

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.

V. Trow & Hags

Trow — Shadow Bargainers

Enigmatic fey who keep to thresholds and *almost-there* spaces. They favor the *wizard's guise*: wide-brimmed hats that drink lamplight, weathered grey robes stitched in moth-silver, and long clay pipes that smoke without ember. Most hint at an unnamed patron—the **Grey Benefactor**, the **Under-Guest**—but never speak that allegiance twice beneath the same roof. Trow trade in **Names**, **gaps**, and **safe-conducts**; they value absence properly witnessed more than gold poorly kept.

Appearance & Behavior

- Faces blur at the edge of notice; laughter drifts from behind you even when they stand before you.
- Grey robes hang like fog; hats cast a perpetual twilight across the eyes.
- Footprints begin mid-floor. Pipe smoke rings drift *against* prevailing drafts.

Signs & Omens

- A room grows one step longer than it was measured.
- A familiar name refuses to form until a lamp is raised.
- Cold gathers where a shadow *should* be.

Bargaining Customs

- **Bread-and-Salt under a Lifted Lamp**: binds the Trow to guest-right for one night and one truthful answer.

- **Honest Memory Payment:** they accept lived memories, not pretty lies. False recollection voids courtesy.
- **Threefold Witness:** one mortal, one fey-adjacent, one liminal token (doorway, ferry-rope, dew-mirror). All three seal a pact.
- **Copper in the Left, Silver in the Right:** open with left, close with right; never swap mid-parley.

What Trow Trade

- **Absences:** a missing line in a charter; a night without patrols.
- **Safe-Conducts:** duskmarks between paired thresholds (*Night-Guest Writ*).
- **Borrowed Memories:** held as collateral; returned slightly out of order unless paid in full.

Tokens & Telltales

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

Methods (Veil • Echo • Flow)

- **Veil-Bending:** reverse directions inside a room; quiet a name until dawn.
- **Echo-Accounting:** make sure a vow “takes” by finding its last true witness.
- **Flow-Nudges:** open the exit you meant; close the boastful boast.

Trow as Patrons (Witches & Warlocks)

- Gift** — *Shadow-Step* Move through liminal congruences (doorway-to-doorway, bell-shadow to bell-shadow). Treat as instantaneous movement along a witnessed threshold; *Position +1* if the pair shares concept and witness.
- Gift** — *Night-Guest Writ* Once per leg, declare dusk-right between two duskmarks; hostile checks to bar passage suffer *DV +1* unless they bring counter-witness.

Price — *Almost-Presence* Begin to slip the world's grip. Start **Anonymity** [4] when you overuse Veil gifts; on fill, an ally forgets your face or records omit your name until you anchor with lamp, bread, and a true-name spoken thrice.

Taboo Do not purchase absence for another without that person's witness; the omission recoils as Ninth-work.

Keeper Hooks (Trow)

- **SB 1:** a direction quietly flips; mapping grows uncertain.
- **SB 2:** a memory returns altered (swap a detail; hide a motive).
- **Clock — Grey Courtesy** [4]: ticks when players skip lamp/bread/salt. On fill: hospitality voids; all bargains turn literal.

Hags — Keepers of the Hard Pattern

Fey who wear the guise of elder women with storm-weather eyes and hands like nettle and rope. Where Trow deal in omission, **Hags deal in pain-that-proves**. They oppose whatever mortals prize as easy or beautiful, not from spite alone but to *test the grain underneath*. Their bargains gleam up front and bruise in the keeping.

Covens & Hierarchy

- **Covens of Three:** *Weaver* (sets terms), *Widow* (keeps memory), *Winter* (collects price).
- **Morag High-Matron:** acknowledged apex; her writ runs along ferry-stones, bride-ways, and moon-tolls.
- **Strict Steps:** no unpriced gift; no unwitnessed word; no unmarked crossing.

Appearance & Sign

- Shawls pinned with ferry tokens and thorn; hems river-stained.
- Hearths burn lower in their presence; mirrors show last year's face.
- Breath smells of cold iron kettles and moon tea.

