Prelude

Backstory

Not long ago, great civilizations blanketed the continents. They built wonders of architecture and eradicated poverty and famine. They were in regular contact with the good spirits of the lands, on good terms with the gods, and were well versed in all manners of magic. They believed they had reached a golden age to which there would be no end, but beneath this shroud of hubris the scourges grew. Shadows took on form, and ice crawled in from the north. The wilds awoke with anger, and night became greedy. Dark spirits of the lands amassed into an unstoppable force, and they toppled the great civilizations. Armies were crushed, and cities and towns razed. The few survivors scattered about the wilderness, hunted down by the dark armies.

Now, the survivors are struggling to survive. They spend their lives scavenging in the broken ruins of their past, foraging for what food they can, and hiding from the scourges that hunt them. Ocassionally luck comes their way as they find a kind spirit from before the fall, or as they chance across a hidden cache of supplies that had been overlooked. More steadfast than luck, however, is the bond the survivors share with one another. The bond of an understanding, and of knowing that they can always count on each other; that they can only count on each other. The survivors hope that in time they can settle down in an obscure part the wilderness, and that they will have the resources to remain there and to protect themselves from the wandering scourges. They hope that they can live on.

In this game, players take on the role of one of the small bands of survivors, struggling to find their way through the harsh times.

A Note on the Rules

Many of the rules are written in a more compact and immersive form on the region board, settlement board, and character panels. In this rulebook, those same rules are written out more formally, with various details better explained. Accordingly, you will sometimes find surface level differences between the rules such as the region board saying a "person" gets tokens versus this rulebook saying a "player" gets tokens. This does not mean two different rules are being described—it is simply the game pieces having a more storylike description, with their clearer and more technical counterpart written out here in the rulebook.

Setup

Distribute Pasts and Gifts

Allow each player to chose either a past or a gift. Once this is done, randomly give a each player one of the gifts or one of the pasts so that each player has both a past and a gift. It does not matter if a player's past and gift are the same color. The purpose of this method of dealing out pasts and gifts is to give players the means to pursue a style of gameplay that they desire while still offering some variability to keep things interesting. The combination of a past and a gift make up the character that a player will play as—for example, a player who receives the "woken" gift and the "forester" past will be playing as the "woken forester" character. To create their character panel, each player should fit the their past and gift together so that it forms a single rectanglular shape (with the gift fitting just above the past).

Distribute Starting Tokens

Each player should receive a number of trait tokens for each trait so that all of the white circles on their character panel are filled. Each player should also receive three resource tokens, which will fill three of the five resource token spaces (the white triangles).

Create the Region

Randomly select a region (grassland, forest, or mountains). Fit the six pieces matching the regions color together, so that going counterclockwise around the region from the region name, the zones read: grassland/forest/mountains, gather, explore, scout/deepwoods/cave, explore, rest. Place the hexagonal camp piece into the middle of these six pieces to complete the region board. Place the settlement board next to the region board.

The Game Round

Each game round consists of a beginning phase (the prep phase), two main phases (the action and the event phase), and an end phase (the keeping phase), that are played in that order.

The Prep Phase

The prep phase is the first phase of the round. Any players with ongoing events (usually secrets) encounter those events. See "The Event Phase" for rules on how to encounter an event. There is no turn order during the prep phase, so players may all take their turn at the same time.

The Action Phase

The action phase takes place after the prep phase. In the action phase, each player chooses which action they wish to take from the actions available, and goes to the corresponding zone in the region. Zones are labeled according to their action. Each regional event is also a zone (they correspond to the "visit" action).

Grouping

All players that are within the same zone are considered a "group". There can only ever be one group in a zone at any given time, and players in different zones cannot consider themselves to be in the same group. The one exception to this rule is that players who are in the resting zone and the players who are in the settling zone are all in the same group, as their characters are all at camp. To refer to all players playing the game, the rules use the word "band" (i.e. any effect that applies to the band will affect all players).

