

RPG
FREE RPG DAY

Pellenicky Glade Quickstart

ROOT

❧ The Roleplaying Game ❧





About This Booklet

Happy Free RPG Day! 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 Pellenicky Glade—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 forums (<https://www.magpiegames.com/thenest/>).

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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 6 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.

Pellenicky Glade, the premade clearing in this booklet, predominantly involves two factions—the Eyrie Dynasties and the Woodland Alliance—with a third faction, the Marquisate, being an outside threat. The Eyrie and the Marquisate are at war with each other for control over the Woodland, while the Woodland Alliance is a new and growing rebel force aiming to revolt against those greater powers.

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 Marquisate

Named for the Marquise de Cat who leads it, the Marquisate is either a faction of foreign invaders and colonizers, or a new force for order and industrialization—it depends upon whom you ask.

The Marquise de Cat comes from a foreign empire, and swept into the Woodland with her army when the Eyrie Dynasties were no longer in power. In general, the Marquise’s goal is still to industrialize the Woodland and fully tap its resources. Perhaps this is about improving her own position in her home empire; perhaps it really is about improving the lot of the denizens of the Woodland. Only time will tell.



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.



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.

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 6 characters and playbooks available:

- **Ellora The Arbiter:** Ellora is a powerful warrior devoted to what she thinks is right and just. She's from Pellenicky Glade and she's coming home reluctantly.
- **Quinn The Ranger:** Quinn is a rugged denizen at home in the forest and the wild. They left the Woodland proper to escape the war and their past as an Eyrie soldier.
- **Scratch The Scoundrel:** Scratch is a troublemaker, arsonist, and destroyer. They think their lost teacher might be in Pellenicky Glade, and they've come to find out.
- **Nimble The Thief:** Nimble is a clever and stealthy burglar or pickpocket. He's on the run from the law, and he's hoping the Glade will provide a good score.
- **Keilee The Tinker:** Keilee is a technically savvy maker of equipment and machines. She's from Pellenicky Glade, and was run out for her extreme ideas.
- **Xander The Vagrant:** Xander is a wandering rabble-rouser and trickster who survives on words. He fell in love with the wrong denizen, but he followed them to the Glade.

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 the edges.

Name, Species, and 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 6-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 (like the Arbiter's **Brute**).

Background, Drive & 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 14). 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 Pellenicky Glade and its problems.

Moves, Weapon Skills, and 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 roguish feats** 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.

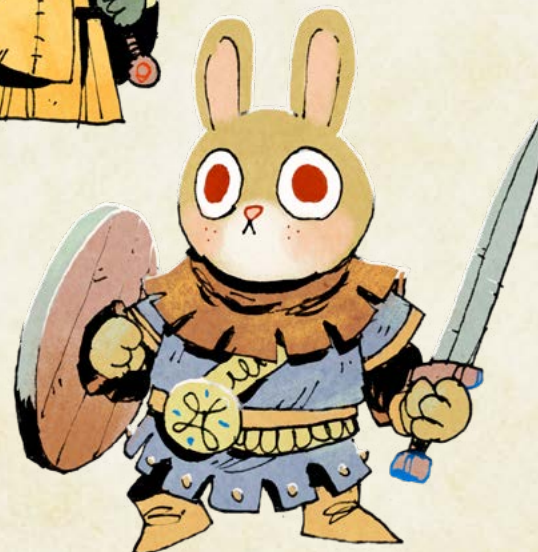
Introductions & Connections

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 drive is. 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:

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

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), all travel moves (page 36), 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 comes to bear, GM’s choice. When you attempt a roguish feat you are NOT skilled in, you are trusting fate.

Every character has a list of all the roguish feats on their sheet. You can try to do any of them, but if you’re not trained in it—you don’t have the box checked—then you’re not “attempting a roguish feat”, 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, weak result, take too long
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, weak result, take too long
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. It has to matter.

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 perform the feat and wind up running straight into a more dangerous situation.

WEAK RESULT

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

TAKE TOO LONG

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

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 “You can't” 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 give 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 persuasion, tricks rely on deceit and manipulation—tricking someone 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 only NPCs can take. You'll find more on it later, but suffice to say it brings them closer to submitting to or fleeing from you.

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 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 aid 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 make something longer-lasting based on their action. For example, a vagabond who helps a friend persuade an NPC by making a second argument might create an opportunity to get something else out of the NPC—but it's only an opportunity, not a guarantee, so the two vagabonds would likely have to do something more for the NPC in exchange.



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 range**, roll with Might. On a hit, trade harm. On a 10+, pick 3. On a 7–9, pick 1.

- inflict serious harm
- suffer little harm
- shift your range to intimate or far
- impress, dismay, or frighten your foe

Grapple an Enemy

When you **grapple with an enemy at intimate range**, roll with Might. On a 10+, you choose first, then they choose. On a 7–9, you choose simultaneously. Continue making choices until someone disengages or dies.

- 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.

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 for a time, 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.

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.

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 two exhaustion or drop their weapon. On a 10+, they have to mark three exhaustion instead of two.

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:

- they suffer 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 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 on them
- you keep them off balance and confused; you inflict 2 exhaustion harm on them
- you avoid their blows to the best of your ability; you suffer 1 fewer harm from their strikes
- 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+, pick 3. On a 7–9, pick 1.

- you inflict morale or exhaustion harm (GM's choice)
- you disarm your opponent
- 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 on your bow 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 harm and cannot mark armor wear to block it. On a 10+, you get away with the strike. On a 7–9, they get a shot in 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.

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, you would circle -1; if you had +0 reputation, you would circle +1. Note that this means you need to mark 5 boxes to advance from -2 to -1, or from -1 to +0, or from +0 to +1 reputation, but you need to mark 10 boxes to advance from +1 to +2, and 15 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, you would circle +1; if you had +0 reputation, you would circle -1. Note that this means you need to mark 3 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 6 boxes to drop from -1 to -2, and 9 boxes to drop from -2 to -3.

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).

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 one good reputation, or mark one bad reputation, your choice. On a miss, they refuse and view you with suspicion; mark one bad reputation.

Meet Someone Important

When you **meet with someone important for the first time**, roll with reputation for that faction. On a 10+, they've heard only good things, and are more likely to ally with you; take +1 ongoing to ask them for help, figure them out, or interact with them positively until you betray their trust. On a 7-9, they either don't know you, or what they've heard isn't especially bad or good. On a miss, 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 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, it 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 are too exhausted and tired to be effective at anything. For a PC, if they are fully exhausted, every move they make is treated as if it missed. Exhaustion clears one box every day, 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 too injured to go on. 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. 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 a piece of equipment they are carrying breaks (GM's choice, following the fiction), and they clear the track entirely.

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 move 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. Two boxes of depletion (2-value) grant enough medical supplies to allow a vagabond to clear a single box of injury (provided they also receive attention from a healer).

Important note for armor: When you're wearing armor, you can mark one box of wear on the armor instead of marking injury on yourself. 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 box of depletion marked. 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 of:

- Boxes of wear, plus
- Number of weapon skill tags, plus
- Number of advantageous traits, minus
- Number of disadvantageous traits

So, a well-made sword with three boxes of wear, one weapon skill available, and one advantage 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 equivalent 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. A vagabond can carry equipment totalling 12 + twice their Might in boxes of wear, NOT including their depletion, without being burdened. Past that, they become **burdened**. Beyond the GM making appropriate moves and following the fiction, burdened vagabonds have to mark one exhaustion whenever they travel. The absolute maximum they can physically carry is 20 + twice their Might in equipment boxes of wear carried.

