

VIGOR: INTO DUST

Beta

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VIGOR: INTO DUST

A Collaborative Storytelling Roleplaying Game

By J.L. Householder and Teddy Humpert

www.vigorrrpg.com / info@vigorrrpg.com

@VigorRpg @teddyhumpert and @jakehouseholder on Twitter

Vigor: Into Dust

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**None of this would, in any way, have been possible
if it weren't for our amazing families.**

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There was a world before this one.

An entirely different world. Our world, Vest, is some form of offspring. A descendant stripped naked, and brought low by so much evil. And yet, the ghost of that World Before lingers. Remnants of it exist all around us. Not always something we might reach out and touch. But it's here nonetheless. Memories. Lingering energy. Physical power. Tastes of a place that teemed with life and bloomed with possibility. Many believe that place to be only a legend. A lie. But there are those who believe that world might be unlocked. Might be brought back.

After all these great many years, there are still scant few written records of this world, or of what came before. I admit there are few who are able to read the runes I use. But this is my one asset. And so I begin.

*FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO RHINS GJOTAW'S "TREATISE ON VEST" CA.
453 OF THE 3RD CYCLE*

THE GAME

Vigor: Into Dust is a role playing game that utilizes collaborative storytelling and character-forward framing to help players discover who they are and who they might become. Players craft the world around them, to unearth the secrets of the places in which they dwell.

With a system of streamlined mechanics designed to ever urge your stories in interesting directions, you'll play in a world riddled with conflict, where survival is hardwon, where malevolent forces are all too common and all too powerful. Where evidence of a greater World Before haunts you. Where some among you are gifted with impossible abilities. Perhaps you'll find hope. Perhaps you'll follow where the dark might lead you. Doubtless, you'll see the easy paths of greed and wrath dangled before you.

THE SETTING

The game takes place in a withered world on the brink: a place called Vest. Vest is marked by an otherworldly, evil force known as The Corruption. In your story, The Corruption might take on any number of forms - hence the somewhat generic term. It might look like The Nothing from *The Neverending Story*. It might look like the voids in Morgan Llywelyn's *Silverhand*. It might look like any number of nature-destroying elements in any number of Miyazaki films.

Whatever world existed before Vest, it was decimated by The Corruption, and, with a dying breath, left you a substance known as The Dust. With it, some are able to draw forth incredible powers. What The Dust is capable of is largely left to you as creators, as is what was that World Before. It might have looked like some blissful utopian technomagic society. It might have been some song and dance version of France in the late middle ages. It might have been a society dedicated to the worship of 1990s era pop-culture artifacts.

Whatever you create, Vest is now locked in perpetual battle with The Corruption. As denizens of Vest, you have to contend not only with that reality, but also with the greed and constant overreach of a powerful, industrialized force known as The Hierarchy. Their tendrils reach far, and their teeth are sharp.

In short: you're living in a shredded land, hunted by an impossible evil, hoping for a taste of a world long ago lost. But you are not nothing. And we certainly wouldn't be telling this story if you were just planning to roll over and die. Right?

...right?



THE STITCH

One of you will take on the role of the Stitch. Importantly, you are not a master of anything. None of you are. This doesn't mean you shouldn't take ownership of the story. But it does mean that it's not yours alone. You are a weaver; a facilitator; a guide; a teacher; a cheerleader; a foil. You will help to create the dynamic world, to establish characters, but this task is not on you alone. Nor is it left to you exclusively, as it is in some other games, to take on the role of supporting characters. There might be times when Leads take on the role of other characters in the story.

There will be times when the Stitch needs to help guide through mechanics; when they need to weave story threads together; when they need to point the story toward what's interesting. But a lot of the time, the Stitch will just need to sit back and let the Leads lead, and let the story live and breathe.

THE LEADS

The rest of you are Leads. Leads are concerned with creating a character, and with bringing that character to life. You'll seek to embody that character; to guide and contribute to the story through the lens of that character; to live in and build the world around you as you move through it. You'll hope to survive, to thrive, to lift up those around you and win back the whole, or at least some corner of the world that's been wrenched from your hands. Or maybe you won't. Maybe you'll seek power. Fame. Legend. It's your story.

The Leads, like the Stitch, should also be foremost concerned with maintaining a safe and inclusive table for the voices, perspectives and desires of all. We are here to lift up community - inside and outside the fiction.

The characters you create will draw from their own stories both narratively and mechanically to find a way to take on the circumstances of their world. Their Threads will pull at them. Their Roots will ground them. Their Natures will guide their actions. They'll take up a Journey, or find themselves on a variety of Journeys. These Journeys each represent a different path Leads might take, and so represent different styles of play:

- **Cuffs** are physical-forward
- **Folds** are powerful supports
- **Hooks** are charismatic manipulators
- **Points** are the leading edge
- **Seams** are Dust wielders
- **Sifts** are matchless scavengers

Leads are not locked into one Journey or another. You can draw from any Journey whenever it feels appropriate to your story. As such, your team of Leads need not have one of each Journey.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

- Players: three to six total are ideal, but it can be played with less or more
- You'll need a pile of six-sided dice (d6s) – around 4-6 per Lead is a good place to start.
- In addition, the Stitch should grab 10 or so d6s (ideally of a different color) to populate and utilize The Corruption and Momentum Pools.
- Copies of Lead Sheets, and some scrap paper.
- This guide should be at your side, physically or digitally
- Pencils, markers, erasers, etc.
- If you're playing online, check out the resources we've made available at vigorrrpg.com
- However you're playing, snacks and beverages are also ideal.

BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN TOGETHER

At least one among you should read through this guide once. You won't pick up everything immediately. You won't memorize all the mechanics. You won't remember to roll Corruption dice every time. You'll forget just what it is that spending 2 Vigor accomplishes. It'll take a couple of times before you remember what actions are available in a Regroup Phase. The system seeks to be streamlined and intuitive, but that doesn't mean it'll sit in your brain right out of the gate.

You might consider looking through some sections together. The sections on Setting and Character Creation, in particular, are good ones to skim through as a group.

PITCHES FOR STITCHES (OR STITCHES GET PITCHES)

As someone looking to take on the role of Stitch, or just someone who's looking to put a group of players together to play Vigor: Into Dust, you might find yourself needing a short pitch to hook your friends/acquaintances/coworkers/family on the idea. Here are some suggestions, if you don't feel like coming up with your own:

THE SETTING

- “It’s like if the Forest Spirit, in Miyazaki’s *Princess Mononoke*, had never again found its head. And Lady Eboshi had, instead of promising to build a better town, expanded her cruel, mechanized reign. All the while, Disasterpeace’s soundtrack for *Hyper Light Drifter* played through the air.”
- “Imagine everything was basically in the state of The Dead Marshes in *The Lord of the Rings*. Not only that, but you - and everything else - was being hunted by The Nothing from *The Neverending Story*. But hope and possibility still remained, as made manifest by Sigur Ros’ 2005 release *Takk...*”
- “Say that, like, the Evil Horde wasn’t just a bunch of flunkies, and the Fright Zone covered a huge swath of the world. There are no Princesses of Power to speak of, AND there’s this thing called The Corruption, which is basically like Hexus from *FernGully*, infecting everything.”
- “Ok. It’s the Future as portrayed in Square’s *Chrono Trigger* for SNES, but probably without all the crazy future tech. Just the despair and scarcity really. BUT! There’s magic all around. Like if the Miasma of *Final Fantasy* fame were actually a helpful, mystical substance. But also the Miasma’s still kind of there as an evil thing.”

THE SYSTEM

- “Imagine you went to great lengths to create a character, put a bunch of info on a character sheet, and then that stuff actually mattered once you started playing the game.”
- “Looking for a system that doesn’t want you to kill everything you encounter? Looking for a system where advancement isn’t tied directly to bloodspillage? This might be the game for you.”

THE SYSTEM



CHARACTER FORWARD

In any roleplaying game, crafting a character's perspective and persona is a big, important, and rewarding deal. In *Vigor: Into Dust*, it's everything. Character advancement, rolls of the dice, storybuilding and basically the entire game are all driven by this guiding principle:

Who you are drives what you do.

This concept is the heart and engine of the sort of character-forward storytelling that this game is designed to foster. The unfolding events in your game will be centered on what your characters care about, what they struggle with, and what makes them thrive. By way of example, at the core of all Leads are their **Roleplay Prompts**: words or phrases that express facets of a Lead's being, and serve as sparks for directing their behavior in play, and thus the story. These prompts are broken into three categories:

- **Threads** – What drives your Lead? What's tugging at them?
- **Roots** – What grounds them?
- **Natures** – How do they operate (for better or worse)?

Each of these Roleplay Prompts has not only a story function, but also a mechanical function - as you'll see later on in this guide, page 30. The same tends to be true of all elements in this system.

COLLABORATIVE STORYTELLING

At their core, most TTRPGs are a conversation among the players. They're a shared performance. Those conversations and performances are then supported in a variety of ways by the game mechanics. And so, a story is born, arcs, dives, and grows.

In creating your own unique version of *Vigor: Into Dust*, we ask that you have your "Yes, and..." ready. As you play, you'll make statements, take actions, ask questions, settle judgments. Through all of that, the hope is that you're ready to **Listen, Agree, and Contribute** ("Yes, and..."). That cycle of storytelling is how you'll ensure the storytelling process remains collaborative.

In a session, whether it's your first venture worldbuilding in Vest or your fifteenth session where you're deep into discovering the forgotten font of Corruption, the (capital T) Table (our shorthand for saying The Leads and The Stitch) is tasked with being open to the creative possibilities of everyone.

For example: say you're sitting there building your world, and another Lead says "OH! I think it'd be really cool if this world was littered with the fossils of mammalian megafauna, like giant beavers." You think, "Gosh. That's not in any way up my alley," but you've read this guide and you understand what it means to say "Yes, and..." So you:

- **Listen:** Someone at the table makes a statement. Listen to it. Pay attention. Be inspired, and consider how you might build on those ideas.
- **Agree:** The statement that someone else just made about this story (giant beavers, or otherwise) is real and valid and YES. This doesn't mean "agree without question". And it doesn't mean the statement isn't subject to change, or the like. You might butt heads, deliberate, or even roll the dice before agreeing. But at some point, you'll all agree on the particulars of how to move forward. Maybe you'll come round on some variation on the giant beaver fossils. Or maybe you'll all agree to go down a different path.
- **Contribute:** You've got an idea. Speak up. Again - say, "Yes, and..." Take what the other players have put out there, and add to the story from your point of view. The Stitch, and/or others Leads, will often be in positions to cheer on new ideas, coax out new Threads, or simply ask questions to keep things moving, and that is contributing.
- **Repeat:** Exactly what it sounds like. Keep it up. It's going to get really good.

In the end, no matter what happened with the beavers - you'll all have worked together to craft it. And, hopefully, you'll have done so in a way that helps others feel heard, and allows you to feel heard. That's collaborative storytelling.

THE RHYTHM OF THE GAME

Vigor: Into Dust has two phases of play. These two phases together form one “Cycle” of play. You’ll spend some of your time in **the Open Phase** - you’ll engage with the other Leads, explore the world, take on challenges and threats, make discoveries, and roll the dice as needed.

When your story reaches a natural breaking point, or the Stitch judges that you’ve been wrapped up in an Open Phase for quite long enough, you’ll enter into **the Regroup Phase**. Where the Open Phase has a fully free structure, the Regroup Phase suggests certain steps:

-REGROUP PHASE-

- **Recount** what’s happened since the last Regroup Phase. Consider the highlights, the low points. Talk about the amazing things the Leads got into. And cheer on your fellow players for their excellent Roleplaying. You’ll also award Heart to your Leads at this point. For more, see page 47.
- **Reassess** your Lead’s Roleplay Prompts. This is an opportunity to consider what’s changed or unchanged in your Lead. It’s an opportunity to spend Heart on any advancements you might seek. And it’s an opportunity for the Table to assess the direction of the story.
- **Regroup** by any number of methods. Here you’ll have an opportunity to spend Regroup Actions to recover, resupply, craft, repair, engage with your Roleplay Prompts, or set any other kind of scene you might be feeling. These actions are a way to help you set things up for the next Open Phase.

The Regroup Phase acts as a break both in game and out of game. Stretch your legs, grab a snack, and catch your breath before jumping back into an Open Phase. For more on the Regroup Phase, see page 45.

You might not find that you’re spending equal amounts of time in the Open Phase and Regroup Phase. Your group might find themselves leaning more heavily into the Regroup Phase, or vice versa. That is all perfectly awesome. There’s no need for the two phases to catch equal time. As much as the story of this game is left in your hands, so too is establishing the rhythm.

ROLLING THE DICE

Much of your time playing will be open narrative: making statements and asking questions around the Table as you inhabit your Leads and weave the Threads of your story together. But there will be times when you'll need to roll the dice.

Vigor: Into Dust uses a character-forward dice engine that attaches fictional prompts to varying degrees of success. In most cases, the number of dice in your pool which meet or beat the target number for your roll determines your outcome on the **Tiers of Success**.

- If you wind up with **0 Successes**, the answer to whether or not you achieve your stated action is **No, and...** // Well that didn't work at all. Things don't go the way the Lead had intended (and then some).
- If you achieve **1 Success**, it's a **No, but...** // The Lead doesn't accomplish what they had hoped. They fail, they fall short, etc... BUT, that's not the end of it. Something goes their way.
- **2 Successes** results in a **Yes, but...** // The Lead does it. They more or less get what they were after. HOWEVER, it doesn't go quite according to plan.
- **3 Successes** is a solid **Yes.** // The Lead does it. Plain and simple.
- **4 Successes** is a **Yes, and....** // The Lead does it and then some.

All dice rolling in this game is based out of this framework. And generally, every roll will require that you look at least to your Roleplay Prompts and your Qualities. In so doing, every action you take should result in your (and possibly the rest of the Table) learning something about who your Lead is, as well as pushing the story forward. As opposed to just saying, "Well, I'm using my 12 in strength on this, and that roll kills the beast, and now it's dead, and that's that."

THERE ARE FOUR TYPES OF ROLLS IN THE GAME:

- **Action Roll.** When a Lead seeks to do something that requires skill beyond the mundane; is opposed by some other force; involves unknown information or potential consequences. Action Rolls will be the bulk of what you roll in this game, and thus the bulk of what drives the story. See page 14.
- **Recovery Roll.** When a Lead is laden with Conditions or Corruption, they'll need to seek aid in a Regroup Phase. When they do so, they'll roll a Recovery Roll. See page 52.
- **Dust Roll.** When a Lead looks to wield the Dust to mystical ends, they'll roll a Dust Roll. To a large extent, these look like Action Rolls, but with a handful of idiosyncrasies. See page 22.
- **Corruption Roll.** As the Corruption Pool grows, so too does its threat to the Leads. At any time, the Stitch (or anyone really) may call for the pool to be rolled. See page 20.

ACTION ROLL

Whenever it is unclear whether a Lead can actually do the thing that they are stating, you'll pick up the dice. This gives the acting Lead a chance to test their ability, and allows the Table to come to an agreement as to the effects of a Lead's actions on the fiction.

By and large, a Lead will make an Action Roll when, at any point in the story, someone is attempting to do or say something that:

- **Requires skill, resolve, or action** beyond the mundane to accomplish
- **Is opposed** by another character or force
- **Involves information unknown**, or potential consequences to the acting Lead

Note: *Anyone at the Table at any time may call for a roll from a character or force in the story, so long as one of these or any other conditions deemed appropriate by the Table are satisfied.*

To make the roll, you'll follow these steps:

1. **Set the “Yes” Condition.**
2. **Build the Dice Pool**
3. **Set The Target Number**
4. **Roll the Dice**
5. **Adjust with modifiers** (Assets, help from another Lead, Corruption, etc.)
6. **Read and interpret the result** on The Tiers of Success

1. SET THE “YES”

Setting the “Yes” condition on the Tiers of Success is equivalent to stating the goal of your action. Your Yes condition might be determining the safest path across a Corruption-riddled river. Your goal might be understanding the runes inscribed on columns from the World Before. In most instances, the “Yes” for your action will be fairly obvious to the Table. But, if needs be, the Stitch or another might ask you to clarify, or might repeat the “Yes” condition for clarity’s sake. Specificity is pretty key here, so things don’t get confusing when it comes time to read the Tiers.

