

Beyond

A Fantasy Adventure Game

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Introduction

The world is broken but that's not the problem. A magical mishap collided the world with its own past, future, and a few parallel realities. A wizard's tower sits atop a nuclear reactor drawing on that power the same way it had drawn on the ley lines. Giant eagles take to pirating from their new floating roost aboard an aircraft carrier. Dinosaurs fight for food with owlbears.

Those aren't really problems, though. People returned to life easily enough, adapting as people always do. Turns out being a car mechanic isn't all that different from repairing magical automatons. The problem is that people have taken advantage of the upheaval to revel in their greed, power, and gluttony. It's the same problem we've always had, but now powered by a world in flux.

You set out into this world to do what is right, to protect those who cannot protect themselves, to test your mettle and better yourself facing those who would live off the work of others.

A Fantasy Adventure Game

Beyond is a fantasy adventure game drawing on a long lineage of similar games. It aims to embrace the parts of the genre that work while also moving it forward. You'll need a GM and 3-5 players.

You can view this playtest version as a web page, PDF, or the raw source. You can send feedback to me on twitter or by filing an issue on GitHub.

Oh, and the name *Beyond* is probably a placeholder. Or maybe not. Who knows.

Versioning

Each release of *Beyond* has a version number of the form `xx.yy.zzzzzzzz`. The `xx` part is the major version. A new major version indicates a milestone in development. We're currently on major version 0. Major version 1 will probably be about the point the game is ready for public playtesting. Major version 2 would probably be some kind of funded release.

The `yy` portion is the minor version. Minor versions differ from each other in ways that are significant enough that you may have to update characters, choose different moves, etc. You don't necessarily have to migrate between each minor version, you can jump ahead several at a time, but you'll need to take some time to review the character playbooks in particular. Each minor version gets release notes mentioning significant changes.

The `zzzzzzzz` portion is the build. Each build differs in mostly editing: rewordings, clarifications, typo corrections. A build may also add new moves or playbooks but it won't alter existing moves, playbooks, or mechanics in an

incompatible way. You should be able to move between builds for the same minor version on the fly.

Quick Start Guide From Dungeon World

Beyond is based on *Dungeon World*, but it isn't a new edition of that game. It considerably shifts the mechanics, procedures, and setting. Since this is a playtest and is incomplete this section helps fill in the game: you can just assume this is *Dungeon World* except that...

- There are no stats. Each move has its own bonus which advances on its own.
- Rolling a 6- doesn't grant XP. Instead it grants advancement towards abilities on that specific move.
- There are no debilities. Instead there are conditions on each move. Each works differently.
- There can be multiple player characters of each class.
- There is no end of session move. Instead each playbook has its own XP instructions for end of session.
- There are no moves for being an elf, dwarf, or whatever sentient creature. Being an elf, dwarf, or human is just your form, noted on your character sheet.
- The core moves are called adventurer moves and each playbook has their own copy of them. The base moves are the same, but each playbook has different abilities and conditions for them.
- Bonds now change categories of success (from 6- to 7-9 and from 7-9 to 10+). Each time you use the bond you mark advancement on it until you retire the bond and gain its ability.
- Each character has reserve dice. Reserve dice can be added to any roll. If a reserve die is added to a roll you add the number rolled on the reserve die to the total. When you have time to rest and recover you roll all your remaining reserve dice and gain HP equal to the total (up to your max), then refill your reserve dice to your starting amount.
- Alignment is replaced by allegiance. Allegiance can be to a big concept, like Good, or to a specific group, entity, or ideal.
- All the player characters share a goal. The first goal is provided by the GM to kick off the game. Once that goal is completed the party writes a new one, but they have to agree on it. The goal is what unites this group of people beyond their direct bonds to one another.
- Monsters are represented by a single die indicating their strength in the current situation. Their damage is equal to that die, their HP is equal to the number of sides on that die, and their armor is equal to the number of sides divided by 4 (round down).
- The GM's structure is no longer Fronts.
- The world is a more specific kind of fantasy, a collision of worlds and ages.

- Hirelings, steadings, and many of the more narrow special moves are gone.

Other than that, some bits of *Dungeon World* (or in some cases *Apocalypse World*) remain the same:

- Rolls are 2d6. On a 7+ the move says what happens. On a 6- the GM says what happens (and you probably won't like it) unless the move specifically calls out otherwise.
- Damage is specified by class, not by weapon
- You have HP. You lose it when you take damage. If you get to 0 you take your last breath.

The World of Beyond

This is a world of collisions. Magic, technology, and myth all live side by side.

The dominant mode of the world is fantasy. The general shape of the world is that of a fantasy realm with dragons and dungeons, ruins and rust monsters, otyughs and owlbears.

Bits, pieces, and people of modern Earth are common. A knight might ride a motorcycle instead of a charger, a wizard might keep their spells on a cell phone, an accountant might now be a cleric, &etc. It turns out adding modern technology to a fantasy realm doesn't change all that much: electric lights are just as convenient as a rock with *light* cast on it.

Larger transplants from modern Earth, like a few city blocks, a movie theater, or an entire town, are frequent. Most everyone knows of at least one such intrusion within their local area. In these areas the scenery flips somewhat: instead of bits and pieces and modernity in a fantasy realm it's small elements of fantasy on a modern city street.

In all cases modern technology continues to work, but it works as magic instead of as technology. Sure, there's no reliably electricity, but somehow the winds of magic drive enough electrons around to keep things functioning (most of the time). There may not be gasoline for that pickup truck, but it turns out troll spit is just as flammable. In general any modern technology works as the same concept, but against a different world: a cell phone app might actually collect stray thoughts instead of posts, while a movie screen becomes an actual portal to another realm. Honor the metaphor of what technology does over the details of how you get AA batteries in a dragon's lair.

Technology is not so uniform as it was in modernity, though. Since it acts according to the idea of what it is each cell phone might be a little different: a spellbook for a wizard, a direct line to the gods for a cleric. A few special items have come through as artifacts, behaving far beyond what normal items can.

Less commonly other ages of Earth have collided. There's a known bit of the Western Front still fighting at the edge of a pastoral county. Some far future

technology is said to have manifested deep in a mountain range.

Rarest of all, elements of other fictions are known to have crossed over. Telamonian Ajax is a noted adventurer, most recently having quested into the Castle of the Flaming Skull to find a portal said to reside there.

