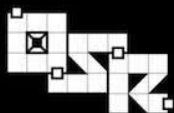


ADVENTURE FANTASY GAME



New School Game Mechanics
Old School Adventure Gaming

♠ M O R E



Paolo Greco

Based on design by David Bowman



Lost Pages

AFG: Adventure Fantasy Game

Paolo Greco

Based on an original design by David Bowman

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HOW TO START QUICKLY

What's the base mechanic? Page 19. Read 20 too if you have a minute.

Character Generation? Starts at page 9. Checklist at page 19. Players have to roll a few dice, pick a Way and jot down details on their sheets. Good starting spells are Apprentice's Delight, Tumbleclick (p. 55), Ancestor's Mettle (p. 60), Selfless Gift of Life, Cure (p. 62), Mark of the Beast (p. 64), Twisting Root and Branch (p. 72).

Combat Rules? Pages 26 and 27. Treat FC as 0. Roll 1d6 for damage.

What about experience and growth? Pages 75 to 80.

This is where the designer says thanks to...

...all testers and friends who helped and kept me going while working on this: Keith, Max, Shazz and the other Glasgow Indie Gamers, Jops, Nadir, Paolino, Luca, Damiano, Luigi, Danilo, Fax, Mattia & Mattia, Paolo, Ilaria, Daniele, Lada, Matt, Greg, Joao, Leo, James, David and Dave. Also many, many thanks to Andrea (for suggestions, feedback, unrelated ideas and a useful design echo chamber for years), to Delta (to hit someone you might as well use a d6 and get on with it), to Roger (spellcasting system), to Carlo (for starting a chain of events that allowed me to write AFG), to Claire MacLean, Christopher Stanley and Stephan Poag for the pretty pictures and to David, Simon and Welsh Andy for proofreading way too many revisions of the manuscript. And to Tim Snider and Richard G. for editing.

Most importantly, AFG owes much to David "Sham" Bowman for allowing me to borrow his ideas and run off with them. The core of the 5MORE system, Experience by Plundering and Experience by Accomplishments were covered on his blog (<http://shamsrog.blogspot.com/>) and struck me as *terrific* ideas. Terrific enough to justify writing a game around them: we started working on it separately and exchanging notes but other, more important, commitments made a collaboration unfeasible. What you have in your hands is my treatment of "The Game", so David should not be held accountable if you don't enjoy AFG. This game is mostly my fault, to be honest. ;)

Support material for the game will be available at:

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

Paolo

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Introduction

This is *another* fantasy adventure game. Does the world need another one? Of course!

AFG exists to run fantasy sandboxes where players are free to get involved with exploration, traveling, politics, dungeoneering, city-life and trading as much as they want. The aims of the rules are the following:

- Use only six-sided dice: grab a die and roll high.
- Rules and equipment should be suited to pick up play: simple enough to be taught and grasped in *minutes*, using only six-sided dice.
- Quick and easy character creation, that does not require players to browse and pick options from a long list.
- Straight compatible with other games' materials, involving in the worst case small adaptations.
- Minimum beancounting and fiddling. No experience points to track or interminable lists of character options. Modifiers, both in numbers and amounts, are small.
- Interesting choices must lead to important consequences.
- Rules must have a purpose and guide the narrative. Rewards must provide a clear direction for players: desired in-game actions must be rewarded by in-game rewards.

Inside you'll find rules covering character creation, adventurous situations, character growth, magic and equipment, religions and advice on adventure setting creation; the content is recommended as guidelines only. Modify the rules as much as you like. There's no Game Police!

Something lacking from this volume is a chapter on introducing players to the game and how to deal with the game itself. I expect at least the Referee to know how to play role-playing games and to be (somewhat) comfortable with running them.

AFG is inspired by many, many sources, and developed using a long trial-and-error, iterative, release-often process, refining the ruleset until I both felt comfortable with running it and the players liked it: I hope you'll enjoy your adventures too!



Chapter 1

Characters

Character generation happens in five steps: roll Stats, pick a Way, choose Accomplishments, get Equipment and roll Hits. This chapter covers these steps in detail. A character might also need things such as a name and some personality, but while these might improve your gaming experience they're not strictly mandatory.



But what a character needs most is guts. Adventure Fantasy Game is about having fun by making your character do dangerous things while you're sitting down and having a good time with your friends.

So don't be afraid of losing your character. The road to adventure and experience is fraught with dangers. And that's why adventure games are fun!

1.1 Characteristics: Stats, Hits, Level, Tier

Characters in AFG are described with the help of characteristics. The first three, collectively called *Stats*, are Physique (PHY), Craft (CRA) and Spirit (SPI); roll 3d6 for each stats. If your rolls are all bad, don't be overly concerned: low stats make the game more challenging but not horribly so. In the same way, high stats make the game a bit easier but by no means represent a guarantee of success or survival for your character.

Physique quantifies the physical prowess of the character, Craft the education, ability and craftsmanship and Spirit the luck, empathy and likeability. High (13 or more) or low (8 or less) values in stats have consequences for characters. The Referee may decide upon different stats thresholds though. The effects described in the table below are explained in the next two chapters.

Stat	Low Value (-1 to 5MORE rolls)	High Value (+1 to 5MORE rolls)
PHY	All melee weapons except knives must be wielded two-handed	Extra melee damage wielding two-handed weapons, +1 Additional Hit
CRA	Reading and writing are difficult	+1 spell known
SPI	When a nasty event hits someone at random in the party, it's going to be this character	Reroll a die or roll once per session, +1 Mana

Two other important stats are *Hits* and *Level* (LVL). Hits represent how much physical abuse the character can take before they can no longer function, while Level is a measure of the experience of a character and how dangerous they can be. Level usually ranges from 0 for commoners and inoffensive creatures to 12 for extremely, extremely expert (and therefore *bad-ass*) adventurers and powerful dragons, and some creatures can go even further.

Players start with level 1 characters: starting adventurers with little training in combat or magic, not much better than an ordinary person. As explained in the next chapters, progress can be made by Plundering Treasures, Practice, Research and completing Accomplishments.

The last stat is the *Tier*. Tiers are used to express the character's status within the setting and as a modifier in some situations, but you won't have to bother with tiers until level 3: characters up to level 3 are Tier 1; from 4 to 6, Tier 2; from 7 to 9, Tier 3 and after 9 Tier 4.

1.2 Ways: Magic, Steel, Arts

First level characters begin the game knowing one of three disciplines. These are the Way of Magic, the Way of Steel and the Way of Arts. Characters' skills develop by making progress in one of these. After rolling their stats, first level characters must choose which Way to pursue, improving as they gain levels.

1.2.1 Casters: The Way of Magic

Characters who embark on the Way of Magic are known as Casters. The Way of Magic focuses training and growth on the accumulation and use of arcane powers. Casters may be mentalists, sorcerers, bards, miracle-workers or even scientists. The rules specify the spell effects and how they are cast. However they do not describe the *nature* of such powers, leaving this to the players' imagination. We suggest determining the flavour of the caster first and adapting all the mechanical details to better fit it.

Casters roll 1d6 to determine Hits for each level gained in the Way of Magic. Casters can't cast spells in armour and are not trained in using armours or shields. The core rules for casting are as follows, and additional magic rules are described in section 6.1.

Spellcasting Casters can alter reality by casting spells. First level Casters know three spells: *Unveil Arcana* (a basic spell used to gain insights in arcane objects or phenomena, described in section 6.3.8) plus, after discussing with the Referee, a spell of level 0 and another of level 1.

First level Casters start with one Mana, which can be spent to cast a single spell. For each level gained in the Way of Magic, the Caster's Mana increases by one, and a new spell of the Caster's level is learned. For example, third level Caster know five spells (*Unveil Arcana*, plus a spell for each level 0, 1, 2 and 3) and are able to spend three Mana points per day. Extra spells can be researched or learned in other ways, for example by obtaining spells from another Caster.

A single spell can't be cast more than once a day by a given Caster: dawn replenishes the ability to cast used spells, while spent Mana is replenished after 6 hours of good sleep. Typically casting spells requires the ability to speak unimpeded and a hand free to make precise gestures.

Players and Referees can agree on different methods of casting. For example, a bard needs to be able to both sing and play an instrument to cast spells, so his mouth and one hand must be free to do so. A psionist may not need to speak and make gestures but can't learn spells from grimoires or other characters.

Grimoires Grimoires are often a Caster's most valuable possession, as they are collected methods, procedures and notes on how to cast spells.



In order to be able to cast a spell, the Caster must have written the spell in their grimoire and have revised the spell in the past month. While grimoires can have many forms (codexes, scrolls, carved sticks, copper tablets, tapestries, knotted strings, crystals and tattoos are just a few examples) part of the training of Casters enables them to usually understand the nature of a grimoire after a brief examination. To be able to understand the contents of a newly found grimoire, the Caster will need either repeated uses of Unveil Arcana, one per spell, or plenty of time to decipher its contents.

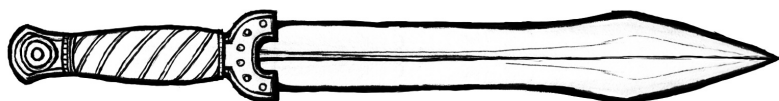
Paraphernalia Arcana Two other important item types for Casters are Talismans and Mana Vessels.

Talismans are charms, trinkets, relics and other curios. Each talisman is dedicated to a specific spell and allows a Casters to cast the spell one more time per day than would otherwise be allowed, provided the Caster provides the necessary Mana. The form and function of a talisman should relate. For example, talismans for Unveil Arcana would usually be spectacles or magnifying glasses. A silver tuning fork or a tin bell could be a talisman for Tumbleclick. A bow, quiver or arrow could be talismans for Unerring Arrow. These spells are explained in section 6.3.

Mana Vessels store Mana which can be later used by Casters. Mana Vessels of a given level store 1 Mana that can be used to power spells up to that level. They can be recharged by a Caster of at least the same level by spending 1 Mana in a process that takes 1 hour. Mana Vessels can be vials full of æther, gems, tattoos or similar small items. Mana Vessels will sometimes change when storing Mana. Æther or gems might glow, tops could spin forever, tattoos may animate and so on.

1.2.2 Fighters: the Way of Steel

Characters who embark on the Way of Steel are known as Fighters. The Way of Steel focuses on training and growth of skill at arms, both in melee and with range weapons. Fighters can be men-at-arms, barbarians, gladiators, thugs, vagabonds, soldiers, brigands, monks, brawlers or guards. Fighters can use all armours and shields and have $1d6+2$ Hits for each level gained in the Way of Steel.



Intense Training Intense training and combat practice make a good warrior. As shown above, Fighters get two Additional Hits per level, adding 2 to their Hits total for every level in the Way of Steel. This is due to their honed combat skills and knowing that, while being wounded hurts and is extremely unpleasant, it is better for their long-term survival to be able to keep on fighting rather than lying down and succumbing to pain.

Additional hits can be gained in a variety of other ways; see sections 6.5 and 7.2. After level 1 additional Hits directly increase a character's fighting skill as shown in section 3.1.

Armour Armours and shields can help by absorbing blows that would otherwise lead to grievous wounds, but the price to be paid is limited mobility. Expert Fighters, those who have survived many fights, know when to eschew heavy plate armour in favour of lighter alternatives: wearing lighter armour a Fighter can resist fewer blows than in heavy armour, but in turn has much, much slimmer chances of successfully running away to fight another day.

Secret Weapon Techniques Fighters can learn Secret Weapon Techniques, and these can be the difference between life and death. It's possible both to develop new techniques and to learn them from Weapon Masters. Such masters are not only hard to find, but also hard to convince to devote their time teaching their secrets to adventurers. Rules covering Secret Weapon Techniques can be found at section 6.5.

1.2.3 Practitioners: the Way of Arts

Characters who embark in the Way of Arts are known as Practitioners. The Way of Arts focuses training and growth on practicing mundane arts and crafts. Practitioners can be artisans, renaissance-men, artists or con-men. Practitioners roll 1d6 to determine Hits for each level gained in the Way of the Arts and receive training in using light armours but not shields.

Practice, Practice, Practice Practitioners spend a lot of time honing their skills. Each time a character gains a level in the Way of Arts, the character can distribute 5 EXPERT letters on Tasks. The 5MORE system, Tasks and Expertise are covered in section 2.1.



A Fair Day's Wage for a Fair Day's Work Practitioners in the same sector often all know each other, and should the need arise they are able to find a job in their town. Each time a character gains a level in the Way of the Arts, the character can spend 6 months working and gaining some money performing a specific Task. The character will net 1d6 thalers each week spent working, -1 if less than EXPERT in the Task, +4 if MASTER, plus the 5MORE modifier of the Stat relevant to the Task. In addition the character can attempt an experience roll in the Task as explained in section 2.

Since this is done during adventuring downtime and assumes full-time employment, starting characters can spend that time working before starting the game and directly add the same amount of money to their initial possessions. Existing characters will not be able to adventure while they are working. It's important to remember that pickpocket or lockpicking are valid Task for "earning" money. Whether this causes problems with the law should be left to the dice and the Referee to decide.

1.2.4 Straying from the Way

Characters are not forced to follow their first chosen Way for all their adventuring careers. When gaining a level, the character can develop in any one Way, and this can bring additional benefits.

One such benefit is that Casters learn to use and cast spells in armour. A Caster wearing medium armour can't cast spells higher than their Way of Steel level. Light armour allows one level higher, heavy armour one level lower.

For example, Odo is a Fighter 3/Caster 5 and has 5 Mana. Therefore, he can cast 5 spells a day of maximum level 2 when wearing heavy armour, level 3 wearing medium armour and level 4 wearing light armour.

Magic, superstitions and rituals need not be exclusive to Casters. The rules allow any level 0 character to cast level 0 spells, even while wearing heavy armour. This means that any character is able to learn level 0 spells and can receive an extra spell known from high CRA. Any character is able to use Mana Vessels (but not recharge them, as only Casters can recharge Mana Vessels) and a possible extra Mana point from high SPI to power level 0 spells without ever gaining a level in the Way of Magic.

1.3 Aspiration & Destiny: Character's Personal Accomplishments

Characters have their own needs and aspirations. To represent this it's possible to assign from one to four *Accomplishments* to the character. The player, together with the Referee, can choose actions that his character wants to do or is destined to: both Accomplishments and related benefits obtained at completion are decided by the player consulting with the Referee, who can of course veto any player choice on the topic (as pretty much everything else in the game). It's extremely important that it must be easy to determine whether an Accomplishment has been completed successfully.

Character Accomplishments are discussed in section 7.2.3.

1.4 Hits: Fight 'til you Drop

Hits are used to roughly measure a character's will to fight and the amount of physical abuse they can sustain: Hits are often lost during fighting and other adventuring shenanigans. When a character's Hits are temporarily reduced to 0 by damage, the character becomes unconscious and might die.

There can be more consequences of having less than 0 Hits. The Referee can decide that any further blows to an unconscious character will be fatal, or that characters can reach negative Hits equal to the level before dying.

The initial Hits of a starting character are determined by rolling dice appropriate to the character's Way twice, adding any Additional Hits (see section 3.1 for further details on Additional Hits), and choosing the best roll.

- Caster 1 or Practitioner 1 rolls 2d6 and picks best.
- Fighter 1 rolls 2d6, picks best and adds 2.

When a level is gained, roll a dice for each character level and add the character's Additional Hits. Then the character's Hits become the greatest of either the rolled value or adding one to the character's previous hits. For example:

- Caster 2 or Practitioner 2 either keeps 2d6 or adds 1 to the previous Hits.
- Fighter 2 either keeps 2d6+4 (1d6+2 for each Fighter level) or adds 1 to their previous Hits.
- Fighter 3 either keeps 3d6+6 (1d6+2 for each Fighter level) or adds 1 to their previous Hits.
- Fighter 1/Caster 1 either keeps 2d6+2 (1d6+2 for the Fighter level, 1d6 for the Caster level) or adds 1 to their previous Hits.
- Fighter 2/Caster 2 either keeps 4d6+4 (1d6+2 for each Fighter level, 1d6 for each Caster level) or adds 1 to their previous Hits.

Wounded characters typically recover at the rate of 1 Hit per day. Medical care can improve recovery, as can curative magic as explained in section 4.4. At times, typically due to spells or exertion, characters can suffer *temporary damage*, which can be recovered at the rate of 1 Hit of temporary damage per hour of non-strenuous activity.

1.5 Equipment

Characters in AFG start with basic but functional equipment to shorten the time between the “I need a new character” and the “ready to roll” phases.

Each character starts with some basic equipment, some money, a Way-based equipment selection determined on the Starting Equipment Table, plus another piece of equipment depending on the Way.

Each character starts with the base equipment:

- a set of humble clothes, a pair of cheap sandals and a hat
- a long, walking staff
- a belt
- a knife *or* an hatchet
- a shoulder bag, containing:
 - a blanket
 - a wooden cup
 - seven days of rations consisting of hard biscuits and cheese
 - a bundle wrapped in waterproof waxed cloth containing:
 - three torches
 - tinder and flint (to start a fire or light a torch)
 - a pair of warm, fluffy socks

As an additional equipment piece, Fighters get either a melee weapon of choice or light armour, Casters get a grimoire containing their known spells and Practitioners get the tools appropriate to the Task they have most experience in.

In addition, each character rolls twice on the Starting Equipment Table and gets the appropriate results (with the option of rerolling a duplicate result).

Starting Equipment Table			
2d6	Fighter	Caster	Practitioner
2	Handgun or musket, full powder horn and 10 shots		
3	Warhorse (LVL 4)	1d6 random talismans of level 1d6	Studio or workshop
4	Horse (LVL 2)	Big nasty dog or intelligent crow	Horse (LVL 2)
5	Bow, 20 arrows	Mana Vessel (LVL 0)	Patron: character is employed
6	Polearm, light armour, helmet	Talisman (random LVL 1 spell)	Polearm, light armour, helmet
7	Light armour, helmet, shield	Doctor's Bag	A spare set of tools.
8	Medium armour, helmet, shield	Talisman (random LVL 0 spell)	Sword, light armour, helmet
9	Shield, 3 spears and 6 daggers	Treasure map (discuss content with Referee)	High quality and professional looking clothes
10	Crossbow and 12 bolts	Mana Vessel (LVL 1)	Horse (LVL 2) and wagon
11	Medium armour, helmet, shield	A spellbook containing 1d6 spells of level 1d6	Powerful friend: a guild master, city officer, local noble.
12	Heavy armour, helmet, shield	Roll on the Great Magical Item Table (section 8.3)	Townhouse

More goods and equipment can be purchased from the relevant tradesmen and craftsmen or at a market or fair. Of course the traditional “Adventurers’ Way” of getting goods is to loot them from corpses and dungeons.

Characters start with a spending allowance of 1d6 silver coins called *thalers*. Each silver thaler (abbreviated with a “t”) is worth 12 silver *pennies* or 48 copper *farthings*. Pennies and farthings are used in daily transactions while thalers are used mainly to avoid carrying around a noticeable bag of coinage. One thousand coins, of any denomination, weighs about 5kg.

Gold coins exist and are worth usually from 4 to 24 thalers. They might be known as *crowns*, *florins*, *ducats*, *groats* and *sovereigns*, depending on origin, weight and purity, but usually are minted and immediately put in a vault and see circulation rarely. Until adventurers manage to make them free.

1.6 Complete Character Creation Checklist

- Have you rolled 3d6 for each Stat?
- Have you picked a Way: Caster, Fighter or Practitioner?
- For Casters: have you discussed your starting spells with the Referee?
- For Practitioners: have you assigned your EXPERT letters?
- Have you decided on your Accomplishments?
- Have you rolled your Hits for your character's Way? Determined Mana?
- Have you rolled your random equipment?
- For Fighters: have you picked your weapon of choice or light armour?
- Are all the above written on your character sheet? What about the standard equipment?

Done? You're ready to roll!

Chapter 2

The Rule of 5MORE

The bread and butter of refereeing is adjudicating character's actions when their outcome is not certain. AFG uses a single system for this: **5MORE**.

Let the player describe their action and roll a d6:

ON A 5 OR MORE, SUCCESS!

Done! Easy-peasy! More in detail: 5MORE is not a substitute for good ideas. Players must describe their actions first, then modify rolls as needed:

+1 for easy tasks, -1 for hard ones

+1 for good ideas or plans, -1 for bad ones

+1 for high relevant Stat, -1 for a low relevant Stat

+1 for excellent equipment, -1 for inappropriate equipment

Then roll 1d6 and consult the following list of results:

1: **Absolute Failure:** be creative with the consequences.

2-4: **Failure:** the character failed but consequences might not be dire.

5-6: **Success:** awesome! The character might also *get better at this!* If they succeeded with unmodified 5 or 6, try an **Experience Roll:** roll 1d6 and if the result is an unmodified 5 or 6, note a letter from the word "EXPERT" next to the Task name on the character sheet: for each Task, the first letter is going to be an E, the second an X and so on. With experience, the character can become an *EXPERT* as described in section 2.1.

2.1 Becoming EXPERT

Practice makes perfect. A character can become an EXPERT in a Task by spelling out the word EXPERT next to it. This means that the character gains a permanent +1 on all 5MORE checks for that particular Task.

