

A black and white comic book-style illustration of a road under a bridge. The road is straight, with a dashed center line and solid white lines at the edges. It leads towards a dark, stylized bridge structure with multiple arches. The background is filled with dense, dark foliage on both sides of the road.

THE SILENT ROAD

RPG

CREATED BY: FAWKES

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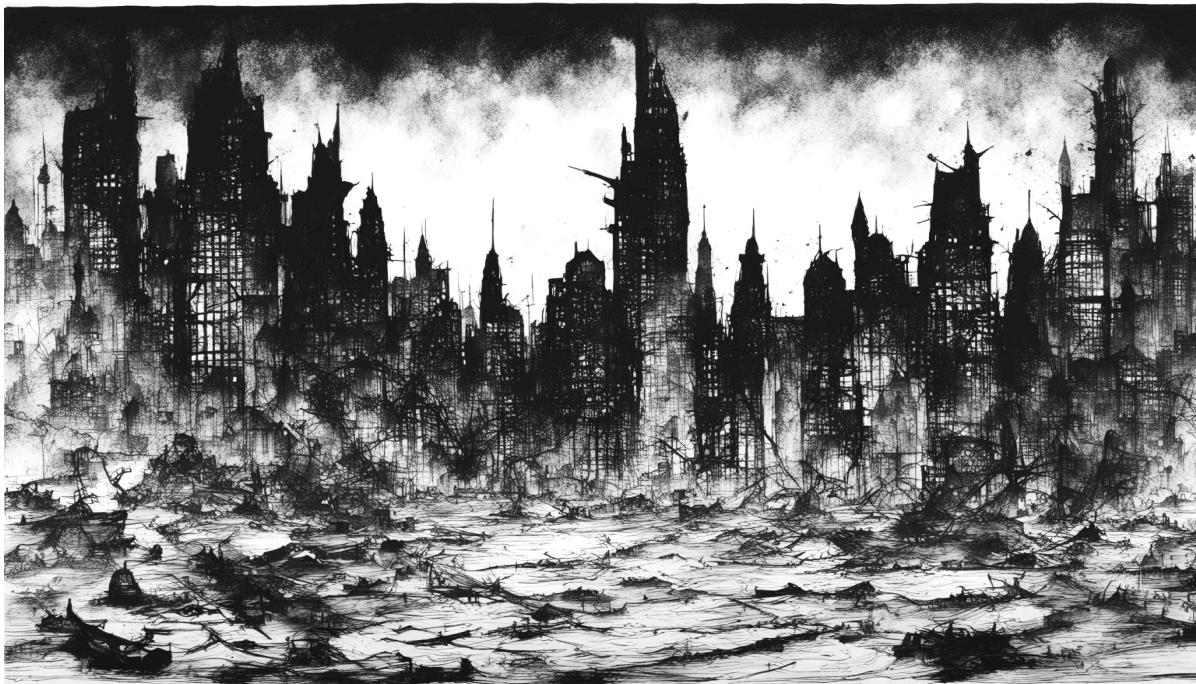
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Playing The Silent Road

The Silent Road is a tabletop roleplaying game set in the grim and foreboding realm of Pyresh. Players assume the roles of Gloomstalkers, cursed heroes wandering a dying world, while the game is overseen by a Game Master called The Augur. The Augur's role is to act as both arbiter of the rules and the primary storyteller, guiding players through the narrative and ensuring their actions influence the unfolding tale.

The rules-lite approach of The Silent Road is intentional, stripping away complex mechanics in favor of an experience that draws players deeper into the unforgiving atmosphere of Pyresh. Every mechanic is designed to immerse players in the brutal reality of their journey: combat is swift and deadly, resources are scarce, and the environment itself is a constant threat. Rather than focusing on granular details, the game emphasizes fast, narrative-driven play, keeping the focus on the harrowing decisions and dangerous encounters that define life on the road.

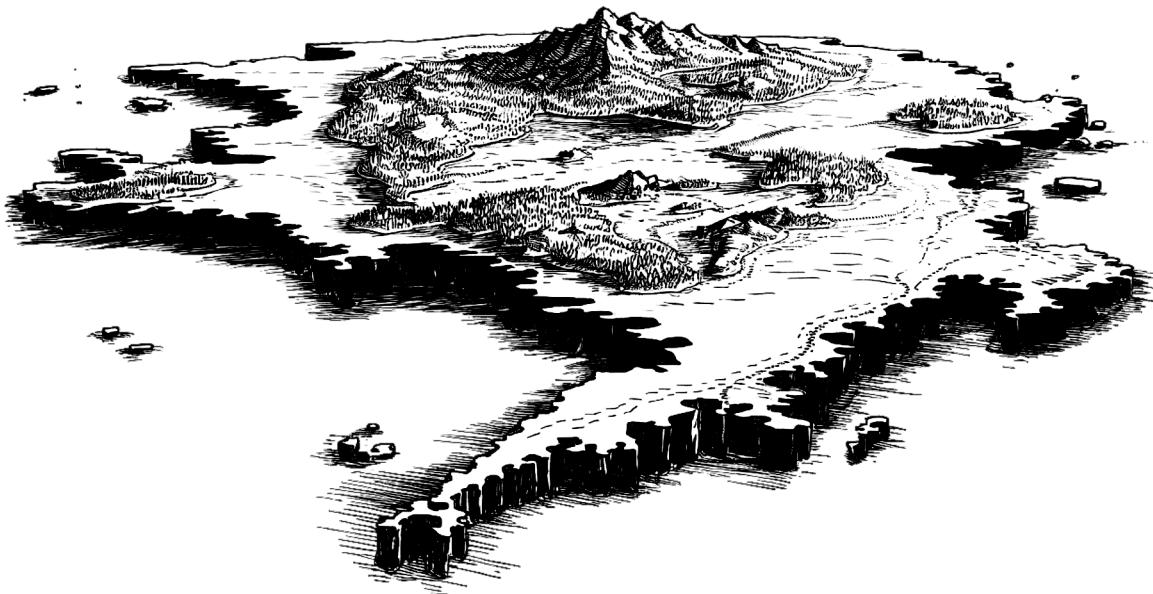


What You Need to Play

1. 10 six-sided dice (10D6s), 4 eight-sided dice (4D8s), 2 four-sided dice (2D4s), 1 one-hundred-sided dice (1D100)
2. A printed copy of the provided character sheet (Or Editable PDF)
3. A notebook or journal
4. A pencil and eraser

The Silent Continent

Once covered in shining cities dedicated to progress and mystical studies, the blighted continent of Pyresh is now home to mere crumbling remnants of civilization plagued by infrastructure decay, dwindling populations, plague, famine, and violence in the aftermath of an eldritch war lost to time. Outside the urban walls, the barren wilderness has become twisted by The Rust-Hued Gloom - a sentient fog mutating man and beast into violent abominations condemned to roam the wastes uttering demented whispers. Unpredictable morphing of the surface coupled with perpetual rainfall and treacherous conditions isolate the remaining city-states, allowing greed and lust for power to corrupt leadership and force hard choices on citizens. Independent communities scattered in the wilds, while less prosperous, seek to provide sanctuary to those who manage to escape the cities. Humans still remain the predominant inhabitants of Pyresh, though other races can also be found like the brutish Ursians and cerebral Encephalons. The people maintain a complex relationship with magic, fearing its might while respecting its power as a volatile tool for survival. Its use faces heavy restrictions in urban centers that still cling to function through wavering control.



The scarred continent of Pyresh provides ample mystery and adventure possibilities. As you traverse its dying lands, feel empowered to expand on the setting and add details where you find fitting. Flesh out new legends clinging to ruins, envision societies dwelling in unexplored corners, or contemplate if pockets of life persist against the creeping decay. This is a world ripe for imagination. Let your creativity guide Pyresh's evolution and see what inspiring ideas emerge from the fog.

The Basics

The Action Dice

In *The Silent Road RPG*, the resolution of uncertain actions revolves around the use of **Action Dice**, a unique mechanic designed to keep gameplay fast-paced while still offering meaningful choices and impactful results. This system consists of **6 six-sided dice (6D6)**, which players roll to determine the outcome of critical actions they attempt during the game. The number of **successes** rolled (a 5 or 6 on each die) directly impacts how well the action is performed, shaping the narrative and influencing what happens next. The simplicity of this system ensures that even complex actions are resolved quickly, while the results drive the story forward in dynamic ways.



Free-Form Actions

Actions are resolved through a **free-form system**, giving players the freedom to decide what their characters attempt in any given situation. Rather than selecting from a predetermined list of actions, players describe their intended actions using *Action Terms*—short phrases that define what their Gloomstalker is trying to achieve. This approach encourages creative problem-solving and adaptability, allowing characters to react to the unfolding narrative in ways that best suit their skills and personalities.

Core Concept

Every action a Gloomstalker takes is tied to one of their *Penumbral Arts*, the core abilities that shape how they interact with the world. These Arts are chosen during *Initiation* (character creation), when a Gloomstalker selects their *Penumbral Path*, which determines the Arts in which they are most proficient. Each Penumbral Art has an associated *Art Rank*, which represents the character's expertise and directly impacts how many successes they need to roll to achieve their desired outcome.

Performing an Action

Follow these three steps to declare your action:

1. **State an Action Term**
 - Choose a word or short phrase that best describes your intended action
 - *Example: "Intimidate," "Investigate," or "Scale Wall"*
2. **Choose a Penumbral Art**
 - Select the Penumbral Art that best fits your action
 - *Example: Using Adaptability to Sneak past a group of enemies*
3. **Justify Your Choice if Required**
 - Explain why your chosen Art applies to this situation by drawing from your character's background, training, or abilities.
 - *Example: "I believe Warfare would apply to me sneaking past these enemies since my Gloomstalker was specifically trained as an infiltrator during their Gloomstalker Training."*

Action Approval Process

1. **Evaluation:** The Augur evaluates your intended *Action and justification* If required.
2. **Approval/Denial:**
 - If **approved**, then you may proceed with the action as planned
 - If **denied**, the Augur will:
 - i. Explain why the Art doesn't fit
 - ii. Suggest an alternative Art
 - iii. Or propose a different approach entirely

Example Exchange

- **Player:** "I want to try and *Intimidate* the barkeeper into giving me a free drink, using *Reverence* as my chosen *Art*."
 - **Augur:** "How would your *Reverence Art* help with intimidation in this situation ?"
- **Player:** "I'll roll up my sleeves to show the barkeeper the *Axioms* I had inscribed in my skin during my Initiation Rites while making reference to my aptitude in *Whisperweaving*."
 - **Augur:** "That's creative use of your background. You may proceed."

Alternatively, the exchange may play out like this:

- **Player:** "I want to try and Intimidate the barkeeper into giving me a free drink, using *Adaptability* as my chosen *Art*."
 - **Augur:** "*Adaptability*? How do you see that fitting into an intimidation attempt in this situation?"
- **Player:** "I thought I could do some particularly threatening looking knife tricks and then demand that the cost of my performance is one free drink"
 - **Augur:** "That's an interesting and creative approach, but I don't think it would fall under a clear form of *Intimidation*, even though your knife skills are impressive. However, you could take a less forceful approach that still fits *Adaptability* by, for example, *challenging the barkeeper to a wager*. You could use your knife tricks as part of a game or contest, which would still let you use *Adaptability* to read the situation and outmaneuver him.
Alternatively, since *Social* is your secondary *Art* and you seem intent on *Intimidation*, you could shift to a more verbal approach—using body language and your imposing presence to unsettle him. This would lean more into *Social Intimidation*, where you assert control through conversation rather than physical displays. It all depends on whether you want to maintain a subtler approach or go with something more direct."
- **Player:** "You make a good point. Since my main goal was to make myself known in town, and the free drink was just a bonus, I'll change my approach. Instead, I'll use *Social* to make a direct verbal threat to the barkeeper."
 - **Augur:** "Excellent, go ahead and roll *Social* then."

Important Notes

*There are no "wrong" suggestions – creative thinking is encouraged -
Discussion between player and Augur helps build the story -
Your character's unique traits can open up unexpected solutions -
The goal is to find solutions that make sense within the game world -*

Performing an Action Roll

Once the *Action* has been approved, the player rolls their **6D6 Action Dice**. The aim is to roll as many successes as possible. In The Silent Road, a success is defined as rolling a **5 or 6** on any die. The number of successes determines how well the action is carried out, with a spectrum of possible outcomes.

Matching Successes to Rank

Each Skill, known as “*Penumbral Arts*,” in the game has a Rank, representing the character’s proficiency in that area. After rolling, the player compares their number of successes to the Rank of the Penumbral Art they used to perform the action.

The outcome of the action depends on how well the roll matches or exceeds the Art’s Rank:

- **No successes (Critical Failure):** This signifies a disastrous outcome. Not only does the action fail, but it also triggers a severe consequence, often leaving the character in a more dire situation than before.
- **Fewer successes than the Rank:** The action results in failure, and the character may suffer a *Setback*, representing the harsh and unforgiving nature of Pyresh. Failures could lead to wasted resources, injury, or a worsening of the situation, reinforcing the gritty tone of the game.
- **Equaling the Rank:** The action is a success, showing that the character’s skill has helped them accomplish the task as intended. They succeed, but without any extra benefits or complications.
- **Exceeding the Rank by 1 or more successes:** This is a Resounding Success. The character not only completes the task but does so with great efficiency or flair. In addition to succeeding, the player earns a Gloomtide Surge point, a powerful resource that can be spent later to affect rolls and other Abilities, representing the rare moments of hope or strength in an otherwise bleak world.

The Action Dice in Play:

Seraphina, a Gloomstalker, rolls the Action Dice (6D6s) to free herself from a hidden trap. Her Adaptability Skill Rank is 3:

She rolls 1, 2, 3, 5, 5, and 6, resulting in three successes (5s and 6s).

Since she needs at least three successes (equal to her Skill Rank) to succeed, her attempt succeeds and she safely frees herself from the trap.

Scenes



A **Scene** represents the ongoing, moment-to-moment gameplay where players interact with the world around them. These Scenes range from casual moments—like conversing with NPCs in a torch-lit tavern or browsing a mysterious market—to high-stakes challenges, such as navigating a trap-filled tomb or negotiating with a dangerous noble. The structure of a Scene is flexible, shaped by both the narrative context and the players' choices. While the Augur provides the framework and initial situation, it's the players' decisions that truly drive each Scene forward.

Scene Structure

In any Scene, there is no strict turn order. Players are free to choose when and how to act, with the Augur ensuring that all participants have meaningful opportunities to engage. This free-form approach allows Scenes to flow naturally, fostering collaboration as players navigate situations together. While the Augur may occasionally step in to manage pacing or highlight opportunities, players should feel empowered to shape the Scene's direction through their choices and actions.

Scene Duration

The length of a Scene varies depending on several key factors:

- The urgency of the current situation
- The environment and its challenges
- The complexity of player goals
- The narrative weight of the moment
- The group's engagement level

Some Scenes might be quick and focused—like a brief exchange with a shopkeeper—while others, such as detailed investigations or multi-layered negotiations, may require more time to fully resolve. The Augur monitors pacing to ensure each Scene maintains momentum while giving players enough time to make meaningful choices.

Scene Transitions

Scenes in The Silent Road rarely exist in isolation; they flow naturally into one another as the story unfolds. A simple **Social** Scene where players gather information in a tavern might transition into a tense **Exploration** Scene as they follow leads into the city's underbelly.

Similarly, a **Tension** Scene of stealth and subterfuge could escalate into open **Conflict** if players are discovered. The Augur ensures these transitions feel natural and meaningful within the broader narrative.

Layered Scenes

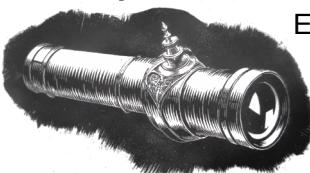
At times, multiple Scene types may unfold simultaneously, creating depth and complexity in the narrative. While some players engage in a delicate **Social** Scene at a noble's feast, others might be involved in a **Tension** Scene as they sneak through the manor's halls.

This layered approach allows different players to pursue their own objectives simultaneously, creating a more dynamic and immersive experience.

Scene Categories

To help with quick reference, Scenes are organized into categories based on the type of activity or challenge players face. These categories are flexible, providing context without imposing rigid restrictions:

Exploration



Exploration Scenes involve navigating and discovering new or unfamiliar environments. Players engage with the world by searching for resources, identifying threats, or uncovering hidden locations.

- **Situations:** Traversing dangerous landscapes, searching ruins, or scouting.

- **Use Cases:** Finding hidden items, scouting enemy locations, uncovering shortcuts or secret paths, gathering resources, or detecting hazards before they strike.

Social

Social Scenes revolve around dialogue and relationships, whether with NPCs or among the party. Players use persuasion, manipulation, or diplomacy to influence outcomes.



- **Situations:** Negotiating, building alliances, gaining favors, or resolving disputes.

- **Use Cases:** Gaining crucial information, securing allies, avoiding combat, resolving disputes peacefully, or learning about local customs.

Investigations



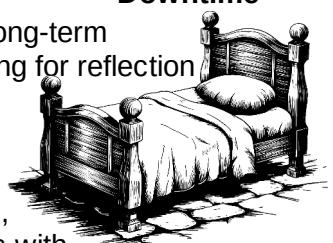
Investigation Scenes focus on gathering information, solving mysteries, or piecing together clues. These moments require players to think critically and uncover hidden details.

- **Situations:** Researching ancient texts, solving puzzles, interrogating NPCs, or inspecting crime scenes.

- **Use Cases:** Uncovering hidden lore, solving puzzles to unlock new paths or quests, piecing together clues to solve mysteries, or identifying enemy weaknesses.

Downtime

Downtime Scenes offer players a chance to rest, recover, and engage in long-term activities like crafting or training. These moments are slower-paced, allowing for reflection and planning.

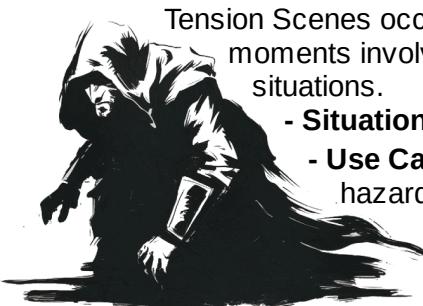


- **Situations:** Resting at a safe location, improving skills, crafting gear, or interacting with NPCs.

- **Use Cases:** Recovering from wounds, training for future conflicts, crafting valuable items, forming or deepening relationships with NPCs, and replenishing resources.

Tension

Tension Scenes occur when players face imminent, indirect danger. These high-stakes moments involve avoiding conflict, outsmarting enemies, or navigating delicate situations.



- **Situations:** Sneaking past guards, defusing traps, or escaping pursuit.

- **Use Cases:** Avoiding detection, escaping danger, disarming traps or hazards, and preparing for potential conflict without initiating it directly.

Vignette



A **Vignette** is a non-interactive, narrative-driven Scene that serves to deepen the story or highlight important events. Unlike other Scenes, Vignettes are entirely controlled by the Augur and are not influenced by player decisions. They provide a window into crucial backstory moments, world events, or character motivations, enriching the overall narrative and building atmosphere.

Vignettes often unfold as **flashbacks**, **cutscenes**, or **symbolic moments**, and may include dream sequences, glimpses into NPC actions, or foreshadowing of future events. While players cannot directly interact with these Scenes, they gain valuable insight that can inform their decisions later in the game.

- **Situations:** A flashback revealing an NPC's hidden agenda, a cutscene showing the aftermath of a battle, or a prophetic dream that hints at upcoming dangers.
- **Use Cases:** Vignettes are used to advance the story, offer players narrative context, highlight key events, foreshadow future plot points, or deepen the lore and setting of the game world. They also provide the Augur a chance to convey important information that players might not encounter directly through gameplay.

Fighting for Your Life

A **Fight for Your Life** Scene is a high-stakes, dramatic moment triggered when a player's Gloomstalker reaches their Maximum Wound Threshold, representing the dire brink between life and death. This type of Scene is designed to focus entirely on the player's desperate attempt to survive against overwhelming odds. When this Scene is initiated, all other ongoing Scenes or Conflicts are paused, and the spotlight shifts to the injured Gloomstalker.

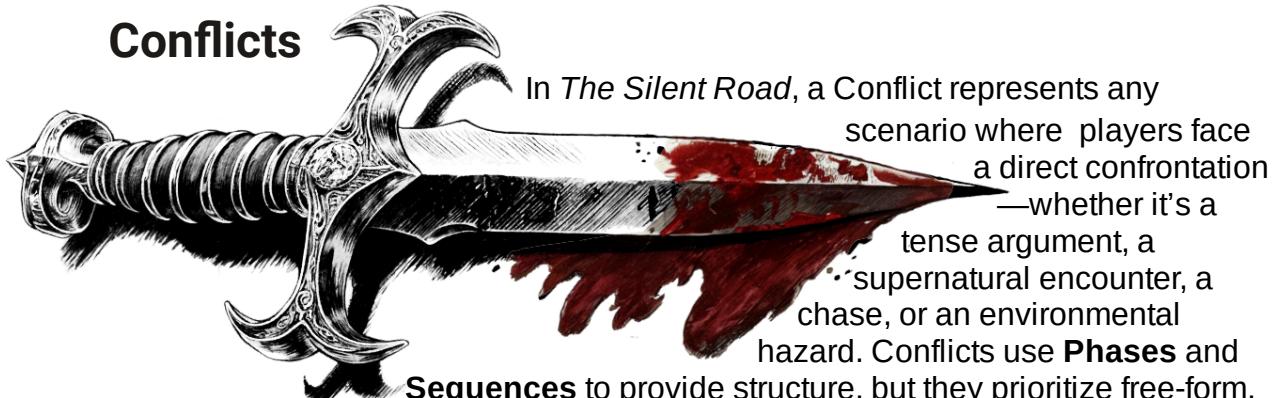


In these critical moments, the **Augur** narrates the character's perilous struggle, and the player must make life-or-death decisions. The outcome of this Scene is uncertain, and success hinges on factors such as the Gloomstalker's abilities, Conviction, and choices made during the conflict. Failure may lead to permanent consequences, including character death, while success allows the character to cling to life and potentially recover.

- **Situations:** The player has been critically wounded in combat, overcome by a trap, or incapacitated during an environmental hazard or dangerous event.
- **Use Cases:** Fight for Your Life Scenes focus on survival. Players might attempt to stabilize their character through healing, receive aid from allies, or use their remaining strength to fend off death for one last heroic act. The outcome of the Scene determines whether the player survives and continues the journey, or if they meet their final fate on The Silent Road.

For more information on Fight for Your Life Scenes, and the consequences of death, refer to the section on Wounding, beginning on Page 40.

Conflicts



In *The Silent Road*, a Conflict represents any scenario where players face a direct confrontation—whether it's a tense argument, a supernatural encounter, a chase, or an environmental hazard. Conflicts use **Phases** and **Sequences** to provide structure, but they prioritize free-form, player-driven actions, allowing creativity in problem-solving. Conflicts often flow into one another dynamically, so Augurs can adapt the situation based on player choices, escalation, or de-escalation.

Conflict Structure

Phases and Sequences:

- **Phases:** Each side (either players or NPCs) acts as a group during their Phase. This allows for coordination within each team, creating strategy and cohesion before the opposing side acts.
- **Sequences:** Within each Phase, actions are organized in a Sequence, allowing participants to decide who acts first within their group. This Sequence encourages players to plan their actions in response to allies and enemies.

Order of Action:

1. **Aggressor First:** When a conflict is initiated by an aggressive act—verbal, physical, or environmental—the initiating side acts first.
2. **Ambush Advantage:** In ambush scenarios, the ambushing side acts first, often gaining a tactical advantage or positioning benefit.
3. **Preparedness:** If a player group or NPCs are anticipating a confrontation and have prepared (e.g., drawing weapons, positioning), they may act first.
4. **Environmental Hazards:** For conflicts triggered by natural or supernatural forces, hazards generally act first. However, prepared players may have an opportunity to react.

Emphasis on Free-Form, Collaborative Play

All Conflicts are designed to be flexible, focusing on player agency and interaction with the environment. The Augur acts as a guide, working with players to explore creative solutions within the framework of the Conflict, rewarding well-reasoned tactics, and encouraging inventive problem-solving.

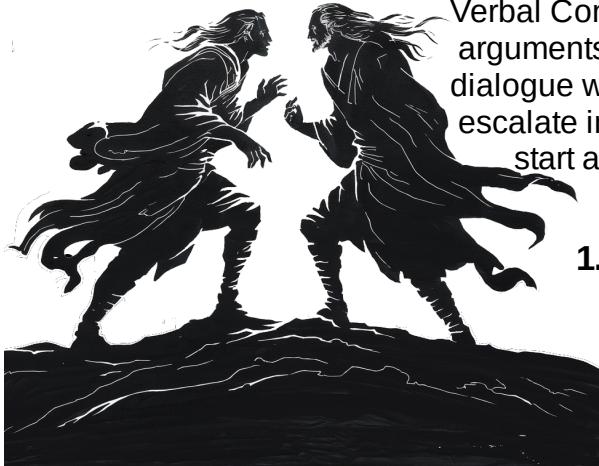
Augur Guidance:

- Conflicts are meant to be challenging but fair. Avoid arbitrarily punishing players for creative ideas, and allow logical solutions even if they fall outside predefined mechanics.
- Remember that player actions should inform and adapt the story's flow. The game's structure is intended to heighten the stakes without forcing the players into rigid or punitive outcomes.

Types of Conflict and Order of Operations

Each Conflict type has a distinct structure and plays out with specific steps to guide the Augur and players through resolution:

Verbal Confrontation



Verbal Confrontations involve high-stakes discussions or arguments, where players engage NPCs or each other in dialogue with significant social implications. These can escalate into physical conflicts or, in some cases, can start as an attempt to defuse a potential combat.

Order of Operations:

1. Establish NPC Disposition:

- NPCs may be predisposed to hostility, neutrality, or friendliness. Adjusting disposition based on the player's apparent nobility or nefarious intent can add realism.

2. Arguments Presented:

- Each side alternates presenting arguments. Players roll Social checks according to their Social Penumbral Art to persuade, gain leverage, or defuse the situation.
- Players describe how their arguments relate to their character's Social Art, creating a grounded, narrative-driven approach to their persuasion efforts.
- Counteractions:
 - The NPC or opposing party may use their own abilities or responses to counteract players' persuasion attempts. This encourages a back-and-forth dynamic that heightens tension.

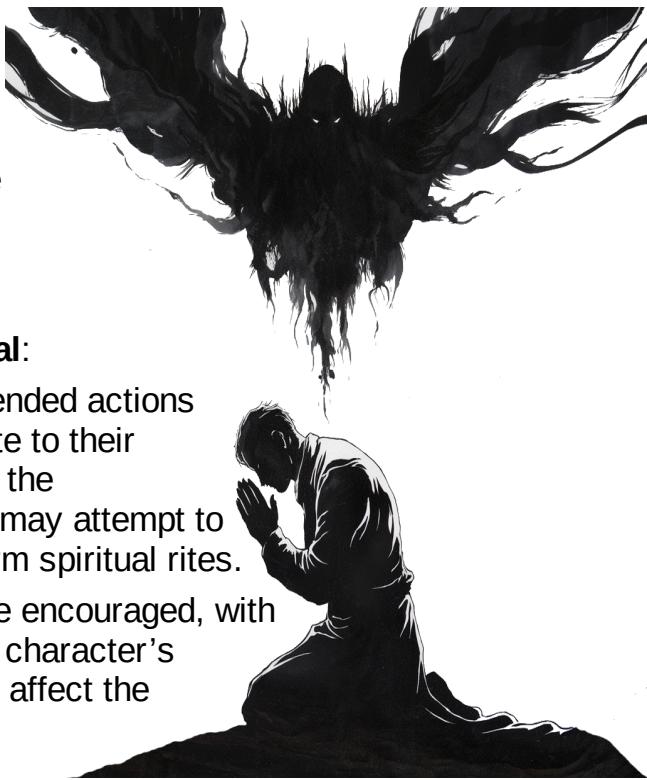
3. Resolution:

- **Victory:** The Conflict ends when one side concedes, reaches a compromise, or agrees to terms.
- **Failure and Escalation:** Failed rolls may lead to hostility, severed alliances, or even escalation to Combat.

Augur Tip: Verbal Confrontations can become Combat Conflicts if the situation escalates aggressively. Likewise, Combat may resolve into Verbal Confrontation if players attempt diplomacy mid-battle.

Spiritual Challenge

Spiritual Challenges are confrontations with supernatural forces that test players' faith, mental resilience, and understanding of otherworldly powers, often requiring Reverence and creative descriptions.



Order of Operations:

1. Engaging with the Supernatural:

- Players describe their intended actions and explain how they relate to their Reverence Art to address the supernatural threat. They may attempt to negotiate, resist, or perform spiritual rites.
- Free-form descriptions are encouraged, with players defining how their character's abilities or knowledge can affect the supernatural encounter.

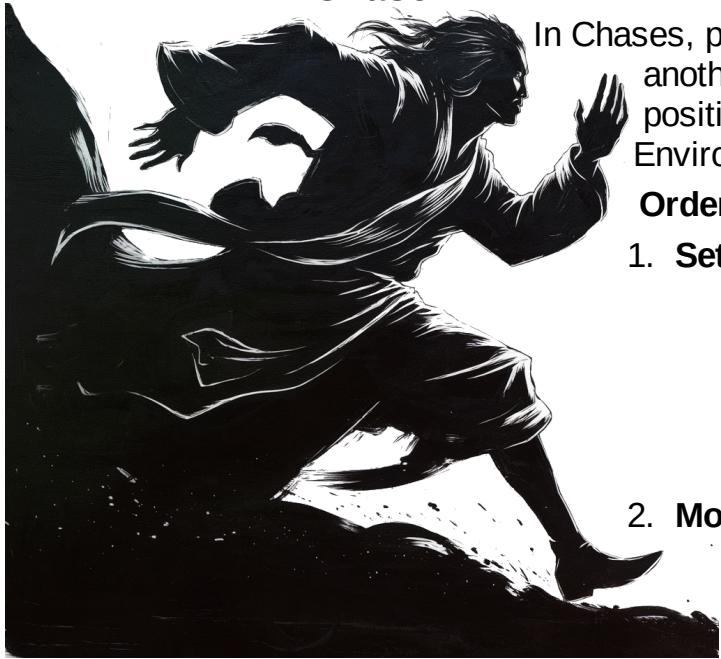
2. Reverence Rolls:

- Players roll using their Reverence Art to execute their planned actions, whether to ward off spirits, banish entities, or protect against corruption.
- Success or failure in Reverence rolls determines the effectiveness of their efforts against the supernatural force.

3. Resolution:

- **Victory:** The Conflict ends if players succeed in resisting, negotiating, or dispelling the supernatural influence.
- **Failure and Consequences:** Failure may result in Conviction loss, lingering curses, or increased susceptibility to future supernatural effects.

Augur Tip: *Don't forget, moments when you face the supernatural are often highly unpredictable, so encourage player creativity and exploration. Unconventional solutions are always the most rewarded, even if the rolls say otherwise.*



Chase

In Chases, players either flee from or pursue another party, focusing on speed, positioning, and strategic use of the Environment.

Order of Operations:

1. Set the Scene:

- Establish the initial distance, positions, and environmental factors affecting the chase, such as obstacles, narrow paths, or hazardous elements.

2. Movement and Player Actions:

- Players take turns acting to close or widen the gap. They may use abilities to slow their

pursuers, increase their own speed, or create barriers to hinder the enemy.

- Creative solutions are encouraged. For example, a player might use Observation to locate a nearby object (e.g., a barrel) and roll to use it as a distraction.

3. Resolution:

- **Capture or Escape:** The chase ends if one side successfully captures or evades the other.
- **Abandonment:** If either side decides to stop the pursuit, the chase concludes without a clear winner.

Augur Tip: Environmental factors add depth to chases. Reward player ideas that incorporate surroundings, and use terrain changes to shift the chase's tone or difficulty.

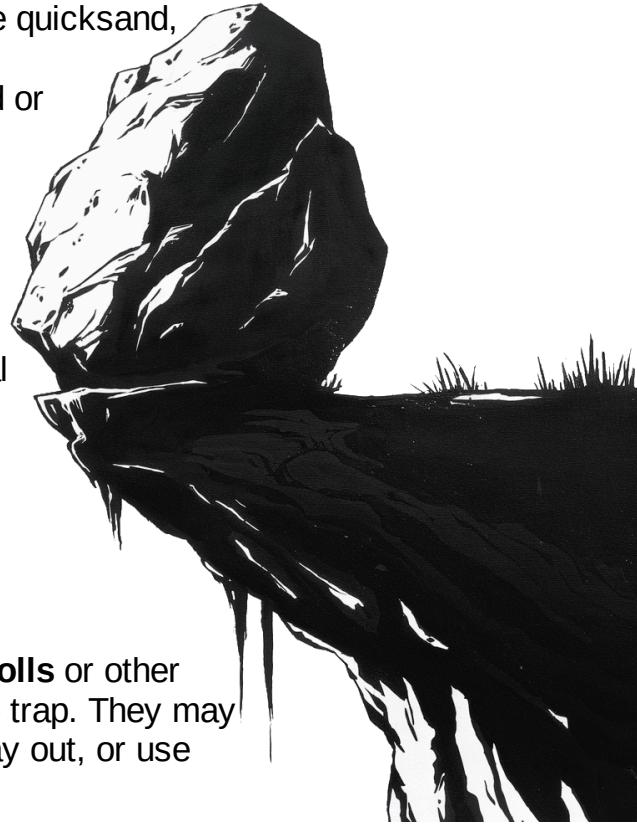
Environmental Trap

Environmental Traps include hazards like quicksand, magical snares, or structural collapses, requiring players to think quickly to avoid or escape harm.

Order of Operations:

1. Trap Trigger:

- Traps may be set off by specific player actions, movement, or environmental cues. Single-player traps, like pitfalls, impact only the triggerer, while larger traps (e.g., arrow volleys) may affect the whole group.



2. Escape Attempts:

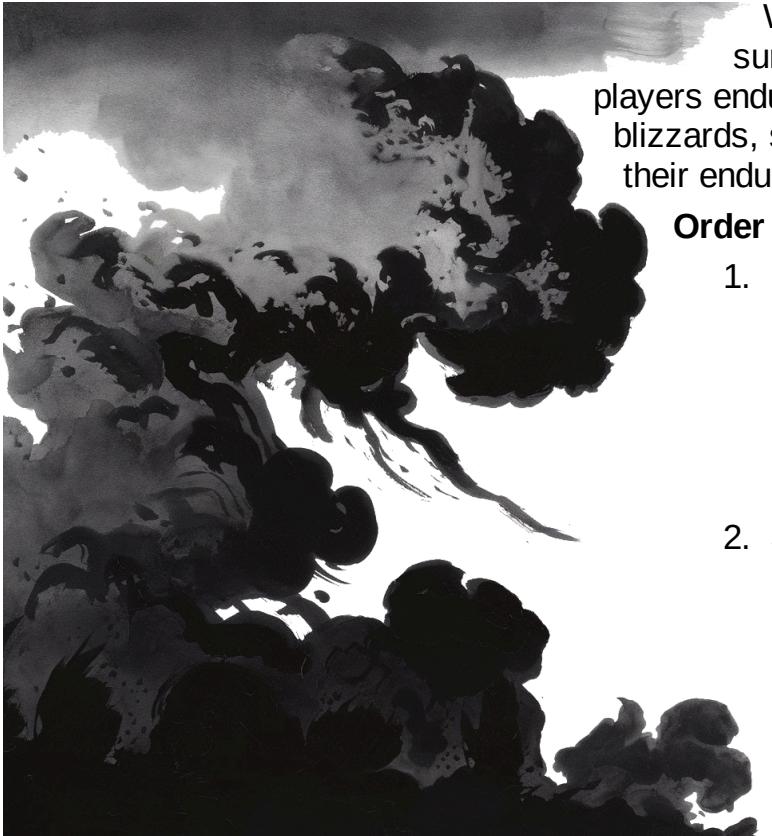
- Players use **Adaptability Rolls** or other skills to avoid or disable the trap. They may roll Observation to find a way out, or use teamwork to extract allies.
- Complex traps may require multiple player actions or coordinated efforts to overcome.

3. Resolution:

- **Escape:** The Conflict ends when players escape or disable the trap.
- **Failure Consequences:** Failing to escape could result in injuries, Conviction penalties, or incapacitation.

Augur Tip: Traps can be instant or prolonged. Use prolonged traps (like closing walls) to allow group problem-solving and escalation, raising tension and stakes.

Weather Event



Weather Events pose survival-based conflicts where players endure natural forces such as blizzards, sandstorms, or fires, challenging their endurance and resourcefulness.

Order of Operations:

1. Initial Assessment:

- Players assess the event and roll Observation or Adaptability to determine severity and find shelter or protective options.

2. Survival Actions:

- Players take protective actions, such as building shelter, using supplies, or adapting to environmental conditions. These actions mitigate exposure and reduce Exhaustion accumulation.

- Extended exposure without sufficient preparation results in increasing Exhaustion, which impacts abilities and decision-making.

3. Resolution:

- **Survival or Shelter:** The Conflict ends once players reach safety or the weather subsides.
- **Failure Consequences:** Failure to endure may result in Conviction loss, physical harm, or long-term Exhaustion.

Augur Tip: Exhaustion builds as players endure harsh weather. Set accumulation rates based on severity and available protection to balance risk with reward.

Combat

Combat Conflicts involve direct physical confrontations where players engage enemies using their chosen Arts. Combat is the most structured Conflict, focusing on positioning, resources, and tactics.

Order of Operations:

1. Turn Structure and Positioning:

- Combat begins with positioning and turn order, determined by each side's Phase and Sequence.

2. Player Actions:

- Players use their Effective Armament Art (Warfare, Adaptability, or Reverence) to attack, defend, or strategize, describing their actions creatively. They may use Path Abilities or environmental features for added effect.
- The free-form structure allows players to specify non-traditional actions (e.g., disarming an opponent, setting traps), and they roll based on the Art they choose to apply.