Despite all of this, life continues. The actual intrusions are rather settled and normal. They are more like going to another country than going to another world. People live their lives as they always have. Some transplants yearn for home, but in the same way you might yearn for old friends after moving to a new place. This is a world that is garish and colorful with odd congruences everywhere.

The problems are what they always are when things change: the greedy, powerful, and hateful have used this opportunity to further their own agendas. Nature has been tampered with and harmed. People and places have been exploited by those who do not care.

The player characters are those who would set to solve problems, to help the helpless, to build strength from discord. They set out with spell, prayer, blade, and song to test themselves against the powerful and unjust. Some adventure because it is right, some adventure because it is hard, but all will find a world that is not short on dangerous places and powerful enemies.

Getting Started

Each player chooses a playbook. The currently available playbooks are:

- The Cleric
- The Fighter
- The Thief
- The Wizard

The GM provides a starting Goal for the party, then opens the adventure at a key moment in pursuing that goal.

Rules

This is an abbreviated overview of the rules that attempts to just hit on the high points to setup playtesting. If something is not covered here, make a best guess and ask when you get a chance, I'll be happy to expand.

Moves

The rules of *Beyond* are broken up into **moves**. Each move says when it happens and what it does. If a move has you roll the dice, the move will say what to add to the dice. It might add a modifier specific to that move, or it might add a bonus based on some condition, or it might ask you a series of questions to determine what to add.

There are four main categories of moves:

- **Core Moves** are rules for handling common situations like making camp. They cover basic parts of life as an adventurer. They apply to everyone. You can use one copy of these and pass them around.
- **Adventurer Moves** are the things adventurers do the most, like avoid an impending disaster or try to find out what's really going on. Each character has them, but each class has different options for how those moves change over time. Adventurer moves are printed on each class's character sheet.
- **Class Moves** are specific to each class. They describe things that are specific to that class's skill set. They are divided into themes for each class. Class moves are printed on each class's character sheet.
- **Supplemental Moves** are groups of moves that come together as part of a larger feature. Sometimes these features are tied to one class (only the thief has poison mastery), but some are available to multiple classes (divine patronage is available to clerics, druids, and bards). Supplemental moves come on their own sheets.

Some moves change over time through abilities or conditions. **Abilities** are ways a move can improve through use. Each ability has a set of advancement boxes ahead of it. Whenever a character fails a roll, they can check an advancement box under that move. Once all the advancement boxes for an ability are checked the character gains that ability. Most abilities modify the move they are under, but a few give one-time effects when gained and can be gained again. Abilities are the only way to change a character's bonus to a move.

Abilities are cumulative. For example, a thief has roll+1 to defy danger as well as abilities that give +1 and +1 against magical effects. A thief with both of these abilities would roll at +3 against magical effects.

Conditions are hinderances to moves that may occur due to failed rolls or poor choices. Each condition says how it modifies the move it is part of. Conditions are only removed as part of making camp or through certain magical means.

Core Moves

Last Breath

When you're dying you catch a glimpse of what lies beyond the Black Gates of Death's Kingdom (the GM will describe it). Then roll (just roll, +nothing—yeah, Death doesn't care how tough or cool you are). On a 10+, you've cheated Death—you're in a bad spot but you're still alive. On a 7–9, Death himself will offer you a bargain. Take it and stabilize or refuse and pass beyond the Black Gates into whatever fate awaits you. On 6-, your fate is sealed. You're marked as Death's own and you'll cross the threshold soon. The GM will tell you when.

Make Camp

When you settle in to rest, if you have supplies mark off one supplies. then choose one for each reserve die you have, then refill your reserve dice to maximum:

- Roll the reserve die and heal that much HP
- Remove a condition

If you don't have supplies, take a condition instead.

Take Watch

When you make camp in dangerous territory assign watchers between first, second, and third watch. If any watcher takes more than one watch they take a condition for each watch beyond the first. If something approaches camp during a watch roll+number of watchers. On a 10+, you're able to wake the camp and prepare a response, everyone in the camp takes +1 forward. On a 7–9, you react just a moment too late; your companions in camp are awake but haven't had time to prepare. They have weapons and armor but little else. On a miss, whatever lurks outside the campfire's light has the drop on you.

The Cleric

You have all the Adventurer Moves and Deity.

Choose three class moves to start with from among your themes. Your themes are Caster, Protector, and Prophet. You must take the first move in each theme before taking any below it. Indicate your move by marking it (put an x: (x) to show you have the move).

When you roll a 6-, mark one of the advancement boxes [] below the move you rolled by adding an x (like this: [x]). When all the advancement boxes for an ability are filled in you gain that ability. You may fill advancement boxes in any order you like.

When you take a condition (when a move says to or when the GM says to) fill in any condition box < > for any move. That condition applies until a move or the GM tells you to remove a condition.

Look

- Fervent eyes, deep eyes, hazy eyes
- Vibrant body, old body, trim body
- Bald, flowing hair, braided hair, styled hair
- Dwarf, Elf, Human, Halfling, _____

Adventurer Moves

Defy Danger

When you act despite an imminent threat or suffer a calamity, say how you deal with it and roll+0. On a 10+, you do what you set out to, the threat doesn't come to bear. On a 7-9, you stumble, hesitate, or flinch: the GM will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.

Abilities

- [][][][] Worldly: Take +1 when you act through wisdom and lore.
- [][][][] By Faith Sustained: Take +1 when defying disease, poison, or magic.
- [][][][][][] Magical Inversion: When the danger you face is magical and you roll a 12+ you can subsume the magical power and gain power from it.

Conditions

- < > Fanatic: When you roll a 9- you must redouble your efforts, no matter the cost.
- < > Shaken: -1

Spout Lore

When you consult your accumulated knowledge about something, roll+0. On a 10+, the GM will tell you something interesting and useful about the subject relevant to your situation. On a 7–9, the GM will only tell you something interesting—it's on you to make it useful. The GM might ask you “How do you know this?” Tell them the truth, now.

Abilities

- [][][][] Wise: +1
- [][][][] Guided By Voices: When you consult the voices of the gods in addition to your own knowledge you may improve your result one step (6- to 7-9, 7-9 to 10+). The GM will tell you the favor the gods ask in return, you may not use this again until you fulfill their request.

