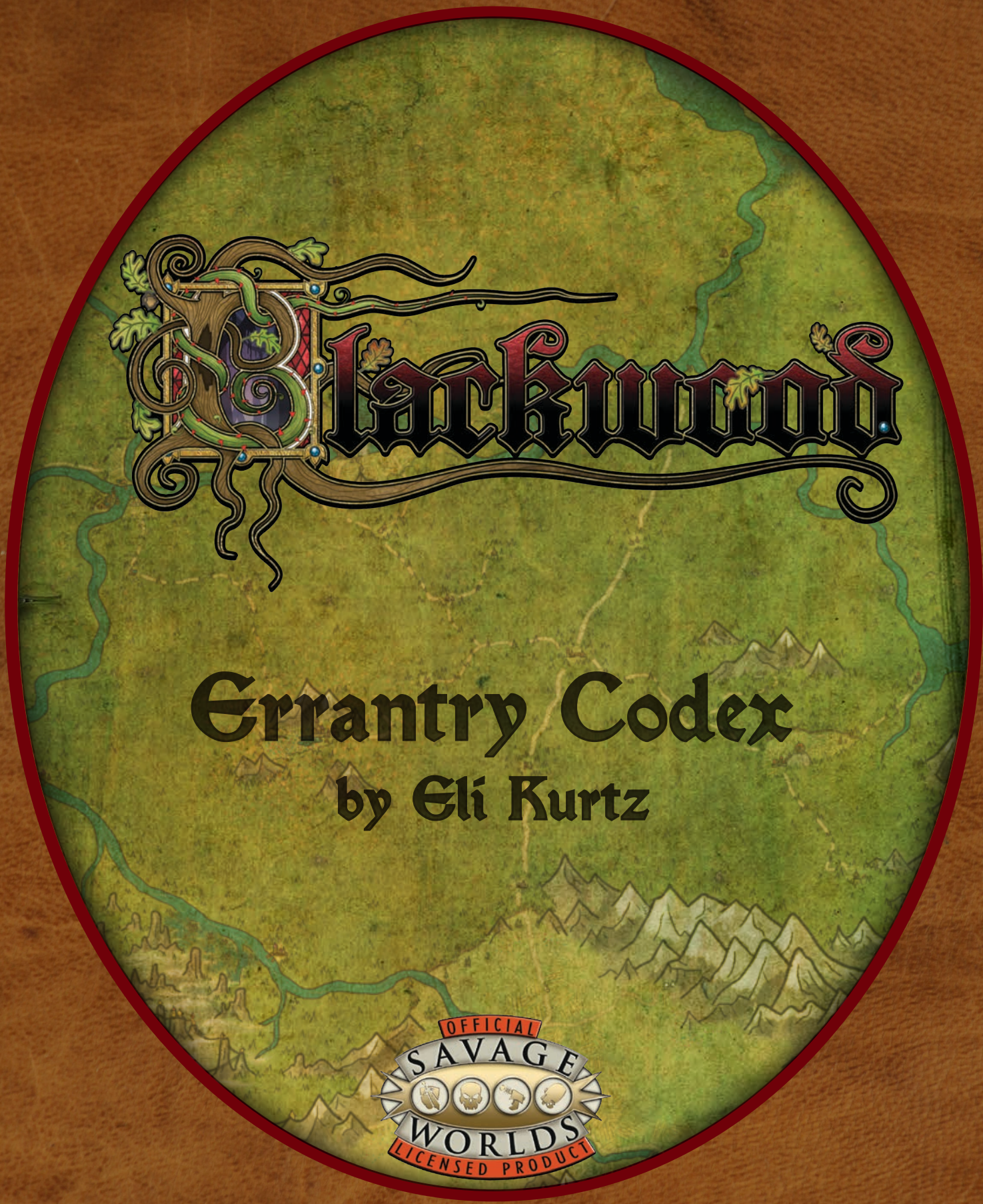

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Errantry Codex

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Roll of Errantry

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Ballad of the Way's Margin

Beyond the village there stands a tall hedge
To keep the Blackwood at bay.
Kept safe from danger, from pagans and elves,
If only we follow the Way.

It was the Elder King who raised the first hedges, who showed his people the strength of their ancestors. The wisdom of his Way taught family and friends to place their ancestor shrines in harmony with each other. We learned to push back when wilderness wanders and elves are about. In safety, we are able to settle families, to harvest crops, and to craft things of beauty and wonder. We come to prosperity only through the strengths of arm and spirit found in fellowship.

The Way of the Elder King, narrow and true,
A guide to law and life.
With aid from our ancestors overhead
We're saved from peril and strife.

Within the hedge we are safe but sundered. Paths through the forest are the only way to enjoy friends and knowledge from distant quarters, and those paths are full of many dangers. Since the Elder King disappeared fourteen years ago, towns and villages have begun to stray from his Way. Hedges collapse, and refugees flee to fill walled cities to the brim. The nobility forget their duties, and even the learned and valorous fall prey to greed and cruelty.

But there are those who falter,
Or those who choose to turn
From fellowship and order,
Who want the realm to burn.

Outlaws prey upon merchants and refugees along every forest road. Pagans lurk in the deep woods, thralls of the strange and malicious elves. All of us contend against the Blackwood itself, where monsters roam and elves hide, waiting.

In the face of this darkening world, we answer the Call of Errantry. Born by riverside, under branch, in high mountain passes, or in the Widelands far away, we walk the Way's Margin to live for glory, duty, and personal passion. We alone are free to take vengeance on the guilty, and to bring back the lost riches swallowed by roaming wilderness.

But if you would stand against these trials
A life of errantry calls.
To walk the Way's Margin, to seek out its faults,
For self or for us all.

The Way and Its Margin

Long ago, the Elder King put forth a great working of wisdom known as the *Five Classics of Lore and Reason*. Their harmony is perfect, but the Blackwood is vast and terrible. The Way of the Elder King can only push back the wilderness so far. The Way protects many, but it will always have a margin where life is difficult, where too many cries for help go unheard.

Settled Folk, Outlaws, and Errants

In the Blackwood, the settled folk of the Elder Kingdom are all subject to the Way. Every noble, commoner, and pauper who lives behind the safety of a hedge owes fealty to the Elder King and his laws.

Those who break the Elder King's laws are subject to the hand of justice. When a fine of coin or labor will not satisfy the Way, the governing lord, lady, or council of a settlement can level the King's Ban against the guilty. Removed from the Way's protection, these outlaws are considered legally dead. There is no penalty for robbing, harming, or even killing them.

Since the Elder King's disappearance, the rot of corruption seeps into more and more settlements. Many folk are outlawed unjustly, and many others become outlaws out of desperation.

The Call of Errantry

"*Even as my Way provideth for the many,*" said the Elder King, long ago, "*Ever shall there be those at the Way's Margin also, whom I could not foresee and cannot protect. And thus, into this land of lakes and rivers, I hereby decree the birth of a new order…*"

The Call of Errantry asks the brave and clever to give up their settled lives, to leave hearth and kin behind as they seek out the faults at the Way's Margin. Each errant swears this upon their badge, a personal symbol that could be jewelry, clothing, or heraldry. An errant's badge is often a source of intense pride.

Errants are granted certain immunities from the Way. Generally, errants are free to pursue lives of duty and righteousness however they see fit. They are permitted to bring justice to anyone beyond the law's reach. Should an errant take issue with another errant's actions, she may challenge him to "answer the Call." This honorable duel is usually to first blood, but errants are granted the freedom to kill one another if needed. Anyone—from the highest born lady to the lowliest pauper—can choose to answer the Call of Errantry.

The Bad Year

It was the Year of the King 1440 when our current troubles began. Not even the wisest Classicists can discern why, but that was the year the Elder King and his family disappeared from their home, the resplendent Starry Meadow Palace. Suddenly free from fealty to his wisdom, many nobles succumbed to the temptation of their wealth and power. The taxes and demands these nobles placed upon the common people sent the Elder Kingdom into disarray. Food stores dwindled, villages collapsed, and cities were choked with refugees. And all the while, the wilderness loomed just beyond every wall and hedge.

Elves and Pagans

So long a distant and dormant threat, believed to be real only in children's tales, the elves began to return just years after the Elder King's disappearance. First came their pagan worshippers, no more than eyes glinting near the treeline on moonlit nights. In time, pagans grew emboldened to attack caravans, and soon after the elves themselves joined the fray. The kingdom's frontier became a charnel house as the elves began to reclaim their forest.

Unity from the Widelands

Into this chaos, foreigners arrived from beyond the Blackwood's distant border. The Widelanders brought food, martial aid, and divine salvation when the Elder Kingdom needed it most. Now, many Widelanders have settled and prospered all throughout the kingdom. But how many come in peace, and how many come with a mind to conquer a weakened realm?



The Magic Forest

Even many people who can't formulate spells or summon aid from out of the wilds still know a magical trick or two. Magic has made life in the Blackwood possible, but it is not strong enough to make it a comfortable life. That is (or was) the duty of the Elder King.

Ancestors Be Praised

In a realm where every acre is hard-won from the jaws of the wilderness, community is a bond stronger than life itself. The Elder King taught humanity to hallow memorial shrines, to anchor a tether between themselves and the ancestors. It is this bond that grows and fortifies every settlement's hedge. The ancestors' otherworldly wisdom even teaches the crops to grow faster and healthier than normal.

By Pestle and Pact

Ancestors are not the only way to draw magic from the Blackwood. Many roots, herbs, and other materials can be combined to create magical brews and home remedies. Herbalists are often mistrusted due to their familiarity with natural magic.

Far worse than herbalists, some draw magic from the forest by making pacts with the elves themselves. These pagans gain great power, but at the expense of shackling themselves to an elf for all time. A dangerous bargain.

The Holy Faith of Unity

The ancestors, according to the Holy Faith of Unity, are real. They wield great power, but they gain that power from an even greater source. The Unified say the ancestors are *Orishas*, supplicants to the god Oruneal, whose voice is Light and Sound. Every culture's gods and spirits were once servants of Oruneal, but were struck dumb from his brilliance and fled to the far corners of the world.

Through music and faith, the Unified try to rejoin all the sundered *Orishas* of the world. Not every realm accepts the Unified, but only rarely does a realm live in such darkness as to be condemned. These are the realms of demons. These realms must be cleansed.

Unified priests, called Celebrants, have condemned the elves as demons. By battling against the wilderness, the Unified have become welcome defenders all across the realm. In fact, some cities are raising Celebrations of Unity, the religion's temples, within their walls.

Year of the King, 1454

Fourteen years after the Elder King and his family disappeared, the Blackwood is rife with tumult and opportunity. There are rumors of wealth and wisdom hidden in the Blackwood, in the towns and fortresses ruined by the ravages of recent memory. There are also rumors that the Elder King is not dead but lost, and the most cunning and honorable errants alike ponder how they might be the ones to find him. Glory, wealth, harmony, and power await the true of heart, if their will is strong enough to grasp for them.

Inspirational Sources

The Blackwood is inspired by stories all throughout history, folklore, and modern media. This is a partial list of those inspirations. They're not necessary to play the game, but they can help you better understand the style of the Blackwood. Enjoy!

An Introduction to the Wuxia Genre (Online)
The Analects of Confucius
Armstrong, Karen: A Short History of Myth
Brotherhood of the Wolf (2001 film)
Connolly, John: The Book of Lost Things
Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (2000 film)
The Decemberists: The Hazards of Love (2009 album)
Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm: Children's and Household Tales
House of Flying Daggers (2004 film)
Iron Monkey (1993 film)
Journey to the West
Kubo and the Two Strings (2016 film)
Lao Tzu: Tao te Ching
Last of the Mohicans (1992 film)
Novik, Naomi: Uprooted
Sapkowski, Andrzej: The Witcher Series
The Secret of Kells (2009 film)
Shi Na'an: Water Margin
Tolkien, J.R.R.: On Fairy Stories
The Witch (2015 film)

Errant's Guide



Read And Go Forth, Errants!

The Elven Call

It's dangerous to go unprepared into the murky depths of the Blackwood. You need proper supplies, careful planning, and a whole lot of luck. Use the following tale as a guide to surviving this vibrant, frightful place. Learn its lessons, and you might just stand a chance.

Give yourself three Bennies before you start. You'll use these to reroll dice and Soak damage in this solo introduction to the Blackwood Plot Point Campaign, *The Way of the Elder King.*

1. A Forest Road: You find yourself in the grips of unknown peril. A sunset burns as red as blood at the end of the last day of Harvest season. Your caravan is a day's ride into your journey from High Hall. With no delays, you should reach the city of Span in another three days.

But the Blackwood has fallen silent. No birds sing overhead. The low rustle of creatures in the underbrush has ceased. Not even the wind blows through the branches. The nervous stamping of two oxen is stifled by the oppressive silence of the forest.

Then, soft at first but pretty as the tinkling of a Unified bell, a song drifts out of the Blackwood: *"Tra la lee lay, not safe today, the Blackwood's all aflutter."*

Out of the corner of your eye, a small figure flits between tree trunks.

"Ho, there! Elves among us!" a caravan guard raises the alarm. *"Elves, I say! Steady now, errants."* The singing jumps from one side of the carts to the other but grows ever louder, closer:

"Not safe today from elven play, you'll end up in the gutter."

You have only a few moments before the elf is upon you. Only a few moments to ready yourself for a battle of wits or weapons, for who can know the twisted intentions of an elf? Do you want to:

- **Survey your surroundings? Read 20.**
- **Prepare for Battle? Read 14.**
- **Take cover? Read 21.**

2. Attack Immediately: You didn't know one of the most important rules when dealing with elves: don't go it alone. You strike out at the elf but it's too quick. Before you know it, pain bursts all across the side of your head. It rips through you for an agonizing instant, then you hear it: the whispered tune that says *"heed my Call, come, follow me."*You are lost forever.

3. Attack the Howlers: It won't be long before the howlers begin leaping down from the trees. Best to take out as many as you can before then. If you have a ranged weapon, make a Throwing or Shooting check to shoot into the trees. If you succeed, one of the howlers cries out and falls to the ground. Read 24 for further information.

4. Call to Arms: One of the nearby guards turns to face you. Alas, he has been Called by the elf, and will serve it until his death. He raises his weapon and attacks you! Roll for him with a d6 in Fighting, and suffer 2d6 damage if he rolls a 6 or better! If the damage is higher than 6, you're Shaken!

Make an attack against him with a d8 in Fighting, Shooting, or to cast a power. If you roll a 6 or better, he's Shaken! The guard is an extra, so one wound will take him down.

You look up from your slain comrade to find the caravan in chaos. Errants battle Called guards near every wagon, and the elf's shrill giggle echoes off the tree trunks in between tunes. If you:

- **Dive for cover, Read 6.**
- **Guard the caravan, Read 9.**
- **Retaliate against the elf, Read 17.**
- **Rush to aid your fellows, Read 18.**

5. Calm Your Nerves: Fear is one of many drives you must conquer if you are to be a successful errant. You will try harder next time, but for now you just need a moment to take stock of yourself. Read 7 for further instructions.

6. Dive For Cover: You knew there would dangers on the forest road, but so soon? Desperate for a moment to collect your senses, you dive for cover underneath one of the wagons. While you're under the wagon, enemies suffer a -4 penalty to attack you. If you:

- **Calm your nerves, Read 5.**
- **Look for a tactical advantage, Read 12.**
- **Prepare a bit of magic, Read 13.**

7. Elven Surprise: Occupied with your own tasks, it takes a moment too long to notice when the elf alights on your shoulder. It hisses a quiet giggle in your ear, then leaps up again with staggering force. Make an Agility check with a d6 plus your Wild Die. If you fail, take one level of fatigue damage as you are shoved rudely to the floor.

   The elf lands on a nearby wagon and locks eyes with you. It smiles, and something about the way it cocks its head jars you almost out of yourself. Make a Smarts check with a d6 and your Wild Die, but make it at a -2 penalty. If you fail, you are Shaken as your wits go blank! Whether you fail or succeed, the elf disappears in a swirl of leaves. Read 10 for further instructions.

8. Failure (Caller): You know one thing: any elf is a bad elf, and this one's already attacked many of your companions. Read 4 for further instructions.

9. Guard the Caravan: Chaos is no excuse for a lapse in discipline. You were hired to guard the caravan, so you rush to help a nearby driver who was entangled with a Called guard. Make an attack against the guard with a d8 die. If you succeed, you manage to kill her before she kills the caravan driver. Read 7 for further instructions.

10. Howlers: Just as the Called guards are finally put out of their misery, a chorus of howls echoes up and down the road. The branches overhead part to reveal the snarling faces of a pack of howlers. These cruel hunters are caught midway between wolf and ape. As if things couldn't go worse!

    The lead caravan driver shouts *"Fly! Fly!"*as he and the other drivers snap their reins. Make an Agility check to leap into the nearest wagon as the howlers overhead give chase. If you:

    - **Protect the Drivers, Read 15.**
    - **Attack the Howlers, Read 3.**
    - **Take the Reins Yourself, Read 22.**

11. Know Caller's Weaknesses: You remember one more thing about Callers: it's hard to outmaneuver them, but they can be outwitted. Make a Smarts trick against the elf with a d8 die and your Wild Die. If you succeed, the elf's Parry suffers a -2 penalty, to a total of 4.

    Make an attack against the Caller. If you hit, deal 2d6 damage against a Toughness of 6. The elf gains one wound and disappears in a swirl of leaves. Read 10 for further instruction.

12. Look for a Tactical Advantage: Just because you're taking cover doesn't mean you've taken your thoughts from the situation at hand. The few Called guards have all been killed. The elf is off fighting one of your more foolhardy companions. The drivers are clearly anxious to leave but they know to abandon their guardians is suicide. You take a moment to take in the scene, and gain a Benny for spying an advantageous position in the back of one of the wagons. Read 10 for further instruction.

13. Prepare a Bit of Magic: Somewhere in the branches of your family tree, you have an ancestor who escaped many dangers. Grasping your ancestor beads in only hand, you beseech her aid now. Make an Arcane Background (Ancestors) check to raise your Agility die to a d10 in the next section. Read 7 for further instruction.

14. Prepare for Battle: Many songs sing of battles with elves, but one piece of wisdom can be found in them all: be prepared. As you ready your own gear, you bark out orders to organize the caravan guards and protect the drivers. Read 23 for further instructions.

15. Protect the Drivers: Why do you get the feeling these wagons would be lost without you? The drivers train their eyes on the road ahead, but you know the howlers will be leaping down upon them soon. What's worse, the elf could return at any moment. You take up a position near one of the wagon drivers, ready and waiting for any howlers to get too close. Read 24 for further information.

16. Raise (Caller): You realize this is a Caller. These elves tempt humans into the forest with odd tunes that are really mind-controlling grubs in disguise. You also know Callers are as dangerous as any elf, but their persuasive magic is not matched with great toughness or fighting skills. Read 4 for further instructions.

17. Retaliate Against The Elf: While other errants who resisted the elf's song take care of the less fortunate guards, you turn to attack the elf at the road's edge. If you:

- **Attack immediately, Read 2.**
- **Know about the elf from another entry, Read 11.**

18. Rush to Aid Your Fellows: It is a grisly thing to kill the men and women you considered allies just moments before, but such is the monstrosity of the elves. You make quick work of it with the help of other errants who resisted the elf's song. Once the Called guards are all dead, you turn to find the elf has disappeared. Read 7 for further instructions.

19. Success (Caller): You realize this kind of elf is known as a Caller. These elves tempt humans into the forest with odd tunes that are really mind-controlling grubs in disguise. Read 4 for further instructions.

20. Survey Your Surroundings: So it is written in the Way of the Elder King, "the Ancients were loathe to act without careful consideration." Leaves shudder all up and down the forest road. Make a Notice check with a d8 die and your Wild Die. If you succeed, you notice each wagon has a barrel of weapons near the driver's seat: an axe, a bow, and quiver of arrows in each barrel. One wooden shield hangs near each barrel too. Go back to 1.

If you succeed with a raise, you also hear a pair of faint sounds: the scramble of feet in the branches overhead, and the panting of some pack of beasts. In the Blackwood, many dangers live out their lives without ever setting foot on the forest floor. Make a Knowledge (Nature) check with a d6 die and your Wild Die. If you succeed, you know these sounds have all the hallmarks of one beast in particular: howlers. Like the mating of a wolf and an ape, howlers roam in packs through the treetops to leap down on their prey from above. They have a knack for finding weak points in their prey's defenses. You shout out a warning to your fellow errants and ready your gear. Read 23 for further instructions.

21. Take Cover: You're not going to be able to help anyone if you're caught unawares. The barrels and crates in the wagons make for handy cover, so you duck behind them and ready your gear. As long as you remain behind these crates, all enemies suffer a -2 penalty to attacks against you. Read 23 for further instructions.

22. Take the Reins: Ever since you left High Hall, you've been grumbling under your breath every time these cut-rate wagon drivers have hit an exposed root or pothole. You're certain you're better at the reins than the man sitting next to you. He hands them to you and goes to retrieve the axe from the barrel just behind him. Read 24 for further instructions.

23. The Elven Call: A small figure steps out of the brush as if that weren't a strange thing to do at all. The figure is neither mature nor childish, nor is it man or woman. An elf.

"Tra la lee lay, not safe today, the Blackwood's all aflutter."

It is dressed in a strange kind of fool's motley, with a hat made of broad leaves, and rattling acorns in place of bells. The elf's eyes, green like emeralds, are a little too large as they look up and down the caravan.

"But come away and play today, to win yourself some butter!"

A few of the caravan guards scream in pain and clutch their ears. Then their faces go still, as you see in horror that a large grub has burrowed into each guard's ear. Make a Knowledge (Elves) check with a d4 and your Wild Die. If you:

- **Fail, Read 8.**
- **Succeed, Read 19.**
- **Succeed with a raise, Read 16.**

24. Afterward: The Blackwood begins to twist and bend around you. Elves are never far from the Elven Wilds, so the forest around them can shift in ways that it shouldn't. Not even the road ahead can withstand the elf's magic, as it lurches left and right over constantly-changing terrain. The howlers bay in the trees above as the sun sinks closer to the horizon...

This marks the beginning of the Blackwood Plot Point Campaign, *The Way of the Elder King*.If you play through the campaign with the rest of your group, keep these final conditions in mind at the start of the first session.



The Call of Errantry

Character Creation

Characters in The Blackwood are created according to the standard Savage Worlds rules. Errants come from many walks of life. Creating an errant in the Blackwood is just like creating a character in the *Savage Worlds core rules* with a few exceptions.

1. Culture

There's only one race in the Blackwood—human—but there are many cultures to be found. You'll find examples on **pg. 15**. Of course, you can choose to pass on these cultural options as be a "typical" human according to the *Savage Worlds core rules*.

2. Languages

The Blackwood uses the Multiple Languages setting rule from the *Savage Worlds core rules*. Your errant knows the Common Tongue plus an additional number of languages equal to half his Smarts die. A Classicist with a d8 in Smarts, for example, knows Common and four other languages—perhaps ancient script, courtly speech, pauper's cant, and Widelander creole. A full list of languages can be found on **pg. 38**.

3. Calling

You have chosen to answer the Call of Errantry. Your oath is to walk the Way's Margin, a world of hidden dangers at the edge of the Elder King's law. All Errants are either passionate or dutiful to choose this life. As part of the Way's Margin setting rule, choose either Emotional or Vow as a bonus minor Hindrance for your character. This is the driving force at the core of your spirit. See The Way's Margin, a setting rule on **pg. 37**, for a full explanation of your Calling.

If you're looking for inspiration or you're in a hurry, you can use the barebones characters in this section as a foundation. They provide an attribute array and a basic concept, while leaving room for you to fill in the unique details of your character.

The archetypes are Novice rank and do not yet have a race. Give your archetype a race, a name, and gear, then you'll be ready to answer the Call of Errantry.

Brash Student

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Taunt d6, +6 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Arrogant, two minor

Edges: Aspiring Student (Boar School)

Brazen Pagan

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Stealth d8, Throwing d6, Tracking d6, +6 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Bumpkin, Outlaw, one minor

Edges: Arcane Background (Elven Pact)

Classicist Court Advisor

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Investigation d8, Knowledge (Law) d8, Persuasion d8, Taunt d6, +4 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: one major, two minor

Edges: Arcane Background (Classicism)

Clever Storyteller

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Gambling d6, Healing d6, Knowledge (Lore) d8, Persuasion d8, +4 additional skill points

Charisma: +2; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: one major, two minor

Edges: Storyteller, Charismatic

Corrupt Bureaucrat

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Investigation d6, Knowledge (Law) d6, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d6, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Decadent, one major and one minor

Edges: Rich

Crafty Hunter

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Healing d4, Knowledge (Nature) d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4, Survival d4, Tracking d4, +7 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Bumpkin, one Major, one Minor

Edges: Trapper

Diligent Guard

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Streetwise d4, Tracking d4, +6 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 7

Hindrances: Stubborn, one Major, one Minor

Edges: Brawny, Nerves of Steel

Eccentric Pauper

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d4, Gambling d4, Lockpicking d6, Stealth d6, Survival d4, +6 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Mischievous, Pauper, one Major

Edges: Liquid Courage

Impetuous Child

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Climbing d4, Notice d8, Taunt d6, +4 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 4

Hindrances: Young, two Minor

Edges: Luck, Magical Trinkets

Outlaw With a Heart of Gold

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: +2; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Emotional (Kind), Outlaw, one Minor

Edges: Charismatic

Pagan Witch

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Healing d8, Knowledge (Elves) d8, Pact d8, Persuasion d6, +4 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Arcane Background (Elven Pact), Witch

Sly Merchant

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Gambling d8, Knowledge (Business) d8, Persuasion d8, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Decadent, One Major, one Minor

Edges: Connections (Black Market), Merchant

Turncoat Prodigy

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Healing d8, Taunt d6, +6 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Zealot (Errantry), two Minor

Edges: Aspiring Student (Stag's Crown), Two-Fisted

Village Herbalist

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Healing d8, Herbalism d8, Knowledge (Nature) d8, Survival d6, +4 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Bumpkin, one Major, one Minor

Edges: Arcane Background (Herbalism)

Wandering Sentinel

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Law) d6, Persuasion d6, Riding d4, Shooting d6, +4 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Sentinel

Blackwood Cultures

All characters are humans in the Blackwood. Instead of picking a race for your character, you can choose a culture: Elderfolk, Elfmarked, Riverfolk, Widelander, or Woodkin. If you don't choose one of these cultures, start with a free Edge as a standard human in *Savage Worlds*.

Elderfolk

Compact and hardy people of the Golden Vale, Elderfolk usually have round, windburned faces. Men and women alike wear their dark hair either long and braided or shaved bald. Purple eyes are rare but unique to their people. They are fond of coats, woolen caps, and fur accents in their clothing.

Elderfolk are the truest subjects of the Elder King. They have always kept close to the teachings of his wisdom, and have grown serene and prosperous for it. Tradition is a deep part of their lives, yet their high vale is the birthplace of much of the Blackwood's innovation. Their farmers were the first to cultivate Golden Grain; most clocksmiths come from Elderfolk stock; even the Classicists themselves call the mountain valleys home.

The people of the valleys nearly buckled when the Elder King disappeared. It was a culture-wide crisis of faith. A few settlements abandoned the laws of the Kingdom. There was devastation, but the majority persevered in their virtues, awaiting the return of their liege with steady, deliberate patience.

Ever studious, Elderfolk read the Classics with fresh zeal since the King's disappearance. They find solace in those pages, and some still find hope. Are you struck with sorrowful wanderlust in the absence of the Elder King? Perhaps you've chosen to be a living paragon of ancestral behavior in these dark times? Whatever your reason, rely on your studious pursuit of wisdom to guide you.

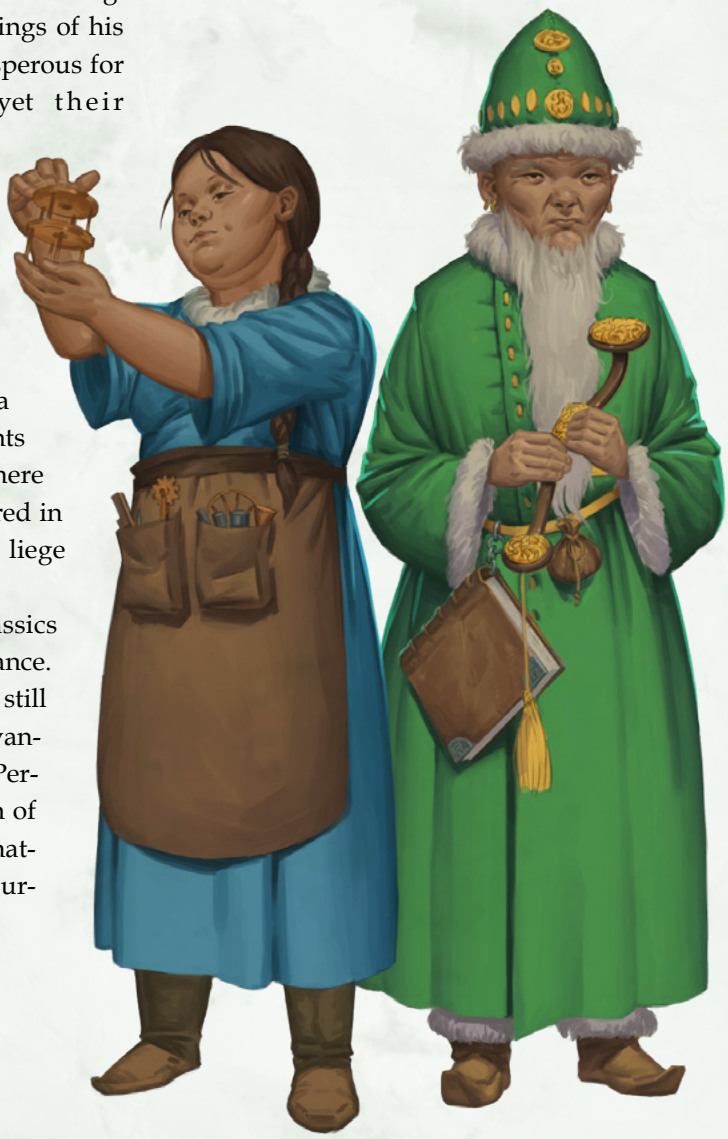
Names:

Male: Adalbert, Oswald, Quill, Volker;
Female: Clara, Fransa, Garnidt, Othilia;
Bynames: Dietersten, Lofty, Shining, Tocklerberg

Racial Edges and Hindrances

Studious: All Elderfolk begin reading the Classics to their children at a young age, so all Elderfolk are well-versed in its parables and aphorisms. They gain +5 power points when they take the Arcane Background (Classics) edge. This learning also grants Elderfolk one free Novice edge.

Surefooted: In the mountains, a loose rock can turn into an avalanche in the blink of an eye. Elderfolk are careful travelers by habit, so they have a Pace of 5 instead of 6.



Elfmarked

Sometimes elven pacts result in a child. These children are normal humans, but elven meddling lurks in their family's blood forever, a curse best hidden or forgotten. Occasionally, this meddling suffuses a descendant with elements of Blackwood flora or fauna in the form of a drastic deformity, like a tree sprouting from a shoulder or an animal leg where a human limb should be.

Nothing innately drives Elfmarked toward vice, outlawry, or paganism, but when your own parents would rather seclude you than let the world know their shame, Elfmarked usually find the only path open to them is toward the wilderness. They have been shunned since long before the Elder King's disappearance, and little has changed for them in the years after.



The errantry can be a refuge for ostracized Elfmarked, but only because errants are often considered odd to begin with. In many places, leaving one's home to wander a dangerous forest is just about as strange as being born with goat ears. And even within the errantry, Elfmarked are still regular targets of suspicion. At the very least, they find themselves challenged to duels more often by wandering braggarts.

Elfmarked often settle among Pagan tribes, where prejudice against their appearance is nonexistent. No matter your origin and no matter where you find yourself, are you an Elfmarked who longs for a place within the Elder Kingdom, or does revenge drive you to plant seeds of chaos within the Kingdom's border?

Names: Elfmarked are born into otherwise normal families, so their names should come from the other cultures.

Racial Edges and Hindrances

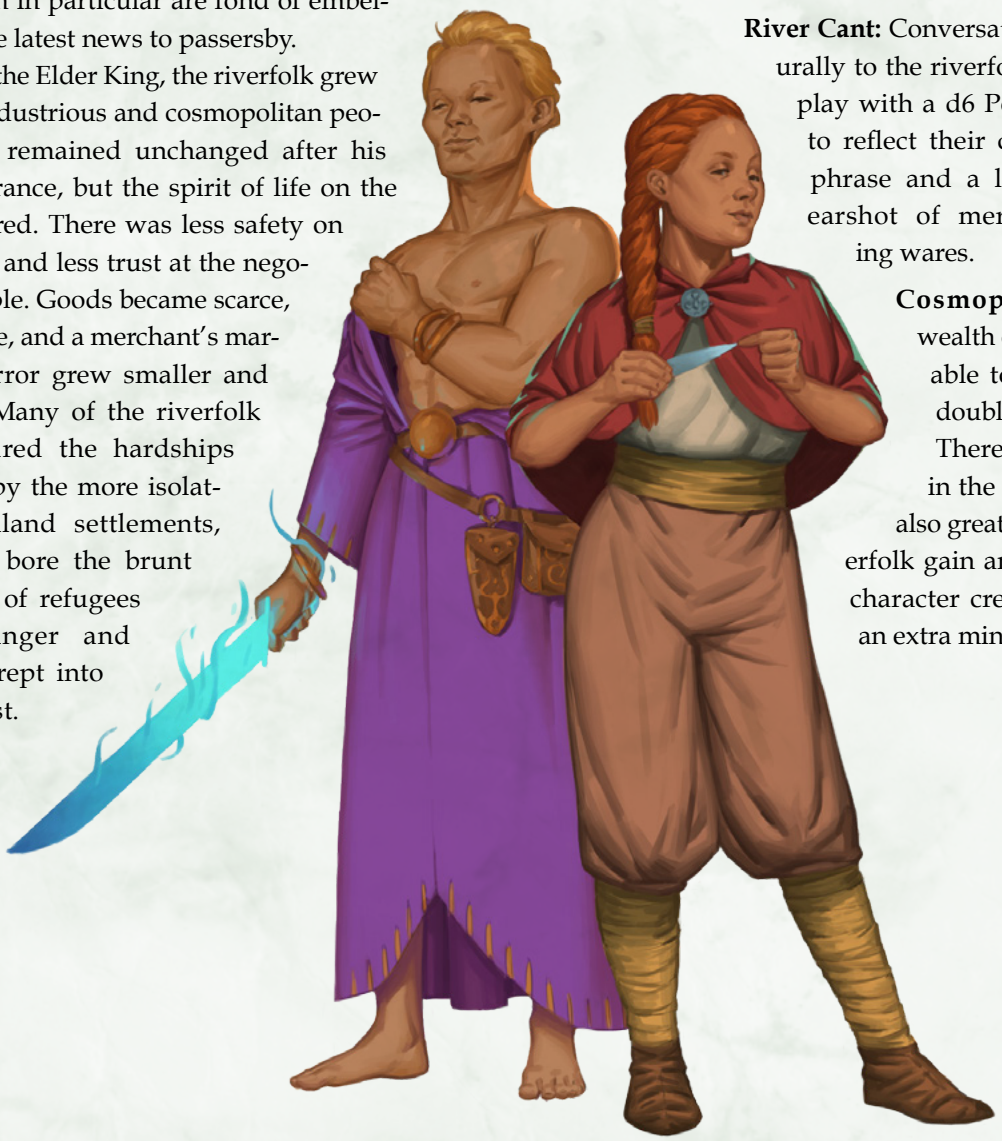
Elfmark: The eponymous feature of all Elfmarked is a fusion of their humanity with either plant or beast. It is an obvious blemish, though it can usually be concealed to a degree. Elfmarked suffer a negative -2 penalty to Charisma due to their stigmatized appearance. However, the natural magic in their blood grants them a +4 bonus to resist all environmental effects. They also have a choice: either gain +5 power points for the Arcane Background (Elven Pact) Edge, or gain 1 bonus power for the Arcane Background (Herbalism) Edge.

Riverfolk

Riverfolk are slightly taller than their woodland and mountain kin, and are often freckled or tan from the river sun. Their hair is usually brown or blonde, though some rare riverfolk have hair as red as an ember. Riverfolk have brown, blue, or sometimes gray eyes. They are fond of robes that can be easily removed for swimming, and occasionally wear wooden clogs to rise above riverside muck.

Some say riverfolk talk too much. Such is the price for those who live in the bustling cities and lively villages of the Way. The rivers allow for faster, more frequent travel. Riverfolk come into contact with new merchants, errants, and settlers on a near daily basis, each with their own goods and stories to offer. Fishermen in particular are fond of embellishing the latest news to passersby.

Under the Elder King, the riverfolk grew into an industrious and cosmopolitan people. This remained unchanged after his disappearance, but the spirit of life on the river soured. There was less safety on the water and less trust at the negotiating table. Goods became scarce, prices rose, and a merchant's margin for error grew smaller and smaller. Many of the riverfolk were spared the hardships suffered by the more isolated woodland settlements, but they bore the brunt of a tide of refugees until hunger and disease crept into their midst.



Riverfolk search for bygone prosperity as often as glory or vengeance. Some see this new, rudderless world as the perfect chance to reach for their ambitions, while others see themselves as wandering guardians over a crumbling realm. Either way, riverfolk are usually guileful and diverse in their interests. They are regularly exposed to business and bartering, so they are often better off than your average woodkin. Decadence is a constant presence in their culture, an ever-present lure toward greed.

Names:

Male: Arnult, Heron, Rutger, Oar;
Female: Elsbeth, Lily, Rill, Verena;
Bynames: Bywater, Dorvert, Fat, Quickwit

Racial Edges and Hindrances

River Cant: Conversation comes naturally to the riverfolk. They begin play with a d6 Persuasion skill, to reflect their clever turns of phrase and a lifetime within earshot of merchants hawking wares.

Cosmopolitan: The wealth of culture available to riverfolk is a double-edged sword. There is great good in the river cities, but also great depravity. Riverfolk gain an extra Edge at character creation, but also an extra minor Hindrance.

Widelander

There are dozens, perhaps hundreds of different cultures beyond the Blackwood's border but the forest dwellers know them all as "Widelanders." There is no archetypal Widelander, although many of them are brown or black. Many Widelanders wear long, layered robes with accents of gold and feathers. Plate armor—first devised by Widelander blacksmiths—plays a major part in their military dress.

If anything, Widelanders are most often members of the Unified faith. Even those few who worship other deities have been shaped by the inclusive commands of the Unified god, Oruneal. Whether sellswords, merchants, priests, or immigrant farmers, they are eager to be seen as generous and savvy beneath their exotic exterior.

Still, Widelanders are more likely than any other culture to be idiosyncratic exceptions to the local perception of what a Widelander is like. Just as there are pious Unified priests from out of the southern deserts, there are shrewd traders from the central sea and stoic horselords from the northern plains. It makes Widelanders unpredictable for the people of the Elder Kingdom. Some find that to be a joyous surprise, others a source of suspicion.



Food and other trade goods from the Widelands are sorely needed by the Elder Kingdom, so it's rare to find a Widelander begging in the alleys. They travel freely through the Elder Kingdom, but whispers abound that the foreigners coddle secret dreams of empire. Are the Widelanders not mere settlers but interlopers, determined to supplant the Elder King with the peaceful—but foreign—god of the Unified? It's a question every Widelander confronts at some time or other.

Names:

Male: Ade, Gaszcon, Jiin, Naziir;
Female: Amelii, Berniiz, Isabal, Yewande;
Bynames: Dalca, Laveni, Oyekan, Rosze

Racial Edges and Hindrances

Pious: Not all Widelanders carry Oruneal's light in their hearts, but familiarity with the Unified faith is inevitable. Widelanders begin with a d6 Knowledge (Religion) skill. Because of this connection to the divine, they also begin with a d6 Spirit attribute.

Foreigners: Widelanders don't naturally speak the local language, and are generally unfamiliar with the Elder Kingdom. They begin play speaking Widelander Creole, but will need to invest language points to speak the Common tongue. In addition, Widelanders suffer a -2 penalty to any Common Knowledge rolls about The Blackwood or the Elder Kingdom, but a +2 bonus to any Common Knowledge roll about the Widelands.

Woodkin

To be keen-eared and practical, such is the aspiration of all true woodkin. They are shorter than their river cousins, and paler from a life lived under the trees. Woodkin have black, brown, or blonde hair, which they wear short or long but always bound by a cap, bandana, or plait. Their eyes are often brown or hazel, and green eyes are unique among Woodkin. They dress for function over form, and have a habit of carrying gear and supplies in case they lose their way in the forest.

Life in isolated villages and towns has made the woodkin resourceful by necessity. Hunting for game, gathering herbs and other goods, or farming, woodkin tend to do a little of everything to help the village stay safe and prosper. The success of such cooperation throughout generations is what fuels their pride in the ancestors, but it also breeds a certain kind of superstition. Every woodland village accumulates its own folk remedies and wives' tales. Some stand by these beliefs with fanatic fervor.

Waves of fear rocked the woodkin when the Elder King disappeared, he who had protected them since time immemorial. Some woodkin hardened with the years, some grew desperate, and too many lost their lives. At the end of the day though, woodkin are the most likely people to be unsurprised by the many twists and tricks lurking in the Blackwood. They have suffered much, but they have learned much also. Woodkin usually know what the forest has in store. Too few continue to weigh kindness more heavily than caution. Some woodland villages—pushed to the brink—turn to a life of outlawry, man, woman and child alike. To abandon a struggling community and look out for oneself, or to aid the needy and downtrodden is a decision every woodkin must make.

Names:

Male: Ernst, Guntram, Flint, Merklin;
Female: Agnes, Daisy, Fawn, Margidt;
Bynames: Old, Honest, Trollkin

Racial Edges and Hindrances

Keen Ears: The sounds of the forest fill woodkin ears from birth. They gain +2 to Notice checks that involve hearing.

Superstitious: Woodkin come to believe all manner of miniscule rituals will protect them from elves and their servants. They gain the Quirk minor hindrance, but also receive the Luck Edge.



Edges and Hindrances

Hindrances

Bumpkin (Minor)

This character was raised far from the river cities, and is considered particularly crude and unsophisticated by urban standards. He suffers a -2 penalty to Charisma when dealing with town and city folk, who are frequently appalled by his poor manners.

Decadent (Minor)

According to this character, life is to be enjoyed. Yes, the streets may be clogged with paupers and refugees, but that's no reason to abstain from the pleasures available to those who can afford it. She prefers to spend lavishly, and suffers a -2 penalty to Charisma when dealing with the poor and downtrodden.

Emotional (Minor)

This character is driven by his emotions, and often follows his heart without truly considering the consequences. Perhaps he is a hopeless romantic, or a lusty womanizer, or maybe he's an angry individual who suffers frequent fits of rage. He could even be driven by shame for past misdeeds, or he might simply be a genuinely good person wishing to spread kindness in the world.

Enchanted (Minor or Major)

At some point, this character ran afoul of a pagan witch or, worse, an elf. They came out of the encounter alive but greatly changed: they uncontrollably turn into a wild animal on a regular basis. The player may choose a single animal for the character to turn into. The character remains under the player's control but they have the intelligence and behavior expected of the animal in question during the transformation.

As a Minor Hindrance, the the character turns into the animal for a whole night, either on the new or full moon (player's choice). As a Major Hindrance, the character turns into an animal for half of every day, either in daytime or at night (again, player's choice).

Forest Bond (Major)

One of this character's ancestors was a Hollowback or some other woodland spirit, and they have inherited her mystic reliance upon the forest. This individual must spend at least one hour out of every 24 in contact with a living tree, otherwise she suffers a level of Fatigue. This can lead to incapacitation, and eventually even death.

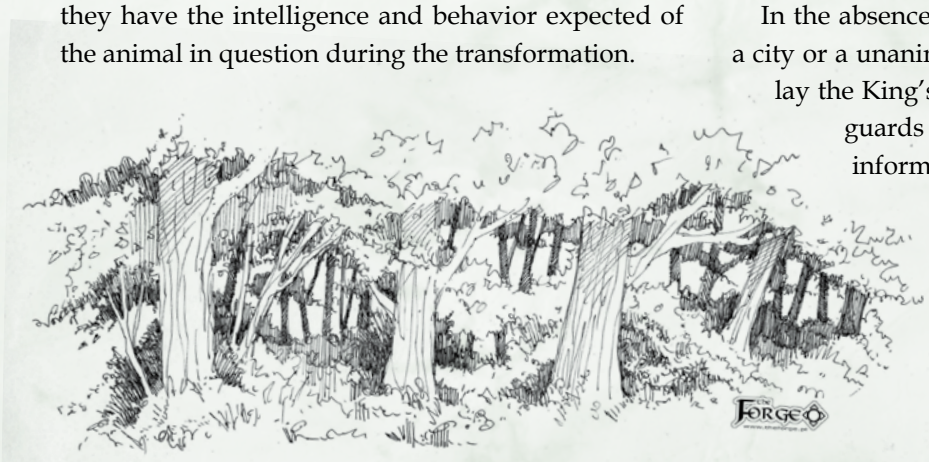
Mischievous (Minor)

Whether they're told or played upon someone, jokes are always funny, right? Pranks and tricks are some of your favorite pastimes. It could be a great tool against your enemies, but sometimes the chance to prank a friend is just too good to pass up. They understand, right?

Outlaw (Major)

Perhaps your character did something terrible in the past, or maybe he simply had the misfortune of offending the wrong lord or lady. But whether his punishment was just or unjust, he is now under the King's Ban, and considered dead in the eyes of the law; other people can rob, harm or even kill him without risking penalty or reprisal.

In the absence of the Elder King, only the ruler of a city or a unanimous vote from a village council can lay the King's Ban upon someone, although town guards and wandering errants are important informants for these lofty figures. Likewise, only a village council or ruler can lift the Ban.



Pauper (Minor)

Living on the fringes of society, and surviving through a combination of begging and scrounging, most paupers are easily identified by their hard eyes and filthy rags. For better or worse, such a squalid existence changes a person forever, no matter what the future might bring.

This character has spent most or all of his life as a pauper, and begins with no starting funds. Although he can accumulate money and equipment normally during game play, this individual's miserable past should always be taken into account when making Common Knowledge rolls.

Pauper versus Poverty

These two Hindrances represent different things: Pauper represents a character who has no money; Poverty represents a character who can't hold onto their money. A compulsive gambler might take both Hindrances.

Village Idiot (Minor)

This maligned fellow grew up in a small town or village, where he became infamous for making foolish remarks and naive decisions. Whether he deserves his reputation or not, his legacy continues to haunt him, no matter how far he travels. If his reputation is truly well-earned, this character should take the Big Mouth or Clueless Hindrance as well!

Zealot (Minor or Major)

This fanatic's devotion to her faith is unwavering, and she speaks frequently and forcefully about the importance of following the path of righteousness, lashing out angrily at doubters and naysayers. Perhaps she is an Elderfolk who preaches the word of the Elder King, or maybe she is a Widelander of the Unified faith, or even an elf-worshipping pagan.

As a Minor Hindrance the character will verbally rebuke those who stray from the true path, but rarely resorts to physical violence. As a Major Hindrance she is far more aggressive, and is willing to kill or even die for her beliefs (take Death Wish as well if she actually hopes to become a martyr for the cause).

Edges

Background Edges

Noble

Nobility (represented by the Noble Edge in the *Savage Worlds core rules*) plays a huge role in the Blackwood. Commoners produce goods, merchants organize their distribution, and the nobility is responsible for organizing labor efforts, levying taxes, and employing guards and armored knights to defend their towns and cities. Since the Elder King's disappearance, many nobles have enjoyed the perks of their station while forgetting the obligations.

Nobility can be either earned or hereditary in the Elder Kingdom. Either way, there are several ranks of nobility:

Freelord/Freelady: Little more than a wealthy craftsman or merchant with an honorary title. Equivalent to the Noble Edge.

Baron/Baroness: The first rank of nobility likely to be seen in noble courts. The Barony focuses mostly on labor management. If players want their characters to reach this level, they should invest in the Filthy Rich Edge in addition to the Noble Edge.

Count/Countess: A Baron might be promoted to the title of Count for extraordinary support of the common people or remarkable influence in court. They are wealthier still than the Barony, with multiple estates and that many more obligations to the common folk.

High Lord/High Lady: Those nobility who rule over entire provinces are second only to the Elder King himself. These days, they are the most powerful and authoritative figures in the Blackwood. The title of High Lord or Lady is almost always hereditary, but there are exceptions.

Rich and Filthy Rich

One silver coin from the Elder Kingdom is equivalent to 80 dollars in modern US currency. With that in mind, characters with the Rich Edge still start with $1500 at character creation, but they only earn a yearly salary of $2600, or $50 per week.

Likewise, the Filthy Rich Edge grants a character $2500 to start off, and a yearly salary of $8800. That works out to $170 per week. Consider this the

character's "spending cash." She's probably much wealthier, but that wealth is found in goods and apprentices, property, etc.

Combat Edges

Aspiring Student

Requirements: Must be taken as Novice, See the Fighting Schools setting rule for details

You have chosen to walk along the Way's Margin as a warrior. Either with a cadre of students or alone with your master, you have begun to learn the secrets of a fighting school. You unlock the Aspiring Technique from your chosen School. See the Fighting Schools setting rules on **pg. 32**.

Blackwood Bowman

Requirements: Seasoned, Shooting d10+

This skilled archer can loose arrows with unerring speed and accuracy. When using the Aim maneuver or Marksman Edge, he halves all range penalties.

The character may also make two Shooting attacks at a -2 penalty, or three Shooting attacks at a -4 penalty, although this is still considered a single action (Wild Cards roll a single Wild Die with their Shooting dice), and cannot be combined with Aim or Marksman.

Distracting Technique

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8+, Fighting d6+

This unpredictable warrior has learned to utilize all manner of feints and distractions during combat, incorporating a range of bewildering movements and gestures into her fighting style to confuse and confound her foes.

The character receives a +2 bonus to Smarts Tricks, and if she is successful her opponent suffers -3 Parry until their next action instead of the normal -2.

Hybrid Schools

Requirements: Veteran, At least one: Fighting/Shooting/Throwing d10+

Not only have you learned the fundamentals of several different schools, but your martial brilliance has found a way to blend them together. You may have two active schools at once, and may use the abilities of each.

Master of the School

Requirements: Heroic, Worthy Student in chosen School.

The Way's Margin still stretches out ahead, but you have walked a great distance and accomplished many deeds. You have learned all the school has to teach, and now must learn more by understanding the wisdom behind the strategy. You unlock the Master Technique from your chosen School and you may now begin taking students of your own. You may ignore the rank requirements for the Sidekick Edge.

Worthy Student

Requirements: Seasoned, Aspiring Student in chosen School.

No longer a mere disciple, you have proved yourself to your school and are worthy of deeper secrets. Unlock the Worthy Technique from your chosen School.

Professional Edges

Celebrant

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background (Unified Faith), Spirit d8+, Persuasion d6+

Preachers, prophets, and other leaders of the flock often seek to unite the world under the banner of a common faith. Such individuals are usually charming and manipulative, deriving power and influence from their charismatic authority.

This character receives a +2 bonus to Charisma when dealing with those of the Unified Faith. She may also use Persuasion to make Tests of Will, as long as her opponent is capable of reasoning and able to understand what she says. The opponent may attempt to resist with an opposed Spirit roll.

Merchant

Requirements: Novice, Persuasion d8+, Knowledge (Business) d8+

From tinkers and small-time vendors, to savvy guildsmen and merchant barons, many enterprising individuals ply their trade within the Blackwood, braving the dangers of the forest in the hope of turning a tidy profit.

Merchants receive a +2 bonus to Persuasion and Knowledge (Business) rolls, and a +2 bonus to Notice rolls related to detecting lies and appraising the value of goods.

Sentinel

Requirements: Novice, Strength d8+, Fighting d8+, Knowledge (Law) d6+, Persuasion d6+

The Valorous Knights-Errant of Bastion in the Grove, known to most as the Sentinels, have sworn to uphold and enforce the Elder King's laws. Wandering the Blackwood, the Sentinels dispense justice with word and deed. They receive a +2 bonus to Charisma when dealing with those who obey the laws of the Elder King.

The Sentinel also receives a masterwork falchion and plate corselet, both marked with the Elder King's seal. The falchion inflicts +1 damage, while the corselet provides +4 armor instead of the usual +3, however anyone other than a Sentinel caught using these items will suffer the King's Ban.

Whereas most errants are free to pursue their own ends, Sentinels are required to live up to the Mandate of Justice (treated like the Vow Major Hindrance) to uphold and enforce the law. They still follow the errant's way of duty, vengeance, and righteousness, but they further swear to follow the knightly virtues of honor, generosity, valor, wisdom, and excellence. These are the qualities needed to dispense the Elder King's justice. Any Sentinel found unworthy of the Mandate is stripped of their status and hunted down mercilessly; the character loses their Charisma bonus, and receives both the Outlaw and Wanted Major Hindrances.

Storyteller

Requirements: Novice, Persuasion d8+, Charisma +2 or better

Some storytellers have mastered their craft to such an extent that they blur the line between fiction and reality. For them, stories are a rare kind of magic all their own.