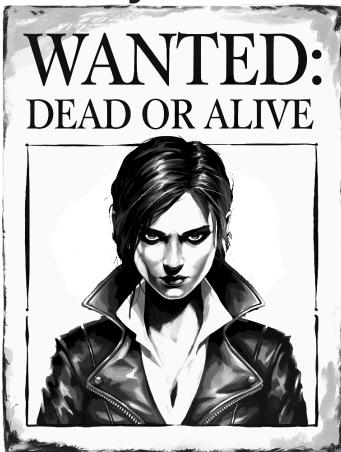
3. Damage and Health Tracking:

- Damage is tracked against each player's Wound Threshold, and combat ends when one side retreats, is incapacitated, or surrenders.
- **Consequences:** Combat may lead to injuries, Conviction shifts, or narrative consequences based on player and NPC choices.



Augur Tip: Use environmental elements as dynamic factors in combat. Give players the chance to adapt their tactics by incorporating terrain features, and recognize creative uses of their Arts.

Objectives



Objectives in *The Silent Road* are pivotal tasks that guide Gloomstalkers through the brutal landscape of Pyresh. Each Objective challenges Gloomstalkers to confront the physical, social, and supernatural dangers of this grim world, aligning with their **Solemn Burdens** and advancing the overarching narrative. Integrated into **Scenes** and **Conflicts**, Objectives give weight to each encounter, reinforcing the game's relentless tone and rewarding players for resilience and resourcefulness.

Obtaining Objectives

Gloomstalkers acquire Objectives from various sources in **Villages, Towns, or Cities**, such as:

- **NPCs** who reveal dark rumors, request aid, or offer tasks in exchange for essential resources.
- **Job Boards** listing public contracts, bounties, or quests with promised rewards.
- **Random Encounters** involving dangerous travelers, hostile creatures, or unanticipated conflicts that demand quick thinking.

Objectives can also "chain" together, creating a series of increasingly demanding tasks that reveal deeper layers of the story. These linked Objectives enable Augurs to craft a harsh, interconnected narrative, building both individual and group arcs over multiple, impactful steps.

Objective Ranks

Each **Scene** or **Conflict** contains an Objective ranked by difficulty and narrative significance. Each rank is designed to align with *The Silent Road*'s grim tone, ensuring that even minor tasks hold inherent risks or costs.

- **Rank 6 – Necessary Tasks:** Low-risk, routine actions essential for survival, such as securing shelter or foraging for provisions. These Objectives do not yield XP but may provide minor rewards or advantages, such as a temporary reduction in Travel Time or resource conservation if executed skillfully.
- **Rank 5 – Basic Survival Challenges:** Tasks with manageable dangers, often required to maintain essential resources or complete minor negotiations. Examples include salvaging useful materials in hostile areas or assisting an NPC with information gathering that could benefit the group. **Reward: 1 XP.**
- **Rank 4 – Routine Hardships:** Tasks requiring deliberate planning or skill, such as scouting dangerous terrain, making tense alliances, or securing scarce resources through guarded or perilous locations. **Reward: 2 XP.**
- **Rank 3 – Complex Trials:** Objectives that require strategic thinking or teamwork to succeed, including infiltrating guarded sites, handling minor hostile encounters, or securing critical intelligence. **Reward: 3 XP.**
- **Rank 2 – Significant Risk:** High-risk tasks demanding advanced skill and perseverance, like surviving an ambush, negotiating with a major threat, or enduring a long, hazardous journey to fulfill an urgent mission. **Reward: 4 XP.**
- **Rank 1 – Extreme Difficulty:** The most dangerous and consequential challenges, often climactic or life-altering, such as overcoming a powerful foe, resisting a deadly supernatural force, or resolving a crucial Objective that could change the fate of the Gloomstalker. **Reward: 5 XP.**

A Note on XP Adjustments: XP rewards reflect not only Objective completion but also player ingenuity, teamwork, and significant character moments. For specific guidelines on XP from Combat, refer to the Combatants section later in the document.

Objective Chains and Multi-Step Objectives

Objective Chains create evolving storylines by connecting multiple Objectives into a single, overarching quest. Each step in the chain progressively deepens the narrative and intensifies the danger, resulting in a gritty, cohesive experience. Multi-step Objectives usually unfold in **three stages**, each requiring increased resolve and endurance:

1. **Stage 1 – Initial Task:** This step introduces the Objective's context. It is often a preliminary (Rank 4-5) challenge, such as gaining vital information from a reluctant informant or tracking a dangerous creature's movements through hazardous terrain.
2. **Stage 2 – Escalation:** Following the initial task, the Objective intensifies (Rank 3-4), presenting new or unexpected threats. This stage may require navigating into enemy-held areas, retrieving forbidden artifacts, or exposing a dark secret that puts the party in danger.
3. **Stage 3 – Climax and Resolution:** The final stage, often Rank 1-2, brings the Objective to a grueling resolution. Gloomstalkers might have to face a formidable foe, weather a supernatural assault, or make a critical decision that could have lasting consequences on their journey or psyche. Completion of this stage often yields significant narrative and character development, particularly if it resonates with a Solemn Burden or major story event.

Rewards and Guidance for Augurs

In *The Silent Road*, Objectives reward Gloomstalkers with more than just XP; they may also provide tangible rewards like Wealth, rare items, or unique resources. Augurs are encouraged to populate the world with loot that fits the story and tone, using rewards to enhance the game's grim atmosphere and support meaningful progression.

Key Considerations for Rewarding Players

Augurs should consider how rewards will affect both gameplay and narrative flow:

- **World Scarcity:** How destitute is your version of Pyresh? Is Wealth rare or only valuable in certain regions? Ensure rewards reflect your world's economic reality.
- **Power Scaling:** Granting Advantages like Abilities or powerful items can alter player tactics and timing for Rank Advancements. Avoid rewards that might trivialize significant story moments.
- **Significance of Locations:** Remote or unexplored areas of Pyresh might be prime sources for unique rewards like Mementos, adding intrigue and rarity to loot.

Types of Rewards and Values by Rank

Rewards should match the Objective's Rank, with higher-risk tasks justifying more substantial or rare items. Present loot as hard-won and scarce rather than abundant, aligning with the game's survival-focused tone:

- **Rank 6 – Necessary Tasks:** Typically yield no rewards, aside from potential resource conservation or small comforts (e.g., temporary shelter, small Wealth if executed skillfully).
- **Rank 5 – Basic Survival Challenges:** Provide essential resources (food, water, basic tools) to sustain the party. Examples include modest weaponry, worn clothing, or minor currency.
- **Rank 4 – Routine Hardships:** Practical items like small Wealth, crafting supplies, or consumables become accessible. Minor magical items, such as charms offering temporary protection, may occasionally appear.
- **Rank 3 – Complex Trials:** Justify more valuable items, such as rare tools, minor magical items, or strategic consumables (e.g., a healing tincture or a single-use magical item).
- **Rank 2 – Significant Risk:** Valuable or unique items, such as enchanted weapons, rare materials, or special utility items suited to specific encounters, become available and should feel worthy of the high-risk effort.
- **Rank 1 – Extreme Difficulty:** Reserved for legendary items, rare Mementos, or powerful artifacts tailored to a character's Penumbral Path. These items could significantly impact gameplay but may carry limitations or risks.

Optional Chance-Based Rewards

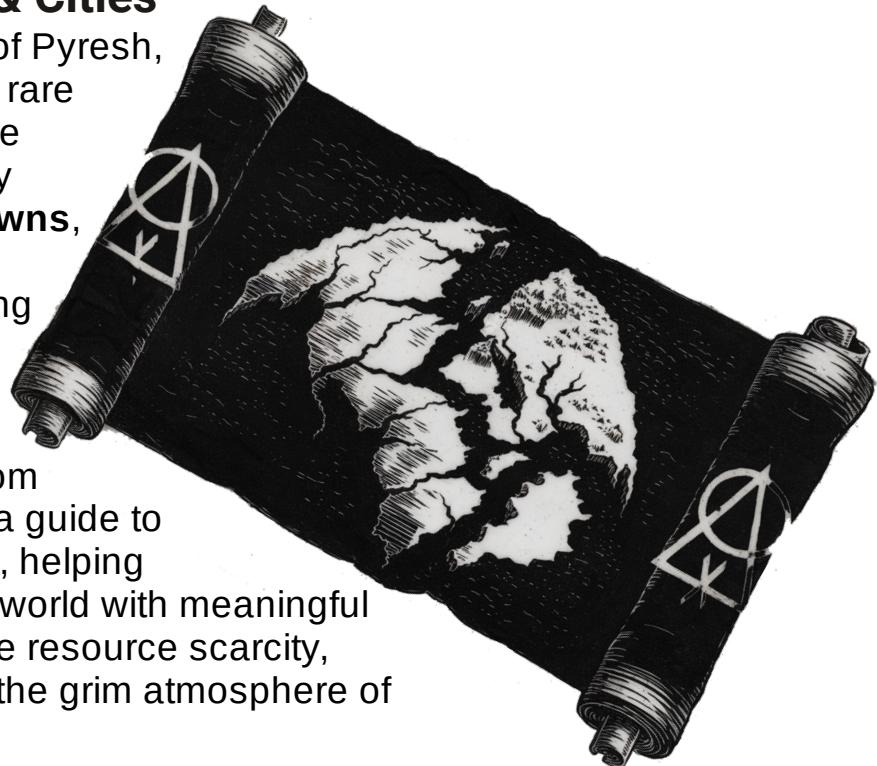
For high-ranking tasks, Augurs may introduce rare items with a chance-based system as a narrative tool for rewarding exceptional success:

- **Example Percentile Guidelines:** A single-step Rank 5 Objective might yield a low chance (e.g., 1%) of a rare item, while a multi-step Rank 5 Objective might offer a 5% chance. These flexible guidelines allow the Augur to tailor rewards by Objective difficulty, adding surprise when it complements the game's tone.

Reference for Advantage Types: For additional thematic reward ideas, refer to the document's **Advantages** section, covering **Transportation**, **Wealth**, **Abilities**, and **Tools**. Advantages offer valuable tools that support character progression while keeping rewards balanced within *The Silent Road's* survival-based challenges.

Villages, Towns & Cities

In the desolate land of Pyresh, settlements serve as rare sanctuaries where the remnants of humanity endure. **Villages**, **Towns**, and **Cities** each play distinct roles, providing Gloomstalkers with limited resources, safe harbors, and a temporary escape from the Gloom. Below is a guide to each settlement type, helping Augurs populate the world with meaningful locations that balance resource scarcity, narrative depth, and the grim atmosphere of *The Silent Road*.

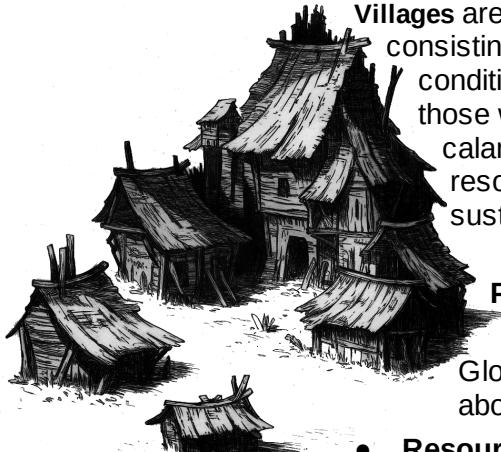


Populating the World with Villages and Towns

Villages and Towns are mutable and adaptable to the Augur's vision for Pyresh. Unlike Cities, which are strictly limited in number, Villages and Towns may shift locations or even disappear due to the Gloom's influence. When adding settlements, consider the following:

- **Resource Dependency:** Villages and Towns often exist because of a minor, critical resource—such as water, rare herbs, or sheltering terrain—that sustains the population. Think about what allows each settlement to endure in an otherwise hostile environment.
- **Isolation and Accessibility:** Villages are typically isolated and challenging to reach, while Towns often function as waypoints on The Road, providing more accessible rest stops.
- **Faction Influence:** Some settlements may be under the control or influence of factions, which can impact trade, security, and openness to outsiders. Factions could provide protection or pose risks, depending on the nature of the group.

Villages



Villages are the smallest, most isolated settlements in Pyresh, often consisting of a handful of people clinging to survival in harsh conditions. These bleak places are populated by descendants of those who chose—or were forced—to remain after past calamities. Villages are usually centered around a minor resource, which allows a limited and often fragile level of sustainability.

Purpose and Available Resources:

- **Purpose:** Villages serve as brief stops where Gloomstalkers can rest, gather limited resources, or learn about local threats.
- **Resources:** Expect only the bare essentials, such as food, water, or basic trade goods. Any weapons, tools, or medical supplies will likely be handmade or rudimentary.
- **Services:** Villagers may offer basic information, rumors, or trade items they lack. Skilled services, however, are extremely rare, and outsiders are often met with distrust.

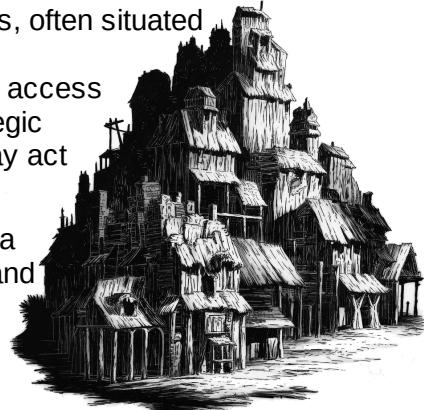
Narrative Prompts:

- What scarce resource or skill enables this Village to endure the desolation?
- How does the Village react to the Gloom's influence, or to travelers who might threaten their stability?
- What hardships define daily life for the villagers, and what sacrifices do they make to survive?

Towns

Towns are more structured and slightly more stable than Villages, often situated along major routes as waypoints between Pyresh's Cities.

These settlements serve as hubs for passing travelers, offering access to supplies, temporary shelter, and limited resources. The strategic positioning of Towns makes them targets for factions, which may act as protectors, extortionists, or sources of influence.



Due to their role on The Road, Towns see more traffic and host a mix of locals and travelers, creating a balance between safety and risk. They offer greater comfort than Villages but are still vulnerable to threats from the Gloom and other dangers.

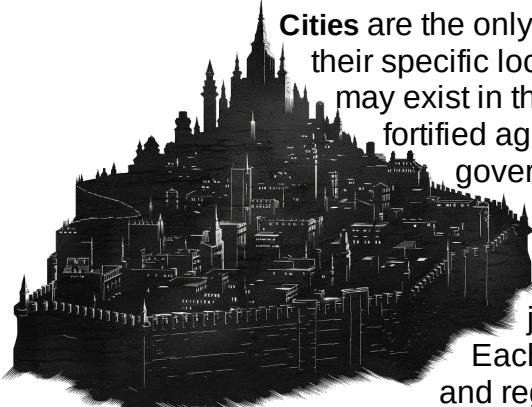
Purpose and Available Resources:

- **Purpose:** Towns act as rest stops for Gloomstalkers, where they can replenish supplies, hear news, or learn of upcoming perils.
- **Resources:** Towns provide a modest selection of goods, including food, simple tools, and basic medical supplies. Occasionally, vendors may stock uncommon items or materials specific to the region.
- **Services:** Inns, taverns, and a few skilled craftsmen are more common here, allowing Gloomstalkers to rest and make repairs. Information gathered from travelers, merchants, and townsfolk provides valuable insight into future journeys.

Narrative Prompts:

- What resources or trade goods make this Town a target or asset to nearby factions?
- How do locals handle the tension between welcoming travelers and protecting their own safety?
- What unique challenges does the Town face in maintaining stability against the threats around them?

Cities



Cities are the only truly permanent settlements in Pyresh, and while their specific locations and characteristics are flexible, only three may exist in the entire world. Each City serves as a major hub, fortified against the Gloom and home to various factions, governing bodies, and skilled tradespeople. These locations are often large, heavily populated, and relatively secure, allowing Gloomstalkers to experience moments of relative stability amidst their journey.

Each City is unique, shaped by its resources, inhabitants, and region. Augurs may design Cities to serve as central story locations, rich with roleplaying potential and complex power dynamics. Cities also provide some of the rarest goods and services in Pyresh, making them essential destinations for Gloomstalkers seeking gear, knowledge, or valuable connections.

Purpose and Available Resources:

- **Purpose:** Cities offer safe harbor, opportunities for faction interactions, and diverse quests. They serve as starting points for many Gloomstalker stories and allow players downtime and rest before venturing into the wilds.
- **Resources:** Cities hold the most extensive range of items, including rare supplies, enchanted weapons, and valuable trade goods. Goods vary based on each City's regional resources, and due to trade routes, Cities can be sources of income for Gloomstalkers transporting goods.
- **Services:** Cities host numerous amenities, such as guilds, healers, and specialized craftsmen. Faction presence is strong, providing complex roleplaying opportunities and access to missions that shape the campaign's story arc.

Narrative Prompts:

- How does each City maintain stability against the Gloom's effects and external threats?
- What factions control parts of City life, and what tensions or alliances shape its power structure?
- How do Gloomstalkers navigate the City's politics, and what valuable resources can they acquire through alliances or trade?

Expanding on Major Cities: For more details on the three major Cities, Augurs may refer to the *Gloomstalker's Almanac (Setting and Lore Guide)*. This guide provides pre-established lore, descriptions of governing bodies, and faction dynamics for each City, offering inspiration and guidance for creating deep, immersive locations. Augurs can create their own Cities, but there should always be only three, preserving their rarity and importance.

Economic Dynamics: The Cities are part of a limited trade network, allowing Gloomstalkers to earn income by transporting rare goods. However, this trade is challenging and influenced by each City's needs and resources, making it both a risky and rewarding venture for those willing to take the journey.

Inhabitants

In Pyresh, survival is a relentless battle against a decaying world, where inhabitants cling to life amid the ever-present threat of the Rust-Hued Gloom. Diverse races and factions populate this fractured land, each struggling in its own way to resist the Gloom's encroachment, salvage remnants of civilization, or carve out power amid the ruins. Humans are the most numerous, but Pyresh is also home to other, stranger beings, each embodying unique attributes and ambitions shaped by the land's dark history.

Humans



Humans are the resilient core of Pyresh's populace. They have adapted to life in crumbling city-states and scattered outposts, enduring the desolation left by the eldritch calamity. Though many have turned to opportunism or survival at any cost, humans retain an underlying drive for knowledge and power. Some work toward reclaiming a semblance of Pyresh's past greatness, while others focus on securing a future, however fleeting.

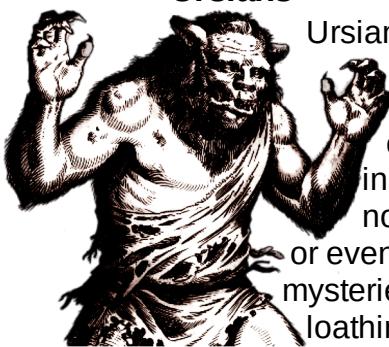
Humans are ambitious, ruthless when necessary, and willing to adapt to Pyresh's hostile conditions, making them both valuable allies and dangerous enemies.

Encephalons



The Encephalons, remnants of an ancient civilization, are humanoid beings with prominent, exposed brains—a physical manifestation of the genetic and magical experimentation their ancestors conducted. They are masters of arcane science and forgotten lore, obsessively studying the mysteries of Pyresh. Driven by intellect, Encephalons often act as scholars, inventors, and keepers of forbidden knowledge, though many are consumed by madness in the process. Their minds are prone to the Gloom's corrupting influence, and they often live as recluses, hiding from its touch. Encephalons are strongly connected to Pyresh's past, rumored to be descendants of a race that reached too far into magic and science, leaving them cursed with fragile minds and a relentless pursuit of knowledge that borders on self-destruction.

Ursians



Ursians are a massive, bear-like people who inhabit the rugged, forested outskirts of Pyresh, away from human civilization. Tribal and fiercely independent, Ursians maintain strong communal bonds and are bound by traditions that keep them in tune with the natural world. Though they live apart, they are not entirely isolated; some Ursians serve as shamans, healers, or even advisors to other races. They respect the land and its mysteries, viewing the Gloom with a reverent fear rather than outright loathing. However, Ursians are deeply suspicious of outsiders, particularly Encephalons, whom they view as careless in their pursuit of power.

Gloomreavers

Gloomreavers are any living creatures—whether human, animal, or other—corrupted by prolonged exposure to the Rust-Hued Gloom. Twisted and grotesque, they are shadows of their former selves, their bodies and minds distorted by the Gloom’s whispers. Gloomreavers are relentless, unpredictable, and often driven mad by the agony of their transformation, making them the most pervasive danger to those who brave Pyresh’s desolate landscapes. Travelers frequently encounter these creatures while on the road, as they roam the wilderness in packs or stalk in solitude, embodying the Gloom’s ever-present threat.



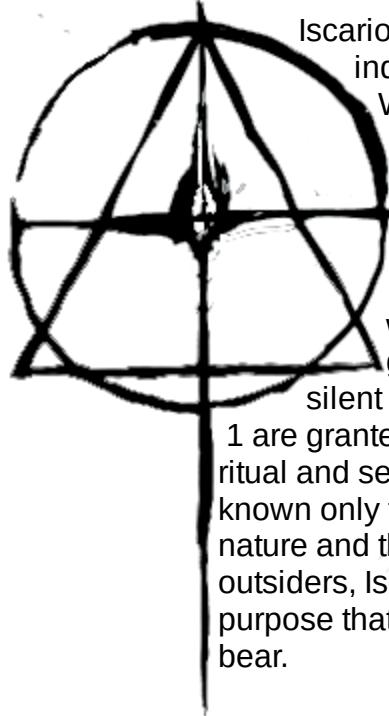
While most Gloomreavers are beyond redemption, some retain brief flashes of their original selves, revealing fragmented memories or critical information before lapsing back into madness. Notably, certain Gloomreavers—particularly those still resembling their former human state—are capable of basic speech and demonstrate a chilling ability to adapt. These humanoid Gloomreavers have been observed using rudimentary tools, setting crude traps, and crafting alarm systems to protect their territory. They serve as a symptom of the greater issue that is the Rust-Hued Gloom, an insidious corruption that slowly devours all life in Pyresh. Encountering them is a grim reminder of the inevitable fate awaiting those who linger too long within the Gloom’s reach, a fate where sanity, identity, and humanity are slowly stripped away.

(More information on Gloomreavers and their role in the game can be viewed in the next section, labeled **Combatants**.)

Factions of Pyresh

Three primary factions hold sway over Pyresh’s fractured populace, each embodying distinct philosophies, ambitions, and forms of influence. These factions—*Iscariot Axíōma*, *The Exilarchy of Perfected Effigies*, and *The Ash Road Trade Union*—each have their own vision for Pyresh’s future, from salvation through order and preservation of arcane knowledge, to ruthless control over dwindling resources. Though they occasionally cooperate when faced with shared threats, their ideologies are often fundamentally opposed, resulting in tense standoffs, strategic betrayals, and uneasy alliances that are as likely to disintegrate as they are to hold. Their clashing objectives set the tone for power struggles across Pyresh, and even in times of peace, there is an undercurrent of competition, mistrust, and treachery as each faction fights for dominance in a land slipping further into darkness.

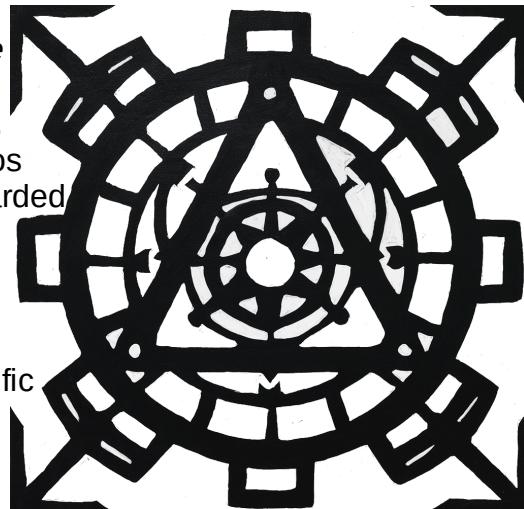
Iscariot Axíōma



Iscariot Axíōma operates as a utilitarian order, akin to an ancient inquisition, but with an ambiguous morality that reflects the eerie Whispers and twisted Gloom they battle. Their mission is less about salvation and more about forestalling Pyresh's inevitable decay, preserving what remains just long enough that future generations might succeed where they have failed. The order's structure lacks a rigid hierarchy, as seniority is instead determined by a Gloomstalker's Rank within their Penumbral Path—a progression marked by grueling trials, the mastery of eldritch knowledge, and the silent weight of the Whisper. Only those who achieve the rare Rank 1 are granted the privilege of inducting new members, a task steeped in ritual and secrecy. Those inducted are chosen by mysterious criteria known only to the highest ranks, sparking rumors about the order's true nature and the heavy, hidden costs that come with bearing its mantle. To outsiders, Iscariot Axíōma is a necessary evil; to its members, it is a purpose that requires sacrifice, a duty only the damned would willingly bear.

The Exilarchy of Perfected Effigies

The Exilarchy preserves what remains of Pyresh's written knowledge within *The Immaculate Grimoire of Perfect Enlightenment*, a massive, heavily fortified library and vault within Ironholt, the capital. Here, ancient texts, tomes, and forbidden Mementos lie in dim-lit halls, guarded by mechanisms and warded spells, some of which are relics from lost civilizations. Members of the Exilarchy, especially the Encephalons who dominate its ranks, study these artifacts and manuscripts with near-fanatical dedication, pushing the limits of arcane and scientific understanding in ways that often lead to madness or irreversible corruption. Known for their mastery of Whisperweaving—a forbidden art that manipulates the Gloom itself—they enforce stringent rules on who may wield this power, with unauthorized practice met with swift and brutal reprisal. The Exilarchy's obsession with ancient technologies and their reluctance to share knowledge with others breeds intense suspicion. Many fear that their pursuit of "perfect enlightenment" might awaken forces beyond control, while others whisper that they are actively seeking a way to harness the Gloom, possibly risking the entire world for the sake of their experiments.



The Ash Road Trade Union



The Ash Road Trade Union holds Pyresh in a merciless grip, controlling nearly all remaining resources in a world ravaged by scarcity. The Union, named as a dark nod to the ancient trade routes, claims to bring stability by coordinating trade across dangerous territories, but its actions often suggest otherwise. Operating as an expansive web of mercenaries, scavengers, and traders, the Union's enforcers—often Humans and Ursian mercenaries—operate with ruthless efficiency, unafraid to employ extortion, theft, or even assassination to maintain their monopoly. Union caravans are both a lifeline and a curse: they provide essential supplies like food, weapons, and medicinal herbs, but only at exorbitant prices or under manipulative contracts that bind entire communities to the Union's will. The Union's iron rule has transformed commerce into a game of survival, where those without wealth or power are forced into indentured servitude or worse. While they shun the arcane pursuits of the Exilarchy and the Gloomstalker's dark quests, the Union wields an equally oppressive influence, its faceless leaders controlling life and death across Pyresh from behind a complex, inaccessible hierarchy. To those who depend on them, the Union is both savior and oppressor, a necessary evil in a world where survival has become a transaction few can afford.

Tensions and Dynamics Among Factions

The three factions exist in an uneasy balance, each vying for influence while keeping a wary eye on one another:

- **Iscariot Axíōma** and the **Exilarchy of Perfected Effigies** share a grudging respect due to their mutual interest in preserving Pyresh's knowledge. However, the Exilarchy views the Axíōma's secretive traditions and acceptance of Whisperweaving with distrust, particularly when Axíōma members practice without Exilarchy oversight. This underlying tension can lead to power struggles, with the Exilarchy occasionally launching investigations into Axíōma operations.
- **The Ash Road Trade Union** provides resources and wealth that both the Axíōma and Exilarchy depend on, yet they maintain an arms-length relationship with each. To the Union, neither knowledge nor mysticism is worth the risk of Gloom corruption, and they rarely participate in the others' rituals or battles for relics. However, their control of Pyresh's economy gives them leverage over both factions, sometimes leading to clashes when the Union's policies disrupt the Exilarchy's or Axíōma's pursuits.
- **The Gloomreaver Threat** unites these factions, albeit reluctantly. Despite their differences, all three factions recognize the danger posed by Gloomreavers. Each faction handles Gloomreavers differently—Axíōma combats them directly, the Exilarchy experiments on them, and the Ash Road Trade Union avoids them entirely. During times of increased Gloomreaver activity, temporary alliances often form, though these partnerships are fragile and typically dissolve as soon as the immediate threat is contained.

Combatants



In *The Silent Road*, **Combatants** serve as the main sources of conflict in combat encounters, embodying the hostility and corruption of Pyresh. Ranked in difficulty from **Rank 7** (horde-type enemies) to **Rank 1** (boss-level threats), Combatants vary in abilities, Wound Limits, and Art proficiency. This ranking system allows Augurs to craft encounters that scale in complexity, challenge, and narrative depth, immersing players in Pyresh's dangerous landscape.

Combatant Arts and the Standard Array

Combatants use the same five **Arts** as players—**Warfare**, **Adaptability**, **Observation**, **Social**, and **Reverence**. This system keeps encounters intuitive, with familiar mechanics while allowing each Rank to vary in difficulty through tailored stats.

- **Standard Array for Rank 7 Combatants:** Rank 7 Combatants follow a base array: **4, 5, 5, 5, 5**. Augurs may choose to apply these points to any Art they wish.
- **Art Scaling by Rank:** From Rank 7 to Rank 1, Augurs may increase two chosen Arts per Rank, up to a maximum of Rank 1 in any Art, allowing them to enhance specific stats based on the Combatant's purpose.

Wound Limit

Wound Limits represent the maximum amount of damage a Combatant can endure before being defeated. For **Rank 7 Combatants**, this limit is always set to **1 Wound**, reflecting their role as weaker, horde-like enemies. These creatures often lack durability but pose a significant threat when encountered in large numbers or under the command of a more powerful Combatant. This keeps them challenging without overwhelming players individually, balancing their frailty with potential numbers and tactical use.

For higher-ranked Combatants, Wound Limits become more flexible, allowing Augurs to design enemies with varying durability based on their intended role and threat level. However, to maintain balance and prevent encounters from becoming too punitive, **no Combatant should exceed a Wound Limit of 50**. This cap ensures that even the most powerful foes remain challenging without being invincible, encouraging strategic play rather than prolonged battles of attrition.

- **Balancing Health with Damage Output:** Higher-ranking Combatants do not need excessive Wound Limits to pose a serious threat. Instead, their challenge should come from potent abilities and strategic defenses. For instance, a Rank 3 Combatant might have a moderate Wound Limit but be capable of dealing substantial damage per attack, forcing players to prioritize avoiding hits over outlasting the enemy. Conversely, a Combatant with higher Wounds might inflict lighter damage but apply lasting effects, such as Afflictions, that test players' resilience.
- **Strategic Scaling of Wound Limits:** By tailoring each Combatant's Wound Limit to fit its damage output, the Augur can create encounters that require players to use a mix of tactical positioning, resource management, and teamwork. A Rank 2 or Rank 1 "boss" might have a high Wound Limit combined with abilities that apply status effects or weaken players over time, creating a unique challenge that demands both preparation and adaptability from the party.

Abilities, Basic Attacks and Scaling

Combatants' **abilities** and **basic attacks** define their roles in encounters, allowing each Rank to introduce unique challenges that escalate in complexity and threat as players advance. This scaling system, based on Rank, determines both the **number** and **potency** of abilities, giving higher-ranked Combatants the tools to control the battlefield and force players into strategic decision-making. Each element—from ability count and uses to scaling damage—ensures that Combatants present an escalating threat aligned with their Rank.

Ability Count by Rank

The number of abilities increases with each Rank, making higher-ranked Combatants far more versatile and dangerous.

- **Rank 6 Combatants** possess **2 abilities**, offering a balanced introduction to abilities—typically a single damage ability alongside one utility-based ability, allowing Rank 6 Combatants to present a controlled threat without overwhelming players.
 - **Ranks 5 to 1** see an increase of **1 additional ability per Rank**, so by Rank 1, Combatants may have up to **7 abilities**. This diversity allows Rank 1 Combatants to wield a mix of damaging, utility, and status-inflicting abilities that force players to adapt on the fly.
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Ability Uses by Rank

Each Rank also dictates the **number of uses** available for each ability:

- **Ranks 6 and 5**: Each ability may be used **once** per encounter, maintaining a moderate threat level.
 - **Ranks 4 and 3**: Abilities may be used **twice** per encounter, increasing potential damage output and tactical variety.
 - **Ranks 2 and 1**: Abilities have **three uses** per encounter, giving these Combatants the capacity to sustain prolonged attacks, use status effects repeatedly, or employ area-based abilities.
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Basic Attacks

Every Combatant may perform a **Basic Attack** in place of an ability, mirroring players' use of basic attacks and allowing for consistency in combat mechanics.

- **Primary Art**: Basic attacks vary by each Combatant's nature, generally using **Warfare**, **Adaptability**, or **Reverence** as their primary Art, reflecting the Combatant's core strengths.
- **Rank 7 Combatants**: These low-level foes typically inflict only **1 Wound per Basic Attack** and lack abilities, making them more manageable individually. However, they remain dangerous when encountered in groups, particularly in swarms.
- **Scaling Damage**: For Combatants of **Rank 6 and above**, the Augur may assign the number of Wounds a Basic Attack inflicts, with damage scaling to a maximum of **7 Wounds** per Basic Attack at Rank 1. This allows higher-ranked Combatants to threaten players directly while reserving abilities for more complex or status-inflicting effects.
- **Dual Basic Attacks**: Starting at **Rank 3**, Combatants may use **two Basic Attacks per turn** instead of one, enhancing their threat and keeping players on the defensive.

Ability Scaling and Effects

As Combatants progress in Rank, their abilities not only increase in number but also in **potency and tactical depth**. Higher ranks introduce varied effects that shape the encounter's flow, challenging players to adapt their approach.

- **Rank 6 Abilities:** These Combatants generally feature one straightforward damage ability and one utility-based ability. Utility abilities may influence positioning, apply mild debuffs, or affect the environment, creating obstacles that add complexity without overwhelming players.
 - **Ranks 5 to 1:** As Ranks increase, abilities become more diverse and impactful. Abilities for higher-ranked Combatants can directly inflict **Afflictions or Ailments**, adding strategic depth by imposing debuffs that hinder players' abilities or force them into defensive maneuvers.
 - **Afflictions** could temporarily reduce a player's Arts, impair movement, or cause ongoing effects like Wound penalties.
 - **Ailments** may affect players psychologically or physically, applying effects such as paranoia, hallucinations, or fatigue, altering decision-making and increasing encounter tension.
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Afflictions and Ailments

Combatants in *The Silent Road* can inflict **Afflictions** and **Ailments** on players, reflecting the debilitating effects of battling the Gloom's horrors. These conditions are impactful yet simple, reserved for higher-ranked Combatants with abilities designed to challenge players' endurance and resilience.

- **Afflictions:** These severe, often long-lasting conditions impact a player's Arts directly and require focused recovery efforts. Higher-ranked Combatants frequently use Afflictions to weaken players.
 - **Fractured Limb:** Reduces mobility and hinders fighting ability. (*Lowers Warfare by 1 Rank until cured.*)
 - **Severe Head Trauma:** Impairs cognitive functions, affecting decision-making and social interactions. (*Lowers Social by 1 Rank until cured.*)
- **Ailments:** These subtle, insidious conditions slowly deteriorate the player's physical or mental state, often affecting roleplay and exploration.
 - **Mind Rot:** A psychological ailment that erodes sanity, leading to paranoia and hallucinations. (*The Augur may provide false information or illusions.*)
 - **Gloom Fever:** A debilitating illness from prolonged Gloom exposure, weakening body and mind over time. (*The player's skin rusts, and they can barely speak or act without fainting.*)

Note: Afflictions and Ailments add narrative depth to encounters, reflecting the grim toll of survival in Pyresh. Augurs should use these sparingly but effectively, especially in encounters with higher-ranked foes.

Combatant Ranks and Encounter Structure

Combatants are ranked from **Rank 7** (weakest) to **Rank 1** (boss-level threats). This ranking provides Augurs with flexible scaling options and aids in balancing encounter difficulty.

1. **Rank 7:** These horde-type creatures are dangerous primarily in numbers. Individually, they can inflict only 1 Wound per attack and typically lack abilities, though they may have high resilience. When led by a stronger Combatant, they create tactical distractions.
 2. **Rank 6 to 5:** Standard combatants with straightforward abilities, these creatures provide an introductory challenge while allowing players to learn combat strategies. Abilities may include minor damage or movement-based skills.
 3. **Ranks 4 to 3:** Mid-tier Combatants with multi-use abilities and increasing complexity. They may serve as leaders in encounters with mixed ranks, adding strategic layers as they direct Rank 7 hordes or other minions.
 4. **Rank 2 to 1:** Boss-level Combatants that are designed to be narrative milestones, with a focus on preparation and strategy. Rank 1 foes often have unique environmental interactions or weaknesses, encouraging players to engage creatively. These Combatants feature abilities that incorporate Afflictions and Ailments, posing serious threats that require teamwork and resource management.
-

Customizing Combatants for Region and Story

Combatants are more than obstacles; they are thematic extensions of Pyresh's twisted regions. Augurs should adapt Combatants to reflect the environmental conditions and narrative elements of each area.

1. **Regional Mutations:** Combatants from Gloom-heavy zones may have mutations, such as extra limbs, spikes, or camouflage that grants them unique resistances or makes them harder to detect.
 2. **Story-Specific Abilities:** Combatants tied to story arcs may possess abilities that reflect their lore or purpose. For example, creatures in shadowed forests might have stealth-based attacks, while desert-dwelling Combatants could drain water or induce hallucinations.
 3. **Environmental Synergy:** Higher-ranked Combatants, particularly Rank 1, should incorporate their environment into combat. Augurs may design encounters with terrain-based hazards, obstacles, or tactical elements to amplify the challenge.
-

Rewards and Loot

Defeating Combatants yields rewards that vary by Rank, granting players incentives for enduring the dangers of Pyresh. Rewards scale according to difficulty, with higher-ranked foes providing rarer, more valuable loot.

