



# AFTER YOU TURN 60...

Your Harvester emerges from beneath the earth to take you away.



**RIPE**

If you manage to kill your Harvester it comes back even stronger next year. You can't do this alone.

Luckily you have other Elders by your side supporting you and protecting you while you do the same for them.

At the Silver Keep there are even more Elders ready to fight, die, and live beside you.

Warriors patrol the ramparts and prepare for close combat against all threats.

Hunters gather food, follow trails, and scout the surrounding lands for signs of the next attack.

Mages develop powerful defensive spells and study ancient records for clues about the Harvesters.

Rogues brew deadly poisons and draw upon resources from the underbelly of society.

Travelers go to distant lands to drum up support and trade for much-needed supplies.

You have lived a full life; you know a bit of everything. What you lack in energy you make up for in wisdom and experience.

This is your life now. You will fight and struggle and survive. Or you will die trying. No matter what...

You will not be taken!










**AN RPG ABOUT  
ELDER ADVENTURERS  
FIGHTING AGAINST THE HARVEST**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth-Month: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_








1. Give your Elder a name, birth-month, and country/town/region.
2. You are 59 years old. Your Harvester will come after you turn 60.
3. Briefly describe your Elder's experience in each career below.
4. Assign these starting dice to your five Careers: d10, d8, d6, d6, d4.
5. Mark a permanent weakness from the list on the right. It can never be removed. Describe how you got it.
6. Fill your Pack Slots with anything from the item list on the next page. Leave a few Slots blank to fill in later. During the adventure you can make a Traveler roll to replace empty Slots.

Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
|  <b>Warrior</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  | Starting<br>d _____ |
|   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   |                     |








Melee Attacks, Physical Strength, Warfare, Tactics, Leadership

Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

|  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
|  <b>Hunter</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  | Starting<br>d _____ |
|  | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   |                     |








Ranged Attacks, Tracking, Physical Senses, Instinct, Creatures

Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |                     |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------------|
|  <b>Mage</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  | Starting<br>d _____ |
|   | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/>  |                     |








Magic, Knowledge, Language, History, Logic, Study, Arcane Secrets

Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
|  <b>Rogue</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  | Starting<br>d _____ |
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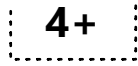
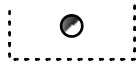
Acrobatics, Sneaking, Tinkering, Street Smarts, Organized Crime

Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

|  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
|  <b>Traveler</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  | Starting<br>d _____ |
|  | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>   |                     |

Inventory, Survival Skills, Navigation, Trade, Diplomacy, Entertainment

## Spend your energy by rolling your Dice. You get one roll per Round.

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Consequence!  |   |   | Downgrade.  | Marked weakness?  |

## Only Marked Weaknesses Matter

When you roll a marked weakness it affects you at the end of your turn. Mark a weakness as a consequence or when you downgrade a d4.

- 2 ☐ **Bad Omen.** A Countdown advances or a new one is created.
- 3 ☐ **Back Spasm.** Fill 2 Pack Slots with "Back Spasm". Clear all "Back Spasm" Slots when you meditate.
- 4 ☐ **Shortness of Breath.** Downgrade another die.
- 5 ☐ **Clumsy.** Increase the task you were working on by d10 energy.
- 6 ☐ **Nausea.** New Countdown: If you don't eat a ration next round then you must vomit and downgrade all career dice.
- 7 ☐ **Cramp.** You can't do anything else until you walk it off. Requires 10 energy to walk it off. Others can help you.
- 8 ☐ **Dementia.** You ruin this task; all progress made is lost. You must start over and/or find some other way to complete it.
- 9 ☐ **Heart Attack.** Empty all your Slots onto the ground, downgrade all career dice.
- 10 ☐ **Harvest Time.** GM makes a secret countdown: in d20 rounds someone's Harvester arrives.

## Recover Energy by Resting

**Rest:** Give up your roll this round to upgrade a single die.

**Make Camp:** All Elders must eat a ration and then each may choose an activity below. Eat another Ration to camp another round. Re-roll all 1s while camping.

- > **Sleep.** Restore two dice to Starting size.
- > **Restore** all uses of all items in your Pack.
- > **Train.** Upgrade two different dice (can go above Starting).
- > **Something else.** Negotiate with your GM.
- > **Meditate.** Roll current highest die and un-mark any weakness equal to or lower than the roll.
- Warning:** Countdowns do not stop while you camp.

## Pack Slots

Each Slot fits 5lbs or anything the size of a human head.

Items either **allow** you to do something you couldn't do on your own (like tinderbox to start a fire) or they grant **Advantage** to your roll (roll 2x, pick one).

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

## Death and Dying

An Elder dies when they must mark a weakness but all are marked. Or whenever a player decides their time has come.

When the time comes your Elder's dice are set to d20, and an unavoidable Death Countdown of 3 rounds begins.

## Fill blank slots during the adventure

Your Elder packed everything they would need (even if the player didn't know it). Make a Traveler Roll to fill a blank slot with any item below the result. This does not use up your roll for the round, still downgrade and suffer consequences as usual.

10

**Small Weapon:** 3 per Slot. 1 Hand. Can be thrown. Backstab 2x dmg.

**Medium Weapon:** 1 Slot; 1 Hand. Deal +1 damage in melee combat.

**Large Weapon:** 2 Slots, 2 Hands. Attack rolls have Advantage in melee combat.

**Exotic Weapon:** 2 Slots, 2 Hands. Melee attack rolls can use ANY career die.

**Ranged Weapon:** 2 Slots, 2 Hands. 5 Uses.

**Shield:** 1 Slot; 1 hand. 1 Use. Avoid marking a weakness.

**Armor:** 2 Slots. 1 Use. Avoid marking a weakness.

8

**Spell Book.** 1 Slot, 2 Hands. When you pick a book name it like *Adjective Noun: Corrosive Blades, Exploding Hands, Warding Waterfall, Sleeping Boulders*

To cast from a book describe to the GM what you want your spell to do. It should relate to the name. Then roll Mage. Any Consequences are often weird and terrible.