Conditions

- < > Dazed: -1

Discern Realities

When you closely study a situation or person, roll+2. On a 10+, ask the GM 3 questions from the list below. On a 7–9, ask 1. Either way, take +1 forward when acting on the answers.

- What happened here recently?
- What is about to happen?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What here is useful or valuable to me?
- Who's really in control here?
- What here is not what it appears to be?

Abilities

- [][][][] Attentive: +1
- [][][][] Signs of Belief: No matter the result you may also ask “what gods are present here?”
- [][][][] Strictures: You may also ask “what do this person's beliefs want them to do here?”

Conditions

- < > Disoriented: -1

Parley

When you have leverage on a GM Character and push them to do what you want, roll+0. On a 10+, they do what you ask if you first promise what they ask of you. On a 7–9, they will do what you ask, but need some concrete assurance of your promise, right now.

Abilities

- [][][][] The Voice Of The Gods: When your leverage is the manifest will of the gods, take +1.
- [][][][] Stigmata: Take +1 when you have shed your own blood on behalf of those you would sway.

Hack and Slash

When you engage an enemy in melee, roll+0. On a 10+, you deal your damage to the enemy and avoid their attack. At your option, you may choose to do +1d6 damage but expose yourself to the enemy's attack. On a 7–9, you deal your damage to the enemy and the enemy makes an attack against you.

Abilities

- [][][][] Resilient: On a 6- you take +1 forward
- [][][][] Warpriest: +1

Conditions

- < > Wounded: No matter the result you take 1 damage (in addition to any other results).

Volley

When you take aim and shoot at an enemy at range, roll. On a 10+, you have a clear shot—deal your damage. On a 7–9, choose one (whichever you choose you deal your damage):

- You have to move to get the shot placing you in danger as described by the GM
- You have to take what you can get: -1d6 damage
- You have to take several shots, reducing your ammo by one

Class Moves

Deity

You serve and worship some deity or power which grants you spells. Give your god a name (maybe Helferth, Sucellus, Zorica or Krugon the Bleak) and choose your deity's domain:

- Healing and Restoration
- The Night Sky And Prophetic Stars
- Knowledge and Hidden Things
- The Downtrodden and Forgotten
- What Lies Beneath
- The Cycle of Seasons and Time

Choose one precept of your religion:

- Your religion preaches the sanctity of suffering, add Petition: Suffering
- Your religion preserves knowledge, add Petition: Gaining Secrets
- Your religion has important sacrificial rites, add Petition: Offering
- Your religion believes in trial by combat, add Petition: Personal Victory

() Caster

Gain *Divine Patronage*.

() **Penitent** When you take damage and embrace the pain, you may take +1d4 damage (ignoring armor). If you do, take +1 forward to cast a spell.

() **Esoteric Beliefs** Choose a Spellbook spell. It counts as a Divine Patronage spell for you.

() **Turn Undead** When you hold your holy symbol aloft and call on your deity for protection, roll+2. On a 7+, so long as you continue to pray and brandish your holy symbol, no undead may come within reach of you. On a 10+, you also momentarily daze intelligent undead and cause mindless undead to flee. Aggression breaks the effects and they are able to act as normal. Intelligent undead may still find ways to harry you from afar. They're clever like that.

Abilities

- [][][][] Banish Undead: You also deal your damage to all undead present on a 7+.
- [][][][][][] Sanctify: On a 7+ the ground you stand on up to 10 paces from you is sanctified making it anathema to undead. The effects of your turning are permanent on that ground.

Conditions

- < > Marked By Death: The undead and spirits are drawn to you for revenge or salvation.

() Protector

When you petition your deity according to the precept of your religion you get 1 hold and lose any hold you already had. Spend that hold when you or an ally takes damage to call on your deity, they intervene with an appropriate manifestation (a sudden gust of wind, a lucky slip, a burst of light) and negate the damage.

() The Scales of Life And Death When you tend to someone who would take their last breath, they do not take their last breath as long as you do nothing but care for them. They are incapacitated, but will not die so long as you tend to them.

() Divine Protection When you have time and safety with a magic item you may ask the GM what it does, the GM will answer you truthfully.

() Sustained By The Gods +4 HP

() Divine Armor When you wear no armor or shield you get 3 armor.

() Prophet

When you petition your deity according to the precept of your religion, your deity tells you what it would have you do. Take +1 when pursuing that action.

() Faithful +1 reserve die

() Apotheosis The first time you spend time in prayer as appropriate to your god after taking this move, choose a feature associated with your deity (rending claws, wings of sapphire feathers, an all-seeing third eye, etc.). When you emerge from prayer, you permanently gain that physical feature.

Bonds

Choose a bond. When your bond applies to a roll you make you or the target of the bond may increase the result of a roll by one category (6- to 7-9, 7-9 to 10+) and mark a bond advancement. When all advancements are marked choose a new bond in place of the one that you completed (but keep the ability). * () The gods have an interest in _____, I must find out why. * [][][][] Visions: The gods will send you visions if _____ is in danger. * () _____ is in danger but I will keep them safe. * [][][][] The Gods' Work: You may give your reserve dice to _____. * () _____'s faith is strange to me, I can learn much from them * [][][][] Expanded Horizons: You may also take moves from _____'s class

Stats

- 8 HP
- 1d6 damage
- 2d6 reserves

XP

At the end of each session mark those that you did that session. When you have time to train in safety, if you have marked your level + 3 XP, erase all XP and gain a level (each mark counts separately).

- [][] Bring peace to a situation
- [][] Serve your allegiance through divine power
- [][] Learn about your own faith or a new faith
- [][] Aid someone in need on behalf of the gods
- [][] Put your deity before yourself
- [][] Achieve a goal

Allegiance

Choose an allegiance to start with: Common Folk, The Lowlands Church, The Royalty

Goal

The GM will give your party a starting goal. When you accomplish that, set a new goal in collaboration with the other players.

Gear

- A blunt melee weapon: _____
- A holy symbol: _____
- A sign of faith: _____
- 2 armor of protective gear: _____
- Two healing potions (drink to recover a reserve dice)
- Supplies (5)

Divine Patronage

The god have gifted you with magic. Gain the Commune and Cast a Spell moves.

Commune

When you spend uninterrupted time (an hour or so) in quiet communion with your deity, you:

- Lose any spells already granted to you.
- Are granted new spells of your choice whose total levels don't exceed your own level+1, and none of which is a higher level than your own level.
- Prepare all of your rites, which never count against your limit.