1. **Wealth:** The most common reward, Wealth represents valuables scavenged from defeated foes, such as materials or currency.
 2. **Tools:** Some Combatants may carry or drop functional items that players can repurpose as tools in future encounters or challenges.
 3. **Mementos:** Rare and valuable artifacts typically found on intelligent or high-ranking Combatants. Mementos hold historical or mystical significance, adding layers to the lore and providing unique benefits.
-

Augur Guidelines for Crafting Combatants

1. **Scaling Arts for Role:** Choose which two Arts to increase with each Rank, adapting them to reflect the Combatant's primary threat. For example, high Warfare implies a physically aggressive creature, while high Reverence might suggest supernatural abilities.
2. **Thematic Abilities:** Ensure abilities align with the Combatant's lore and regional context. For instance, a Gloomreaver might invoke fear through Reverence, while a mountain-dwelling creature might use Adaptability to knock players off balance on rocky terrain.
3. **Mixing Ranks for Depth:** In complex encounters, mix Rank 7 minions with higher-ranked leaders for a layered challenge. For example, a Rank 4 leader might command a group of Rank 7 creatures, distracting players and enhancing the encounter's strategic complexity.
4. **Affliction and Ailment Use:** Reserve Afflictions and Ailments for higher-ranked Combatants, using them to build narrative-driven tension and require strategic counterplay. Avoid overusing these effects to maintain a fair and balanced combat experience.
5. **Environmental Interaction:** For high-ranking Combatants, use the environment to emphasize their abilities or strengths. Consider terrain-based advantages or obstacles that players must navigate, enhancing immersion and strategic depth.

By following these guidelines, Augurs can craft Combatants that challenge players, deepen immersion, and enhance the dark atmosphere of *The Silent Road*. Each encounter becomes a significant part of the characters' journey, testing their resolve and adaptability in the face of Pyresh's relentless hostility.

Travel



In the bleak land of Pyresh, travel is measured in **Distance Units (DUs)**, each DU representing a full day's journey. This system allows Augurs and players to estimate travel time and manage resources while navigating the dangers of varying terrain, Gloom influence, and the ever-present threat of exhaustion.

Distance Units (DUs) and Travel Time

- **1 DU** is approximately **8 hours** of travel time for an average party traveling on foot under moderate conditions.
- **Flexible Measurement:** Each DU can represent different distances depending on the terrain, environmental hazards, and influence of the Gloom, giving Augurs the flexibility to adjust DUs for different areas of Pyresh.

Modifiers to Travel Time per DU

1. **Terrain and Environment:** Each type of terrain modifies Travel Time:
 - **Easy Terrain (Plains, Roads):** 8 hours per DU.
 - **Difficult Terrain (Forests, Hills):** 10 hours per DU as the party navigates obstacles.
 - **Hostile Terrain (Deserts, Mountains, Swamps):** 12 hours per DU due to extreme obstacles.
 - **Gloom Zones:** Areas influenced by the Gloom are highly unpredictable, adding up to **4 extra hours per DU** due to necessary detours and special Navigation checks.
2. **Conviction and Travel Time Modifiers:**
 - **High Conviction (+3 Legendary):** When the party's Conviction reaches +3, **overall Travel Time for the journey is halved**, representing resilience and focus.
 - **Low Conviction (-3 Shattered):** At -3 Conviction, **Travel Time doubles**, reflecting the toll of despair and fatigue on each step.
3. **Travel Advantages:** Travel Advantages provide increased efficiency and endurance for travel. Higher-ranked Advantages prevent exhaustion from setting in as quickly:
 - **Rank 5:** Adds **2 hours** to the time the party can travel before exhaustion.
 - **Rank 4:** Adds **4 hours** to the pre-exhaustion travel time.
 - **Rank 3:** Adds **6 hours** to the pre-exhaustion travel time, and so on.

Using Distance Units in Gameplay

1. **Set Distance Units (DUs):** The Augur determines the number of DUs between locations, considering additional hazards along the route.
2. **Apply Terrain Modifiers:** Adjust Travel Time per DU based on the type of terrain or region being traveled.
3. **Add Conviction and Travel Advantages:** Apply the Conviction modifier first (e.g., halving Travel Time), then apply the Transport modifier to the remaining time.
4. **Narrative Adjustments:** The Augur may introduce narrative-driven events—such as faction conflicts, environmental hazards, or Gloom effects—to increase or decrease Travel Time, adding tension or relief.

Example: A party embarks on a 4 DU journey through hills (10 hours per DU), with +3 Conviction and a Rank 5 Travel Advantage:

- **Base Travel Time:** 4 DUs x 10 hours = 40 hours.
 - **High Conviction Modifier:** Halves Travel Time to 20 hours.
 - **Rank 5 Travel Advantage:** Extends travel time before exhaustion by an additional 2 hours.
-

Travel Risk and Encounter Mechanics

Travel Risk is a measure of danger while traveling in Pyresh. Base Travel Risk varies by terrain, increased by any Wealth or Transport Advantages the party has.

1. **Base Travel Risk by Terrain:**
 - **Easy Terrain:** 15% Travel Risk.
 - **Difficult Terrain:** 35% Travel Risk.
 - **Hostile Terrain:** 60% Travel Risk.
2. **Risk Modifiers:**
 - **Transport Advantages:** Rank 1 Transport increases Travel Risk by up to 50%, with lower ranks adding less risk.
 - **Wealth:** Carrying Wealth increases Travel Risk as follows:
 - +10% at 100 Wealth
 - +25% at 500 Wealth
 - +50% at 1,000 Wealth
3. **Determining Encounters:**
 - **Rolling for Encounters:** At the start of each DU, the Augur rolls **1d100**. If the roll is less than or equal to the Travel Risk, an encounter or Conflict occurs.
 - **Non-Conflict Scenes:** When an encounter is rolled, the Augur may introduce exploration or discovery Scenes instead of Conflicts, rewarding players for preparation and tactics with unique resources or side stories.

Camping and Resting Mechanics

Camping allows Gloomstalkers to recover from travel and avoid exhaustion but increases the chance of conflicts depending on Travel Risk and campsite choice.

1. Camping and Conflict Risk:

- Camping after a high-risk journey increases the likelihood of a Conflict at night. For instance, if Travel Risk exceeds 50%, there's a significant chance of attracting attention.
- **Campsite Choices:** Choosing a well-defended or hidden campsite may reduce the chance of Conflict, allowing for a more restful recovery.

2. Foraging During Camping:

- **Foraging:** Players can forage while camping by making Adaptability checks to gather food or water. Resources vary by terrain, with difficult terrains yielding less.
 - **Provision Spoilage:** Spoilage is more likely in hot or humid conditions. If provisions spoil, the party must replace them to avoid exhaustion effects.
-

Exhaustion and Travel Limits

Traveling without adequate rest leads to exhaustion, impairing the party's performance and making the journey riskier.

1. Base Travel Limits:

- **Standard Travel:** Without exhaustion, the party can travel for **8 hours (1 DU)**, assuming standard rest intervals.
- **Extended Travel:** Traveling for **16 hours (2 DUs)** in a day leads to exhaustion penalties if no rest follows.

2. Exhaustion Effects:

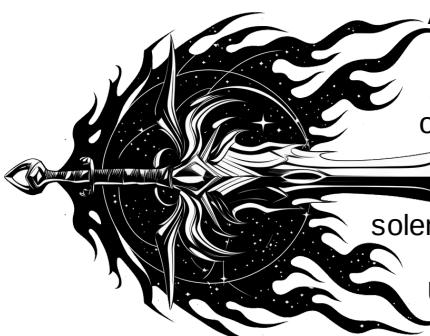
- **Mild Exhaustion (16+ hours without rest):** Impose a -1 penalty to Adaptability and Observation rolls.
- **Severe Exhaustion (24+ hours):** Impose a -2 penalty to all rolls and temporarily reduce Conviction by 1 level.
- **Critical Exhaustion (32+ hours):** Conviction drops to -3, doubling Travel Time until the party fully rests. At this level, the risk of a Conflict is 100% if they camp without a watch.

3. Travel Advantage Extensions:

Travel Advantages increase the time before exhaustion sets in, based on their rank:

- **Rank 5 Advantage:** Adds **2 hours** to the standard travel limit.
 - **Rank 4 Advantage:** Adds **4 hours** to the travel limit, allowing for longer periods before rest is required, and so on.
-

Equipment



Armaments

Every Gloomstalker's journey begins with the solemn bestowal of their unique **Armament**—a powerful symbol of their authority and ability to combat the Rust-Hued Gloom.

This Armament represents both the Gloomstalker's rite of passage and their first solemn burden, as well as a core part of their mystic power.

Upon completing their occult training, Gloomstalkers venture into the depths of the Gloom for a solitary vigil. At the end of this harrowing journey, they emerge with their personalized Armament—an enigmatic creation forged by unknown forces and imbued with arcane sigils. While the exact process remains a mystery, Gloomstalkers are left with a deep sense of duty and connection to their new weapon.

During character creation, players have the opportunity to design their unique Armament, describing its origins, appearance, and how it's wielded. Your Armament could be anything from a dagger wreathed in black flames that reflect the cosmos to a gnarled staff pulled from the depths of the Gloom itself.

Every Armament starts with a Weapon Wound Value of 1, and as Gloomstalkers increase in Rank, their Armament's power grows in tandem with their Penumbral Path. Additionally, when forming your Armament, you choose between a Melee or Ranged weapon, which influences both your combat style and grants access to a special ability.

Examples of these abilities include:

- A **Melee Armament** with the **Parry** ability, which allows you to shrug off 1 Wound of damage per day, with increased protection as you rank up.
- A **Ranged Armament** with **Quick Shot**, enabling you to attack twice in one Sequence once per day, with additional uses as you progress.

These abilities, along with others, are detailed further in the "Choosing Your Armament" section of Chapter 2.

Shrouds

Just as every Gloomstalker is bound to their unique Armament, they are also adorned with a **Shroud**—clothing that serves both a narrative and functional role. While Shrouds reflect your Gloomstalker's aesthetic and personal style, they also offer passive abilities that provide tangible benefits on their journey through Pyresh.

Each Shroud is imbued with a special power, much like the Armament, and can belong to one of three distinct categories: **Nimble**, **Balanced**, or **Bulky**. These categories influence your playstyle, providing bonuses that complement your chosen abilities and combat strategy.

During character creation, you can customize your Shroud's appearance, choosing whether it takes the form of sleek robes, heavy armor, or something entirely unique. Along with the aesthetic, you'll also select a Shroud ability that matches your chosen category. Some examples are listed on the next page to help you get an idea of the Shroud's capabilities.



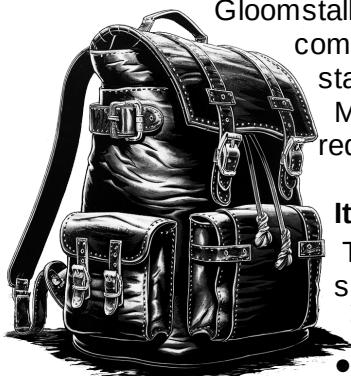
Shroud Examples:

- A **Nimble Shroud** with the **Light-Stepper** ability grants an additional Action Dice that can be used on any Adaptability Roll once per day, with more uses unlocked as you rank up.
- A **Balanced Shroud** with the **Extra Pockets** ability increases your Item Slots by 2, with an additional slot gained at each new Rank.
- A **Bulky Shroud** imbued with **Astralite Lining** increases your Wound Threshold by 2, with an additional 1 gained at each Rank.

Your Shroud, much like your Armament, evolves as your Gloomstalker grows in power, deepening your connection to both the material and mystical realms.

These abilities are explained further in the "Choosing Your Shroud" section of Chapter 2.

Travel Packs



Gloomstalkers often travel light, carrying only what's essential for survival and completing their objectives. Each Gloomstalker begins their journey with a standard travel bag designed to hold critical supplies like Provisions, Mementos, and Wealth. However, these bags have limited space, requiring players to carefully manage their inventory.

Item Slots

- To simplify inventory management, travel bags operate using a slot-based system that represents the available space. Each item occupies a certain number of slots based on its size and weight:
 - **Provisions:** 1 Provision occupies 1 slot.
- **Mementos:** Depending on their size, Mementos take up 1-3 slots. Small, handheld Mementos might use only 1 slot, while larger items can take more space.
- **Wealth:** Coins, gems, and smaller valuables are compact. 1 slot can typically hold 50 units of Wealth, such as 50 coins with a Wealth Value of 1, or 2 gemstones with a combined value of 50.

The **standard travel bag** contains 10 slots. Once these slots are full, the Gloomstalker has reached their maximum carry capacity. Attempting to carry more leads to **Encumbrance**, resulting in penalties like reduced movement, as detailed in the Travel section starting on page 33.

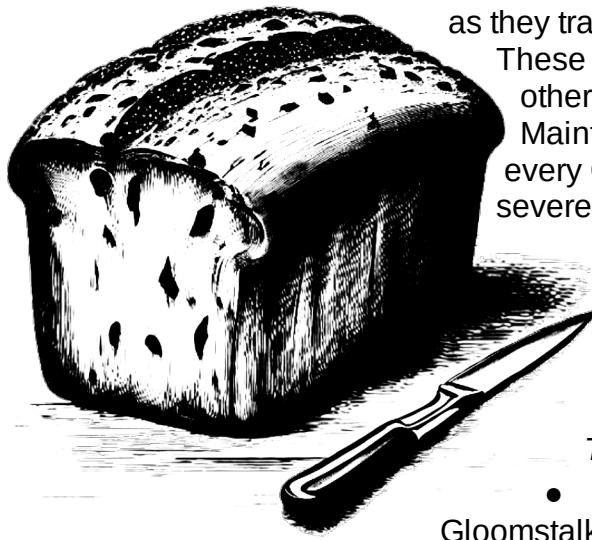
Increasing Carry Capacity

Gloomstalkers can expand their carry capacity through various means:

- **Crafted Bags:** Upgraded or well-crafted bags can add extra slots, allowing a Gloomstalker to carry more without penalties. For example, a reinforced bag might increase capacity from 10 to 15 or even 20 slots.
- **Pack Animals:** Pack animals such as horses or mules significantly increase carrying capacity. A single pack animal can provide an additional 50-60 slots, enabling the party to undertake longer journeys with more supplies.
- **Abilities:** Certain abilities from a Gloomstalker's Penumbrial Path or Shroud can offer extra item slots. For instance, the **Extra Pockets** ability from a Balanced Shroud grants additional slots, while a Gloomstalker following the **Path of the Sanguine Boot** may unlock the **Pack Rat** ability, which adds 5 extra slots without incurring penalties.

This slot-based system encourages strategic planning, ensuring that each Gloomstalker travels efficiently, carrying only what's needed to complete their mission.

Provisions



Provisions are essential supplies that sustain Gloomstalkers as they travel along the treacherous **Silent Road**.

These resources represent the food, water, and other necessities needed for survival.

Maintaining adequate provisions is critical for every Gloomstalker, as running out can have severe consequences during expeditions.

Acquiring Provisions

Before setting out on any journey, securing sufficient provisions is a top priority for every Gloomstalker.

There are several ways to gather provisions:

- **Purchasing from Vendors:** In settlements,

Gloomstalkers can buy provisions from markets, shops, or local traders. Prices may vary depending on the region, and higher-quality provisions with added benefits may be available for a premium.

- **Hunting or Foraging:** When camping in the wilderness, players can use their Adaptability to hunt wildlife or gather edible plants. These efforts can help replenish their supplies, though success is not guaranteed.
- **Raiding Stockpiles:** Riskier but more rewarding, raiding enemy camps or Gloomreaver caches can yield a significant number of provisions if successful.
- **Loot and Quest Rewards:** Provisions may also be found as loot during exploration or rewarded for completing certain objectives.

Carrying Provisions

Each Gloomstalker has a personal carry capacity, limiting the amount of provisions they can carry at any given time. On average, a Gloomstalker can carry up to **10 provisions** without penalty. This reflects roughly **10 days' worth of food and water**, weighing around **15-20 pounds**. Gloomstalkers are trained to travel light and efficiently, always packing just enough to sustain them while ensuring their mobility is unhindered. This lightweight approach is essential to completing their Objectives swiftly and effectively, especially when speed and stealth are crucial.

Weight and Space Considerations

In addition to the weight of provisions, the space they take up must be considered. A typical provision for one day might include dried food, jerky, and a water skin, which could easily fill a small satchel or pack. Carrying **10 provisions** would realistically take up a **medium-sized backpack's worth of space**, meaning that Gloomstalkers must often sacrifice other equipment or loot space if they intend to bring enough food for extended journeys.

Carrying more than **10 provisions** not only increases weight but also takes up valuable room in their packs. As a result, Gloomstalkers must carefully balance provisions with other gear like weapons, tools, and survival equipment. Overpacking for food can leave little room for crucial supplies like torches, climbing gear, or potions.

Expendng Provisions

Every Gloomstalker in the party must expend **1 Provision per day** of travel or activity. The length of a day is flexible and depends on the narrative flow, as determined by the Augur. This consumption represents the basic sustenance required to keep a Gloomstalker functioning at full strength during their travels through the harsh environments of Pyresh.

- **Daily Consumption:** Each Gloomstalker must consume 1 Provision per day, regardless of the type of activity or scene they are involved in. This rule applies whether the characters are fighting enemies, traveling, or simply resting.
- **High-Quality Provisions:** In larger towns or cities, Gloomstalkers may come across higher-quality provisions. These more expensive rations offer additional benefits, such as restoring Conviction, healing minor wounds, or granting temporary bonuses to certain skills.

Careful rationing and tracking of provisions are crucial, especially during extended journeys where resupply may not be possible. Running out of provisions exposes Gloomstalkers to significant dangers.

The Consequences of Starvation

If a Gloomstalker's provisions are fully depleted, they will begin to suffer the effects of **starvation**. This condition imposes heavy penalties that make survival much more difficult.

- **Time Without Provisions:** Once out of provisions, a Gloomstalker can only survive for a number of days equal to their **Wound Threshold** before they begin to collapse from hunger. After this period, they sustain 1 Wound per additional day without food.
- **Combat Impairments:** Starving Gloomstalkers become desperate and reckless, losing the ability to disengage from combat voluntarily. In this state, their tactical thinking is impaired, making them more vulnerable to further injury and mistakes.
- **Reduced Performance:** Starvation reduces overall effectiveness in both physical and mental tasks, including combat, social interactions, and problem-solving. This affects the party's ability to respond to challenges and navigate through difficult encounters.

Provision Spoilage

While Gloomstalkers often carry provisions designed to last, certain items may spoil over time, particularly in harsh environments. Spoilage introduces an additional element of resource management, encouraging players to consider both their inventory and the specific conditions they face.

Spoilage Rules:

1. **Perishable Provisions:** Provisions that include fresh food or delicate supplies spoil after 3 days unless kept in a cool, dry environment. When spoiled, these items are no longer consumable and must be discarded.
2. **Environmental Conditions:** Extreme environments accelerate spoilage:
 - **Hot or Humid Environments:** Perishable provisions spoil in 1 day.
 - **Cold Environments:** Perishable provisions spoil in 5 days.
3. **Preservation Techniques:** Players may encounter preservation methods like salt curing, smoking, or magical preservation to extend the life of their provisions:
 - **Preserved Food:** Items treated with preservation methods or magic last indefinitely.
4. **Spoilage Check:** The Augur may ask players to check provisions when they camp in extreme conditions, ensuring they keep track of spoilage and discard inedible supplies.

These rules encourage players to prioritize preserved provisions on long journeys and strategize their packing, especially when traveling through challenging environments.

Wounding

Wounds serve as a measure of the physical damage dealt both to your enemies and your Gloomstalker in combat situations, reflecting the impact of strikes and the toll of high-risk encounters.

Inflicting Wounds

In combat, landing successful hits allows you to inflict wounds upon your foes, the number of which is dependent on the weapon you are wielding, and the level of success you achieved on the Action Dice.

- Deal **normal** Weapon Wound Value on a **Regular Success**.
- Deal Weapon Wound Value **+1** on a **Resounding Success**.



Note: Some Penumbral Path Abilities may allow inflicting additional Wounds.

Wound Limits & the Coup De' Grace

Every enemy and NPC has a Wound Limit, representing their physical endurance and how many wounds they can take before becoming vulnerable. As you land hits and inflict wounds, you push the target closer to their Wound Limit. Once they reach this limit, a **Coup De Grace Action** is triggered.

During a Coup De Grace, you have narrative freedom to describe how you finish off the defenseless target or, if you choose, spare them to show mercy. Either option concludes the target's role in the combat, removing them as a threat.

Receiving Wounds

Whenever your Gloomstalker sustains Wounds, these injuries are marked on your character sheet. The number of Wounds your Gloomstalker may receive before reaching your **Critical Wound Threshold** is intricately tied to various different factors which you choose upon Character Creation. Firstly, every Penumbral Path a Gloomstalker may choose to traverse upon Character Creation determines the initial number of Wounds they can sustain before becoming Critical. This is then adjusted further by the following factors:

- **Penumbral Path Ranks and Abilities:** As a Gloomstalker traverses through the Ranks of their chosen Path, their bodies often grow more accustomed Wounding, increasing their overall wounding threshold. Additionally, some Penumbral Paths offer the ability to shrug off damage in more directly active ways as well.
- **Armament and Shroud:** Some passive, and active abilities granted by a Gloomstalker's Armament, or Shroud will allow the Gloomstaler who wields or wears them an increased Wound Threshold, or even the potential to shrug off some incoming damage.

Condition & Afflictions

Each Gloomstalker has a defined Critical Wound Threshold, which indicates the limit of their physical endurance. As wounds accumulate, a Gloomstalker's overall well-being deteriorates, represented by their Condition, which falls into four distinct tiers:

- **Unharmed:** No accumulated wounds.
- **Bruised:** Wounds tally between 1 and 1/3 of the Critical Wound Threshold.
- **Beaten:** Wounds accumulate between 1/3 and 2/3 of the Critical Wound Threshold.
- **Maimed:** Wounds accumulate from 2/3 up to the Critical Wound Threshold.

As a Gloomstalker takes damage, they progress through these Condition tiers, gaining Afflictions that represent the severity of their injuries. Upon advancing to a new Condition, the player gains Afflictions, which the Augur will assign based on the Wound Location and the nature of the injury. For instance, a blow to the Head at the Beaten tier may result in an Affliction such as blurred vision or disorientation.

The total number of Afflictions acquired per Condition tier is as follows:

- **Bruised:** +1 Affliction
- **Beaten:** +1 additional Affliction
- **Maimed:** +2 additional Afflictions

If a single hit causes a Gloomstalker to bypass multiple tiers, they gain an extra Affliction for each skipped tier. For example, a Gloomstalker going from Unharmed to Beaten from one hit would receive 3 Afflictions instead of 2. If they go from Unharmed to Maimed, they would receive 6 Afflictions. Effective management of Wounds and strategic retreat can thus be essential to avoid compounding debilitating Afflictions.

Wound Location

When a Gloomstalker receives a Wound, the Augur determines its location by rolling a **1d6** and referring to the chart below, or **choosing a location** when contextually appropriate. This Location influences the specific Affliction assigned, tailoring the injury to the body part affected:

- | | | |
|---------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Head | 3. Right Arm | 5. Right Leg |
| 2. Body | 4. Left Arm | 6. Left Leg |

For example, a Wound to the Leg may result in an Affliction affecting movement, while a Wound to the Head could impair perception or cognitive function. This system allows injuries to have a tangible and realistic impact on gameplay, as each Affliction reflects the area targeted by the opponent's attack.

Critical Wounds & Dying

When the accumulated Wounds reach a Gloomstalker's Critical Wound Threshold, they fall unconscious, triggering a Fight for Your Life Scene. In this pivotal moment, the player faces life-or-death choices to attempt survival. Success or failure in this Scene depends on the Gloomstalker's abilities, Conviction, and choices. While success allows the Gloomstalker to cling to life, failure can result in permanent consequences, including death.

Healing and Recovery

The road through Pyresh is fraught with danger, and even the most resilient Gloomstalker must manage their Wounds to survive. Various methods exist to restore health, ranging from short respites to powerful medicates and mystical services. Healing Wounds efficiently requires a combination of rest, supplies, and sometimes the aid of the rare and skilled Whisperweavers of Iscariot.

Resting and Wound Recovery

Rest is essential for wound recovery, and the following types of rest are available to Gloomstalkers:

- **Short Rest (~1 Hour)**
 - **Effect:** Heals 2 Wounds. May be taken once per day.
 - **Bonus Healing in Villages, Towns, or Cities:** If the Short Rest is taken in a more developed location, it heals an additional 2 Wounds, for a total of 4.
- **Long Rest (~8 Hours)**
 - **Effect:** Heals 4 Wounds. Can be taken once every 16 hours, starting from the last Long Rest's wake time.
 - **Bonus Healing in Villages, Towns, or Cities:** In more developed areas, the Long Rest heals an additional 4 Wounds, for a total of 8.
- **Full Rest (~1 Week)**
 - **Effect:** Fully restores all Wounds and increases the chance of healing Afflictions by 50%.
 - A Full Rest may only be taken once a month, beginning from the completion of the previous Full Rest.

Medicines (Consumable Healing Items)

Medicines are consumable items that can be purchased or discovered during a Gloomstalker's journey. Each offers varying levels of wound recovery, with higher-value items providing more potent healing effects.

- **Pauper's Succor**
 - **Average Value:** 10 Wealth
 - **Description:** A small pack of bitter pills, meant to be eaten with food.
 - **Effect:** Regenerates 1D4 Wounds gradually over the course of 1 hour.
- **Gloommonger's Tincture**
 - **Average Value:** 40 Wealth
 - **Description:** A small ampule of glowing liquid, akin to Astralite.
 - **Effect:** Consumed as an action, this tincture instantly heals 1D4+1 Wounds.
- **Reaper's Ransom**
 - **Average Value:** 60 Wealth
 - **Description:** A clear medicinal gel administered by syringe, requiring a safe and reasonably sterile environment.
 - **Effect:** Heals 2D4+2 Wounds instantly. Due to its potency, it may only be administered once every 12 hours to avoid overdose.
- **Corpse Water**
 - **Average Value:** 100 Wealth
 - **Description:** A vile, viscous syrup that tastes of ammonia, consumed in a full action.
 - **Effect:** Has a 70% chance to instantly heal 2D6+2 Wounds. If unsuccessful, the user vomits the liquid, negating any healing effects.

Whisperweavers & Doctors

- Certain **Anamists** of the *Exilarchy of Perfected Effigies* organization may provide Whisperweaving services to Gloomstalkers who have proven helpful to their cause.
- **Doctors** will offer their medicinal healing services at a cost which is directly proportional to the number of Wounds you wish to have healed. Costing 15 Wealth per Wound healed. (Ailments generally cost 50 Wealth to have removed).

Fighting for Your Life

During a Fight for Your Life Scene, all other actions are paused, focusing solely on the Gloomstalker at risk. Gloomstalkers, deeply connected to the Gloom, possess an uncanny resilience, rumored to be nearly immortal. This durability is represented by two options to attempt survival:

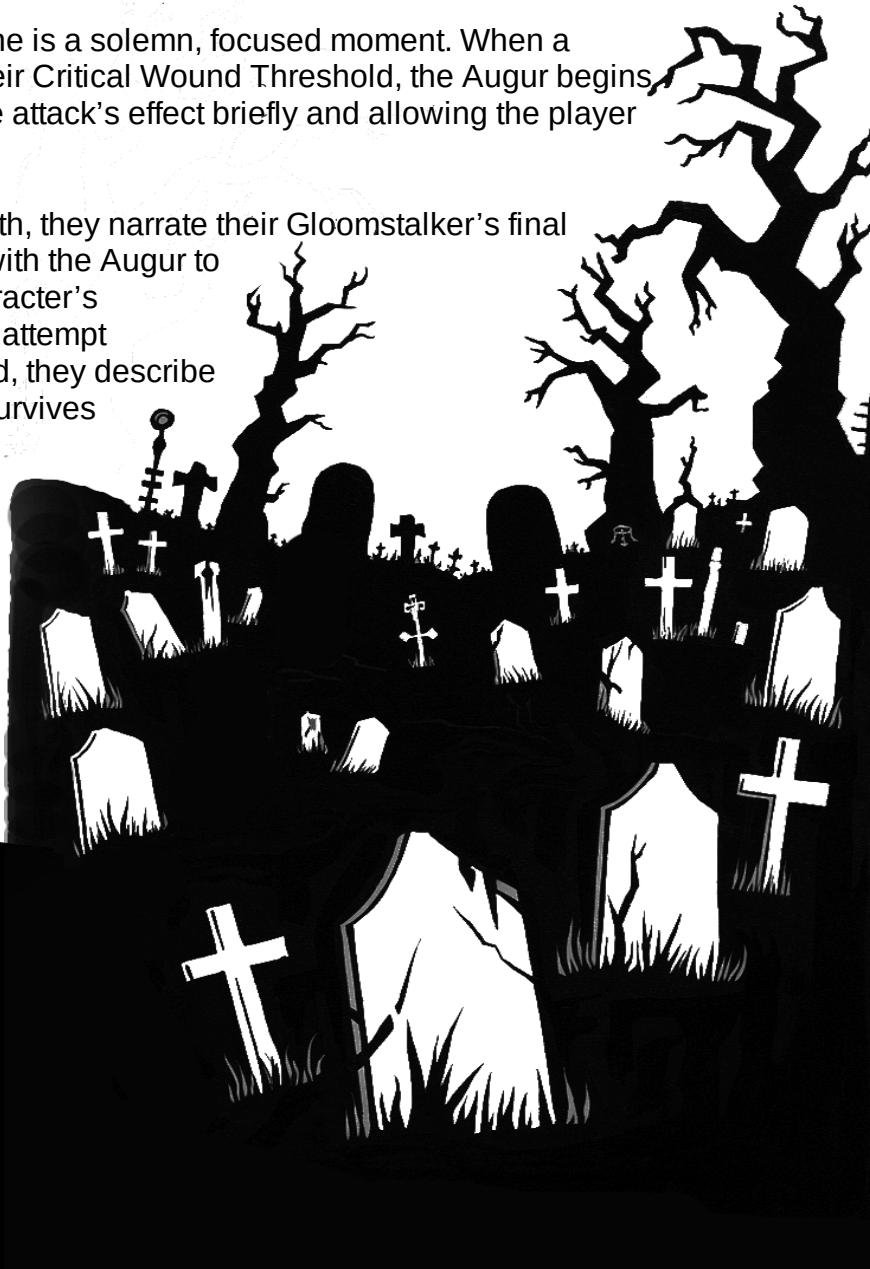
- **Bargaining:** The Gloomstalker may lose 1 Rank in their chosen Path to stave off death. This option can be used repeatedly, but with each additional use, the Rank loss increases by one. A Rank 1 Gloomstalker cannot bargain, nor can any Gloomstalker reduce their Rank below 1, marking a limit to this option.
- **Divine Intervention:** The player rolls 10d6 and, with 6 or more Successes, their Gloomstalker survives. This option can only be chosen once, regardless of success or failure. Should this option fail, no further bargains can be attempted, and the Gloomstalker dies.

Setting the Scene

A Fight for Your Life Scene is a solemn, focused moment. When a Gloomstalker reaches their Critical Wound Threshold, the Augur begins the Scene, describing the attack's effect briefly and allowing the player to decide their next step.

If the player chooses death, they narrate their Gloomstalker's final moments, collaborating with the Augur to bring closure to their character's journey. If they choose to attempt Stabilization and succeed, they describe how their Gloomstalker survives the otherwise fatal blow.

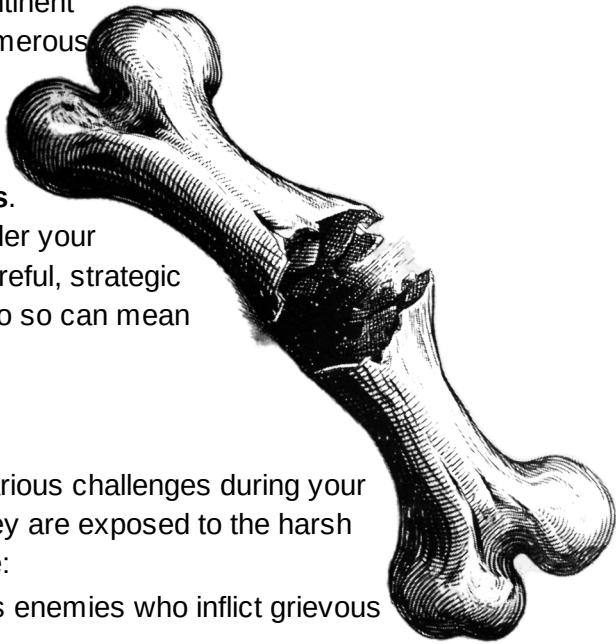
They then remain unconscious for a number of hours equal to the total of an **8d6** roll. This concludes the Fight For Your Life Scene, and resumes normal gameplay without the affected Gloomstalker's immediate involvement.



Afflictions & Ailments

In your perilous journey across the desolate continent of Pyresh, your Gloomstalker will encounter numerous dangers that threaten not only their life but also their physical and mental well-being. These threats manifest as Status Effects, categorized into two distinct types: **Afflictions** and **Ailments**.

These debilitating conditions can drastically hinder your Gloomstalker's abilities, forcing you to make careful, strategic decisions to overcome their effects. Failure to do so can mean certain doom.



Acquiring Afflictions & Ailments

Afflictions and Ailments are acquired through various challenges during your Gloomstalker's expedition, particularly when they are exposed to the harsh realities of Pyresh. The primary sources include:

- **Combat Encounters:** Facing dangerous enemies who inflict grievous wounds.
- **Wound Thresholds:** Reaching certain levels of injury triggers Afflictions.
- **Environmental Hazards:** Failing to navigate traps or hazards can lead to physical or mental impairment.
- **The Rust-Hued Gloom:** Prolonged exposure to this malevolent fog twists the body and mind, leading to severe conditions.

These Status Effects are divided into two categories:

- **Afflictions:** Physical impairments resulting from wounds or the fallout of failed actions. These may include broken bones, head trauma, or debilitating injuries that directly hinder your character's physical capabilities.
- **Ailments:** These conditions stem from exposure to diseases, poisons, or the corrupting influence of the Rust-Hued Gloom. Ailments can range from physical sicknesses to deep psychological scars, such as paranoia or madness, and are far more insidious in their effects.

Illustrative Afflictions & Ailments

Throughout your campaign, you'll encounter a wide variety of Afflictions and Ailments, each with unique mechanical effects on your character. These are detailed in the Augury Charts and across the NPC and Monster character sheets you encounter.

- Examples of **Afflictions** might include:

- **Broken Limb:** Reduces your mobility and hinders your ability to fight effectively. (Effect: Reduces number of Action Dice you may roll when using Warfare by 1)
- **Severe Head Trauma:** Impairs your cognitive functions, affecting your decision-making and ability to speak clearly. (Effect: Reduces number of Action Dice you may roll when using Social by 1.)

- Examples of **Ailments** might include:

- **Mind Rot:** A psychological ailment that gradually erodes your sanity, leading to paranoia and hallucinations. (Your Augur may tell you false information, or lead you to believe you are seeing things which are not really there.)
- **Gloom Fever:** A debilitating illness contracted from the Rust-Hued Gloom, which weakens your body and mind over time. (Your skin begins to turn a rusted color and you seem incapable of doing more than speaking for an extended period of time without fainting.)

Healing Afflictions

To heal an Affliction, your Gloomstalker must first find a safe place to rest, either at an establishment in a Village, Town, or City or by making camp in the wilderness. Once settled, you may attempt to heal the chosen Affliction by selecting an appropriate Action and Skill. Describe to the Augur how your chosen Action would facilitate recovery. The Augur will then decide whether the Action is viable and allow you to roll for the result. Use the chart below to determine the outcome of your Heal Action:

- **Critical Failure:** You botch the healing attempt, causing irreversible damage. The Affliction becomes permanent, representing a grievous injury or condition that will haunt your Gloomstalker.
- **Failure:** The attempt to cure the Affliction fails, but it does not worsen. You may attempt to heal it again in the future.
- **Success:** You successfully recover from the chosen Affliction with no adverse effects. The condition is removed.
- **Resounding Success:** Not only do you heal the Affliction, but you also gain valuable insight into how to treat this condition in the future. You no longer need to roll for a Heal Action to remove the same type of Affliction if you receive it again, though rest is still required for recovery to occur.

Note: This may be attempted only during a Short, Long, or Full Rest.

Curing Ailments

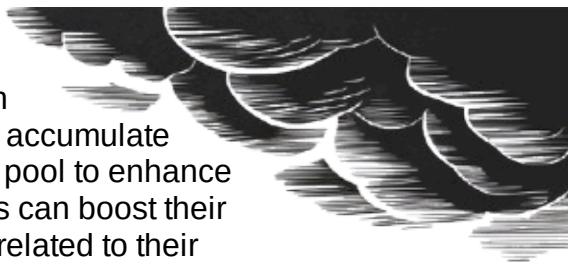
Ailments, however, are far more challenging to address. Unlike Afflictions, they require specialized care that can only be found in Major Cities or from rare, traveling Doctors encountered during your travels. Ailments are designed to represent the severe toll that Gloomstalking takes on both body and mind, and if left untreated, they can quickly spiral out of control, drastically impairing your Gloomstalker's abilities.

While Ailments can be cured by skilled professionals, doing so is often costly, reflecting the bleak and unsympathetic nature of the world. The exorbitant fees (50 Wealth per Ailment) charged by Doctors for these life-saving treatments underscore the desperation of Pyresh's inhabitants and the scarcity of resources. This economic pressure mirrors the hardships faced by those living in a world on the brink of collapse, forcing Gloomstalkers to balance their resources carefully.