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 Pellenicky Glade; 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
- Remind them of their outcast status
- 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 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 • Keilee • Keera • Kagan • 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
Sarrah • 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 • Yotterrie
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 just multiply this track by 3 for a small group, 5 for a medium group, or 7 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

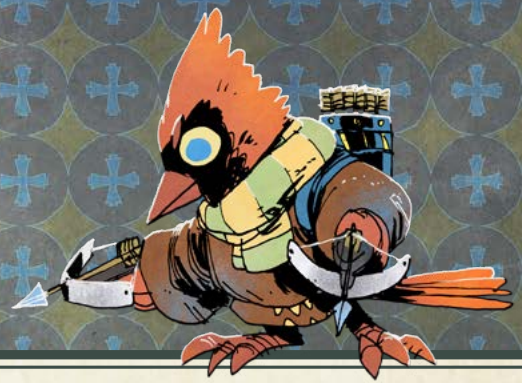
Here are a few possible weapons and attacks NPCs can use against the vagabonds:

- **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.

Pellenicky Glade



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 vagabond's intervention and in response to any particular actions.

As the GM for this game, you should read the 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. If you wind up using Mina Goshawk, Ellerbee Goshawk, and Callem Goshawk, it's okay if Zane Goshawk winds up becoming a bit player.

"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 **overarching issue** 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 into 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 overarching issue known very quickly—there should be no way they can miss it.

The **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 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 overarching issue and the 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.

Pellenicky Glade Description

The glade is an idyllic location, beautiful and well-kept. Travelers and merchants who come through all marvel at its splendor and its delicacies. Most aspire to one day live there.

The working mice of the Glade do their best to remain well out of sight, so the wealthy aristocracy can continue to live in such comfort without question. They've been well-trained through generations of domination by the swords and halberds of the ruling Goshawk family.

The Goshawks have always been prominent within the Eyrie Dynasties over the years. Even after the Eyrie tore itself asunder in its last civil war, the Goshawks managed to maintain control over Pellenicky Glade, pulling back all their interests to their perfect little outpost in the forest.

Now, the Eyrie is rising again, and the Goshawk family is at odds with itself over whether it should try to throw its support behind the new leaders of the Eyrie Dynasties, or keep the family independent from Eyrie politics and commitments. This conflict is exacerbated by the murder of the Goshawk patriarch, which has left the family with many suspects... and no clear leader. What's more, the Woodland Alliance may be preparing a full-scale revolt through its agents in the servants' quarters of the Glade...

At First Sight:

The sun spills down through a patchwork canopy of leaves, dappling the walls of the clearing with speckles of brilliant golden light. The walls themselves are well made—tall, cut planks of wood topped with perfectly symmetrical spikes. The gate is carved with the sigils of the Goshawk family, a talon clutching a golden sun, along with figures of Goshawk history and lore, all beautiful and expertly hewn.

The air between the forest floor and the leaves above is filled with rope lines and hanging nets, strung to form geometric patterns from any perspective while providing both lines for birds to cross above the buildings below, and a defense from any would-be avian attackers. Mouse burrows and homes dot the forest floor beneath the rope layers. Nothing shows any signs of the damage, destruction, or dilapidation that besets other clearings throughout the Woodland—the war has left Pellenicky Glade untouched as of yet.

Overarching Issue

The Independence of the Glade

Pellenicky Glade was a jewel in the Eyrie's crown before the Grand Civil War that tore the Dynasty apart. While the Glade was given to the Goshawk family decades upon decades ago—a prize for Pollyria Goshawk's legendary valor in one of the Eyrie's historic battles—the Goshawks made it available to the greater powers of the Eyrie as a refuge, a place of solace.

The Goshawks were given nigh autonomy for their loyalty and service, but they always saw themselves as Eyrie through and through until the Grand Civil War. The Goshawks made promises to all sides that kept the Glade out of the war, and the clearing came through largely undamaged and free of external factions' control.

And that changed almost nothing. The Goshawks remained in control of the Glade, and ran it much as they always had. The clearing continued to produce plentiful food and water, more than enough to sustain itself and sell to the other independent clearings. During this period of Woodland unrest, the Glade only grew richer, and the Goshawks hired out-of-work soldiers to create their own small army.

Now, the Eyrie Dynasties have restored themselves and are trying to take back their Woodland...and the leading Goshawks of the Glade don't agree on what they should do.

The Eyrie expects the Glade to fall into line as it once did, but times have changed, and some Goshawks (like Mina and Ellerby) aren't interested in submitting to the Dynasties. Conceding control to the Marquisate is even more unthinkable. But remaining independent comes with dire risks, and will make enemies of the Eyrie.

Everybody in the Glade from mouse to rabbit to bluejay to Goshawk has an opinion on if the Glade should remain independent and how exactly it should do that.

How It Develops

... If the vagabonds never came to the Glade, then the issue would eventually resolve itself explosively. The different disputes and conflicts would come to a head without diplomatic resolution. Ultimately, the Glade would explode into its own civil war, as Callem Goshawk and his Eyrie allies lead a fight against Ellerbee Goshawk and the town guard, even as the Woodland Alliance—through Mina Goshawk, Osha Rustle, and Jessamy Winn—would lay traps and ambushes to disadvantage all sides. No matter who wins, the Glade would be damaged and worn down, left a far less appealing prize to the factions, and its denizens would of course suffer the brunt of the harm.

Conflicts

Leadership of the Denizens

The Goshawks hold all de jure authority in the Glade. But especially with the clearing's years of recent independence, there's an opportunity for new, different leaders to emerge. The majority of the Glade's denizens are mice, cast for years into a position of servitude. But they've become increasingly discontent with the Goshawks.

The non-bird denizens of the Glade haven't yet unified behind any particular leader, however. They haven't been galvanized to action, and no single would-be commander has garnered enough support to unite the denizens.

The three best candidates for a uniting leader of the mice denizens of the Glade are:

- **Osha Rustle** - an older mouse and true, radical dissident. She's become an official member of the Woodland Alliance, though she keeps it secret from the Glade at large and from the Goshawks.
- **Jessamy Winn** - a middle-aged mouse and pacifist, Jessamy doesn't necessarily want her people to remain under the boot of the Goshawks—and she definitely doesn't want them to be placed under the boot of the Eyrie or the Marquisate—but she also doesn't want to resort to violent revolution to achieve her aim.
- **Dina Goshawk** - the youngest of the Goshawk children, and the most radical. She's a Goshawk, so the denizens are less likely to implicitly trust her as having their best interests at heart...but Mina has been speaking about changing the Glade, making it a true refuge for the unfortunates of the Woodland, and upending the current structure. Some mice believe in her dream, and believe she can accomplish it.

Below the radar of the other Goshawks and the clearing's guard, these three are struggling to gain the support of as many denizens as they can—to ensure their vision of the future of the clearing is the one that comes to pass. They aren't working together, but all three know the others have a vision for the clearing that goes beyond submitting to the Eyrie or the Marquisate.

How it Develops

If the vagabonds never arrived in the Glade, then Osha Rustle would likely become the full leader of the denizens and Woodland Alliance in the Glade. Osha is comfortable using force, while Jessamy is not. Even if Jessamy wins the hearts and minds of the mice, Osha's followers would seize control, for "the good of the denizens." Mina, unable to convince any mice to stand with her, would never be able to reach a position of authority with the denizens of the Glade, and would ultimately have to join with Osha Rustle or flee the Glade.

The Murder of Alton Goshawk

Alton Goshawk, the Mayor of Pellenicky Glade, has been murdered. He was found dead in his mayoral office two weeks ago, a simple wood-handled knife in his back. The Goshawks have done their best to hide what happened to their patriarch—the clearing knows that Alton is dead, but they don't know that he was murdered. The Goshawks (Ellerbee in particular) have control of the clearing's guard, after all, and have done everything they can to ensure that no one has talked.

Alton was far from beloved by his family, but he kept them in check. Now, with his death, the Goshawks' power struggles threaten to engulf the clearing.

