

WITCHES OF FATE'S EDGE

Cords, Curses, and the Quiet Work of Names

What a Witch Is (and Isn't)

A witch is a **threshold worker**—one who listens to **Echo** (what has been), steadies the **Veil** (what is), and leans into **Flow** (what wishes to be). Witchcraft is not brute force; it's **fit**: finding where the world already wants to move and giving it a gentle, precise nudge. Hearth craft, mill craft, and road craft are simply slow, patient forms of the same art practiced by ordinary hands. The most powerful magic is often indistinguishable from **skilled attention**.

I. First Principles

1) The Law of Named Existence

To name is to anchor. **True Names** fasten an Echo; forgetting frays it. Words spoken under witness reshape how a place remembers. Every curse, blessing, or bargain is a small act of **creation through recognition**. **Un-Naming** (suppression, forgetting) can weaken or banish.

2) The Concordant Layers

People, places, and vows exist as chords across **Echo / Veil / Flow**.

- **Echo**: The accumulated memory and intention that shapes reality.

- **Veil:** The current, perceivable state of things; the boundary between potential and actual.
- **Flow:** The direction and potential of change, the will of elements and intent.

Witches feel dissonance within this chord and decide whether to **harmonize it (benediction)**, **redirect it (hex)**, or **lock it in place (binding)**. **Wise law:** do not sever, do not overrule, do not forget. Work with the existing harmony.

3) Threshold Mechanics

All workings start at **edges**—doorways, wakes, vows, last breaths, first light, crossroads, riverbanks. Magic is **boundary-law**: who may pass, what must stay, and what should never meet. Thresholds are points of maximum potential for change.

4) Element-Will

Elements are **wills**, not mere substances. Earth (structure), Air (chance), Fate (order), Luck (opportunity), Fire (life), Water (Obishaal/Death-Dreams), and others. A working "argues" with a chosen will; **Obligation** is the debt you incur when you borrow strength from a will larger than yours, aligning your own will with it.

5) Story Weight

Stories have gravity. Meaning accrues; reality leans to fulfill it. When the table marks a complication (Story Beat), the world is simply cashing what the scene has earned through narrative momentum and player action. The universe has a kind of "narrative inertia."

6) The Silent Ninth

There is a missing step in the scale—acknowledged, never filled. The **Ninth** is absence with teeth: erasure, gaps, omissions, and the power of what is left unsaid. It represents the space beyond the eight fundamental forces, often tied to observation, truth, or the framework itself (like The Witness Patron). Manipulating the Ninth is potent and dangerous.

II. What Witches Actually Do

Ritual Families (all begin at a threshold)

- **Bell-Rites:** Strike, count, hold the last beat in silence—pin the Veil while you speak the Name. (Tags: [WITNESS], [BIND]) Engages the layer of the Veil.
- **Knot & Cord:** Memory braided into order; untie to release a promise. (Tags: [ECHO], [SEAL]) Engages the layer of Echo.
- **Chalk & Salt:** Draw a passage or a prison; shape decides which. (Tags: [THRESHOLD]) Manipulates Thresholds directly.
- **Offering & Omission:** Sometimes you add; sometimes you remove—perfect ground for Ninth-work. (Tags: [VOID]) Engages the Ninth.

Table Hook: Choose which limb you lean on—Echo / Veil / Flow.

- **Echo:** +1 die to recall/restore; backlash = recursion (loops, past actions repeat).
- **Veil:** +1 Position to conceal/shape; backlash = hairline cracks (subtle reality breaks).
- **Flow:** +1 Effect to urge/change; backlash = overshoot (change goes too far).

III. Blessings, Marks, and Curses

Blessing (benediction).

Harmonize a target's chord with local memory—grant advantage where a place already remembers safety (mills, bridges, shrines). Anchors positive potential.

Mark (sign).

A visible/felt alignment—threaded fate-lines, hearth-warmth, dream-silt in hair. A boon that also attracts like to like. A sign of attunement to specific forces or places.

Curse (constraint).

Edit the memory rulebook—insert a habit into how the world recalls a person or object (e.g., "lamps forget to light for him"). Curses, vows, and certain griefs are recursive code that keep executing until answered or broken. They are potent because they become part of reality's operating system.