Practice must be meaningful: doing the same action over and over again, like picking the same lock, does not provide additional letters unless in novel and stressful circumstances. For example, picking a lock while being shot at by the city night watch. The Referee is encouraged to put a limit on how often EXPERT letters are gained; a letter per encounter or scene is a safe limit. Beyond EXPERT, further bonuses may not be gained in this manner for a particular Task, except by achieving the proficiency of a *MASTER*.

2.2 MASTER of a Task

Once a character has become EXPERT in six Tasks, he or she can claim the title of *MASTER* and add “Master” before their name. At that time, the player shall select one, and only one Task the character is already EXPERT in and shall receive a further bonus of +1 on all 5MORE rolls in that Task. The word “EXPERT” next to the Task will be erased, to be substituted by the word “MASTER”.

For example, it is possible for an EXPERT Climber (who is also an EXPERT in five other Tasks) to choose to become a MASTER in Climbing for a +2 bonus. If the MASTER Climber has a high PHY, the total bonus of Climbing rolls will be +3.

2.3 5MORE Task List

The following table suggests modifiers for a list of common adventuring Tasks. It is not a list of all the Tasks, but only meant to be a guideline. If the character lacks necessary tools for the Task, like picking a lock without lockpicks, a sensible modifier would be -2.

Task	Relevant Stat	Notes
Climbing	PHY	
Eavesdropping	SPI	
Feat of Strength	PHY	-2 when forcing open locked or barred doors.
Surgery	CRA	Requires doctor's bag and uses bandages.
Gather Information	SPI	
Haggle	CRA or SPI	
Hunting	PHY	
Intimidate	PHY or SPI	Relevant Stat depends on argument used.
Lockpicking	CRA	Requires lockpicks.
Mechanics	CRA	Modified by device complexity, might require tools.
Medicine	CRA	Might require a doctor's bag and bandages.
Rally	SPI	Requires flying a banner to rally beyond 30'.
Research	CRA	Requires specific equipment, refer to section 6.2.
Seduce	any	Relevant Stat depends on target and approach.
Stealth	PHY	
Teaching	SPI	

2.4 Impromptu Task Creation

5MORE can be used for a check with no related existing Task. If a player succeeds in both the Task roll and the experience roll, the Referee is recommended to create an ex-novo Task and let the player mark the letter E next to this. Referee, this is your opportunity to be creative.

For example, if a player rolls a 6 and then another 6 while running away from monsters down the side of a mountain, the created Task could be called Mountaineering, Balance, Acrobatics, Athletics or something more dramatic like *Extreme Mobility*, *FLEE!!!* or *Hasty Honourable Fallback*. The character is of course able, with experience, to become EXPERT and MASTER in this new Task.

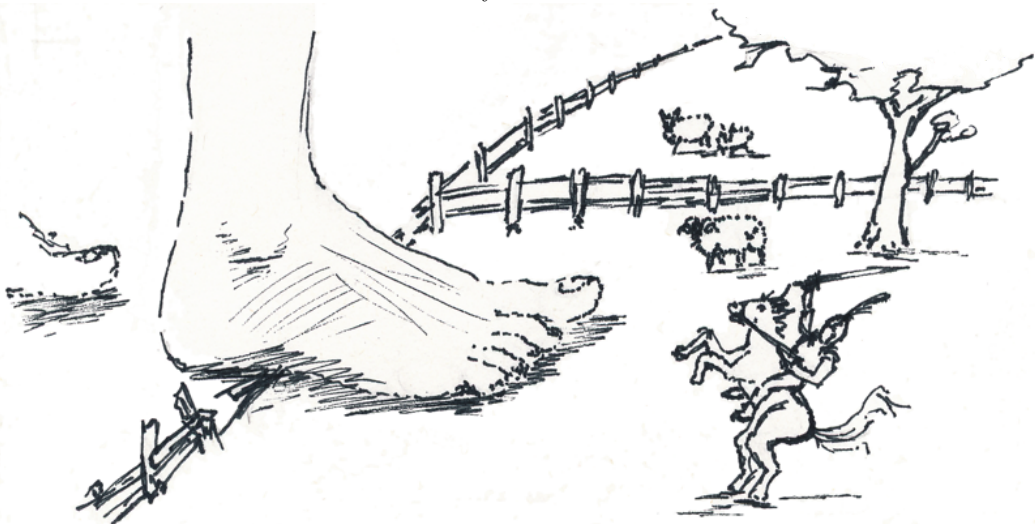
2.5 Doing the Impossible Failing the Improbable

Sometimes a player rolling 5MORE might need to roll over 6 to succeed or under 2 to fail. Unless the Referee feels otherwise¹ there's no automatic success or failure in doing anything.

When more than 6 is needed to succeed: the Task fails unless a 6 is rolled and, for every additional point over 6, the player needs an additional unmodified 5MORE. For example, if a character with low PHY (-1) wants to climb a difficult rock wall (-1) with no tools (-2), the player will need to roll 5 or more with a modifier of -4, needing to roll a 9 on a d6. Instead, this becomes a 6 plus three additional unmodified 5MORE rolls.

When less than 2 is needed to fail: the Task succeeds unless a 1 is rolled but, for every additional point under 2, it's possible to reroll once. For example, a master climber (+2) with high PHY (+1) and tools proceeding carefully (+1) can climb a rock wall with a 1. This means that the climber will fail only by rolling a 1 and then rolling a 1 again.

The Referee might also rule that for some rolls an unmodified 1 is always a failure and an unmodified 6 is always a success.



¹ "Unless the Referee feels otherwise" should be applied to everything during the game.

2.6 Saves: at some point it's bound to get ugly

Sometimes a character ends up doing something stupid or dangerous.

Often both stupid and dangerous. Such is the life of the adventurer.

Examples of such behaviour, not to be taken as an exhaustive list, are: drinking poison, falling in pit traps, listening to mermaids' alluring songs, drinking too much, slipping on ice, eating rotten food, standing ground in front of a charging dragon, being engulfed by said dragon's noxious breath, having their soul snuffed by magic or being on the wrong side of an ambush.

In these cases, a *player's bad decision* has put the character in harm's way² but it's possible that the character might *know better*³ and notice the ambush, tough up against dragon breath, resist the poison, hang on the edge of the pit trap, doesn't run away from that dragon and so on.

This is done through a Save roll. In order to avoid the effects of such nasty outcomes, roll 5MORE, but modify the roll by adding the character's Tier and subtracting 2. Starting characters save on a 6 or more: it's therefore better to rely on careful play rather than your character's luck.

On 5MORE you avoid the worse, but if you don't, it's *big time bad*. The Referee will probably cackle and gleefully relate the consequences of the roll; something marginally bad can happen even if the Save is succeeded, but not as bad as if it was failed. As a rule, it's always better to save successfully.

This game uses four Saves to determine the character's behaviour in critical situations:

- Alertness, how quickly the character reacts.
- Toughness, how physically robust the character is.
- Stubbornness, how headstrong the character is.
- Morale, how brave the character is.

Why have separate Saves? Because Saves are considered Tasks and accrue EXPERT letters accordingly, allowing characters to become EXPERT and MASTER in Saves. More Saves can be added depending on the campaign. If you prefer to have a single save instead of four or more, consider that characters will become EXPERT at it faster.

²Your character would never do that to you. Think about it.

³Your character most probably has a better clue than you do.

Chapter 3

Combat

Combat is nasty, brutal and short. Combatants die or get mutilated easily. The best combat option for unarmored, untrained characters is to *run away* or to be defended by Fighters. Being skilled at arms and wearing armour helps survival but by no means is the ultimate solution. On the field preparation, execution and contingency handling are all just as important.

AFG is not a combat game, and its combat rules are quite abstract and lightweight. As with the rest of the rules, feel free to improve or replace them, in part or in their entirety, to better adapt them to the style of game you want to achieve. Since combat is based on *Fighting Capability* (FC), a single score representing a character's skill in combat, it's easy to adapt the system for other games and their supplements (for example, assigning FC based on monster level) and vice-versa.

Two methods to resolve combat are presented hereafter. A basic system called 5MAIL and an advanced system called FIGHTMORE. 5MAIL is the application of 5MORE to combat¹. 5MAIL uses FC as the main score, employing the single, streamlined 5MORE resolution mechanic to keep combat easy.

The advanced system, FIGHTMORE, is designed to make combat more interesting. This is not done through accumulation of modifiers but enabling players to make interesting, important choices at both strategic and tactical levels. FIGHTMORE treats combat mainly as a series of melee challenges.

¹The term “5MAIL” derives from “roll 5MORE to hit the average Fighter wearing chain-mail”. When in doubt, Fighters wear medium armour and have a shield unless wielding a two-handed weapon.

3.1 Fighting Capability – FC

Fighting Capability (FC) is a combat modifier. It represents skill at arms.

Normally a character's FC is equal to their Tier minus 1

All starting characters have FC 0

Also, Additional Hits express training and combat skill *not expressed by character level*. They make a character a better fighter. To calculate the FC, Additional Hits make characters fight as though they were of a higher level. The modifier is +1 level per four Additional Hits or fraction thereof.

Or ignore the formula and look up in the FC in the following table.

Additional Hits	Level											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
1, 2, 3, 4	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4
5, 6, 7, 8	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4
9, 10, 11, 12	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4
13, 14, 15, 16	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5
17, 18, 19, 20	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5
21, 22, 23, 24	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	5
25, 26, 27, 28	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	6

Extend the progression as needed. Additional hits can be increased by a high PHY, levels in the Way of Steel, Accomplishments and Secret Combat Techniques (sections 6.5 and 7.2).

So a Tier 2, level 5 Fighter (10 Additional Hits), has the level increased by +3 to 8. So, they fight as a character of Tier 3 with an FC of 2. The same value can be found in the table looking up level 5 and 10 Additional Hits.

A Tier 1, level 2 Fighter normally has 4 Additional Hits, their level increased by +1 and brought to 3. Not enough to become Tier 2 so the FC is still 0. Should this character gain an Additional Hit for an Accomplishment or a Secret Weapon Technique, the level would be increased by +2, bringing it to 4, enough to fight as a Tier 2 character with an FC of 1.

A level 12 Fighter has 24 Additional Hits, their level increased by +6. This unstoppable warrior fights as a character of level 18, Tier 6, with FC 5. Should they get another Additional Hit (for example from high PHY or an Accomplishment), they would have 25 Additional Hits, therefore FC 6.

3.2 5MAIL: Introductory Streamlined Combat

5MAIL combat is divided into *rounds*, each representing a very short amount of time, typically about 6 seconds. Each combat round is split into 4 phases. Players declare actions at the beginning of the phase they want their characters to act, with the exception of spellcasting, see section 3.2.

The phases are Melee, Missile, Manoeuvre, Magic and happen strictly in this sequence, each character acting only in one of them. For example, a character acting in the Missile phase won't be able to act in the Manoeuvre phase of the same round.

5MAIL rolls of Melee, Block and Missile are Tasks like any other, so characters can accumulate experience and become EXPERT and MASTER in Melee, Missile and Block.

Melee Phase

A character attacking with a melee weapon needs a successful 5MAIL Melee roll to hit: roll 5MORE, needing a 5 or more to hit and damage a character in medium armour, such as chain-mail. If the attacker hits, they roll for damage, as explained in section 3.4. The Melee 5MAIL roll is modified as following:

- Armour: +1 for defenders wearing light armour (4 or more), +2 for no armour (3 or more) and -1 for heavy armour (6 or more).
- FC: add the attacker's FC.

Charge! A character not yet in melee can, in the Melee phase, move up to twice the melee speed and then perform a melee attack, adding a bonus of +1 to both his and his opponents' 5MAIL melee rolls this round.

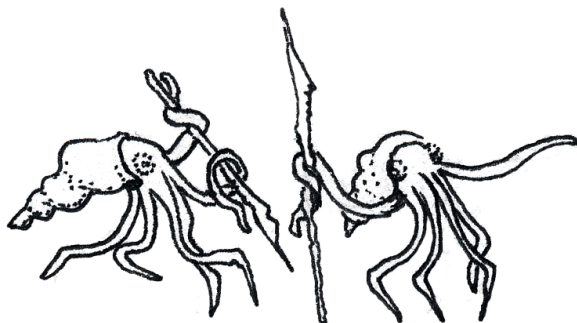
Shield Block A character wearing a shield can try to block once per round to completely negate a received successful attack. The attempt needs a successful 5MORE Block roll.

Missile Phase

A character attacking with a missile weapon needs a successful 5MAIL Missile roll to hit. The attacker must not have been wounded in the Melee phase this round. If the attacker hits, they roll for damage, as explained in section 3.4.

The Missile 5MAIL roll is modified as following:

- Armour: +1 for defenders wearing light armour (4 or more), +2 for no armour (3 or more) and -1 for heavy armour (6 or more).
- FC: add the attacker's FC.
- Range: from -1 for medium range to -3 for very long range.
- Cover: from -1 for a defender using a shield to -4 if hiding behind an arrowslit.



Manoeuvre Phase

The character can move up to twice their melee speed, as shown in section 4.2. Movement allows characters to enter melee without charging.

Magic Phase

Spells are cast and take effect in this phase. Spells that take more than one phase to cast are exceptional. Casting must be declared at the beginning of the round for spells with casting time of one round, one round in advance for spells taking two rounds and so on. Should a casting character be wounded before the Magic phase of the last round of casting, the spell is disrupted and has no effect, the Mana spent is wasted.

3.3 FIGHTMORE: Advanced Combat

FIGHTMORE combat is divided into *rounds*, each representing a very short amount of time, typically about 6 seconds. Each combat round is split into 4 phases. Players declare actions at the beginning of the phase they want their characters to act, with the exception of spellcasting, see section 3.3.

The phases are Melee, Missile, Manoeuvre, Magic and happen strictly in this sequence, each character acting only in one of them. For example, a character acting in the Missile phase won't be able to act in the Manoeuvre phase of the same round.

Melee Phase

FIGHTMORE melee is determined by contests of Fighting Capability: each character acting in this phase chooses a nearby opponent to attack with a melee weapon. Both characters roll a d6, adding their FC; if the attacker's roll is greater than or equal to the defender's roll, the attack is successful and the attacker rolls for damage, as explained in section 3.4.

In the case of two characters attacking each other, roll a single contest: the winner of the contest successfully hits the opponent. In case of a draw, both sides are hit at the same time.

Charge! A character not yet in melee can, in the Melee phase, move up to twice the melee speed and then do a melee attack. If the opponent is further away than 20 feet, the character can add a bonus dice to both melee damage dealt and received this round.

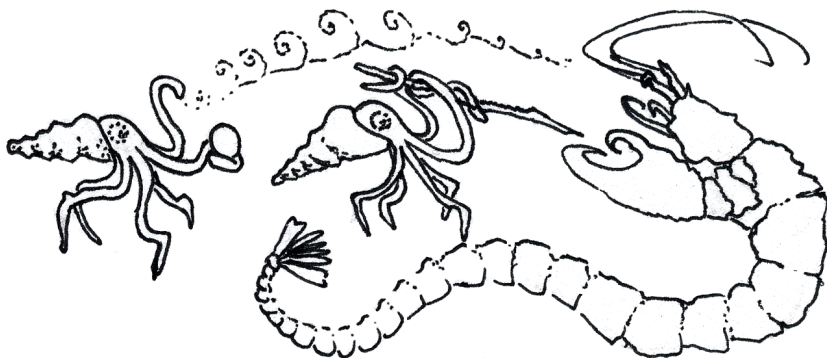
Shield Block Characters using a shield block the blow and suffer no damage if the FC contest is drawn.

Unarmed Combat Characters are considered unarmed if they are not wielding a shield or weapon and will suffer a penalty of -1 in melee against armed opponents. Fighters wearing medium or heavy armour and monsters with nasty claws, fangs and the like are not considered unarmed. Characters who are not wielding weapons at the beginning of the round can act in the Melee phase to prepare a weapon and decide either to roll for melee normally with a penalty of -1 or only merely defend taking no penalty to the rolls.

Missile Phase

A character can attack with a missile weapon in this phase, unless they've been wounded in the Melee phase this round. To hit and deal damage, the attacker needs to succeed at a 5MORE roll, modified as follows:

- FC: add the attacker's FC.
- Range: from -1 for medium range to -3 for very long range.
- Cover: from -1 for a defender using a shield to -4 if hiding behind an arrowslit.



Manoeuvre Phase

The character can move up to twice their movement speed, as shown in section 4.2. A character moving more than their movement speed cannot benefit from their shield the next round. Movement allows characters to enter melee without charging.

Magic Phase

Spells are cast and take effect in this phase. Spells that take more than one phase to cast are an exception as the casting must be declared at the beginning of the round for spells with casting time of one round, one round in advance for spells taking two rounds and so on. Should a casting character be wounded before the Magic phase of the last round of casting, the spell will be disrupted and will have no effect, the Mana spent is wasted.

3.4 Damage

The amount of dice used to determine combat damage is a reflection of Fighting Capability and weapon. Consult the following list of modifiers, roll the number of six-siders indicated.

- Base Damage for Missile and Melee Weapons: 1d6
- Fighting Capability: +1d6 for each point of FC.
- Wielding a Two-Handed Weapon (only if high PHY): +1d6
- Magic weapon: +1d6 or more, depending on the weapon
- FIGHTMORE charge for 20 feet or more: +1d6
- Mounted charge for 40 feet or more: +1d6

The highest result is used for damage, other dice are considered bonus dice. Any 5MORE bonus dice adds +1 to the total resultant damage. If using FIGHTMORE, the damage is reduced by an amount according to the armour type as explained in section 3.5.

Example: a Fighter of level 4 (FC 1, +1d6), wielding a magic mace (one-handed magic weapon, 1d6+1d6), would roll 3d6 on each hit. From those 3 dice, the highest result determines the damage dealt that round. When rolling Multiple Dice, while only a single die is used to calculate damage, any 5MORE not used as the highest result will add 1 damage to the attackers total. For example, a character rolling 3d6 to determine damage with a result of 6,5,5 would deal 8 damage (6 + 1 for the first five + 1 for the second five).



3.5 Armour and Damage

Armour protects in combat by either minimizing the effect of blows in 5MAIL or reducing damage in FIGHTMORE. In both systems, it's possible for two opponents to hit each other at the same time and die from wounds.

Armour	Protection		Speed			Cost
	5MAIL	FIGHTMORE	Turn	Daily	Combat	
None	3+	0	3000'	30mi	40'	nothing
Light	4+	1	2400'	24mi	40'	30t
Medium	5+	2	1800'	18mi	30'	100t
Heavy	6+	3	1200'	12mi	20'	400t

5MAIL Wearing armour reduces the chances of being hit from needing 3 or more for unarmored opponents to needing 4, 5 or 6 or more.

FIGHTMORE Wearing armour reduces melee and missile damage by an amount equal to the the protection of the armour worn. For example, a Fighter wearing heavy armour will reduce the amount of damage received by all melee and missile attacks by three.



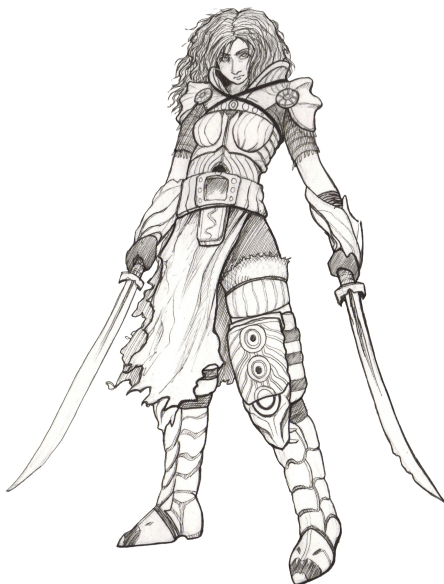
3.6 Optional Combat Rules

This section collects a number of optional rules for 5MAIL and FIGHTMORE. They can radically change combat, so it's prudent to try them in stand-alone or non-critical sessions as players might need time to understand the implications of the new rules.

3.6.1 Shield-Smashing!

When a shield blocks a melee attack (both in 5MAIL and FIGHTMORE) roll for damage anyway.

If the damage dealt in a single blow is 7 or more, the shield is damaged and can't be used until repaired. Magic shields can't be destroyed.



3.6.2 Morale

Victory by total annihilation of the opponent is not frequent: one of the two sides usually loses the will to fight long before that. When the battle turns bad, each group or individual not run by players needs a Morale Save to keep on fighting: veterans of a few battles can ignore a failed Save or two.

Saves are needed for the following reasons: loss of 25% of total Hits or comrades, loss of 50% of total Hits or comrades, loss of 75% of total Hits or comrades, extreme disparity in quality or numbers (like peasants against a dragon or a handful of guards against an angry mob).

3.6.3 Weaponmasters' Hack-Through

If all of a Weaponmaster's melee opponents have FC 0, the Weaponmaster can roll a single time for all the melee contests and deal damage to each opponent defeated in the contests. Weaponmasters are discussed in section 6.5.

3.6.4 The Right Weapon for the Right Occasion

The systems provided do not differentiate between different weapons except between missile, one-handed melee and two-handed melee: AFG abstracts away weapon differences like many other elements of combat. It can be interesting to introduce more details into combat if it suits your group and campaign. Compared to the normal rules, the effectiveness of missile weapons has been generally reduced, while melee weapons are made more effective in specific circumstances.