It might also be the case that someone needs to check you on the scope of your “Yes.”

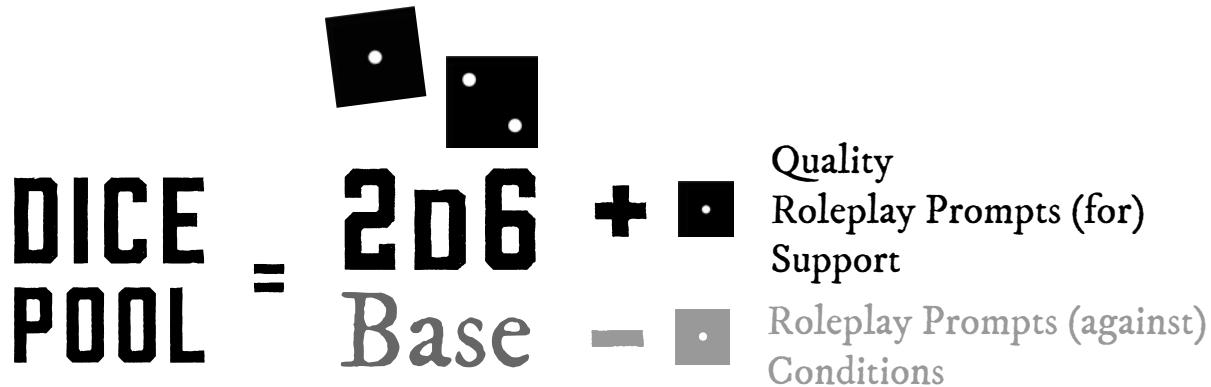
For example:

“Uh. Wait. You’re rolling to on-a-whim find the eternal source of Corruption and destroy it forever?” // “Yes, that’s what I’d like to do.” // “An admirable goal, no doubt. But considering your Lead hasn’t yet even encountered the Corruption, and maybe isn’t convinced of its existence, do you think we could aim for something more attainable with this action?”

Once you’ve set the “Yes,” it’s on to building the dice pool.

2. BUILD YOUR DICE POOL

No matter the action, your pool always begins with a base of **2d6**. You'll modify that base using your relevant **Quality**, your **Roleplay Prompts**, and any **Support** from other Leads, or **Conditions** affecting you.



+QUALITY

With the Table's help (or approval, if necessary), you'll choose the Quality through which you are acting, and add dice to the pool equal to your rating in that Quality. There's more discussion on Qualities starting at page 32. But for now, here's a breakdown:

- **BRAWN** Strength, Toughness, Grit, Gross Motor Skills, Sheer Frame
- **FINESSE** Grace, Liteness, Fine Motor Skills, Speed, Agility
- **GUILE** Wit, Cleverness, Resourcefulness, Mischief, Sneakery
- **PRESENCE** Personality, Authority, Reputation, Intimacy
- **UNDERSTANDING** Interpretation, Appraisal, Knowledge, Discernment

There's a purposeful amount of grey area here. So, if in doubt as to which Quality to use, ask the Table, or make your case.

+/- ROLEPLAY PROMPTS

After adding your Qualities to the base 2d6, you'll add or remove dice for each Roleplay Prompt relevant to the roll. If any are providing some advantage, or motivation in this particular situation, you'll add a die for each. If any are holding you back or working against you in some way, you'll remove a die for each.

+ SUPPORT

If other Lead Characters want to help you with this action, they can Lend a Hand. They describe how they are trying to help out (with yours and the Table's approval). Then, the supporting Lead(s) spend 1 Vigor each and add 1d6 each to your pool. They'll share in any potential consequences from the action as well.

The only limit to how many Leads can Lend a Hand on an action is what makes sense to the Table. So long as it works in the fiction you want to see, go for it.

Note: In putting together this kind of group action, you might instead consider Montaging the Action, for more on that see page 56.

Support might also come by means of your drawing from the Momentum pool. For more on Momentum, see page 21.

- CONDITIONS

If you're carrying any Conditions, remove a die from the pool for each Condition relevant to the intended action. Depending on what you are attempting and the nature of your Conditions, all, none, or any combination of your accrued ill-effects may be working against you. That is for you and the rest of the Table to decide.

Note: Corruption Effects should also be considered here. If the Stitch or another at the Table finds an Effect relevant to the action, remove a die for each, or for the level, for more on this see page 20.

3. SET THE TARGET NUMBER

The Target Number (TN) is the value a die must meet or beat to be counted as a success. **The TN is 6 by default.** Certain Waypoints might change the TN for specific actions, but generally, your TN starts at 6.

That said, a Lead can choose to **modify the TN by spending 2 Vigor** in order to lower the TN by 1. So if you're starting at a TN of 6, and you spend 2 Vigor, your new TN would be 5. If you're starting at 6, and you really, really want this thing to work - you might consider spending 4 Vigor to lower the TN to 4. And so on, and so forth.

4. ROLL THE DICE AND ADJUST

Once you've got your "Yes," your Dice Pool, and your Target Number, it's time to roll the dice. Roll your pool, and tally up your Successes. If you haven't hit the mark you hoped for, or you just really want more successes, you have the power to make that happen by using your Assets, or by tapping into Corruption.

Note: this is also the point at which Corruption Dice might be rolled against you. For more on that, see page 19.

If you have relevant Assets available, you may use them. Packed Assets are worth +1 to a single die. And Prized Assets are worth +2 to a single die. So if for example your pool roll back a 4, 5, 3, 1, & 6 and your Target Number was 6, you could spend a Packed Asset on the 5, and a Prized Asset on the 4 to go from 1 total Success to 3 total Successes. Much more on Assets can be found starting at page 40.

Corruption is a little more powerful, and a little more dangerous. In order to add successes after the roll, you need only mark one hex on your Corruption Track for each additional success you wish to gain. That's right. A free success. No strings attached. Well, not exactly. For much more on the much much bad of Corruption, see page 19.

5. READ THE TIERS AND STORYBUILD

The Tiers of Success (ToS) help the Table turn dice into stories. The number of successes generated on a roll of the dice determines which prompt the Table will use to narrate the result in the story.

TIERS OF SUCCESS

SUCCESES	PROMPT
0	NO, AND...
1	NO, BUT...
2	YES, BUT...
3	YES
4	YES, AND...

As stated above, you'll have already set your "Yes" by the time you get to interpreting the ToS. And with that in mind, you'll look to the ToS to answer the degree to which you do the thing you set out to do.

No, and... Well that didn't work at all. Things don't go the way the Lead had intended (and then some). *What does failure look like in this situation, and how do things get worse for you as a consequence?*

No, but... The Lead doesn't accomplish what they had hoped. They fail, they fall short, etc... BUT, that's not the end of it. *How do you fail in your action, but still get closer to your goal?*

Yes, but... The Lead does it. They more or less get what they were after. HOWEVER, it doesn't go quite according to plan. *How do you succeed, but with fallout, escalation, or diminished returns?*

Yes. The Lead does it. Plain and simple. *How do you pull off this action and move the plot forward?*

Yes, and... The Lead does it AND then some! *How does this action come off even better than you had hoped, with added benefits, insights, or flair?*

Whoever's leading the action should typically get first dibs on narrating how things go down, and what the potential ANDs or BUTs are. But, the Stitch (and others at the table) should be ever ready to step in and assist, clarify, offer feedback, etc. if needed.

Additionally, the Stitch will likely need to get involved when it comes to assessing Consequences and Corruption. For more on Consequences, see the following page. For more on Corruption, see page 19.

CONSEQUENCES

There are a variety of avenues by which the Leads accept consequences. In the case of an Action Roll, anything short of a solid “Yes” - that is 3 Successes - should be met with consequences. In these cases, let the prompts guide the storytelling, and be honest about the potential impact the result has on the Lead(s) involved.

TYPES

Consequences should be both narratively relevant and mechanically impactful wherever possible. When you hit below a “Yes,” consider applying any (or all) of the following to the acting Lead(s) as a reflection of whatever turn the story is taking:

- **Take a Condition.** 1-4 levels, depending on severity.
- **Take Corruption.** 1-4 in your track, depending on severity.
- **Lose Vigor.** 1-4 points, depending on severity.
- **Damage an Asset.** The Asset is broken, lost, or otherwise useless until either your Pack resets (Packed Assets) or you spend a Regroup action to repair it (Prized Assets).
- **Lose Momentum.** 1-4 dice removed from the Momentum Pool, depending on severity.

SEVERITY

When judging the severity of consequences, be honest about the fiction. Consider the ToS result as well as the impact of what’s happening in the story. Put it to the Table if there’s doubt.

- **1 - Minor.** A bruise, distraction, general unease.
- **2 - Major.** A sprain, panic, major loss
- **3 - Devastating.** A break, hysteria, existential crisis.
- **4 - Life-Threatening.** A mortal wound, total breakdown, vegetative state.

There are other ways the Leads might suffer consequences beyond the result of an Action Roll. These include, but aren’t limited to, results from Montaging the Action, or having The Stitch roll the Corruption Pool. You’ll find out how to assess consequences in these situations in their particular sections at page 56 for Montaging, and page 20 for the Corruption Pool.

CORRUPTION

The Corruption may take on any number of forms in your story. It's meant to be something you take, and make your own. See page 65 for more on that. But at its core, The Corruption is insidious and powerful, and (to one extent or another) devouring its way through the world and its inhabitants. There is very little left of Vest that remains untouched by The Corruption. The same may be true of you and yours.

The Corruption is drawn to power. It feeds on it. It needs it. When you mark Corruption in your Track in order to gain successes on a roll, you overreach your power, and the Corruption grows.



THE CORRUPTION TRACK

There are a handful of ways your Corruption Track advances, but it's likely movement will come primarily from you taking Successes offered by Corruption, or suffering Corruption-related consequences.

If there's anything in your Corruption Track, you must deal with it every time you roll the dice. The Corruption is not quiet. It is not dormant. If you carry any of it with you, it will affect you directly, regardless of what action you are taking. In those moments, you have a few options as far as handling it:

- **The Corruption Steals.** For each hex marked in your Corruption Track, roll 1d6 against your action. These dice are rolled at the same time you roll yours (that is, before you have opportunity to spend further Corruption on successes). You, or the Stitch may roll these dice. If any of the faces rolled match those rolled on your action, those dice are stolen from your roll and added to the Corruption Pool (this includes successes). If Assets were used to flip any dice on the action roll, use the final, modified result to judge the match. *How has the Corruption interfered?*
- **The Corruption Spreads.** For each hex marked in your Corruption Track, add 1d6 to the Corruption Pool. *You feel light, strangely free at the moment. But why? What is it waiting for? What is it planning?*
- **The Corruption Fails.** Spend 1 Vigor each for however many hexes marked in your Corruption Track that you'd like to avoid. That is, you might have 3 in your track, but only want to spend 1 Vigor to ignore 1. The other two would still get rolled against you, or have to be dealt with in another way. *The Corruption gnaws at you, but you are able to push it down this time.*

CORRUPTION EFFECTS

When all four hexes in your Corruption Track are filled, you take a **Corruption Effect**, and the track resets to zero. The Corruption has marked, marred, or scarred you. The Corruption is a part of you that you won't be getting rid of any time soon.

Describe the effect as you choose. Give it a name - *how does it change you? Your physical appearance? Your outlook? Your personality?* As you take on more Effects (if you should do so), follow these general levels:

- **First Effect:** Hindered – *a nuisance, a mark, a worry*
- **Second Effect:** Changed – *an impediment, a scar, a fear, a part of you changed*
- **Third Effect:** Shackled – *unrecognizable, unwelcome, bound to the Corruption*
- **Fourth Effect:** Aberrant – *completely lost to the Corruption. When a Lead reaches this level, their time in the story is over. What has become of them? How does it end?*

Your Corruption Effects, should you carry any, are there to add flavor to your story, and don't have any direct ties to mechanics. However, if a Corruption Effect seems relevant to an action, consider removing a die (or more) from your pool. For example, if you're trying to convince someone to follow you to safety, but your skin ripples with Corruption...your pool might need to be adjusted.

THE CORRUPTION POOL

The Corruption has a tendency to follow you wherever you go, and your use of it tends to make that shadow grow. The Corruption Pool is just that. The Stitch presides over the Corruption Pool, bringing Corruption into the game in various ways as they see fit over the course of the story.

When the Corruption seems relevant to an action or development in the story, the Stitch can use the dice in the Corruption Pool in a few ways (The Table should keep them in check on this):

- **Against an Action.** Hand Corruption Dice (as many as you like) to a Lead to roll, or you The Stitch can roll them, against their action (as with The Corruption Steals).
- **Against a Montage.** Add Corruption Dice (as many as you like) to your pool during a Montage to increase the challenge the Leads face. ALSO, you can choose to discard 2 Corruption Dice from the pool to lower your Target Number by 1 (it starts at 6).
- **Against the Dust.** As you may against an Action Roll, The Stitch might throw Corruption Dice against a Dust roll.
- **Against a Lead.** Roll Corruption Dice (as many as you like) as an attack against a Lead or Leads. The number of successes generated are the severity of consequences (0-4). Unless they carry a relevant Waypoint, the Lead(s) does not have a chance to avoid this.

POPULATING AND DEPLETING THE CORRUPTION POOL

- The Corruption Pool begins each Open Phase at 0.
- Each time a Lead chooses The Corruption Spreads to deal with Corruption, dice are added to the pool.
- Any time the Stitch rolls dice from the Corruption Pool, those dice are discarded from the pool (this does not include dice used when a Lead rolls for The Corruption Steals).
- The Corruption Pool resets to 0 at the end of each Open Phase, no matter what.

MOMENTUM

When the Leads take action, to whatever end, their goal, one would assume, is a “Yes” or a “Yes, and...” There will be moments when you exceed even those marks with the number of successes earned. Or instances where you feel that a “Yes, but...” is just enough to do what you set out to do. In those instances, you and those around you may gain **Momentum**. You have so expertly done what you set out to do that it inspires the lot of you. And in whatever actions lie before you, you may choose to draw on that inspiration, that momentum.

Whenever a Lead chooses, they may set additional successes into the Momentum Pool. Literally, any successes you have available on a roll can be banked into the Pool. So, if a “Yes, but...” is good enough for you on a given action, but you rolled 4 successes, you can throw 2 into Momentum for later use. If, on a particular action, you roll 5 successes, but you’re just really interested in what a “No, and...” might turn into for the story, you can throw all 5 of those successes into Momentum. The power is yours. Just be true to the story and the desires of the rest of the Table.

USING MOMENTUM

However many dice are currently in the Momentum Pool are there for any Lead to use on any action, with Table approval of course. These dice add directly to the Lead’s pool for that action. They may be adjusted by Assets in the same way as normal pool dice. And they may likewise be affected by any rolled Corruption.

You don’t have to, as players, remember which die came from which Lead’s action. But if it feels appropriate to the story, you can definitely speak to what Lead or Leads inspired your action to have that much greater chance.

UNSPENT MOMENTUM

At the end of each Open Phase, any dice remaining in the Momentum Pool become a pool of Vigor which the Leads can divide among themselves as they see fit. If there are none left, there are none to spend. If there are ten dice left, those can be split among whomever might need Vigor recovery.

THE DUST

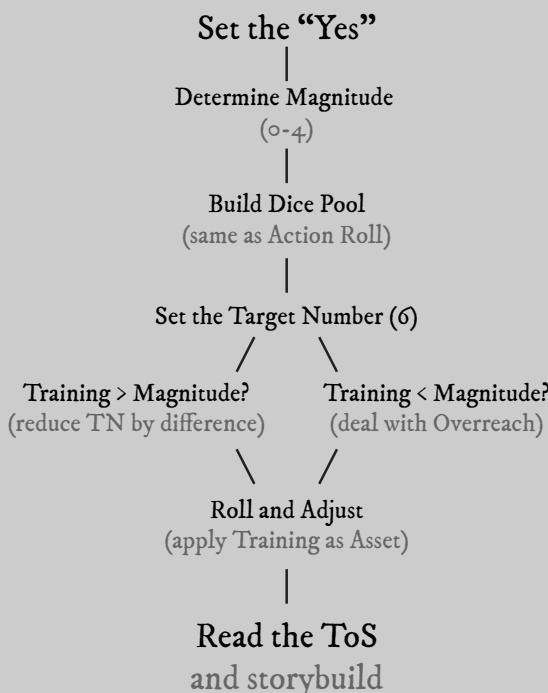
The Dust is a seam between what is and what was. With the Dust, the lingering energy of the World Before may be brought forth into the present. This mystical, powerful connection may be used for incredible things: *to raise lingering spirits, to transform the terrain, to shake emotions.* But these actions are not often without cost, as The Dust is not only extremely powerful but also, for some long-forgotten reason, a beacon for The Corruption. The Corruption is drawn to its power, and drawn to those who wield it.

