

THE  
**WITCHER**<sup>®</sup>  
A TOME OF CHAOS

A Celebration of the Art, Chaos, and Science of Magic







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WI11051 978-1-950911-22-6

# Table of Contents

<b>Compiling a Tome</b> .....	5	The Circle of Caed Myrkvid.....	64	<b>Mages of Interest</b> .....	152
<b>Ley Lines</b> .....	8	The Circle of Gedyneith.....	65	Artorius Vigo.....	154
<b>Mages</b> .....	10	Wandering Druids.....	66	Bronwyn Deadeye .....	155
A Background on Mages.....	11	The Druid Profession.....	67	Cadfan of Ebbing.....	156
Mage Lifepath .....	18	Forces of Nature .....	70	Dormyn of Gemmera .....	157
A Little Knowledge .....	33	<b>The Magical Mundane</b> .....	72	Dorregaray of Vole.....	158
<b>Priests</b> .....	34	A Background on Magical Talents.....	73	Elgan of Verden.....	159
A Background on Priests .....	35	Magical Gifts .....	74	Francesca Findabair .....	160
Dana Meadh.....	39	Tactical Pursuits .....	76	Drystan of Nazair .....	161
The Eternal Fire .....	40	<b>A Compilation of Chaos</b> .....	78	Fringilla Vigo.....	162
Freya.....	41	Mage Spells.....	81	Istredd .....	163
The Great Sun .....	42	Priest Invocations.....	91	Keira Metz .....	164
Kreve.....	43	Druid Invocations .....	96	Margarita Laux-Antille .....	165
Melitele.....	44	Witcher Signs.....	101	Philippa Eilhart.....	166
Coram Agh Tera .....	45	Rituals.....	102	Sile de Tancarville .....	167
Epona .....	45	Hexes .....	105	Stregobor of Kovir.....	168
Lilvani .....	46	<b>The Magical Marketplace</b> .....	109	Xarthisius.....	169
Morrigan .....	46	Glyphs.....	110	<b>A Binding Clause</b> .....	170
Nehaleni .....	47	Enchantments .....	111	<b>Bestiary</b> .....	195
The Prophet Lebioda .....	47	Elixirs.....	115	Bes .....	196
Svalblod.....	48	Magic Items .....	117	Casglydd.....	198
Veyopatis.....	48	Purchasing Magic Items.....	123	Corpse Amalgam.....	200
The Priest Profession.....	49	Trophies .....	124	Great Bear.....	202
Wine or Wisdom .....	52	<b>The Dark Arts</b> .....	126	Living Armor.....	204
<b>Druids</b> .....	54	A Background on the Dark Arts .....	127	Mari Lwyd.....	206
A Background on Druids.....	55	Necromancy.....	129	Penitent .....	208
The Circle of Gwyn Carn.....	61	Mutation .....	134	<b>Components &amp; Mutagens</b> ....	210
The Crow Clan.....	62	Goetia .....	139	<b>Index</b> .....	211
The Circle of Bleobheris.....	63	Portrait of the Artist.....	150		





# Compiling a Tome

*“Ban Ard has proven a haven for a sorceress who’s repudiated her homeland. I can argue academic minutiae with Brandon of Oxenfurt one day, then spend the evening with cups of wine hearing the doings of the world as filtered through Merchant Kazmer’s eyes. One should never ignore an opportunity to learn.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne



**You may be wondering how I, Brandon of Oxenfurt, renowned historian, have come to write the tome you hold in your hands—a tome concerning magic in all its forms, a subject some might consider dangerous knowledge for the average reader. The quest for knowledge sends one down all manner of dark and twisting corridors. But in the end, I have survived the journey and returned to bring this knowledge to you. And besides, a friend of mine suggested that if I didn’t write it, a sorceress might, and one can only guess how that would come out!**

One blustery day, I opened my door to find Rodolf, my old friend (who you may remember from our discovery and publication of the personal journal of Erland of Larvik). He was excited about something but seemed hesitant to divulge it. I plied him with the contents of my liquor cabinet, and it loosened his tongue a bit. He said there was someone I should meet—someone who, were I to collaborate with them (as I had with him), might bring me fame and perhaps some money. I glimpsed one of those aforementioned corridors stretching out before me.

“But you must come with me to Ban Ard,” Rodolf said with his trademark grin.

I glanced out the window with a sigh. “Can it not wait until Spring?”

“No, you old fool! We must be on our way immediately,” or something to that effect.

I gathered a few meager belongings and a great deal of paper, pens, and ink. Rodolf had brought his wagon, of course, brimming with unlikely things to sell along the way. I commented that he may not find much business with the bears and wolves who would no doubt be our primary company along the long, snowy road to Ban Ard. I should have been more tactful—were it not for the pickling salts, wolverine hides, and cooper’s hammer, ours would have been a much shorter story indeed.

I will leave the sordid details of our long trip for another time, but we did finally arrive at Ban Ard with all extremities intact (if slightly blue). From there, we went directly to the boy’s school of magic. I thought perhaps some crusty old mage wanted to leave a legacy of magic behind. But imagine instead that the person I was to meet was elven, Nilfgaardian, female, and a sorceress. I can’t imagine anyone I would trust less. And yet she didn’t have the arrogance of most elves, nor the unimaginative nature of a Nilfgaardian, nor the flighty, self-indulgent nature of most women. And, well, you know how most sorceresses are—superior, scheming, always looking to start a conspiratorial cabal, unwilling to let magic knowledge creep from their grasp. Thus, I was introduced to Glynnis var Treharne, a former director of magic at Gweison Haul. In a level way, she explained that, while she wished no harm on Nilfgaard, neither could she tolerate their systems of oppression nor endorse their expansionist policies, fearing that victory in the North would not end aggression but encourage the army to seek new targets. Unfortunately, due to the cloistered status of mages in the South, Glynnis had few options in her current position, nor could she teach her students anything beyond the controlled status of magic. She felt that, were the knowledge of magic made more accessible, then perhaps its study might be less stringent in the South, and knowledge could be brought to shore up the weakened nations of the North. But mostly, when she spoke of bringing all magical knowledge, from the North and the South, together in one volume, I glimpsed a light in her eyes that I understood immediately.

Beyond politics, Glynnis is a scholar—and I have great admiration for the difficult and dangerous path she walks. She will no doubt be outlawed in her homeland. I asked her why she had not sought out the sorceresses of the North. She said she knew them only by reputation. That was enough for me.

And so, we started out on an overwhelmingly large project. We have tried to encompass as much verifiable magical knowledge as possible. When one of us lost faith, the other reawakened their determination. Many, many people have helped us through firsthand observations, or the loan of many excellent but forgotten tomes of magic. Read on and learn, as I did.

-Brandon of Oxenfurt

## The Contents of the Tome

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Within the pages of *A Tome of Chaos* you will find many exciting options for the magically inclined player or the devious Game Master. The many spells, invocations, rituals, hexes, alternate rules, and monsters presented in *A Tome of Chaos* are designed to work hand in hand with the material in the *Witcher TRPG Core Book*, adding both danger and excitement to your gameplay. Across these nine chapters, you'll find:

### Mages

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Often considered the most powerful wielders of Chaos, mages occupy a strange niche across the Continent, ranging from almost equal to the aristocracy in the North to useful tools in the South. We'll take a deeper look at the training of mages in the various regions of the Continent, how the cultures and societies of the Continent view them, and what the future holds now that the North is no longer safe. Additionally, you'll find a whole custom Lifepath designed to emulate the long, sordid lives of sorcerers and sorceresses. With it, you can discover how your magic manifested, how your loved ones reacted, and the nature of your training.

### Priests

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More widely accepted by the world at large, priests often serve as community leaders, wielding magic bestowed on them by a power beyond mortal comprehension. The truth of priestly magic may be a hot topic of debate among magical scholars—but the people believe it, nevertheless. We'll look at how priests interact with their followers, how their treatment differs from mages, and how their magic manifests. Additionally, we'll take a deeper look at the six largest religions on the Continent, along with eight of the less popular or prevalent religions which still pervade certain regions of the world.

### Druids

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Often overlooked beside the more visible mages and priests, druids nevertheless play a vital role in the magical landscape of the Continent. From their duties as keepers of balance to the nature of their primal magic, we'll discover what makes a druid tick. You'll learn about the tenuous balance of the natural and unnatural upon the Continent, what druids do to keep that bal-

ance, and how the world interacts with these oft misunderstood shepherds. Additionally, we'll take a deeper look at the six largest druid circles on the Continent with information concerning their practices and culture.

### The Magical Mundane

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Below the more powerful mages, priests, and druids exist a cast of magical individuals ignored by magical society at large: the majority of magic users, capable of only a single magical effect. In this chapter you'll find rules for giving your character a magical gift.

### Magic Compiled

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*A Tome of Chaos'* bread and butter is new magic for all types of magic users. In this chapter you'll find spells, invocations, signs, rituals, and hexes compiled into a comprehensive list of new magic from which to learn.

### Magical Marketplace

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Across the Continent, magical items are rare and often falsified—but when you can get your hands on real magic, it can make a real difference. In this chapter you'll find a wealth of magical items, as well as runewords and magical trophies.

### The Dark Arts

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Certain magic is too dangerous to be used by any mage. These forbidden magics were locked away by the Council of Mages so that they couldn't ruin the reputation of mages and wreak havoc. In this chapter we'll explain the three most prevalent forms of forbidden magic—necromancy, goetia, and mutation—and provide rules for unleashing them upon the world.

### Magical Society

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Despite their many feuds and foibles, most mages are in some way bound by their connection to Chaos. This has led to a large and interconnected web of alliances and interactions referred to as *Magical Society*. In this chapter you'll meet a number of members of that magical society to act as allies, villains, or mentors in your campaigns.

### Adventure

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Finally, with a host of knowledge under your belt, embark on an adventure to the dark depths of goetic practice. "A Binding Clause" is an adventure designed to be played with up to six players that shows the dangers of making deals with devils.

But first, we should begin by diving into the fundamentals of magic: the crisscrossing web of dimensional intersections that form the backbone of magic in the Continent.



# Ley Lines

*"Those not attuned to chaos are quick to label magic as 'the other.' A force that exists completely separate from the natural world and, with its alien nature, cannot be trusted. But the matter is not quite so black and white. Magic permeates the land we walk on and the pathways it follows form a complicated web of beauty that could only be brought about by magic."*

—Glynnis var Treharne

Ley Lines are invisible semi-physical pathways of magic that crisscross the world. Where these lines converge, the forces of magic are most powerful. Ancient elves built standing stones at these intersections, which came to be known as Places of Power. Though individual Ley Lines are bountiful sources of magic, most magic users focus entirely on Places of Power.. Largely, this is because tapping a Ley Line is inherently less controlled than using a Place of Power. A Ley Line can be drawn on by mages, priests, and druids alike to empower their magic—but if drawn on improperly or overdrawn, they are far more dangerous. One must also know how each element of magic functions to know what to expect from a Ley Line. Each Ley Line is linked to a specific element of magic and each behaves differently.

## How Do You Find Ley Lines?

Despite being around six meters wide and spanning hundreds of miles, Ley Lines are difficult to detect due to their invisible, intangible state. Luckily, there are two surefire ways to find a Ley Line for the observant magic user. Firstly, a magic user can search for the Ley Line's magical signature.

Each Ley Line radiates a magical signature which can be sensed by anything that is capable of sensing magic. Any character attuned to magic (with a Vigor Score) gets a cramp in their ring finger when within 10 meters of one. If a Mage uses Magic Training to sense for magic within 10 meters of a Ley Line, they sense a great deal of magic and know the direction of the Ley Line.

For the non-magically adept, there is a more mundane way to find Ley Lines. Each Ley Line has a minor physical effect on the area that it passes through. If you find an area with unusual rock patterns, frequent dust devils, or unnatural humidity, its likely you've stumbled across a Ley Line.

## Ley Lines and Places of Power

All Ley Lines eventually lead to Places of Power linked to the element of the Ley Line. This is where two of the same elemental Ley Lines cross. In general, this intersection happens at a location befitting the element of the Ley Lines: a river delta for water, the rim of a volcano for fire, or the top of a mountain for air. This being said, Ley Lines traverse the entire world, which means following one could lead you on a long and possibly epic journey. It's also important to keep in mind that the location of Places of Power are sometimes inhospitable or dangerous to humans. Luckily, Ley Lines are largely metaphysical and can be found and accessed at any altitude, even when moving toward the peak of a high mountain or the depths of a cavern.

## Drawing from Ley Lines

Once a Mage, Priest, or Druid is physically touching a Ley Line, they can try to draw from it by taking an action. To do this, they must make a DC:16 Spell Casting check. If the magic user succeeds, they have unlocked the power of the Ley Line and can benefit from it as long as they are touching it. However, they also suffer extra Overdraw and Fumble Effects as per the element of the Ley Line. If they move away from the Ley Line, their connection to it is severed and they must attempt to draw from it again when they come back in contact with it. If the magic user fails to draw from the Ley Line, they immediately suffer an elemental fumble of their type with no additional damage. While connected to a Ley Line, a Mage can only cast spells of the element of the Ley Line.

Priests and Druids are able to cast their invocations despite not being aligned with the element of the Ley Line.

## Elemental Ley Lines

Element	Signs	Benefit	Additional Penalty
Earth	Prevalent Plant Growth, Gnarled Trees, Strange Rock Patterns	While casting earth magic at a Ley Line, anyone defending against your spell (no matter the defense) takes a -4 to their attempt.	Your connection to the Ley Line is severed and the DC to connect again is 2 points higher.
Air	Frequent Dust Devils, Cirrus Clouds, A Smell of Ozone	While casting air magic from a Ley Line, you are capable of casting any air spell of the same level as an air spell you already know. This doesn't give you knowledge of the spell. You do not have access to the spell after you disconnect, and you cannot teach another mage or scribe a scroll of the spell.	The spells always goes off, but the GM chooses a different air spell of the same level for you to cast instead. You still pay the stamina cost of the spell you initially cast.
Fire	Withered Plants, Heat Haze, Glaring Sunlight	While casting fire magic from a Ley Line, add 2 damage dice to any damaging spell and raise any chance to inflame the spell has to 100%	You must spend extra stamina to take another action to cast the same spell again at the same stamina cost with a random target. If you fumble that spell you just suffer the normal fumble effects.
Water	Humidity, Unnatural Water Flow, Extreme Tides	While casting water magic from a Ley Line, your Spell Casting skill is considered two points higher.	You experience vivid hallucinations. These hallucinations are controlled by the GM and last until you disconnect from the Ley Line and up to one minute after that.

### Random Elementals

*"Traveling near to a Place of Power in a remote location can prove very dangerous. A Place of Power that has not been tapped recently may spontaneously summon elementals, which are often aggressive."*

—Glynnis var Treharne

### Witchers & Other Magic Users

Drawing power from a Ley Line requires a great deal of magical training. Just opening the connection can be tricky for most mages. A witcher or a magically talented person attempting to open a connection to a Ley Line would have nowhere near the training required to succeed.

## Drawing from Ley Lines as a Priest or Druid

Element	Benefit	Additional Penalty
Mixed	While casting magic at a Ley Line, increase your Vigor Threshold by 4.	You lower your Vigor Threshold by 2 for six hours. If you fumble or overdraw again while connected to this Ley Line you take another -2 penalty to your Vigor Threshold cumulatively. If your Vigor Threshold is reduced to 0 or below, you are incapable of casting any magic until it rises above 0.



# Mages

*“I’m no noble; I grew up a merchant’s daughter with a talent for Chaos. Socially I’ve traditionally fallen somewhere between a trebuchet and a natural disaster. I rely upon lists to track who’s who in power so the ease with which sorceresses negotiate Courts in the North is baffling.”*

– Glynnis var Treharne



The lives of mages are often consumed by the knowledge and practice of magic. In the South, most mages attend Gweison Haul, the headquarters of magic in Nilfgaard. Some come of their own accord, seeking magical training and knowledge; others, with more dangerous powers, are reported to Gweison Haul and summoned. Most are happy to become a part of the magical establishment because they see it as a path to political power. They are tested as young as six or seven. After a rigorous review by Gweison Haul and after they have been entered into the records, many are simply taught how to control their minor abilities and sent home. The empire may call upon them later in life if their magical talent become useful, but largely, they are left to their own devices.

For a person whose magical potential is worthy of being trained, they will be given the opportunity to join Gweison Haul. What they learn and how much they learn is decided by their teachers. Most receive a thorough basic education in magic. Some will then specialize while others will continue to be trained in increasingly advanced magics. For students to go on to the highest level of training, they must be approved by the Directors of Magic and the Rector. This approval process can be long and bureaucratic but if approved, a mage stands to

increase not only their magical knowledge but also their status in the Empire. Besides inherent ability and good school reports, approval also involves signs of loyalty to the Emperor and Nilfgaard, birth into noble families who support the Emperor, and willingness to be guided and ordered by Gweison Haul. While powerful Southern mages are given a great deal of autonomy, they are still monitored. If a mage with advanced magic acts against the best interests of Nilfgaard or Gweison Haul, they may be imprisoned. This is not common, however. Southern mages are essentially agents of Nilfgaard.

In the North things are different. People with minor magics—healing, mending, localized weather control, animal handling—are not considered important. Only those with significant magical abilities are taken into the girls’ school at Aretuza or the boy’s school at Ban Ard. Girls at Aretuza are cloistered during their years at school. They are taught more esoteric magics than the boys, as well as a large number of skills in order to make the young sorceress more beautiful and more able to influence others. They are taught that non-magical persons are below them and should not be considered in one’s plans. Boys, on the other hand, are not cloistered, and are taught more practical magics with an emphasis on control.

## The Imperial Magic Academy

While the vast majority of students pass through Gweison Haul, the more prestigious children of the empire are sometimes extended the opportunity to study at the Imperial Magic Academy near Loc Grim. This royal academy of magic was created to train the highest echelon of Nilfgaard’s magical community. While the students of the Imperial Magic Academy are not as strictly controlled as the students of Gweison Haul, they study under the same understanding that their magic exists to benefit the Empire. In almost all cases, students who graduate from the Imperial Magic Academy immediately join the imperial military or are employed by their family.

## Buying Your Way In

It is said that some students of marginal abilities from wealthy families may be admitted to the Imperial Magic Academy after an appropriate contribution to the school.

## Mage Abduction

While the practice of kidnapping magically potent children ended many years ago, it was a very real issue in the early days of the Brotherhood of Sorcerers and led to a bad reputation for mages across the Continent.

After years of training, many mages can profitably use their powers, and most live comfortable lives. Often, they are placed in the courts of nobles, remain at their school as teachers, or become experimental mages. Sorceresses are free to move as they wish, but responsibility to their school or their teachers generally drives them to find positions of power. Before the Northern Wars there were many mages working as advisors and problem-solvers to the Northern Monarchs. In those days, the mages were organized into the Chapter and the Council, who determined magical policy. Unfortunately, after the coup at the island of Thanedd, the Chapter and Council dissolved and the fact that some Northern mages were shown to be working with Nilfgaard caused the Northern kingdoms to drive most of the mages out of the courts. In recent years, the mage hunters of King Radovid of Redania have driven many mages to the outer lands of Kovir and Poviss.

While many Southern mages live under the control of the Empire, powerful Northern mages are drawn back into magical politics as the mages seek a way to return to their places of power and influence. But they all use the same power—the energy that mages call upon and shape to their desires is inherent in the land. Ley Lines of magic run across the countryside. Places where they meet are especially powerful. It is not for nothing that many elven cities stand at the intersections of Ley Lines. In the South, experienced mages chart the strongest Ley Lines. In the North, mages are more often taught how to find Ley Lines when they wish to use them. Due to the less regimented nature of Northern mages, they sometimes draw more magic, or primal Chaos as it is known, than is wise; their magic can be greater in effect but more difficult to shape. This is sometimes referred to as Wild Magic. A powerful spell may not be entirely under the mage's control and may rage through their body, leaving them weakened. Drawing beyond one's capacity can kill. But with greater training, one can safely draw more energy. At the battle at Sodden Hill, great spells were pulled up and thrown at the Nilfgaardian front, bringing victory to

the North. By contrast, while mages are no doubt used as agents in the South, they are more commonly employed as assassins and saboteurs than battle mages.

—Brandon of Oxenfurt

## What is a Mage?

A mage is someone who is born with a powerful innate ability to channel Chaos to effect material changes in the world around them. What most people think of when describing mages are those who have sufficient control over Chaos to learn the versatile applications known as spells. They are not the only ones capable of using magic; priests and druids do things their own way when utilizing the same forces, which is inherently incomprehensible to the academically inclined mages. Additionally, there are myriad Chaos-wielders with minor talents, some are able to direct their magic in a narrow, specific area, while others can only use one or two Rituals, where Chaos is focused through specific instructions. Witchers can, through their mutations and training, learn to use Signs, a limited and simple form of magic, but this does not make them mages. To have any hope of becoming a true mage, one must be born to it.

Mages rarely know what they can do right from the word go; those with the potential come to that realization in a variety of ways. Some are precocious enough to understand that sparks from the fingertips or burying your family in a sinkhole is not normal; in this case, they may try to train themselves. This study rarely goes well, however, and can be devastating, with lingering psychological effects. More commonly, the first magical experience is born out of high emotion, and the easiest and most powerful emotions for a child to reach for are negative. Anger and hatred tend to have a specific focus, so curses are not an unusual way of discovering one can do magic. Even if they are excited at discovering the beginnings of their talents, it doesn't follow that their family will be thrilled, making estrangements the norm. Some trained mages, with a range of motives from benign to manipulative, can spot the potential in a Chaos-influenced child. A con-

fused and scared family may be persuaded, bribed, or forced to put their offspring in the hands of someone better qualified to deal with them.

Without formal training, mages are highly at risk of detrimental effects when using their powers, so those surviving long enough to merit the title will have undergone some form of training. The nature of this education varies according to the innate power of the subject and the environment in which they grow up. Some regions are highly organized when it comes to dealing with their young magic users, but outside of the Nilfgaardian Empire, a baby mage might find themselves learning from one of the established academies, taken as an apprentice, or secretly taught in a less formal environment.

## Aretuza

The Isle of Thanedd in Temeria is home to Aretuza, an academy of magic attended by daughters of some of the most prestigious families in the North, though they accept girls from anywhere in the world with the right potential. Thanedd is an isolated rock, which has been sculpted over the centuries into terraces and soaring towers, forming a series of distinct structures. Garstang is a palace used to

host gatherings of honored guests from the magical community and visiting alumni of the academy. Its walls have been infused with a powerful aura that blocks the effects of magic. The academy proper stands adjacent to Garstang, and below both is Loxia. This palace guards the bridge to the mainland and is the only place visitors and students may mix, as outsiders are banned from entering the school and the students cannot leave. Thanedd is accessed by one of two means: the bridge to the mainland, or via secret sea caves allowing boats to land inside the hollow mountain.

Aretuza has a strong academic focus and a traditional private school structure, with fees standing at 1,200 crowns per year and an atmosphere somewhere between a dedicated university and a girls' finishing school. Study is intense and girls develop a firm grounding in both the theory and practice of magic as a science first, art second, with little romanticism around the subject. Nor is magic the only lesson, as they expect students to learn in detail the history and politics of the world in which they will function. Once they have joined, adepts cannot leave the school until graduation without facing punishment. This, coupled with the high costs, means that girls studying there tend to remain, retaking classes until they graduate



## Tuition

*“It baffles the mind that anyone should have to spend thousands of florens to attain a magical education. Brandon tells me that this fee can be waived if a girl shows proper potential but still the concept is troubling. Regardless of potential, magic can be dangerous if untrained.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne

## Agent of the State

In the years before the Winter War, the Kaedweni Secret Service was known for commonly employing drop outs from Ban Ard. These partially trained mages could be turned into “super human” agents of the state. Now, with Redania storming across their border, that recruitment has expanded even further.

## Nilfgaardian Reeducation

*Contrary to popular northern belief, teachers at Gweison Haul do not employ mind-controlling magics or devious alchemical elixirs to “reeducate” mages who have acted against the Empire.*

—Glynnis var Treharne

as fully trained mages. Those few who drop out go on to parlay their training in social manipulation to win influential roles usually denied to women in the world at large, such as becoming lawyer.

Isolating the students for their entire education promotes a hothouse atmosphere, but also makes interpersonal politics a survival skill. Aretuza students are magically sterilized to avoid the unpredictable effects of giving birth to potentially unstable children. This redirects their energies toward success and personal power and makes strategic alliances more common than trust. The only external contact they are permitted is in Loxia, where they can meet and mix with visitors and dignitaries under strictly controlled conditions. Here they practice their social skills and see the practical results of political interactions they have studied. Graduates of Aretuza frequently attain influential positions as the—sometimes literal—power behind the throne. Their magical acumen does not protect them from a world that, at best, distrusts mages so some turn to mundane protectors, seeking to influence matters through wit and charm while maintaining a certain aloof, determined superiority.

## Ban Ard

The Academy of Ban Ard resides in the city of the same name, in the kingdom of Kaedwen. While not controlled by Kaedwen, Ban Ard is influenced by the uncouth energy and strength of personality of the nation constantly in conflict with both its neighbors and its less than hospitable climate. Unlike Aretuza or Gweison Haul, the exclusively male students of Ban Ard are not sequestered from the outside world. The Academy stands just outside the city proper, an imposing, stone-built structure and it is far from unusual for students to take themselves around town. Older boys find great amusement in drinking, socializing, and taking in all the sights and pleasures that the city can offer a young man of means; High fees and a preference for boys of noble families makes for classes full of the sons of the wealthy. This “boys will be boys” attitude encourages a lack of discipline to a point, although students can

face expulsion if they commit certain offenses. Petty theft, for example, is looked upon far more severely than outraging public decency after successful exams.

In keeping with the feel of the region, Ban Ard students are positively encouraged to train their combative and militaristic sides along with their magical talent. Advanced students may take time to engage in monster hunts or even mercenary contracts to develop their skills. Such activities take place under the auspices of the Academy, as internships, so the students can expect to see the school take a cut of any fees they receive. This adds up to a lack of focus on magic in day-to-day studies. Academic topics are important but the boys in Ban Ard do not have that constant pressure that drives the girls studying in Aretuza. Indeed, there are regular contests between the schools and Aretuza consistently dominates. One theory is that the Ban Ard students’ ambition exceeds their grasp, and they overreach themselves, whereas Aretuza’s better understand their own capabilities, what is possible, and back this up with focused academic training in magical theory.

The lack of pressure may have something to do with the higher rate of Ban Ard students failing to complete their studies, though it may also have something to do with the relative opportunities afforded children. Academic success is often key for women to achieve rank and status in their own right, whereas boys who only partially complete their studies can still find a range of opportunities across the board. Even a poorly trained sorcerer may find success in a mundane occupation, for example, and charge a premium for their services, where they are not expected to face fully trained mages. In addition to their classes, Ban Ard houses clubs and secret societies where the wealthy boys can make connections that may prove profitable long after they leave the school.

## Gweison Haul

The Nilfgaardian Empire takes a different approach to mages than the Northern Kingdoms. It is deemed a civic duty for anyone

with magical potential to be trained, whether that is by a mentor or at the school of Gweison Haul. Once simply the state magic school of Vicovaro, Gweison Haul now stands as a complex devoted to training the mages of the Empire. The school was built up over the years as Nilfgaard conquered territories and shipped the remains of enemy Mage's laboratories and studies back from the front. This has led to the architecture and furnishings of the school being somewhat eclectic. This sets the tone for the way students from across the Empire are treated. Students of Gweison Haul may come from any of the imperial nations, even the heart of the Empire, and they arrive at the school with attitudes as widely spread as their origins. Rebellious Northerners and loyal subjects are all treated with the same heavy hand once they enter the school. While it is never directly stated, every trainee mage has it impressed upon them that they are tools of the Empire. Teachers often discourage unconventional thinking and common areas are under magical surveillance. The penalties for breaking the rules can be harsh and the school houses a platoon of Mage Hunters, who are empowered to deal with rebellions and threats to the faculty as they deem necessary. These Mage Hunters carry dimeritium shackles and regularly patrol the halls. These shackles are rarely used but their presence

instills a certain resistance to the alloys effects in much of the student body.

Despite these somewhat authoritarian practices, students of Gweison Haul are well taken care of and often excel in their studies. The school maintains a well-stocked, strictly curated library, and students are allowed to roam the halls and courtyards of the campus when not attending classes. The rigidly structured lifestyle of Gweison Haul combined with the ever present expectations of the Empire can lead to fast friendships among students seeking trustworthy confidants with whom to share their concerns and fears. Education is thoroughly standardized in Gweison Haul, putting little value on an individual's feelings or opinions. Once students graduate, they are assigned a value based on their skill which informs how easily they can find employment and what that employment might entail.

Recently, rumors have come out that deep within the catacombs of Gweison Haul, curious students have found secrets dating from before the Usurpator's reign. There are untold secrets to be found in dusty corners, hidden away from the world. Ancient tomes, records of audacious research, and long-forgotten scrolls of lore missed by the prying eyes of the Empire.



## Parental Guidance

*A little over a century ago, before the empire was as regimented as it is now, I studied magic under my father. He wasn't a powerful mage, but he was well-versed in the science of magic and there were no sages where we lived under whom I could apprentice.*

—Glynnis var Treharne

## The Imperial Magic Academy

Magic-inclined children of nobility and wealth need not learn amongst the commoners of the Empire in Gweison Haul; in return for a substantial annual fee, these young minds are sent to the Imperial Magic Academy. This highly defensible, secure castle on the banks of Loc Grim is staffed by the most prestigious mages in all of Nilfgaard and protected by veterans of the Imperial Army.

The academy is just as focused on loyalty and service to the Empire as Gweison Haul, but the students are afforded greater luxuries. Each student receives a lavish personal room and the school is staffed by servants who are at the students beck and call. During holidays the academy hosts feasts and celebrations on par with

those of the capital. Upon their graduation, students usually take up positions of service with their families or as adjutants in the armed forces, acting as advisors and organizing the most effective deployment of mages.

## Apprenticeship

Not every mage can or wishes to study in one of the official schools. Ban Ard and Are-tuza in the Northern Kingdoms are expensive and thus exclusive; though allowances can be made for particularly talented students, the wealthy generally do not wish to rub shoulders with the magically-inclined children of shepherds. In Nilfgaard the problem is less one of cost and more regarding the distance to Gweison Haul or the strict regulations of the school. Meanwhile, in the elderlands, they have always practiced a less rigid structure when it comes to educating their magic users.

Some magic training can literally start at home, with parents or friends of the family who have some skill and knowledge. Magic users who have children sometimes pass on their gift and these children must receive the proper training or risk horrible side effects. Alternatively, gifted children may be picked out by traveling mages to be their apprentice. Currently, the North holds a deep mistrust of mages as a whole, so someone taking it upon themselves to educate a gifted child would certainly wish to do so quietly. In Nilfgaard, most mages attend Gweison Haul but apprenticeship is still considered better than no training at all. Said student might, however, be considered less qualified than a mage trained at an academy.

Elderfolk mage training has traditionally happened under mentors, with a one-to-one relationship where a student might seek out a teacher to study under, or a teacher see the potential in a child and take responsibility for their training. One tool that can be used by any teaching mage, independently or in a school environment, is the apprenticeship. In this relationship, the student is leashed to their master, and their magic is linked. This can be positive, imposing a more measured pace to learning on an impulsive and



reckless student but might also be coercive and used as a means of control to dominate young mages.

An alternative is that some mages may run classes for those magic-rich and gold-poor. Parents who cannot handle their children's power may give them over to such teachers, and it is unlikely that they would often return once their studies are complete. These classes are normally poorly equipped, lacking the resources of the mainstream schools but can still provide effective training in a less formal and more flexible environment.

The mage providing the teaching sets the tone and may be doing so out of the goodness of their heart, for a humble living, or for other, darker reasons. A mage may well see the potential in educating a class from an impressionable age, to be loyal to them out of fear for how the world at large may treat them, with this being particularly strong if they have been rejected by their blood relatives.

## Mages in Society

Prior to the First Northern War, mages and mundane rulers often held themselves broadly separate, with kings claiming no dominion over mages' studies and mages likewise interfering little in matters of state. The pact that cemented this distinction was called the Novigrad Union and, while there were numerous blurrings of the line between the mages' academia and leadership, each side was content to keep to their own spheres of influence. This perceived neutrality allowed mages to be regarded as impartial mediators, having no inherent loyalty to either side in a dispute as they were independent irrespective of the outcome. As such, they were no threat to the ruling classes and were free to organize themselves to better further their research.

The oldest organizational body was the Brotherhood of Sorcerers, formed from the co-operation of the preeminent mages of the time. This was born after a brief period of internecine warfare that cleared the board of many independent individuals resistant to the formalization of rules and regulations that governed practitioners. Later, the leadership of the Brotherhood split into two governing bodies, the Chapter of the Gift and the Art and the Supreme Council of Sorcerers, who had the responsibility of policing and enforcing standards. Despite these bodies, though, most mages were still involved in pure research and experimentation, holding themselves above the pettiness of the mundane world.

During the First Northern War, though, this detachment was abandoned when Northern mages stood with their nations in the Second Battle of Sodden, turning the tide of the invasion. After this intervention, mages were courted



by rulers and adopted as valued and dangerous counselors, court diviners, and healers. Most mages still preferred to stick to their studies, but more and more began to dabble in politics as the newfound respect went to their heads. This culminated in the Thanedd Coup, a planned rebellion by mages in league with Nilfgaard and the Scoia'tael anticipated by mages still loyal to Northern kings. This brutal battle saw the end of the Supreme Council, the Conclave, and the trust rulers placed in their court mages, as the shocking news of the Nilfgaardian sympathizers' treachery emerged.

In the wake of the Thanedd Coup, the women-only Lodge of Sorceresses was established, comprised of both Northern and Nilfgaardian mages and geared toward establishing political power. Today mages are alternately hated, feared, and seen as both useful but also untrustworthy. Many faiths preach that they participate in dark magic and the populace is as keen to turn on them as they are on non-humans, in some kingdoms. With their organizational structures largely gone, it falls to mages to police themselves against forbidden arts such as necromancy. Some still endeavor to pursue research while others seek political power both for its own sake and as a shield against the scapegoating that has seen mages burned at the stake in the North by Witch Hunters.

# Mage Lifepath

The life of a mage is long and often filled with the kinds of opportunities and dangers that would never even occur to the average craftsman or merchant. Training in a school of magic can be grueling and oppressive, cutthroat and duplicitous, or raucous and chaotic. The forces of Chaos swirl around sorcerers and sorceresses almost constantly, and the drive to expand one's power can lead to terrible losses and triumphant victories. And once a mage leaves

the hallowed halls of their alma mater, they are sent into a world that will likely come to revere and hate them in equal measure. For most mages, every movement is calculated, every word is weighed, and every risk is assessed. To replicate this life of difficulties, when creating a Mage character, you can roll on this Mage Lifepath rather than rolling on the standard Lifepath in the Core Rulebook.

## Where Were You Born?

Roll	Birth Location	Elderfolk Birth Location
1	The Northern Realms (Kovir & Poviss or The Hengfors League)	An Elven, Gnomish, Vran, or Werebbub mage can choose to have been born in the elderland of Dol Blathanna or a mountain conclave.
2	The Northern Realms (Redania or Kaedwen)	
3	The Northern Realms (Aedirn, Lyria & Rivia, or Temeria)	
4	The Northern Realms (Cidaris, Kerack, or Verden)	
5	Skellige	
6	Nilfgaard (Cintra, Angren, or Nazair)	
7	Nilfgaard (Mettina, Toussaint, or Mag Turga)	
8	Nilfgaard (Gheso, Ebbing, or Maecht)	
9	Nilfgaard (Etolia, Gemmera, or Vicovaro)	
10	Nilfgaard (The Heart of Nilfgaard)	

## Who Was Your Family?

Roll	Family Size	Family Personality	Family Status
1	Tiny	Conservative	Aristocracy
2	Small	Aggressive	Artisans
3	Small	Strange	Knights
4	Medium	Kind	Merchants
5	Medium	Depressive	Peasants
6	Medium	Stern	Slaves or Prisoners
7	Medium	Immature	Priests
8	Large	Supportive	Mages
9	Large	Tight Knit	Entertainers
10	Huge	Calm	Academics

## How Did You Discover Your Magic?

Roll	Event
1	<p><b>Catastrophe</b> (Subtract 3 from your next Lifepath roll)</p> <p>The discovery of your magic was tied to an unfortunate catastrophe when you were young. One day, unaware of your connection to Chaos, you let your emotions get the better of you. You may have burned your parents alive, triggered a cave-in, or frozen another child solid.</p>
2	<p><b>Accidental Curse</b> (Subtract 2 from your next Lifepath roll)</p> <p>The discovery of your magic was tied to a powerful hatred. Without really planning on it, you lashed out at someone in your early childhood and cursed them. A witcher may have lifted the curse—or maybe it still plagues them to this day.</p>
3	<p><b>Discovered by a Mage</b></p> <p>When you were young, a mage came to your home and spoke with your parents privately. They explained to your parents that you had a magical gift and without proper training you would become a danger to everyone.</p>
4	<p><b>Inspired by a Mage</b></p> <p>One day you were treated to a demonstration by a traveling mage who showed you the wonders of magic. After the mage's demonstration, you tried to copy them and found that you had a gift. Your inspiration to study magic was all according to the plans of the mage.</p>
5	<p><b>Terrifying Magical Development</b></p> <p>Your magic developed in the form of a small magical trait and expanded from there. One day you performed a small magical effect while playing and the event scared the hell out of you. You had no idea how it happened or what might happen if you tried to do it again.</p>
6	<p><b>Joyous Magical Development</b></p> <p>Your magic developed in the form of a small magical trait and expanded from there. One day you figured out how to perform a small magical effect and you quickly showed it off to your family and friends.</p>
7	<p><b>Press-ganged by a Mage</b></p> <p>A traveling mage saw potential in you and decided it was their duty to take you away to train. They may have intimidated your family into giving you over, or they may have directly stolen you. But in the end, you were taken to train against your will.</p>
8	<p><b>Bought by a Mage</b></p> <p>A traveling mage saw your potential while passing through your hometown and made an offer to your parents. You may not even know how much you were worth to your parents, but a price was agreed upon and you were taken away by the mage.</p>
9	<p><b>Grudge-born Curse</b> (Subtract 2 from your next Lifepath roll)</p> <p>Your gift became apparent when you cursed someone in your hometown. A grudge you held against this person grew and festered just below the surface until it eventually became powerful enough to draw magic from the beyond and formed a terrible curse.</p>
10	<p><b>Catastrophe</b> (Subtract 3 from your next Lifepath roll)</p> <p>You learned you had magical capability at a young age but kept it hidden and tried to study on your own. Inevitably this backfired. You may have set fire to your family home, caused a flood, or summoned a dangerous storm. Either way, everything came crashing down.</p>

## Attendance of the Imperial Magic Academy

For the purposes of this Lifepath, attendance to Gweison Haul is the same as attendance to the Imperial Magic Academy.

## Far From Home

The guidelines of what school your character attended are just that, guidelines. A mage born in Nilfgaard may have been spirited away to Aretuza or Ban Ard when their talent was discovered and it's equally likely that a magically gifted child in the Northern Realms may have been rounded up and sent to Gweison Haul when their village was raided during one of the Northern Wars. Lore-wise, the only hard guideline is the strictly gendered nature of mages in the Northern Realms. That being said, if you want to break that "rule" you're free to. There could be special situations that led to a male mage being trained in Aretuza or a female mage being trained in Ban Ard. This is the case for Bronwyn Deadeye (see pg. 155) who was assigned male at birth and attended the Ban Ard Academy and then transitioned afterwards using magic and alchemy.

## How Did People React to Your Magic?

Roll	The North	The Elderlands	Nilfgaard
1	Your family cast you out.	Your family became terribly scared of you.	Your family cast you out.
2	Your family became terribly scared of you.	Your family tried to ignore your gift.	Your family sent you to the church.
3	Your family tried to sell you to a family of high standing.	Your family sent you to train immediately.	Your family immediately sent you to Gweison Haul.
4	Your family immediately sent you to Aretuza or Ban Ard.	Your siblings and friends became horribly jealous.	Your family pushed you to study magic and get into politics.
5	Your family tried to ignore your gift.	Your family pushed you to become a great mage.	Your family tried to use your power for themselves.
6	Your family and friends celebrated your talent.	Your family and friends celebrated your talent.	Your family and friends celebrated your talent.

## What School Did You Attend?

	Female	Male
<b>The North</b>	Aretuza	Ban Ard
<b>Skellige</b>	Aretuza	Ban Ard
<b>Nilfgaard</b>	Gweison Haul or the Imperial Magic Academy	Gweison Haul or the Imperial Magic Academy
<b>The Elderlands</b>	Minor Academia	Minor Academia

### Minor Academia

Minor Academia represents the many unaffiliated mages across the Continent who take gifted children as apprentices. Often times, these mentors are not officially recognized by the Conclave of Mages. Generally, in the Elderlands, Elderfolk do not attend an official school and instead train with elder mages in their own society. No matter where you come from you can choose to have had your training in Minor Academia.

<p><b>Aretuza Wellspring</b> By spending 10 extra STA on your turn, you can raise your Vigor Threshold by 2 for the duration of that turn. This increase does stack with Focus Items.</p>	<p><b>Ban Ard Controlled Collateral</b> When you suffer a Magical Fumble you can sacrifice 10 STA to lower the amount fumbled by 5 (minimum 1).</p>	<p><b>Gweison Haul Tolerance</b> When coming in contact with dimeritium, you can spend 10 STA to give yourself a +3 to your Endurance check to resist the effects.</p>	<p><b>Minor Academia Versatile Caster</b> By spending 10 extra STA when you cast a spell, you can either add +4m of range to a spell, +2 Rounds of duration to a Non-Active.</p>
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# Life in Academia

No matter what school you attended, every mage goes through roughly 20 years of magical training. During this time, they learn how to control their gift, study the science of magic, and familiarize themselves with the process of wield-

ing Chaos. For many mages, these formative years are full of exciting incidents and “character-building” moments. For each of the two decades, you must roll 1d10 on the column of the table that corresponds to your School.

Roll	Aretuza	Ban Ard	Gweison Haul	Minor Academia
1	<p><b>Spell Backfired</b> A spell you cast backfired horribly. You lower your Vigor Threshold by 1.</p>	<p><b>Spell Backfired</b> A spell you cast backfired horribly. You lower your Vigor Threshold by 1.</p>	<p><b>Spell Backfired</b> A spell you cast backfired horribly. You lower your Vigor Threshold by 1.</p>	<p><b>Spell Backfired</b> A spell you cast backfired horribly. You lower your Vigor Threshold by 1.</p>
2	<p><b>Developed a Bond with Another Student</b> You and another student spent time together to unwind. You gain a Mage Ally. Roll on the Ally table on pg. 30 to see how close you are and what their value is.</p>	<p><b>Caught Smuggling</b> You smuggled tomes out of the school and were caught. You were made an apprentice (see pg. 23).</p>	<p><b>Rule-Breaker</b> You broke one of the many rules of Gweison Haul but were caught in the process. You were made an apprentice (see pg. 23).</p>	<p><b>Dabbled in Dark Magic</b> You have dabbled in Dark Magic and unleashed a demon on the world. You bear the demon's lucifuge and they always know where you are.</p>
3	<p><b>Got a Rival Expelled</b> You got a rival of yours expelled from Aretuza. You gain a Mage Enemy. Roll on the Grudges table on pg. 28 to see how it's escalated and what their power is.</p>	<p><b>Stole a Spell Scroll</b> Start with a journeyman spell scroll. Work with the GM to determine which spell.</p>	<p><b>Helped Develop Weapons of War for the Empire</b> Start with 1 bomb formula. Work with the GM to determine which bomb.</p>	<p><b>Witcher Target</b> Your unsupervised use of magic caused enough damage that a Cat school witcher was hired to kill you. This witcher is still looking for you.</p>
4	<p><b>Teacher's Pet</b> You got preferential treatment from a teacher. Start with an extra known Novice spell.</p>	<p><b>Helped with Unsanctioned Research</b> Roll once on the Knowledge table on pg. 31. If knowledge of this research comes out, you will be in major trouble with Ban Ard Alumni.</p>	<p><b>Law Bringer</b> You helped the authorities with a magic related crime. Gain a +2 Reputation with Nilfgaardian authorities.</p>	<p><b>Apothecary</b> Part of your learning involved being able to diagnose and cure ailments for the people of your community. Gain a +2 to First Aid.</p>
5	<p><b>Impressed a Foreign Dignitary</b> You start with +2 Reputation at the court of one kingdom of your choice.</p>	<p><b>Hunted a Monster</b> You went out to hunt a monster in the dense forests of Kaedwen. Gain +1 to Monster Lore.</p>	<p><b>Explored the Catacombs</b> You found a scroll in the catacombs of the school. Gain 1 journeyman spell scroll. Work with the GM to determine which spell.</p>	<p><b>Botanist</b> You tended to your school's garden. Gain +2 to Wilderness Survival.</p>

Roll	Aretuza	Ban Ard	Gweison Haul	Minor Academia
6	<p><b>Stole Ritual Components</b> You squirreled away tiny bits of rare ritual components. Start with an extra 100 crowns of components.</p>	<p><b>Miscast</b> You accidentally cast magic on a school member or faculty and ruined their day. Roll on the Grudges table on pg. 28.</p>	<p><b>Censorship</b> You were asked to find and erase all traces of a banned work. Its author is now out for revenge. Roll on the Grudges table on pg. 28 to determine who it is.</p>	<p><b>Helped Locals with Various Issues</b> You have used your magic to aid a region in need. Your Social Standing is Equal in this area. Work with the GM to determine where this is.</p>
7	<p><b>Found Blackmail Material on a Teacher</b> You can use this information to force a single favor out of them at the GM's discretion.</p>	<p><b>Mercenary Work</b> You fought for a minor noble in a land dispute. You kept part of your pay, after the school took its cut of course. Gain 1d6 x 100 crowns.</p>	<p><b>Helped hunt down a Renegade Mage</b> You helped the Mage Hunters bring in a rogue mage. Gain +1 in any combat skill or start a new combat skill at +2.</p>	<p><b>Cursed</b> You were cursed, either by your own hand or the ire of another at your school. Work with the GM to pick an appropriate curse from the ones listed on pg. 230 of the Core book.</p>
8	<p><b>Found Clues on the Location of a Relic</b> Consult with the GM to determine which Relic and what you know.</p>	<p><b>Cursed</b> You were cursed, either by your own hand or the ire of another at your school. Work with the GM to pick an appropriate curse from the ones listed on pg. 230 of the Core Book.</p>	<p><b>Harbored a Renegade Mage</b> You helped shelter a rogue mage. You gain a Mage Ally. Roll on the Ally table on pg. 30 to see how close you are and what their value is.</p>	<p><b>Defended a Village from a Monster</b> You used your magic to repel a monster attack from a village. Gain +1 to Monster Lore.</p>
9	<p><b>You Were Sent into the World</b> You were leashed to a mage living outside of Aretuza. Roll a regular life event from the table on pg. 31 of the Core Book. You were made an apprentice (see pg. 23).</p>	<p><b>Secret Society Initiation</b> You were inducted into a secret society within the school. Gain +2 Reputation with the other alumni of Ban Ard.</p>	<p><b>Church Liaison</b> You were sent to help the Church of the Great Sun with magical matters. You gain a +1 to Charisma, and Social Etiquette.</p>	<p><b>Extracurricular Learning</b> You studied under many mentors, learning as much as you could. Start with an extra Novice spell.</p>
10	<p><b>Cursed</b> You were cursed, either by your own hand or the ire of another at your school. Work with the GM to pick an appropriate curse from the ones listed on pg. 230 of the Core Book.</p>	<p><b>Translated a Tome</b> You helped translate an old elven tome. You gain +2 to Elder Speech.</p>	<p><b>Better Part of Valor</b> You were trained in the basis of spy work. You gain a +1 to Disguise and can attempt to disguise yourself without a disguise kit at no penalty.</p>	<p><b>Crafted your Own Focus</b> You built your first focus item. You gain an Amulet which counts as a Focus (2) item for you.</p>

## Were You an Apprentice?

Among mages, the practice of taking an apprentice is common, though its prevalence varies based on the school of magic. Young mages are made apprentices of more experienced mages, allowing the elder mage to guide their pupil. In some cases, this goes so far as to “Leash” the pupil to their master, binding the two mages’ magic together so the pupil can better learn. In theory, this relationship allows an inexperienced or reckless mage to learn control and skill at the side of their mentor so they will be better prepared to operate independently. In practice, reckless mages are often made apprentices to elder mages to keep an eye on them until they learn to act with respect and follow the rules.

Roll	Aretuza	Ban Ard	Gweison Haul	Minor Academia
1	No	No	No	Yes
2	No	No	No	Yes
3	No	No	Yes	Yes
4	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

## What Was Your Mentor Like?

Roll	Personality	Value	Clothing Style	Hatred
1	Secretive	Money	Utilitarian	Arrogance
2	Rebellious	Honor	Ostentatious	Politics
3	Violent	Their Word	Severe	Other Races
4	Idealistic	Hedonistic Pursuits	Militaristic	Mundane People
5	Contemplative	Knowledge	Traditional	Violence
6	Stern	Vengeance	Comfortable	Disrespect
7	Deceptive	Power	Ragged	Young People
8	Friendly	Love	Unusual	Adversity
9	Arrogant	Survival	Charming	Criminals
10	Nervous	Friendship	Foreign	Disorganization

## Leashing

Mechanically, leashing a mage to a mentor binds the two mages’ magic together. When within 10m of each other, both mages can use any spell, ritual, or hex collectively known. Additionally, the mentor can, without spending an action, limit the amount of stamina their apprentice can use to cast magic per turn, setting a cap that the apprentice cannot surpass. Finally, if the apprentice fumbles a Spell Casting, Ritual Crafting, or Hex Weaving roll, the mentor can choose to take half of the damage the apprentice would suffer from the fumble. Once two mages are leashed, only the mentor can break this bond. Otherwise, the two mages remain bound together until one of them dies.

*"I have had the honor of being the mentor of a few young mages in my lifetime and I have always found the experience to be a pleasant one. That's not to say I haven't had my fair share of troublemakers leashed to me to temper their disruptive tendencies. But I haven't met a student yet that I couldn't teach."*

—Glynnis var Treharne

## Journeyman Mages

It's not uncommon for mages in the North to make their way in the world as an independent journeyman. These magicians, known as Dwimveandra if female, roam the Continent, taking odd jobs and studying under other mages they encounter until they have gathered enough knowledge and skill to return to their academy and apply to become a Master or Mistress. In earlier days, the Chapter even provided a special scholarship fund to pay for these students' travels.

## Life in Nilfgaard

While mages in Nilfgaard are more controlled than they are in the North a clever mage can still learn to subtly manipulate things to get themselves where they want to be. They could volunteer to perform specific experiments for the betterment of the Empire or work closely with the aristocracy to get a foothold in politics.

## What Was Your Mentor's Teaching Style?

Roll	Style
1	Hands On
2	Patient
3	Demonstrating
4	Neglectful
5	Overbearing
6	Manipulative

## What Was Your Most Memorable Moment with Your Mentor?

Roll	Moment
1	You shared a touching moment
2	They used you to achieve a goal
3	They abused you in some way
4	They risked their life to help you
5	They betrayed your trust
6	They took you to meet your family
7	They tried to ditch you
8	They helped you recover from something
9	They killed or hurt someone close to you
10	They saved your life

## How Did You End Things with Your Mentor?

Roll	Ending
1	They were murdered
2	You poisoned them
3	You are to marry their child
4	You are still with your mentor, but as lovers now
5	You parted ways after a particularly intense argument
6	You passed all of their tests
7	They discarded you after you failed them yet again
8	You became friends and still keep in touch
9	You killed them in self-defense
10	You watched in horror as they lost control of their magic and obliterated themselves

# The Life of a Mage

## Lifepath Example



Once out of schooling and no longer leashed to another mage, it is largely up to each mage to make their way in the world. Depending on where the mage operates this may take many different forms. A mage may choose to get into politics and attempt to become an advisor to a powerful noble. They may pour their focus into experimentation, ethical or otherwise, to try and discover new theories and practices or improve old ones. Or they may choose to continue their magical study, attempting to ferret out the answers to long held questions of Chaos. No matter what path a mage chooses to pursue their profession ensures that there will always be a shadow of danger, even if they choose to live a cautious life.

Upon graduating your magical training, you are somewhere between 20 and 29. Next you'll have to choose how old you are when your game begins. Currently, the oldest recorded mage is Gerhart of Aelle who was somewhere around 491 when he died of coronary failure at the Thanedd Coup in 1267. Mages are generally not considered "adults" by other mages until they have several decades under their belt and even mages in their 80s and 90s are considered "young."

Once you've decided how old you are, look at the following table. For each decade after your 20's decide how you chose to spend the majority of that decade. First, roll on the Danger row and consult the appropriate column. If you rolled the number presented or lower, something went wrong. Immediately go to the Danger Table on Pg. 26 and roll on the appropriate column to determine what happened. Regardless of whether you have to roll for a Danger, then roll on the Events section of the first table to see what went right then roll on the corresponding Event table. Follow this process once for each decade after 20.

Time	Cautious		Politicking		Experimentation		Magical Study	
<b>Danger</b>	20%		50%		70%		50%	
<b>Events</b>	1	Benefit	1-2	Benefit	1-3	Benefit	1-5	Benefit
	2	Ally	3-7	Ally	4	Ally	6-7	Ally
	3	Knowledge	8	Knowledge	5-10	Knowledge	8	Knowledge
	4-10	Nothing	9-10	Nothing	X	Nothing	9-10	Nothing

For example, a young sorcerer has just graduated from Ban Ard and finished their apprenticeship. At the start of their Lifepath they are 23. From the years of 23 to 33, they decide that they spent their time politicking, so they roll percentiles on the Danger rating for Politicking. They roll a 36 which is well within the 50% danger rating of Politicking. So before rolling to see if something went their way, they go to the Danger table on pg. 26 and roll 1d10 on the Politicking column. Their result is 9 meaning something they did netted them a rival. After rolling on the corresponding Grudges table to flesh out their rival, they roll 1d10 on the Events column for Politicking. They get a 2 meaning they got a benefit. Going down to the benefits table on pg. 29, they roll a 7 on 1d10 meaning they found a portal. It could be that they went on an expedition to find this portal and beat out another mage, gaining some knowledge or fame that made the other mage deeply jealous. Either way, this sums up the major events of their 20s and now it's time to make their choice for the years 33 to 43.

## Danger

Roll	Cautious	Politicking	Experimentation	Magical Study
1	<p><b>Debt</b> You fell 1d10 x 100 Crowns in debt.</p>	<p><b>Grudge</b> Someone hurt your feelings, or you hurt theirs. Nevertheless, one of you is holding a grudge from this event. Roll on the Grudges table on pg. 28.</p>	<p><b>Overdraw</b> In your arrogance or your ignorance, you drew too much power into your body and suffered the consequences. Lower your Hit Points by 2.</p>	<p><b>Magical Block</b> In your studies you neglected one of the elements in favor of others. Pick one element; earth, air, fire, or water. When casting spells of this element, you take a cumulative -2 to the Spell Casting check. Each time you get this Danger you must either choose the same element or a new one.</p>
2	<p><b>Addiction</b> You developed an addiction to something. You can pick your poison. See Core Book (pg. 32).</p>	<p><b>False Accusation</b> You were falsely accused of something. Roll 1d10. 1-2: Theft, 3: Treason, 4: Cowardice, 5: Rape, 6: Murder, 7: Fraud, 8: Forbidden Magic, 9: Tax Evasion, 10: Unethical Practices.</p>	<p><b>Demonic Encounter</b> At some point, whether it was your own doing, or the workings of a fellow student, you came in contact with a demon. You may have fled or perhaps you fought for your life but either way, you bear the demon's lucifuge and they always know where you are.</p>	<p><b>Monster Encounter</b> You had a near death experience while studying a monster. Choose a monster from the Witcher TRPG. You now have a phobia of this creature and take a -2 to Courage checks against it. Additionally, you must make a Courage check at DC:15 when first encountering any instance of this creature or be Staggered.</p>
3	<p><b>Fell Ill</b> You fell ill from a wasting disease. You eventually recovered, but it left behind some lasting fatigue. You lower your STA by 2.</p>	<p><b>Betrayed</b> You were betrayed by a friend or acquaintance. Choose a friend and make them an enemy. If you don't currently have any friends make a new one and then mark them as an enemy.</p>	<p><b>Deemed Dangerous</b> Something you did labeled you as dangerous to the people of a kingdom. In this kingdom you are wanted by the authorities.</p>	<p><b>Overdrew from a Place of Power</b> You found a Place of Power, but in your inexperience overdrew from it and was permanently scarred in the process. Every Place of Power you draw from requires an Endurance save as if you were drawing from it a second time.</p>
4	<p><b>Angered City Folk</b> It might be something you did (or something you didn't do), but you have riled up the citizens of a major city. If you return to that city, the citizens will immediately see you as a threat or a target.</p>	<p><b>Friend or Lover Killed</b> A friend or lover was killed in an accident or perhaps due to a scheme. Pick a friend or lover. If you don't currently have a friend or lover, make a new one and then determine how they died.</p>	<p><b>Alchemical Incident</b> You mixed the wrong reagents and suffered consequences. You take a -2 penalty to STA.</p>	<p><b>Hunted by a Golem</b> In your studies you managed to step on the toes of a powerful mage who sent a golem after you. It now seeks you out across the Continent. If it finds you it will try to destroy you.</p>

Roll	Cautious	Politicking	Experimentation	Magical Study
5	<p><b>Accident</b> Roll 1d10. 1-4: You were disfigured. Change your social standing to Feared, 5-6: You were bedridden for 1d10 months, 7-8: You lost 1d10 months of memory from that year, 9-10: You suffer from horrible nightmares (7 in 10 chance each time you sleep).</p>	<p><b>Caught Red Handed</b> You were caught attempting to manipulate others into doing your dirty work. Roll on the Grudges table on pg. 28 for an enemy. This enemy must have a Power based in Minions.</p>	<p><b>Lasting Scars</b> One of your experiments backfired horrendously, deforming your face. Change your social standing to Feared.</p>	<p><b>Loud Telepathy</b> You learn the Telepathy Spell. You tried to improve upon the basic telepathy spell, but the result was not what you expected. When you spy telepathically on a target, you cannot help but emit a low mumble in their mind that may alert them. Anyone you spy upon can roll an Awareness check at a DC: 15 to sense you.</p>
6	<p><b>Imprisonment</b> Something you did (or a false accusation) had you imprisoned for 1d10 months.</p>	<p><b>Social Faux Pas</b> You made a terrible social faux pas at a gathering of mages and are now treated as Tolerated by other mages instead of Equal.</p>	<p><b>Magical Allergy</b> You have developed an allergy to magic. Whenever you drink a potion or elixir, in addition to the standard effects, you also suffer from the Nausea condition for the duration of the elixir.</p>	<p><b>Polymorphed</b> You spent the decade polymorphed by another mage. It took a long time to find a way to reverse it. To this day, you have kept some of the mannerisms of that animal. You suffer a -2 to your Social Etiquette.</p>
7	<p><b>Mentor Passed Away</b> If your mentor was still alive, they passed away during this decade. If you did not have a mentor, you can re-roll this result. It is up to you and the GM to determine how they died.</p>	<p><b>Hunted</b> There are bounties out on you. A group of (1d6+5) bounty hunters are actively looking for you.</p>	<p><b>Intoxicated</b> You tried a poorly made concoction on yourself and it changed your metabolism forever. When drinking a potion or an elixir, you must roll beneath your BODY on 1d10 or become Intoxicated.</p>	<p><b>Extreme Vulnerability</b> You tried to make yourself resistant to dimeritium. You got the opposite result. You suffer a -3 penalty to your Endurance checks to resist the effects of dimeritium.</p>
8	<p><b>Hair Fell Out</b> A spell went awry and as a result, all of the hair on your body has fallen out and refuses to grow back.</p>	<p><b>Enemy of the State</b> Your political schemes were discovered, and you have been branded the enemy of a nation you were conspiring against. You are Hated in that nation regardless of what your Social Standing is in that region.</p>	<p><b>Alchemical Dependency</b> Through constant testing of elixirs and potions, you have developed an addiction to Elixirs. This works exactly the same as any other addiction. See Core Book (pg. 32).</p>	<p><b>Teleportation Sickness</b> You experience teleportation sickness. Whenever you teleport or travel through a portal, you must make an Endurance check at a DC: 12 or suffer from the Nausea condition for 10 minutes.</p>

Roll	Cautious	Politicking	Experimentation	Magical Study
9	<p><b>Arthritis</b> Your hands have trouble making the intricate gestures required for spell casting without pain. You suffer a -1 penalty to your Spell Casting checks whenever you cast a spell that requires hand movement.</p>	<p><b>Rival</b> Through your actions, you have made a rival of another school member. Roll on the Grudges table on pg. 28, but they must be the offended party.</p>	<p><b>Lost a Sense</b> Your experiments have cost you much. You lost the sense of taste, smell or touch. You have a -2 penalty on skill checks that rely on that sense.</p>	<p><b>Wanted by Hunters</b> You did something so careless and heinous with your magic that a church sent a pair of Witch Hunters (or Mage Hunters in Nilfgaard) after you. They are enemies that will do anything to subdue or kill you.</p>
10	<p><b>Hexed</b> You were hexed, either by your own hand or someone you irritated. Work with the GM to pick an appropriate hex from the ones listed on pg. 105 or pg. 120 of the Core book. Your character has yet to undo the hex.</p>	<p><b>Retained by a Noble</b> A minor noble hired you for your magical abilities and arcane knowledge. Each month, you gain a stipend of 100 crowns. However, you must go to them immediately whenever they summon you and perform any tasks they require of you or risk angering them.</p>	<p><b>Mutation</b> Your attempts at understanding mutagens backfired. You gain the physical changes of a Minor Mutation of a Mutagen of your choice and the changes in Social Standing.</p>	<p><b>Cursed</b> You cursed yourself by accident, trying to understand the workings of curses. Work with the GM to pick an appropriate curse from the ones listed on pg. 230 of the Core Book.</p>

## Grudges

Roll	Profession	The Cause	Escalation	Power
1	Criminal	Sold out the offended party	They/you have forgotten about it	Social
2	Mercenary	Backstabbed the offended party	They/you are on the lookout	Social
3	Merchant	Turned down the offended party	They/you have forgiven the aggressor but could be pushed back	Knowledge
4	Artisan	Kept the offended party from acquiring something	They/you are actively scheming against the other	Knowledge
5	Scholar	Stole something from the offended party	They/you want nothing to do with the other	Physical
6	Druid	Caused the offended party harm	They/you are planning to go after the other's loved ones	Physical
7	Priest	Tried to ruin the offended party's reputation	They/you are trying to sabotage the other	Minions
8	Mage	Manipulated the offended party	They/you are just spreading harmful rumors	Minions
9	Knight	Tried to poison the offended party	They/you are mad enough to fly into a rage at your next meeting	Magic
10	Noble	Insulted the offended party	They/you are looking for allies to hurt the other	Magic

## Benefit

Roll	Event
1	<p><b>Scouted out a Prospective Mage</b> You found a young person gifted with Chaos. You helped them bring their powers under control and trained them to be a mage. You are in constant communication and can ask them to re-search magical matters for you. You gain a Mage Ally.</p>
2	<p><b>Moved into a Community</b> You moved near a small village. The people there slowly opened up to you as you helped them with their woes. You will always be welcome there, and they will even offer shelter and food should you need it. While in this region you are always treated as Equal.</p>
3	<p><b>Payment Due</b> Someone owes you 600 crowns and you have kept the right to collect at any moment, even after decades.</p>
4	<p><b>Familiar</b> You have gained the friendship of an animal that follows you everywhere. This can be a cat, a dog, a bird, or a serpent. This animal is trained and follows your commands unless you abuse it.</p>
5	<p><b>Love Affair</b> You found a lover who appreciated your magical talents and made a meaningful connection. Roll 1d10. 1-6: it lasted a few months, 7-8: it lasted a few years, 9-10: it's still going on and off.</p>
6	<p><b>Won a Duel</b> You fought another mage in a magic duel and came out the victor. You took an item of theirs as a trophy. Roll 1d10. 1-4: An Elven Walking Staff, 5-8: A Gnomish Staff, 9-10: A Crystal Skull.</p>
7	<p><b>Found a Portal</b> You discovered the location of an old elven portal. Roll 1d10. On an even number it is still active; roll 1d10 again for the destination: 1-3: An old glade in Dol Blathanna, 4-5: the Tir Tochair mountains, 6-8: a swamp in northern Kaedwen, 9-10: deep under the city of Novigrad. The portal can also, at the GM's discretion, lead to another destination.</p>
8	<p><b>Battle Magic Training</b> You spent the decade training to battle other magic users and resist their power. You gain +1 to Resist Magic.</p>
9	<p><b>Place of Power</b> You have found the location of a Place of Power and harnessed its energy. You gain 5 Units of Fifth Essence. Work with the GM to determine where it is, and which element it is attuned to.</p>
10	<p><b>Armored Casting</b> You have practiced casting in armor. Subtract 1 from the total EV of all the armor you are wearing for the purposes of spell casting. If you already have this benefit you re-roll this result.</p>



## Allies

Roll	Profession	How You Met	Closeness	Value
1	Criminal	You studied with them	Acquaintances	Social
2	Mercenary	You saved them from an accident	Acquaintances	Social
3	Merchant	You supported them at a tough time	Acquaintances	Knowledge
4	Artisan	You backed them against a betrayal	Acquaintances	Knowledge
5	Scholar	You were one-time romantic partners	Acquaintances	Physical
6	Druid	You set out to manipulate them	Acquaintances	Physical
7	Priest	You showed them genuine kindness	Friends	Minions
8	Mage	You set out to study them	Friends	Minions
9	Knight	You helped them backstab someone	Friends	Magic
10	Noble	You met during some punishment	Bound by Bond	Magic



## Knowledge

Roll	Knowledge
1	<p><b>Stumped by a Curse</b></p> <p>You began delving into the workings of a particularly vile curse that has been affecting a family for generations. While you could not dispel it, your findings gave you insight into the nature of curses. You gain a +1 to Magical Training and a +1 to Hex Weaving.</p>
2	<p><b>Memorized Formulae</b></p> <p>You spent your decade memorizing spell formulae. Choose one Novice and one Journeyman spell. You begin the game knowing both of these spells.</p>
3	<p><b>Magical Biologist</b></p> <p>You spent a great deal of time studying the inherent magic of monsters like leshen and fiends. You begin the game knowing the Imbue Trophy Ritual. If you already have this knowledge you re-roll this result.</p>
4	<p><b>Zerrikanian Alchemy</b></p> <p>You spent your time studying the alchemy of the Zerrikanian scholars. You begin the game with the Formula for Zerrikanian Fire memorized.</p>
5	<p><b>Signs and Portents</b></p> <p>You peered into the future and saw an event you must prevent or must ensure happens. Work with your GM to determine what it is. This vision was conveyed through symbols and metaphors.</p>
6	<p><b>Encyclopedia Arcana</b></p> <p>You spent this decade diving into the laws of Chaos, its evolution, and its uses. You gain a +2 to Magic Training. If you already have this knowledge you re-roll this result.</p>
7	<p><b>Ley Line Studies</b></p> <p>You spent the decade studying the Ley Lines of the Continent. When you try to draw on a Ley Line you do so with a +2 bonus. Additionally, you begin the game knowing the Detect Ley Line Spell.</p>
8	<p><b>Teacher's Assistant</b></p> <p>You spent your time helping a teacher or perhaps your mentor. When teaching new spells to other mages, you halve the number of learning checks required.</p>
9	<p><b>Apprenticed to an Alchemist</b></p> <p>You spent some time studying the finer points of alchemy. You begin the game with any 2 novice alchemical formulae and gain a +1 to Alchemy.</p>
10	<p><b>Divination Expert</b></p> <p>You delved into the study of divination and clairvoyance. You begin the game knowing either the Hydromancy, Pyromancy, Tyromancy, or Oneiromancy Ritual.</p>



# A Little Knowledge

1271, Gweison Haul • Transcribed by Alec von Karst

“...So, by positioning your hand over the dish and focusing on bringing just enough flame to ignite the candle without melting, we can see how controlling breath controls thoughts and thoughts control Chaos...”

Glynnis held her palm flat above a deep terracotta bowl in illustration, and her candle flickered to life, floating in the water. She glanced at the ranks of students ranked above her lecture space, encircling the hall. Black-clad in the uniform of Gweison Haul, most likewise wore expressions of concentration as they worked the experiment.

A flickering giggle drew her scrutiny to the back of the room to see a student rewarded for his lapse in attention with a flash of flame and a face full of steam as the liquid performed its dual function of safety valve and salutary example.

“Master Kai, if you are uninjured, kindly replace your water. Everyone else, snuff your flames and try again. As Kai has demonstrated, in losing concentration you lose control. This is a minor working in a peaceful room—imagine you stand in the ranks in battle, drawing power to aid your comrades while men scream and die, purely to distract you.”

That earned a ripple of shy laughter. It usually did. At least one student received an impromptu steam bath every time she taught this experiment, discomfiting them without true pain. Glynnis was mildly surprised only Kai the joker had washed his face, she’d anticipated over-enthusiasm from another source...

A strangled intake of breath from the front row she knew from experience meant “I have an opinion and you may not appreciate it.” There we are.