Swords and Long Blades The character, when attacked by multiple opponents, can deal damage to any single opponent he defeated in a melee contest this round instead of being able to wound only the attacked opponent.

Axes, Maces and Unbalanced Weapons Reduce armour protection of the wounded character by 1.

Flails and Chains Flail attacks can't be blocked by shields.

Lance Wielding a lance in a mounted charge concentrates a lot of momentum in a tiny spot. The lancer rolls an additional damage dice in addition to the additional damage dice for the mounted charge and, if using FIGHTMORE, the additional damage for a long charge.

Spears and Long-hafted Weapons Characters wielding long weapons inflict damage first in melee. This might disable their opponents before they have a chance to hit, as the wounds might take them out or force a Morale Save.

Knives, Daggers and Short Blades Knives are easy to conceal (+2 to the 5MORE concealing roll) and can be extracted and used to attack in melee in the same round without the -1 penalty. Due to the possibility of getting close and stabbing where it hurts, knives also give +1 damage dice against unarmed opponents. Furthermore they can also be wielded with one hand by characters with low STR.

Long Staves Long staves help defence. A character wielding a long staff with two hands can block 1 attack per round as if using a shield.

Bows Bows are difficult to use, requiring extensive training, but allow a high rate of fire. -1 to FC.

Slings Slings are not effective against armour; -1 to damage against armoured targets.

Crossbows and Firearms Crossbows and firearms are easy to use and have good armour penetration but have a limited rate of fire, needing one and three rounds respectively to reload during which the character can't attack. Reduce armour protection by 1, and firearms roll an additional damage dice.

3.6.5 Below Zero Hits: Critical Wounds

Characters collapsing or dying when they go below 0 Hits is boring. You can relieve them of limbs, appendages and internal organs with Critical Wounds instead. Characters can also get Staggered: a staggered character can't act, defend at -1 and rolls an extra d6 when suffering another Critical Wound.

Keep track of the characters' current Hits, even after they go negative. Any time a character takes damage and is at less than 0 Hits, roll 1d6, add their current negative Hits and look the effect on the table below. For example a character sent to -4 Hits will roll 1d6+4, 2d6+4 if Staggered.

Roll	Effect.
2	Cut or bruise. Will leave a scar or permanent bump.
3	For some reason you let your weapon fall off your grasp.
4	Badly unbalanced. Staggered for 1 round.
5	Your weapon arm is broken/badly cut. Next time dodge instead of using it as a cover for your head. -3 to hit (-1 FC) for a month.
6	Face blow. You see the stars even in a dungeon. Staggered for 1d6 rounds. If you have a full face visor, instead SAVE or staggered 1d6 rounds. In any case, SAVE or lose an eye.
7	There is a gap in your ribcage. Blood is coming out. YOU ARE DEAD
8	SLASH/CRACK! A body part is disabled for 1d6 weeks, roll 1d6: 1-2: leg; 3-4: arm; 5: head; 6: torso. If head or torso, SAVE OR DIE , then immediate coma for 1d6 weeks.
9	Hit square on the head. If you have a helmet, SAVE OR STAGGERED 1d6 rounds. Else, SAVE OR DIE . If you save, lose a bit: 1d6: 1: an eye; 2: an ear; 3: nose; 4: part of skull; 5: jaw; 6: tongue.
10	CHOP/SMASH! Like SLASH/CRACK! , but irredeemably smashed or mutilated. If head or torso, DEATH, NO SAVE , roll a new character.
11	An internal organ becomes external. That does not bode well. SAVE OR DIE . If you save, staggered for 3d6 rounds and your max Hits are halved. If from now on you drink or party hard, SAVE OR DIE .
12	You're losing blood like there's no tomorrow, internally if blunt damage. SAVE OR DIE each round for the next 1d6 rounds.
13	Blood. Blood spraying everywhere. Everywhere it should not be, at least. And its yours. SAVE OR DIE each of the next 1d6 rounds, then collapse for 1d6 hours.
14	YOU ARE DEAD . In a horrible way. For example, your belly is cut open, your bowels fall out, someone trips over them and sprays blood and gore everywhere. Or you explode. Or are reduced to a big red smear.

3.6.6 Tweaking Combat: Playing with Numbers and Dice

It's possible of course to change the combat mechanics. During playtest we experimented with:

Ratio between additional damage dice and FC Normally at 1. If you feel that armours should retain more effectiveness also at high levels, give an additional dice of damage for each 2 tiers.

Ratio between levels and Additional Hits to calculate FC Normally at four. Reducing the hits needed to get an additional level to calculate FC makes the Way of Steel and, marginally, Secret Weapon Techniques more significant toward combat effectiveness.

FC from Hits Calculate a character's FC by dividing the character's maximum hits by 10, round down (without adding the Additional Hits bonus).

Melee Mayhem To make melee faster, more abstract and less confusing, try this: everybody in melee, for both sides, rolls 1d6 (of a different colour for every character to make them easier to recognise) and add the FCs normally. Then, to find out who fights who, sort the results for each side, and pair them up, better results against better result and then going down. Treat the melee results as for FIGHTMORE. Whoever wins his matchup this round deals damage to the opponent, armour reduces damage, shields break ties.

Beyond d6 Instead of 1d6+FC, try rolling 3d6+level or 1d20+level for melee contests, with the usual Additional Hits modifiers.

Initiative: Playing with Round Phases It's possible to radically change the feel of combat by rearranging the combat phases. There are a few caveats:

Don't put Movement before Melee, or else running away becomes too easy.

If Magic happens before other phases, casters will never fail spells due to combat damage. This will definitely make casters way more lethal: Missile and Melee are before Magic because an arrow or sword in the face are the only way to stop a caster from opening a Hellgate.

During most of the AFG playtest we played with the phase order: Missile, Melee, Movement, Magic. The aim was to ensure that characters got at least one shot against charging enemies, and it worked for that purpose. However we found that if the two sides were within short range it makes more sense (and combat more interesting) to make charging characters enter melee with characters equipped with missile weapons and stop them from shooting. This also encourages groups to maintain tighter formations and "keep the line".

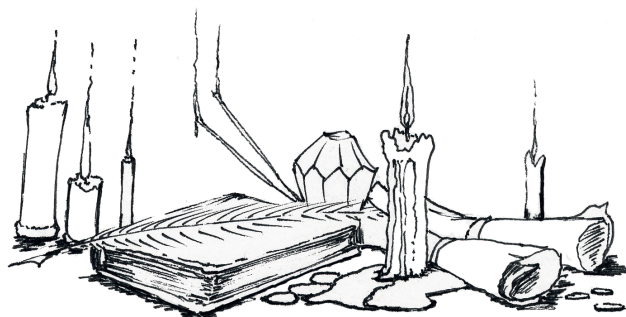
Chapter 4

Town, Time & Travel

This chapter covers the relationships between time, travel and adventure. Time spent adventuring in AFG is important: it takes time to go around the dungeon, search for secret doors, fight monsters, count money, set up camp, wear armour, take naps and get back to safety. Not only must hunger and thirst be taken into account, but in dungeons light sources such as torches can be depleted, leaving adventurers literally and metaphorically in the dark, where they might be eaten by *anything*.

Furthermore, adventurers don't only spend their time going back and forth between dungeons filled with unnamed evil monstrosities, but might also enjoy some downtime spent recovering from wounds, having drinks, hitting drugs, getting nookie, learning skills, working jobs, going places, doing things and seeing people.

And, of course, spending hard-earned treasure on equipment and servants.



4.1 Hiring People

Nothing says “Upper Class” like having people wiring for you. Characters can have a retinue of servants, workers and aides, as well as hiring mercenaries and professionals. Their availability depends both on the locale and on the character’s renown.

Worker	Weekly Wage	Notes
Unskilled labourer	15p	Easy to come by everywhere except during harvest.
Skilled worker	2t	Typical artisan like a farrier, weaver or mason.
Master worker	4t	Excellent artisan.
Smith	4t	Working full-time can maintain armour and weapons for 30 soldiers.
Intellectual worker	8t and more	Highly trained worker like an architect, surgeon, medic, apothecary, engineer, lawyer, insurer, artist. Scarcely available and highly requested by noblemen and well-off people.

Workers and soldiers expect room and board to be provided by their patron. While lowly labourers are fine with sleeping in a common room and living mostly on bread and beer, better skills command better treatment.

This is even more important for soldiers, as provisioning an army is a complex logistical exercise. Equipment must be maintained and soldiers must be fed and sheltered. Supply trains must bring tents and food if the soldiers can’t commandeer them locally: the alternative is poor performance in battle, poor morale and desertion. Soldiers will also expect the equipment of defeated enemies in payment, plus part of the loot, but not the ransom for captured nobles. They are not up for dungeon delving unless paid much more.

Soldier	Daily Wage	Notes
Infantryman	2p to 1t	Found in <i>bands</i> of 20-120 men or <i>companies</i> of 50-300, plus a supply train. Unpaid camp followers follow the soldiers, raising the count by 5-30%. Double pay for a day of battle, plus a part of the spoils. Wage depends on reliability, experience, equipment and fame.
Horseman	2t	Found in <i>lances</i> of 2d6 men. Double pay for a day of battle, plus a double part of the spoils.

4.2 Equipment List

Most of the goods on the following table can be acquired in the relevant manufacturers' shops, mainly in towns. The availability is not guaranteed, especially for weapons in small towns and villages; local smiths might not want to sell their stock to dangerous and armed foreign-looking travellers who are badly dressed and covered in scars. The prices have been researched from historical secondary sources or estimated when no better data could be found.

Melee Weapon	Cost
Dagger, Spear, Pike	1t
Sword, one-handed	10t
Sword, two-handed	30t
Other melee weapons	8t
Shield, wooden	5p

Ranged Weapon	Ranges	Cost	Ammunition cost
Sling	30'/60'/80'/90'	1p	Stones are cheap
Bow	120'/150'/180'/210'	20t	12 arrows@3p
Crossbow	60'/120'/180'/240'	60t	10 darts@1t
Pistol	10'/20'/30'/40'	100t	10 shots and powder@1t
Musket	20'/40'/60'/80'	300t	10 shots and powder@1t

Armour	Protection		Speed			Cost
	5MAIL	FIGHTMORE	Turn	Daily	Combat	
None	3+	0	3000'	30m	40'	nothing
Light	4+	1	2400'	24m	40'	30t
Medium	5+	2	1800'	18m	30'	100t
Heavy	6+	3	1200'	12m	20'	400t

Miscellanea	Cost	Notes
Doctor's Bag	40t	Comes with 10 bandages.
Bandages (10×)	1p	New, clean, made of linen.
Lamp (clay)	1p	Kinda fragile.
Lamp (metal)	6p	Has shutters.
Lamp Oil or Tallow	1p	Burns for 6 hours in a lamp, does not ignite without a wick.
Torch (3×)	1f	Burns for 2 hours.
Shoulder Bag	6p	
Backpack	9p	
Waterskin	2p	
Powder Horn	2p	

Blazing Oil (bottle)	10t	Light oil, if spread forms a puddle about 10' wide. Will ignite with sparks or flames, dealing 1d6 damage per round for two rounds to creatures in the area.
Treasure Map	2d6×50t	Might or might not be awfully wrong.
Talisman	50t	For a level 0 spell.
Mana Vessel	50t	For a level 0 spell.
Intelligent crow	15t	2 Hits. Can talk, quite smart.
Big nasty dog	6t	LVL 2, trained.
Mule	10t	LVL 2, 30miles/day, trained. If carrying 150 lb. of dead load or a live rider it can walk 18 miles a day without rest. Maximum load 300 lb.
Horse	20t	LVL 2, 40miles/day, trained.
Warhorse	400t	LVL 4, 40miles/day, trained.
Wheat, bushel	6p	Average price for a bushel (60 pounds), can be milled and baked into 9 gallon loaves. The price of wheat can realistically oscillate between 4 and 12 pennies per bushel depending on the harvest. This in turn can influence the price of bread, ale and other food and livestock.
Gallon Loaf	1p	A big loaf of bread (8 pounds), enough to feed a worker for two days.
Ale, cheap, 1 gallon	1p	Weak, cheap ale available at roadside alehouses and inns everywhere.
Wine, cheap, 1 quart	1p	Common wine available at inns.
Mediocre meal	1p	Available at all inns, almost nutritionally adequate but cheap.
Good Food and Drink	3×	Available at most inns, nutritionally adequate and good-tasting.
Fine Food and Drink	10×	Available at good town inns and excellent roadside inns. Feeding fine people with less than fine food and wine would be a terrible <i>faux-pas</i> .
Night at an inn	1f to 2t	More expensive in cities.

4.3 Timekeeping for Referees and Players

There are two special time units used in AFG: *round* and *turn*. One round lasts six seconds and is normally used in combats and in situations where quick actions and reactions happen, like chases. One turn lasts 10 minutes and is normally used to keep track of time during exploration and other time-consuming endeavours.

Whether time should be carefully kept track of is a Referee's choice; it does not take much work but it can make adventurers' lives much more *interesting*. The most pressing problem is that torches and oil get consumed and the party will eventually run out of them. Characters can also run out of water and food, although foraging and pillaging are always useful options, even in dungeons. More long-term pressure comes from equipment maintenance, as armours and weapons need care, and most equipment deteriorates when kept in damp environments like dungeons. While fixed clocks can be available, like sundials, candles, water clock or clockwork, a portable equivalent might not be as effective.

4.4 Wounds, Diseases, Poisons and Healing

An adventurous life often leads to suffering grievous wounds, being poisoned and catching nasty bugs. An early demise is always possible, but being careful and having a medic around reduces chances of an early career end due to death. Medical care is usually available in two forms: immediate using Surgery and long term using Medicine.

4.4.1 Wounds

Wounded characters recover 1 Hit per day after sleeping 6 hours and succeed a Toughness Save when waking up. Another Hit per day can be recovered if the character sleeps and rests all day in a somewhat clean and warm bed.

Surgery: battlefield surgery can be administered within an hour of getting wounded. Another character needs to spend a turn and succeed a 5MORE Surgery roll. Only one attempt per combat per wounded character.

Medicine: a character can recover 1 Hit receiving medical attention from another character: a single attempt is permitted per wounded character once a day; the attempt takes 1 hour and a 5MORE is needed.

4.4.2 Diseases

Diseases can be caught in countless ways, especially while mucking around with open wounds in damp, dirty places like dungeons. Being bitten by plague rats is a classic way to get infected wounds.

If a character is exposed to a disease, roll a Toughness Save. A failed Save means the character will fall ill within an onset time and suffer the symptoms. The ill character can roll a Toughness Save every day. Success means an improvement of the character's condition, recovery needing two to ten successes.

Medicine: a character can benefit from receiving medical attention from another character each day. A single attempt is permitted per wounded character; the attempt takes 1 hour and a 5MORE Medicine roll is needed. If succeeded, the diseased character can attempt another daily Toughness Save.

Example: Infected Wounds. Exposure: wounds exposed to dirt. Onset: 1 day. Recovery Saves: 1. Effect: roll a Toughness Save for each Hit recovered from non-magical means. If the Save is failed, don't recover the Hit instead.

4.4.3 Poisons

Poisons have specific methods of introduction: for example, skin exposure, injection or ingestion. A Toughness Save is needed to avoid the effects, and some long-lasting poisons might need more than one Save over a period of time. Some poisons have effect immediately, while other have an onset time: the Toughness Save must, in the latter case, be rolled after the onset time.

Surgery: a character can benefit from receiving first aid from another character within the poison onset time of injected poisons: an attempt to suck out the poison takes 1 round and a 5MORE is needed.

Medicine: a character can benefit from receiving medical attention from another character every day: a single attempt is permitted per wounded character; the attempt takes 1 hour and a 5MORE is needed. The nature of the benefit is left to the Referee.

Example: Viper Poison. Injected. Onset: 1 turn. Effect: 1d6 damage.

4.5 Careful Movement

Careful movement, such as going around dungeons, is subject to specific rules. One does not simply walk into dungeons. It's probably more precise to say that, yes, it's possible to have a casual stroll into a dungeon, but at the expense of not being careful and aware of one's surroundings, not drawing maps, not noticing important features and falling into ambushes and traps.

Thus the speed in dungeons is not only limited by encumbrance and armour, but also by awareness levels and by other actions that characters might take, like thoroughly searching rooms. The same rules can be used for environments where visibility is limited and features abound, like forests or cities.

Awareness	Turn Speed	Notes
Extreme	450'	All apparent features are described, players can take detailed maps and notes, 1 in 6 chance of finding hard to notice but not-obstructed features (such as exposed secret doors seams). +1 to Awareness Saves.
Normal	900'	All apparent features are described, players can take detailed maps and notes.
Casual	1200'	Most apparent features are described, players can scribble simple hub-and-spokes maps. -1 to Awareness Saves.
Clueless	above 1200'	Only very noticeable features are described, players are not allowed to write or consult notes and maps. Automatic surprise (possibly on both sides).

4.6 Searching for Hidden Things

Typical elements of dungeons are hidden traps, secret doors and concealed compartments: there's no Task roll involved in the search, but instead the Referee will describe the visible elements of the environment to the players and listen their reactions.

For example, the Referee describes a room with a rug. The secret hatch that leads to the treasure room is hidden under the rug and therefore is not mentioned. If the players do not look under the rug, they will *not* find the hatch.

Chapter 5

Divinity: Charisma, Worship & Henosis

Gods, demons, spirits, godlings, saints and the like are both extremely powerful and prone to bouts of anger. Ordinary people go out of their way to ingratiate themselves to superior beings: to avoid misfortune and obtain favour. Veneration in AFG is treated as a relationship with two roles: Venerable and Supplicant. Venerables can be gods, demons, spirits or anything else. They are often as irrational, cantankerous and susceptible to flattery and gifts as everyone else. Supplicants are less powerful beings looking for intercession from a Venerable.

What defines the relationship is the disparity of power: Venerables can tremendously impact Supplicants and their lives. AFG does not provide hard and fast rules to simulate this interaction. To give this interaction some structure though, consider these ways to receive intercessions from a Venerable:

Worship Worship is behaving specifically to please a Venerable. Grovelling, offerings, sacrifices, vows, pilgrimages, voluntary self-mutilations and questing are ways Supplicants worship Venerables.

Worship can please a Venerable directly by doing an action they appreciate, or help the Venerable recover power, or simply show seriousness and willingness to sacrifice dignity, material wealth and time to please a Venerable. For example, flagellation and spilling one's blood might entertain a god of pain, burning incense in a temple might help a Guardian Spirit to recover Mana, sacrificing a lamb during a prayer shows the seriousness of a prayer.

Henosis Henosis is achieving unity with a Venerable. Supplicants behave like a Venerable to make them closer to the Venerable via unity of action. For example, Supplicants might make their nature closer to Venerables or take the same steps taken by Venerables to achieve their power. Venerables might also see an attempt at Henosis as veneration or as a blasphemous act.

Charisma Charisma is being a favourite of a Venerable. It's not clear how to get Charisma except that Worship is not necessary. Spontaneous intercessions, gifts of both character and material as well as eagerness to answer prayers are ways Venerables express their special relation to their favourites.



It goes without saying that ecclesiastical status and hierarchies do not necessarily need, expect or imply Worship, Charisma or Henosis. While it's usually safe to expect clergy to be pious and to follow the will of their gods, subverting this concept can lead to interesting developments in your campaign. Remember that cults are primarily social phenomena constituted of humans.

Following is a brief list of example cults.

5.1 Cthulhu, the Tentacled Ur-Dragon, Devourer, Harbinger of Life, the Dreamer

Everything that is born must eat. In turn, everything needs to be eaten to bring more beings to life. There's a single starting and end point in this cycle: Cthulhu. Mystery cults reveal that Cthulhu sleeps somewhere, in the bowels of the earth, dreaming.

Its terrible chthonic dreams appear in people's dreams, and when it stirs, those dreams speak of woe and destruction. Cthulhu will one day awake and eat everything, even other gods and ultimately itself, so that everything will be born again, creating a new world teeming and bustling with life.

Cthulhu worshippers are of two kinds: those venerating the endless cycle of life and death and those trying to awaken their master, so that everything will be eaten and born again. This last bunch is seen as problematic by a lot of people, so both kinds of worshippers organise as mystery cults. The first one hides behind a layer of pagan, nature-worshipping practices, while the latter is simply reclusive.

It's unclear whether Cthulhu rewards worship: occasionally some cult of the second kind starts kidnapping and sacrificing a lot of people. While this is known to have a beneficial effect, it's unclear whether the benefits come from Cthulhu or another Venerable.

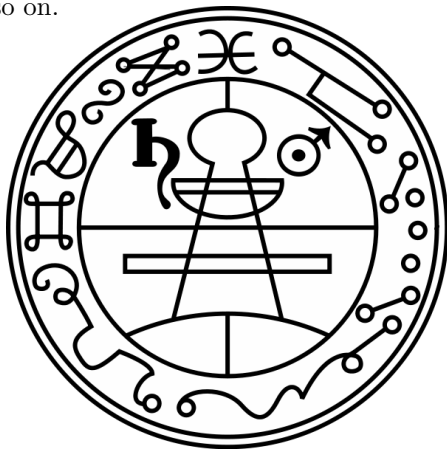
What's certain is that this kind of behaviour is frowned upon by authorities and common people alike, and many cults have met their end at the hands of guards and angry mobs. It's not necessarily true that these cults engaged in this kind of behaviour (or worshipped Cthulhu), but a few disappearances can easily be blamed on any suspect cult.