Ninth-Work (omission).

Weaponized absence: remove the witness, the final word, the ninth cup. Gaps propagate until someone names them and repairs the edge. Manipulates the fundamental structure by removing a part.

IV. Witches & Warlocks

Most witches ply "**low law**" craft—patient resonance that keeps households and roads steady, often indistinguishable from exceptional skill. Those who bind themselves to Patrons (often called warlocks by outsiders) borrow alignment and pay **Obligation**. The **Sisters' Covenant** (Inaea, Isoka, Ikasha)

shapes much traditional witchwork, offering paths of continuity, change, and possibility respectively. Each path offers blessings; each exacts a price if handled without witness or context.

section*V. Trow & Hags

Trow — Shadow Bargainers

Mysterious, often mischievous fey who prefer the *guise of wizards*: wide-brimmed hats, grey travel-robos, ash-stained cuffs, and long pipes that glow without ember. They move along edges—lintels, ferry ropes, dew-lines, the hush between bell-strokes—serving as **mobile witnesses** and dealers in omissions. Most claim agency to an *unspoken patron* sometimes called **the Grey Benefactor** or **Under-Guest**; none will name them twice in the same place.

Appearance & Mien

- Grey palette: weathered wool, riverstone buttons, moth-silver thread. Hats tilt to hide eyes; pipes exhale ringlets that drift *against* the wind.
- Voices carry like a remembered promise; laughter arrives from behind you, even when they are in front.
- Shadows fail to match their gestures; footprints begin two steps into any room.

Customs & Courtesies

- **Bread-and-Salt under a Raised Lamp**: binds them to guest-right for one night and one question.
- **Left-Hand Copper**: open an honest bargain; right-hand silver closes it. Never mix hands mid-parley.
- **Name-Wrapping**: they will accept a *mask-name* if offered with witness; true names are never spoken until the lamp is lifted.

What Trow Trade

- **Absences:** a missing page, a forgotten oath, a night without patrols.
- **Safe-Conducts:** duskmarks connecting two thresholds (*Night-Guest Writ*).
- **Borrowed Memories:** collateral for passage—returned slightly out of order unless paid in full.

Methods (Echo/Veil/Flow)

- **Veil-Bending:** step through reflections, reverse directions inside a room, quiet a name until dawn.
- **Echo-Accounting:** reckon the last true witness; *with it* a pact takes, *without it* the bargain slides.
- **Flow-Nudges:** open the exit you *meant* to take, close the one you bragged of.

Tokens & Tell-Tales

- *Trow Knot:* a single-loop cord that slips any mundane tie once.
- *Grey Pipe-ash:* blown over a document to hide a line until a bell is struck.
- *Hat-Feather:* points toward the nearest witnessed threshold at dawn.

Etiquette & Taboos

- Do not ask a Trow to name their patron; they will leave *and* take the shortest exit with them.
- Never bargain for *someone else's* absence without that person's witness; this invites Ninth-work backlash.
- Keep a lamp raised while speaking true names; a lowered lamp lets the Veil eavesdrop.

Keeper Hooks (Trow)

- **SB 1:** a direction flips; the “short way” grows longer.
- **SB 2:** a memory returns altered (detail missing/added).
- **SB 3:** a night path opens that bypasses guard or ward—usable once, owed later.
- **Clock — Grey Courtesy [4]:** ticks when players skip lamp/bread/salt. On fill: hospitality voids; all bargains turn literal.

Adventure Seeds

- **The Pipe Without Ember:** a Trow's pipe continues smoking on a tavern table; follow the ringlets *against* the draft to a hidden threshold.
- **The Borrowed Winter:** a village wakes to find last year missing; the Trow want a single name spoken under a lifted lamp to return it.

Hags — Keepers of the Hard Pattern

Fey who wear the guise of elder women with storm-weather eyes and hands like root and rope. Where Trow trade in omission, **Hags trade in pain that *proves***. They are custodians of old recursions—bride-prices, ferry-rights, moon-tolls—*and* delighted saboteurs of mortal vanity. Their deals shine at the start and bruise at the end.