Gloomtide Surge

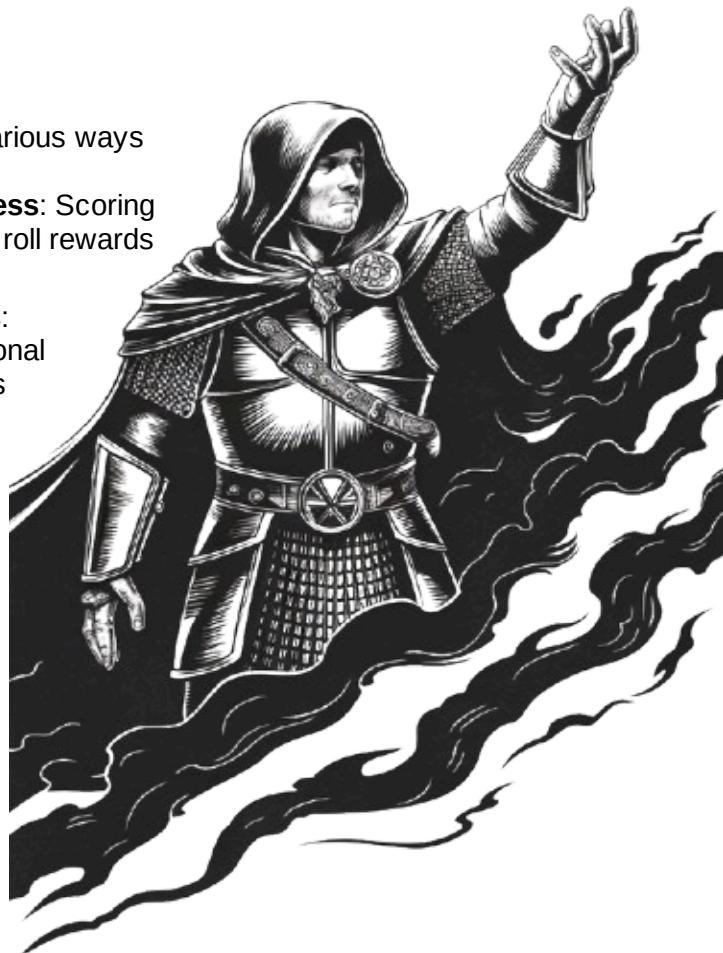
Gloomtide Surge represents a Gloomstalker's inner drive, pushing them beyond their normal limits when they face challenges that align with their **Solemn Burden**. Each Gloomstalker can accumulate up to **5 Surge Points**, which act as a resource pool to enhance their actions. By spending these points, players can boost their chances of success or unlock special abilities related to their Penumbral Path.



Accumulating Surge Points

Gloomstalkers earn Surge Points in various ways during gameplay:

- **Achieving Resounding Success:** Scoring a critical success in any action roll rewards a Surge Point.
- **Completing Major Objectives:** Accomplishing significant personal or story-driven milestones adds Surge Points.
- **Overcoming Major Foes:** Defeating powerful enemies or resolving difficult challenges is another way to accumulate Surge Points.



Using Surge Points

Players may spend Surge Points to improve their rolls or trigger specific abilities tied to their character's chosen path.

Here's how they can enhance gameplay:

- **Amplifying Actions:** Each Surge Point spent adds an extra die to a player's dice pool for a single action, significantly increasing the odds of success.
- **Path-Specific Effects:** Depending on a Gloomstalker's Penumbral Path, Surge Points can be used to perform specialized feats like evading attacks, unleashing powerful strikes, or influencing NPCs in unique ways.

Path-Specific Uses

Each Penumbral Path has its own set of abilities that can be activated or enhanced through the use of Gloomtide Surge Points. These abilities allow Gloomstalkers to tailor their approach to different challenges, such as increasing agility, negating enemy attacks, or improving social maneuvering.

This flexibility in Surge Point use provides **tactical depth** and **narrative agency**, allowing players to determine when to tap into their character's reserves of determination to push through obstacles, defeat enemies, or negotiate with powerful figures.

Conviction

Conviction represents your Gloomstalker's courage, resolve, and willingness to carry on against grim odds. This mental attribute measures their emotional fortitude when faced with horrors and hardships.

Conviction is measured on a scale ranging from **-3 to +3**, each level describing a distinct state of mind:

- **-3 Conviction (Shattered):** In this state, your **Travel Time is doubled**, and your ability to engage effectively in combat is severely hindered (You temporarily **lose 3D6 from your Warfare Dice**). This is in addition to the penalties from the previous two levels.

- **-2 Conviction (Rattled):** At this level, distraction sets in, affecting your observational skills (You temporarily **lose 2D6 from your Observation Dice**). This compounds upon the penalty from the previous level.

- **-1 Conviction (Apprehensive):** When experiencing this level of Conviction, a sense of depression overcomes you (You temporarily **lose 1D6 from your Social Dice**).

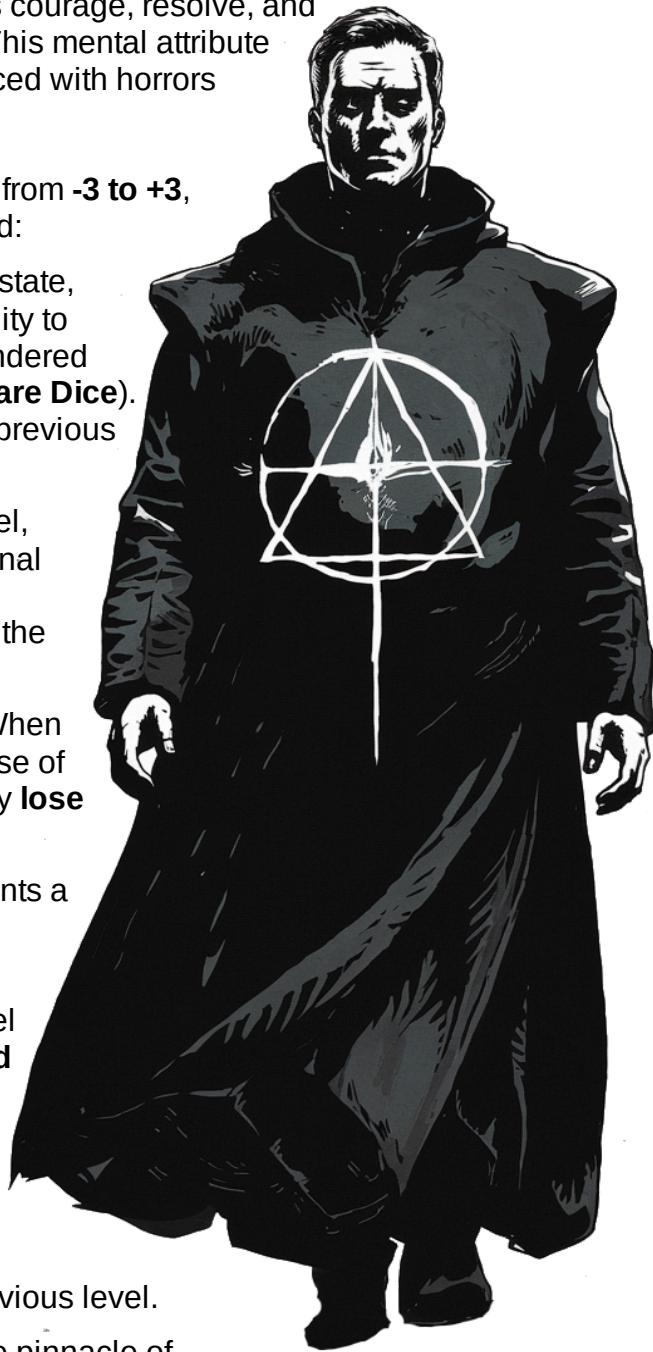
- **0 Conviction (Stoic):** This represents a neutral state with no particular bonuses or penalties.

- **+1 Conviction (Resolute):** You feel invigorated and driven (You temporarily **add 1D6 to your Reverence Dice**).

- **+2 Conviction (Heroic):** With heightened Conviction, you gain certainty and self-assuredness (You temporarily **add 2D6 to your Adaptability Dice**). This is in addition to the bonus from the previous level.

- **+3 Conviction (Legendary):** At the pinnacle of Conviction, you feel nearly unstoppable. Your **entire party's Travel Time is halved**, and your combat prowess increases significantly (You temporarily **deal 1 additional wound** with each successful attack in combat). This comes in addition to the bonuses from the previous two levels.

Throughout the game, your Augur will present opportunities to adjust your Conviction based on the outcomes of your party's Actions. As your Conviction diminishes, your Gloomstalker becomes more prone to fear, skepticism, and vulnerability. Conversely, elevating your Conviction empowers your character with heightened bravery, resolve, and a steadfast drive to accomplish exceptional feats.



Advantages

Advantages represent the diverse array of valuable resources that a Gloomstalker may acquire along their Path. Each Advantage offers various options and bonuses available for use in most Scenes and Conflicts, adding unique tactical opportunities. Advantages span four categories: **Transportation**, which facilitates movement; **Wealth**, reflecting material success; **Abilities**, showcasing Penumbral Path skills; and **Tools**, providing specialized objects with mechanical or narrative functions.

Transportation



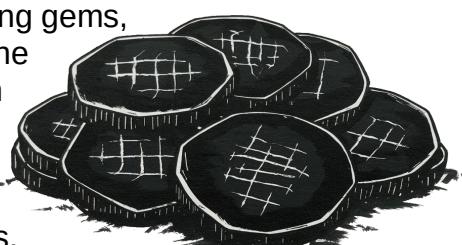
Advantages in this category decrease Travel Time or increase Item Slots for either an individual Gloomstalker or the entire party. These resources are rare and highly coveted; commoners might even kill for such luxuries. The exclusivity of Transportation is represented by its **Risk Factor Adjustment**, which increases the overall Travel Risk based on the Rank of the Transportation Advantage:

- **Rank 4:** 10% Risk Increase
- **Rank 3:** 20% Risk Increase
- **Rank 2:** 35% Risk Increase
- **Rank 1:** 50% Risk Increase

Refer to the Travel section for more details on Travel Risk adjustments.

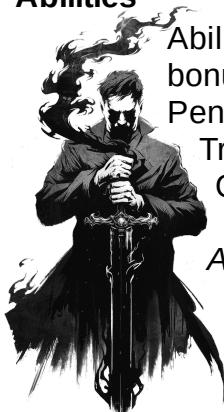
Wealth

Wealth represents a Gloomstalker's material gains, including gems, coins, and other valuables. To calculate total Wealth, add the value of all gems, coins, and valuables carried. As noted in the Equipment section, Wealth occupies Item Slots in your pack and on your person. Small valuables, like coins and gems, are compact; up to 50 units of Wealth can fit in one Item Slot. Units of Wealth can also be divided into decimals, reflecting smaller coin values in a simplified manner. Accumulated Wealth also impacts Travel Risk:



- **Over 100 Wealth:** +10% Travel Risk
- **Over 500 Wealth:** +25% Travel Risk
- **Over 1,000 Wealth:** +50% Travel Risk

Abilities



Abilities are special skills and bonuses derived from a Gloomstalker's Penumbral Path and Equipment.

Track each Ability individually in your Gloomstalker Journal, noting recharge rates and any special effects.

Abilities do not impact Travel Risk or require Item Slots.

Tools

Tools are objects that offer mechanical or narrative utility within the game. Generally, your Gloomstalker has access to basic tools for common tasks like lockpicking or forging notes. For more specialized devices, the Augur and players may create unique Tools, allowing added mechanical variety. Since Tools are flexible, they follow a few guidelines for seasoned Augurs and players:



Guidelines for Creating Tools

Tools **may**:

- Introduce new Abilities or character-specific skills.
- Have a Wealth value, Risk Factor Adjustment, and occupy Item Slots.
- Enable unique environmental interactions, such as a Rope and Grappling Hook for reaching inaccessible areas or a Weather Cloak for resistance to harsh conditions in Tension Scenes.
- Temporarily increase a Penumbral Art rank.

Tools **may not**:

- Guarantee success in critical moments (e.g., pivotal combat actions or survival rolls).
- Directly affect Surge or Conviction, as these are core attributes of inner resilience and determination.
- Have unlimited use; items like lockpicks should wear out after several uses. High-quality tools may last longer but are still finite in Pyresh.
- Impact spiritual mechanics, such as resisting the Rust-Hued Gloom, as these are designed to challenge the character's mental or spiritual resilience.

Awarding Advantages

Advantages should be awarded thoughtfully to reflect a Gloomstalker's growth and achievements. Consider these situations for awarding Advantages:

1. **Completion of Major Objectives**
Reward Advantages after completing significant quests or milestones, especially when resourcefulness or sacrifice was involved. Match the reward to the challenge, like Wealth for retrieving valuable items or Transportation for aiding allies.
2. **Overcoming Unique Challenges**
When a Gloomstalker creatively overcomes a substantial threat, grant a fitting Advantage. For example, navigating dangerous terrain might yield a Tool or minor Transportation bonus.
3. **Building Strong Relationships**
Social bonds with influential NPCs can merit Advantages. Earning a village leader's trust could result in Wealth, a Tool as thanks, or Transportation for special tasks.
4. **Strategic Play**
For exceptional strategy or narrative creativity, consider a limited-use Advantage that aligns with recent actions or the Gloomstalker's Penumbral Path. These can provide temporary Abilities or Tools for tactical depth.
5. **Augur's Discretion**
Sparingly, the Augur may award an Advantage as a narrative device, representing cosmic intervention or hidden aid, such as a Tool found in a moment of need.

The guiding principle here is that Advantages should always feel earned, fit the story, and align with character choices, enhancing gameplay without overpowering it.

Mementos



These are ancient and extraordinary artifacts, which resonate with forgotten power and latent magic. Such enigmatic items, unlike mundane Tools, emit a mystical influence only discernible to those attuned to their energy. Their diverse forms serve as echoes of the once-thriving civilizations that once ruled Pyresh, now reduced to ruins by devastating conflicts and famines. Crafted with advanced techniques and arcane artistry, these intricate devices and constructs reflect the aspirations of long-lost cultures. Each Memento whispers ancient ingenuity, granting insight into Pyresh's bygone glories and the enigmatic societies that defined its history. Encountering these artifacts during your solitary journey unveils not only their mechanical potential but also the rich cultural tapestry from which they originated.

Carrying & Attuning to Mementos

Mementos contain unpredictable arcane power requiring deep understanding to control. A Memento's "Rank" denotes the minimum Reverence Skill rank needed to attune and use it without mishap.

For example, a **Rank 3 Memento** requires the Gloomstalker to have at least **3** ranks in their **Reverence Skill** to safely attune. Attempting attunement without sufficient skill risks rendering the Memento inert.

Additionally, a Gloomstalker can only carry one attuned Memento at a time. Bringing multiple Mementos into close proximity risks their volatile energies reacting and destroying the items.

In summary:

- Check a Memento's Rank to ensure your Reverence Skill meets the minimum threshold for attunement.
- You can only attune to one Memento at a time without risking their destruction. Manage your equipped Memento carefully.
- Attempting to use a Memento beyond your skill level is dangerous and may render its power permanently inert.

Activating Mementos

Mementos have specific prerequisites and effects like other mechanics in The Silent Road. Understanding how to activate your attained Mementos is key to utilizing their arcane power.

Each Memento has an will be provided with an Overview which will list the following:

1. **Memento Name:** The unique name of the Memento.
2. **Memento Rank:** The rank denotes the skill level required to use it. You must have a high enough Reverence skill to safely control Mementos.
3. **Memento Hue:** *White, Black or Gray.* Matches the Memento's nature.
4. **Description & Activation:** Details the physical form and specifics of how to activate its power. Also outlines any conditions needed to trigger it.
5. **Effect:** Denotes the effect granted by the Memento upon activation.

Memento Hues

Among the mystical Mementos scattered across Pyresh, the latent **Whispers of Power** contained within each artifact manifests as an arcane Hue. This ephemeral aura denotes the nature of the abilities one might gain upon attuning with the Memento. There exist three known **Hues**, each embodying distinct properties:

White Hue (Restorative)



Mementos of the White Hue channel the power of restoration and healing. They possess the capacity to mend and rejuvenate, offering solace in a harsh world. These Mementos might include:

- A flute with notes that calm troubled minds.
- A flower with petals that miraculously restore vitality.
- A basket that perpetually produces nourishing meals.

Black Hue (Destructive)

Mementos with a Black Hue harness the raw energies of destruction, capable of causing harm and chaos. They bring forth the darker aspects of the arcane, presenting both peril and power. Examples of such Mementos include:



- A sinister blanket that devours organic matter.
- A haunting whistle capable of shattering glass.
- A mirror that steals random memories.

Gray Hue (Utility)



Gray Hue Mementos are the versatile tools of adventurers, offering a wide range of practical applications and functionalities. These enigmatic artifacts serve as invaluable assets in the unpredictable journey through Pyresh's desolation. Some examples of Gray Hue Mementos are:

- A cloak rendering its wearer invisible in shadows.
- Glasses bestowing sight in lightless abysses.
- A ring alerting its wearer to impending threats.

Discovering Mementos

Mementos are extremely rare artifacts in Pyresh. They can only be obtained through:

- Loot in high-ranking hostile locations like ancient ruins and enemy strongholds.
- Rewards for completing quests that appease particular groups or factions.
- Serendipitous discoveries when searching vendors' wares.

Their scarcity maintains the significance of obtaining one.

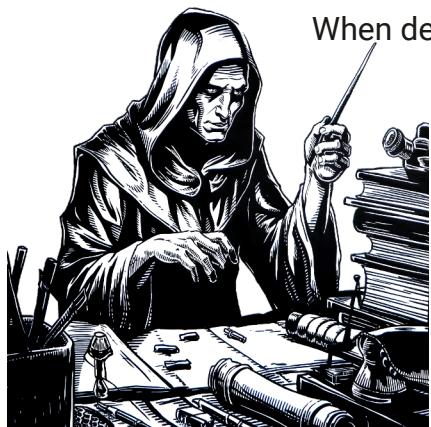
For example,

A **Rank 5 Conflict** may have a **1%** chance of producing a Memento as a reward for completion.

While,

A multi-step **Rank 5 Quest Objective** from a Village, Town or City may net you a **5%** chance of receiving a Memento as a reward for completion.

Guidelines for Creating Mementos



When designing an original Memento to add to your own game, follow these steps:

- 1. Pick a Memento Hue:**
 - Select a Hue that fits the desired theme and abilities:
 - White for restorative/healing
 - Black for destructive/harming
 - Gray for utility
- 2. Determine its Rank:** Choose a Rank from 1 to 5 that matches the planned power level and attunement requirements. Higher Ranks require more skill.
- 3. Describe the physical form:** Detail the Memento's visual attributes and materials. Is it a ring? Amulet? Weapon? Describe notable markings, gems, runes, or designs that reflect its arcane origins.
- 4. Name the Memento:** Give it a name reflecting its history, abilities, or creators. Ancient languages can inspire interesting names.
- 5. Detail the backstory:** Outline where this Memento originated, how it was created, past owners, legends, or any lore that establishes its significance. Link to your custom worldbuilding.
- 6. Define its abilities:** Specify what unique powers and benefits this Memento bestows on an attuned wielder. Tailor to the Hue and Rank.

Whisperweaving

Whisperweaving is the ancient art of utilizing the **Whispers of Power**—the arcane forces that make up all matter on Pyresh—through the use of Axioms, the eldritch words that describe those forces.

Gloomstalkers use these Axioms to perform Whispers, mystical phrases that manifest powerful effects in the world. Whisperweaving involves combining three Axioms—**Prefix**, **Intent**, and **Suffix**—to produce a unique result, though the process requires careful control, as the Axioms are dangerous if mishandled.

Whisperweaving Mechanics

To perform a Whisper, a Gloomstalker must know at least one Axiom from each of the three categories: Prefix, Intent, and Suffix. This foundational knowledge is essential before any successful Whispers can be executed. However, even a completely Irreverent Gloomstalker still has a chance to achieve a Resounding Success on a Reverence Art Check, allowing them the potential to channel a Whisper in a moment of rare lucidity. Roll your Reverence Skill and follow this chart to determine what to do next:

- **Success:** The Whisper manifests as intended.
- **Failure:** The Whisper goes unheard, and no effect occurs.
- **Critical Failure:** A Whisper Effect of the Augur's choice occurs, potentially leading to unintended or dangerous outcomes.
- **Resounding Success:** The player can either choose from a complete list of Axioms or describe the intended effect of their Whisper, leaving it up to the Augur to facilitate. (Described in more detail on pg.)



Prefixes

The Prefix determines both the nature and Hue of the Whisper, defining its core purpose and how it interacts with the world. Each Prefix shapes the Whisper into one of three Hues, which visually represent its power and effects:

- **Destructive (Black Hue):** These Whispers manifest as harmful, chaotic, or aggressive forces, often channeling dark or intense energies. Examples include bursts of flame, bolts of lightning, or decaying auras.
 - *Example Axiom:* *Luxis* (Fire), a Black-Hued Axiom, could unleash a burst of fire to sear enemies within its range.
 - **Restorative (White Hue):** These Whispers channel healing, protection, or balance, creating shields, mending wounds, or purifying environments.
 - *Example Axiom:* *Kyndra* (Fire), a White-Hued Axiom, will create a barrier that withstands extreme heat, protecting allies within a specific radius.
 - **Utilitarian (Gray Hue):** These Whispers serve neutral or practical functions, enhancing tools, manipulating environments, or aiding in exploration and crafting.
 - *Example Axiom:* *Veirn* (Wind), a Gray-Hued Axiom, could summon a gentle breeze to clear debris or lift light objects within close proximity.
-

Intent

The Intent Axiom specifies the target and default range of the Whisper, directing its energy toward an adversary, ally, item, location, or the immediate area around the Gloomstalker. The range of each Intent adjusts to the type of target:

- **Combatant-Focused Example:** Combining *Luxis* (Prefix) and *Vulnus* (Intent) results in a flame-based attack targeting a Combatant within 10 feet.
- **Ally-Focused Example:** Combining *Kyndra* (Prefix) and *Amicus* (Intent) generates a protective barrier surrounding a Companion within 5 feet.

Certain Intents, such as *Visus* (Sight), extend to line of sight, while others, like *Locum* (Location), naturally affect a larger area. Suffixes can further modify these ranges, allowing Whispers to adapt to the Gloomstalker's immediate needs.

Suffix

The Suffix Axiom enhances the Whisper's attributes, modifying factors like range, duration, potency, or target count to suit various situations. This final modifier offers flexibility, enabling the Gloomstalker to tailor each Whisper to fit specific tactical requirements:

- **Extended Range Example:** Adding *Extensa* to a Whisper with *Luxis* as the Prefix and *Vulnus* as the Intent enables it to strike a target farther away.
- **Prolonged Duration Example:** Applying *Persistus* as a Suffix to a Whisper with *Kyndra* (Prefix) and *Amicus* (Intent) allows the protective effect to endure throughout an entire Scene or Conflict.

Suffixes thus shape each Whisper's adaptability, giving the Gloomstalker control over the finer details of its execution. Like all other Axioms, Suffixes can only be used one per 24 hours.

Whisperweaving Limitations

Once a Gloomstalker uses an Axiom, they cannot use the same Axiom again for 24 hours. Attempting to reuse an Axiom before this cooldown period is over risks overloading their mind with incomprehensible eldritch power, which can cause severe mental or physical impairment. While it's strongly discouraged to attempt this, it is possible.

If a player wants to reuse an Axiom before the cooldown is complete, they must first succeed on a Reverence Skill Roll. However, they suffer a **-1 Action Dice Penalty** to their Reverence Art Rank **for each Axiom they are attempting to reuse**.

- If **successful**, the Whisper can be performed as normal.
- If the roll results in **failure**, they fall into a catatonic state for a number of hours equal to the result of a d4 roll multiplied by the number of repeated Axioms.
- In the event of a **Critical Failure**, the Gloomstalker is overwhelmed by eldritch truths far beyond human comprehension. It's highly unlikely they will recover from this, and if they do, they will be profoundly altered by the experience. If this happens, the player and their Augur may decide how to proceed narratively. However, within the context of the setting, recovery from such an event is unprecedented and would require extraordinary circumstances.
- On the other hand, if the Gloomstalker achieves a **Resounding Success** when reusing an Axiom, they may choose to forego reusing the originally selected Axioms and instead pick a new set, following the standard rules for Resounding Successes.
- If they achieve a **Resounding Success while using three previously-used Axioms**, they not only gain the benefits of selecting a new set of Axioms, but they also get to memorize one (1) new Axiom of any category. This new Axiom must be equal to or lower in Rank than what the Gloomstalker's Reverence Art Rank would be without any bonuses or penalties, and it does not count toward the normal maximum number of Axioms they can memorize.

This system encourages Gloomstalkers to be strategic with their use of Axioms, forcing them to carefully consider when and how to employ their powers. At the same time, it rewards bold, high-risk decisions with powerful and unique rewards, enhancing both the challenge and the potential impact of their Whispers.

Learning and Memorizing Axioms

As a Gloomstalker progresses through their journey, they encounter and learn new Axioms, which are earned as rewards for completing Objectives, discovered as rare loot, or through deeper contact with the Whispers of Power that shape their reality. However, the number of Axioms a Gloomstalker can commit to memory is determined by their Reverence Skill Rank, which reflects their growing connection to the fundamental forces of the universe:

- **Rank 5 (Initiate of the Whispers):** Memorize 1 Axiom from each category (Prefix, Intent & Suffix).
- **Rank 4 (Speaker of Forgotten Truths):** Memorize 2 Prefixes, 2 Intents, and 1 Suffix.
- **Rank 3 (Seeker of the Unseen):** Memorize 3 Prefixes, 3 Intents, and 1 Suffix.
- **Rank 2 (Weaver of Hidden Words):** Memorize 4 Prefixes, 4 Intents, and 2 Suffixes.
- **Rank 1 (Master of the Eldritch Tongue):** Memorize 5 Prefixes, 5 Intents, and 2 Suffixes.

(Note: Once you memorize an Axiom, you may not change your mind and choose a different one.)

Suffixes, powerful Axioms that amplify a Whisper's potency or duration, become accessible only at **Rank 4** and above, allowing high-level Gloomstalkers to intensify their Whispers with additional strength. The careful selection of Prefix, Intent, and Suffix Axioms allows each Gloomstalker to develop unique Whisper combinations that reflect their personal strengths and strategic style.

This structure encourages players to choose Axioms thoughtfully, focusing on combinations that will benefit them in diverse situations. Whisperweaving's flexibility allows even those who may not excel in other Arts—such as Warfare, Adaptability, or Social—to play a pivotal role within their team. By mastering Whisperweaving and expanding their array of Axioms, Gloomstalkers become adaptable problem-solvers capable of contributing in dynamic and impactful ways across a range of challenges. This versatility makes Whisperweaving a vital tool for strategic play and team support.

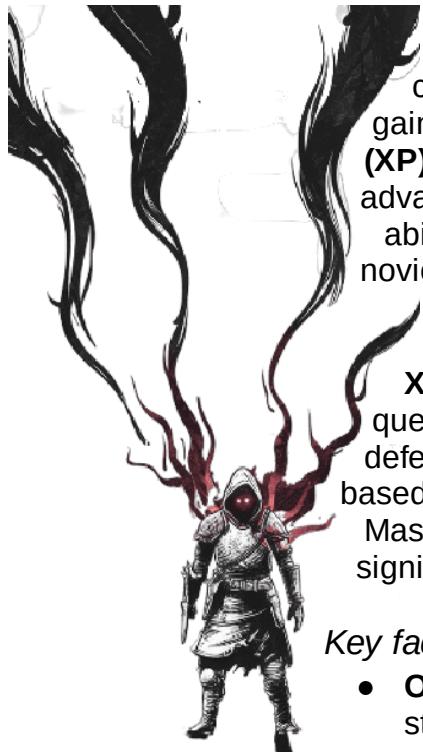
Resounding Success in Whisperweaving

When a Gloomstalker achieves a Resounding Success on a Reverence Roll during a Whisper attempt, they temporarily become spiritually and intellectually connected to the Whispers of Power—the fundamental forces that shape the matter of the world. This connection grants them a glimpse into the unimaginable and provides the insight necessary to read and interpret the Whispers and the Axioms that compose them. In this state, the Gloomstalker can freely speak a set of three Axioms, adhering to the requirement of using one Prefix, one Intent, and one Suffix. However, despite the expanded choices, a Whisper performed in this manner still results in a singular, focused outcome. This rare moment of clarity enables the Gloomstalker to push the boundaries of their understanding of Whisperweaving and creatively utilize combinations of Axioms they may not typically be able to perform.

To maximize the impact of their Whisper, the player can choose between two options:

1. **Select from the Full Axiom List:** The player may choose any Axiom from the complete list, including those their character has not yet memorized. This option allows them to craft a powerful Whisper by combining unexpected elements. For example, a Gloomstalker could combine the Prefix "Luxis" (Black Hue) with the Intent "Ferri" and the Suffix "Occular" to instantly melt nearly all forms of metal in their line of sight. (Caution is advised, as this could include allies and unintended objects, so the player should be certain of their intentions before invoking such a risky Whisper.)
2. **Describe a Desired Effect:** The player can articulate a specific outcome they want their Whisper to achieve. For instance, they might wish to instantly turn night into day, typically achievable only with the highest-ranking and most esoteric Axioms known in Pyresh. The Augur will facilitate the player's request, assuming it aligns with the possibilities of Whisperweaving. If the player proposes an effect that the Augur feels does not fit narratively or mechanically, the Augur may suggest an alternative. (If you are acting as the Augur, it's good practice to allow and encourage players to creatively use game mechanics in ways you may not have foreseen. For example, if a player achieves a Resounding Success on a Whisperweaving attempt and describes an effect that cleverly overcomes the current challenge, rewarding their creativity by allowing it to happen is beneficial, unless it clearly abuses the game mechanics.)

Advancement Tracking & Experience



As your Gloomstalker ventures deeper into the treacherous land of Pyresh, they will face countless challenges—both physical and mental. The experiences gained from these trials are reflected in **Experience Points (XP)**, which serve as the foundation for character growth and advancement. XP is central to increasing your Gloomstalker's abilities, power, and Rank, representing their journey from a novice explorer to a legendary force in the world of Pyresh.

Earning Experience Points

XP is earned primarily by completing Objectives such as quests, expeditions, or major story milestones, as well as defeating powerful foes. However, XP rewards aren't solely based on combat or mission completion—the Augur (Game Master) has the discretion to award XP based on the significance and complexity of an Objective or Encounter.

Key factors that determine XP rewards:

- **Objective Completion:** Quests or missions that push the story forward or are personally meaningful to the Gloomstalker are prime sources of XP.
- **Defeating Powerful Enemies:** Battling and overcoming high-ranking foes grants XP proportionate to the challenge they posed.
- **Player Engagement:** Players may earn bonus XP for exceptional contributions, creative problem-solving, or working harmoniously with their group to achieve goals.
- **Significant Character Moments:** Non-combat accomplishments, such as pivotal social interactions or personal growth aligned with a character's **Solemn Burden**, can also be recognized with XP.

Dynamic XP Adjustments

The Augur holds the authority to adjust XP distribution based on player performance. If a Gloomstalker didn't contribute meaningfully to an Objective or was intentionally disruptive, the Augur may withhold XP. Conversely, players demonstrating teamwork, clever planning, or creative actions can be rewarded with additional XP. This dynamic approach ensures that XP reflects not only mission success but also ingenuity and group cooperation, encouraging players to actively shape their story.

XP Distribution by Rank

XP is scaled based on the difficulty of the task or enemy. Objectives and enemies are ranked according to their complexity and danger:

- **Rank 5 Objective/Conflict:** 1 XP
- **Rank 4 Objective/Conflict:** 2 XP
- **Rank 3 Objective/Conflict:** 3 XP
- **Rank 2 Objective/Conflict:** 4 XP
- **Rank 1 Objective/Conflict:** 5 XP

Gloomstalker Ranks

A Gloomstalker's Rank measures their overall power and standing in Pyresh. Players begin their journey at **Rank 5** and progress toward the legendary **Rank 1**, representing the pinnacle of skill, strength, and reputation.

XP Requirements for Rank Advancement

Progressing to each new Rank requires accumulating specific XP totals:

- **Rank 4:** Requires 10 XP
- **Rank 3:** Requires 25 total XP (15 additional XP)
- **Rank 2:** Requires 45 total XP (20 additional XP)
- **Rank 1:** Requires 70 total XP (25 additional XP)

The early stages of advancement are relatively quick, but as Gloomstalkers ascend to higher Ranks, they must overcome increasingly dangerous challenges. This progression reflects the growing difficulty of the world around them and the significant effort required to rise to legendary status.

Initiating Gloomstalker Advancement

Once your Gloomstalker has amassed enough XP to reach the next Rank, the advancement process must be initiated. However, this is more than just a mechanical upgrade; it is a pivotal moment for reflection and narrative development. Gloomstalker advancement typically occurs during moments of rest, often in a **secure haven** where your character can recover, reflect on their journey, and prepare for what lies ahead.

When initiating **Gloomstalker Advancement**, the Augur will guide you through a personalized progression sequence based on your character's **Penumbral Path**. This process not only strengthens your character's mechanical abilities but also enriches their story, showing how their experiences have shaped them.

Advancement Rewards

Upon advancing to the next Rank, your Gloomstalker gains various rewards depending on their Penumbral Path and the trials they have faced:

- **Skill Advancement:** You can increase the Rank of your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts, allowing your Gloomstalker to become more adept in their chosen fields.
- **Increased Wound Threshold:** With each advancement, your Gloomstalker becomes more resilient, able to sustain more damage before reaching critical injury.
- **Armament Proficiency:** Gloomstalkers become more proficient with their chosen weapons, increasing their effectiveness in combat.
- **New Abilities:** As your alignment with your Penumbral Path deepens, you gain access to new abilities or techniques unique to your Path. These abilities reflect your character's evolution, offering new ways to solve problems or gain Advantages in the dangerous world of Pyresh.

This advancement system allows players to chart the development of their Gloomstalker, blending mechanical power-ups with narrative growth. As Gloomstalkers rise through the Ranks, they become increasingly capable of handling the dangers and mysteries of Pyresh, embodying their legends along **The Silent Road**.

The silence overwhelmed my heart like a void of agony,
causing it to ache as if I had left a promise unfulfilled.

What had we wrought upon God?

- Medicant Ferrix. Exilarchy of Perfected Effigies



Become the Gloom You Walk Through

In the heart of the untamed wilderness, where the brave falter and the timid dare not venture, you find your true calling. Your existence is a relentless dance with uncertainty, a symphony of struggle, and the world turns its hopeful eyes to you for the triumphs they only dream of.

Visualize Your Gloomstalker

Before delving into the intricacies of Character Creation, take a moment to contemplate your Gloomstalker's physical attributes. Consider details like scars, tattoos, birthmarks, piercings, freckles, skin tone, and hair length. These initial characteristics can serve as a stepping stone, guiding you towards the more profound narrative elements of your Gloomstalker's persona, including personality traits, moral compass, flaws, and deeply held beliefs. This thoughtful progression ensures a coherent and immersive character creation process.

Mastery Embodied

Gloomstalkers epitomize competence, embarking on tasks knowing they are uniquely qualified to accomplish them. However, this competence doesn't equate to invincibility. Like all inhabitants of Pyresh, Gloomstalkers are not immune to the world's cruelty, and adversity will inevitably cross their path. In these moments, despite their best efforts, they may falter and confront overwhelming challenges. Yet, the essence of a Gloomstalker lies not solely in success or failure, but in the substance of their actions and the purity of their intentions.

Taking Your First Step Along The Silent Road

Now that you've crafted your Gloomstalker's appearance and persona, you may follow the guidelines in this chapter to shape their mechanical and narrative aspects, defining their skills, objectives, and background.

In the following pages, you'll encounter a Character Sheet, each section of which is marked with corresponding numbers. Subsequently, you'll find an in-depth exploration of each section and its constituent elements.

1

NAME: Wren Hallowbrook**AGE:** 19 **RANK:** 5**PATH:** Road of Soiled Hands

2



3

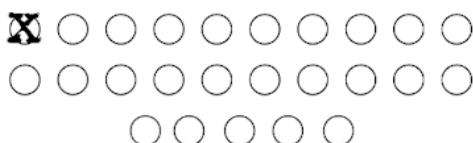
WOUND TRACKER**CONDITION**

- Unharmed
- Bruised
- Beaten
- Maimed

CONDITION CALCULATOR

Bruised (1 - 1/3 Maximum Wounds)	Beaten (1/3 - 2/3 Maximum Wounds)	Maimed (2/3 - Maximum Wounds)
1 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 9

5

OKP TRACKER

4

SKILL RANKS

5

Warfare



4

Adaptability

2

Reverence

3

Observation

3

Social

6

CONVICTION

- +3 **LEGENDARY**
(+1 Wound Dealt + Travel Time Halved)
- +2 **HEROIC**
(+2 Rank Bonus to Adaptability)
- +1 **RESOLUTE**
(+1 Rank Bonus to Reverence)
- 0 **STOIC**
(No Bonus or Penalty)
- 1 **APPREHENSIVE**
(-1 Rank Penalty to Social)
- 2 **RATTLED**
(-2 Rank Penalty to Observation)
- 3 **SHATTERED**
(-3 Rank Penalty to Warfare)

GLOOMTIDE SURGE TRACKER5
4
3
2
1
0

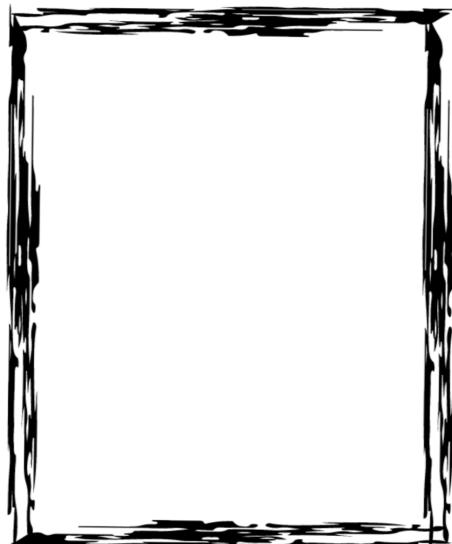
1. I.D. Card



This section is where you record the essential details which make up your Character Profile, such as:

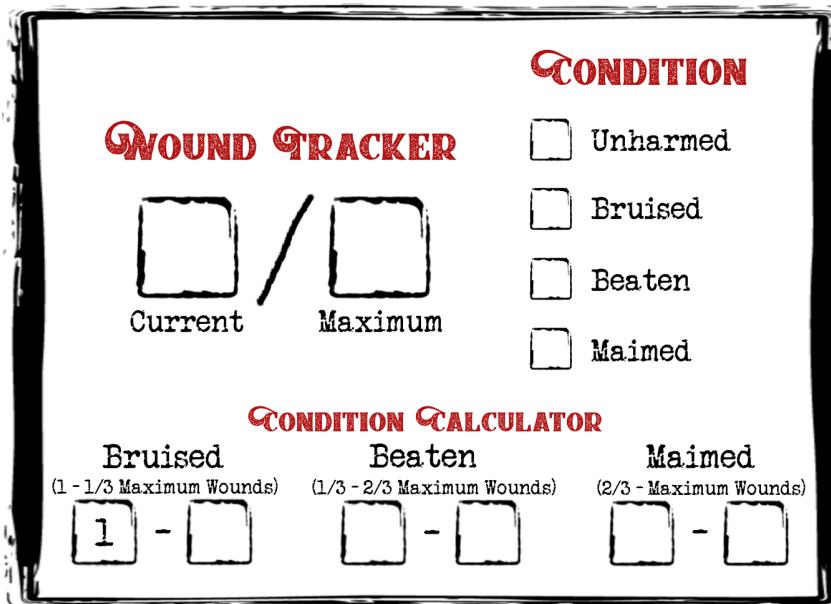
- **Name:** This is the distinct name your Gloomstalker goes by. It can be anything you desire or left blank if you prefer your Gloomstalker to remain nameless. Your Gloomstalker's name holds significance in your storytelling, aiding your immersion into the character you've crafted.
- **Age:** In the enigmatic realm of Pyresh, age is a mutable concept, often more indicative of one's physical appearance than the passage of time. Here you will record your Gloomstalker's current age, keeping in mind that the passage of time here is far from conventional.
- **Rank:** Use this field to denote your Gloomstalker's current rank. All new Gloomstalkers commence their journey at Rank 5 and can progress upwards, achieving Rank 1 by fulfilling objectives and accumulating XP.
- **Path:** Here, you document the Penumbral Path your character has embraced. Your chosen Path influences the starting Rank of your Skills and the Advantages you begin your journey with.