“You have something to add on the topic of self-restraint, Master Aleister?” Glynnis kept her face neutral, but a smile touched her voice. Aleister was talented and intelligent and instructing him was a welcome test of her own control.

“Mistress Var Treharne, this is ridiculous!” The words burst from a boy in the center front row, his accustomed place. “Why do you not truly test us? Why do we play with candles and hold our breath when the forces of Chaos are ours to command?”

“As your classmate has just demonstrated, Master Aleister, not everyone has yet attained your finely-tuned self-control and precision. Were it not for the lessons you learn here, your emotions might overwhelm you in stressful moments. I have engravings to pass around of the injuries that may be sustained through unwise power drawing and I caution you they make for grim viewing”

Aleister flushed and Glynnis realized something was amiss. He challenged her teachings daily, but this was new, harsher, and out of step with their usually amicable exchanges.

“That’s a failure in your students, Mistress! Their faith failed them, and they lost control. If we hold to the Great Sun, surplus Power is safely channeled away, protecting the faithful mage! All you’re doing is holding back more capable students to save the slower feeling foolish!”

Fervor shook his voice and Glynnis felt a growing chill of concern, though her own lessons in control kept it from her face. This needed defusing; if Aleister didn’t vent he’d burst and if she could isolate his ideas, this might be turned to a lesson for the class. One to hopefully prevent a favorite student from immolating himself one fine day.

“I don’t recall any teachings referring to protecting ourselves from our own foolishness, Aleister. But please, I am always willing to learn. Come, the floor is yours.”

Aleister, briefly taken aback at the sudden opportunity, started clambering over his classmates to the stairs. His last obstacle was a boy who sat transfixed, wide-eyed at this boldness. Aleister met his gaze and the child retreated, bolting from the room as the new lecturer took to his stage with the confidence of a performer.

“We learn to deal with the minutiae of power, with petty, limited tricks that must never be demonstrated to a wider audience lest we scare them. In the priesthood, initiates our age are trained to glory in their abilities! All is done in honor of the Great Sun; the people can see what their leaders accomplish in its name! We are capable of much more than we are permitted to show!”

The sound of the door and heavy footsteps drew Glynnis’ attention, but her gaze remained fixed on Aleister, her mind racing. Always sincere in his beliefs, this was a whole new level. He’d been attending extra-curricular classes with priests of the Great Sun; what had they taught and why hadn’t she made time to monitor their activities? She drew in a breath to remonstrate, calm the situation, regain control.

“Aleister, you raise interesting questions we should discuss, calmly.” Too late she felt the unmistakable prickle of the boy drawing in power.

“I’ll show you what I’ve learned—what I can do! Then you’ll understand!”

Aleister drew in fire, pointed both hands at Glynnis’ bowl and hurled a stream of flame that splashed like oil and washed out in a wave, filling the lecture floor. Glynnis barely had time to throw up a defense; the flames split and flowed past her, lapping against the front-most desks as students recoiled from the heat.

The table and paneling were cracked and blackened; Glynnis stood untouched while fragments of her notes rained embers around her. It was so much worse for Aleister.

The boy let out a wail of agony and collapsed to his knees as his arms scorched away, revealing twitching tendons and blackened bone without the mercy of allowing him to faint.

From the doorway, a cry.

“See! I told you—he’s dangerous!”

Suddenly, armored men were running down the steps, filling the floor, while the boy who had fled pointed accusingly as Glynnis tried to summon the coherence of thought to cast a healing spell on the wreckage of the child before her.

She was jolted from her spiraling thoughts when two of the men—Mage Hunters, she now registered—gripped Aleister by his shoulders and pushed his head down. Glynnis started forward, a plea for pity on her lips, but powerful hands stopped her in her tracks. There was nothing to be done as their captain declared Aleister’s crime and sentence, their right and duty within Gweison Haul. In another breath the axe swept down, ending Aleister’s torment and sending his severed head rolling across the floor, an expression of agonized confusion on his face.

A ripple of approval spread through the class as the Hunters released and saluted Glynnis, their task complete, a dangerous rogue dispatched. They filed out, all shining mail and heroic stature and only the force of ingrained habit prevented her from dropping to the floor and wailing. Without removing her gaze from Aleister’s as his remains were unceremoniously carried away, Glynnis spoke with all apparent control.

“Class. Dismissed.”



# Priests

*“Faith is important; it can give comfort, strength, and help believers extract sense from a confusing world. But a gentle faith in another climate may turn harsh; a simple belief twisted and complex. I walk cautiously as a stranger around the faithful until I discover the flower or the flame.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne



**I believe this will be the most controversial chapter in the book: priests and magic. The standard explanation is that priests can use priestly magic, like invocations and incantations, because their gods or the powers they worship use magic through the priest. This is an important point because in this age of backlash against mages, many priests draw a thin line with their invocations on one side, and the terrible, ungodly mage spells on the other side.**

Let's look at where priestly power comes from. Priests of Kreve and the Eternal Flame claim their magic comes from a holy being. They are trained by old, venerable priests of their faith who have spent decades manifesting their god's magic through themselves. The concept is that the priest is taught how to contact their god, and how to receive his power. As far as we know, the power of Kreve or the Eternal Flame can be used for good or evil purposes. I think we can agree that the work with the Order of the Flaming Rose was morally dubious at best. These priests are generally found in towns and cities. In larger cities they may have many beautifully decorated temples with an "eternal" flame in each. These are faiths for people who want a well-controlled, predictable faith that will tell you what you should and should not be doing. Besides keeping the temple, and listening to the supplications of followers who come to them with concerns, priests may be involved with local charities and local politics. They usually encourage conformity and promote the absolute power of kings.

The priestly power wielded by the followers of Melitele and Freya the Great Mother of the Skelligers are less straightforward. In both cases the goddess is one with the natural world. A lot of their magic is healing of mind and body, and fertility. It suggests that Melitele and the Great Mother are focuses for the natural powers. As far as I know, the priestesses of both of these groups believe they are given

their magical power by their Goddess but do not believe that they are being used as a conduit for their Goddess. The priestesses of Melitele especially are keepers of knowledge and often have schools within their temples. The religions of the goddesses are common throughout the North and in the northern provinces of Nilfgaard. They exist quietly among the people. In Nilfgaard, because of the official status of the Great Sun, the faith of Melitele may be somewhat overshadowed but temples and priestesses can still be found. In the North, besides education the priestesses are alchemical as well as magical healers. They encourage people to live with nature and they dispense common sense.

Then there is the Great Sun. The power of the Great Sun is seen in different ways in different parts of Nilfgaard. On the fringes, the small local farming villages, some still believe that the Emperor is in some way connected to the sun and is a focus for the power of said heavenly body. The main temple of the Great Sun is adjacent to the imperial palace. It is beautiful inside and out and its exterior contributes to Nilfgaard's capital being named the City of Golden Towers. All temples of the Great Sun, large or small, are subsidized by the government. Priests and priestesses can marry and have families as it is consistent with the values of the Great Sun. As long as one is loyal to the Empire and fulfills their civic responsibilities the faith encourages the comforting values of home, family, filial responsibilities, humility, hard work, and charity. Education is overseen by the Imperial Office of Education and is not related to religion.

In all of these religions, incantations and invocations of the power of their god is trained but functions primarily through focused will and piety.

—Brandon of Oxenfurt

## Why is a Priest not a Mage?

To the literal uninitiated, a priest and a mage may appear to be capable of exactly the same feats. They draw and channel power laypeople don't understand and change the world around them to a degree both incomprehensible and terrifying. And yet a fully trained mage cannot attempt to perform an invocation that a novice can perform with relative ease. Both are generating supernatural effects, so what's the difference?

A mage approaches the study of Chaos and its manipulation in terms of science first, art second. They learn to channel the quantities of the correct form of Chaos that they need to achieve their desired effect. Casting spells in a heightened emotional state can lead to overdrawing power, with undesired consequences. Priests draw upon their own fervor and faith to perform invocations. They have passion, depth of belief, and a certainty that their abilities come from their spiritual connection to a power greater than themselves. That is anathema to the analytical soul of many mages, and hence invocations simply make no sense to them and are mere words.

Where they find common ground is in the most formulaic of workings. Anyone capable of channeling a thread of power can learn how to cast a Ritual, with its clear rules and defined effects. Hexes likewise come with standardized



recipes to follow, both for their casting and their lifting. These imposed misfortunes are cast simply by following the instructions to the letter. Like baking an unpleasant cake.

Does priestly magic come from a god? Something powers their invocations, but these are designed in such a way as to render mages incapable of comprehending the necessary mindset. Priests internalize prescribed portions of lore and chant, declaim or mutter these to invoke the power of their deity, working themselves into a state approaching self-hypnosis. It does not seem to depend upon how “good” or “evil” they are, simply that they deploy their belief in the power of their chosen divinity to accomplish their goals.

## Priests and the Common People

Irrespective of the dominant faith of a region, the dedication of priests in their training and work garners the respect of common folk, if not their belief. Unless running up against someone actively opposed to their god, or to gods as a concept, priests are regarded as responsible parties, and their opinions carry weight. This influence is especially strong over followers of their own deity and magnified where there is one dominant faith, such as Nilfgaard, where the Great Sun often over-shadows all alternatives. A village priest may be all a peasant ever sees of the clergy, so to them, they are the embodiment of the faith.

Leadership and political squabbles are entirely outside the purview of the man on the street; all they see is someone who heals the sick, rallies the faithful, and can pull lightning from the sky to defend their flock. They perceive priestly magic as “cleaner” than the more incomprehensible mage workings without the associated taint of dark arts. Thus, priests represent a bulwark against what might harm ordinary people, be that monsters, rival faiths, or subversion. Priests of almost all stripes hold positions as pillars of the community, holding the responsibility of being trusted by the people.

## The Nonbelievers

Despite a plethora of gods and mystical powers to choose from, there are still those who simply do not believe. These people do not disbelieve in the effects of priestly magic but do not call them “miracles.” They don't get to ignore invocations, nor gain any special defense against them—it's their source they doubt, not their efficacy. Nonbelievers normally fall into one of three groups: gods exist but are unworthy of worship, gods may or may not exist, or gods are simply a justification for the spell casting of priests.

The first includes those who feel failed by their faith or representatives of a deity. This can destroy their belief

and comes from a place of anger that may fall upon priests, temples, and the concept of gods altogether. The remaining groups tend to be those who have studied and dug into the secrets of natural and magical philosophy. Scholars of Oxenfurt may believe that their knowledge renders the reality of gods irrelevant; they may, or may not, exist with no direct impact on the world at large, save that which their followers impose. The closest to classical atheists often originate from the ranks of mages. They understand the flow of Chaos on a personal level and see no reason to bring superior beings into the equation. To this last group priests and their invocations are merely another form of spell casting that requires special training but uses the talents of the caster. That priests vehemently disagree with this point of view is a source of disgruntlement to these scholarly mages.

## The Old Ways

The Old Ways is a catch-all term by which modern, or at least dominant, faiths refer to the Gods Who Came Before—beliefs once commonplace which now seem folksy, outdated, and potentially dangerous. To the peasantry, however, the Old Ways represent a part of their social history and may linger, despite their having ostensibly adopted newer deities. The inhabitants of a village on the Yaruga may be “hatched, matched, and dispatched” under the auspices of the Eternal Flame, and yet still light a candle to Veyopatis or pour out a libation to Dana Meadhbh on their way home from the fields. Some more militant beliefs might try to crush the Old Ways, whoever they may venerate, but this is more likely to send them underground than eradicate them. When the crusaders move on, the believers dust off shrines, uncover murals, and garland sacred trees with fresh flowers.

## The Organization of Belief

To an outsider, the mosaic of competing deities and divine powers worshiped by Nordlings might seem like a set of outright separate religions. Today, with the actions of Eternal Fire clergy, this conclusion is getting closer and



closer to the truth, but it was not always this way. Even during these troubled times there are still itinerant priests who preach the glory of multiple gods at once.

The majority of the Northern Realms' inhabitants believe in the gods but specifically revere one or more deities from a loose, regional pantheon, with the function and importance of given deities interpreted differently depending on regional traditions. Born out of a myriad of local cults and beliefs of the settlers, this pantheon of beings is referred to by some priests and scholars as the Immortal Ones.

The task of proper interpretation of the many texts and doctrines of this pantheon, in the Novigrad Union's spirit of separation of church and state, belonged to highly esteemed clergymen: arch priests of important temples and popular preachers. Together, they formed local clerical Councils convened to settle doctrinal and disciplinary disputes. The most important of such gatherings are Electoral Colleges, each choosing a Hierarch out of

## Gods and Monsters

To common, powerless people, anything capable of devastating their community might be considered divine. The ekhidna Melusine in Skellige and the sylvan calling himself “The Allgod”, for example, were propitiated by the locals out of fear of their wrath. The difference between “god” and “monster” becomes academic when either could destroy you and all you love. Such sacrifices can themselves become the root of new cults, detached from their origin.

## Subsuming Beliefs

Younger faiths can supplant their forebears by appropriating the old deity as an aspect of the newcomer. Instead of stamping out the existing beliefs, missionaries encourage the adoption of the new gods as part of the status quo. They add names to ceremonies and fold festivals into new holidays with a similar theme. The Eternal Fire, out of Novigrad, has incorporated the works of the Prophet Lebioda into its canon, making many of his followers its own. Gradually the old gods become less prominent, until a couple of generations down the line, people forget things were ever different.

their ranks whose task was to oversee the peaceful relations between priesthoods of different deities, serve as negotiators between local clergy and monarchs, and help with the organization and funding of new temples in areas of their care. The Hierarchs were, at least officially, equal in importance, but it soon became apparent that in practice the most esteem was tied to the five Hierarchs close to seats of powers in the Four Kingdoms and Cintra, with the Hierarch of Novigrad who was often chosen to act as a mediator between conflicted Nordling kings.



This model ultimately fell out of favor as over time the Hierarchs began to pick favorites from the pantheon. Cyrus Engelkind Hemmelfart, elected in early 1250s as the Hierarch of Novigrad, chose the Eternal Fire as a force to lead the hearts of his subjects and promoted its worship with the help of Novigrad's Chancellor of Security, Chappelle. Similarly, Krevenic Hengist Pikker, the Hierarch of Ard Carraigh, started to promote Kreve, the heavenly god of expansion, to justify King Henselt's conquests. The last truly ecumenical Hierarch who strove to keep intact the balance of power between churches in the realm of his care was Olcan Grandemot, the Hierarch of Vengerberg who cared even for Freya who was revered by Skelliger mercenaries who were hired during the Loremark War. Olcan's death at the hands of King Henselt marks the final step to the end of this dialogue.

The aforementioned monotheistic tendencies might ultimately lead to a situation akin to the position of the Church of the Great Sun in the Empire. Here, only one faith is officially recognized by the state, with others not officially banned but often overshadowed. Each province has a clerical Council called a Synod that is composed of arch priests of regional Great Sun temples. In the major provinces, there are also hierarchs, called Incandescent. Unlike in the North, the Great Sun's Incandescent hold supreme power over lower clergy, and are themselves held accountable to the Emperor.

On the other hand, the organization of the priesthood is very different in Skellige. Here, while Hindarsfjall is treated as the spiritual center of the kingdom, all temples are entirely autonomous. Despite a lack of centralized hierarchy or clerical Councils, Skellige is refreshingly devoid of theological conflicts. Druids, and worshipers of Freya, Sea Gods, or the Heroes, don't feel the need to squabble about the primacy of their school of thought as they are bound in one culture.

An entirely different matter are the Dark Cults, as their followers tend to be unwelcome even in the most tolerant regions of the Continent. Worshiping gods with a deep interest in blood and death requires secrecy. Dark cultists determine the wishes and goals of their deity on a far more localized basis than the mainstream "cults" and the leadership of each circle, cell, or web is determined by cunning and strength rather than assigned from above by a hierarch or a council. Promotion via "Dead Man's Shoes" is the usual way of climbing the ranks for people prone to meeting masked, in isolated places, with the goal of bringing misfortune in the interest of personal power.

# Dana Meadbh



Dana Meadbh is an ancient being, known under different names by her worshipers dating from before the time when elves ruled. The elves call her Dana Meadbh, the dwarves Bloemenmagde; she's also known as the Eternal One, Lyfia, and the Queen of the Fields. She is not necessarily recognized as a Goddess but more of a personifications of nature and the natural world, with an emphasis on the life of the wilderness and the wild wood.

The worship of Dana Meadbh is one of the most open and welcoming of all the faiths; as the personification of love for all living things, she is revered by people of all races. Her followers have no official organization or hierarchy and those who depend upon the weather and the soil for their livelihood will often celebrate her as part of their direct connection to nature. There are no temples to Dana Meadbh and her few places of worship are ancient and derelict, having been abandoned by their inhabitants long ago. These places of worship can be found at significant trees, rivers, and caves, but her worshipers more commonly make offerings to her at their places of connection. Farmers may offer up a portion of their crops in the fields where they grow, beekeepers share honey directly from their hives, and foresters burn scented woods to show their respect around the trees they harvest. The elves, who do not, as a rule, practice agriculture make offerings gathered from natural groves and orchards.

While Dana Meadbh's worship has declined over the years, her faithful can be found across the Continent, frequently giving worship to Dana Meadbh privately while publicly following another deity. Her worship is strongest in Dol Blathanna, the ancient elven kingdom now restored to their rule by Nilfgaard in gratitude to those elves who fought for Emhyr var Emreis. It is least common in Skellige, where agriculture is less important and much of Dana Meadbh's purview is held by Freya, but in the Northern Kingdoms and Nilfgaard it survives as part of the nebulous concept of "the Old Ways," much to the disgruntlement of proponents of the Eternal Fire who see it as ancient superstition. Druids do not worship Dana Meadbh, as their focus is on nature as an entity in its own right. In fact, Dana Meadbh has no "priests" in the traditional sense. Those who guide communities in her rituals and practices are most commonly village elders and sages.

In keeping with her many names, Dana Meadbh's worshipers can vary wildly. Scoia'tael bands might call upon her aid for the trees to hide them while making raids on human farmers who will raise a basket of produce to her come harvest time. The goddess loves all people and does not play favorites. As a personal deity, she is known to visit the people from time to time at her celebrations, joining them for feasts or roaming the fields in the shape of a beautiful young woman adorned with flowers and accompanied by various animals which flock to her side.

## Elven God or Regional Deity?

*"Many humans and even some elves would consider Dana Meadbh to be an 'Elven deity.' This, of course, is inaccurate. The Queen of the Fields is an ancient being who existed long before my people arrived on the Continent. I would think this association comes from the Aen Seidhe's strong connection to the natural world. Even I, who grew up in the midst of the City of Golden Towers, feel a certain connection to the forests and valleys of the Continent."*

—Glynnis var Treharne

## Naturally Neutral

As perhaps the most literal personification of nature, Dana Meadbh remains neutral in most affairs unless they have to do with the natural world. She has no interest in the rise and fall of kings, the shifting of power, or even the persecution of one race or another.

## The Flaming Rose Now

After the catastrophe in Vizima and the death of their Grand Master just a few months prior, the chaos at the Loc Muinne Summit, and a crushing defeat at the hands of the Nilfgaardian war machine, the Order of the Flaming Rose has been all but destroyed. King Radovid V has reclaimed and sold their fortresses and estates and effectively disbanded the order in the eyes of the church. The few remaining members have largely gone their separate ways with many of them joining Radovid's Witch Hunters and a small faction turning to drug-dealing to make a living. Still, a few knights have not given up on their order and wander the realm seeking to carry on Jacques de Aldersburg's goals.

# The Eternal Fire



The Eternal Fire is not a deity—the scriptures describe It as a divine force, the power that fuels the hearts of both gods and mortals in a perpetual fight against evil. Its Church stands as a light in the world's darkness, a guide both spiritual and toward progress and advancement. Its focus is on defending the faithful against evil, whether that be within themselves or from external forces that would harm or corrupt them.

Representatives of the Eternal Fire can be found spread across the North, in most towns and many villages. The church is centered in the Free City of Novigrad, which houses a full nineteen temples to the faith. Largest and most imposing of these is the Great Temple of the Eternal Fire, seat of the Hierarchy of Novigrad. An elected position, they are voted in by the Electoral College of Novigrad, a body of priests and high-ranking local worthies, as part of their civic duty. The power of the church in the city is growing rapidly, and there are concerns that it will eventually undermine the city government.

In the towns and villages of the Northern Kingdoms, the Eternal Fire offers a sense of security to the populace. It is strident in its morality but has no desire to lose congregants to the forces of darkness and will take steps to hire aid or distribute charity to those of the faithful in times of need. When an enemy is less immediately obvious, the faithful might look to their purses and wonder what exactly it is that the church does for them. Here, it has proven necessary for the priesthood to expand their definition of "evil." The true cleansing wrath falls upon non-humans, practitioners of sorcery, and any who threaten the congregation. The harsh principles of the church are attractive to zealots and fanatics who then act according to their own interpretations of its scriptures.

An effective and popular way of disposing of evildoers is through the cleansing power of flame, specifically pyres and stakes, depending upon the occasion. Burning the local witch in the town square is the sort of statement that makes people consider their own beliefs, and cling to them even more vocally, lest they be judged "evil." The Eternal Fire has its own Inquisitors to ferret out and interrogate suspects, through tortures frequently involving flames and branding. Priests are known by their red and white robes, often adorned with a black cross with golden filigree. This faith primarily appeals to men, though it numbers some women within the zealous ranks of its priests. The church also maintains lay members, including Witch Hunters, and a dedicated unit of Temple Guards in Novigrad.

## The Order of the Flaming Rose

Founded in 1268, the Flaming Rose was tasked with the spreading of the faith in the Eternal Fire and the defense of the needy. It was born from the dregs of the Order of the White Rose, which mostly listed members of the nobility among its members and was a stiff and moralistic order affiliated with the Cult of Kreve. When the previous Grand Master of the order died, the new leader, Jacques de Aldersberg, imposed his vision of a less tolerant and more proactive organization. Non-humans and mages suffered special persecutions at the hands of the Flaming Rose.

# Freya



The predominant faith in the Skellige Isles, Freya represents the differing aspects of the forces of the natural world, similar to Melitele on the mainland. While she is depicted as maiden, mother, and crone at different time, she is most commonly depicted as a beautiful, mature woman, heavily pregnant, wearing the diamond Brisingamen around her neck. Freya embodies the qualities of maternal wisdom and strongly supports love, marriage, and families.

Freya is normally benevolent, and the Islanders are her beloved children. She is, however, a mother with some definite ideas on how her children should behave, and those who break her strictures or desecrate her temples face her wrath. There are many strong and adventurous types who would sooner face a screaming horde than disappointment and punishment from their mothers for cruelty and misdeeds. In Freya's case, she severs them from the source of motherly love and kindness until they show proper and sincere contrition. Those who refuse to repent or do penance for their crimes face an even stronger punishment. The goddess curses them to never again know the love and support she provides, eternally. Worse, because Freya embodies the concept of family, this curse falls upon any descendants of the miscreant in perpetuity. A lesson in not making your mother angry and why abandoning or slaying one's own kin is one of the worst crimes a Skelliger can commit. Those who have done so can seek an honorable death in battle to expunge their offense and protect their children's futures.

Throughout the Skellige Isles, the general population reveres Freya, especially women regardless of social status. Those who work closely with nature and depend upon its moods and shifts also strongly favor this goddess. A hunter might offer a prayer to her for a successful pursuit, a farmer would likewise in hopes of clement weather and a good harvest. The raiders for whom the Isles are famed plead for calm seas and those they leave on land for their safe and swift return.

Women form the whole of the priesthood of Freya, though men may serve in a lay capacity. Priestesses wear practical dresses and caps of simple, purple fabrics. This suits their position as de facto "mothers" to the community, taking care of injuries and illnesses and adjudicating squabbles before they develop sufficiently to escalate to the jarls' courts. In particular, they serve women as midwives and counselors, providing solace, explanation, and remedies for girls as they mature. Worshipers may seek their blessings for healthy children, crops, and the safe return of loved ones. Freya's priests regard those with sorcerous abilities with mistrust, as not quite being part of the natural world. Druids, however, while not forming part of her clergy, recognize Freya as a face of Mother Nature, in a bond of mutual respect with the priesthood. Freya's primary temple is on the isle of Hindarsfjall; here, her worshipers make offerings of honey, strawberries, yogurt, and mead, and sing her love songs and poems.

According to legend, Freya can take the form of a white cat, so cats, along with falcons, are sacred to her. Feeding a stray or adopting a cat to your hearth is seen as a way of cultivating her favor.

## The Gods of the Sea

*"Had a lot of dealings with Skelligers over my years. Mostly tradesmen comin' from Hindarsfjall. Seems like they worship some 'Gods of the Sea' as well as Freya but I'm not sure that they all agree who these 'Gods of the Sea' are. I've heard plenty of names chanted under their breath and offerings tossed into the ocean but it's rare that I hear the same name twice. Heh, probably a regional thing."*

—Rodolf Kazmer

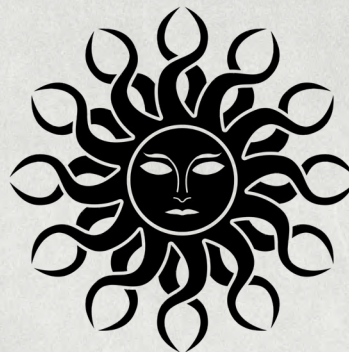
## Hemdall & The Clans

Unlike many nations, the Clans of Skellige hold a very personal connection to their goddess. It is believed by the Skelliger people that the founders of the 6 great clans of Skellige were all sons of the great hero of legend, Hemdall and his wife Heulyn. Hemdall, a mighty champion who lays in rest until summoned for the last great battle of Ragh nar Roog, is believed by most to be the son of Freya and a demi-god in his own respect.

## The Spread of the Great Sun

After the end of the First Northern War, the faith of the Great Sun began to spread north. Fanatics, mystics, and priests began to preach the good word of the Great Sun, linking it to the prophecy of the legendary Elven oracle, Ithlinne aep Ave-nien. Ithlinne's Prophecy declared that the world would be destroyed by the White Frost and would be born anew by the White Flame and the White Queen. These itinerant priests claimed that Emperor Emhyr var Emreis, the White Flame Dancing on the Barrows of his Enemies, was the legendary White Flame which would bring life back to the world. While the Northern Monarchs quickly cracked down on these preachers, there are still Nordling worshipers of the Great Sun who see the Emperor as a savior who will usher in a new, utopian world.

# The Great Sun



The Church of the Great Sun is the official state religion of the Nilfgaardian Empire and the Emperor, Emhyr var Emreis, is also the Head of the Church. While the Emperor has no part in the church's day to day affairs and is not a trained priest of the Great Sun, it has been tradition for the Emperor to be the Head of the Church since the time of Emperor Torres var Emreis. During Torres var Emreis' rise to power, his followers claimed that he was the literal incarnation of the Sun and held the divine right to rule over the land. There are speculations that this belief came from more ancient beliefs held by the humans who lived around the River Alba but regardless, this belief in a divine right of rulership helped found Nilfgaard. As time passed, the faith evolved and the Var Emreis family came to merely be blessed by the Great Sun and not descend from the Sun itself. Still, a few people in the most rural regions believe this to be true.

While its political power is now limited, the church of the Great Sun lies at the heart of the Nilfgaardian Empire. The banners of the black-armored military bear the emblem of The Great Sun, and most imperial citizens follow its tenet. Among the knights and aristocracy of the Empire, the tenants of the Great Sun exist as a set of guidelines for living and a reminder of the power of the imperial family. The church extols the virtues of bravery, loyalty, and cooperation while also giving the nobility of Nilfgaard a clear way to distance themselves from the commoners. Those who support the Emperor are seen highly in the eyes of the church and are often rewarded. Among the commoners of the Empire and beyond, the Church of the Great Sun offers a light in dark times. The faith teaches that if one lives their life by the virtues of the Great Sun and shows their loyalty to the Empire they will flourish and the Empire will protect them from the ravages of the world. Despite all of the morally gray actions of the Nilfgaardian Empire, the Church of the Great Sun is a supportive organization which encourages familial devotion, community, and respect for the natural world among the often beleaguered people of the Continent. On a day-to-day basis, priests of the Great Sun organize celebrations, hand out small gifts or cakes at festivals, and involve themselves in every emotional beat in the lives of the faithful, with ceremonies for births, marriages, and deaths.

Shrines and temples to the Great Sun are common throughout Nilfgaard and its territories. The priests themselves are distinguished by their robes, normally black accented with gold or silver. At significant occasions such as eclipses or the sitting Emperor and High Priest's birthday priests will wear gold or yellow vestments with complex patterns of embroidery. In addition, they bear white enameled masks on chains around their necks, which are worn during services and heavily painted with stylized images of the Sun. Among some priests blonde hair is considered most fashionable and some rising priests commission wigs, formally styled, and worn as part of their ceremonial garb.

# Kreve



Kreve, also known as the Forefather, is often considered by Nordlings to be the Sky Father to Melitele's Earth Mother. In a way, they are two sides of the same coin. While Melitele preaches the benefits of compassion and cooperation, Kreve inspires his worshipers to action in defense of their people. He is a deity who opposes the forces of "Evil" and extols the virtue of family and community. The Forefather expects his worshipers to act decisively and never surrender to forces which might harm their community.

The usual image of Kreve is as a towering, muscular man wielding a spear made of lightning and a large shield. His priesthood stands against the monsters and evildoers that would threaten their flock and the dangerous nature of the Continent has led them to take up their swords against a great number of different threats over the years. The priests of Kreve have encouraged and empowered the people to stand and fight against bandits, monsters, hostile non-humans, wild animals, and foreign invaders. All in defense of their homes and families. This eagerness to protect the realm made the Church of Kreve a perfect match for the Monarchy of the Northern Realms. Over time, a number of Northern Monarchs embraced Kreve, raising up the priesthood and in return receiving their blessing. The church claimed that Kreve had chosen the Monarch in question to rule the land and that any defiance against the crown would be violating the divine order.

Recently, the Church of Kreve has lost some of its influence in parts of the North, with the people flocking to the more radical Church of the Eternal Fire which is quickly gaining power in Redania. The worship of Kreve is especially popular in Kaedwen and the Hengfors League, though, where its tenets of self-reliance match the harsh climate. This land has built a hardy, austere and stoic population, for whom the strong and non-coddling nature of Kreve is a good fit. Particularly, the priesthood in Kaedwen has placed itself close to the seat of power and holds great sway within the kingdom.

Kreve's worship is present among specific groups outside Kaedwen as well. He is popular among those who live harsh lives on the fringes of society such as lumberjacks, miners, and pioneers and among people who risk their lives to protect others including soldiers, knights, and even mercenaries. These worshipers strive to live by the Virtues of Kreve which are preached by all priests of the Forefather as a guideline to a true, fulfilling life.

The priesthood of Kreve is exclusively made up of men; though his philosophy of self-reliance appeals to some women as well, they cannot serve as priests. Clerical garb is dark brown or black robes, with an integral pointed hood falling low on the brow. The border of the robe is of a lighter brown, trending toward gold. An embroidered stole, depicting crossed lightning bolts, may be worn for ceremonies or official business. Some priests of Kreve carry a sword or other weapon so that they can be ready to defend those in need at any moment.

## God of Good Fortune

Despite the strict nature of Kreve, the Forefather has come to be worshiped by risk-takers and action-oriented members of society. In adherence to the tenets of Kreve, these individuals act decisively and trust that Kreve will guide them. And so, they call out to Kreve to bless their actions. In turn, priests of Kreve believe that this mixture of devotion and self-confidence pleases the lightning god and can gain his blessing. And so, for many, Kreve has come to be associated with good fortune, as long as you actively seek out that fortune and make Kreve proud.

## The Virtues of Kreve

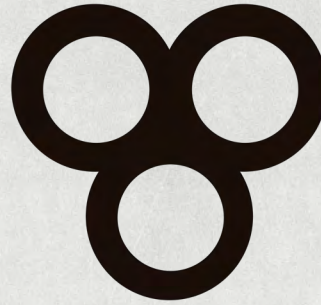
The Virtues of Kreve are a set of traits extolled by the priesthood in the name of the Forefather. Every worshiper of the Forefather likely knows these virtues by heart and tries to live their lives according to them where possible. The virtues are: Courage, Hospitality, Self-Reliance, Honor, and Truth.

## Church Protectors

*“Heh, funny thing about temples of Melitele. Plenty folk think they’re good targets for raiding and what not. All staffed by scholarly women, plenty of statues and herbs to steal. And ya might just get away with that in a tiny town somewhere in the backwoods. Plenty of temples that don’t train their priestesses to fight. But let me tell ya, they don’t have to. I personally watched a group of bandits try to break down a temple’s doors in Aedirn a few years ago. ‘Course I was about to get my crossbow when I see folk comin’ outta every hut. Heh, every brother, son, husband, and father in the damn town turned out carrying everything from wood axes to kitchen knives!”*

—Rodolf Kazmer

# Melitele



The archetypal goddess of fertility and birth, Melitele’s cult is one of the oldest in the world and stands despite the effort of newer faiths to subsume it. She is the classic embodiment of the maiden, mother, crone vision of womanhood and has a great deal in common with Freya. So much so that it is possible both deities are simply different aspects of the same being. Whatever the truth, her cult has proven resilient and expansive. Melitele is primarily worshiped in her aspect as a mother but her shrines may show any of her faces and her temples house three-sided statues displaying her in her entirety. As a guardian of women in childbirth, her name is frequently on the lips of women in pain, as they are tended to by her clergy. In this, she is a powerful protector of women, adapted from the primal beliefs of the earliest human cultures, merged into the form and worship of the goddess.

The Cult of Melitele can be found throughout the Northern Kingdoms, whether in large temples or rough, but carefully tended shrines. Although her appeal is predominantly to women, many men are numbered among her worshipers. Men with wives or sweethearts going through difficult births, or those hoping for children are especially likely to make offerings and prayers to Melitele. In addition, people who work closely with and depend upon the natural world for their living; farmers, herders, and similar may worship her in her aspect of an embodiment of kindly nature and fertility.

Although the regional leadership of the cult may act according to their own guidance, the leaders will meet from time to time to discuss and agree on future policy and direction for the faith. This spirit of co-operation extends to other churches; while priests of Melitele may not agree completely with those of Kreve or the newer and more aggressive Eternal Fire, they debate them in clerical councils and attempt to foster peaceable agreements, so that their ministrations are unhindered. They are generally on good terms with druids and the followers of other nature-worshipping sects, recognizing their common ground and shared origins.

The priesthood of Melitele accepts only women, though men are free to worship her and serve her as laypeople. There is a strong tradition of service within the cult, and you can find priests of Melitele working as healers and midwives or supporting populations during times of war or plague. The structure of the priesthood has evolved to be quite formal and fairly scientific; novices learn biology, botany, medicine, and arithmetic alongside the scriptures of the faith. This renders them eminently practical and capable in their future careers as healers and helpers. In terms of dress, Melitele’s priesthood wears red, gray, or white dresses or robes, with close-fitting hoods or wimples. During formal occasions or when they wish to be more visible, such as in war zones or other crises, they wear a headband over the wimple fronted by a tall, polished bronze miter. They frequently carry pouches with medical supplies at their belts when in their temples or satchels with similar when traveling. They are respected by the population, as they save lives when people are at their most vulnerable and are known for their practical and unflappable demeanor.

## Coram Agh Tera

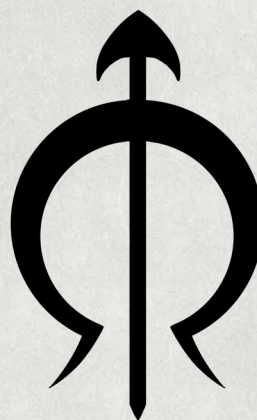


Also known as the Lionheaded Spider, Coram Agh Tera is revered as a deity of death, black magic, and the night. It is an enigmatic figure which has been depicted in many forms from a monstrous spider lurking in the darkness to an unfathomable being weaving a massive web beyond reality.

Unlike many other deities, the Lionheaded Spider offers direct favors in return for dark sacrifices. Priests of Coram Agh Tera give themselves to this dark force in return for aid, spending their lives maintaining its temples in secluded areas of the Continent. They adorn these temples with carved bones and braziers of acrid green fire and act as middlemen between the Lionheaded Spider and the people of the Continent. Priests of the Lionheaded Spider master the art of weaving potent curses and learn to induce a trance-like state in those who come to the temple, allowing them to bargain with Coram Agh Tera. Coram Agh Tera's blessings always require a meaningful sacrifice of equivalent value. This price is communicated directly by Coram Agh Tera and rarely do two hopefuls receive the same price. The only guarantee is that this price will be bloody and will require personal sacrifice. Frequently, people are drawn to the Cult of Coram Agh Tera when they have nowhere else to turn. When other faiths refuse to help, the desperate few are drawn into the Lionheaded Spider's web.

It is unknown how the cult of Coram Agh Tera was founded but the Church of the Eternal Fire claims that Coram Agh Tera is a demon manipulating the weak. However, despite the many rumors, priest of Coram Agh Tera are not bloodthirsty murderers. They do not force anyone to sacrifice, only give them the incentive. There are, however, unaffiliated cultists who believe they are chosen by the Lionheaded Spider or have awakened another dark force trying to contact it. These individuals are genuinely dangerous, sacrificing others in droves in hopes of gaining dark power.

## Epona



The Lady of Horses holds sway over horses, mules, ponies, and those who rely upon them. Her worship is unevenly distributed; on the Continent, she is strongly revered by those whose fate she governs but little elsewhere. Some aspects of Epona's worship are reportedly shared by horse cults in Ofier and Hakland, but the details of this relation are yet unconfirmed. Epona's good graces are sought by riders, stablemen, farmers, and racers; anyone who lives with and uses horses or horse-adjacent animals. She protects and loves the beasts and those who harm them risk her wrath—rumors persist of brutal owners beating their mounts and being found trampled into the sod in the morning. Epona is associated with fertility, both as it pertains to horses and also crops, making her doubly important to those working the land. Farmers will invoke her name in hope of a healthy foal and when following the plow behind their hardworking mare to encourage a bountiful harvest.

One specific aspect of the goddess is venerated by soldiers; this started with cavalrymen but spread downward through the ranks of many continental militaries over time. In this aspect, Epona appears as an archer on horseback, standing as a protective force for those that fight in defense of their homes. Homemade altars to Epona sometimes spring up in barracks and military encampments, and her ceremonies are often conducted by devoted cavalry officers before great battles. Outside of the military, Epona's worship includes people of all genders, all of whom are skilled at riding and handling horses. There is no dedicated priesthood of the Lady of Horses but particularly pious knights, farmers, and travelers have been known to dedicate themselves to her worship. These acolytes travel the Continent performing fertility ceremonies and animal blessings in Epona's name and tending to her shrines which usually stand on roadsides and frequently include natural springs.

## Lilvani



In centuries past Lilvani was worshiped in the North as Goddess of the Moon and of peaceful death and burials. Her cult was particularly prevalent in Ellander, Nazair, Mettina, and Velen, the latter housing a large temple to her in the cave system near Toderas. Unfortunately, this ancient goddess fell out of favor and her temples were neglected and destroyed, as much by time as by rivals. Many suggest that the worship of Melitele was the primary factor in the organic demise of the older cult, as her worship spread widely among the women of the Continent. Some even go so far as to say that Melitele is another face of Lilvani or vice versa.

Where Lilvani is still depicted it is as a naked, beautiful woman with a somber expression on her face, but with her arms spread in welcome. Her visage can still be found in ancient crypts and other burial places and her shrines in alcoves and caves where the moon can shine upon them, directly or through holes carved in the roof. One of the only remaining artifacts of Lilvani is the Moon Blade, a powerful silver sword blessed by one of the Goddesses few surviving priests to combat a powerful demon.

The priesthood of Lilvani tended toward women but also numbered a significant proportion of men. Historically they were involved in preparing the dead for burial and making sure that the appropriate rites were followed. In the heyday of the cult, worshipers would gather at shrines to observe a cycle of ceremonies tied to the phases and forms of the moon. A ritual of protection against evil on the night of the New Moon and a jubilant celebration on the night of the Full Moon with fertility ceremonies dedicated to Harvest Moons and cleansing rituals performed on the nights of Eclipses.

Lilvani's priesthood is not completely extinct but has dwindled to the dedicated few. A low-level of belief may run through family lines descending from more powerful worshipers, though many of her duties have been subsumed into the worship of Melitele.

## Morrigan



Morrigan, known to some as the Queen of the Veil, is an ancient goddess of war, knowledge, fate, spirits, and magic. Reliefs of this warrior goddess were first found among the menhirs of the Dauk people of Nimnar Valley. Similar depictions have been found as far south as Angren and in caves on the islands of Skellige suggesting that her worship was once widespread among early humans. The modern worship of Morrigan is relegated to small remote communities across the Northern Realms though interactions with the traders of the Far North suggest that she is more commonly worshiped beyond the Dragon Mountains.

The Queen of the Veil is depicted as being a wise monarch, capable of outright bloodshed but also possessed of the wisdom to understand when guile and cunning were more useful. She is depicted as wearing heavy armor of metal and leather and carrying a bearded axe. Her symbol and sacred creatures are ravens, and her followers revere them.

When humans from the Landing of Exiles expanded into Angren, they discovered Ard Gwyd, a forested mountain among the Slopes with the ruins of an ancient fort at its peak. The ruins showed signs of having once been a grand fortress and the remains of tattered tapestries and ruined murals depicted Morrigan. At the heart of the ruin stood a massive sycamore tree growing at a convergence of earth ley lines. The explorers were soon forced abandon the ruin when an unknown force began to stir, darkening the sky with a terrible storm and a vicious flock of ravens.

Morrigan no longer has a priesthood, but her tenets live on in her sages who are knowledgeable in battle tactics, history, and rituals of magic. These sages believe that magic permeates all things but is a naturally chaotic force that can only be controlled by a clever mind, a strong will, and stronger conviction. They consider knowledge and courage to be the key to success in all things but stress that respect is paramount, especially the respect of the dead.

## Nehaleni



Nehaleni, or Nehalena in the South, is a goddess of travel and divination whose worship is thought to have originated with a nomadic human culture from the Mag Deira Plains in the time before Mettina joined the Nilfgaardian Empire. These nomads prayed to Nehaleni to protect them on their journeys and to guide their caravans to prosperous lands. These travelers roamed the Continent from Cintra to Maecht and as they traded with traveling merchants, sailors, and ferrymen the worship of Nehaleni spread.

While Nehaleni's cult has always been far from powerful, many people court her favor before setting out on a journey, and she is also venerated by diviners and fortune tellers. Nehaleni is primarily worshiped at crossroads or at points of embarkation such as ports. Those calling upon her hoping for a safe journey may burn sacrificial loaves of bread baked in the shape of boars, calves, and fish which act as stand ins for the animal sacrifices of other, more visceral deities.

Images depict Nehaleni as a young, joyful woman, wrapped in a traveling cloak, carrying a carved wooden staff and a compass. At her heel is a large hound which stares adoringly at her. Among worshipers of Nehaleni, dogs are considered symbols of good fortune and are often kept as companions. Sheep dogs and wolf hounds especially.

Nehaleni's has no clergy but her few devoted worshipers embark on pilgrimages across the Continent, aiding travelers and performing divinations in hopes of earning prosperity. In line with ancient traditions, they show their dedication to Nehaleni by tossing a coin or rolling dice to make major decisions. While these pilgrims are often adept at divination, they also offer their services as guides to accompany travelers on uncertain paths and to find safe routes through swamps, forest, and avalanche-prone mountains. Those lucky enough to encounter such pilgrims in their travels, often encourage them to join their company, believing that they bring them good fortune in their travels.

## The Prophet Lebioda



The cult of the Prophet Lebioda started when he was but a simple shepherd. He wandered the Continent, telling parables about life, gods, and men, and preaching sermons with an emphasis on kindness and compassion. In short order he built up something of a following. Contemporary accounts hold him as a kind man, whose calling was to persuade those who would listen that they should be nice to each other.

Lebioda's mortal life ended unpropitiously at the jaws of a dragon who swallowed him whole while he attempted to dissuade it from devastating a village. After the prophet's demise, some loyal followers ventured to where the dragon left its spoor and retrieved his remains. These were carefully cleaned and housed in a reliquary that is now stored in the Great Temple in Novigrad, where it is displayed during festivals. The faithful, at this time, are permitted to kiss the relic.

Acolytes of the Prophet spread his worship both during his lifetime and subsequently. Notable among these was Saint Plegmund, who brought Lebioda's philosophy to Toussaint, a region he had visited and loved. The Saint's visits were marked with spectacular miracles, including the healing of severed limbs and deathly illness. All this while preaching love and compassion and listening to the needs and prayers of his believers. Plegmund converted the whole duchy to the worship of Lebioda, and the people erected a vast monument to Lebioda on the banks of the Sansretour River and a temple in Beauclair.

Lebioda is widely revered across the Continent and his teachings have been adopted and adapted to serve many other churches. The Eternal Fire, which has the Great Temple of Novigrad as its headquarters, has been especially keen on using his writings to fill the philosophical gaps in its message. Incorporating these books into its holy texts has added a layer of mercy and compassion to its otherwise hardline preaching.

## Svalblod



Before the worship of Freya and the full dedication of the Skelligers to honorable bloodshed and the joy of battle, some followed a darker and more visceral deity, Svalblod. This entity, a distorted and furious mixture of bear and man, reveled in the pain and slaughter of battle. Svalblod's worshipers included warriors, but his ties to nature, red in tooth and claw, attracted druids fallen to the more brutal aspects of their faith. Some worshipers could shape-shift into gigantic bears when the blood lust took them, the better to rip and claw their foes to pieces. Legends held these powers came from a rite wherein worshipers took hallucinogenic herbs and offered themselves to cave bears, who would consume them. This deadly ritual was said to bond the berserker's soul with that of the bear.

The jarls took steps, distressed at the vicious cruelty Svalblod inspired in their people. Most of the cult was wiped out, the cultists sentenced to death. Tied to their ships and sent without sail or means of navigation into the teeth of the stormy seas, their fate was intended to deter any further deviants from taking up the torch in the future. But a cult of blood and strength will always hold an appeal to some, and not all the altars were destroyed. Warriors, brigands, lovers of violence, and human monsters abandon much of their humanity to join the cult despite the price Svalblod demands in blood and cannibalistic feasts.

There are rumors that the heart of Svalblod's worship on Ard Skellige is once again active. His priests, clad in furs and dried blood, exist only to slake Svalblod's thirst for red death and revel in the power he grants in return. While the cult is still treated with fear and disdain, bloodthirsty warriors who can transform into bears are a useful tool when war comes for the jarl who dares to use them. Some even claim that Berserkers loyal to Svalblod live amongst the people of Skellige, slipping away in the night to perform their blood sacrifices.

## Veyopatis



Veyopatis is an ancient, protective deity whose worshipers relied upon him to keep them safe throughout what is now the Pontar Valley. The cult of Veyopatis has lessened as newer gods took over and people spread more widely, but he is still revered by a few of those who live alongside the great Pontar river. He stands as the embodiment of the river valley, capable of calm protection and capricious cruelty, as the moods of a river may change along its length.

As human populations arrived and migrated across the lands, they stayed close to the rivers. The land was fertile and the visibility good, so they could see danger coming, unlike the woods which housed all manner of monster. As settlements expanded along the valley and into the wild forests, carvings of Veyopatis were used to mark the boundaries beyond which danger lurked. Camps became villages and then towns; stable and better defended. Worn poles with Veyopatis' face carved into them may be seen in the undergrowth where the forest reclaimed the land outside their walls. The appearance of Veyopatis is a scowling man's face with an open mouth, as if shouting or blowing, his fearsome image being held to have defensive properties. Coming across such a carving is disturbing, stumbling into one of his larger shrines in the middle of the forest, with wild eyes and gaping maw is an experience.

Veyopatis has no official priesthood but a few village elders around the Pontar Valley still perform his rituals for community protection and good health at his shrines. Veyopatis has taken the position of a protective household spirit in the Pontar Valley, even where the people worship other gods. During rituals, wise men and women sometimes wear wide belts of cured, woven river-grasses, and medallions bearing his face. These are carved from river pebbles, and the less carving they need, the more powerful they are believed to be.

# The Priest Profession



## Social Standing

Priests are considered Equal by those who respect their deity but are Tolerated by those who don't and Hated and Feared by those who hate magic and don't respect their deity.

## Initiate of the Gods (EMP)

The churches of the world are often warm and inviting places which aid their communities and welcome new converts. A Priest can roll Initiate of the Gods at a DC set by the GM at churches of the same faith to get free lodging, healing, and other services at the GM's discretion. Initiate of the Gods also works when dealing with members of the same faith, though they will likely be able to offer less than a fully supplied church. At the GM's discretion, Initiate of the God will also work with worshipers of related deities.

**“In this temple, I give the orders. I usually ensure my orders don't conflict too much with Hereward's politics, as far as those politics are logical and understandable. In this case they are irrational, so I won't treat them any more seriously than they deserve.”**

**–Nenneke**

*Alright, so perhaps I haven't been as accurate in my descriptions of the magic wieldin' folk as I coulda been. Heh, Glynnis set me straight on a few things and I suppose I ought to set the record straight myself. While they may not seem all that different to the average folk like myself, priests and druids are worlds apart. Priests are magic users who gain their power from the gods, or at least they say they do. From what Glynnis says, the facts ain't exactly holdin' up. But wherever they get the fuel they make the fire in their own special way, heh. Ya see, for a priest it's all about belief. Belief in yer god, belief in yourself, belief in your message, all that sorta stuff. For some, that belief gets channeled straight down the middle as divine power. These are the preachers ya see managin' flocks in town squares all over the Continent. Born leaders, whose faith lets 'em pull off all sorts of magical hijinks. Rumor has it, they even get messages from the gods but I ain't so sure how much stock I put in that, heh. Then ya got the cultists, the ones who ain't exactly lucky enough to worship a mainstream deity. Might be death cultists of Coram Agh Terra or just worshipers of Melitele in the South. Either way, their faith's gotta persevere against a world that wants 'em gone. You'll find theses priest in private, hidden shrines, givin' secret sermons to their followers to bolster their faith and move 'em to action. The ones ya really gotta watch out for are the fanatics, heh. Sure, they're convincin' but that convincin' usually leads to inquisitions and angry mobs burnin' down slums, and brothels, and anybody else the priest don't like. They usually like to keep a cohort of "apostles" nearby too so they ain't easy to dethrone either.*

*–Rodolf Kazmer*

## Defining Skill

Initiate of the Gods

## Vigor Threshold

2

## Magical Perks

2 Novice  
Invocations

2 Novice Rituals

2 Low Danger  
Hexes

## Skills

Charisma

Courage

First Aid

Hex Weaving

Human Perception

Leadership

Ritual Crafting

Spell Casting

Staff/Spear

Teaching

## Gear (Pick 5)

100 crowns of  
components

Clotting Powder (x5)

Dagger

Double Woven  
Gambeson

Holy Symbol

Hourglass

Jewelry

Numbing Herbs (x5)

Staff

Surgeon's Kit

# The Priest Skill Tree

## Defining Skill: Initiate of the Gods (EMP).

The churches of the world are often warm and inviting places which aid their communities and welcome new converts. A Priest can roll Initiate of the Gods at a DC set by the GM at churches of the same faith to get free lodging, healing, and other services at the GM's discretion. Initiate

of the Gods also works when dealing with members of the same faith, though they will likely be able to offer less than a fully supplied church. At the GM's discretion, Initiate of the God will also work with worshipers of related deities.

Cultist	Preacher	Fanatic
<b>Mystagogue (EMP)</b>	<b>Divine Power</b>	<b>Blood Rituals (WILL)</b>
When in a settlement, a Priest can spend a day and roll Mystagogue at a DC based on the settlement to build a shrine to their deity that attracts people and converts them to their religion. The GM determines how many people join. Additionally, while within 20m of this shrine, the Priest can use the shrine as a Focus with a value of 3.	A Priest can become more in tune with their god, gaining 1 point of Vigor threshold per skill level in Divine Power up to level 9. At the 10th level in Divine Power, you raise your Vigor Threshold by 5 bringing it to a total of 16. Divine Power can be trained like any other skill.	A Priest casting a ritual can make a Blood Ritual check against the casting DC of the ritual. If they succeed, they can cast the ritual without required alchemical substances by sacrificing 5 HP in blood per missing unit of alchemical substance. This blood can come from others but must be spilled at the time of the ritual.
<b>Cult Mystery (WILL)</b>	<b>Divine Authority (EMP)</b>	<b>Fervor (EMP)</b>
At higher levels, a Priest is shown the inner workings of their religion and are privy to some of its secrets. The Priest's cult mystery depends on the type of religion they follow. Refer to the Cult Mystery table to know which one.	The peasants and common folk of the world see Priests as agents of the gods' will. A Priest can add their Divine Authority to their Leadership checks if they are in an area where their religion is worshiped. Even when outside such areas of worship, a Priest adds half this value, due to their presence	A Priest can roll Fervor against a target's current INTx3. On a success, the rallying power of the Priest's words grants 1d6 temporary health for every point rolled over the DC (maximum 5). This lasts for as many rounds as their Fervor x2 and only works once per target per day.
<b>Blessings (WILL)</b>	<b>Precognition (WILL)</b>	<b>Word of God (EMP)</b>
A Priest can bless a group of people through a 1-hour ceremony. At the end of the ceremony, they roll Blessings at a DC:16. For one day afterward, a number of people equal to the Priest's Blessings level gain bonuses as per the Blessings table.	At the will of the GM, a Priest can be overcome by visions of the future, sending them into a catatonic state for 3 rounds. After this time the Priest can roll Precognition at a DC set by the GM to decipher the visions that they are stricken by. Such visions are composed of symbolism and metaphors.	A Priest can roll Word of God to convince people that they are speaking directly for the gods. Anyone who fails to defend with Resist Coercion sees the Priest as a messiah and follows along as an apostle. A Priest can have as many apostles as their Word of God value. In combat, use bandit stats for apostles without stats.

## Settlement Table

Settlement	DC
Hamlet	22
Town	20
Small City	18
Capital	14

## Deities of the Witcher World

Type of Priesthood	Deities
Organized Churches	Eternal Fire, Kreve, Great Sun, Melitele, Prophet Lebioda
Old Gods	Dana Meadhbh, Epona, Freya, Lilvani, Morrigan, Nehaleni, Veyopatis
Dark Cults	Coram Agh Tera, Svalblod

## Guiding Your Apostles

The apostles gained through the Word of God ability genuinely believe that you are the conduit of whatever deity you follow. While this makes them incredibly loyal it can sometimes be difficult if you try to use them for your own gain as they will expect you to act in accordance with the doctrine and teachings of their deity.

Any time you give a truly strange or uncharacteristic command to your apostles, you must make a Word of God check at a DC set by the GM. If you fail, your apostles will still carry out the command but a seed of doubt has been planted in their minds. On the third consecutive time you are forced to make this check and you fail your apostles become disillusioned and leave you. If your third failure is a fumble your apostles will brand you as a heretic or a false messiah and attack you.

Examples of conflicts of interest include: commanding followers of Melitele to torture or kill seemingly undeserving people, commanding followers of the Eternal Fire to save or aid Elderfolk or mages, commanding followers of the Great Sun to go against the word of the Nilfgaardian Emperor, etc. In most cases, the teachings of each deity is fairly clearly spelled out in their description but if there is any confusion the GM has final say on what is and isn't a conflict of interest.

## Cult Mystery

Type of Priesthood	Cult Mystery
Organized Churches	The Priest has been initiated into the higher workings of your church. They can add their Cult Mystery level to their Initiate of the Gods checks.
Old Gods	The Priest has been shown the ways of old magic. When they craft a ritual, they can roll both a Cult Mystery check and a Ritual Crafting check and take the highest of the two.
Dark Cults	Secrecy is key. When someone tries to discern the Priest's true faith or their motives through magic, they must roll against the Priest's Minor Mystery check. If they fail, the Priest makes them believe what they choose. Against non-magical scrutiny, the Priest can add their Cult Mystery level to their Deceit checks.

## Blessings

Type of Priesthood	Blessing
Organized Churches	The Priest empowers their followers with the divine authority of their church. On a success, they gain a +4 to Leadership and +4 to Reputation.
Old Gods	The Priest empowers their followers with a blessing that shields their mind and bodies. On a success, they gain a +3 to SP and +2 to Resist Magic.
Dark Cults	The Priest empowers their followers with a blessing of celerity. On a success, they gain a +4 bonus to Stealth and Initiative.



# Wine or Wisdom

1270, Loc Grim • Transcribed by Alec Von Karst

Glynnis straightened her sleeve for the third time, smoothed her hair, and endeavored not to give an empty room any sign she was intimidated.

It had been nearly half an hour since the young servant, neatly clad in their approved black uniform, had escorted her into this haven of wealth and calculated displayed power. She was calling upon Incandescent Bertrand de Grym, patriarch of the Summer Capital of the Nilfgaardian Empire. Glynnis idly wondered if that was his given name or adopted from the city to cement his position.

De Grym's study was a medley of rich, honeyed tones and plush comfort. Bookshelves lined one whole wall, filled with leather-bound treatises and collections of sermons. The windows' subtle tint threw golden light across the room, and they were thick enough that the street noise couldn't enter this sanctuary. The Incandescent was far above the petty concerns of the populace.

Glynnis sighed inwardly, where it wouldn't show. The chanting of the service de Grym had been presiding over had long since faded. She recognized the delay for what it was; not a power-play, that implied competition. He was making certain Glynnis knew where she, and by extension, her school, stood in the grand scheme. Something she had learned over her two centuries; humans did like to assert their dominance.

After roughly another age of the world, the door opened and in strode the gentleman himself. Incandescent Bertrand was tall, solidly built, and with a face just lined enough to convey an air of authority and an expression of benevolent condescension.

At first glimpse his hair appeared a silky, flowing golden blonde, falling to his shoulders, but as he entered his room, he lifted the ceremonial wig off and passed it back to his servant without a glance. The youth smoothed a few stray hairs and set the wig carefully upon the stand on the Incandescent's desk. Silently, the servant departed but almost at once returned with a burnished silver tray, bearing a carafe of wine, glasses, and a matching silver fruit basket laden with oranges and golden grapes. They arranged these on the central table with practiced speed before retreating, bowing to the Incandescent's back as he examined himself in the mirror.

"So, Director Var Treharne—Glynnis? What brings you to my humble suite? Ah, please, sit. Help yourself to wine and fruit, you look in need of refreshment."

He gestured to the smaller of two armchairs, taking the more commodious seat opposite and self-consciously straightening his belted robe of office. The style left ample room at the chest to show the tailoring of his dark velvet doublet and the heavy porcelain mask that was both a symbol and ceremonial wear. The shiny white face with its gold-rimmed eyes and rayed Sun upon the forehead stared at Glynnis. She did as requested, pouring a measure of the pale wine, the jug chilled enough to leave a sheen of water on her hand. Sitting bolt upright in her chair, she gripped the stem of her glass and tried to appear composed.

"Incandescent Bertrand, thank you for agreeing to meet with me. I value the friendly relations between Gweison Haul and the church, and it is regarding my school I wish to speak."

"Indeed? Are you experiencing difficulties? I'm sure the work you do there is appreciated." De Grym poured a large glass of wine, snagged a few grapes, and relaxed into his chair.

"No difficulties—not yet, at least" Careful woman; remember, the church is never in the wrong. "It is about some of my students."

"Rambunctious young lads?" Amusement filled de Grym's words. "I'm not sure I can help you if they're lacking proper discipline."

Glynnis stood on a retort, keeping her tone level. The stem of the

glass was sharp under her fingers and she deliberately relaxed her hand.

"Lads and ladies, yes. But their discipline is not a problem to bring to you, Incandescent. This is more a matter of teaching styles. It has come to my attention that several of my students have been attending meetings with your initiates. I'm concerned that this may distract them from their lessons."

"Surely outside their studies, your students' time's their own? I'd have thought opening their minds to all the possibilities their talents may offer would be of interest to you? Unless, of course, you fear the competition."

There was a smile in the man's voice, but it didn't quite touch his eyes. Glynnis nearly rolled hers, refusing to step into the trap. Respect the man who could ruin your reputation forever...or worse.

"I would not dream of suggesting we compete for these children. Merely that by showing them a different method of wielding Magic, they may become confused at a critical moment to the detriment of themselves and those around them."

"My dear Glynnis, if they're distracted in your lessons, perhaps that's a sign they're better suited to a career within the Church. We welcome all truly questioning minds here, and the Great Sun can warm their hearts and feed their souls in a way dry book-learning never could." He examined a grape and popped it in his mouth before continuing.

"You needn't fear that they will waste their magical talents, far from it! By delivering miracles to the people, we show the power and righteousness of the true faith. The well-trained mind, schooled in the rituals of the Church, can be a beacon of sheltering power and show the benevolence of the Emperor. You Gweison Haul types are, perhaps, a little too dangerous to ever truly hold the trust of the populace."

I know a clamp-down when one is threatened, Bertrand, never fear. I can also spot an opening.

"I agree! The trained mind, with proper guidance, is absolutely the ideal tool for both our needs. I merely fear that your initiates, fervent though they are, may not be sufficiently experienced to deliver the detailed instruction my students require in deciding where their talents truly lie."

"May I, therefore, propose a compromise, Incandescent? I would not dream of placing barriers between my pupils and the Church but perhaps organized classes with your representatives, making use of our learning facilities, would be less ad hoc than young preachers practicing on children even younger than themselves?"

De Grym leaned forward, a beatific smile on his face.

"My dear girl, that'd be ideal! The different arms of the Church can offer their teaching, finding those among your students, gifted with the blessings of the divine while they're still young. It'll be simplicity itself to identify those better suited to a life of service, freeing you and yours to deal with those for whom the confines of your lessons are a better fit. I'll speak with my subordinates and make arrangements immediately"

Glynnis shifted a little uncomfortably, "These classes would need supervision by tutors from Gweison Haul, Incandescent"

He waved his hand, brushing her concern aside.

"Yes, yes, I'm sure you can arrange that for yourself. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to attend a meeting of the local landowners. Tedious, but that is the price one pays to accomplish good works, and this interview has run a little longer than I expected."

The Incandescent downed his wine in a mouthful, rose and, smiling, indicated the door. Moments later, Glynnis was standing in a stark stone hallway, as the servant waited to escort her out. Off-balance and wrong-footed, it left her wondering as to exactly what she had agreed.



# Druids

*Druids are fascinating but they remind me how far from the natural world our civilization has brought us. Predator and prey, drought and flood, man and beast; these are the concerns of the druids and their rituals are stark as a bloodied fang in their maintenance of the balance.*

—Glynnis var Treharne



**Many people, North and South, who cannot use magic fear it for its power and potential misuse. This is a sensible fear. But they fear the flashy mages and the blood-and-thunder preachers. All this time druids are wandering through the woods, talking to trees, and hand-raising baby bunnies, or whatever else they do. No one knows exactly how many Circles of Druids exist these days but there are likely fewer now than before the War.**

Druidism isn't strictly a religion. They do not proselytize for converts and they do not hold services. They are protectors of the land itself, or should I say, forests. I'm not aware of any druids of the deserts, moors, or barren mountain tops. They have no fixed temples or houses of healing, preferring instead to gather around ancient trees and standing stones. Their circles, under the control of a Hierophant (male) or Flaminika (female) take place deep in forests. It would be easy then to say they must be on the decline.

However, there are still many deep forests that dot the Continent and many of them show signs of magical beings within them. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that there are druids who ally themselves with the dryads of the Brokilon forest or perhaps hide amongst the bogs and mires of Angren or the high mountain woodland of the Blue Mountains.

Koviri merchants have mention dealings with druids across the Dragon Mountains and there are numerous stories of travelers encountering hermits living in the deep forests of the Continent. With all of this, do you truly believe that there are so few circles of druids? I believe there are far more than we know, probably in the deep forests of Angren, Kaedwen, or other sparsely populated nations. I hear the argument that humankind is pushing back the boundaries of the wild and that the forests are dwindling. However, thanks to the wars, villages on the edges of the great forests are destroyed by armies and many of the countryside's inhabitants have deserted their farms for the safety of city walls. I would not be surprised to find that there are sects of druids seeking to reclaim the forests and lands that humanity cultivated so long ago.

Druids, when encountered, appear to be simple children of nature. Protecting the forest creatures and writing many aggrieved letters to local authorities all the way up to the kings. Their cause is to care for the wilds and promote balance between of nature. Many may never see them as they go about maintaining the balance deep in the forests. Others, I have heard, are in nearly constant contact with isolated forest communities. It seems that where humanity intersects more thoroughly with the wild and the rule of kings

## Druids of the Continent

*"You may, dear reader, be tempted to point to the few circles of druids present on the Continent. I would be quick to mention that thanks to the ravages of the Nilfgaardian War, many areas of wilderness have been destroyed and likely many druids have been run out or killed. As of yet, our research suggests that the great oak Bleobheris survives with the druids that tend it. But an expedition beyond the front line is something I am most definitely not interested in.*

—Brandon of Oxenfurt

## Brandon's Druid Theories

*"Ya may have noticed, Brandon's got some opinions about druids. Heh, I'd say it's all about the outlook. Personally, I've never cared that much for 'progress' and 'society' and all those high-minded ideas. Heh, If ya ask me, the Druids are just some folks tryin' to uphold the old ways and keep humans from ruinin' the land for everybody. But Brandon's all about 'civilization' and 'advancing' society. I'd guess to him the druids are a threat to all that. Seems to be the way of things for plenty of folks. The druids are a reminder of the old ways and they stand in the way of progress."*

—Rodolf Kazmer

is weakest, the druids take it upon themselves to adjudicate disputes and settle quarrels. The most visible of these druids are in Skellige where they are even consulted on the ascension of the next king. The belligerent Skelligers live close to the land. They are more likely to fish and raid than try to subdue nature. Druids can and do make these livelihoods safer by affecting the weather and the sea. The Hierophant of this circle was at one time a member of the courts of both Skellige and Cintra. I imagine druidic magic is a great aid on sea raids to Nilfgaard. On the other hand, in Angren, whenever there are mishaps and accidents in the logging camps druidic magic is blamed.

The magic of the druids is similar to the magic of Melitele and Freya. But as protectors of the forests and the balance, they are attuned to mobilize the powers of wind and wave, and all living things. In this way their spells are a little like the invocations of the priests except that what they worship is primeval life itself. They also manifest magic through the use of sigils, symbols inscribed in the air or on objects to focus magic on that spot. These are often protections of that section of the forest that impede those who may come to loot and destroy the plants and animals. I've heard that they use this kind of protection at the breeding sites of endangered animals and the headwaters of salmon streams. Do not touch or deface these sigils as they are said to be able to protect themselves.

Druids do not distinguish between humans, elves, dwarves, or other elderfolk. They say that their magic is older than the elves, that it was here before the dwarves, and will remain when they are gone. There is no verifiable reference to druids sacrifices any living thing, including humans. Though I would not put it past them.

—Brandon of Oxenfurt

## The History of Druids

James Rufus of Oxenfurt, a scholar writing long ago before the University was formally established wrote: "After the ships landed and humans spread out into the dark forests of the river valleys, they came across stone altars and crude stone arches centered around huge oak trees. The sigils and writing on these stones is as of yet still undecipherable but we believe that they were created by the Wozgor or another, earlier human population which had died out prior."

While very little of this information can be substantiated, rumors persist that druids have been on the continent far longer than humanity. They have always lived apart from cities as they value the peace and harmony of the wild

lands. These rumors suggest that in the early days, just after the Conjunction, members of earlier human societies such as the Dauk and Wozgor, became druids. Deep in the forests these druids formed circles, led by a Hierophant (male) or a Flaminika (female) surrounding ancient and venerable oak trees. They shepherded the natural world and guided small communities of humans around the dangers of the Continent to keep them from being destroyed. Much like the rest of the early humans the final fate of these speculated druids is largely unknown but modern scholars believe that they left signs of their presence among the menhirs of the Dauk and Wozgor which carried forward their teachings.

When the next wave of humans came to the Continent they faced the same harsh conditions and were also preyed upon by the many monsters that prowled the land. In response, the druids of this era took up the same mantle that the druids of old would have, attempting to strike a balance between allowing nature to run its course and stopping humanity from being utterly wiped out. These druids did not see all of the monsters of the Conjunction as anathema to their cause and perceived some of them as new facets of nature. While they would slay monsters to protect the balance of nature, there were very few that considered the existence of the monsters to be unnatural. More often, druids took up roles as advisors to chieftains, sages who kept the knowledge of their people, or healers of the ill.

As humanity spread across the land, beginning to build cities, farms, mines, and other foundations of civilized society, the druids' role began to change. Humans were no longer in need of protection and instead, other aspects of nature were being encroached upon by humanity. The druids counseled the rulers of humanity to stop their reckless expansion but they were labeled as "archaic" and accused of slowing the progress of society. Gradually, their place in society was taken over by mages who were more pragmatic and less interested in preserving the balance. By the beginning of the 13th century, the druids had been pushed out, relegated to their remote circles, deep in the wild.

Over the years, druids worked to regain their influence over the courts of the Continent but their pleas tended to fall on deaf ears as few monarchs besides the kings of Skellige would halt the progress of their nation for a seemingly nebulous, mystical balance. By the year 1272, the majority of druid live in their circles, tending to the surrounding wildlife, communing with the natural world, and sending chastising missives to kings, merchants, and mages who are despoiling nature, fully knowing that they lack the resources or influence to do much about these injustices.

## Types of Druids

The people who become druids are all drawn to the wild in some way. But there are many types of druids. The fledgling druid will gravitate to the lifestyle they require.