Actions

Once players have chosen which action they wish to take and are in the corresponding zones, play out the action of each group zone by zone, going counterclockwise around the region board starting from the region name. With the exception of the "visit" action, each action begins in the same way when it is played out: each player in that group rolls a die, and the roll counts as a success if it is equal to or below the value shown on the zone they are in. Use the rules below for each specific action to determine what happens when a success if rolled, as well as what trait tokens can be used as part of the action.

Gather —For each success, the player who rolled it gains a resource token. Additionally, the player in the group with the lowest roll receives bonus resource tokens equal to the difference between the number they rolled and the value shown on the gather zone. This represents the idea that if someone finds a place with an abundance of resources, having more gatherers won't make it any more abundant. Before rolling, players in the group may also spend one or more of either active tokens or keen tokens in order to roll extra dice equal to however many tokens they spent. These extra dice are individually worked out exactly the same as the other dice they roll to gather.

Explore —One at a time, for each success the group rolled, roll the event die. If a location is rolled on the event die, place it onto a vacant regional event zone. If any other event is rolled, any players in the group may spend one or more keen tokens to roll that many dice. If any of these rolls are equal to or below the value shown on the explore zone, you may continue on with resolving this action (do not encounter the nonlocation event) as the event is seen ahead of time and avoided. If no player rolled equal to or below the value shown on the explore zone—including if no player attempted to do so—you must cease rolling the event die, the action ends, and the event is encountered immediately during the action phase.

Settle —For each success, the player who rolled it may contribute one of their resource tokens toward whichever settlement building they wish. Players who do so simply place the resource token they are contributing onto the settlement board in one of the empty resource token spaces of the building they wish to contribute to. Before rolling, players in the group may also spend active tokens to roll that many additional dice, but successes from these additional rolls (regardless of which player rolled it) must all contribute resource tokens from just one of the players in the group. Which player's resource tokens get contributed from the additional rolls is up to the group. This represents one person overseeing the allocation of people's resources and tasks in a larger project.

Rest —Each player regains one trait token in each of their core traits. Furthermore, each player with a succesful roll regains one additional trait token in each of two different traits of choice. Before rolling, players in the group may choose to spend caring tokens to roll that many dice separately. For each one of these dice that rolls equal to or below the value shown on the rest zone, any player in the group (chosen by the player who rolled the success with their separate roll) may regain one trait token of their own choice. These separate rolls represent tending to someone else—they do not cause, and cannot cause, the player who rolled them to regain any trait tokens. Also, any players who are resting may exchange as many resource tokens and artifacts as they wish among each other.

Scout —For each success, choose a zone and preemptively roll to see if an event would occur at that zone (as if one or more players were at that zone). Next round, if any players choose to do the action corresponding to that zone, use the preemptive result obtained instead of the normal roll to see if an event occurs. Before making any rolls, players in this group may spend wise tokens in order to roll that many additional dice. For each player that has at least two successes, that player may also preemptively roll the event die and use its result for that zone (along with the roll for whether an event occurs) instead of the normal roll on that turn. The scouting action is to represent players scouting out a part of the land from afar before approaching it.

Deepwoods —The "deepwoods" action works the same as the "explore" action with the following changes. When a location is rolled on the event die and drawn, do not place it on a vacant regional event zone. Instead, players may spend wise tokens to roll that many dice. If any of these rolls are equal to or below the value shown on the deepwoods zone, the location may be encountered immediately. Just as with the explore action, the deepwoods action ends immediately upon encountering an event (a location event or any other event). Events drawn from the deepwoods action are never placed into a regional event zone: they are instead discarded. The deepwoods are a dense part of the woods almost impossible to navigate—many things can be found in them, but few can be found again.

Cave —If at least as many successes are rolled as there are players in the group, this group neither adds presence tokens this turn to the zone they are in nor rolls to see if an event occurs for their group this turn. They also each gain a trait token in two different traits of their choice. Before rolling, players may spend wise tokens to roll that many additional dice. These additional dice can count towards the number of total successes rolled. The cave action represents taking refuge in a cave—as long as everyone is cautious, they can rest unnoticed.

Visit —This action corresponds to one of the regional event zones. To play out this action, everyone in the group simply encounters the event.