First, you may invoke the Lesson Learned setting rule once per session, even if another character has already invoked it. Second, you may spend a Benny to try and persuade the Blackwood itself to conform to your story.

With a successful Persuasion check, you can add a detail to the game world. Perhaps you know a friendly local, or maybe you spy a hidden weakness of the foe you are facing. On a raise, your story becomes more meaningful: the local has powerful connections, or the foes makes a critical mistake. Whatever the boon, you should work with the Gamemaster to find something appropriate.

Trapper

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+, Notice d6+, Stealth d6+, Survival d8+

Many hunters, trappers and poachers live off the bounty of the Blackwood, and the various traps they employ can also provide an effective defense and deterrent for their enemies.

It requires a successful Survival roll to set a trap; on a raise the character discovers a particularly well concealed location, which incurs a -2 penalty to attempts to spot or avoid the trap. Characters can only make a Notice roll to spot the trap if they are actively looking, or if they have the Danger Sense, Woodsman or Trapper Edge.

The trap works in a similar way to either blast, blind, entangle, havoc or stun—chosen when it is set—although it isn't magical and doesn't require Power Points or an arcane skill roll. The effect of the trap only fills a Small Burst Template, centered on the victim, and can be avoided with a successful Trait roll, made at -2 if the trap was set with a raise. Havoc traps are resisted with Strength, stun traps with Vigor, and the others with Agility. Entangle traps fully restrain victims who achieve a total of 1 or less on their Agility roll.

Most traps take at least a few minutes to prepare. If a character wishes to set a trap in a hurry, treat it as a five-round Dramatic Task, applying the normal -2 difficulty penalty.

Witch

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background (Elven Pact), Smarts d8+, Spirit d8+

Pagans receive their power from pacts made with the elves, but those primal spirits are fickle and conniving, and usually come ahead in such dealings. However some pagans are cunning enough to find loopholes in their arrangements, and these individuals are called "witches".

Once per session, this character gains a temporary power of her choice, although she must still meet its rank requirement. This temporary power lasts for the remainder of the current scene, and must have a

similar trapping to one of the witch's existing powers, as it represents an alternate use of that gift.

Witches also receive a +2 bonus to Common Knowledge rolls related to elves, and when communing with elves they only suffer an injury on a critical failure.

Racial Edges

Beast Sight

Requirements: Novice, Elfmarked

The hereditary deformity of this Elfmarked hybrid takes the form of inhuman eyes. The character may choose either Low Light Vision or Infravision, and also receives a +2 bonus to sight-based Notice rolls. This Edge must be taken during character creation.

One of the Locals

Requirements: Novice, Widelander, must speak Common

Widelanders aren't naturally familiar with the ways of the Blackwood and the Elder Kingdom. Many Widelanders are only visitors to this forest realm, but some of them make this place their new home. In their effort to learn the ways of the locals, they end up with more knowledge of their surroundings than the average commoner.

First, the -2 penalty Widelanders suffer to Common Knowledge rolls about the Blackwood and the Elder Kingdom is negated. Second, the Widelander receives a +2 bonus to one of those two topics.

Wooden Flesh

Requirements: Novice, Elfmarked

This character's flesh is as tough as wood, and her blood oozes like thick tree sap. She receives a +2 bonus to Soak rolls, and only needs to roll for Bleeding Out every 10 rounds. This Edge must be taken during character creation.

Weird Edges

Leaf Step

Requirements: Seasoned, Agility d8+

You are close enough to the Blackwood's magic that you've learned to fit through the trees like a leaf on the wind. When you use the Run action, you gain the Wall Walker ability for 1 round. If you are in combat, you may also make an Agility Trick as a free action.

Magical Trinkets

Requirements: Novice, Luck

This fortunate individual has somehow obtained an unspecified number of magical items that only he can utilize, each designed to overcome a particular challenge, such as a comb that can grow into a thorny hedge, boots that can grow wings and fly, and so on.

Once per session, you can declare that your character has a trinket for a particular situation. This is treated as a single-use power of your choice, although its rank cannot exceed your own, and the duration cannot be extended. If the power targets an enemy, use Throwing as the arcane skill, otherwise it works automatically as if it had been cast with a normal success. These items may not necessarily be destroyed upon use, but you can use no more than one item per session, and no more than once that session.

Tree Friend

Requirements: Novice, Spirit d8+

Plants flex and bend to aid this character's passage, moving out of her way to avoid tripping her, and even giving a helping push or pull when she's climbing. The character ignores penalties for Difficult Ground caused by vegetation, and receives a +2 bonus to Climbing rolls whenever plants are nearby.

Whistle of the Lost

Requirements: Novice

You know an old whistling tune that has been hallowed by the ancestors. Once per day, you can use an action to whistle the tune. Its tone is instantly heard by a designated person, regardless of distance or impediments. Once alerted in this way, the person could faultlessly guide someone to the spot where the tune was whistled.

To attune the whistle, two people must spend three rounds repeating the tune to each other. Once attuned, the magic lasts until it is attuned to another pair.

Gear

Currency

The Blackwood is rich with silver veins, so it's no surprise the silver coin is the standard currency. The average commoner earns a single silver piece per day. It is also the cost of your average goat. Gold coins exist, but they are rare outside of the nobility. Green leafstone coins are even more valuable than gold, and are said to be lucky to boot. Finally, some nobles are so wealthy they trade in standardized gems. Exchange rates are as follows:

- $1 = 1 Silver Coin
- $10 = 1 Gold Coin
- $50 = 1 Leafstone Coin
- $100 = 1 Gem

While these are the coins and currency used in the Blackwood, much of the Elder Kingdom uses a barter economy. Commoners never have much coin, but they've got bushels of grain, animal hides, tools, and services to offer. For this reason, it's helpful to have a wagon or boat around to haul goods.

Merchants and nobles are more likely to exchange coins, but even then there are exceptions. Nobles often pay by accepting the debt of a favor. Rarely valued at more than $500, favors are nevertheless transferrable as gear, supplies, hirelings, even acreage or properties.

Gear Notes

Ancestor Beads: Life in the Blackwood is only possible for humans through the veneration of their ancestors. Each settlement has an area for shrines dedicated to the deceased, but most folks also carry a string of beads to commemorate noteworthy ancestors from their home or their own family line. These beads can be carved from nearly any material, but wood and stone are most common.

Classicist Manuscript: While studying ancient tomes, Classicists often need to take notes. They also benefit from practicing their prose, poetry, and illumination. To that end, each Classicist carries their own small manuscript. The text for every power a Classicist knows has been meticulously copied into their manuscripts.

Climbing Gear: A set of crampons and a climbing pick with 50 feet of rope. It takes 5 minutes to properly don all of the gear. The climbing pick can be used without the other gear for a partial bonus, or as a makeshift weapon.

Clockpicks: Half a dozen long, thin metal instruments used to fine tune clockwork contraptions. Among thieves, they are employed as ideal lockpicks.

Dream Bark Tea: Brewed from the bark of certain fungal trees, Dream Bark Tea looks, smells, and tastes quite similar to your typical black tea. Once imbibed, however, Dream Bark causes a person to suffer strange hallucinations. While under the effects, victims are more susceptible to persuasion and coercion.

Elven Totem: Rather than worship their ancestors, pagans tie themselves to elves for survival. These pacts are sometimes symbolized by carved totems. Each totem is unique, depicting something about either the elf or the nature of the gift the elf bestows.

Errantry Kit: Errants wander the roads of the Elder Kingdom, and need to be prepared for many possibilities. This backpack is packed with basic gear needed for exploring and camping. It also includes a badge of errantry, the symbol by which each errant swears while answering the Call of Errantry.

Gearworks: All clockwork is made up of gears, counterweights, and balance-springs. Large or small, wooden or metal, the innards of clockwork machines are standardized for the ease of clocksmiths everywhere.

Hearth Bread: More than just a twisted loaf of bread sprinkled with salt, these trail rations include a chunk of cheese as well. The typical ration of hearth bread can feed a single errantry for up to 7 days.

Herbalist Kettle: All herbalists carry a portable kettle large enough to hold a small mortar and pestle and a collapsible stand to hold the kettle over a fire.

Hunting Trophies: Antlers, claws, teeth, furs, and all manner of animal parts can be kept as trophies by hunters and errants. Most are simply personal tokens.

Imp Rot Poison: Extremely rare, Imp Rot poison is refined from the fungal spores found on the back of Imp elves. It can be deadly when ingested.

Silkspider's Sorrow Poison: The same creature that spins the beautiful and hardy silk used in Elder Kingdom fashion is also highly venomous. Silkspider's Sorrow can temporarily paralyze victims.

Sweet Death Poison: Blissberries are the most delicious food in the Blackwood. Unfortunately, they are also highly deadly.

Tinker Scraps: Rusted weapons and armor, broken tools, and tarnished knick-knacks of all kinds are the stock-in-trade of tinkers all over the realm. They take in these items, repair them, and sell them for a meager profit.

Trade Goods: Crates of clothing, food, tools, or any typical goods are all quantified as "trade goods" in the Elder Kingdom.

Tree Viper Venom: The venom of a Tree Viper does not paralyze or kill human victims, but it does cause great strain to the system.

Unified Bell: One of the holy symbols of the Unified is a bell, representing the pure musical tones of Oruneal's voice. These bells are usually small enough to hold in one hand. Sometimes they have a separate clapper that can be used as a makeshift cudgel.

Unified Pendant: The other Unified holy symbol is a pendant of many-colored glass. Usually about the size of a person's hand, the pendant depicts a radiant sun.

Woodland Herbs: Sage pine berries, blue willow leaves, graver's grass roots, and many other Blackwood flora can be refined into potent herbal remedies. Even on their own, they can be valuable in trading endeavors.

Armor and Weapon Notes

Antler Knife: Perhaps the most iconic pagan weapon, antler knives are sometime literally made from antlers. These weapons resemble two overlapping crescent blades. Antler knives are designed to be dual-wielded, and can be thrown short distances.

Hook Axe: A polearm commonly used by sailors, this weapon has a long axehead on one side and a hook useful for grabbing rope at a distance (or tripping foes) on the other.

Lacquered Leaf: Scale armor made from layers of leaves, pressed together and lacquered for both strength and flexibility. This technique is normally only known by pagans, but the armorers of Denvorn Province have discovered the secret for themselves.

Lancing Sword: This classic weapon of one of the Widelander cultures is the evolution of a traditional spear. Now, it resembles a rapier with a dagger protruding from the pommel. The lancing sword can still be thrown short distances.

Quilted Silk: Crafted from the same silk used for valuable garments, this armor can be both effective and attractive. Quilted silk armor is comfortable enough to sleep in too.

Sap: Commonly used by guards and pacifist thieves. Saps have a broad, flat striking surface covered in leather to reduce the impact.

Sentrywood Plate: Carved from the wood of the mighty sentry pine, this armor can only be crafted by master armorers. As a result, this jet-black wooden armor grants even greater protection than iron armor.

Spear: Most of the time, spears are wielded in both hands. They can be wielded in one hand (to use with a shield, for example) at the cost of the weapon's agility. When using a spear with only one hand, the weapon loses its Parry bonus.

Mundane Gear	Weight	Value	Notes
Climbing Gear	5	$100	Climbing +2
Clockpicks	0	$100	Lockpicking +1
Clockwork Padlock	2	$50	
Clothing			
Common		$5	Linen, Wool, Fur; good for travel and labor
Noble		$50	Silk, Brocade, Jewelry; required for attendance in court
Errantry Kit	15	$100	Badge, Backpack, Bedroll, Crowbar, Flint/Steel, Lantern, Oil, 20' Rope, Pick/Shovel, Hearth Bread (1 week), Water-skin, Whetstone
Hearth Bread	1	$25	Trail rations for 7 days
Spell Focus			
Ancestor Beads	0	$10	Beads of wood, stone, or other material to symbolize one's ancestors. 10-20 per strand.
Classicist Manuscript	5	$50	Leather-bound tome for the Classicist to record notes, art, music, etc.
Elven Totem	1	$5	Physical token of an elven pact. All are unique, and all are made from natural materials.
Herbalist Kettle	1	$30	For brewing herbalist teas and potions. Usually comes with a set of cups and napkins.
Unified Bell	2	$15	Symbol of the glory of Oruneal's voice. Typically a handbell with a separate clapper.
Unified Pendant	0	$15	Symbol of the glory of Oruneal's light. A pendant of gold and colored glass.
Locksbane Acid	1	$120	
Music Instrument	varies	$5	Common Blackwood Instruments: bells, drum, horn, lap fiddle, lute, pipe
Poison			
Dream Bark Tea	0	$100	Vigor -2 vs. Hallucinate 4 rounds, must be ingested
Imp Rot	0	$1000	Vigor -2 vs. Death, must break skin
Silkspider's Sorrow	0	$250	Vigor -2 vs. Paralyzed for 2d4 rounds, must break skin
Sweet Death	0	$750	Vigor -4 vs. Death, must be ingested
Tree Viper Venom	0	$500	Vigor -2 vs. 2d4 Fatigue, must break skin
Treasure Map	0	$1000	Conduct Narrative Mission to find Treasure Horde
Supplies			
Gearworks	15	$50	A chest of gears, springs, and other clockwork pieces.
Hunting Trophies	5	$20	Likely Trophies: beaks, claws, feathers, furs, horns, teeth, etc.
Tinker Scraps	10	$10	A small crate of rusted knick-knacks and damaged goods. Suitable for tinker repair.
Trade Goods	10	$40	A small crate of food, textiles, art, or other goods
Woodland Herbs	5	$30	A satchel of woodland herbs. Valuable to herbalists and pagans.

Armor	Armor	Weight	Value	Notes
		Light		
Gambeson (Leather, Hide)	+1	10	$30	Covers torso, arms, legs
Quilted Silk	+1	5	$100	Covers torso, arms, legs; Can be slept in without penalty and concealed under clothing
		Medium		
Hauberk (Brigandine, Chain)	+2	20	$250	Covers torso, arms, legs
Lacquered Leaf	+2	15	$600	Covers torso, arms, legs; Stealth +1 when not in motion
		Heavy		
Corselet (Scale, Plate)	+3	25	$400	Covers torso
Vambraces (Scale, Plate)	+3	10	$200	Covers arms
Greaves (Scale, Plate)	+3	15	$300	Covers legs
Sentrywood Plate	+4	30	$1400	Covers torso, arms, legs
		Shields		
Buckler Shield	-	8	$25	Parry +1
Heater Shield	-	12	$50	Parry +1, Armor +2 vs. Ranged
Kite Shield	-	20	$200	Parry +2, Armor +2 vs. Ranged
		Helmets		
Cap Helm	+1	2	$75	50% vs. Head Shot
Kettle Helm	+2	4	$100	50% vs. Head Shot
Full Helm	+3	8	$150	Covers Head



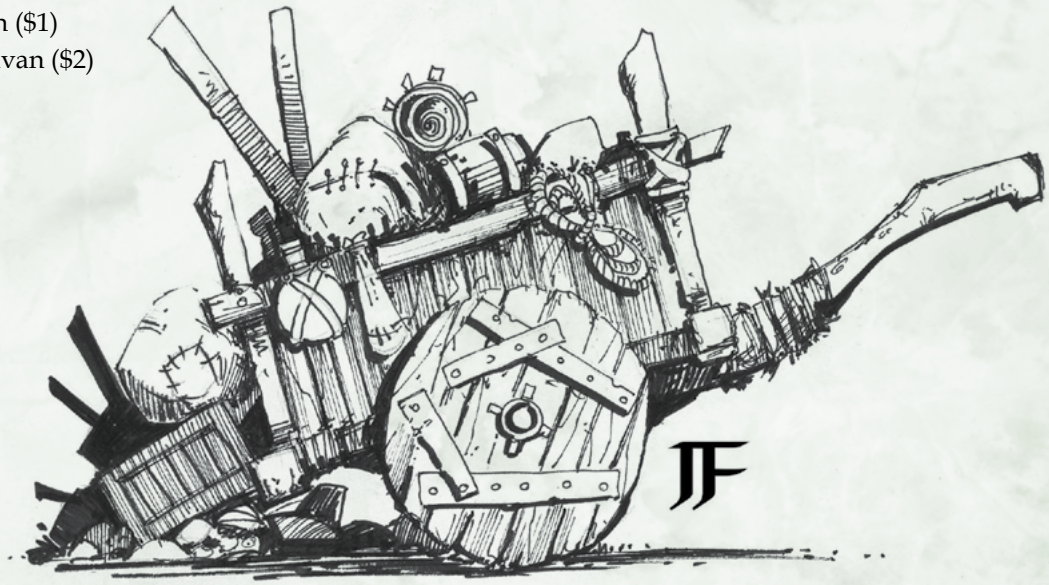
Weapons	Damage	Weight	Cost	Notes
			Light	
Hatchet	Str+d6	2	$75	Slashing, Ranged (3/6/12)
Antler Knife	Str+d6	4	$200	Slashing, Ranged (3/6/12), +1 Parry when dual wielding
Dagger	Str+d4	1	$25	Slashing/Piercing, Ranged (2/4/8)
Sap	Str+d4	1	$25	Bludgeoning
			One-Handed	
Falchion	Str+d6+1	6	$400	Slashing
Longsword	Str+d8	8	$300	Slashing/Piercing
Mace	Str+d8	8	$250	Bludgeoning
Axe	Str+d8	10	$200	Slashing
Lancing Sword	Str+d6	5	$350	Piercing/Ranged (2/4/8), +1 Parry
Baton	Str+d6	4	$150	Bludgeoning
			Two-Handed	
Hook Axe	Str+d8	10	$500	Slashing/Piercing, +1 Agility Trick (Trip)
Greatsword	Str+d10	12	$400	Slashing/Piercing
Maul	Str+d10	20	$400	Bludgeoning
Staff	Str+d4	8	$10	Parry +1, Reach 1
Spear	Str+d6	5	$100	Piercing, Ranged (3/6/12), Min. St d6, Reach 1, Parry +1
			Ranged	
Crossbow	2d6	10	$500	Piercing, Ranged (30/60/120), Str d8
Bow	2d6	3	$250	Piercing, Ranged (12/24/48), Str d6
Harpoon	Str+d6	5	$100	Piercing, Ranged (3/6/12), Ranged Grapple
Dart	Str+d4	1	$25	Piercing, Ranged Only (2/4/8), RoF 3

Hirelings

- Errant (Guard, Student) ($50/week)
- Laborer (Porter, Driver, Sailor, Camp Aid) ($10/week)

Services

- 1 Night of Room/Board
  - Common Room in Average Inn ($1)
  - Private Room in Average Inn ($2)
  - Private Room in Fine Inn ($5)
- 1 Day of Transportation
  - Tinker Caravan ($1)
  - Merchant Caravan ($2)
  - Riverboat ($4)



Transportation	Acc/TS	Toughness	Crew	Cost	Notes
		Animals			
Horse	4/10	8	1	$250	60 Cargo
Mule	2/6	8	1	$150	65 Cargo
Ox	3/7	10	1	$200	100 Cargo
		Vehicles			
Cart	Animal's Pace	8	1+1	$200	100 Cargo
Cog	4/8	16(4)	8+6	$8000	1000 Cargo
Sailing Canoe	4/10	10(2)	1+3	$1000	100 Cargo
Wagon	Animal's Pace	10(2)	1+3	$500	200 Cargo

Setting Rules

The Elven Wilds

Beyond the hedges that guard the Elder Kingdom, the Blackwood is defined by its wilderness. Skip three circles around a certain flower, or walk backwards under a waterfall, or let your eye wander too long away from the trail, and the tapestry of leaves opens up into the Elven Wilds. These are the dark and befuddling forests of tales come to life. Driven by elves like stormclouds are driven by the wind, the Elven Wilds are ever-shifting lands of emerald green foliage, of heavy grey fog, of deadly red blossoms, and deep blue waters.

Pagans say the Elven Wilds are a place of dreams and nightmares. Anything can be found within, but one is only foolish or desperate to enter the Wilds. Errants may have need to brave the Wilds to rescue an ally or recover a lost treasure. They may go in seeking rare herbs or the dens of particularly meddlesome elves. One can find iron-hard sentrywood, magical herbs and fungi, long-lost relics, and hidden knowledge merely by desiring to find it.

Normally, navigating the forest requires a successful Survival check to avoid stumbling into the Elven Wilds. Players may choose to enter the Wilds by declining to make that Survival check. Resolve this trek as a standard 5-round Dramatic Task. Each round pits the errants against a new atmosphere and terrain. Each time a card is drawn, the Elven Wilds should be named according to the card's suit and value (e.g. a 5 of Spades would be the "Tangled and Twisted Wilds").



Atmosphere

- **Clubs—Deadly:** Elves prefer live morsels, but the Elven Wilds often try to butcher interlopers early. All characters suffer a -2 to Agility and Vigor rolls in this atmosphere, and complications are lethal.
- **Diamonds—Befuddling:** In the Elven Wilds, sometimes it's hard to remember anything. Direction, purpose, even your own name can fade from memory. All characters suffer a -2 penalty to Smarts and Spirit rolls in this atmosphere, and suffer from the Clueless Hindrance.
- **Hearts—Alluring:** Despite many hidden dangers, sometimes the Elven Wilds are beautiful beyond measure. And so enticing! All characters suffer a -2 penalty to Spirit and Vigor rolls in this atmosphere, and they can't control their emotions.
- **Spades—Twisted:** The Elven Wilds creep through the Blackwood, and that movement can be dizzying. All characters suffer a -2 penalty to Agility and Smarts rolls in this atmosphere, and suffer the Unstable Platform penalty to all Fighting, Shooting, and Throwing checks.

Terrain

- **Deuce—Wicked:** Sometimes the Elven Wilds are a terrifying place, shifting always into some greater horror. Everyone in the party must pass a Fear test if they hope to brave this awful terrain.
- **3 or 4—Flooded:** In its migration across the Blackwood, Elven Wilds can upset the flow of many streams and rivers. One errant must succeed on a Vigor roll to swim across a flooded area and secure a rope to aid the rest of the party. On a failure, the party gains 1d4 levels of fatigue and is in danger of drowning.
- **5 through 7—Tangled:** In the Elven Wilds, the underbrush can grow as tall as a tree and as thick as a hedge. One errant must make a Vigor roll to hack a path through to the other side. A failure results in the party suffering 1d4 fatigue damage. Other errants may make cooperative rolls during this task.
- **8 or 9—Misty:** Sometimes a heavy fog blankets the Elven Wilds, a fog to twist the mind and dull the senses. One errant must pass a Smarts roll to keep a level head in the mists. On a failure, the party is lost for 2d6 hours.

- **10—Steep:** Entire mountains can be found in the Elven Wilds, often with no route but through their jagged expanse. One errant must pass an Agility roll to work out a safe traversal through the cliffs and chasms. On a failure, everyone in the party suffers 1d6x5 feet of falling damage.
- **Jack—Dark:** Sometimes the leaves overhead get crowded so tight that no light filters through to the floor. One errant must make a Smarts roll to recall how to navigate in the dark. A failure results in the party being lost for 1d4 days.
- **Queen—Great:** Not even the mighty Sentry Pine climbs as tall as the trees in the Elven Wilds. One errant must pass an Agility roll to climb around the massive roots and boulders in this terrain. On a failure, all errants felt so insignificant amongst those giants that they suffer from the Small Hindrance in the next round.
- **King—Scorched:** Grey ash chokes the air of this recently-burned forest. One errant must pass a Vigor roll to scout a safe route through the crumbling snags and beds of still-hot embers. Failure in this terrain inflicts 1d10 fire damage to every member of the party.
- **Ace—Quick Jaunt:** Then again, sometimes a shortcut opens up at the last moment. This round counts as one automatic success, but one errant may still attempt a Survival check at -2 to gain additional successes.
- **Joker—Long Stretch:** Time sure can drag in the depths of the Elven Wilds. Draw 2 more cards and resolve them both. 1d4 hours pass for each card.

Each round, draw initiative cards for each player. Any player with the Woodsman Edge may draw an additional card and choose one. Draw one card each round for the Elven Wilds too. While one errant makes the appropriate check for the Dramatic Task, the other errants will need to defend against relevant swarms and hazards. Failure means the errants are lost forever in the Elven Wilds. Time is slippery in the Elven Wilds, so 1d4 hours passes each round. The party will need to be mindful of rations and resting during their trip.

Once the party has reached their destination within the Elven Wilds, play out the desired scene or combat. Success guarantees a substantial reward, even if that's just a hoard of treasure. When the errants are ready to escape the Wilds, one errant will need to make a Survival check at a -4 penalty to find a way out.

Fighting Schools

In the Blackwood, swords and fists carry the day when law and order fails. Since before the Elder King rose to power, men and women have drawn blades against each other for matters of honor, vengeance, and war. Over time, these skills were codified into five distinct schools: powerful Boar, watchful Falcon, mischievous Red Bear, regal Stag, and patient Tortoise. Certain masters eventually also developed the hidden schools of Dragon, Firecat, and the unorthodox Way of the Gourd. A ninth school, J'Osudeau from the Widelands, rounds out the list of schools available to errants.

Beginning Your Tutelage

Errants pick one of the nine schools to train in, then take the appropriate Edges to unlock up to three tiers of abilities in that school. All nine schools boil down to three core philosophies—the formlessness of the river, the resilience of wood, and the mystical celestial sphere—some of which have advantages over others.

Combatants from an advantageous school gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls when engaged in combat with their rival schools. Celestial schools overcome the physical prowess of Wood schools with their mystical skills. Wood schools, sturdy and strong, excel against the more agile but physically weaker River schools. River schools are skilled at outmaneuvering the patient cultivation of power necessary for Celestial schools. Characters may study in more than one fighting school, but no more than three total. Switching between schools is a free action, but you can only use one school per round.

A Thicket of Rivals

Every student needs a master, so players with Fighting School characters should work with the Gamemaster to develop a suitable teacher character. These could be solitary practitioners with only one pupil, or the headmaster of a knightly academy in the heart of a big city. The possibilities are only limited by what you and your Gamemaster develop together.

To represent the variation of Fighting Schools throughout the kingdom, give your other Combat Edges trappings as additional techniques in your school. If your character is a member of a large academy, the Connections (Errantry) Edge is the best way to

represent that fellowship. Students are proud of their school no matter how small, so duels and challenges are frequent when students from two or more schools encounter each other.

School Trappings

Each fighting school is symbolized by an animal or object. In an effort to create your own unique style, there's no need to stick with the maneuver names listed in each school. Feel free to make your school your own during the game.

Also, most of these schools could be used with any weapon. A student of the Red Bear School with a spear or mace uses the same fundamental techniques as an unarmed Red Bear School student. The same is true for every other style, although a few favor certain weapons.

Aspiring Student

Requirements: See Schools for details

You have chosen to walk along the Way's Margin as a warrior. Either with a cadre of students or alone with your master, you have begun to learn the secrets of a fighting school. You unlock the Aspiring Technique from a Common School of your choice.

Worthy Student

Requirements: Seasoned, Aspiring Student in chosen School.

No longer a mere disciple, you have proved yourself to your school and are worthy of deeper secrets. Unlock the Worthy Technique from your chosen School.

If you are already Worthy in at least one school, you may take this Edge again to study a Hidden School. These schools lack an Aspiring technique because they are considered advanced, hidden, or secret knowledge.



Master of the School

Requirements: Heroic, Worthy Student in chosen School.

The Way's Margin stretches out ahead, but you have walked a long time and accomplished many deeds. You have learned all the school has to teach, and now must learn more by understanding the wisdom behind the strategy. You unlock the Master Technique from your chosen School and you may now begin taking students of your own. You may ignore the rank requirements for the Sidekick Edge.

Hybrid Schools

Requirements: Veteran, At least one: Fighting/Shooting/Throwing d10

Not only have you learned the fundamentals of several different schools, but your martial brilliance has found a way to blend them together. You may have two active schools at once, and may use the abilities of each.

Common Schools

Boar School

Requirements: Strength d8+, Fighting d8+

Core Philosophy: Wood (+1 vs. River)

Blackwood boar often grow larger than oxen, with enough strength and vigor to challenge a whole party of hunters. Long ago, a nameless warrior spared a talking boar's life in exchange for the secret to their deadly might. This wisdom was refined into a series of powerful stances and devastating strikes, best suited for daring and rowdy errants.

Aspiring Students learn the *Stance of the Rampant Tusk*, granting +1 to AP and to damage rolls. Once they have proven themselves Worthy, students learn the *Bone Brow Pummel*. When making a Fighting roll, opponents are knocked back 1" for each raise. Opponents who hit a solid object suffer an additional +1d6 damage.

Masters of the Boar School unlock the secrets of the *Rolling Thunder Stance*. If they incapacitate someone, Masters may immediately make a free Fighting attack at a second foe.

Falcon School

Requirements: Smarts d8+, Shooting d8+

Core Philosophy: Celestial (+1 vs. Wood)

To observe prey from a distance. To strike with unerring speed from a sure position. These are the lessons embodied by the Falcon School of fighting. Considered the most tactical of the schools, Falcons have a trained eye for advantageous positions and the skills to reach them. It is no surprise the school favors ranged weapons.

Aspiring Students learn the *Fleeting Worry, Hidden Calm* technique. They gain the Flight ability as long as they begin and end their movement on solid ground, and ignore the Unstable Platform penalty. This ability is considered a close cousin of the Leaf Step magic used by many errants.

Worthy students acquire the *Gaze of the Falcon*, and automatically hit their foe's least armored location on a raise. This ability increases once an errant has achieved Mastery of the Falcon School. If their Shooting roll misses but is higher than 1, they hit the target's torso for half damage. Masters of the Falcon school almost never miss.

J'Osudeau

Requirements: Agility d8+, Knowledge (Music) d8+, Acrobat

Core Philosophy: River (+1 vs. Celestial)

The people of the Widelands beyond the forest love music and dance, and those of the Unified faith glorify their god with these acts. A sect of the Unified who dedicate themselves to Osudo, the protector Orisha who lives in the moon, have modified the flow of dance into a deadly combat art. J'Osudeau, or "Dance on the Moon" in the common tongue, is at its best when working with a team of fellow combatants.

Aspiring Students are possessed of a *Rocking Rhythm*, and grant their adjacent allies a +1 Gang Up bonus. Worthy Students have mastered their *Melee Sway*. They gain a +4 bonus when escaping from Grapple, Constrict, Entangle, or similar abilities, and Gang Up bonuses against them are reduced by 1.

Masters of the Dance have learned the secret cadence at the heart of the fighting arts. Their Reach increases by 1" as they become a *Whirling Dervish* across the battlefield.

Red Bear School

Requirements: Agility d8+, Climbing d8+
Core Philosophy: River (+1 vs. Celestial)

They say red bears are the offspring of cats and elves, due to their nimble movements and meddlesome spirits. Pagans, the first to observe red bears, refined their movements into a system of fighting with their notorious antler knives. The Red Bear School is fast and agile, favoring skirmish tactics and rapid strikes.

The *Way of the Twisted Branch* is studied by all Aspiring Students of the Red Bear School. They gain +1 to Agility Tricks, their Pace is increased by 1, and their Running die increases by 1 step.

Worthy Students begin to study the *One Hundred Claws* strike, and reduce the multi-action penalty by 2 when performing an attack and an Agility Trick in the same round.

Masters of the school learn the full potential of *One Hundred Claws*. As a single action, they can perform two Fighting attacks at a -1 penalty, or three Fighting attacks at a -3 penalty.

Stag's Crown Treatise

Requirements: Spirit d8+, Healing d8+, Two-Fisted
Core Philosophy: Celestial (+1 vs. Wood)

Alone of all the other styles, the teachings of the Stag's Crown Treatise have never been adapted beyond their original weapons. Practitioners attack with their bare hands, fingers arrayed like a stag's crown to strike at the body's natural pressure points. Knowledge of the body and close harmony with one's spirit are necessary in every student of the Stag's Crown Treatise.

The basis of the school is the *Crown Palm Nerve Strike*, learned by all Aspiring Students. They may make a two-handed attack for no damage. On a successful hit, the target must pass a Vigor check at a -2 penalty or be Shaken. This check is opposed by the student's Spirit check.

Worthy Students have cultivated a measure of *Spiritual Fortune*. First, while in combat they gain a +1 bonus to the final result any time they spend a Benny to reroll a trait check. Second, they gain a +1 Armor bonus that doesn't stack with other worn armor.

The *Rebuke of Royal Splendor* is known only to Masters of the Stag's Crown Treatise. Their studied speed and foresight grant them a free Fighting attack at -2 against anyone who becomes Shaken within their range.

Tortoise School

Requirements: Vigor d8+, Knowledge (Battle) d6+, Brawny

Core Philosophy: Wood (+1 vs. River)

Wise and patient is the way of the tortoise. The Sentinels first developed this school for falchion and buckler, though many errant Masters have adapted its techniques over the centuries. Regardless of the weapon used, the Tortoise School has never lost sight of its original use as a shield for those who have none.

Aspiring Students learn *Patient Steward's Progress*. The +2 Parry bonus from their Defend action extends to 1 adjacent ally.

The Worthy Student is known as a *Stalwart Sentry*. She gains +1 to Soak rolls and ignores 1 point of Wound penalties.

Accomplished Masters of the Tortoise School are *True Knights of Valor*. They draw one additional action card for initiative and keep the highest.

Hidden Schools

Way of the Dragon

Requirements: Smarts d8+, Vigor d8+, Improved Block, Worthy in at least 1 other School

Core Philosophy: Wood (+1 vs. River)

For some Worthy Students, real combat is played out up close and personal. They study the mystical dragon, who wrestles its prey underwater to thrash the air from its lungs.

Those who begin to walk the Way of the Dragon are taught a potent attack, *Crashing Wave's Return*. They may make a free Grapple attack against anyone who hits them but rolls under their Toughness for Damage. True Masters learn the *Scaled Flank Defense*, and gain +1 to Toughness and a +1 Armor bonus. This bonus doesn't stack with worn armor.

Way of the Firecat

Requirements: Spirit d8+, St d8+, Improved Frenzy, Worthy Student in at least 1 other School.

Core Philosophy: Celestial (+1 vs. Wood)

No animal in the Blackwood is as feared as the Firecat, and rightly so. It burns in shadow, fueling its tenacity by drawing in the very light around it. Some Worthy Students learn to kindle their own spirits into a deadly flame. Practitioners of this secret school are ferocious in close combat. Their blows are wreathed in spiritual fire, and they burn with a will to take on all who dare.

Worthy Students discover the *Hidden Ember Attack* buried deep within themselves. They roll their Spirit die for bonus damage on a raise. This die cannot exceed d12.

The fire of their spirit shines in the eyes of Masters of the Way. They have perfected the *Burning Spirit Stance*, and may make a free Fighting attack against anyone who moves adjacent to them in combat.



Way of the Gourd

Requirements: Agility d8+, Vigor d8+, Liquid Courage, Worthy Student in at least 1 other School

Core Philosophy: River (+1 vs. Celestial)

Not every school is looked upon with favor by the formal warriors of the Blackwood. The Way of the Gourd is one such school. Inspired by the lurching movements of the drunkard, practitioners of the Way of the Gourd favor improvised weapons and unpredictable tactics.

The *Sloshing Belly* stance is the first lesson learned by Worthy Students. Once per round, they may prevent one attack from being made against them with a successful Agility roll at a -2 penalty. This check must be made before the incoming attack is rolled.

Masters of the Way of the Gourd have learned to capitalize on the confusion they sow among their opponents. They have discovered the *Regretful Morning Strike*, and gain a free Fighting attack at a -2 penalty against someone who attacks them and misses. This ability can stack with the Counterattack Edge.

In the Right Hands...

In the Blackwood it's not uncommon to see Classicists fighting with their books, cooks wielding ladles, barmaids knocking people out with tankards, and so on. Characters ignore the normal attack and Parry penalties when wielding an improvised weapon associated with their trade or background.

Lesson Learned

The stories within the Classic of Lore record life in the Blackwood over many centuries. These tales act as guides and comforts in the everyday lives of the folk of the forest. Everyone knows at least a few, and not just because they're catchy or popular. We overcome our trials through the wisdom of stories past.

Once per session, one player may interrupt a scene to recall part or all of one of these Tales. Draw an Interlude card using the chart below, and invent a short piece of Blackwood folklore. It must somehow relate to the situation you're trying to overcome. In exchange, you receive a single +2 bonus to any non-combat, non-arcane Trait test. If you're having trouble thinking of a tale, examples are woven into the chart below.

Triumph

- **Clubs—Tragedy:** Something wins out at the end of every tale. Sometimes, the triumph goes to whatever stands between our hero and her goal. These stories turn sorrow or fear into action.
- **Diamonds—Desire:** Many tales have spurred errants to triumph by showing us what can be achieved with no more than willpower and a dream.
- **Hearts—Love:** Great affection—between family, friends, or lovers—knows no bounds. The warmth of these tales is enough to stir the most chill-blasted heart.
- **Spades—Victory:** When we're down, sometimes the best help is a figure to look up to. What better inspiration than triumph itself?

Trial

- **Deuce—Fated Death:** Alas, not all stories end well. In some tales, the hero was doomed from the start.
- **3 or 4—Bewitched Relative:** In recent years, it seems everyone knows a cousin or aunt who fell afoul of witches or elves.
- **5 through 7—Nature's Wrath:** The Blackwood may have no fury like a woman scorned, but its fury is still formidable.
- **8 or 9—Bewitched Object:** If those wily elves aren't bewitching people, they're sure to bewitch a broom or wagon wheel or any unexpected source of mischief.
- **10—Talking Animals:** When the forest can't cause you to stumble into the wilds, sometimes it speaks up to persuade you.
- **Jack—Elven Meddling:** Elves aren't anywhere to be found (thank the ancestors!), but their handiwork can be seen all over.
- **Queen—Heed These Words:** Sometimes a piece of advice can earn you wild success. Sometimes it can only just barely keep you alive.
- **King—Vengeance:** The Way's Margin takes an errant among the wronged and bereft. Alas, sometimes it is a world where good can only be won at the end of a blade.
- **Ace—Ancestral Devotion:** Even in these dark times, may we remember the wise and valorous deeds of those who have come before.
- **Joker—Joke:** Humor can strike in the most unexpected moments. Perhaps a wry observation, or a punchline, or a physical gag, but not all insight springs from a furrowed brow.

The Way's Margin

In these hard times, the Way's Margin is a place of violence. Power is gained through violence. That kind of power corrupts the empowered. Further violence is the quickest way to displace the corrupt powers. This is the endless cycle of life at the Way's Margin.

Errants are free to do things many people cannot. By leaving the obligations of settled life, they may pursue their passions to the far corners of the Blackwood. By answering the Call of Errantry, they may challenge the unjust and corrupt. But at the Way's Margin, they cannot escape violence.

As errants, all player characters have chosen to answer the Call of Errantry. But what has called them to do so? At character creation, all errants gain either Emotional or Vow as a bonus Minor Hindrance. Perhaps they are driven by pride or inner calm, or perhaps they've sworn to feed the poor with the wealth of the rich. Whatever calling is chosen, it should be important enough for the errant to want to strike out into a dangerous world on its behalf.

Once per rank, an errant may declare that they are coming to the aid of one of the settled folk: pauper, commoner, artisan, or noble. The errant declares that they walk the Way's Margin and are driven by a passion or a vow. Then they make an oath to help the settled folk. The errant describes the deed and how it will be accomplished. None of these deeds are ever without their risks and moral grey areas, so resolve this deed with an appropriate skill roll at a -2 penalty. The deed itself should take at least a day, so the roll is a summary of both planning and execution. The player gains a Benny for incorporating their calling into the deed's narration.

On a success, the errant gains a one-time use of the Connections Edge with whichever settled folk they helped. The Persuasion roll for the Edge is made at a +2 bonus because of the target's great debt to the errant.

Making oaths on the Way's Margin is an easy way to gain power, but remember: power corrupts. Even if the errant fails, her deed creates some kind of adversity in the form of the Enemy (Minor) Hindrance. Perhaps it's a humiliated and vengeful rival. Perhaps it's a guild that has blacklisted the errant because of her deed. Whatever the details, the errant should not be easily rid of this Hindrance.

Languages

Despite its relatively small size, there are many languages and dialects to be found within the borders of the Elder Kingdom.

Ancient Script: No longer a spoken language, the writings of the ancients are nevertheless known to Classicists and seekers after forgotten lore. It can be a valuable tool for scholars and graverobbers alike.

Beast Tongue: Animals don't have a proper language, but they each have their signals of voice and body. Errants who understand this subtle language can communicate rudimentary ideas to animals. As simple creatures, the animals may not obey unless trained to do so.

Common: Almost everyone speaks the common tongue. It is the storyteller's language, full of clever quips and turns of phrase. It is also the commoner's language, though they usually have poor grammar and mispronounce large words. It is a dialect that can be both insightful and scathingly crude.

Courtly Speech: When in a noble court, communication is more than eloquent words. It is polite conversation, observation of etiquette, and deference to pedigree and prestige. Unless you have the Noble Edge, this language costs two language slots to learn.

Elvish: No one can speak the senseless tongue of the elves, but a few have heard it. It is like the rustling of leaves on the forest floor, and the creak and clatter of branches in a windstorm.

High Unified: Used only in religious songs and rituals from the Widelands, this is a soaring, musical language said to be as old as Ancient Script.

Pagan: Far beyond the hedge, the pagans speak a language with as many thorny brambles and wild cries as the wilderness they call home. Unless you have Arcane Background (Elven Pact), this language costs two language slots to learn.

Pauper's Cant: A little caution never hurts a life lived on the edge of the Way (and a little madness is to be expected). Paupers communicate with a bizarre motley of code words, catch phrases, and stock gestures. Unless you have the Pauper Hindrance, this language costs two language slots to learn.

Widelander Creole: The Unified are made up of many far-flung cultures. Travelers and traders from all over the Unified domain have developed a hybrid language together and spread its use across the whole world. If a Widelander finds herself traveling as far as the Blackwood, she's certain to speak the Widelander creole.

Oaths and Idioms

The Blackwood is full of colorful phrases.

A Red Letter Day: A special occasion. Festival days labeled in red on public calendars.

By badge and band: A compounded responsibility. Errants can swear by their badge, but also by their band of fellow errants.

By hook or by crook: By any means necessary.

By the Ancestors!: A versatile exclamation, sometimes invoking surprise, gratitude, or frustration. Sometimes, it is shortened to simply "Ancestors!"

Caravans: A popular dice game, not unlike liar's dice.

Cogs: A popular card game, not unlike poker.

Elves licking your heels: Keeping just ahead of trouble. Perhaps gaining or losing ground.

Every road changes: In context, equivalent to either "tough luck" or "who knows?" The forest pushes roadways to and fro. The roads are anchored by Shrine Lanterns every mile, but between those anchors it's anyone's guess.

Giddy-head: Someone who has taken leave of their senses.

Go to Bracken!: Equivalent to "go to hell."

In a Thicket: In deep trouble.

Jumping at every brush elf: The actions of a scaredy-cat. Could also refer to an overzealous person.

Look like a leafstone coin: Equivalent to "look like a million bucks."

Oruneal's Light!: The Unified believe Oruneal's light reveals the goodness in all things. It is a versatile exclamation.

Tartmonger: A person who pursues a frivolous passion, as a candymaker; also, a slang term for a pimp.

Way's Wisdom!: The Way of the Elder King has been the key to prosperity in the Blackwood for over 1000 years.

Whippersnapper: An overconfident youngster.

Wood's Woes!: An exclamation of lament, sorrow, or frustrations, especially after repeated hardship.

Magic

Many scholars argue that the Blackwood is a personification of nature's magic. Even if it is not, the Blackwood is undeniably full of magical energy. Humans know many ways to access this energy: reverence toward their ancestors, perfection of beauty, and mad bargains with elves are only a few examples.

The following list comprises the only Arcane Backgrounds available to Blackwood characters. Some of them are variations of what you'd find in the *Savage Worlds core rules* or the *Fantasy Companion*, but with a distinct Blackwood feeling.

Arcane Backgrounds

Ancestor Worship

Arcane Skill: Special (None)

Starting Power Points: 0

Starting Powers: 1

Spell List: Ancestor Worship can make use of any power in the *Savage Worlds core rules*.

Starting Powers: illuminated text come to life, magic music, stories are real

Suggested Trappings: ghostly helpers, spirit glow



Of all the ways to control the Blackwood's raw magic, none is more ubiquitous than ancestor worship. Even pagans relate the great deeds of the past. But whether in deepest wilderness or the heart of a city, only a fortunate few have the lineage to lend these stories more than pride and nostalgia. Some family lines are graced with paragons of heroism or villainy, titanic figures who can lend power to their descendants from beyond the veil. These ancestors usually grant power to favored descendants—errants most like themselves—but some are granted power for they know not why.

Characters with the Ancestor Worship Background are fortunate enough to claim one of these ancestors. Each noteworthy ancestor grants a single power, which is considered its own skill and has no linked attribute (and is thus "lower" than its linked attribute for purposes of Advancement). A hero with the *armor* and *wall walker* powers, for example, also has an Armor and a Wall Walker skill he uses to enable it. It's more expensive to improve these powers but they don't require power points to activate.

This Arcane Background makes use of the No Power Points setting rule.

Inauspicious: When an ancestor worshipper rolls a 1 on a skill die (regardless of her Wild Die), something about the moment is inauspicious and the ancestor cannot intervene. The character is Shaken by the missing connection, and cannot use the power for the duration of the encounter or scene. Characters may spend a Benny at any time to unblock it (characters can unblock the power and recover from Shaken with a single Benny).

Classicism

Arcane Skill: Knowledge (Classics) (Smarts)

Starting Power Points: 10

Starting Powers: 3

Spell List: Classicism can make use of any power in the *Savage Worlds core rules*.

Suggested Trappings: illuminated text come to life, magic music, stories are real

All the Elder King's wisdom is contained in the Five Classics: the Book of Lore, Book of Rites and Meaning, the Summer Record, the Iron Doctrine, and the ancient Leaves of Change. These collections of story, edict, and song are curated by the Wise Order of the Classics with such skill that deep magic can be discovered in the illuminated text and lofty wisdom upon

their pages. Classicists can draw upon this magic with their voices, a musical instrument, or straight from the pages of their own manuscript notebooks.

Unfocused: Flat notes and the slightest stutters of speech can ruin a Classicist's concentration. On a roll of 1 on the Knowledge (Classics) die (regardless of Wild Die), you automatically become Shaken (this does not cause a wound). Conjuring magic from the Classics can be done several ways, but always requires a combination of manuscript, instrument, or hand gestures. Both of your hands are occupied while casting powers.

Clockwork (Weird Science)

Arcane Skill: Weird Science (Smarts)

Starting Power Points: 10

Starting Powers: 1

Spell List: *Barrier, Blast, Blind, Bolt, Burrow, Burst, Confusion, Deflection, Divination, Entangle, Environmental Protection, Farsight, Fly, Havoc, Light/Obscure, Pummel, Slow, Slumber, Smite, Speed, Stun, Summon Ally, Warrior's Gift*

Suggested Trappings: clockwork traps, wind-up toys, modified weapons and armor

The Elder Kingdom is home to the world's most advanced clockwork technology. It was one of the greatest gifts within the Five Classics, the knowledge of engineering and mathematics to create precise arrays of gears and levers. Complex locks and various laborer's machines are common, but many clever traps and unique gadgets have been developed from clockwork principles too. Mass production of these latter gadgets is impossible, but individual artisans have been creating wonders for generations.

This Arcane Background functions exactly like Weird Science from the Savage Worlds core rules.



Elven Pact

Arcane Skill: Pact (Spirit)

Starting Power Points: 15

Starting Powers: 2

Spell List: Elven pacts can make use of any power in the *Savage Worlds core rules*.

Suggested Trappings: animal magnetism, hidden helpers, nature mastery

Wild and rhythmic, pagans understand that the only way to survive beyond the hedge is to become one with the Blackwood's primal spirit. The totems they carry are imbued with elven magic, forever tying the pagans to the deepest wilds. Each elven totem hints at the nature of the elf that claims it, from crude lashings to intricately carved wood, stone, and bone. Pagans are the antithesis of the Elder Kingdom, so they each receive the Outlaw Hindrance.

Each pagan tribe, called a "coven," is led by one or more witches and the occasional chieftain. Through elaborate rituals of deference and sacrifice, pagans bind themselves in service to one or more elves in exchange for power and protection. This is how they are able to survive along the fringes of elven wilderness.

Since the Elder King's disappearance, many covens have tried to tip the balance of power in the Blackwood. Pagans make incursions by the score into the fertile borderlands of the Kingdom to cause mayhem. Many burn with revenge for centuries of banishment from fertile land, but some few are loath to give up the harmony they've found with local woodkin. No matter how a pagan feels about subjects of the Elder King, they know to always expect mistrust and hostility.

By Oath and Totem Bound: Pagans must make a pact with a new elf for each of their powers, represented by either oaths or totems. If you have a high-quality totem, you may

spend a full round to focus its power (no movement or other actions allowed), receiving a +2 bonus to your Spirit roll in the following round. A high-quality totem costs at least $1000. You suffer a -2 penalty if you attempt to cast a spell without the appropriate totem.

If you choose to take an oath instead, take Quirk as a minor Hindrance and give your character a rule to follow at all times. Throwing spilled salt over your left shoulder, or staying under a roof from dusk until dawn are both fine oaths to take. If you should ever break this oath, the elf will show up to find out why. This is never a good thing, but clever characters may be able to negotiate some kind of boon from the confrontation.

Pagan magic is rekindled by dancing around a fire every night at midnight. Pagans must dance for 10 minutes per spell rank among their powers. Communing with elves is dangerous, so make a Spirit roll during your dance. If you fail, you cannot withstand the weird power of the elves and suffer one level of fatigue. If you roll a 1 on the Spirit die (regardless of Wild Die), suffer one roll on the Injury table. This injury lasts for 24 hours.

After preparing your powers, they may be unleashed as actions any time within the next 24 hours. When casting, a roll of 1 on your Pact roll (regardless of Wild Die) causes you to become Shaken. This does not cause a wound.



Herbalism

Arcane Skill: Herbalism (Smarts)

Starting Power Points: 5 per Draught

Starting Powers: 3

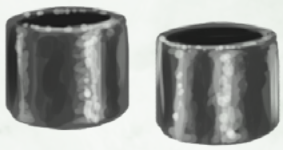
Spell List: *Armor, Blast, Blind, Boost/Lower Trait, Burst, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Darksight, Disguise, Environmental Protection, Farsight, Greater Healing, Healing, Intangibility, Invisibility, Quickness, Speed, Stun, Succor, and Warrior's Gift.*

Suggested Trappings: home remedies, magic alcohol, wicker bombs

Classicists may be the most famous mages in the Blackwood, but herbalists are far more common, and often just as useful to a village or caravan. With their ancestors to guide them, herbalists can harvest plants from the Blackwood and channel their magic into potions, balms, and powders. Caught midway between the magic of the ancestors and that of the forest, herbalists are usually regarded with suspicion no matter how useful they are to a community.

Unlike other arcane characters, Herbalists can give their magic to other characters. Their enchanted potions and powders must be consumed to be activated, and go into effect immediately. Characters must pass a Vigor check when consuming these volatile concoctions or else they are Shaken. Each enchantment has its own store of power points, and is destroyed when those power points are depleted.

Brewing: Herbalists must prepare their materials each day. This takes 30 minutes per spell rank the character has in his spell list. It's a volatile process of cutting, grinding, and brewing, with many ways to go wrong. Characters must make an Alchemy roll during preparation. If they fail, something goes wrong and the character suffers a roll on the Injury table for 24 hours.