2. Character Portrait



This space is yours to illustrate your Gloomstalker as you envision them. Despite the somber setting, your character's appearance can be as vibrant and distinctive as your imagination allows. Your Gloomstalker is exceptional, and that extends to their visual presentation.

3. Wounds & Condition

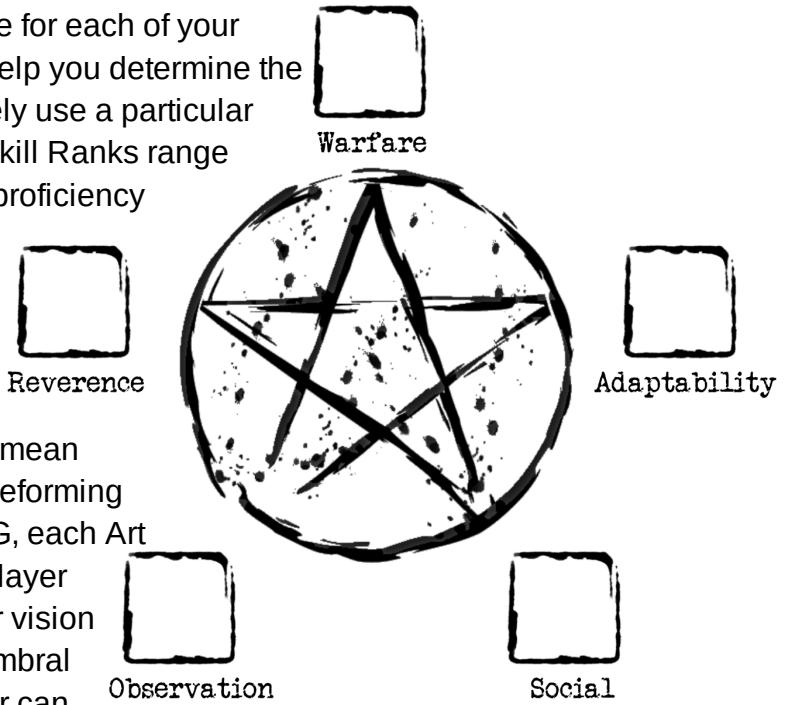


- **Wound Tracker:** In these two boxes, you can monitor your Gloomstalker's total accumulated Wounds (left) and the maximum Wounds they can endure before initiating a "Fight For Your Life" Scene (right).
- **Condition:** These four tiers represent the damage stages your Gloomstalker goes through before entering a "Fight For Your Life" Scene. The boxes beside the words - Unharmed, Bruised, Beaten, and Maimed - function as gauges to reflect your current total Wounds. These serve as reminders to add or remove Afflictions as your Gloomstalker accumulates and heals Wounds. Simply mark the box matching your Gloomstalker's current Condition to help you track this.
- **Condition Calculator:** This area serves as a quick reference for determining your Gloomstalker's current Condition. Your character will always enter the "Bruised" Condition upon receiving 1 wound, as indicated in the bottom, left-most box in the example above. The additional 5 boxes are left blank for you to calculate the number of Wounds for each of the three listed tiers - Bruised, Beaten, and Maimed - by dividing your Critical Wound Threshold into thirds:
 - **Bruised:** Represents Wounds between 1 and $\frac{1}{3}$ of your Critical Wound Threshold. *For example, if your Critical Wound Threshold is 9, Bruised encompasses 1 - 3 Wounds received.*
 - **Beaten:** Indicates Wounds between $\frac{1}{3}$ and $\frac{2}{3}$ of your maximum Wounds. *Using the same example, if your Critical Wound Threshold is 9, Beaten encompasses 4 - 6 Wounds received.*
 - **Maimed:** Covers Wounds between $\frac{2}{3}$ and your maximum number of Wounds. *Continuing with the example, if your Critical Wound Threshold is 9, Maimed encompasses 7 - 9 Wounds received.*

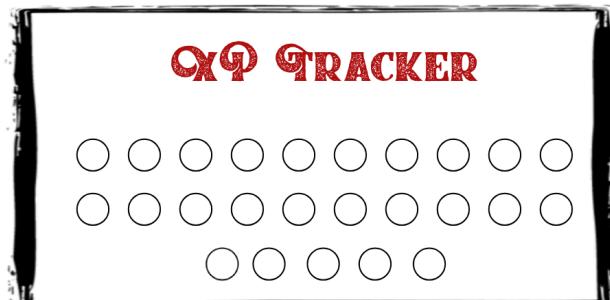
4. Gloomstalker Skill Ranks

In this section, you'll find a quick reference for each of your five Penumbral Arts. This reference will help you determine the number of successes required to effectively use a particular skill within a Scene without failure. The Skill Ranks range from 5 to 1, with 1 indicating exceptional proficiency and 5 representing a novice level of skill.

Each of these five Arts can be applied in various Scenes. It's crucial to understand that you won't become an expert in every Art. However, this doesn't mean neglecting an Art will exclude you from performing certain Actions. In "The Silent Road" RPG, each Art is versatile enough to ensure that every player can focus on the skills that align with their vision for their Gloomstalker. Additionally, Penumbral Paths may modify the way a Gloomstalker can utilize certain Arts under particular conditions.



5. XP Tracker



This section serves as a tracker for the XP you've earned during your journey. Simply mark off each dot on the tracker as you accumulate XP. Keep in mind that you'll reset this tracker every time you achieve a new Gloomstalker Rank.

For more detailed rules on Tracking XP and Character Advancement, please refer to the Character Advancement section on page 59.

6. Conviction Tracker

CONVICTION	
<input type="checkbox"/>	+3 LEGENDARY (+1 Wound Dealt + Travel Time Halved)
<input type="checkbox"/>	+2 HEROIC (+2 Rank Bonus to Adaptability)
<input type="checkbox"/>	+1 RESOLUTE (+1 Rank Bonus to Reverence)
<input type="checkbox"/>	0 STOIC (No Bonus or Penalty)
<input type="checkbox"/>	-1 APPREHENSIVE (-1 Rank Penalty to Social)
<input type="checkbox"/>	-2 RATTLED (-2 Rank Penalty to Observation)
<input type="checkbox"/>	-3 SHATTERED (-3 Rank Penalty to Warfare)

This tracker allows you to quickly mark your Gloomstalker's current level of Conviction. It also serves as a reference to remind you of the effects associated with each level of Conviction. As mentioned in the first chapter, Conviction is measured on a scale ranging from -3 to +3, with 0 representing the baseline. Your Conviction can fluctuate based on your success or failure in Scenes or as a result of witnessing certain events. Monitoring your Conviction is crucial, as a low level can lead to significant penalties to your Skills, while a higher level can grant you Skill bonuses.

7. Gloomtide Surge Tracker



This section allows you to keep a record of the Gloomtide Surge Points you currently possess. To do this, simply attach a paperclip to the side of your Character Sheet and move it up and down to highlight the number of Gloomtide Surge Points you have available for use.

The Gloomstalker Journal

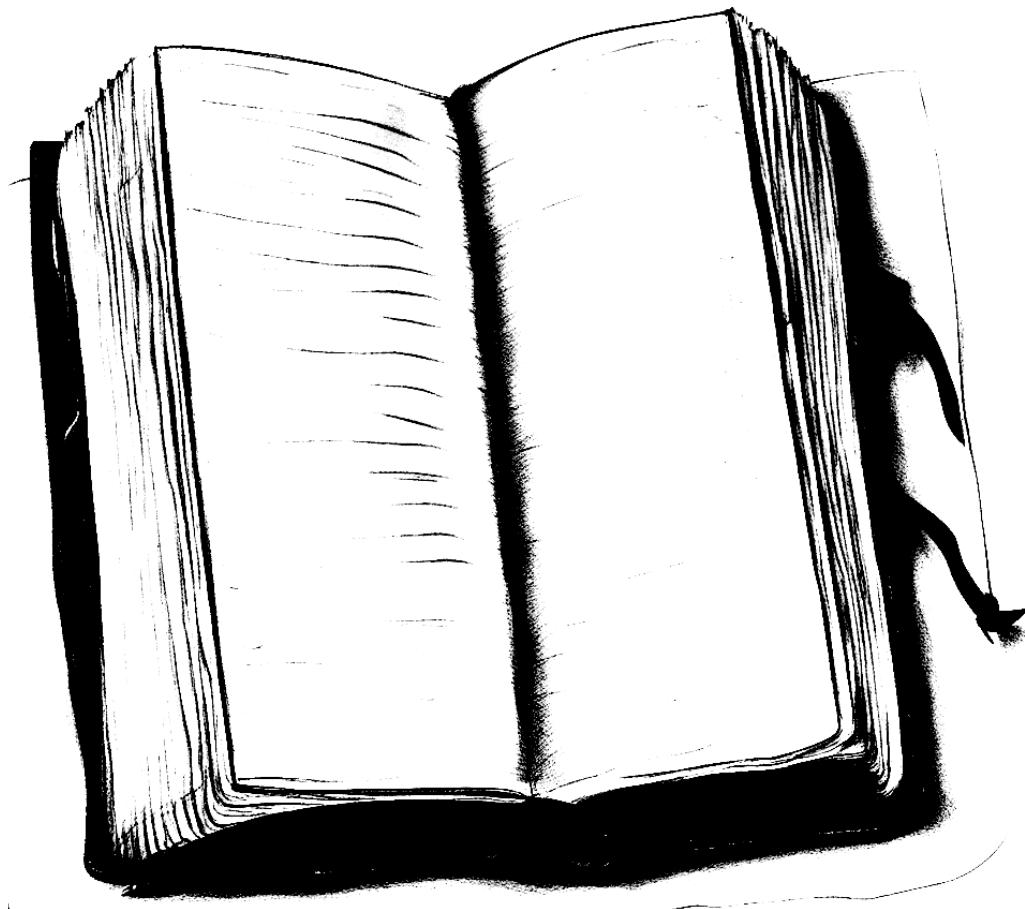
Now that you have acquainted yourself with the Character Sheet and its individual components, it's time to delve into the second aspect of tracking and recording your Gloomstalker's details: the Gloomstalker Journal. This journal can take the form of a simple college-ruled notebook or a word processor document. Regardless of your chosen method, maintaining an organized journal is essential. You'll use it to record various details about your Gloomstalker and their journey, including their Penumbral Path, Solemn Burdens, current and completed Objectives, Provisions, Advantages, and other categories that require frequent updates.

Recommended Practices for Keeping a Gloomstalker Journal

1. **Use Dividers:** Employ colored dividers or tabs to create distinct sections for various categories like Objectives, Inventory, NPCs, and more. This helps keep related information organized.
2. **Make a Dedicated Section for Penumbral Path & Advantages:** Set aside a specific section to record details about your chosen Penumbral Path and the Advantages your Gloomstalker has earned. This provides easy reference during Scenes.
3. **Make a Dedicated Section for Objectives:** Create a space to log formal Parameters for each Quest and Journey. Track your progress using bullet points to mark completed Objective Arcs. Instead of removing or crossing out completed entries, simply note their completion in the margins. Leave ample room between entries for recounting events in greater detail.
4. **Make a Dedicated Section for NPCs:** Devote a section to record information about major NPCs encountered during your journey. Include names, descriptions, dispositions, motivations, and their significance to your Gloomstalker. This adds depth to your story and immerses you further in the world.
5. **Make a Dedicated Section for Inventory:** Allocate several pages to track your Gloomstalker's possessions, such as Provisions, Equipment, Mementos, Objects, and Wealth. Leave room for adding many entries as your journey progresses. Avoid removing Object entries; instead, add to them and note when an Object leaves your possession. Many objects have valuable associated information that enhances the setting's immersion.
6. **Make a Dedicated Section Detailing Your Solemn Burden:** Place this section anywhere in your journal, as it won't require frequent updates. Use it to note your Gloomstalker's Raison D'etre, Attachments, and Wish associated with their chosen Solemn Burden. This helps you quickly recall character traits and motivations for role-playing.

Additional Recommended Journaling Practices

7. **Practice Coherent Scene Tracking:** Record completed scenes, including rewards/penalties, major choices, and notable events. This aids in retracing your journey and easily rejoining the game after a break.
8. **Make Maps:** Create sketches or print a copy of the Pyresh map. Mark it with discovered Locations and exploration status. Note routes taken, points of interest, potential hazards, and more.
9. **Make an Index:** Maintain a comprehensive index to quickly locate key characters, locations, scenes, and inventory items.
10. **Consider Adding Metadata:** Use page numbers, date stamps, and location information to chronicle events, discoveries, and revelations, including who, what, where, and when.
11. **Aim for Legibility:** Write clearly and legibly to avoid smearing. Keep your playing area clean and organized.
12. **Unleash Your Creativity:** Enhance your journal with sketches, pressed flowers, small mementos, or artifacts that represent the memories collected during your journey. Make your journal unique and reflective of your Gloomstalker's experiences.



Character Fundamentals

In the upcoming sections of this chapter, we will provide detailed explanations of every aspect of creating your Gloomstalker character. We'll break down each part of the character creation process into easy-to-follow sections. Additionally, we will use an example player, Tom, to guide us through the creation of his Gloomstalker character, "Wren Hallowbrook," as shown in the Character Sheet example on page 63. This practical example will help you understand the steps involved in creating your character.

Name

At this point, you might have already chosen a name for your character. However, if you haven't, that's perfectly fine. You can skip this part of Character Creation and move on to the next section. You are free to wait and see how the rest of your Gloomstalker character develops before settling on a name.

Tom decided on the name "Wren Hallowbrook" for his character. He felt that this name had a gentle quality that reflected the personality he wanted his Gloomstalker to possess.

Age

As discussed earlier in this chapter, age in Pyresh functions differently from conventional measures of time. It serves as a numerical descriptor of your physical appearance rather than a direct reflection of your chronological age.

Most Gloomstalkers, however, do not embark on The Silent Road until they reach a state of "Maturity." This is the point at which they feel adequately prepared to face the challenges ahead. Still, it's important to note that exceptions to this rule can always arise.

Tom has chosen the age of 19 for Wren. This age selection reflects Tom's desire for Wren to possess a youthful and clean-cut appearance. Wren's charming look is his most significant physical asset.

Rank

A Gloomstalker's Rank serves as a numerical representation of their experience in navigating The Silent Road. Initially, a Gloomstalker is assigned Rank 5 by the enigmatic organization they are a part of. However, they also possess the autonomy to assess their progress and bestow higher Ranks upon themselves when they believe they have met the necessary criteria for advancement.

Rank Structure

Mechanically, Gloomstalker Ranks are structured from Rank 5 to Rank 1. Progressing through these Ranks involves earning a specific amount of XP:

- **To reach Rank 4**, you need to acquire 10 XP.
- **For Rank 3**, an additional 15 XP is required (25 XP in total).
- **Advancing to Rank 2** necessitates an extra 20 XP (45 XP in total).
- **Achieving Rank 1** mandates accumulating 25 more XP (70 XP in total).

Consequently, starting from Rank 5, you must accumulate a total of 70 XP to attain the esteemed Rank 1. It's worth noting that higher Ranks demand progressively more XP, meaning that early progression is relatively faster, while ascending to later Ranks demands significant dedication.

To maintain game balance and gradually unveil new Objectives, it is advisable to initiate a new Gloomstalker at the lowest Rank, which is Rank 5. This approach ensures a balanced experience as you explore and discover new Objectives to undertake.



Solemn Burdens

The Solemn Burden is a fundamental aspect of your Gloomstalker's character, serving as the core of their identity and offering deep insights into who they are. This foundation is built upon three crucial elements: Raison D'etre, Attachments, and Wish, which are detailed in the next pages. Within each of these elements, you'll find various options to choose from. Alternatively, you have the creative freedom to craft a unique Solemn Burden that aligns perfectly with the story you want to tell for your Gloomstalker.

You can draw inspiration from the provided examples in this section as a starting point, using them as a reference to create a Solemn Burden that resonates most with your character's narrative and personality. This flexibility ensures that you can shape a Gloomstalker whose Burden genuinely reflects the tale you wish to unfold in the world of Pyresh.

It's crucial to understand that not everyone has the potential to become a Gloomstalker. Gloomstalkers are unique individuals who seem immune to the severe effects of The Rust-Hued Gloom. Furthermore, unlike all other living beings on Pyresh, who start emitting a Hue as soon as they can utter their first word or coherent sound, Gloomstalkers don't naturally emit any Hue unless they consciously tap into the "Whispers of Power" that permeate the world. This means that most Gloomstalkers experience a moment in their early life when their lack of a visible Hue becomes apparent to others. In Pyresh, where ignorance is common, many people fear or shun what they can't comprehend.

When creating your Solemn Burden, consider these factors. They will help you add emotional depth to your character while remaining true to the constraints of the setting.

Raison D'etre

For those uninitiated in the ways of Gloomstalkers, the term "Raison D'etre" might sound esoteric, but it's a fundamental concept that delves into the deep-seated drive and motivations that reside within a Gloomstalker's heart. Essentially, it's the profound reason that led them to wholeheartedly embrace the role of a Gloomstalker.

In simpler terms, Raison D'etre is the core essence of a Gloomstalker's character. It's the "why" behind their actions and choices. It's what fuels their unwavering dedication to confront the lurking terrors in the shadows and the relentless forces that propel them forward on The Silent Road. This aspect of their character grants them a unique and compelling sense of purpose, setting them apart as Gloomstalkers with distinct motivations and inner fires that burn brightly. It's their driving force and the very heart of their identity.

Select a Raison D'etre and document it along with your response to the narrative prompt:

1. **Defender:** Your existence as a Gloomstalker is driven by the desire to protect the unaware populace from the dangers of The Rust-Hued Gloom. You see yourself as a guardian of the ignorant, striving to keep them safe from the malevolent forces lurking in the shadows.

(*Narrative Prompt:* What was the pivotal moment that made you realize your duty to protect others?)

2. **Seekers:** You have chosen the path of a Gloomstalker because you are fascinated by the enigmatic nature of the Gloom. Your insatiable curiosity drives you to uncover its mysteries and comprehend the unfathomable Whispers of Power. Your journey is an intellectual pursuit as much as it is a quest for self-discovery.

(*Narrative Prompt:* What was your most profound revelation about the Gloom during your early years?)

3. **Harmonizer:** Your decision to become a Gloomstalker stems from your unique nature. You've always been different, lacking the Hue that others have. This path is about embracing your uniqueness, connecting with fellow citizens of Pyresh, and proving that those without Hue are not dangerous monsters.

(*Narrative Prompt:* How did your peers react when they first noticed your lack of Hue?)

4. **Avenger:** You've experienced the prejudice and fear that ignorance can breed. As a Gloomstalker, you aim to challenge those biases and prejudices head-on. Your goal is to protect those who may be treated poorly due to immutable characteristics.

(*Narrative Prompt:* Describe a significant encounter where you challenged someone's misconceptions about Gloomstalkers.)

5. **Survivor:** Your journey as a Gloomstalker began with a personal tragedy or near-death experience caused by the Gloom. You've survived where others haven't, and you carry the scars, both physical and emotional. Now, you're determined to confront the Gloom and make sure no one else suffers as you have.

(*Narrative Prompt:* What was the life-altering event that led you to become a Gloomstalker?)

6. **Champion:** You believe in the balance of the world, and you've observed how the Gloom affects it. Your mission as a Gloomstalker is to ensure that the Gloom's influence remains in equilibrium with the rest of Pyresh. You strive to prevent either side from tipping the scales too far.

(*Narrative Prompt:* How do you perceive the balance between the Gloom and the rest of Pyresh?)

Or, create your own custom Raison D'etre if the ones provided don't fit your character concept using these guidelines:

- Reflect on your Gloomstalker's core motivations. What internal drive compelled them towards this dangerous path?
- Consider formative experiences that sparked their interest in seeking out the Gloom. Did a traumatic event lead them to that point?
- What personal virtues or flaws shape their view of the Gloomstalker role? Do they crave adventure? Redemption? Belonging?
- Is there a particular injustice or external threat that ignited their desire to act? Inequality? Prejudice? Suffering of others?
- Are they seeking mastery of an esoteric craft? Forbidden knowledge? Or to prove themselves worthy?
- Do they have issues trusting authority? Were they forced into this role unwittingly? Past harmful experiences with nobility?
- Describe their Raison D'etre in 1-2 sentences capturing their essence and what fuels them.
- Craft a prompt about a key moment that illuminated their purpose and commitment to this path, then answer it with as much detail as you can.

Tom must now define Wren's Raison D'etre.

Tom wants Wren to be a Survivor, someone who has been through personal tragedy and is now driven to confront the horrors of the Gloom, so he used the following Narrative Prompt:

"What was the life-altering event that led you to become a Gloomstalker?"

His answer: Wren survived an attack by a Rust-Hued abomination that decimated their village. Wren was the only survivor, scarred both physically and emotionally. This traumatic event drives them to prevent others from suffering the same fate.

Attachments

Attachments are an integral aspect of your Solemn Burden, playing a pivotal role in shaping your Gloomstalker's emotional connections within the enigmatic world of Pyresh. These bonds can manifest in various ways, encompassing profound relationships with individuals, deep affection for specific places, or unwavering commitment to enduring principles and beliefs. Your selected Attachments provide a profound glimpse into your character's motivations to confront the encroaching darkness, laying bare their humanity and the core values guiding their path. These emotional anchors not only define your Gloomstalker's identity but also illuminate the principles they hold dear amidst unyielding challenges.

Attachments, within the context of the game, are usually conveyed through short phrases or single words that can be easily integrated into narrative prompts. They can be categorized into three types: Individuals, Locations, and Ideals. In this part, you will select one term from each category to establish the narrative basis for the second aspect of your Solemn Burden. Alternatively, you can use the provided options as a source of inspiration and follow the guidelines at the end of this section to craft your own Attachments that align more closely with your Gloomstalker concept.

Choose one Individual:	Choose one Location:	Choose one Ideal:
Sibling or Parent	My Hometown	Protect the Vulnerable
Trusted Confidant	The Mountains	Uphold Justice
Ruthless Adversary	A Childhood Haunt	Preserve Innocence
Lover or Spouse	A Secluded Cabin	Seek Redemption
Respected Mentor	My Family Estate	Inspire Hope
Childhood Friend	An Isolated Forest	Defend the Voiceless
Loyal Pet	A Hidden Cave	Foster Unity
Mysterious Stranger	A Secret Refuge	Unearth Hidden Truths
Fallen Comrade	A Deserted Beach	Heal the Weak
	An Old School	Spread a Philosophy

Continue Forming Your Story

Once you've picked an Attachment from each category—Individuals, Locations, and Ideals—you'll utilize these Attachments as narrative prompts to explore your Gloomstalker's background in more depth. Think about how each Attachment has influenced their decisions, molded their character, and guided their actions. Consider the connections between these Attachments and your chosen Raison D'etre, and reflect on how they've contributed to your Gloomstalker's journey along The Silent Road.

Furthermore, ensure that the details you write about your Attachments align seamlessly with your Gloomstalker's Raison D'etre, creating a cohesive narrative that tells the story of their life and experiences.

Tom has spent some time looking over the Attachments prompts, and has settled on the following choices:

- Individual: Wren's sister Merle who tragically succumbed to the Gloom.
- Location: Wren's home village of Thrix where they lost their family and livelihood.
- Ideal: To prevent any other innocent person from experiencing the same losses he has.

Altogether, Tom has now formed a solid foundation for him to begin writing Wren's backstory. Let's take a look at how he decides to incorporate that with his Raison D'etre of being a "Survivor":

"Wren Hallowbrook grew up in the quiet village of Thrix with their family, living a peaceful life until the Gloom descended. In the chaos, Wren's younger sister, Merle, was taken by the Gloom, and despite Wren's desperate attempts to save her, they were left as the only survivor. This tragic event left Wren scarred, both physically and emotionally, and solidified their determination to endure no matter the cost. Their Raison D'etre as a Survivor drives them forward, fueled by the pain of loss."

Unable to abandon their past, Wren frequently returns to the ruins of Thrix, haunted by the memory of their family and the life that was stolen from them. The village represents both Wren's failure and their motivation to continue.

Its destruction is a constant reminder of why they fight as a Gloomstalker, a burden they carry as they journey across Pyresh."

Wish

The Gloomstalker's Wish is a profound embodiment of their most fervent hopes, dreams, or aspirations—a guiding light that beckons them forward, even if its realization remains elusive. This desire, while it may seem unattainable, serves as the driving force behind their journey and resonates at the core of their being. It is the very heart of the Solemn Burden they carry, a constant reminder that propels them to persist on a path that might forever remain just beyond their reach.

Your Wish should align with the backstory you've constructed using your Raison D'etre and Attachments. It should seamlessly integrate with your character's motivations and experiences. Wishes can take various forms, ranging from tangible goals like "Locate the Source of the Gloom" to more abstract pursuits like "Find Inner Peace." Each Wish encapsulates a deep desire that shapes your Gloomstalker's purpose and fuels their journey.

Although crafting your own unique Wish is highly encouraged to enhance your immersion into your Gloomstalker's role, here's a list of potential Wishes you can select from as inspiration:

- **Redeem My Past Mistakes:** Your Gloomstalker seeks to make amends for a grievous error they once committed.
- **Uncover the Truth:** Your Gloomstalker is determined to uncover hidden secrets or long-buried truths, no matter the cost.
- **Protect My Loved Ones:** Your Gloomstalker's greatest desire is to ensure the safety and well-being of their cherished family or friends.
- **Bring Justice to the Wicked:** Your Gloomstalker is driven by a sense of justice, aiming to right the wrongs committed by those who evade retribution.
- **Find Inner Peace:** Your Gloomstalker seeks tranquility and harmony within themselves, aiming to overcome personal turmoil.
- **Master the Whispers of Power:** Your Gloomstalker is determined to unlock the full potential of the mysterious "Whispers of Power" that permeate Pyresh.
- **Discover the Origin of the Gloom:** Your Gloomstalker yearns to trace the origins of the enigmatic Rust-Hued Gloom that shrouds Pyresh.
- **Save Pyresh from Desolation:** Your Gloomstalker's Wish is to protect Pyresh from the impending doom that threatens it.
- **Find a Lost Loved One:** Your Gloomstalker longs to reunite with a lost friend, family member, or lover.
- **Become a Legendary Hero:** Your Gloomstalker aspires to achieve legendary status and be remembered throughout Pyresh's history.

Using Your Wish as a Catalyst

Your Gloomstalker's Wish isn't just a distant dream; it's a driving force that has played a crucial role in shaping their journey. Incorporating your Wish into your character's backstory provides a powerful catalyst for their path as a Gloomstalker. Here are some factors to consider when integrating your Wish into your narrative:

- **The Origin of the Wish:** Delve into the origins of your Gloomstalker's Wish. Was it a long-cherished dream, a promise made, or a deep-seated desire? Describe why this Wish holds such significance for your character.
- **Unintended Fate:** Not every Gloomstalker chose this path willingly. Some may have been thrust into it by circumstances beyond their control. Reflect on how your character's Wish may have inadvertently led them to become a Gloomstalker. This twist of fate adds complexity to their backstory.
- **Decision-Making Moments:** Highlight pivotal moments where your character's Wish influenced critical decisions. These moments could involve personal sacrifices, difficult choices, or leaps of faith. Explore how your Gloomstalker's commitment to their Wish has shaped their character.
- **Consequences and Challenges:** Pursuing a Wish often comes with consequences and challenges. Consider how your Gloomstalker has faced adversity, struggled, or encountered unexpected obstacles in their journey to fulfill their Wish. These challenges can provide depth and conflict to your character's story.
- **Evolving Motivations:** As your Gloomstalker's journey unfolds, their motivations may evolve. Describe how the pursuit of their Wish has transformed them, whether it strengthened their resolve or introduced doubt. How does their evolving motivation align with the path of a Gloomstalker?

Remember that your character's Wish is a dynamic element in their story, guiding their actions and decisions throughout their life. By incorporating your Wish into your backstory, you not only provide a compelling narrative but also connect your Gloomstalker's past to their present role on The Silent Road.

On the following page we will check back in with Tom, and see how his chosen Wish has affected the backstory he has crafted for Wren.

After reflecting on Wren's journey, Tom chooses "Redeem My Past Mistakes" as Wren's Wish. This aligns perfectly with Wren's Raison D'etre as a Survivor and their profound sense of guilt over failing to protect their sister, Merle, and their village of Thrix. Let's see how that affects Wren's backstory now:

"Wren's Wish is to Redeem My Past Mistakes, a desire rooted in the tragedy that shaped their entire life. As a Survivor, Wren is haunted by the failure to protect their younger sister, Merle, and their home village of Thrix from the Gloom. This loss drives Wren's every action, shaping their mission as a Gloomstalker. They believe that by confronting the Gloom and preventing others from experiencing the same devastation, they might one day find redemption for the lives they couldn't save.

The origins of Wren's Wish go back to that fateful day when the Gloom descended upon Thrix. Amidst the chaos, Wren fought desperately to save Merle, but she was lost to the horrors of the Gloom. That moment has haunted Wren ever since, fueling their deep guilt. Wren made a vow: no matter how difficult the path, they would atone for their failure by confronting the Gloom head-on, saving as many lives as possible, and ensuring that no one else suffers the way they did.

This Wish is not just about vengeance but about redemption. Wren carries their sister's charm as a constant reminder of the past, returning often to the ruins of Thrix to reflect on their purpose. The weight of their past decisions pushes Wren to protect the innocent, aligning with their ideal of preventing anyone else from suffering the same loss. Each village saved, each abomination defeated, brings Wren closer to redeeming their past mistakes, though the journey is long and fraught with self-doubt. Every failure feels like a reminder of the loss they couldn't prevent, but each victory is a step closer to peace."

Wren's Wish connects all aspects of their character. Their Raison D'etre as a Survivor, their attachments to Merle and Thrix, and their ideal of protecting others are all bound to this singular desire. It defines their path on The Silent Road, pushing them forward through hardship and despair, all in the hope of one day finding the redemption they seek.

Finalizing Your Solemn Burdens

With your Raison D'etre, Attachments, and Wish selected, you now possess the fundamental building blocks to finalize a multifaceted backstory for your Gloomstalker. As seen in the example, Tom was able to choose a fitting Wish for Wren after establishing his Raison D'etre and Attachments.

The Wish questions also prompted Tom to reflect more deeply on aspects of Wren's journey to becoming a Gloomstalker. This highlighted details and motivations he had not fully considered before.

Following Tom's example by carefully integrating your own selections into a cohesive backstory will provide the narrative depth to roleplay a unique hero along the Silent Road.

As you refine your backstory, keep these elements at the forefront:

- **Raison D'etre:** This represents the very core of what compels your Gloomstalker down this grim path. All other aspects should logically tie back to this profound purpose.
- **Attachments:** These emotional anchors reflect what your Gloomstalker holds most dear. Incorporate details on how these bonds have shaped their character and choices.
- **Wish:** This embodies their burning aspiration, which serves as an elusive guiding light. Consider how pursuing this wish has impacted their journey.

With each draft, strengthen the connections between these components. Use the provided narrative prompts to add color and depth. The goal is a handcrafted backstory brimming with resonance.

Finally, reflect on your Gloomstalker's beginnings and imagine their future. How have they changed? Where might their path lead? This bridges their history to the unfolding narrative.

By patiently shaping their Solemn Burden, your Gloomstalker will come alive as a distinct character. Their motives and values will drive their decisions and actions. When their essence resonates so profoundly, your story along the Silent Road will flow naturally, guided by their inner light kindled through your creativity.

Penumbral Path

With your character concept and backstory firmly established, it's time to delve into the mechanics and statistics that breathe life into your Gloomstalker. These intricate elements, harmonizing with your character's tale, are guided by the 'Penumbral Path' your Gloomstalker embarks upon. This chosen path becomes a defining facet of your character's identity and journey. It wields a direct influence over your character's capabilities and progression, shaping their starting Skill Ranks, offering bonuses when harnessing Gloomtide Surge Points, and defining the initial two Advantages your Gloomstalker's Penumbral Path Abilities grant you. The selection of your path extends beyond mere mechanics; it embodies your character's distinct narrative and position within the immersive realm of Pyresh.

The Penumbral Triumvirate

Within each Penumbral Path lies a trinity of essential elements known as "The Penumbral Triumvirate." These three vital components - Skills, Surge Bonus, and Abilities - form the core foundation of your Gloomstalker's identity and journey. They work in unison to shape a Gloomstalker whose expertise aligns with the narrative you envision and the mechanical gameplay experience you seek in "The Silent Road" RPG. Your chosen Penumbral Path breathes life into this intricate triad, molding your character's strengths and capabilities as they navigate the shadowed realms of Pyresh.

Our journey begins by introducing you to the five Skills that Gloomstalkers must master during their initial year of academic pursuit before their formal initiation, providing a concise overview of their distinctive qualities. Subsequently, we will offer a brief overview of the five primary Paths available to new Gloomstalkers, allowing you to become acquainted with their distinct characteristics. Following this, you will delve deeper into the Initiation Rites and rejoin our example player, Tom, to witness the progress in his Character Creation journey. After reviewing Tom's initial choices, you will have the opportunity to explore each Path in detail, understanding the unique benefits each one bestows. Finally, you will be prepared to select the path that resonates most profoundly with your character concept.

Moreover, in this section, we extend beyond predefined Penumbral Paths, equipping you with comprehensive guidance to craft your own bespoke Penumbral Path. This path can be seamlessly integrated into the established Pyresh setting or adapted for use in your preferred setting, adding a distinctive layer to your Gloomstalker's character. We ensure you have all the necessary tools and insights to maintain balance and coherence while forging your customized path.

Penumbral Arts

The Gloomstalker's Penumbral Arts form the very foundation of how they interact with their every *Ability* and *Action*. During *Initiation* (Character Creation), new Gloomstalkers will choose a Path which shapes the foundations of which *Arts* they will be most proficient with.

These Penumbral Arts can be used to perform various *Action Terms*—phrases that describe what a player wishes to accomplish within any given *Scene* or *Conflict*, such as “**climb** a wall.” Additionally, each of your Gloomstalker's *Penumbral Arts* has an *Art Rank* associated with it. This serves as a measure of proficiency, and determines how many successes a player must roll to succeed when using that *Art* in any given *Scene* or *Conflict*. In upcoming sections, we will explore these elements in greater detail to give you a deeper understanding of the Penumbral Arts.

Action Terms

As outlined in the “Action Dice” section starting on page 5, The Silent Road uses a free-form approach to actions, meaning there is no fixed list of actions to choose from. Instead, players, with the Augur's guidance, define what is possible and how it is done. When a player wants to perform an action in a scene, they simply describe their intended action using an Action Term and justify which Penumbral Art they believe best fits that action.

Term Mastery

As you navigate the world of Pyresh and engage in various scenes, you will become familiar with specific Action Terms that your Gloomstalker may use more frequently than others in their party. It's a good idea to keep track of these in your journal. Each time you achieve a Resounding Success while using an Action that includes a particular term, mark a small pip next to that term. Conversely, if you experience a Critical Failure while using that term, erase all accumulated pips for that term.

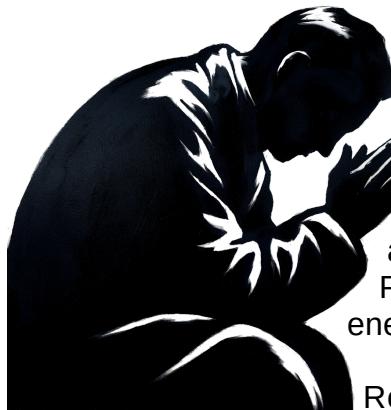
Once you accumulate five (5) full pips without suffering a Critical Failure, you achieve Mastery over that term. This means you will automatically succeed when performing an action that includes that term in the future. However, to achieve a Resounding Success while using a Mastered Term, you must still roll as normal.