Presence Tokens
After every group completes their actions, each player adds a presence token to the zone they are currently occupying. These tokens represent signs of activity in the region, which attracts spirits both good and bad.

The Event Phase
The event phase takes place after the action phase. Going counterclockwise zone by zone around the region board starting from the region name, each group takes their turn in possibly encountering an event.

Determining the Event
Each group rolls one die for the whole group. If the result is equal to or below the number of presence tokens on the zone they are in, remove all presence tokens in that zone, and that group encounters an event. To determine which event is encountered, roll the event die and draw from the deck that corresponds to the result (S = spirit, L = location, O = occurrence, and P = phenomenon). Randomly determine which player draws from the deck by assigning everyone in the group a number and rolling a die. This person draws from the top of the designated event deck and looks at front of the card (the side with the name at the top). If it is a "secret" card, that player should not disclose the card's information to anyone; otherwise, the player may read the front of the card aloud and show it to others—importantly, no one can look at the back of the event card, not even the person who drew it. If an event is not encountered by a group, that group's turn during the event phase is finished.

Encountering an Event

When a group encounters a "group" event, each player in the group encounters the event. When a group encounters an "individual event", only the player who drew the event encounters it. If the event is a "secret" event, then it is encountered by the person who drew it every round during the prep phase until it is resolved (it is not encountered immediately).

When one or more players encounters an event, they must choose one of the three options on the front of the card, marked by colored diamonds. The color of the diamond in each option corresponds to which trait tokens may be spent in pursuit of that option (e.g. red diamonds mean strong tokens may be spent in pursuit of the option). Each player encountering the event rolls one die, and may spend trait tokens from the trait corresponding to their chosen option in order to roll additional dice equal to how many trait tokens they spent. Each roll that is a 4 or lower counts as a success (unlike actions, this number is fixed). Once each player knows how many successes they rolled, the card is flipped. If a player rolled a number of successes equal to or more than the number of diamonds shown for their chosen option, then for that encounter they were strong/active/keen/wise/caring or they communed, according to whichever trait the option corresponded to. Each player resolves the results of their rolls and chosen option seperately—successes are per player, not per group.

Special Event type: Secrets

Events that are labeled as "secret" are not disclosed by the player who drew them, and instead become that player's secret. That player encounters the secret each round during the prep phase. The player with the secret must try not to let other players become aware of certain rules of the secret event. These rules that should not be disclosed are both bolded and underlined, and are that secret's "hidden rules". The player must also not let other players become aware of the secret's name, or what the options are that they have to chose from. If another player clearly knows an important element of one of the hidden rules, then the secret is "discovered": follow the directions written in the secret's rules of what happens when the secret is discovered. A secret may only be discovered once. Secrets may also be "revealed", according to the event's rules. When a secret is discovered or revealed, its rules may be shown to all the players without further penalty.

Deciding if a player "clearly knows" one of the hidden rules is not a clear matter itself; nor is deciding what an "important element" is in a hidden rule. Unfortunately, no elegant rules can be made to define how to determine these things. Instead, consider the following idea. If players consider the smallest sign of knowledge to be enough that the secret is discovered, the rules break down as secrets just play out their "discovery" rules and nothing more. If players only consider a secret discovered when its hidden rules are literally stated by someone out loud, the rules break down as everyone could know what a secret's effects are without it counting as discovered. The middle ground in between these two extremes is ideal. As such, try to make judgments as reasonably as you can. Don't worry if the judgments end up erring slightly towards one side or the other—it might change how tightly players try to keep their secrets undiscovered, but the rules will still function properly.

While the bolded and underlined rules of the secret shouldn't be made known to others, a player with a secret can still request certain actions of other players. For example, a player whose secret causes anyone who explores to lose health, that player may say such things as "Don't explore, something bad might happen". A player with a secret may also voluntarily share the bolded and underlined rules of the secret. This will simply cause the discovery effects of the secret to occur.