Henosis through dreaming confers regeneration, water breathing and a terrible, ever-present hunger accompanied by the capacity to eat uncanny amounts of food of any kind. Cults use various techniques to cause dreams and hallucinations, like drugs, meditation and chanting. A typical rite shared by Cthulhu cults is to leave corpses in the wild to be eaten by insects, birds, beasts or other cultists instead of resorting to burials or cremations.

5.2 Innumerable Demon Gods: B'Z'M, N'T'P, Z'T'T and all the countless others

Often during deals, both parties believe they will gain some benefit. When dealing with the Innumerable Demon Gods, money, love, health and power come at the price of a few seemingly innocent mischievous actions. The most common are burying and burning food, effigies and stolen objects, getting drunk, high and dancing with animals at night. As the deals proceed, nefarious deeds like polluting wells, self-mutilation and sacrificing innocent kids are requested. Or more obliquely, a farrier might be requested to take less care when placing horse shoes on the baron's horse, a guard to ignore crimes witnessed under the new moon and so on.

To conjure a Demon God, a simple generic ritual, such as spilling blood or sacrificing something important, with a simple improvised invocation will suffice. Then comes the bargaining. And then the troubles. Truth is, nobody knows why the Innumerable Demon Gods ask their supplicants for this behaviour, or what their purpose is. What's certain is that their schemes unravel in decades and centuries, plots too grand and complex to be grasped by a human mind.



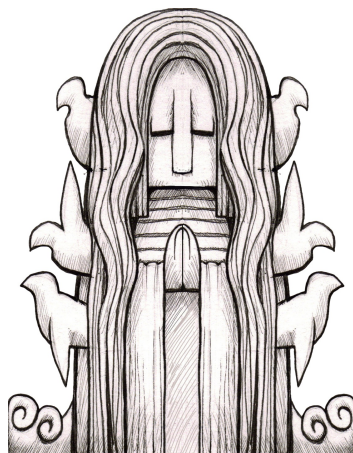
As stated above, the Demon Gods can be worshipped to satisfy vices and desires of the supplicant: love, safety, wealth, self-actualization, revenge, magic power or martial prowess are only examples. The Demon Gods ask some service in return, like sacrifices or lewd behaviour. As the supplicants sell their time and effort to satisfy their desires, the Demon Gods enjoy playing with their new “toys”. This goes beyond the fun a kid has from a new puppet because ultimately the supplicant’s depraved actions will compromise not only their soul but also the lives and well-being of many, many other people.

Should a Demon God be refused his payment, not only will the benefits conceded be taken away in the most distressing way possible, but a terrible curse will strike the misbeliever. Referee, be cruel: dealing with the powers of darkness should ultimately benefit only them.

5.3 Dove, Queen of the Underdogs

Oppression is a fact of life for everybody. Every day people are subjected to arbitrary rules decided by someone else, and somebody's life is ruined by lack of empathy and greed. The only hope for the downtrodden, meek and persecuted is Dove.

Legend has it that Dove was a grey-haired woman who lived before magic, when stars were not yet shining and gods were not yet born. She worked as a pidgeoneer when the lord of the land came to her village to ask for tribute. When the meat, eggs and live birds offered didn't satisfy him, he ordered everything destroyed and all the food and valuables looted. Dove's dovecot was demolished and all her birds started to swarm around the area. Heartbroken, she cursed the lord and all the powerful, greedy, selfish people who take advantage of the meek. When the guards killed her they were only following orders, but soon hundreds of birds started flying in circles around the lord. They attacked him, took his life and picked the bones completely clean in a matter of minutes. And then flew away.



Or at least this is what the legend says: what's left of her legacy nowadays are a lot of doves scrawled on walls, guards and soldiers occasionally found dead in dark alleys and occasionally a dead ruler.

Dove doesn't have organized cults and is worshipped in secret. Those subject to authoritarian rule who sincerely pray to Dove for help daily achieve a +1 bonus to all attempts to evade notice when doing illicit activities against authority and the uncanny ability to notice when someone else close by covertly draws a dove in a public place.

Henosis is, for Dove's followers, its own valuable reward. The meek attempting self-liberation and regicide are already walking the path of emancipation from authority, and that is what is important. Despite this, Dove's followers gain Charisma by taking the fight against power into their hands. Those enacting revenge on authority figures (like guards, aristocrats and elected officers) by killing or dispatching them violently gain the daily ability to call a messenger dove by whistling. The bird is able to either fly carrying a message to any person or to attack an authority figure as asked by the caller.

5.4 Rowena & Thorn, The Family, Hands of Teaching and Giving

Providing and teaching are two essential aspects of parenting: Rowena and Thorn, together called the Family, are the patron saints of family. Rowena is the Hand of Giving, providing food and care for members of the family. She is depicted as a woman with her left hand outstretched with the palm up, as if offering something. Thorn is the Hand of Teaching, authority enforcing the appropriate notions and behaviour to the family, and is depicted as a man with his right hand open and raised as if about to smite or slap someone.

While strict gender roles are not adopted by some of their followers, more authoritarian and patriarchal followings shape families and society on strict gender roles. This difference is also present in idols. While the former usually has depictions that do not make gender evident and can only be distinguished by arm position, idols made by the second group are very detailed and also depict other attributes that society sees as gender-appropriate.

Worshipping the Family does not bring divine benefits, but running an orphanage or a school in a community where the Family is worshipped brings increased social status (+1 to 5MORE Spirit rolls when interacting with worshippers and donors) and a steady but not necessarily great stream of donations, mostly in kind.

Consistently teaching and feeding one's family, the poor and strangers without expecting payment can bring Charisma: the benefit granted can be either Rowena's Hand of Giving or Thorn's Hand of Teaching.

The Hand of Giving confers +1 to all 5MORE rolls to procure food (not only physically but also, for example, by soliciting donations).

The Hand of Teaching confers an additional Teaching roll per month and, once per day, the ability to smite with a saint-powered, open-hand slap. This is a special melee attack to be declared before rolling the melee attack. If the attack is successful, the Hand ignores armour, deals 1d6 temporary damage, forces a Morale Save and, unless a Stubbornness Save is rolled, makes the victim unable to do anything except blocking until the end the next round. If the attack is not successful, the Hand can be invoked again the next round.

5.5 Saint Eleuther, Saviour of the Lost

Nothing is known about Saint Eleuther, except that he's worshipped because of three miracles: leading a caravan lost in a desert to safety, leading a ship lost at sea to a safe harbour and appearing in a vision to a group of kids lost in the woods at night, revealing the way back home.

It's unknown why Eleuther was traveling by deserts and seas, but chances are he was a merchant by profession. Now his name is uttered by the lost in the hope of finding a safe way back home. The saint is often depicted holding his symbol: a cross-staff, a tool used to measure latitude during navigation.

Saint Eleuther is mainly worshipped through prayers and offerings: with a 5MORE Spirit check at -2, Saint Eleuther will appear to a lost Supplicant explaining a somewhat safe and quite direct homeward path. Each Mana spent during the prayer gives a +1 modifier, while praying at one of his roadside shrines gives another +1. A vow of pilgrimage to where his relics are kept or building a roadside shrine in his name grants automatic success. Until this vow is fulfilled, Saint Eleuther will not benefit the same character again.

Saint Eleuther relics are valuable to travellers and adventurers: holding one and invoking the Saint for intercession makes immediately apparent the *safest and quickest* way to get home, complete with timing details and apparently inconsequential actions that, if observed to the letter, will guarantee a safe travel, avoiding all the troubles on the way.



Chapter 6

Magic, Learning & Research

This chapter contains some additional rules regarding casting, grimoires and a few example spells. The basic rules for casting and acquiring spells by gaining levels are in section 1.2.1, while the rules for casting while wearing armour are covered in section 1.2.4. Rules supporting the research, learning and teaching of Spells and Secret Combat Techniques complete the chapter.

6.1 More on Casting, Spells and Books

6.1.1 Learning Spells

Learning a spell can be done by either studying a grimoire describing the spell or being taught by another character who knows the spell already. Learning a spell takes one week of full-time study per spell level, which includes writing the spell into a grimoire. At the end of the weeks, the student will need to roll a 5MORE Research roll to successfully learn the spell. If the roll is not successful, the student may reattempt the roll once per additional week of full-time study.

6.1.2 Concentration

Some spells require concentration to have an effect. Keeping your concentration can be hard and requires the character to only move at 10' per round, 600' per turn. Any action more distracting than something extremely mundane and simple like opening a door or drinking will require a Stubbornness saving throw to keep concentrating, while a wound requires both a Stubbornness and a Toughness Save.

6.1.3 On Writing And Copying Grimoires

The time and labour are needed to copy spells. Transcribing a spell in a grimoire can be done reliably only if the scribe has learned the spell already and takes one day per spell level. In any other case, the transcription can't be used to learn the spell but can be used instead to research the spell at twice the speed and a tenth of the cost. It can also be used as research notes for half of its value if the correct transcription of the spell is not available.

This, together with the cost of spell research, make grimoires very valuable. And, of course, it can be a good excuse to introduce printing presses and movable type in your setting world halfway through a campaign. The last ingredient for completely changing the cultural landscape forever (and your campaign as well) is to replace expensive *vellum* with cheap paper, making the printing industry economically viable and destroying the arcane monopolies of guilds and mages. It takes a single Caster to create a book-block to make a grimoire available to the masses for just a handful of pennies.



While a scrivener can realistically copy four pages a day, a two-man puller-beater team manning a Gutenberg-style printing press can churn out 3600 impressions a day. Weekly productivity and labour costs go from a level 1 caster copying 24 pages for 10 thalers to two labourers producing 11000 impressions for 6 thalers. Some Spellsmithing spells described later were developed to counteract the problems that this early automation posed to guilds and mages.

6.2 Spell Research

Casters can develop new spells. The player describes a spell to be researched and the Referee decides its level. A character cannot research a spell of higher level than their own level in the Way of Magic. In order to research a spell, the character must spend a certain amount of time and money, and during all the processes have access to specific equipment. This equipment might be tomes, special crystals, contraptions, research notes or whatever else is appropriate to the setting.

The total value of the research equipment must be at least 100t multiplied by the square of the spell level. It will not be consumed during research. Grimoires can be used as research equipment. For this purpose they are worth 10t per spell level they contain, not counting duplicate spells. During research more money is also spent on consumable components. This spending also creates lasting equipment, which can be used in further research, of a value of 1t for every 10t spent.

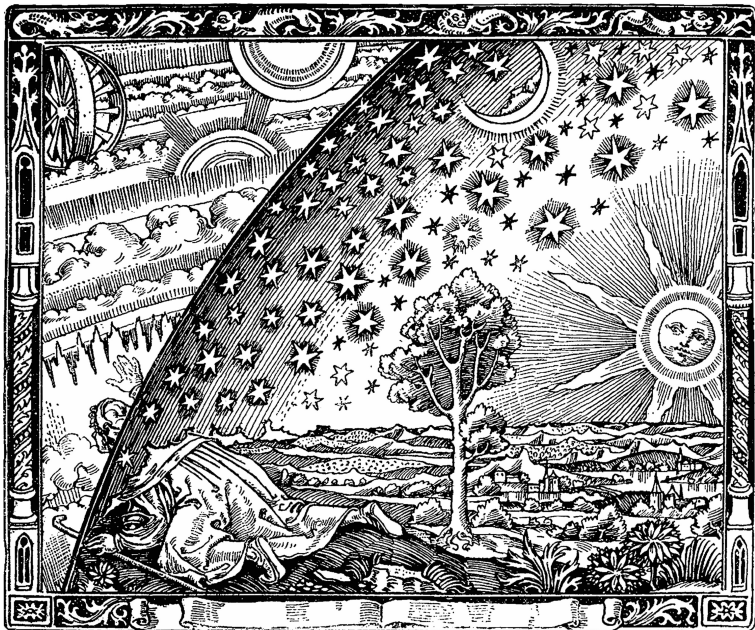
Spell research happens in three phases: Design, Feasibility, Development.

Design After 1 day per spell level, the character can decide the effect of the spell. Design is not mandatory; if skipped, the Referee will secretly come up with a spell to be researched but all research rolls will get a +1 bonus.

Feasibility This step is *not* mandatory, but at times advised: every week and 100 thalers per spell level spent investigating spell feasibility will allow a 5MORE research roll (which does not accrue EXPERT letters). If the roll is successful, the Referee will inform the player of the exact spell effects: effects decided during the Design phase might not be deemed compatible with its level and might need adjustment.

Development Each month of development costs 100t per spell level and allows a 5MORE roll on Research. The research is complete when the Caster accumulates a number of successes equal to the spell level.

Aides Up to 3 characters can be *Aides* and help research if they are able to cast spells of at least three levels less than the researched spell level. For example, a Caster 6 can be a research aide for a level 9 spell. If one of the research rolls is failed, each Aide can try 5MORE on Research. If one of the



aides succeeds, the researcher can make a second attempt to get 5MORE on the research roll: this can happen only once per failed roll.

Example: Tomas (Caster 5) decides to research a level 3 spell aided by his apprentices Robin (Caster 1) and Ember (Fighter 1, Caster 0, so enough to be an aide to spells up to level 3). Tomas's library is worth 780 thalers. He also has 20 levels of spells in his grimoires, worth 10t each, so that his total resource is 980 thalers, more than the 900 needed. After 3 days of design, Tomas decides to go straight to development as he's a bit pressed for time and doesn't have much cash to spend. The first month, after spending 300t, Tomas's research roll is successful, so a first success is tallied. The second month, 300t more are spent. Tomas and Ember fail the roll but Robin succeeds; this allows Tomas a second roll, which is successful, so a second success is tallied.

The third month a further 300t are spent. Tomas fails but Robin and Ember both succeed, so Tomas can reroll once. The reroll fails, so no progress during the third month. The fourth month 300t are spent, and Tomas's research roll is successful; the third, final success is achieved.

Tomas skipped the feasibility research attempt so the player does not know all the details of the researched spell up to this point. The Referee can now tell Tomas's player the exact effects. The whole research lasted 4 months and three days and cost 1200 thalers. The research created both a third level spell

and 120t worth of research notes. Tomas's library is now worth 900 thalers, plus 230 thalers as his grimoires contains 23 levels of spells.

6.2.1 Extending Spell Duration

When a spell ends, if the duration is not instantaneous or permanent, the caster can spend another Mana to keep it spell going. The caster feels when spells are expiring and can opt to simply spend more Mana without casting the spell again.

A common practice for Casters with a lot of lasting active spells is to touch enough Mana Vessels to power the extension and spend Mana from them. Since many spells' effects last until dawn or sunset, the act of powering spell extensions through Mana Vessels is normally called "Twilight Rite" even when performed at other times.

6.2.2 Adapting Spells from other Games

Spells from other fantasy games can usually be easily converted for use in AFG. In AFG, spell level is roughly equal to the character level needed to cast a spell in other games by a character focused exclusively on spell casting.

For example, if another game requires a spellcaster to be at least level 5 in order to cast a specific spell, then that spell's level will be about 5 in AFG. It's better to err upwards, as simply knowing an additional spell gives an AFG Caster a bigger edge than in other games where a given spell can only be used once per day.

6.3 Example Spells

This section describes a few spells, grouped by theme or tradition. AFG spells are not split into schools but some Casters will nonetheless focus in one or more themes or traditions. They will, in turn, favour some spells while teaching to their apprentices and, in the same way, they might not trust apprentices with spells from some other traditions. This might cause different magic tradition lineages, making some spells extremely rare or completely unknown in some areas of the world, for example.

6.3.1 Spellsmithing

Apprentice's Delight Level: 0

Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn.

The caster can manipulate one object at a time up to 10' away with strength comparable to that of a child. For example, they may use a key to unlock a door, open it, lift a weapon, stir soup with a spoon and, a favourite of apprentices, wipe floors with a broom.

Tumbleclicks Level: 1

Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 3 rounds + 1 round/level.

The caster can speak the forgotten metallic language of locks, clockworks and other metallic mechanical contraptions. They may command locks, clocks and mechanical devices by giving simple orders such as "lock", "unlock", "stop" and the like.

The clicks pronounced must be specific to a specific device. A 5MORE Spirit roll can be attempted to deliver the command with the specific intonation for a given device once per round. Once the specific tone for a device has been found, the caster will be able to use it again successfully from then on.

Unerring Arrow Level: 2

Range: 300'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The spell throws an arrow or bolt touched by the caster at a target in sight. The arrow never misses and counts as magical for damage purposes, reducing the victim's protection by 1.

Unerring Dedication to Work Level: 3

Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next dawn.

The caster can eschew drinks, food and breaks until the end of the spell. At this point all the accrued thirst, hunger and tiredness takes effect.

Artisan's Despair Level: 4

Range: 60'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until terminated by caster or next dawn.

A target complex mechanical device stops working while the spell is active. Repairs won't be effective nor will taking the device apart and reassembling it. Any of the parts in the original device will make any device they're placed into inoperative while the spell is active.

Rain of Arrows Level: 5

Range: 300'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

As Unerring Arrow, but the spell affects up to 1 arrow or bolt per level. The missiles must be directed at different targets. The projectiles or their container (such as a quiver) must be touched.

Arcane Mastery of the Art Level: 6

Range: self. Casting time: Special. Duration: Special.

This spell focuses the Caster on working on a specific craft: the casting, chanting, spell duration and crafting all happen at the same time and terminate when the Caster stops casting or working. During this period, any time the Caster fails a 5MORE craft roll, they can spend Mana equal to the failure margin to turn the failure into a success.

Song of Steel Level: 7

Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 round/level.

During the spell duration, a metallic object, armour, shield or weapon per Caster level is enchanted and considered a magic item. The enchanted items hum loudly and, when struck or striking something, emit a loud metallic tone. The combined hums and tones contribute to a melody that gives this spell its name.

Late Betrayal of the Craftsman Level: 8

Range: 90'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next dawn.

A target artefact, such as a sword, book, lock or bed, breaks or fall apart the first time it's used, as if the craftsman who made it meant for it fail under stress. The spell does not have any effect on magic items.

Animate Artefact Level: 9

Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next sunset.

A target artefact not bigger than an elephant animates, subject to the mental orders of the Caster. Tables can walk and kick, doors open and close at will, a chariot can wheel around without being pulled by horses, a bow can hop around and snare people and so on. The Referee will determine statistics as needed.

6.3.2 Mentalism

Sense the Emotion Smear Level: 0

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster will receive a brief mental sensation of the most intense emotional event that the touched object was used for. For example, a murderer's knife might convey the event of a victim being stabbed to death, while an anvil might convey a smith forging the king's sword. The intensity is due to the strong emotions of people who have used the object in the past, so the spell reveals the event that caused the greatest emotional response.

Open Own Third Eye Level: 1

Range: self. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: until next dawn.

An eye opens on the Caster's forehead, giving +1 to Awareness Saves and the ability to perceive auras. The spell does not give any indication of what is causing an aura, but the Caster can associate different types of auras with particular "colours". For example, arcane items emanate an aura described in the literature as a "yellowish shade of mauve". Variants of this spell exist that are blind to, or only perceive, certain specific auras.

Sever the Dreaming Soul Level: 2

Range: self. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: 1 turn/level.

Caster falls asleep and his dreaming soul sleepwalks, temporarily leaving the body behind. The soul is not under the control of the Caster, it sleepwalks at will, but being insubstantial it has great freedom of movement. The Caster will remember the entirety of the dream when waking up.

Hear the Whispering Minds Level: 3

Range: self. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: 1 hour/level.

The Caster perceives all thinking creatures within 90', even if dreaming or unconscious, by hearing their thoughts. Thoughts are perceived as unintelligible whispers. The Caster can pinpoint the position of creatures and their general state of mind. The spell doesn't work on brain-dead creatures or undead or on creatures behind 10' of stone or 1 inch of metal. Every round, the Caster can concentrate to understand what a given thought is about, even without sharing a language with the thinker, if the thinker fails a Stubbornness Save.

Awaken the Lucid Dreamer Level: 4

Range: self. Casting time: 1 hour. Duration: 1 round/level.

Caster falls asleep and his dreaming soul sleepwalks as with Sever the Dreaming Soul, except that the soul's actions are *completely* under the control of the Caster. The soul can "float" through solid objects at a speed of 60' per round.

Mind Over Craving Level: 5

Range: self. Casting time: 1 hour. Duration: 1 day/level.

The Caster need not eat, sleep or drink for the duration of the spell. At the end of the spell, hunger, tiredness and thirst will start to accumulate normally.

Nurturing a Sprouting Idea Level: 6

Range: 20'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn/level.

The Caster verbally plants an idea or belief in the mind of a target creature. If they fail a Stubbornness Save, their mind will behave as if the idea is genuine and sound. On a successful save they will realize that the Caster is up to no good and potentially messing with their minds.

Barrage of Assailing Doubts Level: 7

Range: 100'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn.

The subject is assailed by paralyzing doubts that make any kind of action impossible unless a Stubbornness Save is successful. The subject will not react to any stimuli with effortful actions but will perform effortless actions. For example they can walk if pushed or pulled, but can't Save on Stubbornness or Alertness nor dodge attacks.

Will to Power Level: 8

Range: 50'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: while concentration is maintained.