Cast a Spell

When you unleash a spell granted to you by your deity, roll+2. On a 10+, the spell is successfully cast and your deity does not revoke the spell, so you may cast it again. On a 7–9, the spell is cast, but choose one:

- You draw unwelcome attention or put yourself in a spot. The GM will tell you how.
- Your casting distances you from your deity—take -1 ongoing to cast a spell until the next time you commune.
- After you cast it, the spell is revoked by your deity. You cannot cast the spell again until you commune and have it granted to you.

Abilities

- [][][][][][] Marked: +1
- [][][][][] Empower Magic: On a 10+ you have the option of choosing from the 7-9 list. If you do, you may maximize the spells effects or double its targets.
- [][][][][] Chosen: The spell _____ counts as a rite for you.
- [][][][][] Devoted Healer: When you heal someone else of damage, add your level to the amount of damage healed.

Spells

Rites

Light An item you touch glows with divine light, about as bright as a torch. It gives off no heat or sound and requires no fuel but is otherwise like a mundane torch. You have complete control of the color of the flame. The spell lasts as long as it is in your presence.

Sanctify Food or water you hold in your hands while you cast this spell is consecrated by your deity. In addition to now being holy or unholy, the affected substance is purified of any mundane spoilage.

Guidance The symbol of your deity appears before you and gestures towards the direction or course of action your deity would have you take then disappears. The message is through gesture only; your communication through this spell is severely limited.

1st Level

Bless Your deity smiles upon a combatant of your choice. They take +1 ongoing so long as battle continues and they stand and fight. While this spell is ongoing you take -1 to cast a spell.

Cure Light Wounds At your touch wounds scab and bones cease to ache. Heal an ally you touch of 1d6 damage.

Cause Fear Choose a target you can see and a nearby object. The target is afraid of the object so long as you maintain the spell. Their reaction is up to them: flee, panic, beg, fight. While this spell is ongoing you take -1 to cast a spell. You cannot target entities with less than animal intelligence (magical constructs, undead, automatons, and the like).

Magic Weapon The weapon you hold while casting does +1d4 damage until you dismiss this spell. While this spell is ongoing you take -1 to cast a spell.

Sanctuary As you cast this spell, you walk the perimeter of an area, consecrating it to your deity. As long as you stay within that area you are alerted whenever someone acts with malice within the sanctuary (including entering with harmful intent). Anyone who receives healing within a sanctuary heals +1d4 HP.

Speak With Dead A corpse converses with you briefly. It will answer any three questions you pose to it to the best of the knowledge it had in life and the knowledge it gained in death.

The Fighter

You have all the Adventurer Moves.

Choose three class moves to start with from among your themes. Your themes are Destroyer, Bearer, and Armorer. You must take the first move in each theme before taking any below it. Indicate your move by marking it (put an x: (x) to show you have the move).

When you roll a 6-, mark one of the advancement boxes [] below the move you rolled by adding an x (like this: [x]). When all the advancement boxes for an ability are filled in you gain that ability. You may fill advancement boxes in any order you like.

When you take a condition (when a move says to or when the GM says to) fill in any condition box < > for any move. That condition applies until a move or the GM tells you to remove a condition.

Look

- Steely eyes, fierce eyes, caring eyes
- Lithe body, ravaged body, brawny body, bulky body
- Bald, flowing hair, wild hair, styled hair
- Dwarf, Elf, Human, Halfling, _____

Adventurer Moves

Defy Danger

When you act despite an imminent threat or suffer a calamity, say how you deal with it and roll+1. On a 10+, you do what you set out to, the threat doesn't come to bear. On a 7-9, you stumble, hesitate, or flinch: the GM will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.

Abilities

- [][][][] Iron Constituion: Take +1 when defying poison, disease, or infection.
- [][][][] Battle Hardened: Take +1 when you act through mental fortitude.

Conditions

- < > Shaken: -1

Spout Lore

When you consult your accumulated knowledge about something, roll+0. On a 10+, the GM will tell you something interesting and useful about the subject

relevant to your situation. On a 7–9, the GM will only tell you something interesting—it’s on you to make it useful. The GM might ask you “How do you know this?” Tell them the truth, now.

Abilities

- [][][][] Veteran: +1 when the topic is arms, armor, or armies.

Discern Realities

When you closely study a situation or person, roll+0. On a 10+, ask the GM 3 questions from the list below. On a 7–9, ask 1. Either way, take +1 forward when acting on the answers.

- What happened here recently?
- What is about to happen?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What here is useful or valuable to me?
- Who’s really in control here?
- What here is not what it appears to be?

Abilities

- [][][][] Seeing Red: Take +1 in combat
- [][][][] Weak Point: Add “How could I defeat them in combat?” to your list of questions.
- [][][][] Size Up: You may always ask “What size dice are they?” for free even on a 6–.

Conditions

- < > Disoriented: -1

Parley

When you have leverage on a GM Character and push them to do what you want, roll+0. On a 10+, they do what you ask if you first promise what they ask of you. On a 7–9, they will do what you ask, but need some concrete assurance of your promise, right now.

Abilities

- [][][][] Renown: Take +1 among those that have heard tales of when you _____
- [][][][] Interrogator: Take +1 when your leverage is a credible threat of impending violence.

Conditions

- < > Fed Up: You’re done with this, take -1.

Hack and Slash

When you engage an enemy in melee, roll+2. On a 10+, you deal your damage to the enemy and avoid their attack. At your option, you may choose to do +1d6 damage but expose yourself to the enemy's attack. On a 7–9, you deal your damage to the enemy and the enemy makes an attack against you.

Abilities

- [][][][][][] Battle Hardened: +1
- [][][][][][] Sure Strike: You deal +1d4 damage
- [][][][][][] Riposte: +1 armor against damage from Hack and Slash.
- [][][][][][][] Superior Warrior: On a 12+ you deal your damage, avoid their attack, and impress, dismay, or frighten your enemy.

Conditions

- < > Off Balance: You may not choose to deal extra damage on a 10+.

Volley

When you take aim and shoot at an enemy at range, roll+1. On a 10+, you have a clear shot—deal your damage. On a 7–9, choose one (whichever you choose you deal your damage):

- You have to move to get the shot placing you in danger as described by the GM
- You have to take what you can get: -1d6 damage
- You have to take several shots, reducing your ammo by one

Abilities

- [][][][][][] Kill Shot: you deal +1d4 damage

Class Moves

() Destroyer

When you use pure strength to destroy an inanimate obstacle, roll+2. On a 10+, choose 3. On a 7–9 choose 2.