6

**3 Preserved Rations.**

All 3 fit in one Slot.

**Spyglass.**

**Magnifying Glass.**

**A Personal Memento.**

Tell a short story about this mundane item and why it's important to you. (GM Discretion)

**Face Paint & Makeup.**

**Incense.** 1 use.  
Overwhelming smell.

**Fake jewels.** Traveler roll to convince people of value.

5

**Lantern.** Requires Oil.  
Resistant to water and wind. Directional.

**Cooking pot.** While Camping you can turn a Simple Ration into 3 Preserved Rations.

**Bear trap.** Acts like a delayed ranged attack.

**Bottle of Oil.** 3 Uses.  
Each use burns 1 round.

**Fishing rod.** Hunter roll to catch that many Simple Rations.

**Lock Picks.** Works on mundane locks.

4

**Grappling hook.**  
Does not include rope.

**Quill + Ink + notebook.**

**Chain.** 10ft.

**Rope.** 50ft.

**Hand Mirror.** Fits in your palm, gives clear reflection.

**Metal file.** Can slowly wear down most metals.

**Cracked Compass.**  
Still works perfectly.

**Padlock.** Includes key.

**Marbles.** 1 use. Each use is about 20 marbles.

3

**Simple Ration.**  
1 use. 1 Slot.  
Used for Camping.

**Waterskin.** Can hold a gallon of liquid, even acidic ones.

**Drill.** Make tiny holes in stone or metal.

**Torch.** 2 Uses.  
Each use burns 1 round.

**Strong Pulley.**

**Spool of Twine.** 100ft.

**Box of Nails.**

**Bucket of Grease.** 1 use.  
Very Flammable.

**Handsaw / Pickaxe / Shovel.**  
Or any other simple tool.

**Whistle.**

**Manacles.**

**Chalk.**

**Tinderbox.**

**Glue.** 3 uses. 1 round to dry.

**Sponge.**

**Net.** 5ftx5ft of thin rope.

**Pole, Collapsible.** 10ft long, made of thin hollow metal.

**Child's Toy.**

# How to Play RIPE

RIPE is a game of teamwork and difficult choices. You possess the skill and experience to accomplish almost anything. But you don't have the time or energy to do everything.

Dice are your energy. Roll your dice and apply that much energy towards a task. No matter what you roll, that energy is always applied.

**If you roll a 1** then you suffer some kind of Consequence.

**If you roll a 4 or higher** then you must downgrade that die.

**If you roll a marked weakness** then that weakness affects you at the end of your turn.

You only get one roll per round, so use it wisely. After all players have rolled, the round ends, the GM takes their turn, and then a new one starts.

Tasks are complex projects, goals, or obstacles to overcome. Every task requires some amount of energy to complete. ALL tasks are optional, you can always ignore a task if something else is more important.

Make new tasks by telling the GM what you want to do, and the GM will tell you how much energy is required to complete it.

Countdowns are tasks with a time limit. If they aren't completed before the countdown ends, then something (usually bad) will happen.

## How to GM a game of RIPE

1. Describe the current situation and environment.

**Remind** players of existing Tasks and Countdowns.

*Tasks, Countdowns, and their remaining energy should usually be known to the players. Only hide this info in special cases.*

2. Ask the players: "What do you want to do?" Determine if...

**This is a simple action.** No roll required.

**Is there an obstacle?** Create a Task and tell the players how much energy will be required to complete it.

**Is there a danger?** Create a Countdown for that danger. It will impact the players if they don't deal with it somehow.

3. Let them roll. Repeat until all the players have made a roll.

4. End Round. The end of the round is the GMs turn. This is your chance to introduce new countdowns, control NPCs, create tasks, etc. When you're done start a new round back at step 1.

# Example of Play

Angela, Lauren, Joseph, and Stan want to find their way through a confusing forest. The GM creates a Task:

**TASK:** IF Elders spend 10 energy navigating the forest, THEN they will arrive on the main road back to town.

Angela and Stan have already rolled this round. They can still perform simple actions, but they can't make any rolls until the next round.

Lauren decides to climb a tree and use her spyglass to see if she can spot the edge of the woods. The GM thinks this is a Traveler roll, but Lauren explains that the hard part is actually climbing the trees; once she's up there the looking around isn't as important. She also remembers that she has a spyglass that should grant her Advantage. The GM agrees and Lauren rolls her Rogue die, which is currently a d10.

She gets an 9. The GM describes how she sees the edge of the woods and knows they're going in the right direction, but is still unsure how to navigate from the ground level. Lauren downgrades her die to a d8 (since she rolled a 4+). Just 1 energy left to complete this Task and escape the forest.

**TASK:** Escape the Forest. 10 1

Since Joseph is the only one with a roll this round he decides he's going to cast a spell to lead them from the forest. His spell-book is named "Thinking Breath" and he describes how the forest can "breathe out" and leave a trail for them to follow. The GM admires the creativity and allows it. Joseph rolls his Mage die which is currently a d8.

He gets a 1. Since Joseph rolled a 1 he must suffer a Consequence. The GM declares that his spell goes wild; the breathe of the forest turns into a dangerous gale. The GM makes a new Countdown:

**TASK:** Escape the Forest. 10 1 0

**COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS the Elders spend 15 energy to avoid being buffeted by the winds THEN in 2 rounds they must each mark 2 weaknesses.