Special Event Type: Regional Events

Locations, phenomena, and spirits are considered to be "regional events" as long as they are not secrets. When encountered, regional events are immediately placed frontside up on the region board based on the event and how it was encountered. Locations are placed in the first vacant spot (going counterclockwise from the region's name). This is because spirits and phenomenon can prevent a location from being discovered, and two locations can't be in the same place. Phenomena and spirits are placed on top of the event you were visiting (or if you weren't visiting, in the first spot that doesn't already have a phenomenon or spirit). This is because phenomena and spirits can inhabit locations and prevent you from reaching them. If there is nowhere to place the regional event according to these rules, discard it.

When you place a regional event onto the region board, if the regional event has a duration number, place a time token on it with that many numbers. For example, an event with "duration 4" should have a four-number time token placed on it. Time tokens determine when a time-limited regional event will pass.

Regional events may only be visited as an action as long as they are the top-most event on that slot. Regional events are discarded when their rules say they are "resolved" or their duration token causes them to be discarded during the keeping phase. Discarded regional events may no longer be visited, and their rules are no longer in effect.

The Keeping Phase

After the event phase is the keeping phase, the final phase of the round. The keeping phase is played out as a band—all players together. In the keeping phase, some of the resources are consumed to represent the need to eat. Players must collectively spend an amount of resource tokens equal to half the number of players in the band, rounding down. When doing so, each group must have spent at least one resource token. If this does not occur (by choice or inability), each player in each group that did not spend a resource token loses 1 health and morale. After this, one die is rolled, the results of which represent chance happening and the passing of time. Unveil (flip over) all artifact cards that have a time token containing the number rolled on the die, and remove such artifacts' time tokens. Keep all duration events that have a time token containing the number rolled on the die, and discard the duration events that do not.

Settling

Settling is the objective of the game, and is accomplished by the "settle" action. Settling represents building a small village and acheiving the stability necessary to survive for a longer period of time.

How to Build the Settlement

When a player places a resource token on a building's resource token space on the settlement board, it represents progress in constructing that building. Once all the resource token spaces of a building are full, it is built: place the building token onto the region board to represent this. Buildings that are built add additional beneficial effects according to their rules. _When all six buildings in the settlement are built, players win the game_ . The people have managed to make a stable enough life to survive.

Settlement Buildings

Hall —When six resource tokens are contributed to the hall, it is built. When the hall is built, players in the resting/settling group can choose not to encounter an event as long as they all spend one trait token of their choice. These do not all have to be the same trait tokens. A hall allows for people to take refuge from troubles and dangers.

Storage Hut —When four resource tokens are contributed to the storage hut, it is built. When the storage hut is built, players who are resting may transfer any number of their resources tokens into the storage hut, and may transfer any number of resource tokens in the storage hut into their possession (up to however many they can carry at once). They may do the same with artifacts. Having a storage hut allows for mass collection of resources.

Vantage Point —When four resource tokens are contributed to the vantage point, it is built. When the vantage point is built, as long as at least one player decides to rest, players may choose one regional event zone that round where any regional event in that zone may be visited, not just the topmost one. A vantage point allows people to see how to navigate around obstacles and reach desired places.

Plans —When two resource tokens are contributed to the plans, they are built. When the plans are built, players collectively get one additional trait token each round that any one of them may spend as if it were a trait token of their choice. This additional trait token does not accumulate over multiple rounds—there is only ever one such trait token per round to spend. Plans and procedures make for more successful undertakings.

Altar —When two resource tokens are contributed to the altar, it is built. When the altar is built, players may each roll one additional die whenever they choose a communing option in an event they are visiting. The altar provides a connection to the gods and their magic.

Hearth —When four resource tokens are contributed to the hearth, it is built. When the hearth is built, players who rest may gain one additional trait token of choice, regardless of whether they successfully rest or not. The hearth provides a heartwarming place to rest easy.

Other Parts of the Game

Traits, Health, and Morale

There are six traits in the game: strong, active, keen, wise, communing, and caring. Trait tokens represent the ability to act in a way that displays that trait—e.g. when a player spend wise tokens, it represents taking a wise course of action. When a player spends a trait token, that player simply removes one of the tokens of that trait from their character panel. A player can never spend tokens from more than one trait at a time. That is, if an instance allows a player to spend tokens from more than one trait, that player must choose which trait they wish to use in that instance, and spend tokens only from that trait.

