



RIPE

AN RPG OF ELDERS
FIGHTING AGAINST THE HARVEST

YOUR HARVESTER IS COMING TO TAKE YOU AWAY. AND YOU HOPE YOU'RE READY.

The past few years of training have been brutal. You underwent physical, mental, and magical therapies; how to lift objects without hurting your back, how to move quickly on weak ankles, how to keep your heart rate low while under extreme pressure, how to channel powerful magic through brittle bones.

It won't be enough. Harvesters descend from the skies and carry a murderous hatred for every living thing in its sight. Each one is a different horror; tailored specifically to find and capture you. You and everyone around you won't be safe until you reach The Keep.

Yesterday was your 70th birthday. It was also your funeral. You said goodbye to your family, packed your things, and left your old life behind you. If you're lucky then you will met up with the Caravan on it's yearly circuit. If you're unlucky then you made the perilous trip alone.

Either way, you eventually arrived at the Poineri Este, casually referred to as "The Silver Keep". It's a place for Elders to come together and battle their Harvesters.

- ▶ **Champions** defend the walls and lead the charges; always ready to confront any threat head-on.
- ▶ **Hunters** patrol the surrounding wilderness; acting as lookouts and bringing back food for the Keep.
- ▶ **Sages** spend their days in research and invention; on the lookout for new weapons, concoctions, or arcane secrets.
- ▶ **Rogues** are more secretive about what they do; their efforts occur under the cover of night and quite outside the laws of the world.
- ▶ **Travelers** do a little of everything; often leaving the Keep for months at a time to secure trade and diplomatic friendship.

WELCOME TO THE KEEP, ELDER
TOGETHER WE FIGHT, WE LIVE, WE DIE...
BUT WE SHALL NOT BE TAKEN!

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Robin, Jessica, Ian, Josh, Andrew, Gini,
Rachel, Lindsay, Cameron

Name: _____

Birth-Month: _____ Age: _____

YOUR DICE REPRESENT YOUR ENERGY

If you roll higher, you succeed!

Energy has been spent. Downgrade that die after each Success.

If you roll equal to or below, you fail.









Mark any Number after each Failure.

Obstacles can be attempted over and over.









Dangers grow worse with each failure.

Projects get easier with each success.









Brute Strength, Warfare, Strategy, Leadership, Competitions, Fame

 Champion								Starting
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	d_____









Physical Senses, Tracking, Instincts, Creatures, Awareness

 Hunter								Starting
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	d_____









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

 Sage								Starting
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	d_____

Acrobatics, Finesse, Stealth, Balance, Speed, Street Smarts, Crime

 Rogue								Starting
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	d_____

Diplomacy, Trade, Survival, Navigation, Entertainment, Oddities

 Traveler								Starting
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	d_____

CREATE YOUR ELDER

1. Give your Elder a name and a birth-month. You are 70 years old.
 2. Assign these starting dice to your backgrounds: **d10, d8, d6, d4**
 3. Mark the **10** on the bottom right by checking the box.
 4. Create 1 Memento, 1 Spell, and 1 Burden [d12 Project].
- Write down anything else you're carrying with you (suggestions on page 3).

MARKED NUMBERS

Trigger painful consequences when rolled, but **ONLY** if marked.
If **ALL** your Numbers have been marked, then your Elder perishes.

1 ☐ Terrible Luck. When you roll a 1 and this is Marked...

This action was an abject failure. Even when rolling with a group, this failure overrides any and all other dice.

2 ☐ Bad Knee. When you roll a 2 and this is Marked...

You fall and damage something you're carrying. Cross it out.

3 ☐ Nausea. When you roll a 3 and this is Marked...

Decrease a die of your choice.

4 ☐ Dizziness. When you roll a 4 and this is Marked...

Until you next make camp you cannot use items to modify your rolls.

5 ☐ Cramps. When you roll a 5 and this is Marked...

Your muscles seize up and you need help. You can't take any actions until allies get you back on your feet [d8 Obstacle].

6 ☐ Heavy Burden. When you roll a 6 and this is Marked...

