



The Magic of Wanting More

In the wild, there's one rule: those who adapt survive, and no animal was more suited to adapt to Div than humanity. Born without magic, descended from primitive, territorial apes, man spent many long years overlooked by the higher creatures of the lands. The forests were forbidden to man, the seas a frightful domain of capricious and mercurial spirits. To hunt a fae beast of the wilds was almost certain death, or worse, and nothing was more dangerous than the beings known as "elves" who lived as comfortably among these supernatural hauntings as a fly lives in a trash heap.

But humanity discovered chemistry and gunpowder. What once served as great mysteries were gradually peeled away, left bare and naked before the inquisitive eye of these lesser beasts. A time of reckoning fell upon the spirits of the wild, and no frontier was safe from man's expansion but those in the depths of the ocean or the darkest of woods. What was described as the unknown and who could be said as having knowledge shifted dramatically. Now man kept secrets, and the spirits of the wild could only struggle and wonder as their habitats were burned, strange diseases fell upon them, and the towns of such hairless apes became forbidden.

Making matters worst of all was man's discovery of mythril, called the "bone metal" by the elves. Where the wild powers were strongest

were vast deposits a durable, light-weight material that could be fashioned into weapons, armor, and tools with properties the likes of which men never had access to before. Guns no longer fired mere bullets, but great explosive rounds that would burn for days. Gears made of mythril would turn on their own after absorbing sunlight, pots would produce their own heat with a crank of the switch.

The Mythril Rush

It was inevitable that as man grew accustomed to the conveniences provided by mythril, along with its strategic value, aggressive encroachment and expansion into the wilds would ensue. So valuable is the metal that humans would often clash over wildlands that hadn't even been cleared of their inhabitants yet. These scuffles became wars, and with the magic of mythril weapons, most of Div suffered devastation which, it would be discovered, was irreversible.

Today, convenient known mythril sources have been tapped and stockpiled, but a few valuable wild places remain, having yet to be plundered. All of these areas were considered either too dangerous, too scarce in supply to be worth committing to, or hitherto undiscovered by officials.

The Easy Boys

And so, with stockpiles of mythril gradually dwindling and high prices being offered to anyone brave or stupid enough to enter

the wild places on their own, a new profession of prospectors, drifters, and mercenaries arose. These people are generally called “Easy Boys”, a pejorative term earned because men successful at the trade became wealthy fast and lived easy lives, or more often because fights between such individuals, often armed with mythril weapons by necessity, can leave little of a town standing. “Easy, boys,” is sometimes the last thing a bartender is able to say before his entire bar is leveled by a gun fight between rival gangs.

Of course, the term is misleading, as there are also a few famous women who fall under the moniker. As the saying goes, Sol made humanity, but Legerdemain and Sons made all humanity equal to Sol.

The Elves

The name “elves” has long since been used to refer to those inhabitants of the wild capable of communication and using magic to survive. Many laymen consider all elves to be the same, in their way, all operating under the same inscrutable logic and having the same basic, hostile interactions with people. But the experienced Easy Boy knows these creatures to all be distinct.

Among their commonality is a certain territorial behavior. They like to congregate around mythril veins and consider those areas their homes, which they will defend to the death. Any intruder, be it humans or another form of elf, will be dealt with in whatever manner the local elves behave, which can change drastically from location to location. Some elves will immolate anyone who steps foot on their ground, others may blind their victims, and others still may allow their prey to walk deep into their territory, only to put them in a long sleep until they starve.

Elves are not strictly organized in the sense that humanity understands. Although they are social with one another, and some reports exist of elves even forming alliances among tribes

in close proximity, they sustain themselves differently. One tribe may need frequent access to water, another may be mostly active during the day, where they absorb sunlight. Some elves are hunters, chasing non-magical prey through the woods. Some elves will use the resources of the land, making tools and shelter, while others may seem to drift almost mindlessly, like great, ethereal jellyfish. The unpredictability of these creatures is what makes them so dangerous.

The most curious elves are those with their own culture and history. They form something that could be called a civilization, constructing cities that suit their own alien needs. Oddly, no elf has ever been known to use mythril weapons, but stone, iron, and even bronze weapons and tools have been seen in conflict or discovered among the ruins of elven lands.

A Dying Land

The scars of the mythril wars are vast and many. Human civilizations have been leveled by the mighty power of mythril canons. Coastal cities have been sunk into the ocean. In all these places, virtually all life is gone. Grass no longer grows, there are no insects, the air sits stagnant and humid. To be in these places is like having a lead blanket wrapped around your shoulders, making it difficult to move and breathe.

In the worst of these places, where mythril weaponry and shells lay broken and dormant, tools smashed and never recovered, malignant spirits roam the area. Unlike elves, which are merely territorial, these beings are so acutely vindictive towards humans that they are thought to be the restless souls of the dead. Other scholars regard them as a specific breed of elf that thrive on misfortune. Anywhere they are, there is usually a reasonable amount of mythril that could be salvaged, but those who don't return from those places tend to be consigned to a fate worse than death.

However, the dereliction of land is not limited only to where wars have been. Over the years of expansion and conflict, Div has grown “sick”, to place it in clear terms. Many magical creatures who previously relied on the wildlands to survive have gone extinct, and a gradual lack of biodiversity has caused populations of even non-magical animals to decline. Many plants have also come to wither, suffering from missing insects, birds, or other beasts they would have relied on to reproduce.

Humanity cultivates certain non-magical livestock and crops, but famine has become more common than it used to be. Annual dust storms present terrible problems to farming communities and there is a growing sense that mythril is, at this point, the only thing keeping humanity together. Its magic is relied upon, especially in small towns, to prevent the drying flesh of Div from reaching into human towns and taking many lives with it.

The Most Dangerous Animal is Man

Of course, it isn't merely opportunism that drives people to search for more mythril. For many small communities, they are also driven by desperation. Easy Boys themselves live hard lives as well – maintaining a mythril arsenal is expensive, and it's typical for an Easy Boy to sell every mythril item he owns when he retires. As a result of all of this, competition is fierce, bodily harm is likely, false leads are set up all the time, and any contract may severely under-report the danger of the job.