Hierarchy & Covens

- **Covens of Three:** roles cycle as *Weaver* (sets terms), *Widow* (keeps memory), *Winter* (collects price).
- **High Matron Morag:** acknowledged apex; her writ runs along river oaths and bride-ways. To cross a coven that names Morag is to argue with the river itself.
- **Strict Steps:** no unpriced gift, no unwitnessed word, no unmarked crossing.

Doctrine in Practice

- **Opposition to Mortal Adornments:** anything called beautiful or easy is suspect; they scratch polish to test the grain beneath.
- **Deals with Hidden Costs:** the first comfort is bait; the true payment arrives “when the story ripens.”
- **Echo-Heavy Law:** every boon stitches tighter rules into local memory—this is why their gifts *hold*.

Appearance & Sign

- Layers of weathered shawls, river-stained hems, pins made from ferry tokens and thorn.
- Hair braided with nettle-thread; breath smells of cold iron kettles and moon tea.
- Hearths burn lower in their presence; mirrors show last year's face.

Bargain Patterns (examples)

- **Sweet Hearth, Bitter Road:** warmth for a winter; afterward, no guest may stay the night without paying a tear (real grief, witnessed).
- **Bride's Gold:** a dowry prospers, but the first child must be named under rain at the ferry stone—miss it once, and the river keeps a season of luck.
- **Moon's Mercy:** cure without scar; later, your reflection will not answer to your name until you repair a stranger's oath.

Tools & Tokens

- *Thorn-Pin:* fixes a bargain to flesh (remove only by finishing the price).
- *Kettle-Mirror:* shows the consequence owed, never the boon received.
- *Winter Thread:* a pale cord that tightens when a promise is evaded.

Etiquette & Bastions

- **Witness First:** bring a bell, a bead, or a judge. Hags love law; *hate* loopholes they didn't write.
- **Honor the Old Toll:** if you pass a ferry-stone or bride-way marked in hag runes, pay with story—speak a truth, not a coin.
- **Never Mock the Pattern:** insult their craft and they add your name to it.

How to Survive a Hag's Gift

1. Read the **said** and the **meant**. Demand both ledgers aloud.
2. Price the **witness**. If none is named, bring your own.
3. Name a **repair year**: define how the place will heal after the cost is paid.

Keeper Hooks (Hags)

- **SB 1:** a comfort sours (food bland, wool scratches) until a truth is spoken.
- **SB 2:** an *old* toll asserts itself (add a moon-fee or ferry-prayer).
- **SB 3:** **Winter** comes to collect: mark a *Price Due* [4] clock tied to the boon.
- **Coven Law** [6]: ticks when players try to bypass the stated cost with tricks. On fill: Morag's writ extends—local oaths adopt hag phrasing.

Adventure Seeds

- **The Bride-Price Ledger:** a coven claims the city's marriage court owes three generations of "forgotten tears." Settle which grief counts—before the court closes for a year.
- **Morag's Ferry:** a new bridge collapses on cloudless night; a thorn-pin pierces the engineer's plans. Pay the toll in story, or the river learns to keep boats.

Trow & Hag Intersections (Table Guidance)

- Trow open exits; Hags price crossings. A clever party can triangulate both to pass safely—if they keep witness straight.
- Trow disdain gaudy beauty; Hags *oppose* it. Gifts from both will strip lacquer until only grain remains.
- The Ninth loves their disputes. When a Trow bargain and a Hag pattern contradict, expect **Omission Bloom** [4]: forgotten steps, skipped vows, doors that miscount hinges. Clear with lamp, bread, salt, and a single true name spoken thrice.

VI. Witch-Hunters

Good hunters fight **resonance**, not just sorcery. Their best tools are:

- **Dissonant bells** (break cadence),
- **Counter-witnesses** (name the Name under rival authority),
- **Ward geometry** (choose which crossing is allowed),

- **Sanctified ground** (impose a steadier chord).

They skew toward Fate/Earth—closing options, enforcing form. On their ground, magic strains; outside it, their certainties can crack. They are the counterbalance to unchecked magical force or chaotic change.