The druid that most people expect is a shabbily dressed servant of the woodland, standing in the way of society and trying to drag everyone back to the old ways. They have a deep connection to a particular forest and spend a lot of time meditating to be in touch with the woods. In their spare time they may foster fawns or care for young children who have become lost. They remain separate from human society and only communicate with the other druids of their circle. When they do communicate with outsiders it is usually by way of long letters demanding that a settlement cease its logging, hunting, trapping or other ravages of the natural world. And there are some druids like that. Usually, they are people who have escaped from desperate lives in human society, and they wish to immerse themselves as deeply as possible in the tranquility of a healthy forest. These are the druids that will most discourage human settlement in the forest, believing that humans have outgrown their place in nature and must be stopped from expanding further. The areas around their meeting grove may be set with natural deterrents from thorny brambles to irritating plant-life but these deterrents are rarely too dangerous. In rare cases, as these druids are pushed farther and farther into the wilds, they start to develop a paranoid outlook which can make them dangerous. There are rumors of druids who take a more “active” role in the protection of nature: accosting hunters and lumberjacks who enter their woods, lighting fire to lumberyards and hunting lodges, and using their magic to empower the land to fight for itself. These rumors are almost entirely fabrications, concocted by merchants and nobles looking to demonize the nature priests, but every few decades a small group of these more isolated druids gets fed up with the ambiva-



lence of humanity. It's not usually long before the druids in question are run out or killed but they leave a great deal of chaos in their wake which fuels the rumors of wild, dangerous forest people. Being traditionally pacifists, the majority of druids consider these eco-warriors to be dangerous radicals, who have lost sight of the way of nature.

The majority of druids, however, are peacefully, practical stewards of nature who prefer the tranquility of the forest and feel responsible for the creatures who live there. They are prodigious walkers and are familiar with each tree and dell, sometimes saluting them by name. These individuals care for the forest by healing trees and animals with magic,



herbalism, and the accumulated lore of hundreds of years. They manage the growth of the trees, maintaining openings for the small plants to grow, prune back or remove diseased plants, and find water in times of drought. They protect the gravel beds where the salmon spawn and dress the wounds of injured animals, but they do not interfere with the relations between predator and prey. The only time these druids take up arms is when the balance of nature is greatly threatened. If a griffin moves into their forest, this is the way of nature. But if a fiend gets loose in the woodland and devastates tens of acres of forest, massacring anything it comes across, then the druids will intervene. Even in this drastic circumstance, the druids would first attempt any means necessary to calm the beast or lure it away, only resorting to violence as a last resort. The druids of the Continent are often considered pacifistic to a fault, loathing the idea of taking a life unnecessarily. They are often content to nurse and maintain their great oaks and pass down the ancient wisdom of their people through songs and poetry.

In small, rural communities, druids sometimes still maintain their ancient roles as spiritual leaders and counselors. While they belong to a circle, they mediate between the village and the forest, making sure that the farm plots, charcoal makers, and fur hunters do not upset the balance and that the native beasts of the forest do not terrorize the villagers. They teach the people their foraging and healing skills, why different animals and plants, exist and how they contribute to the wholeness of the forest. They bless the fields before planting and after the harvest and sometimes bless babies in the name of the forest. In most cases, these druids are better educated than the people of the villages and they keep oral histories of the settlement. The children of the village receive an education if they show interest, intelligence, and the ability to memorize long poems and songs. Many bards get their start this way and traveling minstrels sometimes visit these circles to learn the tales and legends of the land.

Among most druid circles there are one or more druids that are particularly gifted with druidic magic. Frequently these druids rise to be the hierophant or flaminika, but not always. These more magically-inclined druids use their command of nature to help their circle achieve its larger goals such as building sanctuaries for endangered species, regrowing damaged woodland, and cultivating stores of herbs for healing salves. To the druid's way of thinking, magic is found in the energy of the nature is not an alien force to be feared or controlled. Each circle has its own magical traditions, and its own way of utilizing magic but unlike other magic users, druids do not flaunt their abilities to those outside.

## Druidic Interactions

The druids of the Continent have much to offer and in many cases they are willing to offer their bounty under the right circumstances. As long as a settlement is willing to follow the old ways and help maintain the balance of nature, most druid circles are happy to tend to their wounded, help them with their crops. However, their staunch beliefs and rigid codes of conduct often make interaction with other people tricky.

While the druids possess great knowledge regarding certain aspects of the natural world their knowledge is sometimes antiquated and many druids are unwilling to accept that fact. Druidic healers sometimes have disputes with university trained doctors who question their methods. These druids see their healing, whether by herbalism, magic, or folk medicine as an indisputable gift. They do not ask why white thistle makes childbirth easier because they know it has done so for generations and there's no reason for that to have changed. They maintain the knowledge of their ancestors and pass it on, unquestioned. This stubborn adherence to the old ways can drive modern doctors to distraction, especially since most often the druid's knowledge is correct.

This rigid outlook on life has hampered the druids as most circles remain unwilling to compromise with the human societies that encroach on their forests. Many circles have been destroyed by wars, by human expansion, and by the distrust of the druids by those in power. Their sacred oaks fall, and while some find a home in another circle, many are left wandering. Some of these displaced druids spend years traveling, some carrying an acorn of their great oak in the hopes of planting a new circle in some far off land where humanity may not reach them. Despite the destruction of their circles, druids displaced by war generally don't hold a grudge against either party in the conflict. To them, the wars raging across the Continent are no different from the territory disputes between animals in the wild. After all, as much as they fight the idea humans, elves, and all other sapient races are animal just like the wolves and deer.

Those druids who do get involved in politics are few and far between. As of the moment there are only two places where a druid is able to bend the ear of a monarch to any great degree. In Toussaint, the Duchess Anna Henrietta has signed treaties with the Circle of Caed Myrkvid, allowing them to act as shepherds of the beautiful wildlife of the region. Toussaint's forests are breathtaking and their famous vineyards grow in harmony with the plants and

animals native to the land partially thanks to the druids. Meanwhile, off the coast of the Continent in Skellige the people have always lived close to the land. The worship of Freya compliments the druids' beliefs and the Circle of Gedyneith is one of the oldest of all the existing circles. The druids of that circle know many weather magics and are always consulted before large fleets take any action. Hierophant Ermion was also an important advisor to the royal family of Cintra until the country was overrun by Nilfgaard.

On the other hand, the druids of Angren are forever challenging the locals about deforestation. When under attack by the foresters, the druids of Caed Dhu withdrew into the



## Lost Circles

In the wake of the 3rd Northern War a number of smaller druid circles have been destroyed or uprooted. It is hard to say how many were disturbed but the numerous refugees flocking to the great oak Bleobheris would indicate many.

dark, dangerous forests of southern Angren. Rumors state that they had struck a deal with the terrifying wildlife of the forest and lumberjacks or hired swords that followed them didn't emerge unscathed. Eventually the for-esters set fire to the forest and waited for the druids to emerge. They were disappointed as the druids had snuck out through the thickest forest and traveled to join the circle of Loch Monduirn; but that circle also eventually fell, forcing many druids to travel south to settle in Caed Myrkvid.

Notably, there are no druidic circles associated with the Dwarven stronghold of Mahakam or the Elven lands of Dol Blathanna. Besides that fact that the Dwarven holds in Mahakam have little natural vegetation to protect and the elves traditionally do not partake in farming, the cultures of the dwarves and elves don't lend themselves to the need or desire for druids. Dwarves and elves both respect nature and some revere Dana Meadbh but they don't inherently see nature itself as divine or worthy of worship. Additionally, since member of both elder

racess count their lives in centuries, they are more prone to thinking long term than the short lived humans. The dwarves and elves are aware of the long term effects of over-harvesting the natural world and are much more likely to live to see those consequences. To combat this, both races devote a great deal of effort to natural conservation making druids largely unnecessary.

It is difficult to tell if there are druid circles in the Nilfgaardian lands besides Caed Myrkvid but if there are that they are likely in Maecht, Ebbing, or Mag Turga. Nilfgaard made swift work of Maecht, avoided large sections of the Pereplut marsh in Ebbing, and peacefully absorbed Mag Turga. All three provinces have large areas of wilderness that could easily hide a druid's circle and in most circumstances, the Nilfgaardians see the benefit of having druids in their lands. That being said, Nilfgaardian officials will not halt their expansion for the sake of the druids. Mag Turga and Angren are both important sources of lumber and ore which are used throughout the Nilfgaardian empire.

*“There are enclaves of elves within the Empire who largely govern themselves. Though I have never had the opportunity to visit them, my father would talk about them from time to time. I can't say that they have druids per-say but in many ways some elven sag-es may seem similar to the druids of the Continent.”*

*—Glynnis var Treharne*

# The Circle of Gwyn Carn

Beyond the Dragon Mountains lies a frozen land of deep forests and windswept plains. The people who live in this land, known as the “People of the Far North” are only ever seen by the merchants of Kovir and Poviss and the Hengfors League. Every now and again hunters from the Far North cross the Dragon Mountains to trade. In these brief meetings they appear to be human with a sturdy appearance and a gruffness to their manner. It is clear to anyone who meets a Far Northerner that they hail from an inhospitable realm likely not meant for human settlement. And this is where the Circle of Gwyn Carn comes in.

In more hospitable terrain, druids act as the moderators of civilized expansion, keeping humans and other races from destroying the delicate balance of the natural world. In the Dragon Mountains and beyond the role of these magic users changes ever so slightly to help civilization survive at relative peace with nature that would destroy them. The Circle of Gwyn Carn is located deep in the Dragon Mountains, in a dark coniferous forest. The druids make their home in various natural shelters around a tremendous oak tree called Elvanen. While very few know how the circle was founded, many scholars who have interacted with the circle share a vague story told to them by the druids about human settlers of the Dauk and Wozgor societies who traveled north across the Dragon Mountains and were met by a white dragon called Galvalesteith who had bent the beasts of the mountains to her whim. Specifics are hazy but it is said that the first druids of the Circle of Gwyn Carn slew Galvalesteith in defense of the valley and their brothers and sisters and buried her body where she fell from the sky. As they watched, a great oak sprouted from the burial mound and grew high into the sky, sheltering the travelers from the snow. The druids had done a great service to the spirit of the mountains and in turn the mountains had welcomed them. And so, the druids created their home around the burial mound and the great oak to shepherd the Dragon Mountains and all beyond.

In early years, it’s speculated that the druids of Gwyn Carn were instrumental in helping the settlers of the Far North survive in the frozen wastes, teaching them how to live in harmony with the dangerous terrain and sheltering them against deadly monsters and terrible storms. It is said that this led to the modern society of the people of the Far North; focused on hunting and gathering and very skilled at traversing the wild taiga. The druids worked less to reign in the expansion of civilization and more to help civilization live in relative harmony with the land with druids acting as tribal councilors and spiritual leaders. Many believe that the humans who exist beyond the Dragon Mountains today may be remnants of the Dauk and Wozgor who were shepherded by the original druids of the circle of Gwyn Carn but that is difficult to say as both societies appear to have either died out or been assimilated by the Nordlings.

When more Nordlings made their way north and began to settle in the mountainous regions that would become Kovir & Poviss, they came to a truce with the druids who would help them to settle in the mountains and guide them in living harmoniously with nature. However, this agreement would be largely broken when great deposits of ore were found under the mountains and humans began voraciously mining them out. Now, the Druids of Gwyn Carn live deep in the mountains attempting to rein in mining efforts by the humans and facilitate interactions between the Nordlings and the people of the Far North.

## The Death of Galvalesteith

The story of the druids slaying the dreaded white dragon Galvalesteith has been corroborated by at least two scholars from Kovir & Poviss, but it is worth mentioning that this story was circulated throughout the region during a time when the slaying of dragons was seen as a valiant endeavor undertaken by great heroes and its spread was largely supported by the Jeweler’s Guild of Kovir & Poviss. One documented interview with a druid of the Circle of Gwyn Carn does exist which seems to refute this story, claiming that Galvalesteith, was instead a protective being who struck a pact with the druids. In return for the druids looking after the mountains Galvalesteith allowed the settlers to pass through the mountains safely. In this account the “White Burial Mound” from which the Circle gets its name was created to honor Galvalesteith upon her death.

## Outsiders

To many druids, the Crow Clan Druids are largely seen as outsiders. Not to be feared or demonized but not necessarily trustworthy. Even for druids, watching their kin cawing and shrieking at a bird is unsettling.

## Morrigan

Much as Freya and Melitele are often compared by Continental scholars, the Crowmother is often compared to the ancient Continental goddess, Morrigan. Morrigan is also a goddess heavily associated with crows and her primary temple on the Continent is located around a large sacred tree.

# The Crow Clan

Among the druids of Skellige there are those who push the boundaries of magic, beyond what their brothers and sisters would deem safe or necessary. These druids are often among the Crow Clan, an unorthodox group of druids who exist on the outskirts of the Skelliger Druid culture.

While the druids of the Circle of Gedyneith focus their efforts on the shepherding of the natural world and the clans of Skellige, the Crow Clan seems to focus entirely on a quest for esoteric, hidden knowledge. Druids of this clan believe that the Druids of Gedyneith are cowards who have chosen to close their minds and exist in ignorance for fear of allowing themselves to be enlightened. They believe that the world holds secrets yet undiscovered by humanity and that the key to unlocking them is in communion with the noble crow. The crow stands as an observer of the world at large, gathering in great flocks and sharing knowledge of the world we see and the world beyond. Acolytes of the Crow Clan are quick to claim that much like cats, which can sense and absorb ambient magic, crows too have a form of 6th sense which allows them to see into a realm beyond human understanding.

To bolster their connection to the crows, Crow Clan druids study extensively in alchemy and Crow Clan alchemists are skilled and often quite radical, mixing elixirs of toxic Crow's Eye Rhizome and trying to attain alchemically induced trances to commune with the birds. Many Crow Clan Druids will even go so far as to work tirelessly to learn the complex language of the crows. It's not unusual to find one of their number attempting to communicate with a group of crows roosting nearby. It is still largely unknown to outsiders how effective this communication is, but the Crow Clan does claim to have gained great insight into matters beyond human understanding.

At this point, the Crow Clan's obsession with crows is apparent but its origin isn't. The foundation of this obsession can be traced back to the Flaminika of the Crow Clan, known as the Crowmother. The Crowmother is an ancient woman who has been the Crow Clan's leader since its inception centuries ago. The Crowmother is looming and frightening, with feathers sprouting from her skin and scant clothing that appears to be made of leather with a peaked hood and a veil covering the top of her face. To most she would appear monstrous but to the Crow Clan she is their leader and a maternal figure.

The Crowmother is easily the oldest and most powerful Flaminika in recorded history and rumors abound as to her origin. Some say that she is a crow who took human form, while others say she's just a powerful druid who learned how to speak with the crows. Still others believe the Crowmother is a powerful relict who has made her home on Skellige because of the lack of witchers and the more zealous Skelligers believe that she was once a powerful deity cast down to the realm of mortals by Freya centuries ago. Whatever her origin, the Crowmother is a force to be reckoned with and her clan of druids are unwavering in their pursuit of knowledge.

When Crow Clan druids interact with others it is usually in the process of gathering ingredients for elixirs or advising local community members. As with many other druids it is rare that a Crow Clan druid will leave their home, but they can be found wandering the roads of Skellige or even occasionally on the continent where they will often say they are following the guidance of the crows or the Crowmother. Unfortunately, they are usually unwilling to explain what that might mean for themselves or the other people around them. Luckily, these druids rarely cause serious trouble.

# The Circle of Bleobheris

In the dark forests north of Gors Velen stands the great oak, Bleobheris, believed to be the first tree on the Continent. Its broad branches shelter an enormous clearing which is the center of a druid circle which dates to before the human ships arrived. For a long time, the circle existed quietly, in a deep, dark forest surrounded by bogs and swamps. It is unknown exactly who made up this circle of druids but some speculate that it was a center of worship and society for early humans.

Eventually the Landing of Exiles brought new groups of humans who spread throughout the region, looking to build farms and villages. But the bogs and swamp lands could not be plowed, and groups of lumberjacks sent into the forests were run out again by wild animals. Eventually those few successful settlers sent brave individuals into the forest to parley with whatever was guarding the wilderness. They approached humbly and were met by the druids. An agreement was reached where the druids would help the settlers start some small farms in the bogs and swamp lands and allow the settlers to carefully manage a part of the forest and cut trees only as part of the management plan. In return the farmers supplied sacrifices for the altar and other trade items the druids might need. Over time this relationship flourished. The Druids healed the locals, blessed their fields, and protected them from dangerous forest creatures. Many of the halfling druids moved to live among the farmers, helping them with their fields and livestock. The locals protected the forest from outsiders but over time the area under Bleobheris' leafy canopy became a famous meeting place for any that honor the ancient oak. Anyone of any race is welcome in the circle as long as they keep the peace. People honor Bleobheris by posting letters and wishes on papers attached to the great oak. Because of the great history of the oak, even though it is out of the way, many famous bards have played under its enormous umbrella of limbs.

The fate of the Bleobheris circle is uncertain currently. War with Nilfgaard has decimated most of Temeria, but the forest still stands, and many refugees have been taken in by the druids. In fact, the refugees of many smaller druid circles destroyed by the war have also found their way to Bleobheris seeking shelter. Fortunately, the forest is not really on the way to any of Nilfgaard's goals and there is little to conquer so the circle has survived. The people of the area now cherish the druids who protect them from beasts and war. They flee to the forest to avoid press gangs who would take any men for the army. The druids' relationship with the forest helps them feed many whose homes have been destroyed. The druids teach the refugees how to tend and gather plants that can replace substances they now lack, including herbal substances that stop infection, salves that heal burns, cuts, and muscle aches, and even dyes for clothing. When bandits approach the forest, druidic magic allows the Hierophant to send them away with a loud threatening voice. In the very worst situations, the Hierophant can cast a plague on invaders. At this circle, as well as others, many people try to pressure the druids to use their magic to fight armies, but the druids' magic is based on their faith in the forest, not the world of man and the most they will do is foster peace.

In the few times military detachments or roving free companies have come to the forest of Bleobheris with violence in mind, they have been quickly turned away by the druid circle. One Nordling free company recounts tales of entering the forest after a group of refugees only to be met with a group of druids who used some powerful magic to make them sit down and negotiate.

## Halfling Druids

While halflings are famously magic deterrent and thus incapable of casting invocations or drawing sigils, they are also considered to be among the most nature attuned races besides the elves. There are a handful of halfling families who now serve among the druids of the Circle of Bleobheris, after having been run out of their homes after the Landing of the Exiles hundreds of years ago.

## Angrenian Tree Cats

One thing that the druids brought from Angren was a species of green and brown speckled, arboreal feline, endangered by logging. They are slightly larger than a house cat and make great companions for the druids.

## Wickermen

*“To my knowledge, the druids of Caed Myrkvid have rarely used this ‘ritualistic’ form of execution. Perhaps only once or twice from the stories of druids I have had the pleasure of encountering. It is truly a shame that they would feel the need to threaten it at all.”*

–Glynnis var Treharne

# The Circle of Caed Myrkvid

Caed Myrkvid lies in a valley in the mountains of Toussaint. Looking down upon it you see only a blanket of fog. It twists and curls in ways that remind you that it is not natural. If you have been to the dryad forest of Brokilon this would look familiar. Riding down through the fir forests, one descends through fog into a thick, damp forest of beech and alder, dotted with venerable oaks. Ferns and blackberry vines grow thickly between the trees and an unnamed river marks the boundaries of the druid’s sanctuary. Do not think to cross this river without good reason for the circle of Caed Myrkvid is probably the most powerful left on the Continent. Like most circles, it is ancient and was founded by people or races unknown before written history began. Its isolation meant that for centuries the Druids of Caed Myrkvid did not have to teach people how to live in harmony with nature and the land is so fertile that plants and mosses grow on top of each other. In a way, the druids here are more in service to the forest than to human settlers.

Most druids now in Caed Myrkvid are refugees from two other circles that existed in the north. The circle of Caed Dhu was in Angren on the bank of the Yaruga. But the druids suffered during the wars and the growing population wished to drive them out. After all, lumber is the “Angrenian Gold” that fuels trade in Angren and the lumberjacks weren’t interested in maintaining the balance. When driven out, the druids moved on to Loch Monduirn in Sodden. Sodden, of course, has had armies fighting back and forth over it many times since then and during one of these skirmishes the druids once again moved on bringing with them the refugees of the original Circle of Loch Monduirn. In 1267, the Caed Myrkvid circle accepted the Druids of Caed Dhu and Loch Monduirn as refugees. The refugees held a grudge against the human populations that drove them out and when one of their number became flaminika of Caed Myrkvid, the protections of the circle increased. As part of those protections the Druids of the Circle used a great deal of magic to create walking oak tree monsters that follow the directions of the druids.

This brings up one of the most controversial stories about druids. For years, humans who hated the druids spread the rumor that they captured invaders, jailed them in a huge wicker statue and then set the wicker on fire, burning their victims alive. This story was used against the druids for many years but apparently the new flaminika of Caed Myrkvid decided that if everyone spread these lies about them, then they would make it a reality to make sure no one attempted to push them out of Caed Myrkvid.

In their new home, the Druids of Caed Myrkvid have common dealings with the people of Toussaint which has been both beneficial and troublesome. Most notably, the great wines of Toussaint have always been aged in Beauclair Oak but harvesting the sacred oaks for wine barrels put the Cooper’s Guild at odds with the druids. At first this did cause friction as the druids refused to let woodsmen into the depths of the forest which in turn led to many calling to the Duchess to displace or destroy the circle. Fortunately, the rulers of Toussaint have long been fond of the unspoiled wilderness of the grove and the druids were able to prove themselves excellent caretakers by mitigating the catastrophe caused by the rerouting of the Sansretour River some years ago. And so, they struck a deal. Treaties were signed between Toussaint and the Druids of the Circle. The Groves of Caed Myrkvid were established as a sanctuary, fully autonomous in their internal affairs. The Cooper’s Guild is allowed to harvest oaks but only under strict supervision. Also, as part of the agreements the druids cultivate and harvest useful plants for the ruling house of Toussaint.

# The Circle of Gedyneith

Nowhere in the world are druids more respected than in the Skellige Isles. Where druids are generally seen as outsiders and agitators by Nordling rulers and Nilfgaardian officials, they are viewed as trusted advisors and spiritual mentors by the Jarls of Skellige. Druids are well respected, handsomely accommodated, and attentively heeded by the vast majority of Skelligers.

The largest and most influential group of druids in Skellige is the Druid Circle of Gedyneith, who take their name from a sacred oak growing on a hill on Ard Skellig. These druids are led by an elderly Hierophant named Ermion who has stood as the advisor to the throne of Skellige for many decades and traveled at the side of King Eist, King Bran, and Jarl Crach an Craite, even acting as a court-appointed druid for the Kingdom of Cintra when King Eist Tuirseach of Skellige married Queen Calanthe of Cintra.

Under Ermion's steady leadership, the Circle of Gedyneith has remained a stable pillar of Skellige society, often using their influence to temper the quick tempers and brash nature of the Skelliger people and help them survive in the harsh climate and terrain of the Skellige Archipelago. When two clans have reached a disagreement it's not uncommon for a druid to step in to help them settle the situation before any bloodshed. This doesn't always work but the attempt is made nonetheless. Even more commonly, farmers call upon druids to help them grow their crops, huntsman to guide them to good game, or sailors to calm the storms so they won't be dashed to pieces on the rocky shores of the islands. Many scholars believe that the Skelligers' reverence for the druids stems from the fact that the Skellige Isles are inherently wild and dangerous and without the aid of a person attuned to that dangerous wilderness, colonization of such terrain would be a daunting process which might end in disaster. In a realm where witchers are uncommon and mages are almost unheard of, druids are often instrumental in running off or slaying monsters that threaten the Skellige society. A great warrior seeking to slay an Ekhidna or a Kraken is likely to visit the Circle Gedyneith first for the counsel of the druids.

Indeed, the Druids of Gedyneith are such a foundation for the culture of Skellige that they are often intertwined with the other primary pillar of Skellige society, the Church of Freya. While the Druids of the Circle of Gedyneith do not pray to Freya for their magic and the Priestesses of Freya do not view the natural world around them in the same way as the druids, both faiths are able to come together in the care of nature and the Skelliger people. Freya herself is an ancient goddess who is often associated with certain aspects of nature and in that way, the relationship between the Church and the Circle is made easier. Often, a druid of the Circle of Gedyneith is also a worshiper of Freya and both groups gather at the great oak for worship and ceremonies including important weddings, and the crowning of the King.

When the King of Skellige dies, the wake has rocked the halls of Kaer Trolde, and the next King has been chosen, the Druids of Gedyneith and the Priestesses of Freya gather under the bows of Gedyneith along with the Jarls of the seven Skelliger clans and any who wish to attend to crown the king in a ceremony that began centuries ago with the first kings of Skellige. The new King will reign over all Skellige with the Hierophant of the Circle of Gedyneith as their trusted advisor, able to keep them on the right track and prevent them from making foolish mistakes and costly miscalculation.

## Skelliger Druids

Unlike their continental counterparts, Skelliger druids carry the same warrior's spirit that all Skelligers do. In most cases, if you have done something to upset a druid of the Circle of Gedyneith you will know about it immediately. Petitions and strongly-worded letters are far from a Skelliger druid's first choice when settling disagreements.

## Rough Skellige Seas

*"Heh, sailing the sea to Skellige ain't easy. Even if ya avoid the raider ships patrolling the Great Sea, you'll probably just wind up bein' capsized by enormous waves or smashed on the rocky shores of the isles before ya even see land. Some folks think the druids're the ones who made the seas so rough, but I can't say one way or the other. Heh, do my best to be on a ship as little as possible if I'm honest. Dwarves and the sea don't mix as far as I'm concerned."*

—Rodolf Kazmer

## Druids & Witchers

When humans first came to the Continent, druids would sometimes slay monsters to keep the human populations safe. They did this not out of a loyalty to humanity but a desire to maintain the natural balance and keep the humans from being wiped out. When humans expanded beyond the need for this help, the druids stopped protecting them. When humanity created witchers the druids saw this as a grave offense against nature. To most druids, a witcher is nothing more than a butcher, tipping the scales of balance in the favor of humans by sacrificing other creatures. The fact that witchers successfully drove many species to extinction during the Gold Age of Witchers only solidifies this belief.

# Wandering Druids

Many people believe that wandering druids are a product of the wars which have decimated many of the northern countries. The truth is that there have been wandering druids as long as there have been druids. In the early days, just after the Landing of the Exiles and before the humans got their feet under themselves, forests would have gone on forever, or as they say, a squirrel could have traveled from Poviss to Nilfgaard without its feet touching the ground. The menhirs and remains of druidic circles found by human scholars suggest that the druids would have been thriving and expanding. As the circles expanded, it's only natural that some druids would leave the circle to find another forest with another great oak. In these cases, the wandering druids might have been explorers, eager to know what was over the next hill. They may have been very opinionated and wished to start a circle following new beliefs. Some may simply have been dreamers, preferring the wilderness over the circle. These wandering druids likely wouldn't have respected any political boundaries and may have been an important source of news and spiritual solace as they traveled between the small villages in the forests and fields. Once again, we must remember that druids accumulated a lot of information; about the wild, about trees and animals, but also about the seasons and the stars. Their knowledge would have aided the first farmers and fisherman of humans as they began to build settlements up and down the great rivers. However, because the druids do not write down any of their laws, formulae, or oral histories we don't have too much information about those days. Once populations of elves and humans multiplied, the areas they controlled began to outnumber the deep and mysterious forests that the druids represented. By this time, the druids were primarily known for the celebrations they conducted at the solstices and equinoxes before more formal religions started to take hold. At these events, the druids blessed mistletoe collected from the oaks and it was used for fertility and as an antidote to poison.

Today there are refugee druids. Some join other circles but many refuse to abandon the lands they know so well even if their central oak has been cut down. They have found that trying to influence the dukes, aldermen, or bandits that rule the land doesn't get much done, except perhaps killing the druid. Compassion causes them to lend their knowledge and skills to aid the few people left in places like Velen to help them restart farms to feed the starving. Some bring a seedling oak from the forests and around it build circles marked by stones or carved posts. They help the pioneers who are trying to re-establish villages, and the villagers help the druids to replant the trees. The druids capture and heal wild animals that have been burned, stabbed, or trapped, to re-establish the circle that will maintain life going forward. These druids will use their magic to aid villages in danger of being utterly destroyed by monsters but only enough to re-establish the balance of nature. Once balance has been restored, they continue on their path.

These druids are perpetual wanderers. They do what they can for the wild lands they pass through, and they heal the sick or injured that they come across. While traveling, these druids may sometimes "liberate" animals kept under abusive conditions but always keep the balance in mind. Their relationship to the wild is very personal and very individual. Some wanderers see their trail as a series of pilgrimages to visit the existing druid circles where they may stay long enough to learn a new song or poem of lore. Most current religions do not consider druids a threat, so they are safe enough, but they are almost never seen in urban settings and they still tend to keep to themselves.

# The Druid Profession



## Social Standing

Druids are considered Equal in Skellige and in rural communities but are Tolerated by all other groups and Hated and Feared by those who hate magic.

## Rite of Oak and Mistletoe (INT)

A Druid learns very quickly how to harvest magically potent plants and turn them into a powerful focus for their magic which connects them to the land around them. A Druid can take a day and make a Rite of Oak and Mistletoe check against a DC specific to the area in which they find themselves to harvest the necessary ingredients. If successful, the Druid creates a Staff which works only for the Druid.

This staff functions exactly as a Staff (Witcher Core Rule Book, pg. 74) but its Focus value rises as they improve their Rite of Oak & Mistletoe value. Additionally, while the druid is carrying their staff, they gain benefits based on their Rite of Oak & Mistletoe value.

**“Life and Death, entwined as a braid.”**

–Axel Three-Eyes

*If ya talk to a druid they’ll tell ya they’re the guardians of nature and the ones who keep balance in all livin’ things. They’re empowered by their connection to the natural world to make sure nothin’ gets outta sorts. Stoppin’ poachers, protectin’ endangered animals from monsters, helpin’ rebuild after forest fires and whatnot. But that ain’t all. Heh, I’ve had my fair share of interactions with druids and they ain’t all the same. Most of the druids yer gonna see are initiates of nature who’re settin’ out to do all the stuff I mention before. They’re real attuned with the world around ‘em, can call on the forest to do all sorts of magical stuff, read the smallest signs in broken branches and bent grass to learn about intruders, and even make pacts with animals to help ‘em guide the wilderness. Then ya got yer sages. These are the druids who study the mystical arts and secrets of their circles. Also turns out they tend to be the ones who interact with other folk the most, heh. You’ll find ‘em actin’ as spiritual guides and counselors for backwoods communities. Tellin’ fortunes with rituals of blood and bones, and settlin’ disputes between all manner of folk. I hear the most powerful ones can even change their bodies to be more beast than man but I ain’t seen it. I suppose if ya live in the wild long enough and ya go seekin’ out all sorts of ancient knowledge it’s bound to have some effect on ya. Heh, the last ones are the ones city folk are most concerned about, the militant ones. Ya see, some druids get fed up with being peaceful all the time. Most folks couldn’t care less about nature long as they get theirs. Plus, ya gotta deal with all the damn monsters without a place in nature! These militant druids tend to designate an area as their sacred grove, usin’ the nature around ‘em to fend off loggers, poachers, and monsters; and if that fails, they’ll use their magic to grow a beast into a behemoth to run the invaders off.*

–Rodolf Kazmer

## Defining Skill

Rite of Oak and Mistletoe

## Vigor Threshold

2

## Magical Perks

2 Novice Invocations

2 Novice Rituals

2 Low Danger Hexes

## Skills

Awareness

Endurance

First Aid

Hex Weaving

Monster Lore

Persuasion

Ritual Crafting

Spell Casting

Teaching

Wilderness Survival

## Gear (Pick 5)

100 crowns of components

Bedroll

Belt Pouch

Candles (x5)

Cold Weather Clothing

Druid’s Sickle

Numbing Herbs (x3)

Pipe and Tobacco

Smelling Salts (x2)

Staff

# The Druid Skill Tree

## Defining Skill: Rite of Oak and Mistletoe (INT)

A Druid learns very quickly how to harvest magically potent plants and turn them into a powerful focus for their magic which connects them to the land around them. A Druid can take a day and make a Rite of Oak and Mistletoe roll against a DC specific to the area in which they find themselves to harvest the necessary ingredients. If successful, the Druid creates a Staff which works only for the Druid. This staff functions exactly as a Staff (Witcher Core Rule Book, pg. 74) but its Focus value rises as they improve their Rite of Oak & Mistletoe value. The Focus value begins at 1 at level 1 and raises by 1 every 2 levels to a maximum of 4 at level 7. At level 9, the Staff gains the

Greater Focus Effect. Additionally, while the Druid is carrying their staff, they gain the following benefits based on their Rite of Oak & Mistletoe value. At level 2, the Druid ignores all environmental penalties in overgrown or swampy terrain. At level 4, the Druid ignores the penalties for snow and ice conditions. At level 6, the Druid ignores the penalties for extreme heat conditions. At Level 8, the Druid ignores all penalties from being underwater. At Level 10, the Druid can roll to create a new staff by taking a full round action rather than 1 day. The DCs to create a staff are 14 when in a forest, 16 when in swampy areas, 18 when in mountainous regions, and 20 when at sea.

<b>Initiate</b>	<b>Mystic Sage</b>	<b>Militant</b>
<b>Nature Attunement</b>	<b>Lore Keeper</b>	<b>Beast Healer (CRA)</b>
A Druid can become more in tune with nature, gaining 1 point of Vigor threshold per level in Nature Attunement up to level 9. At the 10th level in Nature Attunement, the Druid's Vigor Threshold rises by 5 to a total of 16. Nature Attunement can be trained like any other skill.	Part of the initiation into a Circle is to memorize a plethora of topics that can come in handy to the Druid. They can roll their Lore Keeper Ability in place of any Wilderness Survival, Monster Lore, Human Perception, or Education checks.	Working often with animals in defense of nature, a Druid can tend to grievous wounds in their beastly companions. A Druid can roll Beast Healer to treat Critical Wounds inflicted on Beasts. This roll works exactly like the Doctor's Healing Hands ability.
<b>Read Nature (INT)</b>	<b>Blood and Bones (WILL)</b>	<b>Sacred Grove (WILL)</b>
When in a purely natural environment, a Druid can roll Read Nature at a DC set by the GM. On a success, the Druid reads the signs around them to learn everything that passed through that area within the last week and what each creature did in the area. Read Nature renders a very localized picture and cannot track things but gives a very detailed description of what happened in the area..	By casting bones in a bowl filled with blood drawn from a person, the Druid can alter the fate of that person. The Druid rolls Blood and Bones against a DC:10 + the target's WILL. On a success, the target can add half the Druid's Blood and Bones value to one check made before the next sunrise. On a failure, the target cannot benefit from this ability for 1 week. A single target can only benefit from this ability once per session.	A Druid can turn an area of nature into a sacred grove. This takes 1 hour, and covers an area with a 20m radius. The Druid takes the value of their Sacred Grove check and uses those points to add protections to their sacred grove. The Druid and anyone they specify are immune to these protections. This grove lasts for 3 months and the Druid can maintain a number of groves equal to their Sacred Grove value.
<b>Animal Compact (WILL)</b>	<b>Bestial Form</b>	<b>Grove Guardian (WILL)</b>
A Druid adds their Animal Compact value to any Wilderness Survival rolls they make to handle animals. The Druid can also make a compact with an animal. By taking a full round and rolling an Animal Compact check at a DC set by the GM, they can make one Beast or animal their ally for a number of hours equal to their Animal Compact value. Monsters are unaffected.	Unlocking ancient rituals allows the Druid to incorporate animal aspects into their body, transforming into a hybrid form without taking an action. For each 2 levels the Druid has in Bestial Form, they can add a new animalistic aspect to their hybrid form. Additionally, while in their hybrid form, the Druid can speak with animals of a type they have incorporated, and become Feared & Hated by non-druids.	By using an ancient ritual, the Druid can empower an animal or beast. By taking one full round and rolling Grove Guardian against a DC:10 + the creature's BODY, the creature grows to twice its size, its BODY increases by 5, and gains a +5 bonus to damage. This bonus affects the creature's Derived Statistics as well. The creature also becomes highly aggressive to enemies of the Druid. This lasts for 24 hours and during that time the druid's Vigor threshold is reduced by 5.

## Sacred Grove

Protection	Cost
<b>Overgrown Environment</b> The plants of the area grow wildly out of control, imposing a -2 to Dodge/Escape and Athletics checks.	2
<b>Lost</b> A magical fog settle around the grove which forces anyone entering it to make a Resist Magic DC:16 to enter the area. Targets who fail are turned around and immediately exit the grove.	10
<b>Poisoned Harvest</b> Deadly magic suffuses the plants of the grove causing crops grown in the area inflict the poison effect when eaten.	6
<b>Miracle Harvest</b> The plants of the grove grow a bountiful harvest doubling the number of plant-based ingredients gathered from each gathering check.	4
<b>Thorns</b> A wall of thorny vines sprouts at the edge of the grove and anything that passes through it must make a DC:16 Athletics check or suffer the Bleeding condition.	10

## Shapeshift

Animal	Effect
Boar	The Druid's skin thickens and grows bristles. The Druid gains +3 SP on all body locations.
Bear	The Druid's hands grow claws. The claws deal 4d6 slashing damage and have 10 REL. If damaged, these claws regrow at a rate of 1 REL per day.
Wolf	The Druid's ears grow to a point and their mouth and nose change into a snout. They gain the benefits of enhanced senses, granting a +1 to Awareness and allowing them to rack things by scent alone.
Panther	The Druid's legs become digitigrade and furry allowing them to leap twice their Leap distance by using your move action from a standing start. This leap can be made horizontally or vertically.
Serpent	The Druid grows poisonous fangs. They gain a bite attack that deals 3d6 damage and has a 100% chance to inflict the Poison Effect.
Owl	The Druid's eyes grow large and feathers sprout around their face. They gain Superior Night Vision.
Crow	The Druid's body sprouts black feathers and their mind sharpens granting a +1 to INT which can raise their INT above 10. Additionally, whenever they Reposition they can move their full SPD rather than half.

## Druid's Sickle

Name	Type	WA	Avail.	DMG	REL.	Hands	RNG	Effect	Conc.	EN	Weight	Cost
Druid's Sickle	S/P	+0	P	3d6	15	1	N/A	Grappling Bleed (30%)	L	1	1.5	540

## Druid's Sickle Diagram (Journeyman)

Name	Crafting DC	Time	Components.	Investment	Cost.
Druid's Sickle	17	5 Hours	Hardened Timber (x2), Resin (x1), Beast Bones (x2), Hardened Leather (x2), Sharpening Grit (x4), Steel (x2), Feathers (x3)	390	780



# Forces of Nature

1270, Nazair • Personal Journal of Glynnis var Treharne

I have arrived at the estate of Baron Amaury de Melin to investigate a gathering of druids from the surrounding area. There are... concerns as to their activities; so officially I am here to watch, assess, and take steps if need be. This journal will serve as the core of my report when I return to the Capital. Honestly, I feel the only reason a cadre of Mage Hunters isn't already en route is that there might be a legitimate cause for their rumored actions. Still, it's an exciting opportunity to see druidic workings in the wild, so to speak.

Therefore, I am sitting in an estate worker's tavern glorying in the name "The Pulpy Pith", sipping a glass of the local interpretation of Nilfgaardian Lemon. It's not bad, as these things go, de Melin at least has an eye for distillation. Most of the drinkers are clearly estate laborers, paying in wooden chits, and there are a few armed and uniformed guards at the best table.

Ah! The druids are arriving! And being met by the armed men... if there's a conflict, I had better stay out of it and introduce myself afterward to avoid complicating matters.

Later...

De Melin is not receptive to the druids' proposal to (and I quote) "restore the land you have violated". It was quite the sight, seeing how they resisted the blandishments of the guards and notably their captain, who is a nasty piece of work and clearly spends far too much time polishing his armor.

The druids' leader got the brunt of the brutal language meted out by the guards; the issue of them trespassing on the de Melin estate was raised, and he declaimed in a voice designed to carry that "the land cried out to me and I shall not be swayed". The captain postured but understandably refrained from overt conflict with eight druids on a mission.

I've introduced myself to the Circle's Hierophant, a brusque gentleman by the name of Johann Hollyrood. I indicated that I was here for purely academic reasons but he was having none of it. Rural this man may be, but he's no bumpkin. My admission to being an agent of Gweison Haul satisfied him, and he's allowed that I may join their pilgrimage, so I may better learn of their bond with the natural world. I would have hoped my heritage would have given me some credit there, but he pegged me as a woman of the city at first glance. His sole condition was that I should neither interfere nor use any Power of my own, lest it cause unfavorable resonances.

I must ask Johann if he really did hear the land crying out to him and if so, how? Dreams? Visions? A particularly talkative fox?

The source of the grievance is a dam erected by de Melin as an irrigation project. Lemons, it seems, require a constant source of water, and rather than tailor his crops to the land, he has dammed and redirected a tributary of the Sylte. Said tributary supplies swathes of wilderness now in a drought, so the druids are taking steps. A local solution will save the Empire the trouble of dealing with the problem should it start affecting citizens.

I hope the druids' plan is peaceful; it would be a shame to lose such a wealth of knowledge in the ways of Chaos.

The walk from The Pulpy Pith was not overlong but dry. In the interests of practicality, I'd opted for leggings under a traveling dress but regretted my choice after mere minutes of steady striding along the valley in which the estate sits.

It's worth recording the appearance of these druids as they do not dress in traditional Imperial or Mettinese garb. These nature-priests, men and women alike, wear pale tunics falling to mid-knee, of sturdy

fiber. These are closed at the neck and bicep with wide toggles carved of smooth, yellow bone. They clothe their feet in open boots with strapping reaching up the leg. At their shoulders, they wear mantles of fur, each of a unique color and texture. Many of the mantles show silver tips, indicating the animals died in advanced years.

Mounting a rise, we came upon the offending architecture. The dam was an ugly thing of wood, nails, and banked mud, and its reservoir had formed in a natural bowl, with a sluice directing the flow into trenches dug between the rows of a flourishing lemon grove beyond. It was only then I realized the dusty road we had trod to get here must be the correct course of the river.

Here, Johann directed me to this coppiced tree and told me to sit still and watch. Then, he deployed his people on either side of the dam in readiness for their ritual.

Each opened the sling bag they carried and pulled out first a large yellow lump the size of my two fists and then bundles of pungent herbs I could smell from my vantage point. They kneaded the lumps until they softened and gave off a potent scent of honey, then divided the beeswax into three, flattening them in their hands, and wrapped a portion of herbs within a cylinder. These crude candles were set around the dam, some molded onto the wood, some sitting on stones to either side. With a whisper of Power, each candle sprung to smoldering life, sending scented smoke billowing into the sky.

As an attentive student, here is where I sit, watch, and write.

Johann stands in the riverbed, before the dam. He raises his hands and begins a chant I regret I cannot hear in sufficient detail to record accurately. There's a note of command but also respect, and it's certainly answered. I can feel the power building as the smoke swirls into a spiraling column between the practitioners.

Later...

I was so engrossed in the working that I nearly missed the tread behind me: a guard from the inn. Conscious of both his drawn blade and of my need to not disturb the ritual I grabbed my staff, dropping this journal in the dirt.

An advantage of the staff is the striking distance compared to that of a sword. As the guard drove his blade towards my face I stepped to my right, bringing the crystal in its heavy mount down on his left wrist with a satisfying crack. While he was occupied, I reversed my staff, tapping his temple with the iron-shod butt, felling him like a tree.

Glancing around, I saw more men stealthily approaching the druids, swords drawn. I was ready to shout a warning—that might have distracted them but less than an attack, when the smoke spun out to a wider circle, whipping tunics and driving back the armed men, leaving them coughing.

At the dam, the planks were distorting, knotting around each other, carrying the candles upwards as they formed a column taller than a man. The water gushed free, almost taking Johann's feet from beneath him as the column sprouted branches, leaves, and a coating of bark that ran along its surface like melted wax. Within moments a healthy, mature tree stood on stilt-roots in the center of the reinstated river.

As the smoke cleared, the druids turned their attention to their ambushers, laying about with walking staves as they fought to clear their eyes. The fight did not last long, and they were gracious enough to allow them to drag away their wounded, including my contribution.

As they staggered away, Johann called after them:

"The land will restore itself. Do not rebuild this foul tool, lest we return with Nature's fire and storms, instead of her gentle growth."



# The Magical Mundane

*“To be born with enough control over magic to become a sorcerer or sorceress is extremely rare. The vast majority of magically talented children are born with just enough grasp of chaos to create a single, simple magical effect. Despite being well in the majority, these gifted individuals are often ignored by the greater magical society.”*

–Glynnis var Treharne



**When I was growing up in Oxenfurt there was a woman who could influence the weather of about 2 square blocks. I remember when there was a blizzard on the university campus the day that mathematics finals were to be held. Other than that, she was not well-liked. The inhabitants of Oxenfurt are very attached to their city and don't want people messing with it, even if it is to give them a warm spring day in January. Eventually she moved to a small village on the Temerian side of the river that specialized in growing squash. She was beloved and I hear the squash were better than they had ever been.**

There are many people, perhaps 1 in 500, that are born with a magical talent. They can do one thing. They can repair pot-ware. They can find lost geese. They might even be able to make wooden things unbreakable. They are usually not born into families with manifest magic. How these people live is just as varied as their talents. In the South, as we've mentioned before, these people often attend Gweison Haul long enough to be evaluated, trained, and often cataloged. If they are finders of lost waterfowl they will likely be forced to pursue a mundane career unless one province of Nilfgaard is suddenly plagued by missing geese. In the outer provinces of Nilfgaard, these people are sometimes hidden away by partisans in case one day their abilities might help in an uprising. These limited magic users have an advantage over mages. They do not need to be trained by a mentor. If left to their own devices they will not go mad. Even provincials who are not overly fond of Nilfgaard understand that people born with the potential to be mages must be trained the easiest place to find that training is Gweison Haul.

In the North, these limited magic-users can be seen in various ways. If they can increase the crop, or find water

by dousing, they will usually be seen favorably. If they can control one person for a few minutes or set things on fire from a distance, they are frequently called witches and become scapegoats in their communities. Many of these people leave their village or neighborhood and wander until they find a place where news of their ability has not reached and there they settle, probably hiding their ability. They are generally seen as pathetic by more powerful mages and they cannot learn to draw and use magic. Since Thanedd, rulers, like King Radovid, distrust all magic. Their belief flows out to the common people who are then more suspicious of magic in all its forms. Radovid's witch hunters do arrest people with limited magic. Some even specialize in it as it is an easy way to get bounties. In areas like southern Temeria and Aedirn, where authority is thin on the ground, the people are more open to anything that might help them.

One village might be able to make unbreakable boar spears. Another may build up a pottery trade that can replace their scorched fields. In these cases, the magic user can use their skill to create a good life for themselves. But sometimes notoriety is a curse. If word gets out that a child can charm fish to a boat, they may find themselves stolen in the night and chained to the mast of a fishing boat.

No one has developed a good explanation for why limited magic occurs and why one particular person receives it. One mage has suggested that perhaps these people were exposed to a large charge of magic as children or perhaps even in the womb. Some interpret it as a religious gift. Some that it is the result of extreme trauma. They suggest that limited magic is more common since the wars started. Certainly a lot of people are experiencing trauma in these times.

## Sold To The South

*“Grim business but I once had the honor of helping one of these little sprouts durin’ the second war. Heh, little Cidar-ian boy, no taller than me. Parents found out he could sharpen blades with his mind and tried to barter him off to the Black Ones for money or safety or such. Found the kid on the run after some Verdenian rebels had hit the Black Ones on their way past Orth. Nice lad, well-behaved consid-erin’. Dropped him off in Kerack with a friend of mine who’d look out for him.”*

—Rodolf Kazmer

# Magical Gifts

To most people on the Continent, having magic is synonymous with being a priest, druid, or mage. But that isn’t exactly true. Any mage will tell you that sorcerers and sorceresses are the most powerful of the magically gifted. The majority of people who are gifted with the powers of Chaos are really only capable of doing one small task. Their gift is usually self-taught and their attunement is such that they are incapable of channeling enough magic to learn spells, invocations, or other forms of magic. In some cases, gifted individuals are students of magic academies who proved incapable of higher learning and were expelled or dropped out.

In character creation, if a player gets permission from their Game Master, they can choose to give their character one of the 14 Magical Gifts at the cost of taking the matching Side Effect. The character gains access to this Magical Gift and a Vigor Threshold of 2. Mages, Druids, Priests, and Witchers cannot take a Magical Gift and neither can any character of a race that is incapable of being a Mage. Furthermore, unlike a Mage, Witcher, Druid, or Priest, a Magically Gifted character is not attuned enough to Chaos to learn any new magic or properly utilize a Focus.

Magical Gifts come at two different levels denoted by their Stamina Cost and Difficulty. Lesser Magical Gifts have a Stamina Cost of 1, can be cast as an action, and do not have a DC. These gifts draw on so little Chaos that the user doesn’t even have to roll a Spell Casting check to cast them. Major Magical Gifts on the other hand, have a Stamina cost of 2, require a full round to cast, and the caster must beat a DC:9 Spell Casting check to perform the effects of that gift.

Being Magically Gifted does not initially change your character’s Social Standing but if you are caught using magic you will be assumed to be a Mage by the majority of people, meaning that your Social Standing changes to that of a Mage with anyone who saw you or believes the word of someone who saw you.

## Minor Gifts

### Calm Animals

**Spell Casting DC:** N/A

**STA Cost:** 1

**Effect:** As an action, you can calm a Beast that does not have a Medium or Hard Threat Rating. After this effect, the Beast considers you and your allies friendly and will not attack unless provoked.

**Side-Effect:** Beasts of Threat Rating Medium or Hard are enraged by your presence and if possible, will prioritize attacking you over other targets.

### Fear Aura

**Spell Casting DC:** N/A

**STA Cost:** 1

**Effect:** As an action, you are able to emit an aura of palpable fear. Everyone within 4m of you must make a DC:12 Resist Magic check or be frightened and take a -2 to any action made against you for 24 hours.

**Side-Effect:** You count as one level lower on the Social Standing Chart (Minimum Hated) and members of your own race now treat you as Tolerated instead of Equal.

### Fleet of Foot

**Spell Casting DC:** N/A

**STA Cost:** 1

**Effect:** As an action, you can double the range of your LEAP for 1 Round.

**Side-Effect:** When you are knocked back, you travel an additional 4m, raising the possible damage taken from hitting an object.

## Green Thumb

**Spell Casting DC:** N/A

**STA Cost:** 1

**Effect:** As an action, you can grow a small plant from seed to maturity. This allows you to grow herbs and alchemical plants but not larger plants such as trees.

**Side-Effect:** Any alchemical concoction you create with a plant-derived substance as one of its ingredients gives you the poisoned condition as well as the intended effect when you use it.

## Minuscule Illusion

**Spell Casting DC:** N/A

**STA Cost:** 1

**Effect:** As an action, you are able to create an illusion within 4m that fills a 1m cubed space. This illusion must be simple and is only visual.

**Side-Effect:** You take a -3 penalty to determining whether an illusion is real or not.

## Pigment

**Spell Casting DC:** N/A

**STA Cost:** 1

**Effect:** As an action, you can make a mark with your hand on a surface that has a color you desire that can optionally glow, should you desire. The glowing mark raises the light level by 1 for 4m all around it (Maximum Daylight). Once you have made a mark you can take another action as long as you are within 4m to make the mark emit a flash of Glaring Light for one round after which it disappears.

**Side-Effect:** When someone within 10m of you suffers a magic fumble effect, you suffer the effect as well. If you suffer a magical fumble you do not suffer a second effect.

## Major Gifts

### Aerokinesis

**Spell Casting DC:** 9

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** As a full round action, you can manipulate up to 5 ENC of material at a range of 8m as if you were holding it.

**Side-Effect:** Whenever you are knocked prone or knocked back you are also reduced to 10 STA unless you were currently at or below 10 STA.

### Cryokinesis

**Spell Casting DC:** 9

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** As a full round action, you can freeze up to 2 square meters of liquid or a single target within 8m.

**Side-Effect:** Whenever you have a chance of being frozen, you are no matter what. Additionally, instead of the standard Frozen condition you reduce your SPD by 6 and REF by 4.

### Detect Poison

**Spell Casting DC:** 9

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** As a full round action, you can smell a substance to detect whether it has been poisoned.

**Side-Effect:** Whenever you would gain the Intoxicated or Poisoned conditions, you are additionally Nauseated for the duration of those conditions.

### Fortify

**Spell Casting DC:** 9

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** As a full round action, you can increase the Reliability or SP of an item you can touch by 1. An item can only benefit from Fortify once.

**Side-Effect:** If you come within 4m of any amount of dimeritium you lose all Vigor Threshold and must make an Endurance roll at a -3 against the Dimeritium Effect Table.

## Geokinesis

**Spell Casting DC:** 9

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** As a full round action, you can create a tremor with a 8m radius centered on yourself. Anyone within this area must make a DC:14 Athletics check or fall prone and be staggered.

**Side-Effect:** If you would suffer the Staggered condition you are instead Stunned for 1 round.

## Pyrokinesis

**Spell Casting DC:** 9

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** As a full round action, you can light a fire or put out a fire. You can light one object or target within 8m on fire. You cannot target yourself with this ability.

**Side-Effect:** Whenever you have a chance of being caught on fire you are caught on fire no matter what.

## See Aura

**Spell Casting DC:** 9

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** As a full round action, you can see the aura of all targets within 8m of you. This aura tells you what the Vigor Threshold of each target is.

**Side-Effect:** You give off a tangible tingle that alerts anyone who touches you to your magical capability. This will make many people assume you are a mage. Because of this your Social Standing is considered to be that of a mage.

## Weapon Honing

**Spell Casting DC:** 9

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** As a full round action, you can add a 25% Bleed chance to a weapon that deals Piercing or Slashing damage.

**Side-Effect:** Whenever you have a chance of bleeding, you bleed no matter what.



# Tactical Pursuits

1272, Ban Ard • Transcribed by Alec Von Karst

Winter in Ban Ard is crisp, clear, and crunchy. On the outskirts, the season's snowfalls layer upon each other, undisturbed save by hunting animals and enthusiastic youngsters.

Which was why, Eachan thought, it was unfair that today's plans for building and shaping last night's snowfall were going to be ruined by the forces of Evil.

He always thought of Tomos and Dylan like that; Evil, big "E". Three years his senior, the older boys were wealthy, convinced they were destined to be officers when they went to war. Many of the city's fathers had left already, and it seemed to Eachan that the army had enough people already.

As if they read his thoughts, the two young men grabbed a handful of stones from the inn yard where Eachan had assembled his friends. The little ones liked him, looked up to him, and were good at following orders in his games.

Now they sheltered behind him as Tomos tossed a stone. It flew wide of the mark, but Dylan was ready to follow-up. Dylan's father was a merchant and teaching his son the family business involved having him lugging bales around from deliveries. There was a lot of Dylan.

This time the throw was on target. Eachan saw it heading straight for his face and flinched away. In his head, he felt a sharp \*snick\* and the stone missed him, clattering off the kitchen window shutter.

"Stand still, you little bastard!" Dylan's face twisted in anger.

Stung, Eachan's retaliation was out before his sense could stop his mouth.

"I've got a dad and a mum, and I know who they are!"

It was stupid; worse, it was rude, and the bullies made him feel it, sending a pair of stones straight and true. Behind him, the youngsters squealed and Eachan felt pure anger as that internal \*snick\* came again and the missiles zipped aside. One bounced harmlessly off the wall, the other...

"Ah!"

Eachan turned in horror to see his mother next to the kitchen door, rubbing a cut above her eye. Seeing his distraction, Tomos drew back his arm. The next moment could have gone badly, but for; "ENOUGH." The word was not shouted, it was stated, carrying the weight of practice and with no time for nonsense.

The speaker was the only guest the inn had, an elf-woman with long blonde hair braided tight to her head. She strode out of the door and gazed at the assembled children with a frown. After a long moment, she spoke again, in that weird maybe-Nazairi accent he'd noted when she arrived a week ago. "You two are too old for such mischief. Go." Tomos and Dylan rocked back, but turned and stalked away. Dylan tossed a sneering farewell over his shoulder, "Just as well your father left for the war! When he's killed, he won't be able to ditch you for a real son!"

Eachan's vision blurred with angry tears and he started forward with no thought but to force those words back down Dylan's throat. His mother was faster, spinning him to face her.

"Boy, you are a fool! We'll be lucky if their families don't take the inn!" She pulled him towards the door, but the odd guest stepped into their path and spoke gently.

"Madam Gilreath, please, permit me to speak with your son. I'm certain the child meant no harm."

"I don't need an elf's help to raise my son! Do you even have children?" His mother all but spat.

Eachan watched in pure shock as the guest locked eyes with his mother and grip on his arm slackened.

"No, I do not have that honor. But I am a teacher. Please. Allow me to help."

"Teach this little idiot not to get himself killed by his betters!" And his mother stomped inside, slamming the door.

The guest cast her gaze over the yard as Eachan and the gaggle of small ones huddled together trying to go unnoticed. To these last, she smiled and said, "We will have a game when I have talked with your friend. Can you make snowballs?" Enthusiastic nods. "Then make as many as you can, and a wall to hide behind. Over there, next to the trees." The children scampered off to their task.

"Miss, who are you?"

In reply, the elf led Eachan to the far side of the yard.

"My name is Glynnis. And I think you need my help. I watched what you did to the stones. Was that the first time?"

Stunned by her bluntness, Eachan's instinct was to deny everything, but her direct gaze left him sure she'd know. He looked away.

"N-no. Sometimes... things move when I want them? Since I was a baby. Dad wanted me tested, but the magicians at the school, they said I was worthless." The memory stung, though he wasn't certain why.

"Child, you defended your friends." Glynnis sighed. "You are no sorcerer in waiting, but this power is far from worthless." She raised her voice. "Come, children, time for a battle! All of you against Eachan! Boy, you will stop the snowballs, understand? Don't think, do."

Baffled, Eachan nodded and grabbed a handful of snow and had barely formed it when the first wave struck with a series of wet slaps and laughter. He grinned at the next attack, dodging most and waving one aside. The children gasped, giggled, and rearmed; this time he deflected two balls and held another for a moment before sending it back. As a large, wet example lofted towards him, Glynnis' voice suddenly whispered in his head though she stood clear of the exchange;

"Your father left you." The ball stopped as Eachan froze. "You're a useless freak, he hates you."

His breath came fast, words trying to spill out. The snowball hung in the air, shaking—and then exploded in his face. Rage vanished as he spluttered, wiping his eyes and mouth. Glynnis helped clear his vision. Her hands gentle on his face.

"Child, when angry, you lose control. Power does not vanish, but without control..."

Emotions churning, Eachan stared at her.

"A face-full of snow?"

"At best. One day you may face other things." Glynnis brushed her hands dry on her skirt and called out, "Come here, children! And that includes you two, I see you skulking. Come and listen."

Tomos and Dylan slouched out of their hiding place at the side of the inn. The small ones pounded over, red-faced and smiling.

"One day, all of you will fight. When that happens, you may not have your friend at your side. You could have a stranger or one you hate. It matters not. That's why this time, these two will throw for you, Eachan, and you will defend them. No, do not protest. You are to be men soon and this lesson is for you also. Now, let battle commence!"

Reluctantly at first, but with increasing enthusiasm, Tomos and Dylan scooped snow and hurled it at the children behind their defensive wall. Soon the air was full of snowballs arcing across the yard and the laughter of children. Eachan stood tall, deflecting and bursting snowballs that threatened his team with more confidence each moment and a growing smile on his lips.

Glynnis retreated to the sidelines, watching the game. Her fond smile faded as she looked South to where the army she had but recently left was lying, a spare few months from raining death and horror on these innocents. Could she warn them?

"Let them be children," Glynnis whispered, "if only today."



# A Compilation of Chaos

*“Researching and refining a new spell can take months or years and the cost in resources, head-pain, and sleepless nights can be high. It’s a matter of minor wonder to me that so many spells make their way around the world intact and almost entirely predictable in their effects.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne



This chapter is a compilation from many sources. Glynnis has contributed spells and rituals not seen in the North. Rodolf has collected stories of hexes and rituals. My library has been ransacked for spells and invocations. We have spent hours poring over the library at Ban Ard as the snow fell. We searched the Oxenfurt library, and the private libraries of my contacts built up over the years. I must acknowledge the help of the librarian of the Church of the Eternal Flame in Novigrad. Eventually we made contact with the fabled library at Lan Exeter by megascope. Between all these places we found a treasure trove of spells, invocations, rituals, and hexes. Some Northern sorcerers and sorceresses helped us but ask to remain nameless. Oddly we found that when we truly convinced people, often complete strangers, that we were studying magic and collecting great knowledge so that nothing would be lost, many of them opened up and could hardly stop talking. Of course, we usually sent Glynnis in first.

In the end we gathered all our information together in the library of Ban Ard where

we pored over our notes, eliminating things that seemed of dubious authenticity. Glynnis tried many of the spells we have included. She decided that spells have “dialects” of how magic is used between the South, the North, and the islands. We declined to try the invocations as none of us felt sufficiently religious to contact any gods or forces. We experimented with some rituals and Rodolf and I attempted to venture into the hexes but surprisingly we lacked the focused malice.

At first I thought that curses would make an interesting chapter but Glynnis was against it. She said that curses were very personal things, entirely irreproducible; I argued that they certainly made for good stories. But Rodolf’s outlook was that the hexes were bad enough and did we really want to doom a great number of mothers-in-law and inconvenient business partners. From there I’m afraid the conversation degenerated into silliness and in the end we bowed to Glynnis’ good sense.

One thing I regret is that we did not get much access to elven magics. If there is a

## The Importance of Learning

*“The greatest enemy of magic is and has always been ignorance. All my life I have striven to illuminate the minds of magicians and laypeople, young and old, in hopes of stamping out this ignorance wherever possible. Please, as you read this chapter, do your best to keep an open mind and an open heart. Magic is capable of so many wonderful things if it is controlled.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne

library of elven magic we were not able to get even a whisper about it. The elves declined to let us see their libraries or to be interviewed on the subject of magic. Some inferred that if humans had not destroyed the great elven libraries, there would be much more information for us to find. I suggested that if they had not destroyed their cities as they retreated that they might have access to their centuries of information. Rodolf broke in and closed that conversation.

In the name of getting the most information possible, I sent word to a correspondent in Nazair. I didn't mention Glynnis or suggest that I had any other Nilfgaardian sources. My correspondent's library offered a fair amount of knowledge about Nazairi magic during its Golden Age, around 1000 of our calendar. It appeared to be elegant and centered on aesthetics. I was delighted to bring Glynnis something she had never seen.

—Brandon of Oxenfurt

*"I must admit that in my time working with him, I have become quite fond of Brandon of Oxenfurt. Though I am quite sure he is my junior by many decades he has become somewhat of a curmudgeonly uncle to me. The vim and vigor with which he approaches learning in all its facets is inspiring even if his propensity for quarreling is unmatched and he has a breadth of knowledge that I am often jealous of, though I imagine a great deal of that knowledge is gleaned from impromptu journeys to dangerous places with master Kazmer. In all, he is a refreshing change from the academia of the Empire where knowledge is sought for the sake of the nation and composure is paramount. You would be hard pressed to find an imperial scholar as animated in his discussion of ancient gnomish-human relations as Brandon of Oxenfurt. Were he to practice in the City of Golden Towers I have no doubt he would have either been imprisoned or assassinated by the end of the first month."*

—Glynnis var Treharne

# Mage Spells



Mixed	Earth	Air	Fire	Water
<b>Novice Spells</b>				
Alchemical Recovery	Cryfhau	Bronwyn's Bow	Breath of Fire	Aurora's Breath
Blemish	Earthen Pillar	Dust Coating	Coating of Fire	Slip Stream
Detect Ley Lines	Sharpen Senses	Light Feet	Harmless Fire	Water Jet
Fergus' Demise	Soften Earth	Magnify Odor	Vahila's Smoke	Web of Ice
Hold Tongue				
Magic Screen				
Reopen Portal				
Savolla's Method				
<b>Journeyman Spells</b>				
Cloak	Bekker's Rockslide	Ball Lightning	Cinder Door	Essence of Potion
Disrupt Focus	Elgan's Bastion	Invisible Ribbon	Mage's Forge	Invaerne
Dormyn's Chamber	Javed's Swarm	Touch of Lightning	Smith's Touch	Rusting
Empower				
Spectral Tether				
Trap Portal				
<b>Master Spells</b>				
Bekker's Dark Mirror	Crystal Stasis	Gwyntog	Blaze of the Korath	Ainfra's Extraction
Steal Spell	Shape Earth	Hand of the Tempest	Living Fire	Deluge of Ys

## Reverse Engineering

Creating a portal is a lot like crafting a wooden door. Building the frame, shaping the wood, and attaching all the fittings is a complicated process that requires a great deal of skill. But once that door has been created, opening it doesn't come with any complicated requirements. In the same way, any Standing Portal created leaves a small trace which can be opened like a conventional door.

## Novice Spells

### Mixed

#### Alchemical Recovery

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** Alchemical Recovery allows you to revitalize the potency of a spent substance. Upon casting this spell, you can choose an alchemical crafting project that has failed and recover one of its Alchemical Substances. This spell cannot be cast on the same failed project more than once but can be used alongside the standard Recovery step.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

#### Blemish

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** Blemish allows you to create a small but noticeable illusion on a target that they are unaware of which makes them off-putting or unattractive. Upon casting this spell, the target suffers a -3 to Seduction, Charisma, and Leadership checks. If the target is alerted to the illusory blemish, they become aware of it. A target that looks in a mirror or reflective surface, can make a DC:16 Awareness check to notice it as well.

**Range:** 4m

**Duration:** 1d6 Hours

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

#### Detect Ley Line

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Detect Ley Line allows you to locate the closest Ley Line by sending out a magical pulse. Upon casting this spell, your hand points in the direction of the closest Ley Line and you can feel which element it is connected to.

**Range:** 1 Mile

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

#### Fergus' Demise

**STA Cost:** 4

**Effect:** No one knows who created this spell but it was made infamous by its use on Emperor Fergus var Emreis after he was dethroned. Fergus' Demise allows you to summon a cluster of magical needles that act on your command, to torture a target within range. For the duration of this spell, you are able to make a Spell Casting check instead of an Intimidation check to interrogate your target.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** 1 Hour

**Defenses:** None

#### Hold Tongue

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** Hold Tongue allows you to magically glue a target's lips and paralyze their tongue, rendering them unable to speak. While affected by this spell, the target cannot open their mouth and can only emit muffled sounds. If a Mage, Priest, or Druid with a Spell Casting skill value below 7 is affected by this spell, they cannot cast magic. At the end of every round, the target can attempt another Resist Magic check against a new Spell Casting check to end the effect.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** 10 Minute

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

#### Magic Screen

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** Magic Screen allows you to create a very specific illusion over a 2m cubed area to hide or alter items. Upon casting this spell, you can hide or change the appearance of items within the area. This change can only be visual and remains until dispelled or until any items are removed from that 2m cubed area. When a target comes within 4m of the Magic Screen they can make a Resist Magic check to see through the Illusion.

**Range:** 4m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

## Reopen Portal

**STA Cost:** 6

**Effect:** Reopen Portal allows you to find the trace of an existing portal and reopen that connection temporarily. Upon casting this spell, you can choose either a Permanent Portal which is currently closed or the trace of a Standing Portal which was cast within the last 30 seconds and roll a Spell Casting check. If the chosen portal is a Permanent Portal, the DC to reopen it is 16. If the chosen portal is a Standing Portal, the DC is 20.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** 1 Round

**Defenses:** None

## Savolla's Method

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** An evolution of ancient techniques, Savolla's Method breaks down the tissue and mucous membranes of a corpse and makes it easier to find and extract mutagenic compounds. Upon casting this spell, the Mutagen within a corpse separates itself and emits a slight glow allowing it to be extracted with a DC:14 Alchemy or Witcher Training Check.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

## Earth

### Cryfhau

**STA Cost:** 4

**Effect:** Cryfhau allows you to permanently increase the density of a single 2m cubed area of cover. Upon casting this spell, you immediately raise the cover's SP by 5. This can raise the SP higher than its original total. Cryfhau cannot be cast multiple times on the same area.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

## Earthen Pillar

**STA Cost:** 4

**Effect:** Earthen Pillar allows you raise a 2m cubed pillar from earthen ground. This pillar counts as cover with 10 SP and remains until destroyed.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

## Sharpen Senses

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Sharpen Senses allows you to heighten the sensitivity of your sight, smell, and hearing. Upon casting this spell, you immediately gain the benefits of Night Vision and Scent Tracking and have a +2 to Awareness checks. However, if you are subjected to a bright light or a very loud noise, you suffer Staggered condition.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 30 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

## Soften Earth

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Soften Earth allows you to soften a 6m cubed area of earth into a muddy morass or change sand into quicksand. The area of the spell becomes difficult to maneuver within and imposes a -2 to Dodge/Escape and Athletics checks.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** 2d10 Rounds

**Defenses:** None

## Air

### Bronwyn's Bow

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** Developed by Bronwyn Dead-eye to bombard the Nilfgaardian Navy, this spell allows you to summon a powerful current of air to propel a thrown weapon great distances. Upon casting this spell, you can make an attack with any Thrown Weapon, hand-held Ranged Weapon Ammunition (Arrows or Bolts), or Bomb against a target using your Spell Casting base. If throwing an arrow or bolt, you deal 4d6 damage.

