

Hacksaw Dell Quickstart

ROOT

✿ The Roleplaying Game ✿





About This Booklet

This booklet is a preview of **ROOT: THE ROLEPLAYING GAME**, including six playbooks; all the basic moves; rules for depletion, wear, exhaustion, and injury; equipment mechanics; and a whole premade clearing to get you playing right away. Here, you'll find everything you need to get started playing and run through a dangerous, complicated situation in Hacksaw Dell—one that could easily take a couple of sessions of play to sort out.

These rules might make more sense to those familiar with the Powered by the Apocalypse framework and games like **Dungeon World**, **Masks**, or **The Sprawl**, but they are designed to be usable by anyone. If you have any questions, or want to give feedback, you can head on over to our Magpie Games Discord (<https://magpiegames.com/magpie-games-official-discord/>).

Credits

DESIGN: Brendan Conway & Mark Diaz Truman

WRITING: Chazz Kellner

EDITING: Brendan Conway, Danielle Lauzon, and Mark Diaz Truman

LAYOUT: Miguel Ángel Espinoza

ART: Kyle Ferrin

ART DIRECTION: Marissa Kelly

PROOFREADING: Katherine Fackrell

ROOT BOARD GAME DESIGN: Cole Wehrle

ROOT BOARD GAME GRAPHIC DESIGN AND LAYOUT: Cole Wehrle, Kyle Ferrin, Nick Brachmann, and Jaime Willems

ROOT BOARD GAME CONCEPT: Patrick Leder

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Root: An Overview

ROOT: THE ROLEPLAYING GAME is based on Leder Games's award-winning **ROOT: A GAME OF WOODLAND MIGHT AND RIGHT** board game about conflict and power, featuring struggles between cats, birds, mice, and more.

In **ROOT: THE RPG**, you all play vagabonds, denizens of the Woodland who have been cast out of “civilized” society, whether by their own volition or by exile. You venture throughout the Woodland fulfilling jobs, having adventures, and tipping the scales in the conflict between the factions.

This game focuses on fun adventurous action and escapades, on the meaningful, lasting backdrop of the Woodland and its war. You'll get into big fights and stage cunning heists, and you'll earn reputation with different Woodland factions, perhaps even helping them to take control over clearings.

The Woodland

The Woodland is defined by the dense forests from which it takes its name. They obstruct travel and construction, and even after years of habitation, the Woodland denizens are largely confined to “clearings”, mostly-treeless areas amid a sea of timber. The denizens cut paths between the clearings, facilitating travel and trade, but those are far from real roads.

Striding out into the forests between paths and clearings is a foolish, dangerous endeavor. The forests play home to bandits and outlaws, to bears and deer, to harsh conditions and dangerous terrain.

There are many species of Woodland denizen, but the dominant species include foxes, mice, rabbits, and birds. Clearings are populated mostly by one of the ground-dwelling species, with the birds spread out in the canopies across the Woodland.

Until relatively recently, the Woodland was held in the talons of the Eyrie Dynasties. Then the Dynasties tore themselves apart in a civil war, ultimately destroying what control they had over the clearings of the Woodland. In the new vacuum of power, many clearings were left in disarray, while others began to govern themselves...

When the Marquise de Cat took notice, she led her soldiers in from a far-off empire, along with their knowledge of industry and engineering. She took control, by force, by enticement, by whatever means necessary. And soon most of the Woodland clearings were under her sway.

Now, the Eyrie Dynasties have finally managed to regroup and muster their forces. They are pushing to take their ancestral domain, while the Marquisate stands strong against them. And all the while, the other denizens of the Woodland are beginning to stir in new, defiant ways, forming a Woodland Alliance to try to rebel against the other powers and take back the Woodland...

The Vagabonds

There have always been vagabonds in the Woodland. Exiles, outcasts, strangers, oddities. Idealists, rebels, criminals, freethinkers. Those who don't fit into the clearings and the paths. Those who would prefer to live in the spaces between.

Most of the time, the life of a vagabond is focused on survival. They take what jobs they can when they visit clearings—often the least desirable or most difficult jobs around—to get enough food and supplies to survive. Some even resort to crime, although any who primarily subsist on stealing from other denizens are more bandits or robbers than vagabonds.

But along with those harsh realities, the vagabond gets something else: freedom. The social structures of clearings rarely have any hold on the vagabonds. The rulers and politicians may threaten the vagabonds into compliance using force of arms, but even then, vagabonds have been hardened and sharpened by their lives. They carry great skill in combat, and some are more than a match for even squads of soldiers or guards.

The Players

In the full game of **ROOT: THE RPG**, each player creates a character, their own vagabond, using a playbook. A playbook is a kind of vagabond archetype, a set of abilities, character traits, and story elements all designed to help you make the coolest character possible. In this booklet, there are six prefilled playbooks to get you playing quickly—just choose the one you like best and start the game!

The Gamemaster

One player in your game of **ROOT: THE RPG** (likely the first one to read this booklet) will take on the role of Gamemaster (GM), with the responsibility to represent the world of the Woodland. The GM will portray all of the other denizens who fill up the story. The GM isn't playing against the other players; their job is to portray the Woodland and make it an interesting, dramatic place of consequence and change.

The Factions

The Woodland plays home to many denizens and powerful groups, all vying for control of its resources. These powerful groups are called “factions”, and they extend over the width and breadth of the Woodland.

Hacksaw Dell, the premade clearing in this booklet, predominantly involves squabbles between and among the Woodland Alliance and the Lizard Cult, with a third faction—the Eyrie Dynasties—waiting in the wings. In the Woodland at large, the Eyrie and the Marquisate are at war with each other for control over the Woodland, but the conflict in Hacksaw Dell might show a new path for the Woodland to follow.

There is one more “faction” of note within the Woodland—the Woodland denizens themselves. This faction is broken up and disunified—fox-dominant clearings don’t necessarily agree with mouse-dominant clearings. But the opinions of the regular denizens will affect the vagabonds wherever they go.

In all cases, no faction is “good” or “evil”. All factions do right and wrong. All factions help the denizens sometimes, and hurt others. All factions have members who have empathy and honor and care about those around them, and members who are in this fight purely for their own selfish benefit.



The Woodland Alliance

In the midst of the new war for the Woodland, many denizens have reached their boiling point. After years of chaos in which they found themselves free of any reigning wing, paw, or claw, to suddenly have two major empires trying to force a yoke upon them yet again—it’s unacceptable. These denizens built the Woodland Alliance, a network of would-be rebels, and waited for their moment to hit the Eyrie and the Marquisate hard enough to take back their Woodland.

The Woodland Alliance isn’t a straight representative of the denizens, of course—they weren’t elected or chosen by the denizens at large. They arose from the denizens most angry at the current war and the other powers, and they are willing to take extreme measures to defeat those empires. Sometimes, that means freeing clearings from oppressive regimes. Other times, that means creating martyrs and making terrible sacrifices.



The Lizard Cult

The Lizard Cult originated in a distant land, and its missionaries, priests, and soldiers spread out across the world, sometimes acting as with kindness and succor, sometimes acting as invaders and conquerors, but always spreading the message of the Great Dragon. The Cult’s core hierarchy and structure is far, far away from the Woodland, and those missionaries who have made it to the Woodland have adopted all those different tactics and more to share their ideology with the denizens. They even go so far as to alter elements of Cult orthodoxy to match the Woodlanders’ belief and better bring them in to the Cult.

Despite its name, the Lizard Cult isn’t actually composed only of lizards. Especially in its Woodland incarnation, the Cult has found supporters across all the different Woodland species as it caters to the downtrodden of the clearings. But the Cult, like nearly any faction, is not one simple thing, and for all that there are plenty who have been helped and uplifted by the Cult’s kindness, there are some who fear or even hate the Cult as a result of crimes perpetrated by those claiming to act in the Cult’s name.



The Eyrie Dynasties

The history of the Eyrie Dynasties stretches deep into the Woodland’s past. They claim that they have always ruled the Woodland, and always shall. True, their reign was characterized by infighting, by regime change (often at the edge of a blade), by bird dominance and oppression of the other Woodland denizens...but they also protected the clearings from bandits and the wild. They built and maintained the paths between clearings. They enforced law and order, and they made the Woodland what it is today.

Everything came crashing down in a recent civil war, one of the more vicious conflicts to ever face the Eyrie. The Dynasties nearly tore themselves to pieces back then. Now, a newly resurgent Eyrie is caught in a new war with the Marquisate to retake the Woodland clearings—their rightful domain. And with an enemy outside of itself for once, the Eyrie is ready to wage total war. After all, the denizens of the Woodland need its protection.

Choosing Characters

The full game of **ROOT: THE RPG** will include all the rules you need to create your characters from scratch. For this booklet, though, the characters are mostly pregenerated so you can jump into play faster! Here's what you need to know:

Playbooks

Each pregenerated character is tied to a playbook, an archetype that comes with a set of abilities, skills, questions, and dramatic issues. For this booklet, there are six characters and playbooks available:

- **Laeliana the Arbiter:** Laeliana has been a mercenary for years, but she decided that life was wrong for her. Now she is a vagabond trying to choose the right battles to fight.
- **Jexri the Champion:** Jexri is a devout follower of the Great Wyrms, but not the Lizard Cult. They do their duty to the Wyrms by defending those who need it wherever they go.
- **Yates the Envoy:** Yates came to love life on the road, and in particular enjoyed voicing the words that others couldn't quite find for themselves, making him a diplomat for hire.
- **Mint the Prince:** Mint's mother, Monca Leafclaw, was renowned all across the Woodland for her incredible deeds. Now, Mint is trying to live up to her mother's example.
- **Rackham the Thief:** Rackham comes from Hacksaw Dell, and they had to escape that boring life! Now, Rackham comes home to show off their expertise as a burglar.
- **Knohadd the Vagrant:** Knohadd was meant to be a Riverfolk Company captain, but he quit that life. Since then, he's made friends, enemies, and plenty of trouble.

You're going to be adding more details about the Woodland and the different denizens as you flesh out your characters during play. That's well and good. Use everything in the pregenerated characters as a starting point, but feel free to play in the undefined spaces and edges.

Name, Species & Look

Every vagabond has a name—and often, an epithet, a working name for them to conduct crimes under. If you want an epithet for your vagabond, fill one in!

Then, every denizen has a species—what kind of denizen you are. Are you a fox? A rabbit? A bird?

Species has no mechanical effect—anyone can be a vagabond. But socially, your species will influence how some denizens deal with you. If you're a bird, you may be hated still further by other birds who see you as an outcast...or you might be embraced by the birds of the Eyrie, who try to woo you to their side. If you're a wolf, then you may be looked at with suspicion—most denizens probably haven't seen a wolf before.

Finally, the vagabond's details. Each pregenerated character has a short description at the top right of the playbook and in the character background—feel free to elaborate!

Stats

Each vagabond has five stats: Charm, Cunning, Finesse, Luck, and Might. Throughout the game, you'll be rolling two six-sided dice and adding these stats to determine the results of moves. So, the higher the stat, the more likely things will go in your favor for the associated moves.

Charm measures how socially adept you are, how capable you are of bending other people to your will using words and ideas.

Cunning measures how sharp-minded you are, how capable you are of noticing important details in people and places, and how capable you are of tricking others.

Finesse measures how deft and dexterous you are, how capable you are of performing complicated or intricate tasks with your hands.

Luck measures how...well...lucky you are, how capable you are of putting your fate into the hands of pure chance and coming out on top.

Might measures how strong and tough you are, how capable you are of overpowering opponents or succeeding in tasks that require brute force.

Each playbook comes with a predetermined set of stats. Normally, you get to add +1 to the stat of your choice, so long as you don't raise any stat beyond +2. **This +1 has already been added in for all the pregenerated characters.**

Over the course of the game, you might unlock advancements that will further improve your stats, but the absolute maximum you may have in one stat is +2 without a special move, and +3 with a special move.

Background, Drives & Nature

Next up, you have your background, drives, and nature.

The background for every pregenerated character has already been filled in, but feel free to elaborate on what is provided or make small alterations that fit your style of play.

The characters' drives have also been chosen. These two drives describe how you can advance—fulfill the condition of the drive and you can advance immediately. But you can only advance once per session per drive! If you want to see what you can do when you advance, check out page 14 for some basics and page 31 for specific options.

Finally, the characters' natures have already been chosen. Your nature refers to your deeper personality type. It's a way that you act to relieve stress. If you fulfill the condition of your nature, you can clear your entire exhaustion track (see more about that on page 12). You can fulfill the condition of your nature any number of times, as long as you take the necessary action.

If you feel strongly about changing any of these options, you can talk about doing it with your GM—but what's already in there is prechosen to fit Hacksaw Dell and its problems.

Moves, Weapon Skills & Roguish Feats

Each playbook has moves of its own. Many moves require you to roll with a particular stat—pay close attention to those stats, and how they connect with your stat line. The playbook moves for the pregenerated characters are already chosen.

Weapon skills each refer to one of the special weapon moves. To use them, you need a weapon tagged with that move, and you need the appropriate weapon skill. For example, to use Cleave, you have to both have the weapon skill and have a weapon tagged with that skill. The pregenerated characters' weapon skills have already been chosen.

Roguish feats are the special feats of roguery and clandestine action that you're skilled in. These are used in conjunction with the **attempt a roguish feat** move. Each playbook has a few preselected, or can choose some number from the list. For this booklet, the pregenerated characters all have their roguish feats selected.

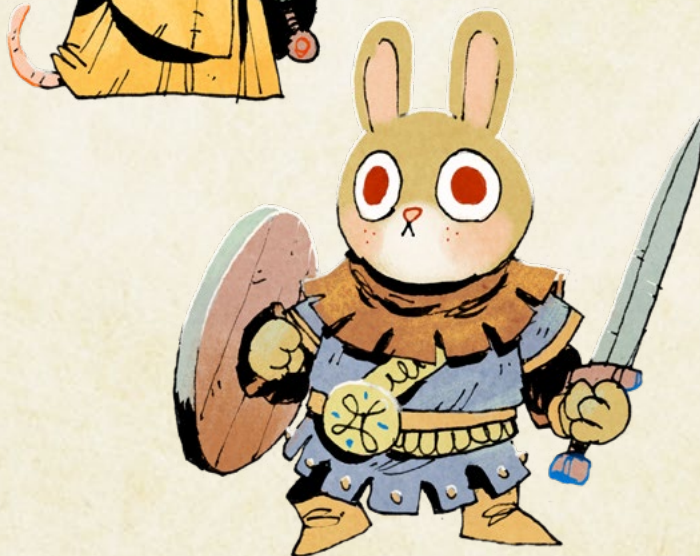
Introductions & Connections

When everyone is done picking and reading over their characters, go around and introduce your characters. Explain who you are, why you're a vagabond, what you do, and what your drives are. Answer any questions the GM or other players ask. After everyone has introduced their characters and you know who the other vagabonds in your band are, you'll choose connections to those other vagabonds. Go around in the same order, each player adding one connection at a time. Each player has two connections on their character sheet and gets to use both, so go around until each player has set up the two connections from their own character sheet.