Bargain Patterns (examples)

- **Sweet Hearth, Bitter Road:** winter-long warmth; thereafter, no guest stays without paying a tear (true grief, witnessed).
- **Bride's Gold:** dowry prospers; the first child must be named under rain at the ferry stone or the river keeps a season of luck.
- **Moon's Mercy:** heal without scar; later, your reflection will not answer your name until you repair a stranger's oath.

Etiquette & Bastions

- **Witness First:** bring a bell, a name-bead, or a judge. Hags love law; they hate loopholes they did not write.
- **Honor the Old Toll:** when hag-runes mark a ford or bride-way, pay in story—speak a truth, not a coin.
- **Never Mock the Pattern:** insult their craft and they add your name to it.

Tools & Tokens

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

Hags as Patrons (Witches & Warlocks)

Gift — *Hearth-Binding* Sanctify a home-circle: *Position +1* for defense and parley within; create **Hospitality Toll** [4] that must be paid in courtesy or truth by all who enter.

Gift — *Widow's Measure* Name the hidden cost in any offer; learn the price that will be collected *and* who will bear it.

Price — *Beauty Unpriced* Unpaid flourish rots. Start **Price Due** [4] when you accept comfort without naming its cost; on fill, the gift curdles until you set a repair year or forfeit adornment tied to the boon.

Taboo Never give an unpriced gift; it becomes a curse on the giver.

Keeper Hooks (Hags)

- **SB 1:** a comfort sours until a truth is spoken.
- **SB 2:** an old toll reasserts (add moon-fee, ferry-prayer).
- **SB 3:** *Winter* comes to collect; begin **Price Due** [4] tied to the scene's boon.

Trow & Hag Intersections

- Trow open exits; Hags price crossings. Use both to pass safely—if you keep witness straight.
- Trow strip lacquer; Hags scorn it. Their gifts together reduce a place to grain and oath.
- When a Trow bargain and a Hag pattern contradict, begin **Omission Bloom** [4]: forgotten steps, skipped vows, doors with miscounted hinges. Clear with lamp, bread, salt, and a true name spoken thrice.

VI. Witch Hunters & Containment Orders

Overview

Every culture that lives beside Patrons, rites, and old places develops a way to *contain* what runs wild. Some orders prosecute crimes; others prevent collapses of context; all of them prefer witnesses to wounds. Human Witch Hunters are formally sanctioned in Thepyrgos—where they keep homes and lamp-courts—but they range across all human realms by writ and guest-right. Other peoples keep their own flavors: accountants of breath and stone, proof-keepers of sum, riders who cut bad bindings, and silk-vigils who reset roles before knives are needed.

[Chain-Lanterns of Thepyrgos — Human Witch Hunters] ORDER • CIVIL
• RITESAFE

Lanterns hooded with iron mesh; stamped writs; a bell struck once before questions.

Show the writ; name the witness; lift the lamp. They will not proceed without at least one local witness.

Mark a *Lantern Line* (no spells cross without a test), read a scene for *unpriced*

gifts, serve a *Stop-Rite* that pauses a working until dawn.

Lamp-Writ (safe question under light), Sanctuary Tag (one room becomes truce ground), Letters Patent (act across borders once without fee).

No witness, no action; false ledgers poison their standing (Repute 1 until repaired).

Jurisdiction & Home Lamp-Courts of Thepyrgos house archives of cases and seals. Chain-Lanterns maintain *Warrant Houses* in major human cities; abroad they work under guest-right and charter with local factors.

Keeper Hooks

- **Clocks:** Public Panic [4], Hex Containment [6], Overreach [4].
- **SB:** (1) witness balks, (2) rival patron's envoy intervenes, (3) forged writ appears.

[Spirit-Shield Correctors — Aeler] ORDER • STONE • ANCESTOR

Counting breath at thresholds; chalked tally-marks; iron bells hung on lintels.

Name your tools; swear breath-count; offer repair years if you break a rite.

Seal a vent with *Stone-Witness*, convert loose magic into *owed labor*, bind a rogue working to a *Repair Ledger*.