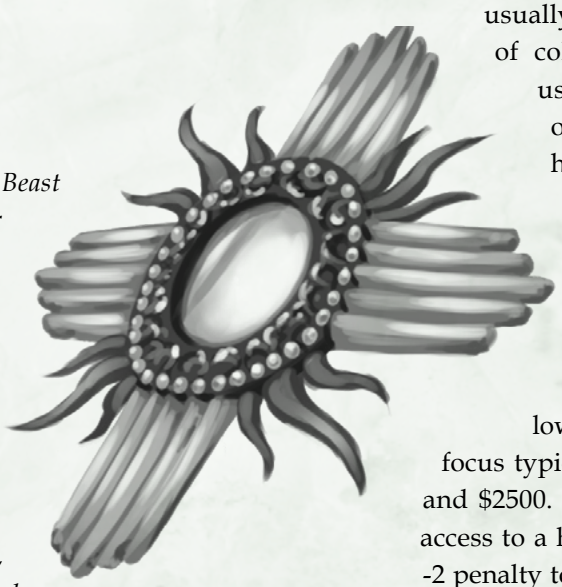
Unified Faith

Arcane Skill: Faith (Spirit)

Starting Power Points: 15

Starting Powers: 1 (plus see below)

Spell List: *Armor, Banish, Barrier, Beast Friend, Blast, Blind, Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Burst, Damage Field, Darksight, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel, Divination, Drain Power Points, Elemental Manipulation, Environmental Protection, Farsight, Fear, Fly, Greater Healing, Havoc, Healing, Invisibility, Light/Obscure, Mind Reading, Pummel, Quickness, Shape Change, Slow, Slumber, Smite, Speak Language, Speed, Stun, Succor, Summon Ally, Telekinesis, Teleport, Warrior's Gift*



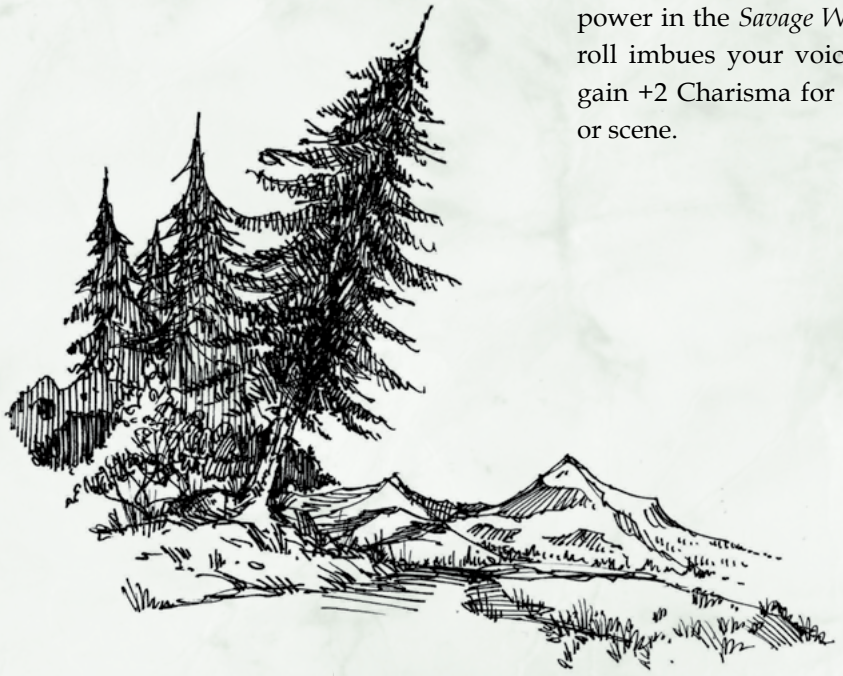
Suggested Trappings: divine dance, holy light, sacred music

Praise be to Oruneal, God of Unity, whose voice is light and sound! The Unified faith has spread to every corner of the world in recent years. Most of the faithful worship Oruneal through *Orishas*, the former gods of their own cultures. Whatever their domains before they joined Oruneal's host, the *Orishas* chief concern is now the unification of all peoples under a peaceful banner.

Unified carry holy symbols—usually a hand bell or pendant of colored glass—which they use to channel the power of Oruneal. Unified with a high-quality holy symbol may spend a round focusing their power (no movement or other actions allowed), receiving a +2 bonus to their Faith roll in the following round. A high-quality focus typically costs between $1000 and $2500. If a Unified doesn't have access to a holy symbol, she suffers a -2 penalty to her Faith rolls. It takes 2 weeks to attune a new holy symbol.

Music is an important spiritual rite for the Unified, so they often chant, sing and dance when invoking their god's power. They may take no other actions and their Pace is halved when casting a power. Finally, Unified suffer a -2 penalty to Faith rolls if they commit minor sins against the ideal of unity. Major sins rob them of all powers for one week, and mortal sins make them forsaken until they undergo a quest or task of atonement.

Oruneal's Light, Osudo's Slumber: All Unified begin blessed with Oruneal's Light, Osudo's Slumber as a bonus spell. This functions like the *Light/Obscure* power in the *Savage Worlds core rules*. A raise on this roll imbues your voice with Oruneal's power. You gain +2 Charisma for the duration of the encounter or scene.



Suggested Trappings

As per the *Savage Worlds core rules*, you invent one trapping for each power when you take it. The trapping is set in stone once you've chosen it, but you can make it anything you want. That said, magic in the Blackwood is subtle and slippery. Powers sometimes have flashy trappings, but this is not a high-magic setting. Instead, the magic should be whimsical, obscured, or it should make use of the surrounding environment. Following are a selection of suggested trappings to provide you with a little bit of inspiration.

Armor: The caster's body is enveloped by hardwood plates that fly from the forest depths.

Barrier: So strong is the caster's communion with her ancestors that they can help her conjure a small hedge to come bursting from the ground.

Bolt: A number of razor-sharp leaves whisk between the caster's fingers like natural throwing darts.

Boost/Lower Trait: A spectral glow emanates from the target, either blessed or cursed by the ancestors.

Damage Field: A cyclone of leaves and small debris rips up around the caster.

Deflection: An unseen elf flits about the caster, knocking away incoming missiles.

Entangle: A thicket grows up rapidly to restrain the target.

Fly: For moments at a time, the caster can maneuver even better than the masters of the Leaf Step.

Healing/Greater Healing: A tea brewed from sage pine berries and the dried leaves of a tea shrub.

Light/Obscure: Oruneal lends control of light and shadow to the caster.

Pummel: As luck would have it, something—a wild animal, a panicked person in the crowd, a gust of wind—boulders through the area.

Quickness: A perfect harmony of mind and body allows the caster to move twice as fast as the average person.

Smite: The caster's smothers the weapon with a vile poison.

Succor: The caster plays a particularly soothing tune on the lap fiddle.

Summon Ally: The bodyguard is an ancestral guardian, come to visit the mortal world for a time.

Teleport: The caster bursts into leaves and blows away to his destination.

Wall Walker: This spell is visually identical to the magic of Leaf Step.

Zombie: Rather than corporeal zombies, the caster summons the ghosts of the slain.




Blackwood
Stonecrown Peaks
Ram River
Three Rivers
Span
The Way
Highway-Under-Bough
High Hall
The Spires
A new map of the Blackwood and the Elder Kingdom in the Year of the King 1454
City
Village
Ruins
Miles
0
10
20
30


Giant Mountains
N
W
E
S
Farwater Beach
The Last Branch
Bastion in the Grove
Elk River
Demorn
Lesser Heights
Grand Delving
The Way
Elder King

The Elder Kingdom

Gazetteer

Bastion in the Grove is the home of the Valiant Order of Sentry Grove, better known as the Sentinels. Positioned at the northern end of the Highway-Under-Bough, Sentinels strike out from the Grove to level justice against all who are cruel and vicious.

Bracken, little more than a frontier outpost, is the last refuge in Stonecrown Province since Vosserlin was sacked two years ago. It is a seedy den of wild and desperate folk. Expeditions strike out regularly from Bracken to explore the many ruins in the province.

Castle Highguard is a haunted fortress in the north of Denvorn Province. It has been locked in an endless winter night for nearly a decade.

Denvorn, the capital of Denvorn Province, is a town on the frontier of the Elder Kingdom. Its woodcrafters have mastered the art of leaf lacquering, and its hunters fend off a regular stream of unruly monsters from the eastern wilds. The Denvorn Hall of Classics helps the common folk of the province to cultivate an abundant crop.

Denvorn Province is a frontier territory in the eastern part of the Elder Kingdom. Bordered by the Lesser Heights to the south, Denvorn Province relies mostly on hunting and mining to sustain itself.

Dunkelfluss is a small village upriver from Three Rivers. It is known as a new haven for refugees willing to work for their prosperity.

Farwater Beach, the capital of Giant Province, is the largest city in the Blackwood. No other city outside the Golden Vale has as much farmland, and no city has as many Widelanders within its walls. One of the Unified faith's holy temples, called a Celebration of Unity, is being raised in Farwater Beach.

Forest Roads are anchored by Shrine Lanterns every mile to keep it from drifting too far off course. Shrine Wardens maintain these lanterns as they travel the roadways. Should a shrine lantern crumble, the road will become overgrown until the lantern is replaced.

Ghostlight Bog rises from the southern shores of the Long Lake. It is full of bog lanterns and swamp beasts, the former eager to draw you into traps set by the latter.

The Giant Mountains mark the furthest northeast anyone has ever traveled in the Blackwood. Rumors abound of giants and monsters in amongst the slopes.

Giant Province in the north of the Elder Kingdom is the closest province to the Widelands, though they are still separated by several days of forest wilderness. It is one of the provinces to suffer least under the Elder King's absence.

The Golden Vale is the crown jewel of the Elder Kingdom. Nestled in amongst the Heights, it is the only province in the Elder Kingdom to be entirely free of magical forest.

Grama's Brewfarm is a small tavern and inn a day's ride out from High Hall on the road to Span.

Grand Delving, capital of Golden Vale Province, is home to the Wise Order of the Classics. Simple clockwork contraptions abound in this mountain city. Quarried stone, precious metals, and gems are common exports.

The Great Falls are the only place where the Way's flow is interrupted. These huge waterfalls spill into Great Falls Lake, forcing merchants to make portage around a line of rocky cliffs. The city of Span is the point of departure for this portage.

Great Falls Lake is the basin at the foot of the Great Falls, into which the Way gathers before continuing its course north. A few unsettling islands dot the northern shore.

Great Falls Province, right in the heart of the Elder Kingdom, is known mostly as a home for merchant guilds and guard companies.

The Heights, a range of impassible mountains, form the southern border of the Elder Kingdom. An arm known as the Lesser Heights breaks off to the north, cradling the Golden Vale.

High Hall is the capital of Mead Meadows Province. Located high in the mountain pass in the heart of the Elder Kingdom, High Hall is widely regarded as the most well-defended city in the realm. It is famous first and foremost for its mead.

The Highway-Under-Bough stretches from Grand Delving in the south to Bastion in the Grove. Also called The Steadfast, because it is lined with so many Shrine Lanterns that its course is not pushed about by the roaming wilderness.

Iron Lake lies between Bracken and the ruined city of Vosserlin. Its dark waters are said to hold all the sorrows from these dark, recent years.

Knuckle Peak is actually a range of four minor peaks in the Giant Mountains. Sometimes at night, bestial howls float down the peak upon the wind.

Lake Echo in Denvorn Province is a place of many legends. They say a dragon glides through the mist each morning. They say an elf plays a mournful tune upon a stolen lap fiddle each night.

Last Fork, a spit of a village on the fringe of Giant Province, is home to an especially superstitious group of woodkin.

The Long Lake is home to the bustling city of Farwater Beach. The Way flows into it near Ghostlight Bog and out again as it speeds north toward the Widelands.

Longwater Town lies within the hedge of Three Rivers, upon the southern bank of the Way.

Mead Meadows Province, a small province near the exact center of the Elder Kingdom, is home to the city of High Hall. The region is known for its delicious mead and it flamboyant errants.

Owl's Watch, one day from Grama's Brewhouse, is named after a local errant who recently became the village's champion.

Sky Pillar Monastery, perched above the world, is home to the realm's finest warriors and scholars. These individuals have secluded themselves deep within the Spire Mountains, where they can meditate upon perfection in peace.

Span is the capital of Great Falls Province. So named because the city spans the Way right at the top of the Great Falls. The city creates a bottleneck for all traffic traveling in either direction on the Way and is famous for 3 things: merchant guilds, fighting arenas, and its seedy underbelly.

The Spires break off from the Heights at the mouth of the Golden Vale. They are towering needles of stone rising out of the dragon-haunted mists below. Sky Pillar Monastery is located within the Spires.

Spearwood, a hunting lodge at the edge of the eastern wilds, is home to the famous Spearwood Fellowship. These reclusive hunters patrol the wilderness, endlessly searching for the huge beasts that come from the far east.

The Stag and Dragon Inn marks the halfway point along the Highway-Under-Bough. It is a huge, sprawling complex of great halls and boarding houses, and the site of many tales of errantry.

Starry Meadow Palace, seat of the Elder Kingdom, lies beyond the Golden Vale, high into the Heights. It is the home of the Elder King and his family. No one else is permitted to set foot within its halls.

The Stonecrown Peaks mark the furthest northwest anyone has ever traveled from the Elder Kingdom. They are dark and inhospitable mountains, although many pagans live in valleys below.

Stonecrown Province is frontier territory for the Elder Kingdom. No other province has suffered as badly since the Elder King's disappearance. The province is mostly a ruin.

Talbrand is a quiet village in Denvorn Province. It suffered a huge drop in population a few years ago, but it has recovered to a modest level of prosperity. It is the closest settlement to Castle Highguard.

Three Rivers, capital of Three Rivers Province, is a place of beauty and art. The finest storytellers are found here. It is also home to many fine artisans. Three Rivers is the most peaceful city outside the Golden Vale.

Quarry, a small village in Golden Vale Province, is known for its abundance of beautiful marble.

Vosserlin is now a pagan-infested ruin, but once was the capital of Stonecrown Province.

The Way is a river that flows from the Golden Vale in the south, winding its way through the Blackwood, out into the Widelands, and all the way to something called the sea. It is the backbone of life in the Elder Kingdom.

Wine Vale is a village in Great Falls Province, along the road to High Hall. It is known for strange crystals created when lightning strikes the nearby lakeshore.

Calendar and Festivals

Life in the Blackwood is measured by days, weeks, months, and years. Like anywhere else, a day is 24 hours long, 7 days make a week, 30 days make a month, and 12 months make a year. By this reckoning, a single year transpires every 360 days. Each month begins on the new moon.

The solstices and equinoxes are important measures of the year in the Elder Kingdom, which divides the months according to the seasons:

Month	Details
Spring	Equinox, Fool's Day
High Spring	
Late Spring	
Summer	Solstice, Starflower Festival, Riverfolk Tournament
Midsummer	
Late Summer	
Harvest	Equinox, Harvest Festival
High Harvest	Hunter's Moon
Late Harvest	
Winter	Solstice, Yuletide Festival, Woodkin Tournament
Midwinter	
Late Winter	Ancestors' Eve

Ancestors' Eve: One week before the year ends, the common folk build up great pyres in each field within their hedge. All write out their grievances upon strips of paper or symbolize them with carved totems. The ashes of those who died in the previous year are gathered and cast into the fire, killing the old year to make way for the new. When the bonfires finally die, the remains are spread over the fields, in anticipation of the Spring Equinox and the coming planting season.

Fool's Day: On the first day of each year, the date of the Spring Equinox, the common folk are as bright and dazzled as newborn babes for a day. They have the run of the town and must be served by any nobles they pass. It is invariably a day of debauched revelry. Over the following week, the commoners give thanks for their revelry by planting the first harvest.

Harvest Festival: On the Harvest Equinox, the whole of the Elder Kingdom gives thanks to the ancestors for a good crop in the previous year. It is a simple rite, after which the commoners begin gathering the main harvest. One week after the equinox, the people of the Elder Kingdom celebrate their labor with a three-day festival. All give thanks to friends and neighbors, and there are feasting tables laid out for one and all.

Hunter's Moon: The full moon in the month of High Harvest is known as the Hunter's Moon. It implores all to begin a search or renew one, and to always seek improvement. It is a time to make resolutions for the coming year, just before the wind turns cold and Winter draws near.

Riverfolk Tournament: Following the Starflower Festival every Summer, a wandering tournament takes place in the river cities. Its location moves from city to city each year, but the Riverfolk Tournament remains the same. It is a full week of contests and revelry, with many fine prizes to be won by the competitors:

- Day 1: Carousing and Boasts
- Day 2: Cogs and Caravans
- Day 3: Log Roll
- Day 4: Storytelling
- Day 5: Sailing Canoe Race
- Day 6: Errant's Arena
- Day 7: Awards and Revelry

Victors are awarded with cash prizes and special arms and armor, depending on the event. If anyone wins two or more of the contests, they are named a tournament champion. They are awarded with glory, prestige, and gain an introduction to some of the most elite noble courts in the land.

Starflower Festival: Elven meddling ebbs and flows throughout the year, but the Summer Solstice is always when elves are at their most numerous. To push back against this perennial rise, the Elder Kingdom has a longstanding tradition of fireworks displays every Summer on the solstice. In every city and in many towns, the common folk set off fiery pinwheels, smoking streamers, and small, sparkling bombs in market squares. This celebration carries on all night long and is followed by a rest day.

Woodkin Tournament: After the Yuletide Festival has come to a close, people emerge from their homes to face the Winter with mirth. Moving to a new woodland city each year, the Woodkin Tournament is a time

to rouse one another's spirits with sport and feats of skill. Like its summertime counterpart, the Woodkin Tournament lasts for a full week:

- Day 1: Carousing and Boasts
- Day 2: Caravans and Cogs
- Day 3: Springboard Chop
- Day 4: Storytelling
- Day 5: Treetop Race
- Day 6: Hunter's Prize
- Day 7: Awards and Revelry

Victors are awarded with cash prizes, fine clothes, and food goods to share with their friends and neighbors through the rest of the Winter. Any person who wins two or more of the events is named a tournament champion. They are awarded with glory, prestige, and an introduction to some of the most elite noble courts in the land.

Yuletide Festival: By the time of the Winter Solstice, the Blackwood has yielded its power to the bitter cold and the heaping blizzard. The height of Winter is a time of scarcity: provisions dwindle, most elves hibernate but the Wild Hunt roams, and the biting cold prevents long travel. The Yuletide Festival, then, is a time to remember the strength of fellowship. Families and friends gather together in their homes, share what food they have, and raise three toasts: to the ancestors, to the Elder King, and to each other. In more prosperous times, gifts were given from one to another.



Factions

Any one of these factions would work well with the Connections Edge. A few—like the Classicists, Sentinels, and the Unified—would work well with the Code of Honor and Vow Hindrances too.

Hunters

No village or city could survive without hunters to forage in the Blackwood and bring home game. In addition to their roving, hunters are also often skilled at working leather and lacquered leaves into armor, and can make formidable tools and weapons from carved wood. They are survivalists who commonly work with other hunters to broaden their knowledge.

Village Council

Just as nobles guide towns and larger cities, smaller villages are held together by the deliberations of a village council. Comprised of the settlement's elders and important tradespeople, the village council dictates the harvest, village construction and defense, and communion with the ancestors. Village councils are more closely connected to their charges, so there is less corruption among councils than there is in noble courts.

Merchant Guilds

Settlements produce most of the Blackwood's goods and services, but they are all separated by wide swaths of dangerous, magical wilderness. Some tinkers and smaller merchants manage with no more than a wagon and a few guards, but large-scale trade requires extensive planning and preparation. Guilds facilitate these voyages, but hard times have made many guilds turn to greedy, corrupt business practices.

Noble Courts

Imbued with authority by the Elder King himself, nobility have guided the fates of the larger towns and cities since ancient days. Their courts are equal parts administration and entertainment, providing their settlements with food and defense while profiting from taxation and loyalty. These days, too many nobles have seen the Elder King's disappearance as an excuse to pull out all stops and rise to levels of extravagant wealth. Their peasants have been bled nearly dry.

The Wise Order of the Classics

Formed shortly after the Elder King came to power, these scholars and sages collect the Elder King's laws, tales, and wisdom in five gorgeously illuminated volumes, known as the Classics of Lore and Reason. Every Classicist carries a manuscript of their own—part devotional and part journal—which contains copies of select Classics pages. Using the beauty of the words, the art surrounding them, and their own notes, Classicists are able to work powerful, studious magic.

All the Elder King's wisdom is contained in the *Five Classics of Lore and Reason*: the Book of Lore, Book of Rites and Meaning, the Summer Record, the Iron Doctrine, and the ancient Leaves of Change. These collections of story, edict, and song are curated by the Wise Order of the Classics with such skill that deep magic can be discovered in the illuminated texts and lofty wisdom upon their pages. Classicists can draw upon this magic with their voices, a musical instrument, or straight from the pages of their own manuscript notebooks.

The Valiant Order of the Grove

More than independent errants, the Elder King needed knights to defend his realm, and so he created the Sentinels. These warriors wander the Blackwood in his name, righting wrongs, and bringing the wicked to justice when they can. Corruption has seeped even into this august order, such that some Sentinels have begun to lose faith in their fellows.

The Holy Faith of Unity

Outside the Blackwood, much of the world adheres to the Unified faith. These Widelanders revere Oruneal, god of unity, whose eye is light, whose voice is music, and who watches over the world from his seat in the sun. He calls his faithful to go forth and bring other gods under his allegiance as *Orishas*, who are still honored as powerful beings. Those gods and religions who do not join the Unified faith are condemned as demonic, and must sadly be purged from the world.

Outlaws

Those who fall on the wrong side of the law used to be universally awful people. Most outlaws are still despicable, but since corruption has risen amongst the nobility there are increasing numbers of outlaws who merely offended the wrong lord or lady. All outlaws are stigmatized as desperate, evil people, yet some few can prove to be useful allies.

Pagans

Before the Elder King, humans only survived in the Blackwood at the whim of the strange and powerful elves. When the Elder King rose to power, some humans rejected him in favor of the old ways. Over a millennia later, these pagans still worship the elves and live alongside them in the Blackwood's wilderness. They are much-hated, but can make for powerful allies in a pinch.



Gamemaster's Section



Turn Back, Errants! Here There Be Elves!

Nearly fifteen centuries ago, the Blackwood was a much different forest. Humanity was separated into many petty kingdoms: each fighting against the other, and all fighting against the forest. We commanded great and terrible magic in those days, but only through the abomination of blood sacrifice.

In this time, the mightiest ruler among these petty kings and queens was Wulf Ember-Eye, king upon the throne of Castle Trakenholtz. His kingdom was known as the Light Realm, but behind closed doors it had another name: The Kingdom of the Inferno. He expanded his borders by torch and blaze. Riven with rivalries and hatreds, the other rulers were powerless to stop the Light Realm. Still, Wulf Ember-Eye was not able to subjugate them entirely. There was one obstacle left to destroy.

The Elves of Yore

Vast wilderness between each human kingdom stymied Wulf in his efforts. Each wilderness was its own kingdom teeming with elves. Each was a dire threat that drew much of humanity's focus.

Wulf had lost his father and grandfather to one such thicket kingdom, in a shadowy valley not far from his stronghold. Burying one's forebears is reason enough for revenge, but the elves also took his son and daughter in a tragic expedition.

On that fateful day, cradling his lifeless children in his arms, Wulf Ember-Eye swore an oath. He renamed the shadowy elven valley the Dark Realm and swore to purge it from the earth.

The Curse of Wisdom

Elves proved to be harder to burn than humans. Years into his brutal campaign, Wulf had managed to breach the Dark Realm's borders at the cost of a huge portion of his own army. He had one, final chance to strike at the elves.

The Balance of Light and Dark is a battle known only through legend, but even among legends it is one of the foulest and most bitter. We know only that Wulf prevailed in the end. He destroyed the elven valley utterly, but the deed cost him the rest of his army. It was the fatal flaw that would doom his kingdom not long after.

There are none who know that at the end of the battle, when the valley was choked with ash and death, Wulf Ember-Eye stood victorious over the sole surviving elf. He raised his axe to finish his grisly work, when he was struck with a much crueler thought. There, Wulf cursed the elf to live on as a human.

"For 81 generations of man, you and your kind have been a blight on my people. For 81 generations more, I curse thee. Thy woodland heart shall flow with the blood of humanity. Thou, elven filth, who art so different from us in mind and body, shall yet love us completely as thine own self. Our pain shall be thine, even unto the last day of the 81st generation. May it teach you humility."

This done, Wulf turned to survey the devastation he had caused. His enemy was defeated, but his army lay decimated too. It meant most of his smallfolk had died following his mad orders. It meant the ruin of his kingdom.

In the end, Wulf lost his mind and marched with his remaining 12 soldiers into the forest, never to be seen again. To this day, the number 13 remains an ill omen.

The First Generation

The cursed elf wandered the forest for a year, slowly changing into a human boy. With each passing day, he felt a new sensation: pain. And not just his own pain over scraped knees and twisted ankles, but the distant ache of humans wracked with hate and fear.

His transformation complete, the boy walked in the direction of the strongest human ache. Eventually, he arrived at a lone cottage at the border of the Winter Kingdom high in the mountains. There, a mother and father wept quietly in the night. Their modest crop had failed, leaving no food to feed their two young children. For days, the cursed boy lingered at the edge of the forest pondering how to help them and ease his own ache. He found he could still work some of his elven magic, and so he caused their crops to burst back into life. He made himself known to them on the morning they discovered this miracle. Being good-hearted people (and now with food to spare), they welcomed him into their home. He cultivated their fields in secret, and never told them of his magic, his secret past, or the ache his labor helped to relieve.

He seemed to be older than both the family's children, and so the family named him "Older." In time, he grew to manhood. He fell in love with the family's daughter, and she him. They were wed and eventually gave birth to a son, Alder.

In time, Older grew into his name and approached the end of his life. Elderly and bent, he took Alder into the woods just before the spring equinox. There he revealed his secret. He died in his son's arms, and in that moment Older's spirit left his body and entered his son. Alder remained himself, but now he had all the human wisdom and experience of his father. And like the memory of a whisper, his father's spirit was there with him too.

The Elder King

This transfer of mind and spirit continued generation after generation. In time, they came to be known as the Elder family for two reasons. First, each of their patriarchs was wise well beyond their years. Second, they discovered how to circumvent the blood sacrifice necessary for magic. Instead, they venerated their ancestors—already dead—with special rituals and began to draw upon their elders' wisdom long after death. The family grew in power and standing in the Winter Kingdom. In time, they ascended to the throne.

By the time of the 9th generation, the Elder patriarch had cultivated the Winter Kingdom to be more vast and powerful than even the Light Realm of old. He gave all credit to the wisdom of his ancestors, and he instructed his subjects to do the same.

The king of the Winter Kingdom was the first ruler to prefer the branch of diplomacy over the sword of conflict. By these means, he eventually united all kingdoms under his banner. They crowned him the Elder King in the 165th year of his family line, and by that name he has been known in all the years since. The memory of elves faded into fable and legend.

Hidden Secrets, Sudden Realization

Through every generation, not a single soul learned the truth of the cursed elf's ever-renewed life. Even among the royal family, knowledge of the spiritual transference was maintained while the nature of the curse was forgotten. Until Ancestor's Eve in the Year of the King 1440.

On that fateful night, 80 generations after the curse began, the Elder King killed the old year with his son at Starry Meadow Palace. He never had grievances to burn, but this year his wife died in the summer, and the time came for her ashes to help renew the Elder Kingdom.

As the flames rose into a pristine evening sky, the Elder King was struck by a vision of a terrible future. He saw a collapsed kingdom. Elves ran rampant through every city and village. The wailing of women and children could be heard beyond the forest's border. And over it all, there towered a dark and malevolent figure. The Elder King felt the pull of fate in that dark figure's gaze.

So great was his fear that he took his son and fled the kingdom to hunt for his realm's salvation. Foolishly, he trusted his kingdom to weather his absence. When the Elder King realized he was fated to be his own realm's damnation, the ache of a suffering humanity—so long forgotten—wracked him with such pain that he was powerless to resist his transformation. He would never return to his throne.

Doomed Salvation

The Nine Worthies, chosen guardians of the Elder King, set out at once to find their missing liege. They searched for three years before they learned of his hiding place in an ancient ruin far to the east of Vosserlin. Before they went to fetch him, Keeper Quill of the Hall of Classics in Grand Delving approached them. He had discovered a magic biography of the Elder King hidden in the highest chamber of his palace. He revealed to the Worthies the truth of the Elder King's origins.

In that moment, the Nine Worthies upheld their oath to protect the kingdom and forsook the protection of their king. They journeyed to Sky Pillar Monastery, where Master Diedrick, the master bladesmith, forged for them a dagger capable of killing an elf as powerful as the Elder King. The Nine Worthies set out for the Elder King's palace, but none of them would ever return alive.

Lennid Talbrander, the Ninth Worthy, managed to flee the Elder King's new fortress with the dagger. He was killed by a pagan coven but a few miles from the fortress gates. The dagger passed from coven to coven as a strange, powerful trinket. Eventually, it landed in the hands of a witch under the sway of a Caller elf known as Grubtune. There, it awaited a group of heroes to reclaim it, and carry on the quest...

Denvorn Province

Heraldry: Orange chevrons inverted on a Black field

Monsters from out of the eastern wilds are a common trouble in Denvorn. Here on the frontier of the Elder Kingdom, nature is a larger concern than corrupt nobility. Everyone labors because that's what is necessary for survival. The nobility do not exempt themselves from their duties any more than they exempt themselves from the labor effort.

Denvorn Province was settled 12 generations ago by High Lord Falko Denvorn I. The province's many hunters fuel a robust fur trade, but only Denvorn Province woodworkers have mastered the art of lacquering leaves. Normally a skill known only to pagans, Denvorn Province can draw upon the forest's limitless resources to produce many fine pieces of jewelry, armor, and weapons.

In addition to vegetables and root plants, Denvorn farmers raise fowl, goats, and pigs. Denvorn breeds few oxen, but they are hardy. Woodland herbs, hunting trophies, and other natural goods are available for 10% less than the average selling price, but trade goods and clockwork items are twice as expensive as normal.

Castle Highguard

The cursed Castle Highguard is a day's ride north of Talbrand along the shores of Lake Echo. Winter has reigned in that place for many years. Many errants travel to the castle to plumb its mysteries and recover its lost treasures, but none have ever returned. On clear nights, when the moon is gone, the villagers of Talbrand to the south sometimes hear distant wailing carried to them on the wind.

Castle Highguard is the haunt of a Wild Hunt elf. It slaughtered the inhabitants of the castle 9 years ago. A lone member of the Denvorn family escaped, narrowly avoiding the end of his lineage. A Classicist in service to the family gave his life so little Prince Falko could escape, but he managed to bind the Wild Hunt to the castle before he died.

Since that fateful night, Castle Highguard remains locked in eternal winter. A party intrepid enough to survive its horrors might defeat the Wild Hunt for good, bringing peace and warmth back to the castle and surrounding lands.



- **Castle Highguard (pg. 95):** The party could learn about this Savage Tale in just about any tavern or noble court.

Denvorn

Population: 2,015

The first High Lord Denvorn settled atop a rocky prominence in Maiden Valley, at the heart of the province. A bustling town has grown around it in the many years since. Denvorn town is built in tiers: the High Lord's palace and noble quarter, then the merchant's quarter just below, then the common quarter lower still. The wooden buildings are usually long and thin, and can rise as high as four stories above the streets.

Denvorn is famous for its woodworkers. They craft everything from hedge gates to rustic clockwork tools with the same care, all sturdily built and decorated with beautiful carvings. There is usually a rivalry simmering between the town's woodworkers and its hunters. One side tries to bring in the most presitigous game, while the other tries to overshadow its glory with an even more glorious mount.

The sturdy stone walls around Denvorn town protect from elves and other dangers of the forest, but

they cannot protect the town from poverty or crime. To keep the peace, the town's 3 noble houses have 11 sworn knights between them, and 12 guards keep watch under the command of the High Lord. There are usually 20-30 errants in town.

Places of Note

The Firecat Inn and Tavern: Located in Denvorn's lower market, the Firecat is an age-old haven for folks looking to avoid attention. Dim and quiet, rumors abound that shady deals and illicit acts are conducted under The Firecat's low ceiling. Its owner, Hans, fits into the somber scene but proves to have a dry wit nonethless.

Maiden Village: Home to the province's Hall of Classics and most of the town's farmers, Maiden stands in the eastern half of Denvorn's hedge-fields. Most of the province's bread is baked in Maiden, and the Classicists ferment a fine berry wine in their hall.

Noble Quarter: In the highest quarter of Denvorn town, three stately noble manors surround a cliffside ancestral shrine and garden. One of the noble families, House Greenbriar, keeps a master blacksmith on their estate. Castle Denvorn rises above these estates, a lofty stone keep surrounded by many tall towers. It is said the High Lord can see all the way to Span from the highest chambers.

Red Tower: In the forests just south of Denvorn town, a ruined stone tower rises above the trees. Moss as red as blood grows on its southern face. Red Tower is a site of dark tales. There, the eponymous maiden of the valley was imprisoned by a cruel witch many years ago. The witch tormented her daily, and he killed her before she could be rescued by a young Prince Denvorn. Folks say the tower carries the melancholy and remorse of that story to this very day.

- **The Woodkin Tournament (pg. 112):** This Savage Tale could take place in any woodland town, but Denvorn is an ideal location for it.

Lake Echo

The eastern border of Denvorn Province is marked by a wide and lonely lake. Mist gathers on its surface every dawn and dusk, rumors of a dragon somewhere nearby. And sometimes at night, folks in Talbrand swear they hear the mournful tune of a lap fiddle drift across the lake on the wind. They say it's the song of an elf, who once knew the love of a human and can never recover from the heartache of losing him.

Talbrand

Population: 200

An isolated village on a misty lake, Talbrand has known relative peace in the years since the Elder King disappeared. Talbrand keeps to itself, and the Wood seems to leave it alone most of the time. It's proximity to the haunted Castle Highguard doesn't hurt to keep ne'er do wells away either.

Almost a day's hike out into the forest, the village hunting lodge is home to a unique band of errants. The Talbrander Society train in longsword, bow, and hatchet specifically to track down and fight against elven trickery. Their leader, a wiry old man named Pigeon Hawk, studied directly under the Society's founder in his youth.

- **The Seven Quillcrows:** This free Savage Tale is available online.

The Eastern Wilds

Even from the highest mountain peak, the forest beyond Denvorn Province stretches beyond sight into the east. From this unexplored vastness comes abnormally large beasts, brutish trolls, quillcrows, howlers, and other monsters, but mercifully few pagans and elves.

The only things of value in the eastern wilds are the glory of the hunt, and the security the hunt wins for the Elder Kingdom back west. No one lives here unless they seek those things. Although they live in remote isolation from the Elder Kingdom, the hunters of the eastern wilds need not live alone.

The Spearwood Fellowship

Population: 150

Almost all the hunters who roam the eastern wilds are members of the Spearwood Fellowship. Their hall is built in a vast grove of spindly spearwood

trees. These trees can grow over 100 feet tall, but their branches don't grow until dozens of feet off the ground. For this reason, the trunks make perfect hafts for spears and other polearms.

The Spearwood Fellowship trains to move quickly with Leaf Step and to fight off creatures several times their size with coordinated spear tactics. Their leader, a contemplative woman known simply as Moon, is rumored to be a reformed pagan. In truth, she's not the only drifter or outcast who found a home in the Fellowship.

Giant Province

Heraldry: Azure band per fess on a Crimson field, with a Golden beacon charge

Furthest downriver from the Elder King's palace, Giant Province is not the forsaken place you might expect. It has weathered its distance from the seat of the Elder King's power by welcoming river traffic from the Widelands beyond the Blackwood's border. Giant Province is not without its troubles, but the province lays claim to the most expansive hedgefields outside of the Golden Vale itself.

Widelanders and their Unified Celebrants are more common in Giant Province than in any other. Indeed, they have all but replaced the Classicists in the region. It was an amiable arrangement by all accounts, but many rumors question High Lord Theodor's allegiance. One thing is clear: the Widelanders have made themselves appreciated in every class of life, and they seem to want to help the Elder King's subjects.

Commoners raise oxen and horses. They fish and grow crops. Exotic goods of all kinds come upriver from the Widelands. These goods are 10% cheaper here than anywhere else in the Elder Kingdom. Giant Province is also known for it's riverboat craftsmen, the only boatwrights in the realm who make large, long-distance vessels.

Farwater Beach

Population: 14,060

The largest city in the Blackwood is also one of the least involved with Elder Kingdom politics. Farwater Beach serves as the realm's northern outpost on the Lake of the Far Waters, and is the last haven for ships bound outward to the Widelands. It is a cosmopolitan



city, and the only one in the Blackwood to consider news from the wider world in its deliberations.

Outside the Golden Vale, no other city has farmland as wide and fertile at Farwater Beach. The city is a priceless producer of food goods for the region. As the nearest city to the Widelands, Farwater Beach has entire markets devoted to exotic spices, fashion, and other goods.

The city's hedge is wide enough to contain an astounding three villages, with ample farm and pasture land in between. 17 noble families rule within the city's domain. There are 140 sworn knights within these noble families, and 90 vigilant guards are under command of the High Lord himself.

Places of Note

The Beacon: Blazing atop a promontory on the northern edge of the Lake of Far Waters, the beacon marks the boundary of the Elder Kingdom. Its lofty torch welcomes newcomers and bids safe passage to all those who leave.

Boar's Moon Meadworks: Owned by Volker von Knecht, youngest son of the von Knecht brewing clan. The meadery stands in the eastern part of the city proper. The building was originally a hospital, but Volker purchased and converted it after it was attacked by a monstrous boar several years ago. Secretly, Volker believes himself to be that boar, and is terrified of losing control again.

Celebration of Unity: This holy temple of the Unified soars over the noble's market in the heart of the city. Laborer's have begun to clear away the scaffolding as construction draws to a close. It has been 10 years. In that time, the Celebration has become a towering hall of white marble and colored glass. Its bells can be heard as far away as Ten-Mile Hedge.

The Celebration is home to a few dozen acolytes and 14 Celebrants. They hold a service of singing, dancing, and scripture once per week at high noon. Worshippers thank Oruneal for the gifts of Light and Song. They pledge to share His Song while helping others. In these hard times, service is a valuable community feast for the needy as well.

Farwater Harbor: Boatwrights in Farwater Harbor produce most of the ships that ply the Way between Farwater Beach and Span. Their cogs are sturdy and sound, but they also craft ships that can carry a crew and cargo for days downriver, all the way out to the Widelands and back. They speak of a town called Szunpaaz at the edge of the forest, and a whole world without trees beyond.

In the harbor, a bustling market carries goods from the city, its vassals, and from foreign trade ships. An inn around the market, the Grandeur Glaize, was one of the sites of a grisly string of murders just two years ago.

Ten-Mile Hedge: The village south of Farwater proper stands right next to the Farwater hedge, ten miles from Farwater's gates. Outside the Golden Vale, no other hedge expands so far from the city gates. Perhaps it's not much of a claim to fame, but the villagers embrace it.

- **The Starflower Codex:** This mini-campaign takes place mostly in the city of Farwater Beach.
- **Tourist Season:** This free Savage Tale is available online.

After the Starflower Codex

The events of the *Starflower Codex* series of Savage Tales drastically alters the status of Farwater Beach. The Unified may have substantial control over the city, or their Celebration might become a smoking crater. The city is certain to be ravaged by battle, but the extent of the damage depends on the events of two Savage Tales: **Hymn of the Orisha** and possibly also **The Errant's War.**

Ghostlight Bog

At the confluence of the Last River and the Way, right at the mouth of the Long Lake, the land sinks into a wide a fetid bog. It is a difficult region to traverse, full of tangled bramble, quicksand, and acrid gases. Ghostlight Bog takes it name for the bog lanterns native to the area. They float above the waters, and lure passersby toward the many beasts and pagans within.

- **A Light on the Past (pg. 82):** The fourth adventure in the Plot Point Campaign takes place in this swamp.

Giant Mountains

The northeastern extreme of the Elder Kingdom is marked by the Giant Mountains. The Blackwood stretches out immeasurably beyond these peaks, where no man has ever tread. The mountains themselves are rumored to be thick with trolls and other large creatures.

Knuckle Peak: A breakaway from the Giant Mountain's southern slopes, Knuckle Peak is actually a small range of four small peaks. The nearby village of Last Fork worships a legendary monster who lives on Knuckle Peak. In the Elder King's absence, they have taken to calling this creature "the King of Knuckle Peak." They believe he will protect them from harm.

- **The King of Knuckle Peak:** This free Savage Tale is available online.

Last Fork

Population: 167

This spit of a village on the fringe of Giant Province is home to an especially superstitious group of Woodkin. They keep mostly to themselves, but only by subjecting themselves to the whims of a monster from the mountains, the King of Knuckle Peak.

The Long Lake

Perhaps it is no surprise that the last lake in the Elder Kingdom is also the largest. By the time it reaches the Long Lake, the Way has gathered 15 smaller rivers and streams. It pours into the basin of the Long Lake for nearly 10 miles before it coalesces on toward the Widelands.

The Long Lake is home to the bustling city of Farwater Beach. Nearly the entire northern shore of the lake is open to Farwater's legendary hedgefields. The opposite shore leads into the Northern Wilds, which no human has settled in dozens of generations.

Golden Vale Province

Heraldry: Five Azure books in chevron inverted over a White tree on a Golden field

Up in the Heights, above the Blackwood, the Golden Vale has always been a symbol of hope for the realm. Wide and fertile, it is where the Elder King chose to take up residence when he first ascended to power. In the years since his absence, Golden Vale Province remains a haven of peace and security, but the spirit of the people is hit especially hard without his leadership.

So many things come from Golden Vale Province, but two things share equal primacy: the scholarship of the Classicists, and the clockwork technology they developed nearly a century ago. It powers mills, clocks, cranes, and other machinery all throughout the realm. While clockwork may be the most valuable contribution of the Golden Vale, it is also a vital source of artisan crafts, knowledge, and leadership for the Elder Kingdom.

The common folk of the Golden Vale cultivate honey from the alpine flower meadows, and a particularly hardy strain of wheat. The Golden Vale also raises goats, sheep, and cattle, all with much more fur than what's found in the forest below. No goods or services are upcharged in the Golden Vale, and clockwork goods are available for 10% of their regular price.



Grand Delving

Population: 11,980

Home to the Order of the Classics and all its collected wisdom, Grand Delving is the most enlightened city in the Blackwood. Clockwork marvels can be found in every square, and the serenity of the Elderfolk pervades the city's very flagstones. Life is easy here, but settled folk worry about the troubles of their forest kin.

Knowledge may be Grand Delving's greatest treasure, but the city also deals in the quarried marble, mined silver and jewels, and the prolific farmland of the province. The Elder King loves each province equally, but Grand Delving is—without doubt—the crown jewel of the kingdom.

There are 15 noble houses in Three Rivers. 80 guards keep its streets safe, and 120 knights stand ready to come to the city's aid.

Places of Note

Clocksmith Road: Not far from the Root of Wisdom, a broad avenue is crowded with clocksmith workshops and academies. Clocksmith Road is widely regarded to be the most wondrous area of a city full of wonders. Here, even toymakers have integrated clockworks into their creations.

First Harbor: Grand Delving is situated at the first point of the Way's watercourse that is navigable by trade cogs. Thus, the harbor in Grand Delving is the first in the Elder Kingdom. Products like stone are transported by caravan, but all the other goods of the Golden Vale leave from First Harbor.

The Root of Wisdom: Ancient home to the Wise Order of the Classics, the Root of Wisdom is a massive library complex on the highest hill in the city. It contains a copy of every book ever written—indeed, most of them were written here. No books in its collection are more deeply valued than the *Five Classics of Lore and Reason*, the collected wisdom, edicts, and poetry of the Elder King.

The Root operates like a city unto itself. The complex has its own council to govern it, guards to patrol its walls, gardeners, and crafters, all to support its students and researchers.

Stonemason's Square: On the northern outskirts of the city, an old quarry excavation has been converted to a market square for the finest stonemason's in the realm. Many fine sculptors have taken residence here too.

To the Root of Wisdom (pg. 84): The fifth adventure in the Plot Point Campaign takes place in Grand Delving.

The Heights

The southern border of the Elder Kingdom is marked by a long and towering range of mountains known simply as the Heights. No human has ever traversed them and come back to tell the tale, so no one knows what's on the either side. The snow-capped beauty of the Heights is the subject of countless tales and poems.

An arm known as the Lesser Heights breaks off to the north, cradling the Golden Vale. While they are smaller peaks, they are still capped with snow all year and are nearly impossible to traverse.

Quarry

Population: 435

The Lesser Heights cradle the village of Quarry on their southern slopes. This settlement is named for its marble quarry, which produces the finest and most colorful marble in the Elder Kingdom. The people of Quarry also raise particularly hardy goats.

The Spires

At the mouth of the Golden Vale, the Way follows the land down into the Blackwood but another valley leads into a unique and stunning part of the Heights. A range of needlelike column stone called the Spires breaks away from the Heights headed north. Many of them are over 200 feet tall, clustered in small groups or separated by hundreds of feet. Beneath them is a knot of gorges, mist-choked and riddled with caverns and dense foliage.

Hundred Bridges Road: A chain of rope bridges snakes its way across the top of the Spires on the way to the famed Sky Pillar Monastery. The bridges are wide enough for a cart, but most often it is traversed by solitary pilgrims. They go to pay homage to Sky Pillar Monastery, or to supplicate themselves before the masters in hopes of studying there themselves.

Some of the Spires have precarious staircases or ladders leading down into the mists below. It is a dangerous landscape of dragons and pitfalls, but the treasures of unlucky pilgrims lie waiting. Usually hoarded by dragons, the treasure is all gathered together but is fiercely guarded.

Sky Pillar Monastery: The Blackwood is full of masters, both of combat and the arcane arts. The greatest of these make hermitage deep within the needlelike Spire Mountains, in a temple called Sky Pillar. Those who seek the wisdom of these masters must traverse the Hundred Bridges Road, precipitous drops and dragon mists ever-present below.

Starry Meadow Palace

Beyond Grand Delving, up past the grain fields of the Golden Vale, through a peaceful grove of tall sequoias and firs, the Elder King made his home beside Star Mirror Lake. Starry Meadow Palace and its grounds are said to be the beautiful and serene place in the forest, though nearly no one is permitted to visit. For nearly fifteen centuries, it was home to the royal line. For nearly fifteen years, it has stood vacant.

Great Falls Province

Heraldry: Four Black bars per pale divided on an Azure field

In many ways, Great Falls Province is the crossroads of the Elder Kingdom. The portage route at the city of Span is the most obvious example, but it also lies almost exactly in the center of the Way. As the old saying goes "the Great Falls are halfway to everywhere."



Perhaps it's no surprise that the province is also home to many schemes and plots. Right in the thick of things, Great Falls Province is home to more merchant guilds and mercenary companies than any other. This hasn't discouraged the outlaws in the region, who are too tempted by the prospect of raiding portage caravans to steer clear of the province's prolific security efforts. It is a constant struggle between order and chaos.

Meanwhile, the common folk of the province make do to the best of their availability. Most of them live on the rivers, and so raise fishing ducks and harvest river fish. The commoners also goats and pigs, but otherwise Great Falls Province cultivates the fewest grains and other crops in the realm. Woodland herbs and food-based trade goods are 10% more expensive here than average.

The Great Falls

Within the bounds of the Blackwood, there is only one place where the Way's course is interrupted. Right next to the city of Span, a long cliff stretches for nearly 20 miles, and the Way cascades over this cliff in the wide and powerful Great Falls. These huge waterfalls spill into Great Falls Lake, forcing merchants to make portage around a line of rocky cliffs. Without doubt, the Falls are one of the most majestic sites in the Elder Kingdom.

Great Falls Lake: This basin at the foot of the cliffs gathers the Way into a deep lake before the river continues its course north. The majority of Span's hedgefields takes up the majority of the lake's southern shore. The opposite shore of the lake is peppered with several small islands, each rumored to be haunted, infested with pagans, and a variety of other tales.

Span

Population: 9,840

Sister city to Three Rivers, Span is the heart of the Blackwood's trade network. Goods traveling north and south must pass through Span to traverse the Great Falls, so perhaps it's no surprise that more errant companies call Span home than any other city. Its fighting arenas have been legendary entertainment for centuries.

Perhaps it is no surprise either that a city famed for trading and arena fights is home to corruption. Span wears its vices close to the vest. Outwardly a high-walled city of markets and bravado, Span's backalleys are a warren of gambling rings, thieves dens, and all manner of dubious dealings. If the tales are to be believed, even the nobility conceals their involvement in secret orders and sinister cults.

The city of Span is divided up between 12 noble houses. 70 guards regulate strict order within the city walls, while 90 knights stand ready to respond to external threats.

Places of Note

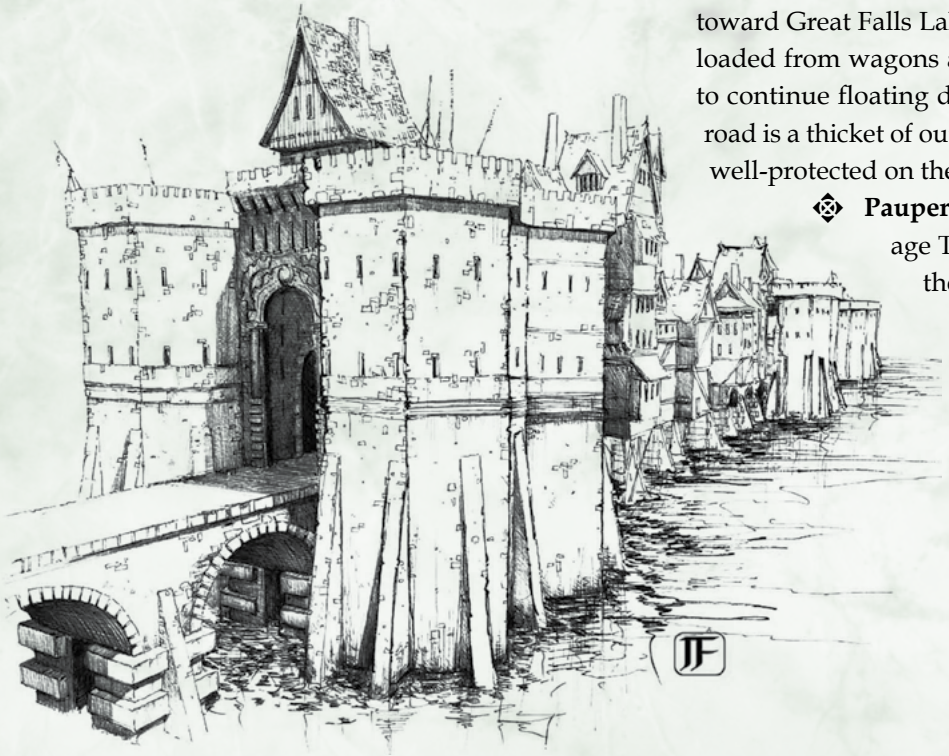
Arena District: Span's many mercenary companies are always vying for attention from potential employers. To that end, the nobility have permitted the presence of public fighting arenas. Errants of every stripe fight in duels and melees for the adoration of the crowd (and the wealth earned through victory). Many arenas are connected to a fighting school. One arena, Red Falcon Keep, features fighters from the city dungeons.

Bridgetown: Not only is Span an important bottleneck between the upper and lower courses of the Way, it's an important crossing point for the river too. The most iconic part of the city is a mighty bridge that spans the river within sight of the Great Falls. It is fortified on either end, and laden with manor houses, guildhalls, and shops in between.

Guildmaster's Way: In Span, if you're not looking for mercenary work then you're probably trying to transport something. If so, a wide avenue just behind the harbor market is your destination. Dozens of merchant guilds can be found along this road, each offering training for aspiring caravaners and services for anyone looking to do business. Most guilds—large or small—engage in all manner of scheming and sabotage against one another.

Lower Span: The town near the feet of the Great Falls is called Lower Span. Rumors say a vast criminal network runs the town, but in truth there is a vast network of vaults and passages underneath Span proper. This literal underworld is home to several outlaw gangs and pauper communities. The black market in this place can secure any item in short order… if you can afford the additional costs.

Portage Road: The Great Falls make a single voyage down the Way impossible. Goods are transferred from ships to wagons in Span, then sent out on a road that skirts the cliffs before doubling back toward Great Falls Lake. There, the goods are unloaded from wagons and loaded back onto ships to continue floating down the Way. This portage road is a thicket of outlaw raiders, so caravans are well-protected on the trip.



- **Pauper's Arena (pg. 100):** This Savage Tale makes a great followup to the first two adventures in the Plot Point Campaign.

Wine Vale

Population: 225

Wine Vale is a decent-sized village next to an equally decent-sized lake off of the road to High Hall. After being attacked and ruined by pagans, Wine Vale may be reclaimed during the course of the Plot Point Campaign. After a few months, settlers help Wine Vale to flourish through farm, trade, and entertainment at what is perhaps the best Inn for dancing in all The Blackwood.

- **Salt, Fire, and Blood (pg. 77):** The second adventure in the Plot Point Campaign takes place in the ruins of Wine Vale.

The Highway-under-Bough

The Blackwood's roaming wilderness causes roadways to drift far from their original courses. Shrine Lanterns, each a memorial to an errant from times past, are placed at every mile to keep the roads from drifting too far. It is a different story for the Elder Kingdom's most famous road, the Highway-Under-Bough.

Also called "the Steadfast," this highway between Grand Delving and the Bastion in the Grove doesn't move an inch thanks to the solid line of Shrine Lanterns on either side of the road. The ancestral magic of this road is so strong that there is even a waist-high hedge between the lanterns and the forest. No road in the realm is safer for travel.

Bastion in the Grove

Population: 1,830

The mighty fortress home of the Sentinels perches on a cliff above the shores of the Way, guarded by a grove of sentrywood pines. From here, the Sentinels seek to level justice against those outlawed under the King's Ban, and against all who are cruel and vicious. All Sentinels train at this castle before embarking on their errantry, and all Sentinels return here at least once each winter, to share news and recommit themselves to the cause.

Service to the Sentinels has been an honorable path for nobles throughout history, so it's no surprise Bastion in the Grove has 5 noble families living permanently within its walls. There are 81 Sentinels who have sworn themselves to the castle's defense.

The Stag and Dragon Inn

Population: 1,430

The High Road runs from Grand Delving in the mountains all the way to Bastion in the Grove in the north. It connects all other roads in the forest, and the Stag and Dragon Inn stands at the halfway point. Larger than many villages, the Stag and Dragon can house hundreds of errants and travelers at a time. There are even fellowships who choose to make the Stag and Dragon their permanent home, but novice and master alike know better than to rouse the ire of the Iron Kitchen Disciples, who own and operate the Inn.