Health and morale represent physical and emotional well-being. A player's health is the total number of strong, active, and keen tokens in their possession. A player's morale is the total number of wise, communing, and caring tokens in their possession. When a player loses health, they remove any combination of strong, active, or keen tokens, where the total tokens removed equals however much health they lost. When a player gains health, they regain any combination of strong, active, and keen tokens, where the total tokens regained equals however much health they gained. When a player loses or gains morale, it works the same way but with wise, communing, and caring tokens in place of strong, active, and keen tokens.

When a player loses all of their morale, they become hopeless and despondent. A player without morale can no longer gain tokens from their own actions or event choices. When a player loses all of their health, they are dead. *When a player dies, the game is over and all players lose the game.*

Artifacts

Artifacts are tools and spells that remained after the fall of civilization. They can be acquired by players in various ways throughout the game. When a player receives an artifact, that player draws from the artifact deck and places the artifact card face up next to their character panel. As with events, it is important that the player does not look at the back. Also similar to events, if the artifact card has a "unveil" number, then a time token should be placed on the artifact card. The keeping phase will use the time token to determine when the artifact's true nature becomes unveiled (see "The Keeping Phase" for what this entails).

Artifacts have rules written on them (usually beneficial) that apply only to the player that possesses them. If the artifact is a tool, then its rules are always in effect as written on the side that is currently facing upwards. If the artifact is a spell, it may be used according to the rules written on its front, and is played out in the same way that an event is encountered.

Limits

Trait tokens—Players can never have more trait tokens than there are slots for them (white circles) of the corresponding color on their character panel. If a player would gain a trait token but does not have an open slot for one of that type, the trait token is not gained. For example, a chosen soldier could have up to five strong tokens, three active tokens, one keen token, one wise token, two communing tokens, and two caring tokens.

Resource tokens—Players can not have more resource tokens than there are slots for them (white triangles) on their character panel. If a player would gain enough resource tokens that there are not enough slots to hold them all, the excess resource tokens are not gained.

Limits (continued)

Artifacts —A player may not have more than three artifacts at a time. If a player would gain a fourth artifact, they may give it to any other player in their group. If all the players in their group have three artifacts, then the artifact that would be gained is discarded instead.

Pasts and Gifts

Each player plays as a character in the game. Each characters has a past, a profession or lifestyle that they practiced before the fall of civilization. Each characters also has an extraordinary gift, as the civilizations that fell were so magical and blessed that no individual was without some extraordinary power.

Core Traits

Each player has core traits according to their past and their gift. The core trait of each is the trait that matches the past or gift in color. If a player has a past and a gift that both have the same core trait, then that player is considered to have the core trait twice. (e.g. an empath spouse's core traits are caring and caring). Core traits represent the traits that a character readily exhibits.

Pasts

Soldier —This character was a soldier in the army during the fall and learned to fight well. The soldier has the "protect" ability. If the soldier chooses a "strong" option when encountering a spirit and rolls the number of successes needed to be considered strong for that encounter, the soldier may prevent that encounter from having any effects whatsoever on another player in the soldier's group (i.e. the results of that player's choice do not occur, though tokens they spent are still spent). The soldier may choose this after seeing the back of the event card. The soldier is able to safeguard other people during fights.

Farmer —This character tended crop fields before the fall and was accustomed to hard work. The farmer has the "craft" ability. While settling, if the farmer rolls a 1 on any of their rolls and had spent at least one active token, they may craft a tool. To craft a tool, draw from the artifact deck until a tool is drawn. When done, place the non-tool cards drawn in this way back into the artifact deck and shuffle it. The farmer is used to crafting the tools needed for a task.

Forester —This character roamed about tending forests before the fall and has a sharp eye. The forester has the "bounty" ability. While gathering, if the forester has a successful roll and had spent at least one keen token, their lowest roll gives them additional resources as if it were the lowest roll of the group (see the rules for gathering). If the forester's lowest roll was also the lowest roll for the group, then instead use the second lowest roll for the purposes of this ability. The forester can find troves of resources that others may overlook.