Each connection also comes with a small rules tweak. Make sure you read it out loud so everyone involved with the connection is aware of it.

Other Elements

You also have harm tracks (injury, exhaustion, and depletion) and equipment. Your harm tracks represent your health, stress, and general equipment, while your equipment is the more specialized and important items you are carrying. For more on your harm tracks, see page 12. For more on equipment, see page 13.



Playing Root: The RPG

Talking and Moves

ROOT: THE RPG is a tabletop roleplaying game, and that means it plays out like a conversation. The rules are here to help that conversation, prompting interesting statements and helping to fill in gaps or moments of uncertainty.

In this game, the most common way the rules prompt conversation is with “moves”. A move is a single nugget of rules, phrased as a “When X happens, Y happens” kind of sentence. “When you engage an enemy sword-to-sword, roll with Might.” “When you attempt a roguish feat, roll with Finesse.” “When you trick an NPC, roll with Cunning.”

The first part of the move, the “When X happens” part, is called the trigger. When the trigger occurs in the conversation of the game, then the move is triggered, and the second part follows. Sometimes, that second part says something happens. Sometimes, it calls for a dice roll (always 2d6, usually with a stat added).

The core takeaway to keep in mind right now is this—if a move is triggered, you follow the instructions. If a move hasn’t been triggered, you keep the conversation moving.

Rolling the Dice

If a move asks you to roll dice, roll two six-sided dice (2d6) and follow the outcomes listed in the move. Usually, moves ask you to roll with something—like “roll with Might” or “roll with Reputation”—which means that you add that stat to the roll.

The outcomes of a move fall into three categories:

- **10+:** a full hit! You get your way.
- **7-9:** a partial hit with costs, complications, or consequences.
- **6-:** a miss. The GM tells you what happens. It probably won’t be good.

Some moves tell you what happens for each category, while others allow you to choose more options when you roll higher. Either way, rolling higher is usually better.

The GM never rolls dice. Instead, they tell you what’s happening and respond to the actions your characters take. They also act as the referee if there’s any disagreement about what a move means.

The Basic Moves

Every vagabond makes use of the basic moves, included on the following page. Here’s a list of the basic moves, along with a primary stat if applicable:

- Attempt a Roguish Feat (Finesse)
- Figure Someone Out (Charm)
- Persuade an NPC (Charm)
- Read a Tense Situation (Cunning)
- Trick an NPC (Cunning)
- Trust Fate (Luck)
- Wreck Something (Might)
- Help or Interfere
- Plead With a PC

These moves help structure the core conversation of the game. A wide variety of the things the vagabonds do will fall under one of those categories, and their specific components ensure the conversation moves forward in interesting directions.

Vagabonds also have access to all the normal and some of the special weapon moves (see page 9), all reputation moves (page 11), and their own playbook moves. All of those are more specific moves designed to help fill in particular parts of the overall conversation. The weapon moves, for example, cover fighting and using weapons, while the reputation moves cover using your reputation throughout the Woodland.

Attempt a Roguish Feat

*When you **attempt a roguish feat** you are skilled in, say your goal and roll with Finesse. On a hit, you achieve your goal. On a 7-9, mark exhaustion or one risk of your feat (GM’s choice) comes to bear. When you **attempt a roguish feat** you are NOT skilled in, you are **trusting fate**.*

Every character has a few roguish feats trained. You can try to do any of them, but if you’re not trained in a feat—you don’t have the box checked—then you’re not **attempting a roguish feat** when you try it, you’re **trusting fate**.

You have to state your goal when you attempt a roguish feat—something like “steal the jewel from that guy’s pocket,” or “sneak into the barracks unseen,” or “disable the traps.” “Achieving your goal” means that even if there was a cost or complication, you did the thing—you stole the jewel, you snuck into the barracks, you disabled the traps.

Here’s a list of all the roguish feats and likely risks:

Roguish Feats

Feat Name	Description	Risks
Acrobatics	Adeptly climbing, vaulting, jumping	Break something, detection, plunge into danger
Blindside	Backstab, murder, sneak attack, suckerpunch	Draw unwanted attention, leave evidence, plunge into danger
Counterfeit	Copying, forgery, fakery	Leave evidence, take too long, weak result
Disable Device	Disarming traps, turning off mechanisms	Break something, draw unwanted attention, expend resources
Hide	Disappear from view, remain hidden	Expend resources, leave evidence, take too long
Pick Lock	Open a locked door, chest, etc.	Break something, detection, plunge into danger
Pick Pocket	Subtly steal from a pocket	Leave evidence, take too long, weak result
Sleight of Hand	Palming, switching, ditching, flourishes	Draw unwanted attention, leave evidence, weak result
Sneak	Get into or out of places without being seen	Break something, draw unwanted attention, plunge into danger

Risks Definitions

BREAK SOMETHING

Break something you're carrying or in the environment. Possibly mark wear.

DETECTION

Straight up get noticed by an onlooker.

DRAW UNWANTED ATTENTION

Either create hostile onlookers where before no one cared, or call attention without actually being detected.

EXPEND RESOURCES

Use up supplies. Mark depletion or exhaustion as the GM chooses.

LEAVE EVIDENCE

Leave behind evidence that can later lead an investigation against you or expose your allies to retribution.

PLUNGE INTO DANGER

Seize the chance to act and run into a more dangerous situation.

TAKE TOO LONG

Take too much time, leading the situation to change around you in some meaningful way.

WEAK RESULT

Get a hard choice about exactly what you want, or just straight up don't quite get everything you want.

Figure Someone Out

When you **try to figure someone out**, roll with *Charm*. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1. While interacting with them, spend your hold 1-for-1 to ask their player a question:

- is your character telling the truth?
- what is your character really feeling?
- what does your character intend to do?
- what does your character wish I'd do?
- how could I get your character to _____?

This move doesn't resolve immediately—you get a few points of "hold" which you spend according to the move. Here, you spend hold during the conversation to ask questions.

When you ask questions, "their player" answers (and answers honestly), meaning that another player answers for another vagabond, and the GM answers for NPCs. For the question, "how could I get your character to _____?", you can fill in the blank with anything—and "There's nothing you can do" is a valid answer, if it's true.

Persuade an NPC

When you **persuade an NPC with promises or threats**, roll with *Charm*. On a 10+, they see things your way, provided you have given them a strong motive or reasonable bribe. On a 7-9, they aren't sure; the GM will tell you what you need to do to sway them.

This move is used when you're trying to get someone to do what you want based on what you're saying. If you're making threats, if you're making a persuasive argument—that's **persuading an NPC**. It's always an NPC—this move is no use against the other vagabonds.

"A strong motive or reasonable bribe" is dependent upon the character, the situation, and the GM's judgment. That means on a 7-9, the requirement is higher—the GM will tell you what more you have to do.

Read a Tense Situation

When you **read a tense situation**, roll with *Cunning*. On a 7–9, ask 1. On a 10+, ask 3. Take +1 when acting on the answers.

- what's my best way out / in / through?
- who or what is the biggest threat?
- who or what is most vulnerable to me?
- what should I be on the lookout for?
- who is in control here?

This move is about taking in the area around you and figuring out what matters. You can only read a *tense* situation. So if you have ample time and no pressure to search a room, you're not triggering the move—you just search the room.

Whether or not you are “acting on the answers” is ultimately up to the GM to decide, but usually it should be interpreted pretty liberally. As long as your actions are informed or supported by the information you gained, you should probably get the bonus. It lasts until the situation changes enough for the information to no longer matter.

Trick an NPC

When you **trick an NPC** to get what you want, roll with *Cunning*. On a hit, they take the bait and do what you want. On a 7–9, they can instead choose one:

- they hesitate; you shake their confidence or weaken their morale
- they stumble; you gain a critical opportunity
- they overreact; take +1 forward against them

Unlike **persuading an NPC**, tricks rely on deceit and manipulation—**tricking an NPC** isn't about convincing them through argument or pressure; it's about saying or doing whatever is necessary to get them to act how you want. Just like **persuading an NPC**, you can't **trick** another vagabond.

On a hit—a 7 or up—the NPC is deceived in some way...but on a 7–9, they don't have to do what you expect. Instead, they can hesitate, stumble, or overreact at the GM's discretion.

Morale harm is a special kind of harm for NPCs only. It brings them closer to submitting to or fleeing from you. If an NPC hesitates, the GM should consider inflicting morale harm on them. You'll find more on morale harm later (page 12).

Trust Fate

When you **trust fate** to get through trouble, roll with *Luck*. On a hit you scrape by or barrel through; the GM will tell you what it costs you. On a 10+, fortune favors the bold; your panache also earns you a *fleeting opportunity*.

This move is here to act as a back-up, all-purpose move. Always use a more specific move if there is one, but when a vagabond does something dangerous, risky, difficult, or otherwise tense, and no other move covers the situation... they're probably **trusting fate**.

Remember that on any hit at all—any result of 7 or higher—there is still a cost. **Trusting fate** is risky, and nearly always costs something, whether a dropped item or exhaustion.

“Scraping by” or “barreling through” both imply that you aren't doing this gracefully or skillfully—you're just barely making it, or you're smashing straight ahead.

A “fleeting opportunity” is a short-lived chance for the vagabond to really stretch, to try something especially dangerous for potentially great reward.

Wreck Something

When you **wreck something**, roll with *Might*. On a hit, you seriously break it; it can't be used again until it's repaired. On a 7–9, you're imprecise and dangerous; you cause collateral damage, attract attention, or end up in a bad spot, GM's choice.

Wreck something is for bashing doors down, breaking equipment, and more. You need to actually be able to **wreck something** for the move to trigger—a single mousefolk vagabond with a dagger can't wreck a windmill. But a mousefolk vagabond with a battering ram could.

By default, **wrecking something** is based on brute force. Careful “wrecking” based on device knowledge and cutting the right cord, for example, is **attempting a roguish feat** or **trusting fate** (unless you have a special move for it).

Help or Interfere

When you **help or interfere** with another vagabond, mark exhaustion to add +1 or -2 to their roll (after rolling). Mark exhaustion again to select one of the following:

- conceal your help or interference
- create an opportunity or obstacle

To **help or interfere**, a vagabond must be able to take appropriate action for the specific situation. Multiple vagabonds can **help or interfere** with the same roll, as long as each marks exhaustion.

If a vagabond creates an opportunity or obstacle with their **help or interference**, they might make something longer-lasting based on their action. It's only an opportunity, however, not a guarantee.

Plead With a PC

When you **plead with a PC** to go along with you, they clear 1-exhaustion if they agree to what you've proposed. You may use this move only once per session.

Pleading with a PC is the best way to get other vagabonds to go along with your plans. Each PC can only **plead** with another PC once per session, whether or not they agree! And if the other PC doesn't agree, they're signalling that there is no way they'd do this—time to find another way forward.



Weapon Moves

All vagabonds can use **engage in melee**, **grapple an enemy**, and **target someone**, if they have a weapon with the right range. To use a special weapon move, you must have the weapon skill and a weapon with the appropriate tag and range. (Improvise Weapon and Confuse Senses just require usable materials.) By default, unarmed vagabonds do 1-exhaustion harm. Armed vagabonds do 1-injury harm.

Engage in Melee

When you **engage an enemy in melee at close or intimate range**, roll with Might. On a hit, trade harm. On a 10+, pick 3. On a 7–9, pick 1.

- inflict serious (+1) harm
- suffer little (-1) harm
- shift your range one step
- impress, dismay, or frighten your foe

Grapple an Enemy

When you **grapple with an enemy at intimate range**, roll with Might. On a hit, you choose simultaneously. Continue making choices until someone disengages, falls unconscious, or dies. On a 10+, you make one choice first, before beginning to make simultaneous choices.

- you strike a fast blow; inflict injury
- you wear them down; they mark exhaustion
- you exploit weakness; mark exhaustion to inflict 2-injury
- you withdraw; disengage to close range

Target Someone

When you **target a vulnerable foe at far range**, roll with Finesse. On a hit, you inflict injury. On a 10+, you can strike again before they get to cover—inflict injury again—or keep your position hidden, your choice.

Cleave SPECIAL

When you **cleave armored foes at close range**, mark exhaustion and roll with Might. On a hit, you smash through their defenses and equipment; inflict 3-wear. On a 7–9, you overextend your weapon or yourself: mark wear or end up in a bad spot, your choice.

Confuse Senses SPECIAL

When you **throw something to confuse an opponent's senses at close or intimate range**, roll with Finesse. On a hit, you've thrown them off balance, blinded them, deafened them, or confused them, and given yourself an opportunity. On a 10+, they have to take some time to get their bearings and restore their senses before they can act clearly again. On a 7–9, you have just a few moments.

Disarm SPECIAL

When you **target an opponent's weapon with your strikes at close range**, roll with Finesse. On a hit, they have to mark 2-exhaustion or lose their weapon—it's well out of reach. On a 10+, they have to mark 3-exhaustion instead of 2.

Harry a Group SPECIAL

When you **harry a group of enemies at far range**, mark wear and roll with Cunning. On a 10+, both. On a 7–9, choose 1.

- inflict 2-morale harm
- they are pinned or blocked

Improvise Weapon SPECIAL

When you **make a weapon out of improvised materials around you**, roll with Cunning. On a hit, you make a weapon; the GM will tell you its range tag and at least one other beneficial tag based on the materials you used. On a 7–9, the weapon also has a weakness tag.

Storm a Group SPECIAL

When you **storm a group of foes in melee**, mark exhaustion and roll with Might. On a hit, trade harm. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7–9, choose 1.

- you show them up; you inflict 2-morale harm
- you keep them off balance and confused; you inflict 2-exhaustion
- you avoid their blows to the best of your ability; you suffer little (-1) harm.
- you use them against each other; mark exhaustion again and they inflict their harm against themselves

Parry SPECIAL

When you **try to parry the attacks of an enemy at close range**, mark exhaustion and roll with Finesse. On a hit, you consume their attention. On a 10+, all 3. On a 7–9, pick 1.

- you inflict morale or exhaustion (GM's choice)
- you disarm your opponent; their weapon is out of hand, but in reach
- you don't suffer any harm

Quick Shot SPECIAL

When you **fire a snap shot at an enemy at close range**, roll with Luck. On a hit, inflict injury. On a 7–9, choose 1. On a 10+, choose 2.