The Caster completely takes over one subject's mind. A different subject within range can be chosen every round, which can attempt a Stubbornness Save every round to avoid the effects of the spell. If in a given round the subject fails the Save, the caster can perceive through the subject's senses and fully control all their powers and abilities.

Mind Over Body Level: 9

Range: self. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster is healed of all damage of any kind. In addition, limbs fully regrow, diseases are healed and poisons countered.

Seeding the Fertile Minds Level: 10

Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn/level.

As per Nurturing a Sprouting Idea, this spell affects up to 1 subject per Caster level.

Yearning for Master Level: 11

Range: 20'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: permanent.

The subject must Save against Stubbornness or become fanatically loyal to the caster. Any other affiliation or concerns, including personal safety, become much less important to the subject than fulfilling the caster's wishes and keeping the caster safe.

Plaguebearer of a Nagging Thought Level: 12

Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous or 1 day.

The caster mentions a thought, idea, concept or notion, as in the spell Seeding the Fertile Minds.

Everybody within hearing range must succeed a Stubbornness Save or accept and believe the notion. They will then try to spread it to other people, although they will otherwise continue with their normal daily lives.

Anybody hearing the idea from anybody affected by the spell must in turn roll a Stubbornness Save or be affected by the spell for one day, trying to spread the notion (and the spell) to other people, and so on.

Each person hearing the thought need save only once for a given casting of this spell: a success makes the subject immune to the spell's effects. If they fail the Save the subject gains immunity from the thought after 1 day, when normal critical thinking reexamines whether the planted idea is valid or not.



6.3.3 Discipline of the Warring Souls

Battle Blessing Level: 0

Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn.

This inspiring blessing makes all allies within range luckier in battle. The first time each subject draws a combat-related roll or fails it by 1, the blessing confers a retroactive +1 bonus to the roll, improving its outcome.

Ancestors' Mettle Level: 1

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 hour.

The subject's ancestor spirits appears to guide and support their descendent in combat, affording a bonus of +1 to FC.

Spirit Mantle Level: 2

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next sunset.

A translucent spiritual screen forms around the subject, conferring protection like medium armour.

Spirit Comrade Level: 3

Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn.

The Caster conjures a Spirit Comrade, the ghost of a dead warrior. The Comrade can't understand commands but will fight on the side of the Caster using a provided weapon. The spirit's FC is equal to the Caster's and it has 1 Hit.

Spirit Aegis Level: 4

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next sunset.

As per Spirit Mantle except the effect of the aegis is the same as if the Caster was using a shield.

Blade Spirit Level: 5

Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 round/level.

Each forged blade is home to a spirit. This spell empowers the spirit in a blade held by the Caster. The blade animates and flies away from the Caster's grasp, independently attacking an opponent within range on its own as if wielded by the Caster. The blade will stop only if the Caster becomes unconscious or if the Caster issues other orders. The spell range expresses only how far the

blade can be commanded to move: should it move further from the Caster for other reasons (such as the Caster running away) the spell will not stop working. The blade can also be ordered to guard an area, like a passage or a room, or protect somebody or something within spell range.

Spirit Curtain Level: 6

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 hour/level.

As per Spirit Mantle except the spell confers instead protection like heavy armour.

Spirit Company Level: 7

Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn.

As per Spirit Comrade, except it conjures five spirits.

Mettle of the Warriors of Yore Level: 8

Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 hour.

As per Ancestor's Mettle, except the spell affects all of the Caster's allies within range. Any FC of less than 3 is raised to 3.

Guardian Spirit Level: 9

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next sunset, see below. The Caster assigns a Guardian Spirit to protect the subject. When the subject fails the next Save, the Spirit will intervene to resolve the situation, transforming the failure into a success. For example, the Spirit can appear in a vision and warn the character, give moral support and willpower. This spell can't be cast more than once a day on a given subject, so a character can be "saved" only once per day.

Spirit Sanctuary Level: 11

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 hour/level.

As per Spirit Mantle except the spell confers protection like magical heavy armour and shield.

Conspiracy of Blades Level: 12

Range: 100'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 round/level.

As per Blade Spirit except the spell affects 1 forged weapon per Caster level.

6.3.4 Physiurgy

Selfless Gift of Life Level: 0

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster heals the subject of the spell of 1d6 Hits and takes the same amount of temporary damage.

Cure Level: 1

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

The Caster heals the touched subject of 1d6 Hits. The subject can also reroll a daily disease recovery Toughness Save (refer to section 4.4).

Wilson's Orange Draining Level: 2

Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until hit, max 6 rounds.

The Caster can shoot an orange ray at a living target within range. If a missile roll is successful, the ray transfers 1d6 Hits from the victim to the Caster and the spell terminates.

Healer's Last Stand Level: 3

Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The Caster heals all the allies within range for 1d6 Hits and then suffers the total healed amount as temporary damage.

Good Nap Level: 4

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The subject, if willing, is healed of 4d6 Hits but takes twice that amount as temporary damage.

Salvific Apport Level: 5

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next dawn.

The Caster's hands will exude a small quantity of apport, a gunky white goo. The apport will evaporate with the rising of the morrow's sun as mysteriously as it appeared. This apport can be spread on a creature, allowing an extra daily disease Save roll, neutralizing any poison and healing 2d6 Hits. Dissolving the apport in 10 gallons or less of water will make it pure and safe to drink. If dissolved in a quart of water it will make it blessed. Eating it will make a person sated for the day.

Aura of Renewal Level: 6

Range: 20' radius. Casting time: special. Duration: special.

An aura of renewal spreads from the Caster. Everybody in the area is healed of 1d6 Hits per hour of complete rest, 1 Hit per hour if conducting other activities. Everybody in the aura can also attempt a Toughness Save per hour to recover from diseases and counter poisons, lifting their effects for the spell's duration. To emanate the aura, the Caster must be immobile and chanting. Any movement or interruption terminates the spell. The Caster can't maintain the spell for more than 1 hour per level.

Wholeness of Body Level: 7

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

As per Cure, but the subject is healed of 1d6 per Caster level.

Warrior's Respite Level: 8

Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 round.

The spell heals all the wounds suffered by a subject during the casting round plus 1d6, possibly resuscitating a recently dead subject. In addition, all Hits lost due to melee damage by the subject during the next round will be halved.

Health Level: 9

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

The subject is instantly healed of disease and any poison present in their system is neutralized.

Mors Tua, Vita Mia Level: 10

Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn.

The Caster can, every round during the spell duration, either drain life as a double-strength Wilson's Orange Draining (draining 2d6 Hits) or transfer 2d6 of their own Hits to a subject within range.

Salvation of Body and Soul Level: 11

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The subject becomes perfectly healthy and pure of any ill-influence. Not only wounds, diseases, poison and their effects are healed and canceled, but also all noxious spells and effects affecting the target are countered.

Death unto Life Level: 12

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

A corpse, when touched, is brought back to life. The resurrected creature has 0 maximum Hits, however. The corpse's conditions must be good or it will survive only 1d6 rounds: existing mortal wounds will need additional magical healing administered in this interval. The maximum amount of Hits of the resurrected will be 0 during the first day, increasing by 1 every subsequent day, up to the maximum number of Hits they had before they died.

6.3.5 Goetia

Master's Call Level: 0

Range: 100'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster calls the name of the subject, causing them immediately to rally.

Mark of the Beast Level: 1

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: until next dawn.

The Caster traces on the subject's forehead the magical mark of a Demon God (a mystical sigil specific to each Demon God), which will appear glowing in a dark, purplish light. A grimoire containing this spell covers details of at least one specific mark, so to learn other marks, more grimoires must be consulted.

Undead, demons and creatures of evil will recognize the subject as a thrall of the Demon God and, unless the subject harms them first, must succeed a Stubbornness Save in order to harm or impede the subject at all. If the subject is currently in favour with the specific Demon God, no Save is allowed.

The Best Gift Level: 2

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

The Caster offers an object to an intelligent subject creature, which must be able to understand how the object is used and must consider it valuable in order for the spell to have any effect. The subject must roll a Stubbornness Save or take the object (and hold on to it) and consider the Caster a newly found best friend. If the creature accepts the gift, the Save is rolled with a -1 penalty. A typical use for this spell is to corrupt people, or to placate hostile, angry animals and beasts with food.

Precious Blood for my Master Level: 3

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: see below.

The Caster must successfully deliver a mortal wound to a creature bigger than a cat in the round after casting the spell. If this is successful, the Caster recovers 3 Mana points. In case of failure, the Caster suffers 1d6 wounds instead.

Hellgate Level: 4

Range: 200'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The Caster opens a tiny gate to Hell for a round. Rushing flames deal everybody within 15' of the gate 1d6 fire damage per Caster level, reduced by half if the victims make a Toughness Save. Characters under the influence of a Mark of the Beast suffer only 1 damage. If at least four sixes are rolled for damage, the gate also releases a demon of level 1d6+6. Its disposition toward the Caster and his allies is not certain; it's common for Casters to either bind the demon or offer it riches to gain its service, exploiting its greed.

Binding of Lesser Will Level: 5

Range: 20'. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: permanent or see below.

This spell magically binds a subject unearthly creature, such as a spirit or demon, to do the Caster's bidding. The subject must be within spell range during all the casting time and of a lower level than the Caster. Immunity to magic does not confer immunity from this spell, but the subject can roll a Stubbornness Save at the end of the casting time to make the spell ineffective. The Caster can use items and invocations specific to the creature and its ilk to give negative modifiers to the Save. For example, spraying holy water or showing relics is said to be effective to bind demons. If the Caster tries to affect a creature of the same level or higher and the Save is successful, the binding duration will be limited and unknown to the Caster.

Goetic Ward Level: 6

Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 round or more. Duration: permanent.

The Caster enchants a previously created ward that fits the spell range. The ward can be traced in loose soil, or drawn with chalk, or inlaid in stone of different colours and so on. No undead or unearthly creature nor their magic can pass through or touch the ward unless they match criteria specified by the Caster during casting, each additional criterion adding 1 round to the casting time.

6.3.6 Moon Hunters

Pounce Level: 0

Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 round.

The caster may long jump up to 80' immediately after casting the spell. If cast during a combat, the jump can be done either immediately during the Magic phase or during the next Melee phase. In the latter case, apply a double charge modifier.

Feral Eyes Level: 1

Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

The subject can see in near-absolute darkness as if it was a normal, bright environment. Any amount of light will suffice, even starlight.

Moon Blade Level: 2

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

This spell can only be cast at night. A silver crescent blade appears in the hand of the Caster, usable as either a one- or two-handed magic sword. The blade can also be thrown and will return to the Caster at the end of the round in a way that can be easily caught, enabling the Caster to wield it or throw it again the next round. The blade vanishes at the end of the spell.

Silent Hunt Level: 3

Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

This spell can be cast only at night. The subject's actions make no noise when interacting with objects or creatures. For example, no noises will be made by the subject walking, striking objects with weapons, opening doors and breaking glass. Even wounding creatures will not emit a sound, but the victims will still be able to make noise, for example by screaming in pain.

Mucous Skin of the Salamander Level: 4

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next dawn or until subject exposed to direct sunlight.

The subject's skin becomes soft, wet and mucous. The subject can absorb liquids and gases through the skin, for example, they may breathe and receive hydration by staying immersed in water.

Wild Acceptance Level: 5

Range: self. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: until next dawn.

The spell harmonises the Caster with their natural surroundings. Animals will not interact or react to the Caster's action in any way and the Caster is unaffected by extreme temperatures or inclement weather..

Running, Flying, Swimming, Crawling Level: 6

Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next sunset or subjects terminate.

This spell changes the form of 6 willing subjects to wolves, eagles, dolphins or snakes as chosen by the Caster, conferring them the movement abilities of their new forms. While transformed the subjects may not use their skills, casting abilities or weapon techniques. Their equipment is transformed as well, becoming unavailable until the spell ends.

Soothe the Savage Beasts Level: 7

Range: 50'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

By speaking softly, the caster calms all the animals and bugs within range, stopping them from behaving with hostility unless they save on Stubbornness.

Thundering Mega-Therion Level: 8

Range: 50'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 hour/level.

The caster, letting out a very loud whistle, summons a Giant Bad-ass Animal with a base level equal to his own. The animal will be appropriate to the environment and its stats will be determined by the Referee, possibly using MOSTROTRON as described in section 8.2. The animal will protect the Caster and his allies and is able to understand simple commands.

The Beast Within Level: 9

Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

The Caster will change shape either to a Giant Bad-Ass Animal like those summoned by Thundering Mega-Therion or to a hybrid humanoid-animal form. While in animal form, no spell-casting capability is possible. In hybrid form, the caster gains immunity from non-silver, non-magical melee and ranged weapons and rolls two more damage dice in melee if attacking with bites or claws. In both cases, the caster will gain an Additional Hit per level.

Hibernation Level: 10

Range: self. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: until spring.

This spell can only be cast in autumn or winter. The caster undergoes magical hibernation and falls asleep, entering hibernation until spring. While sleeping the caster does not breath, age, grow thirsty or hungry. The caster can be awakened normally and can enter hibernation again while the spell is active.

Regrowth Level: 11

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: see below.

A subject's corpse placed in an unspoilt natural location will be completely eaten by animals and insects until nothing remains. Plants and flowers will then sprout from where the corpse was in about a minute.

About a turn later, if the deceased succeeds in a 5MORE Spirit check, the body immediately starts reforming in the same location, for example growing in the trunk of a tree, in a big pumpkin, or in the womb of an animal passing by or sprouting off the ground.

One more turn later, the subject returns to the condition they were in before they died (excluding magical effects that might have previously altered it) and wakes up in perfect physical and mental health, with all memories of the previous life preserved.

Might of Nature Level: 12

Range: 50'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn/level.

As Thundering Mega-Therion except the number of animals summoned is equal to the higher of two rolls of a d6.

6.3.7 Necromancy

Song of the Dead Level: 0

Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

The caster sings the Song of Death to an undead. This will make the undead follow the Caster's commands. The undead can try a Stubbornness Save to completely negate the effects of the spell but only if its level is higher than the caster's level.

Interrupted Rest Level: 1

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The subject humanoid corpse animates as an undead of level 1. Its personality has been completely corrupted by the ordeal of waking up as a rotting corpse; it is free-willed but spiteful, ravenous and angry with all that is alive.

Zombify Level: 2

Range: touch. Casting time: 8 hours. Duration: instantaneous.

As Interrupted Rest except the corpse animates as an undead with level equal to the Tier of the Caster and is completely subject to the Casters will. The spell needs ingredients costing 50t per level of the undead created, such as special powders, myrrh, candles and incense.

Ghoulish Taste Level: 3

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

The subject becomes extremely hungry but only wants to eat meat. Any heart consumed during the duration of the spell heals the subject by 1d6 Hits per Tier of the creature the heart comes from.

Dead Head Level: 4

Range: touch. Casting time: instantaneous. Duration: 1 turn.

The Caster animates an undead severed head, known as a Dead Head, completely subject to the caster's will. The head has 1 Hit per caster's Tier and whispers with a really quiet voice. If an appendage is stitched to it, the Dead Head will be able to use it to move around, flying with bird or bat wings, hopping on a foot, crawling on a hand. The small size combined with the ability to talk make Dead Heads excellent scouts.

Back from the Graves Level: 5

Range: 1 mile. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: instantaneous.

The closest humanoid corpses to the caster will animate as undead. The spell affects 2 corpses per Caster level and the undead created are level 1. Their personalities have been completely corrupted by the ordeal of waking up as rotting corpses: they are spiteful, ravenous and angry with all that is alive. The spell needs ingredients costing 1000t.

Gift of Immortality Level: 6

Range: touch. Casting time: 8 hours. Duration: instantaneous.

Like Interrupted Rest except that the subjects powers, skills, levels, personality, will and agency escape the clutch of death completely preserved.

The spell also laces the corpse with extremely powerful necromantic energy. The subject will have gained one Undead Ability determined by the use of the MOSTROTRON Type Ability Table (section 8.2). The spell needs ingredients costing 1000 thalers.

Taste the Drink of Life Level: 7

Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next sunset, see below.

The caster grows fangs and may bite and drink blood in melee like a vampire. This attack deals damage like a magic one-handed melee weapon but if the armour does not absorb all damage, blood may actually be drunk.

Drinking blood will transfer 1d6 Hits from the victim to the caster, enabling the latter's Hits to go above the maximum for the spell duration. Another vampiric peculiarity gained by the caster is susceptibility to sunlight: daylight is fatal to the Caster, even the first light of dawn shining when the spell is ending.

Great Gift of Immortality Level: 10

Range: touch. Casting time: 12 hours. Duration: instantaneous.

Like Gift of Immortality except the subject gains one random Undead ability per Tier it had before death. The spell requires ingredients costing 5000t.

Lost Company Level: 11

Range: 100 yards radius. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

Like Zombify except it affects the closest 250 corpses. The spell needs ingredients costing 5000t.

Totentanz Level: 12

Range: 1 mile radius. Casting time: 8 hours. Duration: instantaneous.

Like Interrupted Rest except it affects all corpses within range.

6.3.8 Ex Arcana Paraphernalia et Miscellanea

Unveil Arcana Level: 0

Range: 1'. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: instantaneous.

The Caster uncannily receives insights and visions enabling them to identify and understand one unknown function of the chosen arcane item or phenomenon within range.

If cast on a grimoire, the caster will be able to identify a chosen spell from the source. The caster can then learn and transcribe it if their levels are compatible. If cast on other items or phenomena, the weakest unknown function or detail of the object or phenomenon will be understood by the Caster first, with more details conveyed on subsequent castings.

Augury Level: 1

Range: self. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster of the spell finds and correctly interpret an omen regarding a specific course of action to be carried out in the future. Omens can be read by examining the entrails of a recently slain creature, the flight of birds in the sky, patterns of lightnings in a thunderstorm or some other natural phenomenon.

The Referee will tell the Caster if the omen is *good* and the specific course of action will be favourable or, conversely, if the omen is *bad* and the specific course of action will be unfavourable. Such prescience of course does not imply success in the endeavour.

Extend Talisman Level: 2

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

Target talisman can be used to cast its spell a second time. A third casting may be forced from the talisman in the same day, but doing so completely and permanently drains the talisman of all power.

Fill the Vessel Level: 3

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

A Mana Vessel touched by the Caster is refilled. If cast on an object that is not a Mana Vessel, the Mana will be stored only briefly, to be released as energy in one turn unless tapped when casting a spell. As the energy discharges quite suddenly, it causes the object to bounce and tremble and spark. Fragile or easily flammable objects might thus be damaged or catch fire.

Magic Smells Level: 4

Range: 150'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 hour.

The Caster will be able to smell the direction of the closest magic item or spell in effect or recently cast (excluding this spell) within the area of effect. To avoid getting confused by nearby objects, the Caster can ignore up to 2 items per Caster level.

Impair Arcana Level: 5

Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: see below.

The spell cancels the effects of a specific spell or magic item within range for a short duration of time. Both the caster of Impair Arcana and the caster of the chosen spell or creator of the magic item can attempt a Stubbornness Save. If only the former succeeds the effect is canceled for 1d6 turns, while if only the latter succeeds, the effect will not be canceled. If both Saves are successful or both are failed, the effect is canceled for 1d6 rounds.

Unravel Arcana Level: 6

Range: 90'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The spell cancels the effects of a specific spell within range. Both the Caster of Unravel Arcana and the Caster of the chosen spell can attempt a Stubbornness Save. The spell is canceled if the former succeeds and the latter fails.

6.3.9 Dendromancy

Bounty of the Tree Level: 0

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 hour. Duration: 1 day.

The touched plant or tree, during the casting, flowers and then bears 1d6 fruits. Each fruit, if eaten, heals 1 Hit and satiate the eater for a day.

Twisting Root And Branch Level: 1

Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 hour.

The caster animates the touched tree for the spell duration as long as physical contact and concentration are maintained. The caster can control movements of any parts of the tree, making them twist, bend and bow on demand, enabling the Caster, for example, to uproot a tree and reroot it somewhere else.

6.3.10 Alternate Spell Versions

The limitation of casting a given spell not more than once a day (except by using talismans) is meant to both stop Casters from reusing the same spell over and over and over again, and also to make players engage in strategic thinking. As characters can cast a given spell a limited number of times a day (once, plus once for each talisman) indiscriminate use of even low level spells by high level Casters can lead to headaches.

A stratagem tried by “smart” players to dodge the limitation is to research new spells with the same (or very similar) effects to existing spells. While this is not recommended, each Referee is, of course, able to determine what’s best for a given game. A way to limit this practice without banning it altogether is to allow each “clone” spell to be researched at one level higher. For example, the Cure spell is of level 1, and the first clone would be of level 2, the second clone of level 3 and so on.

A different approach is to research spell variants. Each spell can have many versions but they all count as the same spell regarding daily limitation. Knowing a spell and using it as a base to research its variants is simpler than researching the spell from scratch. For spell research, consider variants as spells of one level lower. For example, Unerring Arrow (level 2) could have as an alternate “Fiery Projection”, proposed as an example below: a Caster would not be able to cast both versions of the spell in a given day.

Fiery Projection Level: 2, alternate version of “Unerring Arrow”

Range: 100'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

The spell throws a blaze of flame toward a target in sight. The flame must come from a burning object held by the Caster, such as a torch, candle or lantern. The target will receive 1d6 damage (armour doesn’t protect) and flammable objects in the vicinity will be set on fire.