Art Rank

Each *Penumbral Art* has an *Art Rank*, which indicates your level of expertise. Your starting rank for each *Penumbral Art* is determined by the *Penumbral Path* you choose during *Initiation*. This ranking system ranges from 1 to 5, with 1 representing the highest level of mastery in any given *Art*. Your *Art Rank* dictates the number of *Successes* you need to roll when utilizing an *Art* in any given scene to achieve an overall success. In the following sections, we will delve deeper into these concepts, providing a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics within the Penumbral Arts.

Reverence

Example Terms: Activate Mechanism, Disarm Trap, Disable Alarm, Venture Inside, Sabotage, Run, Rust-Hued Gloom Cloud, Siege, War Zone



The Penumbral Art of Reverence delves deeply into the intricate and profound aspects of Gloomstalker training, particularly in the realm of philosophy and metaphysics. It grants Gloomstalkers a profound familiarity with the elusive and intangible forces that pervade Pyresh.

Those who specialize in Reverence possess a unique and profound connection with the enigmatic "Whispers of Power," enabling them to manipulate these mysterious energies through a practice known as "Whisperweaving."

Reverence encompasses not only the practical application of Whispers but also a profound understanding of how to harness the inherent properties of ancient and arcane artifacts referred to as "Mementos." This mastery of Reverence allows Gloomstalkers to wield these forces for various purposes, making them adept at navigating the intricate web of energies that flow throughout Pyresh.

Adaptability

Example Terms: Climb Up, Disarm Trap, Disable Alarm, Hunt/Forage, Jump Over, Make Camp, Pass Time, Pick Lock, Sneak Through, Swim Across, Venture Inside, Raid Supplies, Run, Rust-Hued Gloom Cloud, Strategic Withdrawal, War Zone, Weather Event

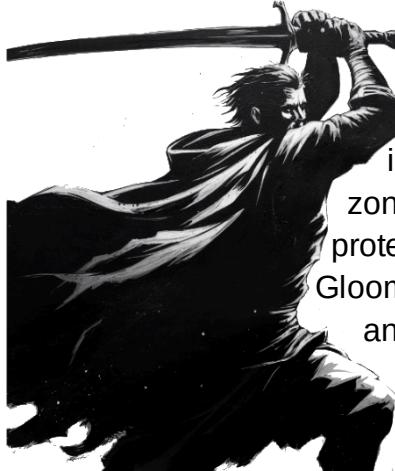
The Penumbral Art of Adaptability relates to the finesse of quick thinking, nimble maneuvers, and the ability to disarm traps with precision.

Gloomstalkers who hone their skills in Adaptability possess the dexterity to navigate hazardous landscapes, evade danger with elegance, and disable intricate mechanisms. This art not only enables them to react swiftly to unexpected obstacles but also empowers them to deliver precise, light strikes when needed, making them invaluable in situations that demand agility, versatility, and precision. Whether they are infiltrating hidden sanctuaries or traversing treacherous terrains, these Gloomstalkers are the embodiment of adaptability, capable of turning any challenge to their advantage with grace and finesse.



Warfare

Example Terms: Bash Barrier, Combat, Duel, Escort, Hold Out, Hostage Situation, Raid Supplies, Siege, Strategic Withdrawal, War Zone



The Penumbral Art of Warfare deals in measured combat and destructive prowess. Gloomstalkers who choose this path excel in delivering calculated, heavy strikes. Whether it's dueling opponents, defending allies, or navigating war zones, Warfare is their language for overcoming challenges and protecting the vulnerable in Pyresh's perilous world. These Gloomstalkers are masters of strength and precision, trained to analyze battlefield dynamics and strike with pinpoint accuracy. They stand as bulwarks, ready to confront threats head-on and keep the darkness of Pyresh at bay. With their keen battle instincts and unwavering resolve, they emerge as formidable champions, ensuring that the light of hope endures even in the face of the realm's deepest shadows.

Social

Example Terms: Gamble, Converse, Hostage Situation, Venture Inside, War Zone

The Penumbral Art of Social delves into the intricate dance of interpersonal relationships, communication, and influence. Gloomstalkers who specialize in Social skills are adept at navigating the complexities of human nature, be it through charming conversation, shrewd negotiation, or even the art of intimidation. They excel in understanding the motivations of NPCs and factions, using their insights to forge alliances, gather vital information, and manipulate situations to their advantage. The Social Art is a reflection of a Gloomstalker's capacity to shape the world not just through brute force, but also through the power of words, persuasion, and diplomacy. It is the art of mastering the human element within the dark and enigmatic realm of Pyresh.



Observation

Example Terms: Gather Rumors, Activate Mechanism, Assess Ruins, Follow Tracks, Locate Vantage Point, Search Location, Survey Area



The Penumbral Art of Observation is a discipline that hones Gloomstalkers' senses and elevates their awareness to unparalleled levels. These Gloomstalkers are masters of perception, capable of discerning even the most minute details in their surroundings. With their heightened senses, they can track elusive footprints, unveil concealed threats, and decipher enigmatic clues that others might overlook. This art bestows upon them the ability to read the world as if it were an open book, revealing its hidden truths and guiding them through its intricate mysteries. With Observation, Gloomstalkers become the ultimate seekers of knowledge and the guardians of secrets, using their acute awareness to unravel the secrets that lie beneath the surface of Pyresh's enigmatic landscape.

A note about Example Terms:

While the example terms provided are directly tied to particular Penumbral Arts, this is not entirely set in stone, and players may argue a case for why they believe any given Term could apply to a completely different Art.

The main intention is to focus on free-form fun, and emergent storytelling.

A Basic Overview of Penumbral Paths

Let's begin by delving deeper into the concept of Penumbral Paths. As mentioned earlier, each Penumbral Path offers a Gloomstalker their "Penumbral Triumvirate." This consists of a predetermined Major Skill specialization, the flexibility to choose a Minor Skill specialization, an exclusive power unlocked by spending Gloomtide Surge Points in a Scene, and two Penumbral Path Abilities presented as Advantages.

We will provide you with a clear and concise overview of each path, offering you a comprehensive understanding of the distinct advantages and attributes associated with each one. This will provide you with an initial glimpse into the diverse paths your Gloomstalker can follow.

Path of the Soiled Hands

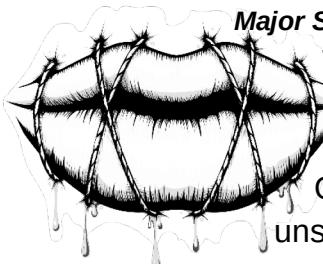
Major Skill: Warfare

For individuals who embrace the Path of the Soiled Hands, their primary emphasis lies in harnessing raw, concentrated strength, applied with unwavering determination. This path encompasses abilities associated with demolishing structures, enduring unforgiving environments, and delivering powerful blows. Those Gloomstalkers who adhere to this path are unrelenting warriors, wielding their formidable might as a weapon of devastation against anyone who has become a victim of The Gloom.



Path of the Muted Sibilance

Major Skill: Reverence



The Muted Sibilance path delves into the mystical manipulation of Whispers of Power. It encompasses Whisperweaving, the art of using Mementos, and a deep connection to spirituality. Gloomstalkers on this path gain profound reverence for the unseen forces that shape Pyresh, allowing them to harness the very essence of these whispers.

Path of the Sanguine Boot

Major Skill: Adaptability

Sanguine Boot is a path for Gloomstalkers who excel in quick thinking and nimble maneuvers. This path emphasizes the ability to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances, allowing practitioners to navigate treacherous environments with agility and precision. Gloomstalkers on this road are masters of improvisation, turning unexpected challenges into opportunities for success.



Path of the Tranquil Countenance



Major Skill: Social

The Tranquil Countenance path revolves around the art of socializing. It includes skills in negotiation, bartering, interrogation, and the delicate practice of pacifistic conflict resolution. Gloomstalkers on this path are masterful diplomats, adept at navigating the intricate web of social interactions.

Path of the Penetrating Iris

Major Skill: Observation

The Penetrating Iris path focuses on the keen observation of details. It encompasses skills such as charting courses, acquiring profound knowledge about the world, and the uncanny ability to perceive danger before it strikes. Gloomstalkers on this path possess an unyielding curiosity and unparalleled perception.



Initiation Rites

Upon conscription into the Gloomstalkers, recruits dedicate a year to intellectual enlightenment, a fundamental principle for Gloomstalkers. Afterward, they undergo assessments, including written tests, interviews, and character evaluations. Only those excelling in these evaluations earn a unique opportunity: selection by a mentor. The mentor presents them with their first Gloommantle, a durable silk cloak symbolizing their initiation into the Gloomstalkers. Initiates then embark on a three-day contemplation in solitude, abstaining from sustenance, sewing the symbol of their chosen Path onto their Gloommantle upon emergence. This marks the commencement of five years of training and commitment.

View your Initiation as the pivotal narrative moment that precedes your choice of Path. Take a moment to contemplate how your Gloomstalker spent six years in training, the profound transformation brought about by the Initiation ritual, and the values and sense of purpose instilled by their mentor. This introspection will serve as a guiding influence in making your ultimate decision about which Path aligns best with your character's journey. Additionally, this period can be utilized to infuse further depth into your character's backstory, although this step is optional.

Before diving deeper into the details of each Penumbral Path, let's check back in with Tom and his character creation process.

Initiation Rites and Choosing the Path

After rigorous training in the Gloomstalkers' academy, Wren approached the final Initiation Rites. Here, each recruit would meditate on their purpose and choose the Penumbral Path that aligned with their inner fire. During his solitary contemplation, memories of Merle and Thrix sharpened Wren's resolve, reminding him why he had come so far. He recognized he was not like those who favored brute strength or mystical arts—Wren was a quick thinker, a survivor who had thrived by adapting to his circumstances.

Reflecting on his strengths, Wren chose the Path of the Sanguine Boot, a journey that would hone his ability to move swiftly and decisively, turning the treacherous landscapes of Pyresh to his advantage. The Sanguine Boot path emphasized adaptability, something that Wren's life had taught him was essential in surviving the Gloom. Here, he could refine his skill at navigating perilous environments, leveraging speed and agility to protect himself and others. With this choice, Wren knew he was honoring the memory of Merle, carrying forward her spirit in his promise to shield others from the Gloom's destructive force.

Integration of Path and Abilities

As part of the Sanguine Boot, Wren developed an Adaptability rank that allowed him to blend into his surroundings and use his environment as a weapon. He chose Observation as his secondary skill, heightening his senses to better detect subtle changes—a critical advantage in the shadowed world of Pyresh. His Wound Threshold, set at 12, was a reminder of his human limitations, but Wren's resolve was his strongest weapon.

With abilities like Nimble Escape and Opportunist, he gained tools to evade traps and exploit openings in combat, reinforcing his role as a swift, resourceful Gloomstalker.

Now that we've seen Tom's path selection process for Wren, let's examine the intricate details of each Penumbral Path. Gaining this deeper knowledge will provide valuable insights as you choose your own ideal path moving forward.

Path of the Soiled Hands

For Gloomstalkers who walk the Path of the Soiled Hands, their primary focus lies in harnessing raw, concentrated strength and applying it with unwavering determination against the darkness of Pyresh. This path encompasses abilities associated with demolishing structures, enduring unforgiving environments, and delivering powerful, devastating blows.

Gloomstalkers who adhere to the Path of the Soiled Hands are unrelenting warriors, wielding their formidable might as a weapon against the victims of The Gloom. Their mastery of the Penumbral Art of Warfare allows them to excel in delivering calculated, heavy strikes with precision. Whether dueling opponents, defending allies, or navigating war zones, warfare is their language for overcoming challenges and protecting the vulnerable.



These stalwart Gloomstalkers stand as bulwarks, ready to confront threats head-on and keep the darkness at bay with their keen battle instincts and unwavering resolve. They emerge as formidable champions, wielding strength and precision to ensure that the light of hope endures even in the face of Pyresh's deepest shadows. The Path of the Soiled Hands has a major skill focus in Warfare, allowing adherents to analyze battlefield dynamics and strike with pinpoint accuracy as masters of combat.

Allocate Starting Art Skill Ranks & Wound Threshold

- **Warfare** begins at Skill Rank 3.
- **Choose One Penumbral Art** from Adaptability, Observation, Reverence, or Social. The Art chosen begins at Skill Rank 4.
- **All Other Arts** begin at Skill Rank 5.
- **Wound Threshold** begins at 14.

Choose One Gloomtide Surge Bonus

- **Striker:** When you spend **(1+)** Surge Points on performing any Action that may inflict Wounds upon a target, you deal *1 Additional Wound on a Success, and you deal 2 Additional Wounds on a Resounding Success for each Surge Point spent on that action.*
- **Relentless Assault:** When you land an attack on a target, you may choose to expend **(2)** Surge Points to immediately *repeat that attack on the same target.* This may be repeated multiple times assuming you have the required Surge Points to spend.
- **Siege Master:** When you spend **(3+)** Surge Points on performing an Action which is intended to bend, break, or destroy an object, *you automatically succeed, causing 10 Wounds worth of damage to the object.*
- **Phoenix:** When you reach the Maimed Condition, you may choose to expend **all of your current Surge Points** to *heal yourself for a number of Wounds equal to the number of Surge Points spent.*

Choose Two Abilities

- **Iron-Skinned:** If you ever receive 3 or more Wounds from a single attack, you can reduce the wounds received by 1.
- **Ranger:** While your Conviction is in the positive range and you are not within a village, town or city, you gain 1 additional Action Dice that may be used continuously on any of your Penumbral Arts.
- **Blood Frenzy:** After landing a Resounding Success on an Action which would deal enough Wounds to kill an enemy, you enter a frenzy for the remainder of the Conflict. In this state, you may choose to take two separate actions which would inflict Wounds instead of one, on each of your turns. However you must reduce your Conviction by 1 for each turn spent in this frenzy until your Conviction reaches -3, at that point you become exhausted and can no longer act until resting.
- **Devastator:** Once per Conflict, you can deal your Armament Wound Value multiplied by two (X2) if you successfully land a hit on an enemy, this multiplier increases to times three (X3) on a Resounding Success

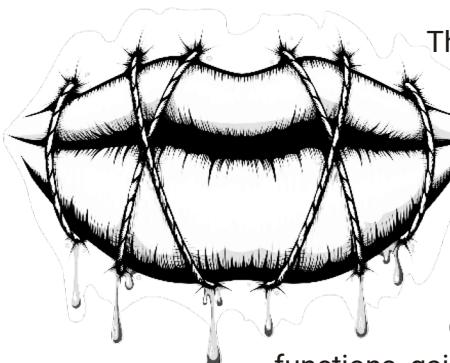
(This includes any additional Wound bonuses you receive upon achieving a Resounding Success.)

- **Bloodlust:** If you enter a Conflict, with four (4) or more Combatants, you immediately gain 1 Gloomtide Surge Point (up to your Surge Point limit).
- **Fearsome Aspect:** If you or a party member are the ones to initiate a Conflict, you may immediately attempt to use your Social Penumbral Art to intimidate one of the opponents. On a Success, select 1 enemy, that enemy will now permanently deal 1 less Wound when successfully landing a hit on you for the rest of the Scene. On a Resounding Success, this effect applies to all enemies for the remainder of the Conflict.
- **War Cry:** Once per Conflict you may let out a vicious and empowering shout. When you do this, all Allies, including yourself immediately heal for one (1) Wound, and their Conviction also increases by one (1).

Rank Advancement

- **Rank 4:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 3:** Increase Wound Threshold by 2, the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 2:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1, choose 1 additional Ability to add to your retinue, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 1:** Increase Wound Threshold by 2, the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.

Path of the Muted Sibilance



The Path of Muted Sibilance focuses on mastering obscure rituals to commune with the enigmatic Whispers of Power permeating Pyresh. Through intense study and mystic training, adherents learn to harness these latent forces, engaging in esoteric practices like Whisperweaving to manipulate the fabric of reality.

Devoted acolytes of this Path carefully attune their minds to comprehend the Whispers underpinning Pyresh's metaphysical functions, gaining insights unattainable through mundane means. Their primary focus lies in honing the Penumbral Art of Reverence above all others in order to unlock this metaphysical perception.

Whether unraveling an ancient codex or conjuring power from a Memento artifact, for Gloomstalkers following this Path, intellect and skills of perception are their true weapons. Guided by cryptic mentors, they walk a scholarly path mastering forces beyond most minds..

Allocate Starting Art Skill Ranks & Wound Threshold

- **Reverence** begins at Skill Rank 3.
- **Choose One Penumbral Art** from Adaptability, Observation, Warfare, or Social. The Art chosen begins at Skill Rank 4.
- **All Other Arts** begin at Skill Rank 5.
- **Wound Threshold** begins at 10.

Choose One Gloomtide Surge Bonus

- **Focused Mind:** When you spend **(1+)** Surge Points on your Reverence Roll when activating a Memento's power, you may *re-roll any 1's from the result of that Reverence Roll once, keeping the new result.*
- **Truth-Seeker:** You may choose to spend **2** Surge Points when asking a question during a conversation with an NPC or fellow Gloomstalker. When you do, you *will immediately know with certainty whether the answer is truthful or a lie. However, if someone is only telling a half-truth, you will not be able to determine which part of the statement is a lie.*
- **Axiomatic:** If you have already spoken one of your memorized Axioms in a Whisper, you may spend **3 Surge Points** to speak it again without suffering the normal penalties for using an Axiom more than once in a 24-hour period. This may only be done once per Axiom until another 48 hours have passed.
- **Surge Protector:** Any time you spend **(3+)** Surge Points on a Reverence Roll, and then subsequently achieve a Success on that roll, you *may restore 1 of the spent Surge Points. Additionally, if you achieve a Resounding Success, you may restore 2 of the spent Surge Points.*

Choose Your Axioms

Refer to the Codex of Axioms on Page 101 and choose two additional Prefixes and Intents, plus one Suffix, which you may then add to your list of Memorized Axioms.

Choose One Ability

- **Surreptitious Speaker:** When attempting to perform Whisperweaving while in earshot of 6 or more living beings who are capable of comprehending speech, you can roll 1 additional Action Dice on your Reverence Roll.
- **Combat Attuned:** When attempting to use a Memento during a Conflict, you can roll 1 additional Action Dice on your Reverence Roll.
- **Scholar:** You are knowledgeable of every written language which is, or has been present on Pyresh and are not required to perform actions involving reading and writing. Additionally, you are able to decipher most cryptographic languages too. (This of course does not apply to Axioms.)
- **Blood Echo:** You may choose to inflict 4 Wounds upon yourself when performing an act of Whisperweaving. When you do this, you automatically succeed on your Reverence Roll and can immediately begin speaking your Axioms. There is no way to achieve a Resounding Success on a Whisper in this manner, however, you may use this ability to circumvent the Reverence Penalties associated with reusing Axioms. (The normal 24-hour cooldown will then be applied to the twice-used Axioms after activating them in this way.)
- **Wayfinder:** Once per day when you are traveling in the Wilderness, you may make a Reverence Roll to listen to the Whispers of Power in an attempt to find your way. On a Failure, you gain no information. On a Success, you know the general direction you are supposed to be heading to reach your destination. On a Resounding Success, you know the exact direction and distance of your destination. On a Critical Failure, your connection to the Whispers are temporarily muted, you may not attempt this ability again for 1 full week.
- **Greater Bargainer:** When you take enough wounds to reach your Critical Wound Threshold and enter a “Fight for Your Life Scene,” you can choose to exchange all XP earned at your current Rank as a Bargain instead of giving up full Ranks. This only may be used 3 times.

Rank Advancement

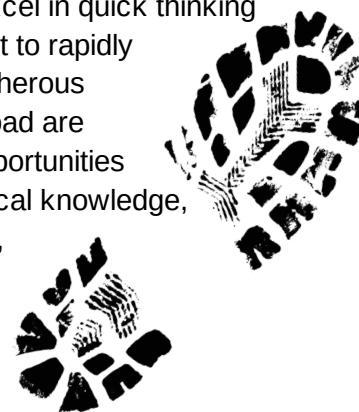
- **Rank 4:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 3:** Increase the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, choose any 3 new Axioms to memorize, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 2:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1, choose 1 additional Ability to add to your retinue, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 1:** Increase the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, choose 3 new Axioms to memorize, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.

Path of the Sanguine Boot

The Path of the Sanguine Boot is ideal for Gloomstalkers who excel in quick thinking and nimble maneuvers. This path emphasizes the ability to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances, allowing practitioners to navigate treacherous environments with agility and precision. Gloomstalkers on this road are masters of improvisation, turning unexpected challenges into opportunities for success. Rather than relying on brute strength or deep mystical knowledge, those who follow this path rely on their resourcefulness, reflexes, and adaptability to overcome obstacles.

This path attracts those who thrive under pressure, able to adjust their tactics on the fly and turn chaos into opportunity.

Whether it's navigating dangerous terrain, quickly responding to unforeseen threats, or using their environment to their advantage, these Gloomstalkers live by their wits. The Sanguine Boot empowers them to move swiftly and decisively, avoiding danger and creating openings that others might miss.



Allocate Starting Art Skill Ranks & Wound Threshold

- **Adaptability** begins at Skill Rank 3.
- **Choose one Penumbrial Art** from Reverence, Observation, Warfare, or Social. The chosen Art begins at Rank 4.
- **All other Arts** begin at Rank 5.
- **Wound Threshold** begins at 12.

Choose One Gloomtide Surge Bonus

- **Nimble Escape:** You may spend **2 Surge Points** to immediately *remove yourself from a dangerous situation without requiring any sort of Action Roll*. Some things you may be able to escape from include: traps, environmental hazards, bindings, etc. and reposition yourself at a safe distance.
- **Opportunist:** After successfully landing a hit on an enemy, you may spend **1 Surge Point** to *strike them again immediately*. This second attack automatically hits and deals 1 Wound, regardless of your Armament's level. If this second hit defeats the enemy, you may target another nearby enemy and deal 1 Wound to them as well.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Once per day, when you spend **(1+)** Surge Points on any Adaptability Roll, you gain the "*Traveler's Boots*" Advantage. (*Increasing your Movement by 60 ft for one Scene or Conflict*). The effects of this Advantage last for a number of hours equal to the number of Surge Points spent during activation.
- **Reckless Runner:** Once per day, you may spend **2 Surge Points** to *dash through or intentionally trigger any Environmental Hazard without taking damage*. If you activate a one-time hazard, such as a trap, you effectively disarm it without harm to yourself or your party.
- **Reflex Save:** Once per combat, when an enemy targets you with an attack or action, you may spend **3 Surge Points** to *immediately evade the effect*. However, if you perform this maneuver while near allies, you must roll 1d4 to see if the attack hits one of them instead. On a roll of 1, 2, or 3, your allies are safe. On a roll of 4, the Augur may choose a different target, and that target receives the attack.

Choose Two Abilities

- **Distracting Presence:** Once per Conflict, you may shout obscenities at nearby enemies, attempting to draw their attention. Roll Adaptability. On a Success, you can choose one enemy whose focus shifts entirely onto you, even if there's a greater threat nearby. On a Failure, their attention remains unchanged. On a Resounding Success, you can choose up to three enemies to shift their focus to you. However, on a Critical Failure, your attempt backfires—enemies become enraged, and you suffer 2 additional Wounds from the next attack which is landed on you.
- **Gloomstride:** Once per day, you can attempt a short-distance teleportation. Choose an unoccupied, solid space within your line of sight and make an Adaptability Roll. On a Success, you teleport to the chosen area. On a Failure, you remain in your current location. On a Resounding Success, you teleport as intended, and your Gloomstride Ability automatically recharges, allowing you to use it again before the usual 24-hour cooldown. This recharge can happen endlessly in this way. However, if you roll a Critical Failure, you will teleport to a random location chosen by the Augur, take 2 Wounds, and cannot attempt another Gloomstride for 48 hours instead of the standard 24.
- **Sticky Fingers:** When performing acts of subterfuge, such as thievery, lock picking, or pickpocketing, you may add two additional Action Dice to your Adaptability Roll. Furthermore, you instinctively sense the most valuable item available for pilfering in your vicinity.
- **Feint:** During a Conflict, you may choose to feign an attack against an enemy. To do so, make an Adaptability Roll as an action. On a Success, you do not deal any damage, but instead cause the enemy to become confused. While in this state of temporary confusion, the next attack you or an ally lands on the enemy will deal double its normal damage. On a Failure, there is no effect. On a Resounding Success, the next attack that lands on the enemy will deal triple damage. Conversely, on a Critical Failure, the enemy sees through your trick and immediately retaliates with an unavoidable attack.
- **Spaghetti Step:** Once per Conflict, you can deftly maneuver behind a foe of your choice to inflict a critical strike. This Ability automatically hits, cannot be avoided, and deals damage equal to your Armament Wound Value multiplied by two (X2). Additionally, you may still roll the Action Dice, and on a Resounding Success, this bonus increases to times three (X3).
- **Expert Trapper:** You may disarm any simple mechanical trap without requiring a roll. Additionally, you are always able to salvage something of value from traps which have been successfully disarmed.
- **Mimicry:** You have the uncanny ability to mimic any voice you have heard previously, as long as you have heard the voice of the person you are mimicking for more than 10 minutes.

Rank Advancement

- **Rank 4:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 3:** Increase Wound Threshold by 2, the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 2:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1, choose 1 additional Ability to add to your retinue, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 1:** Increase Wound Threshold by 2, the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament

Path of the Tranquil Countenance



The Path of the Tranquil Countenance represents mastery of social intricacies and interpersonal dynamics. Gloomstalkers on this path refine the art of communication, negotiation, and understanding the motivations of others.

Rather than relying on brute force or mysticism, these Gloomstalkers use words and subtle manipulation to achieve their goals. Whether defusing a conflict through diplomacy, securing an ally with a well-crafted bargain, or uncovering secrets through careful questioning, their mind and tongues are their greatest assets.

This path attracts those skilled in psychology and body language, adept at "reading a room." They excel at finding social weaknesses, building rapport, and adapting to each interaction. These Gloomstalkers move others like chess pieces, with patience and calm, manipulating events with regal poise and grace.

Allocate Starting Art Skill Ranks & Wound Threshold

- **Social** begins at Skill Rank 3.
- **Choose One Penumbral Art** from Adaptability, Observation, Reverence, or Warfare. The Art chosen begins at Skill Rank 4.
- **All Other Arts** begin at Skill Rank 5.
- **Wound Threshold** begins at 8.

Choose One Gloomtide Surge Bonus

- **Fast-Talker:** When you use your Social Skill to make a wager, gamble, or haggle over the price of an item you are selling, you may spend **2 Surge Points**. If your Social Roll is a Success, you *receive double the reward or price. If the roll fails, you receive only half. On a Resounding Success, you receive triple the reward or price. However, on a Critical Failure, you will be barred from making any future sales, wagers, or financial interactions with the NPC involved.*
- **Commanding Tone:** Whenever you spend at least **2 Surge Points** on a Social Roll during a conversation with an NPC, you *automatically succeed*, causing the NPC to comply with your request or provide the information you seek. However, this ability cannot be used to make an NPC do something they find morally or physically impossible, nor can it override a refusal to do something they have already declined.
- **High Stakes Negotiator:** During a Conflict, if you have **(3+)** **Surge Points**, you may choose to expend all of them on a single Social Roll. On a Success, you *convince one enemy of your choice to surrender. If the roll fails, no effect occurs. On a Resounding Success, you convince up to three enemies to surrender. However, on a Critical Failure, your Conviction is immediately reduced by 2, and you lose your next turn.*
- **Subtle Manipulator:** When negotiating or discussing with three or more NPCs, you may spend **2 Surge Points** and attempt a Social Roll to *subtly shift their opinions*. On a Success, you sway the majority to align with your perspective, even if they were initially divided. On a Failure, your input is completely ignored. On a Resounding Success, you steer the entire conversation, ensuring the outcome benefits you without appearing forceful. On a Critical Failure, the group becomes suspicious of your intentions and will no longer trust your judgment on the matter at hand.

Choose Two Abilities

- **Friendly Face:** Upon entering a City, Town, or Village you have not previously been to, and initiating a conversation with an NPC for the first time, you gain 2 additional Action Dice which you may use on any Social Roll involving that NPC. This bonus can only be applied once per newly encountered Village, Town, or City.
- **Commander:** Once per Conflict you may grant all of your allies 1 additional Action Dice which they may use on any Warfare Roll. This effect lasts through the entire encounter, however, the Gloomstalker must announce they are adding their additional Action Dice to their Warfare Roll before making the roll.
- **Briber:** You may offer some of your Wealth to an NPC for a particularly strong Advantage in practically any future Social interaction with them. For every 50 Units of Wealth you give up, you may add 1 additional Action Dice which may be used on any Social Roll involving the NPC you gave the Wealth to. This effect is permanent, meaning you may add those additional Dice to every future Social Roll involving that NPC.
- **Shared Struggles:** Whenever your Wealth is at 0 and you interact with an NPC who appears similarly impoverished, their opinion becomes more favorable. This grants you 2 additional Action Dice on any Social Roll when dealing with that NPC. Additionally, you may ask for minor favors or assistance without requiring a Social Roll. However, their opinion returns to normal once your Wealth rises above 0.
- **Diplomatic Immunity:** Once per week you may weasel you and your party members out of a situation where tensions could escalate into conflict, by making a Social Roll to avoid consequences or blame. If successful, you gain temporary immunity from any repercussions of the situation giving you time to escape. On a Failure the scene would proceed as normal. On a Resounding Success, you successfully shift the blame onto another party. On a Critical Failure, you and your party will experience more severe consequences. (Up to the Augur's discretion.)
- **Unbreakable Will:** You cannot reach -3 Conviction; instead, -2 Conviction is the maximum negative Conviction you can attain.
- **Auctioneer:** Once per day when you are haggling, bartering, or striking a deal with an NPC, you may attempt Social Roll twice keeping the more favorable result.

Rank Advancement

- **Rank 4:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 3:** Increase the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, increase Critical Wound Threshold by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 2:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1, choose 1 additional Ability to add to your retinue, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 1:** Increase the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, increase Critical Wound Threshold, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.

Path of the Penetrating Iris

The Path of the Penetrating Iris draws Gloomstalkers with an insatiable thirst for knowledge and a keen sense of perception. These tacticians view observation and intellect as their sharpest weapons, favoring insight over brute strength or mystical prowess. Their approach to conflict and exploration is rooted in careful analysis, relying on mental acuity to uncover hidden truths and outmaneuver their foes.



Through intense training, they fine-tune their senses to detect even the smallest details that others would overlook. This heightened awareness allows them to see through lies and deception, spot traps and ambushes before they spring, and in combat, instantly identify the weaknesses in their enemies' defenses. By exploiting these vulnerabilities, they turn the tide of battle with precision strikes, making every attack count.

Beyond the battlefield, their extensive knowledge of Pyresh's history, geography, and culture makes them skilled navigators and strategists. Whether traversing treacherous terrain or deciphering ancient texts, they use their prodigious memory and deep understanding to guide their party through danger.

Allocate Starting Art Skill Ranks & Wound Threshold

- **Observation** begins at Skill Rank 3.
- **Choose One Penumbra Art** from Adaptability, Social, Reverence, or Warfare. The Art chosen begins at Skill Rank 4.
- **All Other Arts** begin at Skill Rank 5.
- **Wound Threshold** begins at 8.

Choose One Gloomtide Surge Bonus

- **Astute Scrounger:** Spend **1 Surge Point** during a Search Action. On a Success, you will always find at least one Object of value. On A Resounding Success, you find 2 objects of value.
- **Eagle-Eyed:** Spend **3 Surge Points** on an Observation Roll for tracking, navigating, or searching to automatically succeed in finding exactly what you seek if it is nearby.
- **Bulwark:** When an enemy's attack would exceed your Critical Wound Threshold, you may spend all your remaining Surge Points to reduce the Wounds by the number of Points spent.
- **Inquisitive Mind:** Spend **2 Surge Points** when reading a document or tome to automatically gain the same information you would on a Resounding Success.
- **Weak Point:** Spend **2 Surge Points** and roll Observation to assess an enemy's combat style. On a Success, the next attack you or an ally lands on the Combatant deals 2 additional Wounds, or 4 on a Resounding Success.

Choose Two Abilities

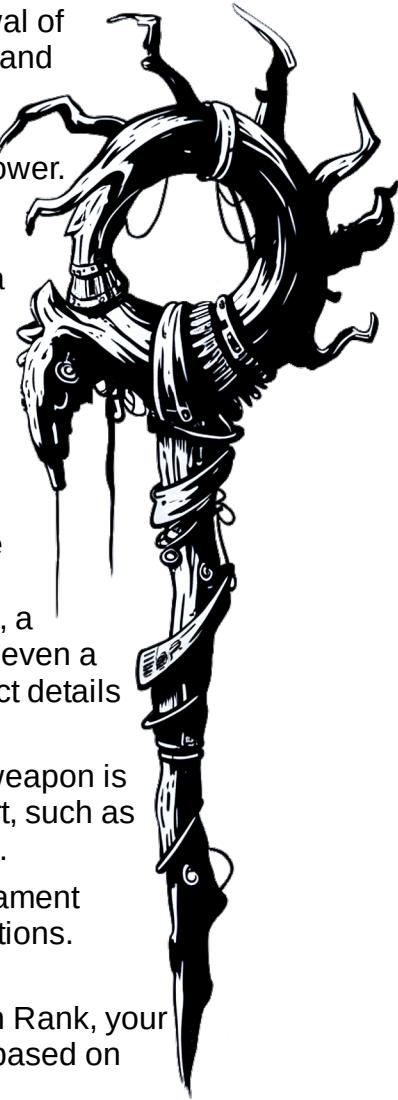
- **Leading Charge:** Any time you are the one to initiate a Conflict, you and your party will all deal 1 additional Wound on their first attack.
- **Probe:** Once per day, and after witnessing one of your allies deal any amount of Wounds to a foe, you may immediately make an Observation Roll. On a Success, you spot a specific weakness, and inform your allies. All of their attacks against that foe now do 1 additional Wound until the end of the Conflict. This bonus increases to 2 on a Resounding Success.
- **Shared Gloom:** Once per day, you may freely choose to spend up to three of your Surge Charges. When you do this, choose a number of allies equal to the number of Surges expended. The Allies chosen each regain 1 Surge Charge. (Gloomstalkers still cannot surpass the maximum of 5 Surge Charges, even with this method.)
- **Tactical View:** Once per Conflict, you may take a free action in the form of Observation Roll to discern the motivations or hidden strategies of a chosen NPC or enemy. On a Success, you gain insight into their next move, causing it to utterly fail. On a Resounding Success, you instead disrupt their plans completely by forcing them to forego their next turn, and allow one of your allies to immediately perform a counterattack that deals their Armament Wound Value.
- **Coordinated Defenses:** Once per Conflict, you may make a Observation Roll, and on a Success, you can choose one ally, they will now be immune to the next attack which would deal Wounds to them. On a Resounding Success, you may choose up to 3 allies instead.
- **Perceptive:** As long as you are moving at a slow and careful pace, you no longer need to make an Observation Roll to spot any basic hidden trap, door, or other suspicious things, however, this does require you to be traveling at the “front” of the party to be active.
- **Coordinated Retreat:** Once per day, you may safely lead your party from a Conflict. If any of your allies are currently Unconscious or Fighting for Their Life when you attempt this ability, you must make an Observation Roll. On a Success or a Failure, you may choose to proceed with the retreat, leaving those allies in danger behind, or forgo using this Ability while still spending its daily charge. However, if you achieve a Resounding Success, you can safely extract all of your allies, including those in danger. Conversely, on a Critical Failure, you must follow through with the retreat, leaving any allies still in danger to face almost certain death.

Rank Advancement

- **Rank 4:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1, and choose 1 additional Ability to add to your retinue.
- **Rank 3:** Increase the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, increase your Critical Wound Threshold by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.
- **Rank 2:** Increase the Skill Rank of both your Primary and Secondary Penumbral Arts by 1 and choose 1 additional Ability to add to your retinue.
- **Rank 1:** Increase the Skill Rank of any one Penumbral Art by 1, increase Critical Wound Threshold by 1, and deal 1 additional Wound with your Armament.

Choosing Your Armament

Every Gloomstalker's journey begins with the solemn bestowal of their unique Armament—a powerful symbol of their authority and ability to combat the Rust-Hued Gloom. This Armament represents not only the Gloomstalker's rite of passage but also their first burden, serving as a core part of their mystic power. Upon completing their occult training, each Gloomstalker must embark on a solitary vigil into the depths of the Gloom. Emerging from this journey, they find themselves bonded to a personalized Armament, forged by unknown forces and etched with arcane sigils. This mysterious creation grants each Gloomstalker a powerful, singular connection to the weapon, imbuing it with a sense of duty and arcane potency.



Designing Your Armament

During character creation, you are encouraged to explore the origins, appearance, and specific features of your Armament. This could take many forms—a dagger reflecting the cosmos, a gnarled staff with roots drawn from the heart of the Gloom, or even a spectral bow that whispers of lost realms. You can add distinct details like:

- **Material and Aesthetic:** Consider what material the weapon is made of and any unique characteristics that set it apart, such as glowing runes, enchanted smoke, or shifting shadows.
- **Symbolism and Personality:** Think of how your Armament symbolizes your Gloomstalker's personality and ambitions.

Each Armament begins with a **Weapon Wound Value of 1**, representing its initial power. As your character progresses in Rank, your Armament's abilities may also grow, expanding its potential based on your Penumbral Path.

Melee vs. Ranged Armaments

The choice between a Melee or Ranged Armament shapes a Gloomstalker's combat approach, impacting everything from preferred range to tactical advantages and unique abilities. Each type has its strengths and trade-offs, allowing players to choose the weapon that best suits their strategy.

Ranged Armaments

Ranged Armaments provide the flexibility to engage enemies from afar, making them ideal for Gloomstalkers who prefer to maintain distance and control on the battlefield.