However Joseph's 1 energy is still applied to the Task. That's enough to complete it! The group follows the winds and walks out of the forest onto a dirt road.

Now the round ends, and the GM takes their turn and makes another Countdown:

**COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS the Elders spend 10 energy fleeing back to town THEN in 1 round they will be ambushed by their rivals.

The next round begins, and all 4 players have their Rolls back. They can choose a new Task to start working on, or focus on avoiding/delaying the Countdowns.

# Consequences

Consequences are an important part of RIPE. They force caution and careful decision making. More dangerous tasks have more severe consequences. Here are a few listed from less to more severe:

**Disadvantage** on the next roll made. They get in each others way; slowing things down. *If the stakes are high the disadvantage can apply to multiple rolls or even multiple rounds.*

**Create (or advance) a Countdown.** Alert a sleeping threat, trigger a trap, reinforcements on the way, etc. *See the Countdown section.*

**Lose a Resource.** An item is used up or broken, a friendship lost, a promise abandoned. *The resource should be related to the task being attempted.*

**Mark a Weakness.** A slip or stumble results in injury. *A straightforward consequence for physical dangers.*

**Make things Worse.** Clumsy mistakes ruin the hard work of everyone else. *Add d6, d10, or even d20 energy to the task they were working on.*

**Lose this Opportunity.** Accidentally sealing a door shut, tunnel cave-in, or insulting a noble. *The task is abandoned; they must find another way to achieve their goals.*

## Tasks

Tasks are about the end result; not the method used. Leave the methods up to the players. Clever planning or use of items can grant Advantage on a player's roll. Advantage means they roll the die twice and pick one.

Any Elder can contribute to any task, as long as it makes sense. Likewise any task can be ignored. If a task is time-sensitive it should be a Countdown instead.

**5 energy** --> A skilled person could do it alone.  
*Get past a locked door, climb a rocky cliff, defeat a goblin*

**10 energy** --> A few untrained people could do it.  
*Open a barred door, win a bar fight, hunt a bear*

**20 energy** --> Would required a few skilled people.  
*Carving a new doorway, defend a small room, discredit a noble*

**30 energy** --> Would require many skilled people.  
*Defeat a Harvester, win an outmatched battle, cure a plague*

**+3 energy** --> Must be done in a particular way. Can be stacked multiple times depending on how complex a task is modified.  
*Must be done safely, quietly, without spilling wine, while distracting someone could be +12 to the energy required.*

# Making Countdowns

Countdowns are tasks with a time limit. If a certain amount of energy isn't applied by the deadline, something happens. Some guidelines:

**Sudden Dangers** have short countdowns and can be avoided:

- ▶ Arrow Trap: End of round Elders mark a weakness. 7 energy to avoid.
- ▶ Reinforcements: In 4 turns d6 more goblins arrive. Kill leader to avoid.
- ▶ Gust of Wind: End of next round empty two Slots. 15 energy to avoid.

**Unavoidable Threats** have longer countdowns that can be delayed:

- ▶ Sleeping Dragon: Awaken in 4 rounds. 10 energy to delay 2 rounds.
- ▶ Ancient Ritual: Complete in 12 turns. Steal artifact to delay 5 rounds.
- ▶ Zombie Army: arrive in 5 rounds. Retreat to delay 2 rounds.

**Annoying Hindrances** are minor but can't be avoided or delayed:

- ▶ The torch will go out in 3 rounds.
- ▶ The blizzard will keep us from camping for the next 12 turns.
- ▶ The city quarantine will last for 15 rounds.

**Passive threats** are tasks that require more energy to safely overcome. Consequences that happen while working on this task will be more severe.

- ▶ Get across the rickety bridge safely. Energy: 12
- ▶ Get across the rickety bridge while avoiding enemy arrows. Energy: 17
- ▶ Get across the burning bridge while protecting the prince. Energy: 22.

## Saves?

RIPE doesn't have any kind of "save or suffer" mechanic. Elders only roll on their turn. If there is a sudden threat it should be a countdown. Even a short countdown gives Elders a chance to react and plan. Something like:

|   |
|---|
| <b>COUNTDOWN:</b> UNLESS Alex spends 4 energy THEN at the end of her turn she must mark a weakness. |
|---|

This still gives Alex the choice on how they spend their roll. Never just spring a threat upon the players and then ask for a roll.

## Creatures & NPCs

NPCs are obstacles that hinder or tempt the Elders. An enemy is a threat, a spy holds the secret they must know, the mayor won't let them enter the city, etc.

NPCs have tasks associated with them and some common actions. NPC actions either happen as a consequence of a failed roll, or they happen during the GMs turn.



# Campaign Starter

The next few pages detail a starter adventure for RIPE.

Players, read through this if you want a better understanding of the game. But make sure your GM doesn't plan to run it, otherwise you'll spoil it for yourself.

## Preparation

**Read through this entire adventure.** The first time through don't take notes, just let it seep into your brain. Later you can re-read and take notes as needed.

**Schedule a game.** Pick a good time, invite 3-5 of your friends. Set aside 3-4 hours to play.

**Grab a set of polyhedral dice,** or find a good dice-roller app. You will need a d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20.

**Print** out a character sheet for every player, and find some pencils.

## Introduction

After everyone arrives let people get settled and hang out for a few minutes. Hand them their character sheets, pencils, and dice (apps).