- you don't mark wear
- you don't mark exhaustion
- you move quickly and change your position (and, if you choose, range)
- you keep your target at bay—they don't move

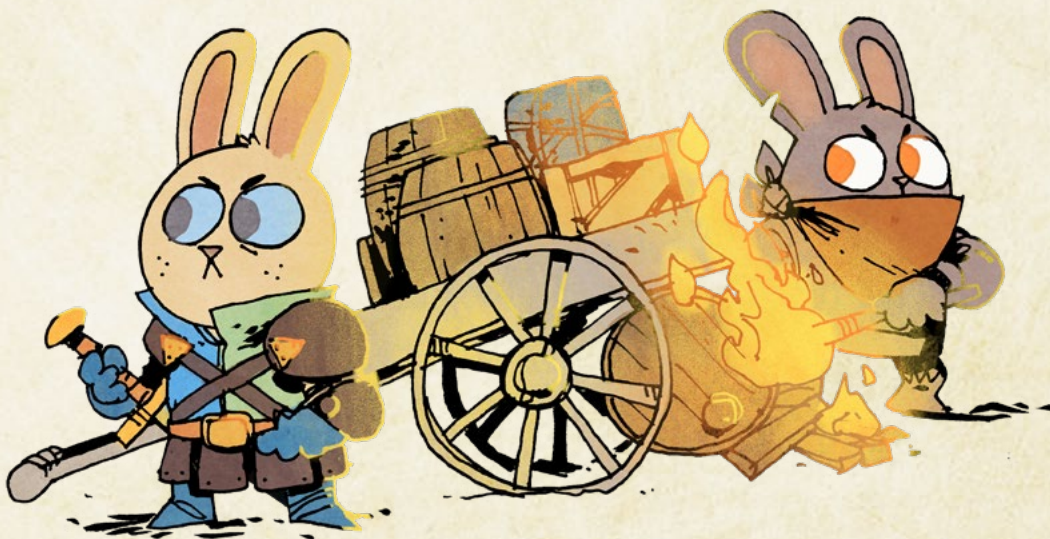
Trick Shot SPECIAL

When you **fire a clever shot designed to take advantage of the environment at any range**, mark wear and roll with Finesse. On a 7–9, choose 2. On a 10+, choose 3.

- your shot lands in any target of your choice within range, even if it's behind cover or hidden (inflicting injury or wear if appropriate)
- your shot strikes a second available target of your choice
- your shot cuts something, breaks something, or knocks something over, your choice
- your shot distracts an opponent and provides an opportunity

Vicious Strike SPECIAL

When you **viciously strike an opponent where they are weak at intimate or close range**, mark exhaustion and roll with Might. On a hit, they suffer serious (+1) harm and cannot mark wear on their armor to block it. On a 10+, you get away with the strike. On a 7–9, they score a blow against you as well.



Reputation Moves

Each vagabond has a reputation across the Woodland. At the start of a campaign of **ROOT: THE RPG**, they'll have some reputation, but mostly be unknown. As they take more and more actions amid the war, however, their reputations, good or bad, will grow. The factions and general denizens of the Woodland will come to have stronger and stronger opinions about each individual vagabond. To represent this, **ROOT: THE RPG** uses this system of reputation tracks and moves.

A bit of terminology, first. Prestige refers to positive word about you. Notoriety refers to negative word about you. Your Reputation is the actual score you have with any given faction, representing their overarching opinion and knowledge of you.

Each PC tracks their own Reputation independently, and each PC tracks Reputation for each faction independently of the others. In situations where multiple PCs' Reputations are at stake, add them together (max +4, min -3).

The full game of **ROOT: THE RPG** contains more Reputation moves you can use with particularly high or low Reputations.

Mark Prestige

When you **mark prestige**, mark the next box to the positive (right) side of 0 on the appropriate faction's track.

When you **mark enough boxes to reach (not pass, reach) the next highest positive number on the track**, your Reputation with that faction increases! Clear all prestige boxes on the track, and circle the next highest number up from your current Reputation.

If you had -2 Reputation and marked five prestige, you would circle -1; if you had +0 Reputation and did the same, you would circle +1. Note that this means you need to mark five boxes to advance from -2 to -1, or from -1 to +0, or from +0 to +1 Reputation, but you need to mark ten boxes to advance from +1 to +2, and fifteen boxes to advance from +2 to +3.

Mark Notoriety

When you **mark notoriety**, mark the next box on the negative (left) side of 0 on the appropriate faction's track.

When you **mark enough boxes to reach (not pass, reach), the next lowest negative number on the track**, clear all notoriety boxes on the track and circle the next lowest number down from your current Reputation.

If you had +2 Reputation and marked three notoriety, you would circle +1; if you had +0 Reputation and did the same, you would circle -1. Note that this means you need to mark three boxes to drop from +3 to +2, from +2 to +1, from +1 to +0, or from +0 to -1, but you need to mark six boxes to drop from -1 to -2, and nine boxes to drop from -2 to -3.

Ask for a Favor

When you **ask for a reasonable favor based on your reputation**, roll with Reputation with the appropriate faction. On a hit, they'll grant you what you want. On a 7-9, it costs your rep a bit; clear prestige or mark notoriety, your choice. On a miss, they refuse and view you with suspicion; mark notoriety.

Meet Someone Important

When you **meet with someone important for the first time**, roll with Reputation for their faction. On a hit, you're aware of their wider reputation (if any), and they're aware of yours (if any). On a 7-9, pick one. On a 10+, both.

- you've heard stories; ask a question about them, and the GM will tell you one story you've heard about them as an answer
- they've heard something in your favor; take +1 forward when you first try to play up your connection with them and their faction

On a miss, you only know the basics about them, and they've heard stories about you and the things you've done, true or false—prepare for major complications.



Harm Tracks

Every vagabond has three harm tracks, each with at least four boxes, to track their stress, damage, and resources. They also have tracks for the durability of their equipment, and NPCs have their own special harm track to represent morale.

For each track, if a character must mark a box and cannot, they are in some way unable to act or even taken out entirely. (For equipment, needing to mark wear on a piece of equipment and being unable to do so means the piece of equipment breaks.) A character can never choose to mark a box as an option on a move if they don't actually have an empty box to mark.

Exhaustion

Exhaustion tracks a character's energy, will, and effort. The more boxes checked, the more tired the character is. If a character has to mark a box of exhaustion and cannot, then they fall unconscious or are otherwise left completely at the mercy of those around them. Exhaustion clears approximately one box every night of decent rest, and all boxes if a PC gets some rest and care. Also, if a PC fulfills the condition of their nature, they immediately clear all boxes of exhaustion.

Injury

Injury tracks a character's physical health. The more boxes checked, the more wounded, injured, and bruised the character is. If a character has to mark a box of injury and cannot, then they are dying. They likely pass out or are otherwise utterly incapacitated, and will perish without medical aid. Injury clears when a character receives medical attention, or when they rest for an extended time.

Depletion

Depletion tracks a character's stash of resources and assorted minor equipment. The more depletion boxes checked, the fewer resources a character can call on quickly and easily—the

equivalent of saying your satchels and pouches are empty. If you have to mark a box of depletion and you can't, then it means you're out of supplies, but you suffer no other consequences. Depletion clears when you resupply—for instance, if someone pays you in resources, you spend some time foraging in the woods, or you steal assorted goods and food from someone's pantry.

Wear

Wear is a track for each individual significant piece of equipment a vagabond carries. As the equipment gets damaged, you will mark its wear boxes. If you have to mark wear and cannot, then the piece of equipment breaks. If the piece of equipment is only damaged, then it can be repaired, though that'll often require expert help from a smith or a Tinker. To see more about repairs, check page 13.

NPCs have a wear score that works as an overall track for their equipment and resources. If the track fills and they have to mark another box, then an important piece of equipment on them (their weapon, their armor, etc.) breaks.

Morale

Morale is only used by NPCs. Morale tracks a character's will to keep going in the face of danger and threat. The more boxes checked, the closer a character comes to breaking entirely and fleeing. If a character has to mark a box of morale and cannot, then that's it—they break. They either surrender, likely groveling and begging for mercy, or they bolt.



Equipment and Treasure

For this booklet, every pregenerated character starts with some assigned equipment. Each piece of equipment comes with a few traits, maybe a weapon skill tag, and its own wear track. If you ever fill a piece of equipment's wear track and need to mark another box, that equipment breaks entirely—you use it one last time, but you damage it beyond repair.

When a vagabond wants a piece of general equipment—a rope, a torch, a compass—they can mark a depletion to pull it from their pouches and bags. This includes money and medical supplies. It costs approximately 1-depletion (or 1-Value) to pay for clearing 1-injury by a skilled healer, or to get enough supplies for an appropriately trained vagabond to provide the same healing.

Important note for armor: When you're wearing armor, you can mark 1-wear on the armor instead of marking 1-injury on yourself. You can absorb multiple injury at once in this way. You can only do this if the armor you are wearing would actually protect you from the injury—for example, leather armor might not actually be of huge benefit when you fall off a castle wall. The GM is the final arbiter of whether your armor is applicable.

When a vagabond wants to repair their equipment, they need a capable crafter or smith, and to trade Value for repairs. Each box of wear repaired costs 1-Value, the equivalent of 1-depletion. If the piece of equipment is broken, though, then it'll have to be replaced entirely, not repaired.

When the vagabonds have access to ample supplies—say, when they get to pick through the barracks armory as payment for a job—they clear their depletion tracks as they resupply.

Treasure

Many vagabonds focus on filling their pouches with hard-won coin. Whether they take on jobs for wealthy Marquisate nobility or plunder ancient ruins, they're looking for treasure.

The Woodland has no single currency. As such, denizens of the Woodland are used to barter and trading goods.

In the game, this economy manifests in a few ways. First, any time you refer to something's worth, it's recorded in "Value": 1-Value, 2-Value, 3-Value, etc. Each box of depletion provides the equivalent of 1-Value. A vagabond's depletion track includes objects and items of some Value, such that a vagabond can use depletion to "pay" for new items and services by marking boxes.

Each piece of significant equipment has a Value determined by combining the following numbers:

- (Add) Boxes of wear
- (Add) Number of weapon skill tags
- (Add) Number of advantageous traits or extra ranges
- (Subtract) Number of disadvantageous traits

So, a well-made sword with three boxes of wear, one weapon skill tag, only its single default range, and one advantageous trait would be worth 5-Value.

Finally, treasures or sacks of coin or other items that only have Value, not utility, also exist on the same scale. There are relatively few such items in the Woodland—the denizens live mostly pragmatic lives. But sometimes a vagabond will find such a treasure in a ruin, or they will be paid by a Marquisate baron with a sack of coin.

A bag of coin or similar stack of cash is represented as a piece of equipment with boxes of wear equal to its Value. Vagabonds can spend those boxes one at a time to buy goods or services as they choose, including to replenish their depletion one box at a time when they buy goods from a store, or paying for repairs to equipment one box at a time.

A treasure that is a singular object should be represented as a piece of "equipment" with a number of boxes of wear equal to its Value. A beautiful golden scepter might be worth 7 boxes of wear, for example.

Unlike a bag of coins, you're not going to be able to just check off a few boxes of that scepter to buy something. A singular object cannot be broken up—it's an all or nothing exchange. You'll have to give over the object whole, so make sure you get something that's worth it!

Burden

Finally, vagabonds can't carry infinite amounts of stuff. Each significant piece of equipment a vagabond carries uses 1-Load. Some particularly large pieces of equipment might use 2-Load. A vagabond can carry a total Load equal to 4 + Might without being burdened. Past that, they become **burdened**. Beyond the GM making appropriate moves and following the fiction, burdened vagabonds have to mark 1-exhaustion whenever they travel long distance. The absolute maximum they can physically carry is twice their burdened Load limit.

Buying and Selling

When a vagabond goes to buy or sell something, it's not always a simple, rote affair, a comparison of value. The denizen on the other end of the bargain matters! If they don't like vagabonds, or mistrust denizens of the vagabond's species, or see no use for gold...they'll bargain, dicker, or even refuse to deal.

The GM makes the call on how NPC denizens react and respond to deals, but should base it on the situation at hand. If the vagabond is trying to buy in a clearing they've saved, full of denizens with whom they have a high Reputation, then buying may be very simple! But in a hostile clearing, they may not be able to buy a darn thing.

Changing PCs

Over the course of play, the vagabonds will change and grow. They'll earn prestige with some factions and notoriety with others. They will become more skilled and more capable, even as the problems before them become more and more complicated.

To represent these changes, the vagabonds can advance through their drives, and they can update their natures, drives, and connections.

In the full game of **ROOT: THE RPG**, there are several ways to keep your characters growing and changing to support long-term campaign play. For this booklet, however, you'll find a simplified system of advancement.

Advancement

Vagabonds advance by following their drives. Each drive lists a condition by which the vagabond can advance. Ultimately, the GM is the judge of whether or not the vagabond has met their drive condition, but players should call the GM's attention when they think they have met a drive condition.

When you advance by following a drive, you'll pick another option from the advancement options available starting on page 31. These advancements are suggestions for the pre-generated characters and Hacksaw Dell; they will speed up gameplay and choices substantially. If you want a fuller spectrum of possible choices, then you can choose from the list below, but we highly recommend using the options on page 31 to keep the game fast and smooth.

Here are the more open advancement options:

- Take +1 to a stat (max +2)
- Take a new move from your playbook (max 5 moves from your own playbook, including starting moves)
- Take a new move from another playbook (max 2 moves from another playbook)
- Take up to two new weapon skills (max 7 total)
- Take up to two new roguish feats (max 6 total)

IMPORTANT NOTE: You cannot take more than one advance per drive per session. So even if you think you've hit the same drive multiple times in a single session, you only get to advance once. You can advance once per session for each of your drives, however, meaning you can advance twice per session at most.

GM Reference

Agendas

- Make the Woodland seem large, alive, and real.
- Make the vagabonds' lives adventurous and important.
- Play to find out what happens.

Principles

- Describe the world like a living painting.
- Address yourself to the characters, not the players.
- Be a fan of the vagabonds.
- Make your move but misdirect.
- Sometimes, disclaim decision-making.
- Make the factions and their reach a constant presence.
- Give denizens drives and fears.
- Follow the ripples of every major action.
- Call upon their station and reputation.
- Bring danger to seemingly safe settings.

Moves

- Inflict injury, exhaustion, wear, depletion, or morale (as established).
- Reveal an unwelcome truth.
- Show signs of an approaching threat.
- Capture someone.
- Put someone in a spot.
- Disrupt someone's plans and schemes.
- Make them an offer to get their way.
- Show them what a faction thinks of them.
- Turn their move back on them.
- Activate a downside of their background, reputation, or equipment.
- After every move, "what do you do?"

If you get stuck...

GIVE THEM A CARROT OR A STICK.

They're vagabonds—there's a good chance they'll seize on a dangled opportunity for profit, revenge, whatever fits their drives. But also, they're vagabonds—plenty of denizens mistrust them, and a knife at your throat is plenty good motivation to act.

SHOW A FACTION'S FANGS.

Every faction in the game can be threatening—even the denizens, if they want to. When the fangs come out, things start happening, so bare those fangs!

TARGET THEIR REPUTATIONS.

If they want to look like good guys, then threaten that with possible notoriety. If they don't mind being criminals, threaten that with someone who looks up to them.

NPCs and Harm

Creating NPCs

When you create a new NPC, give them a name, a description (including species), a job, and a drive.

When they get into a real fight or would mark harm, give them harm tracks and/or attacks.

Give them injury, exhaustion, wear, and morale harm tracks with at least 1 box and no more than 5 boxes in each track for a single character.

Choose their weapon, with a range (intimate, close, far) and an amount of harm that it deals (at least 1 injury or exhaustion, often more). A lethal weapon deals more injury, a tricky or tiring weapon deals more exhaustion, a bashing or breaking weapon deals more wear.

Groups of NPCs can be treated as mobs.

