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*This is a work in progress, compiling lots of notes and ideas surrounding this game into one place. It will be updated as I go. Beware accidental spoilers!*

## Characters

All the characters shown so far.

### Steelshod

**Aleksandr Kerensky (PC):** Commander of Steelshod. A young man, early twenties, but he looks older due to a full beard and hard Ruskan living. Third son of a Ruskan noble house in the far northern reaches of Rusk. Though his older brother inherited the lands, Aleksandr was always held in high esteem by their father. When he left to start his own company, his father gifted him the family blade.

Aleksandr is, in many respects, a man out of place in this era. He is agnostic, seeing little value in putting stock in gods to solve problems for you. He is egalitarian, respecting men and women. He values freedom and justice and honor, and is *always* willing to give people a second chance.

**Yorrin (PC):** Aleksandr's right hand. The dark to Aleksandr's light. Yorrin grew up in the slums of a Torathian city, living as a thief and ne'er-do-well. Aleksandr rescued him from a hangman's noose and took him in.

To Yorrin, this was an epiphany. He follows Aleksandr unto death, and always works to reinforce Aleksandr's position. But moreover, he found religion. He takes his status as a Torathi seriously, and strives to embody the virtues of Torath. He still uses his extensive background in sneaking, stealing, and throat-cutting... but to what he sees as noble ends.

Yorrin is more interested in doing good than being seen as good. He has a biting wit, and he is quite willing to get his hands dirty. His favorite method of charity involves setting up the situation in such a way that nobody realizes he is responsible for the charity.

He's also a bit of a chauvinistic bigot. If someone does not follow Torath, he sees them as a stupid heathen and not worthy of the same sort of respect he'd accord a member of the faith. Aleksandr is a big exception here, and as Steelshod recruits non-Torathi he is learning to adjust.

**Dylan the Whip:** A trusted lieutenant in Steelshod, and one of the first members. A young man with good common sense and decent people skills. Dylan is an adept horseman and archer.

**Prudence:** Small woman, excels at scouting and especially spying. Great at disguising herself in plain sight, blending in as a young peasant girl or similar.

**Bear:** Big, gruff son of a bitch that loves to fight, fuck, and drink. Uses mostly axes.

**Robin:** Former bandit, current lazy good-for-nothing. On half-pay, and pays half of his half-pay to Aleksandr until he has paid off his "life debt." Often gets shit work, just as often wriggles out of it and gets other Steelshod members to do it.

**Anatoly:** Ruskan druzhnik without a bayard. Hugely respects Aleksandr; was recruited after he tried to kill Steelshod and Alaina under command of his former boss.

**Orson:** Mercenary who learned some herbalism and midwifery from his mother. Heavily leaned upon to serve as a de facto medic. Friendly, talkative guy, which makes his close friendship with Levin all the odder. He and Levin were previously hired by Giancarlo before signing on with Steelshod.

**Levin:** Scout, mounted archer, and skirmisher. Extremely terse, very to-the-point. Inseparable with Orson. He and Orson were previously hired by Giancarlo before signing on with Steelshod. Yorrin has nicknamed him "Lemon".

**Perrin:** Formerly a mercenary of Taraam. Well versed in a wide array of weapons, tactics, and fighting styles. Romantically involved with Prudence. Well, as much as possible, considering Prudence considers romance to be a stupid waste of time.

**Gunnar:** Svardic warrior, freed from being an oar slave on one of Taerbjornsen's ships. Adept warrior, adept sailor, and highly intelligent.

**Cara:** Daughter of Cailan, chief of the Wncari clan Cos Cruach. Mistreated by the Svards, rescued by Steelshod. Tough as nails, skilled in archery, hunting, survivalism, and other barbarian pursuits. Wed to Felix, mother of Felina.

**Miles:** Farm-boy and one-time deserter from the Caedian army. Huge lad, but he seems smaller than he is due to his slouch and introverted, skittish nature. Doing the best he can to be a warrior.

**Leon duPont:** Arrogant, brash chevalier from fair Lorraine. Leon is, in a lot of respects, like a more sophisticated Bear. Bear with a veneer of civility. At the end of the day, though, his favorite pastimes are wine, women, and war.

**Michel:** *A Loranette batman, steward, and squire. Sent by Comte Florian DuPont, Leon's father, to watch over him in the Midlands. Very proper, elegant, well-spoken, and a surprisingly good fighter. Ripped apart by the Taer Bjorn while he defended Leon during the final battle for Nahash.*

**Ben “Longshanks”:** Caedian longbowman. A free man, he decided to join up with Steelshod because he didn’t get along with the local Caedian lords that were offering to pay for his services. Generally a friendly chap, easygoing, with just a bit of a snarky/rebellious streak. Steelshod is a company of rebels, snarky assholes, and general outcasts and irregulars, so he doesn’t even rate a second glance in this regard.

**Alejandra Augustine:** Spatalian jinete (light cavalry). Formerly commanded a larger group, never much cared for the contract management/administrative side of things. Eager to let someone else handle that. Decent tactical commander, easy to get along with. Lovers with her two men. Left Steelshod after the death of Martín, to return home to Spatalia and give the back-pay to her dead lovers’ families. Returned after joining in the final battle of Nahash.

***Carlito:** One of Alejandra’s men. Another jinete, a pretty good guy, follows orders and works well in the team. Killed by Einsulf the Black at the Battle of Kilchester.*

***Martín:** Alejandra’s other man. Seems like a great guy, but he doesn’t speak much Middish. Killed during the Arcadian Firefall.*

**Jaspar Beckenridge (PC):** An upjumped merchant that was adopted into a Caedian noble house. That house collapsed in the early stages of the Svardic War, and Jaspar struck out on his own. Highly educated and literate, Jaspar studied at the University in Cassala. Serves as a factor, steward, and general administrator.

***Olivenco:** Called the Cutter of Camarr. Originally from the Spatalian city-state of Camarr, where he was an infamous bravo and duelist. “Retired” to the Midlands, to assist the mercenary company at Fort Taraam. Eventually became commander, then was grievously wounded in the Underpass.*

*Lost his dominant arm. Has joined Steelshod more as a consultant and trainer than a true combatant, though he can still fight passably well with a dagger in his left hand, as his main style was blade and dagger. He became Leona’s lover, only to be mortally wounded by her during the Taeric Rage in the last battle for Nahash. Died a few short days after the battle from these wounds.*

**Chattering Chauncey:** A Middish guttersnipe that went to Yerevan to steal his way to fortune. No luck there, but he fell in with Olivenco and the Taraam men when they formed a resistance to the Yerevani Madness that nearly caused a war between Rusk and Caedia.

He was mostly following Olivenco, not Taraam. So when Olivenco signed on to Steelshod, they got Chauncey too. Nobody was that thrilled, but it turned out he was a damn good footpad. He stutters a lot, is very nervous and awkward, but when he’s on a job he’s as quiet as a ghost.

**Agrippa (PC):** Arrogant, highly competent medico. Constantly on his friends’ cases about their unhealthy habits of excess.

**Leona Ljonskar (PC):** Hoplite soldier with a love of fighting, sex, gambling, and drinking. Suffers from some post-traumatic issues, but hides them beneath a blustery facade. With the help of Drengi, she became the first Ljonskar.

**Hubert (PC):** A jolly fat monk that dabbles in everything from combat, to alchemy, to cooking delicious meals for large companies of men. Considers new experiences to be the purpose of living, and seeks them out at every opportunity.

**Amos:** Backwoods country hick, trapper, poacher, archer. Good ol' boy, not too bright.

**Sir Gerald Thorton, "Unicorn":** A knight from Kirkworth. Good mounted archer and spearman, famous for killing a warhorse with a single well-shot arrow during a charge.

**Pierre Le Noir:** A former Loranette Royal Guard that killed his patron and several other guards. Fled Lorraine with his steel weapon and armor. A bit of a scoundrel with little moral compunction left. Disillusioned.

**Ignus Vecchio:** Cassaline engineer. Cultured, intelligent, careful, precise. Mentor to Nate.

**Nate, "Mucker":** Caedian peasant turned sapper turned siege expert. Apprentice to Ignus. Uncouth, rough, impulsive, and highly intelligent.