Zale Goshawk, Alton's brother, aims to take his brother's seat through a special emergency election. He's more of a charmer than a planner, and he's counting on being well-liked to get him the mayoralty.

Ellerbee Goshawk, Alton's oldest daughter, assumes she was Alton's intended heir, and that control of the Glade falls to her. She's begun to operate out of her father's office—the same place she found his body with a dagger in its back—and she isn't planning on giving it up for any reason. She's definitely not counting on an election; they were always suspect and less-than-legitimate, anyway.

Callem Goshawk, Alton's son, is known throughout the Glade as a drifter and layabout...but now he's come back wearing Eyrie blue armor and claiming the mayoralty should be his. He's been talking to the Eyrie diplomat Count Dridge, and with Dridge's help, he plans to take what he believes he deserves.



WHO ACTUALLY DID IT?

At this point, you may be asking yourself—so, who really killed Alton Goshawk? Who is the murderer? Here's the thing: in a Powered by the Apocalypse game like **ROOT: THE RPG**, you play to find out what happens. And that includes playing to find out the real culprit behind mysteries like this one!

It's definitely good to have some ideas of who might've done it, and why. It's definitely good to be thinking about it over the course of play, as the vagabonds take action, talk to different NPCs, gain evidence, and even develop their own theories. That way, when it comes time to reveal the culprit at a dramatic moment, you can reveal a character who makes sense, whose betrayal is shocking, whom the evidence points to, and so on.

It's not good to force what happens to fit a particular outcome. The basic moves of the game and the questions the PCs ask through them will help guide you to a likely answer. Your job isn't to preselect an answer—it's to fit the answer to the fiction as you play!

With that spirit in mind, here are a few possible answers you can draw from:

- The Silent Paw did it to throw the clearing into disarray and confusion. It worked!
- Count Dridge had Alton assassinated to further weaken the Goshawks and create room for Callem at the top. Callem doesn't know!
- Ellerbee had her own father killed because he was planning to capitulate to the Eyrie Dynasties, and she couldn't let that happen!
- Some over-exuberant mousefolk under Osha Rustle did it. Osha didn't want Alton killed so soon, but now that he is, she's going to take advantage of this moment!
- No one did it—it was an accident after a night of drinking with Zale! But a drunken Zale sunk a dagger into his dead brother's back to throw suspicion on Alton's children!

Mina Goshawk, Alton's youngest daughter, isn't in the running for the mayoralty, as such. She believes the whole structure of the Glade is broken, and she's advocating radical change. She's a Woodland Alliance sympathizer, and their help may be exactly what she needs.

Any of the Goshawks might have been responsible for the murder of Alton Goshawk—none of them are exactly truly upset that he's gone.

How it Develops

If the vagabonds never arrived in the Glade, then it would come down to a conflict between Callem and Ellerbee. Zale is kind and charming, but Guard Captain Wossey wants to keep the peace, so he would side with the most stable Goshawk—Ellerbee. With Ellerbee backed by the guard and Callem backed by Eyrie soldiers, they would come to have a fight for the control of the Glade, with Mina and Zale swept up in one side or the other, or quickly eliminated to cut off their power. The winner of the fight between Ellerbee and Callem, in the long run, will be Callem—he can get reinforcements from outside of the Glade, and Ellerbee would not. But the Glade would be devastated well before then, leaving it ruined.

The Silent Paw

"The Silent Paw" is as much rumor as anything. A cat whose very nature is tied to the darkness and shadow. Unseen, unnoticed, the Silent Paw passes through defenses like a ghost, arrives into secured locations like the wind and gets back out just as easily. Crimes all across the Woodland have been attributed to the Silent Paw, from the theft of crucial military documents or caches of jewels, to the deaths of important denizens. All the stories of the Silent Paw agree that she aids the denizens wherever she goes.

The existence, goals, and nature of the Silent Paw in the Woodland at large aren't clear. But as far as Pellenicky Glade goes, a hooded, mysterious cat calling herself the Silent Paw has been undertaking crime after crime, with the powers that be seemingly helpless to stop her.

Exactly what her goals are, why she's here, why she's doing this—all are unclear to the Glade at large. Rumors abound that she's here to help foment a Woodland Alliance rebellion, or that she's here to assassinate the Goshawks one by one, or that she's here to steal some hidden treasure of Pollyria Goshawk herself—her twin blades forged by master fox, mouse, AND rabbit smiths.

Regardless of exactly what she's after, she is driving the authorities of Pellenicky Glade to greater and greater paranoia and stress, forcing them to raise security and hunt for her. She must be hiding somewhere in the Glade, after all...

How it Develops

If the vagabonds never arrived in the Glade, the Silent Paw would face minimal opposition. No one would be expert or capable enough to truly oppose the Paw in her pursuit of her goals, and she would ultimately achieve her end (see page 21 for more on her end)—but not without driving up tensions and frustrations throughout the Glade, leading every other actor to become further on edge and more likely to resort to drastic measures.

Important Residents

Osha Rustle

An older mouse and true, radical dissident. Osha wants to burn down the Goshawk home and seize total control of the Glade from the Goshawks. She's known by the servants of the Glade to be an official Woodland Alliance representative now, giving her and her ideas more clout than most of the Glade would've expected. She keeps her position secret from the other powers in the Glade, especially the Goshawks.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐

WEAR ☐

INJURY ☐

MORALE ☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To lead the denizens of Pellenicky Glade to freedom through uprising*

EQUIPMENT:

- A supply of corvid-crafted explosives
- A small knife

MOVES:

- Give a speech rousing to action
- Block attempts at compromise or surrender
- Call upon the aid of followers

Jessamy Winn

A middle-aged mouse and pacifist, Jessamy is the owner and bartender of the Beerburrow. She wants to walk the line of independence without going into open revolt. She doesn't want the Goshawks to remain in control, nor does she want another faction to take power...but she also doesn't want violent revolt if she can avoid it in any way.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐

WEAR ☐

INJURY ☐☐

MORALE ☐☐

DRIVE: *To pursue peaceful means of independence*

EQUIPMENT:

- A few jugs of Beerburrow ale

MOVES:

- Negotiate an amenable deal
- Deescalate a situation with words
- Call upon the aid of followers

Zale Goshawk

Alton's younger brother, while publicly lamenting his brother's death and leading preparations for the funeral, is preparing to bid for his brother's seat. Zale has always been more well-liked than the other Goshawks—he is charming and content to spend money on drinks and extravagances, but he was nowhere near as competent of a planner and administrator as Alton. Nonetheless, he expects the denizens of the Glade to elect him to the mayoralty in a special emergency election, assuming his brother's seat and his rightful place in the Glade.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐

WEAR ☐☐

INJURY ☐☐

MORALE ☐☐

DRIVE: *To become the mayor of the Glade via charm and bribery*

EQUIPMENT:

- A lute
- A pipe and bag full of redleaf

MOVES:

- Offer an extravagance or luxury to entice or mollify
- Talk his way out of a dangerous situation
- Take refuge behind a more powerful ally

Ellerbee Goshawk

Alton's oldest daughter has always been the most like him, and has always assumed that she was his intended heir. Alton wasn't a warm bird, so he would never say so openly, but he took Ellerbee under his wing and taught her his means of running the Glade. She didn't miss a beat after her father's death, and immediately assumed his duties, operating out of his office (the place where she found his body). She wants the Glade to remain exactly the same. She's competent but not particularly well-liked by anyone, and so far most have simply allowed her to occupy the office and give orders because it's been easier than standing up to her.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐

WEAR ☐☐

INJURY ☐

MORALE ☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To take power and control in the Glade*

EQUIPMENT:

- Pouches of coin
- The Goshawk family seal

MOVES:

- Compromise in a difficult situation
- Organize a plan to overcome a problem
- Summon agents to eliminate a threat