Greet everyone, thank them for coming. Explain the concept of RIPE and the adventure (paraphrase the text below as needed):

**GM:** "RIPE is a role-playing game about Elder adventurers fighting against the Harvest. Each of you will create an Elder and determine their actions. I will be the Game Master, in charge of describing the world and controlling the other characters within it. There will be dangers, treasure, and difficult decisions to make."

Review your table rules and safety tools. Learn more about safety tools here: <http://goldenlassogames.com/tools>. And you can grab some handy table rules here: [https://technicalgrimoire.com/files/Table\\_Rules.pdf](https://technicalgrimoire.com/files/Table_Rules.pdf)

## Elder Creation

Pitch the game to the players:

**GM:** "After you turn 60 years old your Harvester will emerge from beneath the earth to take you away. You've lived a full life and accomplished many great things. You will not be plucked away like grapes on the vine. You will join the Keep and fight against the Harvesters with other Elders."

Walk them through the Elder creation steps on their sheet. Answer any questions they have.

## Join the Caravan

The Grey Caravan makes a yearly circuit across the entire continent. Originally meant to collect the Elders and bring them to the Keep, the caravan now includes merchants, guards, entertainers, and more.

The leader of the Caravan is an Elder named Raffi. She's curt and direct; not one for small talk. Her gray dreads stand out against her dark skin. One of her arms has been replaced with a white metallic prosthetic.

Go around the table and have Raffi interview each Elder. You can explain that these interviews happen months apart if players are from distant lands.

**Raffi:** "Greetings Elder. I welcome you to the Grey Caravan. Please answer my questions honestly and directly.

- ▶ What is your name?
- ▶ Where do you come from?
- ▶ How old are you, and in what month were you born?
- ▶ Briefly describe your experiences as a Warrior. Then as a Hunter, Mage, Rogue, and Traveler.
- ▶ Do you have any specific requests for equipment? We will attempt to outfit you as best we can. As an Elder you have full access to the caravan supplies.
- ▶ Do you have any weaknesses we should know about? Don't worry, you will still join the Keep. We take everyone we can.
- ▶ Are you prepared to take the Final Oath? If so, repeat after me:

I <your name> do solemnly swear to serve the Keep and defend it against all enemies; that I will fight alongside my fellow Elders and support them in every way I can; that I will pursue solutions to end the Harvester threat; that I will sacrifice my body and mind in this service; that I renounce all titles, allegiances, and loyalties to my previous life; and that I preserve my principles and my uniqueness to better serve the Keep.

**Raffi:** "Welcome to the Grey Caravan, Elder. When we arrive at the Keep you may be asked more questions, but for now, you report directly to me. Continue your training, support other members of the caravan, and get settled."

## Reading the Adventure

In each area there are new Countdowns and Tasks introduced. Modify or replace them depending on the actions of your players.

Unless otherwise stated, all Tasks and Countdowns are known to the players. They can't make informed decisions without knowing about the details.

*Words in italics are specifically not known to the players.*

## The Hook

After several weeks of traveling with the Grey Caravan you've settled into your new life. You've made some friends, a few enemies, and proven yourself to be a capable group to Raffi. It doesn't take long before she starts assigning your group more difficult tasks.

One morning you hear her utter a curse and break her usual composure. "Damn Nobles, they will be the death of us all!" After being calmed down, she gives your group their assignment:

**Raffi:** "One of the noblemen isn't reporting to the Caravan, Freeman Phyllox. Not a huge surprise, since aristos are reluctant to give up their titles and die with us peasants. But he's been a problem before. He refused to let one of his workers join the Caravan. Presumably the worker died before their harvester arrived, but Phyllox has proved himself a menace to civilization. The mayor explained that Phyllox has been hiding in their vineyard for the past year or so, and hasn't been seen recently. The mayor sent a group of guards to retrieve him, but I know you'll get results faster.

"Find Phyllox. Bring him here before. If you can't get him back here, kill him. It's brutal, but better for Phyllox to die now than to endanger hundreds of lives when his Harvester emerges.

"Start looking for Phyllox at his vineyard on the far edge of town. Maybe you'll find some clues about where he's gone. Try to work with the mayor's guards, but don't let them slow you down."

## Backstory (not known to the players)

Phyllox is a mean old bastard who's only joy comes from hunting with his rifle. Only his brilliant sommelier allowed Phyllox to maintain his family's vineyard.

A few years ago he refused to let his sommelier join the Caravan. Phyllox hired a squad of mercenaries to protect the sommelier.

The sommelier's Harvester inevitably emerged and killed the sommelier. The mercenaries barely managed to take it down before dying from their own wounds.

Phyllox kept the Harvester corpse and used its bones as a trellis to grow corrupted grapes. He knows Harvester parts have supernatural properties and wine is the only chemistry he knows.

The grapes granted him youth and vigor. He's convinced the wine will keep his Harvester away. Just in case, he had a panic room built beneath his cellar. He hides there right now, drinking his weird wine and hiding from his Harvester until the year has passed.

Little does he know that the wine is actually accelerating the Harvester process, and it will be here very soon.

