in-6 chance of making anyone they talk to sad for 1d4

hours after hearing the song.

**8. *National Song*** - A rousing song that gives anyone from a specific nation or race +1d4 Temporary Hit Points for the following day, but the arrogance of this song makes any such person grant enemies a +1 to Hit.

**No. Appearing:** Soloist (with banjo, accordion, fiddle, or oboe and one article of clothing), Duet (with complimenting instruments and one article of clothing each), Band 1d4+2 (with complimenting instruments, fancy hats and clothing), or Orchestra 1d10+4 (with uniforms, complementing and lovely instruments, fancy tassel uniform hats).

### **Antiquarian Assassins**

**HD:** As Class Level, **AC:** As Leather, **Attack:** As Weapon. **Move** as Human. **Morale:** High. Jingoistic and on a mission.

These assassins come from some far off kingdom, often in search of mystical metals but just as often in pursuit of their mortal quarry. They wear porcelain masks to prevent themselves from suffering the dangerous effects of the Metal Bloom, though they have only found that realm a handful of times. They carry with them well-carved metal tubes with floral filigree, which they fill with sodium daffodil. These “loud-sticks” as the hobos call them, function as a rod that shoots a *fireball* spell that takes them a full minute to reload.

**Special:** These creatures are humans or at least humanoids, and they have HD/AC equivalent or befitting a Thief/Rogue/Assassin of whatever level you desire them to be. They serve the side of Law with ironclad discipline and don't like to make idle conversation. They will buy sodium daffodil at a rate of 100 gold per pound.

**No Appearing:** Lone Gunman (in a place of tactical value), 1d4+2 Assassin Kill-Team (Plotting their next move), 1d6 Assassins attempting to hire 1d10+4 hobos and wanderers to harvest them sodium daffodil.



*Art by Thomas Novosel*

## **Bloom-Zombie**

**HD:** 3, **AC:** As Armor, **Attack:** Metal-Petal Claws (1d6)

**Move** as shambling corpse (20'). **Morale:** N/A.

The unfortunate souls of human wanderers, halflings, and certain cicadamen who were overwhelmed by the Metal Bloom. In their moist flesh they are covered in tiny *Bloom Flowers* which determine the moans of half-mumbled words the Bloom-Zombie gumbles. They appear to be dusted in powdered metals in certain splotches (usually around orifices) and their flesh appears to have been cut and impaled by jagged metals.

**Special:** Is infected with *Mystical Metals*, which they have a 5% chance of infecting another with when they attack with their raking claws. Anyone infected who dies due to a Bloom-Zombie will rise as one.

**No. Appearing:** 1d6 shambling by an exit to Tartarust, 1d4 outside the Metal Bloom poorly trying to voice a warning, 1d10+2 group within the Metal Bloom.

## **Madds Gaffer & Lady Mathilda**

**HD:** 9, **AC:** Leathers, **Attack:** As Weapon.

**Move** as Human. **Morale:** Enthusiastic and hard to shake.

The Gaffer and Lady Mathilda are subject to much debate among the hobos of Gaffton. They have many theories about the both of them, but the truth of the matter is however, entirely up to you as a GM. They could be charlatan thieves of 9th level who have fled the law and ended up here, or one or both could be 9th level clerics of the old road gods.

One or both could be lowmen, or angels who have fallen to the world in the same way a lowmen might rise to it. They could even be road gods, whatever that might mean. Regardless, they are functionally 9th level though seldom prepared for combat. They are not decked to the nines in magical items, having at most 1d6 pieces between the both of them with only a 1-in-6 chance of having it on them rather than in their wagon when combat breaks out.

**Special:** If they aren't clerics or magical in nature, they can still cast Level 1 spells by way of charlatan tricks, smoke and mirrors. They've been doing this for years. They also always know how to read and write hobo signs as though they were 8th level hobo-of-note, regardless of how they live their lives.