- It doesn't take a very long time
- Nothing of value is damaged
- It doesn't make an inordinate amount of noise
- You can fix the thing again without a lot of effort

Abilities

- [][][][][][] SMASH: +1
- [][][][][][] Read The Wreckage: When you destroy something of value the GM will give you some insight into the person who valued it.

() **Vigorous** +1 reserve die.

() **Powerful** +1 reserve die.

() **Killing Blow** When you spend a reserve die to hack and slash treat your damage dice as if they all rolled their maximum values.

() **Bearer**

Gain a *signature weapon*.

() **Through Death's Eyes** When you go into battle, roll+1. On a 10+, name someone who will live and someone who will die. On a 7-9, name someone who will live or someone who will die. Name NPCs, not player characters. The GM will make your vision come true, if it's even remotely possible. On a 6- you see your own death and consequently take -1 ongoing throughout the battle.

Abilities

- [][][][] This Is Not How It Ends: The next time you would take your last breath you succeed as if you rolled a 10+, no need to roll. Then erase all advancement from this ability.

() **Ghost Of The Blade** When you consult the spirits that reside within your signature weapon, they will give you an insight relating to the current situation, and might ask you some questions in return, roll+1. On a 10+, the GM will give you good detail. On a 7-9, the GM will give you an impression.

Abilities

- [][][][] Bladefriend: +1

() **Armorer**

When you make your armor take the brunt of damage dealt to you, the damage is negated but you must reduce the armor value of your armor or shield (your choice) by 1. The value is reduced each time you make this choice. If the reduction leaves the item with 0 armor it is destroyed.

() **Steel Hide** +2 armor

() **Indomitable** +6 HP

Bonds

Choose a bond. When your bond applies to a roll you make you or the target of the bond may increase the result of a roll by one category (6- to 7-9, 7-9 to 10+) and mark a bond advancement. When all advancements are marked choose a new bond in place of the one that you completed (but keep the ability).

- () _____ appears weak, but there's much I can learn from them.
 - [][][][] Expanded Horizons: You may also take moves from _____'s class
- () I owe my life to _____, I will pay them back.
 - [][][][] Death's Friend: Take +1 to last breath rolls.
- () I worry about _____, I will protect them.
 - [][][][] Bonded: You may give your reserve dice to _____.

Stats

- 10 HP
- 1d8 damage
- 2d6 reserves

XP

At the end of each session mark those that you did that session. When you have time to train in safety, if you have marked your level + 3 XP, erase all XP and gain a level (each mark counts separately).

- [][][] Prove yourself against a worthy adversary
- [][][] An impressive show of strength
- [][][] Encounter a new fighting style
- [][][] Aid someone in need
- [][][] Lead a charge into battle
- [][][] Achieve a goal

Allegiance

Choose an allegiance to start with: Strength, The Golden Company, Power

Goal

The GM will give your party a starting goal. When you accomplish that, set a new goal in collaboration with the other players.

Gear

- A powerful melee weapon: _____

- A reserve melee weapon: _____
- A typical ranged weapon: _____
- A memento mori: _____
- Two healing potions (drink to recover a reserve dice)
- Supplies (5)

Signature Weapon

Your signature weapon is one of a kind. It may be important in some universal way (an heirloom or enchanted weapon) or only important to you, but it is yours through and through. Nothing can separate you from it for long. Describe your weapon from the lists below.

- Name: _____
- Form:
 - Sword
 - Axe
 - Spear
 - Flail
 - Polearm
- Look (choose 1 or more):
 - Ancient
 - Unblemished
 - Ornate
 - Blood-stained
 - Sinister
 - Shining
- Enhancements (choose 2):
 - Hooks and spikes. +1 damage
 - Sharp. Ignores 2 armor.
 - Perfectly weighted. +1 to hack and slash.
 - Serrated edges. +1 damage.
 - Glows in the presence of one type of creature, your choice.
 - Huge. Knocks enemies back, leaves grievous wounds.
 - Versatile. Can be used to volley.
 - Guard. +1 armor.

The Thief

You have all the Adventurer Moves.

Choose three class moves to start with from among your themes. Your themes are Poisoner, Ambusher, and Trap Expert. You must take the first move in each theme before taking any below it. Indicate your move by marking it (put an x: (x) to show you have the move).

When you roll a 6-, mark one of the advancement boxes [] below the move you rolled by adding an x (like this: [x]). When all the advancement boxes for an ability are filled in you gain that ability. You may fill advancement boxes in any order you like.

When you take a condition (when a move says to or when the GM says to) fill in any condition box < > for any move. That condition applies until a move or the GM tells you to remove a condition.

Look

- Shifty eyes, criminal eyes, sharp eyes
- Lithe body, knobby body, flabby body, skinny body
- Hooded, cropped hair, messy hair, styled hair
- Dwarf, Elf, Human, Halfling, _____

Adventurer Moves

Defy Danger

When you act despite an imminent threat or suffer a calamity, say how you deal with it and roll+1. On a 10+, you do what you set out to, the threat doesn't come to bear. On a 7-9, you stumble, hesitate, or flinch: the GM will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.

Abilities

- [][][][] Danger Sense: +1
- [][][][] Immunity: Take +1 when defying poison, disease, or infection.
- [][][][] Lightning Reflexes: Take +1 when avoiding traps or ambushes.
- [][][][] Spellthief: Take +1 against magical effects.
- [][][][] Evasion: On a 12+ you transcend the danger. You not only do what you set out to, but the GM will offer you a better outcome, true beauty, or a moment of grace.

Conditions

- < > Shaken: -1

Spout Lore

When you consult your accumulated knowledge about something, roll+1. On a 10+, the GM will tell you something interesting and useful about the subject relevant to your situation. On a 7–9, the GM will only tell you something interesting—it's on you to make it useful. The GM might ask you “How do you know this?” Tell them the truth, now.

Abilities

- [][][][] Exploit: Take +1 forward when acting on the information.
- [][][][] Knowledgeable: +1

Conditions

- < > Dazed: -1

Discern Realities

When you closely study a situation or person, roll+0. On a 10+, ask the GM 3 questions from the list below. On a 7–9, ask 1. Either way, take +1 forward when acting on the answers.