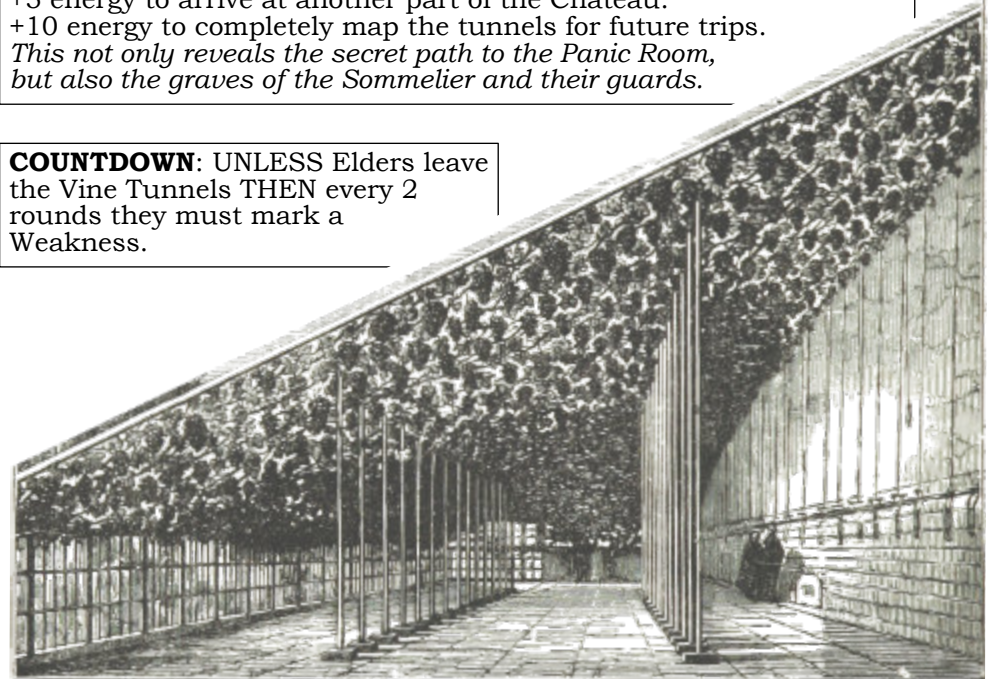


## Vine Tunnels

Complex grapevine tunnels encircle the Chateau for a mile around. Rotting grapes hang from the awnings and trellises, creating a disorienting and disgusting maze.

**TASK:** IF Elders spend 10 energy navigating through the grapevine tunnels, THEN they will arrive at the Front Entrance of the Chateau.  
+5 energy to arrive at another part of the Chateau.  
+10 energy to completely map the tunnels for future trips.  
*This not only reveals the secret path to the Panic Room, but also the graves of the Sommelier and their guards.*

**COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS Elders leave the Vine Tunnels THEN every 2 rounds they must mark a Weakness.



# MAP COMING SOON

# Chateau Ground Floor

As soon as the Elders enter any room of the Chateau this countdown begins:

**COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS the Elders spend 5 energy each round to delay the guards THEN in 2 rounds the guards will enter every room in the Ground Floor *and take or break anything with a ☼ symbol next to it.*

► Getting anything back from the guards will require 10 energy or some amount of money.

## Front Entrance

The door is bashed open and one of the front windows is broken. A sign hangs askew above the doorway: NO VISITORS. LEAVE PACKAGES BY THE DOOR. You can hear some raucous laughter coming from inside the house.

Gaspard, captain of the guards, is giving a pep talk to his seven men. “...in summary, find the poor bastard and ‘confiscate’ any treasures as ‘evidence’. Gold-leaved clues are especially critical to this investigation, followed closely by fine wines and jewelry!”

**Gaspard:** A man wearing a dirty orange uniform over some leather armor was sent here by the mayor to find Phyllox. He and his men plan to loot the Chateau and blame it on “bandits”. The Elders make him nervous, and he’ll try to use official-sounding language and authority to boss them around, lamely justifying any thievery or vandalism. “This golden carafe is evidence!”

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 7 energy reassuring Gaspard and tolerating his men’s thievery, THEN Gaspard will answer their questions and provide some clues about Phyllox.

► Phyllox created some the strangest and most distinct flavor blends. He would combine unexpected scents and tastes to delight many a connoisseur. Phyllox’s bottles of “Strawberry Sunshine” are highly treasured.

► Phyllox lost his prime sommelier last year and the quality of his wines have taken a sharp dive ever since. Most people weren’t surprised when he disappeared.

► Phyllox disappeared a few months ago, firing all his workers and ordering strange deliveries to the manor: chemistry supplies, grape seeds from distant lands, and even hiring a foreign construction crew.

► Everyone hoped he was building a new winery, but this place is a wreck.

**COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS the Elders tolerate the guards and allow them to vandalize the manor THEN in 3 rounds the guards will group up and threaten the Elders with violence, forcing them out of the Chateau.

► Gaspard requires 10 energy to defeat. *On the GM’s turn he can force an Elder to mark one weakness.*

► Each of the seven guards requires 5 energy to defeat, *and they will flee if Gaspard is taken out. On the GM’s turn every two guards in the battle forces an Elder to mark one weakness.*

## Great Hall

A large open room with walls covered in paintings, knickknacks, and valuables. Everything is covered in dust and neglect.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 5 energy searching the Hall THEN they’ll discover some treasures and clues.

► A few unpaid bills and notices about a construction crew and chemistry supplies.

► ☼ 4 beautiful paintings. They take up 3 Slots each.

► ☼ A dueling rapier with a crossguard designed like a bottle of wine.

► ☼ Crystal wine bottle filled with what appears to be liquid fire.

► A simple wicker box woven from dried grapevines

► A Pile of discarded boxes and bags gives clues about the chemistry equipment Phyllox ordered; most of it dealing with liquids, titration, and fermentation along with simple surgeon tools you might use for an autopsy.

☼ *The guards have broken the display cases, ruining whats inside. This task is no longer available.*

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 13 enertgy carefully opening the display cases THEN they can retrieve the treasures without breaking them.



► A Complex time-keeping device that runs on the fermentation of wine. Either magic or complex chemistry.

► A time-sealed bottle of Old Era wine. Priceless, one of a kind.

► A fractal image of Phyllox’s ancestors; like a 3D moving picture.