A bad memory, old scar, or ancient curse weighs you down. Create a new Burden and carry it with you [d12 Project].

7 ☐ Group Conflict. When you roll a 7 and this is Marked...

A petty argument, misunderstanding, or civil disagreement. You and another Elder both create a new Burden related to your conflict [d8 Project]. Neither Burden can be removed until **BOTH** are complete.

8 ☐ Dementia. When you roll an 8 and this is Marked...

Destroy a Memento or a Spell permanently. You may attempt to re-create it later but must start from scratch.

9 ☐ Heart. When you roll a 9 and this is Marked...

Set all dice to d4 and permanently reduce the Starting size of a die.

10 ☐ Harvest Time. When you roll a 10 and this is Marked...

Your Harvester arrives. If you've already killed your Harvester this year, then an ally's Harvester arrives instead.

CARRIED THINGS

You can carry 10 items with you. Anything larger or heavier than a gallon of milk takes up two slots. An Elder can use one item per roll.

Items **allow** you to do something you couldn't do on your own.

Breathe Underwater, Cut Metal, Pick a Lock, Launch a Fireball, Outrun a Tiger

OR grant **advantage** to your action (roll twice, pick one of the results)

Climb a Mountain, Injure a foe, Dig a Hole, Start a Fire, Build a House

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____





9. _____

10. _____

MAKE CAMP TO RECOVER ENERGY

Whenever Elders make camp in a safe place they gain the following benefits:

- ◆ **Rest and Relax.** All backgrounds at ☹ are restored back to starting size.
- ◆ **Self Care.** Roll a d10. Unmark any number below the result.
- ◆ **Choose one:**
 - Train and Meditate. Upgrade all dice by one size (even above starting size).
 - Work on a Memento, Spell, or Burden (one roll). Describe how you're working. You may instead assist someone else with their roll.

DICE CHANCES CHEATSHEET			Chance of success if Elders roll d6	Chance of success if Elders roll d10
	VS	d4	60%	74%
	VS	d8	70%	90%
	VS	d12	75%	95%
	VS	d20	65%	91%

SAMPLE ITEMS FOR INSPIRATION

WEAPONS

Mechanically there is little difference between attacking with a longsword and attacking with a stick. Rely on the fiction to provide nuance rather than the rules. A stick might not grant advantage against an armored soldier, but a torch is a formidable weapon against a barkbeast!

Sword	Knives	Throwing Knives
Hammer	Boomerang	Pistol
Axe	Knuckles	Musket
Shield	Nunchaku	Bladed Chains
Spear	Club	Guandao
Staff	Bow	Or anything else...

CLOTHING & ARMOR

While it doesn't offer mechanical protection, different kinds of clothing can be useful in different situations.

Plain clothes	Camouflage	Loose, flowing robes
Fancy garb	Plate mail	Military uniform
Winter coat	Boiled leather	Loincloth
Sneak suit	Outrageous costume	Or anything else...

SIMPLE TOOLS

Hammer	Spyglass	Lock Picks
Pickaxe	Fishing Rod	Grappling Hook
Shovel	Waterskin	Torch
Drill	Rope 50ft	Lantern and Oil
Metal File	Chain 10ft	Pulley or Tackle
Tinderbox	Spool of Twine 100ft	Padlock and Key
Cooking Pot	Fishing Net 5ftx5ft	Or anything else...

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Makeup	Card deck & dice set	Box of Nails
Incense	Bag of Marbles	Whistle
Fake jewels	Torch	Chalk
Bear trap	Bucket of Grease	Sponge
Quill + ink + book	Waterskin	Child's Toy
Hand Mirror	Bucket of Glue	Or anything else...

MEMENTOS

Mementos are items imbued with past experiences and skills. They can be used for any action related to those memories (in addition to whatever uses the item itself has). Crafting a new Memento is a d12 Project.