**Range:** 50m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Dodge & Block

### Dust Coating

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** Dust Coating allows you to whip up dust from the local area into a 10m cubed cloud which reveals any invisible creatures for one round. Choose one target within this area to adhere the dust to. If the target fails to defend, you cover them in a coating of dust which negates the benefits of invisibility.

**Range:** 20m

**Duration:** Active (2)

**Defenses:** Dodge

### Light Feet

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Light Feet allows you to accelerate your movement by carrying yourself along on a gust of wind. Upon casting this spell, you raise your Speed Statistic by 5, your Run Derived Statistic by 15, and your Leap Derived Statistic by 3.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** Active (2)

**Defenses:** None

## Magnify Odor

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** Magnify Odor allows you to intensify an existing scent until it encompasses a 6m cubed area. A creature who starts their turn in this area or enters it must make an Endurance check against your Spell Casting check or be overwhelmed by the odor and Nauseated for 1 Minute. Additionally, anyone who enters the area is permeated by the scent for 1 week along with their possessions granting anyone with Scent Tracking a +2 to track them. Any creature with Scent Tracking loses that ability while affected by this spell. This scent lasts for the duration of the spell or until entirely submerged in water.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** 1 Week

**Defenses:** None

## Fire

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### Breath of Fire

**STA Cost:** 4

**Effect:** An imperfect attempt by the sorcerer Afan of Gulet to re-create the breath of a true dragon, Breath of Fire allows you to exhale a stream of magical fire onto a target. If the target fails their defense, they take 3d6 damage and have a 100% chance of being lit on fire.

**Range:** 4m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Dodge or Block

### Coating of Fire

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** Coating of Fire allows you to subtly permeate a single object with fire magic to make it highly flammable. For the duration of the spell, the object will burst into flame immediately if exposed to any open flame. If cast on a creature any effect that would have a chance to light them on fire automatically does.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** 1 Hour

**Defenses:** Dodge

## Harmless Fire

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** Harmless Fire allows you to manipulate the heat and power of a fire to make it temporarily safe. Upon casting this spell, choose an area of fire no larger than 2m cubed and that fire becomes harmless to anyone touching it. The fire will not spread or otherwise damage anything it is touching. If you are on fire and under the effect of this spell you can still take damage from fire-based attacks.

**Range:** 8m

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

## Vahila's Smoke

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** Created by the feared Etolian assassin Vahila, this spell transforms a wisp of smoke into a choking veil. Upon casting this spell, you can engulf a single target's head in thick smoke. If this target fails to defend they are immersed in smoke and considered Blinded and Suffocating. Each turn, the target can spend their action to attempt another defense check against a new Spell Casting check to end the effect.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** Active (2)

**Defenses:** Dodge

## Water

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### Aurora's Breath

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** Developed by the famed Water-Mage, Aurora Henson, to explore submerged ruins off the coast of the Continent, Aurora's Breath allows you to breath water as well as air through skillful manipulation of water magic.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 30 Minute

**Defenses:** None

## Slip Stream

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** Slip Stream allows you to propel yourself through the water in a current of your own creation. While swimming, your Speed Statistic is changed to 12 and you do not suffer the normal penalties for attacking and defending underwater.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

## Water Jet

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** Water Jet creates a controlled geyser from a source of water to strike a target with your choice of slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning damage. If the target fails to defend, they take 4d6 damage and are knocked Prone.

**Range:** 8m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Dodge & Block

## Web of Ice

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Web of Ice allows you to create a delicate structure of ice on a surface which is linked to a duplicate that you possess. The moment a creature interacts with the surface it is placed on, the structure and its duplicate break. Alternatively, breaking the duplicate melts the original structure. The ice can be spotted with a DC:18 Awareness check.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Defenses:** None

## Journeyman Spells

### Mixed

#### Cloak

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Cloak allow you to render yourself and anything you are carrying invisible. This grants you a +10 to Stealth and a +5 to Attack and Defense. Even if a creature makes their Awareness check to spot you, you still gain a +3 to Attack and Defense. Yrden or a Moon-dust Bomb can render you partially visible, reducing your Stealth bonus to +5 and your Attack and Defense bonus to +3. If you are hit by an attack while invisible, this spell ends immediately.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** Active (2)

**Defenses:** None

#### Disrupt Focus

**STA Cost:** 15

**Effect:** Disrupt Focus allows you to temporarily disturb the magical pathways in an item with the Focus effect. Upon casting this spell, a single item with the Focus effect ceases to act as a focus for the duration of the spell.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

#### Dormyn's Chamber

**STA Cost:** 18

**Effect:** Dormyn's Chamber allows you to imprison a single target within a translucent magical bubble. The chamber has 40 Hit Points and remains stationary where it was cast. The creature within the chamber cannot target or be targeted by anything outside. Additionally, sound does not pass through the chamber's walls.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** Active (8)

**Defenses:** Dodge

#### Empower

**STA Cost:** 12

**Effect:** Empower allows you to weave additional magic into your spell casting to create a dangerous convergence of chaos. The next spell you cast gains one of the following benefits of your choice: the percentage chance of any effects caused by the spell raise to 100%, the roll to cast the spell is made at a +2 bonus, or an already damaging spell deals an additional 2d6 damage. However, if you roll a 1 when making the Spell Casting check you automatically suffer from a Magical Fumble as though you had rolled a 10.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 1 Minute

**Defenses:** None

#### Spectral Tether

**STA Cost:** 8

**Effect:** Spectral Tether allows you to weave a tether of magic around a target which binds it to it's physical form. While affected by this spell, a target cannot become incorporeal or invisible and cannot teleport by any means. Additionally, as long as the spell is in effect, the target cannot move more than 10m away from you. Each turn, the target can spend their action to attempt another Resist Magic check against a new Spell Casting check to end the effect.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** Active (4)

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

#### Vahila's Pipe

*"Heard a little bit about this lass from one of my contacts in the Blue Rose. Said she used to take contracts on rebels and traitors to the Empire. Heh, they said she liked to find her targets in their homes and disorient 'em by chokin' 'em with the smoke from her pipe. While they're clawing at the smoke and thrashin' around she'd put a stiletto in their gut and split 'em open groin to throat."*

—Rodolf Kazmer



## Trap Portal

**STA Cost:** 12

**Effect:** Trap Portal allows you to place a magical trap inside a portal which redirects the portal's end point. Upon casting the spell, you learn the portal's end point and can choose a location within 1 mile of that point to be the new end point. This trap makes a notable change to the portal which requires a DC:16 Magic Training check or a DC:20 Education check to spot. Anyone with at least 1 point in Magic Training automatically gets to roll a Magic Training check upon seeing the portal to try and spot the trap. Immediately after a creature passes through the portal, the trap is dispelled but evidence that the portal was trapped remains for 1 month.

**Range:** 4m

**Duration:** 1 Month

**Defenses:** None

## Earth

### Bekker's Rockslide

**STA Cost:** 13

**Effect:** Bekker's Rockslide allows you to rip a large stone from beneath the ground and drop it on a target. Upon casting this spell, the target must roll a Reposition roll against your Spell Casting check. If they fail, the target takes 6d6 damage to the torso with a 100% chance of Knock-Down. As the rock makes impact, it explosively shatters covering a 6m radius. Anyone in that area must make a DC:16 Athletics check or be Knocked-Down and take 4d6 damage to the torso..

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Dodge (Reposition)

## Elgan's Bastion

**STA Cost:** 14

**Effect:** Created by the famed magician Elgan of Verden, Elgan's Bastion uses trace amounts of metal in stone to magnetically lift a shield of rocks around you to defend yourself from physical attacks and damage. This shield of rocks counts as a Cover with 30 SP and entirely surrounds you. While surrounded, your SPEED Statistic cannot be higher than 2 and you cannot do anything on your turn but take a single Movement Action.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** Active (4)

**Defenses:** None

## Javed's Swarm

**STA Cost:** 10

**Effect:** Javed's Swarm allows you to control a great number of insects from the environment. Upon casting this spell, a swarm of controlled insects crawls out from nearby crevices and forms a horde with a SPD Statistic of 7 which can engulf a single target by making an attack at a Base 14. This attack deals 1d6 damage to the target's torso, ignores all worn armor, and has a 100% chance of poisoning. The Horde has 15 Hit Points and a Dodge base of 14.

**Range:** 6m

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

## Air

### Ball Lightning

**STA Cost:** 14

**Effect:** Favored by mages who commonly fight agile targets, Ball Lightning summons an orb of magical lightning which flies through the air at your command. Upon casting this spell, you can direct the ball lightning at a single target who must make a defense check against your Spell Casting check. If they fail, the target takes 3d6 damage to the torso and suffers the Concussion Critical Injury Effect for 10 Minutes. If the target successfully defends, the Ball Lightning remains in the area. On subsequent turns you can use your action to make a new attack against a target with a new Spell Casting check. Once the ball lightning hits a target it dissipates.

**Range:** 20m

**Duration:** 5 Rounds

**Defenses:** Dodge

### Invisible Ribbon

**STA Cost:** 15

**Effect:** With a whisper, Invisible Ribbon allows you to focus a gust of wind into a sharp, invisible blade that whistles through the air. Upon casting this spell, a single target must make a Defense check against your Spell Casting check. If they fail, the target takes 3d6 damage. The ribbon is invisible and thus even after attacking, anyone in the area must make a DC:20 Perception check to determine where the attack came from.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Dodge or Block

## Touch of Lightning

**STA Cost:** 8

**Effect:** Touch of Lightning allows you to imbue a stationary metal object with a powerful charge of electricity. Upon casting this spell, the object becomes an electrical trap which will deal 1d6 damage to the first body location that touches it. This spell can be charged by spending extra rounds focusing on it during the casting. For each round that you continue to hold the object and pay its active cost the trap deals an extra 1D6 of damage (maximum 8D6 total). If the object is moved before it is touched by a body location it loses all charges. Additionally, 24 hours after the spell is cast the object loses all charges. It requires a DC:20 Perception check to determine an object has been affected by this spell.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Active (5)

**Defenses:** None

## Fire

### Cinder Door

**STA Cost:** 12

**Effect:** Cinder Door allows you to funnel fire magic into a flammable structure to safely and silently consume it from within. Upon casting this spell, up to a 2m cubed section of the cover you touch takes 4d6 ablation damage. This spell can be maintained by spending extra rounds focusing on it during the casting. For each round that you continue to maintain the spell and pay its active cost the cover takes 4d6 ablation damage. When

this area of cover no longer has any SP, it crumbles away.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Active (3)

**Defenses:** None

### Mage's Forge

**STA Cost:** 12

**Effect:** Mage's Forge allows you to create a magical fire that can be used to purify metal. When ingots of metal are placed within this fire their impurities are burned away making them easier to recover after a failed crafting attempt. During the Recovery Step any purified ingots used are automatically recovered. Additionally, the fire created acts as a Tinker's Forge for the purposes of crafting, but cannot be used on Dimeritium.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Defenses:** None

### Smith's Touch

**STA Cost:** 10

**Effect:** Smith's Touch focuses fire magic into metal allowing you to manipulate it with your bare hands. While this spell is active, you are able to bend, shape, and manipulate metal as if it were clay. Additionally, by taking an action to make a Brawling attack, you can deal 3d6 ablation damage to armor or reliability damage to a weapon. This spell cannot be used on Dimeritium.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Active (10)

**Defenses:** Dodge

## Mage's Ingots

The ingots created by Mage's Forge don't look any different and are not magical which means that it is difficult to convince a merchant or craftsman to pay a higher price for them without demonstrating their purity.



## Water

### Invaerne

**STA Cost:** 14

**Effect:** Invaerne allows you to create a howling snowy gale in an area with a 30m radius. This area has Snow & Ice conditions. If cast in a cold environment, the duration of this spell is increased to one week.

**Range:** 50m

**Duration:** 1 Hour

**Defenses:** None

### Rusting

**STA Cost:** 14

**Effect:** Rusting allows you to emit a spray of chemically reactive water which rapidly oxidizes metal objects. If using this spell on a target's armor, all their worn armor takes 2d6 ablation damage and wearing any of it imposes a -2 to their Reflex, Dexterity, & Speed Statistics. If using this spell on a target's weapon, the weapon takes 2d6 reliability damage and imposes a -2 to attacks made with it. If this spell is blocked by a shield, the shield takes 2d6 Reliability damage. The rust created by this spell can be removed from 10 items by taking an hour to make a DC:14 Crafting check.

**Range:** 4m

**Duration:** Permanent

**Defenses:** Dodge or Block

### Essence of Potion

**STA Cost:** 12

**Effect:** Essence of Potion allows you to take a single dose of any Decoction, Potion, or Elixir that has not yet been affected by this spell and magically transfer some of its properties into a unit of Essence of Water, transforming it into a copy of that item.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Permanent

**Defenses:** None

## Master Spells

### Mixed

#### Bekker's Dark Mirror

**STA Cost:** 25

**Effect:** Bekker's Dark Mirror allows you to trap a creature's reflection in a reflective surface near them, draining their strength. Upon casting this spell, you can choose two of the target's Statistics and reduce them each by 1d6. This reduction affects Derived Statistics. Once drained, this Statistic remains lowered for the duration of the spell or until the mirrored surface containing the reflection is completely destroyed. The affected target casts no reflection until the spell ends. A creature without a reflection cannot be affected by Bekker's Dark Mirror.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** 1 Month

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

#### Steal Spell

**STA Cost:** 20

**Effect:** Steal Spell allows you to take control of another mage's spell and re-designate its target. When another mage casts a Non-Master level spell you can immediately force the mage to make a contested Spell Casting check against you. If you succeed at this check, you change the target of the spell to anyone within range of the original caster or yourself if the spell had a range of self. If the spell requires an attack check, use your Spell Casting check from the contested check. If the spell you steal is active, you remain in control of the spell but must pay its active cost.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

### Earth

#### Crystal Stasis

**STA Cost:** 25

**Effect:** Crystal Stasis allows you to cause crystals to grow up around a target and encase them entirely, placing them into an unaging, coma-like state. These crystals grow rapidly but not instantaneous and the spell must be maintained as per an Active Spell over three rounds. On the target's next turn, their body becomes sluggish and stiff, imposing a -3 to attack and defense and a -3 to their SPD. On their second turn, their body begins to be consumed by crystal and they additionally cannot move from where they stand. On their third turn, the target is entirely entombed in a pillar of crystal rendering them unconscious. If the mage is forced to stop maintaining this spell before the third round, the spell ends and the effects are reversed. Otherwise, the only way to reverse the effects are the use of the Dispel spell.

**Range:** 6m

**Duration:** Active (6)

**Defenses:** Resist Magic or Dodge

#### Shape Earth

**STA Cost:** 25

**Effect:** Shape Earth allows you to create a single structure composed of materials present at the site such as wood, stone, or earth that fills a 20m cubed cube. This structure can be whatever you wish, provided that it is simple in nature for example, a tremendous wall, a statue, or a fortification with a few rooms and simple furnishings. The structure will build itself over the next 10 minutes and will vary in SP from a wooden wall with 5 SP to a stone wall with 30 SP. This is determined by the GM.

**Range:** 6m

**Duration:** Permanent

**Defenses:** None

### Air

#### Gwyntog

**STA Cost:** 24

**Effect:** Gwyntog allows you to create a localized windstorm with up to a 40m radius. While this spell is in effect, gale force winds whip around the area making flight impossible and movement extremely difficult. Immediately, any flying creature is knocked out of the air and suffers damage as per normal. Ranged attacks made will fail to hit their intended target and land wherever the GM decides. Finally, any creature in the area must make an Athletics check DC:20 or be unable to take a Movement or Run Action during their turn.

**Range:** 100m

**Duration:** Active (6)

**Defenses:** None

#### Hand of the Tempest

**STA Cost:** 25

**Effect:** Summoning the full force of gales, you exert a tremendous force on a target which can manifest in one of 3 ways. With a powerful updraft you can send a target who fails a Reposition check or object of 1000kg or lighter flying 14m into the air. The target begins to fall at the end of their next turn. Upon hitting the ground, the target and anything it hits takes 7d6 bludgeoning damage to the torso and are knocked prone. Alternatively, with a powerful gust you can flood a 14m cone with powerful wind. Anyone in this area who fails a Reposition check or could not escape the area of the spell with their reposition is knocked back 14m and takes ramming damage if they hit anything as they fly. Finally, you can manipulate an object up to 1000kg as though you were holding it in your hand.

**Range:** 20m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Dodge

## Fire

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### Blaze of the Korath

**STA Cost:** 24

**Effect:** Blaze of the Korath allows you to create a sweltering aura with up to a 40m radius which eats away at creatures' STA. Upon casting this spell, each creature in the area lowers their current STA by 2d6. Additionally, while in the area, creatures are incapable of taking the Recovery Action. If a creature is in the area at the start of its turn or enters the area on its turn, they lower their current STA by 2d6. If a target is reduced to 0 points of STA by this spell, they fall unconscious until they recover at least 20 points of STA and make a successful Stun save.

**Range:** 100m

**Duration:** Active (4)

**Defenses:** None

### Living Fire

**STA Cost:** 25

**Effect:** Living Fire allows you to summon a small amount of life into a fire. While not as sentient or powerful as a Fire Elemental, this living fire is capable of taking a turn, at your Initiative. The Living Fire has a Speed Statistic of 5, is considered Incorporeal, and can cast Aenye, Wave of Fire, and Flaming Vortex, with a Spell Casting Base of 16 and infinite STA. The Living Fire cannot take extra actions and is destroyed if the fire is put out.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

## Water

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### Ainfra's Extraction

**STA Cost:** 22

**Effect:** Created by the famed Ainfra of Mag Turga, Ainfra's Extraction allows you to desiccate a target and then utilize their water for your own means. Upon casting this spell, a target that fails to defend lowers their current STA by 8d6 and the caster may immediately cast Rhewi, Ice Slick, or Water Jet at no STA cost.

**Range:** 8m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

### Deluge of Ys

**STA Cost:** 24

**Effect:** Deluge of Ys allows you to summon a 20m cubed cube of water which floods out in all directions. Anyone caught in the area takes 5d6 damage to the torso and must make a DC:24 Physique check or be knocked prone as water batters them. If cast in an open area, the water will flood outwards within the same turn it was cast. If cast in an enclosed space, the water fills the space, breaking any non-reinforced barriers and leaves the area entirely submerged.

**Range:** 40m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

*"There aren't many mages capable of casting master grade spells and I've come to believe that is something of a blessing. I've encounter a number of mages who seem to use magic to solve all of their problems and I would hate to see a poor inn keep have his whole inn flooded by a sorcerer who thought some ruffian had cheated him at a round of gwent."*

*—Glynnis var Treharne*

# Priest Invocations



## Novice Invocations

Blessed Weapon

Divine Inspiration

Duplicitous Darkness

Light of Penance

Presence of the Divine

## Journeyman Invocations

Blessing of Abundance

Brand of Withering

Seek the Seekers

## Master Invocations

Quill of the Divine

Sagitta Aurea

## Arch Priest Invocations

Deity	Invocations
Epona	Blessed Herd
Svalblod	Blood of the Berserker
Veyopatis	Champion of the River
Dana Meadh	Feast of Plenty
The Prophet Lebioda	Miracle of Lebioda
Nehaleni	Omen of Misfortune
Morrigan	Retribution of the Raven
Lilvani	Silverlight



## Novice Invocations

### Blessed Weapon

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Blessed Weapon creates a glowing rune on a melee weapon you touch which magically lightens and balances the weapon. For the duration of the invocation, the weapon has the Balanced Effect.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** ½ Hour

**Defenses:** None

### Divine Inspiration

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Common among inquisitors and artists alike, Divine Inspiration allows you to bless a target with insight. Upon casting this invocation, you grant a +2 bonus to a single skill. The target of this invocation must have at least a Skill value of 1 in the skill affected before the invocation is cast. A character can only benefit from this invocation once per day.

**Range:** 8m

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

### Duplicitous Darkness

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Duplicitous Darkness shrouds your target's mind in a veil of false thoughts. Your target gains a +2 to Deceit checks, cannot be forced to tell the truth by magic, and cannot be mentally spied on with Telepathy. Anyone attempting to probe the target with magic is unaware that this invocation has been cast unless they make a DC:20 Awareness check.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** 1 Hour

**Defenses:** None

### Light of Penance

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** Developed by the beloved Incandescent Anika var Myricks in the heart of Nilfgaard, Light of Penance summons the power of your deity to punish a target, draining them of their will to resist. Upon casting this invocation, the target lowers their current STA by 2d6. If the target has a Vigor Threshold of 1 or higher, they lower their current STA by an additional 2d6 as well.

**Range:** 6m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

### Presence of the Divine

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** Presence of the Divine allows you to summon the aspect of your deity to make your bearing more imposing. Upon casting this invocation, you can make your voice boom loud enough to be heard from far away and you gain a +4 to Intimidation checks. Alternatively, this invocation can be cast on up to 6 targets to make them immune to fear effects.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

## Journeyman Invocations

### Blessing of Abundance

**STA Cost:** 6

**Effect:** Blessing of Abundance imbues you with divine providence, making you more likely to benefit from found goods. The first time you or your GM rolls to determine how much loot you gain, the roll is made twice and the higher value is taken. This applies to an entire loot source; meaning that if you loot a dead monster, you would roll each loot item twice and take the higher value.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Defenses:** None

### Brand of Withering

**STA Cost:** 6

**Effect:** Favored by death cultists of all creeds, Brand of Withering marks a target with a symbol of creeping decay that arrests their ability to heal. Upon casting this invocation, a target who failed to defend can no longer benefit from any

## Master Invocations

### Quill of the Divine

**STA Cost:** Variable

**Effect:** Quill of the Divine allows you to reach into a target's mind and alter their memories. By spending 14 STA you can lock away the memories of a target who fails to defend against this invocation giving them severe retrograde amnesia. By spending 16 STA you can implant memories of your own creation into a target who fails to defend. Unless the target has had their memories locked away with this spell, they gain a +5 to resist the implantation of these new memories.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Permanent

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

effect that would allow them to recover Hit Points, including natural healing.

**Range:** 8m

**Duration:** 1 Week

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

### Seek the Seekers

**STA Cost:** 6

**Effect:** Seek the Seekers creates a magical ward around you that warns you of divination such as Hydromancy, or Pyromancy. If you or anyone within 10m of you is the target of divination you are alerted as soon as it is cast and are shown the face of the diviner. Anyone who tries to spy on you with divination must make a DC:20 Education or Magic Training check to realize they have been caught. However, if they succeed this check, you are made aware that they know you caught them.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Defenses:** None

### Sagitta Aurea

**STA Cost:** 14

**Effect:** Sagitta Aurea summons the divine power of your deity to form a spear of golden light. Upon casting this invocation, a target must make a Defense check against your Spell Casting check. If they fail, the target takes 7d6 damage. Sagitta Aurea can travel in a straight line through targets with each target making a Defense check. If a target is possessed by a demon, the demon takes the damage as well and is forced out of their body. Additionally, any demon damaged by this invocation cannot use any of its abilities for the next round.

**Range:** 20m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** Dodge





## Arch Priest Invocations

### Blessed Herd (Epona)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** With power granted to you by Epona, you summon up to 10 wild horses and empower them with magic. These horses appear within the next hour. A horse empowered by this invocation can either be empowered with swiftness or strength. If enchanted with swiftness, the horse summoned is a Horse with a Speed Statistic of 24 and an Athletics Skill Base of 20. If enchanted with strength, the horse summoned is a Warhorse with a Control Mod of +2 and a natural armor value of 20 which can't be layered with barding. While riding these mounts, creatures you choose get a +5 to their riding checks. You can only have up to ten horses summoned with this invocation at a time.

**Range:** N/A

**Duration:** 1 Week

**Defenses:** None

### Blood of the Berserker (Svalblod)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Channeling the power of Svalblod, you transform your body into a towering great bear. While in this form, any items on your person meld into your form and you gain access to all the abilities of the Great Bear but loose access to your Profession abilities and magic. Your Statistic and Skill values change to those of a great bear with the exception of any values that would be higher than those of a Great Bear. When you end the effects of this invocation, any damage or Critical wound you took as a Great Bear are transferred to your natural body. However, if the damage sustained as a Great Bear would be enough to kill you normally you are instead reduced to 1 Hit Point. Similarly, when you cast this invoca-

tion, any damage or critical wounds you already had are applied to your Great Bear form.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Defenses:** None

### Champion of The River (Veyopatis)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** With the power of Veyopatis you anoint with river water a target as your champion and suffuse them with magical strength. As long as this invocation is active, your champion has Resistance to all damage sources and gains a +5 to all rolls.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** Active (5)

**Defenses:** None

### Feast of Plenty (Dana Meadbh)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Calling upon the power of the Lady of the Valley, you bless a feast gathered entirely from the local area and large enough to feed at least 20. Upon eating from this feast, a creature gains 6d6 Hit Points, immediately treats all critical wounds; and removes the Poison and Disease conditions. This invocation can affect as many people as the feast can feed.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

### Miracle of Lebioda (Lebioda)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Calling upon the power of the Prophet Lebioda you command the body of a target to heal itself. Immediately upon casting this invocation, a living target entirely heals one critical wound or removes the lingering penalty from a past critical wound. The wound is treated as though it had never been inflicted even if this means regrowing limbs, eyes, etc.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

### Omens of the Future (Nehaleni)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** You allow Nehaleni to fill your mind with thousands of glimpses of possible futures which you cannot immediately decipher. Roll 1d10 until you get 3 outcomes that are not 1 or 10 and record these numbers. For the duration of this invocation, if a target within 20m of you rolls one of these values on 1d10 you are immediately able to recognize this outcome, allowing you to, without taking an action, intervene in some minor way and force that target to instead roll a fumble.

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Defenses:** None

### Retribution of the Raven (Morrigan)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** With power granted to you by Morrigan, the Lady of Ravens, you block the connection to the elemental planes, nullifying magic. Within the area of this invocation, all magical effects, such as runes, glyphs, focuses, curses, trophies, relics, magical items, etc. are rendered inert. As long as this invocation is active, only those you choose or those who successfully defended against this invocation can cast magic of any form. This invocation cannot be dispelled.

**Range:** 20m

**Duration:** Active (5)

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

### Silverlight (Lilvani)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Summoning the power of the Moon Goddess Lilvani you anoint up to 5 people with the a blessing of moonlight which shelters them in their darkest hour. For the duration of this invocation, affected characters take no penalties from being within their Wound Threshold or in Death State and the first time they would be reduced to below 1 Hit Point they are instead reduced to 1 Hit Point.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Until the next Sunrise

**Defenses:** None



# Druid Invocations



## Novice Invocations

Herbalism

Touch of Bounty

Voice of the Counselor

Web of Roots

Word of Summoning

## Journeyman Invocations

Bigelow's Befoulment

Blood of the Mountain

Sigil of the Hunt

## Master Invocations

Druidic Totem

Wrath of Nature

## Hierophant/Flaminika Invocations

Circle	Invocations
Bleobheris	Shade of Bleobheris
Gwyn Carn	Winds of the Taiga
Caed Myrkvid	Sanctuary of the Black Grove
Crow Clan	Conspiracy of the Mother
Gedyneith	Well of Knowledge

## Novice Invocations

### Herbalism

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Herbalism allows you to create an elixir using ancient druidic practices instead of traditional alchemy. As long as all the ingredients for the elixir are plants, you can roll a Spell Casting check instead of an Alchemy check when creating the Elixir or in the Recovery step.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

### Sigil of Bounty

**STA Cost:** 1

**Effect:** Widely used by druids who advise rural communities, Sigil of Bounty imbues an aspect of nature with vigor to cause one of three effects. If cast on spoiled food or drink, this invocation causes them to become fresh and delicious again. If cast on a forageable plant, the plant will produce twice the units of forageable material. Finally, if cast on soil, any plant grown in the soil will grow to twice its typical size in half the time.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** 1 Year

**Defenses:** None

### Voice of the Counselor

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** Voice of the Counselor allows you to imbue your words with inspiration. For the duration of this invocation, you can either make your voice boom loud enough to be heard from far away or whisper in the ear of one person within range. Additionally, you gain a +4 to Leadership checks.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

### Web of Roots

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** Web of Roots allows you to take control of the roots of a nearby tree to grapple a target. Upon casting this invocation on a tree, you can use its roots to grapple, trip, or disarm a target within 10m of the tree who fails a Defense check against your Spell Casting check. Each round that you maintain this invocation you can either maintain your grapple or attempt one of the other options on a target within 10m of the tree. A grappled target can escape by succeeding a Dodge/Escape

check against a new Spell Casting check or by dealing 15 points of damage to the roots.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** Active (1)

**Defenses:** None

### Word of Summoning

**STA Cost:** Variable

**Effect:** Speaking the Word of Summoning calls out to a nearby wild animal which arrives within 1d6 rounds. When the animal arrives, it is friendly to you and will help you as long as you don't betray or abuse it. If you spend 2 STA casting Word of Summoning you can summon a small animal (Bird, Serpent, Cat, etc.). If you spend 5 STA you can summon a medium animal (Wolves, Panthers, Boars, etc.). If you spend 10 STA you can summon a large animal (Bear, Ox, Horse, etc.). Word of Summoning can only be cast once in an area per day. When this invocation ends, the animal becomes neutral to you.

**Range:** N/A

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

## Journeyman Invocations

### Bigelow's Befoulment

**STA Cost:** Variable

**Effect:** Bigelow's Befoulment taints all food or drink you desire within a 2m cubed area with harmful bacteria. If you spend 5 STA casting this invocation, anyone who consumes the affected food or drink suffers the Disease condition within the next hour. While affected by the Disease condition, a target takes a -2 to all actions, lowers their maximum STA by one quarter, and must make DC:14 Endurance checks at the

discretion of the Game Master or suffer the Nausea condition. The Disease condition can only be removed by having a Doctor roll a DC:15 Healing Hands check on the affected character and then that character getting a full night's rest. If you spend 10 STA casting this invocation, the affected targets also suffer the Poison condition.

**Range:** 4m

**Duration:** Permanent

**Defenses:** None

## “Black Bile” Bigelow

*“Everybody knows, if you’re on the Yaruga, near Scala, and ya see a heron ya best leave it alone. Better ya go hungry or try your luck with the berries than hunt a heron near “Black Bile” Bigelow’s hut. Met the old bastard once and let me tell ya, the man could out-glower Brouver Hoog himself, heh! Lives out in a hut on the Yaruga cause none of the other druids can stand him. Most folks in Lyria know him from the stories of Baron Ludwik’s disastrous feast years back. The Baron’s men had been hunting heron in the swamps for weeks, gatherin’ up a feast for the Baron’s eldest son’s birthday. Bigelow took notice and decided to attend the feast himself! Heh.”*

—Rodolf Kazmer

## Blood of the Mountain

**STA Cost:** 6

**Effect:** Calling upon the wellspring of power deep within the earth, Blood of the Mountain empowers a target with tremendous strength. The target’s melee attacks cannot be parried and deal double ablation damage to weapons, shields, and armor. Additionally, the target is immune to any effect that would knock them off their feet.

**Range:** 6m

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

## Sigil of the Hunt

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** Drawing the Sigil of the Hunt on a target allows you to change how animals and monsters perceive them. Upon casting this Invocation, you can mark up to 6 targets as either “safe” or “prey”. A target marked “safe” does not disturb animals and any beast they encounter is initially friendly; and any monster they encounter will initially be neutral. A target marked “prey” is perceived as prey by all predatory animals or monsters. These creatures will attack the target on sight. Both “Prey” and “Safe” marks appear almost identical but with a DC:16 Education check, you can tell the difference.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

## Master Invocations

### Druidic Totem

**STA Cost:** 14

**Effect:** Druidic Totem allows you to sacrifice your staff of oak and mistletoe to create a magical totem which connects you to the natural world. After casting this Invocation, you must sacrifice the focus created by the Rite of Oak and Mistletoe by planting it in the ground. The staff grows into a 2m tall totem with 20 Hit Points, reminiscent of the local flora. While within 1-Mile of this totem, you are always counted as having a focus with a value of 4, all animals are considered friendly to you and your allies, and you gain an additional benefit based on the location where you placed the totem. You can only have one totem active at a time and creating a new totem transforms the old totem into a non-magical plant.

- ◆ **Fields:** You have a Speed Statistic of 12.
- ◆ **Mountains:** You have Resistance to Bludgeoning, Slashing & Piercing damage.

- ◆ **Underground:** You have Superior Night Vision and gain a +4 to Stealth checks.
- ◆ **Forest:** If you consume fruit grown within the area of your totem, you gain a Regeneration value of 3 for 1 Hour.
- ◆ **Swamp:** You are immune to the Poison and Disease conditions.
- ◆ **Shore:** You can breath underwater and have no penalties for fighting or maneuvering in water.
- ◆ **Desert:** You are immune to the Extreme Heat condition and you can always find a source of water. Once per day, when you consume water collected within the area of your totem, you regain all lost STA.
- ◆ **Tundra:** You are immune to the Snow & Ice conditions, you cannot be lit on fire or frozen, and you gain resistance to fire and ice damage.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

## Wrath of Nature

**STA Cost:** 14

**Effect:** Wrath of Nature allows you to summon the tremendous power of the natural world to wreak havoc on your enemies. Depending on the terrain, Wrath of Nature creates a different effect centered on you with a 60m radius.

- ◆ **Fields:** Every turn you can spend a full round action to either touch down a rope tornado within 10m of you or direct a single rope tornado within the area of the storm. A rope tornado covers a 4m cubed area and when directed by you can move 10m per turn. If it runs over or into targets those targets must make Athletics checks against your Spell Casting check. If they fail, they take 4d6 damage to the torso and are knocked back 10m in a direction decided by the GM.
- ◆ **Mountains:** Every turn you can spend a full round action to summon down a bolt of lightning which strikes a target. The target must make a Dodge/Escape or Athletics check against your Spell Casting check or take 6d6 damage to the torso and have a 50% chance of being lit on fire.
- ◆ **Underground:** Every turn you can spend a full round action to summon a stalagmite or stalactite to violently erupt from the stone and stab a single target. The target of this attack must make a Dodge/Escape, Athletics, or Block check against your Spell Casting check or take 5d6 damage. Each summoned stalagmite or stalactite remains until destroyed and counts as a 2m cubed piece of cover with 20 SP.
- ◆ **Forest:** Every turn you can spend a full round action to either summon up a tangle of roots from the ground to take one of the following actions or give a single command to each existing tangle of roots you have summoned. These roots are immobile but have the Long Reach Effect and can be used to Grapple, Trip, Disarm, Choke, or Pin a target. They have a Brawling base of 16 unless your Spell Casting base would be higher.
- ◆ **Swamp:** Every turn you can spend a full round action to summon a 6m radius area of swamp gas that erupts from the ground. Anyone caught in the gas must make an Endurance check against your Spell Casting check or suffer from the Disease condition. This gas remains until the invocation ends. Additionally, if an exposed flame is present in the area of this gas, it explodes, causing every creature in the gas to take 5d6 damage to the torso and have a 75% chance of catching on fire.
- ◆ **Shore:** Every turn you can spend a full round action to summon a powerful waterspout out of the nearby body of water to knock down targets with pressurized water. Two jets of water emit from the spout towards one or two tar-

gets within 20m. These target's must make Dodge/Escape or Athletics checks against your Spell Casting check or take 3d6 damage and be knocked back 6m.

- ◆ **Desert:** Every turn you can spend a full round action to kick up a gust of burning sand in a 6m radius area. Any creatures within this area must make a Dodge/Escape or Athletics check versus your Spell Casting check or be blinded for 5 rounds and be lit on fire.
- ◆ **Tundra:** Every turn you can spend a full round action to summon up a whirl of snow and water magic around a single target to encase them in ice. The target must make a Dodge/Escape, Athletics, or Resist Magic check versus your Spell Casting check or be encased in solid ice. This ice immobilizes the target and keeps them from taking actions. To break out of this ice, the target must make a DC:16 Physique check. Alternatively, if someone deals 10 points of damage to the ice or 5 points of fire damage to the ice, it allows the person to break free. Any damage beyond the 10 points (or 5 points) required to break the ice is dealt to the target's torso.

**Range:** 60m

**Duration:** Active (6)

**Defenses:** Variable



# Hierophant/Flaminika Invocations

## Shade of Bleobheris (Bleobheris)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Shade of Bleobheris calls upon the great oak to calm the hearts of man and beast. Upon casting this invocation, all animals become docile and all affected combatants are removed from initiative and cannot take hostile actions for 1 day. Additionally, the essence of Bleobheris temporarily suppresses the prejudices of all affected creatures, negating any penalties from Social Standing or monstrous heritage. On each of its turns, a target affected by this invocation can use its action to attempt a Resist Magic check against a new Spell Casting check to end this effect. If the target is attacked this spell no longer affects them.

**Range:** 50m Radius

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Defenses:** Resist Magic

## Winds of the Taiga (Gwyn Carn)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Winds of the Taiga summons the winter winds of the Far North to create a blizzard that shelters you and your allies. The area of the invocation is immersed in a blizzard that blinds anyone in it and creates Snow & Ice conditions. Any number of people you choose are not blinded by the blizzard, are immune to the Snow & Ice conditions, and their attacks have an additional 50% chance of freezing.

**Range:** 1 Mile Radius

**Duration:** 1 Hour

**Defenses:** None

## Sanctuary of the Black Grove (Caed Myrkvid)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Sanctuary of the Black Grove allows you to attune yourself and as many allies as you wish to the trees within a 1 Mile radius. While this invocation is active, you can touch a tree and look simultaneously through all the trees within 1 mile of you. You are able to parse this information and focus on specific views if you want. Additionally, you and any allies you designate can pass through any tree within this area and come out of any another tree within the area. Your allies cannot see through the trees but are able to designate where they want to go.

**Range:** 1 Mile Radius

**Duration:** 1 Hour

**Defenses:** None

## Conspiracy of the Mother (Crow Clan)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Conspiracy of the Mother allows you to reach out to up to 10 crows and summon them to you. Any crow affected forms a telepathic link with you. This telepathic link allows you to communicate with them silently within 20m, raises their Intelligence, Reflex, & Dexterity Statistic to 7, gives them a Sleight of Hand score of 7, and makes them sapient creatures who follow your orders unless you abuse them. This telepathic link also allows you to view their memories while you are physical touching them and lets them know where you are at all times. Finally, any crow affected by this spell

raises their claw damage from 1d6/2 to 2d6. You can only be bonded to 10 crows with this invocation at a time but the effects on the crow are permanent.

**Range:** ½ Mile

**Duration:** Immediate

**Defenses:** None

## Well of Knowledge (Gedyneith)

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Well of Knowledge causes a tree you touch to grow an integrated basin of fluorescing water blessed by nature. The next 20 people to drink from this basin are affected immediately. For one day after consuming the water of the basin, a creature gains a +4 to Initiative and Awareness, becomes immune to the Stagger, Stun, & Hallucination conditions, and can see through any illusions. If the creature had a Vigor Threshold of one or more before consuming the water, they raise their Vigor Threshold by 4 but suffer a -4 to Resist Magic. After the invocation ends, the tree shifts back to normal leaving only an etched sigil unique to the druid. A creature cannot benefit from this invocation more than once a week.

**Range:** 2m

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Defenses:** None

# Advanced Witcher Signs



## Somne

**STA Cost:** Variable

**Effect:** Somne puts a single target to sleep with soothing magic. Upon casting this sign, if the target fails to defend, they are put to sleep and considered Stunned until they wake, 8 hours later. If you spend 2 points of STA casting this Sign the target wakes if they take damage, if someone wakes them, or if a loud noise occurs. If you spend 4 points of STA the target only wakes if they take damage or if someone tries to wake them with an action. If you spend 6 points of STA the target wakes only if they take damage or if someone tries to wake them with a full round action. If you spend 7 points of STA the target only wakes if they take damage. If the target has no reason to suspect magical interference before being put to sleep, they do not know they were affected by magic when they wake.

**Range:** 8m

**Duration:** 8 Hours

**Defenses:** Resist Magic



## Supirre

**STA Cost:** Variable

**Effect:** Drawing the Sign of Supirre on a surface allows you to link it to a point within the range of the spell. When linked, you can hear anything happening near that point as if it were right next to you and can choose to focus on a single sound or conversation by tuning out all other noise. As long as this sign is active, you do not need to make an Awareness check to hear any conversation at the linked point. The sign can only be linked to one location and must be recast to listen in another. The range of this sign is determined by the number of STA Points spent when cast. If cast with 1 STA Point, Supirre has a range of 2m. For every STA Point spent beyond that, the maximum range of the sign increases by 2m.

**Range:** Variable

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Defenses:** None

# Rituals



Novice Rituals	Journeyman Rituals	Master Rituals
Create Crystal Skull	Animate Armor	Create Place of Power
Imbue Trophy	Beacon of the Unnatural	Enchant Amulet
Tyromancy	Fog of the Past	
Wagerer's Pendant	Magical Guestbook	

## Novice Rituals

### Create Crystal Skull

**STA Cost:** 5

**Effect:** By infusing an existing animal skull from a cat, dog, bird, or serpent with fifth essence you create a crystal skull which can be used to form a single animal of that type as per the Crystal Skull on pg.119. If the animal created by a Crystal Skull dies, the Crystal Skull can be recharged by performing this ritual again using only 2 units of Fifth Essence and the inactive skull.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 14

**Duration:** Immediate

**Components:** Animal Skull, Fifth Essence (x5)

### Imbue Trophy

**STA Cost:** 3

**Effect:** By properly preparing and taxidermizing the remains of a monster, this ritual allows you to make use of a monster's alien physiology to channel magical effects. Upon performing this ritual, a single non-enchanted trophy you possess becomes a permanent magical trophy that grants the benefits listed on pg.124 to anyone who carries the trophy who also helped kill the monster.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty:** 12

**Duration:** Immediate

**Components:** Monster Trophy, Fifth Essence (x1), Infused Dust (x1), Tanning Herbs (x10), Ogre Wax (x1), Ester Grease (x2)

## Tyromancy

**STA Cost:** 2

**Effect:** By magically aging or melting cheese and watching closely its qualities, Tyromancy allows you to divine whether a course of action will have a positive or negative outcome. When the ritual is performed, the GM privately rolls 1d6 and either adds or subtracts it from 13 to determine the DC of the ritual. If the cheese used is of standard quality or lower (10 Crowns per Unit) the d6 is added to 13. If the cheese used is of high quality (30 Crowns per Unit) the d6 is subtracted. You then make a Ritual Crafting check against this DC. After the check, you may ask the GM whether a course of action will have a positive or negative outcome. If your check was successful, the GM must answer truthfully. If the outcome of the action would be both positive and negative, the answer is whichever would be more immediate. If you fail, the GM will give you a false answer based on the private roll of their d6. If the number was odd the false answer is negative, if the number was even, the false answer is positive.

**Preparation Time:** 5 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 13 +/- 1d6

**Duration:** Immediate

**Components:** Cheese (x2)

## Journeyman Rituals

### Animate Armor

**STA Cost:** 14

**Effect:** By assembling a full suit of armor with a golem heart at its core and infusing the heart with magic you can animate the suit of armor as a loyal servant. Upon performing this ritual, the suit of armor you used becomes animate and uses the living armor stat block (pg. 204) except for its armor Stopping Power which is equal to the armor you used. The living armor is not a sapient creature and is eternally loyal to its creator. It will perform any task given by its creator to the letter.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 18

**Duration:** Permanent

**Components:** Head Armor (x1), Torso Armor (x1), Leg Armor (x1), Fifth Essence (x3), Infused Dust (x3), Golem Heart (x1)

### Wagerer's Pendant

**STA Cost:** 6

**Effect:** By binding a shard of etched glass in a pendant of wolfsbane, beast bones, and leather strips, you can create a locus of dark magic. This pendant absorbs the chaos which forms hexes and temporarily stores it. While a person wears it, they are freed from the effects of all hexes. If the pendant is removed at any point, all of the effects return. Additionally, if the person fails to rid themselves of all of the hexes by the end of this ritual's duration, the pendant breaks and releases a torrent of dark magic. Should this occur, the person wearing the pendant and anyone within 2m of them are immediately afflicted by a number of hexes chosen by the GM.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 14

**Duration:** 1 Week

**Components:** Glass (x2), Beast Bones (x1), Wolfsbane (x2), Leather (x2), Chalk (x2), Etching Acid (x5), Ashes (x2)

### Beacon of the Unnatural

**STA Cost:** 12

**Effect:** By constructing a grim totem containing a fifth essence infused mutagen you create a beacon for monsters. Upon performing this ritual, the Beacon of the Unnatural calls to any monsters within 1 mile to come and build a new nest at the location. The scent given off by the Beacon grows stronger over time, expanding the range of its draw by a mile every year. The Beacon is 2m tall and has 20 Hit Points.

**Preparation Time:** 15 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 18

**Duration:** Until Destroyed

**Components:** Hardened Timber (x4), A Mutagen, Rope, Beast Bones (x5), Fifth Essence (x1)

## Fog of the Past

**STA Cost:** 10

**Effect:** By arranging a circle of candles, creating a pyramidal sculpture of glass with a lunar shard in its center, and filling it with essence of wraith you create a magical projector which summons up a vision of the past. Upon performing this ritual, the projector shows the most emotionally resonant moment to have ever occurred in the area. This moment can be up to 5 minutes long and plays on repeat until the end of the ritual.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 18

**Duration:** 20 Minutes

**Components:** Glass (x5), Lunar Shard (x1), Candles (x5), Essence of Wraith (x2)

## Magical Guestbook

**STA Cost:** 8

**Effect:** By weaving symbols in chalk and coal on an archway or door frame and placing a small fifth-essence-infused clay icon on the top of the entryway you create an invisible curtain. This magical curtain records the faces of anyone who passes through and alerts you telepathically if anyone you designated when you cast the ritual pass through it. The curtain keeps the recordings of the faces until the ritual ends, after which they are stored in the clay icon which can be viewed by someone with a Vigor Threshold of 1 or higher. These recordings remain as long as the icon remains intact. While the ritual is active, you can access the records at any time telepathically while within 100m. You must also be within 100m for the Magical Guestbook to alert you to a designated person entering.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 16

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Components:** Chalk (x2), Coal (x2), River Clay (x1), Fifth Essence (x1)

## Master Rituals

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### Create Place of Power

**STA Cost:** 18

**Effect:** By carving complex sigils on a standing stone erected at the confluence of two ley lines of the same element you create a Place of Power. This Place of Power remains indefinitely. If you fumble when performing this ritual your fumble outcome always results in a 10 and all of the stone used for the ritual explodes as if it were a bomb (doing 7d6 damage) with a 6m radius.

**Preparation Time:** 20 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 20

**Duration:** Permanent

**Components:** Stone (x40), Runewright's Tools

### Enchant Amulet

**STA Cost:** Variable

**Effect:** By inlaying a common amulet with gemstones etched with magic glyphs you create an enchanted amulet that stores the knowledge of casting certain spells. When creating a magic amulet, a character must spend the required STA for each spell cast. If a spell has an active duration, the caster must also spend enough STA to sustain it for 4 rounds. When creating an amulet, the caster may not use a magical focus. Every spell to be imbued in the amulet must be cast quickly in succession, without taking any other action in-between, otherwise the Crafting process fails.

**Preparation Time:** 15 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 18

**Duration:** Permanent

**Components:** Simple Amulet (x1), Perfect Gemstone (1 Per Spell/Invocation), Fifth Essence (x2), Runewright's Tools

# Hexes



Low Danger Hexes	Medium Danger Hexes	High Danger Hexes
Curse of Temperance	The Evil Eye	Bones of Glass
The Odious Hex	Unending Need	Hex of Forgetfulness

## Low Danger Hexes

### Curse of Temperance

**STA Cost:** 4

**Effect:** The Curse of Temperance sours the subject's stomach to alcohol and exacerbates the effects of drunkenness. If the subject consumes anything that would cause them to become intoxicated, they immediately suffer the Intoxication and Nausea effects as their head spins and their stomach churns violently.

**Danger:** Low

**Requirement To Lift:** The subject must gather 40 Crowns worth of alcohol and find a bucket. They must then fill the bucket with the alcohol and dunk their head. Their head must remain submerged until they suffer the Suffocation effect. Upon pulling their head from the bucket the hex will be broken.

### The Odious Hex

**STA Cost:** 4

**Effect:** The Odious Hex weaves around a subject and makes them repellent. While hexed, the subject always counts as one level lower on the Social Standing table unless they were already Hated. This affects people of the subject's own race.

**Danger:** Low

**Requirement To Lift:** The subject must construct an effigy of themselves from a unit each of Han Fiber, Barley, & Fool's Parsley. They must then insult the effigy as if they were insulting themselves until they can no longer think of insults. Finally, the subject must burn the effigy to free themselves of the hex.

## Medium Danger Hexes

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### The Evil Eye

**STA Cost:** 8

**Effect:** Casting The Evil Eye upon a subject weaves a web of misfortune around them which threatens their every move. Whenever the subject rolls a Fumble, they must roll twice and take the worse outcome. Additionally, the GM is encouraged to choose the subject whenever they would be randomly determining the target of a threat.

**Danger:** Medium

**Requirement To Lift:** The subject must acquire a unit of coral from the Great Sea (50 Crowns) and fashion it into an amulet with a DC:14 Fine Arts check. The amulet must be worn during the entirety of a full moon and will shatter at the sunrise, freeing you of the Hex.

### Unending Need

**STA Cost:** 8

**Effect:** Unending Need causes the subject's body to be consumed by sloth and gluttony, requiring more sleep and food to function properly. The subject must get 10 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night or take the -3 penalty on rolls for Sleep-Deprivation. Additionally, the subject must eat 5 meals a day or halve their total STA for the next day.

**Danger:** Medium

**Requirement to Lift:** The subject must fast for 3 full days and 3 nights drinking only water and sleeping with sweets underneath their pillow. If the subject is able to perform this fast and not touch the sweets beneath their pillow the hex breaks on the morning of the fourth day.

## High Danger Hexes

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### Bones of Glass

**STA Cost:** 12

**Effect:** Bones of Glass magically hollows the bones of the subject, making them prone to splintering. When the subject would suffer the Cracked Ribs Critical Wound, they instead suffer the Broken Ribs Critical Wound. When they would suffer the Fractured Arm/Leg Critical Wounds they instead suffer the Compound Arm/Leg Fracture Critical Wounds. When they would suffer the Minor Head Wound Critical Wound, they instead suffer the Skull Fracture Critical Wound. Additionally, rolls made to stabilize or treat these critical wounds are made at a -3 penalty.

**Danger:** High

**Requirement to Lift:** The subject must acquire a war horse, a troll liver, meat from a wolf, 3 units of balisse leaves, and a bottle of spirits. Upon gathering these things, the subject must bleed the war horse, collecting some of the blood in a pot and add the liver, meat, and leaves to form a foul stew which takes 3 hours to cook. The subject must then consume the entire pot of stew within 1 hour and follow it by chugging the bottle of spirits. When they finish the bottle, the hex will have been lifted.

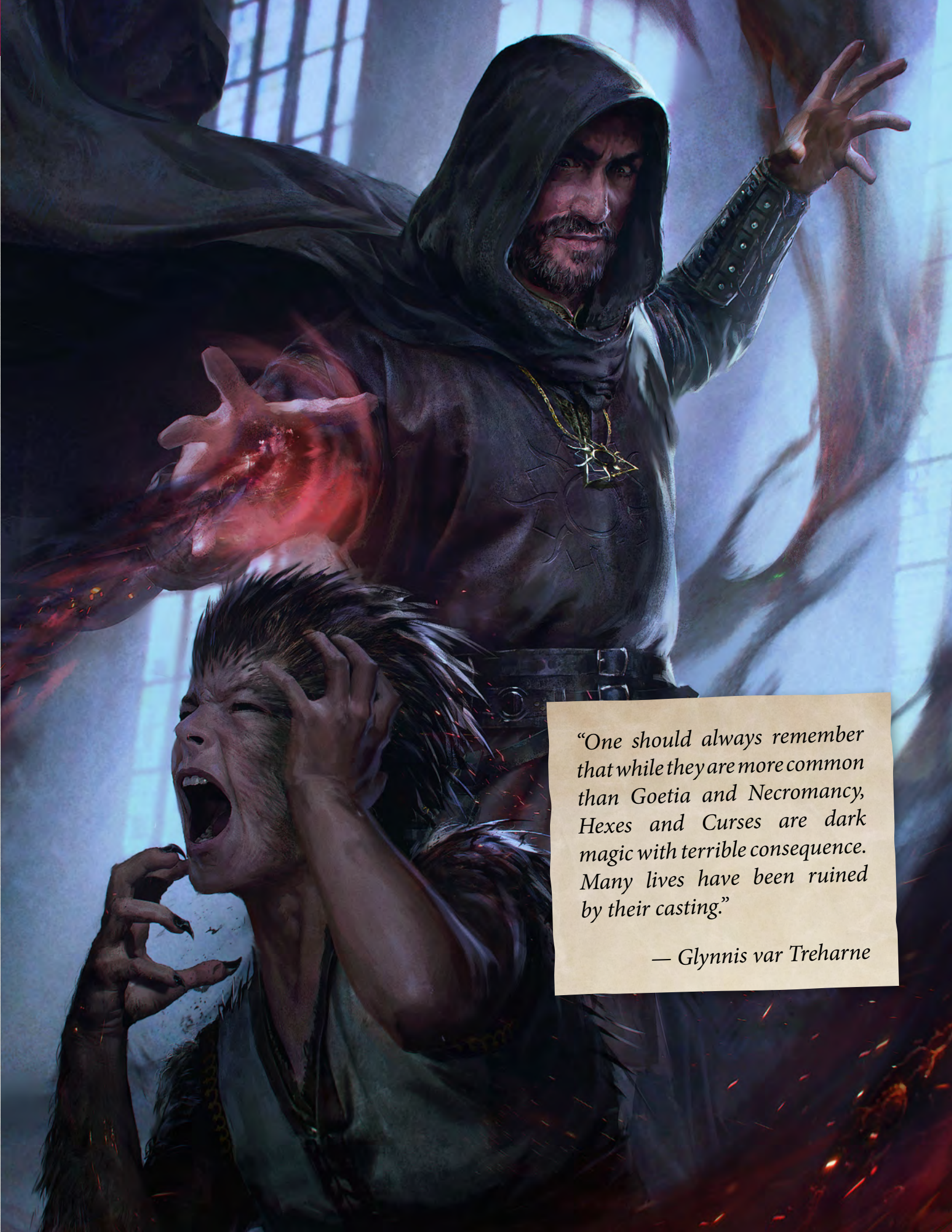
### Hex of Forgetfulness

**STA Cost:** 12

**Effect:** The Hex of Forgetfulness submerges the subjects mind in a thick soup of magical obscurement making it difficult for them to retain knowledge and memories. The subject can no longer gain I.P. via being taught or study and practice, can no longer teach someone, and can no longer learn new magic. Additionally, once per day, the GM can call upon the subject to make a Resist Magic roll at a DC:20 or forget a fact, memory, recipe, spell, invocation, ritual, hex, or sign of the GM's choice until the Hex is removed.

**Danger:** High

**Requirement To Lift:** The subject must shave their head of all hair and then prepare a paste of 2 units of essence of water and 2 units of river clay. The subject must then inscribe specific sigils on their scalp with the clay and hold a unit of optima matter under their tongue. They must wait silently for a full day and night for the clay to dry. When the clay is removed from the scalp and the optima matter is removed from their mouth, the optima matter will be ashen gray and the hex will have been removed, returning anything forgotten. The optima matter used is permanently grayed and acts as a Focus (2) that can only be used for Hexes, Goetia, and Necromancy.



*“One should always remember that while they are more common than Goetia and Necromancy, Hexes and Curses are dark magic with terrible consequence. Many lives have been ruined by their casting.”*

*— Glynnis var Treharne*



# The Magical Marketplace

*“Present the average man a staff carved with twirling runes, capped with a glinting gem and he’ll declare it magical. The carving may read ‘property of Adelheid’, the gem glass, but in his ignorance, he’ll treat it like a mage’s prized artifact. Because next time it might explode in his face.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne



**Despite well-earned paranoia about mages and sorcerers, most people can’t resist wanting a little bit of magic of their own. Magic items, enchantments, magic elixirs, love charms, and Gods know what.**

Having spent some time in the mind of a Witcher, I know that effective enchantments and magic potions do exist with the most powerful of them being the tools of witchers. For centuries, witchers have used these bits of magic to help them hunt down the nastiest creatures on the Continent. One might then expect that witchers are the source of many magic items. This would be far from the truth. Despite having been formed by all sorts of magics, witchers are not mages, not spell casters. While they can use these items, they did not create them and most couldn’t really tell you how they work. No, those capable of crafting these works of magic are almost invariably mages. So if these are not witcher secrets, why doesn’t everyone have a rune etched sword and potions that let them see in the dark? There are two factors. Primarily, mages prefer to keep the majority of their magical creations to themselves. In some cases, such as the Megas-

cope or the Magical Amulet, this is because no mundane person could properly use the item in the first place. In other cases, the mage in question jealously guards the secrets of their creation to keep it rare and special, purposefully keeping the masses in darkness. And this, of course, leads to the secondary reason, these items are expensive. Mages who aren’t attending fancy convocations have to make money somehow. And price is based on perception of value. I would guess that any mage who moved into a village and started trading elixirs for a dozen eggs would be hunted down by the local magical fraternity.

But it is now that we are able to pull back that curtain with the help of Glynnis and give a more thorough explanation of the workings of magical items. I will admit that as a former-director of a magical academy, Glynnis knows more about this than I do and while she has tried to explain the theories to me I now understand how my students feel during my more obscure lectures. The processes of crafting stable magical items are esoteric and complicated, requiring a familiarity with chaos that I cannot claim. I would certainly have been sit-

## Potions VS Elixirs

*“Dear Reader, you will, I’m sure be quick to point out that the potions for which witchers are so widely known are poisonous to anyone who hasn’t been mutated by the trials of the Witchers. This is of course, true, though in some cases regular ‘non-mutants’ have benefited from these potions and the most skilled of alchemists have shown a capability to adapt these potions to make them less dangerous to the uninitiated.”*

—Brandon of Oxenfurt

## Relic Items

*"I think it is far more interesting that items can take on magic all by themselves. Actually I think it's related to curses and hexes. If you concentrate enough emotion, enough intent, on an item it can take on magical aspects. If something is used over and over again by one person it can take on the emotion or the intent. Wooden spoons used by grandmothers, musical instruments used by bards, stiletos used by assassins."*

—Brandon of Oxenfurt

## Crafting Enchantments

*"Now, what you'll probably be wondering is, 'Why the hell is all this so complicated?'" Etching runes into my blade ain't this difficult. Ya just etch the rune, and infuse the rune stone in it! Heh, well here's the problem. Ya ain't exactly enchanting yer weapons right. Any runewright'll tell ya that etching a rune or a glyph ain't easy if ya wanna get the most out of it. Heh, ya need the right tools and plenty of concentration and time. Runewords & glyphwords are so exacting' that ya can't cut any corners when etching 'em. Gotta do the whole thing to get any effect."*

—Rodolf Kazmer

ting in the back row of her classes. While magic may spontaneously latch onto an item, the majority of magical items are created through rituals, which require specific treatments and magical incantations to bind magic to rune, crystals, and other focusing items in or on the intended piece.

And as for love charms, charms to make people tell the truth, charms to grow pumpkins, and bring fish, these are far more often the fabrication of Hedge Magicians in need of coin. These lesser mages who have one minor ability can extend their "services" to people who truly want to believe in whatever they are sold. Some people can make being an old crone into a cottage industry. A cleaner at the university went into business selling little dolls made to look like whoever the buyer had a strong loathing for. Supposedly anything done to the doll, happened to the victim. Interestingly one of her dolls actually worked. I believe that was one case that may have fallen into the magic by use category. It took 17 years, but in the end the victim was run over by a carter's wagon. In Oxenfurt, fake mages selling beauty potions and magic knitting needles are far less common. The current rage for alchemy has caused many of them to change professions.

—Brandon of Oxenfurt

# Glyphs

While most known glyphs on the Continent expand the magical capabilities of a magic user, new glyphs are being discovered with every delve into elderfolk ruins. The following glyphs were brought to the Continent from Ofir not long ago. While rare in the North, these glyphs are sometimes traded in southern Nilfgaard and some eventually make their way to major trading hubs such as Novigrad or Cidaris. Just like the glyphstones in the Core Rule Book, each of these new glyphs can be inscribed on a piece of armor with an open Enhancement Slot. This glyph is permanent and inscribing it uses up the glyphstone.

Name	Effect	Cost
Binding	While wearing this armor, whenever you would have a chance of bleeding, lower that chance by 30%.	200
Mending	While wearing this armor, whenever you regain Hit Points, you regain 1 additional point.	450
Reinforcement	The armor's Stopping Power increases by 3.	100
Warding	While wearing this armor, you have resistance to damage dealt by an Elemental source such as fire or lightning.	300



# Enchantment: Runewords & Glyphwords

Another magical practice flourishing in Ofir is the enchantment of items with runewords and glyphwords. These enchantments combine multiple runes or glyphs to create a unique magical effect. These effects can be very powerful but the magic binding them is very carefully woven and can be disrupted by other enchantments. A weapon or piece of armor can only ever benefit from one enchantment and cannot be inscribed with other runes or glyphs even if it has more free enhancement slots. If the weapon or armor has a rune or glyph already etched onto it which is not part of the enchantment desired, that rune or glyph is destroyed in

the process of etching the enchantment. If the rune or glyph already present is part of the desired enchantment you can add it to the enchantment; meaning you can build runewords and glyphwords over time.

To etch an enchantment into an item, the item must have a prerequisite number of open enhancement slots. A lesser enchantment takes up two enhancement slots, while a greater enchantment takes up three. You cannot benefit from the same enchantment multiple times, even if they are on different items.

## Runewords

Name	Rune Slots	Item	Effects
Burning	Lesser	Weapon	The damage done by this weapon can change to fire damage which bypasses Resistances to Slashing, Piercing, or Bludgeoning Damage. It can still be resisted by creatures immune or resistant to fire. The weapon does not cause the target to light on fire.
Deflection	Greater	Weapon	While wielding this weapon you can make a check at a -6 with your weapon skill base when targeted by a ranged attack to parry the attack. If your roll beats the attacker's attack roll, you can choose a target within 10m. That target must take a defense action against your initial weapon skill roll or be Staggered by the flying projectile. If you have levels in the Parry Arrows ability, instead you gain a +2 to it when wielding this weapon.
Depletion	Greater	Weapon	When casting a spell/invocation using this weapon as a focus, if your target fails to defend they lower their Stamina by 1d6 in addition to being affected by the spell.
Placation	Lesser	Weapon	While carrying this weapon, whenever you use Adrenaline dice the cost to your Stamina is 5 instead of 10.
Preservation	Lesser	Weapon or Shield	This weapon or shield's Reliability increases by 5.
Prolongation	Lesser	Weapon	When casting a spell/invocation using this weapon as a focus, if the spell/invocation has a duration expressed in dice (such as 1d6 hours), roll twice and keep the highest result.
Rejuvenation	Greater	Weapon	Whenever you kill a creature with this weapon, you regain Stamina equal to your REC score.
Shearing	Lesser	Weapon	Attacks made with this weapon do an additional 1 point of damage to the Stopping Power of Armor or the Reliability of Shields if they penetrate them.

## Glyphwords

Name	Enhancement Slots	Item	Effects
Balance	Lesser	Any Armor	This armor's Encumbrance Value is reduced by 1.
Beguilement	Lesser	Head Armor	While wearing this armor, you gain a +1 to Charisma, Grooming and Style, and Leadership.
Heft	Lesser	Any Armor	The Stopping Power of this armor is increased by 2 but its Encumbrance Value is doubled. If this glyphword is used on an armor with an Encumbrance Value of 0 the Encumbrance value remains 0.
Protection	Greater	Torso Armor	While wearing this armor, your Hit Points are increased by 5.
Retribution	Greater	Any Armor	While wearing this armor, if you take damage from an attack, the attacker takes 3 points of damage to their torso which cannot be blocked by armor.
Rotation	Lesser	Leg Armor	While wearing this armor, attackers do not gain a bonus when attacking you from outside your Vision Cone.
Shining	Lesser	Torso Armor	By taking an action to rub the rune word on your armor, you can make it shed light up to 6 meters from you for 30 Minutes raising the light level to the level of daylight. Monsters that have a weakness or susceptibility to light or sunlight are affected by the light of this armor.



# Crafting Enchantments



It is possible to recreate the old techniques of crafting Enchantments, but the necessary requirements often make it a costly endeavor. Before crafting an enchantment, a craftsman must have the diagram for the enchantment, the components, and a set of Runewright's Tools. If an item you are attempting to enchant already has one of the runes or glyphs

required by the enchantment it can be counted towards the components of the enchantment and is not destroyed.

If you fail to craft an enchantment, you can attempt a recovery roll by rolling the same Crafting check again. If you succeed at this roll you can keep one rune or glyph used in the enchantment. The rest are lost.

Journeyman Diagram					
Name	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Runeword: Burning	15	1 Hour	Chemobog (x1), Dazhbog (x1)	1175	2150
Runeword: Placation	15	1 Hour	Morana (x1), Stribog (x1)	1075	2150
Runeword: Preservation	15	1 Hour	Devana (x1), Morana (x1)	1150	2300
Runeword: Prolongation	15	1 Hour	Perun (x1), Svarog (x1)	1175	2150
Runeword: Shearing	15	1 Hour	Veles (x1), Zoria (x1)	1150	2300
Glyphword: Balance	15	1 Hour	Glyph of Mending (x1), Glyph of Reinforcement (x1)	550	1100
Glyphword: Beguilement	15	1 Hour	Glyph of Fire (x1), Glyph of Water (x1)	1150	2300
Glyphword: Heft	15	1 Hour	Glyph of Mending (x1), Glyph of Reinforcement (x1)	550	1100
Glyphword: Rotation	15	1 Hour	Glyph of Binding (x1), Glyph of Reinforcement (x1)	300	600
Glyphword: Shining	15	1 Hour	Glyph of Air (x1), Glyph of Warding (x1)	875	1750

Master Diagram					
Name	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Runeword: Deflection	21	1 Hour	Chemobog (x1), Perun (x1), Stribog (x1)	1650	3300
Runeword: Depletion	21	1 Hour	Stribog (x1), Triglav (x1), Veles (x1)	1675	3350
Runeword: Rejuvenation	21	1 Hour	Perun (x1), Svarog (x1), Triglav (x1)	1750	3500
Glyphword: Protection	21	1 Hour	Glyph of Earth (x1), Glyph of Magic (x1), Glyph of Warding (x1)	1450	2900
Glyphword: Retribution	21	1 Hour	Glyph of Earth (x1), Glyph of Fire (x1), Glyph of Reinforcement (x1)	1250	2500

## Adding Extra Slots

The process of enchanting items isn't all that common in the world of the Witcher which means that many items have little to no room for enchantment. However, through a complex and costly process, a craftsman can add an empty enhancement slot to a weapon or piece of armor. To do so, the item in question must be at its full Reliability or Stopping Power value and the craftsman must have

a set of Crafting Tools, 4 units of Meteorite, 2 units of Infused Dust, and the Enhancement Slot Diagram. With these prerequisites met, the craftsman can spend 4 hours to roll a Crafting check to attempt to add an enhancement slot to the item. This new enhancement slot can only hold runes or glyphs, and an item can only have a maximum of 3 enhancement slots.

Master Diagram					
Name	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Enhancement Slot	25	4 hours	Meteorite (x4), Infused Dust (x2)	684	1368

*“I did once see an officer inscribing a rune onto his own sword in the field. While it was effective in a limited way it was also quite messy. All wiggly lines and hardly any clean angles. It was such a waste of a wonderful artifact. Remember, it is always best to find a trained professional if you want your weapons enchanted.”*

*—Glynnis var Treharne*

# Elixirs



## The Evolution of Elixirs

In many cases, the Elixirs presented here are either based on infamous Witcher potions or served as the foundation upon which the Witcher potions were created.

## Halflings & Elixirs

Unfortunately, due to their magic-resistant nature, a Halfling cannot benefit from any Elixir, no matter how many they drink. They can still be effected by the Toxicity of Elixirs, however.

*“If memory serves me correctly, the Usurpator once tasked the top alchemists in the Empire with reverse engineering potions stolen from a witcher of the Viper School. Obviously this endeavor was less than successful but it may have led to some of the elixirs used by Nilfgaardian infiltrators.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne

While magical potions are most commonly associated with witchers, there are many magical elixirs peddled by mages and alchemists which are perfectly safe for non-mutants to ingest. These elixirs use magically reactive alchemical compounds and fifth essence to alter the imbiber’s physiology in desirable ways. Many knights, mages, and nobles keep vials of various elixirs on their person for various needs throughout their day; making the business lucrative in areas where it isn’t ille-

gal. This, of course, has given rise to hordes of elixir merchants who peddle colored water and alchoest mixed with unidentifiable herbs. Real elixirs are all considered rare and are generally only sold by mages or highly skilled alchemists.

While they are safe enough for anyone to consume, they are still toxic in large doses meaning that a character who is not a witcher is affected by having a toxicity score above 100% the same as witcher.