Callem Goshawk

Alton's son Callem was aimless and without direction for most of his life. He traveled the Woodland, almost a vagabond, before inevitably returning to the comforts of the Glade. The last time he returned, however—just a few short weeks before his father's death—he was wearing Eyrie blue. An Eyrie diplomat, Count Dridge, convinced Callem that his family was trying to deny him what he was owed. Now, Callem believes that he should command the Glade, and that the Eyrie is the only viable option for the future. If he commits himself and the Glade to the Eyrie, then Dridge offered him soldiers and support in his bid to be in command of the Glade.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐

WEAR ☐☐☐

INJURY ☐☐☐

MORALE ☐☐

DRIVE: *To ally with the Eyrie for control of the Glade*

EQUIPMENT:

- Gleaming Eyrie armor
- The Goshawk family longblade

MOVES:

- Attack a problem head-on
- Demand what he deserves
- Strike hard against a perceived threat

Mina Goshawk

Alton's youngest child, Mina, is the most radical of the younger Goshawks. Before Alton's death, she was already pushing her father to remain independent and hand more power and wealth back to the denizens at large, to make the Glade into a refuge for dispossessed and poor denizens across the Woodland. Her father shot down all of her radical suggestions, but with him dead, she thinks now is the time to act and truly change the Glade for the better. She believes in the cause of the Woodland Alliance and has tried to reach out to suspected agents of theirs in the Glade.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐

WEAR ☐☐

INJURY ☐☐

MORALE ☐☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To transform the Glade into a refuge for the needy*

EQUIPMENT:

- An exquisitely-crafted bow
- A satchel of medical supplies

MOVES:

- Haughtily refuse a rotten compromise
- Stage a surprise attack against a threat
- Make a plea for change to gain sympathy

The Silent Paw

As far as the PC vagabonds are concerned, the Silent Paw starts off as an enigma. Is she really the Silent Paw? Is she just using that identity to cover her actions? What is she really after? Where is she hiding?

When you run Pellenicky Glade as the GM, you should keep these questions in mind. You can intersperse rumors, appearances, and complications with the Silent Paw throughout your game, but eventually you'll need to have an idea of what she actually is so you can portray her truly—even if you undermine those truths as deceptions later.

Here are the truths you should decide on:

Is this cat the real Silent Paw?

What is this cat after?

- The twin swords of Pollyria Goshawk
- An uprising of the servants of the Glade
- All the wealth of the Goshawks
- The death of the Goshawks
- Fomenting unrest so another faction (the Woodland Alliance, the Marquisate) can seize the Glade

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐

WEAR ☐☐☐

INJURY ☐☐☐

MORALE ☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To obtain their goal through illicit means*

EQUIPMENT:

- Numerous and varied thieves' tools, like lockpicks, grappling hooks, smoke bombs, climbing gear, and more
- A pair of lightweight mousefolk daggers
- The Silent Paw's Hood

MOVES:

- Appear and disappear without warning
- Move faster and more capably than seems possible
- Put on a display of flair and panache that rallies support



Count Dridge

A visiting owl diplomat and representative of the Eyrie. Dridge was afforded diplomatic immunity by Alton, a status which technically, by the Glade's own rules, persists. Dridge is careful not to overstep the boundaries of "reasonable" action—in public, at least. His best chance to achieve his ends rests with Callem Goshawk at the moment, but he is content to adjust his plans on the fly. He is protected by a small cohort of Eyrie soldiers whom he can use to act, if need be.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐

WEAR ☐☐☐

INJURY ☐☐☐

MORALE ☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To take control of the Glade for the Eyrie*

EQUIPMENT:

- An Eyrie scepter and symbol of power
- A ceremonial waraxe

MOVES:

- Threaten with the full might of the Eyrie Dynasties
- Reveal a terrible betrayal
- Deny involvement and blame

The Eyrie Guard

Count Dridge has a small force of Eyrie guards with him in the Glade, ostensibly to act as a bodyguard. They are well-trained and capable, and prepared to take drastic action if ordered to by Dridge. They are loyal to Dridge's commands, and swaying them will be exceedingly difficult. If necessary, create individual guards according to the NPC creation rules. Be sure to give them 2 Injury harm for their training and weaponry, and at least 2 boxes of Wear for their armor. If you need to treat them as a group, there are about 10 of them forming a small mob with the following traits:

HARM DEALT: 4 injury

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐

WEAR ☐☐☐

INJURY ☐☐☐

MORALE ☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To serve and protect the Eyrie's interests in the Glade*

EQUIPMENT:

- Eyrie armor and weaponry

Captain Wossey

The mouse guard captain and leader of Pellenicky Glade's private army. Wossey remembers the conflicts that shook the Woodland not too long ago; he's not looking forward to the new war reaching the Glade, but he sees it as almost inevitable. His focus is on protecting the Glade, be it from chaos without or from chaos within. Solving the murder of Alton Goshawk is a high priority to restore a sense of safety, and ensuring that the Glade has a stable leadership is the next highest priority. Wossey doesn't relish the idea of intervening in politics, but hates the idea of the Glade tearing itself apart more.

EXHAUSTION ☐☐

WEAR ☐☐☐

INJURY ☐☐☐

MORALE ☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To keep order in the Glade*

EQUIPMENT:

- Well-made armor
- A mousefolk steel shortblade and dagger set

MOVES:

- Engage a threat safely with cleverness and tactics
- Call upon the Glade's guard for help
- Defuse conflict with calming words or threats

The Glade's Guard

The Glade has its own private guard—a substantial force for any clearing in the Woodland, about 50-75 guards. They're well provisioned, trained, and kitted. They'll follow Captain Wossey's lead by default, but they are individuals, and they can be swayed to other allegiances. Create individual guard members as needed using the NPC creation rules, being sure to always give them at least 3 Wear for their armor, and 1-2 Injury harm for their weapons. If you need to deal with them as a group, then set them up as a normal mob with +1 box of each harm type, and a "normal harm dealt" of 1 Injury. Here's an example of a small mob (about 10) of Glade guards:

HARM DEALT: 2 injury

EXHAUSTION ☐☐☐☐

WEAR ☐☐☐☐

INJURY ☐☐☐☐

MORALE ☐☐☐☐

DRIVE: *To keep order and eliminate overtly dangerous threats to the Glade*

Important Places

The Beerburrow

The Beerburrow is a favorite watering hole for Pellenicky Glade. After a day of hard work, when the denizens want to play games of chance or have drinks with friends, they head to the Beerburrow. It's underground, but it has the best food and drink that a poor mouse can expect. It's also a place the Glade's guard lets police itself for the most part. Sometimes that means brawls aplenty. Other times that means safety from the Glade's watching eyes. Jessamy Winn is the owner and bartender of the Beerburrow.

The Goshawk Home

Up in the treetops, the Goshawk Home is the best private residence in the whole Glade. It's huge, stretching across three different trees, and the Goshawks pay a host of servants to maintain it. All of the Goshawks have rooms there, spread out so they don't have to see each other. There are rumors about vaults and locked rooms hiding treasures in the Home, but only the Goshawks know if those are true.

The Guard House

Located near the main gates of Pellenicky Glade, the Guard House is a barracks big enough for the entire guard of the Glade. Its lower level is filled with armor, weaponry, and the tools to maintain it, and its higher level hosts bunkrooms. Some of the guards live in their own homes, but many live out of the Guard House, including Captain Wossey. The basement of the Guard House has a few cells in it for dissidents and unruly denizens.

The Mayor's Office

The Mayor's office is located in a central, hollowed out tree. The business of the Glade has been conducted there since the Goshawks took power. Maps, contracts, rules, deeds, and more are all found in the archives here. This is also the place where Alton Goshawk was found murdered, although much of that evidence has been cleaned up and hidden.