6.4 Teachers

Teachers can instruct up to 6 pupils at a time if teaching full-time or proportionally less if teaching only part-time. Should a pupil fail a roll to learn a spell or weapon technique, the teacher can attempt a Teaching roll twice a month, which allows one of their students to reattempt the roll. A student can’t benefit from this teacher support more than once per month.

6.5 Secret Combat Techniques

Secret Combat Techniques increase the fighting prowess of Fighters. Weaponmasters teach them to their students and their names all mention the author. For example, *Frigotti's Faux-Triple Double-Step* or *Goldberg's Spinning Mordhau* or *Solomon's Secret Strike* or *Welsh's Swift Kick to the Trousers*.

Most techniques have an in-game benefit for people that know them: increasing Hits by one. This also contributes to increasing the Fighter's FC, abstracting away the increase in fighting skill from the new technique. However, the Referee can allow the research of Secret Weapon Techniques with different effects.

No more than 1 Secret Combat Technique may be learned per Fighter level. To avoid double dipping, their names and effects all have to be recorded on the characters' sheets.

Developing Secret Combat Techniques To develop a fighting technique, a character with at least four Fighter levels needs to accrue 10 5MORE PHY successes minus one per Tier. One such roll can be rolled per month of full-time training, so a level 4 Fighter will need at least 16 months, but a level 12 Fighter will need only 8 months.

Once development is complete, the Fighter will become a Weaponmaster and will be able to teach techniques to pupils, even techniques learnt from other people. Weaponmasters can't become a MASTER in any Task, nor can a MASTER develop new techniques; they can still add Master or Weaponmaster before their names.

Learning Secret Combat Techniques Fighters knowing techniques can teach them to other Fighters, up to six pupils at time. Each pupil needs to accrue at least two 5MORE PHY successes, rolling once per month of full-time training. Of course, Weaponmasters are extremely picky about their students and will expect to be compensated adequately.

There are other ways to learn techniques: fencing books that describe techniques, like Master Panuzzi's "Sulla Scherma: Arte Novissima", can be found and perused. However, learning a technique from a book requires twice as many successes.

Chapter 7

Tiers, Plundering and Accomplishments

AFG does not use hard and fast advancement via accumulation of experience points. Instead, it relies on a three-pronged, more action-based approach. The characters will improve not only with practice, as seen in sections 2.1 and 2.2, but also through Plundering and Accomplishments, which are the focus of this chapter.

Since nearly all of the players' adventures will involve dangerous plunges into the underworld, raiding of castles and stealing riches from temples, the only set-in-stone method for gaining levels is by plundering *Treasure Troves* and successfully escaping with their precious content.

Troves are not your run-of-the-mill loot stashes, but rather the kind of specific riches which are mentioned by Arneson and Gyax in "Dungeons & Dragons - Volume 3: Underworld & Wilderness Adventures". Arneson and Gyax suggest the adventure designer to "thoughtfully place several of the most important treasures" before dicing for random distribution.

There are restrictions to the experience-by-plundering system, as normal advancement halts at the top level of each Tier, levels 3, 6 and 9. To access subsequent tiers, and as another way to advance, one must complete campaign- or character-specific *Accomplishments*.

7.1 Experience by Plundering

A typical way to gain a level playing AFG is to get your character's party to recover treasures and bring them to a safe place. Recovering treasures from dangerous places is one of the main tropes of the fantasy and adventure genres.¹

Characters gain one experience level whenever they are a member of an expedition which makes off with a *Treasure Trove*. Characters need to successfully return the Trove to safety, providing the loot was plundered from a *Holding* (better described in section 8.1) of an equal or greater level than the character's current level.

Safety, in this context, might mean different things. For example, while treasure plundered from a dungeon is considered safe when brought to a civilized area, if the city coffers are plundered the loot would be considered safe only when removed from the city and taken somewhere remote, like a castle, hide-out or another city.

The idea is that each adventure locale, dungeon level or sub-level will have anywhere from one to three, maybe four Holdings containing “most important treasures”; these might contain specific/mythical/legendary items, or might simply be the plundered spoils of a great leader or powerful being.

Holdings should not be placed randomly but with forethought, never plundered without considerable work from the players: in AFG, experience comes from memorable effort. The level and difficulty of the Holding does not necessarily imply its position relative to other Holdings like the dungeons detailed in Arneson and Gygax, but reflects merely the size of the Treasure Trove and the difficulty of its extraction.

Treasure maps or their analogues, such as tomes describing how to reach a lost city, or the handbook describing security procedures of the city mint, are a perfect way to introduce a Treasure Trove within a specific contained frame. Of course, a Referee might decide that a given campaign does not feature the adventuring trope of “recovering treasure”, or might reserve the benefits of experience by plundering for only some characters.

¹If you are wondering if this makes AFG an *heist-oriented game* then, dear reader, you are perfectly right.

7.2 Experience by Accomplishments

The third source of experience in AFG comes from Accomplishments: carrying out memorable deeds. Accomplishments can be campaign- and character-specific. Accomplishments not only express a way to gain “cred”, empowerment, self-reliance, trust, will to fight, grit, thousand-mile-stare and the seasoned adventurer’s typical stance of “I’ve seen things you people would not believe”, but can also be rites of passage. Rites of passage are extremely important in many societies. This is reflected in the myths and faerie tales that civilizations generate, where the rite effectively changes the nature of the person, introducing some new behaviours and barring others.

In order to unlock Tiers - which begin at levels 4, 7 and 10 - the character will be required to complete an Accomplishment. Knowledge of campaign-specific Accomplishments may be obtained in game or simply imparted by the Referee. For example, quite early in a Bleak Beyond campaign², players should discover that any true delver worth his salt who wants to earn “street cred” needs to etch his name on the Big Block. In the Western League campaign, all adventurers worth their salt will have claimed, successfully or not, ownership of an outpost or manor and the surrounding land. In both cases, bragging rights and unlocking advancement to Tier Two (character levels 4-6) are combined in one Accomplishment.

An Accomplishment is presented in two parts: the first is the deed to be completed and the second is the reward, as shown in this example:

- Go on a 1000-mile-long pilgrimage to a holy place of one’s faith / Unlock Next Tier or +1 Stat of Choice

Players must track the number of each specific Accomplishment, along with the reward gained, on the back of their character sheet for future reference and to prevent possible double-dipping. A more elegant solution would be to use a physical artefact, like a bound “Book of Tales”, and record therein the date and Accomplishments. This way, all the completed Accomplishments can be collected in a single place, maybe together with other notable events.

Something similar can be done with player’s handouts: real-world medals, scrolls, badges and mementos recording the Accomplishment can be crafted and given to players. In the case of the Big Block, the Block might be represented by the Referee’s screen or a poster hanging in the room where the game is hosted and the character name could be written on it. Be memorable.

²Bleak Beyond and Western League are the two proto-AFG campaigns.

7.2.1 Campaign-specific Accomplishments and Flavour

Campaign flavour is strongly impacted by player characters' actions, which in turn are strongly influenced by incentives decided by the Referee. Accomplishments are put in place to steer the unscripted, emergent narrative of the campaign. While this might seem heavy-handed, consider not only that players can create character-specific Accomplishments, but that only three are needed to reach the maximum level.

Divulging knowledge during the campaign will go a long way to providing the opportunity for the type of character-setting engagement the group expects from the game. Characters could be mocked by more expert adventurers, or go on a dare, or read in a book about a rite of passage involving the Big Block, or recover an antique law codex explaining problems in the common law for land claim in the Western League. Such Accomplishments are recorded:

- Etch one's name on the Big Block / Unlock Second Tier or +1 Spirit
- Claim an outpost or manor and the surrounding land / Unlock Second Tier or 3d6 LVL 1 Fighters show up at the manor and volunteer for service

The critical point in designing Accomplishments is to balance their risks and rewards. Easy-sounding paths to fast advancement can turn into TPKs. And nobody likes those.

The following Accomplishments are presented as suggestions to be used. Players and Referee can, of course, discuss and amend them to better suit their taste.

- Become a MASTER in a Task / Unlock Next Tier or +1 to relevant Stat
- Win 10 duels honourably / Unlock Second Tier or +1 Hit or +1 Physique
- Win 40 duels honourably / Unlock Third Tier or +1d6 Hits
- Conquer a city or save a kingdom / Unlock Fourth Tier or +1 Level
- Build/liberate a temple of own cult / Unlock Second Tier or +1 Spirit
- Recover and own an Awesome Magic Item / Unlock Second Tier or +1 Spirit
- Perform a 1000-mile-long pilgrimage / Unlock Third Tier or +1 Stat of Choice

- Successfully teach own Way to six apprentices / Unlock Third Tier or +1 Spirit
- Recover a major relic of own cult / Unlock Third Tier or +1 Stat of Choice
- Found a new order or build a monastery/abbey/cathedral of own cult / Unlock Fourth Tier
- Recover and Peruse a Lost Tome / Unlock Next Tier or +1 Craft
- Build or raze a fortification / Unlock Next Tier or +1 Physique
- Secure a trade route / Unlock Second Tier or +1 Craft
- Break through a siege or blockade / Unlock Third Tier or + 1d6 hits or +1 mana

7.2.2 Accomplishments' Rewards

Rewards vary in value and should be commensurate to the related Accomplishment. When discussing character-specific Accomplishments and when designing campaign-specific Accomplishments, the Referee could refer to the following list as a *guideline* to determine their relative value. Rewards are listed in roughly increasing order. The exact value is dependent on the character and the campaign. Adjudication is left to the Referee.

- 1 EXPERT point
- +1 to Random or Specific Stat
- +1 Hit
- Unlock Second Tier – 4th Character Level
- +1 Mana
- +1 Level
- +1d6 Hits
- Unlock Third Tier – 7th Character Level
- +1 to Stat of Choice
- Unlock Fourth Tier – 10th Character Level

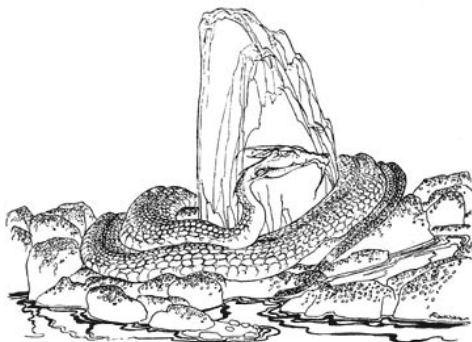
7.2.3 Character-Specific Accomplishment

Accomplishments like “defeat 10 knights singlehandedly”, “sail across the world”, “rescue a kingdom’s heir apparent from a dragon, marry up and get an heir”, “kill the man with three eyes and avenge my father” or “destroy every copy of Darkmantle’s Codex” can be defined for every character and approved by the Referee. It’s possible to decide them during character generation, during the game or both. These Accomplishments can be used either to unlock advanced tiers, to improve characters’ scores or to gain a level. An appropriate number is to have one to three, or rarely four such unachieved Accomplishments for each character.

Character-specific Accomplishments are also an extremely good way for players to contribute to a more detailed campaign. Not everything in your campaign will be pre-designed: players can fill in the blanks by adding their own stories that might not be individually important at a campaign scale but add colour and complexity at the scale of the characters.

In addition, players often come up with character-specific Accomplishments that are so good youll want to use them in your campaign. During the first playtest session, a player wanted to “recover the Red Tome from the Valley of Fire”, a tome that was promptly introduced in the Western League setting and placed in a specific place in the already existing Valley of Fire.

In the same way, after a bit of brainstorming, after a player wanted to avenge the death of his character’s father at the hand of Baron Kenneth of Bogfort, Kenneth became the go-to draconian, harsh noble in the Western League. He’s also a well known Weaponmaster, and a Fighter LVL 9.



7.3 Fifth Tier: Endgame Accomplishments

Sometimes characters achieve something that can be only be described as *the stuff of legends*. This deserves a special-special something, as an Endgame Accomplishment. The following list is only intended to give you an impression of what such Accomplishments and related rewards could be. An additional reward for these endgame Accomplishments is that once one is completed successfully and the character reaches level 12, the character is considered for all intents and purposes Tier 5 instead of Tier 4.

- Build and occupy a mighty fortress (worth at least half a million thalers) / Unlock Fifth Tier, attract a vast army of fanatics.
- Marry off one's offsprings to every one of the heirs of the Seven Kings / Unlock Fifth Tier, gain powerful alliances.
- Research and Cast the Domain Ritual / Unlock Fifth Tier, gain monstrous followers.
- Recover the Lost Gold Throne of the Overking from the Unbidden Palace/ Unlock Fifth Tier, gain special followers and Fighter cohorts.
- Absorb the Crystal Skull of the Star Child from the Vaults of Dread / Unlock Fifth Tier, gain Ultimate Foreknowledge (all Saves automatically successful).
- Become Grand Sorcerer of the Fire Valley / Unlock Fifth Tier, gain apprentices and Caster cohorts.
- Wear the Shroud of the Prophet, recovered from the Cathedral of the Iron Chariot / Unlock Fifth Tier, gain State of Grace (all Saves automatically successful).
- Recover the Earhorn of Whispers from the Underground Underground Society³ / Unlock Fifth Tier, gain 6 MASTER cohorts: one each in Climbing, Eavesdrop, Gather Information, Intimidate, Lockpicking, Sneak.

³Yes, Underground Underground Society. Both subterranean and concerned with organised crime, it's an informal group including many of the big rackets and bands in the Western League and neighbouring lands.

Chapter 8

Holdings, Monsters & Treasure

This chapter describes how to set up Holdings, their residents, Treasure Troves and their surroundings. Simply peppering a game world with monsters and treasures, while leading to a fun campaign, leads to character growth problems due to the Experience by Plundering rule.

8.1 Holdings and their Treasure Troves

One of the staples of adventuring is plundering hoards and acquiring treasures. Such treasures are hidden in castles, dens, hideouts and dungeons, collectively referred to as Holdings. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in AFG characters gain levels by plundering Treasure Troves from Holdings and bringing them back to safety, but only if the Holding and the Treasure Trove contained are of at least the same level as the plundering characters.

Holdings are not the only places where adventures, combat with monsters and treasure-hunting happens. They are, however, the only places that hold treasure that confers an experience level when successfully plundered. A Holding's physical space is best described as a *cohesive, stylistically recognisable* and *circumscribed* set of locales. Holdings can be the entirety or portions of castles, forts, dungeon levels, hideouts, ruins, crypts, cairns and lairs: it's possible to have Holdings within Holdings.

Some kind of transition should happen upon entering or leaving it, the most typical being stepping beyond a “special-looking” door in a dungeon. The transition doesn’t need to be telegraphed: the Holding need not even be evident from the outside. Subtle hints like differences in illumination, furniture, decoration, people, building materials and style, noises and smells can all work perfectly, as can banners, graffiti or heads on sticks.

Threshold transitions help provide a structure for the emergent narrative of exploration. It can also be highly effective to occasionally surprise players with interesting and potentially dangerous locales they stumble into.

For game purposes, it’s easier to have an Holding populated by creatures of roughly the same level. Roll the appropriate number of dice on the Holding Resident Population Table.

Each Holding will contain a Treasure Trove of the same level, containing:

- Level² × 3d × 10t worth of treasure consisting of coins for the first 20-70% and goods for the rest, their type to be determined depending on the Holding context and residents.
- 1 Special Item per level, to be rolled on the table in section 8.3.

While this covers the population and Treasure Trove of the Holding, its physical space and residents are left to be determined. Remember: the concept of a Holding is an abstraction of in-game locations, beings and objects.

Once the population has been determined, the Referee should come up with what exactly the residents are. This is an important step because most of the character of a place is given by the locals; players will associate locations with whatever they happen to meet there.

Holding Resident Population Table			
Tier	Level	Population	Average
Tier 1	1	7d	24.5
	2	6d	22
	3	5d	17.5
Tier 2	4	4d	14
	5	3d+1	11.5
	6	3d	10.5
Tier 3	7	2d+1	8
	8	2d	7
	9	1d+2	5.5
Tier 4	10	1d+1	4.5
	11	1d	3.5
	12	1d	3.5

In case you need a push to get your creative juices started, you can use MOSTROTRON, the Random Monster Generator described in section 8.2, plunder monster manuals or the adventure at the end of this volume.

For example, the fortress Dunbog is a level 1 Holding (the treasure contained in the stores, mostly weapons and food), while its Inner Bailey is a level 6 Holding (the treasure held behind a secret and trapped door in the dungeon) and its local Chapter House of Rangers is a level 4 Holding (with treasure consisting of gems hidden in dirty socks and rare maps kept in its library). The Bailey and Chapter House, although physically contained in the fortress, have different encounter types. The Rangers mostly hang out in the chapter house but, of course, will come out and help the guards should the need arise, as will the officers from the bailey. So in total the fortress hosts 30 Fighters of level 1, plus 7 Fighters and 2 Casters of level 6 in the bailey. One of the residents might be a level 6 dragon, magically transformed into a human.

A common type of Holding that is hard to build with the above table is a band of Tier 1 goons with one or two leaders of Tier 2 or Tier 3. A situation similar to the above might be a fortress garrison of 40 level 1 Fighters and their level 8 Lord. In this case, it's possible to either treat the fortress as a single Holding of around level 3 or 4 or as two separate Holdings of level 1 and level 4 to 6, depending on the amount of traps and other defences. This does not mean, of course, that a low level Holding can't have a big hoard or vice-versa.

Another typical example of higher level Holding including scores of Tier 1 creatures is a coven of necromancers and their small army of undead minions. The residents need not be of the same level, so long as the difficulty roughly stays the same. The Holding Resident Population Table is just a guideline; feel free to wander from it as you will. Holdings and Treasure Troves are abstractions and, like any abstraction, sometimes they don't work perfectly.

The balance between a Holding's defences and its Treasure Trove is important but not absolute; characters can of course avoid fights through smarts, tricks, scams, cons, hustles, hoodwinks, gambits, flimflams, stratagems, bamboozles, bribery and evasion!

If playing a campaign using only random content or when adapting other adventure games' material, note that only hoards consisting of sizeable amounts of treasure and special or magic items are considered Treasure Troves. Such hoards should be kept either in well-defended Holdings or in secret stashes heavily protected by traps and magical guardians. They can also be found in locations rendered inaccessible either because they've been forgotten or because they are remote or extremely hard to reach.

8.2 MOSTROTRON

Monsters and Creatures Generator

Interesting creatures and opponents can improve your game. This generator is for when a Referee feels the need for a special combat or encounter and can't just take a decision.

Start by deciding the level, setting it at the level of the relevant Holding if you are not sure. Then, based on the level, find the number of abilities on the Special Abilities per Tier Table and then roll 1d6 twice to find armour and type on the relative tables. If the creature has special abilities, the first one is related to the creature type, rolled on the Type Ability Table. For each other ability, you need to roll 2d6 separately and consult the General Ability Table. When you are done, create some *fluff* for your new creation, so players can talk about “dragons” instead of “giant flying fire-breathing monsters”.

All undead and bugs have Nightvision. You might want to give extra abilities to creatures, or to expand the tables.

Special Abilities per Tier				
Tier	1	2	3	4
Special abilities	1d6-4	1d6-3	2d6-6	3d6-9

Type Table						
1d6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Type	Humanoid	Animal	Undead	Monster	Bug	Weird

Armour Table						
1d6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Armour	None	Light	Medium	Heavy		

Type Ability						
1d6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Humanoid	Caster		Fighter		Bad-Ass	Giant
Animal	Nightvision	Flying	Sneaky	Swimming	Burrowing	Jumping
Undead	Immune		Draining		Deadly	
Monster	Breath Weapon		Giant	Deadly	Sturdy	Immune
Bug	Giant	Flying	Quick	Burrowing	Jumping	Armoured
Weird	Eldritch	Psychic	Sturdy	Protean	Immune	Bad-Ass

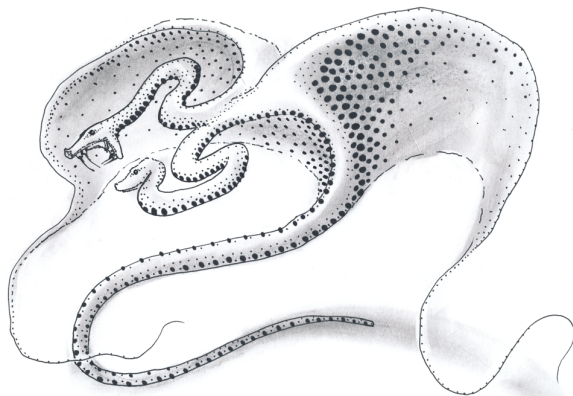
General Abilities						
1d6 - 1d6	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	roll an additional Type Ability					
2	Flying		Jumping	Burrowing	Swimming	Breath Weapon
3	Caster	Fighter	Psychic	Quick	Giant	
4	Nightvision			Protean	Eldritch	Bad-Ass
5	Immune		Sneaky		Draining	Deadly
6	Armoured		Trained		Sturdy	... and Friends

- ... and Friends: the creature has 1d6 minions of level equal to the creature’s Tier.
- Armoured: the creature’s protection is increased by one.
- Bad-Ass: the creature’s level is increased by 3. The number of abilities might increase as a result.
- Breath Weapon: the creature can breathe a cloud of fire, ice, acid, or poisonous gas once every 1d6 rounds. Damage is 1d6 per Tier and can be halved with the appropriate Alertness or Toughness Save.
- Burrowing, Flying, Jumping, Swimming: the creature can move in an unusual way.
- Caster: the creature is a Caster of the same level or half of its level (50% chance each).
- Deadly: the creature can dispatch adventurers in a really fast and dangerous way. Determine the delivery mode first and then the attack type.