**Sir Felix Wren (PC):** A longbow-wielding knight, fond of sniping and long range murder. An antisocial, arrogant prick, but loyal to his liege, Lord Chatsworth. Family is from Highurst, and he speaks with a Hurstie brogue.

**Zelde (PC):** A Kriegar warrior woman, once the personal guard to a Kriegar Jarl. Stupider than a stack of bricks, but a fierce fighter and generally friendly and agreeable to her comrades. Trusts Felix implicitly.

**Drengi:** An ulfskennar, a Svardic barbarian attuned to the skin of a wolf. Drengi is fairly clever and cunning, and speaks passable Middish. He is considered to be the leader of the ulfskennar among Steelshod.

**Hrodir:** Another ulfskennar. Follows Drengi's lead. Less bright, barely speaking any Middish at all. Ferocious warrior, though, like most ulfskennar.

**Sir Evan Lafferty:** A knight from Kirkworth that was disgraced and cast out after losing a duel to Felix, who suggested he take up with Steelshod. Evan is a bit of an asshole, and has a rivalry with Gerald, but so far has proven a valuable addition to the team.

**Oliver (PC):** A scrawny lad with a clubfoot, Oliver serves as Steelshod's standard bearer and Aleksandr's squire.

**Luke:** A former Serpentis, Brother Luke was among Torthian's company and fought alongside Steelshod in the Underpass. He joined up with Steelshod after reaching Nahash, dissatisfied with the Serpentes' reaction to the Old Ones. Later revealed to be a Knight Draconis.

**Avram Wrigley:** One of the knights from Acton, who joined up to get enough money, contacts, and influence to liberate Acton.

**Reuben Stafford:** The other knight from Acton, also working to liberate his homeland.

**Hill of Nahash:** A large man who served as a labourer before the war. He rarely speaks, choosing his actions carefully.

**Sam of Nahash:** A butcher who lost a forearm while fighting in the breach of Nahash's outer wall. A relentless axeman with the heart of a warrior.

**Yosef Hekselman:** A kennelmaster who has served as either a conscript or militiaman multiple times in his life. Decent with a mace.

**Quinn Slattery:** An anchorite who lived in a church cellar, Quinn joined Steelshod as a logistics specialist after his church burned down.

**Pots of Nahash:** A young lad barely older than Oliver, Pots was hired as a second dedicated cook. He has dreams of heroism, tempered by realism.

**Cat of Nahash:** One of Yorrin's criminal contacts, decided to go "legitimate" for a better payout. Inexperienced, but has potential.

**Thad of Nahash:** A poacher, served with Steelshod along the walls. Decent enough with a bow, and went with Amos on multiple hunting trips post siege.

**Big Antoni of Terraconesis:** A simple giant of a man who worked for Nona Mettucci. A strong fighter with a big heart, he nearly broke Bear's arm in his introductory fight.

**Tulio:** An amazing horse rider, decent with a javelin. Matched set with his lover, Matteo.

**Matteo:** An apprentice medico. Matched set with his lover, Tulio.

**Rosa de Baja:** A duelist, skilled with a blade, light on her feet, and sharp with her wits.

**Harkaitz the Dead:** A great fighter, and the best of Alejandra's outriders. Considered dead by his clan, for the crime of loving a Spatalian woman.

**Enrique, “Mad Eye”:** A physically imposing man, in it for the money.

**Porfirio, “The Owl”:** A fighter that focuses on precision. A great scout, and keeps a level head.

**Zappo, “the Barber”:** A literal barber, and an emergency surgeon. Decent fighter.

**Torleif Arnason, “Thunderhammer”:** A Svardic reaver, decent with a maul. A bigot through and through.

**Kyösti Oddrson:** Formerly a huskarl for a jarl slain by Taerbjornsen. Decent with a sword and shield. More likeable than Torleif.

**Gottfried Eckhardt:** A Jarlwatcher of clan Eckhardt, he joined Steelshod after Zelde persuaded him to change sides during a battle.

**Inga Eckhardt:** A shieldmaiden of clan Eckhardt. She aspires for glory and a command one day.

**Aleifir the Smith:** A deadly warrior and a sorcerer that knows the secret of making what Drengi called “Ice Iron,” named for its pale color. Formally joined Steelshod after the events at Nahash. Worked with Aleksandr to craft his starsteel plate armor.

**Vígi:** A Vartror disillusioned with the war due to Taerbjornsen tolerating people like Unferth and Asmundr. Joined Steelshod because they fight madness. Great shot.

**Snorri:** A Bersark of simple principles. He follows Taer and believes that might makes right. Joined Steelshod because they defeated the Taer Bjorn.

**Sigrídr:** A shy Ulfskennar, few notable qualities.

**Alva:** The most well rounded of the Ulfskennar. Lost an arm fighting the Shipbreaker kraken.

**Dagur:** The most animalistic of the Ulfskennar pack, doesn’t speak much Middish.

**Eríkur:** A quiet and unassuming Ulfskennar, easily overlooked. Tortured by Itzhak Coldman of the Serpentes, and he has not recovered.

**Frøyr:** One of the Ulfskennar, a skilled hunter.

**Gulbryn:** The most devout of the Ulfskennar.

**Helka:** The smartest of the Ulfskennar, one of the best scouts Wodan Two-Soul ever trained. A loner.

**Knut:** The largest of the Ulfskennar. Badly injured at the Thaumati Gate, but has mostly recovered.

**Kjelfrid:** Has a commanding presence among the Ulfskennar, and is viewed as a leader of sorts, after Aleksander and Drengi.

**Belanrika (PC):** A highly devout ex-Serpentes, left because she felt they focused too much on politics and not enough on helping others. Skilled with a glaive, and a possible Molt of Torath.

**Maggie Thatcher, "Lioness":** An unflinchingly brave and solid warrior with more than a little iron in her spine.

**Jon Tinsmith, "Tiny":** The single largest member of all the Sons. Quiet, well-read fellow that likes solitude and books.

**Pete Slater, "Breaker":** Shorter than many of the Sons, but absolutely ferocious in battle. Prone to shattering shields, horses, and armor with his swings.

**Lucrezia Corvus:** A blade dancer, sister of Pontius Corvus. Dislikes politics. Recruited by Leona after a fight.

**Ginevra Caecilius:** Salerno's daughter, joined to provide logistical support. In a relationship with Agrippa.

**Valbrand Valderson:** A priest of Vlar, disagrees with Hakon's sacrifice of innocents, preferring to use the blood of foes defeated in glorious battle. His own blood will do in a pinch.

**Guy LeFevre:** A son of a blacksmith, rose to the rank of Loranette man-at-arms. Generally a friendly and helpful person.

**Brutus Varley:** An ancient legend of a strategist. Once caused all sorts of trouble for the Empire. Mentor to Calvin Volk. Dying of various health problems due to his age, though Agrippa has prolonged his life considerably. Officially joined Steelshod after the Caedian-Loranette war.

**Ben's Longbowmen:** Ten Caedian longbowmen. Yeomen, they look up to Ben after serving with him during the Caedian-Loranette war. Join Steelshod under Ben's command.

**The Shiphouse Shirkers:** A fairly well armed and organized group of about 40 brigands operating out of the wreckage of Hakon's former longship, the "Steel Keel." Hired on as a subordinate unit to Steelshod during the Caedian-Loranette war, they stayed on the roster after it ended, serving in Stanmouth under Gunnar's command.

**The Bold Brotherhood:** A group of primarily Caedian pikemen led by Bertram the Bold. Trained in pike, tall shield, and crossbow. The Bold Brotherhood first served alongside Steelshod during the Svardic invasion of Caedia, including at Kilchester, and again during the Caedian-Loranette war. Hired as a subordinate unit after the latter.

**James Enorius (PC):** The former prince of Karim, son of the slain King Micah Enorius. Disinherited after King Micah conspired to betray Torathia to the Loranettes and Svards. Was away with his companion Sir Diligence Harrington on a mission to hunt down the thief and con man Nelson when his father was killed, and participated in the defence of Shimshon's Monastery. While he began as a naïve young man, his experiences have matured him somewhat. He originally returned to Karim intending to kill Aleksandr and reclaim his birthright, but wound up being impressed by what Aleksandr and Steelshod had done for his country and joined Steelshod.