Advisor —Before the fall, this character was one of the wise member's of a lord's council. The advisor has the "advise" ability. When another player visits an event and chooses a "wise" option for the event, the advisor may spend wise tokens on behalf of that player.

Priest —This character was a priest before the fall, and served the good will of the gods. The priest has the "prayer" ability. Whenever the priest rolls for an action that allows communing tokens to be spent in exchange for rolling extra dice, the priest may remove one of the failed rolls from the result, as if that failed roll were never rolled in the first place. The priest is in good favor with the gods, and any failures to wield the divine magic are met with understanding.

Spouse —Before the fall, this character had given up pursuing a profession in order to tend to their family. The spouse has the "tending" ability. While resting, if the spouse has a successful roll on at least one of their rolls from having spent caring tokens, then all of their rolls from caring tokens count as successes for that action. The spouse is a caring soul who is kind and helpful to others.

Gifts

Chosen —This character has a patron god watching over them. The chosen has the "invoke" ability. When the chosen encounters a spirit, they may have all of their rolls count as rolling a 1 for that encounter. Add one presence token to the zone that currently has the fewest presence tokens, and then repeat this for each roll the chosen made during the encounter. If two zones have the same number of presence tokens, add the presence token to the zone that's closest to the region name, going counterclockwise around the region board. The chosen can call upon their patron god for aid, but this will attract much attention from the spirits.

Woken —The life force of this character has been fully awoken such that they no rest or sleep. The woken has the "restless" ability. When the woken rests, they do not gain the two tokens they would normally regain in their core traits (though they may still regain trait tokens in their core traits from other sources, such as the trait tokens of choice they regain from succeeding the rest roll). Each round during the keeping phase, the woken may regain one trait token in either of their two core traits. This abundance of energy allows the woken to be very productive, but it also makes resting have little value to them.

Whisperer —This character can speak to the rabbits and the birds and even the trees. They can communicate with anything living. The whisperer has the "nature's tongue" ability. When an event occurs for the group that the whisperer is in, that group (at the whisperer's discretion) may reroll the event die once to possibly change what type of event occurs. The second result cannot be rerolled in this manner and is the result that will be used. The whisperer can ask the various beings of nature of what lies ahead.

Seer —This character can see glimpses of fates and the future. The seer has the "augury" ability. While resting, the seer may attempt to commune to discern what will come to pass. To do so, the seer spends as many of their communing tokens as they wish and roll that many dice. If any of the rolls were a 4 or lower, the seer may look at the front sides of the top two cards of a deck of their choice (spirit, location, occurrence, phenomenon, or artifact). The seer can foretell what events will arise and what decisions will have to be made.

Mage —The mage is in tune with the powers of the divine and can bend it to their will. The mage has the "magic" ability. When any player in the mage's group (including the mage) spends one or more trait tokens to roll extra dice, the mage may attempt to commune to adjust how many dice that player can roll in that instance. To do so, the mage spends as many of their communing tokens as they wish and roll that many dice. Each roll that is a 4 or lower is a communing success, and each roll that is a 2 or lower is a communing failure. For each communing success on the mage's part, the player who had spent the original trait token(s) can roll an additional die. For each communing failure on the mage's part, the player who had spent the original trait token(s) rolls one less die. Any of the mage's communing failures in excess of the dice the player would have rolled are simply ignored. The mage can harness the magic of gods to aid others—but the gods are prone to punishing those who abuse their divine power.

Empath —This character can understand someone with just a glance. With effort and compassion, they can even gain insights into other people's lives. The empath has the "insight" ability. At any time, the empath may attempt to be caring to see another player's secret without the secret counting as discovered. To do so, the empath spends as many of their caring tokens as they wish and roll that many dice. If at least two of the rolls were a 4 or lower, the empath may look at one "secret" event card in possession of another player in their group, and that secret does not count as discovered from the empath knowing what its hidden rules are. Importantly, other players can still cause the secret to be "discovered" if they find out the hidden rules (as per the normal rules for secret events) so the empath must keep the hidden rules secret as well. The empath can can use their insight to become deeply aware of another person's perspectives.