Keystone Courtesy (pass a gate once), Breath-Bond (stabilize a rite for a scene), Oath-Swap (trade a lethal clause for service).

Haste; uncounted crowds. They lose Position where breaths cannot be tallied.

Notes They police collapse-hazards, not people: if a sorcery holds under weight and witness, they'll price it rather than smash it. Ancestors are their first audience, ledgers their second.

[Sum-Abjurers — Aelinnel] ORDER • PROOF • NONLETHAL

Blue-ink ledgers with Said/Meant columns; knot-proofs; soft shoes in court.

State intent and scope; present a *Context Key*; accept a counter-example.

Refactor a working by redefining inputs (*DV 1 if context is agreed*), quarantine a loop into a *sandbox*, require a *mercy clause*.

Two-Ledger Courtesy (parley DV 1 under audit), Proof-Stay (pause a rite for review), Mask-Permit (operate as neutral examiners).
Bad faith; undefined terms. If meanings slide, their binds fail.

[Break-Reins Riders — Ykrul] ORDER • FIELD • EXITLAW
Unknotted bridles on cairns; bell at the saddle; two exits chalked on a board.
Name the exits you will leave; price the road; no rope becomes a leash.
Cut coercive bindings (*convert to a public clock*), declare a *Blue Moot* for safe extraction, escort a witch under guest-right across contested ground.
Bridle Ring (void one coercive clause), Storm's Favor (Position +1 to break pursuit), Road-Writ (travel immunity for one leg).
Closed courts; sealed rooms. Without sky and route, they lose leverage.

[Silk Vigil — Lethai-ar (Inaea)] ORDER • ROLELAW • SILK
Three-tone bells; hair-fine lines across doorways; dew-mirrors set at corners.
Mask Right: declare roles; ring once for guesthood; never cross a silk unbidden.
Wedding Line sanctuary (no violence under thread), *Context Reset* (restore proper roles; end duels of pride), *Parley Under Bell*.
Bride-Line Audience (force truce in a lane), Knot-Record (bind terms to a thread), Dew-Reading (scene truths revealed).
Broken context. If roles are mocked or masks refused, their silk frays.

[Shed Vigil — Lethai-ar (Isoka)] ORDER • DECISIONLAW • VENOM
Bitter herbs; shed-skins as warnings; dawn writs pinned with scale.
Speak the hard choice; accept the cut; no third path offered after dawn.
Venom Truce (bind a decision at dawn), *Shed-Skin Escape* (strip a false label), *Fang of Decision* (end dithering, compel the keystone act).
Dawn Seal (one crisis must conclude), Scale Draft (resist fear once), Knife of Words (Effect +1 when a painful truth is spoken).
Stalemate courts; leaders who refuse to decide. Their venom turns inward.

[Wake-Judges — Linns of the Salt] ORDER • FERRYLAW • UNDER-RIVER
Ropes loop gently; coins stacked on pilings; twin lanterns over black water.
Pay said and meant; name your passenger; never cut a ferry rope.
Hold mid-channel until a truth is spoken, drown a curse in running brine

(*reset context*), declare a *Blue Weather Crossing*.
 Cold Crossing (Position +1 in storms), Drowned Ledger (who failed to pay),
 Ferry-Pardon (erase one petty offense at water's edge).
 Stagnant pools; dry judgment. Without flow, their law thins.

Inter-Order Etiquette

- **Witness First:** Any order yields to whichever can furnish the clearest witness (lamp, stone, silk, or wake).
- **Spheres:** Stone for collapse, Silk for roles, Chains for due process, Reins for coercion, Wake for passage, Sum for definitions.
- **Conflict Rule:** If two orders claim lead, begin *Jurisdiction* [4]. On fill, the scene splits: half becomes court (parley), half becomes extraction (escort).

GM Tools: Running a Witch Hunt

- **Scene Clocks:** Hex Spread [6], Crowd Temper [4], Due Process [4], Collateral Mercy [4].
- **Easy DVs:** *Reading the Working* DV 3; *Establishing Witness* DV 2–4 (culture); *Humane Containment* DV 4–5.
- **SB Menu:** (1) rumor spikes Crowd Temper, (2) wrong order asserts jurisdiction, (3) price of the boon comes due.
- **Fiction First:** Decide *what kind of harm* the rogue magic causes (coercion, collapse, contagion, context). Point the right order at that harm.