The Underground Stream

There are some underground tunnels running in the area of the Glade, and one in particular hosts a quick stream of fresh water. It's not the Glade's only source of water, but it is one of the more useful. It also allows for daredevil criminals to try to escape or run illicit goods down the underground stream... and it might be the hideout of one Silent Paw.

How to GM

The vagabonds come to Pellenicky Glade (experiencing the "At First Sight" imagery on page 17) to repair their equipment. Start them each off with one box of depletion marked, and two boxes of wear marked, spread as they choose among their equipment. They catch the eyes of the denizens fairly quickly, and one (or more) of the leading figures of the Glade approaches them. You can choose any leading figure you want, but here are some suggestions:

- Captain Wossey. He would "invite" them to the guardhouse to talk to them, try to determine who they serve, and possibly even solicit their aid in catching the Silent Paw or figuring out Alton Goshawk's murderer.
- Osha Rustle. She would invite them to dinner with her and a group of denizens, offering them supplies and hospitality in exchange for their help in executing a Woodland Alliance revolt.
- Zale Goshawk. He would invite them to a drink down at the Beerburrow and try to charm them to support his claim on the Glade, perhaps by helping him bring in his father's killer?

Your goals as a GM right now are simple—create trouble, complicate the situation so that there are no simple solutions or enemies, and keep the PCs involved in the clearing's issues. If the PCs are shying away from one NPC who tries to recruit them, that's okay—see if another NPC gets their attention! If they're swayed dramatically to the side of one NPC, then have another make them a fantastic counteroffer! If the PCs want to pursue their own plots and leads, let them, all the while complicating the situation.

Then, as things continue, make an escalation—a move designed to intensify the situation and draw the PCs in further. Escalations can provide new opportunities, create new dangers, or close down outlets for escape. If things ever get too quiet or slow, or the PCs aren't sure what to do, make an escalation. Here are some escalation examples:

- During the night, the Silent Paw meets the vagabonds and offers them a split of the profits if they give her a hand in stealing whatever she's after.
- Someone else (preferably someone the PCs have met) in the Goshawk family is found dead—and everyone thinks the killer must be Alton's killer, as well. The guard closes down the gates to the clearing to keep everyone inside.
- Ellerbee Goshawk imprisons Jessamy, Osha, or both on suspicion of rebellion and treachery. The servants of the Glade are incensed and ready to take violent action.

You can use multiple of these escalations, as well—your goal here is to bring the Glade to a boiling point, a place where things are about to explode.

And then...make them explode! Bring the big issues the PCs have been confronted with to a head, with a giant conflict between the interested parties. Whether it's a dramatic argument or a straight fight, or one that slides into the

PC BONDS TO THE GLADE

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

- **Ellora The Arbiter:** Ellora is coming home to Pellenicky Glade for the first time in a long time. She was a childhood friend of Callem and Mina Goshawk, before Alton ran her out.
- **Quinn The Ranger:** Quinn was once an Eyrie soldier, and has a past tied to Count Dridge. Dridge recognizes a former lieutenant, and would like to woo Quinn back to the cause.
- **Scratch The Scoundrel:** Scratch was trained by another cat, and the Silent Paw sounds to Scratch like she might be Scratch's mentor—or, maybe another student of the same teacher.
- **Nimble The Thief:** Nimble is wanted across the Woodland. Captain Wossey will have heard about Nimble and use that knowledge as leverage.
- **Keilee The Tinker:** Keilee is from Pellenicky Glade, where she espoused radical ideas like freedom for the denizens. She was friends with Jessamy Winn and Osha Rustle, both of whom have adapted Keilee's ideas.
- **Xander The Vagrant:** Xander is a wandering rabble-rouser who fell in love with Mina Goshawk while she was traveling the Woodland.

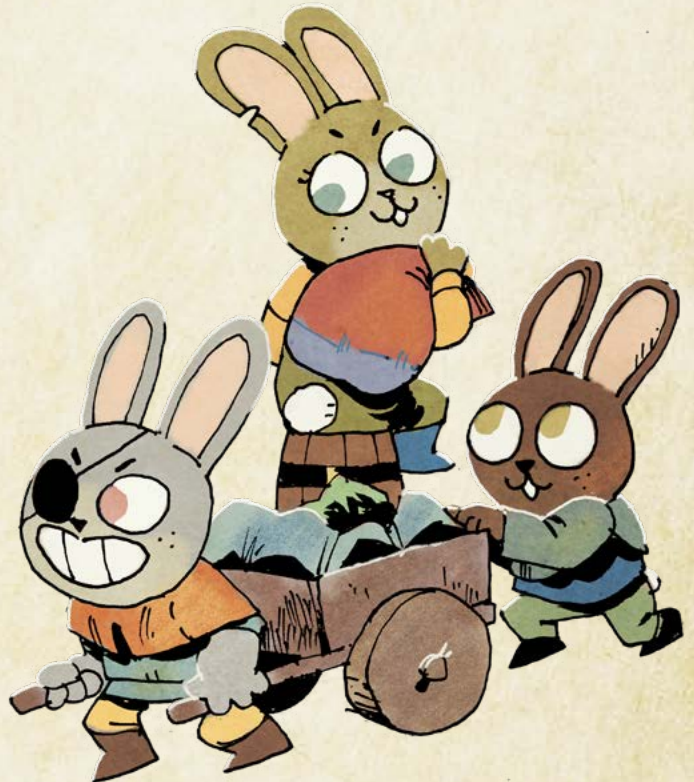
other, the issues of the Glade boil forth. Don't introduce new issues—focus only on the characters and problems the PCs have been faced with so far. Make sure that the most pressing big questions have been resolved. If the PCs have been looking into Alton Goshawk's murder, then they should have a pretty good idea of who did it by the end. If the PCs have been hunting or working with the Silent Paw, then they should know what the Paw is after by the end.

Throughout play, pay attention to the PCs' reputations. If they undertake an action that would meaningfully affect the opinions of the faction as a whole or of the local leaders of that faction, reflect it by having them mark prestige or notoriety as appropriate. Don't worry about reining in how much prestige or notoriety they mark—for the Pellenicky Glade set up, better to mark too much than too little!

Playbooks

Below is a list of all the pregenerated characters included in this quickstart. In the following pages, you'll find the playbooks themselves, each designed to be printed double-sided on single sheets of 8.5" x 11" paper. There are 6 vagabonds in this booklet.

- **Ellora The Arbiter:** Ellora is a powerful warrior devoted to what she thinks is right and just. She's from Pellenicky Glade and she's coming home reluctantly.
- **Quinn The Ranger:** Quinn is a rugged denizen at home in the forest and the wild. They left the Woodland proper to escape the war and their past as an Eyrie soldier.
- **Scratch The Scoundrel:** Scratch is a troublemaker, arsonist, and destroyer. They think their lost teacher might be in Pellenicky Glade, and they've come to find out.
- **Nimble The Thief:** Nimble is a clever and stealthy burglar or pickpocket. He's on the run from the law, and he's hoping the Glade will provide a good score.
- **Keilee The Tinker:** Keilee is a technically savvy maker of equipment and machines. She's from Pellenicky Glade, and was run out for her extreme ideas.
- **Xander The Vagrant:** Xander is a wandering rabble-rouser and trickster who survives on words. He fell in love with the wrong denizen, but he followed them to the Glade.



Ellora the Arbiter

A powerful, honorable, just badger warrior from Pellenicky Glade. Ellora has an honest demeanor and a large frame. She carries with her a tarnished locket from her past. She is devoted to her own sense of good and right.



Charm +2 • Cunning +0 • Finesse +0 • Luck -1 • Might +3

Your Nature

Defender: Clear your exhaustion track when you defend someone who cannot defend themselves from dire threat.

Your Drives

Justice: Advance when you pursue and achieve justice for someone deeply wronged by another powerful denizen.