Of the many errantry fellowships who have taken residence at the Stag and Dragon, there are 4 factions that control most of the inn's operations. These factions maintain order with 25 expert guards.

Mead Meadows Province

Heraldry: Three Golden bees on a Purple field

Centered on a lone mountain in the middle of the Elder Kingdom, Mead Meadows Province has always been a stronghold against the wilderness. Still, the High Lord of the province is not as strong as his ancestors, so the Mead Meadows has lost a few settlements to the wilderness since the Elder King's disappearance. Its people carry on, but they are haunted by their lost glory.

Mead Meadows Province has a notable granite quarry, but by far its most valuable export is honey mead from the alpine flower fields around the capital of High Hall. Mead for every social class and every occasion is fermented here.

Perhaps reflecting the beauty of the province's many flower fields, the errants of Mead Meadows Province are the most garishly dressed in the whole kingdom. Sadly, this vanity makes errants from the province especially vulnerable to decadence.

In addition to flower fields and beehives, the common folk raise poultry, goats, and pigs. There are several sculptors and crafters in the province as well, but most are restricted to the capital. Mead is available for 10% less than average in Mead Meadows Province, but all other alcohol is 10% more expensive than elsewhere.



Grama's Brewfarm

Just a day's ride from High Hall, Grama's Brewfarm is the first stop for anyone traveling to Span. It is a small inn with a robust garden, and has been in the same family for generations. Currently, it is owned and operated by a hardy old woman known to all as "Grama."

- **Through the 'Wood (pg. 75):** The opening adventure of the Plot Point Campaign ends up at Grama's Brewfarm.

High Hall

Population: 3,840

In the midst of the Elder Kingdom, nestled in a mountain cleft, High Hall is the most defensible city in the Blackwood. Tales tell that the provincial lord is too stupid to understand fear. He strikes out from his fortress with bravery, but trouble seems to return to the land as soon as his warriors have completed their errands.

Mead Meadows province is famous first and foremost for its sprawling alpine flower fields, and the mead crafted from its thousands of bee farms. High Hall is well-known also for its large limestone and granite quarries. Errants from Mead Meadows pride themselves on aesthetics almost much as on strength and valor.

High Hall is home to 6 noble houses. The city commands a force of 19 guards and 32 sworn knights.

Places of Note

Alpine Meadows: The jewel of High Hall (indeed, the jewel of the entire province) is the massive expansive of flower fields around the city. The buzzing of bees is ever-present in this wide swath of color and sunlight. From these fields, the finest meads in the Elder Kingdom are fermented, barreled, and shipped to every noble court.

The May Family Bank: There is a bank in every city, but the May Family Bank has the most sophisticated vault. As a result, nobility from all across the Elder Kingdom store their valuables here. It should come as no surprise that the bank is fiercely guarded by a veritable army of errant guards.

Mead Meadows Hall of Classics: By chance more than effort, the Hall of Classics in High Hall's Lake District has the largest library outside the Golden Vale. There, books and scrolls can be found on virtually any subject. The head librarian is a brutishly disfigured but warm-hearted man. Rumors say he couldn't even read when he arrived at the Hall of Classics many years ago.

Slope Shacks: Paupers, refugees, and other lower class people are relegated to the shanty town on the slopes above the city. Once sparsely populated with noble estates, the slopes are now packed with dilapidated manors and small, hastily assembled shacks. Gambling, robbery, and other crimes are all just around the corner in the Slope Shacks.

Owl's Watch

Population: 230

One more day from Grama's Brewhouse, the next village on the way to Span is named after a recently-returned errant champion. This place is much the same as any other woodland village: a tight-knit community relying on each other for support, wary of passersby but nonetheless in need of their trade goods. Owl's Watch is raided by an outlaw gang just before the party's first visit.

- **Between Errants and Outlaws (pg. 94):** This Savage Tale is a natural pause between the first and second adventures in the Plot Point Campaign.

The Northern Wilds

For centuries, no human has ventured into the wilds north of Span and survived. According to the tales, there were kingdoms here before the rise of the Elder King. Now, there are only huge thickets at every turn, rampant wilderness and devilishly fearsome beasts. Many foolhardy errants have ventured into this region in search of ruins that are rumored to dot the area. None have ever returned.

Of course, the rumors are true. The northern wilds are covered in some of the most ancient ruins in the Blackwood. Leftover from the time of the Petty Kingdoms, now they are vine-choked tombs. Only intrepid pagans and ghosts dwell there now.

Castle Trakenholtz

Of all the ruins in the northern wilds, none are so large or imposing as Castle Trakenholtz. Once, it was the stronghold of Wulf Ember-Eye, the same ancient king who cursed the elf who eventually became the Elder King. It is a massive, solitary tower, rising up above the surrounding forest like a dead, hollowed out tree.

It is to this place of darkness and dread that the Elder King has fled. For 14 years, he has imbued Castle Trakenholtz with his power, even as he has begun the path back toward elven madness. Many pagans and monsters have flocked to his rallying call, ready to strike out against the Elder Kingdom once its former sovereign finally transforms back into his natural form.

- **Crisis of the 81st Generation (pg. 90):** The eighth adventure in the Plot Point Campaign takes place almost entirely at Castle Trakenholtz.
- **The Elder King (pg. 92):** The ninth and final adventure in the Plot Point Campaign begins at the top of this dreaded tower.

Stonecrown Province

Heraldry: Green chevron on a Black field

No province has suffered hardships like Stonecrown. Pagans poured from the western mountains to ravage the land and sack the city of Vosserlin. Here on the northern frontier of the Elder Kingdom, no one has been able to rally enough fighters to take back the realm.

Perhaps it's no surprise, then, that there are no goods produced here. No other province has so many pagan interlopers. Hunters manage to bring in furs, meat, and foraged herbs, but otherwise there are only mercenary errants and outlaws in Stonecrown Province. Because of these hard conditions, all goods are 50% more expensive than average in Stonecrown Province.

Bracken

Population: 1,780

With the province's former seat now a haunted ruin, there is only one settlement left in Stonecrown. The town of Bracken, little more than a fortified outpost, is ruled by an errant petty-lord and filled with a wild and desperate folk.



Outlaws and pagans are as common in Bracken as anyone else. As the only anchor of an embattled frontier, people are less concerned with ideological differences than with survival. There are many ruins to plunder in Stonecrown, if you can brave the wilderness and fend off the many rivals in the area.

Beneath the petty-lord of the town, there are 5 factions scattered around the city. These factions control 20 knights between them, while the petty-lord has a force of 11 guards to respond to serious threats to the outpost.

- **Vosserlin Reclaimed (pg. 110):** This Savage Tale can be discovered just about anywhere, but it begins in the town of Bracken.

Iron Lake

Once, Iron Lake was rich with trade in the titular ore. Miners in the Stonecrown Peaks brought iron, gems, and other ore to the waterfront, where ships would carry the goods out into the Elder Kingdom. Now, the lake is better named for its dark waters than for these forsaken goods. Lying between Bracken and the ruins of Vosserlin, Iron lake is said to all the sorrows from these dark times.

The Stonecrown Peaks

These lofty peaks mark the furthest northwest anyone has ever traveled from the Elder Kingdom. They are dark and inhospitable mountains, although many pagans live in the valleys below. For that reason, the Stonecrown Peaks are sometimes known by another name, the Pagan Crown.

Vosserlin

Population: 2,180

Once, Vosserlin was the seat of the province. Almost two years ago, the largest pagan coven anyone had ever seen poured down out of the mountains and decimated the city. Noble and commoner alike were driven out or killed by hundreds of pagans and their beastly thralls.

The city's hedge has long since collapsed. The city walls and buildings on the outskirts have been ripped apart by encroaching trees. Many of the buildings in the interior still stand, but the streets are choked with vines and undergrowth. At night, the sound of pagan drums can be heard deep in the heart of the ruins.

After Vosserlin Reclaimed

If the party helps Jurg von Fatherton reclaim the city, it will take months for the damage to be undone. Eventually, the ancestors are hallowed once again, the hedge grows anew, and the city begins to recover. Our errant heroes may choose to help Vosserlin regain some of its former glory, so there are many ways the city might gain a new foothold in the region.

Even if the party doesn't stick around after the battle, Vosserlin becomes the home of 5 noble houses. 20 armored knights are sworn into the service of these houses, drawn from the most doughty fighters in the battle. Many of the other errants in the battle choose to stick around as protectors, so Vosserlin has a disproportionately high number of guards. There are 40 guards in total.

- **Leafstone and Silk:** This free one shot adventure is available online.

Three Rivers Province

Heraldry: Three Azure bands bendy on a Green field

One of the most idyllic provinces in the Elder Kingdom, Three Rivers Province is well known for its many



craftsmen, storytellers, and noble courtiers. Three Rivers Province knows a little of the Golden Vale's serenity, Stonecrown's passion, and the savvy of the Great Falls. It has known hardship in the Elder King's absence, but not as much as many other provinces.

Other provinces are better known for producing crops, or orchestrating trade efforts, or training hardy warriors. Three Rivers Province holds its own in each of these regards, but it distinguishes itself in the realms of art and celebration. Festivals in Three Rivers Province are the envy of the realm. Even in these dark times, the people of the province find cause to celebrate with their whole hearts.

The commoners of Three Rivers Province subsist on fish, fowl, goats, and pigs. They also cultivate crops, especially vegetables and river rice. There are no good in Three Rivers Province that are more or less expensive than average.

Dunkelfluss

Population: 180

Dunkelfluss has always been a small family estate, but in recent years it has grown into a proper town thanks to its policy of welcoming refugees and putting them to work for the good of the settlement.

Longwater Town

Population: 940

The largest town within the Three Rivers hedge lies on the southern bank of the Way. Longwater Town is an important staging point for caravans making their way south into Mead Meadows province and beyond. Fish rolls—raw cuts of fish wrapped in rice, riverweed, and various vegetables—are an original delicacy of the settlement that have spread to every corner of the Elder Kingdom.

Three Rivers

Population: 6,930

Sister city to Span, Three Rivers is home to the greatest artisans in the Elder Kingdom. Three Rivers borders on Stonecrown province, but its bold defenders have kept the city and its villages safe. The lady of Three Rivers is perhaps the wisest noble in the Elder Kingdom, but can she protect her people from a tide of darkness?

While Three Rivers has its own croplands, it is more famous for the work of its many artisans. Known also as the City of Painted Splendor, Three Rivers is made more beautiful by a plethora of sculptors, painters, musicians, storytellers, and fine craftsmen of every stripe. Many of these are also errants, who use the tools of their trade to fight as fiercely as any outlaw or Sentinel.

There are 7 noble houses in Three Rivers. A force of 65 guards stands watch over the city, and 70 knights have sworn their services to the city's nobility.

Places of Note

Artisan District: Some of the finest artists, sculptors, actors, and other artisans make the city of Three Rivers their home. By far, the majority of them live in a district very near the Twin Harbors market. This proximity makes it all the easier to transport their works or set up in the market for performances.

Twin Harbors: The two major markets in Three Rivers are actually on either side of the Ram River. Almost identical in their layout, they are commonly referred to as twin sides of a unified whole. Several ferries transport people and goods from one market to the other.

Palace on the Celestial Terrace: Elevated above the rest of the city, nestled among a series of low hills, the palace of the High Lord of Three Rivers is a sight to behold. Wide, low halls spread over the entire complex, and pleasant music drifts from behind its walls at all times of day.

River Rice Floodplains: Three Rivers is so named because it was built at the confluence of the Way, the Ram River, and the Westwash. Every spring, snowmelt floods the banks of each river. The cities and settlements around this confluence have canals, dikes, and other methods for dealing with the flooding, but a good portion of the shore is allowed to flood to better cultivate river rice.

- **The Riverfolk Tournament (pg. 101):** This Savage Tale is best played sometime between the third and fourth episodes of the Plot Point Campaign.

The Way

Named for the Elder King's law, which flows down this mighty river from the Golden Vale to the Widelands and even out toward a mysterious place known as "the sea," the Way is the single constant in this ever-changing forest. It is the backbone of life in the Elder Kingdom. It is navigable by boats even high up in the mountains, and it only falters in its course once, at the Great Falls. All rivers flow into the Way, and it is said all of humanity draws upon its clear waters for sustenance.

Steps Along the Way

These locations were created by the Sentinels and Nobility listed on the Roll of Errantry in this book. They make great drop-in locations no matter where you're adventuring in The Blackwood. Some of these locations may actually be ruins. If that's the case, craft a quick Savage Tale that tasks our errant heroes with reclaiming the site. A few weeks or months may need to pass afterward for the site to be ready for player interaction, but time moves slowly in the Elder Kingdom. Usually, it's fine to just skip ahead on the calendar.

1. Adelbert Woods Farm and Cloister (Hall of Classics)

The village of Adelbert Woods counts itself lucky to house this Hall of Classics within its hedge. Some of the brothers and sisters here are highly knowledgeable about farming, and guide the seasonal crops with precision. Other Classicists at the Hall are dedicated students of lore. They know the wisdom of the past, and they delight in teaching it to the villagers for the benefit of future generations. So long as there are Classicists in the Hall, it makes for a stalwart ally in the fight against the elven wilds.

Hook: Many brothers and sisters at the Adelbert Woods Hall could tell the party about legends near and far. Despite his speciality with farming techniques, Brother Aurochs is the only man in the province who knows one of its oldest secrets. While foraging, he stumbled on a recent burnout in the forest nearby. The fire uncovered the ruined House of Mad Katerlin. There, a bitter old widow brought the ruin of her household while trying to contact elves in the name of revenge. The family's riches were lost with the house… until now.

2. Castle Dorvert (Castle)

Located within its own hedge just a day's ride from a large city, Castle Dorvert shelters and employs a few dozen commoners. Its primary function is to grow wheat for a pair of nearby villages and to provide defense for the immediate area. Baroness Dorvert has ruled in the castle for a decade. She came to power years after the Elder King's disappearance, and so she feels no particular obligation to obey his laws. She is decisive, but lack of oversight has also made her decadent.

Hook: The Baroness is obsessed with her beauty. It is a symbol of her youth, and her youth is what she must protect if she doesn't want to waste away like her late husband. She also instructs commoner girls within her domain on matters of noble etiquette. Within a few years, the girls are well educated and always seem to seek their fortunes out in the wider world (much to the sorrow of their parents).

Secretly, Baroness Dorvert has made a deal with an elf. If she will but bathe in the blood of beautiful, intelligent girls, her youth and beauty will be retained forever. One of the doleful parents tells the party she suspects something strange is going on at the castle. She offers to pool her village's resources as a reward if the party can find their daughters.

3. Further Peaks (Camp)

In the midst of the fog, mist, and vapor of the forests, there is a mountain camp called Further Peaks. It is where ill-informed pilgrims and other hopefuls come to meet and commune with dangerous elves. There isn't much in the way of amenities in the camp--you won't find a blacksmith or an apothecary--but you should be able to barter amongst the pilgrims and camp stewards for whatever it is they've brought with them.

Most of the pilgrims have a positive demeanor. The stewards tend to be more curt, they truly know what goes on with the pilgrims: blood offerings.

Hook: In a town of honest people lives off the land near Further Peaks camp. One of these people approaches the players and tells them the story of how one of their immediate family members has run away to Further Peaks to commune and cavort with the elves. They can't offer much

for the party's help, but if elves are involved then there's sure to be hoarded treasure somewhere. This humble villager is secretly an influential noble trying to weasel out of paying them. If they rescue his family member, the party could hold her for ransom.

4. Honest Ron's Discount Used Goods (Shop)

Famed for welcoming all manner of folk--from the lowliest of travelers to the most famed of heroes--the door to "Honest Ron's Discount Used Goods" sits beneath a relatively plain looking sign of otherwise exceptional quality. Inside, all manner of goods can be found, from things as simple as tankards, bowls, and traveling gear, to weapons, armor, and unique items most general good stores won't carry.

Seated behind the large counter near the back of the store keeping a watchful eye on his wares is Honest Ron himself, conducting business as usual. Renowned for buying and selling all manner of items, virtually everything on display is for sale, and there are few things Ron won't consider purchasing if he believes he can turn a profit on it.

A popular store among travelers and adventurers looking to unload their spoils for a fair price and restock their own supplies, Honest Ron's Discount Used Goods is best placed in one of the larger cities. Heavy foot traffic and the support of the local law enforcement make it easy to maintain his thriving business.

Hook: Items of varying quality can be found in Honest Ron's Discount Used Goods, including the occasional hidden treasure or magic item. A player can spend a Benny to describe one such item, while the GM decides the item's value. Then, the player can negotiate a 50% discount for the item with a Persuasion roll at a -2 penalty. This roll can receive modifiers for good roleplay. If they fail the Persuasion roll, they tipped off Ron about the item's true value and must pay full price if they want the item. New goods are always coming into the shop, so you never know what you might find. One day there could be a coat with jewels stuffed in the lining. Another day, there could be a magic flying carpet!

5. Lincolnswift Ford (Village)

Lincolnswift Ford is more like a giant swap meet than an actual settlement. There is a core of permanent residents, but the Ford's real claim to fame is as a gathering place for tinkers and merchants from all over the Blackwood. They are always vying for the most impressive goods: bragging about their wares, striking deals, and establishing contacts.

The most famous place in Lincolnswift is the bare field just outside the small cluster of buildings that make up the village. Once every couple of weeks, the field is filled to the brim with wagons and carts piled high with trade goods. When the field is empty, the local villagers love to use it to play a local sport. "Chaseball" is played by two teams, who each try to kick a ball through goalposts set up on either end of the field.

Hook: A group of local youths have grown to hate the arrival of the swap meet. They just want space to play Chaseball! They've resolved to chase away the tinkers and merchants for good by spreading rumors that the village is haunted. There have even been reports of theft and damaged property in the dead of night. Is there any truth in the claims of the youth, or have they turned to sabotage?

6. Mad Mab's Swillhouse (Tavern)

Midway between two towns, this seedy inn and tavern is out of sight from the eyes of the law. Most folks think of it as a backwater dive, fit only for inbreds and paupers. Secretly though, the Swillhouse is a vital node in a vast black market network. Its proprietor, a large woman with even larger hair, has done her best to cultivate the former image while keeping the latter reality a secret.



The front doors of the Swillhouse are connected directly to the docks. There's a back door that leads out into the forest, but the vast majority of visitors enter the other way. There are a few dingy pallets in the attic for weary travelers, but otherwise it's just a dimly lit tavern full off swindling game tables and watered-down ale.

Hook: Mad Mab is a clever woman. She puts up a front of elf-addled cluelessness, but anyone who knows the code phrase can see another side to her. Anyone who asks her to "take me for a walk under the Sycamores" will be lead down a short staircase hidden behind the bar. In the basement, Mab's got a cache of crates full of illicit goods. Just about anything can be purchased out of the Swillhouse, if you're willing to spend the time and coin to get it.

7. Riverside Mill (Village)

The people of Riverside Mill care more about honest work than cleverness. Long ago, someone built a mill by this river, and the village has grown up around it through the generations. They barter grain from the passing trade ships, grind it into flour, bake it into loaves of bread, and then trade it back out again. The people of Riverside Mill are especially fond of the Starflower Festival on the Summer Solstice.

Hook: Not far from Riverside Mill, there's a tree that grows upside down. Its bare roots rise into the sky, and if you dig into the earth around it you'll find branches covered with leaves. They say a nearby elf keeps the tree from righting itself. Worse, villagers have started noticing items in their village are irreversibly flipped upside down too. They've called upon the errants to rid them of this elven meddling!

8. The Robert Ervin (Ruined Ship)

You come across an old ship landlocked and abandoned in the forest. It is the Robert Ervin, so named for an egotistical third son of a great lord who, never to inherit, turned pirate and was so brazen or foolish that he went by his own family name. No one knows how the ship's captain, Robert Ervin himself, and his crew came to their end, and no one has seen the ship in years. How it got stuck in a small pond is anyone's guess.

Hook: You've heard tales of the Robert Ervin, which was successful for many years and created many legends of stolen treasures. One legend tells of a magic flute known to affect its target based on the skill of the player and the tunes they can create. When you find the ship, you see a woman up in the crows nest calling for help. She is trying to play the flute but is weak from starvation. She begs you to save her. Secretly, she is a ghost, luring the unwary within range of the ship's ghostly crew.

9. Sir Theobold von Denvorn's School of the Green Blade (School)

For some, swordplay is not merely a physical endeavor. Many warriors have learned to make use of the Blackwood's natural magic when they draw steel. Such is the way of things at the School of the Green Blade. Here, an aging knight teaches his students to tirelessly root out wickedness and injustice. Under its heavy rafters, students learn techniques to capitalize on their strength and sturdiness. Upon the school's broad lawn, the students learn to summon whirlwinds of razor-sharp grass and leaves to lash their opponents.

Hook: Sir Theobold von Denvorn does not accept just anyone. To be his student, one must love justice and hate wickedness. However, if a student can demonstrate these virtues, they may study either the Boar School or the hidden Way of the Dragon from this respected master.

10. Wine Vale (Ruined Village)

Wine Vale is a decent-sized village next to an equally decent-sized lake. After being attacked and ruined by pagans, Wine Vale may be reclaimed during the course of the Plot Point Campaign. After a few months, settlers help Wine Vale to flourish through farm, trade, and entertainment at what is perhaps the best Inn for dancing in all The Blackwood.

Wine Vale has historically been known for its trade of a unique crystal called Naudiz that forms when lighting strikes the lake or its connecting river. A rare sediment on the shores of the water creates crystals with a bright purple glow that gently pulsate when held. These crystals are believed to warn the owner of impending danger.

Hook: Despite its fast recovery and repopulation, something has been amiss in Wine Vale. The crystal panners have been bringing in smaller and smaller hauls of Naudiz. Little was thought of this until a young boy returned home from the lake one day, a crystal in his hand and his clothes stained with red. The crystal was not glowing bright purple, radiating the familiar warmth. Instead, the Naudiz was bleeding from a small crack in its surface. What could be causing this strange phenomenon?

Treasure

Use the Treasure Tables from the *Fantasy Companion* to stock encounters with the appropriate treasure. Here's a list of Blackwood-specific magic items you can add to the game.

Storybound Treasure

Each of these treasures are discovered in the course of specific Plot Point adventures and Savage Tales.

Blunderbuss Dragon Gun ($600) *(8G; 10/20/40, 1-3d6; RoF 1; Weight 12; Min Str d6)*

This stout, short-barreled firearm sprays burning shot in a wide blast. The Dragon Gun deals 1d6 damage at Long range, 2d6 at Medium range, and 3d6 at Close range. Also at Close range, projectiles are burning red and deal an additional 1d4 fire damage. If this die Aces, apply the Spot Fire Hazard to the target. It takes 2 actions to reload the firearm.

The Byways Wheels ($6500)

These large wagon wheels are painted a surprising shade of red. When mounted on a wagon, the elven magic within these wheels grant a +2 bonus to Driving rolls. However, this ability is only granted when the driver is not knowingly headed toward danger.

The wheels also allow a wagon to travel on the Byways, a strange road through the Elven Wilds. When using the Elven Wilds setting rule to travel to a desired location, the Byways Wheels allow the driver to skip safely through the trip with a successful Driving roll. This roll is made at a -2 penalty if the driver is knowingly headed toward danger.

Fire Lance ($300) *(3d6, Reach 1, Weight 2)*

Inspired by the fireworks of the Starflower Festival, this polearm is capped by a long, narrow pot with a fuse sticking out of its base. When lit, the pot sprays fire at targets up to 10 feet away. It takes 2 actions to reload the fire lance.

The Gold-Emerald Shroud of Harmony ($11,000)

This large tapestry, measuring 10 feet by 5 feet, has been used as a coronation cape for every Elder King since 183 YK. It was the very first depicting of the Elder King's heraldry, woven by Sister Elsbeth from pure gold and emerald spun into string. It is a resplendent and humbling work of art.

Whatever the shroud covers is humbled before the immense task of ruling over the Elder Kingdom. When worn, the shroud functions as the *dispel* power for any power the wearer attempts to cast. The shroud rolls a d12 for the *dispel* check with a +4 bonus.

It Shall Be Cut ($20,000)

Exquisite in its simplicity, this dagger is the final masterpiece of Master Diedrick of Sky Pillar Monastery. Its powers are many. First, Fighting rolls with the dagger are made at a +2 bonus, and the dagger has 2 points of Armor Piercing. Three times per day, the wielder can imbue the dagger with the *smite* power with a successful Spirit roll. It Shall Be Cut was crafted in a salted forge, and drank the life force of Master Diedrick in the forging. It fulfills the salt and blood requirements for killing elves.

Finally, the true powers of It Shall Be Cut become apparent when in close proximity with the Elder King. Whenever the dagger is within 5" of the Elder King, all elves become Extras within a Large Burst Template centered on the dagger. The Elder King himself is a sole exception.

The Lantern of Respite ($4000)

This rounded, metal lantern glows with a light from out of the realm of spirits. With a successful Spirit roll, the bearer of the Lantern of Respite can communicate with the local ghosts as per the Connections Edge.

With two or more raises on the Spirit roll, the errant manages to summon the ghost of Lennid from the lantern. A natural tracker and swordsman when he was alive, the Ninth Worthy has become a hunter and jailer of evil in the spirit realm. Much news of the living world reaches his ears, and he can lend the party command of five ghostly warriors.

Mosqat's Prophecy of Light ($600) *(.75; 10/20/40; 2d8; RoF 1; Weight 15; Min Str d6; AP 3)*

Long and thin, this firearm's elegant mechanism is topped with a lens of Unified glass. With the Aim maneuver, halve all range penalties with the Prophecy of Light. If the damage roll succeeds with a raise, the searing blast of the shot affects a single adjacent target too. It takes 2 actions to reload the firearm.

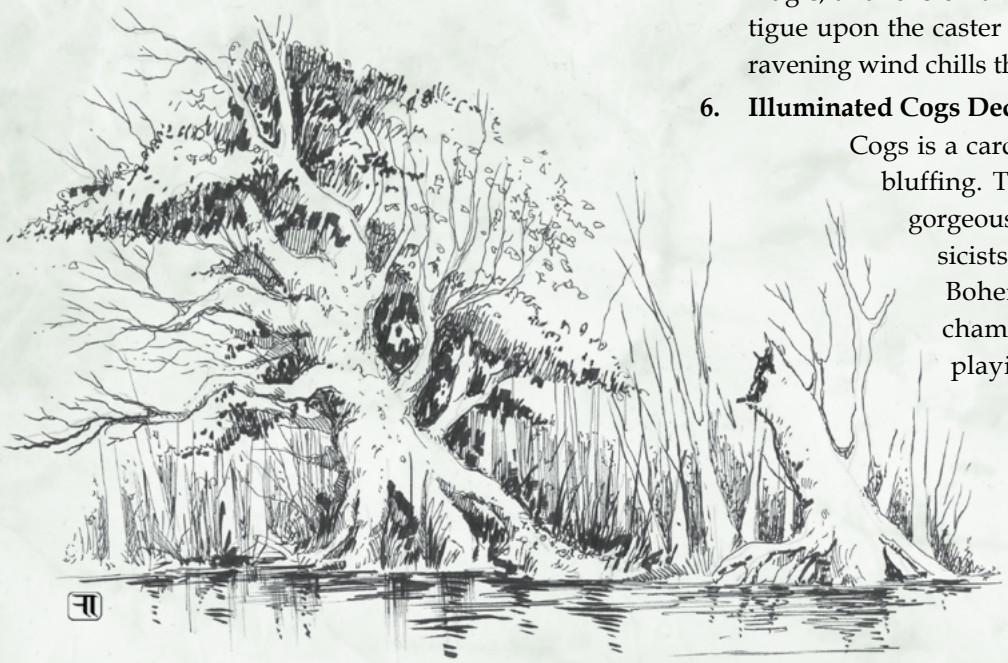
Two-Heart Spear ($5000) *(Str+d6; 3/6/12; Parry +1)*

This spear has a dark sentrywood shaft and a blade of glowing leafstone. Once per combat, the wielder can create a copy of the spear that fights on its own with a successful Spirit check. The copy is treated as an Extra with Parry 6, Toughness 6, and a Fighting die of d6.

Magical Treasure

If you have need of a magic item within a treasure hoard, roll a d20 on this table. Some of the items are unique, while there are several extant specimens of some others.

1. **Compass Leaf ($50)**
   Leaves from the enchanted Compass Shrub unerringly point north when the leaf settles to the ground. This leaf fills a human's palm, and has been lightly lacquered for durability. Simply throw it in the air, and the longest of the leaf's three points will show the way north when the leaf settles.



2. **Dragon Pearl ($4000)**
   Secreted within the mouth of a dragon, this fist-sized pearl is always warm to the touch. When thrown, treat it like the *blast* power. Dragon pearls are reusable, but they must be retrieved from wherever they landed first.
3. **Friar Dalca's Bell ($6500)**
   A hand bell and a relic once carried by Friar Dalca of the Unified. Ever a defender of his Celebration and its realm, the Friar's stalwart vigor still resonates in the bell's tone. Whoever tolls the bell can cast either the *burst* or *pummel* powers with a Sonic trapping. The bell has an arcane skill of d8 and 10 power points.
4. **Gear Key ($2000)**
   This device, a favorite of clocksmiths and thieves, looks like a sword hilt with a tangle of metal picks and wires protruding from one end. Dials in the pommel of the device adjust the height and arrangement of the picks for a variety of locks. The gear key grants a +2 bonus to Lockpicking rolls.
5. **Herald of the Ravening Wind ($6,500)**
   A hunting horn used by the Wild Hunt, this artifact is a herald of fearful journeys. Blowing upon the horn forces everyone within a Large Burst Template to make a Fear check at a -2 penalty. Twice per day, the bearer may use the horn to cast the *teleport* power with a successful Spirit roll. Because the horn is powered by capricious elven magic, a failure on this roll inflicts a level of Fatigue upon the caster and any passengers as the ravening wind chills them to the bone.
6. **Illuminated Cogs Deck ($1500)**
   Cogs is a card game about strategy and bluffing. This set of playing cards is gorgeously illuminated by the Classicists, and was once owned by Bohemian Bart, regular Cogs champion of yesteryear. After playing at least one game of Cogs with these cards, the owner gains +1 to Gambling rolls. Once per month, the owner can use these cards to see the future as per the *divination* power.

7. **Kettle Helm of Sir Pietr the Youthful ($8000)**
The errant who first learned the magic of Leaf Step was known for many tricks and talents. It is said Sir Pietr the Youthful slept easy every night, because his own shadow watched over him from dusk til dawn. It turns out the tales were true, and (unknown to most) Sir Pietr was able to rely upon his shadow thanks to a magical helmet he won from a pagan in a game of chance.

   This wide-brimmed hat of lacquered leaves resembles the kettle helmets worn by guards and Sentinels. Twice per night, the helmet grants the wearer the ability to summon a shade as if she was using the *summon ally* power. This power can only be used at night. If the shade is slain, the wearer suffers a level of Fatigue and loses her shadow for 2d4 days. The shade cannot be summoned again until her shadow returns.

8. **Law of the Land ($2000)**
This ponderous legal tome is enchanted to change the writing on its pages to reflect the local laws and customs. After spending 24 hours in a single region, the tome provides a +2 bonus to all Knowledge (Law) checks within the region.

9. **Lay of the Land ($2000)**
A magical map scroll that changes according to the local terrain. After spending 24 hours in a single region, the map provides a +2 to all Survival checks within the region.

10. **Leafstone Brooch ($1500)**
Money talks. When the command word is spoken, this brooch fashioned from a leafstone coin flits away as if caught up by the wind. It travels to the nearest member of the Coins and is a signal for their aid. Treat this as the Connections Edge, with an automatic success. 2d4 Coins respond in 2d4 rounds.

11. **Leafstone Caravans Dice ($1500)**
Caravans is a game about luck and bluffing. Ralf Barnstar, gambler extraordinaire, once owned this set of five six-sided dice. His ancient luck is still carried within. Anyone who plays at least one game of Caravans with these dice will gain the Luck Edge as long as they keep the dice in their possession. If the owner already has the Luck Edge, gain +2 to Gambling rolls instead.

12. **No-Fire Smoke ($200)**
Crafty woodland hunters have learned how to capture a campfire's smoke within fist-sized wicker balls. These ashen bombs explode into a dark, heavy cloud when thrown. Treat this effect like the *light/obscure* power with a trapping of thick smoke. This item is consumed when used.

13. **Puissant Inkwell of the Illuminated Keeper ($5500)**
A woman named Script, an ancient Keeper of Classics, remains the greatest illuminator in the order to this day. It is said her quill could rule provinces and create life. Anyone who stores their ink in the Puissant Inkwell gains a +2 to Persuasion when writing letters. The Inkwell also allows the owner to paint upon the very air. In this way, they can craft one device per session as per the Gadgeteer Edge.

14. **Tapestried Sail ($1000)**
The image of a golden ship on tempestuous waters is embroidered upon this large, azure sail. The image is so inspiring it grants a +1 bonus to Boating rolls by anyone on the ship.

15. **Rainbow Raven's Mantle ($2000)**
Once, the land was always winter. All animals wanted was to be warm. They spoke about what to do, and decided to send someone to ask the sun to shine brighter. Fox offered to go, clever and fiery as he was, but King Pheasant insisted that Raven go instead. Raven spun words like silk but secretly King Pheasant was jealous of Raven, for in those days ravens had beautiful, many-colored feathers. When Raven finally convinced the sun, it burst forth so suddenly that Raven's feathers were charred an oily black. Raven's voice was scoured away too, so now ravens can only croak.

   This mantle of garish feathers grants a +3 bonus to Persuasion rolls. However, it is so ostentatious that the wearer suffers a -2 penalty to Charisma when speaking to commoners.

16. **Riverboat Boots ($2000)**
These knee-high boots are crafted from the black leather of river rays. The countless small hooks on the rayskin make easy work of even the tallest ship's rigging. Wearing the Riverboat Boots grants a +1 bonus to Climbing rolls, and a +1 bonus to any Agility Trick that involve climbing or vaulting off of walls.

17. **Silken Shawl ($500)**
    Acrobats seem to recover from every fall. When worn, this shawl slows down a person's descent enough to avoid falling damage from any height. It is, however, very gaudy, and imposes a -1 to Charisma when worn among the nobility.
18. **Weather Stick ($3000)**
    It's said the woodkin learned the magic of weather sticks from the pagans (long before they came to cross purposes). The magic is simple: what happens to the stick happens to the weather. Sprinkle the stick with water? It starts raining. Tease it with a match? There's a heat wave. Wave it around and the wind is sure to pick up. The stick can work any of this magic three times per week. But beware: keep it out of the elements it helps to create, or its effects will be compounded.
19. **Wild Scepter ($5500)** *(Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach, 2 Hands)*
    The owner of this magical quarterstaff can change its size at will. It can be as small as a toothpick, as big as a fallen tree, or anywhere in between. The staff has 10 Power Points, which the wielder can use to cast *burst* (Trunk Smash), using Spirit as the arcane skill.
20. **Wingseed Pouch ($1000)**
    Twice per session, the winged maple seeds in this leather pouch grant the Leaf Step Edge for a single scene or combat. The seeds must be thrown in the air to be activated.

Cursed Treasure

Sometimes, the events of a story may call for a piece of treasure to be cursed. You can create your own cursed treasures with the help of the *Fantasy Companion*, but here are a few examples to get your imagination started.

1. **Boots of the Puppet (Cursed)**
   These boots force the wearer to make an immediate Spirit check at -2 when worn. On a failure, the wearer will attack any nearby person and attempt to flay their skin. Each hour, make another Spirit check to maintain or regain control. The curse ends as soon as the boots are removed. The wearer has no memory of his actions during the curse.
2. **Yoke of the Beast (Cursed)**
   At first glance, this is an ordinar golden necklace with a few inlaid gems. When worn, its true, sinister purpose is revealed. Cursed by a fallen Classicist, this necklace transforms into a heavy wooden yoke that cannot be removed. It imposes the Enchanted (Major) Hindrance upon the wearer, turning them into a draft animal from dawn to dusk each day. To break the curse, the errant must complete a Savage Tale, **In Search of Ruin.**
3. **Burglar's Badge (Cursed)**
   This badge, a bracelet carved from ivory and leafstone, was once owned by Cutpurse Cat, a famous burglar. It was stolen by her greatest rival, but not before she uttered a curse upon it. Anyone who wears this bracelet should roll 1d6: on a 1-2, the gain the Blind Hindrance; on a 3-4 they lose their hearing instead (use the same penalties as the Blind Hindrance). On a result of 5-6, they lose their voice. The curse is lifted as soon as the bracelet is removed, but the curse can only be lifted from the object by seeking out Cutpurse Cat's rival with an **Outlaw Bounty** Savage Tale.
4. **Tapestry of the Wilds (Cursed)**
   Tapestries are not uncommon items in treasure hordes. This tapestry in particular is a particularly dense design depicting the wilderness in abstract. Anyone who looks at the tapestry for more than a few moments is sucked into a wilderness of thread. Conduct a trip through the Elven Wilds (with a threadlike trapping) to escape again.
5. **Dizzying Heights (Cursed)**
   Once, a wealth nobleman in Span had a fine pair of elevated shoes. It helped him keep his robes out of the mud as he traveled to his many affairs. His wife, understandably, grew jealous, and found a witch to curse these shoes. Now, anyone who wears them suffers a short-term, debilitating Disease Hazard from the *Savage Worlds core rules*.
6. **The Golden Dice**
   This set of golden Caravans dice would make the perfect addition to any gambler's kit. At least, they would if they weren't cursed with bad luck. Anyone who possesses these dice suffers the Bad Luck Hindrance. It takes a successful Notice roll at a -4 penalty to notice the effects of these dice. This roll can be made anytime the dice are used, up to once per session of play.

Adventures

The adventures in this book are divided into 2 categories: Plot Point Adventures, and Savage Tales. Of the Savage Tales, some are fully fleshed out adventures and some are seeds for you to grow into completes adventures.

Anytime you see this symbol: ✥, it's followed by the title of an adventure and its page number within the book. When your group enters an area with such a link, you can quickly skim the corresponding entry and decide whether or not you want to present the lead. Then it's entirely up to your party whether or not they follow up on it.

The Plot Point Adventures are essential to the overall campaign story. You don't have to follow that story, but if you do then you'll need to run them in order at the appropriate times (described next). Plot Point Adventures are marked with a wax seal graphic, as seen to the left.

The Plot Point Adventures are not designed to be run back-to-back. Between these adventures, allow the party to go where they want. You can either use the Savage Tales listed at any location the party visits, let the players get up to their own trouble, or create an adventure yourself. Many of the seed adventures mentioned earlier could be run at just about any location.

Your group doesn't have to engage in the Plot Point Campaign, but the major events should still go on in the background. The Plot Point Campaign assumes 4 years will pass before the Elder King turns back into his elven self. If our errant heroes haven't fixed things by then, life in the Elder Kingdom will get much, much harder.

The Way of the Elder King

To save the Elder Kingdom, the party must travel a particular path of stories:

- ✥ **Through the 'Wood (pg. 75):** This adventure gets the group together and introduces them to the core dynamic of the setting: the tug of war between civilization and the elves.
- ✥ **Salt, Fire, and Blood (pg. 77):** To finish their caravan contract, the party has to push through a ruin occupied by a pagan coven. They gain two things in this adventure: a driver companion, Sal O' the Byways, and *It Shall Be Cut*, a mysterious artifact connected to the missing Elder King.
- ✥ **Of Rumors and Rivals (pg. 80):** After a Savage Tale or two, the party can learn more about *It Shall Be Cut*. The party travels to the village of a corrupt noble to discover a vital clue: the dagger was commissioned by the Elder King's sworn guards, who are now missing themselves.
- ✥ **A Light on the Past (pg. 82):** A tip from a collector of rare artifacts leads the party to Ghostlight Bog in search of more information about *It Shall Be Cut*. Here, they meet the ghost of one of the Elder King's guards, and learn that the Elder King has gone mad.
- ✥ **To the Root of Wisdom (pg. 84):** To learn more about the Elder King's madness, the party travels to Grand Delving to seek out the most secret knowledge in the Elder Kingdom: the true biography of the Elder King.
- ✥ **The Trappings of Virtue (pg. 87):** Our errant heroes are now truly wrapped up in the quest to stop the Elder King from turning back into an elf. First, they must go to the Elder King's empty palace to retrieve a shroud that will allow them to transport the Elder King's biography to his new hidden fortress.
- ✥ **Byways of the Elves (pg. 89):** Before they can confront the Elder King, the errants must find a way to reach him. Their companion, Sal O' the Byways, knows just the trick—but it means they have to help out an elf first.
- ✥ **Crisis of the 81st Generation (pg. 90):** The final confrontation with the Elder King begins. The party travels to the ruined Castle Trakenholtz armed with the artifacts they've gathered so far. There, they do battle against the Elder King's new pagan army.
- ✥ **The Elder King (pg. 92):** At last, it comes down to a fight between our errant heroes and the Elder King himself. Will they be able to defeat him, and will they choose to save the captured prince?

Continuing the Campaign

The Crisis of the 81st Generation does not mean the end of the errants' adventures. The Elder Kingdom is still in disarray. The Blackwood still threatens to snuff out civilization. Outlaws, pagans, and elves still harry the common people. It is a world ripe for further adventures.

The Starflower Codex

The Starflower Codex is a mini-campaign that takes place during the party's adventures. During this series of adventures, the party can discover a weapon from another time, and can use it to develop the first firearm technology. They will also learn about the Holy Faith of Unity, and will play a large part in setting the religion's course within the society of the Elder Kingdom.

- **The Artifact (pg. 103):** A chance encounter with bandits and pagans reveals a mysterious artifact from another time. Rival factions are introduced that could lead the errants to terrible glory.
- **The Starflower Festival (pg. 104):** Invention and competition collide in the streets of Farwater Beach. During this adventure, the first rudimentary firearms are developed.
- **Hymn of the Orisha (pg. 106):** Now refined but limited to single specimens, firearm technology threatens to spark a religious war between the Elder Kingdom and the Unified.
- **The Errants' War (pg. 108):** Twisted by a mad priest's desperate gambit, a mob of errants and commoners threaten to tear Farwater Beach apart. Can our errant heroes pay the price of their quest for innovation without destroying the Elder Kingdom's largest city in the process?

Starting Out

Your tales of adventure in the Blackwood are ready to begin! We recommend you start with the Plot Point Adventure **Through the 'Wood.** This throws your group into the core conflict of the setting without forcing them into any long-term commitments. Plus, if they are successful then the party will receive a wagon and driver for their efforts.

- **Through the 'Wood (pg. 75):** Start your campaign with the first Plot Point Adventure, **Through the 'Wood.**



Through the 'Wood

Begins in: a forest road outside High Hall, Mead Meadows Province

It was a simple contract. Three days from High Hall to Span, safeguarding a caravan as it trades with villages along the road. In exchange, the errants would earn 50 silver pieces each, as well as the gratitude of their employer. Everything changed when the elf showed up.

The game begins as the players lurch off down a forest road, a pack of hungry Howlers in the trees behind them. The caravan consists of three carts with hired drivers. There is room in each cart for one passenger beside the driver and three on top of the goods in the back. Each cart is full of grain, High Hall mead, and silken garments, with room for extra goods found along the road.

Over the River

A 5-round chase ensues as players try to escape the Howlers. The path buckles endlessly underneath the carts, so players must make Agility tests at a -2 penalty to move around.

Forest Path: The first stretch of road twists and turns through the wood. Low-hanging branches and upthrust roots are likely obstacles if players draw a Complication on their maneuvering tests.

Hewn Tree: The caravan turns a corner to reveal a huge elm laying across the road. Soon after, the players see a team of six loggers standing in front of the tree. With a successful Notice test the players spot their glazed eyes and realize the loggers have been Called by the elf, slaves to its will. The Caller cackles from atop the fallen elm.

Maneuvering trait rolls are made at a -2 penalty due to the fallen elm and Called men around it. Proceed to *River Bridge*. Any driver who draws a complication narrowly avoids the elm but can't make it back on the road. Go to *River Ford*.

River Ford: Panic creeps in as the players realize the elf has forced them away from the safety of the road. They charge along the river until they reach a suitable place to ford. The river itself makes a likely obstacle if a player draws a complication. Go to *Offroad*.

River Bridge: The elf rages as the players bound back onto the road. A wooden bridge spanning a steep

gully lies ahead, with a bubbling river underneath. If a player draws a complication, the bridge is rickety and threatens to break beneath the thundering carts. Go to *Meadow Path*.

Offroad: As if Howlers and elves weren't bad enough, the trees themselves close in around the caravan as it races up in search of the road. All players must make a Vigor test at a -2 penalty or gain a level of fatigue. The elf sees its opportunity here and hops onto the carts to attack for a single round. Go to *Withered Hedge*. leg.

Meadow Path: The caravan hurtles through a tangle of forest before bursting out into a wide meadow. Brush and weeds choke out the fallow wheat field but no dangers lie in store for the caravan here. Complications are ignored in this area. Go to *Withered Hedge*.

Withered Hedge: At last a hedge can be seen just ahead. Surely, a cabin or farmhouse waits on the other side. As the caravan draws closer, the players notice the hedge has withered to the point of collapse. Thorny branches and vines sag down into the entryway. Players must pass an Agility test to avoid the thorns or suffer one level of Fatigue.

- **Grubtune:** Use stats for a Caller on **pg. 129**. The party is unlikely to learn the elf's name in this adventure. It will be made clear later. During this scene, the elf does not enter combat but its mere presence throws the Shrine Lanterns along the road into disarray.
- **Howlers (3 per Errant):** The howlers attack the party until only five of them remain, or until the players reach the brewfarm down the road.

Grama's Brewfarm

The elf and Howlers break off their chase when the players pass within the withered hedge. The whole party realizes the state of the hedge is a sign the ancestors have abandoned this place.

There are three buildings within the hedge: a small cottage, a sturdy barn attached to a tavern, and the tavern itself, with a sign naming the settlement "Grama's Brewfarm." With a successful Notice roll, perceptive characters see signs of recent abandonment—cart tracks, imprints of missing barrels and crates, etc.

An old woman shouts from the cottage if the party comes within ten feet. "*Boar?*" she'll ask, "*Are ye back with them elftouched farmhands? Away with ye!*" She only consents to open the door if the players convince her they mean her no harm.

Inside, the cottage is as empty as the other buildings. The old woman, withered but tough, is the eponymous Grama Frida of the tavern. Boar is her son. Her only companion left in life is Ernst, her distraught grandson. Grama tells the party how the farmhands were slowly Called into the wood over the past week. Boar was the last to leave, just two days ago. Grama and Ernst waited at the farm in hopes someone would return from the Calling but to no avail.

They resolved to leave this morning but just as they hitched up the wagon they were raided by outlaws. The gang stole all the provisions they could carry and her ancestor shrine. "*Might as well killed us,*" she spits, "*leavin' us stranded in the wood with no food nor ancestors to keep us safe!*" If anyone asks about the child's mother, Grama reveals that Margidt was taken by the Wild Hunt last winter.

The Rite of Ancestral Providence

No sooner does Grama finish her tale than a drumming rises out in the Wood, same as the rhythm of the Caller's song. It is a bare hour before nightfall, when the magic of the Blackwood wakes and all humankind should take refuge among their ancestors until dawn. And in recent years, since the Elder King left and the elves have come back, nightfall is an ill omen indeed.

As a Dramatic Task, an errant needs 5 successes on Spirit rolls (each at a -2 penalty) to hallow a makeshift ancestor shrine. It takes until nightfall to prepare the rite, so in the meantime the other players may make their own preparations (such as preparing traps or arming the wagon drivers). Because night is so close, the party can only divide their attention between a total of one task per two errants.

The drumming ceases as night fully descends on the brewfarm. Distant howling drifts in on the wind. It is time to begin the Rite of Ancestral Providence. The Caller elf appears on the cottage roof at the beginning of the first round (perhaps getting the Drop on the party). In the third round of the Dramatic Task, a pack of Howlers arrive. Called Farmhands arrive in the fourth round, followed by Boar in the final round.

If the rite fails, the forest itself rises against the party. In a montage, the players fight valiantly but a tireless wave of brush and vines breaks through the feeble

hedge and smothers the players over the course of several hours. The sun dawns on a quiet, toppled ruin.

If the rite succeeds, the elf is repulsed by the ancestor's protection and flees into the forest. If it is killed first, it falls apart into a flurry of leaves while unsettling laughter echoes away into the Blackwood. The Howlers flee, and the Called loggers come out of their trance in another round. If the players are ultimately victorious, Grama declare them champions of the brewfarm before they all settle in for a hard-earned night's rest.

- **Boar:** Use stats for a Commoner, but Boar is a Wild Card.
- **Howlers (10):** These Howlers will not retreat as their fellows did during the chase.
- **Pine Hornets (2 Swarms):** The Caller will try to hurl these pine hornet clusters to try and engulf as many people as possible.
- **Called Commoner (4):** These enchanted commoners are armed with axes and will fight to the last man.

Over the Hill We Go

The next morning, Grama makes quick work of readying the wagon drivers for departure. She and Ernst hope to travel with the caravan to Owl's Watch, the next village over. They are disappointed when they arrive.

An abandoned merchant's wagon waits outside the town gate. Inside, doors stand open to ransacked houses. Children wander aimlessly while adults carry household shrines toward the center of the village. The outlaws who attacked the brewfarm hit Owl's Watch too.

Two dozen settled folk have gathered behind a hastily constructed barricade. An old blacksmith, Broad Hans, tells the party how the village was raided by outlaws just that morning. They swept in and carried off most of the food, drink, and the ancestor shrine in the village hall. With a heavy heart, Hans reveals that the village hero, Owl Guntram, was overwhelmed by the gang and murdered by its leader, an outlaw who calls herself Way's Margin. Such a byname is an affront to the very meaning of errantry.

The party is faced with a choice: help the village deal with these outlaws, or press on to Span. If they choose to deal with the outlaws, run the Savage Tale **Between Errants and Outlaws.** If they press on to Span, they may take up to 2 refugees per wagon with them.

Salt, Fire, and Blood

Begins in: Forest Road to Span, Mead Meadows Province

A Persistent Caller

After leaving Owl's Watch, the caravan may have a few refugees in tow, and may be on the lookout for outlaws on the road ahead. If the party played through **Between Errants and Outlaws,** they won't have to deal with either.

It's a half day's ride to the crossroads, which lead to the famous Stag and Dragon Inn to the east, and Span to the north. The road is tranquil at first, but as the day goes on the trees blot out more and more of the sunlight overhead. By midmorning, errants can hear a humming tune with a successful Notice roll.

"Tra la le lay…"

Either one of the refugees or (if there are none) one of the wagon drivers is Called into the forest. He doesn't fight the party if it comes to it, but only binding him hand and foot stops him. Against all sense, it seems the Caller they killed at the brewfarm is back.

Justice or Salvation

Despite the tension of the moment, there is no more sign of the Caller before the caravan reaches the crossroads. It is midday despite the gloomy atmosphere, so the wagons circle up to to feed the oxen and take a quick rest.

In the midst of their break, a clamor echos from down the road to Span. A heartbeat later, a garish tinker's wagon driven by a thin and terrified old man bursts around the corner. She barely notices the caravan in time to avoid a collision, but the party's wagons block her path.

Way's Wisdom! Wood's Woes! Ancestors beyond, am I glad to see ye! I got pagans an' ghosts lickin' my heels an' I thought ol' Sal'd never see the dusk! Heeeelp!"

As her wagon skids to a halt, the old tinker leaps from the seat and into the caravan circle. Two pagans—an old man and a young girl—lean out the windows of the covered tinker wagon. All pagans are outlawed under the King's Ban. Since the tinker helped them, she should be considered an outlaw too. Anyone who walks the Way's Margin would be right to arrest or kill any outlaws on the spot.

The tinker desperately introduces herself as Sal O' the Byways. A greasy, charismatic coward, Sal begs the party to believe she didn't want to help the pagans. She says it was the only way to save her own skin. She'll tell them how she was nabbed by a coven, and only escaped because these two pagans wanted to flee the coven and knew her wagon was the fastest way.

The two pagans, little Salty Sage and Ol' Bloodeye, each wear bandages over one ear. They claim to have left the ways of elven worship forever, but they urge the party that they must continue their flight. Resolve these arguments as a Social Conflict if the party has doubts about how to proceed.

During the argument, a heavy mist rolls in from the down the road to Span.

"They's catched us!" Ol' Bloodeye wails as his eyes take in the scene. "Ghosts at the crossroads! An ill omen if e'er was one!"

Ghosts at the Crossroads

A combat scene ensues as a ghost and ghostly beasts attack out of the mist. The monsters attack anyone and everyone, while the pagans merely try to bar themselves inside the tinker wagon. If the party tries to force their way inside, the old tinker pleads with them not to harm his wagon.

After the combat, the ghosts shift into the harmless ancestor spirits of three pagans. Two of them instantly siphon away into the wilderness, but the spirit of a witch woman lingers.

"Mama!" Salty Sage cries from the tinker wagon. Ol' Bloodeye tries and fails to keep her from running out amongst 'hostile kingsfolk.'