Follower Options (hire or call on)

Chain-Lantern Detachment (Human) Cap: 3 Scale: Small Tags: Lawful, Lantern-Line, Neutral Factor

Edges: Writs, safe-conduct, due process. Liabilities: Needs witness; paperwork lag.

Orders/Scene: *Establish Lantern Line*, *Serve Stop-Rite*, *Escort Under Lamp*.

Spirit-Shield Triad (Aeler) Cap: 3 Scale: Small Tags: Stone-Witness, Repair Ledger

Edges: Stabilize sites, bind to labor. Liabilities: Slow, bound to oath-law.
Orders/Scene: *Seal Vent, Price the Rite, Set Repair Years*.

Silk Vigil Pair (Lethai-ar) Cap: 4 Scale: Tiny Tags: Wedding Line,
Mask Right

Edges: Nonlethal resets, trucecraft. Liabilities: Context-fragile.

Orders/Scene: *Line Sanctuary, Context Reset, Dawn Parley*.

Sum-Abjurer Cell (Aelinnel) Cap: 3 Scale: Small Tags: Two-Ledgers,
Quarantine

Edges: DV 1 where terms are defined. Liabilities: Bad-faith stalls.

Orders/Scene: *Proof-Stay, Sandbox, Mercy Clause*.

Adventure Seeds

1. **Three Orders, One Witch:** A coercive charm haunts a bridge market. Chain-Lanterns, Silk Vigil, and Break-Reins all claim lead. Pick a path or braid them before the crowd breaks.
2. **The Lamp Goes Wrong:** A Thepyrgian lamp-court's bell only ticks. Is it Monad work—or a Hag's price come due? Fix the cadence without burning due process.
3. **Stone Oath, Soft Heart:** Aeler Correctors price a lifesaving but illegal ward as ten repair years. Find a mercy clause with an Aelinnel sum-abjurer before the ward collapses.
4. **Blue Weather Sanctuary:** Linn Wake-Judges offer a storm crossing to evacuate a hex-touched quarter—if Ykrul riders will leave two exits and take one. Negotiate the exits *now*.

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 do not fall, songs that make grief breathable. People call it “**just craft**” because the surest workings are gentle enough to be mistaken for good fortune or skill. The danger rises when someone *forces* resonance instead of courting it—overbinding a vow, tightening a name, dragging one rope across many lives. Witches often operate quietly within this ecology, maintainers of subtle order.

Human Realms (at a glance)

- **Frontiers welcome**: Market towns, ferries, and border keeps grant *Green Writs* to lane-witches, midwives, ward-singers, and bridge-binders. Payment is in witness, grain, rope, and small silver.
- **Courts conceal**: Many nobles keep a *Lantern Adviser*—a sworn witch under sealed writ—while publicly deferring to lamp-courts. These advisers read omens of grain and treason, price roads, negotiate with small powers.
- **Thepyrgos orthodoxy**: Chain-Lanterns license urban practice and prosecute coercive rites. *Street rule*: lift a lamp, name a witness, declare the price—then work.

Why superstition lingers

Great songs are dangerous. Too much unity draws collapse; the Sisters taught us to braid small cords, not bind whole valleys in one pull. Memory of old calamities—when a single tune carried too many voices—keeps folk wary of overt magic, even as they depend on its humbler forms.

How other peoples treat witches

Aeler (Stone Cities). *Role:* Bonded Menders.

How it works: Witches are assessed like arches—load, witness, repair years. If a working holds under weight, it is *priced* not banned. Coercive songs are converted to owed labor or sealed under stone-witness.

Welcome: High—if you file ledgers, name your tools, and swear breath-count.

Taboos: Uncounted rites; names without keystones.

Aelinnel (Sum-Lodges). *Role:* Context Weavers.