Name	Avail.	Effect	Toxicity	Weight	Cost
Anabolic Steroids	R	Drinking Anabolic Steroids gives a character +10 maximum Hit Points, and +2 to Endurance and Physique for 10 minutes. On the other hand, it makes the drinker incredibly aggressive towards everyone for 1 hour.	50%	0.1	165
Last Hope	R	A failed replica of the healing medicine of the dryads of Brokilon, Last Hope can repair the most grievous wounds at a cost. Drinking it treats 1 critical wound the drinker has but that critical wound will not heal unless a Doctor makes a DC:24 Healing Hands check to reapply the critical wound and then treats it again with Healing Hands.	75%	0.1	200
Lightning	R	Lightning is the result of an attempt to recreate the Witchers' Thunderbolt potion. It grants the drinker a +3 damage on your next physical attack.	75%	0.1	75
Mongoose	R	A favorite of courtiers and nobles, Mongoose renders the drinker immune to the poisoned condition for 30 minutes.	50%	0.1	50
Strider	R	The drinker forgoes the need for sleep for a 24-hour period. Doses of Strider used to be given to soldiers to allow them to cross more territory without exerting themselves. The costs of this potion quickly made it nonviable for large armies.	50%	0.1	64
Tempest	R	Tempest channels the inherent elemental magic around a person. When making an attack or casting a spell that has a chance of inflicting the Fire, Freeze, or Prone effects, the percentage is increased by 10%.	50%	0.1	52

## Crafting Elixirs

Crafting Elixirs is a process that requires a great deal of monetary investment and skill. In addition to the ingredients listed here, elixirs always require 1 bottle of alcohest in their creation.

Journeyman Diagram				
Name	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Cost
Anabolic Steroids	16	1/2 Hour		330
Lightning	16	15 Minutes		150
Mongoose	15	15 Minutes		100
Strider	16	15 Minutes		128
Tempest	15	15 Minutes		104

Journeyman Diagram				
Name	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Cost
Last Hope	22	1 Hour		400

# Magic Items



## Wearing An Amulet

*“I have worn an Enchanted Amulet once or twice in my life. The Empire keeps a number of them at Gweison Haul so a teacher can cast a certain spell when the Empire requires it. Invariably, the experience is far from pleasant but less than excruciating. The fatigue is bearable but makes managing a class of youngsters far more difficult.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne

Across the Continent enchanted or magical items range from rare and sought-after to so common they may as well be mundane. In general, this is thanks to how magic items get made. In the world of *The Witcher* most magic items are made in one of two ways. The first and least common method is through ambient magic and moments of powerful emotion. This is how many relics are made. Something like a curse, an item can have magic attach itself to the item in some unexpected way. More often, a magic item is tailor made by a mage, priest, or druid for a specific purpose. This item serves its purpose for the magic user and may never make it into circulation. But often times, the mage in question decides to sell this item, they teach others how to make it, or it gets stolen and replicated by someone else. And that’s how many of the magic items on this list wound up spreading across the Continent.

That being said, most magic items are still quite rare since the knowledge and power to make them is also rare and most mages guard

the secrets of their craft jealously. There are even some magic items that are so old that knowledge of how they came about is lost to time. These items are most often found in the tombs and ruins of the elderfolk, abandoned so long ago that even the elderfolk have no idea what they are. Much like Relic Items, Magic Items have an Education DC that must be rolled to determine the item’s nature. Alternatively, this check can be made with Magic Training.

## Enchanted Amulets (Education DC:14)

Enchanted amulets are created by the sorceresses and mages as a reservoir of magic and to allow mages to cast spells that they would otherwise be unable to. In more recent years, the secrets to the creation of enchanted amulets fell into the hands of the Druid Circle of Mayena and the Church of the Eternal Fire is said to also be in possession of a few enchanted amulets which they took from executed mages.

## Power Stones

Power stones are common across the world of magical items. These cut gemstones store magic and programmed commands. In most circumstances they are used like remote controls for magic items but they can also be used to create items with very simple automated responses such as Power Stone Guardians.

Every enchanted amulet counts as a Focus (2) item. In addition, the creator of an enchanted amulet may imbue it with the power to cast 1 to 4 spells. The magic inside the amulet draws on the wearer's stamina to activate the spells and the wearer must have a Vigor Threshold high enough to cast a spell from the amulet. When casting the spells from an enchanted amulet, the wearer cannot make use of any focus other than the amulet to lower the stamina cost. Additionally, an enchanted amulet can allow priests & druids to cast spells as if they were a mage.

Enchanted amulets have a drawback, however. Once more than one spell has been imbued in the amulet, the creator must also choose a drawback from the following list. These drawbacks remain as long as the enchanted amulet is worn, and for 24-hours afterward. The drawbacks can be:

- ◆ The wearer's maximum Hit Points are reduced by 5.
- ◆ The wearer experiences a constant headache giving them a -1 to INT, WILL, and REF.
- ◆ The wearer fatigues more easily and reduces their maximum Stamina by 10.

## Spell Formulae (Education DC:14)

Spell formulae are used by teachers of magic to ensure their pupils understand the underlying theories and risks involved with casting particular spells. While many lay people believe these papers to hold magical potential (and many are sold as such), no spell can be cast through a spell formula. When using a spell formula, you gain +2 to your skill check to learn a specific spell, invocation, hex, sign, or ritual.

## Gateway Portal (Education DC:18)

Gateway portals are an ancient means of transportation used by the elves long ago. In essence, they are the same as a standing portal, but they are fixed between two points.

There are many broken and non-functional gateway portals left across the Continent. So long as the entry portal remains undamaged, its magic is strong and reliable enough to transport people crossing it to its exit point. Entering a gateway portal instantly teleports you to a point designated by its creator. A Magical Training check DC:14 allows a mage to know where the portal leads before crossing. There are many different activators for a Gateway portal ranging from passwords which must be spoken aloud to small gemstones called power stones which must be carried to open the portal.

## Wishing Mirror (Education DC:16)

No one knows when these mirrors were created, by whom, and for what purpose. All that's known is that a small number of them were circulated throughout the Continent, sold by a traveling merchant. At first, these mirrors adorned the walls of lavish manors and castles but as their magical properties began to become apparent they began to filter into black markets and private collections. These magic mirrors are very dangerous, and their effects are used by parents everywhere to warn their children against spending too much time in front of a mirror and avoid vanity.

A wishing mirror allows a person to view their deepest desires within. When looking through the mirror, the onlooker sees their ideal self-image in a location they've always dreamt of and owning all the property they've dreamt of owning. While looking into the mirror, a person falls into a trance of sorts, seeing themselves within the mirror, enjoying the bountiful life just beyond the glass. These visions quickly become addictive and after gazing into the mirror once, a viewer must make a Resist Magic check DC:18. On a failure, the viewer is compelled to look into the mirror for at least 1 hour every day. At the end of each period, the viewer can make a new Resist Magic check. On a failure, the duration increases by 1 hour for the next 24-hour period. On a success, the duration

is lessened by 1 hour. Additionally, for every day that the viewer succeeds in not looking at the mirror, the duration is lessened by 1 hour. When the duration becomes 0 hours, the viewer is no longer under the magic of the mirror. If the duration ever reaches 24 hours, the viewer can no longer withdraw their gaze from the mirror even for basic needs such as eating and drinking. Without help, they are liable to die.

If the mirror is destroyed while someone is under its sway, that person becomes sullen and depressive for a month afterwards. They feel as though their life itself has been shattered and nothing brings them even the smallest amount of joy. This imposes a -2 to all actions they attempt.

## Eye of Nehaleni (Education DC:16)

Eyes of Nehaleni are rare magical objects that have begun to resurface in the last decade. These round stone tablets have inscriptions of a complex variation of the symbol of Nehaleni, the Nordling goddess of fate & illusion. Holding the tablet aloft and calling to the goddess allows a person to attempt to dispel illusions. By taking an action you can make a Spell Casting check with a +4 bonus against the original check made to create the illusion or a DC set by the GM. If you succeed, the illusion ends. The Eye of Nehaleni does not require you to spend any Stamina to dispel an illusion.

Travelers through the North have noticed a lone individual, cloaked in heavy leather and furs, leave such items in remote shrines to the goddess. Of course, the resurgence of the eyes have also led to a new market for fake Eyes of Nehaleni, so take what you hear at the Novigrad market with a grain of salt.

## Four-Leaf Clover (Education DC:10)

These magical, dried, four-leaf clovers are rumored to be given by puckish relicts known as griggs to people who help them, or as consolation to the victims of their pranks. More

commonly, they can be found at market stalls that sell magical goods. A four-leaf clover grants a temporary +1 to your Luck. Without taking an action, you can expend this Four-Leaf Clover to gain a +1 to your next check. Once this point has been used, the clover disintegrates.

## Crystal Skull (Education DC:16)

For many mages it's very useful to have a small animal at hand to run errands and deliver letters, but not as convenient to constantly be caring for a pet. This dilemma gave birth to the Crystal Skull, a crystallized animal skull, permeated with magic which can transform into a physical animal. Upon speaking an activation word, the skull transforms into the animal it came from (cat, dog, bird, or serpent). The animal responds to your mental commands as long as you are within 50m, and will act like a regular animal of its kind should you give it no commands. Upon death, the animal reverts to an inert crystal skull. The Crystal Skull can be recharged by performing the Create Crystal Skull ritual (see pg.102) using only 2 units of Fifth Essence and the inactive skull. The animal summoned from a skull is always the same animal.

## Magical Elven Rope (Education DC:18)

Crafted by the elves and carried throughout the Continent with elven scouting parties, these tightly woven white ropes are imbued with magic which allows them to move with the will of their holder. The rope can twist and cling to people reaching out for it, tie itself around objects that it is laid on, and retract back to the holder. While the rope is capable of tying itself around people, it never does this fast enough to grapple a resisting creature. When climbing with this rope, you gain a +5 bonus to Athletics checks made to climb. Finally, the rope, despite its delicate nature, is nigh unbreakable, able to support 300kg of weight and take 50 points of damage.

## Power of Compulsion

*"Been lucky enough to never look into a Wishing Mirror or meet the man who sold 'em. But I've seen folk who have. Heh, not a pretty sight. Got so wrapped up in their dreams they stopped eating and drinking, and wasted away. Just a husk in front of some glass."*

—Rodolf Kazmer

## Sabotaged Megascope

*“It is not entirely uncommon for a mage in Nilfgaard to suffer the effects of a damaged megascope. To the unaided eye, the damage necessary to destabilize a megascope is nearly impossible to spot and can be caused by the slightest drop. Still, rumors persist that agents of the Empire plant damaged gemstones in the megascopes of mages they consider dangerous or close to rebellion.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne

## Runewright's Tools (Education DC:16)

Beyond the everyday crafting tools used to inscribe runes and glyphs, Runewright's Tools contain super fine chisels, metal guides, and stabilizing compounds to set the magic of an enchantment. A set of Runewright's Tools is required to craft runewords and glyphwords. Additionally, taking ½ hour to etch a rune or glyph into an item with a set of Runewright's Tools grants an additional benefit based on the rune or glyph:

- ◆ **Chemobog Rune:** Your weapon only takes damage if the value rolled is a 1 or 2.
- ◆ **Dazhbog Rune:** The chance of Fire raises to 40%.
- ◆ **Devana Rune:** The chance of Bleed raises to 40%.
- ◆ **Morana Rune:** The chance of Poison raises to 40%.
- ◆ **Perun Rune:** Each time you use an Adrenaline Die, if the value rolled is a 1 you keep the die.
- ◆ **Stribog Rune:** The chance of Stagger raises to 40%.
- ◆ **Svarog Rune:** Instead of Armor Piercing, your weapon gains Improved Armor Piercing.
- ◆ **Triglav Rune:** The penalty to Stun raises by 1.
- ◆ **Veles Rune:** The weapon also gains the Focus (1) effect.
- ◆ **Zoria Rune:** The chance of Freeze raises to 40%.
- ◆ **Glyph of Earth:** The bonus to Spell DC raises by 1.
- ◆ **Glyph of Air:** The bonus to Spell DC raises by 1.
- ◆ **Glyph of Fire:** The bonus to Spell DC raises by 1.
- ◆ **Glyph of Water:** The bonus to Spell DC raises by 1.
- ◆ **Glyph of Magic:** The bonus to Spell DC raises by 1.
- ◆ **Glyph of Mending:** The additional Health Points gained raises to 2.
- ◆ **Glyph of Reinforcement:** The additional Stopping Power raises by 1.
- ◆ **Glyph of Warding:** You gain a +1 to Resist Magic while wearing this armor.
- ◆ **Glyph of Binding:** The penalty to the chance of bleeding raises to -40%.

## Megascope (Education DC:14)

One of the most complex wonders of the magical world, the Megascope is a device composed of several lenses, magic focuses, and perfectly carved gemstones. It's difficult to determine exactly who invented the Megascope or when but it has become a household item for the sorcerous elite. The complex contraption focuses a mage's power and aids with magic cast over great distances, especially teleportation and communication.

A Megascope must be arranged in a wide circle on a flat surface and activated by a person with a Vigor Threshold of at least 1. No special ritual is required to activate a Megascope. Once activated the Megascope can be used in one of two ways. Firstly, the Megascope can be used to contact another person with a Megascope or Telecommunicator. There is no earthly limit to the distance of communication, but a Megascope cannot facilitate communication with things beyond the dimension in which it is used. The recipient of the communication can choose to answer the communication; in which case the Megascope creates a spectral form of the recipient within the circle, allowing communication as if the participants were in the same room. Secondly, a Megascope can, with a DC:16 Spell Casting check, be used to view a person the user has a strong emotional connection to. If the person being viewed is a mage they can sense the augury if they roll a Magic Training check that beats your initial Spell Casting check, but they cannot see who is spying on them. This remote viewing can be maintained for up to 10 minutes before the connection fades and the user must keep all of their focus on the megascope.

Additionally, once a connection has been established, a Megascope can act as a channel for teleportation. While your Megascope is connected to or remotely viewing a person, you can cast the Teleportation or Standing Portal spells to transport yourself to that location. If using Teleportation, there is no Spell Casting check required to teleport.

Unfortunately, the complex nature of the Megascope means that it must be in perfect working order for it to be safely utilized. If one of the Gemstones in a Megascope is damaged in even the slightest way the Megascope becomes unstable. A gemstone can be damaged by being struck, knocked out of the Megascope, scratched, or anything else that might mar its perfect surface. Additionally, due to the highly magical nature of a Megascope, bringing any amount of Dimeritium within 3m of a Megascope will damage all the Gemstones at a nearly imperceptible level.

If this happens while you are communicating with someone or you attempt to activate the Megascope with a damaged or imperfect gemstone, the image just become a bit shakier than usual requiring a DC:20 Awareness check to notice. However, the real danger comes when trying to remotely view a target or teleport through a damaged Megascope. If you attempt to remotely view a target through a damaged Megascope the DC raises to 25 and if you fail to beat this check any damaged gemstones in the Megascope explode, dealing 1d6 damage to every location on the body of anyone within 4m. This renders the Megascope useless until the Perfect Gemstones can be replaced. If you attempt to teleport through a damaged Megascope far worse things happen. If you cast the Standing Portal Spell with a damaged Megascope, the spell automatically fails as though you had rolled a fumble with a value of 10 and all 3 Gemstones in the Megascope will explode, dealing 3d6 damage to every location on the body of anyone within 6m. If you attempt to cast the Teleportation spell within a damaged Megascope the magic begins to rend you apart violently. Anyone within the range of their SPD Statistic has one chance to make a DC:14 Athletics check to remove the damaged crystal before your body is torn apart and the individual pieces lie scattered across the Continent. If they succeed, the Megascope powers down and you are unharmed. If they fail, you die a messy death.



## The Pricing of Magic

Note that the prices presented here should be used as guidelines. Magics may sell these items for more or less depending on their situation.

## Power Stone Guardian (Education DC:16)

These sculpted gems are enchanted to protect an area from intruders. While the power stone itself is a small gemstone, it can be placed in a variety of settings. Power Stone Guardians can take many forms such as doors, statues, or even chandeliers. The consensus seems to be that a power stone guardian must be made from an object sturdy enough to resist accidental destruction. The power stone within this object emits a faint magical aura that becomes stronger the closer it is, meaning that a mage can detect one with Magic Training and a Witcher's Medallion will vibrate when near one.

A power stone needs to be attuned to someone. The creator of this object can attune it to someone else, who then has the power to attune it to others by placing their hands on the stone. In large cities, you will find that almost all noble houses are guarded by Power Stone Guardians of some form and even some middle class residences may have one guarding their valuables.

There are as many types of power stone guardians as there are paranoid mages, but the three presented here are the most common.

- ◆ **Alarm Power Stone:** When an unattuned creature moves within 6m of the stone, it sends a telepathic message to those attuned to it. The stone can only alert the attuned creatures that someone has entered the area but cannot tell them who the intruders are.
- ◆ **Arcing Power Stone:** When an unattuned creature comes within 6m of the stone, it immediately rolls an attack at a base 10 to release a small bolt of lightning that deals 2d6 damage. This attack can be dodged or blocked with a shield. After this point the Arcing Power Stone enters the initiative order at the bottom and attacks every round so long as an unattuned person remains in the area.
- ◆ **Illusion Power Stone:** When an unattuned creature comes within 2m of the stone, the magic inside creates an illusory guard who appears to have just come

onto the scene within 10m. The guard is dressed and armed in the manner dictated when the power stone is created. The illusion can shout a short phrase and can move about within 10m of the stone. The illusion cannot interact with anything otherwise, nor can it damage anything. The illusion lasts for 8 hours, or until dispelled.

## Bonding Pair (Education DC:16)

These ornate silver rings are magically bonded to each other, allowing the wearers to communicate over great distances and sense when their partner is in danger. It is said that the original pair was created by a Nilfgaardian mage by the name of Ainfra of Mag Turga who crafted the pair for her lover, a witcher on the Path. The diagrams for these rings were taken from her dwelling when she was found to have disappeared. Some say, she left abruptly after sensing her lover was in danger and never returned. It is rumored that her creation is now widely used by Nilfgaardian spies.

This item always comes in a set of 2 rings. When a wearer turns the ring in a specific sequence around their ring finger, they can speak a few words, roughly twenty, to be carried on the wind to the wearer of the other ring. The message always reaches its destination in less than a day, but the exact amount of time depends on distance and is left to the Game Master.

Additionally, the rings vibrate when one of the wearers is in mortal danger regardless of the distance between the two.

# Purchasing Magic Items

While some mages peddle magical wares or make items on commission, the magical item industry in the world of The Witcher is very limited. All Magic Items are consid-

ered Rare and can sometimes be found on sale in markets across the Continent, or for sale by mages looking to fund their other ventures.

Item	Price
Crystal Skull	700
Bonding Pair	550
Enchanted Amulet (1 spell)	550
Enchanted Amulet (2 spells)	750
Enchanted Amulet (3 spells)	950
Enchanted Amulet (4 spells)	1150
Eye of Nehaleni	575
Four-Leaf Clover	150

Item	Price
Magical Elven Rope	350
Megascope	3500
Power Stone Guardian	525
Runewright's Tools	550
Spell Formula (Novice)	100
Spell Formula (Journeyman)	200
Spell Formula (Master)	300
Wishing Mirror	880

*“In Nilfgaard, most magic items are made on commission by the mages of Gweison Haul or guild affiliated artisans who adhere to the strict quality regulations of the their guild. I’m sure there is an underground market for magic items but I’ve made a point to never go looking for it. I have heard from Master Kazmer that there are a number of ways to buy magical items in the North, though not all of them are reputable. He especially mentioned a castle in Cidaris known as Rissberg. I had heard the name in passing but having never traveled the Northern Realms outside of an army I didn’t know much about it. He tells me this castle is inhabited by mages who make all manner of magical items to sell across the North. Though from his description it would seem that they do this mostly to raise funds for their own unethical experiments or to test the results of said experiments. I certainly hope the Nilfgaardian Army is stopped before they reach this castle. I can only imagine what they would force these mages to do in the name of the Emperor...”*

— Glynnis var Treharne

# Trophies

It's not unusual for great warriors to carry trophies of hunts they've been on or enemies they've defeated but decades ago a process was created to imbue those trophies with magical power. While no one knows exactly who created this process, most mages agree that it was likely one of the mages involved in the creation of Witchers, as they are most often seen carrying these magical trophies. By inscribing runes and often utilizing the naturally magical structures in a monster's body a magic user can bind a magical effect to part of a dead creature.

When an adult monster has been killed, a single piece of the monster can be removed and used as part of the

Imbue Trophy Ritual to create a magical trophy which grants its wearer a certain benefit as long as they are physically touching the trophy. To benefit from the trophy, you must have contributed to killing the monster in some way, meaning that you cannot gain the magical benefits of a trophy you buy. A single person can only have one active trophy at a time and trying to carry another trophy grants no magical benefits. You can choose to benefit from the effects of a different trophy by spending 1 hour in meditation over your trophy. In addition to the magical effect, each trophy you carry grants +1 Reputation (Maximum +4) as a slayer of monsters.

Trophy	Effect
<b>Cursed Ones</b>	
Botchling	You become Feared and if you already were Feared the bonuses are doubled.
Vendigo	You are immune to diseases.
Werewolf	You gain a +2 to Physique and Wilderness Survival checks.
<b>Draconids</b>	
Cockatrice	Your attacks have a 10% chance to stagger your opponent.
Phoenix	You reduce the chances you have to catch on fire by 50% (Minimum 0%).
Slyzard	You add +2 to Spell Casting when casting fire-based spells and signs
Wyvern	Creatures you damage with your attacks have a 25% chance to be poisoned.
<b>Elementa</b>	
Earth Elemental	Your attacks deal double ablation damage to weapons, shields, or armor.
Fire Elemental	Creatures you damage with your attacks have a 25% chance to catch on fire.
Golem	You are immune to bleeding.
Ice Elemental	Creatures you damage with your attacks have a 25% chance to be frozen.
<b>Hybrids</b>	
Griffin	When rolling for a critical wound, roll twice and keep the result of your choice.
Manticore	You raise the DC to resist or remove the effects of poisons you use by 2.
Succubus	Your social standing improves by one step (Hated becomes Tolerated, Tolerated becomes Equal).

<b>Insectoid</b>	
Arachasae	You are immune to poison.
Frightener	You gain resistance to either slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning damage. Each day, you can change which type of damage you have resistance to.
<b>Necrophages</b>	
Bullvore	If you would be targeted by a Necrophage and there is another target within range, the Necrophage chooses the other target.
Foglet	You gain a +2 to Stealth and Sleight of Hand checks
Grave Hag	You gain a +2 to Ritual Crafting and Hex Weaving checks
<b>Relicts</b>	
Fiend	You gain a +2 to Spell Casting and Resist Magic checks
Leshen	Animals and beasts can understand you when you speak and you can enter verbal combat with them to get them to obey you. Regardless, an animal or a beast will never do something for you it would not do for itself (for example, jump off a cliff).
Shaelmaar	You add +2 to Spell Casting when casting earth-based spells and signs
<b>Specters</b>	
Hym	When the damage you deal is negated by armor, your target still takes 4 points of damage that goes through their armor.
Noonwraith	You become immune to fear.
Pesta	You are constantly surrounded by a cloud of flies. Opponents in melee with you have a -2 to their actions and a 10% chance to gain the diseased condition. You also take a -2 to Seduction, Persuasion, and Grooming and Style because of the flies.
<b>Vampires</b>	
Bruxa	You can communicate telepathically with characters within 20m of you.
Garkain	If you would subtract from your Stun on a Stun Save subtract one less. If there is no subtraction your Stun Value is counted as 1 higher.
Katakan	Creatures you damage with your attacks have a 25% chance to bleed.
<b>Ogroid</b>	
Cyclops	When you would be stunned by a spell, you can choose to attack the nearest living target to you to resist the stun effect. Any other effects from the magic apply as normal.
Rock Trolls	You add 1 to the range multiplier of thrown weapons you wield.
Troll	It takes twice as much alcohol to get you intoxicated, and you never get hung over.
<b>Beasts</b>	
Bear	People you grapple have a -2 penalty on their attempt to escape your grapple.
Panther	You double your climbing speed.



# The Dark Arts

*“To work magic is to twist the threads of the world itself into patterns you desire, an awesome and beautiful responsibility. Some threads are rotten and will tangle even as you weave, leaving vile images that stain the soul and endanger the body even while delivering their grim results.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne



**Personally, I would have left this chapter out entirely. The dark arts. Arts? Why do people who have the darkest souls get to be artists? Are we so afraid of them that we must hedge our bets?**

There are forbidden magical arts; necromancy, goetia, and mutation. Who are they forbidden by? Well, certainly all the Northern Kingdoms. Though, I’m not sure the law is what keeps people from summoning demons. I would guess that only the most learned can cast the rituals and a good proportion of those are dragged off to some uncomfortable place. I’ve always said that strong magical skills are generally paired with hubris and this is a perfect example.

Necromancy is magic dealing with the dead. Goetia is about summoning demons, and mutations are the attempt to change oneself or others physically with the application of powerful magics and chemicals. The things they have in common seem to be casting something that is very dangerous that deals with matters that you and I know should not be tampered with.

There are many stories about demon summoning and in most of them the sorcerer gets exactly what you’d expect. They are betrayed by the demons and are lucky if they just die.

Who could have seen that coming? People summon demons because they want the use of the greater powers of the demon. There are always people who will do anything to get more power and so they attempt to control something or someone who has greater power. Inevitably the “controlled” realize they can mash the “controller” like a bug. The words “greater power than you” should tell you something. I’m not generally very metaphorical, but even I believe attempting to summon demons darken the soul. I checked that with Glynnis, and it is frequently true that those who attempt to use dark powers become more and more obsessed. They do not get up on a fine morning and think “I think I’ll summon a demon today” and if it doesn’t work, they go off and take up pottery. No, a darkness resides in the soul. Some of you have probably encountered someone who just seems to have a shadow about them. You decided you probably won’t trust that person and it may well have been for a good reason.

Necromancy may be all to do with the power of the one summoned back from the dead, it may be a desire to find out information that may have been taken to the grave, or it may just be a fond wish for someone who has left this world. Some have suggested raising armies of the dead and using them to

## A Brief Warning

The world of the Witcher is a dark place with a lot of dubious practices and ethical nightmares. Magic is often wielded by the morally bankrupt and it dabbles in many dark places. In this chapter, we will be discussing three of the darkest topics in the magic of The Witcher: Necromancy, Mutation, & Goetia. These topics are filled with unpleasant imagery regarding, defiling corpses, torture, body horror, and much more. As with everything in this book, this chapter is designed to give you more options to tell gripping stories in the world of The Witcher. But it’s not our goal to traumatize anyone or make anybody uncomfortable. Before you dive into the dark arts it’s not a bad idea to talk to your players and determine exactly how dark you want your game to get and what everybody is comfortable with.

save the living. It turns out that all these ideas have many negative side effects. Oddly, most people do not want to be dragged from wherever they are to chat and do not mistake, persons brought back through necromancy are not suddenly made alive. They are here, but they're still dead. Hen Gedyndeith, one of the original human mages, discovered that creatures reanimated from the dead are erratic and undependable. His experimentation put a stop to the idea of the walking dead army.

Mutation is only included here because the mutation of sapient beings is also banned in most Northern Kingdoms. Most people have heard of the dramatic and painful mutation of Witchers. Only a small percent survive, and this is with knowledge that has come down through the years. The Witchers know that mutation is dangerous, and they keep

it away from non-witchers. What happens to those that don't survive the mutations? They are frequently deformed in terrible ways, sometimes with decreased mental abilities, and do not live long. You're probably thinking "For the strength and speed of a witcher, I'd take a chance." But who would you get to mutate you? The Witchers will not mutate someone who is not a witcher acolyte and any other mutations, by mages perhaps, are all experimental. We have no legacy of mutation to depend upon, so you are truly rolling dice in a game that has no winners.

Reader, please view these pages only as a warning. We educate you so you can avoid all these soul-twisting magics, but I know some of you will think "It won't happen to me!" On your head be it.

— Brandon of Oxenfurt

*"In many ways, I have more reason than most to want to bury the practices of Goetia and the other dark arts. But that is not the way of an academic and I must remind myself of that. Forbidding a practice only makes it more enticing and the greatest defense a person can have against a threat is knowledge of said threat. While some may use this compilation of foul magic to do harm, I can only hope that many more will use the following pages to better defend themselves against the dangers of the dark arts. With any luck, by presenting not only the benefits of the dark arts but also, the many prices that must be paid to use them we will deter desperate young practitioners from sealing their fates and very likely damning their souls."*

—Glynnis var Treharne

# Necromancy



Necromancy walks a dangerous line in the world of magic, using unknown forces to bind souls for various reasons. What makes it particularly tricky is that it rarely works exactly as its caster envisions. Many young magic users are drawn to necromancy by loss. After the death of a loved one, the magic user is consumed with guilt and grief and eventually seeks a way to reverse their loss with magic. They turn to necromancy to return their loved one to life. But this isn't how necromancy works. The crux of necromancy comes in the difference between Reanimation and Resurrection.

In resurrecting a person, you bring them back to life with everything they once had. By the power of magic a once-dead person is returned to the state they were before they died. Their mind, body, thoughts, memories, and so on are all intact. In reanimating a corpse, however, you temporarily bring the functions of a body back to life, restarting the heart, and causing neurons to fire in their brain once again. Despite many rumors, reanimation is all necromancy is capable of in the world of *The Witcher*. When a necroman-

cer reanimates a corpse, they are calling upon unknown and unnatural magic to drag a soul back from whatever afterlife may or may not exist to restart the bodily functions of the corpse. The corpse does not heal itself, or grow whole again, and the soul is dragged back into a corpse which has already begun to decay. Between the dark magic's crushing grip on the soul, the body's wounds, and the decay, this places the reanimated person in unimaginable agony. This pain is so terrible that even if the necromancer could bind the soul permanently, the creature would eventually die again from the shock. When necromancy is employed by seasoned Necromancers it is almost always used to gain information from a corpse, by either reviving its brain to study its memories or reviving the corpse to interrogate it. But even in this case, necromancy is far from tame.

The practice of necromancy was banned by the Council of Mages many decades ago and even now the only way to legally study the practice is to get a dispensation from the conclave to study the theory of necromancy. This is largely

because even “safely” cast necromancy meddles with magic that is not only poorly understood but also noticeably dangerous. Similar to goetia, the magic that makes necromancy possible is drawn from some dark place beyond scholarly knowledge. When necromancy is cast, the world itself seems to react with palpable discomfort. For most mages, the practice of casting necromancy is described as a physically revolting experience, comparable to consuming live insects or swimming in filth. To make matters worse, beyond this discomfort, a failure to properly control the magic of necromancy can lead to horrible consequences.

## The Dangers of Necromancy

When a person performing necromancy fumbles their Spell Casting or Ritual Crafting roll or overdraws magic, they do not suffer an elemental effect. Instead, their clumsy meddling in the realm beyond disturbs the spirits of the dead. After taking an amount of damage equal to the fumble value, refer to the Restless Spirits table. You suffer the effects of the rolled number and the effects of all previous numbers on the table’s column. For Example: if you roll an 8 when fumbling a Journeyman Ritual, you summon wraiths, are affected by a Hex, and are a gateway for spirits for 1 day.

## Restless Spirits

Roll	Novice
1-5	<p><b>Gateway</b></p> <p>You become a gateway for local spirits for 1 day. During this time, you occasionally hear whispers and feel people brushing against you that you cannot see. You gain a +2 bonus to any checks made to perform any necromancy Ritual or Spell. However, you must roll on the Restless Spirit table whenever you roll a 1,2, or 3.</p>
6-9	<p><b>Uninvited Guests</b></p> <p>You have attracted an unknown spirit from beyond. It is too weak to attack you or possess you, but it refuses to leave. This spirit remains in your vicinity, mimicking the effect of a single Hex (of the Game Master’s choice). You cannot remove this Hex by the standard means. Instead, you must kill or banish this specter. This can be done by summoning the spirit with a Seance (which does not require blood from a relative) and killing it or convincing it to leave. You can be affected by multiple Uninvited Guests at once.</p>
10	<p><b>Host of Specters</b></p> <p>Immediately upon rolling this result, 1d6 Wraiths are summoned within 5m of the caster. These wraiths are violent and cannot be reasoned with. They will attack the closest target and will fight to the death.</p>

Roll	Journeyman
1-3	<p><b>Gateway</b></p> <p>You become a gateway for local spirits for 1 day. During this time, you occasionally hear whispers and feel people brushing against you that you cannot see. You gain a bonus +2 bonus to any checks made to perform any necromancy Ritual or Spell. However, you must roll on the Restless Spirit table whenever you roll a 1,2 or 3.</p>
4-6	<p><b>Uninvited Guests</b></p> <p>You have attracted an unknown spirit from beyond. It is too weak to attack you or possess you, but it refuses to leave. This spirit remains in your vicinity, mimicking the effect of a single Hex (of the Game Master’s choice). You cannot remove this Hex by the standard means. Instead, you must kill or banish this specter. This can be done by summoning the spirit with a Seance (which does not require blood from a relative) and killing it or convincing it to leave. You can be affected by multiple Uninvited Guests at once.</p>
7-8	<p><b>Host of Specters</b></p> <p>Immediately upon rolling this result, 1d6 Wraiths are summoned within 5m of the caster. These wraiths are violent and cannot be reasoned with. They will attack the closest target and will fight to the death.</p>
9-10	<p><b>Tainted Ground</b></p> <p>Immediately upon rolling this result, the area where the caster was casting the Necromantic Spell or Ritual is affected by a powerful curse known as “The Haunting.” The Game Master may decide what must be done to remove this curse, but it should reflect the danger of the Curse (Core Book, pg.230).</p>

Roll	Master
1-2	<p><b>Gateway</b></p> <p>You become a gateway for local spirits for 1 day. During this time, you occasionally hear whispers and feel people brushing against you that you cannot see. You gain a bonus +2 bonus to any checks made to perform any necromancy Ritual or Spell. However, you must roll on the Restless Spirit table whenever you roll a 1,2 or 3.</p>
3-4	<p><b>Uninvited Guests</b></p> <p>You have attracted an unknown spirit from beyond. It is too weak to attack you or possess you, but it refuses to leave. This spirit remains in your vicinity, mimicking the effect of a single Hex (of the Game Master's choice). You cannot remove this Hex by the standard means. Instead, you must kill or banish this specter. This can be done by summoning the spirit with a Seance (which does not require blood from a relative) and killing it or convincing it to leave. You can be affected by multiple Uninvited Guests at once.</p>
5-6	<p><b>Host of Specters</b></p> <p>Immediately upon rolling this result, 1d6 Wraiths are summoned within 5m of the caster. These wraiths are violent and cannot be reasoned with. They will attack the closest target and will fight to the death.</p>
7-8	<p><b>Tainted Ground</b></p> <p>Immediately upon rolling this result, the area where the caster was casting the Necromantic Spell or Ritual is affected by a powerful curse known as "The Haunting." The Game Master may decide what must be done to remove this curse, but it should reflect the danger of the Curse (Core Book, pg.230).</p>
9-10	<p><b>The Penitent</b></p> <p>Immediately upon rolling this result, a Penitent is summoned within 5m of the caster. The Penitent is bound to the caster and focuses entirely on destroying the caster. This Penitent will return to the caster every night until it is killed or banished, or it kills the caster.</p>



## Spells

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Due to the dangerous nature of necromancy, necromantic spells are relatively uncommon. Most practitioners prefer to have a more structured environment which might lead to more stable magic in the end. Two necromantic spells are well known by the necromancers of the Continent. Both spells are technically illegal, though Corpse Restoration is sometimes utilized by less moralistic mages in studies and investigations.

### Corpse Restoration

**Level:** Journeyman

**STA Cost:** 7

**Effect:** Corpse Restoration uses magic to restore the muscle, flesh, skin, and hair of a targeted corpse in ghostly form. The restored corpse appears to be a slightly translucent version of the person they were at the moment they died. Any wounds the targeted corpse had sustained before they died are present in this illusory form and the form can be touched and examined as if they were real. You can only summon the “flesh and blood” of the pieces of the body you have but they need not be connected as long as they are within 4m.

**Range:** 4m

**Duration:** 1 Hour

**Defense:** None

### Storm of Souls

**Level:** Master

**STA Cost:** 22

**Effect:** Storm of Souls was first seen during a Nazairi riot after Nilfgaardian invaders captured the local magic academy and shipped its students to Gweison Haul. This highly volatile spell drags restless souls into the world to sow chaos. Immediately upon casting this spell, 1d6+4 wraiths are summoned. These shrieking wraiths are blinded by rage and will attack any target including the caster or their allies.

**Range:** 10m

**Duration:** 2d6 rounds

**Defense:** None

## Rituals

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Over the years, several necromantic rituals have been compiled by enterprising necromancers. Oftentimes, those brilliant minds lead to their own destruction which has led to a great deal of knowledge being lost in ancient underground laboratories or locked away by Mage Hunters who happened onto the scene of a necromancer’s demise. Four necromantic rituals have been compiled here, taken from the notes of dead mages and the observations of Mage Hunters.

### Cadfan’s Synthesis

**Level:** Master

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Cadfan’s Synthesis is a highly complex ritual created by the infamous necromancer Cadfan of Ebbing before his disappearance. The ritual partially animates a great number of corpses, binding them together into a single amalgamated creature that can move and act on your commands. The creature you create is a Corpse Amalgam. Like a golem, it will perform any task given by its creator to the letter but is no longer capable of higher thought.

**Preparation Time:** 15 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 22

**Duration:** Permanent

**Components:** 10 Corpses (from creatures killed within the last 24 hours), Chalk (x5), Tanning Herbs (x10), Lunar Shards (x1), Hellebore Petals (x2), Ducal Water (x3), Fifth Essence (x10), Candles (x10), Crow’s Eye (x5), Specter Dust (x5), Essence of Wraith (x5)

### Create Soul Beacon

**Level:** Journeyman

**STA Cost:** 10

**Effect:** Create Soul Beacon uses bones to create a totem that enhances the abilities of a Necromancer within 6m. A soul beacon is a 1 meter tall totem topped with a skull. The Beacon has 10 Hit Points. You can only benefit from one Soul Beacon at one time. The bonuses you gain are based on the skull used.

- ◆ **Human/Elderfolk:** The DC of any necromancy ritual is lowered by 3. Additionally, the Stamina Cost required to perform any necromancy ritual is lowered by 3. Finally, if you fumble or overdraw while casting a necromancy ritual or spell, you roll 1d10-2 instead of 1d10 when rolling on the Restless Spirits table.
- ◆ **Beast/Monster:** Any creature created by necromancy gains a +2 to Attack and Defense rolls. Additionally, the senses of a person in Hanmarvyn’s Blue Dream are heightened, giving them Scent Tracking and Night Vision.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 16

**Duration:** 1 Day

**Components:** A Skull (from a creature killed within the last 24 hours), Ashes (x10), Fifth Essence (x2), Infused Dust (x3), Timber (x5), Stone (x2), Leather (x3), Specter Dust (x2)

## Hanmarvyn's Blue Dream

**Level:** Master

**STA Cost:** 16

**Effect:** Hanmarvyn's Blue Dream allows a single person to witness the last moments of a corpse's life. Upon casting the ritual, choose one person within 4m to receive the memories of the corpse. This person must make a DC:24 Endurance check to withstand the shock of the event. If they succeed, the effects of the ritual begin. If they fail, they are immediately put into Death State but the effects of the ritual still begin. For the duration of the ritual, the affected person falls unconscious and witnesses the last 10 minutes of the corpse's life. They experience these memories as if they were their own, even feeling that person's emotions. If under the influence of a Hallucinogen, the duration of this ritual increases to 20 minutes.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 18

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Components:** A Corpse, Fifth Essence (x10), Lunar Shards (x2), Essence of Wraith (x3), Ginatia Petals (x2), Quicksilver Solution (x1), Green Mold (x2), Mandrake Root (x1), Phosphorus (x3), Specter Dust (x2)

## Reanimate Corpse

**Level:** Journeyman

**STA Cost:** 10

**Effect:** Reanimate Corpse forcibly summons a soul and binds it within its dead body. While animated, the corpse acts as though it were alive but is in excruciating pain which prevents it from moving and imposes a -3 to Resist Coercion checks. However, for the corpse to answer any questions it must have all parts required to speak including lungs, vocal chords, and a mouth and tongue. Additionally, it's brain must be at least 50% intact. For the purposes of Verbal Combat, Torture and Torment will not work on a corpse revived by necromancy as it is already in unimaginable pain.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 18

**Duration:** Active (3 STA per Minute)

**Components:** A corpse (with working vocal cords, lungs, brain, and a mouth), Chalk (x4), Fifth Essence (x5), Candles (x5), Crow's Eye (x2), Specter Dust (x5), Essence of Wraith (x2)



# Mutation



Mutation isn't a new development in the world of The Witcher. People have been attempting to improve people and create war-beasts for centuries. The most well-known case of mutation is of course the witchers, created by a group of renegade mages lead by Cosimo Malaspina and Alzur. But many people have attempted to harness the power of mutation throughout the ages including the Grand Master of the Flaming Rose, Jacques de Aldersberg. Very few of these attempts could be considered successful.

The crux of mutation is that the process causes extreme stress on the subject's body. Most mutants die on the slab when their bodies reject the mutagenic compounds. This is why the vast majority of successful mutators are mages of some caliber. A mage can utilize magic to keep a subject's body stable and help them accept the mutagenic compounds.

## Advanced Mutation Experimentation

Advanced Mutation Experimentation is the process by which a Mage with at least 5 points in the Mutation ability can add desired Traits to a creature and/or make a Combination of up to three creatures. The downside is, eventually,

something is bound to go horribly wrong, and you'll end up having to terminate the experiment before it does the same to you or your colleagues.

To attempt an Advanced Mutation Experiment you'll need to follow the following steps. First, you must decide what you aim to achieve with this experiment. There are two primary types of mutation you can perform: Combining Monsters and Adding Traits. In the process of Combining Monsters (pg. 136) you'll take multiple monsters (or monsters and people) and try to merge their genomes together to form something new. This process is very dangerous, but it can have some terrifying results, merging the strength of multiple monsters into one abomination. When Adding Traits (pg. 137) your goal is to add one or more of the 11 listed traits to a monster or person. This process isn't quite as radical as combining monsters, but it can give an edge to a pet or a party member at the risk of mangling them permanently. When adding traits, you must choose all the traits you are planning to add to a creature before starting the experiment. If you are feeling very lucky or very skilled you can even attempt to combine monsters and then add traits to that new monster

at the same time. This drastically raises the difficulty of the experiment, however.

Once you know what you want to do, you'll need to gather all the ingredients. To attempt an Advanced Mutation Experiment, you'll need several hard to gather components. First off, you'll need the creatures you wish to experiment on, and they must be in good health. You'll also need to restrain them in some manner for the duration of the experiment. You don't want them thrashing around while you are trying to concentrate. For Combining Creatures, you'll also need one Red, Green, and Blue Mutagen, which attempting the experiment will consume. For Adding Traits, you'll need specific components depending on the trait(s) you want to add. See Adding Traits to build your list.

With all the ingredients at hand the exper-

imentation can begin. Similarly to the Mutate Ability, an Advanced Mutation Experiment always requires 1 full day of work and depletes all the operating mage's Stamina points. At the end of this 24 hour period, the Mage must make a Mutate check at a DC determined by the complexity of the experiment.

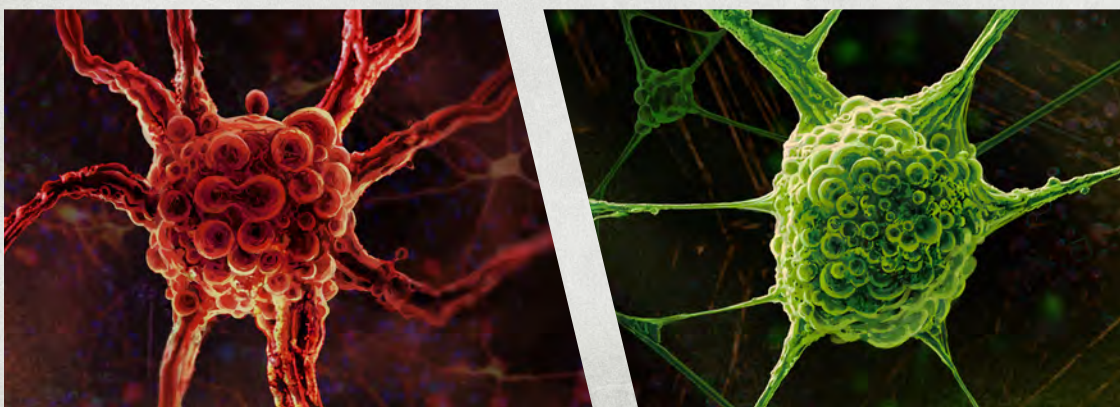
The more advanced your experiment, the higher the Mutation DC will be and the harder it will be to control with the Monster Lore skill. To determine the DC of your Advanced Mutation Experiment, look to the Advanced Mutation Experiment DC table and add up all the modifiers that pertain to your experiment. If you succeed in your experiment, you've created something new and must now consult Maintaining Control of your Experiment (pg. 136). If you fail, skip to Failing your Advanced Mutation Experiment (pg. 136).

## Mutagens

Mutagenic compounds can be found in the viscera of monsters and are usually classified as follows. Blue Mutagens affect the magical potency of a mutant, Green Mutagens affect their physical hardiness, and Red Mutagens affect their viciousness and natural defenses. Traditionally, compounds of mutagenic material are injected into the subject through tubes and needles, combined with magical catalysts and mitigating spells. The process is invariably excruciatingly painful for the subject.

## Advanced Mutation Experiment DC

Experiment Conditions	Additional DC
Base DC for Advanced Mutation Experiment	12
The Experiment Combines two creatures	+6
The Experiment Combines three creatures	+8
The Experiment Involves a creature that was already the subject of a successful Advanced Mutation Experiment	+8
The Experiment adds a Trait to a creature	+3 per Trait to be added
The Experiment involves one or more creatures of Sapient Intelligence	+3 per creature of Sapient Intelligence in the experiment
The Experiment involves creatures that are considered complex or difficult threats	+2 per Complex/Difficult Threat creature in the experiment
The Experiment involves a creature that is in poor health	+2 per creature in experiment not in perfect health



## Maintaining Control of your Experiment

Assuming your Experiment was a success and produced a creature of lower than Sapient Intelligence, you now have a brand new Experiment that will follow your orders without question for one day. After the end of that day, you, or another person whom you teach the secret of doing so, must reassert control over that experiment by rolling the Monster Lore Skill vs the DC of the most difficult Advanced Mutation Experiment that the creature has been subjected to. Success means reasserting control over the Experiment for another day. Letting the time run out or failing the check to reassert control will cause the Experiment briefly to go berserk.



Afterward it will be unable to be controlled again in this manner for a week.

If your experiment is of Sapient Intelligence, you are out of luck and you'll have to control your experiment the old fashioned way, with restraints, magic, drugs, wages, etc.

## Failing your Advanced Mutation Experiment

Failing an Advanced Mutation Experiment is particularly messy. When you fail, you lose all your materials and must choose one of your subjects to save from death. The only caveat is that if you choose to save a subject of Sapient Intelligence, they are reduced to a creature of Feral Intelligence (their INT is reduced to one, but they still use their original Intelligence for Wilderness Survival and Awareness, which should be added to their Skill Bases for these skills). Additionally, despite the experiment being a failure, the experience will have warped their appearance, causing their Social Standing to become Hated and Feared. Don't worry, you will be able to use them in future Advanced Mutation Experiments without any penalties.

## Combining Creatures

An Advanced Mutation Experiment may involve combining two or three creatures into a single much more powerful creature. Doing so is simple, rules wise, but does require a tidy amount of paperwork. For components, you'll need a Red, Blue, and Green Mutagen, which attempting the experiment consumes, in addition to your chosen creatures. To combine multiple creatures, first choose which creature you wish to be the Base Creature for this Experiment. Write down its Stats, Skill Bases, Abilities, and Vulnerabilities. For each other creature in the experiment, swap 2 of the Stats from the Base Creature with Stats from their Stat Blocks. Update the Base Creature's Skill Bases and Derived Skills to account for this change in Stats. Then, for each other creature in the experiment, add up to two Abilities from their Stat Blocks to the Base Creature, and as many of their Attacks to the Base Creature as you desire. You can't double up on abilities with the same name. Additionally, a creature with the Incorporal ability loses it when it is combined with a creature without it. Finally, add all vulnerabilities from the other creatures in the experiment to the Base Creature. The finished Experiment is a Hybrid in addition to all the types of its component creatures. Any finished Experiment's Social Standing automatically becomes Hated and Feared and is considered a Hard/Complex Threat.

## Adding Traits

Advanced Mutation Experiments can include modifying the Experiment with as many Traits as you have the skill and materials to add. Each of the following traits can only be added once to a creature, unless mentioned otherwise. For each Trait you wish to add to your experiment, specific materials must be gathered, which attempting the experiment will consume.

### Amphibious Adaptation

**Components:** Blue Mutagen, Siren Vocal Chords (x2), Drowner Brain (x1)

By merging the Experiment's genome with a blend of aquatic monsters, you adapting it to live on land as well as water. The Experiment gains the Amphibious ability, meaning it can live underwater indefinitely and cannot be drowned, in addition to not taking penalties for acting underwater. Additionally, the Experiment can now breathe air and loses any Vulnerability that would penalize the creature for being on land, such as the Limited Movement Vulnerability.

### Armored Adaptation

**Components:** Green Mutagens (x3), Arachas Chitin (x3), Draconid Scales (x3)

You harden the surface of the Experiment by injecting a slurry of green mutagen and chitinous material. The Experiment gains Resistance to piercing and slashing damage and loses any Vulnerability it had to piercing and slashing damage, in addition to losing the Soft Spot Vulnerability if it had it.

### Engineer Immunity

**Components:** Green Mutagen, Endrega Saliva (x10), Arachas Venom (x3)

By infusing the blood of the Experiment with a mutagenic mixture, the Experiment becomes immune to poison and disease.

### Engineer Regenerative

#### Capacity

**Components:** Green Mutagen (x2), Troll Liver, Werewolf Saliva (x3), Endrega Embryo (x2)

Enhances the Experiment's tissue by bonding it with green mutagen and a blend of regenerative subject's genomes. The Experiment gains the Regeneration ability allowing it to heal 5 Hit Points per turn.

#### Enlarge Appendage

**Components:** Red Mutagens (x3)

Pick one of the Experiment's natural weapons to augment with a dangerous amount of red mutagen causing it to grow wildly. Increase that weapon's damage by 1d6 and double its Reliability. Additionally, increase the Experiment's Hit Points by 10. This Trait can be applied multiple times, but each time, a new natural weapon must be selected.

#### Graft Additional Head

**Components:** Blue Mutagen, Green Mutagen, Red Mutagen, Preserved Head

By injecting a slurry of mutagens and material from the brain of a preserved head into the Experiment's spinal cord, you force the Experiment to grow a vestigial head. The grown head grants the Experiment all of its Natural Weapons (like Bite, Horns, Gore, etc.), Abilities (like Spit Venom, Sonic Screech, or Night Vision), and Vulnerabilities which are localized on, related to, or produced from the head. The brain of the newly attached head is no longer functional, and the main head's brain is still in control of its new head. To be used as a component for this Trait, the preserved head must be within a year of its initial preservation date.

### Graft Additional Limb

**Components:** Red Mutagen, Green Mutagen, Preserved Limb

By grafting bone and muscle from a preserved limb into the Experiment's body and injecting a cocktail of mutagens, you force the Experiment to grow a similar limb. The grown limb grants the Experiment all of its Natural Weapons (like Punch, Claw, or Tail Barbs), Abilities or Effects (like Crushing Force), and Vulnerabilities which are localized on, related to, or produced from the added limb. To be used as a component for this Trait, the preserved limb must be within a year of its initial preservation date.

### Graft Wings

**Components:** Blue Mutagen, Green Mutagen, Preserved Wings

By grafting bone and muscle from a preserved pair of wings into the Experiment's body and injecting a cocktail of mutagens, you force the Experiment to grow a pair of wings. The Experiment gains the Flight Ability allowing it to take flight as a movement. The Experiment can only be knocked out of the air by stunning it or doing more than 10 points of damage with an attack. If the Experiment is knocked out of the air it must make a DC:16 Athletics check or take ramming damage equal to how many meters it fell.

### Improve Natural Weapons

**Components:** Red Mutagen, Vampire Teeth (x4), Griffin Egg

Making use of a red mutagen, a foul smelling mixture is injected into the Experiment, causing their natural weapons to harden and sharpen. Each of the Experiment's natural weapons gain the Balanced effect.



### Make Compliant

**Components:** Blue Mutagen, Triglav Rune

If your finished Experiment would have been of Sapiient Intelligence, they are reduced to a creature of Feral Intelligence, meaning their INT is reduced to one, but they still use their original Intelligence for Wilderness Survival and Awareness, which should be added to their Skill Bases for these skills. The Triglav Rune used as a component is not destroyed in the experiment but embedded into the creature on the surface of its brain. Theoretically, it could be removed with a DC:24 Healing Hands check, which would remove this Trait, and revert the creature to their previous intelligence.

### Maximize Bulk

**Components:** Red Mutagens (x3), Fiend's Eye

By infusing the Experiment's body with red mutagen and fiend genome you cause it to grow and thicken, increasing its Hit Points by 30. Additionally, the Experiment is immune to Aard, or any effects that would knock them off their feet. An Experiment with this Trait loses the ability to benefit from the Flight ability.

*"I have never attempted mutation and I doubt that I ever will. The prospect of forceably twisting the body of another creature through torturous experimentation is repulsive to me. Though I have no doubt that if a reliable form of human mutation was discovered in the time of the Usurpator I would have been forced to mutate slaves by the hundreds."*

*—Glynnis var Treharne*

# Goetia



Goetia is by the far the most dangerous form of magic in the world of *The Witcher*. In part, this is because it tampers with forces beyond the understanding of even the most learned sages. While certain demons have been classified such as hysms, barghest, mari lwyd and the like, their origin, home, and organizational structure is still largely a mystery. Many religions believe they have all the facts when it comes to demonology but the demons aren't very interested in discussing themselves to confirm anyone's theories. Those who tamper in demonology are often found mutilated by the forces they sought to understand, and many are never seen again.

Unlike wielding the powers of the elements, mutating monsters, and raising the dead, goetia requires no special ability or great amount of knowledge to perform. A child without a day of schooling or an ounce of magical experience could feasibly summon a demon if they stumbled upon the wrong book and had enough hatred or desire festering inside them. Some might say this is because unlike the genie

of the elemental planes, demons want to be summoned. Invariably, the summoning of a demon causes great chaos, and is ultimately only beneficial for the demon. A demon that senses a summons from another realm will often choose to accept the summons knowing it can outwit or overpower a foolish mortal into giving it exactly what it wants.

Despite the danger, people continue to study goetia and demonologists continue to summon demons. Such is the arrogance, desperation, and short-sightedness of mortals. Much in the same way as genie, demons are capable of calling on tremendous magical power to grant wishes and provide boons. Piles of gold coins, secret tomes that had been lost for centuries, strength and speed unrivaled by any mortal beast. These are just a few of the treasures that demons can offer to those who summon them. More often than not, the demon will deliver on these promises but just like with a genie, there is always a price.... Often the gift you receive is not nearly worth the price you have to pay.

## Suppliers

Unfortunately, since Goetia was outlawed by the conclave of mages, all information pertaining to safely practicing goetia has become terrifyingly rare; sold only in black markets and kept in the private collections of high ranking mages. Most practitioners are only able to find snippets of lore and instructions that are only a fraction of the full picture.

## Dealing With Demon

Anyone with enough desire in their heart can summon a demon (see Uncontrolled Summoning on pg.142). This summoning process is extremely simple but just as dangerous. Most summoners who take this path are killed or worse before ever benefiting from it. A true goetic practitioner knows that many steps are required to safely summon a demon and skipping any of them would be disastrous. Before attempting a Controlled Summoning you'll want to know who and what you're summoning. To do this you'll need to perform a Ritual of Naming which will teach you the name of a demon. To further mitigate the dangers of goetia, you'll need a few tools. A goetic prac-

titioner should never be without a Bloodstone Dagger. This dagger can be used in a grisly ritual to create a Goatskin Mantle which protects its wearer from the immediate wrath of any demon they summon. Experienced practitioners can even create unique defenses that make controlling specific demons easier and safer.

Once you have successfully summoned a demon, things get a bit more complicated. The demon you have summoned is under no obligation to remain, but will always be interested in making a deal with you. Each demon has a specific deal that it likes to make and will begin by offering it to you. Demons are largely single-minded creatures and will not accept other offers unless they are along the same lines as their favored deal. If both you and the demon accept the deal proposed you can stand to benefit (See The Benefits of Goetia Table on pg.141). However, similarly to a genie, a demon will always twist the words of any deal made to benefit themselves or simply for their own twisted enjoyment. This is where binding comes in.

Demons will not accept deals that are not beneficial to them unless they are bound using the Ritual of Binding which few goetic practitioners are ever able to learn. This is a highly complex, tremendously dangerous process which requires the practitioner to assemble a magical artifact known as a Staff of Binding. When combined with the Ritual of Binding, the staff allows the wielder to trap a demon within a magical barrier and force them into subservience. Successfully completing this ritual places the practitioner into a tenuous relationship with the demon where they can call upon the demon's power without having to give anything up. Any bound demon will be constantly looking to escape this relationship and exact revenge on the person who bound them. Should the demon ever get loose, your best bet is to find a witcher.



## The Benefits of Goetia

Demon	Bes	Casglydd	Mari Lwyd
<b>Unbound</b>	A bes will offer to grant you great physical power by possessing your body. You may specify a single target that it will track down and kill using your body. However, the bes will attack and kill anything that gets in the way.	A casglydd will offer to trade you any one piece of knowledge it has collected for an item of its choosing. Upon delivering the item, you immediately learn the knowledge promised.	A mari lwyd will offer you any combination of items equaling no more than 3,000 crowns in value. The mari lwyd will return for something of a similar value in the not so distant future.
<b>Bound</b>	Once you have bound a bes, you can trap it within your body. This increases your Reflex & Dexterity Statistics to 12 and gives you its Boiling Blood Ability. This remains as long as the bes is bound.	Once you have bound a casglydd, you can talk with it through shadows and ask it any question that a mortal once knew the answer to. The casglydd will find the answer for you within 1 week.	Once you have bound a mari lwyd you can summon it and demand an item of at most 3,000 crowns in value. The mari lwyd will begrudgingly retrieve the item for you within 1 week and cannot seek repayment while bound.
<b>Greater Unbound</b>	A greater bes will offer to grant you great physical power by possessing your body. You may specify a single target that it will track down and kill using your body. However, the greater bes will attack and kill anything that gets in the way.	A greater casglydd will offer to trade you any one piece of knowledge it has collected from this realm or beyond for an item of its choosing. Upon delivering the item, you immediately learn the knowledge promised. This can allow you to learn spells and other magic including magic unavailable to your Profession.	A greater mari lwyd will offer you any combination of items equaling no more than 30,000 crowns in value. The mari lwyd will return for something of a similar value in the not so distant future.
<b>Greater Bound</b>	Once you have bound a greater bes, you can trap it within your body. This increases your Reflex & Dexterity Statistics to 14 and gives you its Boiling Blood Ability. This remains as long as the greater bes is bound.	Once you have bound a greater casglydd, you can talk with it through shadows and ask it any question which can be answered by beings of this realm or others. The greater casglydd will find the answer for you within 1 week. This can allow you to learn spells and other magic including magic unavailable to your Profession.	Once you have bound a greater mari lwyd you can summon it and demand an item of at most 30,000 crowns in value. The greater mari lwyd will begrudgingly retrieve the item for you within 1 week and cannot seek repayment while bound.

### What Demons Want

To successfully convince a demon to take a different deal your proposition must fall in line with the demon's desires. Bes are violent sadists who enjoy causing pain and suffering. Casglydd are obsessive hoarders that collect rare objects. Mari Lwyd are greedy creatures that want to be lavished with attention and gifts.

### Greater Demons

Not all demons are created equal. There exist greater demons whose powers are wildly expansive but whose desires are equally as twisted. These greater demons will sometimes accept the call of an uncontrolled summoning and use the hapless practitioner to further their own goals.

## Chanting at the Table

For added effect, we recommend chanting at the gaming table. Just don't turn off the lights....

## Elderfolk & Goetia

Humans are usually considered the most likely race to attempt goetia. Their short life spans and grand ambitions have a tendency to make them impatient and much more willing to risk death and damnation to achieve their goals. By contrast, most of the elder races are blessed with extremely long lives and are more willing to take the long road to success than take a short cut by invoking demons. That being said, many members of the elderfolk have found themselves in desperate straights after the humans dominated most of the Continent. There are elderfolk so consumed by rage, fear, or desperation that they will make pacts with the unknown in hopes of gaining back some power. Even at the risk of losing their own lives or destroying those around them.

## Rituals of Goetia

In the practice of Goetia there are 4 rituals that form the foundation of demon summoning. Each one builds on the others. One should be very careful to know all of the rituals before attempting any of them. That being said, due to the taboo nature of Goetia, the information for each of these rituals is usually spread across the Continent. Rarely will you find instructions on more than one ritual in the same place. Often you will have to make sacrifices.

## Novice Goetic Rituals

### Uncontrolled Summoning

**STA Cost:** 0

**Process:** Designate a chief summoner, to lead the chant. Have them stand forward, with the rest of your group behind them in a semicircle. Scribe a chalk circle into the ground before you, to guide the demon to your ritual. Pick three syllables from your heart (the Demon True Name Generator on Pg.143) at random, and chant them while visualizing your heart's desire, one syllable at a time, without ceasing, until a demon appears to you.

**Effect:** This summoning ritual is incredibly dangerous. The demon that is summoned is not bound by any sort of code of conduct, and is not controlled by the players. It may attack them, or go back on any deal made with them, with no consequences. Furthermore, a demon of any species may show up in the summoning, including greater demons. This ritual is responsible for most of the deaths associated with goetia.

**Preparation Time:** 10 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 10

**Duration:** Instant

**Components:** Chalk x1

**Investment:** 2

## Journeyman Goetic Rituals

"Gods, my knees ache from the stones, but the circle is drawn, neat and precise as the paper showed. The pieces are in place, now all that's left is to summon it. Tonight. I will meet you there, at the place we chose."

—From a letter found in a home ransacked by the Order of the Flaming Rose.

### Controlled Summoning

**STA Cost:** 0

**Process:** In a bowl of oil, add infused dust and essence of wraith, mixing them into a thick paste. Spread this paste into a circle, and place equally spread outside of that circle five unlit candles. Add to the circle an item beloved by the species of demon you wish to summon. To summon a bes, have everyone participating in the ritual add an offering of their flesh, freshly cut. If enough flesh is offered, a greater bes may be summoned. To summon a mari lywd, fill the circle with fresh food and ale, or to attract a greater mari lywd, prepare a feast (100 crowns). To summon a casglydd, place into the circle a letter of introduction, promising it a relationship of mutual benefit. To attract a greater casglydd, over-promise in this letter. Chant the name of a demon five times. If you know the true name of a demon, chanting it here will force it to be summoned. Otherwise, pick three syllables from your heart (the Demon True Name Generator on Pg.143), which will attract a demon, because it sounds like a demon's true name. After each repetition, one candle should light itself. When all five are lit, the demon will appear.

**Effect:** This summoning ritual allows the players to choose which species of demon they wish to summon, and whether or not they wish to summon a more powerful one. Without protections in place, like a Goatskin Mantle, or protections specific to the demon being summoned, the ritual is still incredibly dangerous, and often deadly.

**Preparation Time:** 15 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 16

**Duration:** Instant

**Components:** Candle (x5), Essence of Wraith (x2), Infused Dust (x3), Oil (x2)

**Investment:** 639

## Ritual of Naming

**STA Cost:** 0

**Process:** Create a bonfire of beast bones, coal, and dry wood. This fire must be hot enough to burn bright orange. Rub a mixture of coal, fifth essence, and your own blood onto your exposed skin to protect it. While holding a branch of hazel, submerge the treated skin into the fire. The fire will be harmless to you, and should burn white hot for a while before going out. While the fire burns hot, think of a demon whose true name you wish to discover. When the fire expires, remove your skin from the fire. The true name of the demon should appear in the crust of the coal coating your skin.

**Effect:** This ritual allows the player to learn the true name of a specific demon. Once removed from the fire, the name can be safely recorded to save for later. If you fail the Rit-

ual Crafting check, then upon removing your skin from the fire, you find the coal had burned off during the ritual and the true name of a demon has been burned into your skin, marking you with a Lucifuge. You may have discovered the true name of a demon, but it will forever know where you are while you bear this mark, and may appear to you on its own terms, as it wishes.

**Preparation Time:** 20 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 18 (DC: 24 for Greater Demons)

**Duration:** Instant

**Components:** Coal (x10), Hardened Timber (x20), Beast Bones (x10), Infused Dust (x3), Your Own Blood

**Investment:** 848

I have it! The name. The name is key. It holds power, as our ancestors before us believed. I can summon it. Yeá, aen ys. I can summon it and make things right again. Bleddyn, esseasquaess. Aé minne taedh, elaine yn.  
—Found grasped in the hand of a dead elf in a cave near the Blue Mountains.

### DEMON TRUE NAME GENERATOR

Roll for the first two syllables, then pick the final syllable that you think feels correct.

Roll 1d6 & 1d10	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	VOD	TOS	RES	NEU	MEY	ITH
2	NOC	DRE	MON	HUS	NAB	STO
3	HEI	ZAK	BAK	CHO	BAR	VAS
4	MAL	FOR	AUM	KAV	KHO	GUS
5	ROG	SHA	OTH	CAM	BAS	AGO
6	MOR	LAC	BIA	MAR	OCK	IAS
7	BOG	SKI	TAR	HAX	OVE	ROS
8	CAM	CAS	RIS	VAK	VOI	GAN
9	NOY	DOM	IEN	EOS	OSE	CRO
10	AEL	DAI	LAM	TAL	SOR	IAN

## Master Goetic Rituals

### Ritual of Binding

**STA Cost:** 0

**Process:** Prepare as you would for a ritual of Controlled Summoning, by making a circle of candles and infused paste. Make a second paste of coal and your own blood and write the true name of a demon just outside of the circle of controlled summoning. Line the inside of circle with silver, which will create a protective barrier within the circle, trapping the demon inside and leaving it helpless to resist you. Within the silver, present an offering to the demon as you would in a ritual of Controlled Summoning. Once you are prepared, chant the true name of a demon until it appears within the circle, helpless to resist you. Torture the demon with the forked end of the Staff of Binding, until it accepts to be bound to you, granting you benefits beyond your wildest dreams.

**Effect:** You must know the name of the demon you are planning to bind before you begin this ritual. Upon casting the Ritual, the demon you named is summoned within the ritual circle and is trapped in a magical cage that renders it unable to escape or attack you for the duration of the Ritual. The demon is aware that the ritual has a finite duration but perceives time as passing more slowly. Once this ritual has been cast, you enter Verbal Combat with the demon

with your end goal being the Binding of the demon. A True Staff of Binding can be used to make attacks through the magical cage and torment the demon but other weaponry and spells cannot penetrate this barrier. A regular Staff of Binding will not penetrate this barrier either. The demon is bound to any agreements made while the Ritual of Binding is in effect and cannot go back on these agreements unless the binding is broken. Once, every 2 weeks the demon can attempt a Resist Magic check against the Binding Character's original Ritual Crafting check to attempt to break the Binding. This roll is made secretly by the Game Master. If the demon breaks the Binding they are no longer beholden to any agreements made earlier and are capable of harming the Binder but may not do so until the moment is right. Unless broken, the binding last indefinitely. During the duration of the Binding, the Binder can summon the bound demon at any time without performing the Controlled Summoning Ritual.

**Preparation Time:** 30 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 20 (DC: 27 for Greater Demons)

**Duration:** 24 Hours

**Components:** Candle (x5), Essence of Wraith (x2), Infused Dust (x3), Oil (x1), Coal (x10), Silver (x6), A Jug of Your Own Blood, True Staff of Binding

**Investment:** 1288

*I haven't much time. The bastard got at me with its teeth — a lucky shot. Denn and Rari are dead. I managed to get away, but I fear I've only prolonged the inevitable. The staff did nothing. Rari must have messed it up somehow. Spelled the name wrong? Stupid woman. Now we've all paid the price for it.*

*—From a bloodstained letter on a half-frozen corpse, pinned under the shattered shaft of a broken staff.*



## Tools of Goetia

Even if you know the rituals to summon a demon, you should still invest in some tools that will help you even the playing field between the demon and yourself. Without any of the following items, you are more or less at the mercy of whatever malevolent being you managed to summon from the beyond. While the process of acquiring these items can be stomach churning, they are a necessity for safe summoning.

## Bloodstone Dagger

A long steel dagger with a flamberge blade inscribed with ancient runes. The most impressive and distinctive aspect of this dagger is a polished bloodstone set into its handle. Bloodstone daggers are carried by cultists of many creeds, but the original bloodstone daggers were created as tools for goetic practitioners. Now a days they are difficult to find and it's rare to find someone crafting them thanks to their ominous reputation.