The delivery mode is either a physical attack (must hit in melee and deal at least 1 damage) or, on a 5MORE, it’s a gaze attack (attacking 1d6 random opponents looking at it every round). The victim needs a Toughness Save to avoid the effects of the attack.

To determine the attack type, roll 1d6; 1: disintegration, destroying the character and all their equipment; 2: petrification, turning the character and all their equipment to stone; 3: instant death; 4: paralysis for 1d6 turns; 5-6: poison for 1d6 damage per Tier, onset 1d6 rounds.

- Draining: the creature, when dealing at least 1 damage in melee, drains life energy. Inflict an additional 1d6 Hits that are added to the creature’s current and maximum Hits. The creature can’t have more than the maximum hits rollable at their level.
- Eldritch: the creature has 1d6 additional special powers.



- **Fighter:** the creature is a Fighter of the same level or half of its level (50% chance each).
- **Giant:** the creature is oversized; roll an additional d6 when determining melee damage and ignores shields used by smaller creatures.
- **Immune:** the creature is immune to a type of attack. Roll 1d6; 1: maximum 1 damage from non-magical weapons; 2-3: immune to magic; 4: immune to fire; 5: immune to frost; 6: all Saves are successful.
- **Nightvision:** the creature can see in complete darkness.
- **Protean:** the creature can transform into either another creature or a swarm of other creatures or something very hard to harm (like a statue or a shadow).
- **Psychic:** the creature can cause madness and despair. Determine the delivery mode first and then the attack type. The victim needs a Stubbornness Save or suffer the effects of the attack for 1d6 rounds.

The delivery mode is either a physical attack (must hit in melee and deal at least 1 damage) or, on a 5MORE, it's an aura (affecting the 1d6 closest opponents every round).

Roll 1d6; 1-2: terror, the creature routes; 3-4: mind control; 5: hallucinations; 6: paralysis.

- **Quick:** the creature's movement speed is increased by 50%.
- **Sneaky:** the creature is hard to notice; +2 to 5MORE Stealth rolls.
- **Sturdy:** the creature recovers 1 Hit per round.
- **Trained:** the creature has 1d6 Additional Hits.

8.3 Special and Magical Items

This section presents only a handful of special and magic treasures. Feel free to add your own, of course!

Special Item Table		
1d6	Type	Special
1	Plot Device	Item of possibly marginal value but of possibly great importance in the setting. It could be a good choice for an item-based Accomplishment, like the Big Block mentioned earlier. As an alternative it could be a proper McGuffin, something with real significance or something completely odd you want to throw at the players. Remember that cool trump everything.
2	Trinket	A precious, valuable trinket worth 2d×100t.
3, 4, 5	Magical Item	What adventurers hope to find. Roll on Magical Item Table.
6	Great Item	What adventurers <i>really</i> hope to find. Roll on Great Magical Item Table.

Magical Item Table	
1d6	Object
1	Magic Weapon: effects described in the Combat chapter.
2	Talisman of random spell of level 1d6-1.
3	Mana Vessel of level 1d6-1.
4	Grimoire containing 1d6 spells of level 1d6-1.
5	Magic Shield: can't be broken and protects the character regardless of what speed they're moving.
6	Magic Armour: the armour's protection is increased by 1.

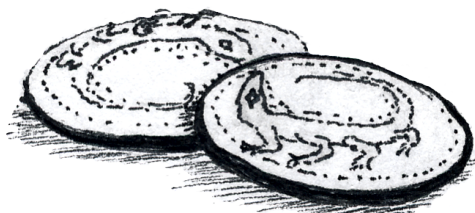
Great Magical Item Table	
1d6	Object
1	Talking Weapon. The weapon is magical but quite talkative, stubborn and opinionated. It can independently cast a spell (determined randomly) once per day.
2	Talisman of random spell of level 2d6, reroll if less then 6.
3	Mana Vessel of level 2d6, reroll if less then 6.
4	Grimoire containing 2d6 spells of level 2d6, reroll if less then 6.
5-6	AWESOME! Roll on the Awesome Magical Item Table.

Awesome Magical Item Table	
d66	Object
11	Magic Broom. Can be ridden by two people and fly at 100'/round. A rider must spend 1 Mana for each hour of travel.
12	Trebuchet of Safety. Throws a person up to 1000 feet away. The person thrown hits the target hard but without harm. Otherwise behaves as a perfectly normal enchanted trebuchet.
13	Mice Bag. A white bag of linen. If someone reaches inside thinking about or trying to extract food, they will instead find nothing but white mice.
14	Rabbit Foot. Makes you lucky. This means that unfortunate events happening to a member of your group at random will happen to someone else instead. You're allowed to cackle.
15	Wooden Shoes of Comfort. The wearer can walk up to 12 hours a day without getting tired.
16	Bone Flute. Playing the flute and spending 1 Mana makes all undead within 30' docile and apt to follow the player while the music lasts. Stubbornness Save to negate.
21	Mirror of Madness. Peering in the mirror for a round causes terrifying visions: roll a Stubbornness Save. If they save then the character casts a spell chosen by the Referee (not necessarily limited to those known to the character) without spending any Mana; if failed, the character will take 1d6 damage, lose 1d6 Mana points and spend 1 spell at random.
22	Shard of Hell. When the holder casts Hellgate the five lowest damage dice results are rerolled, but only for results that are not sixes. Note that this not only improves the damage but also greatly increases the chances of releasing a demon.
23	Bimble's Amulet. The wearer's chances of random encounters are halved.
24	Magic Map. This scroll shows the lay of the land for 5 miles around itself. It updates every dawn, complete with large scale details like volcanic eruptions and forest fires, armies and notable monsters like dragons.
25	Gorget of Safety. The gorget, once per day, will completely shield the wearer from a melee blow dealing exactly 6 points of damage.
26	Banner of Resolve. All creatures allied with the side flying the banner can ignore one failed Morale Save per day if the banner is in sight and within 100 yards.

31	Shiny Staff. Obviously magical, +1 SPI, continuously glows with a bright mauve-green light.
32	Red Spinnaker of Showoff. A sailboat that sails downwind while flying this spinnaker will fly. Yes, you read that right, fly at the same speed as the wind and in exactly the same direction; trying to steer the boat by adjusting the sails will make it lose altitude at a rate consistent with the change of direction. The bright red spinnaker furthermore will glow with a bright red light when used, making it visible for possibly tens of miles depending on the ship's altitude.
33	Magic Dynamo. This foot tall stone and metal gyroscope is found with no string to spin it. It also lacks a hole for the string, and it won't budge if spun manually. It can only be set spinning by touching it and spending one Mana. 1d6 rounds after it starts spinning it generates 2 Mana, and a further 2 Mana, 1d6 rounds after that. When Mana is made available, the dynamo glows. The Mana can only be spent by touching the dynamo frame and casting a spell. If the first Mana is not spent when the second is made available, the dynamo will start spinning faster and explode either in the same round or, on a 5MORE, the next round, dealing 3d6 damage to everything within 20' (armour protects). While spinning, the dynamo can't be moved by anything and it will spin until the second Mana is spent.
34	Four Thieves' Secret Sauce. Swilling this herbal vinegary off-white frothy sauce heals a disease. If sprayed on wounds, it will heal 1d6 Hits. If used as a cooking ingredient, it gives a +3 to cooking rolls. It can also be used as a powerful detergent and, if boiled off a bit, as a super-glue. A quart bottle is enough for 6 applications.
35	Tapestry of Hiding. This cheap-looking decorated curtain can be hung simply by propping it against a wall or other vertical surface. It does a perfect job of stopping light in addition to making anything put behind it completely undetectable from the front side unless the back of the curtain is specifically searched, even if the hidden object would ordinarily create obvious bulges.
36	Starmetal Pickaxe of Passage. This magical pickaxe is <i>uncannily</i> efficient at digging holes through doors, walls, metal barriers or stone. Only the hardest objects will need a 5MORE Feat of Strength roll to be demolished, anything else will yield in a round.

41	Secret Handbook. This tome describes secret techniques for a specific 5MORE Task, like Alchemy, Picklock or Hunting. Spending one month studying the book and a successful 5MORE Research roll will give the reader 1d6 EXPERT letters in the related Task. Each character can benefit from this kind of book only once for each skill.
42	Unfair Spear. The wielder of this magical one-handed spear can make it extend up to 30', allowing them to fight in melee from quite a distance.
43	Bow of Stars. This magical bow, when pulled, briefly creates an arrow made of star-stuff. Only this bow can shoot it but it ignores all armour.
44	Ramrod of Nimbleness. This ramrod makes reloading a firearm 1 round shorter and allows the user to fire and reload firearms even in melee.
45	Exploding Dart. This crossbow dart, when hitting a target, explodes causing an additional 8d6 damage to everybody within 10' (Alertness Save halves).
46	Icon of Protection. Wearing this icon of a saint close to the body gives a bonus of +1 to all saving throws.
51	Cozy Bedroll. Sleeping in this bedroll overnight makes the Toughness Save to recover 1 Hit automatically succeed.
52	Codex of Spawning. The book describes a process to create a specific kind of creature from inorganic material. The process needs 1 successful Alchemy 5MORE roll per level of the creature. Attempting each roll takes 1 week and 1000 thalers. If, at some point during the process, the number of failed rolls is more than the number of successes, the whole creation fails but may be reattempted from the beginning. The created beings will be generally very well disposed toward the creator, and their stats can be determined using MOSTROTRON, described in section 8.2.
53	Barbed Sword of Slaying. This magical two-handed sword deals double damage (after factoring armour protection) against a specific <i>type</i> of creature, determined using the MOSTROTRON Type Table in section 8.2.
54	Menhir: This 6-foot-tall, 1-ton granite monolith can be used as a Mana Vessel that automatically recharges itself at dawn and sunset, but only to cast a specific spell. The spell is inscribed on the monolith on a 5MORE (making it also a grimoire).

55	Hut of Mad Adventures. This 10' × 10' × 10' rickety hut will teleport overnight to a different location, but only if the door is kept shut overnight. The destinations seem to be pretty random, but if the occupiers mention that they'd like to get back to a place the hut has been already, the hut will teleport there the next night if a 5MORE is rolled.
56	Mechanical Hamster. If wound, the hamster will behave like a normal pet hamster for the next hour. Holding it and spending 1 Mana allows a character to control its movements and see through its little glass eyes for 1 hour.
61	Compleat Auras. This thick book describes hundreds of different auras observed through the Open Own Third Eye spell.
62	Awesome Hat. Spending 1 Mana puts the wearer at the centre of attention of everybody within 150' for a turn. Stubbornness Save negates.
64	Portable Pagoda. About 2-feet-tall and 1-foot-wide, carried with a stick slung over the shoulder. Carrier is slowed as if wearing armour 1 category heavier but the spirits in the pagoda create a protection equivalent to a Goetic Ward with a radius of 3'.
64	Portable Pagoda of the Iron Spirit. Made of cast iron, covered in sharp spikes, covered in barbs. Behaves like a Portable Pagoda but can also be wielded as a two-handed magic flail.
65	Magic Talisman. Increases a stat by 1d6 (equal chances each).
66	Fighting Manual. Describes a Secret Combat Technique.



Chapter 9

The Temple Beneath the Harga Volcano

This adventure's premise is: what if *Fantasy F*ckin' Switzerland* had volcanos and a temple of Cthulhu, containing a gold idol of the tentacled god?

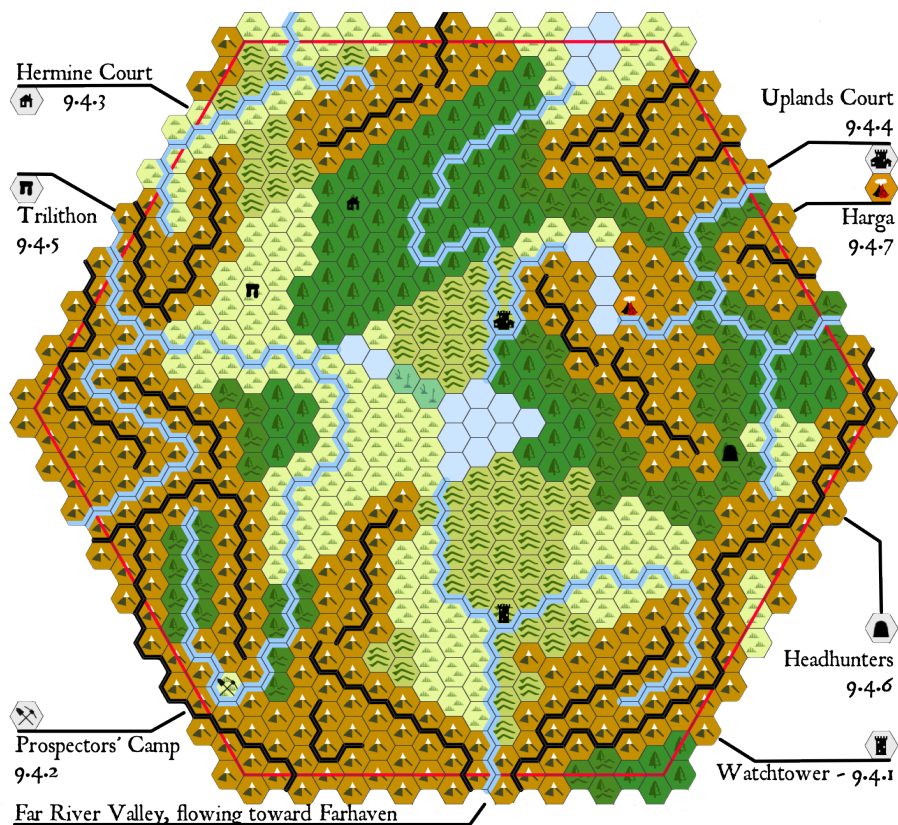
It takes place in the Western League, a mock medieval Europe with magic, where human civilisation has pushed monsters to remote, inhospitable areas. It's a fantasy setting with heavy armours and firearms, coinage names, emphasis on fortifications, feudalism and many other elements that trace back to the European late Middle Ages.

This adventure doesn't have a detailed, fixed plot, instead presenting locations and characters of a portion of the *Uplands*. It begins in Farhaven, the northernmost town on the Great Lake, and progresses into the mountains to the north and the Uplands beyond them. Farhaven is built at the mouth of the river Far and is the seat of Baron Henry of Farhaven, a Western League member. The town's main activities are fishing, logging and paper-making.

The easy way to the Uplands is to walk up the narrow and steep valley of the river Far. Due to the valley's ruggedness and lacking any sensible reason to reach the Uplands, this route is rarely trodden and lacks even a simple path. From Farhaven, it takes three days on foot to reach the Uplands. Traveling on horseback is not an option, but horses can be led up the Far valley.

The river Far can be seen leaving the south edge of the red hexagon on the map; from there, it's possible to see the fuming top and snowy sides of the Harga volcano. Snow and glaciers cover the top of all the mountains in the Uplands during late spring and summer, the period when this adventure is set: winters in the area are extremely frigid and snowfalls are both common and extremely unforgiving. The first snows of winter bury all the valleys, including the Far valley, metres deep.

Characters can have different reasons to go to the Uplands. A very direct hook is the recovery of a scroll fragment mentioning a golden idol in a temple under a volcano north of the Great Lake. More indirect reasons are bringing a message from Baron Henry of Farhaven to either the Upland Chief Karl or the Ermine Chief Soren. An alternative is bringing supplies to the prospecting team on 10 pack mules. The hook should be decided by the Referee, taking in consideration the aspirations of the characters.



9.1 Wilderness Movement

The map on the previous page has a scale of 1 km to the hex, each hex needing 15 minutes to cross for grassland, 30 minutes for forests and hills, 40 for mountains. Crossing a river takes an additional 1d6×10 minutes in order to find a fordable area. Crossing a ridge (a thick black line on the map) takes an additional 1d6×10 minutes *and* a 5MORE Mountaineering roll for each character. If the roll is failed, the character suffers 2d6 Hits, halved with a successful Toughness Save.

Horseback riding doubles speed on grassland but horses cannot cross ridges. To climb to the summit of a mountain, roll 1d6 to determine how hard the climb is. The summit is reached after that amount of Mountaineering rolls, as if they were ridges.

There is a barely-noticed, rarely-used, very direct path between the Ermine and the Uplands Courts. It can be traveled on foot in two hours, crossing the West Upland River at a very easy ford.

9.2 Random Encounters

Random encounters can happen twice a day: roll 5MORE every morning and sunset, then 1d6 on the following table if successful. Remember to remove slain opponents from the population of their community. For example, after 30 adult headhunters have been killed, only their kids will remain.

Upper Far Valley Random Encounter Table	
1d6	Encounter
1-3	Game! Mountain goats, deers, boars, hares, grouses, ducks. Will not fight but can be hunted. And eaten.
4	Hunting Party! 2d6 LVL 1 Fighters. Roll 1d6: 1-4: They come from the closest of the following settlements: the mining site, the Ermine Court, the Upland Court, the Headhunter Cave, the Troll Hall, the Watchtower (Ogun will be alone). 5+: From one of these settlements at random.
5	Bear! Roll 1d6: 1-5: 1 Bear (LVL 4 Animal). 6: the Ur-Björn! (LVL 7 Giant Animal, can Pounce as per spell once per day).
6	Terrorbug Hunting Party! Roll 1d6: 1-4: same amount of LVL 1 Headhunters riding Terrorbugs. 5+: 1 LVL 1 Headhunter riding a Terrorbug.

9.3 The Uplands: Society

The local clansmen speak the same language as the rest of the Western League, but with a strong accent, born of hundreds of years of near-total isolation and very harsh living conditions. Holding on to traditional practices, for Uplanders, is often the only way to survive.

Anybody who does not fit their style, language, accent and customs, or any foreigner in general, is treated as inferior, not fit for society, offensive and ineffective, to be publicly ridiculed and shamed.

Since the same conditions that made them extremely intolerant made them extremely pragmatic, it's possible though to gain their respect by completing Accomplishments they deem worthy of respect.

9.3.1 New Characters and Character Replacements

As the Uplands are remote and hard to reach, dead characters are hard to replace. Once locals are met, replacement characters can either come from a local settlement or as desperate outcasts.

Each replacement character is generated as any other starting character, but instead of rolling twice on the starting equipment table, roll once on the table below according to their settlement and Way. Headhunter Fighters can only choose stone maces, spears, bows and knives as weapons of choice.

1d6	Headhunter (sec. 9.4.6)	Other Fighters	Other Casters
1	Bow and 40 arrows	Crossbow and 40 arrows	
2	Terrorbug poison, 3 doses	Healing Salve (heals 1d6 Hits if applied)	
3	Shield, axe	Light armour, shield, 5 throwing axes	Talisman of Pounce
4	Light armour, spear	Medium armour, two-handed axe	Mana Vessel, LVL 1
5	Light armour, shield, spear	Medium armour, shield	Talisman, LVL 1
6	PET TERRORBUG	Big nasty dog	Intelligent crow

9.3.2 Accomplishments, Troves and Safe Places

There are numerous Accomplishments possible in the region. Accomplishments should be kept hidden from players and only revealed through play.

- Drive the Headhunter Tribe away from the Uplands for the Upland Chief / Unlock Tier Two or +1 level; awarded the title of Knight Protector of the Uplands and the lands southeast of the Upland Lake
- Defeat the Ermine or Upland Clan in combat / Unlock Second Tier or +1d6 Additional Hits
- Bring trophy of the Ur-Björn to the Ermine Clan / Unlock Second Tier or +1d6 Additional Hits; the Ur-Björn pelt is made into a magic medium armour, the claimer of the killing blow can marry one of the sons or daughters of the Ermine Chief
- Create a new settlement in the Uplands, manage it for for 3 years / Unlock Third Tier or +1 Level
- Recover the Idol of Cthulhu, if own cult / Unlock Second Tier or +1 SPI or +1 Mana
- Survive winter in the Uplands out of the two Courts / +1 stat of choice
- Craft a weapon or armour on the Forge of the Troll Mother / Unlock Third Tier or +1 level
- Bring the Idol (whole or destroyed) back to civilization / Unlock next Tier or +1 level
- Tame and ride a Terrorbug / +1 to random stat
- Cause a Jökulhaups (sec. 9.5) and live to tell the tale / Unlock next tier¹

Food is *not* considered part of the Treasure Troves. The treasure must be brought to a safe location, like one of the Courts or, after it's been liberated, the Watchtower. Of course stealing from a Clan makes the relevant Court unsafe unless the clan is defeated or driven away.

¹Also, high five for being awesome!

9.4 Adventuring Locations

9.4.1 Watchtower - LVL 2 Holding

A stone watchtower sits on top of a hill where a minor tributary flows into the river Far. The tower is about 30' tall and 30' wide, has no openings on the ground floor but a door on the first floor facing north (reachable with a stepladder kept inside), a big window facing south on the second floor and a crenelated roof. Inside, a narrow spiral staircase links the floors. The stairs are separated from the various rooms on each floor by doors.