- **5-10 average denizens are a small mob:** 3 boxes of each harm type, deals x2 normal harm
- **10-20 average denizens are a medium mob:** 5 boxes of each harm type, deals x3 normal harm
- **20+ average denizens are a large mob:** 7 boxes of each harm type, deals x4 normal harm

Names

Aimee • Alvin • Alyse • Anders • Bhea • Billi • Braden • Buford
Cesspyr • Cinder • Cloak • Constance • Dawna • Dewly
Doneel • Dugan • Ellaine • Emmie • Ewan • Eward • Flannera
Fog • Foster • Frink • Gemma • Golden • Greta • Gustav
Harper • Henny • Hinnic • Howerd • Igrin • Ilso • Inda • Irwen
Jacly • Jasper • Jinx • Johann • Kagan • Keera • Keilee • Konnor
Laina • Lindyn • Lockler • Longtooth • Masgood • Mint
Monca • Murty • Nail • Nan • Nigel • Nomi • Olaga • Omin
Orry • Oxley • Pattee • Phona • Pintin • Prewitt • Quay
Quentin • Quill • Quinella • Reece • Rhodia • Roric • Rose
Sarrra • Selwin • Sorin • Stasee • Tammora • Thickfur • Timber
Tondric • Ulveny • Ulvid • Ummery • Urma • Vance • Vennic
Vittora • Vost • Wanda • Wettlecress • Whickam • Woodleaf
Xander • Xara • Xeelie • Xim • Yasmin • Yates • Yolenda •
Yotterie • Zachrie • Zain • Zoic • Zola

Species

badger • beaver • bluejay • cat • fox • hawk • lizard • mouse
opossum • otter • owl • rabbit • raccoon • squirrel • wolf

Drives

to get revenge • to get rich • to make family safe
to make home safe • to gain power • to explore
to build something magnificent • to resist invaders
to defend the weak • to destroy an enemy • to wage war
to prove worth • to undermine a figure of power
to find comfort • to serve a higher cause • to escape
to negotiate peaceful resolutions • to survive at all costs
to earn social status and position • to take control
to exert power and authority on others • to lay waste

NPC Harm Tracks

Here are some preplanned harm tracks you can use for your NPCs, depending upon who and what exactly they are.

1 INJURY, 1 EXHAUSTION, 1 WEAR, 1 MORALE

Pretty standard. Default to this for any given denizen.

Remember, multiple denizens in a group can add up their tracks, so add +2 to this track for a small group, +4 for a medium group, or +6 for a large group.

3 INJURY, 2 EXHAUSTION, 3 WEAR, 2 MORALE

A brute or a bruiser. A real threat to any individual vagabond, and even tough enough to threaten the band.

1 INJURY, 2 EXHAUSTION, 1 WEAR, 3 MORALE

A leader, not a fighter. Someone more likely to be in charge, and not to try to fight on their own.

2 INJURY, 2 EXHAUSTION, 3 WEAR, 3 MORALE

A lieutenant, committed to serving another's cause.

5 INJURY, 5 EXHAUSTION, 2 WEAR, 4 MORALE

A bear.

NPC Attacks

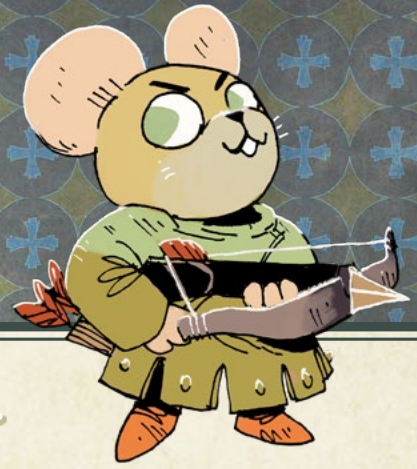
Here are a few possible weapons and attacks NPCs can use against the vagabonds:

- **Standard blade:** 1 injury.
- **Large blade or axe, wielded with strength:** 2 injury.
- **Tricky weapon, like a whip:** 1 injury, 1 exhaustion.
- **Heavy weapon, like a huge two-handed hammer:** 1 injury, 1 wear.
- **Wielded by a skilled and cunning fighter:** +1 exhaustion.
- **Wielded by a powerful and mighty fighter:** +1 injury.
- **Aiming to harm only equipment:** convert all harm to wear, +1 wear.

Inflicting Harm

As the GM, you inflict harm whenever it fits the fiction, as one of your moves. This means that if a vagabond goes through an exhausting experience, you should inflict exhaustion on them, usually 1 or 2. If a vagabond's equipment would be damaged by trying to scrape through a tight space in a castle wall, you might inflict 1 or 2 depletion on them. If a vagabond jumps from a tree, 40 feet from the ground, you might say that the BEST case scenario after trusting fate—the result of a 10+—is marking 1 injury, because it's just too high. Inflicting harm isn't a punishment, and it isn't a stick to discourage action—it's a way to stay true to the fiction, to make the Woodland seem real, to highlight the consequences of the vagabonds' actions in a way that honors their choices. If a vagabond can jump 40 feet without risking injury, then the Woodland loses its drama.

Hacksaw Dell



How To Use This Clearing

A clearing write-up like this one presents one clearing of the Woodland, fleshed out with enough detail to make it easy to run at your table, but without giving you a clear, rigid adventure to follow. **ROOT: THE ROLEPLAYING GAME** has complicated, difficult, and explosive situations. As the vagabonds encounter those situations, they will change and intensify whether the vagabonds act or not. The key here isn't to expect any specific path—it's to know what the situation is, who the characters at play are, and how the situation is likely to develop both without the vagabonds' intervention and in response to any particular actions.

As the GM for this game, you should read the clearing's basic description, read through the conflicts, and skim over the NPCs and the locations. The idea isn't to memorize it all, but to have it stewing in your head. If certain elements are less interesting to you or the PCs, that's great! Don't worry about forcing them in just because they're written here. This isn't a straightjacket—it's a bunch of ideas meant to support and inspire you.

"At first sight" is a description of what the vagabonds would see when they arrive at the clearing. It's there just to set up an initial series of images and descriptions to build upon moving forward, a way to get things going.

The **core conflict** of a clearing is the big problem it's facing, the one that all the denizens know about, the one that's almost immediately apparent upon entering the clearing. It's a kind of "current event." Any NPC a vagabond talks to in the clearing will have an opinion on the public conflict, and most everything that goes on in the clearing is in some way connected to the public conflict.

When the vagabonds come to the clearing, make the core conflict known very quickly—there should be no way they can miss it. Every single denizen has an opinion about the Woodland Assembly, the creation of a new charter, the role of the Lizard Cult in the clearing, and even the idea of the Eyrie Dynasties returning.

The other **conflicts** of a clearing are smaller and more specific disputes within the clearing, most often tied to the overarching issue in their own way. Each is less obvious to the clearing as a whole than the overarching issue. Particular groups within the clearing will know about each conflict, and any denizen who knows about a conflict probably cares about it deeply. But other groups either don't know about the conflicts at all, or completely misunderstand them and underestimate their significance.

The vagabonds will have to do a bit of digging to get at the other conflicts—but once they're talking to someone who cares about that conflict, for example, then you can show them the fullness of the dispute or problem. The point isn't to hide the conflict from the vagabonds. It's to make clear that these issues are simmering below the surface, ready to boil up and cause major problems.

For both the core conflict and the other conflicts, the description of "How it develops" is there to let you know what would likely happen if the vagabonds never arrived in town. The vagabonds are the x-factor here, the unknown element in the mix that can tip the scales on any particular issue. Use the "How it develops" section to have ideas for events that happen off-screen and strategies employed by the clearing's major characters, but keep in mind—things will change as the vagabonds interact with those characters, stop their plans, save lives, and more. Give the vagabonds a chance to react to those events and plans by making sure their consequences appear before the vagabonds.

Description

Before the Marquisate came to the Woodland, this clearing was called Oak Dell. But with the Marquise and her faction's rapacious logging practices came an endlessly noisy lumber mill sitting within the clearing. As a joke, locals and invaders alike took to calling it Hack-and-saw Dell, which they shortened to Hacksaw Dell over time. The name might be relatively new, but it has come to define the place even after the Marquisate has been ousted from the clearing.

The lumber mill was the heart of the Marquisate's operation in Hacksaw Dell for years, so the Woodland Alliance targeted it first and foremost, boldly burning the mill about a month or so back. Following the mill's destruction, the Marquisate left the clearing and allowed the Woodland Alliance to move in fully. Now the Woodland Alliance must manage the resources seized from the Marquisate, rebuild the clearing, and figure out how to do it all equitably.

Committed to a just and fair rule, the Alliance formed the Assembly of Denizens to give everyone a voice in creating a charter for the basis of rule in the clearing. Yet the fiery cell of Woodland Alliance provocateurs who liberated the clearing are growing frustrated with the lack of progress by the denizens in the Assembly; very little has been done to manage the clearing or improve the lives of those who live in Hacksaw Dell. Many within the Alliance are beginning to discuss aggressive procedural measures to push the denizens towards what's best for them, no matter the political cost.

To complicate matters, the plight of the average denizens in Hacksaw Dell makes the offers of succor from the Lizard Cult extremely appealing. Their prominent missionary—Samm Dios—has gained quite a following, enough to form a voting bloc that can defeat most measures in the fractious Assembly. Some denizens fear that the Cult is manipulating the system, stalling important reforms and projects within the community to make the Woodland Alliance seem inept.

At First Sight

The clear-cut trees along the path leave an open wound on the usually dense canopy of the Woodland. Scrubby brush stretches to seize the sunlight as new low growth reaches in towards the path. The charred remains of a large structure stand skeletal at the edge of the channel that flows through the clearing. Fire-blackened ruins mark where an uncontrolled blaze tore through many of the clearing's workshops, storefronts, and homes. Ramshackle lean-tos and makeshift tents sprawl throughout the clearing.

Armed denizens wearing green armbands stand guard around a stockyard piled high with cut timbers, crates, and barrels of food. Bedraggled denizens wait in a long line to receive meager supplies as one of the guards checks a set of books for each in turn. Occasional scuffles break out among those waiting, revealing their desperation and frayed nerves.

Conflicts

CORE CONFLICT:

Ruling After Revolution

The Woodland Alliance freed the clearing from Marquisate control, but their revolution has left the clearing in ruins. Stockpiles seized from the occupying forces and relief supplies sent by the Alliance provide enough materials to start rebuilding, but not without a plan. And to approve the plan, the wider Alliance leadership demanded the local Alliance leaders organize an inclusive Assembly of Denizens and establish a ruling charter for the clearing; they want to use Hacksaw Dell as an example for other "liberated" clearings to follow. Not only will the charter create a framework to decide all matters and ensure a voice for all denizens, but success would also be a shining example of what the Alliance offers as an alternative for the future across the Woodland. Until then, the local Alliance doles out its dwindling supplies to meet only the daily needs of the denizens.

Factionalism and petty concerns paralyze the charter process. Some denizens just want food in their bellies and larders, materials to rebuild their homes, and for things to "get back to normal." With open and protected speaking time in the Assembly, however, other denizens use the forum to settle petty disputes or air minor grievances. Every change or compromise faces lengthy debate, disillusioning many denizens to the democratic process. The matriarchs and patriarchs of the sprawling rabbit families, usually influential voices in the clearing, remain mostly silent, lacking confidence in the Woodland Alliance's radical direction and mixed messages, while remaining deeply suspicious of the Lizard Cult.

Differing philosophies within the Alliance leave their guidance in the clearing divided, with each faction pushing a charter that would cement its own hold on power. Marie Motier, a local hero, champions a model of open democracy, trying to build consensus among the denizens to forge their path forward. Jillian Xavier, a radical rabble-rouser, believes the denizens are not ready for self-rule and need a single strong leader to protect their best interests from prosaic local concerns. If Marie were less of an advocate for democracy, Jillian would support her as the perfect singular leader...but at the moment, Jillian doesn't have a better candidate than herself. While Jillian and Marie have both refrained from attacking each other's positions directly, each is courting support among the denizens.

The only truly unified voice comes from the followers of the Lizard Cult, who are opposed to moving forward without entrenching their beliefs in the charter. They want protections for their sacred guards and recognition of the protected status of any acts performed as part of their religious ceremonies, though they have not yet revealed that those rites include voluntary living sacrifices. They form a large enough bloc that with the procedural rules of the Assembly, they can consistently block any proposal. Samm Dios, the Voice of the Dragon, has rallied Lizard Cult resources to bring much-needed bounty to Hacksaw

Dell. The Cult's generosity continues to attract followers and lets them smuggle in arms that would allow their Cultists to seize control if things don't go their way.

How It Develops

If the vagabonds never arrived in Hacksaw Dell, the Assembly of Denizens would remain deadlocked in ratifying a ruling charter. Marie Motier's voice would eventually be drowned out by the animosity and grievances of the denizens, no matter which group they called their own. Now the conflict spills out beyond the halls of power and into the streets, where the supporters of the various causes begin to pick their own fights. As town meetings descend into grandstanding and bickering, a Woodland Alliance soldier is the first to resort to politics by force, ambushing a Lizard Cult leader and attacking them in a poorly thought-out crime of passion. In response, the remaining Lizard Cult leadership retaliates with more violence to seize the offending soldier and punish them, creating a tit-for-tat cycle of bloodshed that would ultimately discredit both the Cult and the Alliance to all but their fanatics. Many denizens abandon their homes and flee to nearby clearings.

CONFLICT:

In the Chaos

Through the doubt and desperation of Hacksaw Dell's denizens, the Lizard Cult's hopeful message of abundance attracts many new followers in the clearing. With the Cult's numbers growing, Samm Dios, the Voice of the Dragon, promised to elevate one among them to help guide them before he moves on to spread the good word. His inner circle, the first seekers to hear his words when he came to the clearing, know that one among them will become an acolyte and another must die to ensure the elevation. Robyn Dell, a young rabbit, has stepped forward to be that sacrifice.

While the Lizard Cult prepares for the festivities, extending invitations to share its bounty to their fellow denizens, Robyn has been setting his affairs in order. As the often-overlooked youngest sibling, most of his family hasn't noticed any causes for concern, but his sibling Ashley has figured out something is amiss. As a seeker, they've heard the other Cultists talking about one of their number joining the Great Dragon, and Ashley is worried about what exactly that means. They're asking questions but have so far avoided confronting Samm or Robyn.

Samm believes Ashley doesn't understand the importance of the sacrifice to the rites of the Great Dragon, so he is withholding the truth of the sacrifice. He ordered the other seekers not to reveal the truth about the sacrifice, especially to Ashley. But Ashley's tenacity and affection for their younger brother drives them to seek answers, potentially requesting help from the vagabonds to investigate the Lizard Cult's plans for the festival.

HANDLING SACRIFICE AT THE TABLE

The willing sacrifice of a person can evoke emotions related to mental health and suicide. Before bringing this plot to your table, consider the circumstances of your fellow players and what effect such an allusion might have on them. If you have any reason to believe such topics could be traumatic for your table, omit this conflict or alter it—perhaps Robyn has been asked to go on a great pilgrimage to the homeland of the Lizard Cult, where he will take up a more ascetic role forever, never returning to Hacksaw Dell; Ashley would still try to dissuade Robyn, even if his life weren't directly on the line. As a best practice, establish safety tools such as lines and veils or the X-Card before play begins.