Bringing The Dust to further life is left to you and your storybuilding. You'll be tasked with narrating just what happens when using The Dust to call forth or commune with The World Before. It will be left to you to decide how the peoples of Vest react to such powers. For prompts and Threads on that front, see p.66.

WIELDING THE DUST

Anyone can attempt to use The Dust, but only those who take Training can do so with any hope of avoiding dramatic consequence. For more on Training, see below. That said, the conditions for using The Dust are therefore fairly simple. You say "I'd like to try to use The Dust here." The Table either disapproves or approves. And if they approve you move forward to making the roll. It works a bit like an Action Roll.

ROLLING WITH THE DUST



SET THE “YES”

You'll explain what it is you're trying to do. How are you drawing on The Dust? What is it going to accomplish? Who or what will it affect? And what does a clean "Yes, you do it" look like here?

DETERMINE THE MAGNITUDE

After you've explained what it is you're trying to do, you'll determine just what kind of a big deal that is. This is entirely in the hands of the Table. The entire scope of Dust abilities is judged on a magnitude scale from 0 to 4. These numbers are largely meaningless until you and your Table assign some touch points. If you feel stumped, look ahead to the table on the following page. There you'll get some more details. But basically, it comes down to this: **Mundane = 0 / Modest = 1 / Considerable = 2 / Profound = 3 / Legendary = 4.**

Note: *if you have Training below the determined Magnitude, it does not mean you can't attempt it, but it does mean you'll be dealing with Overreach (see page 24).*

Determining Magnitude: *Pose Each Question to the Table and Take the Average Answer.*

ASK:	Mundane	Modest	Considerable	Profound	Legendary
What level of FORCE is required to affect something of this SIZE and/or STATUS in the way described?	0	1	2	3	4
Over what DURATION or DISTANCE must this be executed?	0	1	2	3	4

BUILD THE DICE POOL

You'll pick relevant Qualities and Roleplay Prompts, like in an Action Roll.

SET THE TARGET NUMBER

TN always starts at 6. You can spend 2 Vigor to lower it by 1, or if you have Training above the magnitude level, you automatically reduce the TN by the difference. So if you're trying to do something that's modest (i.e. Magnitude Level 1), but you have three levels of training, your TN would be reduced by 2 to a TN of 4.

ROLL THE DICE AND ADJUST

Roll your dice, and tally up the Successes. If you haven't hit the mark you'd hoped for, you can utilize Assets or Corruption. When using the Dust, any Training you have is counted as a Prized Asset worth whatever its rating. Any other Assets you'd use to help you with The Dust should probably be strange or wondrous in some way.

Note: *as with an Action Roll, this is also the point at which Corruption Dice might be rolled against you. For more on that, see page 19.*

READ THE TIERS AND STORYBUILD

Determine where you landed on the Tiers of Success and run with the story from there. Not just anyone can wield The Dust. This is major stuff, and as such it'll probably carry great weight in your story. And as such, the consequences of these actions might be profound.

THE COSTS OF WIELDING THE DUST

As with an Action Roll, any result that isn't a "Yes" or "Yes, and..." is subject to consequences, whether that be Conditions or Corruption. In addition to that, anyone attempting any Magnitude above their Training (if they have any) is subject to Overreach.

OVERREACH

If you have Training below the Magnitude you're attempting. You are faced with Overreach. For each degree you're off, The Stitch will flip a coin (or roll a single d6). The Stitch will ask you to call Heads or Tails, or 1-3 / 4-6 depending on whether its a coin or die. If you call it wrong, you immediately mark one hex in your Corruption Track.

Anything you call wrong also gets flipped/rolled again against another Lead (probably one that was narratively close to your action). They get a chance to call it. If they call it wrong, they too mark their Corruption Track.

THE RIPPLES OF DUST

Using the Dust also carries a special narrative weight beyond the mechanics of your character sheet. *What if someone saw what you just did? What if that action had ripples throughout Vest? What if The Corruption was drawn to you because of your reaching into The World Before?* If you're interested in answering more questions like these, consult the Threads of the Dust on p.66.

DESCRIBING THE DUST IN PLAY

It may take time for the Table to get acquainted with the general feel for the Dust, its trappings and Magnitude in your story. Give yourself the freedom to backtrack, make mistakes, and move on. The more you play, the clearer the role of the Dust will become in your story.

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j

This world is populated by so many, and yet so few have even a chance. A chance to scrape by. A chance to overcome. A chance to find the light sleep of which we all dream. A chance to die quietly. The Corruption pervades. It gnaws at us all. It feeds on us even when we feel we are safe from it. Aberrants roam freely. More now than ever there were. This world gasps at its last breath. And even still, The Hierarchy machine ever churns. Inviting so many of us to grasp at the possibility of a comfortable and safe life in their arms. Drawing us in with promises of plenty. Only to chew up the vulnerable and spit them back out.

And yet, there are those out here who will not meet such an end. There are those who will not be trod upon. Those who will rise to meet whatever comes at them. Would that I had a handful of whatever strength of will, whatever vigor, they carry in them.

EXCERPT FROM THE WRITINGS OF CALYH FREYALT, CA. 302 IN THE 7TH CYCLE

THE LEADS

The characters you create, The Leads, live in a world that is really and truly struggling to just get by. And in much the same way as Vest itself struggles, so too do most of its inhabitants. You might not always be sure where your next meal is coming from. You might not know how long it will take to travel to fresh water. There might be a pack of Aberrants hunting you at this very instant. You might be working on some insane, impossible Hierarchy project, convinced that the job is the only way you'll attain any kind of stability for you and your family. But you are not without limitless possibilities. You are not without a good deal of surprises. And neither is Vest.

As a player, you'll become a Lead whose strength and depth of character will see you through this troubled world. You will draw from your Roleplay Prompts. You'll have some ability in any of a number of Qualities. You'll have your Assets to draw upon. You'll find yourself on Journeys that provide you with any number of potential advantages. You'll have Vigor. You might reach for The Dust. And you'll, no doubt, be tempted by the power of The Corruption.

CREATING YOUR LEAD

First, you'll want to get a Lead Sheet in front of you. You might have one printed out, or just flip back to page 82 in this guide. Once you've got that in front of you, you'll tackle the following in whatever order works for you, bearing in mind that you do not have figure all of this out right away. You might only set out a couple words of a sketch. You might only decide on one roleplay prompt. *This game doesn't require you to have a completely filled-in character sheet to start play. You can discover yourself as you play.*

- WRITE A SKETCH
- CREATE YOUR ROLEPLAY PROMPTS
- CHOOSE AND COMPLETE YOUR ARCHETYPE

WRITE A SKETCH

This Sketch is your character concept - small or large, detailed or simple. This is a starting place as you work out who your Lead is, what they've experienced, and who or what they care about. This concept might come about by way of a conversation with the Table. It might come about after looking look through the Journeys in this section, see page 33. You might also want to dig into the more detailed section on The Setting, starting at page 58.

Consider any or all of the following questions to help:

- What's someone's first impression of you?
- How would a close friend describe you?
- Where did you grow up? Was that place in The Forge, The Works, The Wilds?
- Do/did you live in a big, bustling community, an isolated enclave, or something else?
- What has changed about you since your youth? Why, how, or because of whom?
- Have you stayed home or ventured away? Why? Do you have a home?
- What role do you find yourself filling on any given day? To what tasks do you commit yourself?
- Who is/was someone important to you? What was an impactful lesson learned from that relationship, and how does it shape your current drives, instincts, or connections?

CREATE YOUR ROLEPLAY PROMPTS

Here's where you get to lay out the core of who your Lead is. Your **Roleplay Prompts** (*Threads, Natures and Roots*) will represent their perspective in the story, modifying dice pools, and function as their platform for growth. Roleplay Prompts are also how Leads acquire **Heart**, the advancement currency of the game.

To help craft your own Roleplay Prompts, look at the questions on the following page. Answer as many as feel important to you, or that help you to lay down a clear marker as to who your Lead is and what they're about.

ROLEPLAY PROMPT CREATION QUESTIONS:

- *What's something happening in your Lead's life, or in the world around them that they care about?*

Write this under **Threads**. These are a Lead's drives, goals, obligations, the things that tug at them, the strands they're following.

- *When faced with a problem, confrontation, or other obstacle, what's your Lead's first instinct as to resolving it (for better or worse)?*

Write this under **Natures**. How a Lead is wired - what comes naturally to them, for better or worse. Their go-tos. Their impulses. Their instincts.

- *What is a grounding relationship, belief, or memory for your Lead, and by what means do they engage with that relationship, belief, or memory?*

Write this under **Roots**. The connections, relationships, beliefs, practices that ground a Lead. Roots are often there to remind a Lead who they truly are, even in the face of all the potential evils of Vest.

For more help writing these prompts, and a more detailed discussion of Roleplay Prompts, check page 29.

CHOOSE AND COMPLETE YOUR ARCHETYPE

Your Lead's archetype is a broad way of defining the details of how they operate: are they more Vigor-heavy, or do they rely on other Qualities? What sort of situations do they tend to be prepared for? What have they gleaned from their Journey so far? Choose whichever archetype best fits with the Sketch and Roleplay Prompts you've written for your Lead, or go your own way.

In all of the following options, the specifics for where Qualities go, or what Pack Types you pick, or how many Prized Assets you bear, or what Waypoints you've acquired are left to you. The archetypes simply provide what 'quantity' you begin with.

Whatever you decide, by the end you'll have a ready-to-play Lead.

Passion over practice.

Training and preparedness are all well and good, but at the end of the day, it's those who want it most who make a better tomorrow.

VIGOR	QUALITIES	PACK TYPES	PRIZED ASSETS	WAYPOINTS
9	1 RATED 2 1 RATED 1	1	1	0

Practice makes progress.

Vest is too cruel and unpredictable to rely on heart alone. Through focus and training, we forge our passions into something more reliable.

VIGOR	QUALITIES	PACK TYPES	PRIZED ASSETS	WAYPOINTS
6	2 RATED 2 [OR 3 RATED 1, 1, 2]	1	1	1

Progress is made by those prepared for the journey.

Preparedness is the key to survival. The right tool could mean a full stomach on what would otherwise be a hungry night.

VIGOR	QUALITIES	PACK TYPES	PRIZED ASSETS	WAYPOINTS
6	1 RATED 2 1 RATED 1	2	2	0

Our own journey is all we have.

History is the best teacher. Your strength lies in the lessons you have learned thus far.

VIGOR	QUALITIES	PACK TYPES	PRIZED ASSETS	WAYPOINTS
7	1 RATED 2 1 RATED 1	1	1	2

I make my own way, thanks.

Fair enough. You're a loose canon, a live wire, the DIY type. We get it. Just remember: it's safety in numbers out here. You'd be a fool to go it all alone. **Spend 15 points above the base figures to create your own.**

BASE	VIGOR	QUALITIES	PACK TYPES	PRIZED ASSETS	WAYPOINTS
	5	2 RATED 1	1	1	0
SPEND	3 POINTS EACH ADDITIONAL	4 POINTS PER HEX MARKED MAX RATING: 2	2 POINTS PER ADDED TYPE MAX: 3 TYPES	3 POINTS PER ASSET ADDED MAX: 3 ASSETS	1 POINT PER WAYPOINT MAX: 2

ROLEPLAY PROMPTS

Roleplay Prompts are kind of the heart of this game. They're your story. They're your core. But Roleplay Prompts are more than catalysts for storytelling. They're more than some added dice here or a removed die there. They are also the platform for character advancement. Embracing your Roleplay Prompts and bringing them to the story will earn you Heart - which you'll be able to spend in ways that help you survive, adapt and grow throughout this story.

A MAP FOR YOUR LEAD

Your Roleplay Prompts are your Lead. They represent your Lead's makeup, outlook, connections and more. As such, if ever you're in doubt as to how to play your Lead, or if ever anyone at the Table needs reminding, your Roleplay Prompts are there as a guide to who you are. You're in charge of your Roleplay Prompts. They're yours to create, and yours to play. The Stitch or Table might have to step in every once in a while to ensure you're playing them honestly. You might change or grow in such a way over the course of the story that you need to change your Roleplay Prompts subtly or dramatically. But no matter what, or when, they're there as a map of who you are.

YOUR THREADS

Threads are your goals, desires, obligations, interests, quests - the events and aspirations that are driving this chapter of your story. These are the things that pull at you, tug you in a given direction. Any Heart earned through your Threads represents, in part, that sense of self found through focusing on the things that matter to you, that mean something to you.

YOUR NATURES

Natures are how you are wired - your instincts, outlooks, and impulses. Natures might be inherently good. They might be inherently problematic. Whatever the case, Natures represent those first responses of yours, your go-to's and all that. Heart earned through your Natures represents your Lead coming to a greater sense of self by engaging with these elements.

YOUR ROOTS

Roots are your core relationships, your foundational beliefs, or your grounding mementos. Your Roots remind you of who you are, remind you that you are connected to something bigger than just yourself, even when you are facing insurmountable odds. Your Roots might be with you actively and presently in the story. Or they might exist in your past, only to appear when you set flashback scenes. But they are, nonetheless, always with you. Heart earned via these Roots represents that connection, those storied bondings.

PROS AND CONS

As mentioned in discussions of rolling the dice, Roleplay Prompts serve as potential added or removed dice from your Dice Pools. Where they are relevant to a given action, they add a single die if beneficial, and remove a single die if detrimental. Not all Roleplay Prompts will come up every single time. And some might not necessarily ever come up for any rolls. That's all just fine. You do not need to be using them on a roll (one way or the other) to engage with your Roleplay prompts. And you therefore do not need to use them on rolls to earn Heart.

THE PATH TO HEART

When you lean into your Lead's Roleplay Prompts, you'll earn Heart. This is further covered in the discussion of the Recount portion of the Regroup Phase, see page 46. But for now:

At the beginning of a Regroup Phase, a Lead will earn:

- **0 Heart** if a particular Roleplay Prompt didn't come up at all during the previous Open Phase.
- **1 Heart** if a Roleplay Prompt came up in some small or motivating way during that phase.
- **2 Heart** if a Roleplay Prompt had a major impact on the story, or came up several times.

Each *individual* Roleplay Prompt has a chance to earn Heart. During a Regroup Phase Heart can be spent on increasing your Vigor or Quality Ratings, gaining new Waypoints, and more. For more on Heart, check page 47.

VIGOR

Your Vigor is that part of you that grants you the power to rise above circumstance. It's your strength of will - your force of character. It's the part of you, and of your fellow Leads, that marks you as unique in Vest.

USING VIGOR

By this point in the guide, you've already run into the places where Vigor is used. It can change your Target Number when you roll the dice. It enables you to Lend a Hand to another Lead. It can help you avoid Corruption Dice, and trigger several different Waypoints.

When you use Vigor, you're tapping into that well of self that allows you to push beyond what you might normally be capable of. You're not using Corruption. You're not using the Dust. You're using your core self. Vigor is inside of you.

ZERO VIGOR

There will be moments when you've either spent all of your Vigor, or you've been hit with consequences that take you down to 0 Vigor. Using the last of your Vigor is a big deal, even temporarily. When a Lead drops to Zero Vigor, the Stitch should prompt them to narrate what's going on: "What happens to you as you pour the whole of your will into this action? In what state does that leave you?" Depending on the narrative circumstances, they (or another at the Table) should suggest one of the following or other consequences accordingly.