A town without money may not be driven by malice, but they will try to downplay the reasons nobody has gone into the local woods if it means getting that mythril at a price they can afford. As a consequence, most Easy Boys who are too sentimental are either very, very lucky, or have very short careers. The ability to bargain, read between the lines, and stay a step ahead of

the competition are all essential skills. But above all else, being lucky is the most important of all.

Character Creation

Because “Easy, Boy” centers so much around the unknown and magic, players are not to be directly involved in the numbers aspect of character creation. That is to say, they will not know their exact stats (so Jim cannot lean over and see that Sally has a weapon that deals 2d6 damage), but they will know certain generalities about themselves and their equipment (Jim *can* see Sally is carrying a .35 repeating rifle and that it appears to be in reasonable condition).

This makes character creation a more narrative subject for players, and a bit of a preparation headache for the GM. Details as to how the GM will assemble characters will be in a later section of the rules. But for players, they will need to do the following:

Establish a Motive

First things first, being an “Easy Boy” is dangerous living. The people who venture into the wilderness in search of mythril are smart, strong, well-educated, or lucky, but preferable all of the above or else they’ll soon be dead. However, that doesn’t mean there’s no such thing as a “reluctant hero”. Players creating an Easy Boy should ask themselves why they’re doing the job.

The Greedy Scoundrel

Hoping to land a lavish retirement is a common reason, but one that quickly gets abandoned as the risk rarely pans out into such lavish rewards. Spoiled kids from rich families sometimes strike out into the woods hoping for fame and fortune, only to never be heard from again. People who romanticize the life of an Easy Boy or who think it’s a shortcut to wealth are often the most scorned individuals in the profession by their peers, and the most likely to be stabbed in the back by other Easy Boys who consider them naive and vulnerable marks.

Some such people wind up lucky and make it big, after which they write books that

perpetuate the frustrating perception that an Easy Boy always strikes it rich. Less fortunate people may sell all they own to follow in the footsteps of such written heroes, only to barely scrape by and spend more time recovering from injuries than being paid. This latter, more common group will then quickly find themselves ten years older with few other life skills under their hats and not a lot of certainty what else to do. Beleaguered and world-weary, such men will do anything for money and relish the easy jobs, which are far and few between. The only fairy tales that old, hungry Easy Boys believe in are the ones where the fairies kill people.

The Drifter

Drifters are types that fall into the life of an Easy Boy because it’s one of the few jobs that suits a man who never stops moving. Whether avoiding the law, alimony, or merely an uncomfortable past, a drifter lives a lonesome life of self-reliance and hardship. Opportunists at every angle, they don’t consider themselves “Easy Boys” as a profession, so much as mercenaries. Always planning to move on before the walls close in, these types are much more often willing to act as murderers for hire, bounty hunters who don’t plan to stick around to see how the local gangs react to having one of their guys busted, or even robbers providing manpower to those gangs for the right price.

Slow to trust others, and difficult to trust themselves, a drifter should have a loose and tenuous relationship with any group he joins, viewing them as temporary at best. Drifters will account for themselves first, skimming a little off the top, hiding some money in their boots, and always making sure if a deal goes belly up, they come out of it as far ahead as can be managed. After all, if things with the current group goes sour, they’ll float on alone again.

The Town Hero

Some people have an idealist sense of their work that really does transcend a strict requirement for personal reward. Perhaps these

people have family back home who depend on the money from the job. Maybe the Town Hero is trying to save an orphanage. These guys walk a difficult tight rope, keeping just enough to stay alive while making a shrewd calculation to give something up to someone in need.

Although personalities like this are often envied and written about, most people go into the profession for the fame associated with them. It takes a true, quality spirit to be the Town Hero and remain in that mindset. Above all else, such men need to be skilled socialites, able to persuade, cajole, and even beg like a hero, because whenever they miscalculate and fall short of their own needs, they rely on the charity of a gracious public to help them get by. Being well-liked isn't merely done for its own sake – for a long term Easy Boy, it's a matter of survival!

The Professional Prospector

When a life of scraping and drifting isn't enough to motivate some people, a promise of a pension and a salary may be. Prospectors are people who work for a company that makes use of Mythril and will pay for anything the prospector discovers. Such individuals are among the lowest risk-takers of the profession, and most likely to team up with a group since their pay is guaranteed regardless of how the job pans out, so long as they deliver from time to time.

Of course, this doesn't mean Prospectors are risk-averse. If they were, they might be accountants, rather than someone in a dangerous field! A prospector might be something of an educated thrill-seeker. Perhaps nepotism landed him a job at an important firm, and thanks to youth he was willing to spend a few years with his boots on the ground, seeing the elves up close.

Create Your Own

There are naturally a multitude of reasons to risk one's life for fame and money, so players are encouraged to come up with their own archetypes and personal reasons. Maybe you were forced into a gang that got wiped out during a

botched robbery, and being an Easy Boy is all that's left for you. Maybe your brother dragged you into the career, then got yanked into a thicket kicking and screaming, leaving you traumatized but with no other way to make cash.

The important thing is to focus on *who you are*, and *why you're doing this*. Most sensible people settle down and start a family. Try to focus on what type of person would choose this life over a safe one, and if you enter the career with a mistaken idea of what things will be like, be prepared to sober up and get reality dumped on you like a sack of vengeful bricks. There's a lot of bitter Easy Boys in the field, and not just a few of them would bury you in the desert for a bottle of liquor.

Describe your character to the GM

This does not mean, "write four pages of backstory" (please have mercy on your GM). Your GM needs to know who you are so he knows how to build your character. Explain to your GM what your character is like, some of his relevant experience, and other notable features. For example, if you tell your GM, "My character is a taciturn drifter who's fast on the trigger. He's been at this for a few years, and his sharp ears and quick legs have saved him from more than several rough situations," then the GM will know to set you up with some fast draw skills and improvements to your running speed and your senses.