How it Develops

If the vagabonds never came to Hacksaw Dell, Ashley would ultimately inspire a meaningful attack upon the Lizard Cult. When Ashley learns about Robyn's intention to be the Cult's sacrifice, they'll do whatever they can to stop it, starting with appeals to the Assembly to forbid the Cult's actions. Ashley's claims seem far-fetched to the traditional rabbits of the clearing, so the denizens won't take Ashley seriously unless they can bring concrete proof of the Cult's intentions. Samm will deflect the accusations and show all the good the Lizard Cult is doing for Hacksaw Dell. Failure with the Assembly pushes Ashley to resort to more extreme measures, such as kidnapping their brother until after the feast day. But Robyn is determined to give himself over and escapes. When Ashley catches up, they end up fighting the Lizard Cult acolytes, and the feast day becomes a flashpoint of sentiment against the Cult.



CONFLICT:

The Uncrowned Prince

While the Woodland Alliance and Lizard Cult clash over ideology, many of the denizens are pining for the old days of absentee Eyrie rule. After all, before the current war, they never had to toil at the mill or wait in food lines for their daily needs. And there was certainly no talk of any kind of sacrifices for the blessing of an invisible sky lizard. The growing sentiment has coalesced around Louise Howl, the no-nonsense matriarch of one of the sprawling rabbit families that make up the majority of the clearing. Louise doesn't see herself as a candidate for rulership, but she believes that a return to the true traditions of the Dell—in the form of bird-centric Eyrie rulership—would put it back on the right path.

Louise sees potential in Arther Pinfeather, an idealistic young kestrel and one of the few birds still remaining in Hacksaw Dell. Having him take over as lord, she feels, would be the clearing's best chance to return to normalcy and stability. She needs to ensure the Eyrie Dynasties will recognize his nobility, but she's fairly confident that the Eyrie Dynasties would gladly return Hacksaw Dell to their control in exchange for ennobling their new ruler in the clearing. She's quietly gathering support and taking every opportunity she can to make Arther look good to the denizens. Her plan is to engineer a crisis and make sure Arther's the one to solve it, then move to declare his lordship and go back to the old ways. She might even consider hiring vagabonds to help pull it off, if she thinks she can trust them.

For his part, Arther appreciates the support but is entirely unaware of the conspiracy to make him the lord. He doesn't feel comfortable with either the Lizard Cult or Woodland Alliance, and he shares the same frustrations with the lack of real progress the Woodland Alliance has made towards making the clearing better and safer for the denizens. He's been vocal at the Assembly and has been surprised by the raucous applause his small speeches have garnered.

How it Develops

If the vagabonds never came to Hacksaw Dell, Louise would keep looking for chances to polish Arther's reputation. She would quietly prod at the cracks between the other factions, hoping to drive them to open conflict and make Arther a more rational choice. Additionally, Louise's missives to the nearby Eyrie stronghold garrison would guarantee her military aid to take advantage of the chaos and lack of equal opposition—just as soon as there is strong Eyrie leadership present in the clearing. With the promised backing of Eyrie forces, Louise would seize the moment to nominate Arther for command of the clearing as the rightful Eyrie heir. But because Arther isn't exactly prepared for the role, over time she would effectively make him her figurehead and take over the clearing herself, despite that not being her original intent. Such a coup would unite the Lizard Cult and Woodland Alliance, creating yet another persistent struggle over control of the clearing.

CONFLICT:

For the Woodland

With deadlock in the Assembly, some among the Woodland Alliance are ready to return to the extreme methods that served them well as an insurgency. Jillian Xavier is gathering conspirators to spark a conflict and claim emergency powers to override the Assembly. She fears inaction will compromise the Alliance's position in the Woodland broadly, but a simple coup would shatter their credibility with the denizens of Hacksaw Dell. A grant of emergency authority could give her a free hand to push through a charter that puts someone like her in control to steer them through the crisis.

Jillian's goal is simple, but her plan has a lot of moving parts. She needs a threat to the clearing big enough to cause panic but not despair—an escalating civil war with the Lizard Cult would serve perfectly, so she's using her position to antagonize the Cultists and turn the rest of the denizens against them. She also needs friends among the influential denizens in Hacksaw Dell. While most have so far rebuffed her efforts, the rabbit matriarch Louise Howl has been receptive to discussions about receiving material in exchange for a voice of support. They're currently negotiating through go-betweens.

Finally, she needs to discredit Marie. At present, Marie, the so-called Hero of Hacksaw Dell, would be the obvious choice were the Assembly to grant anyone emergency authority, and Marie remains steadfastly committed to democracy itself, even as Jillian sees democracy failing the clearing on a daily basis. Jillian considers Marie a friend, but she has given up trying to change Marie's mind, and she won't let friendship get in the way of securing an Alliance victory. She's secretly stealing supplies from the Alliance and arming her own militia for backup when the time comes, while leaving a trail that points to Marie stealing and selling the materials.

Jillian needs co-conspirators and agents. Vagabonds in good standing with the Woodland Alliance or enemies of the Lizard Cult would be the perfect collaborators for her agenda. And vagabonds with poor reputations will make excellent dupes to take the fall if things go badly.

How it Develops

If the vagabonds never came to Hacksaw Dell, some part of Jillian's plans would assuredly go awry. Jillian walks a narrow branch between loyalty to her cause and betrayal of the denizens of the clearing, leaving plenty of routes for disaster to strike. Some of her agents can take action of their own accord, creating a conflict that rapidly threatens to go out of control. Louise secretly never wanted to actually deal with Jillian, and instead she reveals Jillian's machinations to discredit the Woodland Alliance. As Jillian's plans go awry and Marie discovers the extent of Jillian's betrayal, the captain will have to arrest Jillian—and possibly execute her to preserve the credibility of the Alliance.

Important Residents

Jillian Xavier

Jillian Xavier is a diminutive mouse with a ragged left ear, but she makes up for her small size with her intensity. She's the fiery rabble-rouser who led the attack to burn the Marquisate sawmill and liberate Hacksaw Dell. Riding her own wave of inspiration, she convinced the Woodland Alliance to pour resources into her home clearing to prove their leadership philosophy. While she's a true believer in self-governance, the deadlock in the Assembly is pushing her to compromise her ideals for the greater good. Failure is not an option.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐☐ WEAR ☐☐
INJURY ☐☐☐ MORALE ☐☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To secure a strong position for the Woodland Alliance*

EQUIPMENT:

- A sharp and nimble short sword
- Makeshift but battle-tested armor

MOVES:

- Rile up Woodland Alliance supporters
- Sneak away to cause trouble later
- Slide a blade into exactly the right place

Marie Motier

Marie Motier is the Hero of Hacksaw Dell, the dashing rabbit who leapt forward to stop the mill fires from consuming the clearing. Her heroics led to her election as the captain of the Dell Guard to lead the clearing's defense after the Alliance's attack. Though humble by nature and habit, leadership and heroism have instilled her with a sense of personal righteousness. Marie is a true believer in the Woodland Alliance's promise of democratic egalitarianism. She'll do everything in her power to ensure the charter created by the Assembly is a true reflection of those ideals that enshrines the will of the denizens.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐ WEAR ☐☐☐
INJURY ☐☐☐☐ MORALE ☐☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To build a better future for Hacksaw Dell*

EQUIPMENT:

- A new badge of office
- A fine but untested sword
- Worn but well-maintained chain armor

MOVES:

- Earnestly defend the actions of the Woodland Alliance
- Put herself in the path of violent conflict
- Rally the Dell Guard to action

The Dell Guard

Guided by the Woodland Alliance, the denizens of Hacksaw Dell organized a militia, led by Marie Motier, to keep order and defend the clearing. They eagerly throw themselves into the project of defending their clearing. While most of these rabbits answer only to Marie, a growing number are ready to follow Jillian's agenda, and others may follow with the right push.

Medium Mob: The attached stats represent a roughly organized squad of approximately ten Dell Guards, the average sized group that the vagabonds are likely to encounter. Use these stats for both a squad loyal to Marie, and a squad that has been subverted to Jillian's purposes. They inflict 3-injury as a medium mob.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐ WEAR ☐☐☐
INJURY ☐☐☐ MORALE ☐☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To keep the Dell safe from threats without or within*

EQUIPMENT:

- Makeshift weapons and armor
- Green armbands in lieu of uniforms

MOVES:

- Rush overconfidently into harm
- Rally to aid a leader in the Woodland Alliance
- Overwhelm a threat with their numbers

Arther Pinfeather

One of the few birds in Hacksaw Dell, the diminutive and soft-spoken kestrel Arther wants what's best for his neighbors. Early on, he saw the good the Cult was trying to accomplish and tried to join them, but Samm drove him away given the Cult's stance towards birds. Arther's not opposed to the Woodland Alliance's principles, but he recognizes the need for practical solutions today over high-minded ideology. Despite his nervous energy and wide-eyed discomfort as the center of attention, he feels compelled to speak before the Assembly to advocate for what he sees as common sense.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐ WEAR ☐
INJURY ☐☐ MORALE ☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To help the denizens he sees struggling every day*

EQUIPMENT:

- Woodcutter's axe
- A sheaf of sparse speaking notes

MOVES:

- Speak eloquently about problems others might ignore
- Stammer genuine protests to accusations of conspiracy
- Swing his axe in desperation

Louise Howl

As the elderly matriarch of one of the sprawling rabbit families, Louise is known and respected by most of the clearing. She hasn't been outspoken in the Assembly, but she's had more than enough of the new-fangled and foreign ideas. Monarchy was good enough for generations of stability, even with that whole Grand Civil War, and that's what she wants to get back to. And don't get her started on the Lizard Cult! She has no patience for ideas about some overgrown worm living in a sky garden. She's shrewd and cautious, and she'll hire vagabonds to do some dirty work if the ends justify the means.

EXHAUSTION ☐

WEAR ☐☐

INJURY ☐

MORALE ☐☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To return the Dell to the stable rule of the Eyrie Dynasty*

EQUIPMENT:

- Crochet hook, yarn, and half a scarf
- A locket with a tiny painting of her late husband

MOVES:

- Rally her family against an outsider
- Scold someone to remind them of their failings
- Suggest traditional solutions to today's problems

Eyrie Troops

These troops are not present in the clearing to start. They approach Hacksaw Dell as a result of Louise's missives to the local Eyrie garrison commander—Commander Barkbeak, an ambitious cardinal. Barkbeak has dispatched the force to hunker nearby, scouting the clearing and waiting for a sign that this is the moment to strike. Should Louise successfully put Arther in power—or even if the clearing devolves into utter chaos—the troops may strike to retake Hacksaw Dell for the Eyrie Dynasties.

Medium Mob: The attached stats represent the full complement of Eyrie troops waiting anywhere close to Hacksaw Dell, about 20 trained soldiers. Use these stats if the full force moves in. Treat individual soldiers as having 1-exhaustion, 2-wear, 2-injury, and 2-morale. They inflict 3-injury as a medium mob.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐☐☐ WEAR ☐☐☐☐☐☐

INJURY ☐☐☐☐☐☐ MORALE ☐☐☐☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To retake Hacksaw Dell for the Eyrie Dynasties*

EQUIPMENT:

- Eyrie sigildry and colors
- Chainmail
- Longswords

MOVES:

- Surround the biggest threat
- Demand surrender
- Retreat to a defensible position

Samm Dios

Samm became a follower of the Dragon many, many years ago. The toad traveled far and wide before arriving in the Woodland at the brink of the war. When the fighting began, he sought to offer succor to displaced and dispossessed denizens. As a Voice of the Dragon, he attracted followers and cultivated gardens in each clearing he visited. The troubles in Hacksaw Dell saw the Cult grow behind a scattering of seekers, and now Samm plans to use the coming festival to induct a new acolyte. He's cautious about explaining the sacrifice tied to an acolyte's raising, knowing that many do not understand the Lizard Cult's ways. He has considered adapting the Cult's beliefs, abandoning any kind of mortal sacrifice...but he believes in the true commitment to faith and the nobility of the act. He won't ever force anyone to undertake such action unwillingly—doing so would be the highest violation of his faith—but he also isn't ready to undermine what he sees as a bedrock pillar of his beliefs.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐

WEAR ☐☐

INJURY ☐☐

MORALE ☐☐

DRIVE: *To spread the good word and deeds of the Great Dragon*

EQUIPMENT:

- A long-bladed sacrificial flambard dagger
- Ceremonial robes
- Illuminated scrolls of Cult texts

MOVES:

- Call upon his followers to menace an enemy
- Inspire up a zealous mob to action
- Strike out in defense of the Lizard Cult

Devoted Lizard Cultists

While not an organized military force, the Lizard Cult has more than enough devoted followers to whip up a mob. They follow guidance from Samm or another proven leader in the Cult, driven by their faith to extreme action. These groups are made up of rabbits, mice, foxes, lizards, and others from the clearing who have committed themselves to the Dragon.

Small Mob: The attached stats represent a gathered mob of approximately five Cultists, the average sized group the vagabonds are likely to encounter. They inflict 2-injury as a small mob.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐☐

WEAR ☐☐☐

INJURY ☐☐☐

MORALE ☐☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To prove their devotion to the Lizard Cult through action*

EQUIPMENT:

- Weapons and armor smuggled into the clearing

MOVES:

- Chant their support for an acolyte or fellow seeker
- Overwhelm a threat with their numbers
- Vote in solidarity with the Cult's objectives

Robyn Dell

A serious rabbit, Robyn Dell always struggled to find purpose. As the youngest of many siblings, he never had many responsibilities helping his family since older and surer hands always did the work. Joining the Lizard Cult gave him a chance to bring home extra bounty to share with the family he loves. Now, with the Lizard Cult ready to expand, he sees his sacrifice as a way to bring the bounty and blessing of the Great Wyrms to all the denizens of Hacksaw Dell. How could anyone refuse that calling?

EXHAUSTION ☐☐

WEAR ☐

INJURY ☐

MORALE ☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To bring the bounty and blessing of the Great Wyrms to the denizens of the clearing*

EQUIPMENT:

- A token of the Great Dragon
- A farewell letter to family and friends

MOVES:

- Look around the clearing and smile wistfully
- Passionately defend the beliefs and practices of the Lizard Cult
- Struggle with scrappy determination

Ashley Dell

Ashley joined their younger brother as a seeker of the Lizard Cult but doesn't share Robyn's fanatical devotion. Brimming with concern about Robyn's recent comments, they confronted Samm, who explained that all will join the Dragon eventually. His sermonizing didn't assuage Ashley's worries. They brought their concerns to their family, who dismissed them as "the fanciful fears of youth in these uncertain times." After that dismissal, Ashley is too uncertain to bring what they've heard before the Assembly, so they're looking for solid proof or allies to stop their brother from his extreme path.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐

WEAR ☐

INJURY ☐☐

MORALE ☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To keep their brother safe, well, and alive*

EQUIPMENT:

- A heartfelt letter from Robyn about joining the Great Dragon

MOVES:

- Escalate an argument with the members of the Lizard Cult
- Put themselves in danger to protect someone they care about
- Make a genuine appeal of shared concern

Important Places

The Mill Yard

Next to the charred remains of the Marquisate sawmill, the mill yard is a center of activity. The Woodland Alliance has converted the yard to serve as a supply depot. Denizens line up to receive rations daily, and the Dell Guard maintains a watchful perimeter to ensure nothing goes missing. The long wait leads to a lot of grumbling, and connected denizens have worked out a system of exchange to get better spots in line.