- Drop Max Vigor by 1
- Decrease the Rating of a Quality by 1
- Lose (Erase) a Roleplay Prompt
- Take some degree of Conditions, see Consequences at page 18.
- Take some degree of Corruption or Corruption Effects, see more at page 20.

RESTORING VIGOR

You'll encounter a number of ways to restore Vigor via Waypoints - see page 34-39, through Heart advances - see page 48, and Recovery - see page 51. Look to the relevant sections for details on how those options work.

QUALITIES

A Lead's Qualities represent aspects of their physical, mental and emotional self. When attempting to overcome whatever obstacles you face, you'll act, in part, out of these Qualities. When making a roll, you'll choose which Quality is 'leading' the action, and modify the roll from there.

There are five Qualities available to you. All of them start at zero and may be modified upward from there either at character creation (see page 27), or over the course of your story with the use of Heart. For more on that see page 48.

BRAWN	Strength, Toughness, Grit, Gross motor Skills, Sheer Frame
FINESSE	Grace, Liteness, Fine Motor Skills, Speed, Agility
GUILE	Wit, Cleverness, Resourcefulness, Mischief, Sneakery
PRESENCE	Personality, Authority, Reputation, Closeness
UNDERSTANDING	Interpretation, Appraisal, Knowledge, Discernment

These Qualities, and how they're used, are subject to yours and the Table's interpretation. They're built with overlap in mind. If you see your Lead using Brawn to intimidate rather than Presence, go for it. Or if you see empathizing with a compatriot as more Understanding, as opposed to Presence, go for it. You don't have to use Brawn to break down that rock barrier. You could use Guile, or Understanding maybe. This is all about building the story. If it feels right to you and the Table in the story, then go with that.

IMPROVING YOUR QUALITIES

The ratings you have in whatever Qualities represent more than just a blanket skill rating. The numbers are there as a representation of your story - a measure of where you've been and what you've learned along the way. While it is of course mechanically important to have that +2 in Guile available to you, it's also important to remember how you got there.

Toward that end, improving your Qualities is achieved by using a part of yourself, a part of your story: your Heart. If you want to improve a particular Quality by 1, you'll do so during the Regroup Phase by elevating one of your Roleplay Prompts (Threads, Roots, or Natures). Doing this will give you a +1 to the relevant Quality. For more on this, see page 48.

JOURNEYS

Stories grow. They're dynamic. They're about action. Reality moves. Corruption bites. Your characters are part of that movement. In ways both big and small, your Leads are moving and growing. They're on a journey.

As with Roleplay Prompts, Journeys are another way to distinguish your Lead's perspective in the storytelling. But whereas Natures, Threads and Roots turn the lens toward your character's internal processing and growth, their Journey marks their growing repertoire of tactics, insights and skills. In other words, Journeys are about what your Lead is learning – or has learned – to do.

The individual abilities within a given Journey are called **Waypoints**. These are those skills picked up along the way that allow a Lead to bend the rules of the game in their favor. If it helps, you might think of them as a Lead's super powers.

USING THESE JOURNEYS

Journeys represent an arc in your story – particular paths one might take in Vest. They're archetypes. They're models. They're here to help guide you at Character Creation, but also throughout the game. You'll get a brief sketch with each, some suggested key Qualities, and some ideas for Natures. You'll also, maybe most importantly, be offered a pool of Waypoints with each. All of this is here to help you piece your character together. All of it is here for you to pull from as you see fit.

ACQUIRING WAYPOINTS AND KNOWING WHAT TO TAKE

You can take a new Waypoint on any particular Journey in a couple of ways:

- **At Character Creation** - Depending on which archetype you choose, you are afforded the option to take starting Waypoints.
- **By spending Heart** - During a Regroup Phase (specifically the Reassess portion), if you have 5 Heart available, you may choose to spend it on a new Waypoint.

When choosing a new Waypoint, consider the following: Journeys aren't a rigid class system in the classic TTRPG sense. And though each Journey represents a particular sort of character, there are no penalties for taking Waypoints from various Journeys, and no particular rewards for only sticking to one Journey. *Vigor: Into Dust* invites you instead to consider your character arc:

- *How are your experiences shaping you in the narrative?*
- *What happened to them to bring them to this particular moment in whatever Journey?*
- *Who or what helped you get here? What propelled you forward, or had to be overcome?*

These sorts of questions might help you land on what Waypoint to take. That said, you might also just decide that a particular Waypoint seems really fun/cool/interesting. That is also an excellent way to make a choice.

The Journey of

THE CUFF

Tough, imposing, and often short-fused, those on the Journey of the Cuff have a knack for getting themselves into situations that call for a bit of physicality. Luckily, they also have a knack for getting out of them. The Cuff is not typically familiar with the term ‘hesitation.’ Nor are they always the biggest fans of planning.

Key Qualities: Brawn, Finesse, Presence

Possible Natures: Work Harder Not Smarter / Headstrong / Short Fuse / Walk Tall, Carry a Big Stick / Fear is a Great Motivator

WAYPOINTS:

- ◊ **Unbending Will.** Ignore the deleterious effects of a number of Conditions equal to half of your Brawn rating (round up).
- ◊ **Insult to Injury.** Once per phase you can apply your current degree of Conditions as you would an Asset bonus to an attack-based Action Roll instead of a penalty.
- ◊ **Awesome Presence.** Starting TN of 5 on actions that seek to strike fear, intimidate, or the like.
- ◊ **Inspired Action.** Once per phase, when you achieve a “Yes, and...” on an Action Roll, any single Lead (you or an ally) may regain 4 Vigor, or clear two Conditions.
- ◊ **Fisticuffs.** On relevant Action Rolls (melee combat, and the like) you can count your body (or a part thereof) as a Prized Asset.
- ◊ **Trusted Asset.** Take a Prized Asset as a Root. Every time you engage with it enough to earn Heart during a Recount portion, that Prized Asset is worth +1 for the following Cycle
- ◊ **Strike True.** If available, you may spend Heart to generate automatic successes on relevant actions (of the physical type, we would think). If you don’t have any Heart available, you may count it against your next Recount portion.
- ◊ **Through the Fire.** When you hit 0 Vigor, you deal with all of the standard consequences, but may also distribute 2 Vigor to each Lead who witnesses your drop to 0 Vigor.

The Journey of

THE FOLD

There are those in this land who were born to protect. Those who always put others before themselves. Ever-stalwart friend and ally, the Fold may fill many roles: counselor, guardian, healer, caretaker. Whatever particulars their story takes on, the Fold's journey is about forging bonds: both with their allies and with the world around them. The Fold is often the glue that holds people together. And sometimes a literal bulwark against evil.

Key Qualities: Presence, Understanding, Brawn

Possible Natures: Never Let My Guard Down / Tread Lightly / All for the Greater Good / Build Bridges, Not Walls

WAYPOINTS:

- ◊ **Grounding Force.** In the Regroup phase, you may clear Conditions from other Leads. The Lead who seeks your aid need not spend a Regroup Action. Only you need to spend a Regroup Action. You then roll as a normal action. All successes can be counted as cleared Conditions. In these cases, the cleared conditions should not be things like knife wounds, or the like. This ability does not allow you to heal physical wounds.
- ◊ **Deeper Roots.** If another Lead is spending a Regroup Action to engage with you as their Root, you both also add a die to Momentum for the next Open Phase.
- ◊ **The Power of Love.** You may spend a Regroup Action to share an inspired moment of friendship with another Lead during the Regroup Phase. For the duration of the following Open Phase, that Lead may use this lift of friendship as a Rating 2 Prized Asset.
- ◊ **Healing Presence.** On recovery rolls during a Regroup Phase, you and anyone in your vicinity start at 1 lower TN.
- ◊ **Ready Aid.** Twice per Cycle, you can Lend a Hand at no cost.
- ◊ **Resilient.** Pick a Quality. Once per Phase, you may deflect a number of Corruption dice up to half of this Quality, where relevant.
- ◊ **Warm heart.** TN starts at 5 when taking actions that relate to winning affections, charming folk, or that kind of goodhearted social interaction.
- ◊ **Like Family.** In addition to standard rules for Allies, an Ally of yours can take 1 Regroup Action that benefits you or the other Leads in some way as the Table sees fit. This does not count against any Lead's Regroup Actions.

The Journey of

THE HOOK

The Hook is a storyteller, an emissary, a roving peddler. They can reel in an audience through sheer poetry of language. They can sway a crowd with a well-placed swindle. The Hook brings you back. Never short on contacts, never shying from a barter, rarely avoiding the spotlight, the Hook tends to make their presence known.

Key Qualities: Guile, Presence, Understanding

Possible Natures: Lighten up / Lies are simpler than truth / Everybody serves something / Challenge authority

WAYPOINTS:

- ◊ **Information Broker.** Pertinent information, picked up by whatever means, may be handled as an Asset on a relevant roll, or distributed to allies on relevant rolls. The Asset Rating of the information (and whether or not it is pertinent) is set by the Table. This Asset disappears when its rating is consumed.
- ◊ **Imitation Game.** Once per Phase, you may adopt the relevant Quality rating and Roleplay Prompts of another Lead in place of your own for a single action.
- ◊ **Lies, Deception.** TN starts at 5 when taking actions that relate to deceptions, distortions, lies or the like.
- ◊ **Lucky Break.** Once per Cycle, you may reroll your entire roll if two or more dice come up as 1s. Keep whatever roll result is higher.
- ◊ **Captivate.** Once per Phase, you can spend the applicable amount of Vigor to instantly captivate a person or group with words, performance, or something along those lines. The target is not hypnotized, or anything mystical, but you definitely have their wrapped attention. (Single Target - 5 Vigor minus relevant Quality / Small Group - 7 Vigor minus relevant Quality / Large Group - 9 Vigor minus relevant Quality)
- ◊ **Wheel and Deal.** TN starts at 5 when attempting to haggle/barter as regards goods/services (note: this does not give you a blanket bonus to all negotiations).
- ◊ **Blend In.** Spend 2 Vigor to pass yourself off as a local, regardless of your prior familiarity with the locality in question. If attempting to be seen as anything above the common social class, an Action Roll may also be required, but you start at a TN of 5 on that.
- ◊ **Calculating.** When attempting to glean (or remember, etc.) a piece of information you otherwise wouldn't have on a particular target or place or thing, you start a TN 5.

The Journey of

THE POINT

The Point tends to always be thinking a step ahead. They are diligent – meticulous. Whether scouting, leading, or strategizing, people tend to look to a Point for the way forward. Their Journey is marked by keen senses, instincts, and intuition.

Key Qualities: Understanding, Finesse, Presence

Possible Natures: Think two steps ahead / Take charge / There's always another way / Trust the plan

WAYPOINTS:

- ◊ **Stay Sharp.** Choose one of your Prized Assets. You may spend one Regroup Action (and one only) to practice your skill with it during the Regroup Phase. For the duration of the following Cycle, that Asset gains +1 above its normal rating when used.
- ◊ **Hindsight.** Once per Cycle, you may spend 1 Heart after the roll result to retroactively reroll the entire thing. Take whatever result is higher (if you don't have any Heart available, you may count it against your next Recount portion).
- ◊ **Strategize.** You may spend Regroup Actions to plan strategies related to upcoming tasks. Spending a regroup action on this allows you to roll an Action Roll, and add all of those successes directly to Momentum (or if you so choose, you may set them into a separate pool to be used on actions relevant to the strategy only).
- ◊ **Shelter.** If the Leads are stripped of Regroup Actions due to hazardous or otherwise unfavorable conditions you may spend one Heart to return the number of regroup actions to 3 for all Leads.
- ◊ **Swift Wind.** On actions related to physical speed you start at TN 5. And in instances where there's a question of who acts first, you go first, unless the Table really feels you're outpaced.
- ◊ **Pathfinder.** Take a +2 Prized Asset (call it whatever you want that conveys your skill in this area of scouting, tracking, etc).
- ◊ **Precision.** On any action where you're looking to strike (that is physically) a particular target in a precise place, you start at TN 5.
- ◊ **Against All Odds.** Once per Cycle, if in a particularly tight spot, you may (free of anything) change your TN from 6 to 5.

The Journey of

THE SEAM

The Seams are unique. Outliers. Maybe even outcasts. Caught between the World Before and the now. Capable of impossible feats. Awakened by The Dust.

Key Qualities: Understanding, Presence, Guile

Possible Natures: Take the long view / See the good / Open myself to possibility

WAYPOINTS:

- ◊ **Seam Training.** It might not be training for you. It might be an innate ability. It might be something mystical, improbable. Whatever it is, this is the core of who you are, and it represents the strength of your abilities with The Dust. You may take this Waypoint up to four times. For more on what this training affords you, see page 22.
- ◊ **Strange Magic.** Choose a Prized Asset and imbue it with The Dust. This Prized Asset can now be used to aid you in any Dust rolls. It can also be used to absorb Dust-related consequences. If you have consequences coming at your person, you can choose to deflect two of those to this Asset. Doing so breaks it, and you'll need to seek repair.
- ◊ **Corruption Ward.** You may spend Regroup Actions to attempt to remove hexes from yours or other Lead's Corruption Tracks. Two successes on an Action Roll clear one hex. If you take this Waypoint twice, then each success clears a hex.
- ◊ **Gathered Memory.** Spend 2 Vigor to consult The Dust for a fragment of lore or other ancient wisdom germane to your current location or situation. It is up to you and the Table to decide what this knowledge is. Whatever it is should be eminently helpful.
- ◊ **Time Slip.** Once per Cycle, you may allow another Lead (or yourself) to completely reroll whatever roll they're attempting. This costs you 2 Vigor, and one of you must take one degree of Condition. Explain how you use The Dust to make this happen.
- ◊ **Eye of the Storm.** At any point, in an Open or Regroup phase, you may take a moment to help another Lead focus their mind and renew their strength. They may gain up to 4 Vigor, but you must take half that amount as Condition (round down).

The Journey of

THE SIFT

Scavenger, tinkerer, shadow – the Sift is a master of making it on their own terms in these lands. The Sift has found ways to survive that sometimes defy explanation.

Key Qualities: Guile, Finesse, Understanding

Possible Natures: Tread Lightly / Everything's worth something / Take the long view / Keep a low profile / Secrets are currency

WAYPOINTS:

- ◊ **Something from Nothing.** Once per phase, regardless of your Pack Type, you may pull an Asset as if from thin air and not mark a Pack slot when using it. You decide what this Asset is. The Table sets its rating at either 1 or 2. You might decide, instead, that this is a kind of narrative-only asset. This Asset ‘disappears’ after it is used for its intended task.
- ◊ **Scavenger.** You may spend a Regroup Action to scavenge for an Asset or Assets. Doing so allows you to take a temporary (expires after one cycle) +2 Asset or two +1 Assets. Table approval required.
- ◊ **Unnoticed.** You start at TN 5 on any attempts to hide, sneak, prowl, slink, creep, slide, lurk, etc.
- ◊ **Feats of Daring.** You may spend 2 Vigor to perform an otherwise impossible physical feat without having to roll for it.
- ◊ **Pack Rat.** During a Regroup Phase, spend one Heart to allow access to all Pack types for one Cycle.
- ◊ **Preparation.** Rather than spend a regroup action, you need only spend 1 Vigor to check your Heavy Pack for an upcoming cycle.
- ◊ **Go It Alone.** In situations where another Lead(s) spends 1 Vigor to lend you a hand, you can refuse the help and instead pass the die into Momentum.

ASSETS



In these hardworn lands, the right tool can turn the day. It might be the difference between success and failure. It might just be the difference between hunger and sustenance. In Vigor: Into Dust, Assets represent the whole of the stuff - from mundane to prized - that the Leads rely on. Tools, garments, restoratives, heirlooms, weapons, instruments, information, training, plans, and much much more.

ASSET TYPES

Whatever their make or meaning, all Assets are divided into two main categories:

- **PACKED ASSETS.** *The general stuff, miscellany, etc. you employ to do the things you do.*
Packed Assets are worth +1 to a single die.
- **PRIZED ASSETS.** *The few precious, iconic, or otherwise beloved things amongst your possessions.*
Prized Assets are worth +2 to a single die.