**Nelson (PC):** A Karimite thief and con man. Was captured by Prince James and Sir Diligence, but wound up being freed to aid in the defence of Shimshon's Monastery. A polyglot, he speaks many languages, including Svardic, Ruskan, Loranette, Cassaline, and Spatalian. Although he is all but useless in a fight, Nelson joins Steelshod and is welcomed for his intelligence and perceived loyalty.

**Lucas:** A young, but large, farmboy. His family was murdered by Svards, whom Lucas then killed in their sleep. Discovered by James, Nelson, and Elsa in the empty cottage he once called home. Unsure what to do with his life, he was given leave by his lord Sir Richard Oren to serve as Prince James' squire.

**Tobias Marbury, "Toby" (PC):** A boisterous Caedian assassin who formerly contracted with the late King Micah Enorius. Nelson, Jaspar, and Yorrin all recognize his abilities, and after testing him a few times, Tobias is officially hired to assist in killing the Ruskan Tsar.

**Alberico Rossi:** Giancarlo Rossi's son. A bit of a dolt who has blown multiple fortunes on various scams and never seems to learn from his mistakes. Hired by Steelshod to assist Jaspar and Ginevra with bookkeeping, more as a favor to Giancarlo than any perceived usefulness on Alberico's part.

**Sophie de l'Aiguille:** One of Les Petits Monstres, the bastard daughters of Duc Baudouin le Dauphin of Lorraine. A renowned duelist who has killed over 100 men in single combat. After her father's death, Sophie sought vengeance against Aleksandr. After Aleksandr bests her in a duel, Sophie joins Steelshod to find new enemies to fight.



### **Friends of Steelshod**

**Alaina:** A priestess of Torath, and Aleksandr's lover. Steelshod took her to Yerevan to found a new church under the patronage of some Torathi-faithful Ruskan nobility. She was taken by Hakon, tortured and abused, and eventually rescued by Steelshod. Remained in their company for some time, but was withdrawn and without much faith remaining. Married Aleksander after the siege of Nahash and was elected to the council.

**Giancarlo Rossi:** Merchant from the Cassaline Empire. A shrewd and well-educated businessman, with no combat talents to speak of. He is fantastically wealthy, with a luxurious Cassaline estate he rarely sees, and he further possesses the skill to turn a single gold coin into ten, given some time to work.

### **Sons of Victory**

A band of nationally sponsored mercenaries from Victoria. Essentially a small, paid standing army. The Sons are axemen, famous for standing up to Cassaline legions, Wncari barbarians, and all other threats.

**Gwynneth Carver:** The brash, uncouth leader of the Sons. A large, strong woman with a thrice-broken nose and a love of fighting. Known for being able to decapitate a horse and cleave through its rider in one blow. As a Victorian, Gwynneth has no deference to noble titles, and judges all men on their own merits and skill.

**Master Butterman:** *One of Gwynneth's lieutenants. Calm, collected, and polite. Always calls everyone "sir" or similar. Killed during the Arcadian Firefall.*

**Reginald Thatcher, "Reg":** *A big, beefy fellow that grew up on a farm. Got a low-class vibe to him, carouses with Bear and Leona. Killed during the Arcadian Firefall.*

**Quigley Chandler, "Quickly":** A little leaner than his comrades, and quicker on his feet. Works twice as hard to prove he can cut it.

**Verne Delaney, "Terror":** *another of Gwynneth's lieutenants. A huge man with a wild beard and deadly skill with the axe, prone to focused battle rages. Slain by Gjul during the final battle for Nahash.*

**Pate Moynihan, "Moynihan":** Born impoverished in Victoria city proper. A scrapper and very tenacious. Hates his first name.

**Wade Chandler, "Sunny":** Quickly's older brother, a long-time axeman. Known for his cheerful, optimistic attitude.

**Cass Chandler:** A relatively fresh recruit in the Sons, and the younger sister of Quickly and Sunny.

**Ben Miller, "Cheesecloth":** The son of a cheese-maker, but he gets his nickname for how easily his axe parts mail.

### **Yerevani Bayards**

**Dmitri Bogdanov:** *Bayard of Yerevan, a fairly diplomatic and business-oriented Ruskan noble. Nominally of the Torathi faith, with several Middish advisors, nobles, and knights. Killed by his knight-commander, Boris, in a Svardic plot to incite war with Caedia.*

**Pavel Naksava:** A methodical, cautious (some say cowardly) Bayard, controls farms and a small tin mine along the Midland Mountains. Naksava was the first Bayard to agree to break the Siege of Torva, and most of his men came through the siege unscathed. Possibly the wealthiest Yerevani Bayard, despite his relatively low status. His nephew, Milos, commands his knights.

**Arkady Naksava:** Rules Yerevan, at least for now. Stanislav and Kamarsky are both watching to see if he slips up.

**Yuri Stanislav:** Brash warrior and gloryhound. His territory runs along the border with Dunridge. His lands are dotted with moors and lowlands, and he has the most, and best trained, knights of any Yerevani Bayard. He has constant scuffles with Dunridge and wayward Kriegar barbarians, though these disputes rarely rise to the level of open war.

**Sergei Kamarsky:** Stern, loyal Bayard who values honor and lawful service above all else. He is senior and most powerful of the Yerevani Bayards, and controls most of the farmland around Yerevan. Has 4 subservient Bayards sworn to him. Consequently, he has the highest population and can field the most conscripts by a wide margin.

**Vladimir Verchenko:** A shrewd businessman and cunning strategist, Verchenko's lands lie mostly along the Ironblood. He has more barges and fishing skiffs than any Yerevani Bayard other than that of Yerevan itself.

**Feodor "the Younger" Proskoviya:** A new Bayard, still young and fairly unpredictable. The Proskoviya lands lie due north of Yerevan, between Stanislav and Naksava. Most of the land is filled with farms, and inns that service the trade route north towards the Ruskan heartland. The Younger Proskoviya has begun a blood feud with Yuri Stanislav over the death of his father.

### **Caedian Notables**

**King Edric Caedia IV:**

**Winston Marshal:** Lord of Dincaster, General of the Caedian armies, former Regent of Caedia. Widely considered to be one of the greatest knights that has ever lived. Honorable, wise, a peerless warrior and commander. Often simply called "The Marshal." Served as the Regent for the current King, Edric II, for many years, during which he and Brutus Varley fought Kirkworth and Lorraine. Peacefully ceded power upon the King's twentieth birthday. Doesn't have much family remaining to him, only a grandson who commanded the garrison of Dincaster during the Svardic War.

**Calvin Volk:** A Northern lord, his seat is the castle Volkung. His lands lie east of Northwatch, along the border of Dunridge and Kriegany. A hard, uncharismatic man, but an excellent strategist and former student of Brutus Varley. Badly injured at the Battle of Kilchester, Agrippa saved his life but not the full use of his arm.

**Mortimer Wigglesworth:** A high lord of the north, his seat is Wigglesworth. His name isn't that funny, stop laughing. It's a good and honorable Torathi name. Such names are often taken by former Knights Serpentes that retire and are granted a noble title, lands, and incomes by one of Torathia's many loyal kingdoms. Mentored by Volk in his youth.

Steelshod earned Wigglesworth's respect at Kilchester, where they helped him hold the keep against Taerbjornsen himself. Aleksandr personally traded blows with the Svardic Jarl, possibly saving Wigglesworth's life.

Suffered a crippled leg in the final days of Kilchester, but Agrippa saved his life and some moderate use of the maimed leg.

**Preston Chatsworth:** A young lord of Southern Caedia, his seat is Chatsworth. Lord Preston also controls Chipspool, a major seaside trading town. Chatsworth is cautious and wise for his youth, a protégé of Wigglesworth and Lord Marshal both.

Chatsworth is the liege lord of Sir Felix Wren. He's also gained considerable prestige due to serving in the southern campaign with distinction and coming out alive.

**Mandon Beck:** *Lord of Beckborough, a stalwart knight and good field commander. Aggressive, and not too fond of Steelshod. Died at the Battle of Kilchester.*

**Edmund Fortinbrass:** The portly, amiable lord of Torva. A peacetime lord, good with the people and with economics, but with no head for war.

**Vernon Cleaver:** Former steward of Torva. Clearly highly intelligent, with a hidden ruthless/strategic streak. Now serving as The Marshal's spymaster.