Who you are is not the same as a chronology of where you've been, what circumstances beyond your control drove you to join the game's plot, or who your sister-in-law's second cousin once removed is. The only important thing to your GM is what you're like and how you plan to survive going forward.

If you would like your past to be taken into consideration by the GM, you might mention you're being pursued by the law, or that your ex-wife is an Easy Boy who would try to snatch up

the same job as you out of spite. This will not necessarily provide you with additional character points, but may provide you an opportunity to earn additional points via roleplay if it comes up and has a meaningful impact on your personal story.

None of your skills or stats will be visible to you, so REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE. If you forget your personality and what you're capable of, it's just an unfortunate side-effect of being exposed to a little too much magic and seeing a few too many elves. The stuff will really change a man. You may, of course, be reminded of certain kinds of hard-information you know, such as chemistry knowledge or specific lore, but if the player forgets he's a fast runner, it's probably because he hasn't run from a lot of fights in a while. You won't lose abilities you don't use, but try to stay in character so you don't forget the stuff you know.

Do NOT include equipment you rely on in the character description. You will be able to purchase this yourself with a set amount of game currency. However, do inform the GM if you have familiarity with a particular kind of weapon (such as revolvers, rifles, swords, knives, or similar categories).

The Arrogant

When explaining your character, you may be tempted to try to highlight as many good qualities as possible to maximize your abilities. However: don't. Each character is built with a specific number of points, so describing a person who would clearly exceed those values (by describing Hercules, or the world's fastest runner, for example), is the same as asking the GM to do the impossible. You may be pretty good at some things, but you likely won't be the best of the best starting off.

In the event it becomes clear you are trying to say you're good at everything, supernaturally good at something, or if you directly fish for a certain Peculiarity (for example,

by trying to describe yourself as uniquely lucky to score "Darn Lucky"), you might wind up being penalized. Most of your points will go to EGO, and the GM will let you believe your character is the amazing person you said he is without reflecting that in any of his stats.

This is not to be enforced with an iron fist. The point of the game is to have fun, and clearly, a player who says he's a brilliant scientist and a fast runner expects to have related abilities, but certain abstract perks like "Lightning Reflexes" and "Combat Luck" are more likely to be awarded as the game progresses if you exhibit such traits. Combat Luck, for example, would be more likely to be awarded after you have a lucky near-miss with death, but not because you described yourself as "lucky" before the game began.

The GM should encourage players to narrow the scope of their characters before penalizing them with an EGO-centric build. Try guiding first, and fall back to the penalty as a last resort. Players just need to be encouraged to think about what they've been resorting to in order to live in a harsh world, while still keeping them within the bounds of typical humans.

Character Growth

Like character creation, players will not be able to see how they've grown as the game progresses. Instead, the GM will award them experience based on things the character has done throughout the game. Each player should earn approximately 3 Exp per session at a minimum, which will be spent on combat abilities. Additional experience may be rewarded for good roleplaying or making especially fast progress during a session and will be spent towards skills or attributes the player made use of, or took time to learn about.

In a nutshell, the more you do, the more you'll learn! If all you do each game is participate in combat, it will be all your character will

advance in. But pulling off a clever gambit that wins a fight before it begins may rack up some extra experience specifically set aside for the “tactics” skill. If players find themselves doing the talking and the bargaining, they’ll grow into it “under the hood”, so to speak, such that character growth represents action.

Just to clarify, some experience will generally go to combat skills, to keep everyone on roughly the same ground there. The GM will try to assign that experience based on what you do during a fight (running away may net you better running skills). No additional experience will go into combat, however, no matter how many enemies you shoot. Those three points per session are as much as you’ll get. This is intended to promote some specialized behavior in combat, but be aware there is a soft maxima for abilities that might make it practical to mix up your bag of tricks sometimes.

Attributes, such as Dexterity and Strength, which do have some combat benefits, might receive bonus experience as a reward for roleplaying feats involving their use, but players are unlikely to become super-humanly strong or dexterous without a good explanation.

Experience cannot be “farmed”. Players will not be rewarded just because they spent the week doing push-ups or reading about how to pick locks. Applying these skills to advance the plot is the only meaningful way to receive experience.

Equipment

Weapons, goods, and services are all purchased with “Jakes” (sometimes referred to as “J’s”), mythril-plated coins featuring the face of Furta’s first President for Life, Jacob Lewis. The amount of mythril in the coin is worth less than the monetary value of the coin, by design.

All players start off with 200 Jakes, which they may use to purchase equipment before the game begins.

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Hands	Cost
Buck Knife	1 Hand	1 J
Bayonet	1 Hand	2 J
Spear	2 Hands	4 J
Hand Axe	1 Hand	4 J
Pike	2 Hands	6 J
Saber	1 Hand	8 J

Conventional melee weapons have all but fallen to the wayside in the current era. Rifling has led to the creation of highly accurate firearms, and the further specialization of mythril to produce fantastic results with individual bullets leaves a sword trailing behind its modern competitor. However, mythril weapons still remain popular as side-arms, tools, and status symbols due to their magical properties.

Bayonets can be affixed to rifles, and as such are ready weapons should the need arise.

Missile Weapons

Weapon	Hands	Cost
Short Bow	2 Hands	9 J
Long Bow	2 Hands	11 J
Crossbow	2 Hands	20 J

Although bows and arrows have largely fallen out of use, in skilled hands they can still be reasonably deadly and affordable. They tend to be less accurate without devoting time towards learning to use them. Crossbows, meanwhile, enjoy an ease of use, but are time-consuming to reload.

Bolts and Arrows

Type	Quantity	Cost
Arrows	10	1 J
Bolts	15	2 J

Thanks to machine advancements and casting, bullets can be prepared in quite large numbers, making them more economical than arrows and bolts which must be fletched by hand. A short or long bow uses arrows, while a crossbow fires bolts.