PACKED ASSETS

Your Pack represents all the various odds and ends that you might require to do your thing across the landscapes of Vest. However, rather than itemize all of this potential minutiae, the Table simply assumes that you've managed to survive this long out here and therefore must have the bulk of what you need at hand. Otherwise... well... you'd probably be dead.

Of note, The Pack is not necessarily a literal bag or anything of the sort. "Pack" as a term is used simply to represent a generic lump amount of what one could conceivably carry.

That said, you're not just endlessly prepared for any and all occasions. You have, in the course of your life, focused on a particular skill set, craft, or curation of what you carry. And so, you choose your own **Pack Type** – *an assumed collection of gear within a particular category or idea.*

PACK TYPES

There are eight different Pack Types, representing various skill sets one might possess as a Lead:

- **Combat.** Assets such as weapons, armor, or other implements meant to assist or protect a Lead when and if a situation comes to blows.
- **Deceive.** Assets such as tools, clothes, makeup, or forgeries that aid a Lead in the underhanded arts of stealth, thievery, and the like.
- **Explore.** Assets such as maps, instruments, rations, or documents that support a Lead out for discovery.
- **Hunt.** Assets used in scavenging, unerathing, tracking, capturing and the like.
- **Influence.** Assets such as documents, information, gifts. Things that might be helpful in schmoozing, swaying, ingratiating or disarming.
- **Restore.** Assets such as tinctures, bandages, salves, and splints that can help a Lead and their allies to recover from Conditions, restore Vigor or the like.
- **Peculiar.** Assets that are strange or wondrous or just plain odd. Probably only you know their use.
- **Tinker.** Assets such as tools and materials, ideally used for making, mending, improvising or maybe even sabotaging.

The basics for day-to-day survival and such can be assumed for any pack. If you say you have a bit of rope, or a small knife, or some food, you probably do. If the Table agrees that most folks in these parts carry such things, odds are you've got it on you. Your Pack Type is intended to cover you when greater levels of specialization are needed.

USING PACKED ASSETS

When you use something from your Packed Assets to aid you on a roll of the dice, you simply state what it is you've got (literally anything you can think of that fits your particular Pack Type), and check one of your Pack hexes to remind you that it's been used. You might also want to write down what it is because you can then use it on any other relevant actions until the end of whatever the next phase is. This Packed Asset can then be used to adjust any single die by +1.

PLAYING TO TYPE

As with anything else, the Table has a say in what's created. If you use an Asset that doesn't really fit within your chosen Pack Type, someone's of course able to call you out on that. In those instances when you wish to choose something outside of your Pack Type, simply check two hexes instead of one. Or, you might just decide to pick something else that fits the action and your Pack Type.

DURATION AND MULTIPLE USES

Once you've 'created' a Packed Asset, you can use it for one full Cycle (i.e. the phase you're in, plus the following phase). So, if during an Open Phase you took action to sway a village elder to support your cause, and you used a 'heartwarming legend' Packed Asset in that process, that 'heartwarming legend' is available in your Packed Assets through the end of that Open Phase, and into and through the next Regroup Phase.

Your Packed Assets might not always be something it makes sense to use more than once. For example, if you had attempted to sway that village elder using a gemstone, and it was traded directly to that elder - you probably couldn't justifiably use that gemstone again.

PACK LIMITS AND EXPANSION

Your standard pack is limited to three hexes (representing three unique Assets), but can be expanded up to five.

Should it occur that you require more than your three standard Packed Assets at any point, you can spill over into the **Heavy** section, notating your added capacity. However, when you first mark a Pack hex in the Heavy section, you must either spend 2Vigor, or take a single Condition: "Burdened" - the choice is yours.

You may alternatively access the Heavy section by using the **Stock Up** action during a Regroup Phase - doing this avoids the above-mentioned penalties for doing so mid-phase.

To change your Pack Type, or add another, use the **Trade/Barter** action during a Regroup Phase. Regardless of the number of Pack Types to which you have access, your base capacity remains three hexes.

PRIZED ASSETS

Treasured heirlooms, storied blades, a secret tale, something of true and deep value – these iconic items are your Prized Assets.

A Prized Asset is always with you. You do not have to check any boxes to use it. It does not expire. Whenever it is relevant to an action, you may use it. Doing so allows you to change the face value of a single die by +2.

Prized Assets are with you because they're an integral part of your story. As such, they might even find their place in your Roleplay Prompts. They might function as a Root (*"My alder staff, the last real link I have to my mentor"*). You might bear them as a Thread (*"Rumors of a scholar who can unlock the full potential of my Tome from the World Before"*). And you might find them in your Natures (*"Overly reliant on my mother's wayfinding pendant"*).

ALLIES

Given that this is your story to create, you can at anypoint have anybody or anything at your side. But if you want that person, creature, spirit, contraption, or what have you to influence the outcomes of the game from a dice-rolling standpoint, they'll need to become a proper **Ally**.

GAINING AN ALLY

During a Regroup Phase, you may spend **5 Heart** to form a bond with an Ally. Talk with the Stitch and the rest of the Table about this Ally and their role in the story: *What are they capable of? How and when do they participate in the story? etc.* This will help everyone to know what to expect from this supporting character as the story moves forward.

An Ally's level of skill is marked by their **Rating**, which may be improved as you improve your bond with them. Each expenditure of 5 Heart toward your Ally improves their Rating by 1. This improves their abilities as follows:

- **Rating 2** (5 Heart total): +2 Asset bonus, or Roll 6d6 at a TN of 6.
- **Rating 3** (10 Heart total): +3 Asset bonus, or Roll 6d6 at a TN of 5.
- **Rating 4** (15 Heart total): +4 Asset bonus, or Roll 6d6 at a TN of 4.

ACTIONS AND MODIFIERS

Allies may act alongside you or on their own, as long as it fits their abilities. These abilities are set by you. There are no tags, or keys, or tables. You're accountable.

In instances where they're helping you on your action, they act as a Prized Asset would EXCEPT that an Ally's Rating can be split among the rolled dice pool however you like. It is not relegated to only modifying a single die. **For example:** a Rating 3 Ally can apply an Asset bonus to your roll as +1 to three dice; +1 to one die and +2 to another; or +3 to a single die.

In instances where the Ally is acting on their own, they roll 6d6 and their Target Number is set by their Rating, as stated above under Ally Ratings. Allies may only roll independently on things that they're reasonably able to do.

You may modify your Ally's roll if it seems narratively reasonable, gaining additional successes by either spending your own Heart, or marking your Corruption Track. Gain one success for each Heart spent or hex marked in your Corruption Track.

Your Ally does not take Corruption, and does not have their own Heart, but your bond with them is such that you can give some of yourself to them, and if they take Corruption it also takes you.

ALLY CONSEQUENCES AND RECOVERY

Whether they are acting alongside you, or on their own, Allies may find themselves subject to consequences. In these cases, they tick down their Rating. As their Rating is ticked down by consequences, they are less capable of helping you on your rolls.

When appropriate, impose consequences on an Ally according to the guidelines for severity, found on page 18. Decrease their Rating by 1-3 steps as suits the fiction. If the consequences knock an Ally down below Rating 2, they are incapacitated or otherwise out of the spotlight until they can recover.

An Ally may be restored to their full Rating by spending a Regroup Action to help them recover. You need only spend one Regroup Action on this. Narrate what it is you're doing to help them, and then refill their rating to full.

THE REGROUP PHASE



While much of your play will be spent in the Open Phase, there's not a separate section detailing the Open Phase in any way. That's mostly because you can do basically *anything* in the Open Phase, and therefore kind of everything in this guide is about the Open Phase. That is with one big exception, however: ***The Regroup Phase.***

The Regroup Phase is broken out separately because you need to find rest. You need to find a time to clear your mind. You need to find a place to pause play in real life, and get up to hit the bathroom or grab a snack. You, as much as your Leads, need a chance to regroup.

WHEN TO START A REGROUP PHASE

- Anytime the Leads find themselves at a natural breaking point in whatever story's being told during the Open Phase
- Anytime the Leads are at the end of some kind of trial
- Anytime someone at the table says, "*Gosh. It's been a really long time since we had a Regroup Phase.*"

Those are the kinds of moments when you'll start into a Regroup Phase. The transition from Open Phase to Regroup Phase might not always feel like the cleanest, smoothest transition you've ever experienced in any story ever. But it's a most necessary break.

THE PHASES OF THE PHASE (OR THE PHASE'S PHASES)

Here's what happens during the Regroup Phase:

- First, you'll **Recount**. The Table will take some time to talk through the high and low points of the Open Phase that just wrapped up. As you discuss, either Lead-by-Lead or as a group, you'll be awarded with Heart based on how you played to your Roleplay Prompts. This is a time to cheer other Leads on, build people up, and point out what parts of the story are really exciting you.
- Then you'll **Reassess**. Once everyone's earned whatever Heart they're going to earn, you'll come to the Reassess portion where you'll be able to spend any Heart you wish to; subtly or dramatically change any Roleplay Prompts that maybe aren't working or don't fit your Lead; check in with the direction of the story, and offer up any ideas for moving forward.
- And last, you'll have your own in-story opportunities to **Regroup**. You'll get back into roleplaying your story. You'll have a number of Regroup Actions available to each of you, and you'll be able to use those on any number of things. You might need to recover. You might choose to craft. You might turn to your Roleplay Prompts, staging scenes to earn Heart.

RECOUNT

First thing's first in the Regroup Phase, and that's recounting what you all got into in the just-finished Open Phase. You'll do this with an eye to both the Leads' Roleplay Prompts, and the story as a whole. A lot can happen in the course of an Open Phase, and this Recount portion is a way to make sure nothing gets lost, missed or forgotten. Together, you'll reflect on your unfolding story, and consider those highlights, characters, situations, and hooks you worked through. This is an opportunity to not only encourage other players for their excellent roleplay and storytelling, but also where the Leads earn Heart.

In these discussions, you'll also want to take note of any particularly impactful moments, and consider what you might want to see for the story going forward - you'll want to keep these things in mind as you move into the Reassess portion.

HOW IT WORKS

In turn, or however you want to take it, go around the Table and give each player a chance to have the spotlight. As each of you weigh on the previous Open Phase, you'll focus your discussion predominantly around the degree to which each Lead played into their Roleplay Prompts. This will result in each of you earning a bit of Heart.

You'll examine your Roleplay Prompts and consider, with the Table, the extent to which you played your Lead toward those ends. You'll then take Heart for each prompt (yes, each individual one) as follows:

- **0 Heart** if a particular Roleplay Prompt didn't come up at all during the previous Open Phase, in the story or behind the scenes.
- **1 Heart** if a Roleplay Prompt came up in some small or in a more subtle motivating way during that phase.
- **2 Heart** if a Roleplay Prompt had a major impact on the story, or came up a lot of times.

Determining whether any individual Roleplay Prompt is deserving of 0, 1, or 2 Heart is something that's left to the Table as a whole. While it should be fairly clear if a prompt has earned 0 Heart, the difference between 1 Heart and 2 Heart might feel more subtle. The breakout above should help steer your discussion. And again if there's doubt, remember it's not just left to the Lead, or the Stitch to decide. It's open to the whole Table.

HEART *is a measure of your sense of self, of your connections, and (to an extent) of your weight in the world.* As a mechanic, Heart is a currency used for advancement. Earning that currency is all about strengthening your bonds with yourself and those around you. It's about reaching inside of yourself. It's about giving something of yourself to others. It's about heart. And with that Heart, you may advance, grow, better yourself. More on that in the Reassess discussion.

REASSESS

The Reassess portion is all about Roleplay Prompts and storybuilding (creating Threads). The Leads will be able to spend any Heart they've acquired, make changes to their Roleplay Prompts, if necessary, to better reflect the direction they're heading, and offer up any suggestions to the Table as far as Threads they'd like to follow, or Threads they'd like to create moving forward.

USING YOUR HEART

Heart is a kind of earned currency that you're able to spend. Doing so helps you grow and learn and all that good stuff. Here are the things you can spend Heart on during a Reassess portion:

- **Increase your Max Vigor by +1** (*5 Heart*). Doing so also fills your Current Vigor to the new Max level.
- **Increase a Quality by +1** (*5 Heart*). Typically you'd look to an existing Roleplay Prompt and turn that into a +1 to a relevant Quality, thereby removing the Roleplay Prompt from your list. If you'd rather keep all of your Roleplay Prompts, and get a +1 to a Quality regardless, that's totally fine. Just remember, as with anything in Vigor, you should consider the narrative circumstances that got you here, and choose a Quality that fits those circumstances. If you've been doing a lot of sneaking around, it doesn't necessarily make a ton of sense to take a +1 to Brawn.
- **Take on a new Waypoint** (*5 Heart*). Here again, you'll want to consider what got you here in the story. But if something is just really jumping out to you as cool, go for it. The Table might call you out on it, but that's for you all to decide.
- **Gain or improve an Ally** (*5 Heart*). Use your Heart to forge a bond with another. A friend in need is a friend indeed. See the guidelines for Allies on page 43.
- **Write a new Roleplay Prompt** (*2 Heart*). As your Lead grows and changes, they may realize new goals, instincts, and relationships. Formalizing those developments in gameplay and storytelling as new Roleplay Prompts ensures that they'll continue to be a part of the story in a way that impacts your actions and outcomes.

There are a few other things Heart can be used for, outside of Reassess:

- If you are able to Craft, you can use Heart later with a Regroup Action.
- Heart can be used as auto-successes for Recovery Rolls.
- If you have any Allies, Heart can be spent to gain added success on their rolls.

ASSESSING ROLEPLAY PROMPTS

Here you're able to freely change your existing Roleplay Prompts. Typically these sorts of changes should be subtle. This is not a blanket invitation to erase everything you've written, and start again. Instead, this is an opportunity to adjust things to fit more neatly with the particulars of the current story, and the like.

As mentioned in the previous section, if you want to add something completely new, you'll need to put 2 Heart into it. You're wiring new processes into yourself, into your story. It's going to take something of yourself to do that. If you'd rather not spend Heart, you can also set a scene via Regroup Actions, see page 53.

There will also inevitably be moments in the story when certain Roleplay Prompts (Roots & Threads in particular) reach the end of their arc. In these situations, you'll have an option to **fulfill** these Roleplay Prompts. Whether you've accomplished some long goal, conquered some hardship, or said goodbye to a dear friend - these impactful moments will live with you, but their time in the spotlight of the story is over. Erase the Roleplay Prompt from your sheet to mark this moment. **Fulfilling a Roleplay Prompt in this way grants you an immediate 3 Heart.**

TENDING THE THREADS

You'll likely wind up doing a bit of this when you Recount, but just in case you haven't covered it - the Reassess portion is a good place to mention those Threads that are really tugging at you in the story. It's also a good place to suggest Threads moving forward. Think of yourselves as directors and writers of the unfolding story. *Where do you want to see it go next? What do you want to see more of? What do you feel like you're ready to move past?*

You might do this openly at the table, or you might pass a secret note to the Stitch. These Threads might be used immediately in the next Open Phase, or they might be banked somewhere for the future. There will, no doubt, be moments when the story feels like it's dragging, and having this bank of Threads can be helpful.

REGROUP ACTIONS

Once you're all done Recounting and Reassessing, you'll get back into roleplaying. Wherever it is that the Leads have come to a semblance of rest, they'll have an opportunity to do a number of things.

During this portion, Leads might:

- **Recover.** Restore Vigor. Clear Conditions. Attempt to remove Corruption.
- **Craft or Repair.** Make stuff. Fix stuff.
- **Barter/Trade/Resupply.** Get stuff. Change Pack Types.
- **Take Heart.** Set a scene featuring a Roleplay Prompt, and earn a bit of Heart.
- **And more.** You might decide to step outside of the above bounds, and take an action that feels more like something you'd do in an Open Phase. That's cool too. Just make sure you clear it with the Table.

Before tackling this stuff, thought, you'll need to decide how many actions are available to the Leads.

SETTING THE NUMBER OF ACTIONS

In your story, not all rests will be created equal. You might find yourselves in a quiet, peaceful village during one Regroup Phase, and then find yourselves tucked into an abandoned caravan on a desolate plain in the next one. Generally, you'll each have three Regroup Actions available to you. But if the particular circumstances of your story deem otherwise, anyone at the Table may say so, and decide there's only one or two actions available to each Lead. You should always, always have at least one action available during this portion.