## Library

The walls are lined with bookshelves. A large oak table sits in the center. Half the books don't have titles on the spines and they aren't organized at all. The table in the center of the room is covered in wine stain rings and piles of half-open books.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 7 energy searching the bookshelves they find some interesting books on various subjects.

- ▶ ☼ One half-empty bottle of Strawberry Sunshine is tucked in a bookcase. Still good, if a bit stale.
- ▶ See below for books and excerpts. *This is a sneaky place to put some worldbuilding or quest hooks for the players.*

☼ *The guards dumped the table over, adding 5 energy to this task.*

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 6 energy searching through the books on and under the table THEN they will discover more clues about Phyllox.

- ▶ Diagrams for a “panic room”
- ▶ Notes on Harvester chemical properties
- ▶ ☼ Books about different wine blends and techniques “by Phyllox” (some actually written by the sommelier).
- ▶ ☼ A key to the Cellar Vault room tucked between the pages of a book.



## A selection of books from the Library

**Learn the Language of Grapes.** A book that debates the merits of regular interaction with your plants. Talking to them may create a magical resonance between the life forces of the owner and their crops...

**The Fall of Cities.** Although we still rely on the scientific method, we refuse to become reliant on technology as our Elders were. In fact it seems like the Elders in their Keep are the only ones foolish enough to pursue such things! Obviously their desperation and fear drives them to madness...

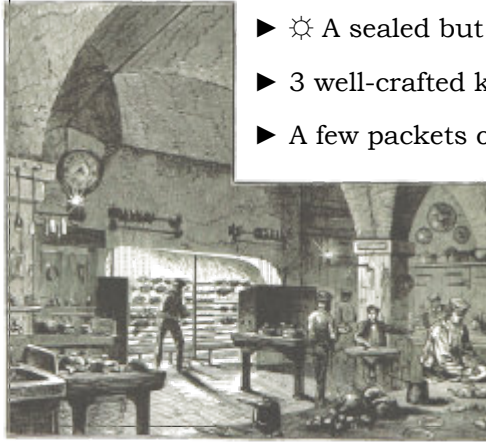
**Harvesters Came with the Mages.** With the arrival of the Harvesters came the embrace of magic and the wyrd. Not all of us can harness the power of magic, but ALL of us are susceptible to being culled as we approach 60! Is that fair? Seems like a bad trade....

## Kitchen

The kitchen and the dining room are one large space; Phyllox enjoyed watching the preparation of food. Most of the food in the kitchen has rotted, only a few things remain edible. The dining room table is bare and dusty.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 8 energy searching the kitchen THEN they will find a bunch of rotting produce and a few edible tidbits:

- ▶ ☼ Tough sourdough bread with a slight hint of wine flavoring. 2 Rations, 1 Slot.
- ▶ ☼ Small bags of dried and salted meats. 3 Rations, 1 Slot.
- ▶ ☼ A sealed but spoiled bottle of Strawberry Sunlight.
- ▶ 3 well-crafted knives (like Small Weapons).
- ▶ A few packets of sugared dried fruit. 1 Ration, 1 Slot.
- ▶ A few empty crates with evidence that more crates were packed and dragged down to the Cellar
- ▶ Phyllox's unfinished cookbook. It contains several wildly creative recipes that may or may not work in practice. Valuable to a collector or cook.



☼ *The guards have broken down the door and entered the Cellar. This task is no longer available.*

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 12 energy opening the door to the Cellar THEN they can enter the Cellar Stairway.

## Courtyard

Beautiful sculptures double as vine trellises. They are covered in rotting grapes. Phyllox's personal courtyard crops were tended to only by him, and they were more of an art project than a wine crop. Weeds and grass have grown over most of the paths and benches.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 5 energy searching the Courtyard THEN they'll discover a few points of interest:

- ▶ Evidence of recent construction.
- ▶ A faded trail leads out into the vine tunnels. (10 energy to follow it and discover the Panic Room)

## Boiler Room

Cold, rusted pipes once brought heat and water to the steam room up above. The boiler room is small, cramped, and packed with pipes, dials, and levers.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 14 effort repairing the boiler room THEN the steam room on the second floor works as expected. Any Elder may give up their roll for this round to enjoy the steam room and upgrade 3 different dice. This can be repeated as many times as they like.

☼ **COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS the Elders spend 6 energy stopping the overload of the boiler THEN at the end of the round the boiler room and spa rooms are destroyed in a loud explosion of steam and metal. Anyone nearby marks a weakness.

## Chateau Second Floor

As soon as the Elders enter the Second Floor of the Chateau this countdown begins:

**COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS the Elders spend 5 energy each round to delay the guards THEN in 1 round the guards will enter every room in the Ground Floor and take or break anything with a ☼ symbol next to it.

► Getting anything back from the guards will require 10 energy or some amount of money.

## Study

One wall is a detailed calendar of harvest schedules with notes from the sommelier with advice and reminders. Towards the back is a charred fireplace flanked by two comfy chairs.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 7 energy searching the study THEN they discover some brainstorming notes between Phyllox and his sommelier as well as clues as to where he might be.

► “Bacon flavored wine?” “NO! God no. Just stop.”

► “Wine soaked in fresh linens?” “Gross.”

► “Blueberry Bourbon” “Maybe. But we need to add some cinnamon to offset the sweet flavor.”

► Several angry letters requesting new stock and trade, complaining that the latest batch isn’t nearly as good as previous years.

► A scrawling liteny from Phyllox lamenting the death of his sommelier and his desperation to find a new wine. “I’m lost without him. I can’t do this on my own. I need something unprecedented. Something insane...”