How it works: Two-ledger licensing (Said/Meant). Witches present proofs for scope, terms, and mercy clauses; rogue workings are quarantined and refactored, not burned.

Welcome: High—when definitions are clear.

Taboos: Ambiguity, undefined costs, “poetic” contracts.

Ykrul (Violet Steppe). *Role:* Road-Witches.

How it works: Leave two exits, take one. Weather-singers, herd-speakers, and ford-binders ride with bands under guest-right. Coercive charmers trigger *Red Weather*—no camp hosts them.

Welcome: Seasonal—strong in caravans and moot camps.

Taboos: Leashes, locked exits, songs that bind unwilling feet.

Lethai-al (Wood Elves). *Role:* Line Midwives.

How it works: Witchcraft is folded into *Mask Right*: roles are fixed with bell and silk; *Wedding Lines* establish sanctuary; dew-mirrors set context keys. Those who refuse roles are escorted to the border at dawn.

Welcome: Strong within the line, cold beyond it.
Taboos: Breaking guesthood; mocking mask and bell.

Lethai-ar (Shadow Courts). *Role:* Patron-Attendants.

How it works: Witches serve Inaea or Isoka; practice is legal so long as *roles* (Inaea) or *decisions* (Isoka) are honored. Unauthorized workings are “rewoven” by Silk or Shed Vigils.

Welcome: Conditional—context or cut.

Taboos: Roleless power; choices that never resolve.

Lethai-thora (City Elves). *Role:* Grammar Menders.

How it works: Cunning folk operate through salons and archives, altering etiquette, precedent, and ceremony—witchcraft as civic rhetoric.

Welcome: Polite, competitive.

Taboos: Provincial bravado; public spectacle.

Linns (Mist & Iron). *Role:* Tide Witches.

How it works: Licensed by Wake-Judges; rites must pay *said and meant* at the water’s edge. Rope, bell, and coin in correct order.

Welcome: Strong at harbors and river mouths.

Taboos: Cutting ferry ropes; lying on a boat.

Vilikari (Meadow & Ecktoria). *Role:* Hedge-Wrights and Ledger-Wives.

How it works: Quiet bargains in barns and border inns; debts written in the *ledger of small kindnesses*. Villages shelter their own, sell routes to outsiders.

Welcome: Communal, protective.

Taboos: Selling a neighbor’s name.

Frontier Licenses & Urban Seals (human lands)

- **Green Writ (Frontier):** One season; ferries, barns, and bridges honor it by lamp. Grants right to mend storms, births, and boundaries; must name a witness.
- **Lantern Seal (Urban):** Case-by-case; issued by a lamp-court. Authorizes specified workings within walls; requires post-rite audit.

- **Quiet Seal (Court):** Private; binds an adviser to house interests with secrecy and indemnity. Violations become politics, not trials.

Witch-Hunters and You (table use)

If a working causes *coercion*, expect Ykrul Break-Reins riders or Chain-Lanterns. If it causes *collapse*, expect Aeler Spirit-Shields. If it causes *looping harm*, expect Aelinnel Sum-Abjurers. If it breaks *roles*, expect Lethai Silk Vigils; if it stalls *decisions*, expect Shed Vigils.

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. [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. [HAG LAW] [SANCTUARY]
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. [LOOP] [CONTAINMENT]
4. **The Forgotten Door.** A house adds a door nobody uses. Walk the unmapped path and choose what returns when it opens. [THRESHOLD] [OMEN]
5. **Green Writ, Red Weather.** A frontier witch's license is valid, but her storm-song leashes livestock across three farms. Break the leash without breaking the writ. [GUEST-RIGHT] [EXIT LAW]
6. **Lantern Adviser.** A noble's secret witch goes missing; the public lamp-court suspects treason. Keep the house from devouring itself while you follow the quiet seals. [COURT] [SECRECY]
7. **Stone Price.** An Aeler Corrector prices a lifesaving ward as ten repair years; the village cannot pay. Find a mercy clause with an Aelinnel proof or promise the years yourself. [LEDGER] [MERCY]
8. **Blue Weather Crossing.** Wake-Judges offer storm sanctuary for an evacuation if Ykrul riders will leave two exits and take one. Negotiate the

exits, then hold the line under rain. [FERRY LAW] [KON'REH]

Keeper's Quick Questions

- Which layer am I touching—*Echo*, *Veil*, or *Flow*?
- What threshold frames the scene (door, ford, oath, mask, ledger, ferry)?
- Which Name anchors—and which must be loosened?
- Where does the Ninth already bite—and who benefits if it closes?
- Who is the right *order* to call (lantern, stone, sum, reins, silk, wake)?