Counter-craft

: To break a curse, supply the missing layer: return the Name, repair the threshold, or change the story that keeps firing. Make a truer story and anchor it with witness.

VII. Paths by Patron (Field Uses & Backlash)

(Assuming these Patrons embody or are closely aligned with these concepts)

Hearth-Line (Inaea - Mercy, Continuity)

- **Mercy Lines:** Harm stops at a door-thread.
- **Repair Years:** Time-priced blessings; holds while the household keeps witness.
- **Backlash:** Mercy without memory hollows; apologies left unsaid become cold rooms.

Shedding-Line (Isoka - Change, Shedding)

- **Loosening Skins:** Unhook roles and labels; griefs molt.
- **Venom Benedictions:** Pain that ends dithering.
- **Backlash:** Purges; identity slips; loyalties molt too.

Penumbra-Line (Ikasha - Shadows, Possibility)

- **Shadow Courtesy:** Night crossings held safe by role and bell.
- **Mask-Truth:** Let what is possible stand beside what is.
- **Backlash:** Too many possible selves peering in.

Ninth-Line (Silent Note - The Unspoken, The Witness?)

- **Calculated Absences:** Remove a step in command, a record, a light.
- **Hollowings:** Strip significance from a token until witnessed anew.
- **Backlash:** Contagious omission—maps and minds begin to skip a step.

VIII. Curses as Architecture (Keeper Tools)

Write it like a rule

:
"Until a bell is rung in your true name, lamps forget to light for you." (Veil-edit, Named anchor)

Give it a clock

: **Recursion** [6]—ticks when the victim reinforces the story (fumbling, hiding the problem, refusing witness).

Provide a counter

: Add the missing layer—**Name + Witness + Threshold** (ring the bell at a doorway with kin present).

SB Menu (Curses)

- :
- **1 SB:** minor echo (old order resurfaces)
 - **2 SB:** warped threshold (wrong door opens)
 - **3 SB:** layer slip (Veil cracks, Flow surges)
 - **4 SB:** Ninth propagation (a second gap appears)

IX. Witches in Society

Civil life runs on slow witchcraft: oaths that hold, bridges that don't fall, songs that make grief breathable. People call it "**just craft**" because the best workings are gentle enough to be mistaken for good fortune or skill. The danger rises when someone forces resonance instead of courting it, disrupting the delicate balance. Witches often operate quietly within this system, maintainers of subtle order.

Why superstition lingers

: Great songs are dangerous. Too much unity invites collapse; the Sisters taught us to braid small cords, not drag one rope across the world. Fear of unchecked power and the memory of past resets keep the populace wary of overt magic, even as they benefit from its subtle forms.

X. Play Prompts & Seeds

1. **The Ninth Cup:** At a treaty feast the ninth cup was poured; knives hum. Find who omitted the witness phrase and mend the gap before the truce voids. (Tags: [VOID], [WITNESS])
2. **Bride-Charter Broken:** A hag demands the old price; the village pleads for mercy that remembers. Decide which story the ground will keep.
3. **Bell That Ticks:** Shift-bell counts but never rings; workers repeat until fingers bleed. Insert variance, restore the Name, or the mill learns to run without them.
4. **The Forgotten Door:** A house adds a door nobody uses. Walk the un-mapped path and decide what returns when it opens.

Keeper's Quick Questions

- Which layer am I touching—Echo, Veil, or Flow?
- What threshold frames the scene?
- Which Name anchors (or must be erased)?

- Where does the Ninth already bite?

Remember

: Spend complications (Story Beats) like fate tugging the scene toward the story with the most weight—and let good witness (and player action) change which story that is. The world responds to narrative causality and the resonance created by belief, action, and consequence.

Expanded Witch Covens and Traditions

As witches practice their craft across the diverse lands of Fate's Edge, distinct traditions have emerged that reflect the unique magical properties of each region.

The Bone Coven (Aelerian Influence)

Deep within the stone halls of Aeler, a coven has arisen that draws its power from the memories held in ancient stone. These witches understand that every carved rune, every worn step, and every weathered wall holds echoes of the past.

Focus Ancestral wisdom and the patient power of stone that remembers.