- **Range:** Ranged Armaments are effective up to **100 feet**, giving Gloomstalkers the advantage of striking from a safe distance. However, these weapons cannot be used within **10 feet** of the intended target, forcing the wielder to keep a moderate distance in combat.
 - **Ammunition-Free:** Ranged Armaments require no ammunition. Thrown weapons return automatically after each use, whether they hit or miss. Bound to the Gloomstalker, Ranged Armaments cannot be lost or destroyed through conventional means.
 - **Combat Focus:** Ranged Armaments excel in **precision strikes**, **multi-targeting abilities**, and **battlefield control**, allowing Gloomstalkers to provide support from afar, handle multiple enemies, or control enemy positioning.
-

Melee Armaments

Melee Armaments are designed for close combat, bringing Gloomstalkers directly into the fray and offering resilience and devastating power at short range. Melee Armaments come in two variants: **Standard Reach** and **Extended Reach**, each with unique advantages and considerations.

- **Reach Options:**
 - **Standard Reach** (3-6 feet): Standard Reach Armaments are optimal for close-quarters combat and allow Gloomstalkers to fight in confined spaces without penalty. A Standard Reach weapon also offers the benefit of increasing a Gloomstalker's **Critical Wound Threshold by 1 per Rank**, allowing them to endure higher Wound amounts before reaching critical status.
 - **Extended Reach** (8-12 feet): Extended Reach Armaments provide additional range for keeping distance from foes and holding them at bay, but they may impose penalties when wielded in tight quarters. Extended Reach also starts with a **Wound Value of 2** instead of 1, meaning it deals higher base damage, reaching a maximum of **6 Wounds** at Rank 1.
- **Abilities:** Abilities like **Man-eater** gain enhanced effectiveness with Extended Reach, allowing for an increased range on multi-target attacks. Extended Reach Armaments work well for crowd control, while Standard Reach benefits those who seek higher damage output per hit.
- **Trade-Offs:** Extended Reach weapons have a **-1 Success penalty** when used within 5 feet of an opponent, representing the difficulty of maneuvering in confined spaces. Standard Reach Armaments, on the other hand, are easier to wield up close but lack the increased damage and range flexibility offered by Extended Reach.

Choosing an Armament Ability

When you design your Armament, you'll also select one unique ability that reflects its purpose and power. Below are **eight standard abilities for each type of Armament** to guide you, though these are only a starting point. Feel free to work with your Augur to design an ability that directly reflects the Gloomstalker you wish to be.

Melee Armament Abilities

1. Parry

Twice per day, you may immediately shrug off 1 Wound of damage upon taking it—even if that damage would otherwise be lethal.

- **Progression:** At Rank 4, this ability mitigates 2 Wounds per use; at Rank 3, 3 Wounds; at Rank 2, 4 Wounds; and at Rank 1, 5 Wounds.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Parry embodies the instinctual reflexes of your Gloomstalker, as your Armament seems to anticipate and deflect deadly blows. In a flash, the weapon dances aside, redirecting the force of an attack and granting you a moment of survival against the darkness.

2. Riposte

Once per Conflict, when an enemy misses you with an attack, you may make an immediate Basic Attack against them, capitalizing on their mistake.

- **Progression:** Gain an additional use per Conflict each time you gain a new Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Riposte symbolizes the cunning nature of a Gloomstalker, seizing the moment when an enemy falters. Your Armament springs to life, transforming a miscalculated strike into an opportunity for vengeance, slicing through the air with lethal intent.

3. Surge Hound

When you defeat a Combatant, you immediately gain a Gloomtide Surge Point, reflecting the thrill and empowerment of combat.

- **Limit:** Surge Hound cannot increase your Gloomtide Surge Points above the maximum of 5.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Surge Hound highlights the exhilarating bond between you and your Armament, as each victory resonates with newfound strength. With every foe felled, the Gloom flows through you, infusing your weapon with an insatiable hunger for battle.

4. Man-eater

Once per day, you can unleash a devastating cleave that affects all Combatants within melee range, dealing Wounds equal to the number of Combatants struck.

- **Progression:** Use increases to twice per day at Rank 4, three times at Rank 3, four times at Rank 2, and five times at Rank 1.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Man-eater channels the primal ferocity of the Gloom, transforming your Armament into a relentless force of nature. As you cleave through foes, the weapon seems to drink in their essence, reveling in the chaos of battle as it craves more.

5. Rending Wound

Once per Conflict, landing a basic attack inflicts a Bleeding Wound on the target. At the start of the enemy's Sequence, they take 1 Wound in bleeding damage, which persists until the end of the Conflict and cannot be healed.

- **Progression:** Bleeding damage increases to 2 Wounds at Rank 4, 3 Wounds at Rank 3, 4 Wounds at Rank 2, and 5 Wounds at Rank 1.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Rending Wound manifests your Armament's dark power, inflicting wounds that linger and drain the life from your enemies. Each strike etches a mark of the Gloom upon your foes, leaving them to bleed and falter as they succumb to their fate.

6. Whispered Shield

Once per day, you may channel the Gloom's whispers into a protective shield that deflects all sources of damage from any attack about to hit you or an ally. This ability is used as an immediate reaction, even outside your Sequence, but leaves you unable to act for 4 Sequences afterward due to the strain.

- **Progression:** The duration of this exhaustion decreases to 3 Sequences at Rank 4, 2 at Rank 2, and 1 at Rank 1.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Whispered Shield reflects your deep connection to the Gloom, summoning a protective barrier that absorbs the chaos of battle. The weapon hums with otherworldly energy, warding off harm with a spectral embrace, leaving you momentarily drained yet safeguarded.

7. Furious Rebuke

When you take damage from a single hit that meets or exceeds your current Rank in Wounds, you may immediately reduce that damage by 1 Wound and deal 1 Wound back to the attacker in retaliation.

- **Progression:** As you increase in Rank, this ability activates more frequently. At Rank 1, for example, every attack you receive will trigger this effect since no attack can deal less than 1 Wound.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Furious Rebuke channels your pain into retribution, as your Armament retaliates against those who dare to harm you. It pulses with a dark fury, transforming each wound into an opportunity to strike back, ensuring that the Gloom exacts its toll on all who oppose you.

Ranged Armament Abilities

1. Quick Shot

Once per Conflict, you may fire twice as a single Basic Attack, making two separate rolls.

- **Progression:** The number of uses per Conflict increases by 1 at each new Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Quick Shot channels the Gloom within your Armament, releasing a burst of dark energy that propels arrows with unnatural speed. In an instant, the weapon becomes a blur, capable of striking twice in the blink of an eye.

2. Ricochet

Once per Conflict, one of your projectiles may bounce off a Combatant, hitting another nearby Combatant. This attack deals full damage to the first target and 1 Wound to all other targets hit.

- **Progression:** Uses increase by 1 per Rank gained.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Ricochet harnesses the Gloom's will, guiding your projectile with eerie precision. Your Armament redirects the force of each shot, as if the weapon itself seeks to strike at every foe within reach.*

3. Longsight

You may increase the effective range of your attacks by 25 ft.

- **Progression:** This range increases by an additional 25 ft. per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Longsight taps into the Gloom's reach, extending your Armament's influence far beyond normal limits. It feels as if the weapon itself watches from afar, allowing you to strike targets that would otherwise be safely out of range.*

4. Arcane Snare

Once per Conflict, when you hit a Combatant with an attack, you may choose to entangle them with spectral energy. The target is unable to move for one turn.

- **Progression:** The number of rounds they are stuck, and the number of uses both increase by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Arcane Snare manifests the Gloom's hold on reality, as spectral tendrils reach out from your Armament to trap your foes. The weapon pulses with an ancient power, binding those who dare oppose it in shadowed restraints.

5. Tracking Shot

Once per day, when you hit a Combatant with a projectile, you become linked with them. You will know their exact location and condition for 1d4 hours, no matter the range.

- **Progression:** The number of uses increases by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Tracking Shot awakens an uncanny awareness within your Armament, binding you to your target with a strand of the Gloom itself. The weapon's dark connection ensures that no distance can break the tie it has forged.

6. Explosive Impact

Once per Conflict, one of your projectiles explodes on impact, hitting all other Combatants within 10 ft. of the target. This attack deals normal Wounds to the first target and deals a number of Wounds equal to the total number of targets hit with the explosion to all other Combatants affected.

- **Progression:** The number of uses increases by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Explosive Impact channels raw, volatile energy from within the Gloom, unleashing a blast that engulfs all in its wake. The Armament trembles with contained fury, releasing devastation upon your foes.

7. Surreptitious Shot

Once per Conflict, as long as you are not seen by any Combatants, you may make an attack that automatically hits its intended target. You may still roll for the attack, and on a Resounding Success, you gain a Surge Point and deal double your Armament's Wound Value instead of just +1.

- **Progression:** The number of uses increases by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Surreptitious Shot draws on the Gloom's hidden power, cloaking the Armament in shadows that bypass all defenses. In the hands of your weapon, stealth becomes deadly precision, striking true with unerring accuracy.

8. Telekinesis

Once per day, you may choose any creature or object within 100 ft. of you and push or pull that object up to 10 ft. in any direction. The maximum weight of the object cannot exceed 10 lbs.

- **Progression:** The weight limit increases to 50 lbs. at Rank 4, 100 lbs. at Rank 3, 200 lbs. at Rank 2, and 500 lbs. at Rank 1. The number of uses also increases by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Telekinesis is the Gloom's influence given form, allowing your Armament to pull or push with supernatural force. The weightless precision of this power hints at the Gloom's ethereal nature, bending objects to its will at a mere thought.*

Choosing Your Shroud

In *The Silent Road*, every Gloomstalker is bound to a Shroud, which acts not only as their attire but as an embodiment of their identity and survival strategy. Each Shroud offers unique passive abilities, enhancing the Gloomstalker's resilience, adaptability, or sheer force in Pyresh. As with the Armament, a Gloomstalker's Shroud is chosen upon their initiation and represents a balance between mystic fortification and personal style.

Each Shroud belongs to one of three categories—**Nimble**, **Balanced**, or **Bulky**—tailoring each character's combat approach, defensive strategies, and movement style. During character creation, you can design the aesthetic of your Shroud, considering both its visual appearance and the distinctive traits that reflect your Gloomstalker's journey. Whether it takes the form of tattered robes, reinforced plates, or a cloak steeped in dark enchantments, the Shroud serves as a core part of your character's identity, offering subtle advantages that evolve as you progress.



Designing Your Shroud

When creating your Shroud, take time to explore its aesthetic, functionality, and the symbolism it holds for your character. Here are some considerations for bringing your Shroud to life:

- **Material and Texture:** Decide what material your Shroud is made of. It could be lightweight fabric with faintly glowing sigils, heavy iron-plated armor that exudes resilience, or spectral silk that seems to phase in and out of existence.
- **Symbolism and Detail:** Consider what your Shroud symbolizes about your character. Is it a piece of their past, a reminder of their goals, or perhaps a relic they discovered in the depths of the Gloom?
- **Customization and Enhancements:** Like the Armament, the Shroud's capabilities grow as the Gloomstalker progresses. You may choose to weave protective charms into its fabric or emboss it with sigils that reflect your character's growing power.

Shroud Categories: Nimble, Balanced, and Bulky

Each category of Shroud provides different strategic benefits, complementing various playstyles and combat tactics. The choice of Shroud is as crucial as your Armament, as it can shape how you approach battles, handle ambushes, and resist the dangers of Pyresh. On the next page is an overview of each Shroud type and their base stats, then you will be presented with Abilities, which offer specialized advantages to Gloomstalkers across different situations.

Movement & Critical Wound Threshold Bonuses

Each Gloomstalker's Shroud not only represents their survival strategy but also directly impacts their movement abilities and Critical Wound Threshold, tailoring how they engage in combat and respond to injuries. Shrouds fall into three categories—Nimble, Balanced, and Bulky—each offering specific advantages and limitations based on their weight class and durability.

Movement Rates by Weight Class

The weight of a Shroud defines a Gloomstalker's movement speed in combat, measured in feet per Sequence:

- **Nimble Shroud:** 60 ft (Movement) / 120 ft (Dash)
 - *Movement:* 60 feet per Sequence, while still allowing the use of an Action, Ability, or Basic Attack.
 - *Dash:* 120 feet per Sequence if no other action is taken.
- **Balanced Shroud:** 40 ft (Movement) / 80 ft (Dash)
 - *Movement:* 40 feet per Sequence while still allowing an Action, Ability, or Basic Attack.
 - *Dash:* 80 feet per Sequence if foregoing other actions.
- **Bulky Shroud:** 20 ft (Movement) / 40 ft (Dash)
 - *Movement:* 20 feet per Sequence, enabling Action, Ability, or Basic Attack.
 - *Dash:* 40 feet per Sequence if foregoing other actions.

These distances represent the strategic maneuvering capabilities of each Shroud type, with Nimble Shrouds ideal for agile, close-combat tactics, Balanced Shrouds suited for versatile movement, and Bulky Shrouds for players focused on enduring combat scenarios with limited mobility.

Critical Wound Threshold Bonuses

Each Shroud also affects a Gloomstalker's Critical Wound Threshold (CWT), which determines how much damage they can withstand before reaching a critical injury state:

- **Nimble Shroud:** Increases CWT by +1
- **Balanced Shroud:** Increases CWT by +3
- **Bulky Shroud:** Increases CWT by +5

The choice of Shroud, therefore, influences both defensive resilience and mobility. A Bulky Shroud offers the highest CWT increase, making it suitable for those who prioritize durability and can withstand intense encounters. Conversely, the Nimble Shroud's modest boost reflects a focus on speed and avoidance over prolonged confrontation.

Bulky Shroud Abilities

1. Unyielding Fortitude

At sunrise, you gain a temporary Wound buffer equal to your current Surge Points. This buffer absorbs damage before it impacts your main health. For each additional Rank you achieve, this buffer increases by Surge Points + 1 Wound, allowing you to reach a maximum Wound buffer of 9 Wounds at Rank 1 when you have maximum Surge Points.

- **Progression:** Increase the Wound buffer by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Unyielding Fortitude channels a deep resilience within the Shroud, binding its power to the light of dawn. This steadfast aura reinforces your defenses, allowing you to face the day's dangers with unwavering strength.*

2. Obnoxiously Large

All Combatants target you on their first Phase, regardless of other threats. Any successful hits on you during this Phase deal 1 less Wound, with the reduction increasing by 1 per Rank.

- **Progression:** Increase the Wound reduction by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Obnoxiously Large transforms your Shroud into an imposing barrier, magnetically drawing enemy attention. The fabric's presence projects an aura of defiance, making your very form a daunting challenge for any attacker.*

3. Titan's Resilience

Once per day, ignore what would otherwise be a lethal blow, leaving you with 1 Wound. The Wounds you are left with increase by 1 per Rank.

- **Progression:** Increase the remaining Wounds by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Titan's Resilience emanates from your Shroud, granting it the ability to ward off death itself. This effect stirs an ancient resistance in the fabric, compelling you to endure where others would fall.*

4. Stone-Waller

Any Combatant passing within 5 feet of you triggers an immediate Basic Attack as a free reaction. If you wield an Extended Armament, this range extends to 10 feet. Each Rank adds 1 additional Wound to this Basic Attack's damage.

- **Progression:** Deal an additional Wound with the Basic Attack per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Stone-Waller binds your Shroud with a territorial force that repels intruders. This presence forms an unseen wall around you, unleashing swift retaliation against any who dare approach.*

5. Shield Wall

Once per Conflict, intercept an attack directed at an ally within 10 feet, taking the damage on their behalf. Damage taken this way is halved, rounded down. Gain an additional use per Conflict at each Rank.

- **Progression:** Increase uses per Conflict by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Shield Wall emanates from the Shroud, extending its protective energies to those nearby. With this, your Shroud acts as a guardian, deflecting danger and instilling safety around you.*

6. Penumbral Stare

Once per day, choose a living creature and make a Reverence roll. On a Success, the creature cowers in fear for 1D4 Phases; on a Resounding Success, this extends to 1D6 Phases. The creature regains its composure if attacked.

- **Progression:** Gain +1 on your Reverence roll per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Penumbral Stare intensifies the dark mystique of your Shroud, forcing creatures into submission under its shadowy influence. The fabric itself seems to project a profound, chilling authority.*

7. Iron Resolve

Once per encounter, negate all damage from a single hit.

- **Progression:** Gain an additional use of Iron Resolve per day at each Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Iron Resolve fortifies the Shroud with a deflective strength, allowing it to nullify even the most powerful attacks. The protective force within its fibers seems to resonate with unyielding purpose.*

8. Astralite Lining

Increase your Critical Wound Threshold by 2, and gain an additional +1 to the Threshold per Rank.

- **Progression:** Increase the Critical Wound Threshold by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Astralite Lining infuses the Shroud with a rare, nearly extinct mineral that glows with a resilient energy. The Astralite within bolsters your durability, allowing the Shroud to sustain you through even graver injuries.*

9. Mover and Shaker

Your Movement becomes 30/60 ft.; At Rank 3, this increases to 35/70 ft.; At Rank 1, it becomes 40/80.

- **Progression:** Increases your Movement at Rank 3 and Rank 1.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Mover and Shaker enhances your Shroud's fluidity, allowing it to adapt to your movement as though it propels you forward. This bond transforms the Shroud from a weighty armor into a seamless extension of your agility.*

Balanced Shroud Abilities

1. Iron Resolve

Once per day, negate up to 3 Wounds from a single hit, even if it would otherwise be fatal.

- **Progression:** Increase the Wounds negated by 1 for each Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Iron Resolve infuses your Shroud with an unwavering solidity, as if woven directly from the essence of the Gloom itself. When you brace against danger, the Shroud channels this strength, hardening to shield you from even the deadliest blows.

2. Counterstrike

Once per Conflict, when an enemy lands an attack on you, you may immediately make a Basic Attack as a counter. This attack deals your Armament's normal Wound Value and can trigger even if the original hit is fatal.

- **Progression:** Increase the number of uses per Conflict by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Counterstrike sharpens your Shroud's reactive instincts, channeling the force of impact into a calculated retaliation. Each hit that lands upon you is met with a swift, vengeful strike, granting you one last defiant response even in the face of death.

3. Enduring Resilience

Once per day, activate this ability to gain immunity to extreme temperatures for a number of hours equal to twice a 1D4 roll. While active, you are unaffected by most natural sources of heat or cold.

- **Progression:** Increase the dice size to a D6 at Rank 3 and a D10 at Rank 1.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Enduring Resilience binds the essence of endurance to your Shroud, allowing it to repel the elements themselves. This quiet strength grants you calm amidst storms and blizzards, insulating you from the world's harshest extremes.

4. Penumbral Drive

Any time you achieve a Resounding Success on an action, you gain 1 Conviction point. At Rank 4, you may also grant 1 Conviction point to an ally. The number of allies that benefit increases with Rank.

- **Progression:** Grant Conviction to 2 allies at Rank 3, 3 at Rank 2, and 4 at Rank 1.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Penumbral Drive awakens a deep connection within your Shroud, converting your triumphs into a wellspring of hope. Each success radiates outward, energizing both you and your allies, as if the Shroud channels the very essence of victory.

5. Armored Agility

Your Shroud negates all movement penalties while worn. Additionally, once per day, you may attempt to dodge an attack that would otherwise hit. Roll Adaptability; on a Success, take half Wounds (rounded down); on a Resounding Success, avoid the Wounds entirely.

- **Progression:** Increase the number of uses per day by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Armored Agility merges the Shroud's protection with effortless mobility, allowing you to move unencumbered by its weight. Each step is empowered by a balance of strength and agility, keeping you one step ahead of harm.

6. Understanding Absorption

Once per Conflict, after receiving a Wound from a Combatant, you may sense their current condition. Additionally, all subsequent attacks from this Combatant will deal 1 fewer Wound.

- **Progression:** Increase the Wound reduction by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Understanding Absorption brings your Shroud into attunement with your opponent's essence, reading their strength and converting it to your advantage.

7. Extra Pockets

Your Shroud gains additional storage, providing 2 extra Item Slots.

- **Progression:** Gain 1 additional Item Slot per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Extra Pockets integrates practicality into the fabric of your Shroud, forming secret compartments to carry essential supplies.

8. Feeder

Provisions no longer sustain you. Instead, once per day, you must remove your Shroud and place it on a living or recently dead creature, which it will absorb over 1D6 minutes.

- **Progression:** Increase the number of days you may go without feeding by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Feeder binds your Shroud's vitality to the lifeforce of others, weaving hunger into its very fibers. This dark dependence marks the Shroud as both protector and predator, drawing strength from life itself to sustain you.

9. Gloom Pulse

Once per day, you may send a pulse through the Whispers of the Gloom, sensing any creature touched by it within 500 feet. This ability penetrates all surfaces except those containing Astralite.

- **Progression:** Increase the range by 250 feet per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** Gloom Pulse attunes your Shroud to the hidden currents of Pyresh, allowing it to sense disturbances within the Gloom. The Shroud acts as a conduit to these dark forces, connecting you to creatures whose fates are bound by the Gloom.

Nimble Shroud Abilities

1. Veil of Shadows

Once per day, transform into a misty shadow, rendering yourself effectively hidden from all living creatures in areas of low or no light. This effect lasts for 1D4 minutes.

- **Progression:** The duration increases to 1D6 minutes at Rank 4, 1D8 at Rank 3, 1D10 at Rank 2, and 1D12 at Rank 1.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Veil of Shadows enshrouds you in darkness, melding your form with the surrounding shadows. In this ethereal state, the Shroud obscures you entirely, allowing you to pass unseen, as if you were nothing more than a whisper of mist.*

2. Light-Stepper

Once per day, add 1 additional Action Die to any Adaptability roll you make, enhancing your ability to navigate or react swiftly.

- **Progression:** The number of Action Dice added increases by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Light-Stepper imbues the Shroud with an agile grace, as though it grants you a lighter, quieter tread. With this heightened adaptability, your movements become precise, blending seamlessly with your surroundings and allowing you to slip through challenges with ease.*

3. Blur

Once per Conflict, you may turn incorporeal as an immediate reaction upon being targeted by an attack, but before knowing if it will hit. When activated, this ability negates the damage of the triggering attack if it lands.

- **Progression:** Increase the number of uses by 1 per Rank. At Rank 1, Blur can evade attacks that would automatically hit.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Blur allows the Shroud to shift your form momentarily into an insubstantial state, letting threats pass through you harmlessly. This eerie transition grants you a ghostly quality, as though the Shroud itself has learned to part from reality.*

4. Silent Ambusher

When your party initiates a Conflict, add 1 additional Action Die to any Action you attempt during the first Phase.

- **Progression:** Increase the number of additional Action Dice by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Silent Ambusher hones the Shroud's presence, blending your movement into the calm before conflict. With this skill, you become a spectral predator, prepared to strike with amplified focus before the enemy even realizes you're there.*

5. Quick Reposition

Once per Conflict, you may perform a Dash as a standard Movement, allowing you to cover distance rapidly.

- **Progression:** Increase the number of uses per Conflict by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Quick Reposition enlivens the Shroud, quickening your pace and lending a flicker of lightning speed. In moments of danger, the Shroud's influence turns you into a blur, always one step ahead of the fray.*

6. One More Try

Once per day, if you fail an Adaptability roll, you may reroll the attempt. However, you must accept the result of the second roll, even if it's a Critical Failure.

- **Progression:** Gain 1 additional use per day per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *One More Try grants your Shroud a relentless tenacity, refusing to yield in the face of failure. With this determined energy, the Shroud encourages you to press on, pushing your limits and reclaiming success from the brink of defeat.*

7. Conversion Therapy

Once per day, you may expend any number of Surge Points to heal an equal number of Wounds.

- **Progression:** At Rank 3, each Surge Point heals twice as many Wounds. At Rank 1, each Surge Point heals three times as many Wounds.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Conversion Therapy draws upon the life energy within the Shroud, weaving it into restorative force. This ability underscores the symbiosis between Shroud and wearer, where survival is a matter of will and power flows from within.*

8. Gloomy Charm

Once per day, add 1 additional Action Die to any Social roll you make, enhancing your charm and presence.

- **Progression:** Increase the number of additional Action Dice by 1 per Rank.
- **Narrative Flavor:** *Gloomy Charm imbues the Shroud with a haunting allure, infusing your words and gestures with an intangible magnetism. The Shroud channels a mystique that captivates others, drawing them into the shadowed aura you exude.*

9. Feather-Falling

Once per day, activate this ability while falling from over 10 feet to negate all fall damage, landing safely on your feet.

- **Progression:** Increase the number of uses per day by 1 per Rank.
 - **Narrative Flavor:** *Feather-Falling bestows an ethereal lightness upon the Shroud, rendering gravity inconsequential. As you descend, the Shroud envelops you, guiding you safely to earth like a silent shadow gliding through the air.*
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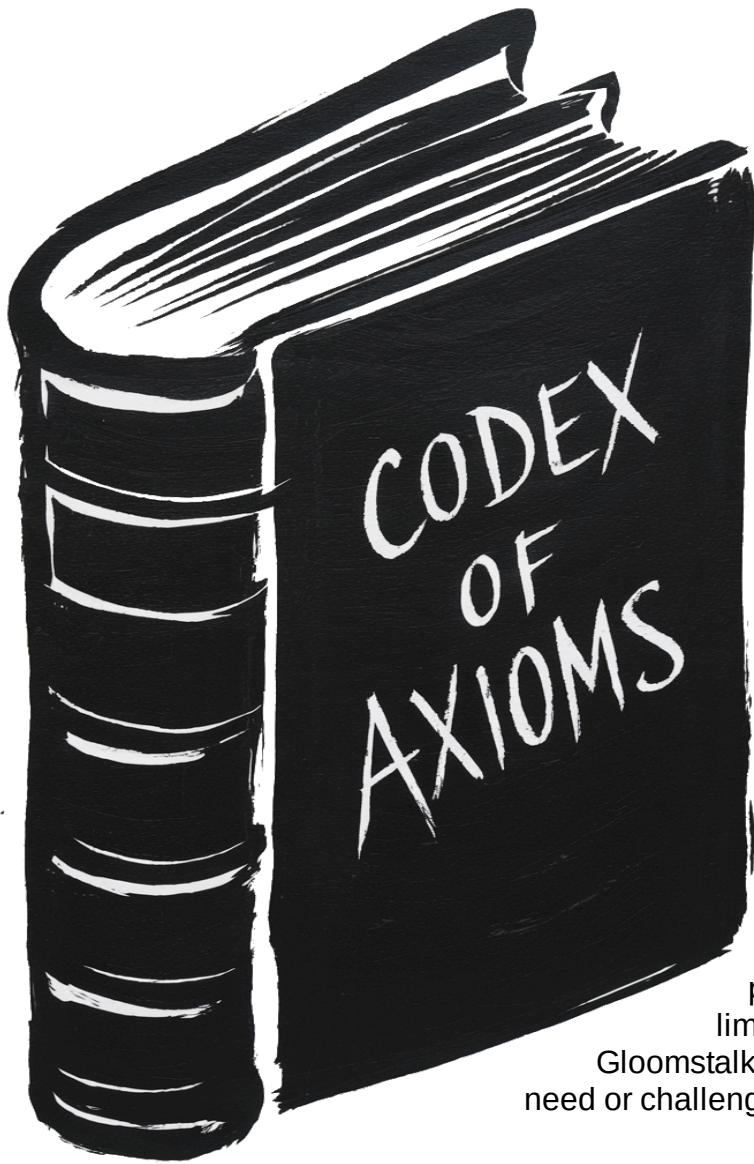
A Note on Progressing a Custom Shroud or Armament's Power

In *The Silent Road*, players can create custom abilities for their Shrouds and Armaments, providing opportunities for personalization and unique gameplay expression. These options allow players to tailor their character's tools and skills to their playstyle, while observing specific guidelines to maintain balance within the game.

Guidelines for Custom Shroud and Armament Abilities

- **Scale Against Existing Abilities:** When designing custom abilities, refer to the abilities already provided in the game. These established abilities serve as a benchmark for power levels, effects, and limitations. Custom abilities should not exceed the effectiveness or impact of existing ones.
- **Approval Process:** All custom abilities must receive approval from the Augurs to ensure they remain balanced and contribute positively to gameplay. Augurs may suggest refinements to align new abilities with the game's mechanics and themes.
- **Power-Scaling Limitations:** Custom abilities must operate within defined power-scaling parameters:
 - **Effect Duration:** Abilities should have reasonable durations to prevent them from dominating gameplay or creating imbalances.
 - **Cooldown Times:** Include cooldowns consistent with existing abilities, ensuring that powerful abilities are used thoughtfully.
 - **Resource Cost:** Some custom abilities may require resources or specific conditions that match their effects.
 - **Risk vs. Reward:** Consider any potential drawbacks or risks to balance an ability's benefits, such as side effects, situational limits, or conditions for activation.
- **Encouragement of Creativity:** While there are guidelines, creativity is encouraged. Players are invited to explore unique concepts that fit within the game world, whether it's a niche ability with special applications or a powerful skill that includes significant risks.
- **Playtesting and Feedback:** Once approved, abilities should be playtested to ensure balance and effectiveness. Feedback from Augurs and players will help refine the ability, ensuring it enhances the experience.

By developing custom Shroud and Armament abilities, players deepen their connection to their characters and enrich the collaborative storytelling environment of *The Silent Road*.



The Codex of Axioms

The Codex of Axioms is a revered tome that details the foundational elements, or "Axioms," which form the basis of Whisperweaving—a mystical art practiced by the Gloomstalkers of Pyresh. The Codex is divided into three parts: Prefixes, Intents, and Suffixes. Each Axiom type serves a unique purpose in shaping a Whisper, the powerful phrases used by Gloomstalkers to alter reality. The Prefix determines the core nature and Hue of the Whisper, embodying elemental forces or concepts such as fire, shadow, or life, which can be Destructive, Restorative, or Utilitarian. Combined with an Intent that directs the Whisper to a specific target or goal, and a Suffix that modifies its range, duration, or potency, these Axioms offer virtually limitless possibilities, allowing each Gloomstalker to shape Whispers tailored to any need or challenge.

Through rigorous study and mastery of the Codex, a Gloomstalker learns to intuitively combine these Axioms, crafting Whispers with effects as versatile as their imagination allows. Whether summoning protective barriers, searing enemies with flames, or enhancing perception to reveal hidden truths, each Whisper drawn from the Codex is a balance of purpose and restraint. Yet the Codex also serves as a reminder of the discipline required; reusing Axioms within a short time risks overloading the Gloomstalker's mind, leading to catastrophic consequences. Thus, the Codex of Axioms not only empowers the Gloomstalker but also challenges them to wield these primal forces with wisdom and care.

The Codex of Prefixes



Destructive Prefixes (Black Hue)

Designed to harm, destroy, or disrupt, these Prefixes create aggressive and damaging effects.

1. Luxis – *Burn, Melt*

- Summons intense fire to burn or melt targets.

2. Fulgar – *Shock, Stun*

- Releases lightning to shock or temporarily paralyze.

3. Umbra – *Drain, Blind*

- Casts shadows to drain energy or obscure vision.

4. Tremor – *Shake, Break*

- Causes tremors that shake or break objects or terrain.

5. Mors – *Rot, Decay*

- Spreads decay to rot or decompose material.

Restorative Prefixes (White Hue)

Focused on healing, protecting, or stabilizing, these Prefixes create shielding and regenerative effects.

1. Kyndra – *Shield, Resist*

- Forms protective fire that shields or resists heat and harm.

2. Solace – *Heal, Cleanse*

- Uses light to heal wounds or cleanse impurities.

3. Vivus – *Regrow, Strengthen*

- Restores life energy to regrow or strengthen the body.

4. Glacia – *Cool, Preserve*

- Applies ice to cool or preserve, numbing pain or slowing decay.

5. Seren – *Soothe, Calm*

- Creates calm to soothe emotions or stabilize a situation

Utilitarian Prefixes (Gray Hue)

Versatile and neutral, these Prefixes are ideal for support, control, and resource management.



1. Veirn – *Move, Push*

- Manipulates wind to move or push objects and people.

2. Aether – *Sense, Reveal*

- Uses ethereal energy to sense hidden things or reveal the unseen.

3. Ferrum – *Fortify, Shape*

- Manipulates metal to fortify structures or shape objects.

4. Aqua – *Flow, Refresh*

- Controls water to create flow, hydrate, or refresh environments.

5. Roota – *Anchor, Support*

- Engages earth to anchor, support, or stabilize the ground.



The Codex of Intents

1. Ferri – Natural Object, Material

- Targets natural objects such as stone, wood, plants, or other naturally occurring materials.
 - **Range:** 15 feet by default, but may be extended with the appropriate Suffix to reach distant resources or materials.

2. Vulnus – Combatant, Opponent

- Affects a single combatant, adversary, or enemy, often in offensive or restrictive ways.
 - **Range:** 10 feet, designed for close-quarters interactions. The range can be extended to allow for targeting at a greater distance if modified with Suffixes.

3. Amicus – Ally, Companion

- Targets an ally or companion, typically for supportive or protective effects.
 - **Range:** 5 feet, emphasizing proximity for aid or protection. Certain Suffixes may increase this range to accommodate more distant allies.

4. Corpus – Corpse, Dead

- Specifically targets a corpse or deceased entity, allowing for interactions with the dead.
 - **Range:** 10 feet, allowing for respectful distance. The reach can be extended with Suffixes if the corpse is further away.

5. Spiritus – Spirit, Soul

- Targets spiritual essence or incorporeal entities, affecting non-physical aspects.
 - **Range:** 15 feet, attuned to ethereal presences at moderate distances. Suffixes may further this range for remote spiritual interactions.

6. **Visus – Vision, Sight**

- Focuses on the target's sight or visual perception, often altering or enhancing their view.
 - **Range:** 10 feet, intended for visual impairment or enhancement. Certain Suffixes may clarify or intensify this line of sight for extended reaches.

7. **Animum – Mind, Thoughts**

- Targets thoughts, emotions, or mental states, often to influence or understand a target's mental condition.
 - **Range:** 10 feet, intended for focused mental engagement. Suffixes may extend the reach to allow for mental influence from further away.

8. **Arcanum – Man-Made Object**

- Affects man-made items, tools, artifacts, and any crafted or artificial objects.
 - **Range:** 10 feet, allowing precision for close interactions with tools or relics. Can be extended by adding a range-modifying Suffix for distant objects.

9. **Vita – Life, Vitality**

- Influences the core life energy or health of a living being, commonly in restorative or protective ways.
 - **Range:** 5 feet, ensuring intimate proximity for life-altering effects. Range can be modified with Suffixes to target those at a greater distance.

10. **Locum – Location, Area**

- Targets a specific area on a surface, concentrating the Whisper's effect on a precise point in the environment.
 - **Range:** 30 feet, affecting only the designated area. Could range between 10 - 15 ft. in area. Suffixes can increase the area covered, allowing influence over larger sections if needed.

The Codex of Suffixes

Extensa – *Extend, Expand*

Doubles the effective area on a Whisper if it has an area, or doubles the reach of the Whisper.

Fortis – *Amplify, Potency*

Amplifies the Whisper's effect to act as if it had been cast twice. Causes the Whisper to double the Wounding or Healing it causes. Causes any Whisper which adds an Ailment or Affliction to add an additional one.

Persistus – *Persistence, Duration*

Lengthens the Whisper's duration to 1 full Scene or Conflict, allowing it to remain effective longer whether the effect is on an ally, enemy, object, or area.

Tempus – *Delay, Prolong*

Adds a slight delay to the Whisper, activating it 1 Phase after casting—useful for timed effects or strategic triggers.

Secundus – *Split, Double*

Spreads the Whisper to target a secondary entity within range, splitting the effect between the original and additional targets.

Black-Hued Whispers

- **Luxis Ferri:** Burns or melts natural materials such as wood, stone, or foliage, leaving them charred or partially melted.
- **Luxis Vulnus:** Engulfs a Combatant in flames, dealing 5 Wounds of damage.
- **Luxis Amicus:** Encases an ally in protective fire that reflects 1 Wound of damage back onto attackers when struck by them for 1 Phase.
- **Luxis Corpus:** Lights the corpse on fire, making it burn with the intensity of a campfire for 10 minutes.
- **Luxis Spiritus:** Causes Spiritual Burns on an incorporeal entity, preventing any form of healing for 1 Phase.
- **Luxis Visus:** Creates a bright flash in the vision of its victim, rendering them Unbalanced for 1 phase.
- **Luxis Animum:** Creates a mental sensation of burning, causing Fear for 1 Phase.
- **Luxis Arcanum:** Melts or damages a standard man-made object, warping its structure or making it unusable.
- **Luxis Vita:** Boils the blood of its victim, causing Vulnerability for 1 Phase.
- **Luxis Locum:** Lights a 10-square-foot area on fire for 1 minute, creating a smoldering hazard that can damage anyone who steps on it.

- **Fulgar Ferri:** Shocks natural materials, splitting wood, cracking stone, or causing sap to sizzle.
- **Fulgar Vulnus:** Delivers an intense electric shock to a combatant, Paralyzing them for 1 Phase.
- **Fulgar Amicus:** Grants the ally Haste for 1 Phase.
- **Fulgar Corpus:** Charges the corpse with electricity that will Paralyze anyone who passes within 5 ft. of it for 1 Phase. The corpse stays electrified for 5 minutes and will Paralyze 1 victim before running out of charge.
- **Fulgar Spiritus:** Disrupts an incorporeal entity with a shock, causing it to Dissipate for 1 Phase.
- **Fulgar Visus:** Creates a brief, blinding flash of lightning that disrupts sight with afterimages and causes Mild Hallucinations for 1 Phase.
- **Fulgar Animum:** Jolts the mind, causing the target to become a Dullard for 1 Phase.
- **Fulgar Arcanum:** Shorts out or fries the Astralite circuitry of a man-made object, making it inoperable for 1 Phase.
- **Fulgar Vita:** Reduces vitality with an internal shock, causing Severe Exhaustion which must be slept off to remove.
- **Fulgar Locum:** Electrifies a 10-square-foot area, causing it to become impassable for 1 Phase. Additionally, any living being standing in the space at the time of effect will receive 2 Wounds and be Paralyzed for 1 Phase.