Salty Sage throws herself at the spirit, but instead of embracing her she flies right through her. The spirit's face is a frozen mask of immeasurable sorrow.

"Daaauuughter miiine," a ghostly voice echoes from nowhere in particular. "P'raaaaps I can weeeeave one more pact fer ye, 'foooore I fade."

The spirit seems to turn its attention to our errant heroes. They only know because of the chill that runs down their spine. "IIIII was the Brushfire," it whispers, "one witch o' two in the Grubtuuuuune Coven. Therrrrre's little time left. The coven's eeeelf twisted two moons baaaaack, twisted by a straaange daaaaggerrrr. The coven was twisssted alsoooo." Salty Sage sniffles on the floor. "I coooouldn'a bear my dauughter suffer such a faaate. My sssspirit cannae rrrrest until I know sssshhheee's saaaafe."

Brushfire's spirit offers the party a deal. The Caller, Grubtune, will spread its influence like a plague if it isn't killed. As a coven witch, Brushfire knows the secret of how to kill an elf for good. If the errants allow Salty Sage and Ol' Bloodeye to flee, she will share the secret with them. The former pagans reaffirm that they have forsaken their elven pacts. They swear to live on the fringe of life in High Hall, and to scrape out a living however the law allows them to. What's more, Grubtune lies between the caravan and its destination.

If the party agrees, Brushfire explains the secret is hidden in their names: make a sacrifice of salt to kill seedlings, add fire for saplings, and mature elves can only be truly killed with a blood sacrifice. Grubtune, she tells them, is a sapling. Brushfire thanks Ol' Bloodeye, whom she calls "mother's-father," for taking care of her daughter. She bids Salty Sage a tender goodbye, and Brushfire's spirit is slowly siphoned away into the wilderness. Such is the fate of all pactbound pagans.

- **Beasts (4):** Use a ghostly trapping for these creatures.
- **Ghost:** This ghost is the spirit of Brushfire one of the Grubtune Coven's witches and the mother of Salty Sage. She will reveal herself to the party right at the beginning of combat.

The Grubtune Coven

If the party allows the Salty Sage and Ol' Bloodeye to leave in peace, they tell the errants that the coven sacked the village of Wine Vale a couple days ago. They fled the coven before the attack, but they're certain it was a massacre. They also reveal that the Grubtune coven can share thoughts with one another, thanks to the Caller's meddling. For weeks, the coven has developed a particular fascination with the Elder King.

If the errants scout out Wine Vale before attacking, they discover a cluster of cottages torn apart by rapidly-growing trees. Most of the ruins have already been chopped into logs and heaped into a pyre in the center of the village. This pyre is to be burned at sunset. Half a dozen hidebound tents are raised in a circle around the bonfire, which could ignite if the flames were to

spread. A large standing stone is lodged at the head of this circle, where the coven's other witch and Grubtune conduct and choreograph the work of the pagans around the camp. Each pagan has a large grub hanging out of one ear. The grubs make them constantly hear the same distant, mind-draining music, a tempo for their every action.

The Caller must be on fire at the moment of its death, and players must immediately scatter salt on the elf's remains. Any pagans left alive when this happens are killed by the grubs in their ears.

- **Caller:** Grubtune holds a grudge against the players after the events of the first adventure. It will not hold back in its attack.
- **Pagans (2 per Errant):** The pagans attack in eerie harmony with each other. They will fight to the death.
- **Witch:** The coven's witch controls the battlefield from the rear. She will try harder to protect her pagans than the elf will.

A Curious Dagger

After the battle, anyone who searches the witch's corpse finds a dagger. Anyone who touches it feels as if someone walks over their grave, but the feeling passes immediately. The dagger, both exquisitely crafted and profoundly tarnished, has a wax seal on the pommel. Next to a heraldic symbol, the words "It Shall Be Cut" are etched into the blade. With a successful Common Knowledge roll, the errants recognize the wax seal as the heraldry of the Elder King, and the blade symbol as the mark of his bodyguards, the Nine Worthies.

Treasure: It Shall be Cut (Major Artifact)

Base Item: Dagger (+2 Fighting)

Arcane Skill: Spirit d8

Powers: Smite (Celestial Edge)

Power Points: 10

Misc: AP 2 (+2 AP vs. Elder King); permanently kills Thicket Elves without the need for a blood sacrifice

Now rid of the pagans, Sal offers to accompany the party back to Span. The road to High Hall's too dangerous these days, according to her.

It's just a single day's ride to reach Span from the ruins of Wine Vale. Mercifully, it is a quiet leg of the journey. They escort the caravan to the warehouses of Baron Ramund von Dolm near the Span arena district. The baron's payroll master pays $100 to each errant, and permits them to keep any loot or treasure they managed to find along the way. Now without a wagon to carry their things, Sal proposes a business deal to the party. If they give her any scrap they find—weapons, armor, trinkets, what have you—Sal O' the Byways would be proud to take them anywhere they'd like to go. In game terms, this provides the errants with a wagon driver and a pawnbroker at once.

The dagger found on the witch's corpse is an important part of the Plot Point Campaign. While in Span, the errants may make an Investigate roll to search the city's Hall of Classics for information about It Shall Be Cut. Alternatively, they may make a Streetwise roll to ask around the taverns and arenas. If the party attempts to gather this information without raising suspicion, both rolls suffer a -4 penalty. A success with either roll reveals that the dagger must have been lost over a decade ago, when the Nine Worthies disappeared on their quest to find the Elder King. Any further information is elusive.

Walking The Way's Margin

A few weeks will need to pass before the next Plot Point Episode, so this is a good opportunity to create an adventure connected to one of the errant's Hindrances or backstory. If Grama and Ernst accompanied the party to Span, they could use the errants' help finding a new home in a city full of rakes and ruffians.

If the party managed to deliver all four wagons safely to their destination, Baron von Dolm would gladly hire them out for more escort jobs. The Baron turns out to be heartless and often cruel to his servants, but he pays much better than average.

If they prove especially rowdy, the Baron will offer them a position in his occasional warbands to strike out against outlaws and pagans. If all else fails, run the **Pauper's Arena** Savage Tale and then advance the calendar a few weeks.

Of Rumors and Rivals

Begins in: Span, Great Falls Province

Rival Interests

Several weeks after they find *It Shall Be Cut*, the party finally gets a lead that may help them figure out more about the dagger. They are referred to Verner von Karst, a dealer in antiquities and rare items.

Verner has taken residence in a private room at the Inn of the Three Uncles in Span's bridge quarter. When talk of the dagger comes up, he gets right down to business.

> *"I know nothing about it myself, but I've heard rumors. In fact, I've heard a rival collector is grubbing around for information on a dagger that fits this description. Apparently, he's managed to gather quite a bit of news."*

Verner does not offer his rival's name for free. As he tells it, this rival has stolen a relic from him, something called "Rainbow Raven's Mantle." Verner requires the party to retrieve it.

> *"Ye'll know it straight off when ye see it. A garish garment made from hundreds of colorful feathers. They say the feathers came from the first raven, before an elf cursed them all to turn black as oil. Further, I have it on good authority the mantle's magic lends a fellow quite a silver tongue. Retrieve it for me however you choose. Oh! And my rival, perhaps you've heard of him? Baron Ramund von Dolm?"*

Of course, the party came together while guarding one of the Baron's caravans from High Hall to Span. Perhaps they even took jobs from him after this first. Verner is unconcerned either way. He points out the Baron is a miserly collector. Attempts at bartering are likely to lead only to frustration.

Sold Up the River

After inquiring at the Baron's estate in Span, the party learns he has taken residence in his ancestral home, the village of Dolm. Conveniently, the Baron's forewoman offers to hire the party as guards on a trade cog headed that way.

It takes two days to reach Dolm by boat. Draw a card: if the suit is Clubs, a band of 2d6 outlaws attacks the cog on the way.

When they arrive, our errant heroes find the village has more in common with the Baron's hard-edged personality than his swank lifestyle. The villagers are poor, dirty, and oppressed.

The Baron's castle here is as luxurious as his home in Span, a stark contrast with the surrounding village. Even if the party didn't work for the Baron again since their first caravan job, he offers to host them for dinner. He's starved for news about the dueling arenas. Over dinner, two things are clear: he is fiercely proud of his collection of antiquities, and fiercely proud of his dueling prowess.

It turns out Verner was right about the Baron: he jealously guards his collection. He boasts about the many treasures, clues, and notes stored away within his fortress tower, but forbids the party from approaching. If pressed, he will only agree to give them a glimpse if the party retrieves a cask of his jewels from a ruined village a day or so north of Dolm.

> *"I used to have a hunting lodge up that way," he explains, "and fool that I was, I kept some of my favorite rubies up there. Damned peasants can't keep a hedge tidy to save their lives. Literally! Haw haw!"*

To sweeten the deal, the Baron offers them a reward of $400 for the job.

- **Outlaws (2d6):** Use stats for Ruffians.

Hidden Agendas

The party will either need to carry out the Baron's task, or find another way into the tower. There are several options available, none of them easy. A few likely ideas are described below.

Cask Errand: If the errants try to fulfill the Baron von Dolm's wishes, they will walk right into his trap. It turns out the Baron knows they possess the dagger and is willing to kill to take it for himself. The party doesn't even make it an hour away from Dolm before they are attacked by the baron's bodyguard and 1 guard per errant.

Theft: Sneaking into the tower comes with its own hazards. A dozen of the Baron's guards patrol the fortress from their barracks at the tower's base. Further, his sleeping quarters are in the tower itself. Possible distractions include challenging the Baron to a duel or inciting a revolt among his oft-abused commonfolk.

Violence: If nothing else, the atmosphere of his village is one of suffering and oppression. Attacking the Baron and his guards directly is reckless, but it isn't unreasonable or without cause. If the party hasn't caught the hint over previous jobs, this adventure is the moment to hammer home the Baron's nastiness.

- **Baron Ramund von Dolm:** See **pg. 124**.
- **Broken Oar:** Baron von Dolm's bodyguard uses the stats for a Knight on **pg. 118**.
- **Guards (12):** The Baron's guards are about as heartless as he is. They follow his orders without question, and have no compunctions about killing.

Splendor and Sacrifice

However the errants manage to get inside the Baron's treasure tower, they find he was not exaggerating about his collection. Casks of jewels, statues, paintings, and glittering arms and armor litter the room. Verner's mantle is displayed on a stand near a wardrobe of very expensive clothing. In all, the Baron's collection is worth $15,000.

Treasure: Rainbow Raven's Mantle ($2000)

Once, the land was always winter. All animals wanted was to be warm. They spoke about what to do, and decided to send someone to ask the sun to shine brighter. Fox offered to go, clever and fiery as he was, but Royal Pheasant insisted that Raven go instead. Raven spun words like silk but secretly Royal Pheasant was jealous of Raven, for in those days ravens had beautiful, many-colored feathers. When Raven finally convinced the sun, it burst forth so suddenly that Raven's feathers were charred an oily black. Raven's voice was scoured away too, so how ravens can only croak.

This mantle of garish feathers grants a +3 bonus to Persuasion rolls. However, it is so ostentatious that the wearer suffers a -2 penalty to Charisma when speaking to commoners.

A spiral staircase at the back of the lower chamber leads up to the Baron's private quarters, more a study than a bedroom, are at the top of the tower. A desk lies heavy with papers, and bookshelves around the room are filled with map scrolls and folios of notes and inventories. A successful search of the room at a -2 penalty reveals a folio labeled "*Nine Worthies Dagger – LOCATED, NOT SECURED.*" Written in the Baron's sprawling hand, it contains a bevy of information.

Crafted by Master Diedrick of Sky Pillar Monastery. Commissioned by Nine Worthies for reasons unknown. His last creation, and his greatest. Diedrick said to have meditated for three weeks, then crafted over one week culminating on Yuletide full moon. Eyewitness claims forge was stoked with charcoal and salt (reasons unknown). Eyewitness claims M. Diedrick wasted away during the forging (reasons unknown). Eyewitness claims Diedrick's last words:

Whatsoever you should encounter on your quest,

be it elf or ancestor or woodland beast:

It Shall Be Cut.

Value: priceless

Whereabouts: in possession of High Hall caravan errants (reasons unknown).

ACQUIRE BY ANY MEANS

Later, Back in Span...

Depending on how the errants managed to get into Baron von Dolm's vault, getting back out could be difficult. Even if the Baron is now dead, any ship headed back to Span could easily catch wind of what transpired. This could make for its own session of adventuring.

Once the players return to Span, Verner is pleased to receive the mantle. He offers to buy up to $2000 worth of any treasure they bring back. He's also willing to sell or barter away the mantle for $2000.

Verner asks if the party found any information about their dagger, but doesn't press the issue if they keep their discovery secret. Still, he will offer to let the party know if he hears anything more.

At this point, the next Plot Point episode isn't triggered until at least one character reaches Seasoned rank.

Refer to the **Plot Point Interlude** sidebar (**pg. 82**)..

Plot Point Interlude

Sal O' the Byways plays an important role in the Plot Point Campaign, so she should become a valuable (if cowardly) resource for the party. The next Plot Point episode, **A Light On The Past** does not occur until at least one character reaches Seasoned rank. In the meantime, encourage the players to seek out adventure on their own with Savage Tales or your own adventures. The outlaws may still be holed up near Owl's Watch, and would bring in a nice bounty. If both Owl's Watch and Wine Vale were ruined, the road between High Hall and Span collapses. Plenty of merchants and nobles would chip in to pay any errants who could fight their way to back both villages and resettle them with refugees. There's plenty of time to kill, so the party should be encouraged to travel to different towns and cities in search of work.

Throughout these adventures, it should gradually become clear that the Baron was not the only one aware of It Shall Be Cut's existence. The party will be approached by a few prospective buyers and even a couple erstwhile thieves. Whomever carries the dagger occasionally has nightmares. When they awake, all they can remember is a ghostly wail and the stench of a swamp. These dreams should slowly grow more intense until at least one player reaches the rank of Seasoned. At which point, proceed to the Plot Point episode, **A Light On The Past.**

A Light On The Past

Begins in: Ghostlight Bog, Giant Province

Requirements: Seasoned

For the past week, whoever carries It Shall Be Cut has powerful nightmares of a ghostly knight drowning in a steaming swamp. Just before waking, it always dawns on the errant: the swamp is actually a giant witch's cauldron. One day, the party receives a letter:

This morning, a songbird alighted upon my shoulder to convey news most intriguing. 'You know of a dagger with quite a storied past,' it said to me. 'The dagger's future lies in Ghostlight Bog.'

So here is a songbird of my own to sing a tale in your ear. There was once a lantern said to draw the spirits of the dead from the objects they held dear. The tales say the Lantern of Respite was lost in Ghostlight Bog, when Old Man Johan finally died after searching the whole forest for his lost love. With this lantern and the dagger bearing the Elder King's seal, perhaps you could learn the fate of our sorely-missed liege. Tweet tweet!

Signed,

Verner von Karst

The adventure begins as the players enter Ghostlight Bog. It is assumed they had a few days to gather supplies and travel from wherever they happened to be at the time. Sal complains and chatters her teeth all the way to the Bog, and refuses to enter with them. According to her, Ghostlight Bog is lousy with ghouls and spirits.

A Turbid Realm

Whichever errant has been having these nightmares needs to make a Survival roll at a -2 penalty to identify the part of the swamp he or she visits while sleeping. Other players may make cooperative rolls to help. A success reveals a pool of steaming water a few miles into the swamp after four hours of searching. A raise halves the time needed to find the area.

On a failure, the party navigates the Elven Wilds in order to find the spot. In this situation, treat all stages of the trip as swampy terrain.

Next to the pool, a large, black boulder is sunk partway into the mud. A shriveled tupelo grows from out of the top of the boulder, and a few glowing orbs—bog lanterns—float above the pool's surface.

- **Bog Lantern (3):** The bog lanterns will try to lure the party away in the Elven Wilds, but won't put up much of a fight if attacked.

A Stinking Refuge

While at the pool, the errants notice what looks like yellow chimney smoke rising above the swamp to the north. This smoke is coming from a massive tree stump that has been made into a witch's cottage. Inside, the witch stoops over a bubbling, foul-smelling cauldron, sprinkling it with swamp herbs and strange powders. A finely-crafted silver lantern sits on the table beside him.

There's no one way to retrieve the Lantern of Respite, but here are a few ideas:

Negotiation: The players may try to persuade the witch, but he stalls for time. During a Social Conflict, he slowly adds powders to the cauldron to change the smoke red. This is a sign to the local pagans to come to his aid after 1d6 rounds. The party can surmise what's going on with a successful Common Knowledge roll at a -2 penalty.

Theft: Conduct a Dramatic Task at a -2 penalty as the party tries to distract and rob the witch. The witch raises an alarm on a failure. Complications also trigger an alarm.

Assault: Witches are smart enough to trick elves from time to time, so a direct assault may seem better than diplomacy. Should the party attack, the witch uses all his powers to separate, confuse, and pick off each of the errants.

Treasure: The Lantern of Respite

This rounded, metal lantern glows with a light from out of the realm of spirits. With a successful Spirit roll, the bearer of the Lantern of Respite can communicate with the local ghosts as per the Connections Edge.

With two or more raises on the Spirit roll, the errant manages to summon the ghost of Lennid from the lantern. A natural tracker and swordsman when he was alive, the Ninth Worthy has become a hunter and jailer of evil in the spirit realm. Much news of the living world reaches his ears, and he can lend the party command of five ghostly warriors.

- **Beasts (1 per Errant):** If the witch is able to summon reinforcements, a troop of pagans with swamp beast companions attack the party.
- **Pagans (1 per Errant):** If the witch is able to summon reinforcements, this troop of pagans comes rushing to her aid.
- **Witch:** Ragged Wind, a male pagan witch, will try to stall for time until he's able to summon reinforcements. If reinforcements arrive, he will fight ruthlessly to defend his home.

A Light in Darkness

Once in hand, the Lantern of Respite pulses with magical energy. Outside the witch's cottage, huge swarms of bog lanterns have gathered. Conduct a Spirit-based Dramatic Task at a -2 penalty to navigate back to the steaming pool without falling under the bog lanterns' sway.

By the time the errants reach the steaming pool, the Lantern of Respite glows as bright as riverfront sunshine, but the light sours before it reaches the bog's dark canopy. There, with *It Shall Be Cut* in hand, a successful Spirit roll activates the lantern's power.

A Dagger's Ghost

When the errants activate the Lantern, they summon a wild and tormented ghost. It attacks them immediately. Once defeated, the ghost's torment ceases, and it turns into the spirit of a man just past his prime, wearing exquisite armor of lacquered leaves. He announces himself to be the ghost of Lennid Talbrander, Ninth Worthy of the Elder King.

"Woe! Woe and folly! These seven years, locked within the dagger's cold confines! From the dead tower I fled, from the fallen Elder King's throne. Hounded by pagans for days! Through the Wilds! I lived by the blade. I was cut down by the blade. And all this time, by the blade I have been imprisoned!

Lennid reveals that the Elder King has embraced madness for reasons unknown. Newly allied to pagans and elves, the Elder King threatens to ruin his kingdom within a decade if he is not stopped. Lennid and the rest of the Worthies learned of these plans and—after a long quest of deliberation—set out to break their oaths and kill their liege for the sake of the Elder Kingdom. They commissioned a mighty dagger from Master Diedrick of Sky Pillar Monastery,

and the Nine Worthies departed for what would be their doom.

Each of the Nine Worthies fell valiantly but alone. Five of them died by the Elder King's own hand. Lennid alone managed to escape with the dagger, but he didn't run far before he was hunted down and killed by a pack of strange, keening spirits.

A Small Hope

Lennid's spirit slowly ebbs during their conversation until he is a hazy mirage before them. He knows no more, but he instructs the party to go to the Root of Wisdom on Ancestors' Eve if they seek the truth. *"There,"* he rasps, little more than mist, *"tread ye The Way of the Elder King."* The final haze of Lennid's spirit drafts into the lantern and vanishes.

A Common Knowledge roll reveals that the Root of Wisdom is the name of the Hall of Classics in Grand Delving. With a raise on the roll, someone knows the Classicists of Grand Delving hold a feast every year on Ancestors' Eve. For errants, the only guaranteed way to get invited is by becoming a champion of either the Riverfolk or Woodkin Tournaments.

Feeling the Heat

By the beginning of this adventure, the party should have been approached by several different agents and intermediaries offering to purchase It Shall Be Cut or (given enough denials) to steal it. After this adventure, these inquiries grow more desperate. Instead of thieves, the mysterious forces behind these encounters begin to send armed ruffians to take the dagger by force. A few of these attacks should happen during the course of Savage Tales between now and Ancestors' Eve.

To the Root of Wisdom

Begins in: Grand Delving, Golden Vale Province

Requirements: Veteran, at least one Tournament Champion

In Grand Delving, Ancestors' Eve is preceded by a three-day festival of fellowship and thanksgiving, hosted by the Classicists. Only locals are invited to this event, but the nobility may invite errant champions of the two tournaments as well. Anyone in the party who earned a championship title was invited to attend by Lady Ruby Gesterbuck.

The Feast of Shared Return

After the dead have been venerated as ancestors, the people of Grand Delving conclude their Ancestor's Eve festival with the Feast of Shared Return. By working together, the city has survived another winter. The Classicists gather together the remaining winter stores and everyone—noble and pauper alike—is welcome to attend.

In the expansive courtyard in front of the Root of Wisdom, Lady Gesterbuck sweeps the party from table to table. She is eager to introduce them to the gathered nobility and common folk. She is thrilled to hear their stories each time, and she revels in the social capital it grants her.

The party needs to get into the Root. Lady Gesterbuck's family connections could bypass many of the logistical problems of the task, but this method has its drawbacks. For one, Lady Gesterbuck doesn't want to go inside.

> *"Go into the Root? Tonight, on Ancestor's Eve? My dear errants—champions, that is—the tomes within those walls are of such passion and quality that they have spirits of their own. There are none who enter tonight. Tomorrow, tomorrow! Then I shall be delighted to guide you.*

Of course, this won't do. The party may be able to convince her to let them take a peek, but sooner or later they're going to have to ditch her without raising an alarm. Errants may slip away from her at the feast with successful Stealth rolls, but this feat is easier to spot as Lady Gesterbuck's arm candy dwindles.

If they ask, Lady Gesterbuck is passingly familiar with the layout of the Root of Wisdom. The library is a great tower in the center of the complex, with deep vaults that stretch out from under the library. These tunnels are the Roots, where the rarest books are held.

> *"And the greatest and most recent addition to the collection,* The Way of the Elder King, *is stored in the Root's deepest chamber. If it really exists, that is. They say it's a perfect biography of the Elder King's life, but no one's actually seen it."*

This is surely what the ghost of Lennid Talbrander spoke of back in Ghostlight Bog.

- **Lady Ruby Gesterbuck:** Old and scatter-brained, Lady Gesterbuck comes from a long line of Classicists but she chose to study courtly law outside the Order. She has been fascinated by the errantry since she was a girl, and delights in meeting the champions of each year's tournaments.

Down to the Root

To reach the biography, the party must go down to the bottom of the Root's library vault. Conduct a Stealth-based Dramatic Task at a -2 penalty due to all the guards (and eventually spirits) roaming around. Anyone may make these rolls, and anyone else may make cooperative rolls when appropriate.

Inner Courtyard: Between the walls of the complex and the tower, the grounds are decorated with tranquil pools and ancient, sculpted trees. The human guards in this area expel anyone they find trespassing.

Summer Vault: After passing into the tower, the party sneaks down into the first vault. The spirits of farmers and livestock roam between the shelves. There is no penalty for complications amongst these idyll spirits.

Vault of Rites: In the second vault, spirits of courtiers and judges wander the orderly corridors. On a complication, the spirits threaten to harangue the party to a standstill. Errants may use Persuasion for cooperative rolls in this vault to distract the spirits.

Iron Vault: A bare, circular vault lined with scroll shelves and diagrams, the spirits of warriors and generals congregate here. They threaten to attack the party on a complication.

Lore Vault: Here, the spirits of legendary figures, fanciful beasts, and elves wander the natural cave scattered with scrolls and tomes. The intense spiritual magic in this place imposes an additional -2 penalty on the Dramatic Task.

- **Book Spirits (6):** Use stats for Ghosts and for Beasts with ghostly trappings.
- **Guards (10):** Use stats for a regular Guard. These guards wear the livery of the Classicists.

The Way of the Elder King

Despite the distance, the lowest chamber in the Root is not the dank, dripping grotto one might think. There are magical lanterns to provide light. A single book stand is placed on a sumptuous rug in the center of the room. Upon the stand, the book lies shut. Leatherbound and bearing the heraldry of the Elder King, the tome measures some 2 feet wide and 3 feet tall.

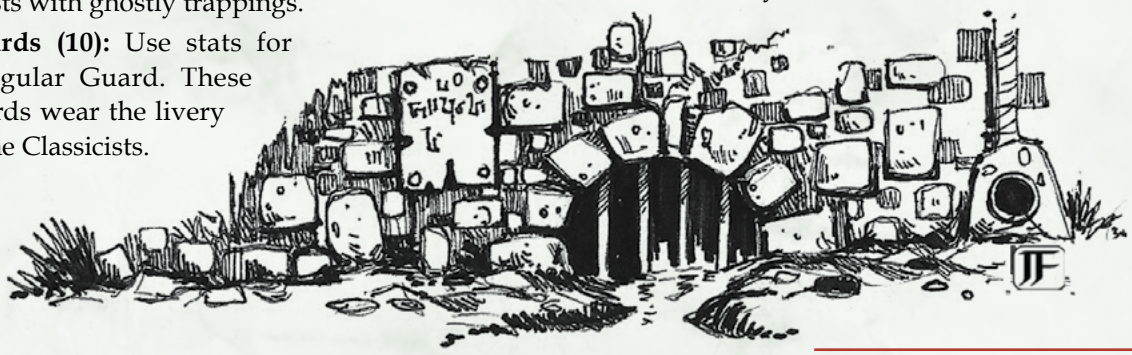
As the party approaches, they can see the room bend and flex at the edges of their vision. When they come within 6 feet of the stand, it seems the book is the only thing in existence. When they open the book, the party experiences the sensation of falling and flying as the pages rise up around them.

Dedication

The first pages of *The Way of the Elder King* are written by the Elder King himself. They dedicate the book to posterity and to his people, and speak of the power of truth and redemption. The pages are festooned with gorgeously illuminated rivers and vines, but the errants don't experience this as images on a page. They float above the surface of a tranquil river, tickled by hanging vines as they go.

Abruptly, the vines grab the party and hurl them through the wood at blistering speed. They soar past countless trees until they land in the middle of a burning grove. An army of imp and hollowback elves wage war against a force of humans in strange, ancient regalia. The humans possess magic more powerful than anything the errants have seen: casting massive fireballs and lightning bolts, projecting blades of force from their weapons to strike at a distance, and moving faster than the eye can follow.

Resolve this scene as a Mass Battle with 10 tokens on each side. The party quickly learns that they too possess incredible power in this place. Errants receive a +4 bonus to any of their rolls.



Cursed for 81 Generations

When the battle is finished, the elven forces lie dead and the elven leader is captured by the humans. The following scene ensues.

> *The towering commander of the humans grabs the elven commander by the throat and casts him to the ground. "For 81 generations of man, you and your kind have been a blight on my people. For 81 generations more, I curse thee. Thy woodland heart shall flow with the blood of humanity. Thou, elven filth, who art so different from us in mind and body, shall yet love us completely as thine own self. Our pain shall be thine, even unto the last day of the 81st generation. May it teach you humility."*

Time swirls around the party as the sound of pages ruffles in the distance. The elf, a Caller, changes to resemble a beautiful human man. He creeps at the edge of human settlements, observing their behavior with longing in his eyes.

A Well of Wisdom and Compassion

Time swirls forward even faster. Amid the rustling of pages, the party watches the elf-man grow up, marry, and bear a son. He loves—and is loved—by his family and neighbors.

Eventually, the man goes with his son out into the forest and tells him the truth of his origins. His son embraces him, and in that moment the man dies and fades into mist. The wisdom of ages shines in the son's face.

This moment repeats itself every 18 years, always in secret. The family unlocks the magic of ancestor worship. After 9 generations of the elf's life, all of humanity is united under his family's banner. He is crowned the Elder King, and begins to reckon the years according to his progenitor. Throughout each generation, the elf's spirit is transmitted from one son to the next, always watching and loving humanity.

In time, the curse fades from memory. The Elder Kingdom marches unknowing toward the Year of the King 1458, when the curse shall be undone and the Elder King will return to his elven nature.

Justifying a Dubious Crime

When the errants finally emerge from the book, they are confronted by none other than Keeper Quill, head of the Grand Delving Hall of Classics and the loftiest Classicist in the Elder Kingdom. He is accompanied by a cadre of guards, and demands to know why the party should not be executed on the spot.

A Social Conflict ensues where Keeper Quill lists the party's crimes. First, they have violated the laws of hospitality, which demand guests do not overstep their welcome. Second, they have violated the laws of the Elder King, who permits the Classicists to hold secret whatever knowledge they deem too sensitive for the masses. Third, they have violated the laws of the ancestors, whose rest the party has disturbed by intruding on this most holy of nights. Keeper Quill is deeply concerned with decorum and propriety, but he also sees the necessity of the party's errand. Appropriate bonuses to the errants' rolls should be applied.

If the party fails the Social Conflict, they are each given the Outlaw Hindrance and must continue their quest with that heavy penalty. If they succeed by a margin of 1-2, the Keeper does not Outlaw them but banishes them from Grand Delving forever. With a success of 3-4, Keeper Quill offers to give them guidance on the rest of their quest.

With a success of 5 or more, Keeper Quill will do everything in his power to help the party. He offers his aid as an Allied Extra. The Keeper is not well-suited to the errant life, but the breadth and depth of his knowledge is nothing short of astounding.

Assuming the party succeeded by at least 3 points, proceed to **The Trappings of Virtue.** If the party did not succeed by at least that much, they must find their own way to try and defeat the Elder King. They are much less likely to succeed in this case.

- **Guards (6):** Each of these guards are Wild Cards. They are fiercely loyal to the Root of Wisdom and Keeper Quill.
- **Keeper Quill:** see **pg. 125**.

The Trappings of Virtue

Begins in: The Root of Wisdom, Grand Delving

In Keeper Quill's austere chambers, he reveals to the party the dire portents of the Elder King's disappearance.

"Thanks to your stunt in the Root of Wisdom, you have learned that our Elder King is in truth an ancient elf. One day soon, he will revert back to elvenkind to the ruin of his own kingdom." Keeper Quill leans heavily upon the corner of his desk. "If we do not stop him, the Elder Kingdom will be ripped asunder by a new advent of elven power.

"One must ask: how much time do we have? The finest Classicists in our order have devoted months of rigorous study to answer that very question. They have determined that the Elder King's regression, which we call the Crisis of the 81st Generation, will take place at midnight on Ancestor's Eve in the Year of the King 1458. It does not leave us much time."

Keeper Quill glides around the room, consulting tomes open upon several stands. "The Nine Worthies were the finest warriors in the realm, and yet they failed. They possessed that mighty dagger, It Shall Be Cut *and yet they failed. I believe it is because they lacked symbols of the errant virtues--might, valor, wisdom, guile, and ancestral devotion--to keep them safe.*

"It's simple, you see. It Shall Be Cut*, strong enough to kill an elf-lord, is a potent symbol of might. Your champions' laurels are likewise an adequate symbol of glory. And this artifact, the Lantern of Respite, forges a literal connection between you and your ancestors. The only virtues remaining are guile and wisdom. I cannot help with such a base motivation as guile--perhaps explore the gambling halls of Span? Wisdom, however, is a specialty of mine.*

"There is no question that the most potent symbol of wisdom in our realm is the Elder King himself. And the most potent artifact of the Elder King is his biography. As you have seen, however, anyone who approaches it is drawn into the magic of its pages. I believe I know a way to nullify its magic long enough to transport The Way of the Elder King."

The Silken Shroud of Sister Elsbeth

Sister Elsbeth of Griscom was once the finest weaver in the Elder Kingdom. Whereas most Classicists found magic in the arts of writing or music, Sister Elsbeth could spin magic into the very fabric of tapestries and garments. Her most famous creation, the Gold-Emerald Shroud of Harmony, is a supple tapestry depicting the heraldry of the Elder King. It is said to be the first depiction of the Elder King's heraldic device.

For centuries, the Shroud has hung in the great hall of Starry Meadow Palace. The party must journey to the Elder King's vacant home to retrieve it. Perhaps they will uncover some as-yet unknown knowledge while they are there.

Treasure: The Gold-Emerald Shroud of Harmony

This large tapestry, measuring 10 feet by 5 feet, has been used as a coronation cape for every Elder King since 183 YK. It was the very first depiction of the Elder King's heraldry, woven by Sister Elsbeth from pure gold and emerald spun into string. It is a resplendent and humbling work of art.

Whatever the shroud covers is humbled before the immense task of ruling over the Elder Kingdom. When worn, the shroud functions as the *dispel* power for any power the wearer attempts to cast. The shroud rolls a d12 for the dispel check with a +4 bonus.

Starry Meadow Palace

The ride from Grand Delving to the palace takes the party four uneventful days. In the final day, the party rides through the most tranquil forest any of them have seen. So close to the Elder King's seat of power, crisscrossing the very headwaters of the Way, no elven influence has a hold over these woods.

Starry Meadow Palace lies in the highest mountain meadow in the Elder Kingdom. The Way rises through a riot of alpine flowers to a large pond that reflects the stars even in broad daylight. Next to the pond, the palace is a soaring structure of alabaster marble.

From its broad porch, one can turn around to see the Golden Vale and nearly all of the Blackwood arrayed before them.

The palace is overgrown with thick, green vines. It resonates with a feeling of safety and sanctuary, but it is a shadow of its former warmth and beauty. Inside, displayed suits of armor stand ready to defend the castle against any and all intruders. After standing idle for so long, a veritable army of enchanting cleaning supplies is eager to help the armor sentries.

The Feasting Hall: The Shroud is proudly displayed in the castle's large feasting hall. Unfortunately, the shroud is displayed like a banner from the ceiling, 50 feet overhead. Leaf Step would make quick work of retrieving the Shroud, otherwise the party will need to get creative.

Mural of the Royal Line: Along the northern wall of the feasting hall, a long mural depicts the life cycle of the Elder King: burying his father, growing in wisdom and love, producing a child, and eventually dying in the child's arms. A successful Notice roll reveals a critical clue: in the final image, a tiny spirit can be seen carrying knowledge and experience from the dying father to the son. This is how the Elder King has grown continually wiser over the centuries. This is what must be prevented from happening to the Prince.

Orrery Tower: The tallest tower in the palace contains a great telescope trained upon the heavens. A series of levers and dials along the wall adjusts the telescope. A book of legends nearby contains coded instructions for present telescope positions. A successful Smarts roll at a -2 penalty will adjust the telescope to point at a mysterious tower on the other side of the Elder Kingdom. The corresponding legend in the tome speaks of King Wulf Ember-Eye, ancient enemy of the Elder King, seated secure on his throne of light in Castle Trakenholtz. This must be where the Elder King has gone.

Royal Chambers: The royal chambers are full of potential clues. A successful Investigation roll reveals the Prince's studies arrayed on a desk in his room. They are woefully average. Without inheriting the Elder King's spirit, he is destined to be a mediocre king. With a raise on the Investigation roll, a collection of hastily-scrawled notes in the Elder King's room imply some sort of amplification power inherent in Castle Trakenholtz.

Idle Throne: In the throne room, just beyond the feasting hall, the Elder King's throne is carved from a tree, molded over the centuries to appear hoary and windblown. Even without the Elder King present, the throne inspires a desire in a person to devote oneself to the Elder Kingdom. Anyone who swears a Vow upon the idle throne will feel a stirring in their heart. At any time in the coming trials, they may invoke the Blessing of the Idle Throne to gain a +4 bonus to a single roll.

- **Animated Armor (10):** Use stats for a Knight on **pg. 118**. These suits of armor are spread out between the different rooms.
- **Animated Cleaning Tools (20):** Use stats for a Commoner on **pg. 115** with a trapping to resemble cleaning tools.

Parsing the Clues

When they finally return to the Root of Wisdom, Keeper Quill helps the party to wrap the Elder King's biography in the Gold-Emerald Shroud. A team of powerful Classicists must conduct a dampening ritual before the party can draw near to the biography. Otherwise there are no issues covering the tome.

> *"When you face the Elder King, unfurl the shroud and open the tome to remind our liege of his fallibility. Against my lifelong loyalties, I nevertheless hope you succeed in your task."*

The Keeper asks what the party learned at the palace. Perhaps the foremost expert on the lore of the Blackwood and the Elder King, he offers important insights to the party's discoveries.

According to the legends, Castle Trakenholtz was a tower so tall it disappeared into the clouds. When Ember-Eye abandoned his kingdom, the same fate befell that tower as the mad king's enemies: it was set ablaze. Keeper Quill considered the castle ruin to be lost to myth, but if it still exists it is certain to be a hazardous ruin.

If questioned about the Prince, Keeper Quill insists that the only way to hold the Elder Kingdom together is to rescue the Prince and crown him. When confronted with the Prince's poor studies, Keeper Quill will dismiss any concern. "*Surely, you are not so worried! A sample of the realm shall be drawn from every noble court, to attend upon the new king and to advise him in his deliberations until such time as he can rule for himself. The new*

king will have daily access to a perfect mirror of the Elder Kingdom." If anything is clear to the party at this point, it is this: a representative sample of the current nobility is certain to be under the sway of corrupt bribers and backstabbers.

When the party begins to search for a symbol of errant guile, Sal O' the Byways reluctantly speaks up. Proceed to **Byways of the Elves**.

Byways of the Elves

Begins in: anywhere

At the mention of a "symbol of errant guile," Sal O' the Byways reluctantly speaks up.

"Y'see now, like I said I was once a handy messenger fer noble courts all up an' down the Elder Kingdom. Folks couldn't figure how I'd travel such vast stretches the road without runnin' into outlaws or pagans or nothin'. Well, y'see… turns out I had a bit o' help."

Sal fidgets in her wagon seat. "The truth of it's in my name, y'see. Folks were right about my travelin' some secret pathway, but they'd never a'hired me if they'd a'known the whole truth." The words become sand in Sal's mouth. She clears her throat a few times. "Oh, Wood's Woes! I was a giddy-headed youth desperate fer coin and glory! I… well, I… oh, I made a pact with an elf! I sought guile and this were the quickest way! Haven't trucked with the elf in years now, got rid o' the magic wagon wheels and all, but the pact still holds."

"What's the pact, y'say? Well, that's the thing. I swore an oath, y'see. 'Never to willingly ride toward battles or dangers.' Coward that I am, I figured it'd be easy enough to keep an oath I was naturally afeared of anyway. Works for me jus' fine, but... I figure I could break it with such high and mighty errants as yerselves there to protect me. Dealing with elves ain't easy, but this I guarantee: no other nothin's gonna get us where we're going faster or more assuredly than the Byways Wheels."

If the party is hesitant to act on Sal's plan, there are likely a few ways to encourage them by invoking a Hindrance or two. Above all, the chance to observe elves and find another weakness would be invaluable. Even Keeper Quill admits that could come in handy with the Elder King.

Dangerous Attention

In order to break her oath, Sal must ride willingly toward a battle or some kind of danger. The party needs to find danger in the form of a quick Savage Tales. **Outlaw Bounty, To Stop an Elf**, and **Hunting and Tracking** are all potential options for this scene.

The Wheelwright's New Pact

Sal's elf, a Caller known as The Wheelwright, arrives as soon as the battle is finished. The Wheelwright will only make a new set of wheels on one condition: the party must track down and kill a Fair Folk elf on the Wheelwright's behalf. In broken speech with a strange accent, The Wheelwright explains it is tired of being stunted in its growth. It longs to "become the Wilds," and will not wait for a chance to "become the canopy" first.

Elves, The Wheelwright explains, mature like trees: first a mess of tangled underbrush, then a slew of stunted saplings, waiting in the twilight while canopy trees glut upon the sunlight overhead. When a canopy tree grows old, it falls and decomposes back into the earth, nourishing new growth for decades. *"And so with elves! The canopies grow, they fall, they become the Elven Wilds! I will not wait! I WILL NOT WAIT! Now, and you must help!"*

Treasure: The Byways Wheels ($6500)

These large wagon wheels are painted a surprising shade of red. When mounted on a wagon, the elven magic within these wheels grant a +2 bonus to Driving rolls. However, this ability is only granted when the driver is unknowingly headed toward danger.

The wheels also allow a wagon to travel on the Byways, a strange road through the Elven Wilds. When using the Elven Wilds setting rule to travel to a desired location, the Byways Wheels allow the driver to skip safely through the trip with a successful Driving roll. This roll is made at a -2 penalty if the driver is knowingly headed toward danger.

According to The Wheelwright, there's a Fair Folk elf nearby that is on the verge of such a maturation. Its woodland spirit will transcend its body and *become* the woodlands. This is the truth: every patch of the Elven Wilds was once an elf itself. This is why the Elven Wilds seem to pulse with a sinister cunning all their own. If the party intervenes in this (very dangerous) event, the Wheelwright piggybacks off the other elf's power and steals the magic of the Elven Wilds away from it.

Before the party sets out, they may make Investigate rolls to learn more about the Fair Folk. They should spend a little time preparing for this formidable foe, but the Wheelwright is impatient. It will not permit them to tarry more than a few days.

- **The Wheelwright:** Use stats for a Caller on **pg. 129**.

The Elven Wilds

When our errant heroes are ready, take them through the Elven Wilds to find their prey. Resolve this as per the setting rule, but each new terrain in the trip should be a little warmer than the last. By the time, they reach the heart of this Elven Wilds, the Fair Folk's sunwell is in full effect no matter the season. The elf is attended by 10 pagans and 2 witches, all sunburnt.

Transcendance

The party must kill the Fair Folk with salt, fire, and blood. When it dies, the Wheelwright dives on its corpse and starts devouring it. The Wheelwright swells to great size in the course of its grisly meal, until it actually pops like a bubble. The sudden burst ripples throughout the surrounding wood. A clear change takes hold. Whether they like it or not, the party has helped an elf become a new patch of Elven Wilds.

After a few moments, a bare cart path snakes its way through the forest just beside the errants.

> *"Yea, we've gone an' done it now." Sal's voice is quiet with fear. "I'd recognize the Byways even in the foggiest dream, but look there," she points to a nearby tree, were four red wagon wheels grow like fruit upon the branches. "Help me get these on the wagon and let's be off! This poor coward's heart can't bear much more."*

With a successful Repair roll, the party can switch out the wagon wheels in under an hour. From there, it's a relatively simple journey to wherever they'd like to go. Their next objective is to reach Castle Trakenholtz for a showdown against the Elder King, but they may not be ready yet. If the party's average rank isn't at least Heroic, send them on a few Savage Tales to prepare. Of course, if Ancestors' Eve of 1458 YK is already near, they may not have time to adequately prepare.

When the party is ready, proceed to **Crisis of the 81st Generation.**

- **The Fair Folk:** This solitary elf is nevertheless a fearsome foe.

Crisis of the 81st Generation

Begins in: Castle Trakenholtz, the Elven Wilds

Requirements: Heroic

Night has fallen on the 30th of Late Winter, in the Year of the King 1458. It is Ancestors' Eve, and the Crisis of the 81st Generation has arrived.

Sal's wagon skids to a halt at the edge of a scorched clearing. In the center, a black tower stretches upward into a bank of stormy clouds. Castle Trakenholtz, lost seat of the ancient Light Realm and home to the mad King Wulf Ember-Eye, is an angry ruin, a place of cruel memories.

Storming Castle Trakenholtz

Arrayed in the clearing between the errants and the tower is an army of Imps, Hollowbacks, the Wild Hunt, and woodland beasts numbering in the thousands. As if in response to such overwhelming odds, the Lantern of Respite begins to glow. Lennid Talbrander emerges from beyond the veil with a spiritual army of his own. *"Stand strong, errants! Behold, I have marshalled nine generations of your ancestors to support you. Go forth, and fight with valor!"*

A Mass Battle ensues on the tangled plain in front of the towering Castle Trakenholtz. Give 10 tokens to the elven army to represent their 10,000 warriors. Each errant and Allied Extra present has 1,000 ancestors at their disposal, so add a token to the party's army for each errant and Allied Extra present. Sal has reverted back to her cowardly ways and refuses to take part in the battle. *"I'll hang back and come flyin' in when y'need a quick escape! Ancestor's be with – well, I s'pose they are already! Plain as day!"*

As the battle pushes its way closer and closer to the castle, our errant heroes discover their abilities are

magnified. Bolt launches dozens of projectiles. The Sweep edge decimates entire squads of elves at a time. With the magic of Leaf Step, errants are able to race across the battlefield at breakneck speeds. These are but a taste of the narrative exaggerations players are encouraged to make during the battle. Be sure to apply appropriate Battle Modifiers for creative actions.

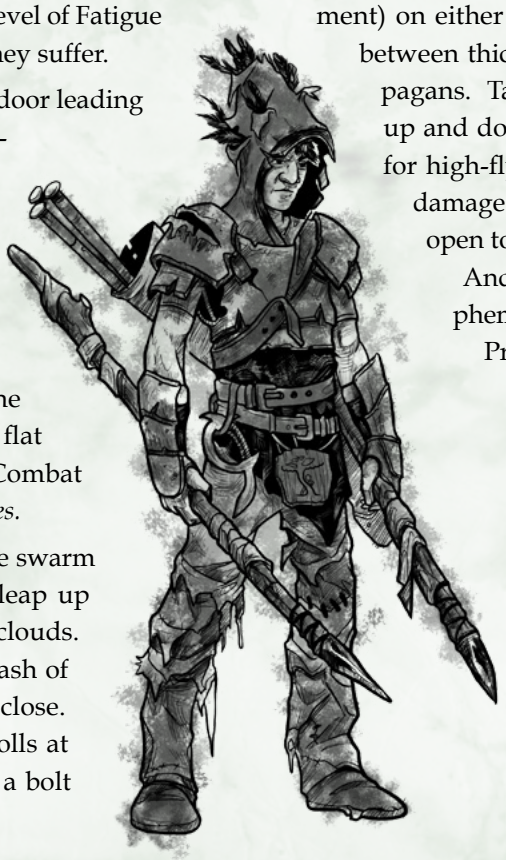
Up the Enchanted Tower

When they finally rout the elven army, the party finds a series of obstacles still lying between them and the Elder King. The lone tower of Castle Trakenholtz looks like a charred snag soaring up into the heavens. In each of the following scenes, the errants are harried by a set of strange witch-elf hybrids. These are the Daughters of the Elder King.

Thicket Hedge: Surrounding the tower like a mockery of every village hedge, a thicket of black, thorny vines rises two dozen feet above the errant's heads. They each find they can use the magic of Leaf Step this close to the tower, but it is not suitable for navigating such an awful bracken. Errants must pass Agility rolls to squeeze through the hedge or Vigor rolls to hack through it. Both rolls are made at a -2 penalty. Any errant who fails suffers a level of Fatigue from all the cuts and scrapes they suffer.

The Tower's Face: There is no door leading to the interior of Castle Trakenholtz, but the errants spy a swarm of pagans crawling over the tower's charred surface. With a little experimentation, the party realizes the magic of Leaf Step will allow them to stand upon the tower walls like they were on flat ground. Resolve as a Quick Combat from the *Savage Worlds core rules*.

Wracked by Storm: Beyond the swarm of pagans, our errant heroes leap up the tower and into the storm clouds. The rumble of thunder and crash of lightning disorients them up close. The party must pass Agility rolls at -2 or suffer 3d6 damage from a bolt of lightning.



A Dizzying Abyss: Now hundreds of feet above the Blackwood, the stormclouds dissipate into a maddening mist. Perhaps it is the Elder King's magic at work, but here the errants' task seems especially absurd. Each errant must pass a Spirit roll at -2 or succumb to an awful urge. Any errant who fails this roll will leap as far as they can from the face of the tower into the abyss below.

A Husk Renewed: Near the top of Castle Trakenholtz, a tangle of vibrant flowers and sturdy vines hold the tower together. Each flower wafts out clouds of poison spores. Every vine bristles with venomous spines. Each errant must pass an Agility roll at -2 to avoid these hazards. On a failure, errants must pass Vigor rolls at -4 or face another level of Fatigue.

- **The Daughters (6):** Use stats for a Witch, but each Daughter is a Wild Card with Fighting d10.

The Elven King's Court

The party vaults over the upper crenellation of Castle Trakenholtz and into the highest chamber. Open to the sky, it is a long hall overtaken by nature. Giant glowing mushrooms cast a weird light onto the scene. A thicket provides cover (but restricts movement) on either side of a central avenue. The space between thickets is filled with deeply enchanted pagans. Tall, bare snags stand like columns all up and down the way. They are an ideal place for high-flying duels, and could be toppled to damage enemy forces. The whole hall stands open to a scintillating night sky.

And on the other side, seated upon a blasphemous throne, the Elder King awaits.

Proceed to **The Elder King.**

The Elder King

Begins in: Castle Trakenholtz, the Elven Wilds

It's the final battle with the Elder King! Most of his minions have been killed or left behind by our errant heroes. Now we discover if the party possesses the courage and luck to save the Elder Kingdom.

Regicide

It is time to unveil *The Way of the Elder King*. As soon as the Gold-Emerald Shroud is removed, the reality-altering magic of the tome immediately negates all the strange powers the party wielded in the first part of their attack. The final battle against the Elder King proves to be the fight of the errants' lives. Fortunately, their adventures have forged our errant heroes into mighty champions.

The Elven Royal Guard

A legion of enemies stands ready to oppose our errant heroes.

- **The Daughters (4):** Use the same stats for the Daughters as in Crisis of the 81st Generation. Flanking the Elder King's throne, his remaining Daughters command his legions and hurl magic from the rear of the battle. They won't hesitate to wade into battle when the party starts to prevail.
- **Enchanted Pagans (4 per Errant):** Use the stats for a pagan on **pg. 120**, but these warriors have Fighting d8 and gain +2 to their Toughness. They seem to be twisted fusions of human and Hollowback.

The Elder King

Resplendent and terrible, the Elder King has transformed from a pinnacle of humanity into a regal elf-lord. The rage of a thousand-year curse burns in his eyes. He stands as straight as a sentry pine, with a tall antler crown growing from his brow.

In combat, the Elder King fights with lordly, dispassionate precision. He is protected by his Daughters, and can summon swarms of Imps to fight for him. Imps and pagans are meaningless to the Elder King, but he will try to heal his Daughters if they suffer injuries.

When he dies, the Elder King transmutes into a sinister mist. Any elves or pagans flee in terror, and his Daughters wail for revenge.

Attributes: Agility d12+2, Smarts d10, Spirit d12+2, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d12, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d10, Throwing d12

Charisma: +4; Pace: 8; Parry: 9(1); Toughness: 13(4)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty

Edges: Command, Level Headed, Improved Sweep

Special Abilities:

Armor +4: The Elder King wears floor-length robes of spun gold. The robes are also adorned with sentrywood, leafstone, and lacquered leaf armor accents.

Elven Shift: Reverted back to his elven nature, the Elder King gains a number of magical boons. First, he adds 2" to his Pace. He turns into a wisp of fog when he moves, which is equivalent to the Improved Extraction Edge. Once per round, he may surround a target with rejuvenating vines as the *healing* power. Finally, once per round, The Elder King can summon a gale of razor-sharp leaves as per the *blast* power.

Immortality: No matter how many wounds the Elder King suffers, he can only be killed by a blow from *It Shall Be Cut*. Wound penalties beyond -4 are ignored.

Leaf Step: When the Elder King uses the Run action, he gains the Wall Walker ability for 1 round. In combat, he may also make an Agility Trick as a free action.

Majestic: Ruling for 1,458 years has imbued the Elder King with a powerful aura of majesty. He gains +4 to Charisma, and anyone in the presence of the Elder King must make a Fear check at a -2 penalty.

Size (+2): The Elder King stands over 10 feet tall.

Two-Heart Spear: Str+d6; 3/6/12; Parry +1; This spear has a dark sentrywood shaft and a blade of glowing leafstone. Once per combat, the wielder can create a copy of the spear that fights on its own with a successful Spirit check. The copy is treated as an Extra with Parry 6, Toughness 6, and a Fighting die of d6.

Through Night and Wind

When the Elder King is finally defeated, his keening cry cracks the foundations of Castle Trakenholtz. At the top of the tower, the sickening lurch spells doom for all assembled. There is no surviving the hundreds of feet to the forest floor.

At the last moment, the crack of a whip signals a final, desperate hope. Sal O' the Byways and her wagon lurch over the edge of the tower and into the highest chamber. *"Quit gawkin' and GET IN!"* The party piles into the wagon and it rockets forward with a cry from Sal. Behind them, a terrible wind rises as the Elder King's dwindling spirit begins its final pursuit.

Jewel Beach: Suspended between sky and earth, the wagon surges down a river of air. On either bank, jeweled star-flowers threaten to stoke the greed within the party. Each errant must pass a Spirit roll or spend their action trying to leave the wagon to grab a star-flower. Errants so tempted find they can swim through the air, albeit at a -4 penalty.