Lizard Cult Garden Shrine

Near the edge of the clearing, ivy-covered trellis walls surround the Cult's garden shrine. The garden is a mix of order and organic growth, with crops interspersed rather than planted in neat rows. Cultists, including Robyn, rest on contemplation benches. A rivulet flowing through the garden bubbles gently. Dedicated Cultists protect the garden at all times, allowing other denizens to visit but not reap the garden's bounty. Samm greets anyone who visits, and Ashley skulks nearby looking for opportunities to find out more about the Cult's plans.

The Assembly Ground

Someday, the Assembly of Denizens will meet in a grand timber hall with carved pews, glass windows, and raised podiums for speaking. Today, that ground is marked with a few posts and ropes. Stacked crates support a platform for speakers, and the assembled stand to listen or take their place in line to speak. The denizens meet in that open space to remind them of what they're trying to build, and their regular foot traffic has muddied the ground. Most of the important residents gather at the Assembly ground for daily meetings.

Temporary Lodges

With the widespread destruction of the fire in the clearing, many denizens lost their homes and burrows. While the Woodland Alliance has promised to help rebuild, the projects have been delayed until the Assembly reaches consensus about the project. That leaves many denizens dwelling in whatever makeshift lean-tos and tents they could construct from scavenged materials. It's not pretty, but at least these measures block the wind and rain.

Old Warrens

On the far side of the ruins, the old warrens of the original rabbit families who settled the clearing burrow into the hillside. Finely crafted doorways, small patios, and ornamental gardens mark the entrance to each, largely untouched by the revolution that leveled the rest of the clearing. Louise Howl and the other rabbit matriarchs sit on their patios holding court, sharing gossip, practicing yarncraft, and sipping herbal tea or liquor.

Special Rules

Lean Times

Supplies are scarce and the denizens have picked over the local Woodland for anything they can easily forage. Until the Woodland Alliance releases their hold on the relief supplies or the clearing finds prosperity by some other means, apply the following rule:

Scarcity

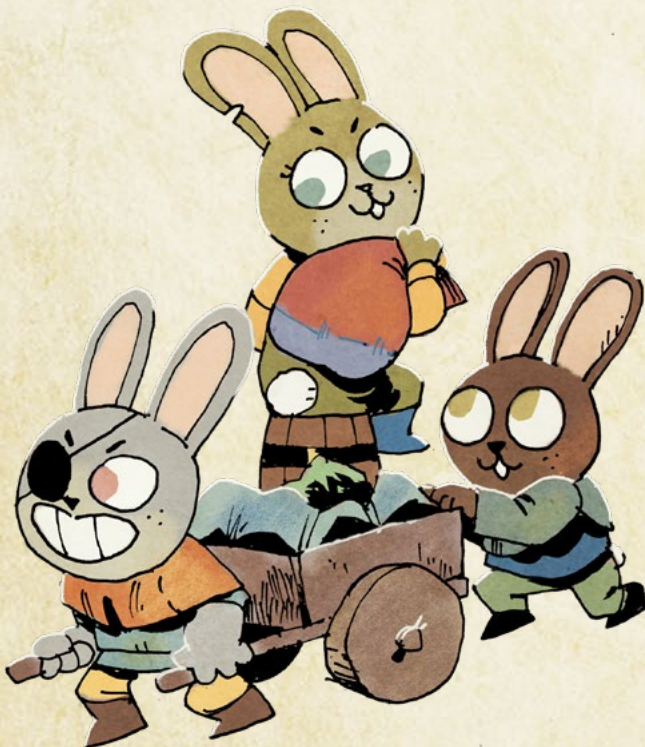
When you clear depletion, reduce the depletion cleared by 1. This does not apply to playbook moves.

The Assembly of Denizens

The Woodland Alliance experiment with democratic leadership has created the Assembly of Denizens, a decision-making forum for all the residents of Hacksaw Dell to speak openly and reach consensus.

Speak to Sway the Assembly

When you speak before the Assembly of Denizens to sway their opinion, roll. Gain +1 if you've earned the support of any major cohort in Hacksaw Dell. On a 10+, the denizens vote to adopt a simple provision you're backing. On a 7-9, they adopt the provision, but with an inconvenient amendment or costly political compromise. On a miss, the Assembly either passes an opposing proposal, adjourns, or descends into bickering.



Where to Begin

Before arriving in Hacksaw Dell, the vagabonds likely know about the Woodland Alliance victory against the Marquisate, but not about the democratic experiment or involvement of the Lizard Cult. The scarcity and tension in the clearing is obvious everywhere. Most denizens in the clearing, especially those waiting for relief supplies, are more than willing to speak their mind about the Woodland Alliance, the Lizard Cult, and the deadlock in the Assembly. If other denizens are nearby, introduce countering opinions and show the argument between the opposing positions.

Try to draw the vagabonds into one of the secondary conflicts, which all involve NPCs who could approach them for help. Each of them ties back to the central conflict. High or low reputation could suggest any of the following hooks:

- **High Woodland Alliance reputation:** Marie or Jillian might come to vagabonds with Woodland Alliance sympathies for help. Marie would ask them to help keep the peace or to help sway opinion towards progress. Jillian would turn to the vagabonds for help with her conspiratorial plans.
- **High denizens or Eyrie reputation:** Louise tips her hand to the vagabonds that she has a plan to set things right in the clearing. If they prove their trustworthiness, she offers to pay them to help win support for Arther.
- **High denizens or low Lizard Cult reputation:** Ashley approaches the vagabonds and asks them to investigate what's really going to happen to Robyn. After confirming the sacrifice, Ashley will beg for help to stop it.
- **High Lizard Cult reputation:** Samm has had enough of Ashley poking their long ears where they don't belong and asks the vagabonds to ensure the festival goes smoothly. He doesn't want Ashley hurt, but wants to make sure they won't stop the elevation of a new acolyte.

As the vagabonds' activities tip the balance of power, important denizens act on whatever new opportunities they see to accomplish their ends. Consider the following escalations to drive action forward:

- Ashley gains concrete proof about the Lizard Cult's plan to sacrifice one of their members at the upcoming ritual. They bring the information to the Assembly and condemn the Cult, calling a vote to explicitly ban ritual sacrifice. The Cult has enough members present to block the vote, but Ashley's accusations are enough to escalate tensions to boiling.
- Another accidental fire consumes much of the clearing's remaining food supply, and Louise is ready to move to declare Arther the clearing's lord to solve the situation. Louise's plan seems very enticing to those annoyed by the change and dissent in the clearing, and to starving denizens thrilled by the promise of Eyrie food and resources.
- After a violent conflict breaks out in the Assembly, Jillian fans the flames of outrage to call for an emergency referendum. She uses the Assembly's obvious failure to restrict voting, letting her control the creation of the charter to enshrine her power until she declares the end of the crisis.

PC BONDS TO HACKSAW DELL

Each prebuilt PC in this booklet has some bonds tying them to Hacksaw Dell and its NPCs. These bonds are described in the backgrounds on the character sheets, as well as here for the GM to reference:

- **Laeliana the Arbiter:** Laeliana fought against Marie in a different battle of the Woodland War, but the two of them formed a strange bond on the battlefield—one that might blossom into something more.
- **Jexri the Champion:** Jexri devoutly believes in the Great Dragon, but doesn't believe in the Cult's practices and edicts; they've seen too many lost souls like Robyn be consumed by less scrupulous Cultists.
- **Yates the Envoy:** Yates and Samm Dios were once traveling companions, and while Samm went an entirely different way, Yates still thinks he knows Samm's good, kind heart.
- **Mint the Prince:** Mint is the child of Monca Leafclaw, the vagabond mentor of Jillian Xavier. She's deeply worried that Jillian will see her as far less than her mother ever was.
- **Rackham the Thief:** Rackham is from Hacksaw Dell, and grew up as a friend of Arther Pinfeather. Arther was always a bit naive, but Rackham found it endearing. Now they feel protective of Arther.
- **Knohadd the Vagrant:** Knohadd and Jillian were once an item, back before Jillian found a greater purpose and Knohadd got himself thrown in jail for his lies.

- Samm wants to insulate the Cult from retribution for their righteous sacrifice. He knows Jillian is desperate for power and approaches her with a bargain—enshrine the Cult's religious freedoms and he'll turn the Cult's vote to her cause. Jillian accepts, assuming she can always alter the charter later if need be. Word of the deal gets out, and neither Marie nor Louise are happy about the turn of events.
- Marie discovers or is brought evidence of one of Jillian's plans to overthrow the Assembly. Compelled to follow the path of honesty, she arrests Jillian and sets the Assembly to conduct a trial, which turns into a chance for grandstanding. Before the final verdict, Jillian's partisans among the Dell Guard hatch a plot to free their leader.
- The seasons turn and the clearing suffers an unseasonable late summer frost. The denizens, still sheltering in whatever makeshift accommodations they've scraped together, decide enough is enough and seize materials from the Woodland Alliance to start building communal dorms. Marie and Jillian are divided—should they be lauded for their initiative or punished for stealing from the Alliance? Other denizens in the Assembly start pushing for simple popular action that will make life easier now, but these choices might not position the Alliance well if war returns to Hacksaw Dell.

Playbooks

Below is a list of all the pregenerated characters included in this booklet. In the following pages, you'll find the playbooks themselves, each designed to be printed on a single sheet of 8.5" x 11" paper, single-sided. There are six vagabonds in this booklet.

- **Laeliana the Arbiter:** Laeliana has been a mercenary for years, but she decided that life was wrong for her. Now she is a vagabond trying to choose the right battles to fight.
- **Jexri the Champion:** Jexri is a devout follower of the Great Wyrms, but not the Lizard Cult. They do their duty to the Wyrms by defending those who need it wherever they go.
- **Yates the Envoy:** Yates came to love life on the road, and in particular enjoyed voicing the words that others couldn't quite find for themselves, making him a diplomat for hire.
- **Mint the Prince:** Mint's mother, Monca Leafclaw, was renowned all across the Woodland for her incredible deeds. Now, Mint is trying to live up to her mother's example.
- **Rackham the Thief:** Rackham comes from Hacksaw Dell, and they had to escape that boring life! Now, Rackham comes home to show off their expertise as a burglar.
- **Knohadd the Vagrant:** Knohadd was meant to be a Riverfolk Company captain, but he quit that life. Since then, he's made friends, enemies, and plenty of trouble.

Laeliana the Arbiter

An experienced, worn, hopeful mercenary trying to be something more. Laeliana has been inspired to seek greater, more worthwhile causes than coin when looking for battles to fight.



Charm +1 • Cunning +1 • Finesse 0 • Luck -1 • Might +2

Your Nature

Defender: Clear your exhaustion track when you put yourself in harm's way to defend someone against injustice or dire threat.

Your Drives

Justice: Advance when you achieve justice for someone wronged by a powerful, wealthy, or high-status individual.

Loyalty: You're loyal to someone—Marie Motier. Advance when you obey their order at a great cost to yourself.

Roguish Feats: Sleight of Hand

Weapon Skills: Cleave

Your Moves

Hardy: Take 1 additional injury box. Whenever time passes or you journey to a new clearing, you can clear 2 injury boxes automatically.

Crash and Smash: When you **smash your way through scenery to reach someone or something**, roll with Might. On a hit, you reach your target. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7–9, choose 2.

- You hurt yourself: mark injury
- You break an important part of your surroundings
- You damage or leave behind a piece of gear (GM's choice)

On a miss, you smash through, but you leave yourself totally vulnerable on the other side.

Strong Draw: When you **target someone** with a bow, mark wear on the bow to roll with Might. On a hit, mark exhaustion to inflict 1 additional injury. Mark exhaustion again to make your shot ignore the enemy's armor—they cannot mark wear to absorb the injury.

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Protector

_____ is a true hero, someone whom even I look up to for their moral clarity. What did they do that convinced me of their righteousness?

When they are in reach, mark exhaustion to take a blow meant for them. If you do, take +1 ongoing to weapon moves for the rest of the scene.

Partner

_____ and I together helped a faction take control of a clearing, and share responsibility for it.

When you fill in this connection, you each mark 2-prestige with the faction you helped, and mark 2-notoriety with the faction you harmed. During play, if you are spotted together, then any prestige or notoriety gains with those factions are doubled for the two of you.

Background

Laeliana has fought in battles her whole life. She started as a soldier in the armies of the Grand Duchy, but she couldn't continue fighting for the Duchy's cause after she saw what they did to the places they conquered. She then became a mercenary but that life wore away at her, too. Only when she met Marie Motier on the field of battle while in the employ of the Marquisate did Laeliana see a different way. Marie fought with passion because she believed she was right, and Laeliana found her magnetic. The two ended their bout with neither having won. When they met next, they struck up a friendship, and Marie inspired Laeliana to seek new things to fight for, to try being more than a mercenary. Laeliana is excited to see Marie again and feel the thrill and excitement she feels every time Marie is near.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ INJURY
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ EXHAUSTION
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ DEPLETION

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 4 BURDENED: 6 MAXIMUM CARRY: 12

Hammer ☐ ☐ ☐

- **Range:** Close | **Weapon skill tags:** Cleave, Storm a Group
- **Large:** Mark exhaustion when inflicting harm with this weapon to inflict 1 additional harm.
- **Slow:** When you **engage in melee** with this weapon, choose one fewer option. Mark wear to ignore this effect.

Longbow ☐ ☐ ☐

- **Range:** Far | **Weapon skill tags:** Harry a Group

Worn Plate Armor ☐ ☐

- **Weighty:** This item counts as 1 additional Load

YOUR REPUTATION

Denizens	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☐	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3
Woodland Alliance	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3
Lizard Cult	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3
Eyrie Dynasties	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3

NOTORIETY

PRESTIGE

Jexri the Champion

A noble, goodhearted, ascetic follower of the Great Dragon, if not the Lizard Cult. Jexri tries to do good works wherever they go, adhering to their own heroic moral code.



Charm +1 • Cunning 0 • Finesse -1 • Luck +1 • Might +2

Your Nature

Advocate: Clear your exhaustion track when you confront a powerful NPC about their mistreatment of the powerless or weak.

Your Drives

Principles: Advance when you express or embody your moral principles at great cost to yourself or your allies.

Folk Hero: Advance when you perform a significant act of service or heroism on behalf of the denizens.

Roguish Feats: Sleight of hand

Weapon Skills: Storm a Group, Parry

Your Moves

Take Up the Call: Between Samm Dios and the Lizard Cult, Jillian Xavier and her Woodland Alliance faction, Marie Motier and her Woodland Alliance Faction, or Louise Howl and her Eyrie Dynasties faction, declare one to be the best hope for the Woodland (*The Just*) and the other evil tyrants (*The Enemy*). Take +1 ongoing to protect members of the Just or harm agents of the Enemy. You may switch which of them you consider to be the Just or the Enemy once per session by clearing all prestige from the Eyrie; your reputation remains the same.