Honor: Advance when you uphold your sense of personal honor at great cost to yourself or your allies.

Roguish Feat: Sneak

Weapon Skills: Storm a Group

Your Moves

Brute: Take +1 to Might (max +3).

Carry a Big Stick: When you use words to pause an argument or violent conflict between others, roll with Charm. On a hit, they choose: mark 2 exhaustion and keep going, or stop for now. On a 10+, take +1 ongoing to dealing with them peacefully. On a miss, NPCs turn their anger to you, and PCs take +1 ongoing against you for the scene.

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 flee.

On a miss, you take the full brunt of the blow intended for your protectee, and the threat has you where it wants you.

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Protector

I once protected _____ from a mortal blow during a fight, and I would do it again. Why?

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.

You each mark 2 prestige with the faction you helped, and mark 2 notoriety with the faction you harmed. If you are spotted together, then any prestige or notoriety gains with those factions are doubled for the two of you.

Background

Ellora grew up in Pellenicky Glade, alongside Callem and Mina Goshawk, children of the Glade's aristocratic Goshawk family. The three of them were great, true friends. Until one day, Alton Goshawk saw his children playing with Ellora, saw the way that Callem and Mina both looked upon this peasant with such fondness, and took steps to drive Ellora off, making her life ever harder until she had no other choice but to leave and become a vagabond. Since then, she has had a bone to pick with any who would exert such unjust discrimination upon the helpless. She only feels slightly comfortable coming home to the Glade because she heard of Alton's death. She doesn't know whether Callem or Mina await her there.

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

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 8 BURDENED: 18 MAXIMUM CARRY: 26

Great Sword ☐ ☐

- **Range:** close | **Weapon move tags:** Cleave, Storm a Group, Disarm
- **Sharp:** Mark wear when dealing harm with this weapon to inflict 1 additional harm.
- **Large:** Mark exhaustion when dealing harm with this weapon to inflict 1 additional harm.

Plate ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- **Arrow-proof:** Ignore the first injury you suffer from arrows in a scene.
- **Cumbersome:** Mark one exhaustion while you wear your armor—clear one exhaustion when you take it off.
- **Weighty:** This item counts for two additional boxes of wear when determining if a vagabond is burdened.

YOUR REPUTATION

Denizens -3 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +0 ☒ ☒ ☒ ☒ +1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +3

Eyrie Dynasties -3 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -1 ☐ ☒ ☒ +0 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +3

Woodland Alliance -3 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -1 ☐ ☐ ☒ +0 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +3

NOTORIETY PRESTIGE

Quinn the Ranger

A rugged, terse, experienced wolf denizen, at home in the forest. Quinn bears the scars from their past as an Eyrie soldier, a past they wish to escape. They are not warm, but they share their pipe with friends.



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

Your Nature

Cynic: Clear your exhaustion track when you uncover an important or damaging falsehood in the clearing.

Your Drives

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

Protection: Name your ward _____. Advance when you protect them from significant danger, or when seasons turn and your ward is safe.

Roguish Feat: Hide, Sneak

Weapon Skills: Disarm, Harry a Group, Improvise

Your Moves

Silent Paws: You are adept at slipping into and out of dangerous situations without anyone noticing. When you **attempt a roguish feat** to Sneak or Hide, you can mark 2 exhaustion to shift a miss to a 7-9.

Threatening Visage: When you **persuade an NPC** with open threats or naked steel, roll with Might instead of Charm.

Dirty Fighter: Take two of the following weapon skills: Trick Shot, Confuse Senses, **Improvise Weapon**, **Disarm**, Vicious Strike. None of the skills you take with this move count against your maximum for advancement. (These skills have already been selected for this character, in bold italics.)

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Watcher

I was tricked, conned, or deceived by _____ once. Why do I choose to continue working with them?

..... When you figure them out, you always hold 1, even on a miss.

Protector

I did something that would have gotten me the enmity of a Woodland faction—if _____ hadn't covered for me. What did I do? Why and how did they protect me? Regardless, I feel indebted to them.

..... 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.

Background

Quinn doesn't like to talk about their past. They aren't proud of the things they did as an Eyrie soldier under Colonel Dridge during the Great Civil War. At the time they were young and proud, excited to be part of a real fight and to earn their shot at glory. Now, they look back on those days with disgust and distaste. They left the military and never looked back, becoming a forest-dwelling vagabond to keep away. Now they still want to stay away from the new war, but it has become harder and harder to remain apart as the new war creeps into all corners of the Woodland.

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

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 11 BURDENED: 14 MAXIMUM CARRY: 22

Foxfolk Longsword ☐ ☐

- **Range:** close | **Weapon move tags:** Disarm, Vicious Strike
- **Foxfolk steel:** Ignore the first box of wear you mark on this item each scene.

Longbow ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- **Range:** far (close with Quick Shot only) | **Weapon move tags:** Harry, Quick Shot

Chainmail ☐ ☐ ☐

- **Tightly woven:** When you take a few seconds to repair this armor after a fight, clear 1 box of wear on this item.
- **Weighty:** This item counts for two additional boxes of wear when determining if a vagabond is burdened.

YOUR REPUTATION

Denizens -3 ☐ ☐ ☐ -2 ☐ ☐ ☐ -1 ☐ ☐ ☒ +0 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +3

Eyrie Dynasties -3 ☐ ☐ ☐ -2 ☐ ☐ ☐ -1 ☐ ☒ ☒ +0 ☒ ☒ ☒ ☒ +1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +3

Woodland Alliance -3 ☐ ☐ ☐ -2 ☐ ☐ ☐ -1 ☐ ☐ ☐ +0 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +3

NOTORIETY PRESTIGE

Scratch the Scoundrel

A lucky, dangerous, flea-bitten cat. Scratch seeks their mentor, who gave them their cherished mousesteel spark lighter, in Pellenicky Glade.



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

Your Nature

Arsonist: Clear your exhaustion track when you destroy or grievously damage an important structure.

Your Drives

Chaos: Advance when you topple a tyrannical or dangerously overbearing figure or order.

Crime: Advance whenever you score a significant haul or pull off an illegal caper against impressive odds.

Roguish Feat: Acrobatics, Hide, Sneak

Weapon Skills: Vicious Strike

Your Moves

Arsonist: When you *wreck something* with flagrantly dangerous means (explosives, uncontrolled flame, etc.), roll with Luck instead of Might.

Create to Destroy: When you use available materials to rig up a dangerous device, roll with Finesse. On a hit, you cobble together something that will do what you want, one time. On a 10+, choose one. On a 7-9, choose two. The device is:

- more dangerous than intended
- larger or more unwieldy than intended
- more temperamental and fragile than intended

On a miss, you need some vital component to finish it; the GM will tell you what.

Better Lucky than Good: When you use a weapon move, mark exhaustion to roll with Luck instead of the listed stat.

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Friend

_____ and I once met and pulled off a mad, impossible stunt together. What did we do? Why?

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

Partner

_____ and I destroyed a faction's resource, on behalf of an opposing faction. Why?

• You each mark 2 prestige with the faction you helped, and mark 2 notoriety with the faction you harmed. If you are spotted together, then any prestige or notoriety gains with those factions are doubled for the two of you.

Background

Scratch was always a troublesome cat, more interested in breaking things, starting fires, and generally making a ruckus than ever doing anything "noble" or "constructive." They likely would've blown themselves up, had they not been taken under the protection and mentorship of another cat—the Silent Paw herself. The Paw never told Scratch her real name, never even really let Scratch see her real face. But she taught Scratch how to survive in the Woodland, how to keep safe, and how to cause trouble productively. Scratch and the Paw were separated some time back, and now Scratch has heard tell that their mentor might be in Pellenicky Glade—so they are thrilled to be coming here.