**No. Appearing:** Independent with the other nearby, or together and being disgustingly in love with one another.

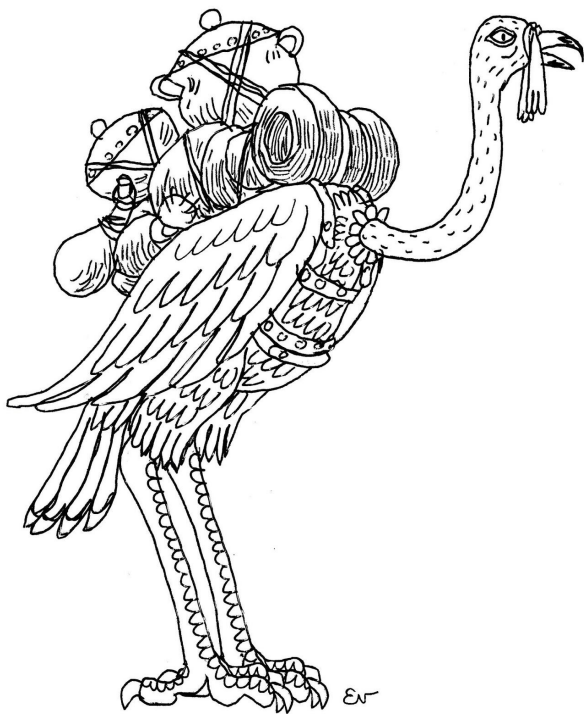
### **Hobocho (the Vulture Turkey)**

**HD:** 2HD, **AC:** As Leather, **Attacks:** Peck (d4), Kick (d8), Vomit (Special). **Move** as donkey, can flutter awkwardly (10' flight, lands at end of flutter). **Morale:** As a dumb, stupid beast.

The Hobocho is a detestably stupid animal that combines the features of a carrion bird and a woodland turkey. Its body is covered in beautiful patterned feathers which bristle awkwardly at any little sound and are easily coated in seeds, burrs, and ticks. Its neck is nearly as long as its torso and it is a naked wrinkle-ripe mottled blue-red affair with thick waddles around their hooked beak. Wayfarers, vagabonds, and hobos have been known to leash these beasts and use them to carry their goods as they wander; as a Hobocho will gladly follow someone if fed stinky meat and ground up seeds at least once a week.

**Special:** Hobocho who make a kick attack fall prone if they roll an odd number for damage. Hobocho Vomit is sprayed in a rough arc of 10 feet and does 2d6 acid damage (Dexterity Save for Half as the spray is chunky and dodged). Vomit can only be sprayed once per day, and only if the Hobocho hasn't eaten yet..

**No. Appearing:** Solitary (walking in circles), a 1d6+1 kettle of Hobocho (pecking at one another and a small dead thing), a 2d4+2 gang of Hobocho and 1d4 Hobos (trying to determine if Hobocho eggs taste as bad as the birds, pecking at black flies.)



*Art by Evelyn Moreau*



## Locustmen

**HD:** 1HD-1, **AC:** Unarmored, **Attack:** Claws 1d4.

**Move** as human, flies clumsily. **Morale:** Mindless in swarm, cowardly when alone.

**Special:** The droning of a Locustman group when swarming provides them with a +1 bonus to hit and +1 HP. If Locustmen and Cicadamen are droning in the same area, everyone suffers a -2 to hit anything and everyone gets dizzy due to the horrible noise. Cicadamen are smart enough to stop, Locustmen aren't.

Locustmen are droning, often poorly dressed vermin best compared to the goblins of other lands. They are crude, stupid, rude, and like to gather in loud swarms that eat everything in sight and get drunk on a mixture of wheat, river water, and their own leavings.

They can fiddle on their legs but only do so when alone and looking for others among their kind. They don't think about the cicadamen and would laugh if they were told they were the reason cicadamen are hated in the wilderness.

They aren't necessarily violent, they're just a whirlwind of debauched destruction and consumption. Lowmen claim they don't have souls, and not in "an interesting way." They know nothing of Tartarust, instead stumbling through this life as nihilistic hedonists.

**No. Appearing:** Solitary (lost his swarm, survivor of some atrocity), or 2d6+10 swarm (causing a ruckus, raiding, feasting, singing discordant tunes.)

## Lowmen

**HD:** As Demon, Devil or Fiend. **AC:** As Demon, Devil, or Fiend. **Attacks:** As Weapon (or Cane 1d4). **Moves** as Demon, Devil or Fiend. **Morale:** Shakable by the religious, but as human.

Lowmen are denizens from the more hellish realms of reality who have found their way out of some hellmouth or infernal passage to these western endless hills. They hear the whispers of the road gods and find themselves unshackled to Evil and Chaos, and instead faced with the terrible but tear-inducingly beautiful gift of free will.