The Just: _____ The Enemy: _____

The role you often fill as a champion:

• **Luminary:** When you *persuade an NPC* to fight for the Just or resist the charms of the Enemy, roll with Might instead of Charm.

Raw Force: Take one of the following weapon skills: *Disarm* or *Parry*. It does not count against your maximum. When you use either weapon skill, you can mark exhaustion to roll with Might.

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Protector

_____ is a true hero, someone whom even I look up to for their moral clarity. What did they do that convinced me of their righteousness?

When they are in reach, mark exhaustion to take a blow meant for them. If you do, take +1 ongoing to weapon moves for the rest of the scene.

Peer

_____ and I are more-or-less siblings after years spent in each other's company. Why have we struggled to get along in the past?

When you help them fulfill their nature, you both clear your exhaustion track.

Background

Jexri was raised in the Lizard Cult, and while they found great solace and meaning in their personal connection to the Great Dragon, too many of the practices and demands of the Cult itself didn't sit well with them. The Lizard Cult takes many forms across its width and breadth, but too often Jexri found Cultist leaders distorting or misusing faith in the Great Wurm to their own selfish ends. To find their own path to connection with the Great Wurm, they left behind their homeland and traveled far and wide, eventually arriving in the Woodland and taking on the roaming life of a vagabond. Everywhere Jexri goes, they fight for what they think is right, defending the downtrodden and casting down the corrupt.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ INJURY
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ EXHAUSTION
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ DEPLETION

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 3 BURDENED: 6 MAXIMUM CARRY: 12

Lizard Cult Talon Blade ☐☐☐

- **Range:** Intimate, Close | **Weapon skill tags:** Parry, Storm a Group, Vicious Strike
- **Precise:** Mark wear to ignore your enemy's armor when you inflict harm.
- **Incriminating:** When any significant individual member of the faction offended by this item first sees you bearing it, mark notoriety with that faction..

Round Shield ☐☐

Robes ☐

- **Unassuming:** Until you harm an enemy, they will never deem you more of a threat than other vagabonds with arms and armor.

YOUR REPUTATION

Denizens	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+0	☒ ☒ ☒ ☒	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Woodland Alliance	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☒	+0	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Lizard Cult	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☒	+0	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Eyrie Dynasties	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☒	+0	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

NOTORIETY

PRESTIGE

Yates the Envoy

An adventurous, outgoing, clever negotiator. Yates has traveled the world far and wide and helped resolve many conflicts between many different denizens.



Charm +1 • Cunning +2 • Finesse 0 • Luck +1 • Might 0

Your Nature

Agent: Clear your exhaustion track when you convince someone influential to allow you to represent their interests.

Your Drives

Loyalty: You're loyal to someone—Samm Dios. Advance when you obey their order at a great cost to yourself.

Clean Paws: Advance when you accomplish an illicit, criminal goal while maintaining a believable veneer of innocence.

Roguish Feats: Hide, Sneak, Pick Lock

Weapon Skills: Improvise

Your Moves

Diplomat: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ^{+0 +1 +2 +3}

You are known across the Woodland as an accomplished diplomat; **you have a track (Diplomat) to reflect your professional reputation, starting at a +1.** When you raise your reputation with any faction, raise Diplomat; when you lower your reputation with any faction, lower Diplomat. You cannot lower Diplomat below +0 or raise it above +3.

- Mark exhaustion to use Diplomat when you **ask for a favor or meet someone important** for the first time, regardless of the faction of your target.
- When you **persuade or figure out** an important NPC while acting on behalf of another—not you or your band—roll with Diplomat instead of Charm.

Fancy Meeting You Here: When you **carouse in a popular locale**, roll with Luck. On a hit, you meet a lackey of a powerful faction in the area—the GM will tell you what they do for the faction, and you tell the GM when and how you met them in the past. On a 10+, they get sloppy: they let a secret slip about the faction's plans or offer to introduce you to the faction's leaders on friendly terms. On a miss, someone who is looking for you finds you first.

Plots & Schemes: Take +1 Cunning (max +3).

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Watcher

_____ reminds me of a powerful political figure of the Woodland. Whom do they resemble? Why is the resemblance so striking to me?

When you **figure them out**, you always hold 1, even on a miss. When you **plead with them to go along with you**, you can let them clear 2-exhaustion instead of 1.

Peer

_____ and I negotiated a truce between two warring parties within a clearing. Why were they so important to closing the deal?

If you share information with them after **reading a tense situation**, you both benefit from the +1 for acting on the answers. If you **help them while they attempt a roguish feat**, you gain choices on the help move as if you had marked 2-exhaustion when you mark 1-exhaustion.

Background

Yates and Samm Dios came from the same part of the world, and as young toads, they together left to see what distant lands could teach them. They traveled together for some time but their paths diverged as Samm learned about the Lizard Cult and became a devoted follower of its tenets, while Yates wandered far and wide. The vagabond toad found himself helping the communities he encountered, assisting them in resolving their conflicts by representing the different sides and ensuring they could hear each other. He loved his role as a mediator, especially when he could help solve injustices by circumventing unjust systems and laws. Now he's aiming to reconnect with his old friend in Hacksaw Dell.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **INJURY**
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **EXHAUSTION**
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **DEPLETION**

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 2 BURDENED: 4 MAXIMUM CARRY: 8

Sling and Rocks ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

• **Range:** Close, Far | **Weapon skill tags:** Harry a Group

Herb Satchel ☐ ☐

• **Flexible:** When you use these supplies to provide medical aid to someone (including yourself), mark wear to clear exhaustion from them, or mark 2-wear to clear injury from them.

YOUR REPUTATION

Denizens	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☒	+0	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3
Woodland Alliance	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☒	+0	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3
Lizard Cult	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☐	+0	☒	☒	☒	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3
Eyrie Dynasties	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☒	+0	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3

NOTORIETY

PRESTIGE

Mint the Prince

A young, driven, skilled, inexperienced vagabond of the Woodland. Mint is trying to live up to the enormous legacy of her mother, Monca Leafclaw, and she has a long way to go.



Charm -1 • Cunning +1 • Finesse +1 • Luck +2 • Might 0

Your Nature

Trailblazer: Clear your exhaustion track when you depart on a wild and risky new course of action with others.

Your Drives

Crime: Advance when you illicitly score a significant prize or pull off an illegal caper against impressive odds.

Freedom: Advance when you free a group of denizens from oppression.

Roguish Feats: Hide, Sneak

Weapon Skills: Confuse Senses

Your Moves

Heirloom Weapon: Your parents bestowed a family heirloom upon you—it has several special properties unique to it. (See your equipment.) If the weapon is ever destroyed, the GM will tell you what tasks you must undertake to restore it.

Legacy: ☐☐☐ When you *meet someone important* for the first time, mark your legacy track to take a 10+ instead of rolling. When your legacy track is full, tell the GM, clear the track, and roll. Take +1 for each “yes” to the following questions:

- Are you in a clearing?
- Is anyone looking for you?
- Do you have +2 or -2 Reputation with at least one faction?

On a hit, someone with unfinished business with your parents finds you. On a 10+, they arrive without warning. On a miss, an ordinary denizen warns you about someone who might seek you out; mark your legacy track.

One of Us: When you try to *figure out* or *persuade* vagabonds, bandits, revolutionaries, or outcasts, roll with Luck instead of Charm.

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Family

_____ was mentored by one of my parents. What vagabond skills did they learn from my parents that I’ve always struggled to master?

When you help them fulfill their nature, you both clear your exhaustion track.

Peer

_____ used to work with one of my parents and invited me to join the band when I came of age. How did I impress them with my talents?

If you share information with them after reading a tense situation, you both benefit from the +1 for acting on the answers. If you help them while they attempt a roguish feat, you gain choices on the help move as if you had marked 2-exhaustion when you mark 1-exhaustion.

Background

Mint is the child of Monca Leafclaw, wielder of the famous Leafclaw—a sword with a silken rope tied to the pommel, a weapon she wielded with astonishing precision up close and from afar. She was one of the most famous vagabonds of the Woodland with countless feats of derring-do attributed to her. She’s gone now, leaving behind countless stories and a few apprentices...and Mint, who feels like she has to live up to her mother’s legacy. Monca never asked Mint to do this, but Mint doesn’t know what else to do or who else to be. Monca helped train Mint, just like she trained others like Jillian Xavier, but Mint feels a special burden to prove herself as the true heir to her mother’s reputation.

☐☐☐☐ INJURY
☐☐☐☐ EXHAUSTION
☐☐☐☐ DEPLETION

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 2 BURDENED: 4 MAXIMUM CARRY: 8

The Leafclaw ☐☐☐☐☐☐

- **Range:** Close, Far | **Weapon skill tags:** Disarm, Trick Shot
- **Unique:** Your weapon is of unusual design (a sword with a silken rope tied to the pommel); once per session, mark exhaustion to ignore the harm inflicted on you by a single attack.

Leather Armor ☐☐☐

- **Flexible:** When you *grapple* with someone, mark exhaustion to ignore the first choice they make.
- **Reinforced:** While wearing this armor, you may absorb injury as exhaustion 1-for-1 instead of absorbing it as wear.

YOUR REPUTATION

Denizens	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☒	+0	☒ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3
Woodland Alliance	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☒	+0	☒ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3
Lizard Cult	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☐	+0	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3
Eyrie Dynasties	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☒	+0	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3
		NOTORIETY						PRESTIGE					

Rackham the Thief

A practical, capable, cynical rogue. Rackham always has their eye on the prize, looking for the biggest score and the biggest mark...but they have much more of a heart than they let on.



Charm 0 • Cunning +1 • Finesse +2 • Luck +1 • Might -1

Your Nature

Rebellious: Clear your exhaustion track when you grievously insult, defy, or anger figures of authority.

Your Drives

Ambition: Advance when you increase your reputation with any faction.

Thrills: Advance when you escape from certain death or incarceration.

Roguish Feats: Acrobatics, Counterfeit, Pickpocket, Pick Lock

Weapon Skills: Trick Shot

Your Moves

Breaking and Entering: When you **attempt roguish feats** to get into or out of a place you've previously been, you can mark exhaustion to make the move as if you had rolled a 10+, instead of rolling.

Disappear into the Dark: When you **slip into shadows while unnoticed**, mark exhaustion and hold 1. As long as you remain quiet, move slowly, and hold 1 for this move, you will remain hidden. If you inadvertently reveal yourself, lose your hold. Spend your hold to reveal yourself from a darkened place, suddenly and without warning. If you attack someone immediately after spending the hold, take +3 on the roll.

Small Hands: When you **grapple** with an enemy larger than you, roll with Finesse instead of Might. On a miss, they overpower you—you're at their mercy.

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Friend

_____ sprang to get me out of holding, whether they bailed me out or rescued me. I owe them.

When you help them, you can mark 2-exhaustion to give a +2, instead of 1-exhaustion for a +1.

Professional

I stole something important, something needed or craved, for _____. I proved my worth to them.

If you share information with them after reading a tense situation, you both benefit from the +1 for acting on the answers. If you help them while they attempt a roguish feat, you gain choices on the help move as if you had marked 2-exhaustion when you mark 1-exhaustion.

Background

Rackham comes from Hacksaw Dell, where they were raised in a comfortable, simple life—something they knew they had to escape! They've always craved excitement and luxury, and they've always hated the authority figures that told them to quiet down, follow the rules, just accept what they already had. Rackham left Hacksaw Dell to seek excitement and riches, and they've found plenty of excitement, even if riches tend to go out just as fast as they roll in. Now, Rackham has returned to their home to show off a bit, but also to help their home define itself free of the authority of the Eyrie or the Marquisate!

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ INJURY
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ EXHAUSTION
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ DEPLETION

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 2 BURDENED: 3 MAXIMUM CARRY: 6

Hand Crossbows ☐ ☐ ☐

- **Range:** Close, Far | **Weapon skill tags:** Trick Shot, Quick Shot
- **Hair Trigger:** Mark wear to **target a vulnerable foe** at close range instead of far.
- **Weighty:** This item counts as 1 additional Load.

YOUR REPUTATION

Denizens	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☒	+0	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3
Woodland Alliance	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☐	+0	☒	☒	☒	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3
Lizard Cult	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☒	+0	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3
Eyrie Dynasties	-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	-1	☐	☐	☒	+0	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	+3

NOTORIETY

PRESTIGE

Knohadd the Vagrant

A manipulative, charismatic, slippery vagabond. Knohadd was trained by the Riverfolk Company to be one of their captains, but he escaped that life to talk his way across the Woodland.



Charm +2 • Cunning +2 • Finesse -1 • Luck 0 • Might 0

Your Nature

Glutton: Clear your exhaustion track when you overindulge on vices like drink, food, and gambling.

Your Drives

Clean Paws: Advance when you accomplish an illicit, criminal goal while maintaining a believable veneer of innocence.

Thrills: Advance when you escape from certain death or incarceration.

Roguish Feats: Pick Lock, Sleight of Hand

Weapon Skills: Harry a Group, Confuse Senses

Your Moves

Instigator: When you **trick an NPC** into fighting another NPC, you can remove one option from the 7-9 list—they cannot choose that option instead of doing what you want.

Pleasant Facade: When you **suck up to or otherwise butter up an unsuspecting NPC**, roll with Charm. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 2. Spend your hold 1 for 1 to deflect their suspicion or aggression away from you onto someone or something else. On a miss, your attempts at flattery are suspicious—they're going to keep their eye on you.

Pocket Sand: Take the weapon skill *Confuse Senses* (it does not count against your limit). When you **throw something to confuse an opponent's senses at close or intimate range**, roll with Cunning instead of Finesse.

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Family

After _____ and I pulled off an impressive heist and stole something very valuable from a powerful faction, my bad choices landed me in dire straits. But they bailed me out, and we've been close ever since.

When you help them fulfill their nature, you both clear your exhaustion track.

Watcher

_____ saw through one of my cons, and turned it back on me. How? Why did we forgive each other?

When you figure them out, you always hold 1, even on a miss. When you plead with them to go along with you, you can let them clear 2-exhaustion instead of 1.

Background

Knohadd was born on a Riverfolk Company ship, docked at a Company trading post, to a Company captain. He was expected to serve the Riverfolk Company...but that never sat right. Life on a ship was always rough, with too little food and too few comforts... and Knohadd is the rare otter who absolutely hates water! Eventually, he ditched his commission and talked his way into joining a trade caravan. He's been talking his way into and out of trouble ever since, lying easily and carelessly, making friends, making enemies, and gladly living a water-free life. He's had his ups—his relationship with Jillian Xavier—and his downs, like that time he was thrown in prison for impersonating an Eyrie officer. But he never stops moving, never stops looking for the next opening to a soft bed and a full belly.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ INJURY
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ EXHAUSTION
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ DEPLETION

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 2 BURDENED: 4 MAXIMUM CARRY: 8

Longbow ☐☐☐☐

- Range:** Far | **Weapon skill tags:** Harry a Group
- Heavy Draw Weight:** When you **target a vulnerable foe** with this bow, mark exhaustion to inflict 1 additional injury.