**Milton Deadman:** Vernon Cleaver's replacement as steward of Torva.

**Sir Davrien Cox:** Young lordling sent to hold Northwatch. Grudgingly impressed that Steelshod had already liberated the fort before he arrived.

**Brandon Rainwood:** *Lord of the castle of the same name between the Wncari Hills and the Ironblood, and a small amount of land surrounding it. Had multiple sons, but only one was still alive at the onset of the Svardic War, as well as a brother and nephew. He and his son and brother died during the Svardic War without ever appearing.*

**Nestor Rainwood:** Lord Brandon Rainwood's nephew, a practical man with a good head on his shoulders. Was serving as part of the Royal Guard of Arcadia prior to the Svardic War, and was dispatched by King Edric to deliver letters to Lord Winston Marshal, among other Lords, instructing them to call their banners. Marshal, impressed by the lad, took him into his service as an aide-in-camp. Granted the Rainwood estate for his service (and because the other Rainwoods died in the war).

**Simon Hartley:** A young Knight serving in the Royal Guard of Arcadia. Became its commander after the Senior Knights who would've taken over before him were killed in the Firefall.

### Kirkworth Figures

**King James Tiberius IV:** The king of Kirkworth. A shrewd ruler, but not exactly a good man. James is ambitious, crafty, and utterly driven to make Kirkworth the wealthiest and most powerful Middish kingdom.

**Lord Branden Terry:** Lord of Terrington, a fief along the border of Kirkworth and Caedia, near the Wncar Hills. His son and heir Nathaniel commands his knights. Branden and Nathaniel are decent enough men, loyal to Kirkworth and cautious of Caedian expansion into their territory.

### Svardic Figures

**Taerbjornsen:** The Jarl of Jarls. A white bear bersark, commanding a huge host of bersarks, Svards, Kriegars, and many others. Wears steel plate and mail, carries a steel sword and axe, and also a huge spiked iron cudgel. Cold, almost emotionless. Seems bored. His true name is Ragnar Varicson. He was once an idealistic Jarl intent on uniting the world and forging a lasting empire of strength and peace. After the Battle of Nahash, he joined the Serpentes as Brother Nicham.

**Hakon:** High Priest of Vlar. Taerbjornsen's right hand in the Caedian invasion. His magic can cloud minds and instill fear or subservience in men.

**Olaf One-Eye:** Old veteran Svardic warrior and clan chief. Close friend of Ragnar's (i.e. Taerbjornsen's), a wise and cunning warlord. Burned badly by Yorrin and captured by Steelshod. After the war, he formed the nation of Grenzania in northern Torathia and southern Rusk.

**Jorg, Spear-Breaker:** Young, quick champion that favors javelins. Known for throwing so hard he shatters the javelin. Son of Olaf One-Eye.

**Gerd, Chainbearer:** *Bersark with a huge weighted chain. Killed by Leona at the Battle of Kilchester*

**Einsulf the Black:** *Lean, quick duelist. Slain by Alejandra, Carlito, and Martín at the Battle of Kilchester.*

**Stein the Butcher:** *Huge man who favored axes. Slain by Steelshod at the Battle of Kilchester.*

**Dagrun the Thrice-Wed:** *The only female frost bear bersark Steelshod have heard of. She wed three jarls, each dying in battle, and after that she took the mantle of frost bersark. Became Jarl herself, and has eschewed taking another husband. Slain by Steelshod at the Final Battle of Nahash, by Leona and many others.*

**Colbyrn, the Stone Breaker:** *The youngest and newest of the frost bersarks, other than Taerbjornsen. Hot-headed and ambitious, but possessing vast strength and fortitude. Best known for his fondness for crushing his foes with huge mauls and other bludgeoning weapons. Mistaken for Taerbjornsen and slain by the Marshal.*

**Brjykkar the Seeker:** The only frost bear bersark that primarily uses a bow, an enormous thing that can punch through several men in one blow. Many years ago Brjykkar went on a journey across the northern reaches of Rusk and brought back new methods of bow-making and archery. All of his bersarks, vartror or not, are expected to learn the art of the bow. One of those who follows Unferth after the Battle of Nahash.

**Gjul, the Hungry:** Gjul has a reputation for viciousness, cruelty, and ruthlessness. Rather than facing down his frost bear in honorable combat Gjul hounded the bear across the ice for weeks. Driving away its food until it finally died of hunger and exhaustion.

The strength in a bersark's skin is partly proportional to how much damage was inflicted upon the pelt. A ragged pelt cannot bear a strong connection. So bersarks always try to kill the beast in an efficient manner. A clean spear-stroke or arrow through the eye is always considered best. Gjul's skin was perfectly intact; very powerful indeed.

But Gjul's method was considered... crass. Dishonorable to the beast whose soul he wished to take. And he paid a price for his unorthodox method. Ever since he donned the skin, he has been cursed.

Gjul hungers. He hungers the way the bear did in its dying moments. And no amount of food or drink can truly satiate him.

One of those who follows Unferth after the Battle of Nahash.

**Hrafn, the Sage:** Hrafn is old and wise, considered a holy man by the bersark tribes. Before Taerbjornsen came, Hrafn was the closest thing to a Jarl of Jarls the bersarks had, but he was more of a high priest, not a ruler.

**Asmundr, Blood Drinker:** *A vicious and brutal vartror champion, known for cannibalistic tendencies. Shot Yorrin through the eye, slain by Steelshod in retaliation.*

**Unferth, Soulless (Formerly PC):** A nihilistic bersark warrior with a philosophical bent, an emotionless sociopathic demeanor, and adept skill at arms. Recently developed master of several Thaumati words of power.

**Tarvald Steelpelt:** Bersark clad in heavy plate made by his master, Aleifir the Smith. Killed by combined force of arms of many Steelshod, killing blow delivered by Anatoly after Yorrin cracked through his plate.

### **Torathian Figures**

**Brother Darius Khashar:** Possibly the greatest Serpentis knight alive. A prodigy that has served for decades, fighting Cassalines, Hassadians, and a host of other foes in the service of the Church. Khashar commands the bulk of the Torathian military, and took most of their Serpentes out to Caedia to face the Svards. Currently suspected to be acting against greater Torathian interests. Possibly hired The Theatre to take power in Cassala.

**Brother Enoch:** Formerly King Saul of Acton. Enoch slew his wife and closest friend when he discovered that they were lovers, then abdicated his throne and took vows as a Serpentis knight to atone. Pushing 60, he has served Torathia well for many decades both as a king and as a Serpentis. He commands Castle Saraf, and is tasked with training all new Serpentes trainees.

**Brothers Yakob & Gilead:** Enoch's two bodyguards, both have taken vows of silence. Suspected to be Draconis.

**Brother Khalid:** Commander of the Serpentes infantry and garrison at Nahash.

**Brother Torthian of Peranople:** One of Khashar's trusted inner circle, a Serpentes cavalry commander who grew up an orphan on the streets of Peranople, a major trading city in southern Torathia. Torthian and his men traveled with Steelshod through the Underpass to bring warning to Nahash. Apparently a member of the Knights Draconis.

**Asaph Artaxerxes** – Hassadian, ex-soldier turned priest. He is known for his willingness to commit Torathia to war for any cause he considers worthy. He has some ties to the wealthy merchant class of Nahash.

**Lucius Cyprianus** – A cautious, reserved Cassaline that ran a Church in the heart of Cassala for decades. He typically advocates for peace and stability and good relations with the Empire.

**Naomi of Misviyr** – One of the oldest women on the Council, and close friend and mentor of Alaina's. Wise, calm, almost unflappable.

**Jeremiah of Acton** – Common-born Torathian that is popular amongst the people. He is well known for being fairly anti-Serpentes, believing that they exert too much power over Torathia. Believes in democracy, rule by non-warriors.

**Lenora Evicci** – Another Cassaline, by birth, but her family fled a remote section of the Empire due to religious persecution. She's something of a firebrand, hates the Empire, and is considered a warmonger.

**Verne Harrington** – A member of the merchant class of Nahash. Known for always trying to avoid wars or conflicts, and focusing on commerce and infrastructure at home. Killed by Thaumati demons born of the Old Ones' Hunters during the Siege of Nahash.