Busch's Uniform

Was the servant of a wicked ruler. *Servant manners, pickpocket, manipulate leaders, easily forgotten*

Heather's Hat

Dozens of years as a Lady of the court. *Social cunning, form alliances, passive aggressive wordplay*

Alexa's Deck

Ran a legal gambling den. *Handling finances, managing employees, catch cheaters, plan events*

Josie's Poems

Author of many beloved stories. *Avoid or embrace fame, charm others, forge courtly papers, lie*

Gruff's Compass

Sailed the 5 oceans. *Navigate by the stars, tie strong knots, ship repair, predict weather*

Lauren's Makeup

Performed in troupes all across the land. *Alter appearance, entertain a crowd, dances/shows from different regions*

SPELLS

Spells are stored in an item. All spells are named in the ADJECTIVE NOUN format. The spell can be cast to do anything related to its name. Crafting a new Spell is a d12 Project.

HOWLING MOON

a small pendant of a white wolf. *Turn into a wolf, generate noise, provide light, emit a piercing howl*

ANGRY GROWTH

a jar of seeds that shudder and shake. *Quickly grow a ladder of vines, entangle foes, infect a building with flesh-eating ivy*

BURNT QUESTIONS

a charred book of ancient riddles. *Ignite flammable materials, confuse an enemy, entertain a dragon*

COLORFUL BREATH

dull grey mask that covers the face. *Breathe underwater, change the color of an object, mark a path*

STALKING EARTH

fossilized footprint of an ancient beast. *Track a target, summon golem, shake the ground*

SLEEPING DEPTHS

a spyglass filled with inky liquid. *See through air or water at great distances, change the weather, taunt a leviathan*

BURDENS

Burdens are memories, habits, and ideas that weigh you down. Yet you still carry them for some reason. Getting rid of a Burden is a d12 Project.

Charred wallet

You lost everything in the fire, and your regret keeps you from building a new life.

An unsent letter

Written to a lost love. Will you let it go?

A broken clock

They broke it as they left. Perhaps old wounds can heal?

Damp boarding pass

The trip you never took. Maybe there is still time?

Half empty vial

You're running low. Can you get more?

Ivory pipe

A smoke is the only way you can sleep. Is it time to drop this habit? Or simply accept it?

WELCOME, ELDERS!

With the arrival of your 70th year of life comes a blend of hope and dread unlike any you've experienced before (and you've done just about everything!).

Your Dread

Your Harvester is coming. Sometime in the next year a horrible creature will descend from the skies to drag you away to...somewhere.

When it arrives it will destroy everything and anyone in its path. Walls, houses, and loved ones are all in danger so long as they are near you. You must leave your home, say goodbye to your friends, and abandon your old life.

Even if you manage to fight it off, it will just come back next year even stronger! You are a ticking time bomb of destructive malice. This is your constant dread.

But there is hope.

Our Hope

You are not the first to go down this path. And you will not walk it alone.

At the Silver Keep is a community of Elders all working against the Harvester threat. They are Builders, teachers, blacksmiths, traders, scholars, physicians, and yes, even warriors.

We all fight against the Harvesters until death takes us; but more importantly we LIVE. The Keep offers community, growth, joy, and some measure of peace. A new life to build and experience.

Welcome, Elders, to the next chapter of existence.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

- ▶ A complete set of polyhedral dice: a **d4**, **d6**, **d8**, **d10**, **d12**, and **d20**. *Each player will probably want their own set; but the table can also share a set together. Dice-roller apps also work just fine.*
- ▶ Printed characters sheets & pencils.

RIPE is a game for three or more players. One player takes on the mantle of GM. They are responsible for portraying the world, creating obstacles, and controlling the NPCs and creatures. The other players each create and Elder to portray on their adventures.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN ELDER

You have done a little of everything and learned all the tricks of life.

How to fire a bow without needing to pull the string all the way back. How to stop a bar fight with a simple joint lock. How to move slowly and quietly in a dark city. You've crafted ingenious spells in a moment of desperation. Or traveled to lands where life is completely different. You have a broad view of life, and a wide range of experiences to draw from.

You also know your limitations.

How to jog without twisting your weak ankle. How to lift objects using your arms and not your back. How to prepare a meal that won't give you heartburn. You've learned the stretches and exercises needed to get the most from your aging body.

As an Elder you can do just about anything. But you don't have the energy to do EVERYTHING. Choose when and how to invest your limited energy. Put your trust in your experiences and preparation rather than trusting in luck.

WHAT'S SO FUN ABOUT BEING OLD?

Elders have learned and experienced so much that they no longer make the dumb mistakes of youth.

A newbie might just climb the cliff and trust their strength to save them, but Elders will rig backup lines, take things slow, and be careful. They MAY run out of energy and suffer health problems, but they won't make dangerous mistakes.

And Elder is capable in any situation, and can overcome almost anything with teamwork and a good night's sleep.

Gold, power, knowledge; these things have less value to you. You get more from investing in community, hobbies, relaxation, etc.

"When time is perceived as open-ended, as it typically is in youth, people are strongly motivated to pursue information. They attempt to expand their horizons, gain knowledge, and pursue new relationships.

In contrast, when time is perceived as constrained, as it typically is in later life, people are motivated to pursue emotional satisfaction. They are more likely to invest in sure things, deepen existing relationships, and savor life.

We see what matters to us."

- Professor Laura L. Carstensen of Stanford

HOW DO I PLAY?

To create your Elder you divide your energy dice among 5 different backgrounds. Your more experienced backgrounds have higher dice; those kinds of things take less energy to do.

Spend your energy by rolling your dice against opposing dice. Enemies, obstacles, dangers, and trials are all represented by a dice of various sizes. Elders can work together by rolling their dice together and adding them.

If the Elders roll **higher** than the opposing die, then they succeed! Everyone involved in the roll downgrades their die to the next lowest size. The obstacle/enemy is overcome!

If the Elders roll **equal to or below** the opposing die, then they fail. Everyone involved must Mark a Number to represent weaknesses. The obstacle/enemy remains; and could have drastic consequences.

If an Elder rolls a **Marked Number** they immediately suffer the consequences listed; no matter if they succeeded or failed. Marked Numbers represent your frailty and weakness. If all of your Numbers are Marked, your Elder perishes.

Working together is extremely effective, but drains energy quickly! Some quick napkin math:

	Elders are tired (rolling d6s)	Elders are rested (d10s)
Rolling VS 1d4	60% chance to succeed alone.	74% chance to succeed alone.
Rolling VS 1d8	2 Elders have a 70% chance.	2 Elders have 90% chance.
VS 1d12	3 Elders have a 75% chance.	3 Elders have 95% chance.
VS 1d20	4 Elders have a 65% chance.	4 Elders have a 91% chance.

Those odds go up even more if you have useful items and equipment to help you out!

ITEMS AND EQUIPMENT

No one leaves their home empty-handed; and Elders rely on their equipment more than most. Elders can carry 10 Slots worth of items. Anything larger or heavier than a gallon (4 litres) of milk takes up two Slots.

Elders may use one item per roll to either:

Elders can (and should) get creative with their items. Mechanically there

Allow them to do something they normally couldn't do.

Ex: Breathe underwater, cut metal, write a letter, tie up an enemy, shoot a fireball.

OR Grant an advantage for that action. The Elder may roll twice and choose which result to use.

Ex: Dig a hole, climb a tree, attack an enemy, navigate the ocean, heal quickly.

is little difference between attacking with a longsword and attacking with a stick.

Rely on the fiction to provide nuance rather than the rules. A stick might not be effective against an armored soldier, but a torch is a formidable weapon against a barkbeast!

MENTOS, SPELLS, AND BURDENS

A detailed explanation is found on the character sheet. Some examples:

Memento Example:

Yirish was a talented sailor in their youth. As she grew older she sailed less and less; those skills faded over time. Yirish finds a broken compass and decides to make it an Asset to remind her of her sailing days.

Over the next few weeks she takes the compass apart, repairs the needle, replaces the glass, and polishes the metal. She studies the stars and tries to remember the sounds of the ocean.

When complete, Yirish could use her compass to navigate just like a normal compass. But she could also use it to tie better knots, repair a ship, read the weather, survive on a deserted island, or any other activity related to her past experiences.

Spell Example:

Lauren never had the patience for books; and even less for dusty classrooms. But she knows magic, and wants to create a new spell. She purchases a fine pair of golden spectacles and wants to make some magic to help her read people.

Over the next few weeks she watches people through the glasses, studying their needs, desires, and secrets; all while channeling her magic.

When complete, Lauren has a pair of spectacles with the spell "ATTENTIVE EYES". She can use this spell to try and detect if someone is lying, or see what they're worried about, or to try and know what they want.

Burden Example:

Grent left on bad terms with her wife, Yola. A stickler for tradition, Grent didn't want the younger Yola to follow her to the Keep. Grent wants to remove this burden by preparing a home and a place for her when she arrives next year. Grent buys a journal as a physical representation of this burden.

She spends time writing letters and saving up for a deluxe apartment to house them both. When complete, Grent will smuggle the Journal to Yola, thus completing this burden and clearing up space for her to carry other things!

HOW TO GM A GAME OF RIPE

RIPE tries to keep things simple for the GM. Your primary job is to present the players with obstacles and opportunities while describing the world and its denizens.

OBSTACLES

This game uses the term “obstacle” to describe anything that stands in the way of what the players want. An obstacle is anything that follows the word “But!” in a sentence.

Desire	Obstacle
An Elder wants to buy a gold sword...	BUT! They don't have enough money.
They need to escape a flooding pit...	BUT! The walls are tall and slick.
Someone is missing their child...	BUT! The Elders don't know where to look.
This Harvester must be defeated...	BUT! It is fast and well armed.

All obstacles are represented by a single die. This is the die that Elders roll against when attempting to overcome the obstacle.

- **1d4** - Everyday problems.
- **1d8** - Difficult challenges. The default die size for most Obstacles.
- **1d12** - Dangerous or Complex.
- **1d20** - Deadly or Daunting.

You can, of course, use other die sizes than the ones listed, but these are the main categories of obstacles. This keeps things simple and focused.

Complex scenarios might have several obstacles at the same time:

- A sheer cliff (d8)
- Rushing winds (d6)
- A pursuing rock-stalker (d12)

Elders can choose to divide the obstacles between them, or try to overcome them all at once with one big roll.

STUBBORN OBSTACLES

Some Obstacles are not particularly difficult, but they require persistence to overcome. When a Stubborn Obstacle is overcome successfully, you reduce the size of its die. Once you've reduced it below a d4, it's overcome.

OBSTACLE CONSEQUENCES ARE NARRATIVE, NOT NUMBERS.

Some obstacles might have additional narrative consequences if failed.

If a dragon is attacking the town [d20], failing to subdue it could result in your favorite tavern being burned down, or losing a trusted ally to the flames.

But the health of an Elder is never in danger from a failed roll. An Elder would never put themselves in a situation where death or serious injury is a possible outcome. Remember, they are extremely capable and well-prepared.

Elders already struggle against their own frailty; don't add more to that.

Anyway, most Obstacles don't even need additional consequences. The Cliff is still an obstacle even if an Elder fails to overcome it the first time. And now they must decide if it's worth the energy to try it again.

ALL OBSTACLES ARE OPTIONAL

Elders are always in control.

Since the game is about resource management and careful decision making, Elders must be able to choose where and how to spend their energy.

In many other games it's common to throw dangers at players; testing their luck and draining resources: “The dragon attacks you! Roll DEX to avoid the gaping maw!”

That isn't a thing in RIPE. The GM is more reactive.

Instead, present the situation, obstacles, and dangers; but let the players decide what to do.

GM: “The dragon chases after you, rearing back for a blast of fire. Escaping through the exit before the dragon melts it is a d12 task.”

Elder: “Let it melt the exit, we're better equipped to scale the walls and escape through the top of the volcano anyway. You said that's a d10 task, right? Can it be a little lower since the dragon is distracted with the obvious exit?”

GM: “Sure! Climbing is a d8 while the dragon is distracted. If you fail this climb though, the dragon will see you, and it will be more difficult next time.”

RIPE CAMPAIGNS

While RIPE is well-suited to oneshots or adapted for other adventures, this book includes a fully featured campaign for your table.

The following pages detail a series of weeks in the world of RIPE. Each week represents several potential Adventures that Elders could enjoy as well as smaller Opportunities.

These Weeks have been designed for an Open Table structure. Originally detailed by Justin Alexander on his blog, an Open Table is particularly well suited for a busy group of players.

But if you have a smaller group of regular players than you can adapt the Weeks to suit whatever kind of campaign your table prefers. Use what you like, change what you don't. It's your table.

CREATE AN OPEN TABLE

Begin by creating a central point of communication for the group. This can be an email chain, group text, social media event, chat server, or well-timed smoke signals.

The group decides how often they would like to play on a recurring schedule. It's important to set a regular time to that players can adjust their schedules and plan ahead.

Something like "Every other saturday from 6-10pm" or "The first Thursday of each month."

A few days before the scheduled game, players RSVP to indicate they will attend. Someone must volunteer to be the GM. If there are too many players, then whoever signed up first gets to play. Any who RSVP'd but didn't get to play get first dibs for the next game.

This will result in a flexible group of shifting players. It also allows for busy schedules and means that players can miss a session or three without affecting the rest of the group.

To that end, RIPE is designed with Open Table play in mind and includes several features to make it more engaging.

RIPE WEEKS

Every week of RIPE includes a main adventure intended to be complete in 2-3 hours of gaming.

Each Week also includes several small opportunities that players can choose to engage with.

Importantly, players can only choose ONE thing each week to do. If they're able to play the main adventure with the group, then they can't do any Opportunities. And if they aren't able to play the main Adventure, then they can choose ONE opportunity from that week.

RIPE OPEN TABLE EXAMPLE

There is a group of 10 players. They all want to enjoy a campaign of RIPE but have busy schedules.

They start an email chain to communicate between them and decide that they will play every Saturday from 3-7pm. They have enough room for 5 players each week (including the GM).

The first Saturday approaches and 8 players sign up. The first 5 who RSVP'd get to play, and one of them agrees to GM. The other three who RSVP'd must wait until next week.

The group plays through the main Adventure for that week while everyone who didn't get to play can still engage with an Opportunity and describe what their character did in the email chain.

The second Saturday approaches and 2 players who RSVP'd last week sign up for this week (they get first dibs). 6 other players sign up as well. The first 3 get to play, and the other 3 must wait until next week (and they'll get first dibs for the next game).

ADAPT AS NEEDED

As with all RPG content, this structure is just a suggestion. If your group wants to play through the Adventure and still enjoy all the weekly opportunities, that's fine too!

Hopefully this structure helps to add ideas and engagement rather than restricting your group's sense of fun.

SUMMARY

Every Week of RIPE includes a main Adventure for the group and several small Opportunities for players who can't attend.

WEEK 1: JOIN THE CARAVAN

The Grey Caravan makes a yearly circuit across the land. It picks up Elders and safely transports them to the Keep. Traders, travelers, merchants, and wanderers travel alongside the Elders; the safety and profits might outweigh the risk of a Harvester attack.



Raffi leads the Elders of the Caravan. During the day she is a demanding drill sergeant.

In the evening she lowers her guard a little and tells stories of the Keep while smoking a cigar. A common joke is that her lungs must be augmented to shout all day and smoke all evening.

Her true talent lies in seeing the potential of each Elder, and helping them find their place in the Caravan or Keep.

Welcome, Elder! By the time we arrive at the keep you'll be 10 pounds lighter and feeling 10 years younger.

Image by Jörg Peter from Pixabay

OPPORTUNITY: LAGER INTRODUCTIONS

Raffi organizes a week of intense "Welcome" training sessions, mostly to evaluate the fitness level of new Elders but also to start developing fitness habits and introduce the chain of command for the Caravan.

Under Raffi is Lager; a jolly brew-master and head of the merchants. *"You know it's a good drink when the flavor is in-tents!"*

Lager tries to be friends with everyone; tries a little too hard. He also likes to ask friendly favors on behalf of the Elders, Raffi is constantly reminding them. "You don't owe him anything...but once you agree, you'd better come through!"

In this case, Lager wants a group of Elders to



THREAT: BUFFOON HARVESTER

"Harvestfall!" Screams Raffi as the caravan works up to a frightened panic. Raffi is angrily dragging a pasty Elder behind her. She motions to the group, "Get this rich buffoon away from the Caravan before his Harvester arrives and kills everyone! I'll send backup shortly."

The Buffon indignantly tries to introduce himself, but it's clear he is in no hurry; he looks around as if waiting for someone else to do something.

Eventually his Harvester does arrive; smashing into a distant merchant cart. A 10ft tall ape-like creature with a flabby paunch and slimy tentacles emerges from the wreckage and gallops towards the buffoon.

Protect Buffoon [d10]. Getting the Buffoon to safety is difficult, and the buffoon seems determined to make things worse with panic and pride. If any other obstacle is completed before this one, then the Buffoon is killed during the fight.

Harvester Tentacles [d12]. If an Elder fails a roll within tentacle grabbing distance, the Elder is pinned and must escape [d6].

Harvester Paunch [d10]. After every roll the Harvester spits huge globs of spit that fill a Slot in a random Elder's inventory.

Harvester Core [Stubborn d8]. If the tentacles and paunch have been destroyed, then the core is exposed and can be targeted. When overcome, downgrade its die and regenerate the Tentacles or Paunch.



AFTER YOU TURN 70...

Your Harvester emerges from the skies
to take you away.

If you manage to kill your Harvester it comes back even
stronger next year. And the next year. And the next year.

You can't do this alone.

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

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

Hunters gather food, scout the surrounding lands, and
rain down projectiles.

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

Tumblers draw upon resources from the underbelly of
society, brewing poisons and striking from shadows.

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

Whatever you may lack in energy or vigor,
you more than make up for in wisdom and experience.
Make the most of the time you have left. Make friends,
learn, fight, grow, and work to build a new life.

Welcome, Elder, to the Silver Keep.



RIPE

AN RPG ABOUT
ELDER ADVENTURERS
FIGHTING AGAINST THE HARVEST

MAKE CAMP

Every Elder in the group must eat a ration to Make Camp.

- > **Sleep.** Restore two dice to Starting size.
- > **Train.** Upgrade two different dice (can go above Starting).
- > **Meditate.** Roll current highest die and un-mark any weakness equal to or lower than the roll.
- > **Restore** all uses of all items in your Pack.
- > **Something else.** Negotiate with your GM.

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.

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.

3 Preserved Rations.
All 3 fit in one Slot.

Face Paint & Makeup.

Incense. 1 use.
Overwhelming smell.

Spyglass.

Magnifying Glass.

Fake jewels. Traveler roll to convince people of value.

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

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

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

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

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

Bear trap. Acts like a delayed ranged attack.

Lock Picks. Works on mundane locks.

Grappling hook.
Does not include rope.

Rope. 50ft.

Cracked Compass.
Still works perfectly.

Quill + Ink + notebook.

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

Padlock. Includes key.

Card deck & dice set.

Chain. 10ft.

Metal file. Can slowly wear down most metals.

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

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

Torch. 2 Uses.
Each use burns 1 round.

Bucket of Grease. 1 use. Very Flammable.

Tinderbox.

Net. 5ftx5ft of thin rope.

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

Strong Pulley.

Spool of Twine. 100ft.

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

Glue. 3 uses. 1 round to dry.

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

Drill. Make tiny holes in stone or metal.

Box of Nails.

Whistle.

Manacles.

Chalk.

Sponge.

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 require 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:

COUNTDOWN: 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

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

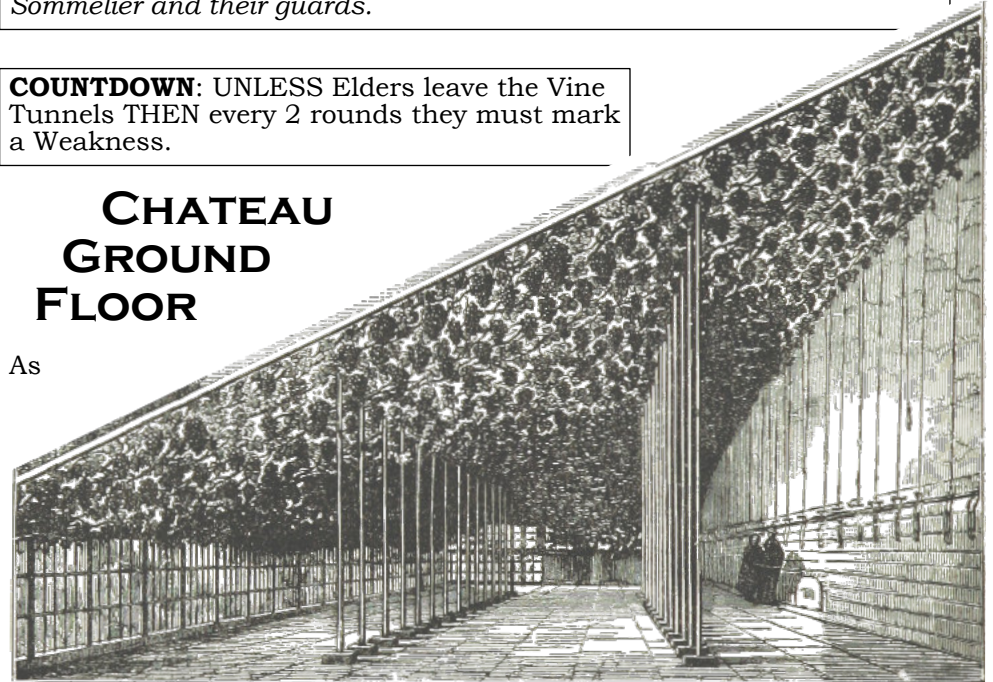
Complex grapevine tunnels encircle the Chateau for a mile around. Rotting grapes hang from the awnings and trellises, creating a disorienting and disgusting maze.

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.

CHATEAU GROUND FLOOR

As



MAP COMING SOON

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-leafed 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 energy 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.

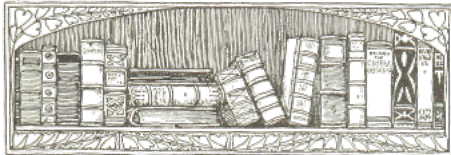
- ▶ ☼ One half-empty bottle of Strawberry Sunshine is tucked in a bookcase. Still good, if a bit stale.
- ▶ See below for books and excerpts. *This is a sneaky place to put some worldbuilding or quest hooks for the players.*

☼ *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...

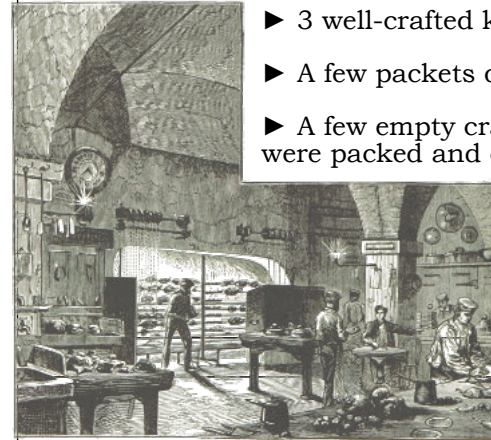
Harvesters Came with the Mages. With the arrival of the Harvesters came the embrace of magic and the wyrd. Not all of us can harness the power of magic, but ALL of us are susceptible to being culled as we approach 60! Is that fair? Seems like a bad trade....

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 snakeskine 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 60th 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).