Salamander Spit Grenade ☐

- Range:** Close, Intimate
- Throwable:** Mark exhaustion to **target a vulnerable foe** with this weapon at far range.
- Expendable:** When you throw this weapon, it is automatically destroyed.
- Explosive:** When this item is destroyed, it explodes and deals 3-injury to everyone in its range (close, intimate). It also starts fires and destroys structures..

YOUR REPUTATION

Denizens	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+0	☒ ☒ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3
Woodland Alliance	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+0	☒ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3
Lizard Cult	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	+0	☒ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3
Eyrie Dynasties	-3	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	-1	☐ ☒ ☒ ☐	+0	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+2	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	+3
		NOTORIETY						PRESTIGE					

Advancements

Vagabonds advance by following their drives. Each drive lists a condition by which the vagabond can advance. Ultimately, the GM is the judge of whether or not the vagabond has met their drive condition, but players should call to the GM's attention when they think they have met a drive condition.

When you advance by following a drive, choose one option from your character's list.

Arbiter

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
Guardian: When you **defend someone or something from an immediate NPC or environmental threat**, roll with Might. On a hit, you keep them safe and choose one. On a 7-9, it costs: expose yourself to danger or escalate the situation.
 - Draw the attention of the threat; they focus on you now
 - Put the threat in a vulnerable spot; take +1 forward to counterstrike
 - Push the threat back; you and your protectee have a chance to maneuver or fleeOn a miss, you take the full brunt of the blow intended for your protectee, and the threat has you where it wants you.
- ☐ Take this move:
Threatening Visage: When you **persuade an NPC** with open threats or naked steel, roll with Might instead of Charm.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **ACROBATICS** and **SNEAK**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **HARRY A GROUP** and **STORM A GROUP**.

Champion

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
A Just Cause: When you **threaten an authority** on behalf of the downtrodden, mark notoriety with the authority's faction and roll with Might. On a hit, the force of your defiance unnerves them; they must make a concession right now to your cause or openly attack you. On a 10+, your words are inspirational; you and your allies take a +1 ongoing against them and their allies if they attack you. On a miss, the authority reveals that the cause you champion is not as just as you were led to believe.
- ☐ Take this move:
Merciful Dight: When you **try to befriend an NPC you've saved from the wrath of another**, spend time helping them further (mark exhaustion) or buy them a drink (mark depletion). Your continued kindness pays dividends; they'll share a valuable secret or grant you a serious favor.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **COUNTERFEIT** and **BLINDSIDE**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **IMPROVISE** and **VIOLENT STRIKE**.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You cannot take more than one advance per drive per session. So even if you think you've hit the same drive multiple times in a single session, you only get to advance once. You can advance once per session for each of your drives, however, meaning you can advance twice per session at most.

Envoy

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
Trust in Me: When you **soothe or placate an angry NPC**, roll with Cunning. On a hit, you calm their rage. On a 7-9, choose 1. On a 10+, choose 2:
 - They reveal an unexpected vulnerability
 - They hesitate in their fury; you create an opportunity
 - They take you further into their confidenceOn a miss, you can only calm them by redirecting their frustrations.
- ☐ Take this move:
Orator: When you **give a speech to interested denizens of a clearing**, say what you are motivating them to do and roll with Charm. On a hit, they will move to do it as they see fit. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1.
 - They don't try to take your intent too far
 - They don't disband at the first sign of real resistance
 - They don't demand you stand at their head and leadOn a miss, they twist your message in unpredictable ways.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **SLEIGHT OF HAND** and **PICK POCKET**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **CONFUSE SENSES** and **HARRY A GROUP**.

Prince

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
No Jail Can Hold Me: Take the roguish feat *Pick Lock*. It doesn't count against your maximum. When you attempt to escape confinement, mark exhaustion to shift a miss to a 7-9.
- ☐ Take this move:
Daredevil: You're at your luckiest when you go into danger without hesitation. When you **dive into a dangerous situation without forethought or planning**, treat yourself as having "Luck Armor," with 1 box of wear (remember, armor is only "destroyed" when you would mark another box of wear, and all its boxes are full). The "Luck Armor" automatically goes away once the danger has passed, and the next time you would have "Luck Armor," you gain it as if it was brand new with clear boxes.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **ACROBATICS** and **BLINDSIDE**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **DISARM** and **TRICK SHOT**.

Thief

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
Nose for Gold: When you *figure someone out*, you can always ask (even on a miss):
 - what is the most valuable thing they are carrying?When you **read a tense situation**, you can always ask (even on a miss):
 - what is the most valuable thing here?
- ☐ Take this move:
Parkour: When you **dash your way through a chaotic scene or fight**, roll with Finesse. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 2. Spend your hold 1-for-1 to dash to something within sight and reach without being stopped, or to dash away from something nearby without being stopped. You can dash away from an enemy even at the moment they attack. On a miss, your surroundings trip you up, and you're caught in place while danger closes in.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **SNEAK** and **HIDE**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **QUICK SHOT** and **CONFUSE SENSES**.

Vagrant

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
Let's Play: When you **play a game of skill and wit to loosen another's tongue**, roll with Charm. On a hit, they let slip something useful or valuable. On a 7-9, you have to lose the game to get them there; mark depletion. On a miss, they're better than you ever thought; either mark depletion and cut your losses, or mark 3-depletion and they'll start talking.
- ☐ Take this move:
Kiss the Ring: When you **exit a meeting with someone rich or powerful**, say you took a few of their things and roll with Cunning. On a hit, the GM tells you what valuable or interesting item you got. On a 7-9, it will be missed, but not until you are gone; mark notoriety with that faction. On a miss, they're going to notice; mark 2-notoriety with that faction and either run or come up with a good excuse.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **PICK POCKET** and **COUNTERFEIT**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **IMPROVISE** and **QUICK SHOT**.



Basic Moves

Attempt a Roguish Feat

When you **attempt a roguish feat you are skilled in**, say your goal and roll with Finesse. On a hit, you achieve your goal. On a 7-9, mark exhaustion or one risk of your feat comes to bear, GM's choice. When you attempt a roguish feat you are NOT skilled in, you are trusting fate.

Figure Someone Out

When you **try to figure someone out**, roll with Charm. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1. While interacting with them, spend your hold 1 for 1 to ask their player a question:

- is your character telling the truth?
- what is your character really feeling?
- what does your character intend to do?
- what does your character wish I'd do?
- how could I get your character to _____?

Persuade an NPC

When you **persuade an NPC with promises or threats**, roll with Charm. On a 10+, they see things your way, provided you have given them a strong motive or reasonable bribe. On a 7-9, they aren't sure; the GM will tell you what you need to do to sway them.

Roguish Feats

Feat Name	Description	Risks
Acrobatics	Adeptly climbing, vaulting, jumping	Break something, detection, plunge into danger
Blindside	Backstab, murder, sneak attack, suckerpunch	Draw unwanted attention, leave evidence, plunge into danger
Counterfeit	Copying, forgery, fakery	Leave evidence, take too long, weak result
Disable Device	Disarming traps, turning off mechanisms	Break something, draw unwanted attention, expend resources
Hide	Disappear from view, remain hidden	Expend resources, leave evidence, take too long
Pick Lock	Open a locked door, chest, etc.	Break something, detection, plunge into danger
Pick Pocket	Subtly steal from a pocket	Leave evidence, take too long, weak result
Sleight of Hand	Palming, switching, ditching, flourishes	Draw unwanted attention, leave evidence, weak result
Sneak	Get into or out of places without being seen	Break something, draw unwanted attention, plunge into danger

Read a Tense Situation

When you **read a tense situation**, roll with Cunning. On a 7-9, ask 1. On a 10+, ask 3. Take +1 when acting on the answers.

- what's my best way out / in / through?
- who or what is the biggest threat?
- who or what is most vulnerable to me?
- what should I be on the lookout for?
- who is in control here?

Trick an NPC

When you **trick an NPC to get what you want**, roll with Cunning. On a hit, they take the bait and do what you want. On a 7-9, they can instead choose one:

- they hesitate; you shake their confidence or weaken their morale
- they stumble; you gain a critical opportunity
- they overreact; take +1 forward against them

Trust Fate

When you **trust fate to get through trouble**, roll with Luck. On a hit you scrape by or barrel through; the GM will tell you what it costs you. On a 10+, fortune favors the bold; your panache also earns you a fleeting opportunity.

Wreck Something

When you **wreck something**, roll with Might. On a hit, you seriously break it; it can't be used again until it's repaired. On a 7-9, you're imprecise and dangerous; you cause collateral damage, attract attention, or end up in a bad spot, GM's choice.

Help or Interfere

When you **help or interfere with another vagabond**, mark exhaustion to add +1 or -2 to their roll (after rolling). Mark exhaustion again to select one of the following:

- conceal your aid or interference
- create an opportunity or obstacle

Plead with a PC

When you **plead with a PC to go along with you**, they clear 1 exhaustion if they agree to what you've proposed. You may use this move only once per session.

Risks Definitions

BREAK SOMETHING

Break something you're carrying or in the environment. Possibly mark wear.

DETECTION

Get noticed by an onlooker. Their attention creates trouble for you.

DRAW UNWANTED ATTENTION

Either create hostile onlookers where before no one cared, or call attention without actually being detected. Increase the danger in the area.

EXPEND RESOURCES

Use up supplies. Mark depletion.

LEAVE EVIDENCE

Leave behind evidence that can later lead an investigation against you.

PLUNGE INTO DANGER

Seize the chance to act and run into a more dangerous situation.

TAKE TOO LONG

Take too much time, leading the situation to change around you in some meaningful way.

WEAK RESULT

Get a hard choice about exactly what you want, or just straight up don't quite get everything you want.

Weapon Moves

All vagabonds can use Engage, Grapple, or Target, if they have a weapon with the right range.

To use a special weapon move, you must have both a weapon with the appropriate tag and the weapon skill. (Improvise Weapon and Confuse Senses just require usable materials.)

By default, unarmed vagabonds do 1 exhaustion harm. Armed vagabonds do 1 injury harm.

Engage in Melee

When you **engage an enemy in melee at close or intimate range**, roll with Might. On a hit, trade harm. On a 10+, pick 3. On a 7–9, pick 1.

- inflict serious (+1) harm
- suffer little (-1) harm
- shift your range one step
- impress, dismay, or frighten your foe

Grapple an Enemy

When you **grapple with an enemy at intimate range**, roll with Might. On a hit, you choose simultaneously. Continue making choices until someone disengages, falls unconscious, or dies. On a 10+, you make one choice first, before beginning to make simultaneous choices.

- you strike a fast blow; inflict injury
- you wear them down; they mark exhaustion
- you exploit weakness; mark exhaustion to inflict 2-injury
- you withdraw; disengage to close range

Target Someone

When you **target a vulnerable foe at far range**, roll with Finesse. On a hit, you inflict injury. On a 10+, you can strike again before they get to cover—inflict injury again—or keep your position hidden, your choice.

Cleave SPECIAL

When you **cleave armored foes at close range**, mark exhaustion and roll with Might. On a hit, you smash through their defenses and equipment; inflict 3-wear. On a 7–9, you overextend your weapon or yourself: mark wear or end up in a bad spot, your choice.

Confuse Senses SPECIAL

When you **throw something to confuse an opponent's senses at close or intimate range**, roll with Finesse. On a hit, you've thrown them off balance, blinded them, deafened them, or confused them, and given yourself an opportunity. On a 10+, they have to take some time to get their bearings and restore their senses before they can act clearly again. On a 7–9, you have just a few moments.

Disarm SPECIAL

When you **target an opponent's weapon with your strikes at close range**, roll with Finesse. On a hit, they have to mark 2-exhaustion or lose their weapon—it's well out of reach. On a 10+, they have to mark 3-exhaustion instead of 2.

Harry a Group SPECIAL

When you **harry a group of enemies at far range**, mark wear and roll with Cunning. On a 10+, both. On a 7–9, choose 1.

- inflict 2-morale harm
- they are pinned or blocked

Improvise Weapon SPECIAL

When you **make a weapon out of improvised materials around you**, roll with Cunning. On a hit, you make a weapon; the GM will tell you its range tag and at least one other beneficial tag based on the materials you used. On a 7–9, the weapon also has a weakness tag.

Parry SPECIAL

When you **try to parry the attacks of an enemy at close range**, mark exhaustion and roll with Finesse. On a hit, you consume their attention. On a 10+, all 3. On a 7–9, pick 1.

- you inflict morale or exhaustion (GM's choice)
- you disarm your opponent; their weapon is out of hand, but in reach
- you don't suffer any harm

Quick Shot SPECIAL

When you **fire a snap shot at an enemy at close range**, roll with Luck. On a hit, inflict injury. On a 7–9, choose 1. On a 10+, choose 2.

- you don't mark wear
- you don't mark exhaustion
- you move quickly and change your position (and, if you choose, range)
- you keep your target at bay—they don't move

Storm a Group SPECIAL

When you **storm a group of foes in melee**, mark exhaustion and roll with Might. On a hit, trade harm. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7–9, choose 1.

- you show them up; you inflict 2-morale
- you keep them off balance and confused; you inflict 2-exhaustion
- you avoid their blows to the best of your ability; you suffer little (-1) harm
- you use them against each other; mark exhaustion again and they inflict their harm against themselves

Trick Shot SPECIAL

When you **fire a clever shot designed to take advantage of the environment at any range**, mark wear and roll with Finesse. On a 7–9, choose 2. On a 10+, choose 3.

- your shot lands in any target of your choice within range, even if it's behind cover or hidden (inflicting injury or wear if appropriate)
- your shot strikes a second available target of your choice
- your shot cuts something, breaks something, or knocks something over, your choice
- your shot distracts an opponent and provides an opportunity

Vicious Strike SPECIAL

When you **viciously strike an opponent where they are weak at intimate or close range**, mark exhaustion and roll with Might. On a hit, they suffer serious (+1) harm and cannot mark wear on their armor to block it. On a 10+, you get away with the strike. On a 7–9, they score a blow against you as well.



War has returned to the Woodland.

The Marquise de Cat led her armies to victory over many of the clearings, but the Eyrie Dynasties rise again to oppose her. And the mice, rabbits, and foxes of the Woodland do not sit idly by—the Woodland Alliance emerges, a homegrown rebellion to free the Woodland from any oppressors.

In the midst of this war, you and your friends—vagabonds all—travel between the clearings. You take on the jobs that no one else will or can do. You choose whom you serve, if anyone...and you may tip the balance of the war.

ROOT: THE ROLEPLAYING GAME is based on the award-winning **ROOT: A GAME OF WOODLAND MIGHT AND RIGHT** board game by Leder Games. In **ROOT: THE RPG**, you play vagabonds, going on adventures and changing the Woodland with your actions.

This booklet is a sampling of the core rules of **ROOT: THE RPG**, complete with six pregenerated characters and an entire prewritten clearing to give you a strong starting situation for a few sessions of play. Open the booklet, give it a read, pick some characters, and get playing! All you need is paper, pencils, and pairs of six-sided dice!

Root: The RPG is available now!

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