Razor Harvest: Plunging through the canopy, the wagon is lashed by countless razor-sharp leaves. All errants must pass an Agility roll at a -2 penalty or suffer 2d4 damage.

Delectable Dirge: Now under the night-black boughs, the party is waylaid by The Daughters from either side. Each errant must pass a Spirit roll or be tempted away into the wilds by the sweetness of the Daughters' ghostly song.

Gloomy Willows: The wagon hurtles into a grove of ghastly willows. Everyone must pass a Fear test as the willow branches attempt to grapple them out of the wagon.

Home Stretch: The Elder King and his Daughters grow more desperate in their final moments. With Starry Meadow Palace visible through a break in the trees ahead, the spirits lash out one last time before they fade. Everyone must make a successful Vigor roll at -2 or suffer 1d4 Wounds from this final, withering assault.

What if they fail?

The Elder King transcends into the largest and most twisted Elven Wilds ever known. The Elder Kingdom collapses immediately. Only the biggest cities remain standing but their hedges collapse. Pagans and Elven Wilds take over the entire Blackwood. In all likelihood, the last vestiges of civilization will be snuffed out within five years. But perhaps the party can find some way to carve out a sanctuary for themselves and their loved ones. Or perhaps they can manage to escape down the Way into the Widelands.

Finale

As the wagon bucks out of the forest and into the royal meadow, a deep groan passes through the surrounding trees. Mixed within is the final wail of a great and terrible spirit, a spirit that will never be able to torment humanity. The Elder King—who guided us for so long—is gone, and his kingdom is better for it. The sun rises over the mountains, and our errant heroes may breathe easy at last.

What happens next depends on the actions taken over the last few sessions. One thing is certain: the errants will be showered with wealth and glory by a grateful kingdom.

Without the wisdom of his forebears, the Prince is destined to be a weak king. If the errants rescued him, he will be coronated in Grand Delving within the month, and he will be attended by a council of nobles from across the Blackwood. If the errants do nothing to prune or influence this council, it will turn out to be a mirror of the realm's corruption.

If the Prince died somehow instead, it will likely mean war for the Elder Kingdom. The walled cities will grow mistrustful of one another. The Unified will ramp up its efforts to influence the nobility. Without a mighty effort, the long and bloody war that ensues could rip the Elder Kingdom apart.

Pagankind is dealt a massive blow by the death of the Daughters and the Elder King. Elves and pagans alike go on the defensive, but they are still numerous and insidious forces. They will not stop trying to extinguish civilization in the forest.

Above all, the Way's Margin still exists. There are still those who suffer beyond civilization's cracked facade. The party's mighty victory does not turn the Elder Kingdom into a utopia, but the dawn is a glorious sign of promise.

So go forth, errants, to walk the Way's Margin!

The Way's Margin: Savage Tales

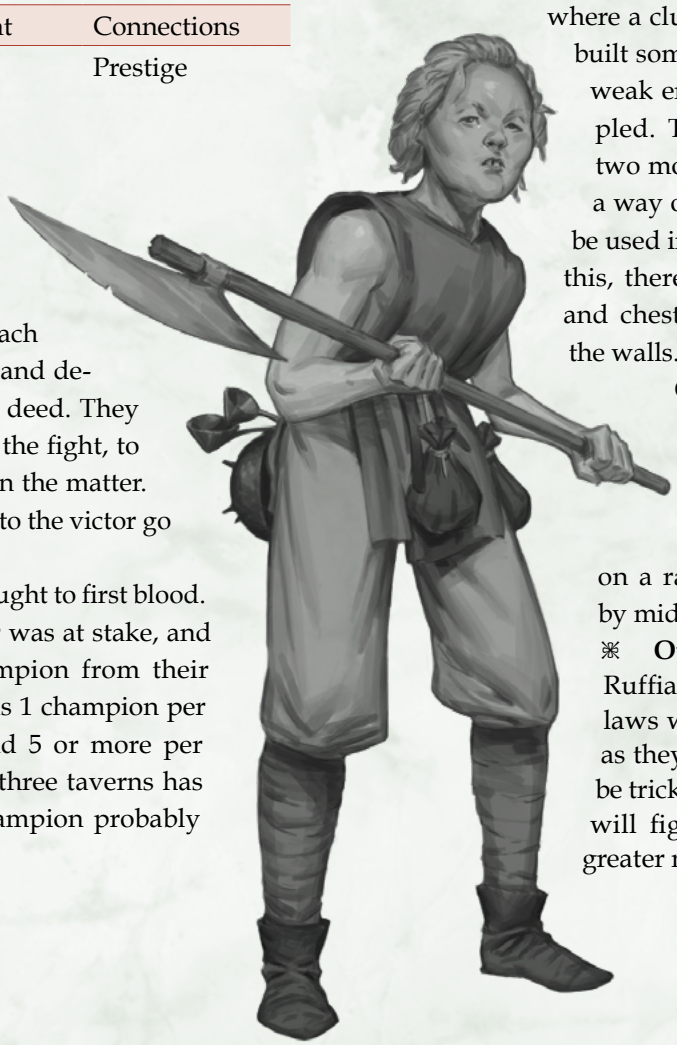
Errants are charged with walking the ambiguous world at the margin of the Elder King's Way. Beyond the Plot Point Campaign, there is no shortage of adventures for your group to find in their travels.

An Errant Duel

Begins in: Anywhere

Perhaps one member of the party offended another errant. Perhaps the local champion has issued an open challenge to all errants who pass through her home. Whatever the reason, the locals (likely bored out of their minds) gather around the challenger's chosen arena to take bets and cheer on the combatants. Draw two cards to determine the terrain and stakes of this duel:

	Terrain	Stakes
Clubs	Uneven	Death
Diamonds	Lofty	Treasure
Hearts	Waterfront	Connections
Spades	Slick	Prestige



Errant duels are full of custom and ritual. They always begin with opposed Tests of Will. With either an Intimidation or Taunt roll, each errant introduces himself and declares his most renowned deed. They both declare the stakes of the fight, to show that each are clear on the matter. Then the fight begins, and to the victor go the spoils.

Most errant duels are fought to first blood. The victor gains whatever was at stake, and perhaps the title of champion from their opponent. Usually, there is 1 champion per village, 2-4 per town, and 5 or more per city. Maybe one of every three taverns has a champion, and that champion probably isn't much of a challenge.

⁂ **Encounters:** Errants

Between Errants and Outlaws

Begins in: Owl's Watch, Mead Meadows Province

Run this adventure if the errants choose to answer the call for help from Owl's Watch. The blacksmith tells the errants about an outlaw gang that has gathered just past the crossroads toward the Stag and Dragon, at a place called the Onceways Inn. There, they find an outlaw queen who's all too ready to mock the Call of Errantry itself.

A Wayhouse for Outlaws

The Onceways Inn used to be a Wayhouse, built by the Sentinels in generations past to shelter all passersby. A stone wall surrounds the inn's courtyard, where a cluster of small cottages was built some years before. The wall is weak enough in places to be toppled. The players may describe two more features of the inn, and a way one of those features might be used in combat. In addition to all this, there are many crates of food and chests full of valuables inside the walls.

Outlaws armed with rusted weapons and village tools loiter around the courtyard. A wagon full of 5 ruffians is out on a raid. These outlaws return by midday.

⁂ **Outlaws (10):** Use stats for a Ruffian on **pg. 122**. These outlaws will shout for help as soon as they spot the party, but might be tricked into hidden traps. They will fight as long as they have greater numbers.

The Way's Margin

Inside the inn's main hall, the gang leader sits at a feasting table with six more outlaws. The ancestor shrine of Owl's Watch has been haphazardly set up behind them. Unless the errants are hidden or jump straight to attacking her, the leader demands to know who they are and why they've come. These are the opening words of a Social Conflict between the leader and the party.

In the first round she declares herself Way's Margin, champion of glory and vengeance. She demands to know what deeds of errantry the party has accomplished. In the second round, Way's Margin rebukes the world of errantry for its false altruism. *"The Call doesn't bind ye to good deeds, so what good is it?"* she asks. In the final round, she declares errantry to be hollow without altruism. Since altruism is dead in these dark times, the party should abandon their oaths and join her gang instead. *"It's better than dying under a noble's bootheel!"*

If the party wins by two or more points, 2d4 outlaw extras are convinced to leave the gang and join the party. With a victory of five points or more, this number increases to 2d8. Way's Margin attacks the players after the Social Conflict unless the balance of power is clearly tipped against her. She and her outlaws fight dirty: ganging up on errants, Agility and Smarts tricks, and pushing them off nearby ledges.

- **Outlaws (6):** Use stats for a Ruffian on **pg. 122**.
- **Way's Margin:** Use stats for an Outlaw Queen on **pg. 119**.

Victory

After the battle, the party doesn't find much worth looting from the dead outlaws: shoddy armor, overused weapons, and the like. Many of them carried errantry badges they must have forsaken long ago. It's a sign of these hard times, when so many errants stray too far from the Way.

Beneath the main hall, there is a stable with a wagon and a team of two oxen. The stolen valuables of several collapsed villages are stacked in crates around the courtyard. There is enough mundane gear, trade goods, and food supplies to fill three wagons.

Back in Owl's Watch, the villagers dearly appreciate any food or valuables brought back to them. If everything is recovered from the Onceways Inn, the villagers have more than they need. They offer to let the party keep a share of any recovered clothing or valuables equivalent to $300.

Caravan Guards

Begins in: any settlement

Notes: Not available past Seasoned Rank

The party has been hired as guards on a mercenary caravan. Maybe they saw a posted notice, or perhaps they inquired in the merchant quarter. Whyever they are guarding the caravan, draw two cards to determine the details:

	Cargo	Payment
Clubs	Arms/Armor	$100
Diamonds	Currency	$200
Hearts	Supplies	1d4x$100
Spades	Special	2d4x$200

The Gamemaster may move one step in any direction on one card draw if it makes sense to do so. For instance, it's hard to imagine a long trip that only pays $100, or getting paid $1600 for a shipment of swords for the town guard.

The difficulty of guard duty should increase as the job becomes more valuable. A $100 trip might incur a hazard like a broken wagon wheel or a nasty storm. A $1600 trip should be a long trek through hostile territory, filed with enemies, hazards, traps, and other dangers. These more valuable trips might take more than one session to complete.

Sometimes, the trouble doesn't arrive until the party has reached their destination. For every threat of roving wilderness or outlaw gangs, there are many more threats of smuggling, theft, and corruption. Perhaps they are tempting for the errants. Regardless, the errants receive their payment if the shipment is delivered without significant losses.

Castle Highguard

Begins in: Talbrand, Denvorn Province

Requirements: Veteran

On the northern frontier of Denvorn Province, Castle Highguard was once a favorite getaway for the local ruling family. Nine years ago, High Lady Gretel was wintering at Castle Highguard when an elf of the Wild Hunt came out of the wilderness. Its relentless assault upon the castle killed the High Lady and all her servants. It's why High Lord Falko Denvorn II rules the province today.

After learning about the curse, our errant heroes learn details in the nearby village of Talbrand. It may take a few sessions to exhaustively explore the castle, but in so doing the party can gain wealth, glory, and a new home.

Rambling Fragments

"Memory erased and daylight scorned," the shell of a man hisses in Talbrand Tavern. "Spurred on by dreams and hounded by wintry shadows…" His fearful whispers fill the evening with the horrors of Castle Highguard.

Many errants have sought to lift the curse of endless winter that lays upon the castle these past 9 years. This man is the only one to return. A stranger to the village of Talbrand, the locals know only that he was gone nearly a month and came back without spirit or drive. *"But he's always whispering,"* the tavern keep says, *"Give a listen, if ye think yerself brave."*

Now, you can't remember how you came to be standing inside the closed gates of Castle Highguard. It is a cold, moonless night, and the biting wind has driven all memory of the man's words from your minds. You carry provisions for a long trip, but you cannot remember why. You only remember a burning purpose—curiosity, determination, or perhaps greed—to fix what's wrong within the gates.

Night-Black Dreams

Castle Highguard is shrouded in endless night. No matter how many hours or days the errants spend exploring the castle, the sun never rises to greet them.

And hours or days it may be, because the only way to remember the way forward is by dreaming. The castle's curse dulls a person's waking memories, and only allows them fitful sleep and nightmares. Each time they sleep, the errants need to pass a -2 Spirit roll or suffer a level of Fatigue upon waking.

Each night, randomly determine one errant to be visited by dreams instead of nightmares. These dreams contain clues to proceed further into the castle. The first time the dream visits the party, relate only the first sentence to the dreamer. If the party doesn't solve the mystery, sleeping again reveals the next sentence, and so forth until the dream is solved.

First Dream: In a silence that should not be, a man shatters like ice when he hits the ground outside the stables. At the gatehouse, a woman wails as a man falls in slow motion from the stable's bell tower. He is the bellringer and she is his wife, but the bell did not ring.

Second Dream: Seven times, the Rope Maker's Daughter is enflamed with passion, each time over a new groom. The Rope Maker weaves his daughter into being while sitting by the fire. In the end, the Rope Maker's Daughter and her Grooms are killed by a raging inferno.

Third Dream: Nine dead men play at lawn games upon the feasting tables. After their game, they are charred into ash. The smoke of their remains can be seen pouring from the keep's tall chimney.

Fourth Dream: The world has turned upside down. Standing on the surface of the fish pond, your reflection reaches up to grab you. But no, it only wants your attention to point to the far end of the pond. There, a monument's reflection has a door that the monument itself lacks.

Fifth Dream: There are six pallbearers in the sepulcher, each smothered by the coffin they bear. The room grows darker each time a pallbearer is swallowed by the coffin. As the last pallbearer disappears, peace settles on the tomb.

Castle Highguard

A blizzard storms from the castle's tallest tower. Not much of the snow falls on the castle below, but is instead blown out up to a mile into the surrounding forest. Castle Highguard is a sprawling complex filled with hazards, curses, and frightful creatures. The doors leading into the noble keep are locked until certain conditions are met, otherwise the party is free to explore wherever they choose.

Basement: Beneath the keep, accessible only by a secret passageway on the terrace, a tomb holds the remains of a forgotten noble line. The coffin at the back of the sepulcher is surrounded by 6 undead beasts. These beasts regenerate every time the party sleeps. If the party grapples each beast into the coffin and shuts the lid, the beasts are permanently trapped and the fifth chain falls from the door leading to the Orrery Tower.

- **Pallbearer (6):** Use Beasts with an Undead trapping from the *Savage Worlds core rules*.

Bedchambers: Upstairs in the keep, four bedrooms were seemingly kept safe from the ravages of the Wild Hunt's curse. The rooms are cold and dark, but pristine: thick curtains, orderly desks and drawers, and a sumptuous poster bed in each room. These beds prevent the party from having nightmares, but there's a 50% chance that a bed grapples the sleeping errant, jostles them in a frantic race around the castle, then flips over and attempts to crush its prey. Between the four rooms, there are valuables equivalent to a Worthwhile roll on the Treasure Table from the *Fantasy Companion*.

- **Roaming Bed:** The bed grapples targets with an opposed Strength roll. If the bed succeeds, its target must make an Agility roll at -2 or suffer a level of Fatigue from bumps and bruises sustained during the bed's mad race around the castle. With a raise on this Agility roll, the errant manages to roll out of bed. Otherwise, the bed overturns and attempts to crush the errant for 2d8 damage.

Gatehouse: The ramshackle building connected to the front gates was once little more than a room where guards could rest after their patrols and a connecting room for storage. Now, the ruin is haunted by the Bell Ringer's Wife. She ambushes anyone who makes their way into the Gatehouse. Inside, a door barred from the other side leads to a room filled with treasure some hapless errant tried to escape with years ago. This hoard is equivalent to a Worthwhile roll on the Fantasy Companion's Treasure Table.

- **Bell Ringer's Wife:** Use stats for a Hopping Ghoul on **pg. 117**.

Great Hall: The tables in this long, vaulted chamber are set up for a feast that never happened. At the far end, a mass of pitch-black cats and dogs slumber on the noble dais. If roused from their slumber, the pack attacks with the red-hot chains collared around their necks. They sleep on top of a Rich treasure haul, which includes an Illuminated Cogs Deck.

There is a tall fireplace on the left side of the hall with the skeletons of 9 men lodged in the chimney. They animate to attack anyone who tries to look up the chimney. The third chain on the Orrery Tower door breaks if the skeletons are burned in the fireplace after they are defeated.

Exploring the Castle

It's easy to get lost in a sprawling complex like Castle Highguard, so it's important to have an idea of where everything is located. Use this list as a quick reference for your players:

- **Lower Courtyard**
  - Gatehouse
  - Stables
- **Upper Courtyard**
  - Guardhouse
  - Servant's House
- **Noble Keep**
  - Basement
  - Bedchambers
  - Great Hall
  - Kitchens
  - Orrery Tower
  - Terrace

Black Cats and Dogs (10): Use stats for Dogs and Small Cats from the *Savage Worlds core rules* with a fire trapping for their collars.

Skeletons (9): Use stats for Skeletons from the *Savage Worlds core rules*.

Guardhouse: The barracks for the castle guard is full of aged but serviceable arms and armor (equivalent to no more than $4000). It is also full of ghosts. A paper map of the castle is laid out on a table on the right side of the room. The map is covered in hasty scribbles. Deciphering these mad notes before entering a room provides a clue about how the curse has affected the room.

Ghostly Guards (3): Use stats for a Ghost. These ghosts throw weapons from the weapon racks around the guardhouse.

Treasure: Map of Castle Highguard: This folio of maps shows the layout of the castle grounds and each level of the keep itself. Hastily scrawled notes cover the sheets of parchment. By consulting the map and making a successful Survival or Investigate roll, errants can learn about any room they're about to enter.

Treasure: The Arms of Dicing Cleaver

A large carving knife and a sturdy wooden cutting board, this set acts as a +1 sword and buckler combo. They once belonged to the castle cook, who could whip up food for a whole party with only the barest ingredients. Once per day, the knife and cutting board can be used to magically turn a single trail ration into a meal for 5 people.

Kitchens: Behind the Great Hall, a long kitchen stretches from one side of the keep to the other. Among piles of refuse and many decaying corpses, one skeleton holds the Arms of Dicing Cleaver. This skeleton also conceals a Swarm of rats in a warren. The rats attack the party as soon as the skeleton is disturbed.

Lower Courtyard: Just inside the gates, a small courtyard is surrounded by the the gatehouse, the stables, a staircase leading to the Upper Courtyard, and a sheer cliff. The drop is deadly, but the view it affords of Denvorn Province is stunning.

Noble Keep: Once decorated with statues and festooned with towers, now there are piles of crumbled stone all around this lofty stronghold. Two stout chains bar entry to the keep. Only solving the first and second dreams unlocks these chains.

Orrery Tower: A heavy door off to the side of the Great Hall leads up a winding stair to the tallest tower in the castle. The Wild Hunt waits up there, but the door is held fast by five heavy chains. Only solving the mystery of all five dreams breaks these chains.

The chamber at the top of the tower has been all but obliterated by the storm. The Wild Hunt lies somewhere out in the clouds. The bare platform at the top of the tower is cramped, but the clouds support the errants' weight until the Wild Hunt is defeated.

- **Wild Hunt:** See **pg. 131**.

Servant's House: Little more than a tavern with a room full of ratty beds upstairs, the servant's house is mostly untouched by the curse. A larder full of rotten food threatens to make the party sick. Any errant who fails a Vigor roll at -2 gains a level of Fatigue as they begin to cough and wretch uncontrollably. They regain composure by leaving the house, but the Fatigue persists for 1 hour.

A storyteller's corpse in the corner clutches a piece of old parchment. Upon it, a ballad tells the story of Dicing Cleaver, an errant and the castle's former cook. His signature knife and cutting board could be used as a blade and buckler, and—if the ballad is to be believed—turn virtually anything into a hearty meal for a band of errants.

Stables: Long empty, the most notable part of the stables is the small tower rising from the roof. The bell within used to ring the hour and alert the castle to any danger. The day the Wild Hunt attacked, the Bell Ringer reached the top of the tower only to be thrown from the tower by a magical gust and dashed on the paving stones of the Lower Courtyard. Ringing the bell dispels his ghost and breaks the first chain on the doors to the Noble Keep.

- **The Bell Ringer:** Use stats for a Ghost on **pg. 117**. The Bell Ringer attacks by swinging the bell toward opponents.

Terrace: Behind the Noble Keep, a wide terrace looks out on Lake Echo and the northern reaches of the Blackwood. Despite the blizzard, the fish pond in the middle of the terrace has not frosted over. A monument at the far end of the pond is dedicated to the noble who built the castle, Lady von Ferren. The fish pond is deeper than it appears, and conceals a hidden doorway at the base of the monument. This passage leads to the Basement.

Upper Courtyard: A broad tree with 7 hanged corpses dominates this courtyard. The Guardhouse and Servant's House flank the tree, while the Noble Keep lies at the top of a staircase ahead. A winding, rocky path leads around the keep to the Terrace. The tree attempts to strangle anyone who moves within reach. Burning the tree and hanged men breaks the second chain on the door of the Noble Keep.

- **The Rope Maker's Daughter:** Use stats for a Methusaleh Tree in the *Fantasy Companion*. Instead of impaling targets on a raise, the tree strangles targets with a noose. Escaping the noose requires an opposed Agility roll to slip out.

Lifting the Curse

The only way to lift the curse on Castle Highguard is to kill the Wild Hunt elf. If it is not killed with fire, salt, and blood, the curse abates but the Wild Hunt returns 3d6 months later to attack the castle anew. The curse returns with it.

Assuming the party successfully breaks the curse, the village of Talbrand is pleased but High Lord Falko Denvorn is elated. Finally, the curse that killed his mother is lifted. The castle is too full of painful memories for the High Lord to move back in, so he offers it to the party as a manor in exchange for two thirds of whatever treasure is found within. A successful Social Conflict could convince him to more generous terms, but he points out his intention to give half his own share to the people of his province.

Hunting and Tracking

Begins in: Anywhere in the forest

A beast stalks outside the village hedge, terrorizing the settled folk enough to put a bounty on its head. A few folks have died each week for the past 1d6 weeks, so the village has scraped together a reward equal to a single roll on the Treasure table. This is almost certain to be a significant fee in their lives.

Pick any animal or monster from the encounter lists on **pg. 114** and treat it as a Wild Card. If most of the party is Veteran rank or above, you may pick a legendary creature instead: Dragon, Firecat, Royal Pheasant, or Stag. This monster has a particular patrol route the players can discover with a successful Tracking check. The errants may choose to lay an ambush for the beast along this patrol, or track it back to its lair with a Tracking Dramatic Task. The beast stalks the players throughout the Dramatic Task.

Either way, build varied terrain for a combat encounter. If the party chooses to track the beast back to its lair, the terrain should give the beast a tactical advantage. In exchange for this increased difficulty, the players find a reward in the lair equivalent to a single roll on the Treasure table.

- **Encounters:** Beasts and Monsters

In Search of Ruin

Begins in: Any provincial capital

Notes: No more than twice in any province.

There are too many reasons why the party might catch news of a ruin discovered nearby. Draw a card to determine the type of ruin they've discovered:

- **Clubs—Fort:** Sometimes, a lone hunter or errant limps through the hedge bringing tales of blood and slaughter. The ruin is certain to be manned and defended, but the usual treasure is present for outlaws and pagans.
- **Diamonds—Village:** Every day, new refugees arrive in the Elder Kingdom's cities and towns. They bring news of another village falling to pagans, outlaws, or the wilds. They left behind many trade goods and heirlooms. Recovering these items would allow the party to call on the refugees as a one-time use of the Connections Edge.
- **Hearts—School:** The isolation of life in the forest improves a student's focus in magical and martial schools, but it also removes them from a town's protections. Ruined schools contain lost knowledge, usually of powers, or well-made arms and armor. They are often occupied by outlaws, pagans, or sometimes other errants.
- **Spades—Ancient Site:** Far out in the forest—often on the other side of elven wilds—there lie ruins from every part of the Elder Kingdom's long history. New powers and magic items are common treasures in these ancient, powerful sites. Elves and monsters are common foes.

All ruins are hazardous, most are trapped, and some are occupied and defended. Some lie on the other side of the Elven wilds, while others are just down the road.

- **Encounters:** Varies

Noble Favors

Begins in: any city

Leafstone coins may be precious, but nothing compares to a noble who owes you a favor. Their demands are often daunting, but the rewards can prove undeniable to stalwart and clever errants.

Perhaps the errants are approached by a courtier or they seek out the nobility on their own. Either way, they've found a noble who is willing to owe them a

favor. Draw two cards and consult the table below. The first card signifies the type of work, while the second card determines the target:

- **Clubs:** Sabotage/Errants
- **Diamonds:** Espionage/Nobility
- **Hearts:** Charity/Commoners
- **Spades:** Blackmail/Merchants

Each task should take a few scenes to accomplish, though you are free to choose whatever situational rules you like. Espionage could be represented by Social Conflict and a Dramatic Task, for example. As one of the most civilized ways to earn money in the Blackwood, fights should be rare in these circumstances.

In exchange for their help, the noble will offer a favor equivalent to 1d8x$100. The errants may negotiate this price with a Social Conflict.

Outlaw Bounty

Begins in: Any tavern or market

Somewhere nearby, a group of outlaws has gained the attention of the local nobility. A reward of $50 has been offered for each outlaw brought to justice, either captured or killed. This price could be raised or lowered by a Social Conflict with whichever noble or town councilor posted the bounty.

Outlaws prefer to hide away from watchful eyes, either in a ruin outside a village or town, or in the slums inside town and city walls. Outlaw gangs support themselves by extorting the locals. It takes at least 3 outlaws to form a gang, but sometimes outlaw kings and queens can rally together over 100 outlaws. If closer to the former, the party could tackle the outlaws in traditional combat, even if they hire a few extra errants to come along. But outlaw armies require a response in kind. Whether the party rallies a host of errants or just the town guard, resolve as a Mass Battle.

Outlaws are untrustworthy one and all, so their hideouts are usually riddled with traps. Fortunately for our errant heroes, outlaw hideouts are usually filled with treasure too. For every 5 outlaws, a hideout contains $500 worth of treasure. Weapons and armor are likely to be rusted or worn, but outlaws sell all kinds of illicit goods to the black market.

- **Encounters:** Outlaws, rarely accompanied by pagans

Pauper's Arena

Begins in: Span, capital of Great Falls Province

Once upon a time, a rowdy hunter from the forest came to visit his city cousin, the servant of a nobleman in Span. The hunter caused such a stir during his visit that the nobleman was disgraced. He abandoned his manor house and fled to another town. The manor has since been occupied by a gaggle of paupers.

The paupers have recently been abducted by another noble, Freelady Rill, and forced to fight in the noblewoman's secret arena. The party investigates the pauper's disappearance (perhaps after **Salt, Fire, and Blood**) and devises a way to free the paupers. If they play their cards right, the party might get a new home out of the deal.

A Twice-Empty Manor

Our errant heroes are approached by a craftsman, Heron Dorvert. Heron explains that the paupers of Folly Manor have mysteriously disappeared. He's worried, and asks the party to investigate in exchange for 5 crates of trade goods.

Folly Manor is located at the edge of the Arena District, nestled amongst a few run-down shops and a seedy tavern. The manor is made of a large main house and a smaller servant's house. An alley between them leads back to an enclosed courtyard big enough for a single wagon, and long-unused stables at the back. The trappings of poverty are everywhere.

There are several clues scattered around the manor about the pauper's disappearance:

Capture: A successful Tracking roll in the courtyard reveals signs of a scuffle. Blood was spilled, and several captives were dragged away. The tracks disappear in the bustle of the street. Also, a successful Notice roll in the main house uncovers a discarded scroll of orders:

> *Try not to kill any of them, but don't hesitate to rough them up. Might as well get the filthy beggars used to this kind of treatment.*
>
> *- R*

Nobility: In the servant's house, a successful Notice roll reveals a guard insignia that must have been knocked off while rounding up the paupers. It is a chain necklace with a small medallion on the end, depicting a noble's heraldry: a gold shield of blue stripes

per bend. A successful Knowledge (Nobility) roll (or a Streetwise roll at -2) confirms this is the heraldry of a minor noble in town, Freelady Rill. The Freelady is cruel woman with a home on the river, on the other side of the Arena District.

Rill's Arena

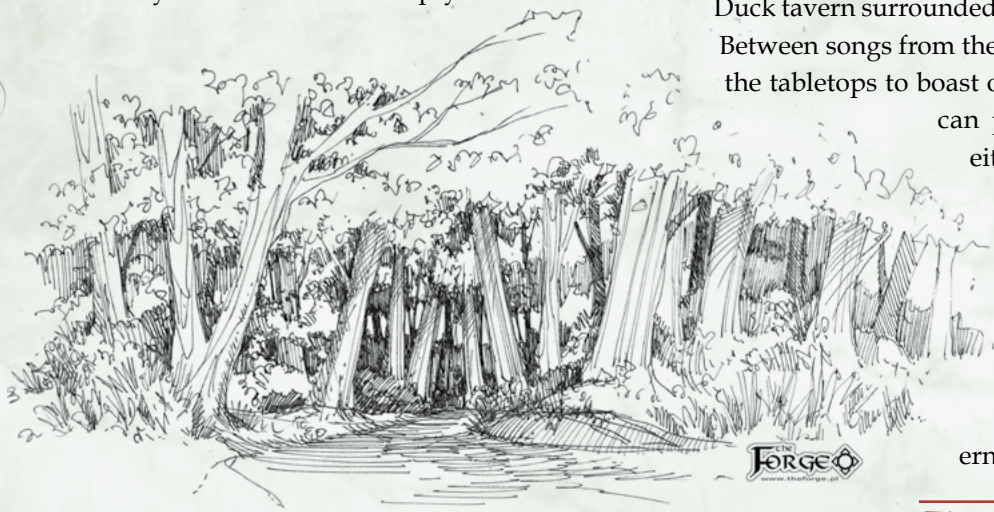
By whatever means they choose, the party learns that Freelady Rill runs a secret fighting arena out of her basement. The prize fighters are little better than ruffians and outlaws. Freelady Rill has decided to spice up the events by pitting paupers against wild animals and each other.

There are many ways the party might respond to this revelation. The fighting arena is not only unsanctioned but features involuntary and illegal matches. Alas, the city guard have their hands endlessly full in a city like Span. They can be convinced to intervene, but it won't be easy.

The party may choose to intervene themselves. The arena is small but open to the river, dangerously close to the Great Falls. It would take a successful Swimming roll at a -4 penalty to avoid death in those waters. If it comes to a fight in the arena, the 6 paupers left alive will join the party against 3 waves: a pack of Beasts, a gang of Ruffians, and a squad of Freelady Rill's personal guards. When all these foes are defeated, Freelady Rill flees in terror to another town.

Twice Empty and Thrice Filled

There are many situations where the party might find themselves in possession of a new home. If they convinced the city guards to intervene, help arrived too late to save the paupers. They are all killed, and Folly Manor stands empty.



Likewise, if the party fought alongside the paupers in the arena, the paupers take up the arms and armor of the fallen foes. They've had a crash course in combat, and decide a life of errantry is better than begging in the streets.

The manor is badly in need of cleaning and repairs, but it provides a sturdy first home for our errant heroes. There are 6 rooms in the main house and 2 in the servant's house, any of which could be converted to whatever purpose the errant's desire. The courtyard and stables make a fine staging area between adventures.

- **Beasts (2d4):** Use stats for a Beast on **pg. 114**, detailed however you like.
- **Freelady Rill's Guard (8):** Use stats of a Guard on **pg. 117**, with an even mix of spear and baton wielders.
- **Prize Fighters (1d6+3):** Use stats for a Ruffian on **pg. 122**.

The Riverfolk Tournament

Begins in: Three Rivers, Three Rivers Province

Beginning on the summer solstice and lasting seven full days, the Riverfolk Tournament pits challengers against one another in several of the most treasured feats and traditions on the riverways. This year, the Tournament is held in Three Rivers.

A Toast! A Tale!

Despite hard times, the people of Three Rivers are abuzz with excitement. The hot summer day has settled into the cool of night. The fireworks of the Starflower Festival burst overhead.

Our errant heroes find themselves in the Fisher Duck tavern surrounded by revelers and other errants. Between songs from the revelers, errants rise up onto the tabletops to boast of their past deeds. The party can participate in this boasting, either by taking an Interlude or by recounting one of their previous adventures together. Any character who boasts in this way earns a Benny. The Gamemaster should add a few boasts from other errants in the tavern to provide atmosphere.

The Games

Each day of the Riverfolk Tournament features a new challenge.

Caravans and Cogs: All hopefuls must choose whether to play Cogs, a card game very much like poker, or Caravans, a dice game similar to Liar's Dice. Over three rounds, all participants make opposed Gambling rolls. Each round, the person with the highest total earns two points, and the second highest earns one point. Gamblers may take multiple actions per round to taunt or intimidate their opponents, but these actions incur the regular multi-action penalty. Whomever has the most points in each game by the end of the third round is named the victor.

Log Roll: Balanced upon a 20-foot log in the middle of a roped-off eddy in the river Way, two contestants roll the log with quick steps. As the log rolls, the contestants make opposed Agility rolls to see who can remain upright the longest. The loser of each roll gains a level of Fatigue, and the first to reach 3 Fatigue fall into the water. All this Fatigue goes away after an hour's rest.

Storytelling: Contestants and spectators gather in the courtyard of the Palace on the Celestial Terrace for a contest of classic Blackwood stories. Using the Lesson Learned setting rule, each contestant tells a story accompanied by Persuasion roll. Storytellers should receive bonuses for good storytelling. Whichever storyteller has the highest total is named the victor.

Sailing Canoe Race: More like a mock battle than a true race, far more contestants begin the Sailing Canoe Race than finish it. Resolve as a Dramatic Task. One errant navigates the canoe using Boating rolls at a -4 due to incoming attacks from other canoes. Up to 3 more errants can repel attacks from within the canoe by making combat rolls. For every success, the penalty to the pilot's boating roll is lessened by 1. On a raise, the attack sinks the enemy canoe. If the Dramatic Task is successful, the crew wins the race.

Errant's Arena: The climactic event of the Tournament is a free-for-all battle between 12 errants. All rivalries are tested and all friendships set aside to determine who is the mightiest warrior. Errants forfeit the battle after suffering their first Wound, and the last warrior standing is the victor.

A Thicket of Rivals

The various games of the Riverfolk Tournament determine the best errants in the forest. Competition is fierce, but death is practically unheard of. This is a perfect atmosphere for the errantry—always proud and often brash—to form and resolve rivalries amongst each other. These rivalries are perfect seeds for the Gamemaster to develop further adventures. And sometimes, a rival can turn into a valuable Allied Extra.

Here are a few errant contestants who would make ideal long-term rivals.

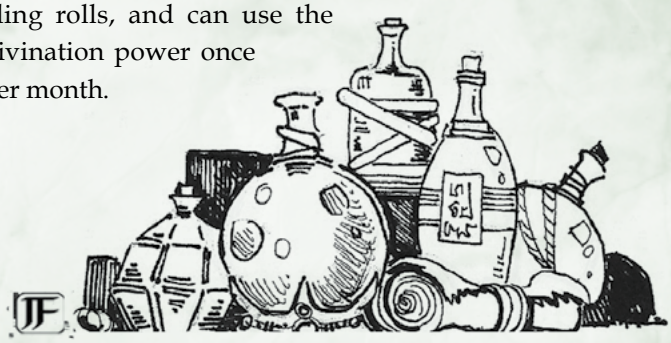
- **Jan son of Jan:** Few woodfolk can claim to be better at the log roll (d10) than Jan son of Jan (son of Jan, etc). He's also a fearsome foe in the Errant's Arena (d8), and is no bore when telling a story (d6). Jan's constant companion is a large, blue, imaginary dog named Mutt. Don't you dare call Jan crazy though.
- **Paul the Revered:** A master storyteller (d10) and an accomplished gambler (d8), Paul is famous for carrying news from city to city faster than anyone. Such an errant life has made him a capable sailor (d6) too.
- **Stormalong Aelfa:** Aelfa is known through the forest as a peerless captain (d10). Many hard years plying the rivers has made her an expert gambler (d8) and a decent brawler (d6) too. She's a giant of a woman with a booming voice and an iron will.

The Champion's Spoils

The victors of each contest earn a bevy of rewards:

Caravans: A cask of $750, and a set of Caravans dice carved from Leafstone. This grants the Luck Edge to anyone who plays at least one round of Caravans with them.

Cogs: A cask of $750, and a deck of Cogs cards illuminated by the Classicists. This deck grants +1 to Gambling rolls, and can use the divination power once per month.



Log Roll: A pair of mastercrafted riverboat boots, whose gripping soles grant +1 to Climbing rolls and +1 to Agility Tricks that involve walls.

Storytelling: A cask of $500, and a wide-brimmed hat that grants the use of the Storyteller Edge to whomever wears it.

Sailing Canoe Race: A finely-crafted sailing canoe that seats 6 people. The tapestried sail on its mast depicts river rapids, and grants a +1 bonus to Boating rolls.

Errant's Arena: A custom set of arms and armor from Crafty Gerta, the finest smith in town. Construction takes 3 weeks, and the weapons and armor cannot exceed $2000 in value.

Any errant who claims a victory in at least two events is named a champion of the tournament. They are awarded with a manor house in Three Rivers and a Dragon Mantle, which is made of lacquered leaves and bestows the Arcane Resistance Edge upon the wearer. All champions also receive an invitation to several noble courts, including the Grand Delving Court for the next Ancestors' Eve celebration.

Starflower Codex: The Artifact

Begins In: The forest roads between Span and Bastion in the Grove

This adventure should be run sometime before **A Light on the Past.** It is the first in a series of adventures that will provide the characters with a powerful tool: the first firearm. It will also greatly influence the relationship between the Elder Kingdom and the Holy Faith of Unity.

Out of Time

Our adventure begins with our errant heroes locked in battle against overwhelming odds. They have been surrounded by an outlaw caravan deep in the forest. The outlaws outnumber them three to one and—judging by the cages in their wagons—intend to capture the errants for slave labor. Because of this, the outlaws will try to disarm and disable their targets instead of outright killing them.

In the second round of combat, the sun glints off of something high in the branches of a tree in the middle of the battlefield. It looks to be a weapon of some kind, perhaps a spear or long-hafted axe. Anyone who climbs to retrieve this will find a strange item indeed.

The Artifact

Laser Rifle (3RB, 30/60/120, 1-3d6, RoF 3, Weight 8, Shots 18, Min Str d6, AP 4)*

**Increasing the damage per attack uses a like number of shots. A 3d6 attack, for instance, uses up 3 shots.*

This new weapon is capable of quickly turning the tide of battle. It spits bolts of fire that punch through most armor, and can strike multiple targets in a line. As soon as its power is revealed, a Widelander prisoner of the outlaws will beg the errants to free them before it's too late.

The outlaws will flee in their wagons two rounds after the weapon is revealed. If the party frees the Widelander in time, he will introduce himself as Mosqat, a Celebrant of Unity. He is here following rumors about a strange weapon, but he will tell the party he is merely a pilgrim wandering the Blackwood in search of a home.

- **Celebrant Mosqat:** See **pg. 125**.
- **Outlaws (3 per Errant):** Use stats for a Ruffian on **pg. 122**.

Light Complications

Alas, there is no time for the party to rest. No sooner does Celebrant Mosqat introduce himself than a Riverwoman hunter bursts through the forest. *"Pagans!"* she shouts. *"Run!"* Before the party can react, she bounds onward into the forest.

The hunter is being chased by three pagans per player. Errants who flee from the pagans will follow the hunter through a Chase scene. They will dash through the forest, slide down a hill, bound across a stream, scramble along a large fallen tree, and finally squeeze into a narrow cave.

- **Daisy Blunderbuss:** See **pg. 125**.
- **Pagans (3 per Errant):** See **pg. 120**.

Compounded Troubles

A dark chamber about thirty feet inside the cave provides safety, but the party will need to find a way to slip past the pagans outside. While at least one of them makes a notice check to find another exit, Celebrant Mosqat and the hunter speak to whomever is holding the mysterious weapon. Both agree the weapon should

be kept secret, and its powers should be conserved for as long as possible. Likewise, they agree it could be the only way they'll escape from this predicament.

But the Celebrant thinks it could be an artifact of Oruneal and should be taken to the Unified for study. Blunderbuss, once a clocksmith's apprentice, is fascinated by the device. She thinks it shouldn't be given to foreigners or anyone else. It should be carefully studied alone and in secret.

Resolve this debate as a three-way Social Conflict between the Celebrant, the hunter, and at least one of the errants. It's clear the two strangers won't work together, so the party should use the scene as a chance to decide which one of them to support.

A Blazing Escape

With a successful Notice check in the previous scene, one of the errants discovers a natural chimney in the corner of the chamber. Fresh air wafts from it, so it must lead to the surface. The party can wriggle their way up this chimney in single file. Toward the end of the long climb, pagans make their way into the chamber below. They stoke a fire to try and smoke the errants out of the chimney. Resolve this as an Agility-based Dramatic Task for all errants, with a -2 penalty for smoke inhalation. Anyone who fails this Dramatic Task falls unconscious and slips back down the chimney to their doom.

Without a successful Notice check in the previous scene, the party is forced to fight their way out of the cave. The artifact can be a huge help in this fight, but it's more likely to run out of shots this way.

A Charged Parting

After their ordeal, the party must make a successful Survival check at -2 to find their way back to the road. Mosqat and Blunderbuss have been bickering the entire time and resolve to each travel down the road in a different direction. Each implores the party to abandon the other. Both of them have the knowledge and the resources to learn more about this powerful weapon.

The party need not decide which side should receive the privilege of examining the artifact just yet, but they will at least need to decide to escort either the woman or the priest back to the nearest settlement. Either way, their choice will tell the party to seek him or her out in Farwater Beach if they should ever find themselves in the city.

Starflower Codex: The Starflower Festival

Begins in: Farwater Beach, capital of Giant Province

Requirements: At least 6 months after **The Artifact**; read the entry about the Starflower Festival on **pg. 48** to use as a background event for the adventure.

Our errant heroes arrive in Farwater Beach after receiving a letter two weeks previous:

> *My friends,*
>
> *If ye should be available, I would love to introduce you to the Starflower Festival of Farwater Beach. Truly, it is one of the finest in the Elder Kingdom.*
>
> *Also, I have done marvelous things inspired by the tale we shared some time ago. To share them with you would be advantageous for us all.*

It is signed by either Blunderbuss or Mosqat, whomever they helped in the previous adventure.

At the Starflower Festival, the Elder Kingdom floats paper lanterns into the sky in tribute to their ancestors, and sets off fireworks in every city market. This is done during the week of the summer solstice, when elves are at their most meddlesome. It was a time of raucous revelry for many centuries, but recent years have dampened the spirit of the people.

Secrets and Dreams

The course of this scene depends on which inventor the party helped in **The Artifact**:

Blunderbuss: Her letter instructed the party to find her at the hunter's lodge in Ten-Mile Hedge, a village named for (and within) Farwater's famously expansive hedge. There, Blunderbuss tinkers with her net launcher contraption while telling the party of her longstanding fascination with the beauty of mathematics and the power of machines. Harnessing these disciplines, Blunderbuss believes she can equip one normal person to be as fearsome as a whole fellowship. Making sure no one else is in the lodge, she is proud to show the errants a prototype she has developed.

Blunderbuss believes she could revise the design and spread it far and wide throughout the Blackwood. Such a weapon would be valuable against the elves, but Blunderbuss is also mistrustful of the Unified faith. A slew of rumors have led her to believe the

Unified are plotting to usurp the Elder Kingdom for themselves. Blunderbuss would make sure her homeland is protected against any and all foul schemes.

Mosqat: His letter instructed the party to find him at the nearly-complete Celebration of Unity in the center of the city proper. Over tea, Mosqat thanks them for their assistance several months before. He was amazed at their valor, ingenuity, and by the artifact they found. Inspired by the device and the fireworks of the Starflower Festival, the Celebrant commissioned a crude replica of the weapon.

After a demonstration of the weapon's power, Celebrant Mosqat offers to share something important with the party. He reveals that he is a seer, and a member of a sect of the Unified called the T'noju. They study an ancient, secret prophecy that foretells a terrible calamity far in the future. Close study of the prophecy has revealed hints of several critical discoveries over the next few centuries. Mosqat is following his visions to the Blackwood, where he knows a great gift will be bestowed. He is certain The Artifact is that gift.

No matter which person they helped in the previous adventure, the party is approached by the other one in secret. They have not developed their own fire lance prototype, but they will implore the party to come and listen to their respective motivations. By the end of this scene players should be informed about both sides.

The Fires of Progress

Blunderbuss thinks the fury of her "gun" (named after Guntram, an old lover) could be sparked by a dragon pearl. Conveniently, she heard about a band of outlaws hiding in the refugee district who stole a dragon pearl and are trying to fence it. These outlaws, the Wind Jesters, are led by an Outlaw King named Hinrick Fort-Dweller. The Wind Jesters are masters of the crossbow, and make excellent use of cover. The party may need to hire a few more errants to join in their mission to reclaim the dragon pearl.

Mosqat thinks he can improve upon the fire lance's range by inscribing a lost prayer upon the barrel. The first Celebrants to travel to the Blackwood carried with them a scroll bearing the Invocation of His Holy Light. It has never been copied, and rests in the hands of Lady Clara Tocklerberg, a collector of rare artifacts. She is willing to sell the scroll for $8000, though she might be haggled down with a Social Conflict. A Dramatic Task to steal the scroll is also possible, but an assault would be ill-advised. Her many errant guardsmen are trained to summon the town watch at the first sign of danger. Besides, Mosqat emphasizes the secretive nature of this task.

- **Errant Guards (6):** Use stats for a Guard. The Lady's guards attempt to disable their targets rather than killing them.
- **Lady Clara Tocklerberg:** Use stats for a Noble on **pg. 119**.
- **Ruffians (6):** The ruffians prefer to attack with numbers on their side, but the value of their loot means they will fight to the death regardless.
- **Hinrick Fort-Dweller:** Use stats for an Outlaw King.

Fire Lance

(3d6, Reach 1, Weight 2)

Inspired by the fireworks of the Starflower Festival, this polearm is capped by a long, narrow pot with a fuse sticking out of its base. When lit, the pot sprays fires at targets up to 10 feet away. It takes 2 actions to reload the fire lance, but the actions may be performed in the same round (with the usual Multi-Action Penalty).

Smoke and Dangers

When our errant heroes return from their task, they discover their inventor companion has been robbed by another gang of errants. The gang broke in and stole not only the plans to the project's next phase and a pair of freshly-made Fire Lances, but the artifact itself.

With a successful Streetwise check, the errants learn that a band of errant rakes have taken the goods to the other inventor's workshop. The thieves won't give up their prizes without a fight, and will even try to destroy the artifact if it seems like it will slip from their fingers.

- **Rake (8):** These errants weren't well paid for this work. They cave and flee after the first couple of them die.

A New Vision

After the battle is waged, the party may be fortunate enough to return to their inventor friend with the stolen fire lances, the plans, and perhaps even the artifact. Whether it's Blunderbuss or Mosqat, the inventor will congratulate the errants accordingly and will set to work on the improvements to the fire lance.

The party is welcome to take the 3 fire lances. The inventor tells them the improvements should be finished in 8 months.



Starflower Codex: Hymn of the Orisha

Begins: Farwater Beach, capital of Giant Province

Requirements: At least 8 months after **The Starflower Festival**

Eight months have come and gone. The masterpiece of either Blunderbuss or Mosqat is complete. In the intervening months, Farwater Beach has grown tense. A small but vocal group of partisans have defamed the Unified faith as interlopers and ne'er-do-wells. The Celebration's construction has proceeded apace, and a significant part of the common people are still passionate about this new religion.

Neither side can be certain of their suspicions, but both sides are determined to oppose the other. The players are left with a hard choice: which zealots will they support? Or will they walk a yet harder path, and try to find some kind of peace?

Every section of this adventure contains useful information, but each section will be visited in a different order depending on who the party sided with in The Starflower Festival. If they helped Blunderbuss make her weapon, start with The Elder King's Partisans. If they helped Celebrant Mosqat instead, start with The T'noju Gambit.

The Elder King's Partisans

While showing off her new Dragon Gun, Blunderbuss reveals that she has bought into the partisan rhetoric. *"Like any hunter worth her salt, I've kept clear of trouble, of course,"* yet her fears of the Unified have grown. She's heard the Unified are planning a ritual now that construction of their Celebration of Unity is complete. *"Can't imagine what they're up to," she says, "but it gives me a bad feeling."*

Despite her fears, Daisy is still a rational woman. She asks the party to confirm the rumors she's heard of this Celebration. *"Perhaps ye haven't yet burned the bridge toward that crusty old priest?"*

Before they go, Blunderbuss offers to introduce the party to the Elder King's Partisans, who have been spreading these rumors. The Partisans hang around Boar's Moon Meadworks in the eastern part of the city. Pamphlets are scattered around the neighborhood decrying the Unified as a group with dangerous words and sinister intentions.

Outside the Partisans' flophouse, one of their number has gathered a crowd to hear his speech:

...why, just last month, you remember how that Unified priest berated a pauper for stealing from their temple. And you, Othilia, haven't you always suspected your market stall was smashed by people who had just come from one of those Unified bacchanals? The so-called Holy Faith of Unity tells us our ancestors are subservient to a foreign god! They speak of peace while they ingratiate themselves with the nobles! Mark my words, the Unified are plotting to steal our entire realm from right under our noses!

Speaking to the Partisans afterward reveals little depth to their arguments. The speeches are persuasive, but the Partisans can't confirm the truth of half their claims.

However, if the party works its way into the confidence of the Partisans, they will be invited to join a show of force on the night of the ritual. The Partisans intend to gather outside the Celebration and spook the Unified with blasts from a few fire lances that have shown up on the black market in recent months.

The Celebration of Unity

`be willing to talk to them.

The Hymn of the Orisha is an important ritual for every Celebration of Unity. A chorus lead by a Celebrant invokes the presence of a powerful spirit known as an Orisha. A direct supplicant to Oruneal himself, the spirit hallows the grounds in the name of Oruneal. The atmosphere of the chorus will be instilled in the Celebration for all time. For this reason, it is of utmost importance to the Unified that the chorus is full of peace and joy.

Blunderbuss Dragon Gun ($600)

(8G; 10/20/40, 1-3d6; RoF 1; Weight 12; Min Str d6)*

This stout, short-barreled firearm sprays burning shot in a wide blast. The Dragon Gun deals 1d6 damage at Long range, 2d6 at Medium range, and 3d6 at Close range. Also at Close range, projectiles are burning red and deal an additional 1d4 fire damage. If this die Aces, apply the Spot Fire Hazard to the target. It takes 2 actions to reload the firearm.

The T'noju Gambit

Celebrant Mosqat is deeply proud to reveal his firearm, which he calls the Prophecy of Light (named after the same prayer that powers its magic). During a demonstration of the weapon in the basement of the Celebration, Mosqat relates his anxieties to the party about a pending anti-Unified riot. *"Reactionary forces in the city have been stoking mistrust for weeks now. We have only welcoming hearts! These 'Partisans' as they call themselves could not be more mistaken."*

The aged seer implores the party to spread a more accurate and positive message around the city in response. *"Would that our Celebrants could be the bearers of this news," he laments, "but it would be better received from the mouths of true Blackwoodfolk like yourselves."* The party may accomplish this by giving speeches in the market, publicly debating the Partisans in the streets, or some other way.

Upon the party's return to the Celebration, Mosqat confides his deepest secret in exchange for their loyalty. He reveals to them the T'noju prophecy:

"Prophecy is the gift of Osudo, the moon, a light in dark places. He provides the glimpse into how things might be, a different measure for every seer. But Old Celebrant Isabal, she saw further than any before or since. She saw the horrors from deep places, the strange foes from a realm no one knows. And stretching toward them, a string of pearls, each with a different name. "Wheel," and "Compass" and many more, the names revealed only on the cusp of their discovery. My friends, I have been graced with the key to the next great pearl. It is named 'Firearm,' and you hold it in your hands."

Celebrant Mosqat fears for what the Partisans might do to endanger this new discovery, but he has a plan. Mosqat has been permitted to conduct the Hymn of the Orisha. He will invoke the presence of an orisha called Oxoszi, a hunter and provider of meals. With Mosqat's direction, Oxoszi will enter the hearts of each person in attendance, and plant in them the seed of devotion toward Oruneal. *"For if enough people worship the God of Unity, the Partisans will abandon their folly."*

A successful Common Knowledge roll recalls the creed of the Unified:

You are free because we are Unified.

Go, each in your own way,

To seek His Light and Song.

Celebrant's Mosqat's plan to force his faith upon the attendees is a violation of these principles of freedom and choice, but he believes they are necessary. He implores the party to keep his plans a secret and to watch over the ritual in case any Partisans should arrive. *"The atmosphere must remain joyful. This you must safeguard most of all."*

Hymn of the Orisha

The party find themselves at yet another crossroad at the Way's Margin. The Partisans do plan to intimidate the Unified, and they refuse to listen to reason. In response, Celebrant Mosqat is willing to forsake the tenets of his faith to secure hope for a better future. The party can side with one of these factions or they can appeal to higher authorities. The nobility and town guard will prefer to keep out of Unified and errantry business. The rest of the Unified would be appalled at Mosqat's actions but will not be easily convinced by a band of roaming errants.