- What happened here recently?
- What is about to happen?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What here is useful or valuable to me?
- Who's really in control here?
- What here is not what it appears to be?

Abilities

- [][][][] Case: Ask one even on a 6-.
- [][][][] Eyes of Desire: Add “What do they most want?” to your list of questions.
- [][][][] Keen: +1

Conditions

- < > Disoriented: -1

Parley

When you have leverage on a GM Character and push them to do what you want, roll+1. On a 10+, they do what you ask if you first promise what they ask of you. On a 7–9, they will do what you ask, but need some concrete assurance of your promise, right now.

Abilities

- [][][][] Wealth and Taste: When you make a show of your wealth and taste take +1

Hack and Slash

When you engage an enemy in melee, roll+0. On a 10+, you deal your damage to the enemy and avoid their attack. At your option, you may choose to do +1d6 damage but expose yourself to the enemy's attack. On a 7–9, you deal your damage to the enemy and the enemy makes an attack against you.

Abilities

- [][][][] Cheap Shot: +1d6 damage against unsuspecting targets.
- [][][][] Dirty Fighter: You deal +1d4 damage

Conditions

- < > Vulnerable: You take +1d4 damage when taking damage from hack and slash.

Volley

When you take aim and shoot at an enemy at range, roll+1. On a 10+, you have a clear shot—deal your damage. On a 7–9, choose one (whichever you choose you deal your damage):

- You have to move to get the shot placing you in danger as described by the GM
- You have to take what you can get: -1d6 damage
- You have to take several shots, reducing your ammo by one

Abilities

- [][][][] Kill Shot: You deal +1d4 damage
- [][][][] Strong Arm, True Aim: You can throw any melee weapon, using it to volley. A thrown melee weapon is gone; you can never choose to reduce ammo on a 7–9.

Class Moves

() Poisoner

You have a *poison mastery*.

() **Disguise** When you have time and materials you can create a disguise that will fool anyone into thinking you're another creature of about the same size and shape. Your actions can give you away but your appearance won't.

() **Retribution** When you are dealt damage in melee you may apply a dose of any applied poison to your attacker.

() **Iron Stomach** You are immune to all ingested poisons you have mastered.

() Ambusher

When you attack a surprised or defenseless enemy with a melee weapon, you can choose to deal your damage or roll+2. On a 10+ choose two. On a 7-9 choose one.

- You don't get into melee with them
- You deal your damage+1d6
- You create an advantage, +1 forward to you or an ally acting on it
- Reduce their armor by 1 until they repair it

Abilities

- [][][][] Assassin: +1d6 damage
- [][][][] Lightning Reflexes: +1
- [][][][][][] Disappear: On a 12+ you immediately conceal yourself again, your target will know they were attacked but not by whom or where you are.

Conditions

- < > Slowed: You always end up in melee after an ambush.

() Shoot First You're never caught by surprise. When an enemy would get the drop on you, you get to act first instead.

() Surge +1 reserve die.

() Escape Route When you're in too deep and need a way out, name your escape route and roll+2. On a 10+ you're gone. On a 7-9 you can stay or go, but if you go it costs you: leave something behind or take something with you, the GM will tell you what.

() Trap Expert

When you spend a moment to survey a dangerous area, roll+2. On a 10+ the GM will tell you the location and trigger of the nearest trap (or let you know if there are none in this area). On a 7-9 the GM will tell you the location or trigger of the nearest trap, your choice.

Abilities

- [][][][][] Sixth Sense: +1
- [][][][][] Cautious: On a 6- you can choose as on a 7-9, in addition to whatever the GM says.

() **Tricks of the Trade** When you pick locks or pockets or disable traps, roll+2. On a 10+, you do it, no problem. On a 7–9, you still do it, but the GM will offer you two options between suspicion, danger, or cost.

Abilities

- [][][][] Subtle: On a 7+ you leave no trace of your tampering.
- [][][][] Practiced: +1

() **Connections** When you put out word to the criminal underbelly about something you want or need, roll+1. On a 10+, someone has it, just for you. On a 7–9, you'll have to settle for something close or it comes with strings attached, your call.

() **Hardened** +3 maximum HP.

Bonds

Choose a bond. When your bond applies to a roll you make you or the target of the bond may increase the result of a roll by one category (6- to 7-9, 7-9 to 10+) and mark a bond advancement. When all advancements are marked choose a new bond in place of the one that you completed (but keep the ability).

- () _____ and I have a con running.
 - [][][][] Expanded Horizons: You may also take moves from _____'s class
- () _____ shares my secret, I must keep them safe.
 - [][][][] Blood Bond: At the end of any session where _____ did not take significant harm you may mark any XP box.
- () _____ has my back when things go wrong, so I have theirs.
 - [][][][] Bonded: You may give your reserve dice to _____.

Stats

- 6 HP
- 1d8 damage
- 2d6 reserves

XP

At the end of each session mark those that you did that session. When you have time to train in safety, if you have marked your level + 3 XP, erase all XP and gain a level (each mark counts separately).

- [][][] Avoid detection during an important undertaking
- [][][] Neutralize a threat

- [][] Conquer an obstacle without leaving a trace
- [][][] Aid someone in need
- [][] Make a daring escape
- [][] Achieve a goal

Allegiance

Choose an allegiance to start with: Gold, The Red Cloaks, Comfort

Goal

The GM will give your party a starting goal. When you accomplish that, set a new goal in collaboration with the other players.

Gear

- A subtle melee weapon: _____
- A reserve melee weapon: _____
- A thrown ranged weapon: _____
- A memento mori: _____
- Two healing potions (drink to recover a reserve dice)
- Supplies (5)

Poison Mastery

You have mastered the use of a poison. Describe your first mastered poison below. You get 5 doses of it and the Brewer move.

Poison

For each poison choose:

- Name: _____
- Method (choose one):
 - Ingestion (duration: days)
 - Injection (duration: hours)
 - Inhaled (duration: minutes)
 - Applied (duration: until removed)
- Effects (choose one):
 - Knocked out
 - Vomiting
 - Intoxication
 - Weakness (-1d4 damage dealt)
 - Vulnerability (+1d4 damage taken)
 - Tremors
- Traces (choose one):
 - Inky residue
 - A pungent smell
 - Gaseous smoke
 - Skin discoloration

Brewer

When you have time to gather materials and a safe place to brew you can create more of a poison you have mastered. Roll+1. On a 7+ you create 3 doses. On a 10+ you may create 2 additional doses or mark advancement.