► Tucked away in the back of a journal is a key to the Cellar Stairway.

## Bedroom

The sheets are stained with wine, dirt, and sweat. The closet is empty of clothes. Two empty suitcases lie forgotten in the corner.

**TASK:** ☼ The guards have overturned the room. They didn’t take anything because there wasn’t anything valuable in the first place.

IF the Elders spend 7 energy searching the bedroom THEN they will find little more than stained sheets and empty bottles; further proof that Phyllox left the Chateau.

## Steam Room

The now empty steam room was once a personal spa. With wooden seats for 6 people to lounge inside, Phyllos preferred to have the space all to himself. See Boiler Room for info on fixing the steam room.

## Trophy Room

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 11 energy getting past the locked door THEN they will enter the Trophy room.

A den of mounted heads and fur-covered chairs. Phyllox was a passionate and proud hunter of wild creatures. But his reputation was built on wine; the trophy room became his sacred refuge. Unlike all other rooms in the Chateau this one is well-kept.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 5 energy searching the Trophy Room THEN they will discover some of Phyllox’s most prized treasures.

► ☼ A painting of Phyllox standing over a large elk. It’s the first time you’ve seen him smile. Takes up 3 Slots.



► ☼ A padded chair lined with snakeskin and covered in white furs. The seat has a deep impression and been well-used.

► ☼ A pile of various trophies; rare tusks, dragons scales, vicious claws, etc. Worth 300g to a fellow hunter.

► A rifle rack is empty on the wall and a half-filled box of ammo dropped on the floor.

# Chateau Cellar

If Elders don't have a light source to help explore the darkness of the Cellar, increase all required effort by 5.

As soon as the Elders enter the Cellar of the Chateau this countdown begins:

**COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS the Elders spend 5 energy each round to delay the guards THEN in 2 rounds the guards will enter every room in the Cellar and take or break anything with a ☼ symbol next to it.

## Stairway

A narrow spiral staircase leading down to the Cellar. The wooden steps have scrapes from all the boxes and materials that have been recently carried down.

**COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS the Elders spend 4 energy being careful going down the steps THEN the Elder in front must mark a weakness in 1 turn.

## Alcove

The side alcove is just to the left of the stairs and holds a selection of perfectly average wines. It has no door so servants can quickly carry wines and supplies up to the kitchen.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 5 energy searching the Alcove THEN they will discover some wines and food supplies.

- ▶ ☼ A dozen bottles of perfectly acceptable wine. 1 Slot each.
- ▶ ☼ A sealed box of stale bread rolls. 4 slots, 4 rations.
- ▶ A collection of notes from the sommelier about wine pairings, food preferences, and meal preparation tips. Could be useful if planning your own fancy meal.
- ▶ A crude drawing of Phyllox being strangled with grapevines. "Go SHOOT some grapes you mean bastard!"

## Main Cellar

The main cellar is huge. Barrels of wine sit fermenting. Boxes of supplies, seeds, and tools stacked on dusty shelves. Rows and rows of spoiled bottled wines wait to be packed and shipped. Searching the entire Cellar will take some time...

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 14 energy searching the Cellar THEN they will discover:

- ▶ Many bottles of wine that have either soured or haven't finished fermenting. ☼ The guards are packing the most valuable wines into boxes.
- ▶ A pile of hastily abandoned construction equipment. Stonecarving tools, shovels, picks, saws, and lathes.
- ▶ The locked door to the Cellar Vault. (See below)
- ▶ Evidence of recent construction in the far corner of the Cellar. It's been concealed behind barrels of wine. It will require an additional 5 energy to excavate the area and reveal the Long Tunnel (next page).

## Vault

The vault is locked tight with a solid steel door and complex lock. Phyllox's vineyard emblem is carved into the door.



**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 15 energy getting into the Vault THEN they will discover:

- ▶ The bones of a Harvester piled in the corner of the vault. Fresh grapevines grows over the bones and have taken on a dark orange color.
- ▶ Detailed structural plans to the Panic Room as well as Phyllox's notebooks. These explain how Phyllox plans to wait out his 60<sup>th</sup> year drinking wine and hiding until the Harvester "goes away".
- ▶ A copy of Phyllox's Panic Room Key.
- ▶ 10 bottles of Strawberry Sunshine, Phyllox's most prized blend. 1 Slot each.
- ▶ 1 bottle of Phyllox's "Harvester Brew". 1 Slot. Drinking it allows an Elder to permanently increase the starting size of one die. It also dangerously accelerates the arrival of their harvester.



## Long Tunnel

The tunnel was created by a Harvester and leads deep beneath the earth. A line of supplies along the sides of the tunnel lead directly to Panic Room. It takes about 5-6 minutes to walk to the Panic Room.

► The supplies are not secured or hidden in any way. Dozens and dozens of preserved rations, torches, and bottles of wine can be found amongst the boxes.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 10 energy searching the Long Tunnel THEN they will discover a recently dug path leading up to the surface. It emerges among the Vine Tunnels surrounding the manor.

## Panic Room

A box of stone and steel built to withstand any attack. There is a large hatch in the front with a magical lock. From the inside you can hear a muffled crying.

**COUNTDOWN:** Phyllox's Harvester arrives in 1 round. This cannot be avoided.

**COUNTDOWN:** In 2 rounds it will break into the Panic Room. Phyllox's panicked cries will beg for help, and then transition to begging for death.

**COUNTDOWN:** In 3 rounds it will take Phyllox away, disappearing into the depths of the tunnels.

The Harvester will attack anything that tries to prevent it from taking Phyllox.

☼ The guards will not intervene. "Let it take him! Better him than all of us."