There's no approximate real time attached to a Regroup Action. They don't have to be wrapped up in three minutes, or ten minutes. But typically a Lead taking a Regroup Action shouldn't be spending weeks or days on the action. What happens in the Regroup Phase should feel appropriately doable given the bounds of where your Leads currently are in the story.

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR TIME

Once you know how many actions are available to you, all that's left is to decide how to use them. You might need to spend all three actions on Recovery. You might be free and clear, and instead want to spend your time Crafting, or Taking Heart. It's all up to you. You can double up, or triple up on the same kind of action.

RECOVERY

RECOVERING VIGOR

Mechanically, recovering Vigor can be achieved in a number of ways:

- **Certain Waypoints** can result in returned Vigor, see Journeys, beginning on page 33.
- **Spending Heart** to increase your max Vigor also fills your Current Vigor, see page 48.
- **Remaining Momentum** is split up among Leads in order to recover Vigor, see page 21.
- **You can spend a Regroup Action** to recover your Vigor. It costs just one Regroup Action to completely refill your Vigor, regardless of the actual amount recovered.

In any of the above situations, consider giving some narrative pop to how you recover that Vigor.
What in the story enabled you to feel replenished or revitalized in this way?

RECOVERING CONDITIONS or CORRUPTION

To recover from Conditions, you'll need to be in a position where you can seek out whatever kind of healing from yourself, another Lead, or a supporting character. If you're stuck under a fallen tree, and no one is there to help you - you cannot typically make a roll to Recover. But if you can help yourself, or you can seek out someone who can help, you'll be on the mend in no time.

RECOVERING VIA SELF or ANOTHER LEAD

Spend a Regroup Action. Narrate what exactly it is you're up to in this Recovery attempt. *How are you attempting to recover? What resources do you have access to? Who, if anyone, is helping you? Etc.*

- **The Regroup Action** is only spent by the Lead *seeking* Recovery. If another Lead is administering the healing, or what-have-you, they do not spend a Regroup Action.
- **Whoever is administering the healing will make an Action Roll.** If you're doing the recovery yourself, you'll roll. If you've sought help from another Lead, they'll roll.
- **You'll handle the roll exactly as you would any other Action Roll,** except that you're not judging the result on the ToS. Instead, any and all successes count as recovery hexes. Each Condition requires two successes to clear, as indicated in the bottom right hand corner of each box for Conditions.
- After the roll result, anyone involved in the recovery can **spend Heart or take Corruption for additional successes.** Anyone involved can also modify the roll with Assets.
- Obviously, using Corruption to get more successes in the process of trying to clear your Corruption track is a perplexing prospect. But stranger things have happened.
- **Excess successes can be put into Momentum,** or can be used in the recovery of other Leads if that makes narrative sense.

RECOVERY via SUPPORTING CHARACTER (aka Non-Lead)

- **Explain who it is you're seeking out.** Set the scene. Obviously, if you're stranded on an uninhabited mountaintop, it might not be easy to find a supporting character with any ability to heal you.
- **Spend a Regroup Action.** Again, the Regroup Action is only spent by the Lead seeking Recovery. More than one Lead can jump into one recovery attempt though. You can either all take the successes off of one roll, or roll for each individual lead. Whatever the case, anyone looking for recovery needs to spend a Regroup Action.
- **Make the Recovery Roll.**

The Recovery Roll here is determined by the nature of your relationship with the supporting character(s), and the TN is set by their relative skill. As there's not a massive table detailing out your relationships with every single possible character ever, these are things left to be decided by you and the Table.

Relationship	DICE POOL
Friendly	6d6
Neutral	5d6
Unfriendly	4d6

Skill	TARGET NUMBER
Good	4
Fair	5
Poor	6

- **All successes equal recovery hexes.** Excess successes can be put into Momentum or distributed to other Leads if narratively appropriate.
- **After the roll result,** you may utilize your own Assets, Corruption or Heart to adjust the outcome.
- **As ever, hit this all up with narrative spice.**

CORRUPTION QUALIFICATIONS

You'll use this same process just outlined to clear hexes on your Corruption Track as well. **HOWEVER**, you'll need to find someone with a special skill, or have that skill yourself. In the case of a Lead, you'll have to have taken the Seam Waypoint *Corruption Ward*, or some other form of Craft that would cover this type of healing. In the case of a supporting character, it's just a matter of what feels right for your story. But probably Vest is not riddled with folk who are skilled in the art of Corruption removal. Otherwise... well... why would it still be a problem?

RECOVERING FROM CORRUPTION EFFECTS

There are no mechanics for recovering from Corruption Effects. These are major. As such, attempting to clear one at all should be a major story element - a quest all its own. It is not solved by a simple roll. And even if you do take up that quest, and manage to find the right way to clear the effect - some of it will likely linger with you forever.

TAKE HEART

Spend a Regroup Action to stage or describe a scene (present, flashback, or flashforward) centered around one of your Roleplay Prompts from any category in order to gain Heart. You'll gain an amount of Heart equal to the number of Regroup Actions you spend on this scene. These scenes can be used in a number of ways to enhance the story:

- To add background, foreshadowing, and depth.
- To show your Lead fulfilling or letting go of a Roleplay Prompt once held dear. Any Heart earned here is in addition to the +3 mentioned in the Reassess portion.
- To show your Lead embracing a new Roleplay Prompt (Thread, Nature or Root). Doing so at this juncture avoids the 2 Heart required in the Reassess portion, covering the cost of this time and introspection with a Regroup Action instead.

PREPARATIONS

BARTER/TRADE

If you're in a place where you can seek out folk with stuff, you can spend a Regroup Action on some trading. In this case, **trading allows you to literally trade out your current Pack Type for another**. You need not roll for this. But you should set a scene for how this all goes down. Maybe have another player take on the roll of whomever you're trading with. A Barter/Trade action does not allow you to add an additional Pack Type.

RESUPPLY/STOCK-UP

If you're in a place where you can scavenge for stuff, shop for stuff, or otherwise resupply/stock-up, spend a Regroup Action, set the scene for what you're up to, and you can **access the Heavy section of your pack for the next Open Phase** without incurring the penalty for doing so mid-phase. This does not require any roll.

REPAIR ASSETS

Anyone is capable of repairing their own Prized Assets. They're your prized assets, you should probably be able to repair them. Should a Prized Asset come to any degree of harm via consequences, you need only spend one Regroup Action to automatically return that Asset to its full function. This does not require a roll.

If you're looking to have another Lead repair your Asset, they need to have ability in a relevant Craft (see next section). Otherwise, what possible use could they be to you?

CRAFTING

During the Regroup Phase, a Lead can take time to craft. In Vest, everyone is capable to one extent or another, of crafting. Some can produce healing substances. Others can create weapons, write songs, draft performances, design clothing, or hatch plans. In order to create something truly valuable, a Lead will have to spend a Waypoint on their chosen Craft. Otherwise, the scope of what you can create is pretty limited.

A QUICK NOTE ON TAKING A CRAFT

During the Regroup Phase, you can spend 5 Heart to take a Craft (as with a Waypoint). This advancement represents your proficiency in this particular craft, and **allows you to create Prized Assets in this category, as well as modify them**. Your Craft can be anything, as long as it's Table-approved. You might be a songwriter, an architect, a smith, a historian, a painter, a cartographer, a choreographer, a strategist. Whatever it is, give it a name. Don't be too vague. Give it a story. Maybe you have a mentor. Maybe it's innate.

CREATING AN ASSET WITHOUT A CRAFT

Any Lead, regardless of having taken a Craft can **spend a single Regroup Action to create a single Packed Asset for the next Open Phase**. Doing this allows you to carry this Asset without checking a Pack hex. To do this, the Lead need only spend one Regroup Action, and have reasonably functional narrative circumstances to create one additional Packed Asset (valued at Rating +1) for the next Cycle. This does not require a roll. But it does require agreement from the Table as to whether or not your crafting it feels narratively possible.

The Packed Asset you've created stays with you through the following Open Phase, and after that it expires. You might choose to spend a next Regroup Action to keep it functional. That's up to you.

USING YOUR CRAFT

In order to do more than just create Packed Assets, you need to have spent Heart to take a Craft as outlined in the box above. **In addition to taking a Craft, creating anything more than a Packed Asset requires Heart**. You are drawing from the depths of yourself, or joining with the Heart of others, to accomplish this feat.

Within your chosen Craft, you can:

- Create or Modify a Prized Asset
- Upgrade a Packed Asset to a Prized one.
- You can also repair the Prized Assets of others if those assets fall into your Craft ability.

In any of these instances, Crafting involves the following steps:

- **Explain what it is you're attempting to create**, receive approval from the Table or modify accordingly.
- **Spend a Regroup Action.**
- **Spend 5 Heart**, either exclusively your own, or in combination with other Leads if narratively appropriate.
- **This does not require a roll.** You are putting your whole self into this, not leaving it to fate.

Craft a Prized Asset - taking the steps above creates a +2 Rating Prized Asset for you or whomever you're gifting it to.

Modify a Prized Asset - taking the steps above either gives a Prized Asset a further +1 (for a total and maximum of +3), or adds a narrative flair to it (see below for examples)

Upgrade a Packed Asset - taking the steps above takes a Packed Asset and transforms it into a +2 Rating Prized Asset.

ASSET FLAIRS

Mechanically, Assets are limited to a range of +1 to +3. But beyond that, they are limited only by what your Table feels comfortable with. Flairs are a way to add something to your Asset beyond just a base number. Here are some examples: NOT YET FILLED IN

MONTAGE

The Leads might occasionally find themselves in situations where tackling a particular obstacle, or achieving a particular goal will require a complex string of actions to complete, and not just one clear Action. In these instances, the Table can use a Montage to see how that all plays out. These Montages could cover anything from extended, intense combat to hatching an intricate rescue plan, to convincing a whole village to take up arms alongside you, or any number of other situations.

RUNNING A MONTAGE

NUMBER OF ACTIONS

First, you'll explain what you're trying to achieve. Once you've got that locked in, you (The Table) will determine how many actions are available to complete the Montage. In limiting the number of actions, you're trying to distill the complex plan or scene into a handful of highlights. If all Leads are involved, you might choose to set it at one action per Lead. But you might be running a Montage with just one Lead. Whatever the case, and whatever the plan, you all decide how many actions are available.

DIFFICULTY AND DICE POOL

Once the number of actions are set, The Stitch will form and roll a pool of dice based on the complexity/difficulty of the Montage.

- **Easy.** 3d6 per action.
- **Normal.** 4d6 per action.
- **Hard.** 5d6 per action.
- **Intense.** 6d6 per action.

The Target Number for these rolls is always 6. However, The Stitch may choose to discard 2 dice from the Corruption Pool to lower the TN by 1. The Stitch may also add dice from the Corruption Pool at their discretion.

So, if the Table has opted for four actions on a Normal Montage, the Stitch will roll sixteen total dice, and count the number of successes based on a TN of 6. Obviously, if you do not have that number of physical dice available to you, you can roll them piecemeal, and keep track of successes as you go. Whatever the number of successes, that's what the Leads are up against.

THE LEADS' TURN

With that set, the Lead(s) will explain their action(s) in the Montage, and build their roll(s) accordingly. The Leads then roll their actions and total the number of successes as normal.

JUDGING THE RESULT

- The Leads total successes are then weighed against the Stitch's total successes.
- If the Leads generate a number of successes equal to or greater than the Stitch, judge the difference on the ToS and resolve the montage accordingly.
- If the Stitch generates more successes than the Leads, the result is a “No, and...” for the Leads, and the Stitch can choose to utilize the additional successes as follows:
 - Add a number of their extra successes as dice to the Corruption Pool.
 - Roll a number of their extra successes as a dice pool against the Leads for additional consequences, with the successes from that roll determining the severity (see page 18 for more on consequences).
 - Some combination of the above options.

THE SETTING



VEST

When so many cycles ago The Corruption came for the World Before—or so the Seams say—insidious evil spread into everything. Life withered, beauty hollowed out, and the inhabitants watched in terror as much of what The Corruption touched was transformed into vile, bloodthirsty Aberrants. All seemed lost. But from ruin, the devoured world channeled what remained into one last gift: The Dust. A spark of energy, a seed of promise, The Dust was capable of incredible things. With it, those that remained were able to shield themselves, and stand against The Corruption. Though they could not destroy the horror that had come, they – and so life – found a way.

In time though, some among those who could not wield The Dust began to fear the power of those who could. That fear drove them to seek out other ways to rise above this new strangled world. With greed and a lust for power driving them, they sought to take advantage of their new world's weakened state. They hollowed mountains; stripped forests; bent rivers to their will; bent people to their will. Some say they even bent The Corruption to their will. In short order, they were many and strong; their machinery undeniable. Neither the Seams, nor any other force that existed in the world, chose to stand against this new power: *The Hierarchy*.

And so Vest, this new world, is now. It is a boundless place scarred and broken by its long battle with The Corruption, and brought even lower by The Hierarchy. And though Vest may still, in rare places, offer glimmers of that hope and possibility – evidence of the World Before – that unbroken, verdant place is no more. The very ground upon which you tread is engaged in a constant and tireless struggle to survive, to persist. Whatever lies in the past, the peoples of Vest now face daily the struggle to make their own way, by whatever means in this withered world, or else seek out a questionable haven in the arms of The Hierarchy.

CREATING YOUR SETTING

First things first: we are, all of us, capable of creating incredible settings for our stories. We might not all be, out of the gate, comfortable or vocal in that creation process. It might take time to warm to the process. We might let others lead, at first, and only interject here and there. Regardless of how we approach it, to one extent or another, we can all do it..

The setting, Vest, presented in this guide is a seed for you to nurture. Included here are broad strokes, touchpoints, bits of detail, core concepts, and other thoughts. But the finery of it, and indeed the whole of it, belongs to you to create. The goal of this guide is not to provide you with encyclopedic knowledge of Vest, but rather to equip you with the tools to build that for yourselves.

This section is organized into two parts: “**Within the Spheres**” wherein you’ll find prompts and guides for the particular regions of Vest, and “**Beyond the Spheres**” wherein you’ll find prompts and guides for some of the core concepts of Vest. These prompts are here for you to use as you build your story Threads. Whatever you create, these Threads will be there for you to use as you play the game. You’ll be able to look to these Threads for direction and inspiration, weaving them into the story together.

As you progress through your storybuilding consider that in these early stages of play this opportunity for storybuilding is not only a chance to establish a bedrock of ideas, but also a chance to stretch creative muscles, to get to know each other, to establish the tone and texture of the story you want to tell, and to generally form your Table dynamics.

THE PROCESS

You do not have to work through all of these, in totality, piece by piece, at the start of your game. You might just grab one and run with it. You might look to a few for inspiration and leave them behind. You might just create your Leads and exclusively build the world around you as you move through it. Leaving everything to that type of discovery is excellent. Or you might, as a Table, choose to build a lot of it right away. However you do it, keep note of what you create. You might do this on notecards that are viewable by all. You might keep track in your own private journals. You might do it all digitally. Make sure everyone has a say, and is included to whatever extent they feel comfortable. Remember your “Yes, and”-ing.

As you talk through these Threads and see your story taking shape, feel free to pick up the action at any point, and anywhere along the timeline. You might feel like you want to stage a scene, or flesh out some particular nuance of your Lead. And if no one jumps in to get things going, then The Stitch might choose to facilitate discussion on how/where you all want to begin the game. For more ideas on how to get into gameplay, see page 67.

WITHIN THE SPHERES

In their desire for ‘Order,’ The Hierarchy broke the map of Vest up into sections based on their degree of control and influence. “The Spheres” as they’ve dubbed them are called The Forge, The Works, and The Wilds. For you as a player, the differing degrees of Hierarchy influence, in each sphere, will offer up the potential for different kinds of stories.

A note before getting into detail about The Spheres. There is no “official” MAP for Vest. The map is yours to create. And so, The Spheres aren’t geographically bound by anything. If you want to have The Forge be a terribly cold place, go for it. If you want to have The Wilds not be a contiguous expanse, but rather let there be pockets of “Wilds” inside The Forge or The Works, go for that.