Assuming he is not stopped, Celebrant Mosqat conducts the Hymn of the Orisha as a 5-round Dramatic Task. During this time, the party must either defend him or try and put a stop to the ritual without disturbing the atmosphere. The Partisans accidentally kill a Unified acolyte if they are allowed to fire their weapons, which will cause the whole scene to erupt into violence.

If Celebrant Mosqat is ever forced to fight—either before or during the ritual—he will attempt to steal the firearm and fight his way out with a group of loyal acolytes. Mosqat will try to draw the fighting up to the Celebration's roof, where he hopes the difficult terrain will be the literal downfall of his foes.

- **Celebrant Mosqat:** see **pg. 125**.
- **Partisan Errants (9):** Use stats for a Rake. Four of the Partisans carry fire lances.
- **T'noju Acolytes (12):** Use stats for a Unified Acolyte on **pg. 123**.. The Acolytes understand the gravity of their task and will do anything in their power to keep the ritual and the firearm secured.

Mosqat's Prophecy of Light ($ 600)

(.75; 10/20/40; 2d8; RoF 1; Weight 15; Min Str d6; AP 3)

Long and thin, this firearm's elegant mechanism is topped with a lens of Unified glass. With the Aim maneuver, halve all range penalties with the Prophecy of Light. If the damage roll succeeds with a raise, the searing blast of the shot affects a single adjacent target too. It takes 2 actions to reload the firearm.

Aftermath

If violence mars the Hymn of the Orisha, proceed to **The Errant's War.**

If the party managed to avoid conflict during the ritual, two things could happen. First, the ritual was a success and a huge population of Unified zealots takes hold in the town. Second, the ritual was prevented and the Unified lose a little credibility in Farwater Beach. Either way, any player may take an Interlude to narrate what happens in the months after this fateful night.

Starflower Codex: The Errant's War

Begins in: Farwater Beach, capital of Giant Province

Requirements: Begin immediately after **Hymn of the Orisha**

In the wake of the disaster at the Celebration, 3 errant bands and nearly 50 commoners have been corrupted into a vitriolic mob. They call upon the demons of the Unified for strength: Obskuun the Sunderer, Mad Sziwere, Ikutre, Lord of Murder, and others. Still possessed of their cunning, the mob barricade themselves in a poor neighborhood not far from the Celebration and stockpile weapons and defenses. What's worse, they begin pressing unenchanted commoners into service for some grisly purpose.

Players must work to put an end to this awful magic before the city of Farwater Beach is torn apart. Defending the city is sure to cost lives and is likely

to tarnish the reputation of the Unified in the Elder Kingdom. But with quick reflexes and silver tongues, our errant heroes can still find a happy ending.

Fleeting Hope

The acolytes and Celebrants of the Unified are distraught. Their Hymn of the Orisha invoked Oxoszi the Provider, but the violence distorted the invocation into one of hunger and anxiety. Those affected by the Hymn are lost, they say, but perhaps they can invoke Oruneal himself to cleanse the Celebration and prevent the city from being affected any further. Above all, they remain committed to the principles of their faith. They seek unity and peace, even in the face of such devastation.

In the meantime, Daisy Blunderbuss and the Partisans want to burn the Celebration of Unity to the ground. They claim the night's events are proof of the Unified's ill intentions. A successful Social Conflict convinces them to stand down, or at least to divert their attention to the enchanted mob threatening to attack the city. Blunderbuss will lend an arsenal of 4 fire lances to aid the party with a margin of victory of 3 or more. The Partisans will only agree to help quell the mob with a margin of victory of 5 or more.

Rag-Tag Defenders

The Partisans are not the only errant band available to help the party fight the enchanted mob. There are 5 more errant bands, each with their own advantages and requirements for helping:

The Greenwatch: Led by Elsbeth Bywater, a mysterious woman who is never seen without her bonnet, this group of magical women spend most of their time in the woods beyond Farwater's hedge. The party must give them $500 worth of woodland herbs to recruit their help. The Greenwatch grants a +2 bonus to a character's arcane skill roll once in the upcoming Mass Battle.

Lady Cerulean's Court: A group of conspicuously subservient men led by an Elderfolk noblewoman and her pet mountain lion. Lady Cerulean will only lend the support of her court for $1000. Recruiting the court allows characters to make Intimidate rolls during the Mass Battle and grants a +2 bonus to one Intimidate roll during the battle.

The Moon Dancers: A group of Widelander bravos is at the Grandeur Glaize Inn in the harbor market. They're capable fighters, but they won't fight for free—not even for the Unified. If the party pays them $1000, the Moon Dancers grant a +2 bonus to a single Agility roll and a single Fighting roll in the course of the Mass Battle.

Sticky Paul's Sneak-Thieves: Sticky Paul is an errant from who knows where. His band of errant paupers are legendary thieves in town and can be paid to join the fighting. For $1000, the Sneak-Thieves allow characters to make Stealth rolls during the Mass Battle and grant a +2 bonus to a single Stealth roll during the battle.

Ten-Mile Lodge: Daisy Blunderbuss has made herself indispensable to the hunting lodge of Ten-Mile Hedge. They are willing to leave their village and help the city proper but only with a successful Persuasion roll at a -2 penalty. If the Lodge is recruited, gain +2 to a single Shooting roll in the Mass Battle.

The Errant's War

A Mass Battle ensues between the enchanted mob and whatever errant bands the party managed to recruit. The mob has 100 fighters, represented by 10 tokens. They gain a +2 bonus to morale checks because they cannot retreat from their position.

Our errant heroes count for 5 tokens themselves, and each errant band they recruit counts for 1 additional token. If the party managed to convince Blunderbuss to give them an arsenal of fire lances, they gain an additional +2 Battle Plan bonus to their Knowledge (Battle) rolls each round. Each round of the Mass Battle takes place over 2d6 days.

While the battle rages, the Unified attempt to cleanse their Celebration by invoking the searing purity of Oruneal himself. Treat this as a Dramatic Task, using the Faith skill at a -2 penalty. Oruneal is summoned whether the Dramatic Task succeeds or fails, but if the ritual fails, then the intensity of his cleansing light reduces the Celebration to a smoldering ruin.

Stop Its Meddling!

Begins in: any village

It's often the worst fate a village could suffer to be harried by an elf. In this age of lost guidance, hedges have trouble withstanding elves when they draw near.

Upon detecting an elf nearby, a village urgently sends for the party's help. Draw a card to determine the specific elven menace:

- **Clubs:** Draw 2 More
- **Diamonds:** Ancient
- **Heart:** Sapling
- **Spades:** Brush

The party determines the elven threat with a successful Tracking roll made at a -2 penalty for each elf present. In some circumstances, the only sensible option may be to proceed to the Savage Tale **The End.** If an assault upon the elf is possible, treat like a **Hunting and Tracking** Savage Tale.

In either case, the reward from the village is likely to vary wildly based on the state of the village itself. However, elves hoard away treasure that should not be forgotten.

The End

Begins in: any village

In these hard times, beyond the help of the Elder King, no village is safe from the ravages of nature and humanity. Our errant heroes have happened to find themselves in a village that is collapsing all around them. Draw 2 cards to determine the nature of the collapse and the village's valuables:

- **Clubs:** The Elven Wilds/Ancestor Shrines
- **Diamonds:** Outlaw Gangs/Gear and Tools
- **Hearts:** Forest Fire/Helpless Villagers
- **Spades:** Depopulation/Treasure Trove

The party will need to help the village secure their valuables, leave the settlement, and safely escort them to the next settlement over. Social Conflicts are appropriate when villagers dispute where to go or how best to evacuate. Dramatic Tasks are perfect when evacuation is rushed and may even take place during combat rounds with invaders.

Likewise, the road is likely to be beset with Hazards and other trouble. Perhaps your enemies have pursued you, and a Chase is necessary. Perhaps the Elven Wilds stand between you and your destination.

If you make it to your destination with most of the villagers intact, they will scrounge together some way to thank you, usually no more than $50. Alas, refugees never have much to spare. This deed is more about helping others than receiving a reward.

Vosserlin Reclaimed

Begins in: Bracken, Stonecrown Province

Requirements: Seasoned, must happen during Winter months

Sometime during the Harvest season, our errant heroes receive a sealed letter:

Most worthy errants,

Your deeds have become known to many in the town of Bracken. Yes, our reputation is that of a lawless gang of rowdy ruffians, and our past is marred by the tragic fall of Vosserlin. I implore you, please: if you dream of the Elder Kingdom's return to glory, please find your way to our frontier bastion after the first week of Winter. With your help (and your secrecy), we may forge for ourselves a story that shall be told for all time.

Signed,

Jurg von Fatherton

A successful Knowledge (Nobility) roll reveals that the seal upon the letter belongs to a noble house from the ruined city of Vosserlin.

During this adventure, the party wages war for control of a ruined city, now occupied by the largest pagan coven anyone has ever seen. It is a furious and desperate campaign, but victory would be a bright symbol of hope for every citizen of the realm.

Stoking the Flames of War

In Bracken, the party is directed toward the central square of the holdfast. There, in one of the larger errantry halls, Jurg von Fatherton welcomes them surrounded by dozens of hardy errants and his stalwart deputy, Molle the Pitcher. Tall, powerful, and stern, Jurg explains his dream in his characteristically clipped speech. He seeks to reclaim the city of Vosserlin, the only home he has ever known.

A pagan coven numbering in the hundreds occupies the ruins, separated from Bracken by a wide and treacherous lake. Jurg has mustered a veritable army of errants in secret over the past two years and is almost ready to

strike. All he needs is someone to aid in the preparations, and to help command his errant army in battle.

Tipping the Scales

Jurg von Fatherton needs to set a few more plans in motion before the attack. He's busy with preparing the errants for battle, so he asks the party to see to these tasks. There's only enough time to pursue 3 of the plans from the list below:

Bitterbombs: Jurg can't afford to raze the city during the battle, but a local herbalist offers to produce a cache of bombs that detonate into a repulsive cloud. With a successful Herbalism roll at a -2 penalty, the errants may detonate these bombs during the battle to receive a +2 bonus to attack actions for 2 consecutive rounds during the battle.

Errant Morale: The errant army of Jurg von Fatherton has grown bored over the past several weeks. The party can compete with the errants in games called the Springboard Chop and the Hunter's Prize. Jurg's deputy, Molle the Pitcher, competes as well. Information about Molle and both events can be found in The Woodkin Tournament (see **pg. 112**). For each event the party wins, the army gains a +1 bonus to morale checks during the battle.

Icy Highway: A team of Classicists has perhaps the most audacious plan in the army: on the night of the battle, they seek to magically construct an icy bridge that spans the entire lake. Treat this as a standard Dramatic Task using the Knowledge (Classics) skill. Success grants a +3 battle plan bonus to the first round of the battle.

The Moon Dancers: A group of 50 Widelander bravos has recently arrived in town, fresh from the Widelands. They need to refill their supplies before they can fight. With a successful Survival roll at a -2 penalty, add +1 token to Jurg's army at the beginning of the battle. With a raise on this check, the party gains a +2 bonus to Fighting rolls up to twice during the battle.

The Wild Bunch: A belligerent errant by the name of Leeward Karl has camped with his band of 50 reformed pagans in the forest southwest of Bracken. They will all join the battle for $4000, or $2000 if someone in the party beats Karl in an errant's duel. Recruiting the Wild Bunch adds +1 token to Jurg's army at the beginning of the battle, and grants a +2 bonus to Stealth rolls up to twice during the battle.

- **Leeward Karl:** Use stats for a Knight on **pg. 118**. Karl prefers Wild Attacks and Push actions to trip his opponents.



The Battle of Vosserlin

It is rare for battles to be waged during Blackwood winters and rarer still for battles to be waged at night. Jurg von Fatherton has seized upon these expectations to catch the pagans off guard. There are 500 pagans in the ruins of Vosserlin. Jurg has an army of 300 errants, plus any errants the party managed to recruit during their preparations. Resolve this as a Mass Battle, where each token represents 50 warriors. Jurg has a d8 in Knowledge (Battle), but he will cede command to anyone in the party with a higher die.

During the battle, there are a number of actions the errants can take to gain battle plan bonuses:

- Sneak past the pagan sentries to take up positions within the ruins before attacking.
- Break off a portion of Jurg's army, either to act as a distraction or for a flanking strike.
- Steer clear of narrow streets and alleys, where the pagan army's skirmish tactics are more effective.
- Take out the pagan army's leaders (5 witches and a Hollowback elf). They are well defended, so this task should come with a heavy penalty.

The party is, of course, encouraged to come up with their own tactics too. The pagans are fortified within the city, so they gain a +2 to morale checks at the end of each round.

New Hope for the North

The party enjoys fame and fortune if they defeat the pagan army and reclaim the city. Jurg von Fatherton is proclaimed High Lord of the city of New Fatherton. Over the next 2 weeks, the party is rewarded with $3000 each, a combination of battle spoils and gratitude from the returning nobles. High Lord Fatherton grants them each a small manor in the city, and knights any character who wishes to swear by a Code of Honor Hindrance to serve him whenever he should summon them.

Over the next several months, Jurg proves to be a stern but compassionate ruler. Vosserlin becomes a safe haven for displaced settled folk. Many of the remnants of Jurg's army strike out into the wilderness around the city, driving out pagans and monsters to expand the city's hedge.

The Woodkin Tournament

Begins in: Denvorn, Denvorn Province

Beginning on the summer solstice and lasting seven full days, the Woodkin Tournament pits challengers against one another in several of the most treasured feats and traditions among the trees. This year, the Tournament is held in Denvorn.

A Toast! A Tale!

Despite hard times, the people of Denvorn are abuzz with excitement. The fire roars during a cold winter night. The fellowship of the Yuletide Festival has come to a close. It is time for the friendly competition of the Woodkin Tournament!

Our errant heroes find themselves in the Old Master Inn surrounded by revelers and other errants. Between songs from the revelers, errants rise up onto the tabletops to boast of their past deeds. The party can participate in this boasting, either by taking an Interlude or by recounting one of their previous adventures together. Any character who boasts in this way earns a Benny. The Gamemaster should add a few boasts from other errants in the tavern to provide atmosphere.

The Games

Each day of the Woodkin Tournament features a new challenge.

Caravans and Cogs: All hopefuls must choose whether to play Cogs, a card game very much like poker, or Caravans, a dice game very much like Liar's Dice. Over three rounds, all participants make opposed Gambling rolls. Each round, the person with the highest total earns two points, and the second highest earns one point. Gamblers may take multiple actions per round to taunt or intimidate their opponents, but these actions incur the regular multi-action penalty. Whoever has the most points in each game by the end of the third round is named the victor.

Springboard Chop: Contestants try to be the first logger to hew through the soft wood high up on a standing tree. Over three rounds, they make Vigor checks to chop a notch into a tree, jam in a springboard platform, leap atop the springboard, and hew through the tree ten feet off the ground. The logger with the highest total result completed the task first.

Storytelling: Contestants and spectators gather in the courtyard of the Palace of Threefold Bounty for a contest of classic Blackwood stories. Using the Lesson Learned setting rule, each contestant tells a story accompanied by Persuasion roll. Storytellers should receive bonuses for good storytelling. Whichever storyteller has the highest total is named the victor.

Hunter's Prize: A contest of marksmanship that draws fine hunters and archers from all across the Elder Kingdom. Contestants make opposed Shooting or Throwing rolls for three rounds. There are small prizes for the highest result each round and a big prize for whoever rolls the highest total across the entire event.

Treetop Race: Over 30 feet up into the forest canopy, contestants race each other through an obstacle course among the branches in the tournament's foremost event. Resolve this as a free-for-all dogfight chase. Any contestant who suffers damage must make an Agility roll at -2 or fall from the canopy into the large safety net below. Use Climbing for the maneuvering trait. The Leaf Step Edge grants a +2 bonus to this contest.

A Thicket of Rivals

The various games of the Woodkin Tournament determine the best errants in the forest. Competition is fierce, but death is practically unheard of. This is a perfect atmosphere for the errantry—always proud and often brash—to form and resolve rivalries amongst each other. These rivalries are perfect seeds for the Gamemaster to develop further adventures. And sometimes, a rival can turn into a valuable Allied Extra.

Here are a few errant contestants who would make ideal long-term rivals.

- **Jan son of Jan:** This jovial lumberjack is a past champion of the Springboard Chop (d10). Jan is a fierce contender in the Treetop Race (d8), and is no bore when telling a story (d6). Jan swears upon two things: his badge (a fine dog collar thrust into his belt) and his large, blue, imaginary dog named Mutt. Don't you dare call Jan crazy though.
- **Apple Seedling:** Once called Johan, this young errant can tell a captivating story (d10), holds his own at the Cogs table (d8), and is prone to surprising folks in the treetop race (d6). He prefers to go barefoot with a pitcher of cider for his badge and a satchel of seeds to chew on.
- **Molle the Pitcher:** A feisty warrior woman, Molle hurls a heavy, iron spear in the hunter's prize (d10), she's a fearsome foe in the Springboard Chop (d8), and she's got some slippery Caravans dice (d6). She prefers to wear a simple dress at all times and drapes herself with a dark banner speckled with stars for her badge.

The Champion's Spoils

The victors of each contest earn a bevy of rewards:

Caravans: A cask of $750, and a set of Caravans dice carved from Leafstone, which grants the Luck Edge to anyone who plays at least one round of Caravans with them.

Cogs: A cask of $750, and a deck of Cogs cards illuminated by the Classicists. This deck grants +1 to Gambling rolls, and the owner can use the divination power once per month.

Springboard Chop: An axe once used by Nimble Barba to set the all-time speed record for the Springboard Chop over 100 years ago. Recently recovered, it grants the use of the Frenzy Edge to whomever wields it.

Storytelling: A cask of $500 and a wide-brimmed hat that grants the use of the Storyteller Edge to whomever wears it.

Hunter's Prize: A custom crossbow, bow, spear, or a set of darts from Flying Aurochs, the finest hunter in town. Construction takes 1 week, and the weapon grants use of either Blackwood Bowman, Steady Hands, or Trademark Weapon Edges.

Treetop Race: A pair of sturdy leather gauntlets covered in tiny hooks. When worn, the gauntlets grant a +1 bonus to Climbing rolls and +1 to Fighting rolls when grappling.

Any errant who claims a victory in at least two events is named a champion of the tournament. They are awarded with a manor house in Denvorn and a Stag's Crown, which is made of sentrywood and lacquered leaves and bestows the Champion Edge upon the wearer. All champions also receive an invitation to several noble courts, including the Grand Delving Court for the next Ancestors' Eve celebration.

Encounters

Following is a list of the many foes one might find in the Blackwood. There are human adversaries, monsters, wild beasts, and even nefarious, meddlesome elves. Edges and Hindrances can be added to any of these entries as desired.

In the Blackwood, you're not as likely to run into a Ruffian as you are Springheel Johan, scourge of Longwater Town. Instead of a Troll, you'll hear rumors about the Terror of Denvorn Woods. As you read through the Plot Point Adventures and Savage Tales, any time you see a particular encounter listed you should give it an evocative name and unique personality. It's the best way to bridge the gap between typical fantasy and the folklore vibe upon which the Blackwood is built.

In addition to the entries here, there are many entries from the *Savage Worlds core rules* and the *Fantasy Companion* that are a great fit for the Blackwood:

Savage World core rules: Bear, Bull, Cat (small), Dog/Wolf, Ghost, Horse, Mule, Snake (Venomous)

Fantasy Companion: Bird of Prey, Boar, Ghoul, Hag, Jabber Bird, Mermaid, Methusaleh Tree, Siren Bush, War Tree, Wight

Beast

Sometimes, for story's sake, the most important thing about a beast is its very beastliness. Beasts resemble whatever animals the viewer finds unsettling, but reports vary from person to person.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Special Abilities

Armor +1: bestial hide

Claws: Str+d6

Parry +1: bestial instincts

Bog Lantern

Small, boxy, and emitting a soft green-yellow glow, a bog lantern is a terrible hazard in any swamp. Floating on the water's surface, it is named for the paper lanterns riverfolk use to commemorate the ancestors. Bog lanterns can take to the air to try and put nearby travelers to sleep, leaving them at the mercy of the forest.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Tracking d4

Charisma: +2 **Pace:** 3; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Special Abilities

Hypnotic Glow: A bog lantern's magic comes from its mesmerising glow. Bog lanterns may add their Charisma score to powers that affect other targets.

Powers: Bog lanterns have 10 powers points and usually know the *blind, boost/lower trait, drain power points,* and *slumber* powers. They use Spirit for their spellcasting die.

Burglar

Some outlaws prefer the slums to a life wandering the forest roads. These burglars survive by sneaking over rooftops and into windows, grabbing any valuables they can find. Unless they have considerable backup, burglars will flee combat as soon as they are able. More experienced burglars might have the Leaf Step or Acrobat Edge, and carry more than $300 in stolen loot.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6+2, Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Lockpicking d6+2, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d8+2, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), 1 other Minor Hindrance

Edges: Thief

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4, 2/4/8), Clockpicks, Locksbane Acid, Sack of stolen loot equivalent to no more than $250

Classicist

Scholars of the *Five Classics of Lore and Reason*, Classicists are the most learned men and women in the Blackwood. They can be found in every noble court and nearly every woodland tavern, telling tales, playing music, and imparting wisdom to all around. More experienced Classicists might have the Storyteller or Jack of All Trades Edge, or might have more powers and power points.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Healing d6, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Law) d8, Knowledge (Lore) d8, Knowledge (pick one) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5(1); **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: pick 2 Minor Hindrances

Edges: Arcane Background (Classics)

Powers: Classicists have 10 power points and know any three powers. They use Knowledge (Classics) as a spellcasting die.

Gear: Staff (Str+d4, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 Hands), Ancestor Beads, Classicist Manuscript, Classicist Robes, Music Instrument, Pouch of loot equivalent to $50

Clocksmith

The subtle workings of a lock and the setting of a wagon wheel on its axle are all within the expertise of the clocksmith. They can construct mechanical wonders, but they are familiar with the workings of all machines, both simple and complex. More experienced clocksmiths would have a few more gadgets, and may have the Gadgeteer or McGyver Edge.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Engineering) d8, Notice d6, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Throwing d4, Weird Science d8

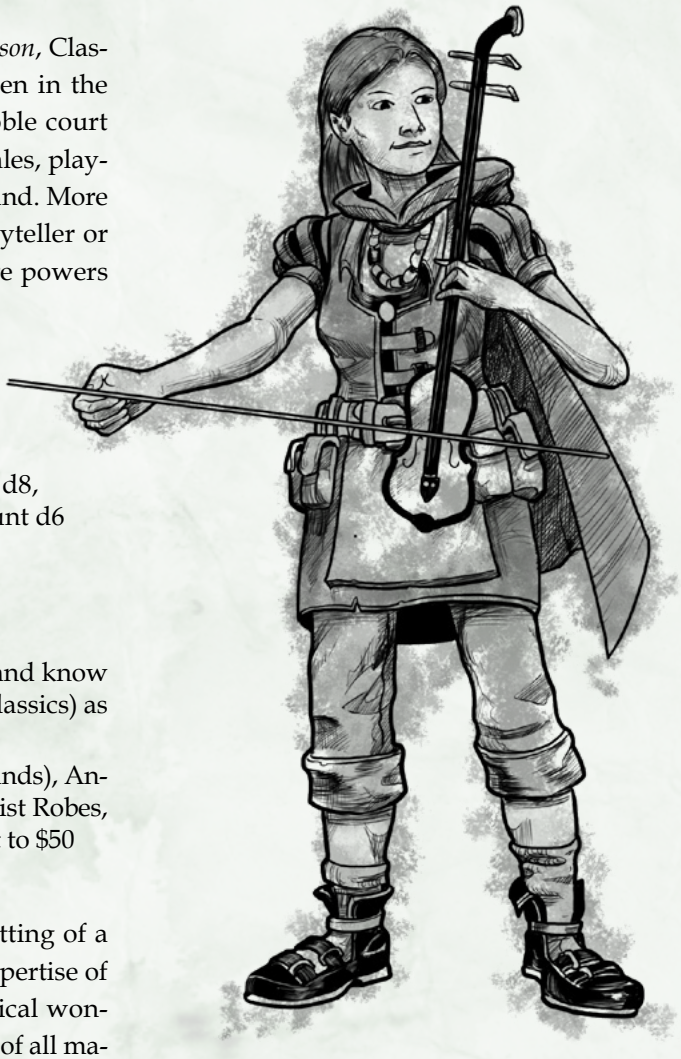
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Bad Eyes (Minor)

Edges: Arcane Background (Weird Science)

Powers: Clocksmiths have one gadget with 10 power points. This power is usually *blast, bolt, burst, detect/conceal arcana, entangle, farsight, pummel, or stun.* Clocksmiths use Weird Science for their spellcasting die.

Gear: Mallet (Str+d6), Leather Bib (Armor +1), Clockpicks, Clockwork Padlock, Gearworks, $100



Commoner

Most folks are plain and simple. They labor each day, help to support their family, and pay homage to their ancestors. When called to defend themselves, they take up whatever improvised weapons are available to them.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Gambling d6, Notice d6, Streetwise d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Laborer's Tool (Str+d4), $5

Dragon

Adrift in a reeking mist, the dragon is a timeless symbol of secret power. The dragon's sinewy bulk floats out of the mists to strike unawares. The dragon's pearls crackle with fiery beauty.

In battle, the dragon relies on its nigh-invincible armor as it thrashes enemies to death. Its teeth and claws are deadly, but woe betide those who are grappled by this legendary creature. For a dragon, there is no mercy on the field of battle.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Knowledge (pick 1) d12, Notice d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 17(4)

Special Abilities

Armor +4: Adamantine Scales

Claws/Bite: Str+d8

Fear -2: Anyone who sees a mighty dragon must make a Fear check at -2.

Dragon Pearl: Dragons hold a fist-sized pearl in a special pouch in their mouth. They can spit this pearl accurately within 10". The pearl ignites when thrown, dealing 2d10 fire damage in a small burst template when it connects with a surface. These pearls are not consumed when thrown in this way. This makes them valuable (if volatile) treasure. A dragon can secrete up to 3 pearls any time within a 24 hour period.

Dragon Mists: Three times per encounter, a dragon can take an action to emit steaming mist from beneath its scales. Each action creates a bank of mist the size of a large burst template and 6" high. Within this mist, all characters have light cover and the dragon has a Flying Pace of 16" and Climb 0.

Hardy: Dragons do not suffer a wound from being Shaken twice.

Improved Frenzy: If a dragon does not use its Dragon Pearl ability, it may make two Fighting attacks with no penalty.

Level Headed: Act on best of two cards.

Size +4: Dragons are long and sinewy. Most are over 35' long from nose to tail, and weigh well over 5,000 pounds.

Tail Lash: The dragon can sweep all opponents in its rear facing in a Cone Template. This is a standard Fighting attack, and damage is equal to the dragon's Strength -2.

Firecat

They say the firecat is born in the heart of a forest fires. It crawls into existence by drinking the flames, so its pelt burns forever like an ember in the dark Alongside the dragon, it is one of the most feared creatures in the Blackwood.

The Firecat stalks in perpetual twilight. Its inexorable charge pulverizes as much as its razor-sharp claws rend. It is said only a firecat can cut through a dragon's scales.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d12, Intimidation d12, Notice d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 12(2)

Special Abilities

Armor +2: Ember Hide

Claws/Bite: Str+d12

Burning Strength: By spending a round drawing in light and heat, the firecat can add +6 damage to its next attack. Within a medium burst template, the temperature noticeably drops and anything within gains light cover as the light is sucked from the area. Firecats can burn with strength no more than 3 times in 24 hours.

Ember Hide: Firecats are impervious to all but the hottest flames. Three times per encounter, they may make a Spirit check to negate any fire-based damage as if using the *dispel* power. If this ability is used to *dispel* a power, make a Spirit check opposed by the caster's arcane skill.

Fear -2: Anyone who sees a terrifying firecat must make a Fear check at -2.

Hardy: Firecats do not suffer a wound from being Shaken twice.

Improved Frenzy: If a firecat does not use either of its abilities, it may make two Fighting attacks with no penalty.

Level Headed: Act on best of two cards.

Pounce: Firecats often pounce on their prey to best bring their mass and claws to bear. It can leap 1d6" to gain +4 to its attack and damage. Its Parry is reduced by -2 until its next action when performing this maneuver however.

Size +3: Firecats are heavily-muscled, tenacious creatures. Most are 15' long from nose to tail, and weigh as much as 2,000 pounds.

Ghost

The spirit lives on after the body's death. Folk of the Elder Kingdom conduct a funeral ritual to hallow their departed as ancestors. These helpful spirits watch over the kingdom, unseen. Ghosts are the twisted, malevolent result of spirits that are not laid to rest in this way. Bound to the site of their death (or sometimes to the objects of their death), they haunt the living until purged from this world by magic.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d12+2, Notice d12, Taunt d10, Stealth d12+4, Throwing d12

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Thrown objects (Str+d4)

Special Abilities

Ethereal: Ghosts are immaterial and can only be harmed with magical attacks.

Fear -2: Ghosts cause Fear checks at -2 when they let themselves be seen.

Guard

These stats work equally well for any guard: in a caravan, at a city gate, or inside a noble court. They are none too great a threat on their own, but guards almost always work together. Most guards wear the livery of their employer. In fact, a guard without proper insignia is usually a sign of nefarious work. Guard Captains may have the Combat Reflexes or First Strike Edge, and two of their skills will be one rank higher.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Investigation d4, Notice d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6(1); **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Gear: Spear (St+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, Range 3/6/12, min. St d6) or Baton (St+d6, bludgeoning), Crossbow (2d6, Range 30/60/120, min. St d8), Chain Hauberk (Armor +2, torso only), Kettle Helm (Armor +2, head only, 50% vs. Head Shot), Heater Shield (Parry +1, Armor +2 vs. Ranged)

Hopping Ghoul

They say tax collectors who skim off the top of their coffers are doomed to carry on as hopping ghouls after death. Naturally greedy creatures, they hop and leap around the forest looking for the precious thing they lack: a human spirit.

Hopping ghouls are especially drawn to magic users, whose spiritual power is stronger than others. Hopping ghouls grapple their prey, and then extract the spirit from the victim's neck with their long fangs.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Tracking d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities

Claws: Str, +2 to Grapple Checks

Leaf Step: When using the Run action, hopping ghouls gain the benefit of the Wall Walker ability until the end of the round. If they are in combat, they may make a free Agility trick.

Undead: +2 Toughness, +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra damage (except to the head).

Powers: Hopping ghouls have 10 power points and know the *drain power points* and *lower trait* powers. They use Spirit as a spellcasting die, and can only be cast when grappled with an opponent.

Howler

As large and sturdy as a wolf but with limbs and a visage like unto an ape, howlers are highly territorial beasts. They leap down from the tree branches in packs and are at their deadliest when ganging up on their targets.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4

Special Abilities

Acrobat: +2 to Agility-based maneuvers; +1 Parry

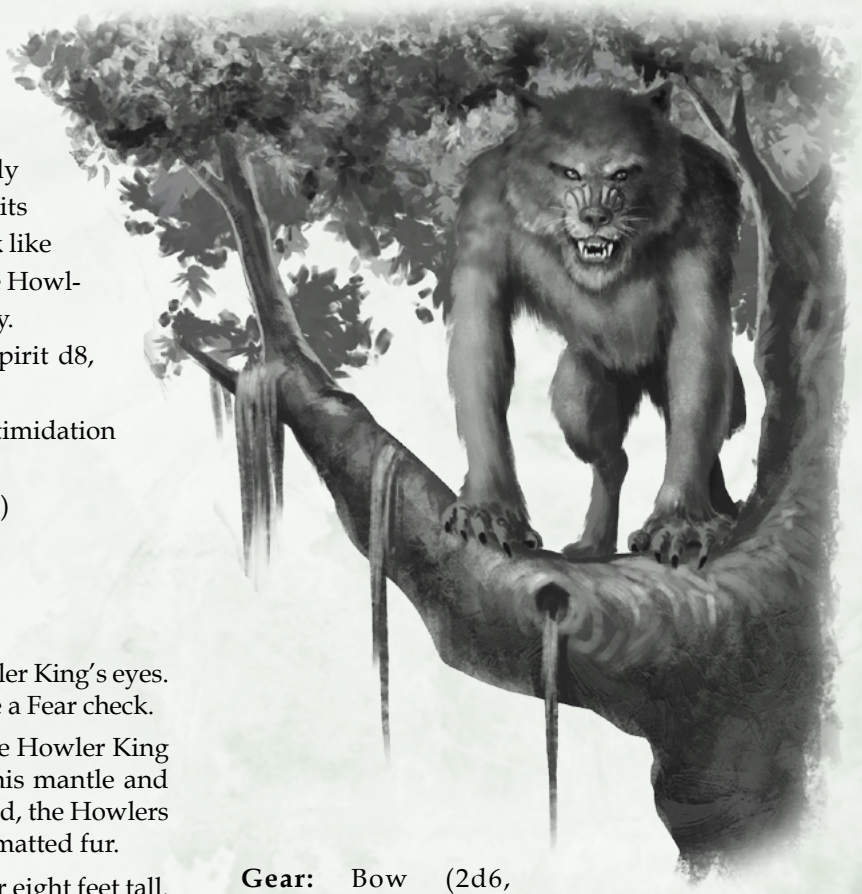
Bite: Str+d4

Size –1: Howlers are about the same size as a wolf.

Go for the Throat: Hit least armored location on a raise.

Wall Walker: Can climb at normal Pace.

Howler King



This hulking monster towers over eight feet tall. Its shoulders are nearly half as wide. Cruel cunning burns in its too-human eyes as it wields a tree trunk like a staff. A mantle of thick fur protects the Howler King as it fights with ruthless ferocity.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 9 (2); **Toughness:** 11 (1)

Edges: Acrobat, Nerves of Steel

Special Abilities

Armor +1: Thick Hide

Fear: Primal peril lies behind the Howler King's eyes. Anyone who sees the king must make a Fear check.

Howler Mantle: For every wound the Howler King suffers, 1d4 tufts of fur burst from his mantle and turn into Howlers. Once they are killed, the Howlers rapidly decay into steaming piles of matted fur.

Size +2: The Howler King stands over eight feet tall. He is preternaturally strong.

Wall Walker: Can climb at normal Pace.

Wild Scepter: *(Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach, 2 hands)* see **pg. 73** for information about the Howler King's magic weapon. He is said to have received it from the king of dragons deep in the Spire mountains.

Hunter

By a certain definition, a hunter is not an errant. Hunters venture out into the forest yes, but they do not roam far from their family homes. No, hunters go into the Wood to provide for their village. The average hunter can track a deer, dress a wound, and feed off the local plants if need be. More experienced hunters may have the Woodsman Edge, and three of their skills will be one rank higher.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d6, Knowledge (Nature) d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Survival d6, Tracking d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6(1)

Hindrances: Pick 2

Edges: Blackwood Bowman

Gear: Bow (2d6, 12/24/48, Str d6), Hatchet (Str+d6, 3/6/12), Dagger (Str+d4, 2/4/8), Leather Gambeson (+1), Animal Trophy, Hearth Bread (7 days), Woodland Herbs

Knight

Town guards and errants who make themselves indispensable to the nobility are sometimes knighted for their efforts. Not quite as fearsome as the Sentinels, knights are nevertheless encased in armor, fully armed, and provided with a horse and a squire. Knights are almost always afforded a place in their noble patron's manor, but sometimes they are granted homes of their own.

When a settlement is threatened, knights take command of the town guard and rally whichever townsfolk are willing and able to fight. They are trained to support their troops from the second rank, but knights are more than capable of wading into combat when necessary. More experienced knights may have the Hold the Line! or Rich Edge, and three of their skills will be one rank higher.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Law) d4, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Riding d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(3)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (Knighthood)

Edges: Command

Gear: Hook Axe (Str+d8, 2 Hands, +1 Agility Trick to Trip), Chain Hauberk (Armor +2 torso, arms, legs), Plate Corselet (Armor +3 torso), Full Helm (Armor +3 head), Ancestor Beads, Errantry Kit, Horse, Noble Clothing, Squire, 100sp

Merchant

Merchants may not be commonly thought of as errants, but they face the same dangers along the Way's Margin. They're almost always willing to sell some of their wares along the road and might even buy some things from the errants as well. Wealthy merchants would keep a pair of guards on hand, while tinkers might have the Poverty Hindrance and a few ranks in Repair.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Business) d8+2, Notice d6, Persuasion d8+2

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Greedy, Pick 2 More (Minor)

Edges: Merchant, Charismatic

Gear: Club, Dagger, 200sp, 2d100sp worth of other goods

Noble

No one in the Elder Kingdom lives a life of greater comfort or responsibility than the nobility. Nobles are instructed by the Elder King to support the common folk, but since his disappearance the nobility has grown stingy. On average, nobles prefer to travel in sumptuous wagons and cogs, and will pay for the finest things wherever they go.

Nobles always have a retinue of either two knights or four guards, along with drivers, porters, and servants to attend them. More prestigious nobility will have even larger retinues, and three of their skills will be one rank higher.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Law) d8, Knowledge (Nobility) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6(1); **Toughness:** 8(3)

Hindrances: Quirk (Decadent), 1 more Minor Hindrance

Edges: Noble

Gear: Family Sword (Str+d8), Plate Corselet (Armor +3), Heater Shield (Parry +1, Armor +2 vs. ranged attacks), Ancestor Beads, Horse, Noble Clothing, Jewelry equivalent to $200, Chest of loot equivalent to $2000



Outlaw King/Queen

Even in anarchy, there is a certain order to be found. Outlaws gather into groups to survive, and these groups inevitably have a leader. Whether it's because they're tough or clever, these outlaw kings and queens have a knack for coming out on top. They always travel with a retinue of at least four outlaw lackeys. Especially powerful outlaw kings and queens could have dozens of underlings to command.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Gambling d8, Knowledge (Secrets) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Greedy (Major), 1 other Minor Hindrance

Edges: Luck, 1 more Combat Edge

Gear: Spear (Str+d6, 3/6/12, Parry +1, Min. Str d6) or Mace (Str+d8) and Buckler (Parry +1), Brigandine Hauberk (Armor +2), Chest of loot equivalent to at least $1000

Pauper

Errants encounter many who suffer at the Way's Margin. Of the all, paupers can be the most surprising. Some are meek and sickly, and some others are clever but unlucky. All of them are united by a wretched life of squalor and begging. Certain paupers might have up to three more ranks in one or two skills, and some might have an Edge reflecting another specialization.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Gambling d4, Notice d8, Repair d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Survival d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Pauper, Ugly

Edges: Martial Artist

Gear: Grubby Mitts (Str+d4), Sack (empty)

Pine Hornet (Swarm)

These fist-sized brown hornets sleep in clusters of 8-12 individuals huddled into a tight ball. This cluster can look like a huge pine cone to the unwary. If they are disturbed, pine hornets erupt into a droning cloud of stingers and sharp carapace. This cloud is treated like a standard swarm in the *Savage Worlds core rules.*

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Notice d6

Pace: 10"; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

Flight: Pine hornets fly with a Pace of 10" and a Climb of 2.

Sting: 2d4 damage to every target in the burst template.

Split: Pine Hornets can divide into two smaller swarms (Small Burst Templates). The Toughness of these smaller swarms is reduced by -2 (to 5 each).

Swarm: Parry +2; Cutting and Piercing weapons don't work against swarms. Area effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round.

Pagan

Living in magical wilderness is the height of folly for anyone but a pagan, and that allowance is dearly bought. Pagans bind themselves to elves in pacts of servitude, power, and protection. In battle, pagans work in eerie harmony and use every dirty trick they can get away with. More experienced pagans might have the New Power or Woodsman Edge, and two of their skills will be one rank higher

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Pact d6, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Hindrances: Outsider, Zealot (Major: Elves)

Edges: Arcane Background (Elven Pact), Leaf Step

Powers: Pagans have 15 power points and usually know the *beast friend* and *elemental protection* powers. They use the Pact (Spirit) skill as a spellcasting die. Each power is the result of one pact they've made with an elf.

Gear: Spear x2 (St+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, Range 3/6/12) or Antler Knife x2 (St+d4, Parry +1 if dual-wielded, Range 2/4/8), Hide Armor (+1)

Quillcrow

Larger than most eagles, quillcrows are cunning scavengers with an intimidating caw. They prefer to strafe their targets and paralyze from a distance with dart-like feathers. When their targets are helpless, they swoop in to finish the job. Their quilled barbs, from which they take their name, can be fashioned into darts, daggers, or spearheads.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6

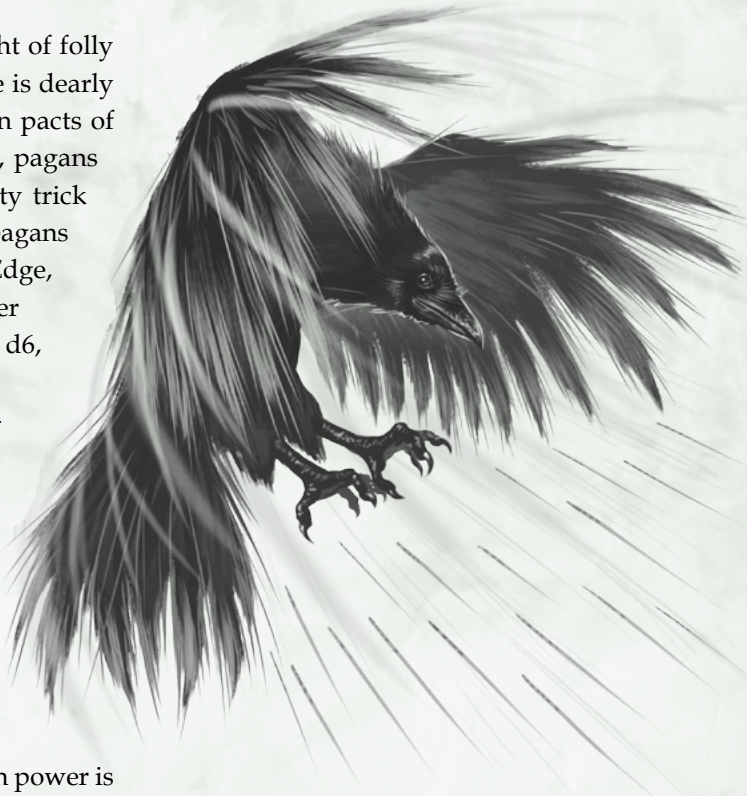
Pace: 2; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

Talons: Str+d6.

Flight: Flying Pace of 10" with Climb 1.

Quills: Str+d4; Range 3/6/12; Paralysis Poison.



Rake

Particularly boastful and aggressive errants are called rakes by the common rabble, but not often to their faces. To put it kindly, rakes are deeply passionate. They will challenge almost any errant they encounter to a duel to first blood. They hold long grudges.

Rakes will pepper their combat with insults and challenges. Some turn out to be cowards, but others prove to be capable of fighting to the bitter end. For more experienced rakes, three of their skills are one rank higher, and they may have the Sweep or Two-Fisted Edge.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Gambling d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting or Throwing d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6(1)

Hindrances: Emotional (Passionate), Vow (Challenger)

Edges: Aspiring Student (one School)

Gear: Leather Gambeson (Armor +1), Errantry Kit, pick one melee and one ranged weapon, 50sp

Red Bear

To some, red bears are adorable rascals who perform daring feats of agility in the treetops. To others, they are slippery menaces who steal and hoard with abandon. Those folks swear red bears are the children of witches and cats, and they can't be allowed to live in the settled world. The truth is red bears are highly intelligent creatures with a strong hoarding instinct. Their humanlike hands allow them to grasp many things, and, without training, they will carry away just about anything that catches their eye.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 2

Special Abilities

Bite/Claws: Str+d4

Size -2: Adult red bears are usually around 2 feet long and weigh 10-15 pounds.

Wall Walking: Red bears have sharp claws and strong limbs to climb any surface. They can even move along the ceiling. Tales say red bears inspired the errants who developed the magic of Leaf Step.



Royal Pheasant

As large as a turkey and as beautiful as the most bejewelled songbird, the Royal Pheasant has long crane legs and a fanlike tail. It is the vainest of all birds.

The Royal Pheasant prefers to flee danger, but will prove a fierce fighter when cornered. The way it stabs with its long beak has inspired spear fighters for centuries. Its brilliant plumage is often emulated in royal courts. It can speak as well as any human.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d12, Taunt d10

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 2; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

Dazzle: The Royal Pheasant receives a +4 bonus to Charisma. Additionally, the Royal Pheasant adds its Charisma bonus to any Tricks it attempts.

Flight: The Royal Pheasant has a Flying Pace of 12" and a Climb of 6".

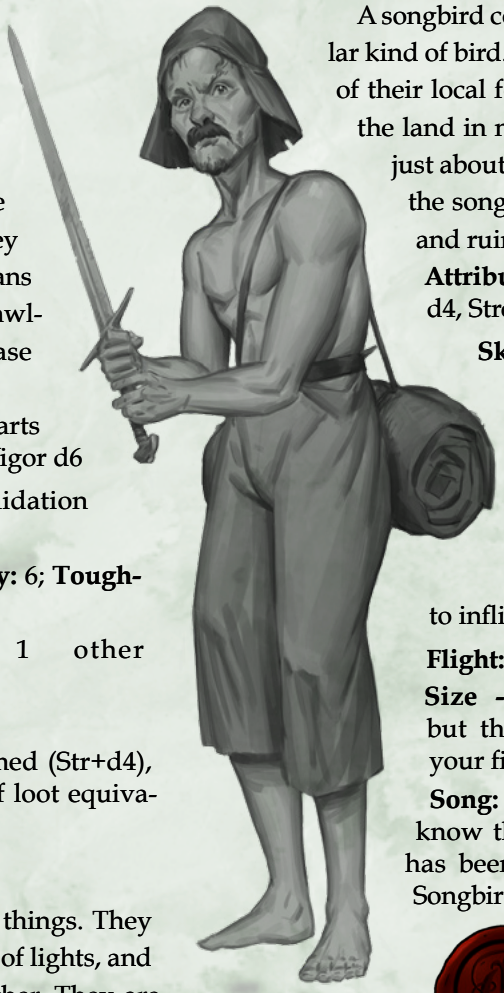
Powers: The Royal Pheasant has 35 power points and knows the following powers: *bolt, boost/lower trait, burst, confusion, deflection, healing, light/obscure, and quickness.* All powers have a dazzling light trapping, and are cast with a successful Spirit roll.

Size -1: The Royal Pheasant is about the same size as a large turkey.

Spear Beak: Str+d6, Parry +1

Ruffian

A life spent preying upon the forest roads hardens a man. Resigned to their misery, most outlaws are brutish and unrefined. These ruffians are willing to kill to get what they want. More experienced ruffians might have the Brawny or Brawler Edge, and might increase their Vigor by one die type.



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6(1)

Hindrances: Mean, 1 other Minor Hindrance

Edges: Martial Artist

Gear: Axe (Str+d8), Unarmed (Str+d4), Hide Armor (+1), Pouch of loot equivalent to no more than $50

Shade

Shadows are mischievous things. They grow and shrink at the tiniest of lights, and sometimes disappear altogether. They are silent and quick as the wind.

Sometimes shadows take leave of their casters to go cause mischief elsewhere. These unnatural shades cause all around them to fall quiet. They have learned to reach through the shadow veil to touch things that are real.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d10

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities

Claws: Str+d6

Liminal: Shades gain a +2 bonus to Parry because they do not fully exist in the real world.

Silence: An aura of total silence extends for 2" around the shade. Nothing within the aura makes any sound whatsoever. This ability can be negated with the *dispel* power.

Songbird

A songbird could be a robin, chickadee, or any similar kind of bird. Songbirds tend to know all the secrets of their local forest and are quick to learn the lay of the land in new places. They can lead someone to just about any place, but one can never be sure if the song is really luring them toward mischief and ruin.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d4-2, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 2

Special Abilities

Pester: Songbirds can't inflict meaningful harm on humans, but they can attack with their Strength die to inflict Fatigue.

Flight: Climb 1

Size -2: songbirds vary wildly in size, but they're all small enough to alight on your finger.

Song: Songbirds have 5 power points and know the *confusion* power. Their golden call has been known to mesmerize the unwary. Songbirds use a d6 for their spellcasting die.



Stag

No creature of the forest is as regal and wise as the Stag. More than a large deer, the Stag towers over other animals. Its antler crown spreads 15 feet wide. Its mantle of moss and lacquered leaves resembles a kingly cloak. Its voice is the tolling of deep chimes in the wind.

Stags are perfect judges, able to read minds and inflict infallible curses. Sometimes, they are known to dispense prescient knowledge. Other times, their wrath is majestic and awful.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Healing d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d8, Persuasion d12, Taunt d10

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Special Abilities

Antler Crown: Str+d8

Judgement: Stags can peer into the minds of the

guilty. Without spending power points, Stags may use the *mind reading* power with a successful Smarts roll. If the power is successful and the target has broken laws before, the Stag may choose to burden the target with a Vow Hindrance (Major or Minor). This Vow compels the target to atone for his crimes, whatever they may be.

Powers: Stags have 30 power points and know the following powers: *banish, barrier, beast friend, boost/lower trait, detect/conceal arcana, dispel, entangle, greater healing, pummel, and smite.* All powers have a nature trapping, and are cast with a successful Smarts roll.

Regal: Stags receive a +4 bonus to Charisma. Additionally, Stags add their Charisma bonus to any Tricks they attempt.

Size +2: Stags stand 15 feet tall at the shoulder, with antlers that spread just as wide. They weigh over 2,000 pounds.

Wise: Stags are renowned for their wisdom. They get a +2 to all Common Knowledge rolls and roll a d8 for all Knowledge skills.

Tree Viper

Tree vipers are camouflaged with growths that resemble twigs and leaves. Even from a few paces away, tree vipers are often indistinguishable from branches. They wait in the trees, perfectly still, and drop down on their prey from above, striking with deadly venom.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d12, Stealth d10

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 2

Special Abilities

Bite: Str

Poison: See the Poison rules in the *Savage Worlds core rules.*

Quick: Tree Vipers may discard Action Cards of 5 or lower and draw another. They must keep the replacement card, however.

Size -2: Tree Vipers are never longer than 5 feet, and they are typically only a few inches thick.

Small: Anyone attacking a Tree Viper must subtract 2 from their attack rolls.

Troll

These lumbering giants are prodigiously strong and profoundly stupid. Trolls establish dens. Sometimes these dens are hidden, and sometimes they are under bridges along the roadways. From here, trolls wander around and extort the humans they encounter. In fact, "shinies or blood" are some of the few words they can speak in the common speech.

Troll dens are legendary for the hoards hidden within. Dens along the road will always have at least $3000 worth of loot tucked away. Hidden dens always contain at least $6000 worth of loot.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Swimming d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(1)

Special Abilities

Armor +1: Rubbery hide.

Spiked Club: Str+d8

Improved Sweep: May attack all adjacent foes at no penalty.

Fast Regeneration: Trolls may attempt a natural healing roll each round unless their wounds were caused by fire or flame. This occurs whether the troll is a Wild Card leader or an Extra. If the latter, a downed troll actually returns to action if it heals itself (and is not Shaken—even if it was before being Incapacitated).

Size +2: Trolls are tall, lanky creatures over 8' tall.

Unified Acolyte

Not all Unified clergy are Celebrants. Many choose to serve the faith as clerks, laborers, or scholars when the preacher's life is unsuitable. These acolytes stand ready to glorify Oruneal however they can. Often, a single Celebrant will have at least a few acolytes to help him or her in tasks of the faith.

Acolytes can gain a few Advancements and the Celebrant Edge to become the iconic priests of the Unified.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Faith d6, Fighting d6, Healing d4, Knowledge (Religion) d8, Notice d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Zealot (Minor: Church of Unity)

Edges: Arcane Background (Unified)

Powers: Unified Acolytes have 15 power points, and typically know the *armor* and *light/obscure* powers. They use Faith as their spellcasting skill.

Gear: Bell Clapper (Str+d6), Unified Bell

Witch

In a pagan coven, women and men who broker pacts with the elves are called witches. Typically the leaders of a coven, witches are valued for their ability to twist elven pacts to their advantage. A witch is an especially tricky foe.