Name	Type	WA	Avail.	DMG	Rel.	Hands	RNG	Effect	Conc.	EN	Weight
Bloodstone Dagger	P or S	+0	R	2d6	5	1	N/A	Bleed (25%)	S	1	.5

## Bloodstone Dagger Diagram

Difficulty	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Journeyman	14	4 Hours	Ashes (x2), Beast Bones (x1), Darkening Oil (x1), Etching Acid (x4), Sharpening Grit (x2), Steel (x1), Gemstone (x1)	254	500

Tossed carelessly into a pile of farriers' tools and tarnished blades, the dagger was buried under a mound of scrap – the stall owner clearly unaware of what he had stumbled upon. The bloodstone is, thankfully, still intact, though the blade itself could use a whetstone before I set it to the task.

–Found in the diary of a Coram Agh Tera cultist.

## Goat Skin Mantle

Description	Rarity	Weight
<p>A treated goat skin mantle that hangs around the shoulders and clasps at the front with bone toggles. Goat Skin Mantles have several unique effects when summoning various forms of demons and are used as a first line of defense by goetic practitioners. The only person who benefits from the effects of a Goat Skin Mantle is the person wearing it.</p> <p><b>Bes:</b> Unless the summoner is wearing a Goat Skin Mantle, the bes will immediately try to possess them upon its summoning. This happens before anyone can take an action.</p> <p><b>Casglydd:</b> Unless the summoner is wearing a Goat Skin Mantle, the casglydd will immediately try to use its Claw attack to drag them into the shadows where it will negotiate on its terms. This happens before anyone can take an action.</p> <p><b>Mari Lwyd:</b> Unless the summoner is wearing a Goat Skin Mantle, the mari lwyd will assume that everything present in the building where the summoning takes place is part of the summoner's offering.</p>	Rare	0.5

## Ritual of the Goat Skin

**STA Cost:** 0

**Process:** The Ritual of the Goat Skin is a complex ritual used to create a Goat Skin Mantle which protects goetic practitioners during their rituals. During this ritual, the practitioner, who must have abstained from all pleasures of the flesh and fasted for a fortnight beforehand, must anoint a goat with oil infused with ginatia and hellebore petals and place a wreath of verbena and silk on its head. As the ritual begins, the practitioner must kill the goat, skin its body, and cast the body into a burning bonfire of timber and animal bones. While the goat burns the practitioner must recite an unbroken series of protective prayers. When the fire burns down, the practitioner must take the ashes of the bonfire and rub it into the pelt of the goat and then tan it and attach toggles made from the goat's bones.

**Effect:** You create a single Goat Skin Mantle.

**Preparation Time:** 30 Rounds

**Difficulty Check:** 16

**Duration:** Permanent

**Components:** Goat (x1), Oil (x5), Coal (x1), Bloodstone Dagger, Ginitia Petals (x2), Hellebore Petals (x3), Tanning Herbs (x3), Verbena (x4), Timber (x10), Beast Bones (x3), Silk (x1)

**Investment:** 400

*"Shadowy claws  
plucked at the locks of fur, recoiling  
when they realized what they were  
touching. For all the stench of goat, the  
wretched creature's skin had served well.  
The casglydd could not touch me as long  
as I wore the mantle. To my delight, it  
shrieked and writhed in the shadows,  
enraged but impotent. It was I who  
held the power now."  
-Found amongst the scattered notes of an  
"alchemist".*

## Earthly Ribbons

Description	Rarity	Weight
A length of beautiful silk ribbon, embroidered with runes made from thread infused with fifth essence. When a goetic practitioner summons a mari lwyd they can present these ribbons among the gifts to the demon. The mari lwyd will happily accept the gorgeous gift and allow the practitioner to tie the ribbons around them. Once bound by Earthly Ribbons a mari lwyd is incapable of taking other forms. Once tied, the Earthly Ribbons remain active for 1 year. After this year, the ribbons lose their magic. Before that year ends however, the ribbons can be removed by anyone other than the mari lwyd.	R	0.1

*"The  
ribbons we presented delighted the  
demon, letting us string them about  
each pronged bone on its long neck.  
Canting its skull side to side, the  
stupid beast couldn't comprehend it  
was had. The fabrics we adorned it  
with were the very chains with which  
we would bind it."*

*-Found in the notes of a Scoia'tael  
mage.*

## Earthly Ribbons Diagram

Difficulty	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Master	22	10 Hours	Silk (x8), 5th Essence (x3), Thread (x10)	676	1352

## Cerebral Elixir

Description	Rarity	Weight
An elixir composed of hallucinogen infused with mandrake root, hellebore petals, crow's eye, wolfsbane, and feline brain matter macerated in alcohest. The concoction must be filtered through han fiber and mixed with silver shavings. The elixir must be consumed at the beginning of the summoning ritual. The Elixir lasts for 24 hours and while under its effects if you cannot be possessed by a bes. If you manage to drink this Elixir while possessed by a bes, the bes is immediately forced out of your body.	Rare	0.1

Poppy

*had yowled, fighting me every step of the way but I could scarcely blame her - what cat would want its brains smashed out of its skull? I buried her by the crow's eye plants by the door for some dignity, at least. But what's done is done, the elixir is complete. The bes can't touch me now.*

*-Found in a pellar's hut in Verden.*

## Cerebral Elixir Diagram

Difficulty	Alchemy DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Master	22	10 Hours	Alcohest (x3), Feline Brain (x1), Hallucinogen (x1), Hellebore Petals (x3), Mandrake Root (x5), Crow's Eye (X3) Wolfsbane (x4), Silver (x1), Han Fiber (x4)	666	1332

## Centerpiece

Description	Rarity	Weight
An entirely unique item crafted for the purposes of protecting a person from a casglydd. This item can take many forms and you will never see the same item more than once. This item must be crafted by a skilled artisan and must be incredibly complex. This complexity can come in the form of intricate carvings or embroidery, strange shapes and angles, puzzle elements, hidden compartments, or the like. This item must be wrapped up and presented to the casglydd when they are summoned. Upon giving the Centerpiece to the casglydd the demon shifts its fascination from you to the Centerpiece. The casglydd will not attach to you and reoccur even if you sign a contract with it.	Relic	N/A

*"An intricate maze of engravings and sliding panels, the creation on the table seems beyond that of even Aen Seidhe craftsmanship. It is... otherworldly, and yet I know the man I commissioned it from was all too human. The hidden compartments are filled with trinkets - offerings. The casglydd will be delighted."*  
*-From the diary of a noblewoman in Oxenfurt.*

## A Centerpiece Diagram

Difficulty	Fine Arts DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Master	22	10 Hours	To create a Centerpiece, you must use the Fine Arts skill to create an entirely unique item of great complexity. The Centerpiece must include at least 3 different materials and the total investment cost must be at least 700 Crowns. Each summoning must have a different Centerpiece.	700	N/A

## Wand of Banishment

Description	Rarity	Weight
A hazel wand with a capped by etched dark steel and treated with ogre wax and ester grease. This wand can be used to temporarily banish a specific demon from existence. The wielder must make a melee weapon attack against the demon which if successful deals no damage but banishes the demon back to its own realm for 24 hours. Each wand can only be used on one specific demon (whose name is carved into the wand) and has a 50% chance of breaking with each banishment. If used against a greater demon, the wand always breaks after the banishment.	Rare	0.5

"It works. My hands are shaking and I'm lucky to be alive, but it works. Melitele's tits, to think this stick was enough to stop it. It crumbled to ash at the slightest touch, gone but for a foul stench in the air. Banished to whatever dark pit it crawled out of. I should record my findings, but first... I need a drink."

-Found in a journal of a dead mage.

## Wand of Banishment Diagram

Difficulty	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Journeyman	17	9 Hours	Timber (x1), Fifth Essence (x2), Ester Grease (x2), Dark Steel (x2), Etching Acid (x5), Ogre Wax (x3), Optima Matter (x1)	405	800

## Staff of Binding

A sturdy staff of hazel, treated with ester grease, ogre wax, and drake oil, inset with a carved bloodstone. This staff is an incomplete Staff of Binding but still functions as a powerful focus.

Name	Type	WA	Avail.	DMG	Rel.	Hands	RNG	Effect	Conc.	EN	Weight
Staff of Binding	B	+0	R	2d6	5	2	N/A	Long Reach, Focus (3), Greater Focus	N/A	1	2

## Staff of Binding Diagram

Difficulty	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Master	19	12 Hours	Timber (x4), Fifth Essence (x5), Ashes (x1), Ester Grease (x1) Drake Oil (x3), Ogre Wax (x5), Gemstone (x1)	666	1332

*“And they say it can’t be tamed. Well, this’ll show them otherwise. I know its name and wrote it on the staff good and proper, no mistakes at all and I double-checked it twice to be sure! The blasted thing won’t get away this time, not until I say it can.”*

*—Found on a dismembered and frozen torso.*

## True Staff of Binding

A sturdy staff of hazel, treated with ester grease, ogre wax, and drake oil, inset with a carved bloodstone. This True Staff of Binding is complete and has the finishing touches: a pair of meteorite brass caps on either end of the staff, inlaid with runes and treated with optima matter. This Staff of Binding still functions as a powerful focus but additionally can be utilized in the Ritual of Binding.

Name	Type	WA	Avail.	DMG	Rel.	Hands	RNG	Effect	Conc.	EN	Weight
True Staff of Binding	B	+0	R	2d6	5	2	N/A	Long Reach Focus (3) Greater Focus	N/A	1	2

## True Staff of Binding Diagram

Difficulty	Crafting DC	Time	Components	Investment	Cost
Grand Master	25	13 Hours	Staff of Binding, Meteorite (x3), Optima Matter (x2) OR Hazel Timber (x4), Fifth Essence (x5), Ashes (x1), Ester Grease (x1) Drake Oil (x3), Ogre Wax (x5), Gemstone (x1), Meteorite (x3), Optima Matter (x2)	1160	2320

*“After years of clutching my wand of banishment my opportunity has come. The final pieces of my staff of binding are affixed. Today I set right what once went wrong. Restaltos took my arm and nearly my life but I will take from it everything.”*

*—Found in the catacombs beneath Cintra*



# Portrait of the Artist

1086, The City of Golden Tower • Transcribed by Alec Von Karst

Good evening Glynnis, allow me to express my deep condolences. It must be terrible to have lost a father under such terrible circumstances. I can only regret that he brought his demise upon himself by the practice of goetia.

I hope you can understand that we need to go over just a few points in your statement. Yes, I know, I know you've spoken to my subordinates. And your statement was... atmospheric. Still, facts are facts and once we've cleared them up, then you will be free to leave. No, not yet. Soon.

Your statement says your father was training you in the cellar rooms of your shop; quite extensive cellars. Part storeroom, part laboratory, how convenient. Just you and your father alone. Very well, so, after your lesson, your father and you had a disagreement. You were asking after your mother, one Catrin var Treharne, is that true? Your father became angry at you over the conversation and left the cellar. Tell me, why did he expect you to stay there? Ah, to tidy his trappings. But then you stayed for... oh, a period of private study in the darkened corner of a dark room.

A more suspicious man might ask what you were studying but let us proceed.

You say after some time your father returned, locked the cellar door, and began laying out ritual elements. Were you familiar with this? No, no, you say you've never seen such things before. So, a circle of candles, a bowl of—did you see him place his own blood into the vessel? I understand. It's just difficult to rely upon the impressions of a scared child.

After the blood—child, there's no need to pale. Evil sorcery has its price, and it is rarely tidy. So, the blood, and then a small portrait. Did you happen to see the subject? Your mother? He must have truly hated her for leaving, but still. It seems a little extreme to have summoned—but I'm getting ahead of myself.

Your father placed the portrait in the center of the candle circle then doused all the other lanterns in the work area? That seems foolish, but I don't feel you are describing a man in full possession of his good sense.

Tell me, where were you watching from and why did you not stop him? Surely the chanting was a sign all was not well? Now is this next part, right? He cut some of his own flesh into the bowl. Well, I suppose that shows what we're dealing with. Your father intentionally summoned a bes, a demon of cruelty and vengeance. You told my officer that a grim shape appeared in the circle. I think you're indulging your poetic tendencies here, my dear. I'm reasonably sure flowing like dark oil is not an accurate depiction, but you were under a lot of stress and one can hardly expect clarity under such circumstances.

You say it coated and entered your father. So, his... Oh, his eyes took flame. And you say they were red? Reddish-purple, that was it. Yes, yes, with black smoke. Dramatic. I'm sure it was terrifying. Anybody would probably have made some kind of utterance. As it happens, I'm rather impressed you merely gasped. Yes, I imagine that would draw his attention. Their attention. Its attention.

So, this possession, as you call it. Your father—sorry—the possessed body of your father spoke to you. And you say it threatened you? I find it incomprehensible that a father would say such things towards his own child, even under demonic influence. Well, perhaps you can explain to me how you yourself are still alive. And intact.

And that your soul is your own?

You concealed yourself behind a wooden support? I suppose you ARE somewhat waif-like, so that's plausible, you seem to take after your mother's side of the family. Aside from promising to skin you alive and make you eat it, what else did it say? Bear in mind demons are never to be trusted, but I am curious as to why you are so coy on this point.

There you were, a vulnerable young girl, flitting from shadow to shadow, that big, bad demon stalking you. It must have said something. Bes are like cats, if you don't keep their interest, they simply pull your head off and leave your corpse on the doorstep.

Oh, it offered you a chance to escape? That was sporting. But you didn't take it up on the offer? Ah, it had the key around your father's neck. Well, that would assuredly make it difficult to open the door. If only you had been more skilled, you might simply have burned your way through.

And what were you doing while this offer was being made? Preparing a spell was very resourceful, I hope it was a powerful one. Dormyn's Chamber? That's advanced for such an immature practitioner. Now if I remember right the working "produces a sphere of glowing blue force that can contain magical energies". It also, I gather, is quite claustrophobic.

You hurled this spell and then what, fled to the door, hoping to pull it open? That was pointless, wasn't it? The chamber only lasts a few moments under stress, which explains why the demon was stalking towards you when my men broke down the door. You really were extremely fortunate there.

Now, what do you mean your father's eyes went out when my men entered the cellar? Are you implying the demon left his body in time for us merely to dispose of an errant caster? That would certainly explain your sobbing and pleading as we carried the sentence out. I do hope we didn't hurt you too much, but you needed to be restrained. Decapitation can be a discomfoting business if you're not used to it.

A final clarification for our records. The demon's eyes. Did they look like this? Or was there more smoke like this? And did its breath smell like rotting flesh with a hint of perfumed sulfur, like this?

I can assure you there's no point screaming. Or running. The door is locked. You're quite safe, even though you caused the death of your father. You could have stopped him; or been more eloquent in your pleas before the axe fell. But don't worry, Gruffydd Aep Elis will be here soon to arrange for your care. Not that he does care, of course, it's simply a service he's been paid for by your mother. No, I wouldn't beg for your mother, you're too much your father's daughter for her to come for you.

Stop crying! I find your statement to be cloudy and inconsistent, but that's what you get for relying on a child. Memories fade over time, and you've had nearly two centuries to forget the details.

One day, you might take control. One day. If you can remember the name your father spoke, in summoning that specific bes. You might even save another child from the same pain.

But today is not that day. Today you have failed. Again.

Wake up, Glynnis, you can try again another night. I'll be waiting.



# Mages of Interest

*“There is a bond between those who can work Chaos, one not easily shattered by mere politics or short-term national enmity. When wars rage, we stand for our nations while we feel they have a righteous cause but only those who wield this power can understand our hearts afterward.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne



And now we come to what you all think of when I say mages, sorcerers and sorceresses. All the people you expect to have wands and pointy hats. But they're not like that. Not that I'm endorsing them, of course. The pinnacle of magic on the Continent is perhaps sixty individuals, perhaps even less now. Wherever they came from, they are all able to channel a great deal of magical power. They are men and women, old and not quite so old, all of them looking like preening courtiers, especially, of course, the ladies. These are the ones who are trained at the great magic schools of the Continent. When I was a student, long ago, some of the sorceresses used to meet at the University. They were all as beautiful as butterflies; but intrude on their meetings and you were fixed with as many cold, pointed gazes as there were sorceresses in the room. I was a young lad just trying to make a coin or two delivering messages or running errands to the kitchens of the better taverns but even I was daunted by their scorn. I stuck around quietly and unobtrusively because information is as easy to sell as bread but pays better. To outsiders they present a united front of haughty arrogance but among themselves they are mostly catty, jealous, and quick to anger. I believe this is because they are among the only people who they believe can threaten them. In the “good old days” before the Northern Wars, every court and many barons, dukes, and wealthy merchants had resident mage advisors. This is, in fact, what the young sorceresses were trained for at Aretuza: how to be beautiful, polished in

their manners, and seemingly deferential to their kings while always moving them in the direction the sorceress wanted them to go.

The mage advisors had to report frequently to the Chapter and Council. They were the ones who made policy, who decided which young royal would be married off to whom, who decided whether the knowledge of magic would be shared by everyone else. Finally, the scheming went too far. Some of the mages chose to throw in with the elves and with Nilfgaard in return for great power in the reorganized North under Nilfgaardian rule. The opposition found out about this, the ones who still worked for and through the Northern Kings. There was a terrific row and mages died, those associated with Nilfgaard were arrested, and many Kings, unwilling to sort out who was who, expelled the mage advisors from their courts. Being a paranoid and brutal ruler, Radovid of Redania established the Witch Hunters to kill the mages of Redania. As a result of the Northern War the courts of Temeria and Aedirn were abolished. In the end, I understand that most Northern mages fled either to Kovir and Poviss or to God forsaken keeps and holdouts. Occasionally, I have seen mages traveling quietly through Oxenfurt. Though I understand the principle, it always shocks me that they will look just like they did when I was a student. Rumor has it that some are pushing for a new council of mages, perhaps even with the help some Nilfgaardian mages.

## Spells & Components

The mages listed in the next several pages are accomplished members of magic society. Many of them have created new spells and many of them are deeply ingrained in the politics of the Continent in some way. In short, they are all highly capable, well prepared mages. When reading the following entries there are two things to keep in mind. Firstly, any mage listed in this roster is assumed to have the components necessary to perform any of the Rituals they know. Secondly, the Favored Magic Section is intended to be a guideline of the mage's preferred magical style. While they will focus on these spells, we encourage you to augment their spell lists based on the needs of the game.

# Artorius Vigo

INT	10	STUN	7
REF	6	RUN	15
DEX	6	LEAP	3
BODY	6	STA	35
SPD	5	ENC	50
EMP	9	REC	7
CRA	7	HP	35
WILL	9	VIGOR	25

Skills	Base
Awareness	16
Business	18
Charisma	15
Courage	17
Dodge/Escape	14
Education	19
Grooming and Style	18
Hex Weaving	17
Human Perception	17
Persuasion	16
Resist Coercion	19
Resist Magic	19
Riding	14
Ritual Crafting	19
Social Etiquette	19
Spell Casting	19
Staff/Spear	12
Stealth	12
Swordsmanship	14

Key Skills	
Assets	10
Distillation	6
Expanded Magic	8
Grape Vine	8
Immutable	7
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	2
Reverse Engineer	7
Scheming	6



Favored Magic
Blemish
Cloak
Dispel
Glamour
Illusion
Interactive Illusion
Magic Screen
Shape Earth
Standing Portal
Teleportation
The Nightmare

Gear			
Elven walking staff	Esboda	Fashionable clothing	Gemstone amulet
Belt pouch	Writing kit	Journal	Ledger
Signet ring	Horse w/ racing saddle	Saddlebags	Wine (x2)
Sweets	Pipe & tobacco	Megascope	Cologne
Gwent deck (Nilfgaard)	Wives' tears potion	Invisible ink	Smelling salts

"Ah, Artorius Vigo. Can't say anyone in the North knows too much about the Black Ones' mages, but Vigo worked for the ducal household in Beauclair for a while, an' Toussaint's, ah, a little laxer about their security. The man's a master illusionist, an' not too shabby in other magic either. Heard some rumors he was the one to make a special workin' for the Duchess Anna Henrietta an' her sister's amusement when they were just young lasses. Rich folk, eh? Getting a serious mage like that to work for a child's fun. Of course, that's not all he did while workin' for the dukes an' duchesses of Toussaint, an' he even found the time to write at least one book, "The Essence of Spells and Illusions", if I'm remembering correctly. Brandon was afire to get a copy for the Oxenfurt library, said there was some useful talk about the mind in there, along with all the information on spells. Me, I dunno 'bout some noble's mage knowin' much about the way people think, but I managed to help Brandon get a copy. Artorius left Toussaint a while back, maybe to write a couple more books, or maybe to help train his brother's daughter, Fringilla Vigo. Fringilla's a member of the Lodge of Sorceresses an' apparently not too shabby with illusions herself. Suppose magic does run in families sometimes. I never heard that Artorius was anythin' but kind to his niece, but I wonder if he's feeling good about the relationship now; the Black Ones weren't too happy 'bout two of their own mages bein' part of the Lodge, that's for certain. Assire var Anahid, the other one, is dead now, an' I haven't heard anythin' about the younger Vigo either way. At very least, I haven't heard anythin' about Artorius denouncin' her, which might speak for itself."

—Rodolf Kazmer

# Bronwyn Deadeye

“Bronwyn Deadeye, the one and only Ban Ard-trained sorceress. No, I did not misspeak. See, Deadeye was born on Spikeroog in Skellige. Supposedly, when she was just a lass, she cursed a neighbor of hers, an’ was sent to train with the druids, the way Skelligers usually handle magic. Somewhere along the way she decided she didn’t want to be a druid and managed to get herself all the damn way to Ban Ard, where she did her learning. Ban Ard’s word on it is that they had no interest in turning down such a talented student, but if that’s the truth, they kept it unusually quiet ‘till after she graduated. Whatever the real story is, Deadeye’s talent with air magic’s amazing—she’s created two spells, Bronwyn’s Gust and Bronwyn’s Bow. Though, her skill with combat magic might be because she went back to her roots when she graduated, picked up a ship and a crew an’ started raiding with the rest of ‘em! Mostly she hits the Black Ones, keeps a collection of insignias an’ such from officers she’s killed—an’ from what I’ve heard, it’s a damn large collection, heh. One of Deadeye’s claims to fame is the time she sailed up the Alba river an’ led a raid on the City of the Golden Towers itself, back when the Usurper was still rulin’ Nilfgaard. She lost most of her crew an’ was badly injured herself, but she got away with her life an’ enough spoils to fund voyages for years, which counts as a win in my books, heh! Talk claims she’s been as far as Ofir, an’ it’s even rumored she’s been to another continent far to the west. Deadeye’s rarely in port nowadays, which makes it easier for Skellige—druids’re always a bit snippy when she comes up, though they never complain all that loudly, maybe for fear of her catchin’ wind.”

—Rodolf Kazmer



INT	8	STUN	9
REF	10	RUN	21
DEX	8	LEAP	4
BODY	8	STA	45
SPD	7	ENC	80
EMP	6	REC	9
CRA	8	HP	45
WILL	10	VIGOR	25

Skills	Base
Awareness	18
Brawling	19
Charisma	12
Dodge/Escape	17
Education	13
Endurance	16
Hex Weaving	20
Intimidation	20
Melee	20
Persuasion	11
Physique	17
Resist Coercion	20
Resist Magic	19
Ritual Crafting	18
Sailing	18
Social Etiquette	13
Spell Casting	19
Swordsmanship	16
Tactics	16

Favored Magic
Air Pocket
Alzur’s Thunder
Bones of Glass
Bronwyn’s Bow
Bronwyn’s Gust
Control Water
Dispel
Evil Eye
Gwynt Troelli
Imbue Trophy
Telekinesis

Gear		
Skellige helm	Hindarsfjall heavy armor	Hindarsfjall heavy chausses
Berserker’s axe	Dagger	Krigsverd
Broadhead bolts (x10)	Gemstone amulet (x2)	Wyvern trophy
Grappling hook & rope	Gwent deck (Skellige)	Waterskin
Cold weather clothing	Sunstone	Holy symbol (Freya)

Key Skills	
Assets	8
Distillation	9
Expanded Magic	10
Grape Vine	6
Immutable	10
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	0
Reverse Engineer	7
Scheming	10

# Cadfan of Ebbing

INT	10	STUN	8
REF	6	RUN	18
DEX	6	LEAP	3
BODY	7	STA	40
SPD	6	ENC	70
EMP	8	REC	8
CRA	10	HP	40
WILL	10	VIGOR	21

Skills	Base
Alchemy	18
Awareness	17
Brawling	12
Charisma	14
Deceit	16
Dodge/Escape	12
Education	17
First Aid	18
Grooming and Style	18
Hex Weaving	20
Human Perception	15
Intimidation	19
Persuasion	15
Resist Coercion	18
Resist Magic	18
Ritual Crafting	20
Social Etiquette	20
Spell Casting	18
Stealth	16

Key Skills	
Assets	4
Distillation	10
Expanded Magic	3
Grape Vine	6
Immutable	7
In Touch	8
Magical Training	10
Mutate	7
Reverse Engineer	10
Scheming	7



“When first meeting Cadfan, one is assailed with the very image of the storybook evil wizard. A thousand peasants could describe him without ever seeing the man. He affects a long black cloak and exotic robes. Likely the cloak’s hood will be pulled down, casting his face into shadow. Cadfan’s staff is old, dark wood with a bleached skull atop it. The rumor goes that the skull belongs to his master, who met a grisly fate after teaching Cadfan all he could. Some say they have seen him speaking to it.

The educated may dig a little deeper and discover a man taken with the theatrical possibilities of a reputation. Strip away the disguise and Cadfan is a sparkling conversationalist with all the best gossip and a taste for good wine. He will smile and explain the skull is no relic of a tormented apprenticeship, merely ornamental. One may spend a happy evening discussing all manner of topics from theoretical chaos treatises to his exploits in the service of Emperor Fergus, which earned him a degree of respect and goodwill from that Worthy’s heir.

One would be advised, however, to make it clear that someone knows where you are, for not all his guests leave after dinner. Beneath the cloak and shadows, Cadfan is a dangerous and capable necromancer, prone to using the unwary in his experiments. The ornamental skull on his staff changes with disturbing frequency and I suspect is the source of the erudite gossip he spreads so freely.

Cadfan has constructed a dark and forbidding tower in the Pereplut, deep within the inhospitable swamps of Ebbing. I believe, however, that he maintains a house in Claremont, where he entertains the local worthies. The nature of these entertainments is not entirely clear, and I would hesitate to accept an invitation without extensive defensive preparations.”

—Glynnis var Treharne

Favored Magic
Alchemical Recovery
Cadfan’s Grasp
Cadfan’s Synthesis
Create Soul Beacon
Dispel
Pesta’s Kiss
Reanimate Corpse
Seirff Haul
Standing Portal
Storm of Souls
Summon Staff

Gear		
Crystal staff	Gemstone amulet	Jambiya
Halfling protective doublet	Double woven trousers	Adda’s tomb (x3)
Chloroform (x3)	Clotting powder (x3)	Fisstech
Sterilizing fluid (x3)	Surgeon’s kit	Alchemy set
Satchel	Megascope	Shackles

# Dormyn of Gemmera

"I must admit to a personal interest in Dormyn, as I've been an admirer of his craft since I was a girl. Indeed, one of his workings, Dormyn's Chamber, was instrumental in my surviving long enough to write this. Nonetheless, I shall attempt to keep to the facts.

Gemmera breeds tough citizens who did not respond well to the Empire's advances when they were slated for conquest. When the armies swept in, the inhabitants resisted, and in resisting they were all but wiped out. A victory of sorts, I suppose.

Dormyn aided the resistance; a thoroughgoing battle mage, with the personality of an avalanche. He methodically flattened waves sent against his forces and those he did not lay low with magic he battered into submission with his staff or simply cut down with his sword while they looked on in surprise. Unfortunately, one man, no matter how powerful, cannot stop an army. As Gemmera fell, Dormyn left rather than be enslaved.

Some years later, rumors emerged of a powerful, solitary mage living in the Tir Torchair mountains. An expedition left, and the survivors reported that the intelligence was correct; that Dormyn had found a home among the gnomes and that he considered himself retired. The scouts heartily concurred with this assessment and the decision was taken to leave him be as long as he did not act against the Empire.

It's said one should never meet a hero but despite this, I undertook the trek to the Tir Torchair where he maintains a stronghold carved from a network of limestone caves. Dormyn was no disappointment; I believe him to be constructed of leather over stone, with a bushy beard and eyes that brook no nonsense. He listened to my babbled praise and then offered me tea."

—Glynnis var Treharne



INT	9	STUN	10
REF	9	RUN	21
DEX	9	LEAP	4
BODY	10	STA	50
SPD	7	ENC	100
EMP	6	REC	10
CRA	7	HP	50
WILL	10	VIGOR	25

Skills	Base
Athletics	19
Awareness	18
Brawling	16
Courage	20
Dodge/Escape	17
Education	14
Endurance	18
Hex Weaving	18
Human Perception	12
Physique	18
Resist Coercion	20
Resist Magic	19
Ritual Crafting	18
Spell Casting	20
Staff/Spear	16
Stealth	19
Swordsmanship	18
Tactics	18
Wilderness Survival	16

Favored Magic
Alzur's Thunder
Artifact Compression
Dispel
Dormyn's Chamber
Dormyn's Fog
Hex of Forgetfulness
Hydromancy
Illusion
Bekker's Rockslide
Shape Earth
Teleportation

Key Skills	
Assets	7
Distillation	8
Expanded Magic	10
Grape Vine	6
Immutable	10
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	5
Reverse Engineer	8
Scheming	10

Gear		
Iron staff	Gemstone amulet	Torrwr
Brigandine	Armored trousers	Dwarven armor enhancements
Lantern	Pipe & tobacco	Spirits
Strider elixir	Anabolic steroids elixir	Magical elven rope
Dice poker board	Satchel	Trail rations (1 day)

# Dorregaray of Vole

INT	10	STUN	7
REF	6	RUN	15
DEX	6	LEAP	3
BODY	5	STA	35
SPD	5	ENC	50
EMP	9	REC	7
CRA	4	HP	35
WILL	9	VIGOR	25

Skills	Base
Awareness	18
Charisma	14
Deceit	17
Dodge/Escapes	14
Education	20
Grooming and Style	16
Hex Weaving	16
Human Perception	16
Monster Lore	20
Persuasion	15
Resist Coercion	19
Resist Magic	19
Riding	14
Ritual Crafting	19
Social Etiquette	19
Spell Casting	19
Stealth	14
Teaching	20
Wilderness Survival	16

Key Skills	
Assets	10
Distillation	6
Expanded Magic	8
Grape Vine	8
Immutable	8
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	1
Reverse Engineer	6
Scheming	8



Favored Magic
Alzur's Thunder
Bekker's Rockslide
Cleansing Ritual
Dispel
Luthien's Quill
Polymorphism
Sharpen Senses
Talfryn's Prison
Tanio Ilchar
Teleportation
Urien's Shelter

Gear			
Elven walking staff	Pipe	Purple velvet kaftan	Invisible ink
Warhorse w/ racing saddle	Military saddlebags	Racing blinders	Gemstone amulet
Halfling protective doublet	Hourglass	Writing kit	Journal
Double woven trousers	Chalk (x4)	Fishing gear	Cologne
Cold weather clothing	Dagger	Signet ring	Megascope

"Dorregaray of Vole is a mage in an odd position. First, he is considered a spy for King Ethain of Cidaris. Quite logical as he is from the small town of Vole in Cidaris. Apparently, he's not a particularly good spy, as at Thanedd he was put aside as simply a messenger to Cidaris and not actively involved on the side of the mages like Philippa Eilhart and Keira Metz who were loyal to their kings. Somehow, the Scoia'tael managed to shoot him in the back, puncturing his lung. Fortunately, being in a castle full of mages, Dorregaray was healed.

He is also a sorcerer, which at least these days is a difficult position to be in. Except for evil genius, Vilgefortz of Roggeveen, and Hen Gedyndeith, the oldest mage alive up until Thanedd, male mages are just not taken all that seriously. Sorceresses hold most of the power. We have one story about a magical spat between Dorregaray and Yennifer of Vengerberg. While Dorregaray throws magical fire, when he gets tired of the spat, Yennifer uses magic to cause everyone involved to become numb and fall over.

And then there is the obsession with endangered species. No one expects a mage to become worked up over lizard skin shoes but Dorregaray seems to be unable to hold a conversation without decrying the over-harvesting of an infinite number of animal species.

Since Thanedd, Dorregaray has been promoted to Rector of the Ban Ard school of magic for boys. He has the advantage of not being too threatening, and Ban Ard has the reputation of being a not-so-close second to the extremely elite school for girls at Aretuza. Hopefully, he will live comfortably in Ban Ard leading the students in campaigns to save endangered newts."

—Brandon of Oxenfurt

# Elgan of Verden

“During our studies of mages I was most interested in Elgan of Verden. He is a specialist mage, fascinated by all things Earth. He is well known to some of the instructors at Ban Ard who told me about named spells he has created. I was intrigued since most of the male mages these days seem to be either evil, or hanging from the bottom rung of mage society. Apparently Elgan is so focused on his magical studies that he has let go of the rungs entirely and rarely leaves the mountains. We found that, quite sensibly for someone studying the earth, Elgan now lives in Mahakam among the dwarves. It seems that the only thing he misses from life outside the mountains is the variety of beers produced in northern countries. So, of course, Rodolf and I filled his wagon with the greatest selection of beers we could find and set off.

When we arrived in Mahakam Rodolf sent a dwarfling to tell Elgan that visitors had arrived. As we expected it took some time for him to be found in the tunnels and chambers but eventually he did appear. Rodolf told him that we were creating a tome of magic so that no history or spells were lost. He seemed to think that was a reasonable project. I found that he speaks quite fluent dwarvish and nordling, retaining the somewhat sing-song accent of Verden.

Ensnored in his tidy quarters, we found that he is much valued by the dwarves as he magically reinforces their tunnels, points them toward exceptional veins of precious ores and rids the diggings of monsters. He told us about his studies, about his named spells, about the geology of the Mahakam mountains, and a bit about his disdain for the magic community. Indeed, we talked, or I should say listened, well into the night accompanied by fine beer.”

—Brandon of Oxenfurt



INT	10	STUN	8
REF	5	RUN	12
DEX	5	LEAP	2
BODY	8	STA	40
SPD	4	ENC	80
EMP	7	REC	8
CRA	9	HP	40
WILL	9	VIGOR	25

Skills	Base
Athletics	13
Awareness	19
Charisma	15
Crafting	18
Dodge/Escape	12
Education	20
Grooming and Style	10
Hex Weaving	16
Human Perception	13
Monster Lore	20
Persuasion	14
Resist Coercion	19
Resist Magic	19
Ritual Crafting	18
Social Etiquette	17
Spell Casting	17
Staff/Spear	11
Stealth	10
Wilderness Survival	19

Favored Magic
Air Pocket
Dispel
Earthen Spike
Elgan's Bastion
Elgan's Theory
Golem Crafting
Mage's Forge
Magic Barrier
Shape Earth
Smith's Touch
The Eternal Itch

Key Skills	
Assets	0
Distillation	10
Expanded Magic	6
Grape Vine	8
Immutable	10
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	0
Reverse Engineer	10
Scheming	7

Gear		
Iron staff	Gemstone amulet	Belt pouch
Brigandine	Double woven trousers	Satchel
Journal	Bredan's fury (x2)	Cart & mule
Bedroll	Dice poker board	Grappling hook & rope
Pipe & tobacco	Quality prosthetic leg	Beer (x3)

# Francesca Findabair

INT	9	STUN	7
REF	8	RUN	21
DEX	9	LEAP	4
BODY	4	STA	35
SPD	7	ENC	40
EMP	10	REC	7
CRA	8	HP	35
WILL	10	VIGOR	20

Skills	Base
Awareness	17
Charisma	20
Courage	19
Dodge/Escape	15
Education	18
Grooming and Style	20
Hex Weaving	20
Human Perception	20
Leadership	18
Performance	20
Persuasion	19
Resist Coercion	17
Resist Magic	17
Riding	17
Ritual Crafting	20
Social Etiquette	19
Spell Casting	20
Stealth	17
Tactics	18

Key Skills	
Assets	10
Distillation	5
Expanded Magic	8
Grape Vine	9
Immutable	10
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	1
Reverse Engineer	7
Scheming	10



*"I am sorry that I have never been in the presence of Francesca Findabair, Enid an Gleanna, Queen of the Elves. Beauty is a hard thing to define. But there appears to be no question that Queen Enid is the most beautiful woman in the world. She is a full-blooded Aen Seidhe of royal lineage. Her very great age is apparently not even hinted at by her beauty. She was disowned by her father, one of the Aen Saevherne, or Sages of the elves, because she did not turn her back on rest of the world and follow her father into exile.*

*The more I study what is known of Queen Enid, the more respect I have for her. Many people of the North hate her because she threw her fate in with that of Nilfgaard and Vilgefortz of Roggeveen at the Thanedd conclave. Many hate her because she accepted Nilfgaardian terms deserting the Scoia'tael and not allowing them to return to Dol Blathanna after it had been reclaimed by the elves.*

*During her lifetime, Queen Enid has seen her people, at that time far beyond humans in art, architecture, social structure, and knowledge, pushed by human violence farther and farther to the east, destroying their beautiful cities behind them. Eventually the elves that did not choose to acclimate to human society found themselves starving to death in the peaks of the Blue Mountains. Through all of this Queen Enid has chosen to fight for her people in whatever way she could. Betray the North and ally with Nilfgaard to re-establish a homeland for her people? Of course. In her lonely position as the only representative of the elves, who wouldn't do just about anything to establish a place where her people could be safe and take a shot at rebuilding their culture."*

*—Brandon of Oxenfurt*

Favored Magic
Aenye
Alzur's Thunder
Blaze of the Korath
Bones of Glass
Dispel
Magic Barrier
Magical Guestbook
Sharpen Senses
Standing Portal
Talfryn's Prison
Telepathy

Gear			
Elven walking staff	Gemstone amulet	Makeup kit	Megascop
Crystal Skull (Hawk)	Hand mirror	Perfume	Fashionable clothing
Halfling protective doublet	Writing kit	Journal	Four-leaf clover
Power stone guardian	Belt pouch	Jewelry	Smelling salts
Map of the Continent	Signal whistle	Horse w/ saddle	Secret pocket

# Drystan of Nazair

In the taverns of the Nazairi interior, when Nilfgaardian loyalists have sensibly retired, bards may sing very quietly of their rebellion against the Empire. One of these stories tells of a unit of imperial knights, tasked with the gathering of magical knowledge in the province. One by one, these men were hunted down and vanquished, although the details vary. Some say they were found dashed to pieces at the bottom of cliffs, others that they were found in their encampment with congested faces and lolling tongues. Or perhaps they simply vanished overnight.

The culprit was one Drystan of Nazair, the scion of a minor noble house, who owned an unremarkable estate overlooking the sea where he taught gifted, young nobles the magical arts. When the soldiers came to Nazair, Drystan cared not a jot. When his relations fled, he barely noticed, caught up in his study.

When the order was given to seize his magical research, he simply paid off an appropriate guard to look the other way while he removed his notes and equipment, including a monogrammed alembic he was particularly fond of. By some oversight, this last was missed and boxed to be transported with the rest of the paraphernalia.

Drystan retaliated against the loss of his property with the power of a fully trained mage and the maturity of a toddler. The knights died quite horribly, and he then fled to the capital of Nazair, where the Crescent Moon welcomed him and his romantic legend.

His current whereabouts are a mystery, though he has been known to attend parties in an obviously covert guise, all tailored leather jerkins, breeches, and flirtatious hair. He cuts quite the figure—and a swathe through the daughters of nobility who really ought to know better.”

—Glynnis var Treharne



INT	9	STUN	7
REF	8	RUN	21
DEX	7	LEAP	4
BODY	5	STA	35
SPD	7	ENC	50
EMP	10	REC	7
CRA	8	HP	35
WILL	9	VIGOR	21

Skills	Base
Awareness	16
Charisma	20
Deceit	16
Dodge/Escape	16
Education	16
Fine Arts	15
Grooming and Style	20
Hex Weaving	16
Human Perception	19
Persuasion	20
Resist Coercion	17
Resist Magic	17
Ritual Crafting	14
Seduction	18
Social Etiquette	19
Spell Casting	17
Stealth	14
Streetwise	16
Swordsmanship	14

Favored Magic
Blemish
Cloak
Dispel
Glamour
Hold Tongue
Invisible Ribbon
Odious Hex
Pyromancy
Spell Jar
Talfryn's Prison
Teleportation

Key Skills	
Assets	10
Distillation	4
Expanded Magic	6
Grape Vine	8
Immutable	6
In Touch	8
Magical Training	10
Mutate	0
Reverse Engineer	6
Scheming	9

Gear		
Crystal staff	Belt pouch	Gwent deck (Scoia'tael)
Writing kit	Vrihedd cavalry sword	Halfling protective doublet
Cavalry trousers	Wives' tears potion	Black venom (x2)
Horse w/ racing saddle	Gemstone amulet	Fine art tools
Loaded dice	Secret pocket	Jewelry

# Fringilla Vigo

INT	9	STUN	7
REF	6	RUN	15
DEX	6	LEAP	3
BODY	5	STA	35
SPD	5	ENC	50
EMP	7	REC	7
CRA	4	HP	35
WILL	9	VIGOR	21

Skills	Base
Awareness	16
Business	15
Charisma	15
Courage	15
Dodge/Escapes	14
Education	18
Grooming and Style	16
Hex Weaving	19
Human Perception	17
Persuasion	14
Resist Coercion	18
Resist Magic	19
Riding	14
Ritual Crafting	19
Seduction	15
Social Etiquette	18
Spell Casting	19
Staff/Spear	12
Stealth	11

Key Skills	
Assets	10
Distillation	5
Expanded Magic	6
Grape Vine	10
Immutable	7
In Touch	8
Magical Training	10
Mutate	4
Reverse Engineer	7
Scheming	10



Favored Magic
Aenye
Bewitch Pendant
Dispel
Glamour
Illusion
Magic Screen
Mind Manipulation
Pyromancy
Rhwystr Graig
Standing Portal
Teleportation

Gear			
Crystal staff	Halfling protective doublet	Double woven trousers	Gemstone amulet
Makeup kit	Perfume (x2)	Belt pouch	Fashionable clothing
Signet ring	Horse w/ racing saddle	Writing kit	Journal
Invisible ink	Jewelry (x2)	Megascoper	Tempest elixir
Mongoose elixir	Gwent deck (Nilfgaard)	Eye of Nehaleni	Ledger

*“It is not in the Nilfgaardian tradition for mages to be overtly stylish; to pay attention to fashion is deemed a waste of energy that could be better used in service. Fringilla bucks this trend and indeed sets others. She comes from distant nobility and brings with her an air of gracious attention, bearing, and dangerous competency.*

*Fringilla delights in subverting expectations; by dedicating genuine effort to her appearance, she might be expected to have let her studies go by the wayside, but she is a dangerous combatant and quite single-minded in attaining her goals. She’s an interesting character study but I would be wary of relying on her in extremity unless working towards a clear mutual destination.*

*Her membership in the Lodge of Sorceresses is one such case; primarily composed of Northern practitioners Fringilla clearly held no compunction against joining them and offering them her allegiance over the Empire. That said, her abilities lie beyond the merely social and she proved herself in battle at Sodden, fighting for Nilfgaard. I can only imagine the apologies she felt necessary when next she met her fellow Lodge members over drinks rather than a barricade.*

*That said, I have misgivings as to the Lodge itself; Nilfgaard often treats its mages as tools; but the Lodge as a tool to control the crowned heads of the Continent sits poorly with me. By setting ourselves too far above people we can gain delusions of grandeur and lose sight of the consequences of our actions on individuals.*

*Perhaps it’s a necessary idea and one that needs to flower and fall naturally to be fully excised. Be that as it may, Fringilla is clearly at home with the politics, the reputation, and the parties. She never enters a room unremarked, and I believe she enjoys that fact.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne

# Istredd

"Istredd is an esoteric scholar of magic. Most mages have never seen him, as he lives in a small, dodgy village rather than any of the cities which hold materials for research. He doesn't seem to have belonged to any of the mage organizations but does publish research papers that somehow make their way to meetings and conclaves. Unfortunately, they are usually so specific and filled with magical jargon that they are not widely read. In academia, one must remember that using rarefied terminology isn't the same as having something to say.

He's one of those mages who buy calves with two heads or chunks of unicorn horn from village people. If you live among mages, then you must wonder who is the stronger or more knowledgeable, but if you are the only mage for 25 miles in all directions it is easy to be superior to your surroundings. It would be nice to believe that mages choose these surroundings to help and protect "the little people." Not likely really. You are The Mage of the town and the people around you feel awe or fear. You can be a small magical fish in a smaller magical pool. Not all the graduates of Ban Ard are ready to fight their way to the top.

Some of his recent papers which I was able to find in Oxenfurt have moved away from magic and toward the study of history and how lives were lived centuries ago. Perhaps he wishes to delve into the past to reach the time before humans, because still little is known about the magic of the Aen Seidhe and the elves aren't talking. Rumor has it that Istredd once dueled the famed witcher, Geralt of Rivia, but I doubt that quite highly."

—Brandon of Oxenfurt



Favored Magic
Alchemical Recovery
Ball Lightning
Cleansing Ritual
Dispel
Essence of Potion
Illusion
Puro Dwr
Savolla's Method
Standing Portal
Telecommunication
Telepathy

INT	10	STUN	7
REF	6	RUN	21
DEX	7	LEAP	4
BODY	6	STA	35
SPD	7	ENC	60
EMP	10	REC	7
CRA	9	HP	35
WILL	8	VIGOR	21

Skills	Base
Alchemy	16
Awareness	18
Charisma	20
Dodge/Escape	11
Education	18
Grooming and Style	19
Hex Weaving	13
Human Perception	20
Leadership	19
Monster Knowledge	19
Persuasion	18
Resist Coercion	15
Resist Magic	15
Ritual Crafting	16
Seduction	17
Social Etiquette	19
Spell Casting	17
Stealth	13
Wilderness Survival	20

Key Skills	
Assets	7
Distillation	7
Expanded Magic	5
Grape Vine	6
Immutable	6
In Touch	8
Magical Training	10
Mutate	2
Reverse Engineer	8
Scheming	8

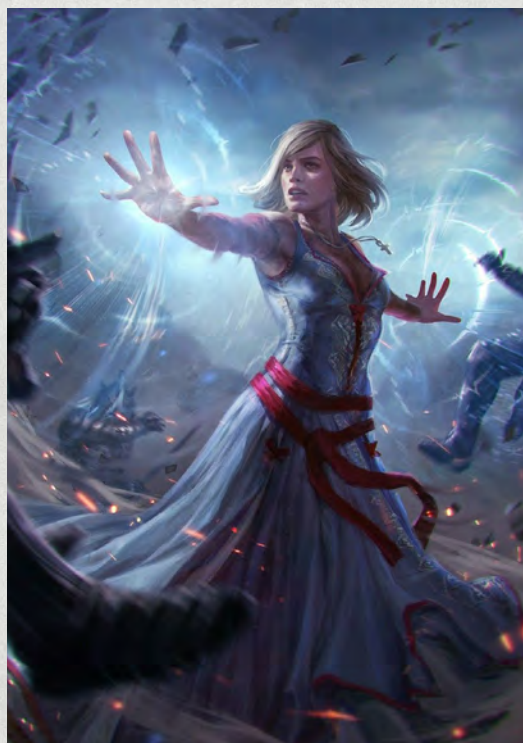
Gear			
Crystal staff	Dagger	Vicovarian blade	Alchemy set
Adda's tomb (x2)	Smelling salts	Gemstone amulet	Writing kit
Telecommunicator	Journal (x4)	Fashionable clothing	Satchel
Belt pouch	Gwent deck (Monster)	Lantern	Cologne
Mongoose elixir	Crystal skull (Kestrel)	Power stone guardian	Spirits

# Keira Metz

INT	9	STUN	7
REF	8	RUN	15
DEX	7	LEAP	3
BODY	5	STA	35
SPD	6	ENC	50
EMP	7	REC	7
CRA	7	HP	35
WILL	9	VIGOR	21

Skills	Base
Alchemy	15
Awareness	17
Charisma	13
Deceit	13
Dodge/Escape	17
Education	18
Grooming and Style	15
Hex Weaving	17
Human Perception	16
Melee	16
Persuasion	14
Resist Coercion	17
Resist Magic	19
Ritual Crafting	19
Seduction	15
Small Blades	14
Social Etiquette	17
Spell Casting	19
Stealth	15

Key Skills	
Assets	8
Distillation	10
Expanded Magic	6
Grape Vine	8
Immutable	8
In Touch	8
Magical Training	10
Mutate	7
Reverse Engineer	10
Scheming	8



“Keira Metz is another member of the Lodge of Sorceresses. Bit of a fussy one, Metz—never fond of muck or mess, appreciated the finer things in life. Terrified of rats, if I remember, an’ used twenty-crown words all the time, too, even when regular ones would do. She was workin’ for King Foltest back before the second war with Nilfgaard broke out, but he exiled her after the Thanedd coup. Why, I dunno—I heard she did well, beatin’ up on Artaud Terranova with a set of brass knuckles, heh! Unfortunately, the bastard got the better of her when the tide turned, threw her out a window with a couple of nasty injuries. Lucky for her, she made it out alive. After being exiled, she must’ve joined up with the Lodge, workin’ with Philippa Eilhart to make that country for mages. She’d been lyin’ low for a couple years after the end of the second war, but it didn’t stop her from being charged with treason over the deaths of King Demavend and Foltest, same as the rest of the Lodge. I suppose the reasonin’ was that they all must’ve been in on it, an’ Metz definitely had a reason for a grudge against Foltest...I can’t help feeling like there’s another explanation, though. Nobody’s sure where she is or what she’s doin’ now, what with the North howlin’ for mages’ blood, especially the Lodge’s, an’ the Black Ones havin’ taken most of Temeria an’ Aedirn, damn their eyes. There’s been some rumors of a talented witch in Velen, though I can’t picture Keira Metz being all that pleased with peasant living. On the other hand, if it is her, maybe she can do somethin’ about the Catriona plague—it’s startin’ to spread again which is the last thing we need with a war going on. She was always good with potions an’ such.”

—Rodolf Kazmer

Favored Magic
Alzur’s Thunder
Bronwyn’s Gust
Cenlly Graig
Dispel
Glamour
Onieromancy
Reopen Portal
Somme
Standing Portal
Telecommunication
Teleportation

Gear			
Crystal staff	Brass knuckles	Halfling protective doublet	Crystal Skull (Cat)
Makeup kit	Gemstone amulet	Alchemy set	Satchel
Jewelry (x4)	Perfume (x3)	Fashionable clothing (x2)	Numbing herbs (x3)
Poniard	Tempest elixir (x3)	Tempest elixir formula	Lightning elixir
Lightning elixir formula	Strider elixir	Strider elixir formula	Telecommunicator

# Margarita Laux-Antille

“Margarita Laux-Antille, known as Rita to friends, is one of the most influential members of the magical sorority. She is descended from one Ilona Laux-Antille, a powerful sorceress who was the assistant to Aretuza’s previous Rectoress, Tissaia de Vries. Magical heritage is uncommon as those born to magical parents often become overwhelmed by their inherited gift but when it does occur it applies a great deal of pressure to the inheritors. In Margarita’s case, this great ancestry pushed her to become an important part of magical society. As a girl she attended Aretuza in the same class as Yennifer of Vengerberg which may be why she has taken her physical perfection even farther than most sorceresses. And yet she is less arrogant than her peers. Their headmistress was the aforementioned Tissaia de Vries, no doubt further stoking the fire of Margarita’s ambition. Eventually, Margarita succeeded Tissaia, becoming Rectoress of Aretuza. Margarita is known for her devotion to her school and her students. Apparently, no one even considered that she might be involved in the scandal at the Thanedd conclave. But she could not escape the crisis that started at Thanedd. Eventually she would have to leave Aretuza to save her students from the anti-magical backlash. She got as far as Novigrad in the hopes of reaching safety in Kovir and Poviss, but walked into the Novigrad of Radovid’s mage hunters. In the end, her students are being burned at the stake one by one. She only survives because Radovid wants her to witness the horror of their deaths but her execution is soon approaching. Truly, she is one of the saddest stories in the magical world.”

—Brandon of Oxenfurt



Favored Magic
Ball Lightning
Codi Bywyd
Dispel
Empower
Focus Shutdown
Hold Tongue
Hydromancy
Interactive Illusion
Ritual of Magic
Standing Portal
The Eternal Itch

INT	10	STUN	7
REF	7	RUN	15
DEX	7	LEAP	3
BODY	5	STA	35
SPD	5	ENC	50
EMP	8	REC	7
CRA	5	HP	35
WILL	9	VIGOR	25

Skills	Base
Awareness	15
Charisma	16
Courage	15
Dodge/Escape	13
Education	20
Endurance	11
Grooming and Style	16
Hex Weaving	19
Human Perception	15
Monster Lore	18
Persuasion	15
Resist Coercion	19
Resist Magic	19
Ritual Crafting	19
Seduction	18
Social Etiquette	19
Spell Casting	19
Stealth	11
Teaching	20

Key Skills	
Assets	10
Distillation	6
Expanded Magic	8
Grape Vine	6
Immutable	5
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	6
Reverse Engineer	10
Scheming	7

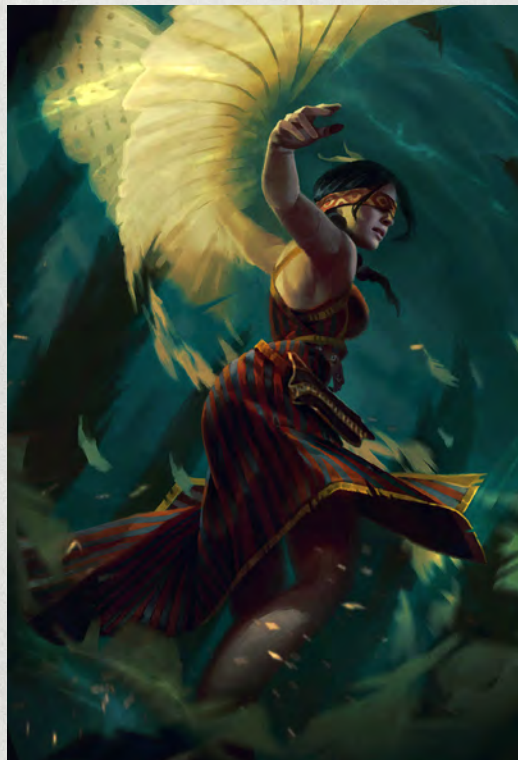
Gear			
Crystal staff	Halfling protective doublet	Stiletto	Gemstone amulet
Writing kit	Fashionable clothing	Alchemy set	Ritual pouch
Megascope	Numbing herbs	Jewelry (x2)	Hourglass
Garter sheath	Double woven trousers	Spell formulae (x4)	Hand mirror
Satchel	Makeup kit	Perfume	Crystal skull (Swallow)

# Philippa Eilhart

INT	10	STUN	7
REF	7	RUN	15
DEX	7	LEAP	3
BODY	5	STA	35
SPD	5	ENC	50
EMP	5	REC	7
CRA	7	HP	35
WILL	10	VIGOR	25

Skills	Base
Awareness	17
Charisma	10
Deceit	18
Dodge/Escapes	16
Education	19
Endurance	15
Grooming and Style	16
Hex Weaving	20
Human Perception	15
Persuasion	15
Resist Coercion	20
Resist Magic	20
Ritual Crafting	20
Seduction	17
Small Blades	13
Social Etiquette	18
Spell Casting	20
Stealth	15
Tactics	17

Key Skills	
Assets	10
Distillation	6
Expanded Magic	7
Grape Vine	8
Immutable	5
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	4
Reverse Engineer	10
Scheming	10



“Philippa Eilhart. Heh. Very dangerous mage—powerful enough to polymorph into an owl. Used to advise King Vizimir and was even involved with his spymaster Sigismund Dijkstra for a while though I’d call that an affair of convenience since she’s strictly for other women. Eilhart been a real leader among the Northern Mages. Durin’ the Thanedd Coup she and the other mages loyal to the North, Dijkstra, and a bunch of Redanian soldiers captured the mages who’d been bought by Nilfgaard. Somethin’ must’ve gone wrong, though, ‘cause the Black Ones’ mages got free, and it turned into a bloodbath. After seeing the fall of the Council, Eilhart started a group of her own, the Lodge of Sorceresses. Rumor has it they wanted to create a country for magic and mages, or some shite. Of course, now most of the Lodge is wanted for treason, Eilhart included, so that tells you how that turned out, heh. Damned witch was mixed up in the murder of King Foltest, too. She was even fosterin’ a peasant uprising to try to control the Pontar Valley after the Lodge hired the Witcher Letho to start killin’ kings. Of course, Letho was probably workin’ for Nilfgaard all along, and her plans started going wrong when her apprentice Cynthia turned out to be a spy for the Black Ones. King Radovid even had Eilhart’s eyes put out when he captured her in Loc Muinne. I suppose Eilhart’s damn near takin’ over Redania after Vizimir was assassinated explains where Radovid got his grudge against her. Radovid’s still tryin’ to chase her down and finish what he started, and the Witch Hunters are tearin’ apart Velen lookin’, but she’s clean vanished. Suppose you’d have a lot more hiding places as an owl, but I don’t think for a minute we’ve seen the last of this one.”

—Rodolf Kazmer

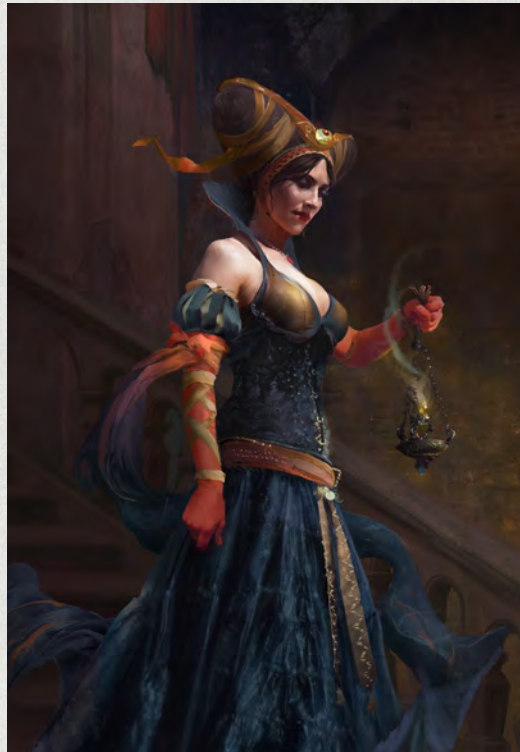
Favored Magic
Alzur’s Thunder
Blinding Dust
Dispel
Eilhart’s Technique
Fergus’ Demise
Glamour
Golem Crafting
Mental Command
Polymorphism
Pyromancy
Standing Portal

Gear			
Crystal staff	Stiletto	Halfling protective doublet	Double woven trousers
Gemstone amulet	Belt pouch	Makeup kit	Perfume
Writing kit	Invisible ink	Poisoner’s friend	Black venom
Alchemy set	Satchel	Secret pocket (x2)	Fashionable clothing
Acid solution	Jewelry (x2)	Sterilizing fluid (x3)	Megascope

# Sile de Tancarville

“Sile de Tancarville’s famed for two things: her connection with the Lodge of Sorceresses and being downright reclusive. I figure she joined up with the Lodge hopin’ that those achieving their goals would let her research in peace— a woman who resigns from a seat on the Council of Wizards because it’s interfering with her work sure isn’t interested in politics for power’s sake. Heard some rumors that she’d been workin’ with Queen Zuleyka to keep Prince Tankred Thyssen outta trouble. Seems to have worked, and maybe even left some fond memories, heh, given he’s King of Kovir now, an’ the only Northern ruler still willin’ to take a chance with mages. De Tancarville popped up in Flotsam not quite half a year ago, durin’ the mess with the Kingslayer; apparently, she was there to take care of a kayran in the town’s port. She wound up workin’ with Geralt of Rivia to kill the beast, and used somethin’ from the kayran to help with King Henselt’s, heh, marital problems, gaining his trust. Of course, then the Kingslayers tried for Henselt, and at Loc Muinne it all came out that the whole thing had been a plot of the Lodge. They’d hired the a group of Witchers to kill the rulers that weren’t bendin’ over for the whims of mages. The Lodge’s plot started going all to pieces with that. De Tancarville tried to make her escape after a damn dragon attacked the conference. Some folks swear that her megascope blew and the sorceress met a grisly fate, an’ some swear Geralt of Rivia saved her life instead. Can’t say for sure if being on the run for treason’s much of a life, especially not with what the Eternal Fire’s been doin’ to mages they catch....”

—Rodolf Kazmer



INT	10	STUN	7
REF	6	RUN	15
DEX	6	LEAP	3
BODY	5	STA	35
SPD	5	ENC	50
EMP	6	REC	7
CRA	7	HP	35
WILL	9	VIGOR	25

Skills	Base
Alchemy	17
Awareness	19
Charisma	11
Deduction	18
Dodge/Escape	14
Education	20
Endurance	13
Grooming and Style	15
Hex Weaving	17
Human Perception	13
Monster Lore	20
Persuasion	13
Resist Coercion	18
Resist Magic	19
Ritual Crafting	19
Social Etiquette	18
Spell Casting	19
Stealth	12
Teaching	18

Favored Magic
Dispel
Elgan’s Theory
Essence of Potion
Freshen Air
Mental Command
Mind Manipulation
Oneiromancy
Ritual of Magic
Standing Portal
Teleportation
The Nightmare

Key Skills	
Assets	8
Distillation	8
Expanded Magic	7
Grape Vine	8
Immutable	5
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	6
Reverse Engineer	8
Scheming	8

Gear			
Crystal staff	Halfling protective doublet	Satchel	Gemstone amulet
Writing kit	Double woven trousers	Alchemy set	Belt pouch
Strider elixir (x3)	Garter sheath	Stiletto	Journal
Perfume	Alchemical adhesive (x2)	Fashionable clothing	Silver fox fur boa
Jewelry	Clotting powder (x2)	Invisible ink	Makeup kit

# Stregobor of Kovir

INT	10	STUN	7
REF	5	RUN	15
DEX	6	LEAP	3
BODY	5	STA	35
SPD	5	ENC	50
EMP	5	REC	7
CRA	8	HP	35
WILL	9	VIGOR	25

Skills	Base
Alchemy	16
Awareness	18
Charisma	10
Crafting	15
Deduction	18
Dodge/Escape	13
Education	19
First Aid	16
Grooming and Style	11
Hex Weaving	19
Human Perception	11
Intimidation	17
Persuasion	12
Resist Coercion	19
Resist Magic	19
Ritual Crafting	19
Social Etiquette	19
Spell Casting	19
Stealth	12

Key Skills	
Assets	6
Distillation	8
Expanded Magic	8
Grape Vine	6
Immutable	8
In Touch	10
Magical Training	10
Mutate	6
Reverse Engineer	8
Scheming	6



Favored Magic
Afan's Mirror
Corpse Restoration
Create Crystal Skull
Create Soul Beacon
Crystal Stasis
Dispel
Illusion
Interactive Illusion
Magic Screen
Summon Staff
Telepathy

Gear			
Crystal staff	Gemstone amulet	Gwent deck (Monster)	Dice poker board
Surgeon's kit	Writing kit	Journal	Hourglass
Alchemy set	Alchemical adhesive	Base powder	Acid solution
Satchel	Adda's tomb (x3)	Clotting powder (x2)	Dagger
Runewright's tools	Cold weather clothing	Belt pouch	Sweets

"Stregobor of Kovir is the most wizardy-lookin' wizard I've seen in my entire life. Tall for a human, skinny as a stick, staff, robes, the whole vein of ore, heh. Mostly did illusions and weather, but he was obsessed with the Curse of the Black Sun. Whole-heartedly believed in the prophecy of Eltibald, that "sixty women wearing golden crowns would drown the river valleys in blood" to mark the return of the evil goddess Lilit. And so, when an eclipse appeared, Stregobor started researching princesses born durin' it. All sorts of rumors that the Black Sun Princesses were evil, or mutated, or possessed, all from birth. After a few years and more than a few dissections, Stregobor was considered an expert on 'em. Things went sideways when he was called in to deal with Renfri of Creyden, though. He confirmed she was twisted from the Black Sun, an' the girl's stepmother supposedly sent her into the woods with a hunter after to kill her. But Renfri escaped 'em, maybe killed 'em, an' blamed Stregobor for ruining her life. Dedicated herself to killin' him, an' word is she nearly did it in Mahakam, but Stregobor froze her in a slab of crystal and ran. She got free with a bit of help an' kept trackin' him, picked up a crew along the way. Eventually Stregobor wound up cornered in Blaviken, an' that is when Geralt of Rivia showed up. I'd heard that Geralt wasn't fond of Stregobor, that the mage'd gotten the Witcher chased out of Kovir on a false accusation, but somethin' happened in that town. I doubt anyone knows the whole story except Stregobor and the Butcher of Blaviken himself, but there were seven people dead in the marketplace, one of 'em Renfri, an' Geralt of Rivia wasn't letting anyone touch her body. Stregobor went back to Kovir and hasn't been bothered since."

—Rodolf Kazmer

# Xarthisius

*“There is no doubt in my mind that Xarthisius has significant divinatory capabilities. But divination in itself is a tricky subject as it often produces results that are unsatisfactory to the person seeking answers.*

*In his youth, Emperor Emhyr was placed under a curse by the Sorcerer Braathens, to legitimize the coup against hi father. None of that line respond well to pressure and this lead to Fergus’ death and his cursed son’s exile.*

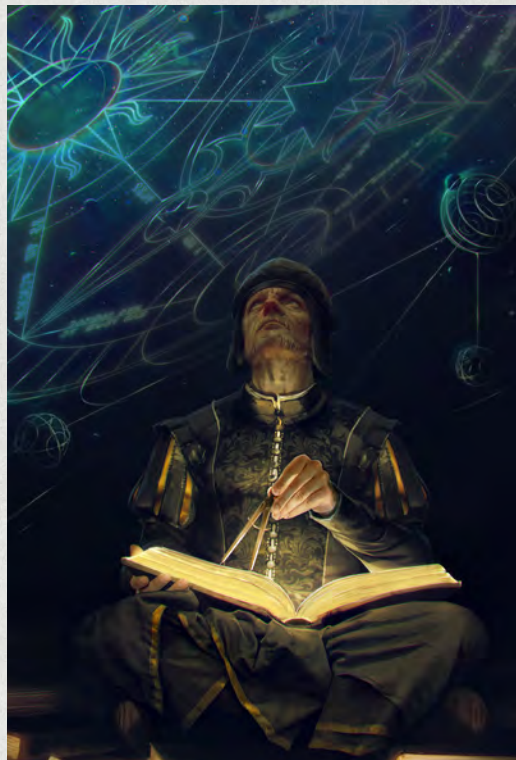
*The boy was able to garner some supporters, including Xarthisius. Through astrology and divinations Xarthisius directed Emhyr’s party North, where he claimed, in his vague fashion, that a cure could be found.*

*Fortunately, the divination proved accurate, after a fashion and a great deal of time in the life of a mundane human. Xarthisius was well-rewarded, with a tower in the Summer Capital, Loc Grimm, fully equipped with all the astrological equipment his heart could desire.*

*Rulers are famously fickle, however, and when Xarthisius was called upon to do service once more his divinations proved woefully inaccurate and much time was wasted dispatching an Imperial agent to comb a hundred square miles of desert-haystack in search of a person-shaped needle. Naturally, the Emperor assumed Xarthisius was incompetent and the poor man exchanged his tower with a view of the stars for a cell.*

*In our rare encounters, for he seldom ventured from his tower, I saw no malice in Xarthisius. He’s a slightly vague, overly earnest man with a touching faith in the ability of the stars to provide accurate guidance. The more I have pondered his imprisonment, the more I am convinced that his divination must have been correct and that some other wrinkle must have led to the failure of the Emperor’s agent.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne



Favored Magic
Detect Ley Line
Dispel
Disrupt Focus
Hydromancy
Magic Compass
Oneiromancy
Pyromancy
Telepathy
Teleportation
Tyromancy
Urien’s Shelter

Gear			
Elven walking staff	Dagger	Basic clothing	Belt pouch
Map of the Continent	Gemstone amulet	Alchemy set	Writing kit
Flint & steel	Star chart	Astrological text	Cheese
Gwent deck (Nilfgaard)	Bedroll	Holy symbol (The Great Sun)	Journal
Writing kit	Waterskin	Pipe & tobacco	Sunstone

INT	9	STUN	6
REF	5	RUN	15
DEX	5	LEAP	3
BODY	4	STA	30
SPD	5	ENC	50
EMP	7	REC	6
CRA	8	HP	30
WILL	8	VIGOR	21

Skills	Base
Alchemy	14
Awareness	15
Charisma	11
Deduction	17
Dodge/Escape	11
Education	19
Grooming and Style	11
Hex Weaving	17
Human Perception	13
Monster Lore	17
Persuasion	13
Resist Coercion	14
Resist Magic	18
Ritual Crafting	18
Sleight of Hand	11
Social Etiquette	15
Spell Casting	18
Stealth	7
Teaching	15

Key Skills	
Assets	4
Distillation	8
Expanded Magic	4
Grape Vine	8
Immutable	6
In Touch	8
Magical Training	10
Mutate	6
Reverse Engineer	8
Scheming	8

# A Binding Clause



## Background (Read Aloud)

*The mountain air of Lyria and Rivia makes for a pleasant change compared to the war-torn lands of Temeria—the cold breeze too weak to carry the smoke of pyres and the stench of decay from the body pits. War seems a distant thing here, a bad memory or forgotten nightmare—out of the reach of the White Flame Dancing on the Grave of His Enemies. But a violent history lingers here in the marks left behind. Rivia, a city scarred by pogroms, sits in the shadow of the Craag Ros mountains on the horizon, somber and tarnished by the hatred its people hold. Tension bleeds like pus from a lanced wound, infecting all that encounter it. You see it in each suspicious look, hear it in every venomous word. And here, in the outlying village of Spetz, something is about to snap.*

## The Rest of the Story

The village of Spetz has been plagued by a demon for over four years now, the strange creature appearing and lingering outside one home, pleading to be let in. The peasants are terrified, now fearing the family inside the home the demon is drawn to. Given Rivia's history, this fear seems destined to become an all-consuming hatred that is waiting to end in bloodshed. All it needs is one little push...*something must give*. Players must figure out how to appease this demon but discover along the way that it's not the only monster lurking in the village, hidden in plain sight.