A good survivalist can produce their own arrows using bone, sinew, and tree sap, but they will not be of the same quality as the steel-tipped factory-made arrows found in stores and lack the penetrating ability of a typical bodkin.

Firearms

Weapon	Rounds	Hands	Cost
Derringers			
.22 Minerva	1	1 Hand	8 J
.30 Harding	1	1 Hand	14 J
.38 Diantha	1	1 Hand	20 J
.40 Tiger Deer	1	1 Hand	28 J
Revolvers			
.22 Rotterdam	6	1 Hand	12 J
.30 Rian	6	1 Hand	18 J
.375 Quincey	6	1 Hand	25 J
.40 Cow Panther	5	1 Hand	30 J
Lever-Action Rifles			
.172 Irma	20	2 Hands	10 J
.30 Coyote Eater	16	2 Hands	16 J
.38 Florent	16	2 Hands	24 J
.45 Mustang	12	2 Hands	32 J
Bolt-Action Rifles			
.22 Lorayne	8	2 Hands	11 J
.30 Edmond	7	2 Hands	15 J
.38 Anthog	5	2 Hands	26 J
.45 Bull Wolf	4	2 Hands	31 J
Single Shotguns			
20 Bore Albie	1	2 Hands	9 J
16 Bore Springhook	1	2 Hands	15 J
12 Bore Baxter	1	2 Hands	22 J
10 Bore Bearlk	1	2 Hands	30 J

Double Shotguns			
20 Bore Sunshine	2	2 Hands	10 J
16 Bore Warrick	2	2 Hands	16 J
12 Bore Armadillo	2	2 Hands	23 J
10 Bore Gerhard	2	2 Hands	29 J

Firearms are the primary armament of humanity. Accurate and deadly, they can deliver punishment from the safety of long ranges and can fire specialized mythrill rounds. Larger calibers do generally cause more harm when using non-magical ammunition. The market is dominated in particular by Legerdemain and sons, with the above catalog featuring the most popular items in their inventory, but a few smaller manufacturers exist and a variety of limited run weaponry might be found or purchased from vendors.

Rifle scopes do exist, but are remarkably expensive and difficult to come by due to the challenges inherent to accurate glass-work. Regardless, many marksmen would express a preference for a mythrill rifle, if given a choice, insisting the magic of the metal does more for the gun than anything.

Derringers

Derringers are tiny, breach-loaded pistols, designed to be as small as possible while still able to fire the caliber they were designed for. They discharge a single round, then need to be manually reloaded. Due to their small size, Derringers are extremely easy to hide, and are especially popular among women who conceal them in purses, brassiers, and stockings. Their effective range is quite limited due to having short muzzles, but in close proximity are weapons perfectly worthy of respect. Reloading a Derringer requires a single action.

Revolvers

Revolvers are a reliable side-arm of choice for both men of the law and desperados on the other side of the line who expect to deal with gangs of their enemies. Most revolvers carry six rounds and must be reloaded by hand. Reloading each round requires one action, but speed loaders can be purchased and employed to reload the entire cylinder in one swift action.

Lever-Action Rifles

Lever-action rifles are preferred by cavalry and combatants on the move. Usually boasting higher magazine quantities than other rifle options, and able to fire off multiple shots without slowing down, they are quite common among militias. Reloading a magazine requires a single action.

Bolt-Action Rifles

Bolt-actions are well regarded for being especially accurate and comfortable to fire while prone. The .38 Anthog is the standard issue rifle of the Furta military, offering a powerful punch and a decent magazine size for its type. Reloading a magazine requires a single action.

Single Shotguns

Shotguns are one of the most popular hunting tools in Furta, with the 12 Bore Baxter being the most popular firearm in Legerdemain and Son's entire collection. The spread of the shot makes them ideal for striking targets at intermediate ranges, and when loaded with mythril ammunition the results can be quite devastating. Their main drawback for the professional Easy Boy is their slow fire rate due to breach loading, but though they are less popular with the broader consumer market, some lever-action shotguns do exist in production.

Another convenience of shotguns is that they may be loaded with slugs, which are heavier and have more penetrating power than rifle cartridges, but are less effective at range than shot. The smaller the bore, the larger and more deadly the shot pellets, but all Legerdemain

shotguns will fire slugs with approximately equal potency. It requires one action to reload a Single Shotgun.

Double Shotguns

Double shotguns function much the same as their single counterparts, but have two barrels which may be loaded individually and fired simultaneously. Most owners of a double shotgun will fire only one barrel at a time due to the powerful recoil caused by firing both barrels, but sometimes firing both barrels at once can be preferable when trying to bring down a larger than average target. It requires one action to reload a single barrel, or two actions to reload both barrels.

Ammunition

Caliber	Quantity	Cost
.172	50	7 J
.22	40	6 J
.30	35	7 J
.375	40	8 J
.38	40	9 J
.40	25	6 J
.45	20	5 J
20 Bore	40	6 J
16 Bore	30	5 J
12 Bore	25	5 J
10 Bore	20	4 J
Slug	30	8 J

The larger ongoing cost of a firearm is purchasing ammunition. The companies that manufacture firearms sell ammunition in boxes, which store owners will tend to not want to break. Selling bullets individually can be good money, however, so it's possible to obtain smaller quantities of ammo at a mark-up.

Any variety of shotgun may fire slugs instead of their standard ammunition. Within nearer ranges, slugs are heavier and more powerful than most rifle rounds

Armor

Armor	Cost
Wooden Shield	5 J
Sewn Plate	5 J
Metal Shield	8 J
Chain Armor	9 J
Cuirass	13 J

The cost to benefit analysis of body armor is a hot debate among military strategists in Furta and abroad. Although Furta's military does not equip their troops with any kind of armor, cuirassiers are considered an important unit in foreign nations and some militia men enjoy the peace of mind from having a sheet of metal between them and the smaller, flying metal coming at them.

Armor is not especially effective against the weapons of the day and will frequently break or be rendered useless, and the cost of their maintenance can quickly add up, but if one can afford it, it can be a difference between life and death. A character wearing armor shouldn't expect to get too many consecutive uses from it.