Signature Rite Stone Memory Communion - By pressing their hands to ancient stone and entering a meditative state, these witches can witness events that occurred near the stone, going back centuries. The power grows stronger in locations with significant emotional or historical weight.

Patron Elements Earth and Fate, representing the solid foundation of stone and the inevitable passage of time that stone records.

Coven Practices

- Crafting talismans from stone that was present at significant historical events
- Maintaining ancient wards by understanding their original purpose
- Serving as advisors to dwarven holds, providing historical context for current conflicts

The Mistwalkers (Mistlands Influence)

In the perpetual fog of the Mistlands, another tradition has emerged that specializes in navigation between worlds and manipulation of thresholds. These witches are experts in the spaces between spaces.

Focus Navigation between worlds and threshold magic.

Signature Rite **Wayfinding Through the Veil** - By burning specific herbs and chanting in the ancient tongue, Mistwalkers can create temporary passages through the Ways Between, allowing for brief journeys to parallel versions of their current location.

Patron Elements Water and Obishaal, representing the fluid nature of reality's boundaries and the dreamlike logic of threshold spaces.

Coven Practices

- Maintaining safe passage routes through dangerous threshold areas
- Acting as guides for those who must travel between worlds
- Negotiating with the entities that dwell permanently in threshold spaces

The Stormweavers (Linn/Ykrul Influence)

On the windswept steppes and along the coastlines, witches have learned to harness the power of weather itself. These practitioners understand that

storms are not just natural phenomena, but expressions of raw magical force.

Focus Weather magic and storm riding.

Signature Rite Storm Dancing - Through ritual movement and the use of weather-focused implements, Stormweavers can call forth or calm storms. The most experienced practitioners can ride the winds themselves, traveling great distances in the heart of a storm.

1 Witch Patrons

Lunera, The Silver Quiet

Among the celestial Patrons, Lunera holds a unique position as the patron of reflection, hidden knowledge, and the mysteries that emerge in twilight hours. She represents the introspective and revelatory aspects of witchcraft, guiding those who seek to understand the deeper truths of existence.

Domain and Influence

Lunera dwells in places where light and shadow meet - crossroads at dusk, moonlit groves, and the threshold between sleeping and waking. Her influence is felt most strongly by witches who specialize in divination, dream magic, and the careful observation of subtle signs and omens.

Lunera as a Patron for Witches

Witches who swear oaths to Lunera gain access to her gifts of insight and revelation, but must navigate the perilous path between knowledge and obsession.

Gift: Moonlit Mirror Allows the witch to peer beyond surfaces and see hidden truths. When gazing into any reflective surface under moonlight, the

witch can observe events occurring in distant locations or gain insight into the true nature of people and objects. The reflection shows not just what is, but what could be or what once was.

Corruption: Shadows Cling The witch's connection to Lunera causes them to cast two shadows - one representing their current self, and another showing their potential future self. In dim light, both shadows are visible, creating an unsettling presence that unnerves mortals and draws the attention of otherworldly entities. Additionally, the witch's eyes take on a faint silver glimmer in darkness.

Lunera's Influence on Witch Covens

Covens influenced by Lunera often serve as keepers of secrets and seekers of hidden knowledge:

Focus Divination, dream interpretation, and the revelation of hidden truths.

Coven Practices

- **Mirror Scrying Circles:** Gathering under moonlight to share visions and insights gained through reflective surfaces
- **Dream Harvesting:** Collecting and interpreting dreams from willing participants to gain communal foresight
- **Twilight Vigils:** Maintaining watch at crossroads and threshold locations to observe the flow of fate

Lunera's Covenant

When dealing with Lunera, witches must understand her preference for subtle exchanges:

- A cherished memory, carefully preserved and offered back in altered form
- A secret that would change someone's understanding of their past

- A moment of perfect silence, captured and held until needed
- The ability to see clearly in one specific situation where others remain blind

The true value of Lunera's gifts lies not in immediate power, but in the wisdom to know when and how to use that power.

Ikasha, She Who Sleeps

Ikasha represents the patient, hidden aspects of magic - the power of latency, potential, and the spaces between actions. As a Patron, she appeals to witches who understand that sometimes the greatest magic lies in waiting, in moving unseen, and in striking at the perfect moment.