**Omar ben Malik** – A former knight of the small Torathian kingdom of Betany, then a priest in Nahash. He is the youngest member of the council. An outspoken advocate for the Serpentes and their role in Torathia's government.

**Seriah bat Zilpah** – A holy woman, somewhat disconnected from earthly affairs. Given to cryptic words, quoting scripture, and the like. Seriah rarely votes, usually abstaining.

**Sister Rivka** – The Serpentis representative, a middle-aged woman that used to be a peer of Brother Khashar during some fierce Torades into Al-Hassad some twenty years ago. Like all Serpentes representatives to the Council, she chooses her words carefully and mostly listens.

### **Spatial Figures**

**Duke Guisepe Garibaldi:** Ruler of Tarraconesis. Struck down by a coven of witches' curse, comatose. Recovered mentally, but not physically, over time, although he continues to feign feeble-mindedness.

**Princeppa Isabel Garibaldi:** Daughter and only child of Duke Garibaldi. Highly politically intelligent, opportunistic, and manipulative. Ruling in her father's stead. To marry Aistulf Lombard, and keeping Juan Marcilla as a hostage/lover. Founder of the Unito Rio Rojo.

**Lady Giovanelli:** One of Garibaldi's nobles. A gruff woman, a warrior and general first and foremost.

**Lord Angelucci:** A sly old noble of Tarraconesis. He predates Duke Garibaldi and was in good graces with Isabel's grandfather. Betrayed the Garibaldis, behind some assassinations. Presumably executed.

**Lord Benevento:** Head of the third major noble house in Tarraconesis. A loyal man who puts family and homeland above all else.

**Juan Marcilla:** Princep of Dantabria, a small Spatialian City-State. Gorgeous, a great lover, deeply in love with Isabel... but also a bit of a dimwit.

**Aistulf Lombard:** Princep of Peltiberia, and Isabel's future husband. Turned out to be gay.

**Rosalina Segura:** Princeppa of Basconia, had been intended to marry Juan by her father. Tried to have Juan killed. Father to be assassinated by the Theatre.

**Sergius Anthimus:** Slimy Princep of Carthagenesis, seems to be at the festivities to find and exploit weaknesses in the Garibaldi family.

**Duke Rodrigo Diaz:** Living legend, duke of Septimania and Andalus. Pious follower of Torath, great warrior, beloved by his people. Also a semi-secret Befana witch. Participated in the Battle of Nahash.

**Candraca:** Spatalian witch that Hubert rescued from an angry mob. Did not support her coven's attack on Duke Garibaldi. Led Hubert to her former sisters before fleeing Tarraconesis.

**Father Seville:** *Fiery, witch-hunting priest of Torath. Killed by a satyr during a confrontation with the coven of witches.*

**Nun Guillou:** An older nun at the church and convent that Seville runs. Sympathetic to witches.

**Nona Mettucci:** Kindly old witch that feeds the poor from a pot of seemingly endless pasta. Attended by a huge simpleton named Big Antoni, said to be part giant.

**Ricardo Valencia:** A member of the Knights Serpentes. Young, imperious, and looking for a glorious fight. Only recently concluded his long years of training and apprenticeship.

### **Cassaline Figures**

**Caecilius Artaxes Salerno (PC):** Legate of the First Frygian, Proconsul of Frygia. Competent politician, strategist, and leader. Somewhat cold and dispassionate, with a reputation for being very honorable (for a politician, at least.)

**Blandius Titus Zeno (PC):** Equites Centurion of the First Frygian, and Salerno's right hand man. Skilled rider, archer, fighter, and tactical commander. Known for emphasizing the basics, drilling his men endlessly, and being a man of few words.

**Quintus Livinius:** *Praetor of Cassala, supreme commander of the legions. Self-styled emperor, trying to get legitimized. Supposedly killed by assassins.*

**Pontius Corvus:** *One of Livinius's followers. An arrogant, pretentious man that studied sorcery in Al Hassad for the last several years. Killed by the Theater while in Salerno's custody.*

**Cesare Barbierrri:** *Senator, former Legate, fat and over-the-hill. Corrupt, greedy, ambitious, and a strong supporter of Livinius. Captured by Salerno after his faction's defeat and poisoned on Zeno's orders.*

**Fulvia Meridius:** Senator and silver-tongued manipulator. A strong supporter of Livinius.

**Matteo Domitus:** Legate of a Hassadian Socii Legion, indebted to Salerno and especially Zeno for rescuing his family.

**Vitale Octavianus:** Legate of the Second Legion, famed across Cassala as a legendary commander and warrior. Hates politics, loves his homeland.



**Decima Pasquale:** Legate of the Second Spatalian Socii, stationed on the border of Spatalia. Dislikes Spatalians, especially ambitious leaders like Duke Rodrigo Diaz. Hard woman, no bullshit.

### **Goblins of the Underpass**

**Voresh:** Faith-chief of a clan of goblins that live in the Underpass. Originally a shaman captured by Steelshod, he was allowed to escape after explaining the threat of the goblin worshippers of the Great Old Ones. Helped guide the rescue team through deep parts of the Underpass. Eventually became the spiritual leader to all the goblins of the Underpass after Steelshod slew three of the four Old Ones, and the fourth fled.

**Glurik:** Torath-worshipping goblin and war-chief of the goblins that live in the Underpass. He led his five men to the depths of the Great Old Ones' territory with Steelshod.

**Arn-Kach:** Elemental force that Voresh claims to be the child of Racha, the earth-father. Emerged from the Dark Below deep beneath the Underpass. Was heralded by bubbling up pools of magma. Arn-Kach could manifest a quasi-humanoid form out of magma, and lash out with fire and molten stone at anything it perceived as an enemy. Seemingly immortal, could reform after a given body was destroyed. Returned to the Dark Below after the Old Ones were killed and driven out, presumably it was awoken by their magic.

### **Loranette Figures**

**Cyril DuChamps (PC):**

**Duc Baudouin le Dauphin, Prince du Sang:**

**King Philippe le Dauphin:**

**Comte Jean Moreau**

**Ludovic Moreau**

**Duc Gaspard Florette**

**Marquis Reynard LeStrange**

### **Little Monsters**

**Marie:**

**Abigail:**

**Angeline:**

**Emilie:**

**Genevieve:**

## Regions

### **Rusk / Ruskan**

Rusk is a vast northern land, mostly ruled by religious monarchs. Ostensibly ruled under a single high Tsar. The Torathi faith is sweeping across the land, but there are many holdouts of the old religion.

*Russian accent*

### **Midlands / Middish, Midlander**

The Midlands are a large swath of land south of Rusk and north of the old Cassala Empire. There are several notable and named regional lands (i.e. Caedia, Torathia) within the Midlands, but this name still applies to many of the border spaces between them.

*British/American/Scottish/Irish/Welsh/Etc.*

### **Torathia / Torathian**

Torathia is one of the most significant of the Midlands kingdoms, and the birthplace of the Torathi faith. The land is dotted with small kingdoms and other strongholds, but the Church holds sway in most places.

*British/American/Israeli*

### **Caedia / Caedian**

Caedia is the single largest kingdom in the midlands, and lies along the coast. The Torathi faith is strong here. Capital city is Arcadia. Known for their longbowmen, pikemen, and knights. Also for prudishness. Was invaded by High Jarl Joramun the Blue two generations ago, and suffered extensive damage before

the King took the threat seriously.

*KAY-dee-uh*

*British*

### **Wncar / Wncari**

Hilly wilds in the Midlands, especially on the outskirts of Caedia, where a few savage clans still eke out an existence. Granted recognition by Caedia for their aid in the Caedian-Loranette war.

*EN-kar*

*Irish*

### **Spatalia / Spatalian**

Southern coastal region, formerly part of the Cassaline Empire. Now it's mostly disjointed city-states and warlords vying for supremacy. Lots of intrigue, culturally/geographically very similar to Cassala.

*Spanish/Italian/Greek*

### **Cassala, The Cassaline Empire / Cassaline**

A decaying southern empire of greatly diminished influence. Still controls a lot of the inner sea, has a powerful economy, and lots of culture and learning. Ruled by a Republic. Pays homage to Torathia and the Church (officially a Torathi nation).

*Italian/Greek/Latin*

### **The Steppes**

Untamed highlands east of Rusk that go on for an unknown distance. The Steppes are sparsely populated by Ruskan barbarians and, further out, native barbarian tribes of swarthy people called Targans.