- **Umbra Ferri:** Drains energy from natural materials, causing plants to wilt, wood to dry out, or minerals to become brittle.
- **Umbra Vulnus:** Saps the lifeforce of a living Combatant, leaving them Weakened for 1 Phase.
- **Umbra Amicus:** Creates a shadowed cloak around an ally, making them Invisible for 1 Phase.
- **Umbra Corpus:** Draws residual energy from a corpse, rendering it unusable for revival or manipulation and healing the caster for 2 Wounds.
- **Umbra Spiritus:** Drains spiritual energy, Weakening incorporeal entities for 1 Phase.
- **Umbra Visus:** Creates darkness over the target's vision, Blinding them for 1 Phase.
- **Umbra Animum:** Causes target to instantly fall asleep for 10 minutes or until awoken.
- **Umbra Arcanum:** Disrupts Astralite power in a man-made object, leaving it inactive for 1 Phase.
- **Umbra Vita:** Immediately inflicts 1 random Ailment on target.
- **Umbra Locum:** Fills a 15-square-foot area with dark shadows, obscuring it and muffling sounds within the zone for 1 minute.

- **Tremor Ferri:** Shakes natural materials, causing wood to splinter, stones to crack, or earth to loosen.
- **Tremor Vulnus:** immediately inflicts a random Injury on the Combatant.
- **Tremor Amicus:** Causes ally to be unable to fall, or be knocked over for 1 minute.
- **Tremor Corpus:** Causes the corpse to instantly explode dealing 3 Wounds to anything within 5 ft. of the corpse.
- **Tremor Spiritus:** Disrupts a spiritual entity with a tremor, making it Vulnerable for 1 Phase.
- **Tremor Visus:** Causes tremors in the target's vision, making them Concussed for 1 Phase.
- **Tremor Animum:** Mentally shakes the target, causing Disorientation for 1 Phase, making it hard for them to concentrate.
- **Tremor Arcanum:** Causes intense vibrations in a man-made object, loosening or breaking its structural components and rendering it unusable for 1 Phase.
- **Tremor Vita:** Creates internal tremors in a living being, inducing Nausea for 1 Phase, impairing movement and focus.
- **Tremor Locum:** Shakes the ground in a 10-square-foot area, creating unstable footing that causes tripping or stumbling for anyone crossing it within 1 minute.

- **Mors Ferri:** Decays natural materials rapidly, causing wood to rot, plants to wither, or stones to crack and weaken permanently.
- **Mors Vulnus:** Inflicts Necrosis on a combatant for 1 Phase.
- **Mors Amicus:** Surrounds an ally with a decaying aura, deterring enemies by inflicting 1 Wound on attackers within 5 ft. for 1 Phase.
- **Mors Corpus:** Accelerates decomposition on a corpse, making it rapidly decay to bones, preventing any form of reanimation or manipulation.
- **Mors Spiritus:** Drains an incorporeal entity's essence with decay, reducing its power and leaving it Vulnerable for 1 Phase.
- **Mors Visus:** Causes a decaying haze in the target's vision, leaving them with Dark Spots for 1 Phase, obscuring parts of their sight.
- **Mors Animum:** Rots away the target's mental resilience, causing Despair for 1 Phase, making them feel hopeless and lethargic.
- **Mors Arcanum:** Causes metal or machinery in a man-made object to rust and deteriorate, breaking its functionality until repaired.
- **Mors Vita:** Accelerates internal decay, causing 2 Wounds and inducing the Rust Lung Ailment, which persists until treated.
- **Mors Locum:** Decays a 10-square-foot area, causing plants to wither and any organic material to rot over 1 minute, creating a diseased patch that weakens creatures that pass through it forever.

White-Hued Whispers

- **Kyndra Ferri:** Creates an element-resistant shield around natural materials, such as shielding plants or stones from extreme temperatures for 1 hour.
- **Kyndra Vulnus:** Envelops a combatant in an aura that makes them impossible to miss with Basic Attacks for 1 Phase.
- **Kyndra Amicus:** Grants an ally a shield that reflects 1 Wound of damage back on attackers who strike them for 1 Phase.
- **Kyndra Corpus:** Shields a corpse from decay, preserving it for ritual or transport and preventing further damage.
- **Kyndra Spiritus:** Causes the spirit to become Vulnerable for 1 Phase.
- **Kyndra Visus:** Protects the target's vision, preventing blindness or reducing intense light effects for 1 minute.
- **Kyndra Animum:** Shields the mind from negative influences, providing resistance to mental effects such as Fear or Despair for 1 minute.
- **Kyndra Arcanum:** Grants a shield to a man-made object, preventing physical or magical damage for 1 hour.
- **Kyndra Vita:** Grants temporary immunity to minor injuries, reducing all Wounds received to 1 for 1 Phase.
- **Kyndra Locum:** Creates a small, shielded area (10-square feet) that blocks harmful environmental effects for 1 Phase.

- **Solace Ferri:** Purifies natural materials, cleansing soil, plants, or water of toxins or impurities over 10 minutes.
- **Solace Vulnus:** Causes Combatant to believe they have been healed, making them fight more aggressively for 1 phase.
- **Solace Amicus:** Heals an ally for 3 Wounds and removes any minor ailments like nausea or exhaustion.
- **Solace Corpus:** Cleanses the corpse of disease or curses, making it safe for burial or handling.
- **Solace Spiritus:** Puts a weaker spirit to rest, allowing it to move on peacefully.
- **Solace Visus:** Clears vision, removing any impairments such as Blinded or Dark Spots.
- **Solace Animum:** Purges negative mental Ailments, instantly removing Ailments such as Despair or Fear.
- **Solace Arcanum:** Cleanses a man-made object, removing grime, rust, or minor magical impairments.
- **Solace Vita:** Restores 5 Wounds to a living target, and removing all Exhaustion.
- **Solace Locum:** Purifies a 10-square-foot area, removing toxic or cursed influences and creating a safe zone.

- **Vivus Ferri:** Instantly regrows damaged plants or strengthens natural materials, causing flora to flourish or wood and stone to harden.
- **Vivus Vulnus:** Causes arms to extend awkwardly causing Combatant to become unable to make Melee Attacks for 1 Phase.
- **Vivus Amicus:** Grants an ally increased resilience, providing them with Temporary Wound Buffer of 4 for 1 Phase.
- **Vivus Corpus:** Temporarily reanimates the corpse for 1 hour. It can perform simple tasks and is unable to do harm.
- **Vivus Spiritus:** Causes the spiritual entity's form to become dense and weighted, reducing its ability to phase through objects and slowing its movement speed for 1 Phase.
- **Vivus Visus:** Enhances the target's sight, granting +2 Action Dice to Observation Rolls for 10 minutes.
- **Vivus Animum:** Bolsters mental resilience, granting immunity to mental Ailments for 1 Phase and improving focus.
- **Vivus Arcanum:** Fortifies a man-made object, increasing its durability and preventing breakage for 1 hour.
- **Vivus Vita:** Regenerates 1 Wound every Phase for 1 minute.
- **Vivus Locum:** Strengthens the ground or environment in a 10-square-foot area, stabilizing structures and preventing collapse for 10 minutes.

- **Glacia Ferri:** Perfectly preserve any natural items including meats and other foods. Can affect up to 1-square-feet of natural material.
- **Glacia Vulnus:** Numbs a combatant's hands giving them a -2 Action Dice penalty on Adaptability Rolls for 1 Phase.
- **Glacia Amicus:** Surrounds an ally in a cooling aura, preventing heat-related damage and providing comfort for 1 hour.
- **Glacia Corpus:** Preserves a corpse by lowering its temperature, preventing decomposition for 24 hours.
- **Glacia Spiritus:** Prevents the spiritual entity from using Whispers for 1 Phase.
- **Glacia Visus:** Cools the target's vision, preventing effects like Blinded or Hallucination from bright lights for 1 minute.
- **Glacia Animum:** Eases mental strain, restoring focus and reducing Fear or Despair by making the mind feel serene.
- **Glacia Arcanum:** Cools a man-made object, preventing overheating or mitigating the effects of fire damage.
- **Glacia Vita:** Lowers body temperature, preventing the effects of Exhaustion and Overheating for 1 hour.
- **Glacia Locum:** Cools a 10-square-foot area, making it safe from fire and reducing ambient heat for 10 minutes.

- **Seren Ferri:** Stabilizes natural materials, slowing erosion and fostering harmonious growth in plants for 1 hour.
- **Seren Vulnus:** Calms an opponent for 1 Phase.
- **Seren Amicus:** Immediately increases Conviction by 1.
- **Seren Corpus:** Consecrates the corpse making it ready for proper disposal.
- **Seren Spiritus:** Soothes a spiritual entity, helping it remain balanced and peaceful for 1 Phase.
- **Seren Visus:** Softens intense visual stimuli, allowing the target to focus without strain and preventing visual Banes.
- **Seren Animum:** Eases the mind, curing Despair or similar mental Banes.
- **Seren Arcanum:** Reduces stress in a man-made object, preventing overheating and stabilizing magical or mechanical functions.
- **Seren Vita:** Calms the body, granting +1 Action Dice to all rolls for 1 Phase.
- **Seren Locum:** Creates a calm, peaceful 10-square-foot area, discouraging violence and soothing those within for 1 minute.

Gray-Hued Whispers

- **Veirn Ferri:** Uses wind to shift natural materials like leaves, stones, or branches out of the way, clearing paths or organizing small objects within a 10-foot area.
- **Veirn Vulnus:** Generates a forceful gust that pushes an enemy back 10 ft, potentially disrupting their stance or forcing them into a hazardous position.
- **Veirn Amicus:** Provides a gentle, controlled push, aiding an ally's movement and granting +10 ft. to their Movement for 1 Phase.
- **Veirn Corpus:** Causes the corpse to gasp for air for 1 minute making reasonably loud noise in the process.
- **Veirn Spiritus:** Allows you to know the exact distance and position of the spiritual entity.
- **Veirn Visus:** Grants foresight for 1 Phase, allowing target 1 reroll of an Action during that phase.
- **Veirn Animum:** Creates a subtle push on the target's focus, nudging their attention toward a specific idea or suggestion, which may briefly distract or sway them.
- **Veirn Arcanum:** Moves a small man-made object (such as a tool or weapon) up to 10 feet, retrieving or relocating it without physical contact.
- **Veirn Vita:** Provides a gentle push to a living target, invigorating them and granting +1 Action Dice to their Warfare Rolls for 1 Phase.
- **Veirn Locum:** Creates a steady breeze in a 10-square-foot area, preventing gases, smoke, or scents from lingering in the space for 1 minute.

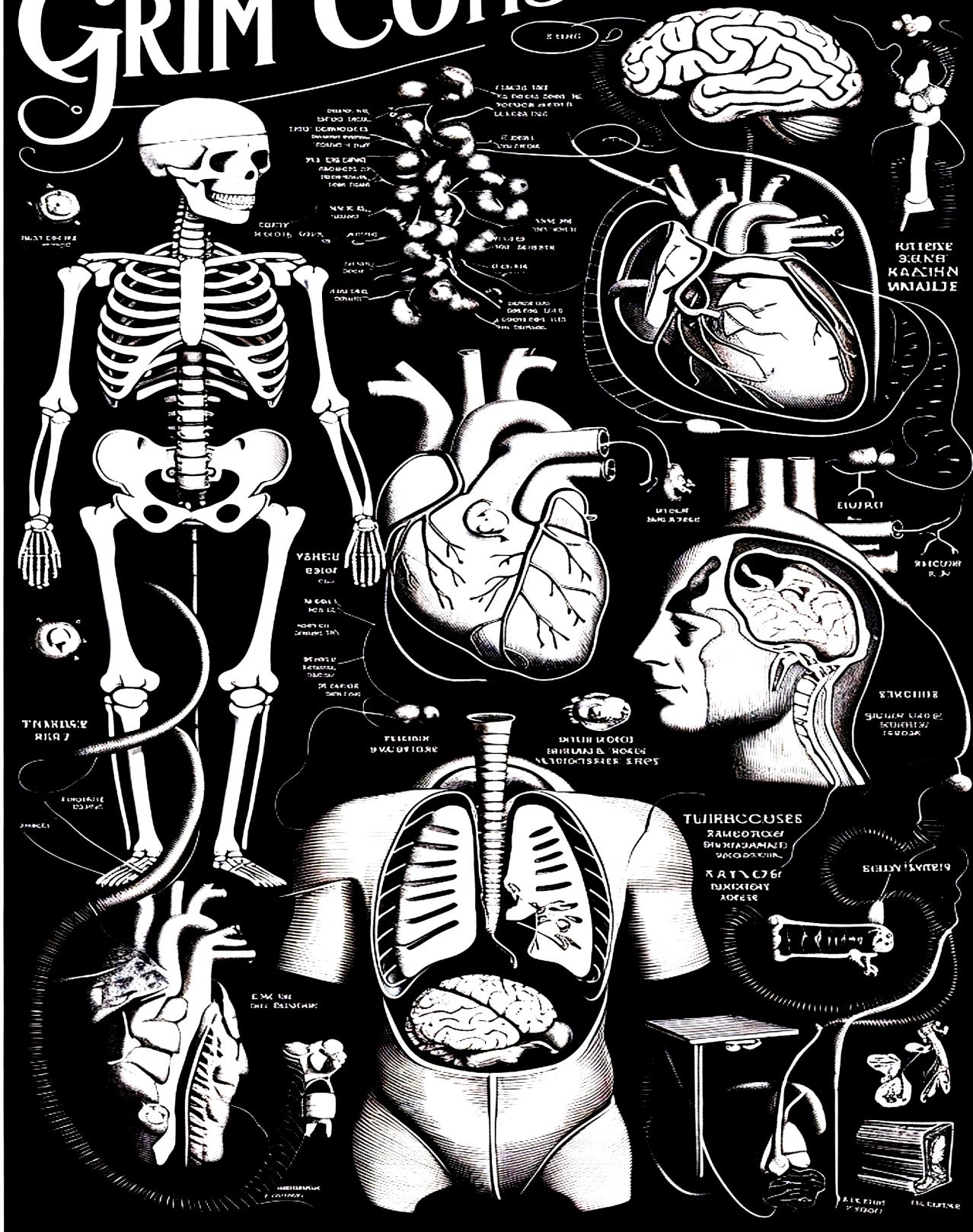
- **Aether Ferri:** Detects hidden or buried natural materials within 10 feet, such as minerals, underground water, or medicinal herbs.
- **Aether Vulnus:** Reveals the weak points or vulnerabilities of an enemy, causing them to take 1 additional Wound every time they take damage for 1 Phase.
- **Aether Amicus:** Allows target to see any valuable items within 20 ft. of them for 1 Phase.
- **Aether Corpus:** Detects lingering energy or causes of death in a corpse, providing insights for investigations or necromantic rituals.
- **Aether Spiritus:** Senses the presence and emotional state of nearby incorporeal entities within 15 feet, revealing their intentions.
- **Aether Visus:** Enhances the target's vision to detect hidden or camouflaged objects or Combatants within line of sight for 1 Phase.
- **Aether Animum:** Senses the target's surface thoughts or emotions, providing insight into their state of mind or intentions.
- **Aether Arcanum:** Reveals hidden compartments, weaknesses, or enchantments within a man-made object, improving understanding of its structure or function.
- **Aether Vita:** Detects the health status of a living target, revealing Injuries or Ailments that may affect them.
- **Aether Locum:** Reveals hidden objects or traps within a 15-square-foot area, making it safe to pass through or occupy.

- **Ferrum Ferri:** Shapes and hardens natural materials, reinforcing wood, stone, or other organic materials to be more resilient.
- **Ferrum Vulnus:** Polymorphs the Combatant into a harmless slug for 1 minute. Returns to normal if damaged.
- **Ferrum Amicus:** Strengthens an ally's armor or gear, reducing all Wounds received by 2 for 1 Phase.
- **Ferrum Corpus:** Reinforces a corpse, preserving it against decay and making it suitable for study, transport, or ritual.
- **Ferrum Spiritus:** Causes a spiritual entity to dissipate into a mist for 1 Phase.
- **Ferrum Visus:** Focuses the target's sight, granting +2 Action Dice on Observation Rolls for 1 Phase.
- **Ferrum Animum:** Strengthens the target's mental defenses, providing immunity to Ailments for 1 Phase.
- **Ferrum Arcanum:** Shapes and reinforces a man-made object, making it more durable and resistant to damage.
- **Ferrum Vita:** Increases a living target's resilience, granting Invulnerability to physical harm for 1 Phase.
- **Ferrum Locum:** Fortifies a 10-square-foot area, reinforcing the ground or structure and preventing collapse or erosion.

- **Aqua Ferri:** Refreshes natural materials like plants, stones, or soil by hydrating or cleaning them, creating a healthier or cleaner environment.
- **Aqua Vulnus:** Causes the sensation of drowning, rendering the Combatant unable to breathe or speak for 1 Phase.
- **Aqua Amicus:** Refreshes an ally, relieving fatigue, and granting +1 Action Dice to Adaptability Rolls for 1 Phase.
- **Aqua Corpus:** Squeezes a corpse dry of all its blood, causing it to run forth onto the ground around it.
- **Aqua Spiritus:** Douses the spiritual entity in a chilling, disruptive flow, causing it to lose cohesion and suffer a Concussion for 1 Phase.
- **Aqua Visus:** Grants total nightvision for 1 hour..
- **Aqua Animum:** Clears the mind, reducing mental fatigue and improving focus, granting +2 Action Dice to Reverence Rolls for 1 Phase.
- **Aqua Arcanum:** Cleans and refreshes a man-made object, restoring minor functionality or removing grime and wear.
- **Aqua Vita:** Hydrates the target, removing Exhaustion. Also counts as sustenance for the day.
- **Aqua Locum:** Refreshes a 15-square-foot area by providing moisture or cleansing the space, ideal for removing dust or contaminants.

- **Roota Ferri:** Stabilizes natural materials such as rocks, roots, or soil, preventing erosion or loosening.
- **Roota Vulnus:** Prevents an opponent from moving freely, reducing their movement speed by half for 1 Phase.
- **Roota Amicus:** Anchors an ally's footing, preventing them from being moved or knocked back for 1 Phase.
- **Roota Corpus:** Anchors the position of a corpse, preventing it from being disturbed or moved by external forces.
- **Roota Spiritus:** Anchors a spiritual entity in place, preventing it from drifting or escaping for 1 Phase.
- **Roota Visus:** Fixes the target's sight on a specific point, making it difficult to shift focus and increasing their awareness of that area.
- **Roota Animum:** Stabilizes the target's thoughts, reducing distractions and enhancing concentration, granting +2 Action Dice to their Social Rolls for 1 Phase.
- **Roota Arcanum:** Anchors a man-made object firmly in place, preventing it from being moved or tampered with for 1 Phase.
- **Roota Vita:** Causes blood to flow more freely allowing target to hold their breath for up to 1 hour.
- **Roota Locum:** Stabilizes a 10-square-foot area, creating a secure and unmoving surface ideal for footing or structures.

THE LEDGER OF GRIM CONSEQUENCE



The Ledger of Grim Consequence

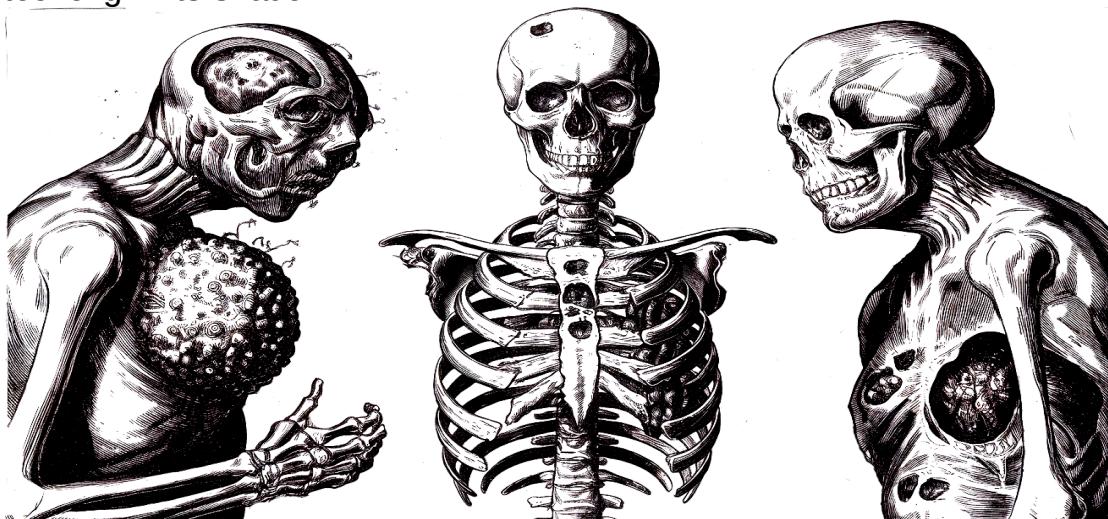
The path across Pyresh is a journey marked by inevitable suffering, where every step closer to your goal exacts a relentless toll on your body and mind. Within this bleak land, your trials extend beyond mere mortal wounds—each encounter, each exposure to the cursed atmosphere, marks you indelibly, chipping away at your physical and mental fortitude. The Ledger of Grim Consequence stands as a record of these punishments, chronicling the Afflictions, Ailments, and Banes that will erode your strength and test your resilience.

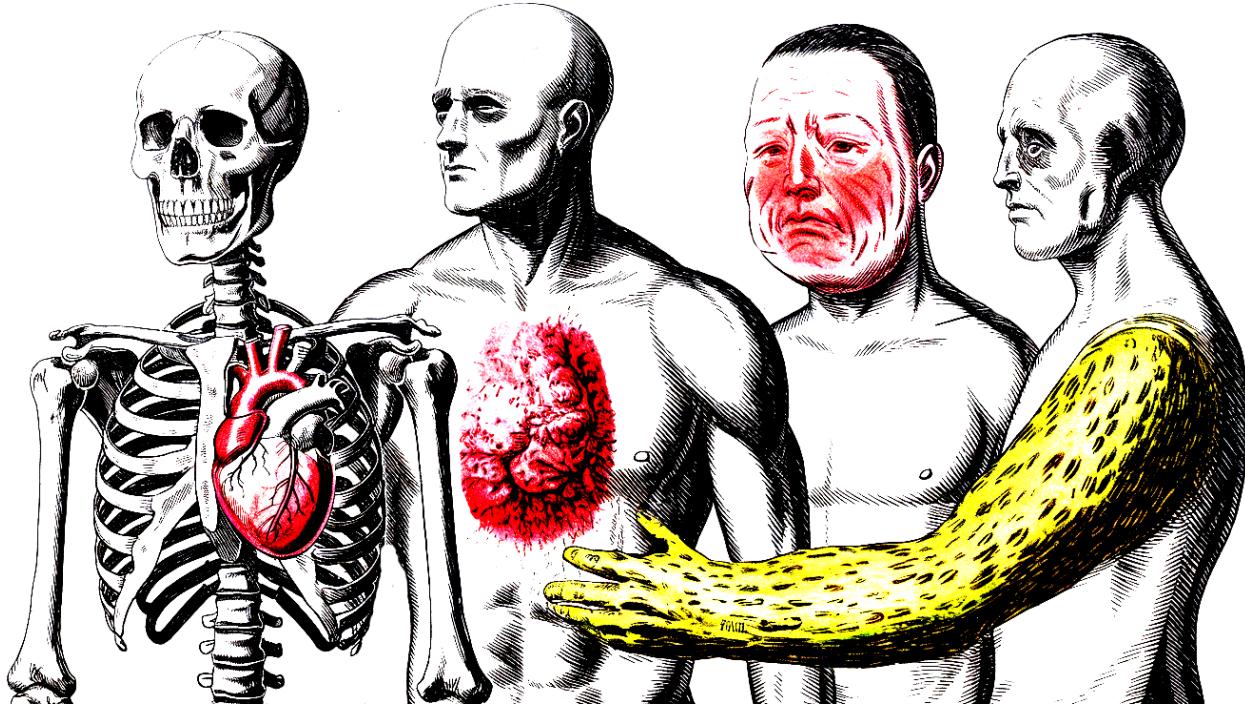
These maladies are more than passing ailments; they are manifestations of Pyresh itself, a land where the very fog harbors malevolent intent, and where survival demands that you reckon with every scar it leaves. They will sap your agility, cloud your perceptions, twist your reason, and drain your endurance, adding yet another layer of despair to the darkness that haunts this land.

Acquiring Afflictions, Ailments, and Banes

To walk the road of a Gloomstalker is to risk these grim consequences at every turn. In the course of your journey, these debilitating effects will come to you from many places:

- **Combat Encounters:** Scars left by brutal combat are not mere wounds but reminders of the price paid in each battle, carving into flesh and psyche alike.
- **Endurance Wounds:** When your Gloomstalker pushes beyond their limits, exhaustion gives way to injury, and even the strongest will feel the strain that lingers beyond recovery.
- **Environmental Hazards:** Pyresh is a land of many perils, and its hazards—from cursed traps to natural treachery—leave survivors weaker and scarred by the experience.
- **The Rust-Hued Gloom:** The corrupting fog that lingers across Pyresh does not simply wound; it warps, it haunts, and it imprints upon those who linger too long in its shadow.





Categories of Consequence

The Ledger categorizes each effect to reflect the distinct ways in which these maledictions encroach upon the Gloomstalker's vitality:

- **Afflictions** – These physical debilities strike hard at your physical abilities, borne of wounds that weaken your body, break your bones, or cloud your senses. They are the immediate price for survival, impairing your Gloomstalker in direct ways, limiting movement, strength, or precision.
- **Ailments** – The poisons, sicknesses, and psychological scars of Pyresh reside here. These ailments do not simply hinder; they corrode. Born of disease or exposure to the Rust-Hued Gloom, they have the power to shake a Gloomstalker's grasp on reality, haunting them with paranoia, feverish visions, or creeping malaise.
- **Banes** – More fleeting yet more intense than Afflictions and Ailments, Banes strike swiftly, leaving characters reeling under their grip. Derived from the twisted Whispers that thread through Pyresh, these effects come with swift potency, often casting a dark influence on your Gloomstalker's soul or senses before fading, yet not without leaving their mark.

As you venture deeper into Pyresh, let the pages of the Ledger of Grim Consequence serve as a somber reminder of what this land exacts from those who walk it. This compendium does not simply warn of what lies in wait; it stands as a record of suffering endured by those before you and what you, too, may confront should you tread carelessly. The journey is perilous, and each entry is a testament to the grim reality of life along the Silent Road.

The Tome of Corporeal Corruption (Afflictions)

Head Afflictions

1. Ruptured Eardrum

- **Effect:** Reduces Observation Action Dice by 1, as you lose hearing in one ear. Combatants may reroll one failed Action Dice when making an attack against you due to your hindered awareness.

2. Shattered Jaw

- **Effect:** Reduces Social Action Dice by 1, making verbal communication painful and slow. Eating or drinking requires extra time, and every attempt to speak has a 30% chance for further injury.

3. Detached Retina

- **Effect:** Reduces Observation Action Dice by 1, causing severe impairment to vision in one eye. All attacks using a Ranged Armament require re-rolling one successful die due to compromised depth perception.

4. Crushed Temple

- **Effect:** Reduces Reverence Action Dice by 1, as dizziness and balance are disrupted from the head trauma. Any Whisperweaving attempt has a 30% chance to fail due to your hindered concentration.

5. Smashed Nose

- **Effect:** Reduces Observation Action Dice by 1, particularly affecting sense of smell and peripheral vision. 30% chance to take 1 Wound of Bleeding damage on the end each of your Sequences in a Conflict if you Attack, use an Ability, or Dash.

6. Splitting Skull

- **Effect:** Reduces Warfare Action Dice by 1. Physical shock to the head causes sharp, debilitating pain, and causes you have a 20% chance of immediately falling unconscious any time you take an additional Wound.

Arms Afflictions

1. Broken Forearm

- **Effect:** Reduces Warfare Action Dice by 1, making wielding weapons nearly impossible in that arm. All two-handed tasks (like using Ranged or Extended Armaments) automatically fail.

2. Fractured Elbow

- **Effect:** Reduces Adaptability Action Dice by 1, limiting arm flexibility. Any action requiring a full range of motion (like climbing or reaching) is restricted and takes an additional -1 Adaptability Dice penalty.

3. Torn Bicep

- **Effect:** Reduces Warfare Action Dice by 1, weakening the character's ability to strike with force. Every attack you make deals 1 less Wound than normal.

4. Crushed Hand

- **Effect:** Reduces Adaptability and Warfare Action Dice by 1 each, as fingers struggle to grip and hold. All grip-based tasks have a 20% chance of failure, and items can be dropped randomly in combat.

5. Dislocated Shoulder

- **Effect:** Reduces Warfare Action Dice by 1 for actions using the affected arm. Due to the damage, you are unable to do any heavy lifting, and your Item Slot Capacity is reduced by 2.

6. Splintered Finger

- **Effect:** Reduces Adaptability Action Dice by 1 due to intense pain in fine motor skills. Tasks like lockpicking, disarming traps, or adjusting small mechanisms are impossible, and you may not throw anything.

Chest Afflictions

1. Cracked Ribcage

- a. **Effect:** Reduces Warfare Action Dice by 1 due to restricted movement. Every attack or defensive maneuver has a 30% chance to deal 2 less Wounds of damage.

2. Punctured Lung

- a. **Effect:** Reduces Social Action Dice by 1 each, as every breath is labored and painful. Movement is also halved, and you may not run due to the difficulty breathing.

3. Damaged Diaphragm

- a. **Effect:** Reduces Reverence Action Dice by 1, as the controlled breathing needed for properly speaking Axioms becomes difficult. Any time you Dash, make an Attack, or use an Ability, you take 1 Wound of damage due to the rapid breathing.

4. Severe Chest Contusion

- a. **Effect:** Reduces Adaptability Action Dice by 1, making evasive actions sluggish and difficult. You will also heal 2 less Wounds from any source of healing. (Including Resting and Whisperweaving).

5. Collapsed Lung

- a. **Effect:** Reduces Social Action Dice by 2, as difficulty breathing limits your ability to speak effectively. You cannot Dash without taking 1 Wound of damage from pushing yourself.

6. Internal Hemorrhaging

- a. **Effect:** Reduces Warfare Action Dice by 1 as physical exertion becomes more staining. You also have a 30% chance to take 2 Wounds of damage whenever you Attack, use an Ability, or Dash

Leg Afflictions

1. Broken Ankle

- o **Effect:** Reduces Adaptability Action Dice by 1 and increases Travel Time per day due to limited mobility. Each step inflicts pain, requiring an extra 50% time to cover standard distances.

2. Shattered Knee

- o **Effect:** Reduces Warfare Action Dice by 1, making rapid movements nearly impossible. Running or evading requires a successful Adaptability roll to avoid losing balance when attacking

3. Torn Hamstring

- o **Effect:** Reduces Adaptability Action Dice by 1 as the leg's range of motion is severely compromised. Movement speed is halved, and there is a 30% chance you take an additional Wound when Dashing

4. Splintered Shin

- o **Effect:** Reduces Warfare Action Dice by 1 as standing becomes difficult. You may only Move or take 1 Action per Sequence.

5. Crushed Foot

- o **Effect:** Reduces Adaptability Action Dice by 1, making fine footwork impossible. Combatants do not need to make a roll to hit you with a Basic Attack.

6. Dislocated Hip

- o **Effect:** Reduces Adaptability Action Dice by 1, and prevents any actions involving sudden movement or jumps. Attempting to run or jump has a 30% chance to cause the hip to dislocate again, resulting in your movement speed being reduced by 10 ft. permanently.

The Manuscript of Maladies (Ailments)

1. Soul Famine

- A bottomless hunger gnaws at you, but no food brings satisfaction. (**Effect:** *Eating feels like a desperate attempt to fill a void that grows no matter what you consume, sapping your strength.*)

2. Withered Hand

- Your hand feels as though it's losing life, the strength slipping away each day. (**Effect:** *Objects become heavy and foreign, slipping from your grasp, as if your own hand betrays you.*)

3. Echoing Pulse

- Your heart races and falters, each beat a struggle as if part of your life force escapes with every pulse. (**Effect:** *Any effort leaves you winded, as though the rhythm of your own heart conspires against you.*)

4. Ashen Sight

- Your vision fades into shades of gray, colors dimming as if the world itself withers. (**Effect:** *You find it hard to see detail, the world blurring as if reality itself is worn and threadbare.*)

5. Ringing Silence

- Your ears ring with an unyielding hum, drowning out voices and ambient sounds. (**Effect:** *Every conversation feels muffled, leaving you isolated and struggling to understand those around you.*)

6. Gloom Rash

- A crawling, maddening itch covers your skin where the Gloom has touched you. (**Effect:** *Scratching brings brief relief, only for the sensation to return more intensely, distracting you at critical moments.*)

7. Dream Eater

- Dreams twist into nightmares, stealing your rest and leaving you hollow. (**Effect:** *Sleep offers no peace, only exhaustion and vague, lingering horrors that follow you into waking.*)

8. Nerveburn

- A tingling fire runs beneath your skin, disrupting focus and turning every touch into discomfort. (**Effect:** *Your nerves jolt at the slightest sensation, making concentration a trial as pain flares unpredictably.*)

9. Rattling Bones

- Every step, every gesture brings a crackling pain in your joints, as if you're held together by fraying sinew. (**Effect:** *The noise and discomfort betray your every movement, as if your own body strains to hold itself together.*)

10. Cursed Breath

- A foulness taints your breath, turning every word into an assault on the senses of those around you. (**Effect:** *Others recoil from your proximity, and every attempt at closeness is met with thinly veiled disgust.*)

11. Frozen Veins

- Your blood runs cold, leaving your skin clammy and numb to touch. (**Effect:** *A deep chill radiates from within, as if warmth itself evades you, and even in heat, you feel frozen and unresponsive.*)

12. Shuddering Heart

- Your heartbeat becomes erratic, racing and slowing unpredictably. (*In moments of tension, the thundering in your chest overwhelms your senses, leaving you distracted and fearful of your own pulse.*)

13. Mind Rot

- A psychological ailment that gradually erodes your sanity, leading to paranoia and hallucinations. (**Effect:** Your Augur may tell you false information, or lead you to believe you are seeing things which are not really there.)

14. Gloom Fever

- A debilitating illness contracted from the Rust-Hued Gloom, which weakens your body and mind over time. (**Effect:** Your skin begins to turn a rusted color and you seem incapable of doing more than speaking for an extended period of time without fainting.)

15. Bone Chill

- A relentless, marrow-deep cold settles into your bones, stiffening each joint. (**Effect:** *Even in warmth, you find yourself shivering, hands clumsy, and your every movement a reminder of brittle fragility.*)

16. Veil of Dread

- Fear takes root in your heart, making your pulse race at the faintest shadow. (**Effect:** *Common objects and spaces become sources of dread, forcing you to gather resolve before each encounter.*)

17. Rust Lung

- Your lungs feel scraped raw, each breath labored and painful. A cough threatens to choke you at the worst times. (**Effect:** *Long sentences are clipped, and exertion brings bouts of coughing that echo in the silence.*)

18. Phantom Pain

- Old wounds you thought healed now throb with new life, as if ghosts of past injuries haunt your flesh. (**Effect:** *Pain flares unpredictably, as if your body itself remembers battles long forgotten.*)

The Index of Fleeting Fluxuations (Banes & Bonuses)

Blind

All attacks against blinded creatures gain a +2 Action Dice bonus, while the blinded creature suffers a -3 Action Dice penalty on any physical attacks they attempt. Lasts 1 Phase.

Calm

Affected creature becomes entirely docile, viewing all those around them as temporary allies for 1 Phase. The creature will not attack or resist unless attacked.

Concussed

Reduces Adaptability Action Dice by 2, and there is a 30% chance to fall Unconscious if the creature receives additional Wounds during this Phase.

Dark Spots

Reduces Observation Action Dice by 2, and the creature must re-roll 2 successes on any physical action they attempt. Lasts 1 Phase.

Despair

Reduces Reverence Action Dice by 2, with a 30% chance at the beginning of the Sequence to lose the turn due to a mental breakdown. Lasts 1 Phase.

Disorientation

Reduces Reverence Action Dice by 2 and prevents any Whisperweaving for 1 Phase.

Dissipate

Spiritual entity is removed from the Conflict for 1 Phase, rendering it unable to act or influence the environment until it reappears.

Dullard

Reduces Social and Reverence Action Dice by 2, blocking the ability to Whisperweave as focus and mental clarity fade. Lasts 1 Phase.

Fear

Instills an overwhelming terror, causing the creature to Dash in the opposite direction from the source of their fear, even if it leads into greater danger. Lasts 1 Phase.

Haste

Doubles movement speed and allows the target to take 2 attacks as a single Basic Attack Action. Lasts 1 Phase.

Invisible

While invisible, any normal Success on a physical attack becomes a Resounding Success. The target cannot be seen or heard, but any attack or interaction with objects reveals them. Lasts 1 Phase.

Mild Hallucinations

Reduces Observation Action Dice by 2, and there is a 30% chance the creature may attack a nearby ally instead of the intended target. Lasts 1 Phase.

Nausea

Imposes a 30% chance to lose the entire Sequence due to vomiting, disrupting the target's control. Lasts 1 Phase.

Necrosis

Deals 2 Wounds immediately and reduces all Action Dice by 2 for 1 Phase as tissue rapidly decays.

Paralyze

Causes complete immobilization, making the target lose their Sequence in the Conflict. The target cannot move, speak, or act for 1 Phase.

Sleep

Renders the target completely unconscious, unable to act for the round, or until awakened. On waking, they have -1 Action Die for an additional round due to grogginess.

Spiritual Burns

Prevents spirits and incorporeal entities from healing for 1 Phase, leaving them unable to recover from damage.

Unbalanced

Reduces Adaptability Action Dice by 2 and reduces movement speed by 10 feet, making balance and mobility difficult. Lasts 1 Phase.

Unconscious

Causes the target to lose their Sequence for the rest of the Scene or Conflict, leaving them prone. Any attacks against them automatically succeed and can kill instantly if severe enough.

Vulnerability

Doubles all incoming Wounds from any source of damage for 1 Phase, making the creature highly susceptible to harm.

Weakened

Reduces damage dealt by physical attacks by 2 Wounds for 1 Phase, leaving the creature's attacks noticeably less effective.