## Setting

Players arrive in Spetz, a tiny mountain village in the unified kingdoms of Lyria and Rivia, the western capital of Rivia only a day's ride north and the Yaruga river a few miles south. Lyria and Rivia were conquered by the Nilfgaardian Army not long ago but the land is still rife with fighting; Queen Meve managing to keep out of Emperor Emhyr's clutches and rally a partisan force. Still, the state of the nation has only continued to suffer. Since the pogroms, Rivia and its outlying settlements have struggled to make any progress between the human and non-human population. Anyone that isn't human, or that isn't 'natural', is treated with suspicion and contempt and it's clear that the people of Spetz are at their breaking point. The demon plaguing them must go, and the family it's drawn to must go with it if that's what it takes.

But there is more to this story than a family simply unfortunate enough to earn the attention of a monster. This creature was *summoned*—to give a 'perfect child' to a mother and father terrified of what their neighbors would think of them and so an exchange was made. A life for a life. When the truth is revealed, the player characters must decide where they stand—with the demon who came to make good on a pact settled years ago? Or with the parents who did the unthinkable? Either way, Spetz is reaching its breaking point. Just how much will be consumed in the flames?

## Forces

This adventure can be run with up to six player characters from either side of the war. So long as none of the characters are notoriously known as enemies of Lyria and Rivia or Queen Meve, nor present themselves as such, they shouldn't run into any trouble with any of the locals or guards. The number of enemies in combat should be equal to the players plus two, unless stated otherwise.

## The Opposition Will Be

- ◆ The **Mari Lwyd**, a demon summoned by **Clenn and Ena Padd** to give them a 'perfect son'. No one knows the true name of

the demon, so they have taken to calling it the **Horse of Frost**. This demon did as it was asked, but the parents failed to be specific about the terms of the deal; now it seeks to fulfill the final part of the contract. The demon can't enter the family home without express permission from **Clenn or Ena** and so seeks to find a way in, using its ability to **steal and wear** the skin of others to try and fool the parents into letting it in.

- ◆ **Clenn Padd** and his wife **Ena**, are the parents and social pariahs who summoned the **Horse of Frost** and made the exchange for another child in place of the one they already had. Ever since the demon's return, their lives have been in upheaval. The locals now fear them, and their child and they have been ostracized by the community, shunned by everyone they know. The villagers are terrified, and this has started to lead to anger and hostility toward the family.
- ◆ **Orin** is the son of **Clenn and Ena** and doesn't know nor realize *why* the **Horse of Frost** wants him. He is five years old and quiet, not having had the luxury of making friends now the village has turned on them. He usually plays by himself inside the house and his parents spend most of their time arguing. Though Orin doesn't understand what the demon is, it appears to have an effect over him—trying to tempt him to open the door and let it in. These—what his parents refer to as 'outbursts'—have become more frequent over the passing weeks and they are afraid of what will happen to their son if they ever fail to stop him from opening the door.
- ◆ **Gart** is the alderman of Spetz and seemingly the only person in the entire village who holds any sympathy for the struggling family. He will enlist the help of the characters to try to get rid of this demon and end its tormenting of his neighbors.
- ◆ **Das** is a human neighbor of **Clenn** and his family and is proving to be a problem. He's become more outspoken and aggressive regarding the situation with the demon and **Gart** is worried that he

## A Brief History of Lyria & Rivia

Rivia was once a tiny kingdom in the Dol Angra valley, on lands that have since been given back to the elves by Nilfgaardian Emperor Emhyr var Emreis. After the Six Years' War in the 9th century and later disputes with rulers of Temeria and Cintra in the 11th, Rivia garnered a reputation for providing asylum to war refugees and political opponents. In the 12th century, it was recognized as one of the two major powers within the region, sharing notability with rival kingdom, Lyria. In 1133, King Berrick of Lyria ascended to Rivia's throne and formed a union between the two kingdoms. This unity lasted no longer than a generation before two different heirs ascended upon his death. In the first half of the 13th century, King Reginald of Rivia married Princess Meve of Lyria and once again joined the two kingdoms. Reginald died in 1258 and left the throne to his wife, Meve, who rules now. In 1268, the capital of Rivia was the scene of a horrendous pogrom between humans and non-humans, resulting in a massacre. Four years on, the tensions are still high.

## The Rivian Pogroms

Four years ago—1268—an argument between young noblewoman Nadio Esposito and a group of dwarves in Rivia's city marketplace became extremely heated and erupted into violence. The humans formed a pogrom against the non-humans, killing 184 in a savage attack. This was not the last pogrom to occur in Rivia, but it was the first on its scale, marking what would become a future of hate and oppression. It is often referred to as the Massacre in Rivia.

will incite other villagers to do something extreme. Lately, the folk have been agreeing more with **Das** than their own alderman. **Das**' character serves to act as a **red herring**, tricking the players into thinking he's the **Horse of Frost** wearing **Das**' skin to throw them off the trail in the **final confrontation**.

- ♦ **Arrik of Scala** was the **local pellar** who lived outside of the village in a small hut in the woods. He helped the **Padd family** for the past few years to keep the **Horse of Frost** at bay but was killed a few weeks prior when the **Order of the Flaming Rose** passed through on one of their **witch hunts**. His ransacked and now-abandoned hut sits to the northwest of Spetz.
- ♦ The **peasants** will eventually rise into a **mob** in the **final confrontation**, tensions finally breaking into a violent fallout. Player characters can choose to attempt to defuse the situation and kill the demon or step aside and let the **Horse of Frost** finally get what it wants.

### Set Up (Read Aloud)

*It's raining by the time you stumble across a village hidden in the pine trees. Mud and moss squelch under you as you're slowly soaked to the bone, rain working its way through gaps in your armor and clothes. Twenty or so buildings sit huddled together with the shutters drawn against the foul weather. A few geese waddle about aimlessly and a lone mule stands dejectedly in a fenced paddock, worrying at a limp bale of hay as you pass. There are very few people milling around, and all of them eye you with clear suspicion on their faces and in the unspoken tension in the air. Someone murmurs something behind their hand. A gruff voice speaks up:*

*You're 'ere for the cursed ones, ain't ye?*

### Hook

As the characters enter Spetz, draw their attention toward an older man sitting in the doorway of his home on a stool, descaling fish. If any characters are **non-human** and have taken

no measures to hide this, he will pointedly narrow his eyes at them, a sharp look of disapproval on his face.

*The man glowers at you, small watery eyes set into his worn face. His lips twist sourly beneath his coarse, thick beard. Cheeks, weathered and ruddy, are flushed from the cold air and the effort of descaling, running the curved blade of the knife along the length of the fish he has on the wooden block at his feet. Clearing his throat, he hawks a wad of spit and says:*

*Or are you lot freaks, too?*

Other peasants appear drawn to the ruckus this man is making—especially when the word 'freak' is thrown out. Their suspicious stares become glares of contempt, but none seem brave enough to speak up and interrupt him. The player characters have a few options here: they can choose to **converse** with this man, **ignore** him, or **confront** him themselves.

### Converse

If the player characters choose to speak with the man, he will introduce himself as **Das**; a local fisherman and self-proclaimed 'voice' for Spetz' inhabitants. He is arrogant, self-important, and loud—happy to be ignorant and rude to anyone who is 'different' (read: **non-human**).

If asked what he means about 'cursed ones,' he will explain that there is a **family** on the **very edge of the village** who meddled in something they shouldn't have and now a monster has been plaguing them for the past **six months**. **Das** is adamant that the family are plotting to **sacrifice everyone to the monster** and he refuses to let them stay in Spetz any longer; they are too great a threat. According to him, they have long overstayed their welcome—a sentiment echoed by the murmurs of approval from the gathering crowd.

### Ignore or Confront

If the player characters choose to either confront or ignore **Das**, he will erupt into a sudden tirade of anger—cursing, threatening, and causing as much of a commotion as he can. He

is a conceited, unpleasant man, and despises being ignored or challenged.

He will accuse the player characters of somehow being in league with the **family of 'cursed mongrels'**, especially if any of the characters are **non-humans**. Though the other peasants agree with the things Das says about this family or any non-human characters, they won't get as aggressive or assertive as he does. If any player characters try to **walk away** from him, Das will get up and attempt to block their path, getting up in their personal space.

Should any of the characters **attack Das**, treat him as having **bandit stats** but without armor and only a dagger as a weapon.

Regardless of how the players react to **Das**, the commotion caused draws the attention of **Gart**—Spetz' **alderman**—who asserts himself to **defuse** the situation, saying:

*Now, now. That's more than enough of that. What's going on here?*

**Gart** is a human man the same age as **Das** and is somewhat financially better off than the rest of the village. His clothes are practical, but made of finer material, and a pair of spectacles sit perched on his round nose. His graying hair is thinning about the top of his head

and he often pulls at it with his fingers to comb over the bald patches. He is fresh-shaven and significantly cleaner than the other villagers, carrying himself with an air of importance and purpose—clearly taking pride in his position.

**Das** thinks little of **Gart** and openly shows this through derisive looks and bad attitude. Currently, the **alderman** is the only person preventing the so-called 'cursed' family from being driven out of Spetz—stopping Das' desire of seeing them banished. However, Das holds *some* respect for the authority **Gart** has, and he won't act out of turn and get rid of the family himself. Instead, it is Das' intent to **sow dissent** amongst the other peasants so that **Gart** will be forced to make the family leave.

If any of the player characters are a **Witcher**, **Gart** will be somewhat relieved to see them. Despite Lyria's reputation for hatred of non-humans, **Gart** understands that this situation requires a professional. It's a fact reluctantly acknowledged across the Continent that without Witchers, monsters would run rampant. As such, **Gart** will generally be polite and cordial to any non-humans, but the fear is still clear on his face; he wants the players to resolve this problem and be on their way as soon as possible.

## Checking In

Throughout this adventure, there are many topics that may be uncomfortable or upsetting for your players. It is your responsibility as GM to ensure all at the table is having a safe and fun experience. Ask your players beforehand about boundaries and lines they may have and make them aware of the general content of this adventure—you don't have to reveal spoilers to do this. For example, ask: 'There are themes of ableism and racism in this adventure, is everyone okay with playing through this?'. Be sure to check in after scenes that heavily involve or touch up such topics. Everyone should have fun and feel safe when playing at the table.



Das



Gart

## Chased Out

If the players end up killing Das at this point, the other peasants—Gart included—will take up arms and chase them out of Spetz. Refer to the peasant stat block at the end of this adventure. Then go to Ending (Cold and Alone).

When Gart intervenes, **Das** will give up and sulkily go back to descaling fish, deeming the argument no longer worth the effort; he's made his point clear enough for now. But it's certainly not the last time that Das will get involved.

*Pausing to make sure Das has returned to his fish, the man turns to you with an apologetic look, running a hand through his thin hair nervously, saying:*

*Apologies. Das is... well, he doesn't like strangers. I'm Gart, the alderman of Spetz. If you're wanting it, I have some work for you.*

Gart will instruct the characters to follow him, saying he will explain everything he can as they walk. Go to **Development (The Ousted)**.

## Development (The Ousted)

The players are led to the **eastern side** of the village and down a narrow dirt path through the trees, whilst **Gart** regales them with what he knows about the situation. He explains that there is a **family** in Spetz who are having trouble with a **monster** that has been an ongoing occurrence for **four years**; they have since taken to calling the monster the **Horse of Frost**. In all that time, no **Witchers** have passed through, so no one knows what to do about it. Up until a few weeks ago, the family had relied on **Arrik**, the **local pellar**, but he was killed during a **witch hunt** by the **Order of the Flaming Rose**, leaving them lost with little options. **Gart** claims to have seen the monster himself and describes it as such:

*'Tis unlike anything I've ever seen, a horse's bones wrapped in rags. Its huge eyes glow, and its neck...it stretches an' grows, creeping outta the cloth it's wearing. 'Tis a thing of nightmares, that's fer certain. I'll never get used to seeing the blasted thing...*

Player characters may recall that **Das** mentioned the monster has only appeared in the **last six months**. If they mention this to **Gart**, he will explain that the monster has been appearing for the past **four years**, but its visits have become so frequent now that it no longer cares to hide itself from the rest of the village; it is becoming bold. For

the past six months, the **Horse of Frost** has been appearing **every night**, and the villagers have finally taken notice of its presence. Any players who make **Human Perception checks** to corroborate this will find that the alderman is telling the **truth**, no matter what they roll.

A **DC 26 Monster Lore check** can be made to ascertain what a player character knows about this **monster** (If they succeed, refer to the **Demonology: The Mari Lwyd** entry on page 186). A **DC 14 Education check** can also be made to discern the following information about the **Order of the Flaming Rose** in the box below.

### The Order of the Flaming Rose

Originally formed in 1268, the **Order of the Flaming Rose** was established to be a counter to the power of the **Lodge of Sorceresses**. It was inspired by the **Redanian Intelligence Service** and built upon the foundations of the **Order of the White Rose** who operated in Temeria. Their leader, **Jacques de Aldersberg**, set about establishing major reforms where the now-called **Flaming Roses** would protect the **Northerners** from monsters and evils, ensure humankind's survival, and establish peace when possible, through the teachings of the **Eternal Fire**.

When **Jacques** was killed, **Siegfried of Denesle** was made leader and withdrew the Order to **Redania** where they were sacrificed in the war against Nilfgaard and abandoned by King Radovid V. Many became part of **King Radovid's Witch Hunters**, persecuting so-called 'witches', 'freaks', and 'mutants' (non-humans). Though some smaller branches of the **Flaming Rose** are still in action, working even as far out as **Lyria and Rivia**.

They are a slowly dying Order, but some hope still remains for their survival down in **Toussaint**, where their 'noble deeds' are looked upon more favorably.

**Gart** will inform players that the **family—the Padds**—has been steadily ousted over the past few years since the **Horse of Frost's** appearance means they can't leave their house. The tensions between them and the rest of the village has only intensified, in no small part due to **Das's** constant outspoken behavior.

The **Padds** live in a small house set back from the rest of the settlement, but that doesn't save them from the daily scorn and contempt that their neighbors have for them. The **Padds** were once well-liked and social people, amicable and friendly. Now, they are withdrawn and afraid, mere husks of who they once were. **Gart** expresses his sympathy for the family and how he has taken it upon himself to ensure they have fresh food, drink, and supplies. In particular, he pities their son, **Orin**, who is only five and unable to leave the house to play with the other children. He shakes his head sadly and says:

*It just ain't right to raise a lad like that. The poor thing.*

The players then arrive at the **Padd family home**, sitting alone of the edge of the village. Go to **Development (Trial, No Errors)**.

## Development (Trial, No Errors)

*The house sits, alone and forlorn, on the very edge of the village. An empty chicken coop is attached to one side, wood rotten and chewed by rodents and damp. The wood and kiln brick structure of the small house is drab and slick with rainwater. Shutters are pulled tight against the windows and the flickering of candlelight can be seen through gaps in the slats. The air here is eerily still, tense, and a feeling like you're being watched settles on you all. When **Gart** raps his knuckles against the old wood door and steps back, his knocks might as well be explosions for how loud they crack in the silence.*

If any players make an **Awareness check**, refer to the **Curious Oddities table** below for what they notice.

Curious Oddities	
Roll	Result
10 – 13	Numerous footprints are imprinted into the dirt around the front of the house, some of them disappearing around the corners, clearly marking the whole perimeter. Mixed in are the hoof prints of a horse. On the doorstep is a rotting <b>line of rice</b> , soaked by the rain.
14 – 16	They also notice that the trees around the house appear disturbed, branches half-snapped off and hanging limply, others completely stripped of their leaves. In places, the bark on the trunks is missing, peeled off.
17 – 20+	A faint scent, foul and lingering in the air; the stench of burning sulfur, muted slightly by the rain, but there. The sounds of nature are missing: no birdsong, animal sounds, not even the movement of the wind.

After a moment, there is the sound of someone moving behind the front door—a heavy thud and the rattling click of a lock. The door cracks open slightly to reveal a sliver of a man's face, the one eye they can see glaring at them as a gruff voice says:

*Who is it?*

**Gart** seems unphased by this standoffish behavior and smiles, though it's a little strained as he replies:

*You know who I am, **Clenn**. I've brought some folks who could help ye.*

If any of the player characters are **Witchers** or **Mages**, **Gart** will specifically point them out as people who can help the family. Player characters who introduce themselves to **Clenn** will only get a grunt and a scowl in

## Arrik of Scala

Until his death a few weeks prior to the players' arrival, **Arrik** was an elderly human man who served as the areas' local pellar, living in the woods to the west of **Spetz**, closer to the foothills of the **Craag Ros** mountains. He was killed by the **Witch Hunters** of the **Order of the Flaming Rose** for the crime of 'using magic and nefarious and malicious sorcery'. His only real 'crime' was the time his chicken attacked one of **Queen Meve's** soldiers. He was a harmless, though strange, old man.

## A Full Sweep

If the players want to investigate the area around the house, refer to the **Curious Oddities table**. The only new thing they will notice around the back of the house is that one of the windows no longer has shutters attached to it, the hinges broken clean off.

## A Useless Precaution

Lines or circles of rice are part of the commoner superstition that some creatures, such as demons, must pick up and count each individual grain before they can step past it. This belief however is founded on nothing substantial, and rice affects demons like garlic affects **Higher Vampires**—that is to say, it does nothing. Those who succeed at a **DC 16 Education** or **Monster Lore** check know that the rice has no effect.

## The Wand of Banishment

This stick is the pellar stick and is the only item the Padd family has that must briefly banish the Horse of Frost. This wooden stick is reminiscent of a wand and was given to the Padds by the now-dead pellar, Arrik of Scala. A strip of dark red cloth binds a sprig of mistletoe to one end and the other has two branching twigs sprouting in opposite directions, both capped with dull copper. A series of runes has been carved into the main body of the wand. A DC 21 Magic Training or DC 25 Education check reveals that these runes are a Lucifuge Rofocale (Lucifuge for short). Refer to the sidebar Words of Power for information on Lucifuge.

## Poor Manners

If any of the characters decide to try to barge into the house before being touched with the stick, they will have to get past Clenn by making a DC 12 Physique check. He will curse at the player(s) the entire time and hit at them with the wooden stick frantically, sheer terror on his face until he realizes that they don't react the way he expects them to. Upon realizing this, he'll stand aside and shout for his wife, Ena, to let them in and only then will the door unlock. If any players want to try and under-

response. The door will open a little further, enough to reveal Clenn, but still not enough to see into the house:

*Clenn can't be much older than thirty, but the lines on his face are doing him no favors. He is pale and drawn, heavy bruises from lack of sleep under his restless eyes. His gaze flicks from person to person, assessing you all, sizing you up. He glances briefly towards the trees, then the rotting line of rice along the threshold of his feet. He mutters under his breath, running frantic fingers through his matted hair:*

*More rice. Need more...to fix the lines.*

*He begins to close the door again, speaking more directly to you all:*

*I'll be right out.*

The door closes again. Gart seems unsurprised that Clenn is behaving this way and gives the characters a patient smile, saying:

*Best to err on the side of caution when a monster's involved, hm? I should've mentioned, but Clenn'll be wanting to test you before he lets you in.*

If the characters ask what kind of 'test' and why, Gart will explain that the **Padd family** are, understandably, terrified that the **Horse of Frost** will somehow manage to **get into the house**. It apparently can **take humanoid forms** and tries to trick the family into letting it in. No one knows exactly how it does this, but it can also **perfectly mimic voices** to bolster the believability of its disguise. Gart says rather ominously:

*'Tis a devious and wicked thing. May the gods help us all if you can't stop it.*

**Clenn** returns, quickly opening, slipping out of, and then hurriedly slamming the door shut after him, the sound of the lock turning from inside with a heavy clunk. In his hand, Clenn is holding a **small wooden stick** which he raises at the player characters threateningly. He seems hesitant to step away from the door and gestures with his free hand for them to approach him, saying:

*We won't be fooled again, you hear? You know what this is. You know what it'll do if it touches ye!*

Gart will encourage the players to let Clenn touch them with the **stick**, assuring them they

have nothing to fear (unless they are the **Horse of Frost**, of course!). Clenn taps each player on the cheek with the stick, explaining that **it must touch bare skin** for him to know if the **Horse of Frost** is hiding among them. When he turns to Gart, the alderman **declines**, saying:

*I don't intend to come inside, Clenn. I need to have a word with Das....Now that this lot are here, I'm sure you can explain everything better than I—I only told them what little I know.*

Gart then addresses the players:

*Let me know if you happen to need anythin' whilst yer here and I'll see it's delivered. 'Tis the least I can do.*

He then leaves, bidding a final farewell to Clenn who merely nods in acknowledgment, still nervous to be letting new people into his home. His eyes flick from the players to the trees one last time before knocking on the door:

*Ena! Let us in!*

The lock clicks and the door open inwards, revealing an exhausted-looking young woman—**Ena**. She looks at the **stick** in Clenn's hand before nodding and stepping aside.

*Ena is just as harrowed as her husband, Clenn. Dark circles frame her eyes, and her blonde hair is pulled up in a messy bun, scraggly and straw-like on her head. Her skin is washed out, her lips thin and firmly pressed in a hard line, and her hands pull restlessly at the bodice of her dress, worrying at the fabric over and over. She stares at you all as you enter, saying nothing, but her expression is haunted. She is afraid.*

Go to **Development (A Broken Home)**.

## Development (A Broken Home)

The players are now inside the **Padds' home**; though perhaps 'home' is too kind a word for it. It was clearly a home once, but there is no longer any warmth to it. It lacks life. It isn't welcoming.

*You are brought into the main living area of the house. A stove sits against the far wall next to a dirtied window with no shutters on its outer side, giving a murky view of clustered pine trees and churned up, muddy grass. The room veers*

off to the right into a small area where two single beds are snugly pushed up to the wall, straw-stuffed mattresses stained and covered with threadbare sheets. A closed door on the opposite wall across leads to another room.

A back door on the far side, close to the beds, is clearly locked, the bolt closed, and a wooden beam fixed across, held in place by a bracket on either side of the door frame. Scratches litter

both the beam and wood around the door handle and bolt—as if something tried desperately to get out.

Player characters can make an **Awareness check** to see what else they notice upon entering the house. Refer to the **Beneath the Surface table** below for the result. There is *definitely* something wrong here.

▶ stand Clenn's intentions with this stick when initially faced with it, a DC 12 Human Perception check reveals that he doesn't seem to want to hurt them. Instead, he is clearly anticipating some sort of reaction from the characters, but they can't discern exactly what reaction he's expecting.

### Beneath the Surface

Roll	Result
10 – 13	There are scratch marks not only around the back door, but the front door, too, all varying in age. Some are older, faded into the grain of the wood, whereas others are new, small splinters and slivers of wood torn up around the side of the grooves. A <b>DC 14 Deduction</b> or <b>DC 12 Survival check</b> determines that these scratches were not made by an animal, but a <b>person</b> . Asking <b>Ena</b> or <b>Clenn</b> about these marks reveals that their son, <b>Orin</b> , makes these during his <b>escape attempts</b> .
14 – 17	Fragments of a broken clay bottle have been hastily gathered into a small wicker basket along with the shards of a shattered plate. On the wall, by one of the beds, is a dent marked by a dark, fresh stain. The tart smell of <b>Rivian Kriek</b> hangs in the air. Something, or <i>someone</i> , threw the bottle of alcohol at the wall with considerable force. Asking <b>Ena</b> or <b>Clenn</b> about this reveals nothing; neither of them wanting to talk about it. The most the players get out of them is that it was ' <b>an accident</b> '. A <b>DC 10 Human Perception check</b> reveals that this is obviously a <b>lie</b> and a <b>sensitive topic</b> .
18+	The window by the stove is not only dirtied but <i>cracked</i> . A fine split splays up the bottom half of the pane, branching out in all directions. Mostly obscured by layers of grime, <b>small hand prints</b> are smudged up the glass from the inside, as though someone frantically pawed at it to get out. Again, if the players ask <b>Ena</b> or <b>Clenn</b> about this, they learn that this was another one of <b>Orin's escape attempts</b> .

Clenn will introduce the players to his wife and then move to the stove, throwing another piece of wood onto the fire and telling Ena to show the players their son. If the player characters want to speak more with Ena and Clenn, refer to the **Current Understanding table** below.

### Current Understanding—Clenn & Ena Padd

Both Clenn and Ena are reluctant to admit the Horse of Frost is a demon as this would lead to the discovery that they summoned it using a tome they stole from Arrik, the Pellar. Since the summoning they've burned the book and thus they can't find out the Demon's **true name**, which is why they've taken to calling it the **Horse of Frost**. Every time the demon appears, their son, **Orin**, begins to **act strangely**; overcome with a frantic need to get outside and tries to **escape the house** to join the demon. The demon can look **humanoid** and can mimic people's voices perfectly. It has almost caught them off guard a few times using this technique. As a result, they are suspicious of anyone outside the house. This has been happening for the past **four years**. In the beginning, the demon would only appear **once a month**, then it became **fortnightly**, then **weekly**, leading up to now with its **nightly visits**. The pellar originally took pity on them and made them the **wand of banishment** but now that he is dead, they can barely sleep out of fear and are desperate for any help.

### Words of Power

In the world of *The Witcher*, words hold great power. They can curse people, manipulate Chaos, and could bind certain monsters. Regarding demons, the words used to hold some sway over them are their true names. This doesn't give a person full control of the demon, but names can be weaponized into items such as wands to temporarily banish them for a short amount of time. Even then, a demon's name can only be used in this manner a few times before they become immune to it. The true name of a demon when written down is called a **Lucifuge Rofocale**, a 'signature'. **Lucifuge** can also be used by a demon itself to lay a claim on a creature or to signify a pact. These signatures are typically left on a visible area of the body and are of significant size, serving to remind the creature of what they now belong to.

Go to **Development (Marked)**.

## A Rivian Staple

Rivia is also known for its famous Rivian Kriek, a cheap beer brewed and made from cherries. It's very popular among both locals and visitors to the region.

## Leaving the House

Characters can leave the house at any time but will be subjected to the pellar stick test every time they return to prove they aren't the Horse of Frost.

**Clenn** and **Ena Padd** are both human adults and their son, **Orin**, is currently in his room; his parents keep him there most of the time 'for his own safety'. Once everyone is inside, Clenn **locks the door** behind him and places a wooden beam across to keep it barricaded shut. The bolt slides across with a heavy thunk. Everyone is locked in.

## Development (Marked)

Having met and spoken with Clenn and Ena, Ena will show the players to her son's room which is across from the two beds by the back door. It is plain and simply furnished.

*A small bed is pushed up against one wall, the sheets rumpled, and a crude-looking doll sits propped against the pillow, dead, carved eyes staring ahead blankly. A few candles burn in their holders, bathing everything in a sickly yellow light as it strikes you that there are no windows in this room. It's clear there was one once, but it has been firmly boarded up, the wooden panels barely offering a glimpse of the outside world through the thin gaps between them.*

*Sat with his back facing you all is a young boy, cross-legged and playing with an assortment of animals carved from wood. He doesn't seem to be aware of you all or, if he is, he simply doesn't care enough to turn around. After a moment of awkward silence, Ena says:*

*Orin, dear, we have guests.*

**Orin** will turn at his mother's insistence and the characters will see that the boy's **right cheek** is marked by a large, deep **scar of lines and shapes**. He doesn't seem bothered by it, and stares at the player characters with pale blue eyes, assessing them.

Orin is a quiet child; he can talk, but prefers his own company, talking quietly to himself whilst he plays with his toys. He is nervous around the player characters, unused to seeing new faces and becomes increasingly anxious whenever he is forced to **leave his room**.

He is clearly very fond of his mother and seeks her affection, but he is reluctant to interact much with his father, Clenn—always being very careful around him. Clenn is quick to anger at his son's behavior, not tolerating Orin's escape attempts despite knowing it isn't the boy's fault. He often orders Orin about, raising his voice if his son disobeys him in any way. It's unsurprising that Orin prefers his mother who is always kind and patient with him; she often refers to him as her '**perfect little boy**'.

If player characters investigate Orin's room, they make an **Awareness check**, comparing their roll to the **Lonesome Room table** below. If they ask about Orin's **facial scar**, refer to the **sidebar A Growing Concern**.

Lonesome Room	
Roll	Result
10 – 13	There are scratches on the boarded-up window made by <b>human hands</b> . These are <b>more recent</b> than those over the doors in the main house.
14 – 17	A <b>broken toy</b> catches your attention. The head has been snapped off a little <b>wooden horse</b> and placed on top of a small chest, angled so that it is looking directly at <b>Orin's bed</b> with its hollow, black-painted eyes.
18+	There are <b>faint drawings</b> made along the bottom of one wall, scratched into the wood and then stained with soot gathered from the stove; the ashes in an old clay bowl nearby on the floor. The drawings are <b>crude</b> —clearly a <b>child's attempt</b> —and depict various little scenarios. One is of <b>Clenn and Ena</b> smiling, with a smaller <b>Orin</b> stood between them. Others are of <b>animals</b> : dogs, rabbits, chickens, all disproportionate and wonky. At the farthest corner of the wall is a drawing of <b>Orin</b> smiling as he sits riding a <b>black horse</b> . The horse is also smiling, a large lopsided grin with too many teeth.

If player characters want to spend time talking with Orin, refer to the **Current Understanding table** below. Orin will refuse to talk with them if his mother isn't in the room with him or if his father is in the room. If Clenn is in the room and is asked to leave so they can speak to Orin, he will go but noticeably clenches his hands into fists and tenses his jaw with a scowl.

#### Current Understanding – Orin Padd

- ◆ Orin understands that his parents don't allow him to go outside and it's **dangerous** out there for him. He'd still like to play outside, of course, but at least inside the house he has his toy animals to play with.
- ◆ He loves both his mother and father, but sometimes Clenn **gets angry**, and Orin doesn't know why, *“He shouts at me, and ma cries. I don't like it when she does that.”*
- ◆ Sometimes, Orin **can't remember things**. He gets 'big spaces' where memories should be. The most recent example of this is **last night** – he was eating dinner and felt dizzy, then he was suddenly being held by his mother whilst she sobbed, and his father yelled. Orin will show his hands to the players, the skin of his palms littered with cuts and scrapes because he woke up with **splinters in his hands**. He doesn't know what happened and his mother says it's because he's **unwell**.
- ◆ A **DC 12 Deduction check** reveals that the splinters must be from Orin **scratching at the doors** whenever he tries to escape.
- ◆ If asked about the **drawing of the horse** on his bedroom wall, he'll simply shrug and say, *“I just like horses.”*

Dreary afternoon bleeds into early evening, and the players are invited to eat with the **Padds**. They explain that the alderman, **Gart**, leaves them **food and supplies** on their doorstep as it's unsafe for them to go outside; the **Horse of Frost** could appear at any moment.

Clenn and Ena know that they are resented by the rest of the village. Whereas Clenn couldn't care less *“what them lot think”*, Ena is extremely upset that her **social reputation** has suffered. It frustrates her that she can't go outside and is now seen as an **undesirable** because of the demon. Refer to Clenn and Ena's individual **Personality tables** for inspiration on how to roleplay both characters.



## A Growing Concern

Orin's scar has been there since he was born. Initially, it was a faint red patch, a little darker than his fair complexion, and his parents believed it was a birthmark. However, with every passing month, it grew bigger—no longer a blemish, but a deep mark that cut into his cheek and scarred over. Now it's a deep, dark red. It still spreads, new lines and shapes beginning to emerge on the skin about his eyebrow. It doesn't seem to be hurting Orin and, if asked, he will tell them that it is painless. However, Orin will remark that he doesn't like how his father looks at it sometimes; it makes him feel uncomfortable and afraid. A DC 12 Education or DC 10 First Aid check reveals that the scar's appearance is like that of a brand.

### Clenn Padd—Personality

- ◆ Clenn holds little regard for the opinion of the villagers, though he is troubled that it may become a **problem** for his wife and son soon; he is aware the tension in the village is going to snap eventually, and he doesn't want his family to get hurt or, even worse, killed.
- ◆ His usual reaction whenever faced with a stressful situation is to **lose his temper**, becoming irate. Whenever Orin has one of his escape attempts, Clenn loses all sense of rationality. He knows and understands that Orin's behavior is caused by the **demon**—the **pellar** having told him and Ena so—but he can't control himself.
- ◆ Ena is also subjected to Clenn's foul temper, but Orin is often the **fixation** of his mood. As a result, Orin talks to him very little, and this only serves to frustrate Clenn even more.

### Ena Padd—Personality

- ◆ Ena clearly cares more about her **image** than Clenn does and, though she adores her son, she is at heart a **selfish woman**. She speaks about the whole situation in terms of herself first and foremost, only adding how it affects Clenn and Orin as though they're mere afterthoughts.
- ◆ She is somewhat eager to finally have **new people** to talk to and comes across as **clingy**. Understandable, however, given her predicament of isolation.
- ◆ Her relationship with Clenn blows hot and cold sporadically. Sometimes they can be having a quiet, genuine conversation, and at others can be shouting and at each other's throats.

Once the player characters have finished getting to know the **Padds** and inspect their house, it has started to grow late. Go to **Development (The Uninvited Guest)**.

## Development (The Uninvited Guest)

Dinner is a simple affair of stew and cheap ale. Clenn says that as there is **no inn** in Spetz, the players are welcome to spend the night in their home so he and Ena can be sure that the **monster** can't pretend to be any of them to trick them into opening the door and inviting it in. The players will have to sleep on the floor, but Ena will provide fur throws, sheepskins, and blankets for warmth.

If players choose to spend the night **outside** the house, go to the **Outside the Home** section. For players who choose to **stay inside**, go to the **Inside the Home** section.

### Inside the Home

As the night grows ever closer, Clenn tells the players that **no matter what they hear** from outside the house, they **cannot open the door** to let anyone in, even if they *think* it's their

friend(s). Ena makes it clear just how far the **demon** will go to get their attention:

*It doesn't matter if you hear someone screamin' bloody murder out there. Do not open the door. Do not let anyone in.*

Most concerning, after Ena has tucked Orin in for the night, she shuts his bedroom door and **locks it**, rattling the handle a few times to be sure. She is visibly upset and Clenn explains:

*Don't you let the boy out neither. The demon, it...bewitches 'im somehow. No matter how much he screams, ignore 'im. It's for his own good.*

Ena doesn't say anything, but it's clear that it pains her to lock her son up like he's an animal. Player characters who ask *why* Orin is locked up, refer to Clenn and Ena's **Current Understanding table**, specifically Orin's **escape attempts**.

Eventually, Clenn and Ena retire to their beds, but it doesn't look like they'll get much sleep. Though lying down, they are still both wide awake and the house becomes *tense*; as though holding its breath—waiting for something to happen.

Player characters can **keep watch** through the night and can do so in **two ways**: listening out for sounds, or by taking a post at the only shutter-less window next to the stove.

Players make an **Awareness check**, referring to the **Lookout Table** below. Players who roll higher can alert others to what they have seen or heard if others roll lower.

Lookout Table	
Roll	Result
10 – 12	The rain has stopped, and the wind has died down. Somewhere nearby an owl calls out into the night. All is relatively still, but it's not entirely unusual for a small village out by the mountains. Nothing but the fog-shrouded woods and the night sky beyond can be seen out of the window.
13 – 16	A soft, persistent clicking can be heard coming from outside, somewhere amongst the surrounding trees – like striking two stones together. Every now and then, something clatters distantly, the sound like bone dice tumbling onto a table. Out of the window, a shadow moves among the trees, never still long enough to assume a shape that is recognizable to you.
17 – 19	There has been an odd noise growing the past few hours; the sound of mice or perhaps a rat or two gnawing at the walls. It's not an entirely uncommon sound—vermin will always be a problem, wherever you go. But now it has taken on a more <i>menacing</i> quality. Now it sounds like a dog's teeth rasping down bone, like a blade cutting into gristle. The sound has not become louder exactly, just more intense, making your hair stand on end and your skin crawl against your will. Outside, the pale moonlight offers the briefest of glances of the moving shadow in the tree line. Glimpses of chalk white bone can be seen every now and then, appearing in the gaps between leaves and branches.
20+	The temperature has shifted minutely, gradually getting colder and colder. Though the fire still burning in the stove has staved off the worst of the chill, frost creeps up the shudders of the window. Outside, the shuffling mass of shadow has stopped, deathly still. It is shapeless, not truly committing to a form. Sometimes it looks almost humanoid and at others like a monstrous beast slinking through the trees.

Go to section **Voices of the Damned**.

### The Mari Lwyd's Game

The Mari Lwyd currently stalking the Pad family has been doing so for so long that it's lost interest in the family and is now seeking only to get what it considers fair payment. Typically, when a Mari Lwyd first returns for payment, it begins with a game of terror in which the demon rasps its bony hands along the walls, doors, and windows of the debtor's home and sings to them in a chorus of eerie discordant voices. These songs vary from one Mari Lwyd to another but they are always understandable to all listeners and always incorporate a plea to the listener to let them in some way. Mari Lwyd are patient demons and will sing throughout the entire night, often changing the lyrics of their song as the night wears on to be more ominous or outright threatening.

## Using Players to Your Advantage

The Horse of Frost can mimic the voice of any person they have heard speak and you, as GM, can use this ability to affect your characters and their experience in a session. If any players or NPCs have gone outside to sit watch, have the demon mimic their voice, trying to coax the other players into opening the door. Additionally, the mari lwyd can mimic the voices of any character in the village of Spetz including Das and Gart.

## The Final Charge

If the final charge of magic in the pellar stick is used up, the Horse of Frost disappears in a whirling flurry of snow and a rasping sigh, like a death rattle. No longer imbued with magic, the pellar stick vanishes too, crumbling into a fine gray ash that is carried off by the breeze conjured by the demon's departure.

## Voices of the Damned

A hush suddenly falls over the house, and a mounting tension rises in the air—so thick you could cut it with a sword. The **Horse of Frost** is finally here...

*Abrupt movement in the tree line brings your attention to the window, white frost framing the edges of the pane. There is a knock at the front door. Then a knock on the back door. A knock up on the roof. A chorus of voices from all around the house speak as one:*

*Let me in... Let me in... Let me in.*

Clenn sits up on his bed and hugs his knees to his chest. His face is grim. Ena turns onto her other side to face the wall, sobbing quietly. The knocking continues, jumping from place to place, wall to wall, all around the house. The voices continue to hiss, whisper, and moan—a haunting chorus.

Go to section **Face to Face** for the **demon's description**.

## Outside the Home

Players who choose to stay outside are **locked out** by Clenn who says before closing door:

*You stay outside until morning. I don't care how much ye scream an' beg, you ain't coming back in 'til then. May the gods watch over ye.*

He will, however, give them the **pellar stick**, telling them that if they **touch the demon** with it, it will **banish** it for a short while. He will warn them that the stick only has **one more use** left in it so the player characters should only use it when **absolutely necessary**. Door slamming shut, all player characters outside hear the lock click, the bolt slide home, and the wooden beam **thunk** into place. They are now all alone out in the cold, waiting until the **demon** shows itself.

Go to section **Searching the Woods**.

## Searching the Woods

Player characters may choose to search the **woods** surrounding the house, looking for **signs** of the **demon**. **Awareness** or **Wilderness Survival checks** can be made, referring to the results on the **Signs Table** below. Players who roll higher can alert other players to their findings if the others roll lower.

During this time, the player characters outside the house have **no idea** what is happening inside. They don't hear or see anything affecting any player characters who remained inside the house.

Signs Table	
Roll	Result
10 - 12	The rain has stopped, and the wind has calmed. An owl calls out, lonesome. Fog has started to rise from the damp ground, coiling up around you. The shuffling of small critters in the underbrush are the only disturbances in an otherwise still night.
13 - 16	A soft clicking disturbs the peace, getting steadily louder and louder. Something stumbles in the foliage, sounding like an animal suddenly spooked. A few hoof prints appear in the mud, but no creature to match. Every couple of minutes a loud crack rends the air, sounding as though it's coming from everywhere at once; there's no discernible direction or source.
17 - 19	Something shuffles through the trees all around, the sound of bones crunching and heavy, rasped breathing. Whenever you turn to look at it, it suddenly appears somewhere else, loping through the trees to the tune of cracking bones and clicking teeth. Through the leaves and branches, flashes of pale, white bone can be seen.
20+	Steadily, the temperature outside has become colder and colder. Your every breath perspires in a huff of white, the grass becomes stiff with frost beneath your feet. A whining, reedy sound spills out from the trees, everywhere and nowhere all at once, making your skin crawl against your will. A jingle of bells shudders in the air.

Go to section **It Follows**.

## It Follows

A hush suddenly falls over the woods, the air tense and still. *Waiting.* The **Horse of Frost** is here...

*A crack of bone, a rattle of tarnished bells, a huff of icy breath. The ground is frozen solid, the trees shudder, branches shedding dried out leaves and trunks peeling fractured bark. A knock from up in the canopy above. A knock from deep within the ground. Bones rapping against wood. Hissing voices rise from the ether:*

*Let me in... Let me in... Let me in...*

Go to section **Face to Face** for the **demon's description**.

## Face to Face

Whether inside or outside, the player characters will all see the following happening:

*It appears slowly, looming out of the fog. The crack of bones and popping joints announce*

*its arrival. A horse's skull—clay beads looping around its hanging jaw, withered branches protruding from hollow orifices, and a pair of glowing white eyes bulge from its sockets. It chatters its teeth loudly.*

*Then you see its neck.*

*Impossibly long, a stretch of vertebrae disappears into the tree line, smothered by foliage and fog. Brief glimpses of it can be seen constricting around a trunk, slithering over branches, an endless coil of old bones. Tarnished bells and rotten fabric clings along the length of it, jingling and fluttering as it stretches out, further and further.*

*Though it has no lungs, it huffs wisps of condensation out of its nasal cavity. The grass below it has frosted over entirely, green blades turned white and gray. Trees closest to where its neck protrudes from seemingly wilt, bark peeling and pine needles dying as it opens its mouth and speak with a hundred voices:*

*Let me in.*

## Impossibly Long

Any characters who decide to follow the demon's long neck into the trees, they find that it is endless. This monster's neck has wrapped and coiled itself around every available tree, creating a dizzying web of bones, bells, and frayed cloth. No matter how hard the characters look for the end of the demon's neck, they cannot find it.

### Attacking the Demon

If any player characters who are **outside the house** want to **attack** the demon, refer to the **Mari Lwyd stats** on page 206. Should they **succeed in killing** the demon, go to **Ending (And They Lived Ever After)**. If the player characters use the **pellar stick** and **banish** the demon or the demon otherwise **escapes**, they have two options. They can choose to stay and see if the demon comes back or leave Spetz and claim the job as done. If they choose to **stay**, continue the adventure as normal. If they choose to **leave Spetz**, go to **Ending (Peace For Now)**. If they die when confronting the demon at this point, go to **Ending (Cold and Alone)**.

### An Eerie Encounter

If some or all the players are **outside the house** and decide to **keep watch** of the demon, they find that the monster **isn't aggressive** and **doesn't attack them**. Instead, it seems transfixed by the house and the one window without shutters, staring inside. The voices, knocking and strange sounds are still present the entire time the demon is present.

The demon will remain watching the house and ask to be let in until **dawn**, at which point it fades and vanishes into the ether.

### Waiting it Out

If they are **inside the house**, they know that they are unable to leave until the morning. Again, Clenn will assure them that the **demon** can't enter the house unless it's invited in. If they stay in the house, it will eventually leave come **dawn**.

Ignoring the monster is easier said than done voices, knocking, and unnatural sounds continue through the night without pause.

Eventually the demon will fade and vanish at **dawn**.

So long as the player characters **don't attack** the demon, go to **Development (New Leads)**.

## Getting Back In

If characters spent the night outside and didn't use the pellar stick, then Clenn will use it to test the players again when they are let back in come morning. If the characters did use the pellar stick during the night, Clenn will let the players back in regardless and tell the players that the demon will be banished until nightfall, so he is certain none of the players are it in disguise.

## Development (New Leads)

As dawn comes and the first few rays of light breach the horizon, the **Horse of Frost** fades into the ether and vanishes from sight. **Orin** has fallen silent in his room and Ena has already unlocked the door to gather him in her arms, huddled on the bed with him as she kisses the top of his head and strokes his hair. The boy seems exhausted and confused but is happy to be held in his mother's embrace, already falling asleep.

A **DC 12 Awareness check** reveals that Orin's palms and fingers are raw and red from spending the night pawing relentlessly at the door and window boards in his room. A further **DC 10 First Aid** or **Healing Hands check** can be made to help take care of his injuries. Ena will not stop anyone wanting to help and welcomes it. She doesn't let go of Orin once, murmuring reassurances that he is her 'perfect boy' and that 'everything will be okay'.

Clenn **avoids his son** and sits on the edge of his own bed, a scowl on his face. If asked what's wrong, he'll gruffly snap "*Nothing.*" and rub both hands down his face—an obvious lie. He looks beyond exhausted and says:

*Well... now you see what we're dealin' with.*

If they require a **recap**, refer to their **Current Understanding table** in **Development (A Broken Home)**. Frustrated, Clenn will curse angrily:

*If it weren't for them gods-damned Witch Hunters killin' Arrik...*

With Clenn too angry to hold much of a conversation without losing his temper, Ena—still sitting with Orin—will explain that **Arrik** was the **local pellar** and the only other person able to help them with the demon (**Gart** being the other). Arrik knew more about the demon than anyone else and used what he'd learned to create the **wand of banishment**. The **Witch Hunters** of the **Order of the Flaming Rose** killed him for '**crimes of sorcery**'—a fact Ena scoffs at, saying:

*They treated him like he was some kind of Mage. He just helped people, that's what he liked t'do. That ain't a crime.*

**Arrik** didn't tell Clenn and Ena much about the **Horse of Frost** other than it had somehow

**attached itself to their son**; hence the **mark** on Orin's face—and that a **wand of banishment** was needed to help keep the family safe and buy him more time to gather information and research. If the player characters ask for more information on **Arrik**, refer to **The Pellar in the Woods** box.

### Pellar in the Woods

**Arrik of Scala** lived in the **woods** in a hut located to the **northwest** of the Padd's house, down a small dirt trail through the surrounding trees. It was ransacked during Arrik's arrest and following execution, but it's still standing. The player characters can go and investigate to see if anything of worth remains that could help them understand the **Horse of Frost** better; Arrik was researching the demon after all.

Clenn and Ena would have gone to look themselves, but they, of course, can't go outside. No one else in the village would go and check, believing it to be a **cursed place** as the **Order** deemed it the home of an '**evil Sorcerer**'. Even **Gart** refused to go near it out of fear.

Both Clenn and Ena firmly believe that there must be *something* left behind that can help them learn more about the **Horse of Frost** and will encourage the players if they show an interest in going there. If player characters don't seem to be interested, Ena will briefly pull them aside and implore them to check and see if anything Arrik was working on survived; both her and Clenn are desperate (even if Clenn won't admit it).

If they decide to investigate the **pellar's hut**, go to **Development (A Ransacked Home)**.

They may decide also to investigate the **village** and talk with the **villagers** for potential further information. Go to **Development (Trouble Brewing)**.

## Development (A Ransacked Home)

The dirt trail to the northwest of the **Padd's house** leads to a derelict hut in a small clearing, surrounded by trees. A small **brook** runs briefly down the far side of the house before curving back into the woods and vanishing amongst the foliage.

*The building has clearly been ransacked; the front door ripped off its hinges and in pieces on the damp grass. Windows are smashed in, glass fragments jutting up from the frames like teeth. A scorched patch of ground scattered with debris next to an old chicken coop that has been pushed over and destroyed; wood and rotten seed thrown everywhere. From what little you can see into the house, the interior is just as bad, furniture tipped and broken.*

## Investigating the Exterior

From the **description above**, there are a few areas **outside** the hut for players to investigate. Refer to the **Areas of Interest table** below for descriptions of specific areas players can look closer at.

Areas of Interest	
<b>Brook</b>	<p>A vein of running water trickles past the far side of the house before curving away and into the surrounding woods. An empty pail lies on its side in the grass nearby. A <b>DC 10 Deduction check</b> reveals this brook was used as the <b>pellar's</b> water source.</p> <p>A few small <b>animal bones</b> have been deliberately placed in a line along the embankment: <b>jaw bones, teeth, bird skulls, and ribs</b>. A <b>DC 14 Deduction</b> or <b>DC 10 Education check</b> reveals that these bones were likely harvested from naturally-dead animal carcasses to be cleaned and used in <b>soothsaying</b> and other such <b>rituals</b> typically carried out by <b>pellars</b>. A further <b>DC 14 Wilderness Survival check</b> tells the players that these bones have been here for <b>weeks</b> and were likely left when the pellar was disturbed and detained by the <b>Order of the Flaming Rose</b>.</p>
<b>Chicken Coop</b>	<p>The remains of a chicken coop and pen lay scattered on the ground in front of the house. The coop is in pieces, wooden slats broken and splintered, and the pen has been uprooted out of the dirt in places. Rotten seed is tossed all over. There are no chickens in sight; most likely, they were either taken by the <b>Order of the Flaming Rose</b> or <b>eaten by wolves or wild dogs</b>.</p>
<b>Scorched Ground</b>	<p>A few meters away from the destroyed coop is a patch of ground that has been <b>scorched</b>, the grass burned away, and the soil blackened. A cluster of debris lies in the middle of it and players can make a <b>DC 14 Deduction</b> or <b>DC 12 Wilderness Survival check</b> to determine the following items in the debris: <b>ashes</b>, the charred remains of a <b>wooden pole</b>, and <b>human bone fragments</b>. Someone—the <b>pellar</b>—was burned here: tied to a <b>stake</b> and <b>set alight</b>. A <b>DC 12 Education check</b> determines that this style of execution is popular among groups affiliated with or founded upon the teachings of the <b>Church of the Eternal Fire</b>.</p>



## Inside the Hut

The interior of the hut is in shambles but is still traversable for players to investigate. Read aloud:

*Pieces of broken furniture are tossed about the floor of the derelict hut, mixed in amongst fragments of shattered pots and glass bottles. Dried herbs and plants still cling to the beams above alongside talismans of shaped metal, stones, and animal bones that rattle as you pass under them. The Order of the Flaming Rose were ruthless in their vandalism, having pulled everything off shelves, breaking everything in their path. But maybe there's something salvageable in all this.*

Players investigating the hut make an **Awareness check**, comparing their roll to the **Investigation table** below.

Investigation	
Roll	Result
10 -13	Pieces of tattered parchment lies under broken furniture. Writing in <b>Nordling</b> is scrawled across the pages in hastily scratched handwriting and the parchment itself is crumpled and littered with holes, some of them chewing so far into the paper that parts of words are completely lost. A further <b>DC 12 Deduction check</b> reveals that this damage was caused by a <b>bird's beak</b> —specifically, that of a <b>chicken</b> .
14 -17	Trapped in the cracked slats of a small, upturned wooden <b>chest</b> is a scroll tied with a thin leather tie. Written neatly in <b>Nordling</b> is a <b>Novice Armor Diagram</b> of your—the GM's—choosing.
18+	One <b>floorboard</b> sits up slightly from the rest, jostled out of place. Underneath is a <b>small stone</b> wrapped in a scrap of cloth. A <b>DC 16 Education</b> , <b>DC 14 Alchemy</b> or <b>DC 14 Ritual Crafting check</b> reveals that this is a <b>Lesser Svarog Rune</b> .

The **parchment** in the pellar's hut provides information on the **pellar's studies** and lore on both **Goetia** and the **Horse of Frost**, but the damage the papers have taken has caused some of it to become permanently lost. The information has been summarized in the following **boxes** for you, the GM.

### Goetia

**Goetia** is a the highly volatile magical art of **demon summoning**. This page details the **partial instructions** for a **ritual**, detailing **crafting components**. Players make a **DC 16 Education** or **DC 14 Ritual Casting** or **Magical Training check** to know that these are the elements required to craft a **pellar stick**. They learn that the stick's actual name is a **Wand of Banishment**.

**Demon summoning** is its own path of magic that is learned steadily over time by piecing information together, but there is no guarantee that it will work or be safe. Often, it is lethal regardless of whether the **binding process** was successful.

Scrawled in the margin of one page is a note that reads:

Clenn? Or Ena?

It is evident that the **pellar** was researching into the **Horse of Frost's true name**. From **Handout 3**, it's clear that **Arrik** must have found something of interest—a **demon** called the **Mari Lwyd**.

### The Diary

This scrap of paper appears to have originally been part of a **diary** or **journal** kept by **Arrik**. It describes his work with **Clenn and Ena** and a '**problem**' they were having. **Arrik** expresses a frustration that Clenn and Ena ignored his warnings and stole a dangerous tome that he had intended to keep locked away. **Arrik** also notes that there is **something wrong** with **Orin**, noting that he **never cried**, gurgled, or made any typical baby sounds when he was born. As a baby, Orin most lay **still and silent**, watching everything and everyone—like it somehow knew something that **Arrik** didn't. The journal also documents **Arrik's** desire to help the family fix their mistake however long it may take. This page was dated **5 years prior**.

### Demonology: The Mari Lwyd

The **Mari Lwyd** deals in **exchanges**. To get something from it, the summoner(s) must offer something in return. This demon prefers to **loan** out things as part of its agreement; any knowledgeable summoner (of which there are very few) knows that they must be **very specific** in detailing how long the **Mari Lwyd** loans out something, otherwise the demon is well within its right to **reclaim it at any time**.

It is an **intelligent demon**, always assessing and learning the **behaviors** of the creatures around it, able to **mimic voices perfectly** and **steals and wears the skin** of another being. To take a person's skin and their form, the **Mari Lwyd** must **kill them** first.

## Development (Trouble Brewing)

Characters can go into the village of Spetz, looking to **talk** to some of the inhabitants and see if they can glean any additional information. Refer to the **Rumor Table** for what they discover.

Apparently, **Gart** has spoken to the rest of the village on the characters' behalf, lessening their suspicions somewhat; they understand now that the characters are here to try and get rid of the **Horse of Frost**. However, this has done nothing to ease everyone's hatred of the **Padds**; if anything, the players' presence has only confirmed to the village that the family are indeed **cursed** and has created even more resentment.

## Arrik's Companion

Arrik was fond of animals and owned quite a few—the Order of the Flaming Rose during the ransacking and execution took many of them. However, one chicken managed to evade capture and roams the ruined hut, scavenging and destroying pieces of furniture and pages torn from books. Players will notice this chicken is tame and can choose to befriend it; no characters need to make checks. If they kill the chicken, they do so without rolling and gain 1d6 chicken meat to put in their inventory.

### Rumor Table – Spetz

<b>The Midwife</b>	<p><b>Vel</b> is the <b>local midwife</b> whose mother helped deliver <b>Orin</b> five years ago. Though Vel's mother died a year after Orin's birth, Vel is insistent that her mother told her about the child; how he was born '<b>sickly</b>' and '<b>lame</b>' and that he surely wouldn't live much longer than a month. Her mother asked her to keep this information a <b>secret</b>, but if it can help prove the Padds are <b>cursed</b>, Vel is more than happy to tell the player characters. For <b>five years</b>, Vel assumed the Padds simply were lucky; perhaps her mother had misdiagnosed Orin, or he had managed to thrive through the care of two loving parents? However, over the past month, Vel has started to suspect that perhaps the monster's presence has something to do with Orin's <b>miraculous recovery</b>.</p>
<b>The 'Perfect' Family</b>	<p><b>Darrik</b>, a <b>local hunter</b>, usually takes the dirt trail leading past the <b>Padds' house</b> but has since stopped. He overheard <b>disturbances</b> before changing his hunting grounds. He could never make out just what the voices were saying, but he often heard <b>a man and a woman</b> screaming at one another—<b>blaming each other</b> for something. He frequently heard shouts of '<b>It's all your damned fault!</b>' followed by expletives, thuds, and smashing glass. Sometimes, he caught a child crying too.</p>
<b>The Leader</b>	<p><b>Gart</b> is clearly losing his authority over the village despite his position as alderman. Instead, <b>Das</b> and his angry tirades against the <b>Padds</b> are being listened to; public opinion swaying in his favor. Tensions are rising high, and folks are demanding that the monster be dealt with <b>once and for all</b>. They think that Gart has protected the Padds for long enough now; nothing will change unless they take matters into their own hands.</p>

### Katarina the Speckled Hen

Those players who choose to interact the speckled white chicken roaming Arrik's hut may be surprised to find the hen is very friendly. Though it's unlikely that anyone would know this now that Arrik is dead, the chicken is named Katarina and she will respond instantly to that name. Arrik raised Katarina from an egg and taught her a number of simple tricks which she can still perform on command. As long as the players treat her well and provide her with food, Katarina will follow them dutifully, occasionally fetching small objects in hopes of getting treats in return.

### Boxed In

Das is so ignorant and set in his hateful ways that he refuses to see sense, even when evidence to the contrary is presented to him. If it doesn't fit his worldview, then he doesn't accept or acknowledge it. He will 'corner' characters with this behavior. They should now come to realize just how serious the consequences of acting carelessly will be if they haven't figured this out already. The world of *The Witcher* is a tough and often cruel place, and sometimes doing what seems right can have devastating consequences.

### Aggressive Negotiations

Should the characters decide to attack Das, this will result in a fight. Regardless of who wins, they will not be run out of Spetz unless they kill Das. Knocking Das unconscious or otherwise defusing the situation will have the other villagers become visibly upset but they won't interfere. If the characters kill Das, go to **Ending (Cold and Alone)**.

### Visiting Gart

Gart is not currently home and asking around will reveal that he has left for the day on 'business'. Any **Human Perception checks** reveal that none of the villagers are lying about this—some will even corroborate that they saw him leave that morning on foot after having struggled to calm his horse. Apparently, it was jittery this morning and the alderman claimed to one of the villagers that perhaps a woodland animal has **spooked it** during the night. Some folks found this to be a little strange as Gart owns the only horse in the village and they have not once seen it behave this way; in fact, Gart often likes to remind people that the mount has some battle experience, making it braver than most. Most villagers, however, thought nothing more of it; wolves roam the woods around the mountains and perhaps one strayed a little too close to the village; it wouldn't be the first or last time.

### Visiting Das

Das can once again be found outside his home, whittling away at a shapeless piece of wood. He will **confront the characters again**. If they attacked or riled him up the last time they met, he will be more aggressive and loud this time. Das has **one goal** in mind during this confrontation; he wants to find out what they know about the Padds and their curse. Characters can choose whether to tell him anything they have learned or not.

### Reveal Information

If they choose to **inform Das** of what they've discovered, he will see it as **proof** that the Padds are not only cursed but in league with a demon and any attempt to persuade him otherwise will convince him that the Padds have somehow managed to **deceive the players**.

### Withhold Information

If they **withhold information from Das**, he interprets their secrecy as an admission of the Padds' **guilt**. That they are, in fact cursed and the characters have somehow been brought to the side of **evil**.

Once they finish in Spetz, go to **Development (It All Falls Apart)**.

## Development (It All Falls Apart)

Returning to the **Padds' home**, characters overhear **raised voices** as they approach:

*Voices, a man and a woman, can be heard as you approach the lonesome house. You can't make out the words from this distance, but the sharp tone and raised volume can only mean anger. Thudding, the banging of a fist against wood. A serious argument.*

Those who want to approach unnoticed make a **DC 12 Stealth check** to get close enough to discern what is said without announcing their arrival. You, the GM, can either explain the argument generally or roleplay it by referring to the **prompt box** below. If the players **fail** the Stealth check, go to the section **Interrupted**.

### Clenn & Ena's Argument

Here you will find Clenn and Ena's argument. You can either use this short dialogue as written or give characters a general overview if you don't wish to act it out. **Bold text** indicates **Ena's speech**.

*Italic text* indicates *Clenn's speech*.

**This is all your damned fault!**

*My fault? It was you who demanded I do somethin' about it!*

*'Whatever it took', you said.*

**Not this though. I never wanted this...**

*And yet ye didn't try an' stop me, did you? You're just as guilty as I am and ye know it!*

**Don't you try and turn this on me. I-**

*And now that blasted boy-*

**That 'blasted boy' is your son! OUR son.**

*Is he now? Is that what he is?! Is he?!*

**You're a vile man when ye get like this, Clenn. I hardly know ye. I can barely stand to look at ye.**

*Oh, of course—of course ye turn it all on me. You always do! Ena Padd can do nothing wrong, can she?*

**You stubborn, good for nothing, man! I can't... I just- Agh!**

*Don't you walk away from me, woman! Don't you dare!*

A door slams heavily and the house abruptly falls silent.

## Interrupted

Failing the **Stealth check** will alert both Ena and Clenn to the characters' presence and they will immediately stop shouting and open the door slightly to check who is out there. Ena will immediately shut herself in Orin's bedroom, and it is Clenn who opens the door and spots the characters, noticeably red in the face from shouting.

The enraged look on his face swiftly shifts into one of panic and he looks down, checking the now-fresh line of rice grains bordering the doorway. One hand instinctively reaches for something within the house, obscured by the door frame before he appears to rethink it, brows furrowed in a scowl as he returns his hand to the door. He points an accusatory finger at the players, but his eyes betray his wariness as he says:

*If it's one of you, I'll find ye out. You know ye can't cross this line! You aren't invited in here!*

If any of the characters ask about the line of rice, refer to the **Useless Precaution sidebar** on page 175.

At this point, Clenn and Ena **no longer have the wand of banishment**. If they used the stick's last charge the night before, then the players will already be aware of this. If they didn't use the stick, then they now find out that **Orin just broke it**, rendering it useless.

Either way, the loss of the **wand of banishment** is the final straw that caused the **argument** the characters came back to. Go to the section **Gaining Entry**.

## Gaining Entry

Clenn will refuse to let them back in as he is unable to verify whether the **Horse of Frost** is hiding amongst them. There are a few ways this can be resolved in the following **boxes**.

## Sixth Sense

Some animals are sensitive to the magic that radiates from monsters and spells; even magically imbued beings like Witchers are enough to trigger a fight-or-flight response from them. Most notably, animals like cats and horses (so long as they are not Witcher-trained) are greatly affected by this. For you, the GM, Gart's horse became so upset that morning because Gart is no longer human. Instead, it is the demon wearing Gart's skin. The characters are unaware of this fact at this point in the adventure.

### The Demon's in the Detail

Players can **prove** they aren't the **demon** by revealing something only they would know from having been inside the **Padd's home** – after all, the demon **can't enter** unless Clenn and Ena invite it in and, as a result, it doesn't know what the inside of the house looks like. The characters can **describe the layout**, anything they **noticed or remember** from **Orin's bedroom**—for example, the **drawings on the wall**. If the players are correct in any of their descriptions, Clenn will let them back in. However, some characters may choose to **lie**. In this case, each player that lies must make a **DC 16 Deceit check**. On a success, Clenn will hesitantly let the players back inside. On a failure, he'll panic and immediately become defensive, slamming the door shut. If characters wish to reason with him again, they must make a **DC 16 Persuasion check** or be ignored. They can also choose to force their way inside with a **DC 14 Physique check** or, if they are a **Witcher** or **Mage**, attempt to **magically influence** Clenn to let them in, i.e., using **Signs** such as **Axii**.

### Wearing Thin

Characters can completely disregard talking with Clenn and attempt to shove him out of their way. At this point, the **wooden bar** that usually goes over the door has not been slotted back into its brackets yet, leaving it vulnerable. Players make a **DC 14 Physique check** to shoulder the door open and knock Clenn out of the way as they barge in. When it becomes clear that none of them stop to **count the rice grains**, Clenn will be visibly relieved and relent, but he is still extremely tense.

Once the characters are back inside the house, read aloud:

*Clay shards from a shattered pot are scattered across the floor. A small wooden stool is tipped over, one of the legs bent at a crooked angle. Ena is nowhere to be seen, but her voice can be heard quietly coming from Orin's bedroom, the door shut. An unspoken tension hangs in the air, the awkward silence that remains after a heated argument. Clenn seems wound up, a tightness about his eyes and in the stiff set of his jaw, hands clenched into white-knuckled fists.*

A **DC 12 Deduction check** reveals that this argument clearly got out of hand, but it's unclear who exactly broke the furniture. Either way, it was certainly a heated row for both parties involved. Refer to the **Wand of Banishment box** below only if the **wand of banishment wasn't used** during the characters' first confrontation with the **Horse of Frost**. Otherwise, go to the section **Confrontation**.

### The Wand of Banishment

If the **wand of banishment** was still unused when the characters were out investigating Spetz and Arrik's hut, Clenn will suddenly say:

*He broke it....The boy bloody broke it!*

Clenn is clearly distressed and angry and he begins to pace restlessly as he explains that he and Ena only took their eyes off Orin for less than a minute before discovering the boy had taken the **wand of banishment** and **snapped it in half**.

Wound up, Clenn immediately begins to pin the blame entirely on Ena and Orin:

*If Ena were watchin' him like I said she should've been, this would never have happened. Useless bloody woman!*

Orin's bedroom door is suddenly thrown open, banging loudly as it hits the wall. Ena storms into the room, pointing straight at her husband and shrieking: *I'm the useless one?! All I ever do is look after Orin and deal with your pig-headedness, you selfish bastard!!!*

Clenn immediately turns red in the face and is irate, Ena's words clearly having struck a nerve. Their argument devolves into a shouting match, swearing and insulting one another, continuing to argue like this unless someone steps in.

Characters can **interrupt** the two adults in any way they please, which will cause Clenn and Ena to fall silent. However, by the looks on their faces, it is obvious that they still have some choice words they'd like to scream at one another.

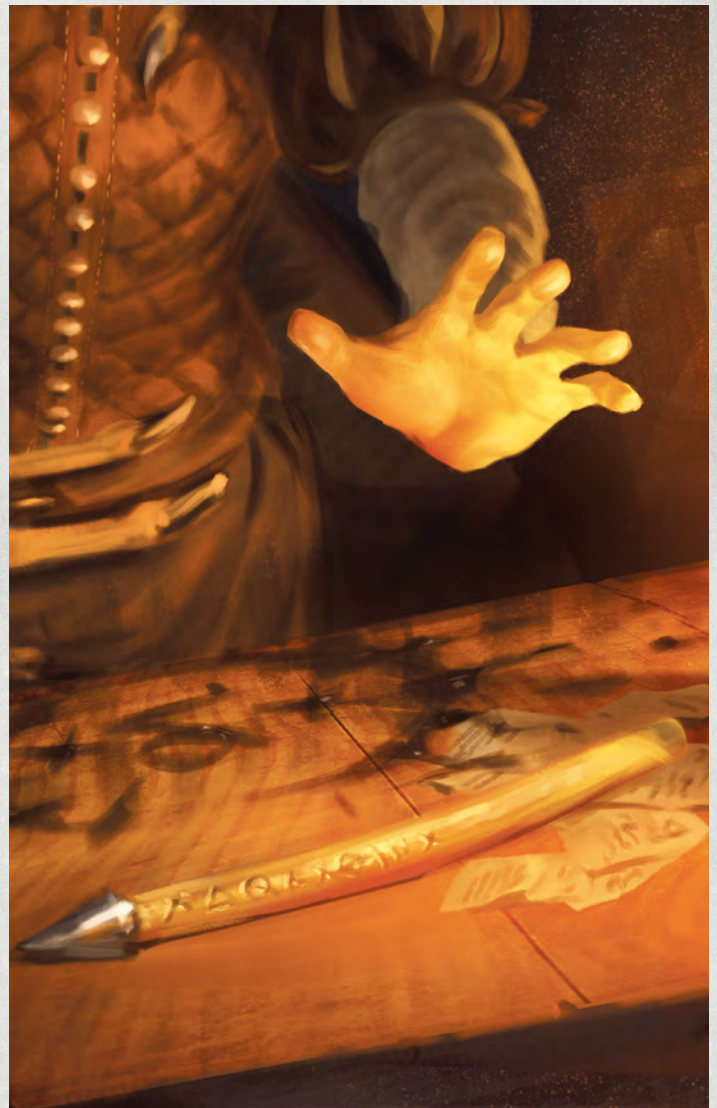
Go to the section **Confrontation**.

## Confrontation

The players can **confront Clenn and Ena** with what they've learned from the **pellar's hut** and the **villagers in Spetz**.

If the **wand of banishment** was already used and the **scene** described in **The Wand of Banishment box** did not play out, Ena can be drawn out of Orin's bedroom if the players ask for her. She will still be angry and slightly flushed from arguing with her husband.

Referring to the **handouts** and/or the **information** gathered from the village and pellar's hut, the players can **ask for** or **demand answers**. Realizing that the jig is up, Clenn and Ena will finally **confess**. Refer to the **Clenn & Ena's Story table** below for the events that led up to the family's **current situation**. You, the GM, can roleplay Clenn and Ena's dialogue here however you please, using the **table** as a checklist of information you must include for your players to understand the whole story.