The main entrance is the first floor door, but it's barred from the inside. The door opens on a big room with two unmade beds, two desks, two chairs and three chests. The chest contains a set of plate mail, sword and shield; pots, pans, cups, cloths and cutlery; paper and writing material.

The second floor is used as a shelter by Ogun the Giant (LVL 6 Giant Humanoid), wearing skins (light armour) and using a tree trunk as a two-handed mace (4 damage dice). As Ogun does not fit through the door, he simply climbs in and leaves through the big window. Plenty of bones are scattered on the floor, including those from the corpses of Eric and Joma, his Caster comrade. Ogun is hungry all the time and will ask anybody in sight for food. A lot of food. Or else. He likes equine meat and getting horribly drunk. Once Ogun is dealt with, the tower is considered safe. Giving him at least a week of rations for a human will make him prone to let the party go. The top floor is protected by a crenelated wall and sports a turnable, movable ballista.

The door from the stairs to the room on the ground floor is closed by a bolt accessible from the stairs. Behind the door, the room is crowded by Joma's little army: 21 zombies (LVL 2 Nightsight Immune-Save Undead, no armour). A trapdoor leads to the cellar containing barrels containing 8 bushels of grain and enough cheese and jerky to sustain a person for three years. A chest contains the rest of the Treasure Trove: 300 thalers, a gold and opal necklace worth 500 thalers, Joma's grimoire containing Unveil Arcana, Apprentice's Delight, Augury, Zombify and Precious Blood for Master, "Eric's Fencing", a Fighting Manual describing the Secret Combat Technique *Eric's Feather Blow* (1 Additional Hit) and a small case with enough balm and incense to Zombify 3 levels of undeads.

9.4.2 Prospector Camp - LVL 1 Holding

At springtime, as soon as the Far Valley was safe to travel, a prospecting team left Farhaven looking for gold. They found a promising area, then set up camp on a stretch of land surrounded by water on three sides and built a palisade to get even more protection. Inside the palisade live 17 people: 10 LVL 1 Fighters in medium armour armed with halberds and crossbows, 4 prospectors and 2 of their wives, led by Yari (Fighter 3, heavy armour, bow, spear, magic great flail).

The prospectors found a couple of river bends rich with gold and are paying protection to both the Ermine and the Upland Courts, just in case. They are greatly under-reporting their finds and have managed to accumulate about 300 thalers worth of gold (buried under Yari's tent).

9.4.3 Hermelinhof - Ermine Court - LVL 2 Holding

Four wooden longhouses, arranged around a square courtyard in a clearing, house the Ermine Clan, defended by Chief Soren (Fighter LVL 4, bow, light armour, great axe) and the Ermine Guard (5 Fighters LVL 3, bow, medium armour, shield, sword). The rest of the clan numbers 20 hunters and trappers and 30 kids: all the adults and half of the kids are able to fight with daggers and bows.

About 30 yards south of the longhouses, there is a Cure Menhir (sec. 8.1) and a huge oak. A house built on the oak, reachable by climbing rope ladders, is home for a coven of three witches (Caster LVL 1, know Unveil Arcana, Pounce, Feral Eyes, Cure). Their spells are engraved on the oak's bark.

Chief Soren will welcome respectful foreigners who arrive at the Ermine Court, offering them a meal and a place to stay for the night in exchange for some clever banter, news and tales of adventures, and will promise the hand of one of his three offspring to whoever manages to bring him the pelt of the Ur-Björn (section 9.3.2), a huge bear that roams the Uplands. Many have tried, among both the Ermine and Upland clans, but nobody has yet succeeded..

Soren is obsessed with killing it to show that the best hunters belong to his family, but one of the witches recently predicted that a foreigner will kill it instead. The Ermine clan treasure consists of 80 thalers worth of gold jewelry (worn by the two daughter of Soren) and 100 thalers worth of fancy furs, worn by the chief, his family and his guards.

9.4.4 Oberlandhof - Upland Court - LVL 1, 3 Holdings

Sitting on top of a hill between the East and West Upland Rivers towers the Upland Court. A robust 40' tall stone tower and two-storey stone house completely surround a 150' wide courtyard, providing living space, barns and storage for the 100 member of the clan and doubling as a night-time corral for livestock.

The only entrance is a gate on the south side, at the base of the tower. On the outside of the buildings there are no ground floor windows and at the first floor only arrow slits. The building has more generous windows facing the courtyard. The only tower entrance is on the first floor, barred by a sturdy oak door only accessible from the courtyard via a wooden stair. The tower has plenty of arrowslits at the first, second and third floors. There is no roof over the 3rd floor, just a crenelated parapet.

House and Courtyard - LVL 1 Holding The court is, during the day, usually bustling with activity; kids run around playing with chickens, dogs and pigs while most adults are outside working the land and most of the livestock is brought outside to the pastures.

Before sunset, the adults come back to the court, bringing in the livestock. The treasure of the Holding consists of 30 prized Upland Cows, which can be sold for 20t each in Farhaven. Four granaries hold a total of 3000 bushels of oats and millet.

Tower - LVL 3 Holding The tower ground floor is the only entrance to the complex, protected by a sturdy iron gate and doors. Murder holes are set in the ceiling so that guards from the first floor can defend against attackers.

Entrance to the tower is on the first floor through the previously mentioned wooden stair and opens on a guard room: the floor is covered in trapdoors to cover murder holes and there is a weapon rack with axes, bows and arrows. Usually 6 archers (Fighter LVL 3, medium armour, crossbow, axe and pike) and two big black Uplandish Hounds (Animal LVL 2) guard the room.

A narrow spiral staircase leads downstairs two floors to the dungeon, containing a big cistern, two casks of spirits, 200 bushels of oats and an oubliette, hidden by a trapdoor. The oubliette is mostly used to keep drunken and rowdy Uplanders for a few hours, or at least until they complain about being hung over.

Walking up the stairs brings you first through a barred door to the barracks at the second floor (furnished with 20 bunk beds and chests) and then through another barred door to the command room, which doubles as a council room for High Chief Karl (Fighter LVL 6, magic bow, medium armour, magic shield, Unfair Spear) and his two knights (Fighter LVL 3, heavy armour, magic shield, crossbow and flail).

The big and sturdy leather and oak armchair of the chief hides a box containing the rest of the Treasure Trove: 2500 thalers, 100 thalers in gold nuggets and a votive pendant of Saint Gunther of the Uplands (+1 hunting and archery). The stairs continue to the top of the tower, where five crossbowmen (Fighter LVL 3, light armour, crossbow, axe) are on the lookout, reduced to three at night-time. The crossbowmen are always ready to raise the alarm in case of an emergency by blowing horns.

Other Notes The rest of the hex is farmland, half pasture, half oat, millet, kale and beet fields. Most of the 50 adults work the fields and hunt during the good season and stay inside manufacturing wood, horn and bone tools and brewing ale during the frigid winters.

Relationships between the Upland and Ermine Courts are friendly. The Ermine court pays a token tribute of 5 deer skins every fall to Chief Karl.

More problematic is the behaviour of the Headhunter tribe in the east, cannibals riding Terrorbugs preying on both livestock and Upland people. Karl will offer “fortifications, crenelation rights, land and title” to a group of adventurers able to “put an end to the Headhunter presence in the Uplands”. What Karl will not tell them is that the land is currently occupied by a very hungry giant, as mentioned in section 9.4.1, and that Eric and Joma were offered the tower and promised knighthood to deal with the Headhunters too.

9.4.5 Trilithon

A trilithon stands on top of a solitary hill, the lintel pointing east-west. The two posts are carved with pictures of people with animal heads (Casters wearing masks) cutting themselves and spraying blood on the trilithon. At twilight, if Caster blood has been spilled on the stones in the past 12 hours, a portal to another dimension (Referee choice) will open between the posts for a minute: roll for random encounters coming from the other side.

9.4.6 Headhunters - LVL 2, 3 Holdings

Characters adventuring in the area will notice the occasional head left to rot on top of a stake. A tribe of cannibal Headhunters dwell underground in this hex, surviving by hunting, often riding domesticated Terrorbugs, speaking their own language and surviving mostly by a mixture of unbridled xenophobia and aggression.

Terrorbugs are carnivorous, shiny, purple, horned scarabs about ten feet long (Bug LVL 1 Flying Psychic (if a character is gored, Save Stubbornness or be paralysed in horror for 1d6 rounds and, after paralysis, roll a Morale Save), heavy armour). They are not extremely manoeuvrable or silent but their flight is very, very stable, therefore they're reliable flying platforms used by the Headhunters to fire bows, throw spears and charge into melee.

The frequency of staked heads increases as characters get closer to the Headhunters' delve: a 1000' tall wooded hill topped with a 150' wide, 60' deep crater, caused by centuries of tunnelling by both men and bugs.

Crater and Tunnels - LVL 2 Holding The Crater sides are dotted with dozens of tunnels openings and its bottom is covered in grass. The tunnels lead to a big underground complex of passages and rooms, inhabited by 30 adult Headhunters (LVL 1, no armour, shield, spear, small gold nugget (3t) embedded in a leather necklace), 70 kids of various ages, 22 adult Terrorbugs and hundreds of eggs. As a map would be quite ineffective to represent the maze-like, intricate structure we recommend rolling a Craft check for each turn spent exploring the maze looking for a way down: on a failure, the party encounters 1d6-1 bugs and 1d6-1 Headhunters, while a success brings them 1 level down.

After descending 2 levels the characters reach a natural cave used by the Headhunters as a temple. The cave walls and ceiling are completely covered in red drawings depicting Headhunters killing trolls, eating them and bringing their dead comrades underground (it is evident to any Caster that the graffiti is a grimoire for Master's Call, Selfless Gift of Life, Mark of the Beast, Open Own Third Eye, The Best Gift, Zombify, Ghoulish Taste). A shallow depression in the floor houses a pile of 200 skulls topped with a gold scarab idol (1000t). In the cave dwell Gazaj the Shaman (Caster 3, spear, bow, dagger-talisman for Augury) and his wife the Chieftain Strech (Fighter 4, light armour, shield, magic axe taken from a dead troll). On the far side of the cavern, behind a human skin curtain, a narrow and twisty cave leads to the Catacombs.

Catacombs The tunnel leaves the temple and descends steeply for about 40 feet, where it opens on a vast cavern roughly 200×300 feet. In the centre of the cavern, there are three huge piles of bones, about 20 feet tall and 60 feet wide. The bones are remains of generations of Headhunters that, after dying, have been eaten by their relatives. After the final meal, their bones are uncere- moniously tossed on the pile.

Every time a pile is disturbed by touching it, but not more than once a day, 7d6 Ancestors (LVL 1 undead, no armour but protected as per light armour due to lack of flesh, Nightsight) will rise from the pile and will chase and try to kill any non-undead in sight. A vertical shaft in the floor behind the three piles leads down 20' toward the Lower Catacombs.



Lower Catacombs - Triple LVL 4 Holding The shaft leads to a tunnel that spirals outwards counterclockwise. On the right, outer side of the tunnel every 50 feet there is a short side passage leading away from the centre of the hill. The passage is sealed after a few feet by a vertical stone slab. Each slab hides a tomb of a clan chief and her husband, the clan shaman; the first tomb is the oldest and there are 23 such tombs, one for each couple. The corridor ends after the 23rd tomb.

In the tombs, the skeletons of the couples hold hands: they will animate as Noble Ancestors (LVL 4 Undead, no armour but protected as per light armour due to lack of flesh, Nightsight, Draining) 1d6 rounds after the adventurers enter the room. Each chief has a gold ring worth 200t.

The stone slab sealing the 17th tomb shows a big crack down the middle. If the passage is opened, the giant and deformed skeleton of the Crazy Chief Amaeh (undead LVL 5 Fighter, Giant, Nightsight, Draining, no armour but protected as per light armour due to lack of flesh) wearing an oversized funeral gold mask (800t) will immediately charge the adventurers wielding a two-handed stone axe. Amaeh's husband is a regular Noble Ancestor and will follow her the round after the charge.

9.4.7 The Cephalopod Ark Under the Harga Volcano - LVL 3, 4, 4 Holdings

On the south side of the Harga, on the lake shore, a deep cave, 20 foot-wide, opens on the inside of the volcano. the lake extending inside for a few hundred feet in what used to be a lava tube. As the tube is half-submerged, the party can enter in the noticeably warmer interior using some kind of makeshift raft. The water is comfortably warm and slowly flowing *out* from the lake. 100 feet into the volcano the cave becomes wider and taller, the water getting shallower, about 2-4 feet deep, and warmer. The cave extends for 1000 feet, growing 250 feet wide and 150 feet tall.

In the cave there are a lot of ruins of big stone buildings in the shapes of shells, together with a rushing noise from a waterfall deep inside the cave. If players decide to play archaeologist or to use divinations they will learn that the lake beside the Harga contained a city of the long-destroyed Cephalopod Empire. As the last Ice Age approached, tentacled artisans built Ark, a new city in the bowels of the stable and warm Harga, to shelter from the approaching glaciers. A mix of food scarcity, inbreeding and internal violence drove the adult population down from a few thousand to about 50 (mostly LVL 1), plus a huge number of young ones used as food by their elders.

Argonaut Fort - LVL 4 Holding Only one building in Ark is still in good shape, and it's very close to the entrance of the cave. From the outside it looks like a simple cylinder of lucid stone 20 feet tall and 100 feet wide with no openings on the sides. In fact it's the exterior wall of the Argonaut Fort. Inside the walls live 12 Argonaut Honour Guards (Monster LVL 4 Swimming, Nightsight, Armoured - increased heavy armour, 4 spears each, can throw all of them in a single round. 1 mana). They're what's left of the defenders of the city, but they rarely leave the walls of the fort except to eat. Some time ago they went to the Temple of Cthulhu and robbed it of its Idol and the Holy Spear Nautilus because they were jealous of its powers.

The 12 squids fight and live in mated pairs, each couple taking residence in one of six big nautiloid shells built on the south side of the fort; Nautilus is an intelligent magic spear, fanatical worshipper of Cthulhu. Nautilus's shaft is made of rough red coral and its blade is in the shape of a squid holding the tip of the coral shaft with its tentacles, the end of the hood the tip of the spear. During the Magic Phase, it can hurl itself as a Unerring Arrow draining 1 Mana from the wielder, then reappear in the owner's grasp at the end of the round. Argonauts take turns wielding Nautilus.

The Idol of Cthulhu The Idol is buried in the middle of the fort. It is made of pure, solid gold and weighs about 7 pounds. The value of the gold alone is about 8000 thalers, while the market price can range from 10000t if sold to a rich noble with a passion for antique curios to 20000t and more if sold to cultists of Cthulhu. Sleeping in front of the Idol brings horrible nightmares of Cthulhu rising from beneath the waves and eating everything. Dreams hurt the dreamer's psyche giving -1 to Stubbornness Saves for a day but healing 3 Hits per hour of sleep.



Lost Temple of Cthulhu - LVL 3 Holding At the end of the cavern, under the waterfall, bearing the brunt of the rushing water, lies a 30' tall stone head of the tentacled god Cthulhu. The stone tentacles are open, forming a passage into the mouth of the statue and, from there, to another cavern housing the temple proper. On the side of the entrance meditates Blobblihl, Fallen Squid Templar (Monster LVL 3 Swimming, Nightsight, Caster, knows Unveil Arcana, Pounce, Cure, Ghoulis Taste, Unerring Spear - alternate of Unerring Arrow, the spear returns to the Caster's grasp at the end of the round), a giant squid with sad eyes, wielding a coral spear (80t) and wearing an ecclesiastical tiara. He will stop the characters from entering and, if queried, will tell them some details about the Ark and his misfortune.

Blobblihl was enjoying Cthulhu's Charisma and was tasked with protecting the entrance of the Temple from intruders, but was thrown out of the temple after failing at his task. The treacherous Argonaut Honour Guard decided that the Squid Templars had held the Idol for too long so they swarmed in, almost killed Blobblihl, stole the Holy Spear Nautilus and the Idol and made it back to their fort. When the other templars came back after lunch, they noticed that the Idol was missing and that Nautilus was not in Blobblihl's grasp. They understood that Blobblihl no longer enjoyed Cthulhu's charisma and threw him out. Blobblihl is still protecting the temple and, should the characters ask him to join forces to recover the Idol, he will enthusiastically accept. But he will never allow them into the temple, even after the Idol has been recovered, mostly because they have no tentacles.

In the middle of temple there is a stone altar in the shape of a wave, topped by an empty indentation where the Idol of Cthulhu once stood. Around the altar sleep 15 Squid Templars (Monster LVL 3 Caster, Nightsight, Sturdy due to Cthulhu's Charisma, know Unveil Arcana, Pounce, Cure, Ghoulis Taste, Unerring Spear), their grimoire concealed as an epic of the Cephalopod Empire, carved on the walls.

Harga Forge and the Hall of the Mountain Queen - LVL 5 Holding

Climbing 150' up the cave to reach the source of the waterfall will reveal that the river rushes down from a 20-foot-wide cave. A walkway has been chiseled in the rock along its length a few feet above the water level. Following the walkway for 500 feet will bring the party to a big hall, where the walkway ends. The hall houses a turning waterwheel as wide as the river cave and its gearbox. A long pulley cable, linked to the gearbox, goes down a 10-foot-wide, 1000-foot-deep shaft surrounded by a double-helix staircase. A big stone door is set in the south wall, opening on a long, straight tunnel that emerges 2 hexes south of the Harga, beyond the river, in a wooded valley full of game.

Guarding the door, waterwheel, gearbox and shaft are four trolls: squat and deformed humanoids about 5 feet tall with grey skin, bulbous features, sharp teeth and a taste for humans (Humanoid Fighter LVL 4, Nightsight, magic heavy troll armour, shield, magic sword). The trolls have orders to keep anybody away and, should anything critical happen to the wheel or gearbox, to pull the red emergency-wheel-release lever (detaching the waterwheel from the gearbox) or the yellow clutch lever (that allows the wheel to spin without moving the gearbox). They accept any kind of bribe for anything requested, only to disregard their side of the deal later or backstab any outsider at the first occasion.

At the bottom of the stairs the shaft opens on the Harga Forge: a wide stone deck on a lake of liquid lava. Five troll MASTER Smiths (Humanoid Fighter LVL 4, Nightsight, leather apron as light armour, magic two-handed mauls) work around a huge Troll Anvil with all the possible metalworking tools you can imagine. They will be totally pissed off with anybody entering the forge. The heat coming from the lava flowing only a few feet beneath the platform is impressive. It causes 1 point of temporary damage per turn to any human. The trolls use it to melt metals. The immense heat and the Troll Anvil allow any MASTER Smith to forge normal metal into magic weapons. The cable coming down the shaft runs through a few pulleys transmitting power from the waterwheel above to a big trip hammer next to the Troll Anvil.

From the forge, a door leads to an equally warm hall. Its walls are covered in intricately carved fake pillars, the furniture consisting of two dozen stone armchairs around a big table sculpted straight out of the rock. At the head of the table sits, huge, deformed and clad in armour, Gerdhr the Mountain Queen (Humanoid LVL 6, Nightsight, Giant, Fighter, magic heavy troll armour, Starmetal Pickaxe of Passage) with her two Troll Spiritsmiths (Humanoid Caster LVL 5, Nightsight, know all Spiritsmith spells up to level 5, magic heavy troll armour, cast-iron staff, 3 spears).

The Troll Queen's treasure is only a small bag of gold and gems (1300 thalers) and an Everfull Mead Horn. The rest of the Treasure Trove amounts to all the magic weapons in the Holding and the Troll Anvil: bringing everything to safety will itself be a challenge.²

9.5 JÖKULHAUPS!

The Harga is a remarkably stable volcano, so a spontaneous eruption is completely out of the question. That's a shame! There's so much ice on it, an eruption would melt it all!

All this water, combined with all the lava and stone being dumped in the lake, would displace a great deal of water farther down the valley, create a huge wave down the river, which would flow past the Upland Court, flood the Ermine Court, then rush down the Far Valley, blow away a neighbourhood of Farhaven or two and cause a massive killer wave in the Great Lake. Volcanos and glaciers go so well together.

There are ways, however, to trigger an eruption. For example, deviating (even partially) the course of the underground river down the shaft to the Harga Forge. This could be done by jamming the waterwheel and partially obstructing the water flow. Plenty of water would flow down the stairs into the lava, steaming the trolls together with everything in the Troll Hall and causing a dangerous overpressure in a mildly unstable portion of the Harga.

After 1d6 turns, the pressure will be enough to first cause a small earthquake, felling some trees and causing minor avalanches all across the region. After 1d6 more minutes, the Harga will start an awesome explosive eruption, sending rocks, pumice and lava dozens of miles up in the sky, melting its glacier in a matter of minutes, and splashing rock and mud into the lake. The resulting wave will wipe out anything within 1 hex of the lake, then flow downstream, washing away anything within 1 hex of the East Upland river except for hill-tops and mountain hexes until it reaches the Upland Lake. From there a massive wave will flow down the Far river until it reaches Farhaven. There it will wipe out 2d6 paper and wood mills and capsize a few boats in the Great Lake.

²Troll armour is crafted around the horrible deformities specific to the troll that wears them, therefore troll magic armour is not usable by humans and not factored in the Treasure Trove.

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