THE FORGE is the seat of the Hierarchy’s power in Vest. It is a massive place given over to their machinery. It is here where their deepest secrets are held. It is here where the most powerful among them are housed. In the Forge, you’re either with The Hierarchy – working for them, or by some agreement – or playing a dangerous game of going unnoticed. In the Forge, you might bear witness to the strange relationship The Hierarchy has with The Corruption. In The Forge, it seems everything is riddled with Corruption, and yet the machines march on.

If you set a story in The Forge, you might find yourself...

- feeling the world vibrating with the raw power of The Corruption
- confronting the Hierarchy head on
- exploring relationships with your fellow cogs in the machine
- pursuing the power of industry, no matter the cost
- sneaking, diplomining, or greasing palms to find a way to survive
- carving out an enclave of hope in a system designed to break you

For Threads from The Forge, see page 62.

THE WORKS are those regions under constant assault by The Hierarchy, and likewise by The Corruption. These are lands scarred by the relentless march of The Hierarchy machine. Lands The Hierarchy has deemed unworthy of being brought into The Forge proper. Out here, Hierarchy Enforcers rule over various outposts and towns, keeping all hands to whatever grind. Out here, Hierarchy Outriders roll tirelessly on, searching for unexploitable resources, and good sites for the next big project. Out here, The Corruption wrecks with abandon. Aberrants are a constant concern. And yet, unbound peoples still find homes, still find ways to live.

If you set a story in The Works, you might find yourself...

- exploring what happens when all sides of a conflict fall into each other
- scrapping, scavenging and building on whatever The Hierarchy leaves in their wake
- confronting the desolation wrought daily by The Hierarchy, in full view
- confronting the desolation wrought daily by The Corruption, in full view

For Threads from The Works, see page 63.

THE WILDS are those lands unexplored and untouched by The Hierarchy – either too remote, too inconvenient, too useless, or too ... wild. They are a tantalizing place, home to tall tales of secreted treasures, wells teeming with ancient Dust, oases untouched by The Corruption. But, like anywhere else, The Wilds can prove dangerous. Out here, no one's ever sure what lies around the corner, or down that path, or deep in the dark places of the wilderness.

If you set a story in The Wilds, you might find yourself...

- exploring the wonders that still remain in these peculiar lands
- tangling with strange cults, beasts, or the occasional Hierarchy Outriders
- trying to stake a claim to any good trade routes coming through The Works
- feeling The Corruption ever probing at the periphery of your world
- living a simple quiet life in a small settlement among those you love

For Threads from The Wilds, see page 64.

THREADS OF THE FORGE

A SHIFTING WIND

The Hierarchy is changing. Choose one or write your own.

- **A change in leadership.** Who's taken control? How did they gain this new power? How is the rest of The Hierarchy responding? What are the stakes for you?
- **A dramatic increase in number.** Are they setting to some new project in The Forge? Are they headed beyond The Forge for some reason? What do you know? Do you know anyone among the new recruits?
- **A little too quiet.** The machine has slowed, or maybe even stopped. What are the rumors? What do you care? What will it mean?

A RISING TIDE

Something grows in the heart of The Forge, ready to strike out. Choose one or write your own.

- **Whispers of an old name.** A leader from years ago. The last one able to strike any fear into The Hierarchy's leadership. What is the name? What does it stand for? What threat does its mention pose to the machine? Who seeks to stamp out these whispers?
- **Sabotage.** All are on edge as the past months have been filled with plots against the Hierarchy. What measures have they taken to clamp down on these plots? Has this put pressure on your and yours? Who knows more than they should about the plots?
- **Something is actually growing.** Rumors swirl of something alive in the earth beneath The Forge. Some say it's the World Before trying to claw its way back. Others say that something else has been awakened. What evidence has anyone shown? What does this stir in your heart – hope or fear?

A NEW DAWN

The Hierarchy can't control everything. Choose one or write your own.

- **An unexpected scarcity.** Potable water? Edible food? Something you've relied on is now and suddenly absent. What's going? What happened? What plans are underway to resolve this catastrophe?
- **Spreading Corruption.** The Hierarchy doesn't seem to have the control they once had. It's growing in ways no one had ever imagined. Is it affecting the people? The terrain? Other life? The climate? All of it? In what ways? What theories has anyone offered to explain the change?
- **An unexpected power.** The Hierarchy never imagined an outside group could threaten its control. But that's exactly what's happened. What is this new group? Where did it come from? Are you attracted to them? Or distrust them? Which side are you on?

THREADS OF THE WORKS

A SHARP TURN

Change is inevitable. Choose one or write your own.

- **Needless destruction.** Even for The Hierarchy, the latest string of destruction is noteworthy. Whole groups, that seemed to otherwise coexist with The Hierarchy, wiped from the map. Who or what fell victim to these events? How will you respond? How is the rest of Vest responding?
- **Fruitless endeavors.** This Hierarchy outpost was supposed to yield massive returns, but it isn't. Hierarchy leadership is furious. Is it a resource issue? A workforce issue? Something else entirely? How has The Hierarchy responded, and how are you caught up in it?
- **Severed ties.** In The Works, The Hierarchy has occasionally let groups exist in concert with their camps, worksites, and outposts. At times, the relationships have even been mutually beneficial. But a longstanding agreement is falling apart. Who's involved? What's happened? What comes next?

OUTSIDERS

Not all who wander are lost. Choose one or write your own.

- **Return of the Salt Mothers.** Envoys from a long-forgotten group of mystics have appeared from their distant home in the Western Salt Flats. Why are they here? Who are they reaching out to? Do they bring a message?
- **Sightings on the Ocean.** The leader of a settlement along the frigid north shores claims to have seen silhouettes far out at sea. Do you trust the stories? What are the strange shapes? What do they portend? Is anyone seeking answers?
- **Cultists.** A nearby Hierarchy town has seen a string of raids by Corruption-worshipping cultists. No one seems to have an answer for what these shadows are. Has anyone even seen them? What are they targeting? Have they left any clues behind?

A SIGHT TO BEHOLD

Even in all this struggle, there is wonder. Choose one or write your own.

- **The Grove.** For some reason, The Hierarchy has let this forest enclave stand, guarded by The Keepers who are rumored to inhabit it. What do you know of this place? What truths is it guarding? Why does The Hierarchy let it remain?
- **The Motherlode.** It just goes on forever. The Hierarchy's machine has opened a massive fissure in the Black Mountains. What invaluable resource lies beneath the surface? What was released in the process?
- **The Bloom Coast.** The shallows in the eastern sea have become suddenly populated by a trove of invaluable flora and fauna. An impromptu festival has grown up around the bloom. To what extent is The Hierarchy involved in the festivities? What about this surplus feels too good to be true? How long it can it last, and what will happen when it ends?

THREADS OF THE WILDS

SOMETHING THERE

This place is full of unknowns. Choose one or write your own.

- **Discovered land.** Uncharted territory? Lands long forgotten by your people? How did this discovery come about? What promise might it hold? What shadow hangs over it?
- **The Norunder.** A merchant from a frozen city called The Norunder has arrived in your village. What tidings do they bring? Had you heard of this place? What action must you take?
- **Insidious Corruption.** It's not supposed to be out this far. What's it doing here? What has it infected? What hope is there?

BUILDING A MYSTERY

Just your garden-variety plot hooks. Choose one or write your own.

- **Dropped into your lap.** Some thing (an object, a living thing, something else) has fallen into your lap, literally or figuratively. Some unknown power seems to follow it. What is it? How did it arrive? How can you tell that it's beyond normal?
- **A new connection.** A font of power, a well of The Dust has appeared, and it's drawing quite a bit of attention. Who discovered it? Who's laying claim to it? What phenomena encircle it?
- **Natural consequences.** The wildlife is behaving in strange ways. Mannerisms changed. Tempers changed. Predictable patterns of life cast into the fire. Have you even noticed? What are these changes and what could they mean? Is anyone taking action?

DRAMATIC EFFECT

The tables have done quite a bit more than turn. Choose one or write you own.

- **Unreliable.** That hunting ground you'd counted on. That harvest you were promised. That trade pact that kept you alive. That's gone now. What was this thing you so profoundly relied on? Was its disappearance a surprise? Can you adapt?
- **Creeping boundaries.** You thought you were further removed from The Hierarchy's reach. Not so. They're at your doorstep. Is this opportunity knocking? The end of life as you know it? Just another day in Vest?
- **All things must pass.** Some things in their allotted time. Others before their time. Whatever this particular loss is, it has impacted the whole region. What/who was it? What ties did you have to it? How will the world move on? How will you move on?

BEYOND THE SPHERES

THREADS OF THE WORLD BEFORE

There was something before Vest. For many, the promises of The World Before are delusion. For others, it's a lingering power into which they might tap. Some say echoes of it can be sensed anywhere and everywhere. Others call those kinds of dreams foolish.

- **What do you believe?** Was there a World Before? What was it like? How was it different from the Vest of today? How, or by whom, did you come to this belief?
- **What do others believe?** Is there any consensus at all? Is everyone a bit different? Is it even something folks talk about?
- **What evidence is there?** Are there records? Artifacts? Signs? Of what sort? Are they freely discussed, fiercely guarded, or forbidden taboo?
- **Why do questions about it persist after all this time?** Is it just a comfort against the oppressive gloom? Deliberate misinformation? A legend run amok?

THREADS OF THE CORRUPTION

Vest is host to an insidious, dark power that seems to infect everything. The Corruption seems to have always been here. Many believe it was The Corruption that brought down The World Before.

- **What are the hallmarks of the Corruption?** Does it have some primary form? Some primary effect? Are its forms many and varied, or unknowable? Can you tell when it is creeping near?
- **How deep does it go?** Is the Corruption something that is faced boldly, and spoken of freely, or is it shrouded in whispers, fear, and superstition? Who benefits from Corruption's hold in these territories? How has it left its mark on your own life?
- **What is Aberrant?** What happens to life when it is consumed by The Corruption? What does that look like? How common are Aberrants, and what power do they possess? How would someone even begin to defend themselves against an Aberrant?

THREADS OF THE DUST

The Dust is the mystical, powerful connection to The World Before. It is said that no one has ever discovered the limits of its power.

- **How does it happen?** What does it look like when someone connects to the World Before through the Dust? Is it tactile or more metaphysical? What rituals, visions, or substances help to bridge past and present? How does the World Before break into the Vest of today?
- **What are the consequences?** What attention does it draw? What does it take out of you? Are Seams accepted, upstanding folks? Or are they hooded figures, wielding the Dust under cover of night? Does the Dust have its own agenda? What are the risks?
- **What is its relationship to other powers in these Lands?** Are the Dust and The Corruption connected? In what way? To what extent? What value does the Hierarchy see in it, if any? What do they fear it is capable of? What limits does it have? Why do the Hierarchy and the Corruption still reign?

THREADS OF THE HIERARCHY

The Hierarchy is an industrialized force of human endeavor, whose desire for power knows no bounds. The Forge is their seat, but it is not their only dominion.

- **If you encounter The Hierarchy, who and/or what do you typically encounter?** What are their numbers/influence in this area? How long have they been here? Who is in charge? What are they building? At whose expense?
- **Do they have characteristic infrastructure or technologies?** How do their infrastructure and technologies compare to that of average folks? How most people view these advancements: valuable and longed for, or cursed and unnatural? What scraps do they tend to leave behind when the machine rolls on?
- **What are some of their immediate goals?** What is valuable to them in this area? Why? How are they going about their clampdown? What larger plan will this fulfill? Who or what stands in their way?
- **What ties are there between The Hierarchy and The Corruption?** Does one lead, follow, or feed the other? Or are they unrelated – mere parallel devouring factions? Which do people most fear in this area? Would they ever seek to harness one to bring low the other?

HOW TO START



Once you get into gameplay, your story will likely flow with relative ease. But getting there from an empty character sheet might feel a bit daunting. The following is one course you might follow to get things going.

You'll focus on sketching out loose concepts and characters, and then play scenes and roll the dice, discovering more about your Leads and the world around them as you go. If you've already got a clear idea for how you want to crack into play as a Table, feel free to skip this section.

A COMMON LANGUAGE

As you begin play (or sometime before), talk about some touchstones you all want for the game in a broad sense. Have a glance at the “Pitches for Stitches” section on page 9 for some fodder in this department, or look back through the Threads chapter immediately preceding this section.

The player taking the role of the Stitch can either prepare something ahead of time to pitch the setting to the rest of the Table, or you can all figure it out together. Do whichever is more fun, just keep it brief.

Don't get bogged down in discussing the finer points yet. Just lay enough groundwork so that you can use a common language about the world you're getting into. You'll nail down the particulars as you go. If you are itching for more material in this department, consult the chapter on the setting, beginning on p.58.

YOUR FIRST MOMENTS OF PLAY

1. Sketch out the Leads
2. Stage scenes to discover more
3. Finish the rest of your Lead sheet
4. Stitch a Thread to add character
5. Establish the “now”
6. Stitch a Thread to add tension

This might take all of your first session of play, or only an hour or two, depending on how deep you dive into things, and how long you spend on each scene. The point is to have fun, get to know the characters and the world a little better, and leave the Table looking forward to the next session. However you get there is secondary.

1. SKETCH OUT THE LEADS (see character creation, p.26 for more).

Bounce some ideas around the Table, asking the following questions of one another and grabbing at whatever sounds interesting to you for your Lead.

- **What's the first thing someone would notice about your character?**
Write a Sketch (1-2 sentences tops).
- **What's an important event or issue in their life (past or present)? Why is it still relevant to their perspective in the story?** Write a Thread.
- **Who or What do they care most about? What grounds them?**
Write a Root.
- **Choose an archetype that best describes your Lead:**
 - Passion over practice
 - Practice makes progress
 - Progress is made by those prepared for the journey
 - Our own journey is all we have
 - Your choice will inform a few key statistics and resources for your Lead. See p.27 for details.

2. STAGE SCENES TO DISCOVER MORE.

Each Lead in turn: roleplay or narrate a scene centered on one of your Roleplay Prompts (either the Thread or the Root that you just wrote). This can be a flashback, in the present, or even sometime in the future. Have other players take up the roles of supporting characters where appropriate.

At some point during this scene, turn the focus to an obstacle, entanglement, tension, or trouble around this Roleplay Prompt.

When you attempt to resolve the situation, make an Action Roll (p.14)

- **What Roleplay Prompt are you facing?** (this should be clear)
 - Add +1d6 to your dice pool for that prompt.
- **What's your primary tactic for resolving this situation?**
 - Write a Nature underscoring this approach. Add another +1d6 to your dice pool for this now-engaged Roleplay Prompt.
- **Interpret the roll on the ToS** (p.17) and narrate the conclusion of the scene.

3. FINISH THE REST OF YOUR LEAD SHEET.

Based on how that scene went and how you approached dealing with the situation, what did you discover about your Lead?

Think on that in the lull between scenes, or during the next player's intro scene. Then, choose the Qualities, Pack Type, Assets and Waypoints (if any) that make sense for your Lead as granted by your Archetype (p.27). Seek input from the Table for perspective and suggestions. If it feels right, feel free to even write another Roleplay Prompt or two.

4. STITCH A THREAD – to add character (optional)

The Leads aren't the only characters in the story. The Stitch now gets a chance to roleplay or narrate a scene to focus on or introduce a supporting character – one connected to a Lead.

- **Who is the focus?**
- **Where/When is this scene taking place?**
- **What are they up to?** What choice, tension, or challenge do they face?
- **Who else is involved, if anyone?** Have other players take up these roles.

#stitchtip: These scenes work great if they bounce off of one that's already been done, preceding or following up the action to reveal hidden information, connections, or motives, or simply to add more life to an established supporting character.

5. ESTABLISH THE NOW

After playing the above scenes, you'll have some shared knowledge about the Leads and what they want. Now, it's time to find out how those desires and connections come together.

Stitch – Ask the other players one or more of the questions below, following up as you see fit to help build the scene. Feel free to contribute yourself as well. At the very least, ask “Where does our story open?” and “What are you up to now?”. Take plenty of notes.