Multiple types of armor may overlap, and in fact a character could even hold a shield in each hand if they felt so inclined, assuming they didn't want to hold any weapons. A player might even overlap several chain shirts, or have metal plates sewn into overlapping layers of clothing. Of course, wearing so much heavy and cumbersome equipment can really slow a person down.

Shields

Shields come in a variety of different forms. For the sake of simplicity, their main distinction is what material they are made of. Tower shields have generally fallen out of vogue, so most are large enough just to cover the upper torso. Mythril shields imbued with Heating are popular among frontiersmen who can afford it to double as both a portable stove and a source of defense.

Shields can be used to bash and attack in melee, but due to their broad forms making them unwieldy, are not much more deadly than using one's bare hands.

Sewn Plate

Wearing chain and a cuirass is seen as a bit of a fashion faux pas in most circles, especially in more civilized areas, so men who fear for their lives but don't want to draw odd looks may opt to have steel plates sewn into their jacket or vest. Even in the case of mythril, such a measure doesn't provide substantial protection, but is at least better than nothing.

Chain Armor

"Chain armor" in this case simply describes the chain-linked shirt one might drape over their body to protect themselves from stabbing and, hopefully, munitions. Alone, it doesn't provide a great deal of protection, but when draped over sewn plating and placed under a cuirass, it serves as a valuable part of a multi-layered defense.

Cuirass

A cuirass is a metal breastplate designed to deflect blows to the body, and at long ranges can serve to deflect munitions and save the wearer's life. Still not strong enough to truly stop bullets, a cuirass will, all the same, at least slow the bullet down before it penetrates naked flesh. Experienced soldiers will swear by the protection of a mythril cuirass, though few can afford them. This type of protection is not to be confused with leather vests and the like, which actually tend to

contain metal plates sewn inside them and are therefore a type of Sewn Plate, described above.

A character can only wear a single cuirass at a time.

Survival Equipment

Item	Cost
Animal Feed (1 week's worth)	5 J
Backpack	5 J
Bed Roll	4 J
Canteen	1 J
Coffee	2 J
Compass	12 J
Cookware	8 J
Dynamite (12 sticks)	10 J
Fishing Gear	3 J
Flint and Steel	1 J
Fool's Tablets	25 J
Lantern	2 J
Liquor	1 J
Madam Linda's Cleaning Tablets	20 J
200 Matches	1 J
Medical Kit	7 J
Mythril Miracle Cooker	35 J
Pocket Moon	35 J
Rations (1 day's worth)	2 J
Rope (per 10 feet)	1 J
Sasquatch Ice Box	35 J
Sewing Kit	2 J
Tent	9 J
Trunk	7 J
Tobacco	1 J
Spade	2 J
Spyglass	28 J

Animal Feed

Enough dry food to feed one animal for a week. The type of animal the food is meant for is purchased when it's purchased (for example, dog food and horse feed are two different kinds of "feed", purchased separately).

Backpack

A rugged traveler's backpack. Made out of durable leather.

Bed Roll

A sleeping bag suitable for most climates.

Spy Glass

A telescope used to observe things a far distance away.

Canteen

A tin canteen able to store about a day's worth of water.

Coffee

A bag of coffee, a natural stimulant. A single bag is enough to make a person one cup of coffee every morning for a month.

Compass

A durable compass. Always points magnetic north.

Cookware

Includes one pot, one pan, and a spatula for cooking meals.

Dynamite

Explosive, long-fuse dynamite for blasting.

Fishing Gear

A fishing pole, several hooks, tackle, and bait.

Flint and Steel

Basic flint and steel, for making fires.

Fool's Tablets

Fool's Tablets are fingernail-sized disks of mythril that will make any aqueous solution they are added to become more acidic. Within eight hours, a cup of water will become bone-threateningly acidic and will probably eat through whatever it is being stored in. Fool's Tablets have been rebranded numerous times, but have gained this nickname after they were first advertised as a kind of seasoning tablet that could make sauces more tart.

Lantern

A gas lantern for holding light. Comes with fuel when purchased.

Liquor

A single bottle of liquor. Purchaser's choice of brand and flavor. Thought to keep people warm in cold climates, but actually just lowers the imbiber's core temperature and makes them more susceptible to hypothermia.

Madam Linda's Cleaning Tablets

Three fingernail-sized disks of mythril meant to be dropped into a bucket of water and used to clean clothes. These tablets will make any aqueous solution they are added to more and more basic over time, and within twenty-four hours will cause a washbasin's worth of water to be dangerous for human contact.

Matches

A box of 200 matches. The striker is on the box. Not useful when wet.

Medical Kit

Comes with a small bottle of whiskey, bandages, a tourniquet, a sewing needle, a small knife, tweezers, gauze, and some sturdy twine to sew up a wound.

Mythril Miracle Cooker

A pot with a mythril bottom that has been imbued with Heating. When a match or spark is applied to the mythril, it quickly heats up, making the pot suitable for cooking a meal or even,

potentially, starting a fire. Dousing the bottom of the pot with a cup of water will cause the magical heating to stop, but the interior of the pot is cast iron and can be filled with anything the owner chooses without deactivating the heating.

Pocket Moon

A small, lightweight, stone orb that has been coated in mythril and given the Light imbuelement. It comes with a vice mounting that can be clipped to clothing, hats, or convenient stationary locations. The light can never be turned off, so they are sold with a small box where the Pocket Moon can be stored while not in use.

Rations

Prepared, salted rations to feed a hungry person on the move. Each pack of rations will provide enough to eat three meals per day, and therefore usually last a whole day. They are not an entirely self-sufficient source of nutrients, so over-relying on travel rations for a month or more can cause health problems. Additionally, fresh rations usually only last for about a month before they begin to spoil, provided they remain dry. Rations that become wet will spoil within the span of a few days.

Rope

Sturdy, durable rope, suitable for heavy duty pulling and lifting.