*Russian (Ruskan barbarians)*

*Or Mongolian (Targan)*

### **Svarden / Svardic, Svards**

Svarden is a northern coastal land peopled by various clans of raiders and fishermen. The Torathi faith has very little hold here. The old Vlari religion is still dominant, and in the far north Taer is the main deity.

*Scandinavian*

### **Uska / Uskari, Uskars**

Uska is a southeastern land between the Midlands and Spatalia. It is mostly populated by native barbarian tribes, though a few small fiefdoms have been carved out by both neighboring lands.

*Basque Spanish/Portuguese*

### **Thaumati**

“Thaumati” is the word modern man has given to the ancient, lost civilization that left only ruins behind. They are said to have been highly advanced and powerful sorcerers, but this is partly speculation, since most Thaumati writings left behind are unreadable.

*N/A*

### **Lorraine / Loranette**

An island nation with a slightly warmer climate than the Midlands. The Loranette court is full of intrigue, knights, etc. Mostly staunch followers of Torath, original religion has largely been supplanted. Loranettes have a reputation for being promiscuous and passionate.

*French*

### **Kriegany / Krieganic, Kriegar**

A collection of warlike barbarian tribes along the border of Rusk and the Midlands. Especially concentrated near the coast, with heavy cultural influences from Svarden.

*KREEG-ah-nee, kree-GAHN-ick, KREE-ger*

*German*

### **Al-Hassad / Hassadian**

A near eastern land of deserts and strange cultures. Sophisticated in its own way, with rich cities and cultures, unique creatures, and religions. Long history of war with both the Cassaline Empire and Torathia. Actually made up of several distinct kingdoms and cultures, at least as varied as the kingdoms of the Midlands and Torathia.

*Middle-Eastern; Arabic, Persian, etc.*

### **Frygia / Frygian**

A huge landmass across the Inner Sea south of the Cassaline Empire. The native population tends to be dark skinned. Along the coast are some ancient kingdoms with wildly different cultures. Deeper in the land, Frygia runs from desert to jungle, and there are even more alien barbarian cultures.

*Various African*

### **Deshret / Desh**

An ancient kingdom in northern Frygia. The Cassaline Empire has several forts here, and still maintains a Legion presence. Ostensibly the Cassaline Empire rules, though much of the day-to-day is handled totally by the native Desh. The Cassaline legions here are typically at least 60% made up of ethnic Desh and other assorted Frygians.

*Egyptian*

## Locations

### **Nahash**

Sometimes called the Encircled City, Nahash is a massive hub in the center of Torathia. The city is built in concentric circles of districts and fortifications. The heart of the Church is here, eight elected priests called the Council.

One of the largest Torathi cathedrals, the Amud Kahal or Church of the Pillar, rests at the heart of the city. Nahash sits near the bank of the Tyre river, a huge river that begins in the Midland and Barrier mountains in the north and winds all the way down through Cassala, eventually emptying into the sea.

### **Underpass**

Underground passage between Torathia and the rest of the Midlands.

### **Ironblood**

River that goes from the northern edge of the Midland Mountains down to Caedia and the coast.

### **Yerevan**

Large trading hub at the banks of the Ironblood. Yerevan sits along the southern edge of Rusk. Fully half of the population is Middish.

### **Camarr**

A major coastal city-state in Spatalia, known for its canals and dangerous criminal underbelly.

### **Fort Taraam**

Independent mercenary fort near the Midland Mountains, in the heart of the Midlands. Generally works to ensure the trade road along the Underpass, and the main trade routes through the central Midlands, remain open. Draws volunteers and tributes from several central Middish kingdoms, and historically has exacted modest tolls from merchants passing through the Underpass or passing a few key crossroads.

Currently understaffed, with new recruits from Yerevan, and trying to retake the Underpass from goblin hordes. Currently captained by Emmett the Even-Handed, called Lefty, a pig farmer's son from the Middish fiefdom of Cardenbury.

Kerfuffle the civilized goblin lives here amidst the human mercenaries of Fort Taraam.

### **Highurst**

A small fiefdom in the central Midlands. Ruled by Iain Mac Donough. Tithes to the Church, and pays homage to Caedia, but does not recognize either as having authority over his lands.

### **Dunridge / Brązogóra**

A fiefdom in the northern Midlands. Pays homage to Yerevan and to Caedia, but considers itself

independent. Ruled by Lord Nicholas Kozak.

### **Copperwell**

Another independent Middish fief, little more than a trading town and a series of fortified copper mines. Lord Ambrus Marron rules here, and pays hefty tithes to the Torathi Church. Also pays a yearly stipend to the mercenaries of Taraam.

### **Victoria**

An independent Middish fief with a rich history. The native people of Victoria (racially similar to Wncari or Kriegars) rebelled against Cassaline rule several decades before the empire's hold on the Midlands crumbled. They won their lands back, though by this point they were heavily modernized. They concentrated their population around a fortified Cassaline city in the foothills, and renamed it Victoria, in honor of their victory over the Empire.

Victoria is not a proper fief, but rather a city-state of freemen. They are ruled by an elected council, and are recognized by the Torathi Church (to which they tithe) as a legitimate government. Victoria is well known for its martial tradition, particularly that of heavily armored foot soldiers bearing large axes. Victorian axemen were used to effectively break the Cassaline phalanx and, in recent years, have been known to kill both horse and rider when fighting cavalry.

### **Dinham**

A small Middish fief southeast of Caedia, little more than a swath of good farmland and a couple of motte and bailey fortifications. Was ruled by Lord Leopald Enmore prior to his death. They pay homage to Caedia, and have had good relations with the larger kingdom for several generations.

The war with the Svards hit Dinham hard, leaving the noble classes dead and most of the people enslaved. After the Caedian-Loranette war, Dinham was granted to Steelshod.

### **Kirkworth**

A decently sized kingdom in the central Midlands, renowned for having one of the grandest cathedrals west of the Midland Mountains. Tithes to the Church and pays homage to Caedia. Ruled by King James Tiberius.

## **Stanmouth**

A port fief at the southern end of Caedia, most of its income comes from trade with Lorraine and fisheries. Previously ruled by Lady Nadia Varley, who paid regular homage to the kings of Caedia and Lorraine.

The war with the Svards took a toll on Stanmouth, as Taerbjornsen took the city and slaughtered the ruling class. After the Caedian-Loranette war, Stanmouth was granted to Steelshod.

## **Cardenbury**

Small kingdom near the Midland Mountains, south of Fort Taraam. Sparsely populated, and with few skilled knights, Cardenbury relies on its mountainous terrain and the support of Taraam mercenaries to keep it safe. Tithes to the Church, and pays regular wages to Taraam. Ruled by Lord Neville Carden.

## Glossary

### **Bersark**

Sometimes called a bersark drekk, but usually simply called "bersark," these beastly warriors wear the skins of brown bears. Through a Taeric ritual they draw strength and power from the bear's spirit. Bersarks are supernaturally strong, and after donning the bearskin grow to between 8-10 feet in height.

**Vartror:** Black bearskin- wearing bersarks. Vartror average 7-8 feet in height. They favor more stealth tactics and archery, especially archery from positions of elevation such as trees and towers.

**Ulfskennar:** Roughly pronounced "ulfshnar", these are a type of bersark that don wolfskins. They are leaner, smaller, and quicker than their bearskin-wearing brethren. They are scouts and skirmishers, favoring group tactics. Typically use javelins, spears, and bows.

Ulfskennar can run faster than mortal men and possess great distance endurance, which means they can keep up with horses over long time spans, though not in a sprint. They have a secret language consisting of howls, a sound that can be heard many miles away.

**Frost Bersark/Hvita Bersark:** The rarest and most esteemed bersarks don the skins of white bears from the frozen wastes in the far north. These beastly men grow huge and far stronger than mortals ever could. They average 10-12 feet in height.

**Casta:** A Cassaline fortification. Term mostly just used in the Empire now, and sometimes in Spatalia. However, many Middish castles and keeps began as Castas on the Cassaline frontier.



**Legion:** A Cassaline fighting force of 1,000 men, divided into 10 centuries, and each century divided into 10 contubernia. A contubernium is a squad of 10 men, the smallest standard unit in Cassaline military forces.