Abilities * [][][][] Happy Accident: Design a new poison. You have mastery for it. Then erase all advancement from this ability. * [][][][][] Innovation: Design a new poison. You have mastery for it. You may choose an extra effect, an extra method, or no traces, your choice. Then erase all advancement from this ability.

The Wizard

You have all the Adventurer Moves.

Choose three class moves to start with from among your themes. Your themes are Towermage, Ritualist, and Warlock. You must take the first move in each theme before taking any below it. Indicate your move by marking it (put an x: (x) to show you have the move).

When you roll a 6-, mark one of the advancement boxes [] below the move you rolled by adding an x (like this: [x]). When all the advancement boxes for an ability are filled in you gain that ability. You may fill advancement boxes in any order you like.

When you take a condition (when a move says to or when the GM says to) fill in any condition box < > for any move. That condition applies until a move or the GM tells you to remove a condition.

Look

- Wild eyes, wise eyes, burning eyes
- Scrawny body, scarred body, twisted body, enchanted body
- Bald, flowing hair, unnatural hair, styled hair
- Dwarf, Elf, Human, Halfling, _____

Adventurer Moves

Defy Danger

When you act despite an imminent threat or suffer a calamity, say how you deal with it and roll+0. On a 10+, you do what you set out to, the threat doesn't come to bear. On a 7-9, you stumble, hesitate, or flinch: the GM will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.

Abilities

- [][][][] Sharp: Take +1 when you act through an improvisation and quick thinking.
- [][][][] Hard Headed: Take +1 when you act through mental fortitude.
- [][][][][][] Magical Inversion: When the danger you face is magical and you roll a 12+ you can subsume the magical power and gain power from it.

Conditions

- < > Cowardly: When you roll a 9- you must also immediately act to remove yourself from the situation, dropping whatever else you were doing.
- < > Shaken: -1

Spout Lore

When you consult your accumulated knowledge about something, roll+1. On a 10+, the GM will tell you something interesting and useful about the subject relevant to your situation. On a 7–9, the GM will only tell you something interesting—it's on you to make it useful. The GM might ask you “How do you know this?” Tell them the truth, now.

Abilities

- [][][][] Wise: +1
- [][][][] Area of Expertise: Take +1 when the topic is _____
- [][][][] Fount of Knowledge: Take +1 if the topic is something no one else has any clue about.

Conditions

- < > Dazed: -1

Discern Realities

When you closely study a situation or person, roll+1. On a 10+, ask the GM 3 questions from the list below. On a 7–9, ask 1. Either way, take +1 forward when acting on the answers.

- What happened here recently?
- What is about to happen?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What here is useful or valuable to me?
- Who's really in control here?
- What here is not what it appears to be?

Abilities

- [][][][] Attentive: +1
- [][][][] Mage Sight: No matter the result you may also ask “what here is magical?”
- [][][][][][] Eye of Time: You may also ask “what happened here in the distant past which is relevant now?”

Conditions

- < > Disoriented: -1

Parley

When you have leverage on a GM Character and push them to do what you want, roll+0. On a 10+, they do what you ask if you first promise what they ask of you. On a 7–9, they will do what you ask, but need some concrete assurance of your promise, right now.

Abilities

- [][][][] Renown: Take +1 among those that have heard tales of when you _____
- [][][][] Parlor Tricks: Take +1 when parleying someone who has recently seen a display of your power.

Conditions

- < > Witchmark: You have some magical alteration of your being that is disconcerting or distracting, take -1.

Hack and Slash

When you engage an enemy in melee, roll-1. On a 10+, you deal your damage to the enemy and avoid their attack. At your option, you may choose to do +1d6 damage but expose yourself to the enemy's attack. On a 7-9, you deal your damage to the enemy and the enemy makes an attack against you.

Abilities

- [][][][] Warpblade: You can manifest a dagger-like weapon from pure magical energy. You are always armed, if you choose to be. Your warpblade ignores mundane armor.
- [][][][] Warwizard: +1

Conditions

- < > Wounded: No matter the result you take 1 damage (in addition to any other results).

Volley

When you take aim and shoot at an enemy at range, roll+0. On a 10+, you have a clear shot—deal your damage. On a 7-9, choose one (whichever you choose you deal your damage):

- You have to move to get the shot placing you in danger as described by the GM
- You have to take what you can get: -1d6 damage
- You have to take several shots, reducing your ammo by one

Abilities

- [][][][] Trueshot: Take +2 when targeting someone recently affected by one of your spells
- [][][][][] Innate Magic Missile: You can always fire magic projectiles. On a 7-9 you cannot choose to reduce your ammo.

Class Moves

() Towermage

Gain a *spellbook*.

() **Spell Study** When you see new magic performed or study a new magical power, mark an advancement for this move.

Abilities

- [][][][] Breakthrough: Add a new spell to your spellbook of the GM's choice then erase all advancements for this ability.
- [][][][][][] Discovery: Add a new spell to your spellbook of your choice then erase all advancements for this ability.

() **Reinforced Binding** You can use your spellbook as a shield (+1 armor).

() **Spell Mastery** Choose a spell. You prepare that spell as if it were one level lower.

() Ritualist

When you draw on a place of power to create a magical effect, tell the GM what you're trying to achieve. Ritual effects are always possible, but the GM will give you one to four of the following conditions:

- It's going to take days/weeks/months.
- First you must _____.
- You'll need help from _____.
- It will require a lot of money
- The best you can do is a lesser version, unreliable and limited
- You and your allies will risk danger from _____.
- You'll have to disenchant _____ to do it.

() **Sustained By Magic** +3 maximum HP.

() **Enchanter** When you have time and safety with a magic item you may ask the GM what it does, the GM will answer you truthfully.

() **Self-Powered** When you have time, arcane materials, and a safe space, you can create your own place of power. Describe to the GM what kind of power it is and how you're binding it to this place, the GM will tell you one organization or being that will have an interest in your workings.

() Warlock

Gain a *mystic patron*.

() Grit +1 reserve die

() Magic Eater When you absorb a magical effect, roll+1. On a 10+ the effect ends and you gain a reserve die (even over your maximum). On a 7-9 the effect is temporarily suspended and you gain a reserve die up to your maximum.