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

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 5 BURDENED: 12 MAXIMUM CARRY: 20

Dagger ☐

- **Range:** intimate, close | **Weapon move tags:** Parry, Vicious Strike
- **Quick:** Mark exhaustion to engage with Finesse instead of Might.

Crossbow ☐

- **Range:** far | **Weapon move tags:** Trick Shot
- **Oiled string:** Take +1 to make a trick shot at far range.
- **Hair trigger:** Mark wear to target at close range.
- **Iron bolts:** Ignore the enemy's armor when you inflict an injury.

Leather Armor ☐

- **Flexible:** When you grapple with someone, mark exhaustion to ignore the first choice they make.

YOUR REPUTATION

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

NOTORIETY PRESTIGE

Nimble the Thief

A clever, stealthy, friendly raccoon burglar and pickpocket. Nimble is on the run from the law of the Woodland and his home of Cutter's Thicket, and he's hoping Pellenicky Glade will provide a good score.



Charm +0 • Cunning +1 • Finesse +3 • Luck +1 • Might -1

Your Nature

Kleptomaniac: Clear your exhaustion track when you selfishly steal something valuable or important.

Your Drives

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

Greed: Advance when you secure a serious payday or treasure.

Roguish Feat: Acrobatics, Hide, Pick Pocket, Sneak

Weapon Skills: Parry

Your Moves

Rope-a-dope: When you evade and dodge your enemy so as to tire them out, roll with Finesse. On a hit, you can mark one exhaustion to make them mark two exhaustion. On a 10+, you can mark one exhaustion to make them mark three exhaustion. On a miss, they catch you in the middle of a dodge—you're at their mercy.

Master Thief: Take +1 Finesse (max +3).

Nose for Gold: When you *figure someone out*, you can always ask (even on a miss):

- what is the most valuable thing you are carrying?

When you read a tense situation, you can always ask (even on a miss):

- what is the most valuable thing here?

YOUR CONNECTIONS

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 one.

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 two exhaustion to give a +2, instead of one exhaustion for a +1.

Background

Nimble comes from Cutter's Thicket, where he stole to survive. He was a petty thief, until he took a crack at a more important mark—stealing the local Eyrie commander's jeweled sword. And he succeeded, carrying the sword just long enough to be caught. He slipped from the Eyrie prison in Cutter's Thicket and ran, working as a thieving vagabond ever since. He's become quite adept at thievery, and is always on the lookout for a bigger score, the score that will actually let him safely settle down. And what with news that the Silent Paw herself might be poking around Pellenicky Glade, Nimble thinks this might be his chance.

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

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 8 BURDENED: 10 MAXIMUM CARRY: 18

Dagger ☐

- **Range:** intimate, close | **Weapon move tags:** Parry, Vicious Strike
- **Quick:** Mark exhaustion to engage with Finesse instead of Might.

Staff ☐

- **Range:** close | **Weapon move tags:** Parry
- **Blunted:** This weapon inflicts exhaustion harm, not injury harm.

Chainmail ☐

- **Tightly woven:** When you take a short time to repair this armor after a fight, clear 1 box of wear on this item.
- **Weighty:** This item counts for two additional boxes of wear when determining if a vagabond is burdened.

YOUR REPUTATION

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

NOTORIETY
PRESTIGE

Keilee the Tinker

An adept, brilliant, and messy beaver and maker. Keilee is from Pellenicky Glade, and was run out for her extreme ideas. She holds out hope for the future, though, and she carries her massive packs back to the Glade with good intent.



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

Your Nature

Radical: Clear your exhaustion track when you espouse dangerous ideas to the wrong audience.

Your Drives

Greed: You advance when you secure a serious payday or treasure.

Ambition: You advance whenever your reputation increases with a faction.

Roguish Feat: Counterfeit, Disable Device, Pick Lock

Weapon Skills: Improvise

Your Moves

Workshop: You have a place where you work on long-term projects. It's located in or very near to Pellenicky Glade; you say where.

Features: *useful hand tools, a forge and anvil, an alchemical stand*

Downsides: *small supply stores, dependent on a local resource*

When you go into your workshop and dedicate yourself to making a thing, or to getting to the bottom of something, decide what and tell the GM. The GM will give you between 1 to 4 conditions you must fulfill to accomplish your goal, including time taken, materials needed, help needed, or the limits on the project. When you accept and accomplish the conditions, you accomplish the goal.

Repair: When you repair destroyed personal equipment at your workshop, the GM will set one condition as per the workshop move. Fulfill it, and clear all wear for that equipment. When you repair damaged personal equipment at your workshop, you do it as long as you have tools and resources. Clear all wear for that equipment.

Jury rig: When you create a makeshift device on the fly, roll with Cunning. On a hit, you create a device that serves a purpose once, and then breaks. On a 10+, choose one:

- It works exceptionally well
- You get an additional use out of it

On a miss, the device works, but it has an unintended side effect that the GM will reveal when you use it.

YOUR CONNECTIONS

Family

_____ and I had each other's back when we were run out of a clearing because our natures got out of hand.

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

Professional

_____ and I have been working together well for a while. We read each other's moves easily.

... 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 one.

Background

Keilee was born and raised in Pellenicky Glade, where she always had a tendency to learn too much, ask troublesome questions, and generally act older than her age. When she was a small child, she befriended the older Jessamy Winn and the much older Osha Rustle, ultimately even swaying them with her implacable ideas as they all grew up. Keilee was cast out of the Glade on the order of Alton Goshawk for disseminating dangerous ideas like full equality for all denizens, and the seizure of Goshawk assets to be redistributed to the entirety of the Glade. Now, after years as a vagabond, honing both her ideas and her mind, becoming a master machinist and tinkerer, she's heard rumors that the Glade might be on the cusp of a real revolution, and she's not going to miss out.

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

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 4 BURDENED: 14
MAXIMUM CARRY: 22

Smithy Hammer ☐ ☐

- **Range:** Intimate, close | **Weapon move tags:** Cleave
- **Heavy bludgeon:** Mark exhaustion to ignore the enemy's armor when you inflict an injury.

Leather Armor ☐ ☐

- **Flexible:** When you grapple with someone, mark exhaustion to ignore the first choice they make.

YOUR REPUTATION

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

NOTORIETY

PRESTIGE

Xander the Vagrant

A charming, gambling, manipulative opossum trickster. Xander survives on words and games. He fell in love with the wrong denizen, Mina Goshawk, but hopes to reunite in Pellenicky Glade.



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

Your Nature

Hustler: Clear your exhaustion track when you spring a complicated con on a dangerous mark.

Your Drives

Chaos: Advance when you topple a tyrannical or dangerously overbearing figure or order.

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

Roguish Feat: Pick Lock, Sleight of Hand

Weapon Skills: Quick Shot

Your Moves

Desperate Smile: When you *trust fate to see you through* by begging, pleading, or abasing yourself, roll with Charm instead of Luck.

Charm Offensive: When you play upon an enemy's insecurities, concerns, or fears to distract them with words during a fight, roll with Cunning. On a hit, you create an opening for yourself—make any available weapon move against them at +1, or strike quickly and deal injury to them. On a 7-9, you also tick them off; they aren't listening to you anymore, no matter what you do, until the situation drastically changes. On a miss, you infuriate them—they come at you, hard, and you're not prepared.

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 one depletion. On a miss, they're better than you ever thought; either mark one depletion and cut your losses, or mark three depletion and they'll start talking.

YOUR CONNECTIONS

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.

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.

Background

Even during his youth in Bramblehatch, Xander talked too much. He was a con artist, a trickster, a rabblrouser...always someone who drew attention, good and ill. As the one who found himself the subject of others' attentions, it surprised Xander to find his own attention drawn to another wanderer named Mina Goshawk. She was traveling the Woodland, she said, to gather new ideas, to become better so she could better serve her home of Pellenicky Glade. She spoke with determination and without artifice, and Xander was helplessly pulled towards that earnesty. He and Mina started a relationship, and they both saw potential for it to become something greater—before his own crimes caught up to him and drove him away, and Mina's travels drew her elsewhere. Now, he has a chance to come to Pellenicky Glade and hopefully find Mina again.