### Clenn & Ena's Story—The Truth

- ◆ **Five years ago**, Ena gave birth to a child, a baby boy. However, the birth was not an easy one, and the baby was clearly **sickly** with an underdeveloped arm and legs. The **midwife** at the time (**Vel's mother**) was certain the child would fail to thrive and delivered the grim prognosis to both parents, declaring that their newborn son was '**lame**'.
- ◆ Clenn and Ena were both **devastated** at the news, but only for purely **selfish reasons**. Ena felt that her **social standing** would be ruined if her neighbors found out about the child's condition, and Clenn was **embarrassed** to have a son he perceived to be '**weak**'.
- ◆ Desperate for a solution, Clenn and Ena sought out Arrik of Scala and asked him to help them. Arrik was unable to help but in his home Clenn found a tome detailing a creature that could help them. The **creature** in question was said to possess the power to **give a man exactly what he desires so long as he exchanges something of equal value in exchange for it**.
- ◆ Arrik refused to perform the ritual to summon the demon so Clenn resorted to stealing the tome and performing **the ritual himself**. He soon found himself unprepared and wholly uneducated about the **demon** he ended up summoning.
- ◆ After the **Horse of Frost (the Mari Lwyd)** had been summoned, both Clenn and Ena agreed upon the **exchange** they wanted; to **trade their baby for a 'perfect' one**: a son who isn't disabled. What the parents failed to realize was that the demon **only loans** what a person desires and can return to **reclaim it** whenever it chooses. Being inexperienced, selfish, and desperate, Clenn and Ena failed to be specific in their wording and bound themselves in a **contract** that the demon is now trying to fulfill. The moment the pair accepted **Orin** as their own child, they unwittingly bound him to the demon's terms.
- ◆ Terrified that the **Order of the Flaming Rose** would discover and come down on them both, Clenn and Ena swore to never tell anyone what they had done that night, only telling the **pellar** who discovered the theft too late but took pity on them.
- ◆ When it became clear that the **Horse of Frost (the Mari Lwyd)** refused to leave them alone until it could reclaim the child it had loaned, Clenn and Ena decided they could no longer leave the house and things very quickly started to spiral out of control. Now, they both regret ever having summoned the demon in the first place but have turned to blaming each other for their situation rather than admitting they are both equally at fault.

Go to **Development (Breaking Point)**.

## Development (Breaking Point)

The truth finally out, it is now early evening, and the sun is beginning to set. But there is a light on the horizon, the glow of torches against the darkening sky. Raised voices can be heard from outside the house. One familiar voice cut through the rest:

*Drag them out—the boy too!!*

Characters recognize this voice immediately, it's **Das**.

Outside the house, the villagers have formed a **mob**, torches blazing and make-do weapons in their grasps: pitchforks, shovels, hand axes, and knives. With the windows at

the front of the house shuttered, the mob can only really be seen through the **gaps** or if the **front door** is opened. If the door is opened, read the description provided in **The Mob** section. If the characters don't open the door, they hear a loud banging coming from the other side, followed by the **alderman's** anxious voice:

*P-Please, open the door... Perhaps we can resolve this peacefully?*

Upon hearing **Gart**, both Ena and Clenn appear visibly relieved and will open the door themselves (if the characters don't move to open it), but they will **not step outside**.

## Ableism

Language has developed over centuries and this adventure features terminology that is now regarded as ableist. The setting of *The Witcher* is inspired by, and based upon, the European Middle Ages, and terms that appear in this text such as 'lame' are used to emulate this world; the novels and video games also use this terminology. However, these words in a modern context can cause players to feel uncomfortable or upset, especially if they themselves are disabled. It is highly recommended that you check in with your players and ensure that they are aware of this before you run the adventure. This ensures that everyone at the table feels safe and can enjoy the fun of roleplay. Furthermore, you can also exchange the language used here for modern terminology, replacing words such as 'lame' with 'disabled'.

## The Mob

The gathering is made up of most of the adult villagers in Spetz. **Das** is stood at the front, clearly in charge, whereas **Gart** is pushed off to the side, looking worried and sheepish.

*Torchlight flickers off the face of twenty people, their scowls cold and unforgiving. Das stands a few strides before them, the leader of the pack. In one hand, he grips a torch of his own, and the other stay clutched around a knife, knuckles drawn white. The look in his cold eyes is grim. Pushed back from the press of bodies is Gart, his expression pinched in worry. He sends you all an imploring look, clearly hesitant to do anything that may provoke anyone. Das makes a noise in the back of his throat and says:*

*Our quarrel ain't with you lot, strangers. You'd do well to stand aside. Let us past.*

Ena makes a frightened, breathy sound, and flees further into the house, shutting herself in **Orin's bedroom** with her son. If the players ask **Das** just what it is he thinks he's doing, he'll simply say:

*I'm puttin' an end to it. Once and for all.*

Clenn is shaking with barely-contained rage, but he will not step out of the house to physically confront Das. Instead, he doles out a string of expletives and colorful threats, adamant that Das has always had something against him and his family. Das ignores him and gestures to the mob behind him. Four men, carrying torches and makeshift weapons of their own step forward and begin approaching the house, Das ordering them to '**grab Ena, Clenn, and Orin, and drag them outside**'.

A **DC 10 Human Perception check** reveals to any uncertain characters that Das is completely serious about this. There is no hesitation in his gaze, no emotion other than twisted satisfaction at what he's doing—as though he has no empathy at all. A **DC 14 Awareness check** has players notice that **Gart** is not getting involved despite his previous defending of the family; though there is a look in his eyes, as though **curious** to know where this is going. The alderman seems **on edge**, more so than any of the villagers gathered here. He appears to be watching everything very intently, gaze frequently flicking back to the **open doorway** that Clenn and the characters are stood in.

Players have **two options**: they can attempt to **defuse** the situation *or* become **confrontational**. Refer to the relevant section.

### Defuse

Characters might try to settle things with **words**; perhaps to **stall for time** or to **end things peacefully**. A successful **DC 18 Persuasion check** will have **Das** affected enough by their

words that he will at least listen to them. They will see that Das gradually becomes hesitant, even going so far as to tell the men approaching the house to 'wait'.

So long as the check **succeeds**, Das will have **second-thoughts**. Read aloud:

*A tense hush falls over the mob, everyone looking to a clearly torn Das for his orders. Gart, however, suddenly begins to shuffle about. A franticness seems to take over him and he begins visibly shaking, eyes wild and confused behind his round spectacles. He looks to the open doorway with a pained longing before twisting his expression and turning to the expectant crowd, shrieking:*

*Well?! What are you waiting for?! Get the boy!!*

Go to **Development (The Demon Revealed)**,

If the check **fails**, they aren't successful in swaying him and the villagers will attempt to get inside the house, becoming **violent**. The Mob consists of a number of peasants equal to the Players plus 2 who use the Bandit Stat Block on page 270 of the Core Rulebook.

### Confront

Characters may immediately jump to **confrontation** as soon as **Das** gives the order for the **mob** to drag the **Padds** out of their home. This will result in **violence**. The Mob consists of a number of peasants equal to the Players plus 2 who use the Bandit Stat Block on page 270 of the Core Rulebook.

Go to **Development (The Demon Revealed)**.

## Development (The Demon Revealed)

Whether the characters choose to **defuse** or **confront** in **Development (Breaking Point)** will affect *when* the **Horse of Frost** reveals itself. If characters **defused** the situation, go to section **In Sheep's Clothing**. If the characters became **confrontational**, go to section **An Unexpected Horror**.

### In Sheep's Clothing

Characters who successfully **defused** the situation, will find that **Gart** suddenly begins behaving erratically. He frantically gestures to the **front door**, demanding that the **mob** go inside and **drag Orin out**. A **DC 12 Awareness check** has players notice that there is **noise** coming from **inside the house**; it sounds like Orin screaming and banging at his bedroom door to be let out—just like he did the night before.

A **DC 14 Awareness check** brings attention to **Gart's face and hands**. His eyes have become sunken, and he keeps bar-

ing his teeth, taking in raspy, shuddering breaths that jerk his body just as violently as the tremors rattling through him. His fingers bend into awkward positions, wringing at the air. When it becomes apparent that no one is going into the house, Gart snaps.

Go to the end of section **An Unexpected Horror** for the **Horse of Frost's (The Mari Lwyd's)** description.

## An Unexpected Horror

**Confronting** the mob causes a **fight** to break out between the players and the **mob**. If the players **attack Gart**, he is **injured** by the ensuing fight, or if the players have dispatched half of the members of the **mob**, the players make a **DC 12 Awareness check** to notice that whilst they were trying to keep the mob out of the house, **Gart** has approached the building only to remain a few steps away from the door. He is pacing frantically, flinching every time one of **Orin's screams** to be let out cuts through the air. Unable to withstand the temptation any longer, **Gart** appears to lose control entirely.

*The sound of bones breaking rends the air and Gart suddenly becomes unnaturally still—a stark contrast to his erratic and wild movements just moments before. He slumps forward, almost bent in half at the middle, his knees buckled slightly. Perfectly frozen for a few seconds when, without warning, he throws himself back up, spine painfully, ramrod straight and neck stretched up, face turned to the sky. His mouth opens, jaw stretching, further and further, until—*

*An ungodly sound. Flesh peeling from bone, sloughing off, collapsing in on itself like a decayed corpse as, protruding out from the gaping remains of a fractured mouth, bare white bone slips out. On and on until a horse's skull, and a collection of bone discs, an impossibly long spine that stretches out and sends Gart—what little remains of him—pooling onto the ground like a rancid gown. The Horse of Frost turns its head to you and chatters its teeth, bells and ribbons shifting about the column of its neck as a voice hisses from its hollow skull:*

*Let me in.*

Go to page 206 for the **Mari Lwyd's stats**.

If the characters **fail to kill** the **Mari Lwyd** and die, go to **Ending (Cold and Alone)**. If the characters **succeed in killing** the **Mari Lwyd**, go to **Ending (And They Lived Ever After)**. If the characters **fail to kill** the **Mari Lwyd** and survive, go to **Ending (Peace... For Now)**.

## Ending (Cold And Alone)

If they are either **chased out of Spetz**, or **fail** to defeat the **Horse of Frost** and die, read the following aloud:

*A village sits in ruins, houses broken down to their foundations as they are consumed by the passage of time. No one in Lyria remembers its name; another backend hamlet abandoned and left to rot. But there are rumors. That it is a cursed place, home now to a monster so devious and deadly they dare not name it. All it touches becomes entombed in frost; shards of ice so sharp they could cut a man down. Nothing grows there anymore, a veritable wasteland of cold. But every now and again, a hunter comes back having strayed too close, muttering to themselves over and over. All of them attest to the same thing: hearing a child's laughter and the cracking of bones.*

## Ending (And They Lived Ever After)

If they **succeed in killing** the **Horse of Frost**, they will find that the **Lucifuge brand** over **Orin's** eye has faded almost entirely, a faint mark on his cheek the only indication it was ever there to begin with. Though the demon is gone, the attitude of the other **villagers** has not swayed in the slightest. Still convinced that the **Padds** are cursed and a threat to the whole village, **Das** and the other peasants decide to **banish** the family entirely, giving them **until morning** to pack their things and leave. The villagers cannot be persuaded to come to a different decision: either the family leaves or they stay and die. **Das** will, however, thank the characters for uncovering and killing the **monster** and will tell them that the bounty they were promised by **Gart** is in the **alderman's home**.

**Clenn** and **Ena** are upset at having to leave their home but understand their position—more than happy to leave and live than stay and die. They leave **Spetz** at **dawn** the next day, taking **Orin** and what little they have with them. Read aloud:

*Dawn comes and, eventually, you and the Padds part ways. Though no one deigns to leave their home to see you out, you can feel every eye on you as you walk through and out of Spetz, piercing gazes of suspicion and distrust, even after everything you have done for them. As you reach the border of the village, you hear a voice cut through the air behind you.*

*There is Orin Padd, fresh-faced and scar-free. He stands awkwardly on the dirt path, bare feet twitching against blades*

*of grass and puddles of rain water like he doesn't know what to make of each new sensation; it's been so long since he last went outside. He has one arm raised, hand above his head in a gesture of farewell as he says:*

*Thank you.*

## Ending (Peace... For Now)

Like **Ending (And They Lived Ever After)**, **Clenn**, **Ena**, and **Orin** will find themselves **banished** from **Spetz**, but, as the **Horse of Frost** wasn't killed or otherwise escaped, **Orin's Lucifuge** doesn't fade, still as bright and angry-looking as ever. Though the demon is gone for now, the **village** is still set against the **Padds**—adamant that they are still cursed – and cannot be persuaded to think otherwise. The fight at the house only gave more credibility to their suspicions and discontent. They will, however, be thankful to the players for seeing the demon off and will present them with the **bounty**.

Though **Clenn** and **Ena** express frustration and sadness at being forced to leave their home, they understand their position: leave and have a chance at a new and better life or stay and most likely be killed. However, the **Horse of Frost** isn't truly gone, waiting to strike again. Read aloud:

*Dawn comes and, eventually, you and the Padds part ways. Though no one deigns to leave their home to see you out, you can feel every eye on you as you walk through and out of Spetz, piercing gazes of suspicion and distrust, even after everything you have done for them. As you reach the border of the village, you hear shuffling behind you.*

*There is Orin Padd, staring after you, the scar on his cheek angry and deep. He says nothing, just watches, brows slightly furrowed and face stern. Suddenly, Ena's voice calls for Orin and the boy hesitates for a moment, looking at each one of you in turn before turning around and walking away, back to his mother.*

## Where to Go From Here?

By the end of this adventure your players will have dealt with a great deal of intrigue and danger in the mountainous hamlet of Spetz. Depending on how the adventure ended they may choose to take some time to lay low and recuperate in Spetz or they may choose to head out immediately. Either way, the trail continues on and the players will be leaving Spetz eventually. When they do pack their bags and set off again there are a number of options for them to pursue.

The Nilfgaardian army is all around them and this creates a number of interesting options for the next adventure. Traveling east will lead them to the Kingdom of Lyria and Rivia, where players might want to team up with Queen Meve and her rag tag band of partisans to free the kingdom from Nilfgaardian control. This won't be an easy task, as Nilfgaardian soldiers occupy nearly every major city in the kingdom but there are plenty of loyal allies hidden in backrooms and alleyways ready to help players in service to the Queen. Whats more, a journey to the city of Rivia could give the players an excellent opportunity to make some powerful but less than lawful friends.

For players less invested in the 3rd Northern War, the Mahakaman Mountains, which Spetz lies in the foothills of, is full of excitement, as the dwarves negotiate with the humans and elderfolk of the lowlands and delve into the dangerous depths of the mountains in search of ore and valuable. Allying with one of the great houses of Mahakam could pull the players into a longstanding clan feud and see them racing to the heart of the mountains to slay deadly monsters and return with the priceless components from their lairs or their corpses.

More magically inclined characters might want to skirt the war front and take the road northeast to try and reach the magic academy of Ban Ard before it's ransacked by the Redanians or the Nilfgaardians. This long, harrowing journey will take them through steep mountains, murky swamps, and monster infested forests until they finally reach the city of Ban Ard where they'll have to negotiate with the mages of Ban Ard or perhaps steal what they can and escape before the war front reaches them.

# Bestiary

*“As the understanding of magic expanded the creation of creatures to ease our lives and protect ourselves from danger was inevitable. It also seems, however, that this greater harnessing of chaos has drawn all manner of dangers from beyond our realm of understanding.”*

—Glynnis var Treharne

The following pages are dedicated to the many monsters we mentioned earlier in this book. This compilation should allow you to easily reference any monster you choose to create, summon, or make deals with.

## Bes (Ref. on Page.139)

Most commonly summoned by desperate people seeking power, bes are demons of violence which delight in the torture of the living. They are difficult to deal with but if you can bind them they grant supernatural agility and power. Just be wary as they are terrifying enemies with claws like razors and the ability to possess people.

## Casglydd (Ref. on Page.139)

Often summoned by academics searching for rare knowledge, casglydd are demons of knowledge who can share with you great secrets. However, they are easily intrigued and that intrigue quickly turns to obsession, causing them to kidnap people away into their own realm of shadows.

## Corpse Amalgam (Ref. on Page.133)

Originally, created by the infamous Nilfgaardian necromancer, Cadfan of Ebbing, corpse amalgams utilize many partially animated corpses to create a golem of flesh which is capable of brief moments of sapient thought thanks to the many tormented souls trapped within it.

## Great Bear (Ref. on Page.94)

Common across the Continent and well respected as apex predators, bears are one of the greatest threats in the natural world. For our purposes here, we are referring to bears as the alternate form of berserkers, the deadly bestial warriors of the blood god Svalblod.

## Living Armor (Ref. on Page.104)

Developed by mages as a cheaper alternative to creating golems, living armors use magic to animate an existing suit of armor to create a simple servant capable of defending its creator and performing simple tasks. Living armors can also be found as guardians of ancient temples and high security vaults.

## Mari Lwyd (Ref. on Page.139)

Summoned most often by greedy or desperate people, mari lwyd are demons of avarice which can grant their summoners amazing physical wealth and material benefit. But a mari lwyd always returns later for payment, taking something of equal value which more often than not far outweighs the initial gift.

## Penitent (Ref. on Page.131)

Born from heinous crimes, penitent are specters which haunt those guilty of atrocities. They shroud the land in deep fog and summon wraiths to kill anyone who gets in their way as they seek some twisted form of justice. Penitent are a genuine threat for fledgling necromancers who attempt rituals beyond their means.

## Collateral Damage

Many of the monsters presented in this bestiary are focused more or less solely on one target. From the demons who make deals with certain individuals to the penitent which stalks a specific criminal. Keep in mind that in all of these cases these monsters do not shy away from collateral damage. If someone gets in the way of one of these monsters as they seek out their prey they are just as likely to wind up dead.

## Dark Implications

Besides the living armor and bears, the monsters presented in bestiary are generally brought about by dark doings and rituals considered evil by the world at large. Anyone with an ounce of sense in their head will immediately know that if someone is dealing with a corpse amalgam, a demon, or a penitent, something foul is afoot.

Skill Base	
Athletics	20
Awareness	10
Brawling	20
Courage	—
Endurance	—
Intimidation	19
Physique	20
Resist Magic	20
Spell Casting	18
Stealth	12
Wilderness Survival	12

<b>Armor</b>	0
<b>Regeneration</b>	—

Resistances
—
Immunities
Fire, Poison, Bleed, Disease, Fear

Susceptibilities
Specter Oil, Dimeritium Bombs

<b>Dodge Base</b>	17
<b>Reposition Base</b>	20
<b>Block Base</b>	22

Bounty
1500

Loot
Ashes (x2d10)
Beast Bones (x1d10)
Bes Horns (x1d6/3)
Infused Dust (x2d10)
Specter Dust (x1d6)
Essence of Wraith (x2d6)
Dazhbog Runestone (x1)



### Hard Complex

**Intelligence**  
*Sapient*

**Senses**  
*Superior Night Vision*

INT	5
REF	12
DEX	12
BODY	10
SPD	7
EMP	2
CRA	2
WILL	10

STUN	10
RUN	21
LEAP	5
STA	50
ENC	100
REC	10
HP	100

<b>Height</b>	2.5m
<b>Weight</b>	162kg
<b>Environment</b>	Wherever they are summoned
<b>Organization</b>	Solitary

# Bes

## Commoner Superstition (Education DC:16)

*Heard of these critters once or twice from some of my less savory sources. Heh, the only reason you'd ever wanna summon a bes is if ya need a real powerful warrior on yer side. From what I hear, bes're the guardians of the demon realm. Got talons that'll slice ya from your throat to your giblets faster than even a witcher can swing. They're just skeletons too so ya can't burn em or poison em. The best thing ya can do is make a deal with 'em, heh. If ya let 'em possess yer body they'll give ya the plenty of power.*

—Rodolf Kazmer



## Lore & Behavior (Monster Lore DC:18)

Bes are demons of rage and power which only enter the world of The Witcher to spread pain and delight in the torment of mortals. Being demons, they come from somewhere beyond the comprehension of even the most learned sorcerers and their societal organization is effectively unknown. However, by observing them you can start to fill in the blanks. Bes are, indeed powerful warriors, with claws sharp enough to sever limbs and leave bleeding wounds with every slash. If you must fight a bes, it would be your best bet to try and slow it down somehow and bring plenty of clotting powder. These claws are really the bes' only weapon in its corporeal form but the truly complicated part about fighting a bes is their penchant for possession.

A bes will always begin a fight by trying to possess the most physically powerful target in range. While possessing a target, a bes can control their every move and greatly improves their physical capabilities. The presence of the bes also heats the possessed target's blood to a burning river that can melt flesh so breaking the skin of a possessed target is not recommended. The only way to force a bes out of a target is to grievously wound the target, have a Mage, Priest, or Druid use magic to force the bes out, or to force them to drink a Cerebral Elixir. In some circumstances, killing the possessed target may be a mercy as they are still aware of everything going on and bes have a sadistic habit of forcing a possessed target to flay their own skin and consume it. If possible, trap the bes in the area of a Dimeritium Bomb. This will render them unable to possess anyone.

Once you've stopped the bes from possessing someone, bombard it with ranged attacks covered in Specter Oil, avoiding fire which bes are immune to. Don't bother trying to poison it, after all the Bes has no flesh or blood for this to take hold in. If you are unlucky enough to encounter a greater bes keep in mind that they are far quicker and more deadly, able to land three claw strikes in a matter of seconds.

Attacks							
Name	ATK Base	Type	DMG	Rel.	RNG	Effect	ROF
Claws	22	P or S	5d6+4	10	N/A	Bleed (100%), Balanced	2

### Ability: Possession

By taking an action, the bes can attempt to possess a target within melee range by making a Spell Casting check against their Resist Magic check. If successful, the bes takes control of the target's body. This allows the bes to use the body of the target but the target gains the REF and DEX Statistics of the bes. This change in Statistics does not affect Derived Statistics. The target also gains the Boiling Blood ability. While a bes is possessing them, a character is unable to control their body but is otherwise, aware of everything going on around them. There are three ways to force a bes out of a possessed target: either the target must be reduced to their Wound Threshold, a Mage, Priest, or Druid must spend 10 STA points and roll a Spell Casting check to beat a DC: 20, or the possessed target must drink a Cerebral Elixir. When in the area of a Dimeritium bomb the bes cannot use this ability. While possessing a target, a bes takes no damage from attacks made against its possessed target.

### Ability: Boiling Blood

Whenever you deal damage to a target possessed by a bes with a Slashing or Piercing weapon, the resulting super-heated spray of blood deals 5 points of damage to the attacker's torso which also ablates any armor by 1 point regardless of penetration.

### Ability: Alternate Form (Greater Bes)

A greater bes has a ROF of 3 with its Claws, has a REF and DEX of 14, and its Boiling Blood Ability ablates armor by 3 rather than 1.

Skill Base	
Athletics	12
Awareness	19
Brawling	18
Courage	—
Endurance	14
Intimidation	14
Persuasion	12
Physique	15
Resist Coercion	18
Resist Magic	22
Spell Casting	20
Stealth	16
Wilderness Survival	17

<b>Armor</b>	15
<b>Regeneration</b>	—

Resistances	
—	
Immunities	
Fear, Blinding	

Susceptibilities	
Specter Oil, Dimeritium Bomb.	

<b>Dodge Base</b>	16
<b>Reposition Base</b>	12
<b>Block Base</b>	19

Bounty	
1500	

Loot	
Infused Dust (x1d10)	
Specter Dust (x1d6)	
Essence of Wraith (x1d6)	
Random Runestones (x3)	
Random Glyph (x2)	



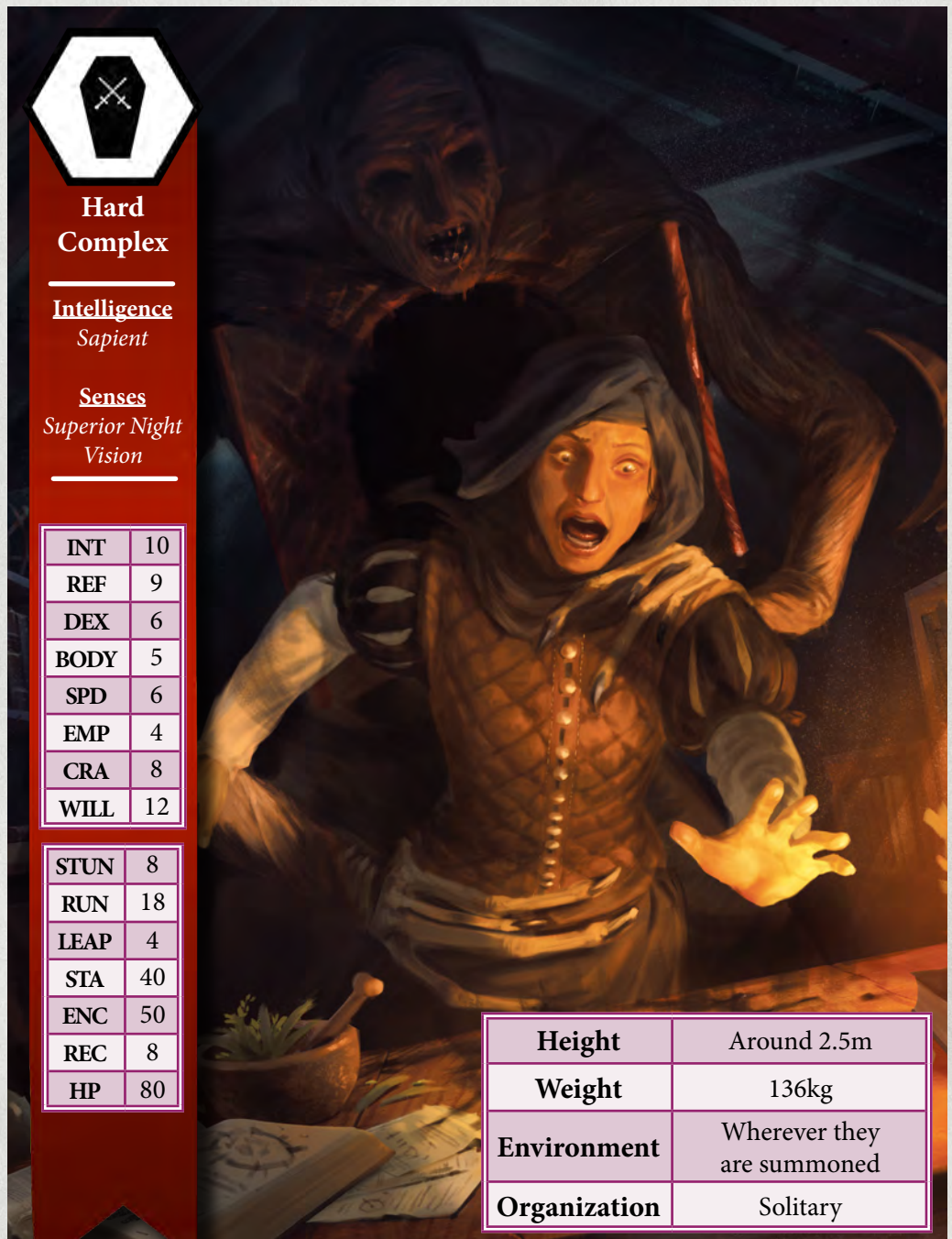
### Hard Complex

**Intelligence**  
*Sapient*

**Senses**  
*Superior Night  
Vision*

INT	10
REF	9
DEX	6
BODY	5
SPD	6
EMP	4
CRA	8
WILL	12

STUN	8
RUN	18
LEAP	4
STA	40
ENC	50
REC	8
HP	80



<b>Height</b>	Around 2.5m
<b>Weight</b>	136kg
<b>Environment</b>	Wherever they are summoned
<b>Organization</b>	Solitary

# Casglydd

## Commoner Superstition (Education DC:18)

*Folk're willin' to do a lot for the right information. Heh, trust me, old Rodolf learned that lesson along time ago. The gnomes used to say that if ya get too greedy lookin' for that information it can turn ya into a casglydd. Lurkin' in shadows, collectin' knowledge that ain't meant for anybody's eyes. When yer dealin' with a casglydd ya gotta be wary of its hands. It'll try to snatch ya up and drag you off to some hellish shadowy place. But if you can keep it from stealin' ya away and force it to talk you can negotiate for just about any information. Heh, just don't get too caught up in the hunt or you'll wind up joinin' it.*

—Rodolf Kazmer

## Lore & Behavior (Monster Lore DC:22)

Casglydd are demons of knowledge who primarily prey on academics, mages, and scholars who's hunger for knowledge drives them to goetia. They are not created from obsessed scholars. A casglydd lives in the shadows and can make portals through these shadows to travel. This teleportation combined with a casglydd's aversion to combat makes killing them very difficult. A casglydd who feels threatened is likely to either disappear and return later or steal away their target and escape through shadows. A casglydd can drag a person they touch through the doorway in their chest into its realm of shadows. The only way out is to kill the casglydd or convince it to let you out. Once in their realm, the casglydd will try to grasp the target with shadowy hands and drain away their intellect and memories. Once they have collected you, a casglydd will sometime choose to keep you as a servant or pet by regulating your intelligence through periodic draining. Luckily, even while draining a target in it's shadow realm, a casglydd remains in the physical realm as well and can be attacked and killed. Those who choose to make deals with casglydd should be aware that without a Centerpiece the casglydd will become fascinated with you and will return to offer you deals that rapidly grow more obscure. In return, the casglydd will offer hidden knowledge and will become enraged if you refuse them.

Attacks							
Name	ATK Base	Type	DMG	Rel.	RNG	Effect	ROF
Claw	19	P or S	1d6	15	—	Drag into Shadow, Long Reach	2

### Ability: Collected Knowledge

A casglydd always has a Base 20 when rolling any skill check to learn, recall, or teach knowledge.

### Ability: Shadow Move

Instead of taking a movement action, a casglydd can transport itself from one area of darkness to another area of darkness within 20m. A casglydd can transport objects it is holding but not living things. When in the area of a Dimeritium bomb the casglydd cannot use this ability.

### Ability: Drag into Shadow

If a casglydd hits a target with their claw attack they can pull the target into their personal realm of shadows. This realm of shadows is 20m in diameter and 5m tall and has no features other than items or people that the casglydd stored there (these items may be chosen by the GM) and motes of light to illuminate their collection. Once a target has been dragged into the realm of shadows the casglydd appears with them and is present in both planes of existence, sharing the same Hit Points and Armor but getting one turn per location. Inside the realm of shadows the casglydd gains access to its Draining Grasp Ability. The only way to exit the realm of shadows is to be cast out by the casglydd or to kill the casglydd. Immediately after the casglydd dies, all outsiders present in the realm of shadows are sucked back into the real world. When in the area of a Dimeritium bomb the casglydd cannot use this ability.

### Ability: Draining Grasp

By taking a full round, a casglydd in its realm of shadows can make a number of Brawling attacks equal the number of people in its realm of shadows plus 1 against anyone in its realm of shadows. If successful, the target is latched onto by a shadowy hand emerging from the floor, walls, or ceiling. Immediately after attaching, the casglydd can lower the INT Statistic of that character by 2. If a target is already latched onto at the start of the casglydd's turn, the casglydd can use this ability without having to make another Brawling attack. Dealing 5 points of damage to one of these hands will free the target. If the target's INT Statistic is lowered to 0, that target becomes trapped in the realm of shadows, loses their memories, and is considered Stunned until they regain at least one point of INT. A target regains their full INT Statistic after spending 1 hour outside of the realm of shadows. A target also regains 1 point of INT per week spent in the realm of shadows. The character's memories will only return when they have regained all of their INT.

### Ability: Greater Casglydd

A greater casglydd's Collected Knowledge Skill Base is 25 and it's Hit Points are raised by 30.

Skill Base	
Awareness	10
Wilderness Survival	7
Brawling	16
Athletics	11
Stealth	10
Physique	20
Endurance	17
Courage	—
Intimidation	16
Resist Magic	17
Resist Coercion	—

<b>Armor</b>	0
<b>Regeneration</b>	—

Resistances	
Bludgeoning, Piercing	
Immunities	
Poison, Bleeding, Charm, Knock-Down, Fear, Stun, Coercion	

Susceptibilities	
Specter Oil, Dimeritium Bomb	

<b>Dodge Base</b>	12
<b>Reposition Base</b>	13
<b>Block Base</b>	16

Bounty	
800	

Loot	
Lunar Shards (x1)	
Fifth Essence (x1d6)	
Specter Dust (x1d6)	
Essence of Wraith (x1d6)	



### Hard Difficult

**Intelligence**  
*Feral*

**Senses**  
—

INT	1
REF	8
DEX	6
BODY	12
SPD	6
EMP	1
CRA	1
WILL	8

STUN	10
RUN	18
LEAP	4
STA	50
ENC	120
REC	10
HP	100



<b>Height</b>	Form Varies
<b>Weight</b>	Around 680kg
<b>Environment</b>	Around crypts and mage towers
<b>Organization</b>	Solitary

# Corpse Amalgam

## Commoner Superstition (Education DC:17)

*Now I'd never heard of this one but Glynis swears up and down it's true, heh. She tells me this Nilfgaardian found a way to really animate corpses for real by doin' some kinda ritual with the souls of other mages or somethin'. I mighta been half awake when she mentioned it. Heh, either way, these things are just piles of corpses so ya can't reason with 'em or poison 'em or anything. Got so many sets of eyes ya can't sneak up on 'em. The best thing ya can do is to start knockin' the bodies off of 'em. Sets the souls free and weakens the beast.*

—Rodolf Kazmer

## Lore & Behavior (Monster Lore DC:21)

A corpse amalgam is a non-sapient golem created from many partially animated corpses. Most often, amalgams are used as bodyguards but some necromancers create them to be assistants. In combat, amalgams are usually very simple, smashing things with their many limbs and pausing only every once in a while to emit a horrible wail which stuns nearby targets. They are entirely undead and therefore cannot heal but are also immune to attempt poison them, create bleeding wounds, or effect them mentally in any way. Additionally, their massive bulk and many limbs make them impossible to knock prone. The greatest danger of a corpse amalgam is also the fastest way to kill it. By striking critical wounds and separating corpses from the amalgam you can break it down very quickly. However, with each separated body the soul that inhabited that body returns as a violent wraith which targets the person who unleashed it. While you may kill the amalgam quickly, the wraiths could prove even more dangerous. The last thing to keep in mind when fighting an amalgam is that they're capable of temporarily summoning sapience back into one of the souls bound within them. If faced with a problem such as a locked door, a puzzle, or a target they cannot reach, a corpse amalgam can force a degree of sapience to figure out how to open the door, solve the puzzle, or even wield a ranged weapon.

Attacks							
Name	ATK Base	Type	DMG	Rel.	RNG	Effect	
Fists	16	B	5d6	10	—	Long Reach, Crushing Force	2

### Vulnerability: Truly Undead

A corpse amalgam is truly dead and therefore its body is not functioning normally and does not heal. A corpse amalgam cannot be affected by spells or items that restore HP and it does not heal naturally.

### Ability: Amalgamated Form

A corpse amalgam is made up of many different bodies bound together by magic and has no vital spots on its body. If an attack would strike the head of the amalgam or any other spot that would multiply damage, the attack deals normal damage rather than triple damage.

### Ability: Bound Spirits

A corpse amalgam is animated by spirits which are bound to this plane of existence by necromancy. No singular part or function of the amalgam's body is critical to its survival and in many cases separating parts of the amalgam can cause more problems than good. Whenever a character would strike a Critical Wound on a corpse amalgam, the attack still deals normal damage but instead of scoring a Critical Wound one of the bodies in the amalgam is separated and the spirit controlling it is freed. The amalgam takes an additional 10 points of damage and a hostile wraith is summoned. This wraith fights alongside the amalgam and takes the orders of the necromancer that created it.

### Ability: Temporary Sapience

Without taking an action, a corpse amalgam can forcibly return one of the spirits in its body to sapience and make that spirit dominant in the amalgam. Immediately upon doing this, the corpse amalgam rolls 1d10, re-rolling a value of a 1. This value becomes the corpse amalgam's Intelligence and Crafting Statistic Values for 10 rounds. While Temporary Sapience is in effect, the corpse amalgam becomes a Sapient creature which is still under the control of the Necromancer who summoned it. The mind of the amalgam is in unending pain and barely capable of speech but it is capable of making tactical decisions and performing technical actions. For example: wielding weapons, unlocking things, solving puzzles, etc. If the amalgam is forced to make a check with a Skill it doesn't possess while Temporary Sapience is active, roll 1d6 to determine the value of its Skill.

### Ability: 360 Degree Vision

A corpse amalgam has eyes all over its body. It is capable of seeing in all directions simultaneously and its Vision Cone is 360 degrees.

### Ability: Horrid Wail

By taking an action, a corpse amalgam can emit a chorus of horrible echoing wails from the many mouths on its body. Any living creature within 10m of the corpse amalgam must make a DC:16 Resist Magic check or be Staggered.

Skill Base	
Athletics	10
Awareness	10
Brawling	13
Courage	14
Endurance	16
Intimidation	14
Physique	20
Resist Magic	13
Stealth	8
Wilderness Survival	12

<b>Armor</b>	14
<b>Regeneration</b>	—

Resistances
Bludgeoning, Piercing, Slashing
Immunities
—

Susceptibilities
Beast Oil

<b>Dodge Base</b>	12
<b>Reposition Base</b>	10
<b>Block Base</b>	15

Bounty
450

Loot
Bear Fat (x1d6)
Bear Hide (x1d6/2)
Raw Meat (x3d6)
Beast Bones (x2d6)



**Medium  
Simple**

**Intelligence**  
*Feral*

**Senses**  
*Night Vision,  
Scent Tracking*

INT	1
REF	7
DEX	6
BODY	12
SPD	7
EMP	1
CRA	1
WILL	5

STUN	8
RUN	21
LEAP	4
STA	40
ENC	120
REC	8
HP	80

<b>Height</b>	1.75m
<b>Weight</b>	600kg
<b>Environment</b>	Forests
<b>Organization</b>	Solitary or in pairs

# Great Bear

## Commoner Superstition (Education DC:8)

*Ya hear all about these big gnarly monsters with their fire breath and their magic hypnosis and their invisibility and whatnot and ya tend to forget about nature's own ploughin' murder machines. Heh, I've been in a wagon that got attacked by a bear. Yeah, there I am mindin' my business in the back of the wagon and suddenly the whole thing rocks like it just got hit by a ploughin' trebuchet! Won't go into exhaustive detail on that little scuffle. Let's say, I gave it a few bolts from my trusty crossbow and when that didn't do much I decided to make a tactical retreat. Heh, some of the others on the wagon weren't so lucky.... If a bear rears up, run for yer life.*

—Rodolf Kazmer

## Lore & Behavior (Monster Lore DC:12)

Bears kill more people every year than most monsters. A bite from a wyvern is more survivable than a bite from a bear. Where a werewolf's claws can be parried, a bear's claws can not, and the bear will still be trying to kill you when the sun comes up in the morning. While many scholars on the Continent would classify the bear as a beast instead of a monster, I believe that the bear would disagree. Reality demands its inclusion into their monstrous ranks. Carry Beast Oil on you at all times and you might survive your fight. When blocking the heavy swipes of a bear, a shield will do not much-except snap. Instead, try and reposition yourself out of reach of its arms whenever possible. While this won't tire out the bear, this will hopefully keep you from being torn apart by the bear's sharp teeth during a horrifically one-sided grapple. If you ever have to look up at a bear rearing up at you on its back two legs, you've already made a fatal mistake.

Attacks							
Name	ATK Base	Type	DMG	Rel.	RNG	Effect	
Bite	17	P	8d6	15	—	Crushing Force, Bleed (75%)	1
Claw Slash	17	S	4d6+5	15	—	Crushing Force	2

### Ability: Rearing Strike

By taking its full round, a bear can rear up onto its hind legs and bring down both claws on a target in melee range, using an attack base of 14. If this attack hits, the target takes 6d6 damage to their torso, is knocked prone, and pinned by the bear. If the target tries to block this attack, they can negate the damage but they are still knocked prone and pinned unless they can beat the bear's Physique check with their own Physique check. If they do manage to succeed, the target is able to throw off the bear and is unaffected by any part of the Rearing Strike ability.

*“The Empire has often been at odds with the island clans of Skellige and we have seen any number of great warriors and vicious raiders. I have yet to personally see a Berserker or even a Great Bear deployed to assault Nilfgaardian forces but I suppose this could also be chalked up to the fact that a bear would not make the best naval combatant. I did once have an associate who was deployed in an early attempt to claim a foothold on the island of Eyna by the previous Emperor who claimed to have faced a Berserker in single combat. Most of our peers simply thought he had been careless and wandered too near to bears den. It's difficult to say, though. The many islands of the Great Sea are rocky and forested, housing many places for a cult of bear worshipping priests to shelter their followers.”*

— Glynnis var Treharne

Skill Base	
Awareness	14
Wilderness Survival	13
Brawling	16
Athletics	10
Stealth	10
Physique	16
Endurance	—
Courage	—
Intimidation	10
Resist Magic	14
Resist Coercion	—

<b>Armor</b>	Based on Armor Used
<b>Regeneration</b>	—

Resistances	
Based on Armor Used	
Immunities	
Poison, Bleeding, Charm, Fear, Stun, Coercion	

Susceptibilities	
Elementa Oil, Dimeritium Bombs	

<b>Dodge Base</b>	12
<b>Reposition Base</b>	10
<b>Block Base</b>	16

Bounty	
400	

Loot	
Fifth Essence (x1d6/3) Infused Dust (x1d6/3) The Armor Animated Any Worn Weapons or Items	



**Medium  
Simple**

**Intelligence**  
*Feral*

**Senses**  
*Night Vision*

INT	1
REF	8
DEX	6
BODY	8
SPD	4
EMP	1
CRA	1
WILL	4

STUN	—
RUN	12
LEAP	2
STA	—
ENC	80
REC	6
HP	60

<b>Height</b>	Based on armor used
<b>Weight</b>	Based on armor used
<b>Environment</b>	Around ruins or mage towers
<b>Organization</b>	Solitary or in pairs

# Living Armor

## Commoner Superstition (Education DC:12)

*Ya don't see these that often anymore. I guess the cost of man-power's gone down or the cost of good armor's gone up. Heh, might be both come to think of it! Back a few decades ago livin' armor was all the rage. Mage's would be whippin' up bodyguards made outta the finest armor to parade around town. Living armor itself ain't the toughest combatant though. Can't think for themselves like a proper flesh and blood soldier. The trick is, ya gotta hit 'em with a dimeritium bomb. That'll dispel the magic and you can rip out their golem heart.*

—Rodolf Kazmer

## Lore & Behavior (Monster Lore DC:16)

Living armor is an ingenious invention created centuries ago by an unknown mage and spread throughout the known world on the strength of its premise. Rather than hire a fallible human, elf, dwarf, etc. and outfit them with armor and weapons to guard you or your possession you can just animate the armor. The armor will be inexhaustible, comparably cheap, and most importantly eternally loyal. You never have to worry about a suit of living armor wandering away from its post for a drink, falling asleep on the job, or stabbing you in the back for the promise of better pay. And so for a while suits of living armor became very popular among nobility and the magically gifted. More reliable than a living guard and cheaper than a golem. Many suits of living armor still stand watch over noble bedchambers, mage's laboratories, and ancient tombs.

In combat, a suit of living armor isn't drastically different from a mortal opponent. They "wear" normal armor, and wield normal weapons with the skill expected of a soldier. They are capable of unleashing a flurry of attacks which may prove dangerous but in the process they inevitably damage their own shell. When fighting one, dimeritium bombs are a good option but they do not dispel the magic, only slowing the armor. The best way to kill a suit of living armor is to open it's torso armor with an ablating weapon and shatter the golem heart at its center. This will instantly kill the living armor.

Attacks							
Name	ATK Base	Type	DMG	Rel.	RNG	Effect	
Fist	16	B	1d6+2	15	—		2

### Vulnerability: Dimeritium Bomb

When struck by a Dimeritium Bomb, a living armor becomes disrupted and sluggish. They are incapable of using their Overreach ability and take a -2 to all rolls while in the area of the bomb.

### Vulnerability: Golem Heart

A suit of living armor is held together by a golem heart suspended inside the chest by magic. The golem heart cannot be targeted. However, when the torso armor of the living armor is reduced to 0 SP, the golem heart is exposed. The next attack to strike the living armor's torso hits the heart and reduces the living armor to 0HP.

### Ability: Living Armor

A suit of living armor is made up of three pieces of armor and each location has the SP of that armor. The living armor cannot wear armor but it can be upgrade with armor enhancements and glyphs like any other suit of armor. The SP value of the living armor does not heal with the HP of the living armor but can be fixed just like regular armor. Additionally, living armor is unaffected by the Restrict Vision effect. If the SP of a living armor's limb is reduced to 0 that limb is considered severed and is useless to the living armor.

### Ability: Weapon Master

A suit of living armor is inherently skilled with all weaponry and has a Skill Base of 16 with all Weapon Skills. When a living armor is wielding a one-handed weapon, it makes all attacks with 2 ROF. When it is wielding a two-handed weapon, it makes all attacks with 1 ROF.

### Ability: Overreach

A suit of living armor can sacrifice 10 HP on its turn to make a single extra attack roll with a weapon they are wielding. If using this ability would reduce the living armor to 0 or fewer HP the living armor dies after making the extra attack.

Skill Base	
Athletics	18
Awareness	16
Brawling	18
Courage	—
Acting	16
Endurance	18
Intimidation	16
Physique	18
Resist Magic	20
Stealth	16
Wilderness Survival	16

<b>Armor</b>	5
<b>Regeneration</b>	—

Resistances
—
Immunities
Poison, Bleeding, Freeze, Fear, Magic Scanning

Susceptibilities
Specter Oil, Fire, Moondust Bomb, Dimeritium Bomb

<b>Dodge Base</b>	18
<b>Reposition Base</b>	18
<b>Block Base</b>	18

Bounty
1500

Loot
Beast Bones (x1d10)
Mari Lwyd Skull (x1)
Silk (x1d10)
Infused Dust (x1d10)
Specter Dust (x1d6)
Essence of Wraith (x2d6)
Zoria Runestone (x1)



### Hard Complex

**Intelligence**  
Sapient

**Senses**  
Superior Night Vision

INT	5
REF	10
DEX	10
BODY	10
SPD	5
EMP	3
CRA	3
WILL	8

STUN	9
RUN	15
LEAP	3
STA	45
ENC	100
REC	9
HP	90



<b>Height</b>	2.5m
<b>Weight</b>	135kg
<b>Environment</b>	Wherever they are summoned
<b>Organization</b>	Solitary

# Mari Lywd

## Commoner Superstition (Education DC:16)

*If ya hear an eerie chorus singin' at your door in the middle of the night it's best if ya lock up tight and plug yer ears. Honest, it's the best advice I can give ya, heh. Mari lwyd are demons that prey on folks who deny 'em hospitality. They wander around, askin' for food and beer and a place by the hearth and whatnot. If ya answer the door but ya don't let 'em in they'll mark ya. Worst part is, a mari lwyd's got this power that lets 'em possess folks. If ya don't let 'em in they'll possess one of yer neighbors and make 'em beg ya to let 'em in.*

—Rodolf Kazmer

## Lore & Behavior (Monster Lore DC:18)(133)

Mari lwyd are demons of greed who give desperate people their wildest dreams only to return for nightmarish repayment. Without permission, a mari lwyd cannot pass the threshold of a home so it will sing to the debtor outside their door. If they are still not let in, the mari lwyd may kill the debtor's neighbors and take their shapes to trick them. Mari lwyd are shrewd and vain creatures that will fly into a rage if you insult them or deny them what they consider to be fair. If it turns to violence, a mari lwyd will prefer to stay at a distance, using its extremely long neck like a whip or lunging its skeletal head out to bite through armor with unnaturally sharp teeth. Be wary that this demon exudes an aura of icy cold which may freeze you in your tracks. If possible, attempt to sever its neck to take away its best weapon.

Attacks							
Name	ATK Base	Type	DMG	Rel.	RNG	Effect	ROF
Bite	18	P	5d6+4	10	100m	Improved Armor Piercing, Freeze (100%)	1
Spine Whip	18	B	4d6+4	20	100m	Stagger (30%)	3
Slam	18	B	4d6+4	15	—	Stagger (50%)	1

### Vulnerability: Fragile Spine

If a mari lwyd's Spine Whip attack is successfully parried or is reduced to 0 REL, its neck is severed and it can no longer use its Spine Whip attack or Shapeshift ability. The head and the body now act separately on its turn and the neck retracts back into the body. The head may now only use the Bite attack (with RNG reduced to melee range) and floats around at its normal SPD Statistic in any direction. The body may only use the Slam attack and cannot extend its neck. Aiming for the mari lwyd's head suffers the same penalty you would normally for attacking the head. Both halves of the mari lwyd still share HP and armor and make use of their Chill Aura ability independently. If adjacent to its head, the mari lwyd can take its full turn to reattach it, tying it back on with a ribbon, which restores its Spine Whip attack to 20 REL.

### Ability: Chill Aura

A mari lwyd radiates an aura of otherworldly cold. If a creature starts its turn within melee range of the mari lwyd, they have a 50% chance to freeze. If the mari lwyd is on fire at the beginning of a turn where its Chill Aura ability is active, the fire immediately goes out, before the mari lwyd takes damage. When in the area of a Dimeritium bomb the mari lwyd cannot use this ability.

### Ability: Retractable Neck

Whenever a mari lwyd takes a movement action, it can choose to extend its neck up to 10m in any direction regardless of whether its body moves. Once it has used its Bite or Spine Whip attack at a distance, its head remains at that distance. As an action, the mari lwyd can retract its head all the way back to its body as long as it is still attached. If someone is currently grappling the mari lwyd's head or neck and it tries to retract, the mari lwyd must make a Physique check against the grappling opponent. If it fails, it cannot retract. If it succeeds it pulls free and retracts.

### Ability: Shapeshift

A mari lwyd can mimic humanoid voice flawlessly. Additionally, as long as a mari lwyd has more than 50 HP, without taking an action, it can transform into a humanoid that it has killed in the past. While shapeshifted, the mari lwyd can only use its Slam attack, and can repress its Chill Aura ability. If the mari lwyd is reduced to 50 HP or less, it is forced to revert back to its true form. When in the area of a Moondust bomb the mari lwyd cannot use this ability.

### Ability: Greater Mari Lwyd

A greater mari lwyd's Hit Points are raised by 30, its Spine Whip attack is ROF 4, and its Chill Aura has a 100% chance to freeze.

Skill Base	
Athletics	14
Awareness	16
Brawling	15
Courage	—
Endurance	15
Intimidation	17
Physique	15
Resist Magic	15
Spell Casting	17
Stealth	17
Wilderness Survival	12

<b>Armor</b>	0
<b>Regeneration</b>	—

Resistances
—
Immunities
Charm, Coercion, Fear, Bleed, & Poison, Disease

Susceptibilities
Specter Oil, Yrden, Moondust Bomb

<b>Dodge Base</b>	16
<b>Reposition Base</b>	18
<b>Block Base</b>	17

Bounty
800

Loot
Specter Dust (x1d6)
Wraith Essence (x1d6)
Infused Dust (x1d6)
Random Rune (x1)



**Medium  
Complex**

**Intelligence**  
*Sapient*

**Senses**  
*Superior Night  
Vision*

INT	6
REF	8
DEX	8
BODY	8
SPD	6
EMP	1
CRA	1
WILL	8

STUN	8
RUN	18
LEAP	3
STA	40
ENC	80
REC	8
HP	80

<b>Height</b>	2.2m
<b>Weight</b>	90kg
<b>Environment</b>	Wherever they are summoned
<b>Organization</b>	Solitary

# Penitent

## Commoner Superstition (Education DC:18)

“A penitent’s a type of demon that haunts folks who’ve done wrong. Heh, folks say that if ya kill someone in cold blood or commit some kinda heinous crime near a source of magic like a place of power or the like you’ll get chained to one of these bastards. When they appear to ya, a penitent’ll drown the land in fog and shadows so ya can’t escape and then steal your soul. Old elven legends say they carry around the souls of all the folk they’ve taken in their lanterns and slowly drain them of all their power or some such. Heh, all I know is, when the fog starts settin’ in ya better have a dimeritium bomb to chuck or you’re done for.”

—Rodolf Kazmer



## Lore & Behavior (Monster Lore DC:16)

While they aren't demons, penitents are souls that return to the mortal coil to punish evil doers and those who've committed heinous crimes. Much like their lesser cousins, wraiths, no one can entirely agree on where they return from but the fact is that if you commit a heinous enough crime you have a chance to summon a penitent. If you do, the penitent will attach itself to both you and the location of the crime plunging the area into a cloud of unnatural mist and summoning wraiths within the area. The penitent will appear in the mist to haunt you, calling your name in a hoarse rasp and attacking you the moment you come within sight. The wraiths summoned by the penitent will attack anything that enters the area of the mist with unrestrained fury.

In combat, a penitent fight in a very similar manner to its lesser cousins, swinging wildly with its sword and lantern, and periodically disappearing, only to appear somewhere unexpected for a surprise attack. It can shift in an out of the physical world at will, making it difficult to strike with physical attacks and is constantly moving, circling its prey. If under serious threat, a penitent will split itself into a group of lesser wraiths and attempt to surround their target. The best way to deal with this assault is to lay down an yrden circle to slow the penitent and any wraiths it summons and keep them from shifting or teleporting. If the penitent splits into multiple wraiths keep moving and kill them quickly before they have a chance to gang up on you. Once you've killed the lesser wraiths, the penitent will be forced back into its natural form.

The only way to get rid of the penitent without killing its prey is to kill it but as long as it remains shrouded in its otherworldly mist the penitent cannot be killed. Attempts to kill the penitent will do nothing and it will likely kill you eventually. To permanently kill a penitent you must find the person who summoned the penitent in the first place and have them light a large fire within the mist. This fire will banish the mist, allowing you to kill the penitent once and for all. This isn't always difficult as a Penitent often follows the person it's bonded to. If the penitent's prey remains in one area for more than three days the penitent will come to them, bringing its supernatural fog and its horde of wraiths.

Attacks							
Name	ATK Base	Type	DMG	Rel.	RNG	Effect	ROF
Penitent Sword	17	P or S	5d6+4	15	—	Bleeding (30%)	2
Penitent Lantern	15	E	4d6	10	—	Fire (75%)	1

### Ability: Supernatural Fog

The area where a penitent haunts is immersed in a thick cloud of supernatural fog and shadows with a 50m radius, centered on the scene of the crime or the location of the penitent's prey when the penitent arrived. Anyone in this fog, save for the penitent and its wraiths, is unable to see anything that is farther than 4m from them. While in this fog, the penitent takes no damage from any form of attack. This fog can only be dispersed by killing the penitent or having the penitent's prey light a large fire within the fog. As long as the fire remains lit and the penitent's prey remains in the area the fog remains dispersed.

### Ability: Split Form

By taking its action, a penitent can split its corporeal form into 4 separate wraiths which appear with full hit points within 10m of where the penitent was. All 4 of these wraiths act on the penitents initiative place and are controlled by the penitent. The penitent takes no damage from the damage dealt to the individual wraiths. When all 4 wraiths have been killed, the penitent must return to its single form and takes 20 points of damage if it's fog has been dispersed. Once the penitent has been returned to its single form it cannot split into separate wraiths again for 3 rounds. While in the area of Dimeritium Bomb the penitent cannot use this ability.

### Ability: Shift

A penitent can roll a Spell Casting check against an attack to become incorporeal and negate the attack. If they succeed, nothing physical affects them until the start of their next turn. If in the area of a Moondust Bomb or Yrden circle, the penitent cannot use this ability.

### Ability: Teleportation

A penitent can use its movement action to teleport 10m immediately. When in the area of a Moondust Bomb or Yrden circle the Penitent cannot use this ability.

## Selling Demon Parts

“If ya ever find yourself at a northern market thinkin’ about selling the parts you hacked off a demon I’d suggest ya find your way to the shadiest part of town you can find. Heh, the customers might smell of sulfur and blood but trust me, your gonna have an interestin’ time explaining where ya got the rams horns carved with ancient runes. Not that I’ve ever had that experience, heh!”

—Rodolf Kazmer

# Components

“As a Director of Magic at Gweison Haul I always kept various components on hand with which to brew elixirs and alchemical remedies to the various ailments suffered by the faculty and students. However, in most circumstances, this store of alchemical components was uniform in its ingredients. I had a specific herb to obtain rebis, a certain mineral for hydragenum, and a fungus to distill fulgur. In my flight across the Northern Realms I was without my usual provisions and had to make do with what I could find. While I would have liked to have had my perfectly measured ingredients, there was a certain excitement to improvising with unknown mushrooms and monster bile.”

—Glynnis var Treharne

## Alchemical Components

Name	Component/Use	Rarity	Location	Quantity	Forage	Weight	Cost
Bear Fat	Rebis (🔪)	P	Found on Bears	1d6	—	.5	90
Bear Hide	Crafting	P	Found on Bears	1d6/2	—	6	30
Bes Horn	Fulgur (⚡)	R	Found on Bes	1d6/3	—	1	166
Mari Lwyd Skull	Hydragenum (⊗)	R	Found on Mari Lwyd	1	—	2	200

## Mutagens

Name	Color	Effect	Alchemy DC	Minor Mutation
Bear	Green	+10HP	20	Prolific Hair Growth
Penitent	Blue	+2 Vigor Threshold	18	Glowing White Markings

# Index

**Academies**..... see Mage Schools

**Components** .....210

**Deities** .....37-48

Coram Agh Tera ..... 45

Dana Meadhbh..... 39

Epona ..... 45

Freya..... 41

Kreve..... 43

Lilvani ..... 46

Melitele..... 44

Morrigan ..... 46

Nehaleni ..... 47

Svalblod ..... 48

The Eternal Fire ..... 40

The Great Sun ..... 42

The Old Ways..... 37

The Prophet Lebioda ..... 47

Veyopatis..... 48

**Druid Circles** .....61-66

The Circle of Bleobheris..... 63

The Circle of Caed Myrkvid..... 64

The Circle of Gedyneith..... 65

The Circle of Gwyn Carn..... 61

The Crow Clan..... 62

Wandering Druids..... 66

**Druids** .....54-71

History..... 56-57

Monster hunting..... 66

Organization ..... see Druid Circles

Profession ..... 67

Skill tree ..... 68-69

Spells..... see Invocations, Druid

Types..... 57-58

**Elixirs** .....115-116

**Enchantments** .....111-114

Crafting .....113-114

Glyphwords .....112

Runewords..... 111

**Glyphs** .....110

**Goetia**.....139-149

Benefits..... 141

Deals ..... 140

Greater demons ..... 141

Rituals ..... 142-144

Tools..... 145-149

True names..... 143

**Hexes** .....105-106

Bones of Glass..... 106

Curse of Temperance..... 105

Hex of Forgetfulness ..... 106

High danger hexes..... 106

Low danger hexes..... 105

Medium danger hexes ..... 106

The Evil Eye ..... 106

The Odious Hex..... 105

Unending Need..... 106

**Invocations, Druid** .....96-100

Bigelow's Befoulment ..... 97

Blood of the Mountain..... 98

Conspiracy of the Mother ..... 100

Druidic Totem..... 98

Herbalism ..... 97

Hierophant/Flaminika invocations..... 100

Journeyman invocations ..... 97-98

Master invocations..... 98-99

Novice invocations.....	97
Sanctuary of the Black Grove .....	100
Shade of Bleobheris .....	100
Sigil of the Hunt.....	98
Touch of Bounty.....	97
Voice of the Counselor.....	97
Web of Roots.....	97
Well of Knowledge.....	100
Winds of the Taiga.....	100
Word of Summoning.....	97
Wrath of Nature .....	99

### **Invocations, Priest..... 91-95**

Arch Priest invocations.....	94
Blessed Herd .....	94
Blessed Weapon.....	92
Blessing of Abundance.....	93
Blood of the Berserker.....	94
Brand of Withering.....	93
Champion of the River.....	94
Divine Inspiration .....	92
Duplicitous Darkness .....	92
Feast of Plenty.....	94
Journeyman invocations .....	93
Light of Penance .....	92
Master invocations.....	93
Miracle of Lebioda .....	95
Novice invocations.....	92
Omens of the Future.....	95
Presence of the Divine.....	92
Quill of the Divine.....	93
Retribution of the Raven.....	95
Sagitta Aurea.....	93
Seek the Seekers .....	93
Silverlight.....	95

### **Ley lines .....** 8-9

### **Mage schools .....** 13-17

Aretuza.....	13-14
Ban Ard .....	14
Gweison Haul.....	14-15

Minor Schools.....	16-17
The Imperial Magic Academy .....	16

### **Mages .....** 10-33

Life in Academia.....	21-24
Life of a Mage.....	25-31
Lifepath .....	18-20
Mage spells .....	see Spells
Schools .....	see Schools, Mage

### **Magic items .....** 117-125

Bloodstone Dagger.....	145
Bonding Pair.....	122
Centerpiece .....	147-148
Cerebral Elixir.....	147
Crystal Skull .....	119
Earthly Ribbons .....	146
Enchanted Amulets .....	117-118
Eye of Nehaleni.....	119
Four-Leaf Clover .....	119
Gateway Portal.....	118
Goat Skin Mantle .....	145
Magical Elven Rope .....	119
Megascoppe.....	120-121
Power Stone Guardian .....	122
Power Stones.....	118
Purchasing .....	123
Runewright's Tools.....	120
Spell Formulae .....	118
Staff of Binding .....	148-149
Trophies .....	124-125
True Staff of Binding .....	149
Wand of Banishment.....	148
Wishing Mirror.....	118-119

### **Magical gifts .....** 74-75

Aerokinesis .....	75
Calm Animals .....	74
Cryokinesis.....	75
Detect Poison.....	75
Fear Aura.....	74
Fleet of Foot.....	74

Fortify .....	75
Geokinesis .....	75
Green Thumb .....	75
Major gifts .....	75
Minuscule Illusion .....	75
Minor gifts .....	74-75
Pigment .....	75
Pyrokinesis .....	75
See Aura .....	75
Weapon Honing .....	75

## **Monsters** ..... 195-208

Bes .....	196-197
Casglydd .....	198-199
Corpse Amalgam .....	200-201
Great Bear .....	202-203
Living Armor .....	204-205
Mari Lwyd .....	206-207
Penitent .....	208-209

## **Mutation** ..... 134-138

Adding traits .....	137-138
Combining .....	136
Control .....	136
DC .....	135
Failure .....	136
Mutagens .....	135, 210

## **Necromancy** ..... 129-133

Restless Spirits .....	130-131
Rituals .....	132-133
Spells .....	132

## **Nonbelievers** ..... 36-37

## **Priests** ..... 34-53

Profession .....	49
Skill tree .....	50-51
Spells .....	see Invocations, Priest
Worship .....	see Deities

## **Rituals** ..... 102-104, 132-133, 142-144

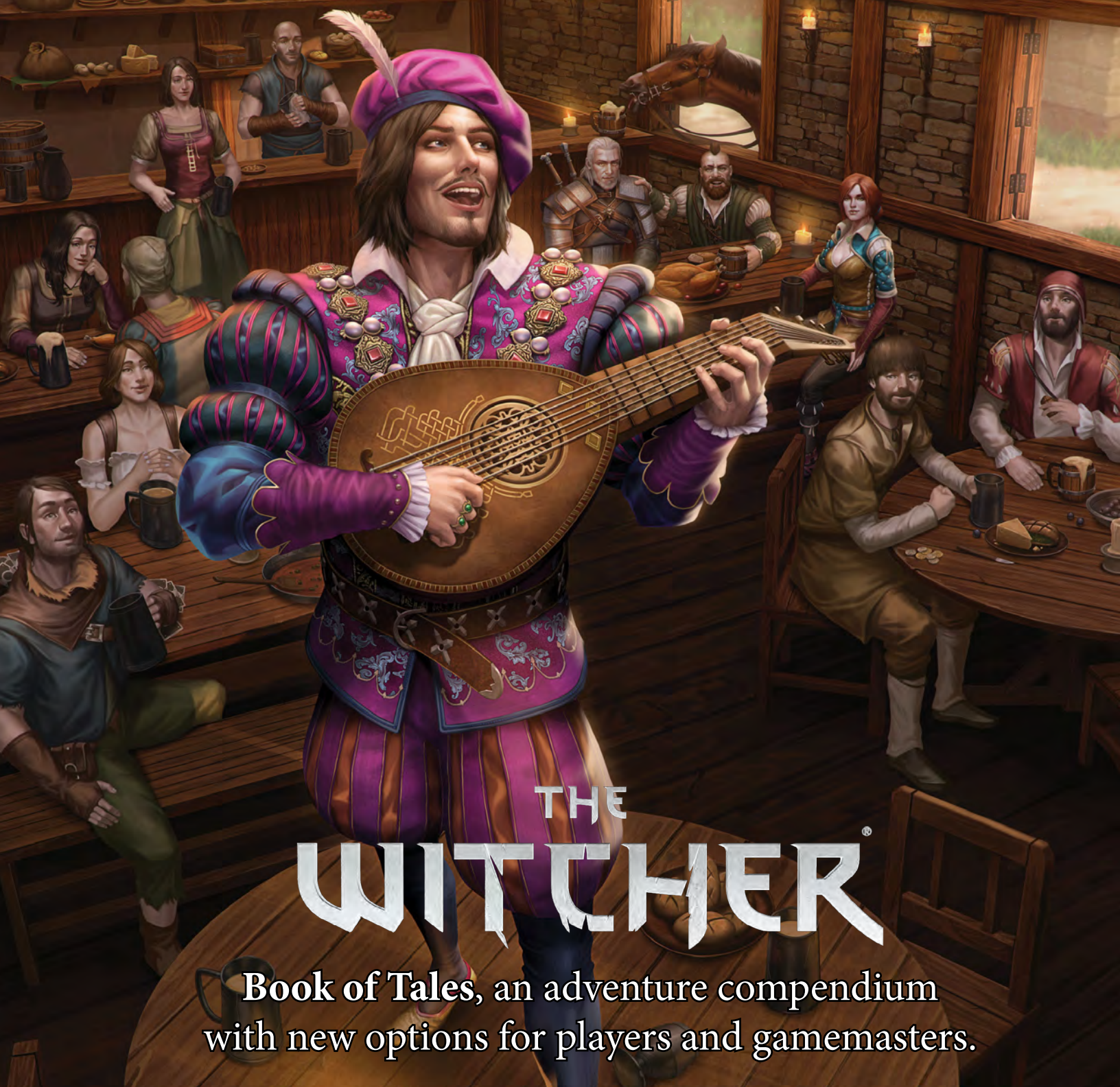
Animate Armor .....	103
Beacon of the Unnatural .....	103
Cadfan's Synthesis .....	132
Controlled Summoning .....	142-143
Create Crystal Skull .....	102
Create Place of Power .....	105
Create Soul Beacon .....	132-133
Enchant Amulet .....	105
Fog of the Past .....	104
Goetia rituals .....	142-144
Hanmarvyn's Blue Dream .....	133
Imbue Trophy .....	102
Journeyman rituals .....	103-104, 132-133
Magical Guestbook .....	104
Master rituals .....	104, 132-133, 144
Necromancy rituals .....	132-133
Novice rituals .....	102-103, 142-143
Reanimate Corpse .....	133
Ritual of Binding .....	144
Ritual of Naming .....	143
Ritual of the Goat Skin .....	146
Tyromancy .....	103
Uncontrolled Summoning .....	142
Wagerer's Pendant .....	103

## **Spells** ..... 81-90, 132

Ainfra's Extraction .....	90
Air spells .....	83-84, 87, 89
Alchemical Recovery .....	82
Aurora's Breath .....	84
Ball Lightning .....	87
Bekker's Dark Mirror .....	89
Bekker's Rockslide .....	86
Blaze of the Korath .....	90
Blemish .....	82
Breath of Fire .....	84
Bronwyn's Bow .....	83
Cinder Door .....	87
Cloak .....	85
Coating of Fire .....	84

Corpse Restoration .....	132	Magic Screen.....	82
Cryfhau .....	83	Magnify Odor .....	84
Crystal Stasis.....	89	Master spells .....	89-90, 132
Deluge of Ys.....	90	Mixed spells.....	82-83, 85-86, 89
Detect Ley Line.....	82	Necromancy spells.....	132
Disrupt Focus.....	85	Novice spells.....	82-84
Dormyn's Chamber.....	85	Priest.....	see Invocations, Priest
Druid.....	see Invocations, Druid	Reopen Portal.....	83
Dust Coating .....	83	Rusting.....	88
Earth spells .....	83, 86, 89	Savolla's Method.....	83
Earthen Pillar .....	83	Shape Earth .....	89
Elgan's Bastion .....	86	Sharpen Senses .....	83
Empower .....	85	Slip Stream.....	84
Essence of Potion .....	88	Smith's Touch.....	87
Fergus' Demise.....	82	Soften Earth.....	83
Fire spells .....	84, 87, 90	Spectral Tether.....	85
Gwyntog.....	89	Steal Spell.....	89
Hand of the Tempest .....	89	Storm of Souls.....	132
Harmless Fire .....	84	Touch of Lightning.....	87
Hold Tongue.....	82	Trap Portal.....	86
Invaerne .....	88	Vahila's Smoke .....	84
Invisible Ribbon.....	87	Water Jet .....	84
Javed's Swarm.....	86	Water spells .....	84, 88, 90
Journeyman spells.....	85-88, 132	Web of Ice .....	84
Light Feet .....	83		
Living Fire .....	90		
Mage's Forge.....	87		
		<b>Witcher signs, advanced .....</b>	<b>101</b>





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