Remember. Spend complications (Story Beats) like fate tugging the scene toward the story with the most weight—then let good witness (and player action) change which story that is. In this world, belief, craft, and consequence braid into law; witchcraft is the art of tying knots that hold without choking.

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.

A Magic Without Homework (Player One-Pager)

[Read-Aloud: What Magic Is] Magic in Fate’s Edge is **leverage on stories**. You bend places where reality already cares: **Echo** (what happened), **Veil** (what’s happening), **Flow** (what wants to happen). You never cast into a vacuum—you nudge an edge.

Three Player Moves

1. **Touch a Threshold (DV 2–4)**: Only if a named threshold frames the scene *and* a clock is in play (chase, parley, collapse). On success, choose one: *Position +1*, *Effect +1*, or *DV –1* for this exchange. On 1s, GM banks SB as normal.
2. **Lean on a Layer (DV 3)**:
 - **Echo** — reveal a relevant fact or prior pattern; gain *Effect +1* for repeating or subverting it.
 - **Veil** — sharpen the present; clear 1 *Obscurity* or gain *DV –1* once.
 - **Flow** — steer momentum; *create a 2-tick scene tag* (e.g., Rising Wind, Quiet Crowd).
3. **Call on a Patron (your engine)**:
 - **Invoker (Symbols)** — prepare a ward/sign; safe, slower, anchor space.
 - **Runekeeper (Rites)** — define a method; fast, powerful; starts a small *Hunger/Attention* clock.
 - **Caster (Weaves)** — shape an element; flexible, volatile; 1s tend to splash.

Element-Will: Predictable Impact

Each element has a steady boon, cost, and backlash. Pick one when your weave matters; Keepers enforce the backlash on 1s.

| Element | Boon (choose 1) | Backlash on 1s (GM) |
|---------|--|--|
| Stone | Effect +1 <i>or</i> DV -1 if braced | <i>Anchors</i> you (Position cannot rise next exchange) |
| Air | Position +1 on approach | <i>Scatter</i> : clocks split attention or targets drift |
| Fire | Effect +1 and <i>fear ping</i> on minors | <i>Spread</i> : create <i>Stray Flame</i> [2] |
| Water | DV -1 on move/control | <i>Carry</i> : scene flow shifts, both sides slide |
| Shadow | Gain <i>Hidden</i> on success | <i>Echo hunger</i> : GM marks <i>Attention</i> [1] |
| Light | Reveal tag; allies +1 die vs illusions | <i>Expose</i> : you lose cover or disguise |

The Silent Ninth (GM-Only)

Rule: Players never declare the Ninth. Keepers may apply a *Void* tag *only as consequence*: remove a support (witness, name, rung). Mechanical effect: cancel one chosen boon *or* remove one scene tag. Never used as a raw damage tool.

Patron Stamps (Pocket Format)

Each Patron on one line: **Gift** (what it does), **Tell** (how it marks you), **Obligation Trigger** (what starts the favor clock).

- **Lunara** — *Gift*: see the counter-angle; *Tell*: twin shadows; *Trigger*: invoking mirrors or names.
- **Inaea** — *Gift*: lines of sanctuary; *Tell*: dew on threads; *Trigger*: hosting parley/guest-right.
- **Isoka** — *Gift*: cut through stalemate; *Tell*: forked tongue-shadow; *Trigger*: forcing true choices.
- **Pale Shepherd** — *Gift*: ward/guide the passing; *Tell*: cold breath in bells; *Trigger*: naming a crossing.
- **Raéyn** — *Gift*: wind-step/route price; *Tell*: hair lifting in still rooms; *Trigger*: altering a route's tempo.
- **Thrysos** — *Gift*: shared courage/flow; *Tell*: sweet-ferment on breath; *Trigger*: sanctifying a cup or floor.
- **Clockwork Monad** — *Gift*: method boosts; *Tell*: oil rings; *Trigger*: consecrating a process.