- **Where does our story open?**
 - The Forge? The Works? The Wilds?
- **How would you describe this place?**
 - The weather, the structures (or lack thereof)? Is it sparsely populated? Crowded? Abandoned?
- **What brought you here? What are you looking for?**
 - Love? Work? Duty? Curiosity? Revenge? Some wild scheme? The worst kind of misfortune?
- **Who's in charge here, if anyone?**
 - How do you feel about that? Do any of you have previous with this person?
- **What are you up to now? What are you trying to accomplish?**
 - Who else is involved? Another Lead? One of the supporting characters we've introduced?
- **What's the general attitude of folks here?**
 - Happy, oblivious, indifferent, disgruntled, edgy, scared?

6. STITCH A THREAD – to add tension

Pick one Thread and lean into it. It's the Stitch's job here to sift through all the material just thrown out at the table, and find a single point on which to apply pressure.

Look back at your notes. Ask yourself:

- What Thread would be the most fun or compelling to explore?
- How could an element(s) of that Thread confront the other Leads as well?
- What do the Leads want in this, and how are they going about getting it?
- Who else wants the same thing, and how are they connected?
- Who or what stands in the Leads' way, and what would lead to a confrontation?

Then, pull on the Thread and see what happens.

Prompt the Leads about the Thread:

- You said you were here looking to _____. How are you going about that?
- Are any of the rest of you there with them? What's your role in all this?

Get them to roll the dice. All you really have to do as the Stitch is prompt the Leads to take action. Once you make it to that first roll of the dice, you're home free. The Tiers of Success will prompt the story forward. If this hasn't come up naturally already, consider using one or more of the following options:

- **Introduce a character or obstacle** in their immediate path
- **Get the Lead(s) to answer a question** about the fiction
 - So, what do you do next?
 - Who else is here?
 - What's strange or unexpected about this marketplace?
 - Talk to me about the big guy skulking in the corner...
- **Telegraph an event** that's about to happen – what would make the Leads react?

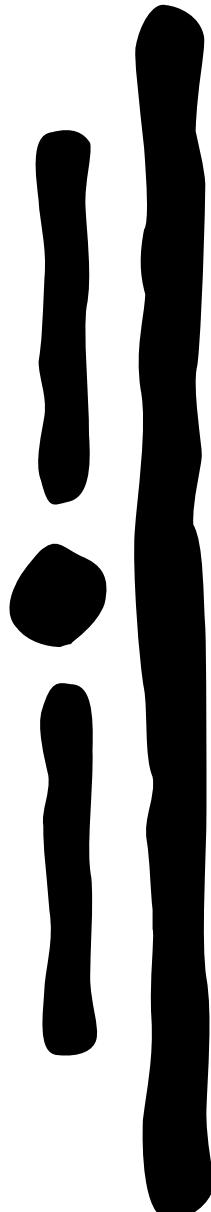
#stitchtip: When a Lead rolls the dice, ask *them* to narrate what happens according to the ToS. Then chime in with a “yes, and...” to add on top of that. Suggest some consequences (if any), and push the story along toward the next point of tension.

GOING FORWARD

Once you've done a few scenes and explored a Thread or two, you can largely abandon this framework. It's just there to help get things moving. As you continue play, however, keep the action unfolding from the Leads and what they want (their Roleplay Prompts), and with a spirit of collaboration and discovery.

RENDING

A VIGOR: INTO DUST STARTER MODULE



Settlements like this are rare

*The old songs claim The World Before had many,
but few remain
Carved from the rock itself, high and low,
Rending is a place built into the cracks
From a distance, you would not guess its existence
And once you were inside its walls,
you'd not worry that there was any world beyond*

*In places vast enough to host a market
Elsewhere too cramped to host a crouching child
Beyond the reach of The Hierarchy
Unmarred by The Corruption
Home to an unexplainable bounty
Fed by the Wellsprings
That flow through these walls
The waters are why I am here*

*The power of the water is fabled
And so a guarded secret
Control, in this place, is claimed by a few
Marcen, the foremost among them*

*I will treat with Marcen tomorrow
For there is something here, I know it
Some key to my puzzle
And whatever it is, I will not leave until I find it*

So ends the scattered collection of writings discovered those many months ago, buried and lost in The Grove. Whatever hope, whatever desire, whatever craze brought you here - whatever made you follow the trail left by these writings - here you stand. The shadowed, canyon entrance to Rending not far off in the distance. Not another soul in sight, beyond your traveling companions.

It's been made clear that entry will not come easily, and access to The Wellsprings will prove even more difficult. But you've come all this way, and you're not turning back. Nevermind the fact that you're well short of supplies, and this is the only haven you'll find within a week's travel in any direction.

One of you will take on the role of Stitch. The rest of you, as Leads, will choose one of the following as your character. If you have more than four Leads, you can create your own characters beyond these.

THE ONE WHO FOUND THE WRITINGS

You were raised in that isolated space, The Grove. You had long known its trees, its green, its walls, its stones, its corridors. In your youth, you were found abandoned in the foothills, and brought to The Grove. The community took you in as their own. They taught you their ways. Gave you their truths.

And then you found the writings. Pages and pages. Tucked away. Lost. Hidden. You broke its code. And through it, you learned that there was a world beyond The Grove. There were others out there. You learned of the beauties, and the horrors. The Corruption. The Hierarchy. Aberrants. The curative power of the Wellsprings. You told no one what you'd found. You had no choice but to leave. You had to discover if what was written was true. If you could help in whatever struggle existed in the beyond, you would help. Whatever it was, whatever was out there, whatever you'd find, you left The Grove and began your journey.

THREADS

The writings found in The Grove, and the secrets they bear.

Trying to wrap my head around this whole new, strange world.

NATURES

Open the heart to possibilities

An ignorant mind is a wonderful thing to lose

ROOTS

The One Who Knows the Way

The Writings

THE REST

- 6 Vigor
- Understanding – 2
- Presence – 1
- Guile – 1
- Prized Asset – The Writings (+2)
- Pack Type – Influence
- Waypoint(s) – 1 total

THE ONE WHO KNOWS THE WAY

You weren't always a traveler. You lived with your family in Brhonn - a coastal village just inside the regions known by The Hierarchy as the Works. Not long ago, a Hierarchy project took hold near your village, and shortly thereafter Brhonn was consumed by The Corruption. Most of the village was immediately Aberrant, turned into wretched terrifying beasts, seething Corruption. You and the few remaining villagers were forced to fight your loved ones. The struggle was hopeless. You survived only because of a sister's sacrifice. It happened too fast. She gave you no choice.

You made a life of wandering. There was nothing left to you. In time your path crossed with The One Who found the Writings, and with little convincing you took up this quest to rout The Corruption. If the world can be rid of Corruption, maybe there's hope. Maybe an Aberrant could be cleansed. Maybe, if she's even still out there, your sister could be brought back.

THREADS

My sister's sacrifice

The courage and drive of the One Who Found the Writings

NATURES

There's always another way

Look for the good

ROOTS

My Sister

The One Who Found the Writings

THE REST

- 6 Vigor
- Guile – 2
- Finesse – 1
- Prized Assets – Brhonn Fishing Spear & Trap Kit
- Pack Types – Explore & Hunt
- Waypoints - none

THE ONE WHO PICKS UP THE PIECES

Everyone has lost something to The Hierarchy. Everyone has lost something to The Corruption. But not everyone has lost themselves. You remember so very little from before. Flashes of a struggle. A riverside. A being. Others. A rending. Corruption. Waking up in a wilderness alone.

Since then, life has been a quest for answers and for survival. You're not sure of your name, let alone how old you are. And you've yet to run into a familiar place or face. For months you found shelter in the company of a roving caravan - tattooists, glassblowers, forecasters, and mystics. It was in that caravan that you met Ghze'von. Ghze'von showed you that the World Before is able to speak through you; showed you that you are a Seam. You'd hoped these new powers would bring answers. So far they've only brought more questions.

The time came that the caravan stopped providing answers. The time came to move on. Ghze'von fought your choice, but ultimately relented. You've found yourself, of late, in the company of folk who are on a quest to understand The Corruption, and perhaps put an end to it. To you, it seems as good an opportunity as any for answers.

THREADS

Putting together the puzzle of my life
Controlling these strange and new abilities

NATURES

Believe in the power of Wonder
You reap what you sow

ROOTS

Ghze'von

THE REST

- 7 Vigor
- Presence – 2
- Understanding – 1
- Prized Asset – Ghze'von's Set of Dustglass Marbles
- Pack Type – Restore
- Waypoint(s) – Seam Training (Level 2)

THE ONE WITH A LITERAL AXE TO GRIND

Your axe is dull. It's been an all-purpose tool for too many years. And while that's probably for the best - it being basically unrecognizable for what it used to be - it could at least use some sharpening. The axe is the one thing you carry from your former life. The one thing that, if someone looked hard enough, might link you to that past. If they did ask, you'd probably just tell them you took it off the warm corpse of some Hierarchy fool. That answer might get you in a bit of trouble, but not nearly as much as answering that the axe was, and always has been, yours.

You were raised to join the Hierarchy. That was always your trajectory. And at the time, the opportunity excited you beyond belief. What other world did you know, except one where The Hierarchy were the heroes? So join you did, and work you did. It wasn't long before it became quite clear that The Hierarchy were not the heroes, that you were on the wrong side of the system. That you had to get out. You left family. You left siblings-in-arms. You left all you'd known. You fled far away, and took on what work you could as hired muscle. You've jumped from job to job since then. Always staying out of The Hierarchy's path. Never getting too involved with any person, or job.

That is, until this job.

THREADS

Conceal my identity, whatever it costs
The lost memories of The One Who Picks Up the Pieces

NATURES

Work harder, not smarter
Trust no one

ROOTS

My Axe
The One Who Picks Up the Pieces

THE REST

- 7 Vigor
- Brawn – 2
- Presence – 1
- Prized Asset – Nameless Axe
- Pack Type – Combat
- Waypoint(s) - Awesome Presence

ARRIVAL AT RENDING

The following is an account of your last moment with Paka, a hunter who roams the Salt Flats and the Blackwater Delta. She has long been permitted to trade with Rending, and has displayed a surprising wealth of knowledge on the subject. Paka has helped get you as far as the main ‘gate,’ but she cannot get you inside.

You might choose to read through this as a group, and pick up the action where it ends. Or The Stitch might choose, instead, to have this section be a playable opening scene.

“There’s a reason so few outsiders attempt to seek out Rending, if they even know of its existence,” she’d told you then. “It is an island in the middle of a great and terrible nothing. I’ll guide you there, for a price. But I’ll not guarantee your life.” Travel by day. Never by night. Paka’s orders. “Out here, the night does not belong to us.” She knows these lands better than most. It’s why you sought her out.

It’s been days since you left that shelter on the banks of the Blackwater. In the distance now, you can just make out the rock rising from the bare earth. “Rending,” Paka says. It feels like it’s been days since she spoke a word. In this middle space, a place Paka calls ‘The Desert of Dread,’ the warm dry air of the Salt Flats in front of you, and the wet air of the Delta at your back, she continues, “The place you are attempting to access is one of the largest settlements you’ll find – outside of The Hierarchy’s holdings – in this mass of territories called Vest. Inside – it’s a network of canyons, chasms, caverns and tunnels, some hewn long ago – and some seemingly more recently – from this massive shelf of sedimentary rock we’re on now – just east as we are of the Western Salt Flats.” She points toward the vast stretch of pinkish-white beyond in the West. “The dwellings of Rending are built into the rock, set out onto the earthen floor, mounted into the canyon walls above, dug in below.

It is a self-proclaimed bastion from The Hierarchy, and The Corruption – though how The Waters manage to keep up either of those things is not a matter of public knowledge. As to The Hierarchy – most assume they’re paid off with some manner of tribute. As to The Corruption, most believe it’s thanks to The Wellsprings, if they exist at all. Precious few claim to have ever seen or touched them. But how else could you explain the relative abundance in Rending?”

She tugs at the bindings on her laden sled, and gives a soothing touch to her pack animal companion. The beast, a sand veol named Uhli, has been markedly uneasy since dawn. “It’s been a long time since we’ve ventured any further than the main market, but Rending is a huge place. And it seems, beyond right or reason, to be ever expanding.” It’s unclear whether or not she’s sure you’re listening, but you’re certain she cares not either way.

“Few outsiders are ever let in on any kind of permanent terms. Most all who ‘live’ here are born here.” She pauses. “If I haven’t emphasized it enough already: getting into this place will not be easy. I’ve been allowed access all these years only because of a chain of family connections. And I’ll say it again, before you ask again, I cannot get you in.”

But, in the event that you do gain entry, whether by a good deal of convincing, a great deal of scheming, or some other guile, likely the first thing you'll notice is that, in this Vest of muted tones, Rending is a place of bold color. You see, anyone living in Rending is subject to a color code. Red, green, yellow, white, purple, and a handful of others." She pulls out a scarf of a light blue, and binds it about her hair. "Your color determines where you are allowed to be, and when you are allowed to be there. All is set by The Register, and heartily enforced by The Watchers." She ties a light blue scarf onto Uhli's harness. "It's all about order in there. You step outside that order, or bend those rules, and The Watchers will execute punishment with the greatest speed. Caught. Held. And set outside the walls in the dark of the night - an almost certain death sentence. I don't need to tell you again what slinks around this landscape in the evening hours."

She surveys the distance. "And it's not like you can just dye your own clothing and move right on in. These dyes are produced from things grown in the gardens of The Springs. Things that I doubt would have a chance growing anywhere else." She tugs at Uhli, and both of them stop abruptly, as if they'd met some invisible barrier. "This is where I leave you. Any further, and I run too great a risk of our being linked." She says nothing more, nothing at all. But from her pouch she removes a small case, and hands it to you. As she and Uhli turn and continue on, you examine the case and open it...

From here on out, you're on your own and into gameplay (if you aren't already). Jump into some roleplay: *What's in the case Paka just handed you? What plans do you have for entering Rending? What hope carries you forward? What fears weigh you down?*

THREADS IN RENDING

The following are some touchpoints for Rending. Feel free to ignore them, or expand on them as your Table sees fit.

ONE LEGEND

It's said that the rock here was cracked open shortly after the dawn of The Corruption. Powerful Seams looking for a weapon to drive back that evil wrought an incredible power and split the earth. What they found wasn't the weapon they'd imagined. What they drew forth was The Wellsprings. It is said that they didn't realize the power the Wellsprings had, until it was too late, until The Corruption had caught hold of so much else. Weighing the odds against them, those Seams decided to insulate themselves against the outside Corruption. They set defenses, and kept the secrets of the place to themselves. At least that's what the legend claims.

ORDER IN RENDING

Everything in this place is bound up in access to water, whether it's potable water or the much lauded Wellsprings (if they even exist). And control of that water, and therefore pretty much everything else, is held by the aptly named council, The Waters. They are a small but powerful council, supported foremost by The Register and The Watchers.

RENDING'S GROUPS

- **The Waters.** The ultimate authority in Rending. They control the flow of water, and therefore pretty much everything.
- **The Watchers.** Tasked with not only watching topside, and guarding the main canyon entrances, The Watchers are the enforcement hand of the Waters.
- **The Springs.** Each one of The Springs is found and raised into the folds. Discovered in their youth by a council of Seams, The Springs come from all over Vest. Sought out for their innate skill with The Dust, The Springs are brought in to tend to The Wellsprings. At least that's the claim.
- **The Wells.** Rending is not so clear of Corruption as it appears. The Seams are engaged in a constant conflict. Corruption is knocking ever on their gates, particularly from the direction of The Blackwater Delta. The Wells, rumor has it, are tasked with using their abilities to maintain literal wells of Corruption, the best way they've found to restrain it. These wells aren't always in the most discreet locations either. If they appear in a populated area, they're hopefully at least well-marked.
- **The Register.** The Register is in charge of keeping track of who's here, and what's here. They're not always easy-going about that.
- **The Exchange.** Run the imports and exports show. They're also in charge of Rending's currency of choice.
- **The Hollows.** Beyond 'digging,' it's not entirely clear what The Hollows are tasked with.
- **The Commons.** Basically everyone else.