They feel little desire to do Evil, but are still motivated by a desire to adhere to a hierarchy of deals and deal-making, using their diminished powers to bind others to them.

They cannot take souls to the lower planes anymore, instead any soul taken turns into a ghost at death of the one who signed it over.

Lowmen are functionally whatever demon, devil, or fiend you want them to be. Imps, Succubi, Vulture Demons, et cetera.

They appear like a parody of a human, almost a political cartoon come to life. They tend to dress nicely in twill suits, and those who freshly arrive often wear smoked lenses to hide their tears at the beauty of freedom and the horror of the fires that still shine in their eyes.

While not working towards Evil, they are still “bad” for the most part and many feel compelled to act with low morality.

They are selfish and utterly mortal in their sins and desires, and that ambition can lead them to do wicked and terrible things.

The more they act with a bent towards a greater Evil, the more like their original demonic form they appear. This frightens some of them enough to try and find a way to do their wicked deeds but be treated like they’ve done nothing wrong at all.

**No. Appearing:** Solitary (likely at a crossroads), Partners (two lowmen, making deals together), Company of 1d4+1 (working for the “public good”), Venture of 1d8+6 (building something benign but heinous in design), or Enterprise 1d20+10 (hiring on mortals, trying to civilize the wilderness, not sure why they keep showing more demonic signs each day.)

## Pollen Sprite

**HD:** 1HD-1, **AC:** As Chain, **Attack:** Smother 1d4, Infectious Sneeze (Save vs Poison). **Move** as a tiny mote (10' flight). **Morale:** As a determined fey, cowardly around fans.

A floating, tiny, apparently sentient puff ball of powdered metal pollen with a partially formed face in its form. It tries to lead people into the Metal Bloom and whisper, laugh, and sing in a flutey voice to people already within, leading them in circles so they can never leave. They are hard to properly damage but can be swatted out of existence if struck properly. A typical specimen is roughly the size of a honeydew melon.

They serve the desires of the *Bloom Flower* (determine as in article) and will broker with mortals if it seems easier than infecting them.

**Special:** Can inflict a powdered form of *Mystical Metals* (determine as in article) by sneezing itself out of existence which can only be resist by a Save vs Poison. When smothering it has a 5% chance of infecting someone with the same mystical metal trait.

**No. Appearing:** Solitary (on the edge of the Metal Bloom), Cloud of 1d6, Haze of 1d6 Pollen Sprite and 1d3 Bloom-Zombies.

## Credits

It goes without saying that putting this second issue together was a community effort, and it seems only right to feature those who contributed right here at the back of the book. If you like their stuff, they probably have more things like; they might even potentially be available to write or create art for you. They are in no special order.

*Evelyn Moreau* [*Words & Art*]

Evelyn put together the first Soup, the bulk of the art for this one, and was an inspiration throughout.

*chaudronchromatique.blogspot.com*

*Brian Richmond* [*Words & Editing*]

Brian wrote a lot of things this issue. He likes writing randomizers and took a hand at monster design here.

*goatmansgoblet.com*

*Thomas Novosel* [*Art*]

Thomas is the artist who contributed some evocative, eclectic, hobo-tastic pieces to this issue. He also did the cover, which is just crazy cool.

*thomas-novosel.com/*

*Richie Cyngler* [*Art*]

Richie is the artist who contributed art for the Cicadamen and the Crystalline Snake.

*Edchuck Sockmonkey* [*Words*]

Edchuck wrote about Bog Babies & Bog Wraiths.

*Max Vanderbeyden* [*Words*]

Max helped contribute some random encounters.

<http://www.shoalmont.com/>

*Christopher Mennell* [*Words*]

Christopher contributed the sadly fated Cicadamen.

<http://thesecretdm.com/>

*Eric Nieudan* [*Words*]

Eric wrote about the twisted promised paradise of Tartarust in all of its allergy-inducing glory.

<http://quenouille.com/>

*Vincent Quigley* [*Words*]

Vincent wrote about Crystalline Snakes and their bite.

<http://thunderhawkslasersharks.tumblr.com/>

*Christopher Weeks* [*Words*]

Christopher produced a foreign language generator for use in name/term/land generation.

<http://thingsweeks.blogspot.com/>