Sasquatch Ice Box

A sturdy ice box with an interior mythril plate imbued with Cooling. The plate itself stays around the temperature of -4 degrees Celsius, keeping everything else in the box cold in virtually all temperatures. Frost has the tendency to build up inside the box and can be a bit of a nuisance in terms of weight and accessibility.

Sewing Kit

A sewing kit containing needles, buttons, thread, zippers, and most supplies necessary to fix a regular amount of wear and tear on clothing.

Tent

A basic two-person tent with a canvas to protect from rain.

Tobacco

A mild stimulant, it can help the imbiber stay awake. Addictive, and also bad for a person's health – though most Easy Boys don't live that long in the profession. Typically a single purchase of tobacco is enough to last for a week of cigarettes, but especially heavy smokers may burn through a pouch a day.

Trunk

A large, lockable trunk to store personal belongings for safe travels. A bit too bulky to simply carry for long periods, but will fit comfortably in the personal cargo space of a locomotive.

Spade

A handy spade for digging or, in a pinch, chopping and bludgeoning.

Animals

Animal	Cost
Mutt	10 J
Attack Dog	20 J
Bloodhound	25 J
Horse	30 J
Race Horse	40 J
War Horse	45 J
Mikatonee Steed	60 J

Mutt

A typical untrained dog. People friendly.

Attack Dog

A strong, well-fed dog who's been trained to attack on command. Such animals are also sometimes employed in illegal fighting rings, and an established champion may fetch a higher price among ne'er do wells.

Bloodhound

A hunting breed that's been trained to track and chase certain things. Commonly used by law enforcement to seek out people hiding in the wilderness, but also a favorite of hunters to flush out prey.

Horse

A garden variety horse capable of pulling wagons or leisurely riding to and from town.

Race Horse

A specifically thoroughbred horse capable of running faster speeds over longer distances.

War Horse

A strong horse trained to remain calm even in the midst of gunfire. It will also trample enemies if ridden directly into them.

Mikatonee Steed

The Mikatonee Steed is a mildly magical breed of horse native to the region of the Mikatonee desert. They have the unusual ability to regulate their body temperature even in particularly hot and cold environments. They are also capable of running very long distances, likely an adaptation to cover the long stretches of empty terrain where they are found. Unfortunately, these animals burn through a lot of calories, and will require twice the feed of an ordinary horse.

Lodgings

Commons	2 J /week
Private	5 J /week
Bed and Breakfast	10 J /week
Fine Hotel	2 J /day

When one travels, they must find a place to stay. Sleeping in the streets or outside of town is free, of course! But if someone would like the added security of a roof over their heads, lodgings are available in most areas.

Commons

Typically only available in cities or large towns where travelers come through in enough quantities to make this model economical, a commons is a large room filled with cots, and the patron rents a cot. Having things stolen is a real risk in these situations, so although they are cheap, an investment should be made into having a sturdy lock on the patron's luggage.

Private

A typical, low-budget private room one might find at a saloon or small inn. No meals will be provided.

Bed and Breakfast

A bed and breakfast will provide both a safe, private room and three square meals a day for the entire duration of a week.

Fine Hotel

Luxurious accommodations, including room service and a stable to keep horses. Both guests and animals alike will be provided with three square meals per day. Such hotels are also capable of sending and receiving telegrams and mail, and a complementary copy of the local newspaper is provided with breakfast every morning.

Meals

Groceries	5 J /week
Restaurant	1 J /day
Lavish Restaurant	3 J /day
Chicken	2 J
Goat	8 J
Cow	20 J

Feeding one's self is an ongoing expense. Hunting and scavenging in the wild can be one way to get by, but when those efforts turn up scarce, a person can buy groceries, turn to a prepared meal at an eating establishment, or keep livestock for long journeys.

Groceries

When one has the means to cook and season their own foods, buying raw groceries can be the cheapest way to stay fed. Groceries usually start to rot if not consumed within a week of purchase – meats are often salted to last until that time – but if stored in a cold container such as a Sasquatch Ice Box, they may last up to a month from their purchase date.

Restaurant

Almost every civilized location has a place to get something to eat when a person either lacks the means or the time to cook for themselves. For 1 Jake, a restaurant will provide enough of a meal to be packed up and last all day.

Lavish Restaurant

A lavish dining experience pulls out the stops when it comes to eating. An entire day's worth of food will be provided, along with the diner's choice of alcoholic beverage and some desert. The liquor provided is only a tasteful glass's worth per meal.

Chicken

A live chicken, for long journeys where one isn't able to keep meats and produce preserved for the entire trip. Hens also lay eggs, which provide a helpful supplement to hunting and scavenging for one person. Butchering a chicken will provide enough food to feed a person for one day.

Goat

A live goat. A female goat provides milk, which can be used to help supplement hunting and scavenging efforts for two people. If butchered, a goat will feed two men for two weeks. The meat will, of course, go bad much sooner than that if not properly preserved somehow.

Cow

A live cow. Cows provide a substantial amount of milk, which can be used to help supplement hunting and scavenging efforts to

feed a small group. When butchered, a cow will feed four or five people for approximately one month, provided the meat is properly preserved for that long.

Mythril

Mythril, aside from being lightweight and surprisingly sturdy, is an innately magical metal which may provide a variety of difficult to identify benefits to any weapon or tool it is used to make. Some owners swear that guns made out of mythril are more accurate, have longer ranges, or other mystical properties, but this is hard to dissect; due to the cost of mythril, only the highest quality firearms are made with it, and there is thus a natural performance difference regardless of what metal was used. All the same, long-standing superstition about the metal and some proven effects of its power will lead people to pay top dollar for anything made of the stuff.

If a player wishes for an item using metal components to be made with mythril, he may pay five times the cost of the item to do so. This includes ammunition and the like.

Mythril does not innately contain spells, but it does seem to absorb its surroundings in a mystical way and will eventually express them, sometimes violently. The first recorded instance of ammunition expressing a magical effect was after a tragic series of explosions.