Domain and Influence

Ikasha dwells in the quiet moments between heartbeats, in the pause before dawn, and in the stillness that precedes transformation. Her influence is strongest for witches who specialize in stealth, patience, and the manipulation of timing and opportunity.

Ikasha as a Patron for Witches

Witches who swear oaths to Ikasha gain mastery over shadow and timing, but must learn to move through the world as a presence rather than a force.

Gift: Umbral Reservoir Allows the witch to draw upon a reserve of shadow energy that can be used to enhance stealth, deception, or escape. This energy builds up naturally during periods of inactivity and can be spent to gain temporary advantages in social or physical situations where subtlety is required.

Corruption: Secret Burden The witch must keep one troubling secret per Tier that weighs heavily on their psyche. This secret cannot be easily

forgotten or dismissed, and causes 1 Fatigue whenever the witch actively tries to put it out of mind. The secret often relates to a previous use of Ikasha's power or a truth that the witch has hidden from others.

Ikasha's Influence on Witch Covens

Covens influenced by Ikasha often operate as networks of information gatherers and subtle manipulators:

Focus Espionage, information gathering, and the careful orchestration of events from behind the scenes.

Coven Practices

- **Shadow Passing:** Teaching techniques for moving through populated areas without being noticed or remembered
- **Crossroads Watching:** Maintaining observation posts at important junctions to track the movement of significant individuals
- **Silent Aid:** Providing assistance to allies through indirect means that leave no obvious trace

Ikasha's Compact

When dealing with Ikasha, witches must be prepared for her preference for indirect exchanges:

- A moment of perfect timing, captured and held for future use
- A secret that can be traded for another, more valuable secret
- The ability to remain unnoticed in one specific location or situation
- A small favor that can be called in at a crucial future moment

Ikasha's power grows through patience and the accumulation of small advantages, making her followers masters of the long game rather than seekers of immediate gratification.

Morag the Hag

Among the many Patrons that witches might encounter, Morag the Hag holds a special place as both a potential ally and a dangerous influence. Known as the patron of Twilight Bargains and Cruel Transformations, Morag represents the darker aspects of witchcraft - the seductive power of deals that seem too good to be true, and the harsh lessons that come with magical shortcuts.

Domain and Influence

Morag dwells at crossroads, hearth-edges, and liminal spaces where the unwary might stumble into her presence. She offers power that comes with hidden costs, teaching witches that every gift has teeth and every kindness a snare. Her influence is particularly strong among those who deal in forbidden knowledge or seek to bend the natural order.

Morag as a Patron for Witches

Witches who swear oaths to Morag gain access to her unique brand of transformation magic, but must always be wary of her true intentions.

Gift: The Crooked Thread Allows the witch to bind minor promises in red thread that causes psychological discomfort when broken. The thread appears as a simple red cord but grows warm and tight when the oath is tested. This gift is particularly useful for ensuring compliance from reluctant subjects or creating temporary truces with dangerous entities.

Corruption: Compulsive Bargaining The witch develops an overwhelming urge to extract a "price" whenever value changes hands. This manifests as an inability to witness any exchange - whether monetary, emotional, or social - without attempting to insert themselves into the transaction to gain some advantage. This corruption makes it difficult to maintain normal relationships and can lead to isolation as others learn to avoid the witch's presence during negotiations.

Morag's Influence on Witch Covens

Covens influenced by Morag often operate as networks of information brokers and deal-makers. They specialize in:

- **Favor Trading:** Creating complex webs of obligation between different practitioners
- **Transformation Services:** Offering magical changes to clients, always with hidden consequences
- **Crossroads Diplomacy:** Mediating disputes between rival magical factions through carefully constructed bargains

Morag's Price

When dealing with Morag, witches must be prepared for her signature style of payment:

- A memory from childhood, carefully chosen to cause maximum psychological impact
- A small piece of their future - perhaps the first-born child of their eventual lineage
- A secret that would destroy their reputation if revealed
- The ability to feel a specific emotion (joy, trust, love) in certain circumstances

The true cost is often not revealed until much later, when the witch finds themselves bound by obligations they never anticipated.