Obligation (Simple Mode): one **Favor** [4] per Patron. Fill on big asks; clear

with witness/offering or by obeying the Patron's ethic at cost.

Trow and Hags (Usable Etiquette)

Trow Protocol (3): *Bread-and-salt under a lifted lamp, pay with honest memory, threefold witness.*

Moves: **Shadow Step** (treat thresholds as Near), **Name-Bead Bargain** (DV −1 once if you surrender a recorded name).

Hag Protocol (3): *Name your need plainly, accept pain in the price, bow to senior sister if present.*

Moves: **Briar Clause** (grant boon; attach a future pain-clock), **Moon-Tithe** (compel payment by old law unless a better story is witnessed).

Witch-Hunters in Three Steps

Inspect (locate the resonance): DV 3—identify layer/tag. **Isolate** (box or bless): create a *Containment* [3]. **Invert** (mercy clause): swap a harmful tag for a witnessed alternative. If all three land, *clear one 1* from the next magical roll this scene.

A.0.1 Nimorith, the Grey Benefactor (Absence & Threshold)

Trow Patron; also answered by threshold-keepers, archivists of omissions, and oathwrights who work in the space between Said & Meant.

Lore. Nimorith dwells in places that almost were—thresholds that shift when unobserved, rooms that measure longer than memory, shadows that fall where no lamp was lit. He does not *arrive*, he is simply the pause you finally notice. Those who bargain with him learn that presence is a luxury, absence a currency, and the space between doors a kingdom unto itself. To serve him is to walk at the corner of sight, to speak in the breath held before truth is told.

“Take what is not there, and you shall have what never was.
The gap is the gift; the missing, the mercy.”

Epithets & Signs. Absent Host; Door-Smoke; Keeper of the Unlit Pipe; Master of the Fifth Step. Signs: pipe that smokes without flame; a hat that drinks lamplight; a grey feather that casts no shadow; panes that reflect halls you have not built.

Etiquette of Absence. Bread-and-salt beneath a lifted lamp binds courtesy; name the price in a whisper to the witness; do not close a door you did not open; return any mark that points the way. Payment in *honest memory* is preferred.

Symbol. A duskmark—two opposed threshold glyphs cut in grey wax—bound with a single hair.

Marks & Gifts (optional boons for devotees).

- **Shadow Lintel Mark.** Once/scene, step from one witnessed threshold to another within Near; on chill or glare, Position −1. *Key:* bread-and-salt shared within the day.
- **Witness Void Mark.** When you present a silent witness (lamp held but unlit), gain +1 die to erase, omit, or bypass without notice. *Curse if unkeyed:* others forget what you asked *and* what you offered.

Strings & Tokens. Gap token (named absence); duskmark writ (paired thresholds); witness bead (records one silence given); errata slip (permits a lesser substitution instead of a lie once/scene).

Rites of Nimorith *Unless noted, rites are Scene-scale and produce subtle, deniable results. If your table uses suits for the Deck of Consequences, suit hints are provided; otherwise treat SB marks as normal SB.*

The Unmeasured Room (Low, 4 XP) *Scene; Self; Sustain by silence.*

Materials: An inward-opening door; a held breath to three.

Effect: Create one *Gap* token—a specific absence that others ignore (a watcher forgets a latch, a ledger skips a line, a patrol overlooks a side door). You gain +1 die when exploiting this gap. An ally may spend 1 Boon to treat one failed roll as “never happened” (retcon of that action only).

Push It: The gap becomes *contagious*: nearby like-absences echo. Mark +1 SB (*Spades*).

Borrowed Memory (Low, 5 XP) *Scene; Touch.*

Materials: A silver thread tied fingertip-to-fingertip; a whispered “I was there.”