A large shipment of mythril bullets were being held in storage by Legerdemain and Sons along with gunpowder and other supplies, but shipping routes were cut off. The bullets remained for quite some time until they were split up and redirected to other locations – in some cases, for consumer purchase. It wasn't until they were loaded into weapons and fired that anyone realized the ammunition had become as volatile as black powder.

After losing one supply truck, eighteen men in the field, and observing a local explosion at a gun store noted effusively by Legerdemain and Sons as being not provably related, the bullets were traced back as the cause, and efforts began to reverse engineer this peculiar property. Since then, great care has been made to produce

ammunition that explodes only after it has left the casing and struck a target, and many other similar wondrous products have emerged as well.

Companies that deal in mythril describe the design of magic to be extremely unpredictable, and must be carefully controlled. The process to produce any particular effect is therefore always a closely guarded trade secret, and competitors have been known to perform various acts of corporate espionage to achieve their own, similar results, or at times to contaminate ongoing mythril manufacturing.

People in the know on modern mythril techniques who are also extremely rich may be aware that once a magical technique has been acquired, nearby mythril can absorb a similar effect just by being in close proximity. It is therefore possible to save money by purchasing about a hundred imbued bullets of the same type, then toss a handful of non-imbued rounds in with the others to develop the same ability. It's theorized that this is one plausible way to mass-manufacture magic effects, though industry specifics remain a ruthlessly enforced mystery.

Purchasing Mythril Imbuements

As with firearms, most mythril equipment is also produced by Legerdemain and sons. The following is a list of available imbuements which may come with a mythril item when it is purchased. To obtain an item with a listed imbuement, the player must first purchase the mythril item at 5x the base cost of the item, then pay the listed price for the imbuement – excluding ammunition, which may be purchased individually for the listed cost of the imbuement.

For example, the character Lucille Deidra would like to purchase a revolver with a simple Light imbuement, and then five rounds of mythril ammo with the Explosive imbuement. To do so, first she buys a .30 Rian, which normally costs 18 J. She pays 90 J for the gun, five times its base price. Next, she finds the price listing for a Light

mbuement, which is another 30 J, bringing her total cost to 120 J for her magically enchanted revolver.

Next, she must purchase five rounds of imbued .30 mythrill ammo. The GM agrees she's able to find a gunsmith who will sell her five imbued mythrill rounds individually. Lucille then checks the price on the Devil imbuelement, which is 20 J per imbuelement, costing a total of 100 J to purchase all five imbued mythrill cartridges.

Only ONE imbuelement may be purchased per mythrill item (so a bullet cannot have both the Devil and White Viper imbuelement, only one or the other). Imbuelements may NOT be given to mythrill items that do not currently have an imbuelement (the process is quite complicated and done in company controlled batches) – though shop owners may be willing to offer trade-in deals when patrons are looking to upgrade. Imbuelements cannot be changed, they are permanent.

General Equipment Imbuelements

These imbuelements are available for virtually any piece of equipment, and have a broad range of uses, be it quality of life or otherwise.

Acid – 20 J

An Acid imbuelement causes the object to maintain a mildly acidic pH balance. By itself, the object may sting open wounds but is not strictly dangerous to hold. However, when exposed to an aqueous solution, it will gradually cause that solution to become more and more acidic, eventually escalating to dangerous levels.

The Acidic imbuelement has had some difficulty finding a niche outside of chemical labs. Applied to small pellets and used mainly to produce acidic water solutions, it was also briefly marketed for “flavor pellets” which could be mixed in with a marinade to make a dish more tart. Unfortunately, this ill-advised product would kill several would-be chefs who lost them in their

marinade, only to accidentally consume them and then perish a horrific death from gradually increasing stomach acidity. This imbuelement is no longer sold as a food-related item.

Alkaline – 15 J

The Alkaline imbuelement makes the object maintain a mild, basic pH balance, which can help kill disease. Any aqueous substance contained by the object will become a little more alkaline – that is, water will lose hydrogen atoms, and will continue to act as a mild base even if transferred to another container. The longer the aqueous solution is left in the container, the more basic it will become, eventually arriving at dangerous pH levels.

First developed to assist with medicine, mythrill with an alkaline imbuelement was proven to be especially valuable to field doctors in need of re-usable, sterile equipment. Sewing needles, bone saws, and the like can be reused multiple times after minimal cleaning because the metal always maintains a sterilizing pH balance. Later, Legerdemain and Sons developed Alkaline pellets, called “Washer’s Bearings”, which can be added to a tub of water and used to gently bleach stains in clothing or to clean surfaces.

Early on, the idea of using actual wash pots with this imbuelement was considered, but it was discovered that water left in such a pot overnight would become deadly by the next morning and difficult to dispose of without causing considerable damage to wherever it was dumped. Actual Alkaline containers are therefore not usually sold, except by knock-off vendors with a poor reputation for consumer safety.

Cooling – 30 J

The object perpetually maintains a temperature slightly lower than ice, or approximately -4 degrees Celsius.

Becoming a rapid staple of modern living, the cooling imbuelement is the most widespread

source of installment payments to Legerdemain and Sons. Mythrill plated-box coolers, which contain an internal set of mythrill plates surrounded by insulation, are a common sight in the homes of the upper crust, and a much envied object of desire to the middle class. The Furta military has also developed smaller, portable boxes for use by mounted units and are highly regarded for their ability to preserve scavenging spoils.

Heating – 30 J

The object will burn hot like a coal whenever it is struck by flame. The flame may be as small as one provided by a match, and once it is ignited will rapidly reach temperatures hot enough to cook by. It is not advised to hold objects with this imbuelement while they are active.

The object may be deactivated with water, and only with water. If the object is buried or otherwise deprived of oxygen, it will continue to burn regardless. The amount of water required to deactivate the object is only about a cup-full, regardless of how big the object is.