**Legate:** Commander of a legion

**Centurion:** Commander of a century

**Decanus:** Commander of a contubernium

**Tribune:** Special officer role in a legion, typically tasked with a specific sphere of influence outside the standard structure. For example, many legions have a Tribune Medico, who commands all medical support staff across all centuries in the legion. Some legions may have multiple tribunes, or none at all.

**Consul:** A legate assigned as over-commander of multiple legions. Consuls are typically designated by the Praetor for the duration of a battle or campaign.

**Praetor:** The supreme general of the entire Cassaline military.

## Mechanics

### **Combat**

Resolved with attack and defense rolls. Base modifier determined by class, either +5 at L5 (Name Level) or +3 at L5.

Damage resolution involves a damage roll, an armor roll if applicable, and a penetration roll if applicable.

For attacking with most weapons, use Str or Dex modifier, whichever is preferred. Some cases the DM may rule you must use one or the other.

On hit, you may apply Str to damage or Dex to penetration

Defense uses Dex.

Protection roll is determined by armor/shield type, some heavier armors have Strength reqs.

Protection as a roll is meant to mimic hit location in a simple, streamlined way. High roll = hit delivered to a well armored part of the body. Armors of similar base type but different coverage can be expressed by changing the average, e.g. Breastplate 1d12, Plate & Mail 2d6, Heavy Plate 3d4

If armor exceeds damage+pen, still a minimum of 1 damage is inflicted. Exception only if armor after pen is still more than *double* damage.

Piercing/Bludgeoning is more likely to have penetration, as are precise weapons. System does not distinguish between penetration that is literally pushing through armor vs. penetration that is finding the gaps in the armor. Slashing is more likely to have low pen, higher base damage.

Weapon damages are roughly in line w/ D20 standards, but some damages have increased and many weapons have a penetration value as well. For example, the typical sword might deal 2d4 damage with 1 point of pen, while a dagger might deal 1d4 damage with 1d4 pen. A mace or warhammer could deal 1d6, with 1d6 pen. (More examples [here](#))

Overpenetration generally does nothing, so bonus damage is intrinsically more valuable than bonus pen. There is one exception, a type of conditional damage we jokingly call "Facestab" (because Yorrin never used and didn't want his Backstab ability). Facestab works as follows: If full penetration is achieved, i.e. enemy armor is completely mitigated by pen value, then receive bonus damage dice.

Facestab creates a really interesting swingy dynamic for high dex, mobile fighters. Your hits either deal very little damage (high dex typically means no Str to damage and a lower damage die, minus remaining armor) or a devastating amount (full pen, so no mitigation to your small weapon die, and then add facestab dice.)

Flanking typically grants advantage to the attack roll; roll twice, take the better roll. Most close quarters combat *does* use facing, so "flanking" isn't attacking from opposite sides. It's attacking someone's flank, i.e. their back, side, or blind spot.

Outnumbering a foe makes it easier to hit them. Gain +1 to attack for each person beyond the first. Commonly forgotten rule at the table, which is fine with me. If someone is outnumbered in such a way that I start wondering about how effectively they could be fighting, I'll remember this rule. If not, eh, probably wasn't that disadvantageous an outnumber anyway.

### **HP and Injuries**

Bloodied is half max HP. Death occurs at negative bloodied value.

There are three severities of injury: standard, critical, and mortal.

When you become bloodied, or the first time you take damage if you began combat already bloodied, you must check for injury (Fort save vs. DC determined by GM, based on damage but typically not equal to it)

When you are knocked to 0 or below, you must check for critical injury. Success results in a standard injury.

In either case if the wound itself dealt damage equal to or exceeding your bloodied value, the wound is increased by 1 step (from standard to critical or critical to mortal).

Injury location is determined either by GM and player agreement based on the descriptions of the attack, positioning, etc... or, if no obvious location is forthcoming, rolled on a custom D12 with locations

stated (Head, Stomach, Chest, R. Arm, R. Hand, L. Arm, L. Hand, R. Leg, R. Foot, L. Leg, L. Foot, Full Body). This is literally just a random custom D12 one of us had. Typically GM will roll twice and pick the result.

Injuries impose penalties or disadvantage to checks that GM or players figure would logically make the most sense to the table. In moments of intense adrenaline, penalties can sometimes be waived briefly at the cost of extending recovery time.

Injuries heal slowly, especially without good medical care. Series of saves made over days or weeks. Too many failures can result in them worsening. Mortal injuries aren't actually mortal per se, but do worsen into death. If an injury is severe enough, or is not treated quickly and effectively by medical care, it typically results in a smaller permanent penalty.

Hit Point recovery is simple: 1d4 per night of rest. Add an additional d4 if being treated by someone with medical training.

If treated immediately following an injury, a trained healer can throw you a d4 during the aftermath of that injury/fight.

*Hit points aren't everything.* If something should kill someone, it kills them. Slitting the throat of a sleeping target is not a damage roll, it simply kills them. Sneaking up on an unaware opponent to kill them results in a series of contests which generally lead to either the unaware person becoming aware, or becoming dead via a stealth kill. HP doesn't usually enter into this equation.

### **Other Mechanics**

Falling damage is the same as in 3e, except it is d12 per 10' instead of d6. This damage is not mitigated by armor protection.

This allows for possible survival of falls, even high falls if very lucky, but makes them far more swingy and potentially dangerous. It means a fall from a horse (1d12 damage) can be seriously damaging to a low level character.

There are semi-firm caps on various things, to encourage horizontal advancement over vertical advancement. However, there is still a fair amount of vertical advancement... high-tier L5 characters can probably start approaching the D20-equivalent of level 8 or maybe even 10 if they focus in certain areas.

Conditional modifiers and supernatural abilities pretty much always allow the surpassing of any of these limits, per GM adjudication.

HP generally caps at about 50, though this is softer than most caps since a high-con d12 HD class can actually break 50 HP even without any Tier HP bonuses.

Stats cap at 20. One of the harder limits, exceptions only for explicitly supernatural effects such as a Bersark's strength.

D20 roll modifiers (skills, attack, defense, saves) cap at +15. Since virtually all rolls are opposed, this always means the die roll can make the difference. A warrior with +15 attack that rolls a 2 will miss an untrained novice with +0 if he rolls a 19, for example.

But it's a big enough bonus that there's a stark difference, and such a powerful warrior in all likelihood will be able to trounce many novices.

Bonus dice of damage (e.g. backstab, facestab, skirmish, expertise) cannot exceed 3; if conditional abilities would exceed this, excess dice are advantage dice instead.

### **Tiers**

Tier benefits are perhaps comparable to 5e feats, though we began using them years before 5e released. At base, they could amount to about +2 to a stat. If granting +1 to 2 stats, at least one stat needs to be going from even to odd (e.g. no change in net modifier.)

They can add a bonus to attack, defense, skills, etc. They can also add bonus dice of damage, or increase damage dice used by one or more steps. Can also add protection, however damage is always *much* cheaper/easier to acquire than protection.

Most tiers should provide an active or passive benefit outside scope of numbers and dice. Sky's the limit. Seriously, just make cool shit up. Active abilities with a use limit are always *Per Session*. Not per day/week/encounter/etc. This reduces the need to track across sessions, and ensures a narrative focus where everyone can get a chance to blow their cool abilities and make a difference, every session.

Ultimately, many high-tier combatants should be something akin to glass cannons. Able to dispatch lesser foes easily, but vulnerable to death from a few missteps against an equally skilled opponent. High level fights are often about maneuvering for positioning and judicious use of abilities to create the right opportunity for the finishing blow.

There are exceptions. Defensive-focused fighters do work exceptionally well, they just require a higher investment in combat training and good gear to really get going.

### **XP and Levels**

Use 3e XP values divided by 100, so 10 XP to L2, 20 XP more to L3, 30 more to L4, 40 more to L5 (total 100 XP). 50 XP to gain a tier for tiers 1-10, +50 more for each new bracket (100 XP for tiers 11-20, 150 XP for 21-30, etc.)

Early on we kept 3e values as is, but I found I basically never gave less than 100 XP, so why have inflated numbers?

XP gained is milestone based; GM decides an amount that seems right for the amount of achievement, adversity, danger, ingenuity, etc. on display. A simple session would just yield a few points. The highest XP amount ever given in a session was in the 15-20 range, maybe 20.