Witches always travel with a coven of at least four pagans. More experienced witches may have the Arcane Resistance, Tactician, or Wizard Edge, and three of their skills will be one rank higher.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d8, Knowledge (Elves) d8, Knowledge (Poison) d8, Notice d6, Notice, Pact d10, Persuasion d6, Taunt d6, Throwing d6

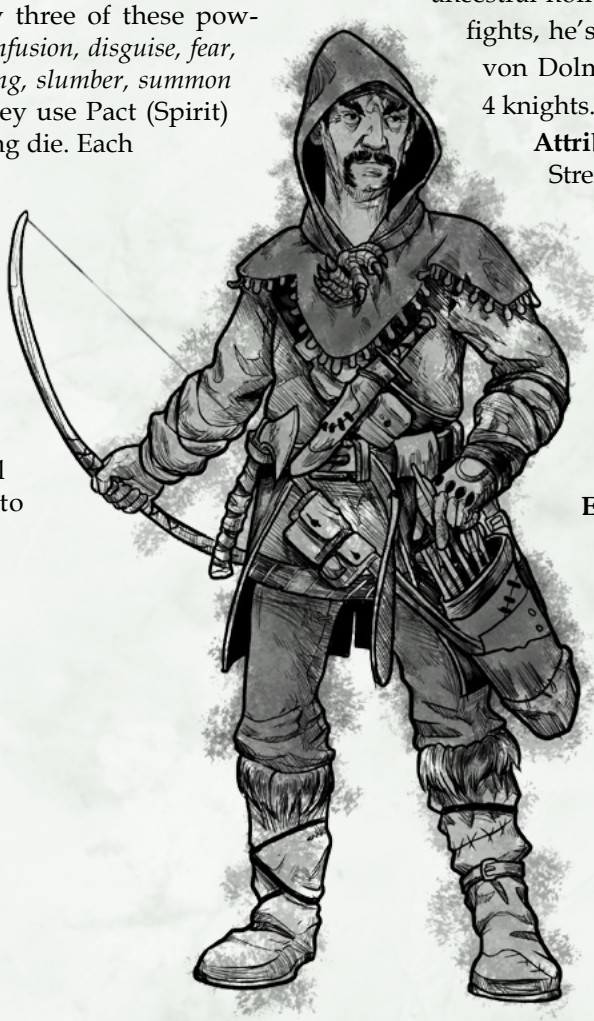
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Outlaw, 1 more Minor Hindrance

Edges: Arcane Background (Elven Pact), Witch

Powers: Witches have 20 power points and usually know any three of these powers: *beast friend, confusion, disguise, fear, healing, mind reading, slumber, summon ally, or teleport.* They use Pact (Spirit) for their spellcasting die. Each power is the result of one pact they've made with an elf.

Gear: Antler Knife (Str+d6, 3/6/12), Elven Totem x3 (Spell Foci), 2 poisons, Pouch of illegal loot equivalent to $100



Dramatis Personae

Each of these characters plays an important role in the various Plot Point Adventures and Savage Tales of the Blackwood.

Baron Ramund von Dolm

Robust and at the edge of his prime, Baron von Dolm exudes aggression even when he's not geared up for battle. A thick mustache and heavy brow gives the Baron a perpetual frown.

Baron Ramund von Dolm inherited a fortune from his mother and father. He delights in wealth, but battle has always been his true passion. Baron von Dolm is one of the nobles who most often gears up warbands to strike out at pagans and outlaws, though they say it's more about bloodlust than virtue.

The Baron splits his time between Span and his ancestral home. When he's not watching or picking fights, he's usually counting his treasures. Baron von Dolm is almost always in the company of 4 knights.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Gambling d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Nobility) d4, Riding d6, Taunt d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9(3)

Hindrances: Decadent (Minor), Greedy (Major), Mean (Minor)

Edges: Command, Noble, Worthy Student (Boar School)

Gear: Harpoon (Str+d6, 3/6/12, ranged grapple), Hook Axe (Str+d8, +1 to Agility Tricks to trip), Plate Corselet (+3 Armor)



Brother Quill, Keeper of Classics

Tall and spare as a sky pine, Keeper Quill has not withered in his old age. His long, white beard falls over emerald robes to a belt of gold. The scepter in his hand bears the heraldry of the Classicists upon its golden surface.

Brother Quill has been the Keeper of Classics for nearly three decades. His ancient intellect understands the Way of the Elder King better than anyone else in the realm. He cares deeply about the Five Classics.

As Keeper, Quill spends his days leading the Classicists of Grand Delving and shaping the character of Classicists throughout the kingdom. He has written dissertations on many subjects, and continues to research in the Root of Wisdom on a weekly basis.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Investigate d8, Knowledge (Classics) d12, Knowledge (Elves) d6, Knowledge (Lore) d10, Knowledge (Nobility) d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6(1); **Toughness:** 6(1)

Culture: Elderfolk

Hindrances: Elderly (Major), Bad Eyes (Minor), Zealot (Minor: Classics)

Edges: Arcane Background (Classicism), Wizard

Powers: The Keeper has 20 powers points and knows the *banish, confusion, damage field, deflection, detect/conceal arcana, dispel, divination, drain power points, greater healing, speak language, and summon ally* powers. He uses Knowledge (Classics) as his spellcasting skill.

Gear: Classicist Manuscript, Keeper's Sceptre (Str+d6), Quilted Silk Robes (+1 Armor, +1 Parry)



Celebrant Ade Mosqat

An aging man with piercing eyes, this Widelander carries all the trappings of a Unified holy man. His crimson robes are fringed with tiny bells, and his staff bears the symbol of Oruneal in exquisite colored glass.

Not long after he became a man, Celebrant Mosqat learned of his gift for foresight. He has only been in the Blackwood for a few months, but he has seen it in so many visions that it feels somewhat like home. He knows not why, but his destiny awaits him here.

Mosqat assists in the establishment of the Celebration of Unity in Farwater Beach. He is normally kept busy with his duties there, but he will make any exception for a chance to study the artifact.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Faith d8+2, Fighting d6, Healing d10, Knowledge (Religion) d10, Persuasion d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6(1); **Toughness:** 5(1)

Hindrances: Elderly, Zealot (Unified)

Edges: Arcane Background (Unified)

Powers: Celebrant Mosqat has 15 power points, and knows the *blast, boost/lower trait, divination, and light/obscure* powers. He uses Faith as his spellcasting skill.

Gear: Holy Robes (+1 Armor), Holy Staff (Str+d4, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 Hands, High-Quality Focus), Hearth Bread (7 days), 100sp



Daisy Blunderbuss

Most hunters are small and spare, but this one has clearly enjoyed some civilized comforts. A belt of strange, clockwork contraptions is draped across her stocky frame, though she is no less nimble because of either.

When she came of age, Daisy worked as a clocksmith's apprentice in the city of Span. For four years, she learned the intricate ways of clocks, locks, and other things, but her mind was always turned to the forest. She left the trade to become a hunter, but she still carries the knowledge she picked up during her studies.

She typically ranges through the villages between Span and Bastion in the Grove. She doesn't keep a permanent home, but most innkeepers and other hunters along that road would know her whereabouts at any given time.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Nature) d6, Lockpicking d6, Repair d6, Shooting d8, Survival d6, Tracking d6, Weird Science d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6(1)

Hindrances: Curious, Stubborn

Edges: Arcane Background (Weird Science)

Powers: Daisy has a single gadget, a net launcher, with 10 power points and the entangle power. It is activated with the Shooting skill.

Gear: Crossbow (2d6, 30/60/120, Str d8), Hatchet (Str+d6, 3/6/12), Leather Gambeson (+1), Animal Trophy, Hearth Bread (7 days), Woodland Herbs



Sal O' the Byways

Small and feisty, cityfolk would call Sal O' the Byways a "firecracker." Even her cheap, garish tinker clothes are like the wrapping of those pyrotechnics used in the Starflower Festival. Sal might have wrinkles and gray hair, but she's still spry behind the reins of a wagon.

When she was a girl, Sal trained to carry messages from town to town. Her natural curiosity and love of drawn-out haggling meant there were many faster messengers, but Sal's speciality was distance, not speed. She got so good at delivering messages across wide stretches of wilderness that people thought Sal must not travel on roads as dangerous as everyone else, so she became known as Sal O' the Byways.

A lifetime later, life hasn't been easy on Sal. She gave up messaging to follow her passion as a merchant. A hundred small missteps later and Sal's just a rascally tinker trying to break any deal she can.

Sal O' the Byways is clever, salty, and skittish. Kind people say she's careworn, honest people say Sal's held together by spit and sarcasm. Sal's an awful coward, but she comes through for her friends.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Driving d10, Shooting d6, Knowledge (Business) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d6

Charisma: −; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Elderly, Quirk (Sarcastic), Yellow

Edges: Merchant,

Gear: Crossbow (2d6, 30/60/120, Min. Str d8), Dagger (Str+d4, 2/4/8)



Verner von Karst

Perfectly average in almost every way, Verner von Karst is a man just out of youth. He speaks odd turns of phrase with an unplaceable accent, and wears an intricate brass medallion around his neck. He's quick with a smile, and has a penchant for sarcasm.

Verner von Karst claims to be a collector of rare items. He is never short of coin, and does indeed have an interesting collection. According to him, Verner was once a Classicist researcher but that way of life was too stuffy. Frankly, he likes a good party.

Verner is secretly a time traveler who has come from the future to retrieve the laser gun the party finds in **The Artifact**. If the party shows it to him, he will ask to take a closer look. As soon as Verner has the Artifact in his hands, he will activate the device hidden in his necklace, say "sorry, but this thing is in the wrong time" with an apologetic smile, and disappear in a flash of light. Verner will wait to act on his plans until the party develops firearm technology.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Gambling d6, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Business) d8, Knowledge (Lore) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5(1); **Toughness:** 5(1)

Hindrances: Decadent (Minor), Quirk (From Another Time)

Edges: Merchant, Rich

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4, 2/4/8), Cosmolabe Medallion, Quilted Silk (Armor +1, Parry +1)

Elves

There are many different kinds of elf, but they all share certain elements in common. First and foremost, they are all equally at home in the forest wilderness. No human could come close to the ease with which elves act under the tree's branches.

Beyond that, precious little is known about the elves. None of this information should be familiar to the party before the game begins, but there should be ample opportunities to discover these details during play.

Brush Elves

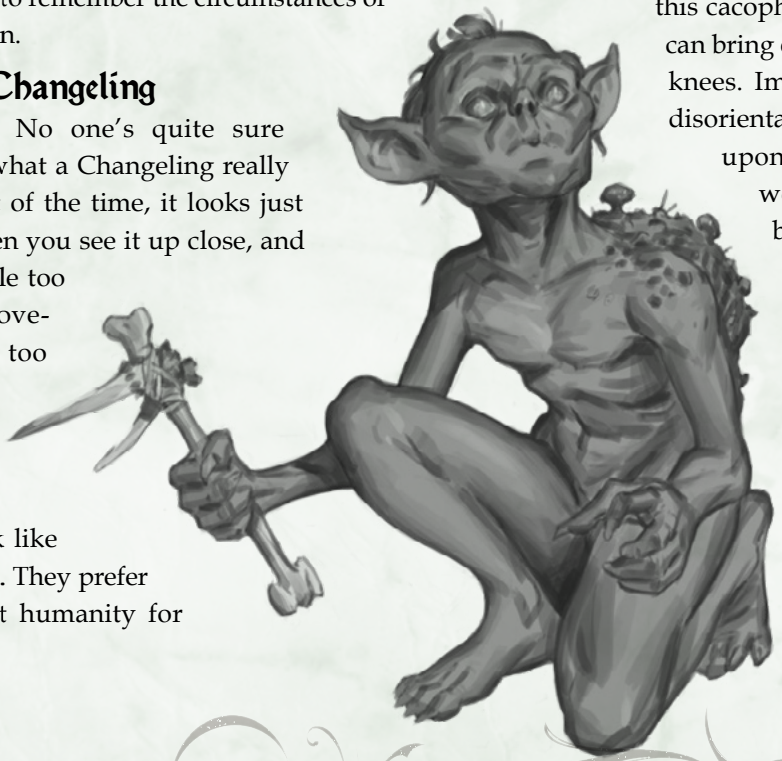
The lowest class of elves are like the forest underbrush. They are numerous and irritating. Any individual brush elf can attempt to inflict the Enchanted Hindrance on a player character, but only once during its lifetime (in other words, if a brush elf dies and regenerates, it can attempt this again). The target must make a Spirit roll at a -2 penalty. If the target fails, she gains Enchanted as a Minor Hindrance. If the target rolls a 1 on her trait die (regardless of Wild Die), she gains Enchanted as a Major Hindrance. This curse could be undone with a quest of atonement.

Brush elves can only be truly killed by sprinkling salt over their fresh corpse. If this doesn't happen, the elf decays into a pile of rotten wood and leaves within 5 rounds, and it will regenerate 1d8 days later in the nearest Elven Wilds. Fortunately, brush elves are simple and unlikely to remember the circumstances of their regeneration.



Changeling

No one's quite sure what a Changeling really looks like. Most of the time, it looks just like anyone. Then you see it up close, and its smile is a little too intense, its movements a little too alien. That's when you realize whatever Changelings really look like must not be nice. They prefer to lurk amongst humanity for days or weeks before striking at their victims. Changelings lure humans in, lull them to sleep, and devour them whole.



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d8, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

Claw: Str+d4

However Ye Please: With a successful Spirit roll at -2, changelings can assume the appearance of any human or animal. Errants must pass a Notice roll at -2 to see through the disguise. This penalty increases to -4 if the changeling gets a raise on its Spirit roll. On a failure, the illusion is twisted and obviously incomplete.

Leaf Darts x15: Range 3/6/12; Str +d4; RoF 3

Powers: Changelings have 20 power points and typically know the *confusion, deflection, elemental manipulation,* and *teleport* powers. They use Spirit as a spellcasting die.



Imp (Swarm)

Imps are said to be naughty Mossfolk who eat food after midnight. Their wickedness twists them into grotesque creatures no larger than a child. Blind from a life lived in the dark caverns of the earth, Imps navigate with a barrage of high-pitched chittering. In larger groups, this cacophony at the edge of hearing can bring even mighty errants to their knees. Imps take advantage of this disorientation with glee, descending upon the stunned with crude weapons made of rock and bone. The fungi growing from their backs emit a peculiar stench, but it brews a potent poison.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Tracking d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

Bone Shards: Imps are clever enough to use subterranean fragments of rock and bone as crude weapons. Imp swarms hit automatically for 2d4 damage to everyone within their template. Damage is applied to the least armored location (victims in completely sealed suits are immune).

Burrowing (10"): Imps are able to disappear into the ground and reappear anywhere within 10" on the next round.

Chittering Horde: Imps navigate by echolocation. They suffer no penalties for bad lighting, even in pitch darkness. When in a Medium Burst Template, the first time players engage in melee with the swarm they must make a Vigor check or be disoriented by the cacophony of so many chittering imps.

Size 0: Individual imps are no bigger than a goat, but as part of a swarm they suffer no size penalties.

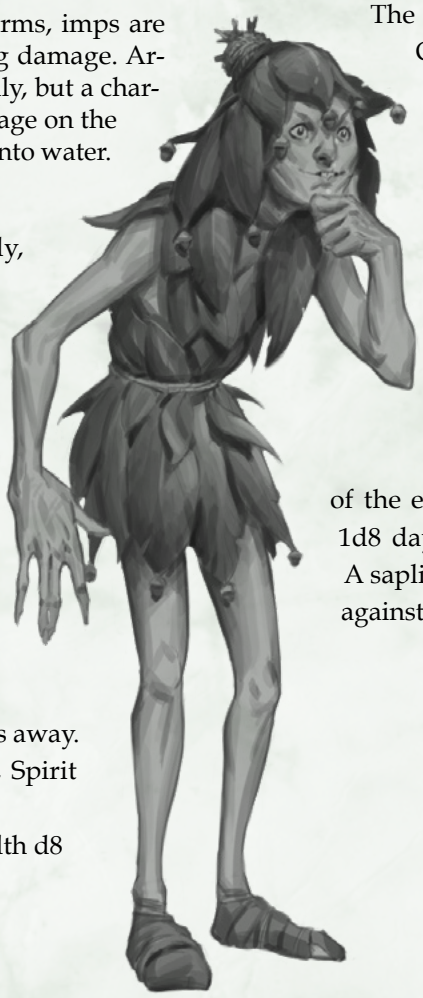
Split: Imp swarms can divide and conquer. They split into two smaller swarms (Small Burst Templates) if their foes split up. The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered by -2 (to 5 each).

Swarm: Parry +2; unlike most swarms, imps are not immune to cutting and piercing damage. Area-effect weapons also work normally, but a character could not stomp to inflict damage on the imps. Imps are not foiled by diving into water.



Mossfolk

After careful study, Classicists have determined mossfolk elves to be essentially harmless. About the size of potatoes, gourds, and pheasants, these elves are made entirely of frilly layers of moss. Mossfolk make a tasty snack for beasts and other elves, so they are always on the run from something. Errants who come to a mossfolk's aid are sure to receive a reward from the generous critter. That is, if they manage to catch the mossfolk before it runs away.



Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Climbing d6, Notice d8, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 2

Special Abilities:

Small -2: Mossfolk are frail but nimble. They subtract -2 from their Toughness, but incoming attacks are made at a -2 penalty.

Tasty Morsel: Beasts, monsters, and even other elves consider mossfolk a fine delicacy. Mossfolk are always pursued by 1d4 of these creatures, who may nonetheless attack any errant they cross.

Tiny Fists: d4-2

Token of Thanks: Mossfolk are grateful when rescued from a pursuer, but their instinct is always escape. If errants manage to successfully grapple a mossfolk, it will thank them for their help with a piece of rare advice and a loaf of freshly baked hearth bread.

Sapling Elves

Less numerous but more powerful, the next class of elves are like saplings: stunted in their growth and vying mercilessly for advantage. Once in its lifetime, a sapling elf can try to give a person an elfmark. The target must make a Spirit roll at -3. On a failure, the target gains the abilities and penalties of the Elfmarked race. This change is permanent. Just as with brush elves, sapling elves can attempt this curse again if they are killed and regenerate.

Like their brush elf counterparts, sapling elves must also be sprinkled with salt after death to keep them from returning to life. However, the salted remains must also be set on fire within 5 rounds of the elf's death, or else it will regenerate 1d8 days later in the nearest Elven Wilds. A sapling elf is very likely to bear a grudge against anyone who fails to kill it.



Caller

Like Changelings, a Caller can look like just about anything. Unlike Changelings, Callers are never quite able to conceal their elven strangeness. They're too conspicuous to stalk unseen, so instead they mesmerize humans and force them to walk out into the Wood and toward their doom. More than any other elves, Callers love to surround themselves with minions and thralls.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d12, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d10, Persuasion d12, Stealth d8, Swimming d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

Claws: Str+d4

Elven Call: For moments at a time, Callers can control the movements of humans almost without trying. Sometimes though, the hypnosis sticks. When Callers use the puppet power, targets who fail their checks by more than 4 are permanently under the Caller's control. The only way to free these poor souls is to kill the Caller.

Leaf Darts x15: Range 3/6/12; Str +d4; RoF 3

Powers: Callers have 20 power points and know the *beast friend, confusion,* and *puppet* powers. They use Spirit for their spellcasting die.



Hollowback

For the most part, a Hollowback looks like a human. But its features are strangely sharp, and if you look, you'll find a hole in its back revealing a hollow wooden body. Hollowbacks usually resemble comely young men and women. They idle their days lying near streams or in groves, though they are dangerous foes when their capricious anger is roused. Then, a Hollowback's wooden body turns into a weapon from daggerbraid to toe. Usually, a Hollowback can be appeased by lying with it for a few weeks. It's no surprise, then, that Hollowbacks are thought to have sired many Elfmarked children.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d12, Intimidation d8, Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Special Abilities

Armor +2: Oakenflesh

Daggerbraid: Str+d6, +2 to Grapple checks

Gnarled Fists: Str+d8

Wild Temper: Hollowbacks get destructive when they're angry. They have the Ambidextrous and Two-Fisted Edges.

Powers: Hollowbacks have 6 power points and usually know the *armor* and *beast friend* powers. They use Spirit for their spellcasting die.



Lorelei

Above the surface of a stream, lake, or river, lorelei look like beautiful men and women bathing. They are found near large rocks in the tributaries of the river Way, and always the glint of treasure shines from the depths beneath them. But do not be fooled: lorelei are vile creatures who dream only of tempting weak spirits into the water, where they may be drowned and eaten. Beneath the surface of the water, the bloated fins and sharp teeth of lorelei cannot be concealed. It is said also that to dwell outside water for even a minute is agony for these elves.

Game Statistics are as the Mermaid in the Fantasy Companion.

Thicket Elves

Far beyond the hedge, deep into the Blackwood, the thicket is always waiting. The highest class of elves is like this tangled, deadly realm: great and terrible. Each thicket elf dwells in the midst of a changed atmosphere, which spells even greater danger to those who draw near.

In order to be truly killed, these most powerful of elves must have their corpses sprinkled with salt and set alight within 5 rounds of death. However, someone must also make a blood sacrifice over the remains for the elf to be truly undone. The blood can be drawn from the character in the form of 2 Wound levels, but the character may choose to sacrifice an animal instead. This animal must be at least as large as a goat to be effective. If all these conditions are not met, the elf regenerates 1d8 days later in the nearest Elven Wilds. It is certain to bear a powerful grudge against those who delayed its plans.

Fair Folk

Tall and splendid. Generous, wise, and merciful. These are the words used to flatter the fair folk. Their pride is easily prickled, and their wrath is terrible, but should someone find themselves with nowhere else to turn, Fair Folk are said to know many secrets: lost lore, hidden weaknesses, forgotten treasures, and on and on.

Fair folk are the most magical of the elves. They wield a wide array of powers against anything that pays them the slightest offense, real or imagined. Despite a decadent appearance, fair folk are also deadly unarmed fighters.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Secrets) d10, Notice, Throwing d8, Taunt d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7(1); **Toughness:** 7(1)

Special Abilities

Armor +1: Shimmering Robes

Searing Glare: Range 3/6/12, Str+d4, RoF 3

Fist of Highest Noon: Str+d6, +1 Parry

Sunwell: Even in the thickest wilderness, the canopy gives way to a blazing sunwell anywhere the fair folk tread. Anything that enters this well must make a Vigor roll with a -2 penalty. On a failure, the target gains a level of Fatigue from the intense heat. This sunwell is 30 yards wide (centered on the fair folk), but it shrinks by 10 yards for every Wound the fair folk suffers.

Powers: The fair folk have 30 powers points and usually know the *blast, blind, bolt, damage field, deflection, dispel, greater healing, mind reading, quickness, speed,* and *teleport* powers. They use Spirit for their spellcasting die.



Nightmare

Beware the moments between sleep and waking, lest ye slip into the nightmare realm. First, you wake but cannot move. Then it comes crawling, long arms dragging a bulk of sagging flesh. Its weight settles on your chest. Its wide eyes bore into you. As your breath struggles, your mind is sent to wander a land of shadows and terror.

The Nightmare comes to those weighed down by the guilt of vile deeds or loss, or sometimes to no one in particular. It prefers to attack while all are asleep and, if discovered, will summon small, stony abominations to its defense.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11(3)

Special Abilities

Armor +3: Sagging Flesh

Spindly Claws: St+d10

Heavy Fog: A thick, malevolent bank of fog 50 yards in diameter shrouds the Nightmare wherever it should creep. Fear checks are made at -1 in this spine-tingling mist, and it grants medium cover to anyone further than 3 yards away. If the Nightmare should be vanquished, the fog dissipates over the course of a few minutes.

Nightmare Eyes: With a piercing gaze, the Nightmare banishes its victims to the awful realm from whence it crawls. After a successful grapple check, the Nightmare may make an opposed Spirit roll with its target. On a success, the target is Shaken. On a raise, it is sent to a hellish, ash-blackened part of the Elven Wilds.

In the nightmare realm, the target must pass a Spirit-based Dramatic Task with a -2 penalty to will itself back out. On a complication, an unseen horror lashes out at the target for 2d6 Fatigue damage, which could eventually cause death.

The target's body remains in the real world while its mind is banished. The Nightmare may act as normal and will try to crush and consume the body unless it is stopped.

Powers: The Nightmare has 25 power points and usually knows the *blind, burrow, dispel, entangle, fear, slumber,* and *summon ally* powers. It uses Spirit as a spellcasting die and is considered to be Veteran rank for the summon ally power.

Wild Hunt

Hunters have no choice but to seek out the wilds for the sake of hearth and home, but sometimes the tables are turned. Every winter, the howling of wind in a blizzard is the herald of the Wild Hunt. The mere presence of these solitary elves can drive humans mad. Elves may be more plentiful in the summer, but in the winter they are all the deadlier.

Following their twisted hounds, the Wild Hunt seek out all who are lost, to drag them away to the Elven Wilds. Their horns thunder through the winter gale. When errants close with the Wild Hunt in battle, it brings the wind itself to bear in its defense. The Wild Hunt slips through the wind to just behind your shoulder or stabs at your heart with a frigid blast.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Shooting or Throwing d10, Riding d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Special Abilities

Armor +2

Blade of Biting Wind: St+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 3/6/12, no hands

Blizzard: The Wild Hunt is so potent a magical entity that it sustains a supernatural winter storm around itself at all times. Treat this as a Cold Hazard that covers a square mile of terrain. It grants heavy cover to anyone further than 2 yards away. If the Wild Hunt is killed, the blizzard dissipates over the course of 10 minutes.

Hounds: Some say the hounds of the Wild Hunt are people who were dragged off by other hounds and twisted into grotesque thralls. The Wild Hunt is usually followed by 2 hounds per player. Treat these hounds like wolves from Savage Worlds, with one exception: when grappling, hounds can make an opposed Strength check to drag their target 1" for every success and raise. If a target is dragged more than 6", he turns into a puff of leaves and is blown away to the Elven Wilds, never to be seen again.

Powers: The Wild Hunt has 20 power points and usually knows the *blast, drain power points, puppet,* and *teleport* powers. Whenever it casts puppet, it will compel the target to cannibalize the target's companions. The Wild Hunt uses Spirit as a spellcasting die.

Allies and Villains

These characters were created by the Classicists, Sentinels, and Nobility listed on the Roll of Errantry at the beginning of this book. Each character has a Culture background (Widelander, Riverfolk, etc) listed on their title line. If you choose to use the character as an Extra, this information will only inform how you roleplay the character. However, if you use the character as a Wild Card you can add the specific mechanical bonuses for that character's Culture. You could also list the languages each character speaks to really round out the play notes. In any case, you should also give the character whatever gear is needed during for their role in the game.

1. Alaric Bywater (Riverfolk Storyteller)

A friendly, optimistic, kind-hearted Riverfolk, Alaric Bywater is an enchanting storyteller. Some of his more popular tales are about the adventures of an otter, for Alaric is not only enchanting, he is enchanted. As punishment for accidentally trespassing into the wilds of an elf, Alaric now transforms into a river otter on the night of each new moon, returning to human form with the dawn. What he remembers of these times he turns into tales, searching always for some way to undo the enchantment.

A bit of a social chameleon due to his cosmopolitan upbringing, Alaric comfortably melds and converses with folks from all stations. Whether old yarns passed down from elders or new ones spun fresh, he shares them all with anyone who wishes to listen. Parts of his tales have even come true. When his words alone cannot soothe a soul or solve a problem, he freely uses his other skills and funds to aid his family, friends, and those in need. As Alaric often says, it's not about winning or getting even. It's about doing the right thing and being kind, whatever the cost.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Healing d8, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Lore) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Streetwise d6, Swimming d4

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Emotional (Kind), Enchanted (Minor)

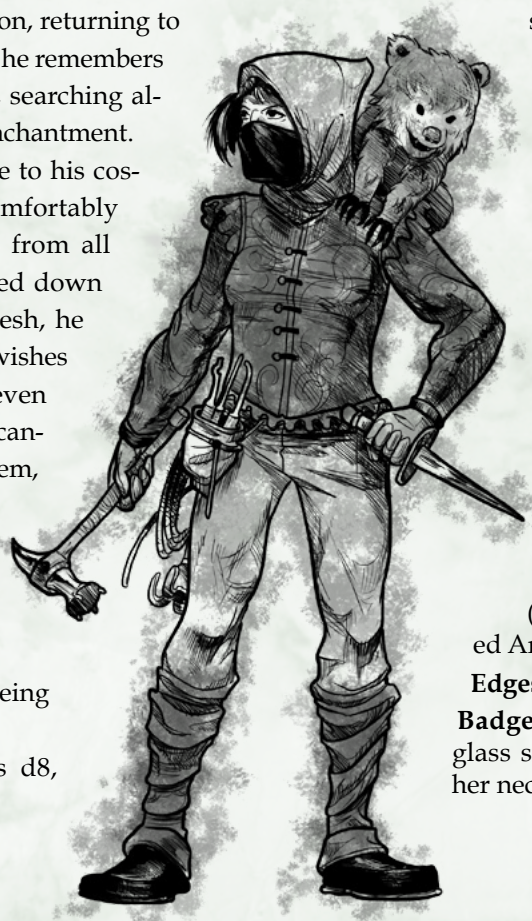
Edges: Storyteller, Charismatic

Badge of Errantry: Alaric wears a wooden otter pendant from his parents over his heart.

2. Aldine al'Vare (Widelander Sentinel)

Aldine al'Vare is a Widelander wandering through the Blackwood. A long time ago, a terrible tragedy struck Aldine's village and she set out on a journey to hunt down those responsible. For many years she was driven by a singular urge for vengeance. But then her memories of the tragedy faded, slowly at first and then faster and faster, as she became an old woman.

These days she follows a vague urge to find her way back home, though she may not recognize it if she ever found it. Since she has been traveling for so long, she can find a way to survive--finding food, shelter, water, and warmth--in almost any environment. Every time you meet her, she thinks it's the first time.



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Healing d6, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Religion) d6, Persuasion d6, Riding d4, Shooting d6, Survival d8, Tracking d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Elderly (Major), Quirk (Enchanted Amnesia)

Edges: Sentinel

Badge of Errantry: A small hourglass suspended from a cord around her neck.

3. Annelise Eidsson (Riverfolk Guard)

A brave warrior who always speaks her mind, Annelise Eidsson has faced off against many outlaws and pagans in her time walking the Way's Margin. Her red hair can be spied from a hundred paces. Next to her traditional ancestor beads, Annelise wears a bracelet full of charms to symbolize her husband and children.

She is most at home on a ship, guarding goods from port to port. Annelise stands up to every challenge but she harbors a secret: she has a terrible weakness for jewelry. She can't help but gawk whenever she spots a particularly nice bauble.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Boating d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Streetwise d4, Swimming d6, Tracking d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Heroic (Major), Quirk (Distracted by Jewelry), Stubborn

Edges: Brawny, Nerves of Steel

Badge of Errantry: A bracelet with six expensive charms, one for her husband and each of her children.

4. Hasan Pedagang (Riverfolk Merchant)

Hasan grew up near the water. Early in life his mother passed, leaving him to grow up in a tavern that housed the riverfolk. From that time, Hasan became involved within trade of things that would make the normal person a little uneasy. Growing up in the Black Market has made him connected to people that can get just about anything, but he often requires those seeking help from him to ensure he is having "fun." Both his thriving business and decadent nature has put him on the wrong side of the law and has forced him to leave any hope of legitimate markets or opening up a shop in a town.

Hasan is tall and has shoulder length black hair that often bounces as he gets excited talking about new deals. His tan skin is covered by a series of complex tattoos on his arms running all the way to his neck. The only thing that adorns his face is a not-so-thick, mustacheless goatee. He used to wear flashy clothing, but it just doesn't work anymore.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Gambling d8, Knowledge (Business) d8, Persuasion d8, Stealth d8, Swimming d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Decadent, Mischievous, Outlaw (Major)

Edges: Connections (Black Market), Merchant

Badge of Errantry: A series of complex tattoos on his arms.

5. Henri Laymarrow (Woodkin Herbalist)

Henri Laymarrow is an up-and-coming herbalist who has a penchant for growing potatoes. One night years ago, Henri was startled by the sound of approaching footsteps while tending his garden on the outskirts of the village. Disguising himself as a potato, he watched in terror as a troop of pagan warriors descended upon his beloved hamlet. They left no man, woman or child standing. To this day, his friends' screams ring in his ears despite countless prayers to his ancestors for relief. All these years later, he offers goodwill to their unseen spirits as he walks the ruins of his village.

Henri's generous heart is cherished by those who know him, but he is not without his flaws. His voice is grating and hypnotic, and tends to make people nod off. He's like an owl, preferring to sleep during the day and experiment with his potatoes by night. Plus, all that toil in the dirt has given him an earthy stench.

He's created many magical concoctions during his studies, but his specialty is a culinary delicacy: a mixture of potatoes cut long and fried, covered in curds and gravy. During the Harvest season, Henri creates this lovely meal day and night for anyone who draws near. That usually means he only feeds animals and ghosts, living in a ruin as he does.

Attributes: Agility d6 Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Healing d8, Herbalism d8, Knowledge (Lore) d6, Knowledge (Nature) d8, Survival d6, Stealth d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Bumpkin, Pauper, Zealot (Major: Potatoes)

Edges: Arcane Background (Herbalism)

Powers: *burst (Hot Potato Salve), disguise (Sneaky Potato), healing (Potato Poultice), 5 power points per potato*

Badge of Errantry: An ever-present sack of potatoes, "for emergencies."

6. Honest Ron (Sly Merchant)

"Honest" Ron has a dubious reputation at best, as his willingness to deal in all manner of used goods and his knack for haggling is viewed as greedy by some. Small of stature and just handsome enough to be of note, Ron keeps his blonde hair combed back neatly and his face clean shaven. He dresses somewhat modestly though his clothes are relatively new.

Quick with a smile and a warm welcome, Ron is adept at appraising the value of a given item, and when his own knowledge fails him he can fall back on his mercantile contacts to discern the true value of a seemingly priceless item. His seemingly trustworthy brown eyes exist in stark contrast to the sickeningly smooth tone with which he speaks, giving both the impression of an honest businessman and a shrewd trader at once.

In keeping with his self-appointed nickname, Honest Ron never lies to his customers, while at the same time bearing in mind that just because one speaks the truth doesn't necessarily mean they ought to speak it in its entirety. If and when flaws are discovered with his merchandise, Ron puts his haggling skills to use, offering what he deems a fair discount along with a well-worded explanation why they're actually getting the better deal.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Gambling d8, Knowledge (Business) d8, Persuasion d10, Knowledge (Business) d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Decadent (Minor), Greedy (Minor), Small (Major)

Edges: Connections (Black Market), Merchant

Badge of Errantry: A lucky leafstone coin carved with exotic markings.

7. Jack the Cowl (Woodkin Outlaw)

Sometimes, those in power fail to wield it responsibly. Sometimes, good people end up on the wrong side of the law. Such a tragedy happened to Jack the Cowl, but it has kept him from doing what's right. He helps the local people however he can, whether it's leading a pagan band on a goose chase or thwarting the cruel plans of the nobility. For all his trouble, the local lord hates Jack and wants him to hang in the marketplace as an example.

Jack prefers to persuade his victims into giving up their goods, but he's not opposed to gentle coercion. He'll even defend himself if blades are drawn, but his goal is to deride and disarm his opponents, not to kill them. His outlaw cowl masks the golden heart within.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d8, Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Emotional (Kind), Outlaw, Pacifist (Minor)

Edges: Charismatic

Badge of Errantry: A green cowl that Jack donned soon after being outlawed.

8. Jean-Christophe "the Ibis" (Riverfolk Storyteller)

Jean-Christophe has a habit of telling tall tales that are too strange to be false but too elaborate to be taken seriously. This habit often gets him into trouble... and back out of it again. He once went so far out of the way to get out of trouble that he ventured into the Widelands, where he stayed working random shifts as a cook for many years. Through a curious turn of events, Christophe eventually found his way home. Already a fierce, towering man, Christophe finally returned to the Blackwood with a price on his head as numerous as the freckles on his face. Despite all this, Christophe remains kindhearted at his core.

Whereas people enjoyed his stories before, now they have grown fearful of them. It seems the world bends to his will when he speaks. Sometimes, his tall tales make nuisances disappear. Sometimes they make his stew turn men into demons of rage or force the trees to shelter a person for a whole week.

One of his tales is rumoured to have caught up to him. While being chased along the Way on a moonlit night, he said that an Ibis once pursued will never be caught. An elf overheard this maxim and made it come true. So on the ghostly nights of the new moon, you can hear the eerie cry of the Ibis, as Christophe takes flight to avoid his pursuers.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Gambling d6, Healing d6, Knowledge (Lore) d8, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d4, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Enchanted (Minor), Mischievous (Minor), Wanted (Major)

Edges: Storyteller, Charismatic

Badge of Errantry: A carved Ibis figurine hanging from his waist.

9. Li from the East Seas (Widelander Storyteller)

A curious specimen of Widelander, the shabby yet jovial Li has numerous exaggerated tales of his origins and journeys. Clad in a wide straw hat and patchwork robe composed of (once lovely) silks, the strange and talkative man offers his talents while wandering from village to village.

Li is famous for his colorful and dramatic stories that paint pictures of his homeland. But by far his most famous tale is a chilling account of a traveling troupe of performers who are beset by malevolent powers and turned to flowers and trees. Whenever he tells this tale, the normally bombastic bard grows quiet and forgets to smile. Some believe there is a deeper truth to this particular tale, as the storyteller shows an odd reverence for trees and flowers. And a few witness even claim to see the colorful man walking into the woods at night with incense in his hand and a somber expression on his normally cheerful face.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Gambling d6, Healing d6, Knowledge (Lore) d8, Persuasion d4, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Curious, Delusional (Minor: Transformed Troupe), Emotional (Bombastic)

Edges: Storyteller, Charismatic

Languages: Ancient Script, Common, Pauper's Cant, Widelander Creole

Badge of Errantry: A wooden performer's mask from his homeland which he wears on a cord around his neck. Strangely, he never covers his face with it.

10. Lilith Willowbark (Woodkin Herbalist)

Lilith has been a life-long scholar of the as-yet undefined field of botany. Her mother before her was an enthusiast of herbalism, and Lilith has followed in her footsteps. She wanders through the Blackwood documenting all of the plant-life that she comes across with the intention of eventually publishing a book on the subject.

She is accompanied by a faithful companion in the form of a hummingbird, named Hubert. Lillith has spent most of her life out in the field. As a result, she is not very personable. However, if you befriend her she will remain true to you until her dying day.

Being a woman of intellect with affinity to nature, she abhors conflict and violence. Her bronzed and wrinkled skin show her age as much as her graying hair, decorated with beads and baubles. It is rumored that she may have dealings with the elves.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Healing d8, Herbalism d8, Knowledge (Nature) d8, Survival d6,

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Bumpkin, Loyal (Minor), Pacifist (Major)

Edges: Arcane Background (Herbalism), Beast Bond, Connections (Elves)

Powers: *Environmental Protection (Chest Tattoo), Healing (Herbal Potion), Boost/Lower Trait (Bag of Herbs), 5 power points per Draught*

Badge of Errantry: The various beads and baubles in her hair.

11. Minister Oswald von Nebel (Riverfolk Bureaucrat)

Even in a noble's court, there are heroes and villains to be found. These days, villains are often more common than heroes. Their crimes are not theft but taxation. They don't murder, but they do send families to the streets without remorse. Minister von Nebel is one such villain.

His pitiless attitude toward others has made him a fortune. His silver tongue has kept him in the good graces of a few contacts. Minister von Nebel's tastes are expensive, his appetite is legendary, but he can

provide information and funding to those who are willing to stoop to his level.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Gambling d6, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Business) d6, Knowledge (Law) d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6,

Charisma: +2; Pace: 5; Parry: 2; Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Decadent, Greedy (Major), and Obese

Edges: Charismatic, Rich

Badge of Errantry: A signet ring bearing the heraldry of his house, a cornucopia inverted.

12. Ol' Milt (Woodkin Hunter)

Ol' Milt has seen everything the Blackwood has to offer. He's a salty old heel with a bandoleer of darts stretched across his ale gut. Ol' Milt can draw and throw a pair of those darts faster than most people blink. Daggers are pretty mean in his hands too. He's rarely seen without a wide-brimmed leather hat to cover his bald head.

Whenever you're around Ol' Milt, it's his way or the wrong way. He's got some good advice, but sometimes he moralizes for so long you wonder when he's going to take a breath. It makes him a pretty stubborn man too. He loves fishing almost as much as he loves knives, and will swear friendship with anyone who'll go fishing with him for a day.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Knowledge (Nature) d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4, Survival d4, Throwing d10, Tracking d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Bumpkin, Code of Honor, Stubborn

Edges: Quick Draw, Two Fisted

Badge of Errantry: A simple man, Ol' Milt swears his errantry upon whatever pocket knife he has on him at the time.

13. Peak (Elfmarked Pagan)

A massive, imposing man dressed in furs, Peak is always at the lead when his coven attacks. He can throw a spear when he needs to, but Peak would rather crush someone with his club, crudely shaped from an uprooted tree. An elf laid with his grandfather in a mountain pass, and the next morning his father awoke with a child in his arms. That child was fine, but her son was born with stony protrusions on his shoulders, forearms, and forehead.

Peak's elven totems make him strong. One ties him to a Hollowback who imbues his club with deadly power. His grandsire is the other, and can make all of his flesh as hard as his rocky patches. He prefers to speak only to his elves, so he's especially surly around other people.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6, Tracking d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Bumpkin, Mean, Outlaw

Edges: Arcane Background (Elven Pact)

Powers: *armor (Boulder Skin), smite (Wood's Wrath) 15 power points*

Badge of Errantry: An uprooted sapling, gift from a Hollowback and used as a club.

14. Prince Regal (Elderfolk Turncoat)

Some princes are charming. Some aren't really princes at all. Such is the case for Hinrick of Heath Hall, who has audaciously renamed himself Prince Regal as an errant. Barely into manhood, he is already one of the most gifted students in the history of the Stag Crown Treatise. Prince Regal has won this achievement despite his frail, consumptive health.

Prince Regal trained at the Heath Hall School of Spirit Warfare outside of Grand Delving. Studying at the feet of Master Iron Claw himself, Prince Regal unlocked the first few secrets of the Treatise with ease. In time, the Prince grew to despise the other students for their inferior skill. With one final outburst, he left the school to master the deadly arts alone.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Healing d8, Intimidation d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Anemic, Emotional (Temper), Zealot (Errantry)

Edges: Aspiring Student (Stag's Crown), Two-Fisted

Badge of Errantry: The embroidered mantle of the School of Spirit Warfare, which he stole before he left.

15. Purnog, "the Dust Devil" (Widelander Herbalist)

The wastes of the wide desert beyond the riverlands are not for the faint of heart. They are the crucible which burned Purnog until only his hard eyes and sun-dried skin remained. He peers at the world around him through thick, sand excluding goggles; examining every grain of sand and gust of wind for danger or opportunity. To compensate for his extremity, he has cultivated an enthusiastic demeanor and uncommon zeal for life. As quick as he is to strike at danger, he is even quicker to laugh at a jest or enjoy an adventure.

Each night, Purnog transforms into a desert wildcat. During this time he is capable of hunting for small game but cannot spend time brewing.

Attributes: Agility d6 Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Healing d6, Herbalism d8, Knowledge (Nature) d8, Survival d10, Notice d10

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Bumpkin, Enchanted (Major), Pauper

Edges: Arcane Background (Herbalism)

Powers: *Burst (Sand Bomb), Environmental Protection (Bracing Elixir), Healing (Pungent Salve), 5 power points per Draught*

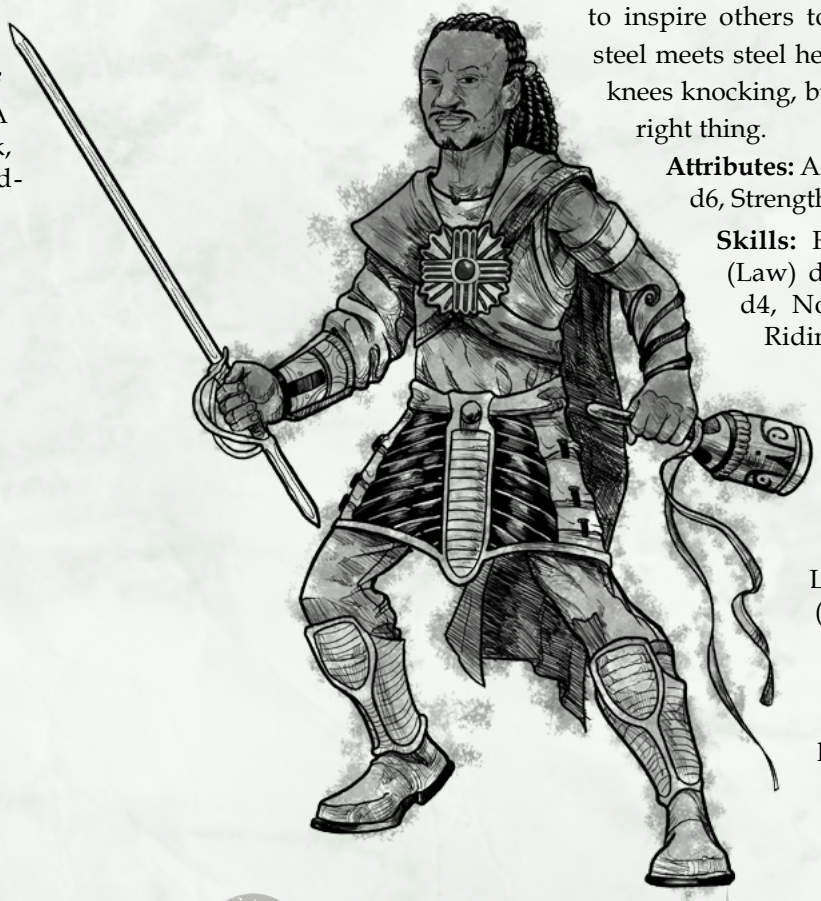
Badge of Errantry: A pair of thick, sand-excluding goggles.

16. Sir Falkner (Riverfolk Noble)

Diedrich Schwarzbach was the son of the corrupt Duke of Dunkelfluss. Unwilling to watch the peasantry under him suffer but being too cowardly to do anything about it, Diedrich left the comforts of home to heed the Call of Errantry. That life was much more difficult than he had thought, but it was not too long until he had earned a name for himself as "Sir Falkner."

Returning home, Sir Falker killed his father in single combat to avenge his people. Fearful that the peasantry would revolt, Sir Falkner drastically increased the quality of life for his peasants by lowering his own. From then on, he has sworn that he will eat no better than his people. It often puts him at odds with the decadent nobility, but some nobles approve of his dedication to the people. Not only does he sacrifice for those of Dunkelfluss, but he regularly risks his life for anyone in need.

While Sir Falkner puts up a brave front, he is actually quite cowardly. If it were not for his love of the people--and the fear of failure--Sir Falkner would never leave home. But despite his many fears, he always does what he thinks is right. He prefers to inspire others to take charge, but when steel meets steel he will join the front lines--knees knocking, but willing to die to do the right thing.



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Law) d4, Knowledge (Nobility) d4, Notice d4, Persuasion d6, Riding d4, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Quirk ("Dunkelfluss is Glorious"), Vow ("Live Like my People"), Yellow (Major)

Edges: Charismatic

Badge of Errantry: Once a jeweled brooch to keep his cloak fastened, the jewels have been removed to symbolize his vow.

17. Stew Kettle (Riverfolk Pauper)

Stew Kettle may be a pauper, but that doesn't mean he's without a job. Over the years he's learned where all the good rummage spots are. He can also make just about anything edible, so he's the cook for all the paupers in his alley. He loves to throw dice, but he might like embellishing his stories even more. Too bad he's always mispronouncing words!

Life as a pauper isn't easy. Once, Stew Kettle lost his arm while rummaging for food in a particularly seedy alley. To hear him tell it, he battled the biggest, meanest rat in the city, but the haunch he pulled from a refuse pile made for one of the finest stews in recent memory.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Lockpicking d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d6, Survival d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Mischievous, One Arm (Major), Pauper

Edges: Liquid Courage

Badge of Errantry: A stew kettle he carries with him everywhere.

18. Thomas Treefell (Woodkin Herbalist)

Thomas has just turned ten years old. He is small even for that, yet he pushes a cart of wares. He sells herbs which (among other things) he claims will enable communication with those who have already passed. His mother perfected the art but died unexpectedly before she could complete his training. It's not certain, but rumors say he had something to do with her death. With nowhere else to turn, Thomas had no choice but to try to perfect the art so he can make a living.

Luckily, Thomas promises, his training has been able to progress through his own communication with his dead mother. For a price, Thomas promises he can help you communicate with anyone who has passed, but there's a catch: the dead don't make a habit of talking to strangers. You will need to find a spirit somehow connected to you (for good or ill) who might intercede on your behalf. Another catch: to be able to communicate fully with the dead, someone must surrender themselves as a host. If it's you, you won't remember what happened (though others can relate the conversation back to you later). If a friend volunteers, you can interact with the dead as if they were alive. But beware! Once you let a spirit in, they may not want to leave!

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Healing d8, Herbalism d8, Knowledge (Nature) d8, Survival d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Bumpkin, Vow (Minor: Master Herbalism), Young (Major)

Edges: Arcane Background (Herbalism), Connections (Ancestors)

Badge of Errantry: One of his mother's teeth, which he tucks away behind his ear.

19. Tocklin Quillfeather (Elderfolk Classicist)

A dedicated, self-appointed servant of the Elder King, Tocklin is a broad shouldered, weather worn, quiet man of an age undecipherable. He wears mostly leather with accents of fur in his cloak and gloves. Several carved white stone pendants adorn his garb.

Thanks to his studies of the *Five Classics of Lore and Reason*, stone is like clay in Tocklin's hands. With a simple quill and a drop of water, can conjure objects from rock, and manipulate them to his will. He can draw a rope as strong as a boulder and pliable as silk. He carries an intricate stone dagger and uses powers to adapt it to any situation. He uses all these powers in his relentless search for the missing Elder King.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Classics) d10, Persuasion d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Death Wish, Stubborn, Zealot (Major: Elder King)

Edges: Arcane Background (Classicism)

Powers: *Armor (Stone Slabs), Bolt (Pebble Bullets), Smite (Water-Honed Edge), 10 power points*

Badge of Errantry: A Classicist Manuscript made from slabs of stone.

20. Twilight Mist (Pagan Witch)

At the end of the day, the twilight mist carries mysterious dangers. So too does this old witch. Strength and speed have long since left her crooked frame, but she needs neither of these things. Her elves provide the Twilight Mist with all she needs to survive.

The Twilight Mist has grown so close with her elves that she willingly submitted to elven enchantment. Each night of the new moon, she transforms into a deadly silkspider from dusk until dawn. She loses her other magic during this time, but the Twilight Mist enjoys using it as an opportunity to strike at her enemies when they least expect it.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Healing d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Elves) d10, Knowledge (Nature) d8, Pact d10, Persuasion d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Elderly, Enchanted (Minor), Mischievous

Edges: Arcane Background (Elven Pact), New Power (Confusion), Witch, 15 power points

Powers: *confusion (Befuddling Mist), deflection (Wisp Wights), healing (Bracing Vapors)*

Badge of Errantry: Three elven totems: a burning bundle of sage, a gnarled wooden wand, and a rusty dagger.

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The Way
Highway-Under-Bough
High Hall
Demeora
The Spires
Lesser Heights
Grand Pylerna
The Way
Elder Kind
The Heights
N
W
E
S
A new map of the Blackwood and the Elder Kingdom in the Year of the King 1454
City
Village
Ruins
Miles
0
10
20
30

Blackwood Errantry Charter

Name: _____ Culture: _____

Rank: _____ XPs: _____ Languages: _____

Agility

Smarts

Spirit

Strength

Vigor

Hindrances

Calling: _____

Skills

d ___	_____	d ___	_____
d ___	_____	d ___	_____
d ___	_____	d ___	_____
d ___	_____	d ___	_____
d ___	_____	d ___	_____
d ___	_____	d ___	_____
d ___	_____	d ___	_____

Equipment

Armor

Head: _____

Torso: _____

Arms: _____

Legs: _____

Total WT Carried: _____

Weight Limit: _____

Enc Penalty: _____

Powers

Power/Trapping	Cost	Range	Damage/Effect	Duration

Weapons

Weapon	Range	RoF	Damage	AP	Wt	Notes

Badge of Errantry

Edges

_____

_____

_____

_____

N _____

5 _____

10 _____

15 _____

S _____

25 _____

30 _____

35 _____

V _____

45 _____

50 _____

55 _____

H _____

65 _____

70 _____

75 _____

L _____

90 _____

100 _____

110 _____

Permanent Injuries

Charisma

Pace

Parry

Toughness

Wounds

-1

-2

-3

INC

-2

-1

Fatigue

Blackwood

Errantry Codex

For nearly 1,500 years, the Elder King reigned over his kingdom with wisdom, compassion, and justice. Alas, he disappeared 14 years ago, and the Elder Kingdom is in disarray. The nobility grow corrupt and forget their duties to the commonfolk. Outlaws and pagans prowl at the borders of the kingdom. And in the wildest depths of the Blackwood, the strange and dangerous spirits known as elves emerge from their hidden realm once more.

It is into this world you walk, an errant patrolling the tattered edges of the Elder King's realm. Through passion or sheer will, you walk this path for your own reasons: perhaps to gain strength, help others, or accumulate glory. It is a world of mystery, violence, heroism, and villainy. It is the Way's Margin.

The Blackwood Errantry Codex is an officially-licensed campaign setting for the award-winning ***Savage Worlds*** RPG from Pinnacle Entertainment Group. It includes character options, world information, and a full-length Plot Point Campaign complete with Savage Tales. You will also need a copy of the ***Savage Worlds*** core rules and the ***Fantasy Companion*** to play in the Blackwood.

THE MYTHIC GAZETTEER

OFFICIAL SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSED PRODUCT