Abilities

- [][][][] Amplifier: The reserve dice you gain through Omega are d8 instead of d6.

Bonds

Choose a bond. When your bond applies to a roll you make you or the target of the bond may increase the result of a roll by one category (6- to 7-9, 7-9 to 10+) and mark a bond advancement. When all advancements are marked choose a new bond in place of the one that you completed (but keep the ability).

- () There is a power in _____ that I want to understand.
 - [][][][] Expanded Horizons: You may also take moves from _____'s class
- () I believe an ancient prophecy is about _____ and I must protect them.
 - [][][][] Prophetic Visions: When you discern realities you may also ask "What will happen if _____ does _____?"
- () _____ can learn much from me, I must teach them
 - [][][][] Mystical Mentorship: You can always tell the direction and distance to _____

Stats

- 4 HP
- 1d4 damage
- 2d6 reserves

XP

At the end of each session mark those that you did that session. When you have time to train in safety, if you have marked your level + 3 XP, erase all XP and gain a level (each mark counts separately).

- [][] Improve your knowledge of magic
- [][] Serve your allegiance through mystical power
- [][] Explore a new place of power or plane of existence
- [][] Aid someone in need
- [][] Craft a new magic item or develop a new spell
- [][] Achieve a goal

Allegiance

Choose an allegiance to start with: Change, The Blue Order, Power

Goal

The GM will give your party a starting goal. When you accomplish that, set a new goal in collaboration with the other players.

Gear

- A handheld melee weapon: _____
- A magical trinket: _____
- A scrap of lore: _____
- Two healing potions (drink to recover a reserve dice)
- Supplies (5)

Spellbook

When you gain a spellbook you get the Prepare Spells and Cast A Spell moves. Your spellbook starts with 3 1st level spells and all the cantrips.

Prepare Spells

When you spend uninterrupted time (an hour or so) in quiet contemplation of your spellbook, you:

- Lose any spells you already have prepared.
- Prepare new spells of your choice from your spellbook whose total levels don't exceed your own level+1.
- Prepare your cantrips which never count against your limit.

Cast A Spell

When you release a spell you've prepared, roll+2. On a 10+, the spell is successfully cast and you do not forget the spell—you may cast it again later. On a 7-9, the spell is cast, but choose one:

- You draw unwelcome attention or put yourself in a spot. The GM will tell you how.
- The spell disturbs the fabric of reality as it is cast—take -1 ongoing to cast a spell until the next time you Prepare Spells.
- After it is cast, the spell is forgotten. You cannot cast the spell again until you prepare spells.

Note that maintaining spells with ongoing effects will sometimes cause a penalty to your roll to cast a spell.

Abilities

- [][][][] Trial And Error: Gain a new spell of your level or lower, then erase all advancement from this ability.
- [][][][][][] Master Caster: +1
- [][][][][] Empower Magic: On a 10+ you have the option of choosing from the 7-9 list. If you do, you may maximize the spells effects or double its targets.

Conditions

- < > Leaky Mind: On a hit you always forget the spell, in addition to any other choice you have to make.

Cantrips

Light

An item you touch glows with arcane light, about as bright as a torch. It gives off no heat or sound and requires no fuel, but it is otherwise like a mundane torch. You have complete control of the color of the flame. The spell lasts as long as it is in your presence.

Unseen Servant

You conjure a simple invisible construct that can do nothing but carry items. It can carry anything you could carry with one arm. It cannot pick up items on its own and can only carry those you give to it. Items carried by an unseen servant appear to float in the air a few paces behind you. An unseen servant that takes damage or leaves your presence is immediately dispelled, dropping any items it carried. Otherwise the unseen servant serves you until you end the spell.

Prestidigitation

You perform minor tricks of true magic. If you touch an item as part of the casting you can make cosmetic changes to it: clean it, soil it, cool it, warm it, flavor it, or change its color. If you cast the spell without touching an item you can instead create minor illusions no bigger than yourself. Prestidigitation illusions are crude and clearly illusions—they won't fool anyone, but they might entertain them.

1st Level

Contact Spirits

Name the spirit you wish to contact (or leave it to the GM). You pull that creature through the planes, just close enough to speak to you. It is bound to answer any one question you ask to the best of its ability.

Detect Magic

One of your senses is briefly attuned to magic. The GM will tell you what here is magical.

Telepathy

You form a telepathic bond with a single person you touch, enabling you to converse with that person through your thoughts. You can only have one telepathic bond at a time.

Invisibility

Touch an ally: nobody can see them. They're invisible! The spell persists until the target attacks or you dismiss the effect. While the spell is ongoing you can't cast a spell.

Magic Missile

Projectiles of pure magic spring from your fingers. Deal 2d4 damage to one target.

Alarm

Walk a wide circle as you cast this spell. Until you prepare spells again your magic will alert you if a creature crosses that circle. Even if you are asleep, the spell will shake you from your slumber.

Mystic Patron

You have the patronage of a mystical entity. You gain the Patron, Dark Bargain, and Desperate Plea moves.

Patron

You have a connection to an entity connected to one of the fundamental forces of magic. Note their name (as best you know it, maybe Palmon, The Queen of Tears, or Fists-of-Stars) and choose one for each:

- Name: _____
- Sign
 - A dimming of lights
 - Insects and rodents
 - An inaudible rumble
 - A scent of spice
- Seeming
 - Glum and gloomy
 - Cold
 - Aristocratic
 - Cruel and uncaring
 - Joyous
- Interest
 - Mortal memories
 - Souls
 - Reshaping the world
 - Sacrifices
- Powers
 - Shadows
 - Creatures of the dark
 - Flames
 - Frost

Dark Bargain

When you tell your patron what you want and make it known you will pay the GM will name a cost for each that is true:

- The request is not in your patron's interest
- The request is hard to accomplish with their powers
- Your patron is happy with you

Potential costs include:

- Retrieving something of value
- Destroying an obstacle

- Spreading the sign of your patron
- Causing embarrassment to their enemies

Desperate Plea

When you look to your arcane patron in a moment of need, roll+0. On a 10+ their agenda aligns with yours for the moment: some manifestation of their power will remove you from danger, at least for the moment. On a 7-9 you are still too useful to lose, but there is a cost: they will preserve you, but hold 1 over you. Expect them to claim something that is yours at the worst time. So long as they have hold over you, they will not answer another desperate plea.