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

Your Equipment

CARRYING: 8 BURDENED: 12 MAXIMUM CARRY: 20

Mousefolk Short Sword ☐ ☐

- **Range:** close | **Weapon move tags:** Parry, Disarm
- **Mousefolk Steel:** Mark wear on this sword to engage sword-to-sword using Cunning instead of Might.

Shortbow ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- **Range:** close | **Weapon move tags:** Quick Shot
- **Short limbs:** Mark wear on this bow to target someone at far range.

Leather Armor ☐ ☐

- **Flexible:** When you grapple with someone, mark exhaustion to ignore the first choice they make.

YOUR REPUTATION

Denizens -3 ☐ ☐ ☐ -2 ☐ ☐ ☐ -1 ☐ ☐ ☐ +0 ☒ ☒ ☐ ☐ +1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +3

Eyrie Dynasties -3 ☐ ☐ ☐ -2 ☐ ☐ ☐ -1 ☐ ☒ ☒ +0 ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ +1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +3

Woodland Alliance -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:
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 1 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.
- ☐ 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 **BLINDSIDE** and **SLEIGHT OF HAND**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **CLEAVE** and **DISARM**.

Ranger

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
Poisons & Antidotes: You have expertise in the poisons and antidotes of the Woodland. When you brew a poison, mark depletion and say what effect you want it to have: sleep, weakness, inebriation, or death. Any poison you make requires ingestion or injection; you can use the poison on your weapon or put it in your target's food or drink. When you study a poison or its effects to make an antidote, the GM will tell you what special ingredient you'll need. Get the ingredient and mark 1 depletion to brew the antidote.
- ☐ Take this move:
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.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **BLINDSIDE** and **ACROBATICS**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **VICIOUS STRIKE** and **QUICK SHOT**.

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.

Scoundrel

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
Danger Mask: You have a mask, disguise, or outfit you wear when you go about your most destructive work—a combination of calling card and means to obscure your identity. Treat it as a piece of equipment with two wear. While you have your mask on, treat yourself as having Reputation -2 with all factions, and take +1 to *trust fate* and all Scoundrel playbook moves. If your mask is ever taken from you, mark exhaustion. If your mask is ever destroyed, mark three exhaustion.
- ☐ Take this move:
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.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **PICK LOCK** and **BLINDSIDE**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **PARRY** and **TRICK SHOT**.

Thief

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
Breaking and Entering: When you *attempt a roguish feat* to get into or out of a place you've previously been, you can mark exhaustion to always have a clear escape, even on a miss.
- ☐ Take this move:
Silent Paws: You are adept at slipping into and out of dangerous situations without anyone noticing. When you *attempt a roguish feat* to Sneak or Hide, you can mark 2 exhaustion to shift a miss to a 7-9.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **COUNTERFEIT** and **PICK LOCK**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **VICIOUS STRIKE** and **CONFUSE SENSES**.

Tinker

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
Give and Take: When you *wreck* a mechanism or lock with precise understanding, roll with Cunning instead of Might. On a 7-9, instead of not controlling your own strength, you discover an unexpected aspect of the mechanism; you still wreck it, but you also cause an unforeseen consequence.
- ☐ 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 you are carrying?When you read a tense situation, you can always ask (even on a miss):
 - what is the most valuable thing here?
- ☐ Take roguish feats **PICK POCKET** and **SLEIGHT OF HAND**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **CONFUSE SENSES** and **CLEAVE**.

Vagrant

- ☐ Add +1 to a stat of your choice (to a maximum score of +2).
- ☐ Take this move:
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.
- ☐ Take this move:
Carry a Big Stick: When you use words to pause an argument or violent conflict between others, roll with Charm. On a hit, they choose: mark 2 exhaustion and keep going, or stop for now. On a 10+, take +1 ongoing to dealing with them peacefully. On a miss, NPCs turn their anger to you, and PCs take +1 ongoing against you for the scene.
- ☐ Take roguish feats **PICK POCKET** and **SNEAK**.
- ☐ Take the weapon skills **PARRY** and **DISARM**.



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 give 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, weak result, take too long
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, weak result, take too long
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

Risks Definitions

BREAK SOMETHING

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

DETECTION

Straight up get noticed by an onlooker. It has to matter.

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 perform the feat and wind up running straight into a more dangerous situation.

WEAK RESULT

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

TAKE TOO LONG

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

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 range**, roll with Might. On a hit, trade harm. On a 10+, pick 3. On a 7–9, pick 1.

- inflict serious harm
- suffer little harm
- shift your range to intimate or far
- impress, dismay, or frighten your foe

Grapple an Enemy

When you **grapple with an enemy at intimate range**, roll with Might. On a 10+, you choose first, then they choose. On a 7–9, you choose simultaneously. Continue making choices until someone disengages or dies.

- 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.

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 for a time, 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.

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.

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 two exhaustion or drop their weapon. On a 10+, they have to mark three exhaustion instead of two.

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:

- they suffer 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 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 on them
- you keep them off balance and confused; you inflict 2 exhaustion harm on them
- you avoid their blows to the best of your ability; you suffer 1 fewer harm from their strikes.
- 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+, pick 3. On a 7–9, pick 1.

- you inflict morale or exhaustion harm (GM's choice)
- you disarm your opponent
- 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 on your bow 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 harm and cannot mark armor wear to block it. On a 10+, you get away with the strike. On a 7–9, they get a shot in as well.

Reputation Moves Creating NPCs

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.

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, you would circle -1; if you had +0 reputation, you would circle +1. Note that this means you need to mark 5 boxes to advance from -2 to -1, or from -1 to +0, or from +0 to +1 reputation, but you need to mark 10 boxes to advance from +1 to +2, and 15 boxes to advance from +2 to +3.

Mark Notoriety

When you **mark notoriety**, mark the next box to 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, you would circle +1; if you had +0 reputation, you would circle -1. Note that this means you need to mark 3 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 6 boxes to drop from -1 to -2, and 9 boxes to drop from -2 to -3. Each PC tracks 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).

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 one good reputation, or mark one bad reputation, your choice. On a miss, they refuse and view you with suspicion; mark one bad reputation.

Meet Someone Important

When you **meet with someone important for the first time**, roll with reputation for that faction. On a 10+, they've heard only good things, and are more likely to ally with you; take +1 ongoing to ask them for help, figure them out, or interact with them positively until you betray their trust. On a 7-9, they either don't know you, or what they've heard isn't especially bad or good. On a miss, they've heard stories about you and the things you've done, true or false—prepare for major complications.

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 • Anders • Alyse • Bhea • Billi • Braden • Buford
Cesspyr • Cinder • Constance • Cloak • Dawna • Dewly
Doneel • Dugan • Ellaine • Emmie • Ewan • Eward • Flannera
Fog • Foster • Frink • Gemma • Golden • Greta • Gustav
Harper • Henny • Hinnic • Howerd • Igrin • Ilso • Inda • Irwen
Jacy • Jasper • Jinx • Johann • Keilee • Keera • Kagan • 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
Sarrah • Selwin • Stasee • Sorin • 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 • raccoon • rabbit • 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

Harm

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 just multiply this track by 3 for a small group, 5 for a medium group, or 7 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.

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
- Remind them of their outcast status
- 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 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.

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.



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 one or two sessions of play. Open the book, give it a read, pick some characters, and get playing! All you need is paper, pencils, and pairs of six-sided dice!

Want to learn
more about the
Root RPG?

Visit rootrpg.com
for more information
and previews of the
upcoming release!



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