**Phyllox's Harvester.** A gruesome creature with the body of an ape and the head of an octopus. Tentacles stream down from its head and wrap around its muscular arms giving it a dozen strong limbs. It requires 25 energy to defeat.

At the end of every round the Harvester forces all Elders to mark a weakness. It does this and one more action:

► Throw one Elder further down the tunnel. That Elder will have to spend 2 energy returning to the Panic Room.

► Tentacles thrust out and knock weapons from the hands of 3 different Elders. Elders must spend 3 energy retrieving their weapon in the fray.

► The Harvester smashes the sides of the tunnel, starting a countdown. **COUNTDOWN:** UNLESS the Elders leave the tunnels THEN in 2 rounds there is a cave-in. All Elders must mark a weakness and each spend 5 energy crawling out of the rubble.

## Conclusion(s)

### Harvester Defeated

If the Harvester is defeated then Phyllox is relieved and offers the Elders four bottles of his Harvester Brew (see Vault).

Phyllox will not willingly join the Caravan. He'll make passionate arguments, threaten the Elders, and eventually resort to flailing and struggling against them.

**TASK:** IF the Elders spend 12 energy bringing Phyllox back to the Caravan THEN Raffi will be extremely impressed and reward them for a job well done.

### Phyllox Dies

If Phyllox dies before being taken then Harvester wanders away, confused. Phyllox drops his prized rifle decorated with intricate grapevines. Firing it while drunk does at least 4 damage and always downgrades a die.

Raffi is mildly disappointed, but congratulates the Elders on their hard work and protecting themselves. She's relieved that no one else was harmed by Phyllox's selfishness.



## Alchemy & Poisons (Optional)

*These rules make Elders much stronger and more capable. Give your players Elixirs for a wilder, more heroic kind of game.*

Elixirs are potent mixtures that mutate whatever they contact. They can be drank or applied to a weapon like poison. Nothing can be affected by two Elixirs at once; the new effect simply replaces the old.

**Alchemy Kit.** 2 Slots, 1 Use. Includes 1 Elixir per kit. Choose a starting Elixir. When you use an Elixir roll Mage. The Elixir lasts that many rounds. Consequences are often weird and terrible.

During Camp you can brew a new Elixir from the list below:

*If effects differ when used on NPCs they are listed in italics.*

**Poison Blood.** The victim's blood becomes toxic to others. Toxic blood deals 1 damage the first round, 2 the second, etc.

**Lightning Speed.** You may make any number of rolls during a round. *NPC moves incredibly quickly on the GMs turn, but falls unconscious after the Elixir runs out.*

**Extra Arm.** A fully functional arm grows out of the victim's back. Not compatible with armor. Gain Advantage to any roll where an extra arm might be useful. *NPC loses any armor they are wearing.*

**Rotting Wings/Fins/Digging Claws.** The victim can fly/swim/dig at the same speed they can run. When Elixir runs out the victim may be in danger depending on their environment and situation.

**Rib Cage.** Anything smaller than a tavern can be shrunk down and stored within the victim's chest cavity. Returns to normal size when the Elixir runs out.

**Invisi-Blind.** The victim becomes totally invisible and is utterly blind.

**Heavily Armed.** One or more of the victim's limbs form into a weapon of their choosing. They drop anything they are carrying.

**Telescopic Eyes.** The victim can see far in great detail, but anything within 20 feet is blurry (cannot roll above a 4 when interacting with nearby objects). *NPC cannot attack nearby enemies on their turn but can still deal damage from a bad roll.*

**Tongue of Flame.** The victim's tongue burns like a bright flame, but does not injure the victim.

**Screaming Lungs.** Any sound the victim makes is ear-piercing and deafens all nearby (including the victim). Even their breathing rumbles like lightening.

**Heavy Stone Skin.** The victim cannot be injured, moves slowly, and must downgrade dice at the end of each round. *NPC takes 3 damage at the end of each round, otherwise invulnerable and moves very slowly.*

**Ghostly.** The victim becomes incorporeal and can pass through solid objects at will. They immediately drop all equipment on the ground.

**Stasis.** The victim is completely frozen in time. They cannot be act or be affected in any way until the Elixir runs out.

**Sonic Mapping.** The victim can't make audible sounds and their echolocation allows them to sense terrain and walls within 50ft.

**Unpredictable Insight.** As soon as you take the Elixir upgrade all dice. At the end of each turn you must downgrade a die or take a hit. *NPC gains an extra action each round, but doesn't deal damage on low rolls.*

**Heart of Truth.** The victim can tell when any kind of deception is occurring. They cannot engage in any kind of deception themselves.

**Finger Knives.** The victim's fingers turn into sharp knives and can be thrown 2 at a time. After the Elixir ends, one finger regrows per round.

**Smelting Hands.** The victim's hands glow bright red with incredible heat; can melt stone and lesser metals. Can injure self. *NPC melts their own armor or weapons.*

**Philosopher's Touch.** Anything the victim touches becomes solid gold. Larger objects might required longer exposure to transform. Objects revert to normal when the Elixir ends.

**Lesser Empathy.** The victim can understand the desires of all nearby creatures. They cannot act against those desires until the Elixir ends.

**Matter Swap.** On their turn the victim may switch places with any target they can see. If this would harm the target then it requires a roll.

**Elixir of Youth.** All dice are set to d10s and cannot be lowered. When the Elixir ends, set all dice to d4s and act as normal. *NPC energy is doubled. When Elixir ends energy is reduced to 1/3.*

**Comprehend Elements.** The victim can speak to fire (answers yes/no), water (constant stream of random info), stone (long memory, forgetful), and wind (knows much but speaks in broken fragments).