Effect: Hold another’s specific memory as collateral. Gain +1 die on actions grounded in that memory’s context. Memory returns slightly out of order unless “paid in full” with a truthful account before witnesses.

Push It: Hold two memories simultaneously; mark +1 **Obligation** as temporal dissonance builds.

The Missing Line (Standard, 8 XP) *Scene; Near.*

Materials: A document with space for amendment; a shadowless grey feather.

Effect: Cause one clause, name, or line to vanish from a witnessed text. *DV = complexity/scope*. On success, the erasure is seamless and socially “always so.”

Push It: The omission propagates to directly-referenced copies; mark +1 SB (*Diamonds*) as reality adjusts.

Duskmark’s Passage [PASSAGE] (Standard, 7 XP) *Scene; Zone.*

Materials: Two duskmarks set at twilight; an unlit pipe that smokes by itself.

Effect: Declare safe-conduct between the paired thresholds. Allies gain +2 dice to **Traverse**; enemies suffer -1 die to intercept within the lane. A counter-witness at either end can block.

Push It: Passage becomes bidirectional for the scene; mark +1 **Obligation**—the path remembers you.

The Almost-Present Guest [OATH] (**Standard, 9 XP**) *Scene; Near.*

Materials: Bread-and-salt beneath a lifted lamp; threefold witness (mortal / fey / liminal).

Effect: Bind Nimorith to guest-right for *one night* and *one truthful answer*. He cannot speak his own name; answers arrive as silence, gesture, or omission all present can understand.

Push It: Extend hospitality to the entire party; mark +2 **Obligation** as the house begins to forget its owners.

Veil-Bending (**High, 12 XP**) *Scene; Zone.*

Materials: A room with four doors; a mirror that reflects only doorways.

Effect: Reverse directions within the space; quiet a name until dawn; align exits with intent rather than map. Zone gains the [VEIL] tag: +2 dice to misdirection; -2 dice to direct confrontation.

Push It: Make it *permanent* for this site; start **Threshold Drift** [6] as the place migrates from the world.

Obligation: 7-segment clock.

The Grey Inheritance [WARD] (**High, 14 XP**) *Extended; Touch.*

Materials: A will in disappearing ink; a hat that drinks lamplight; a true-name spoken in negative (“what you are not”).

Effect: Transfer ownership of an *absence*: void a debt, erase an obligation, negate a presence. Target gains the benefit but suffers -1 die to direct confrontation or plain declaration for the duration of the ward.

Push It: The inheritance binds to bloodline or faction; mark +2 **Obligation** as ancestral gaps widen.

Obligation: 8-segment clock.

Nimorith’s Corruption (Devotion) Track >p1.2cm p5.3cm p5.3cm
Tier Benefit Cost / Quirk

1 **Shadow-Step.** Once/scene, move between witnessed thresholds in Near. **Almost-Presence.** In crowds you slip notice; begin Position –1 when trying to stand out.

2 **Gap-Sense.** +1 die to **Notice** when something vital is missing or altered.

Blind Spot. You may miss the obvious present while hunting absences.

3 **Echo-Accounting.** Once/session, ensure a vow “takes” by finding its last true witness. **Witness Weight.** Maintain three active witness tokens or suffer −1 die to social rolls.

4 **Flow-Nudge.** Once/scene, open the exit you *meant*; close the boastful boast. **Direction Drift.** Maps resist you; −1 die to Navigation without a living guide.

5 **Absence Artisan.** Once/session, create a beneficial absence (forgotten debt, skipped patrol, missing line). **Obligation Void.** Others forget promises owed to you; −1 die to enforce agreements.

6+ **Grey Dominion.** Once/session, declare an area “properly absent”: allies +2 dice to stealth/deception; foes −2 dice to detection/truth. **Reality Thinning.** Mark +2 **Obligation**; risk permanent Harm from existing half-out-of-world.

GM Moves (tone & pressure). A door is now where a wall was; a line is gone from the writ everyone *remembers* signing; a silent witness appears and the loudest voice loses breath; the shortest path demands a price left unspoken.