NPCs gain XP in a simplified way. They gain “stars,” represented on their sheet with \* symbols. From level 1 through L5, T9 a new level or tier is gained after earning 4 stars. Whether or not the NPC’s contributions in a session warrant a star is determined by  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of the players/GM. Someone nominates, someone seconds, the NPC gets a star. For low level NPCs the bar to earn a star is typically much lower than the standard used for L5 NPCs.

For L5, T10 and beyond, they need 8 stars. T20 advancement requires 12 stars, and so on.

### **Alchemy and Poison**

Roll a basic alchemy check to create a concoction. Relatively low DC, failure means some or all resources and time is wasted, try again.

Poison & Alchemy attacks require successful delivery (e.g. throwing an alchemical pot or hitting with a poisoned weapon).

If delivered, attacks at Skill+Int... this is meant to model the effectiveness of the alchemical/poison that was concocted. Roll at the time of the attack, because alchemy is unpredictable and you never really know what you’ve got until you use it.

Regular hit generates a Moderate effect.

If a crit or attack exceeds defense by 10+, the effect is Severe.

If defense is successful, the target suffers Mild effect.

Target must beat attack by 10 to suffer no effect whatsoever.

Poisoned weapons have to do at least 1 damage that gets through armor to have an effect.

Example combat poison: Fast-Acting Paralytic

Severe: Paralyzed, dies in 2d4 rounds without medical intervention

Moderate: Paralyzed. 2d4 round duration

Mild: Numbness, weakness. Gets disadvantage on physical checks. 2d4 round duration

Plot Poisons: Ingested and contacts, can cause death, discomfort, and other effects.

Alchemical substances are formed from 10 alchemical ingredients, 4 bases and 6 specialty ingredients. These were chosen to have a very medieval feel, rather than any basis in chemistry. The player that initially designed them also took a lot of inspiration from an old PC game called Darklands.

Every alchemical recipe is made up of 4 ingredients, a base plus three others (which may be bases, or may be specialty.) The number of units, or parts, of each ingredient ranges from 1 to 4.

There are multiple paths to the same result. A virtually identical alchemical concoction could be created via countless different recipes. Most alchemists guard their recipes jealously, as magical trade secrets.

To determine ingredients of a recipe randomly, roll 1d4 for the base and then 3d10 for the other 3 ingredients. To determine amount of each, roll 1d10 4 times

1-4: 1 part

5-7: 2 parts

8-9: 3 parts

10: 4 parts

#### Bases

1. Choleric Base – Ch – Acids
2. Melancholic Base – Me – Plants, drug effects
3. Phlegmatic Base – Ph – Metal, ore, elements
4. Sanguine Base – Sa – Animal parts, bio stuff

#### Specialty Ingredients

5. Red cinnabar – RC
6. Alum – Al
7. Pitchblende – Pb
8. Naptha – Np
9. Gum – Gm
10. Aqua Regia – AR

#### **Example Alchemical Recipes**

Dragonfire

Targets Reflex

Mild: 1d12 fire damage per round for 1d8 rounds

Moderate: 2d12 fire damage per round for 1d8 rounds

Severe: 3d12 fire damage per round for 1d8 rounds

Ch 1

Np 3

Pb 3

Gm 1

Special: Make a single protection roll. Reduce damage for the first round, and armor effectiveness is permanently reduced by this amount.

Eyeburn

Targets Reflex

Mild: Blurred vision and pain for 2d4 rounds.

Moderate: Pain and blindness for 2d4 rounds.

Severe: Permanent pain and blindness.

RC 2

Ch 3

Sa 2

Al 1

### Stone-Tar

Targets Reflex

Mild: Goopy, awkward.

Moderate: Stuck, can't move from space.

Severe: Encased, may suffocate.

Me 1

Ph 2

Gm 3

AR 1

Special: Also knows the formula for dissolving Stone-Tar, a single dose of which can be created each time a vial of stone-tar is made.

### Essence of Joy

Targets Fortitude or Will

Mild: Targets are relaxed within 2d4 rounds.

Moderate: Targets are calm and friendly within 2d4 rounds.

Severe: Targets are completely malleable and calm within 2d4 rounds.

Me 2

Sa 4

Np 1

AI 2

### Essence of Grace

Static DC: 10/20/30

Mild: Heals 1d4 HP after 1 hour. Heals injuries as 1 day of bed rest.

Moderate: Heals 1d4+1 HP immediately & 1d4+1 HP after 1 hour. Heals injuries as 5 days of bed rest.

Severe: Heals 2d4+1 HP immediately & 2d4+1 after 1 hour. Heals injuries as 7 days of bed rest.

Ch 1

Sa 3

RC 1

AI 3

### Thunderbolt

Targets Reflex or Fortitude

Mild: 2d10 damage and deafened for 1d6 rounds

Moderate: 3d10 damage, stunned for 1d4 rounds, deafened 1d6 minutes

Severe: 4d10 damage, stunned 2d4 rounds, deafened 1d6 hours.

If mixed with metal shrapnel, +2d6 damage and +1d6 penetration per success level.

Ch 3

AR 1

AI 4

RC 3

*+1 to each ingredient until recipe is perfected (This note comes from gameplay, as this recipe was discovered through extensive in-game testing)*

## **Witchery**

*GM Note: Witchcraft rules below pretty much straight from the doc my buddy wrote, hence the change in tone and style. He's messy as fuck but super imaginative. Came up with these rules in preparation for when he ran a short arc in Spatalia.*

Evil eye (malochio) or protecting eye (cimaruta) or any lesser witchcraft can be used 1/day/level, otherwise must use a ritual or brew a potion.  
So the normal max is 5x/day at L5.

Malochio - basic curse, causes wasting illness and ill luck, can be averted by various folk cures

Cimaruta – mainly preventative of the malochio, but can also be used to make a cure more likely, defend against other malicious spells

lesser

- 1 fruition/blight
- 2 double yield/halve yield
- 3 health/ illness [palsy, pox, rash, itching, sneezing, weakness, fever, stomach problems]
- 4 find household item/ break tool
- 5 balk vermin-game / call vermin-game
- 6 calm animal / enraged animal
- 7 path home / lose way
- 8 easy birth / barren
- 9 hearth light / no spark [targeted location gains +1 morale / -1 morale & no lights]
- 10 ease task / stumble task

Major – you must be an expert to lead these, and they cost 3x as much to use

12 heartbreak/ take heart – suddenly reminded of a heart breaking moment, you are stunned and can no longer act this round, -2 to defend, will save or continues for 3 rounds / reminded of why you fight, you gain +2 to morale, will saves, hit, damage, defense, and protection for 3 rounds.

13 inflame passion / frigidity

14 creeps / home – a much more

15 deep slumber / wide awake

16 Death blight / life wish – powerful rituals which multiply the effects of the malochio or cimaruta, one of which sends death over a distance, the other using the participant's own life force to supplement the target, keeping him hale and hearty.

17 Pool power / Disperse power: pool power gives your power to another to use, giving them +1 to their



magic check and also your store of magic, but you are magically drained in the meantime/ Disperse power attempts to equalize to a more natural state the person or spell of power, weakening it to the point of failure [-1 for every point past DC]

18 Zenith/ Renewal: Zenith can only be performed at the full moon to increase one's natural power but leaving one weak and angry days later, Renewal can only be used at a new moon, causing a healing torpor which may also shake off curses

Greater – cost 6x as much to use, meaning one cannot normally use them without Zenith, Pool Power, Or Ritual

19 Prophecy/Medium: gives clues to the future, or raises a confused spirit to answer questions of the past

20 Elf stroke/Elf Gift: causes a sudden, possibly permanent painful paralysis which may also scramble the mind temporarily./ bless with healing and grace, cures 1 normal wound [or downgrades a critical or mortal] OR cures any supernatural wound, and gives either +4 or advantage to a physical action for d4 turns

21 Madness/Lee of Mind: the madness given can be specific, a common one being to make the target believe it has been turned into an animal, but not uncommon is shrunken, paranoid, that one is made of glass, etc. / Lee not only can counter and cure madness, but gives the target a cool and collected mind, granting advantage or +4 on purely intellectual matters for a few turns

22 Cowardice/Bravery: