



# RIPE

**AN RPG OF ELDERS  
FIGHTING AGAINST THE HARVEST**

---

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

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.

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 can't do this alone.

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

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

---

**THIS GAME IS STILL UNDER DEVELOPMENT.  
PLEASE ADDRESS QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS TO  
TECHNICALGRIMOIRE@GMAIL.COM**

Designed by David Schirduan  
and Gini Harrison.

Worldbuilding by Kathleen Rowen

Cover art from Unsplash

Elder Consultation from Meguey Baker

Inspired by The Black Hack, Index Card  
RPG, Terminator: Dark Fate, The  
Night's Watch from Song of Ice and Fire

Icons from game-icons.net

### **Thanks to the playtesters:**

Robin, Jessica, Ian, Josh, Andrew,  
Gini, Rachel, Lindsay, Cameron,  
Tori, Shane, Sarah, Patrick,  
Ashley,

All text protected under the CC-  
BY License 4.0

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Wall Debt:

## TASKS REQUIRE ENERGY

Describe what you're doing to work on a Task and roll a d20.

**1-10**

**No progress is made, life takes its toll.** Mark any Number by checking its box. *Nothing happens unless you roll it later and it's still Marked.*

**11**

**Apply 1 Energy to this task.**

☐ If Marked, Create a Burden related to your past.

**12**

**Apply 2 Energy to this task.**

☐ If Marked, Create a Burden related to your past.

**13**

**Apply 3 Energy to this task.**

☐ If Marked, Create a Burden related to mental stress.

**14**

**Apply 4 Energy to this task.**

☐ If Marked, Create a Burden related to a physical injury.

**15**

**Apply 5 Energy to this task.**

☐ If Marked, a terrible mistake ruins this task; it cannot be worked on any more, and may have consequences.

**16**

**Apply 6 Energy to this task.**

☐ If Marked, immediately Mark another Number. *Simply bad luck? Or a foolish mistake on your part?*

**17**

**Apply 7 Energy to this task.**

☐ If Marked, Destroy all mundane items in your pack. *Did you fall and break your pack? Were they stolen?*

**18**

**Apply 8 Energy to this task.**

☐ If Marked, Destroy a Memento or a Spell. *Was this due to dementia? Or a magical curse? Something else?*

**19**

**Apply 9 Energy to this task.**

☐ If Marked, suffer a heart attack; Allies may attempt to save you (15 Energy, 3 Roll Limit). *Failure means death.*

**20**

**Apply 10 Energy to this task and Mark this Number.** *Your Harvester is getting closer...how do you know?*

☐☐ If all four are Marked, then your Harvester arrives!  
☐☐ After you survive your Harvester, create a haven.

## IMPORTANT ITEMS IN YOUR PACK

*Start with 1 Memento, 1 Spell, 1 Burden, and anything else you need.*

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

OR they **assist you** in your attempt (roll two dice, choose one)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ 7. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 8. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_ 9. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_ 10. \_\_\_\_\_

## ENERGY RESERVE

*Elders start with 5 Energy in their reserve.*

**Spend your Energy** on Tasks after you roll. *Even on a 1-10 you can still spend Energy.*

**Spend 2 Energy** to discover a simple item buried deep within your Pack (as long as the rest of the group agrees with it).

Energy  
Reserve

## MAKE CAMP TO REST AND PLAN

Enjoy these benefits in the following order:

1. **Meditate or Train:** Un-mark your lowest Marked Number.
2. **Work on a Burden:** Make a single roll on any Burden (even another Elder's), then spend ALL your remaining Energy Reserves on that Burden.
3. **Sleep:** Gain 1 Energy in your Reserve for each empty Slot in your Pack.

## MEMENTOS

Mementos are items associated with past experiences and skills. They can be used for any roll related to those memories. Get creative and add depth to those memories! Some example Mementos are listed below, *and tasks they might relate to are in italics*.

When you create a Memento, pick a simple item and briefly describe the history that it represents. Mementos take up 1 Slot.

### 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

All spells are named in the ADJECTIVE NOUN format. The spell can be cast to do anything related to its name. This allows for magic to be extremely flexible and powerful; use each spell to its fullest potential! Below are some example spells, *potential uses are in italics*.

When you create a Spell, name it and store it in an item. Spells take up one Slot.

### 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 vines, tangle foes, infest an area with deadly 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 fog or water, change the weather, taunt a leviathan*

## BURDENS

Burdens are memories, habits, injuries, and ideas that weigh you down. they can't be used with rolls, take up 1 Slot, and can't be removed until it's complete.

When you create a Burden write down the item and what it represents. A Burden requires 20 Energy to complete. After you complete a Burden you may erase it OR transform it into a Memento or Spell. Describe this transformation and how the new Memento/Spell is related to the completed Burden.

### Familiar Nightmares

Sleep is worse than just being tired. *Transforms into spell PEACEFUL SLEEP.*

### Unsent Letter

Written to a lost love. Will you let it go? *Transforms into spell DISTANT HEART.*

### Elder Conflict

You keep having the same fights. *Transforms into spell TEAMWORK DREAM.*

### Old Fear

How much longer you can keep avoiding it? *Transforms into a Memento related to that fear.*

### Damp Boarding Pass

The trip you never took. Maybe there is still time? *Transforms into a Memento about geography and travel.*

### Half-empty Vial

You're running low. Can you get more? *Transforms into a Memento about alchemy.*

### Twisted Ankle

You have to fight through the pain just to keep going. *Transforms into a Memento about first aid.*

### Blinded Eye

You can still see, but the world's more dull than it used to be. *Transforms into spell PIERCING SIGHT.*

### A Deep Lie

Something false you believe about the world...or yourself. *Transforms into a Memento about detecting the lies and prejudices of others.*

### Magical Curse

Perhaps your Spells have been reckless... *Transforms into a Memento about cleansing curses.*

## ADVICE AND TIPS

**Make the details matter.** RIPE is a simple game; more of a framework than a bunch of complex rules. To get the most from your adventures you should make the details matter!

A stick and a sword both do the same damage, but it wouldn't make sense to attack a dragon with a stick. Instead of making complex rules for sticks and swords, let common sense decide how things work.

**Add depth to your Elder.** They've lived a long, full life and accomplished many great things! Use Mementos and Spells to fill in their history.

**Work together.** It's tempting to try and finish a task on your own, but you'll get better results if you share the load with your group.

## HOW TO PLAY

RIPE is a game about Elders going on dangerous adventures. One player is the GM, and the rest create and control an Elder. You will guide your Elder through dice rolls and difficult decisions.

To play, simply tell the GM what you want your Elder to do. For most stuff the GM will tell you what happens and how the world changes to respond to your actions.

If your Elder wants to attempt something difficult or dangerous, then you'll need to roll dice. We roll dice because it's fun to fail, otherwise there's no challenge or drama.

## MAKE THE DETAILS MATTER

HOW you do something is just as important as WHAT you are doing. The rules are simple, but stories are complex and ever-changing. As an example, say you want to work on this Task: “Convince the Merchant to give you a discount.”

The rules tell you to roll a d20 and (hopefully) apply Energy to this task. Once enough Energy is applied, the task is complete, and the Merchant gives you a discount.

But you need to explain what your Elder is doing to convince the Merchant. Are they using threats? Bribes? Friendliness? Truth serum? Either way you roll dice and spend Energy. But HOW you do something matters just as much.

For example, if you threatened the Merchant you'll still get your discount, but later other merchants might avoid you completely. Likewise if you befriend the Merchant, you might be expected to help them out in the future.

This reliance on the fiction is what makes RIPE work. It takes priority over the rules of the game. So be sure to give the GM lots of details and make those details matter!

## WORKING ON TASKS

Tasks must be completed by spending enough Energy within a limited number of rolls.

Any Elder can work on a Task as long as it makes sense. Negotiate with your group about the best way to accomplish something, and share the load between everyone.

Describe what your Elder is doing and roll a twenty-sided die. Consult the Numbers listed on your character sheet to see what happens.

## MARKED NUMBERS

Marked Numbers are unpredictable and scary. They represent the stress your aging body and mind endure. You might roll dozens of times without hitting a Marked Number...or you might hit a bunch in a row.

Whenever you roll a 1-10 you must Mark a Number on your character sheet by checking its box.

If you ever roll a Number that is still Marked, then something bad happens after your action is complete.

## ENERGY

You have a limited reserve of Energy that you can spend on Tasks. Energy can only be spent after you roll.

You may also spend 2 Energy at any time to “discover” an item buried in your pack. You can only discover simple items, you won't find a magic sword or ancient spell. But you can definitely discover some rope you packed earlier but forgot about.

## ITEMS

RIPE only cares about important items. It's possible your Elder is carrying or wearing all sorts of things. But we only write down items that can be used while working on Tasks.

If you need an item but it isn't written down, you can spend 2 Energy to “discover” that item in your Pack and write it down.

**You can use one item with every roll you make.** Using multiple items with a single roll don't grant additional benefits.

Items **allow** you to attempt something you couldn't do on your own...  
*Breathe underwater, fly, outrun a tiger, cut through metal, shoot fireballs*

OR they **assist** you in your attempt (roll twice, choose one)  
*Climb a mountain, injure a foe, dig a hole, start a fire, resist poison, etc.*

This distinction is important. A burning torch might allow you to melt ice, or it could aid you while seeing in the dark. It depends on the situation, and is up to negotiation by the rest of the group.

If you could do something while utterly naked, than items are likely aiding you, rather than allowing you.

Mementos, Spells, and Burdens are much more than common items; they are more powerful and flexible. They are also the primary way you define your character within the rules of RIPE.

# WELCOME TO THE KEEP!

You may feel as though your life is over; that you've come here to wither away. I hope to show you how wrong you are, and to help you build a new life in the Poineri Este; the Silver Keep.

You've heard our mantra, but it's more than just a rousing chant. The four parts guide everything we do here in the keep:

## WE LIVE

Parties, games, conversations, friendships, and fine wines are why we're all here. It's easy to get swept up in the battles and the long work days and the stresses of life.

But most importantly we all need a *reason* to live and fight. Let us help you find a reason; to build a fulfilling life here in the Keep.

## WE FIGHT

Although we pursue life, the Keep is not a safe place. Not entirely.

In the early days of the Keep Elder were expected to repay a Wall Debt; forced to spend a number of days spilling blood atop the battlements.

We still impose upon you a Wall Debt but it can be repaid in many different ways; especially if you are unable to swing a sword.

You may repay your Wall Debt by serving the various Clans of the Keep; each of them will get the chance to introduce themselves; but they're all equally important! Don't let them tell you otherwise...

**Medics** provide medical care, healing poultices, and train first aid.

**Chefs** prepare the food; from parties to traveling rations.

**Fighters** train for combat and guard the walls.

**Scribes** record history, manage finances, and help the other Clans stay organized.

**Locksmiths** fight crime with crime; as Elders we must use every tool and weapon we have.

**Cottars** do whatever else needs doing; odd jobs and tasks that don't fit in any other clan.

**Landsfolk** tend the pastures, farm the fields, and prowl the forests.

**Magi** seek to understand and harness magical forces.

**Builders** maintain the structures and defenses of the Keep.

**Artisans** can be called upon to beautify a home or street with their creations.

**Caravaneers** make the long journey across the land trading for supplies and bringing new Elders home.

## WE DIE

It is true; despite the rumors we are not immortal. We rely on the Medics to protect us from disease, Builders to keep us warm, Chefs to keep us fed, and Fighters to defend us from Harvesters.

When we die it will be alongside our fellow Elders. We will be remembered and missed. The Keep has many mournful days ahead; but it's better to mourn than to simply fade away.

When you die those who knew you will throw a feast in remembrance; eating your favorite foods and telling your stories to one another. Every Remembrance Feast is a blend of joy and sadness; of food and drink; of life and death.

This looming threat of death is what makes life so precious; it's what makes the fight so important. And even death is preferable to the alternative.

## BUT WE SHALL NOT BE TAKEN!

Your Harvester is coming for you. I wish I could say that you're safe now; that you don't need to be afraid. But fear is part of the fight. It's part of life. And if you let your fear consume you; then your Harvester has already won.

We live, taking advantage of every opportunity, every joy we can experience.

We fight, both for ourselves and for our fellow Elders.

We die, knowing we fought well and knowing we will be mourned.

BUT WE SHALL NOT BE TAKEN!

And after your Harvester is defeated we celebrate your birthday with yet another feast! If it wasn't for the physical training I assure you we'd all be too large to fit through doors.

You will earn your Haven and are free to roam and work beyond the walls.

Welcome to Poineri Este, Elders! Live together!





# HARVESTERS

*We don't know why they started coming, but it didn't take us long to figure out that nothing we did could make them stop. -Liefre Stof*

Few now know when the Harvesters first arrived or even that there was a time before. Forgotten are the first days, the days when the elders of our families, our towns, our countries suddenly found themselves confronting Death, wearing a face it never wore in the old stories.

No one remembers Liefre Stof, the first known person to kill a Harvester, though while their name was quickly lost, the fact that the Harvesters could be killed--or at least delayed--spread like wildfire.

While a Harvester has a target, it will not hesitate to kill any between it and its quarry. Aging grandparents turned to their children and grandchildren begging for help, but what person of 20 or even 50 wishes to die in order to save one whose life has mostly been lived? And who would dare to allow an elder to remain in their home, when a monster could come crashing through without warning, perhaps merely destroying a home, perhaps taking the life of an infant fast asleep nearby?

And what parent or grandparent would wish such a potential for tragedy on those they love most?

The Elders, as they are now called, soon realized that the only people that they were willing to risk--and the only people willing to risk themselves--were each other. They soon formed a community in an old abandoned Keep; living, fighting, and dying under threat of these marbled terrors.

## APPEARANCE

No two Harvesters look alike, but they all share an unnatural white-marbled skin that is as hard as stone. The glint of that horrible ivory skin is burned into the minds of any who have survived a Harvester encounter.

Other than their skin, appearance varies wildly. Some have multiple flailing limbs, while others are just a rotund blob. They have been known to fly, walk, crawl, swim, burrow, or simply blink from one place to another. Even that terrible white color has some variation: veins of color, splotches of darkness, varying levels of brightness, slight hues, etc.

But you will know a Harvester when you see one. Not only that, but Elders have a vague sense of when their Harvester is close...

## ARRIVAL

They come within a year of your 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. Harvesters fall from the sky, leaving a multi-colored ribbon of light to mark their arrival. They don't always land near their target; it may take a Harvester several weeks to track down its target after landing.

Elders can feel as their Harvester gets closer. For some it's a growing headache, others have vivid nightmares, and still others can't sleep at all as their Harvester gets closer and closer. Most elders can feel when their Harvest is a few days away.

## SURVIVAL

Harvesters can be killed...it's just very difficult. Harvester attacks usually follow this pattern:

1. Elders can sense their Harvester when it's a few days away. This feeling gets stronger as the Harvester gets closer.
2. The Harvester will violently destroy any obstacles in its path; whether that be warriors, walls, or innocents. It can be killed before it reaches its target, but that's rare.
3. The Harvester reaches its target and incapacitates them in some way. Maybe it poisons them with a fired dart, traps them in flexible limbs, or simple causes enough injury that the Elder stops moving. After this point it's up to others to defeat the Harvester.
4. The Harvester transports the Elder away...somewhere. Attempts to pursue Harvesters are fruitless; they simply move too quickly and unpredictably. Even experienced trackers eventually lose their trail. The Elder is never seen again.

If the Harvester is killed at any point in this process then it will return in a year or so even stronger than before.

## EARN YOUR HAVEN

The day after your Harvester is killed is your birthday; regardless of what the calendar might indicate. If someone is 74, then they have survived 4 Harvesters; their calendar age matters little. This also brings about a restful period; you have a year without the threat of Harvester attack!

To symbolize this freedom an Elder wears something made of bright white cloth (hat, scarf, glove, etc): known as a "haven". Your haven symbolizes that you are not dangerous to be around and can travel safely for a while. You can also live and work outside the keep; perhaps tending fields or trading with nearby cities.

When stains and grime cover the white cloth then it's likely your Harvester is returning soon.

*Create a Haven and add it to your pack; it takes up one Slot. As long as you carry it you do not Mark any of the "20" boxes. When a year has passed and your haven is dirty, destroy it and unMark all of the "20" boxes.*

However the haven is just a symbol; it's up to the Elder themselves to report when their Harvester gets close. Elders who refuse to warn others of their approaching Harvester endanger everyone around them, and are punished severely.

# GM GUIDE

You didn't hear this from me, but being the GM is the best part of RIPE. Congratulations! And major kudos for taking on this responsibility; your gaming group is lucky to have you.

I know being a GM can be intimidating, but RIPE offers a lot of handy tools that simplify your job. Let's take a look at the basic structure of play:

## FLOW OF PLAY

1. The GM describes the current situation.
2. The players describe what they want to do.
3. The GM creates a Task from their ideas.
4. The players roll. The GM says what happens and starts back at step 1.

## 1. DESCRIBE THE SITUATION

- Mention any threats nearby. *Hazards, monsters, mysteries*
- List opportunities. *Paths, valuables, clues*
- Add interesting details. *Unexpected, weird, fun*

When describing a situation, your goal is to give players information they can use to navigate your world and solve the interesting challenges you create for them. This includes where the Elders are, and what is happening now in that location.

This is easier than you think. Just say the obvious stuff; what the Elders can observe with their senses. Players will ask additional questions as needed, so you can stick to simple descriptions; flowery and complicated language is just confusing.

If the players ask you a question that you have trouble answering in the moment, respond with "I'm not sure. Give me a few minutes to check my notes." Never be afraid to pause the game and think about what you want to say. You're not a computer!

It's also okay to share the creative load with your players. This technique is powerful with the right group. If an Elder in the group might know the answer based on their background, then let their player decide.

Player: "Do I see any strange plants or fruits nearby?"

GM: "I'm not sure. Julie, your Elder is a gardener, right? Do they notice any strange or useful plants nearby?"

The pressure isn't all on you. Let the players help you create a fun and engaging world. It will be more fun for them, and more fun for you!

## 2. ASK THE PLAYERS

After introducing the current situation, ask the players what they want their Elders to do. Listen to their ideas. Ask clarifying questions, and answer any new questions they may have. The goal here is to make sure you understand what they are trying to accomplish with their actions.

For example:

The Elders approach an abandoned fort. They want to see if any monsters are hiding in the fort. Some good questions:

- "Do you want to remain hidden? Or just flush them out of the fort?"  
*If they don't mind being seen, then it could be straightforward; just run in and see what happens.*
- "Do you plan to attack? Or do you just want information?"  
*If they want to set up an Ambush that might be a separate Task altogether. It's possible the players want to do several Tasks at once; which it completely fine.*
- "What about valuables? Or are you just looking for dangers?"  
*Looting valuables while scouting for danger could be extra tricky.*

Once you have a solid grasp on what the players want to do, you can create a Task.

## 3. CREATE A TASK

A Task is a risky objective that Elders work together to achieve. Using the players' ideas from before, phrase the task as a sentence that includes the goal and include any additional conditions for success or failure. For example:

- > Task: "Detect any threats in the fort without being noticed."

It's important that Tasks do not define HOW they are to be completed. They are simply a goal; it's up to the players to decide how to accomplish it. "Get past the locked door" is a better Task than "pick the lock on the door". Tasks should be open-ended enough to be accomplished in several different ways.

**Note:** Tasks require Energy and have some risk involved. If Elders are willing to accept the consequences of something, then it doesn't need to be a Task at all.

- "I speak rudely to the Queen" isn't a Task; it's just something the Elders do.
- "I convince the Queen that my friend's rude comment was actually a compliment" is a task because it requires energy and might fail!

## SET ENERGY COST AND ROLL LIMIT

Once the players agree this accurately describes what they want to do, assign this Task an Energy cost and a Roll Limit.

Every Task requires a certain amount of Energy to complete, and must be completed within a number of rolls equal to or below the Limit. If they don't spend enough Energy in enough rolls, then the Task is failed and things get worse.

**Most Tasks require 10 Energy and have a 3 Roll Limit.** Elders have about a 50% chance to succeed at a Task like this. If you want to tweak the numbers, the chart below breaks down more task combinations:

Task Cost	2 Roll Limit	3 Roll Limit	4 Roll Limit	6 Roll Limit
5 Energy	69% of success	81%	93%	99%
10 Energy	32%	51%	78%	94%
15 Energy	9%	24%	54%	83%
20 Energy	0%	7%	28%	66%
25 Energy	0%	1%	11%	45%
30 Energy	0%	0%	3%	26%

*Green Boxes: 66% chance to succeed or higher, Red Boxes: 33% or lower*

It's easy to think of Tasks in terms of difficulty or time limits, but that's not quite correct. Remember, Tasks are designed to make your life easier, not to simulate reality. Rather, think of Tasks in regards to pacing.

- Is this a big important Task you want the game to focus on? Make it 30 Energy with an 8 Roll Limit.
- Only a brief obstacle before the good stuff happens? 5 Energy, 3 Roll Limit.

Or just leave all Tasks at 10 Energy, 3 Roll Limit and let the results contribute to the story.

- Does someone roll a 20 and immediately complete it? The Elders are inspired and energized like never before!
- Did they roll terribly and make up for it by spending Energy

Task Energy Costs and Roll Limits are extremely flexible and there's really no wrong way to do it. Here are a bunch of Tasks that could come from our Fort example:

> Task: "Detect any threats near the fort's entrance without being noticed. (8 Energy, 3 Roll Limit)" Tasks can be as small or large as the situation calls for. Specifying a smaller area ("near the fort's entrance") allows for more tense, moment-to-moment gameplay, while including the entire area can condense what might otherwise be a repetitive dungeon crawl.

> Task: "Loot any valuables in the fort without being noticed. (14 Energy, 4 Roll Limit)" Stealing is more difficult than staring, especially if they didn't watch for guards beforehand.

> Task: "Watch the fort from a distance. (4 Energy, 2 Roll Limit)" This Task is usable, but it's unclear what the players actually want. Consider asking what they are watching for (perhaps whether the monsters have anyone on guard, or if the monsters use any secret entrances) and how long they intend to stay (maybe a few hours, or until nightfall), then adding those as conditions to the Task.

> Task: "Eliminate all threats in the fort without being noticed." For most situations this Task is too broad and could be broken down into smaller pieces. BUT you're the GM; if the meat of your adventure is somewhere else and you want to breeze past the Fort, then maybe you compress all the fighting into a single Task; say 20 Energy, 5 Roll Limit.

> Task: "Walk into the fort." This isn't really a Task; they can just walk right in. There might be consequences to this action, but it doesn't require any Energy. This is a good candidate for warning the Elders before they take action.

## 4. THE PLAYERS ROLL

Once a Task has been created, the players will take individual actions working toward the Task. Before anyone rolls, they must describe what they are doing to contribute. This will develop the players' mental picture of what's happening, and it will give you more ideas for how the situation can evolve, whether they succeed or fail.

During this step, you may discover they want to divide into groups and do multiple, more granular Tasks. You can decide here if you want to divide the Task and assign new Energy Costs and Roll Limits, or leave them as one large task; consider how fast, tense, and simple you want the situation to be.

The players take actions until they hit the Task's roll limit. The cumulative energy from their rolls determine whether they have succeeded or failed.

**If they succeed**, describe their success. Did they gain any new items? Did they learn valuable information? Did they gain some advantage in the fiction? Let them revel in their victory, and describe what comes next.

It's okay if the results are obvious; don't try to be clever or unpredictable every time. The players wanted this, and they worked hard for it. Above all, the results should make sense based on the actions they took.

**If they failed**, then lay the consequences on thick. Things should get worse, tensions rise, the stakes get higher, and doom approaches.



## TASK CONSEQUENCES

Importantly, consequences are almost never physical harm. It's common in a lot of games to threaten players with "10 fire damage" or whatever. But RIPE doesn't have that stuff. Here are some ideas for consequences:

- ▶ **Create a new threat.** An enemy appears, a storm arrives, or an ally is in danger. They have more work to do...
- ▶ **Lose this Opportunity.** Whatever they were trying, it's impossible now. They must find some other way to accomplish their goal.
- ▶ **Remove an advantage.** Did the players know what was coming? Something else happens instead. Did someone powerful owe them a favor? Now they don't. Did players have a backup plan? Their plan falls apart.
- ▶ **Offer a Tough Choice.** Maybe the Elders can still get what they want, but they'll have to give up something or make things worse. This is a good option if they ALMOST succeeded.
- ▶ **Secret Doom.** If you have big plans for a terrible event, use this failure to justify it. You can even treat it like a countdown and every failure brings them closer and closer. This option is great for GMs who like to plan things in advance.
- ▶ **Energy Debt.** If the Task was particularly exhausting or draining then you can give Elders an a debt of negative energy that needs to be made up over time. Anything more than -10 energy is too harsh.
- ▶ **Minor Burden.** Most Burdens are created by the Elder themselves and eventually can be transformed into a Spell or Memento. But the GM can also give Elders a Minor Burden that requires less energy to remove, and is simply erased when complete (it cannot be transformed into a Spell or Memento). Don't overload the players with a bunch of Minor Burdens, but when use sparingly it can really drive home the consequences of a task.
- ▶ **Can't think of anything?** Then this probably didn't need to be a Task. Only make a Task when something might have interesting consequences.

Whether the players succeed or fail, describe how the world changes as a result of their actions and start back at Step 1.

## TASK REWARDS

For almost all cases the best reward for any Task is that Elders get what they want and the story moves forward.

However for big, important Tasks you may wish to grant Elders some mechanical benefit to go along with their narrative progress. Here are some suggestions for adding more "crunch" to successful Tasks.

- ▶ **Gain a Burden.** This seems like a strange reward, but remember: after an Elder completes a Burden it's transformed into a Spell or Memento. Unlike other Burdens, these are optional. "Study with a teacher" (transforms into a Memento related to this

training)

"Investigate an ancient mystery" (transforms into a Spell related to lost magicks)

"Raise a pet" (Transforms into a small pet with some ability or talent)

- ▶ **Gain another Slot.** This can be a powerful reward. Not only does it allow the Elder to carry more things, but if they leave it empty then it will increase their energy after Camping.
- ▶ **Secure a Number (1-5).** Cross out that number on their sheet. When they roll it they no longer need to Mark a Number. No energy is applied either, but it's still a huge benefit.
- ▶ **Energize a Number (11-20).** Grant +1 Energy whenever you roll a Number. They can write it down on their sheet.
- ▶ **Augment a Number.** Augments completely remove a Marked Number. This means you'll never suffer that consequence again, but it also means that you have one less Number that can be Marked; you're one step closer to death.
- ▶ **Gain Energy.** A magical potion or restful experience can grant an Elder more energy. Note that Elders do not have a cap on Energy, but when they make Camp they spend whatever they have left.
- ▶ **Work on a Burden.** Assistance from an NPC or burst of inspiration/motivation may allow an Elder to immediately roll on a Burden.
- ▶ **Free Items.** Modify an item so that it doesn't take up a Slot but can still be used with rolls. E.g. a shrinking sword, or two items that are combined into one (lantern on the handle of a shovel)
- ▶ **Limited Spell or Memento.** A Memento or Spell with limited uses. Once all the uses have been expended, the item is destroyed. E.g. an old scroll that dissolves after being cast three times.