Legerdemain and Sons described their new Mythrill Miracle Cooker as a wife's best friend in its initial advertising, releasing magazines featuring smiling, fat, contemporary women using the mythrill-bottomed pot to prepare meals for their husbands. The product eventually became notorious for causing housefires due to consumers not realizing they had to be turned off between uses. The imbuelement continues to act as a safety hazard, but is considered an essential survival tool by frontiersmen wealthy enough to afford it.

Imperceptible – 85 J

The object (not the person holding it!) will become invisible whenever it is placed in dim light or darkness. Additionally, the object cannot be heard, even if it logically should be, such as by producing a gunshot or striking another object. It should be noted, however, that most bullets are

supersonic and will produce a characteristic whip-crack sound on their own, regardless.

The object becomes perceptible again only if exposed to direct sunlight.

Exactly what was being attempted during the development of this imbuelement and why is unclear, because it hasn't been made available commercially. Black markets, however, have been known to circulate such items, and the second President for Life of Furta, Aaron Virgie, was famously shot to death by an assassin wielding an Imperceptible firearm. The assailant was never discovered, and Virgie was found dead on his balcony approximately an hour after the deed.

Light – 30 J

The object emits a light as bright as day wherever it goes. The light will comfortably fill a space the size of a modest theater (approximately 1100 ft², equivalent to 100 m²), but the object itself is not blinding to look at, nor is it specifically obvious the object is emitting the light. Shadows can still be cast as though light were being emitted directly from the object, and if the object is placed in a backpack or covered by a blanket, the light will be dimmed as well (although it may be a clear a bright object is inside the blanket or backpack, depending on the opacity of the material).

The light cannot be turned off.

When first discovered, the Light imbuelement was considered a major breakthrough in candle-saving, and Legerdemain and Sons rushed to secure a contract to build new streetlights in the city Filadell, rennovating the gas lanterns already in place. The project was a roaring success – such a success, in fact, that locals complained they could no longer tell night from day and whined endlessly at town hall meetings. Ultimately, Legerdemain won out, saving Filadell a great deal of tax money on their

lighting, and ushering a new era of heavy window drapes.

Cartridge Ammunition Imbuements

These imbuements are only available for cartridges. Unfortunately, some magical innovations are only possible by creating mythril-tipped rounds that activate when they collide with a target, or else their spell can harm the user when firing the round, and are therefore not suitable to be applied to shotgun shot. All of Legerdemain and Sons' most popular imbued ammunition are named after magical creatures, to keep in the spirit of the technology.

Devil Rounds – 25 J

Devil rounds explode into fragments when they hit a target, causing a considerable amount of destruction. Legerdemain officially advertises the cartridges as being potentially lethal within ten feet of their zone of impact.

Devil Rounds are so named for the notorious, exploding “Devil Ant”. An insect from the southern regions of Malco that contain a caustic acid in their abdomens. When they bite large prey, their bodies will burst, splattering their victim in burning fluids. So too does Legerdemain’s most popular cartridge imbuelement leave a similar, explosive impression.

Devil Rounds are made up of a lead body with a hollow interior. Imbued mythril is then inserted into that core and locked into place as the bullet’s tip. When the tip strikes a target, the mythril detonates. The force of the blast itself does most of the damage, but the lead body will also fragment, embedding small shrapnel into anyone unfortunate enough to be caught in the blast. These rounds are especially deadly indoors, and every box of Devil Rounds contain detailed written instructions and an illustration of a cowboy blinding himself by firing a round at a person sitting on the other side of a poker table.

Powderbug Rounds – 100 J

These incendiary cartridges explode like a blooming, napalm rose with a radius of about a hundred and fifty feet. Anything not killed in the blast will be doused in a sticky, flaming tar that will continue burning for several minutes.

The Powderbug is an insect native to the volcanic regions of Ureta. It’s capable of producing a blinding light from it’s abdomen that closely resembles a white phosphorous flash. However, the Powerbug has nowhere near the destructive potential as the ammunition for which it is named. Officially classified as artillery by the Furta military, it is sometimes given to sharpshooters and deployed strategically as a means of wiping out cannons or supply stockpiles.

The blast is usually deadly enough, but the fire can spread quite easily given the long burn duration of the magic. Their use is often followed by an attack amid the chaos caused by the rounds. Respected and feared though they are, few civilians will ever purchase such a destructive cartridge, and not many weapons dealers carry them. Their expense is one limiting factor, but it’s also rare for anyone outside the military to have practical use for such devastating rounds. Each box comes with a detailed written warning and a picture of a cowboy blowing up an entire saloon by firing a round indoors. They are almost universally banned in populated cities.

White Viper Rounds – 40 J

White Viper rounds explode into an alkaline, bleach-like powder on impact with a target. Though they have less penetrating power than typical ammunition, anyone who inhales the powder released by the round will likely be incapacitated by coughing fits, and will then later require medical attention.

Featuring the most sinister looking White Viper on their box that the artist could render,

White Viper Rounds are one of the most feared and hated weapons of the modern era. When used in large quantities, the powder can overwhelm an open area and obliterate wildlife and combatants alike. These rounds are sometimes deployed against Elves in grasslands, who are otherwise quite a nuisance to spot amid tall grasses, but even in such cases, men who have had Viper Rounds deployed against them protest they are entirely too much.

The mythrill tip of the White Viper Rounds are encased in a thin layer of copper, and it's not advised to remove the case. The mythrill underneath has a chalky texture, which will rub off on the skin and cause terrible bleach damage to whatever part of the body it came in contact with. The White Viper, for which the round is named, is an odd breed of magical snake whose bite is a cytotoxic alkaline. The snake itself is actually brown and yellow, with black banding – but the whitening bleach stains occurring near their bites is more notable.

General Ammunition Imbuements

These imbuements can be placed on any kind of ammunition, including shotgun shot.

Coal Hare Rounds – 35 J

Once a Coal Hare Round is fired, it begins to rapidly heat to the temperature of burning coal. If it becomes embedded in something flammable, it will almost certainly cause a fire. If embedded in a person, they will cause terrible and likely fatal burns. Because the round uses the Heat imbuement, and such heat can activate the powder in a cartridge, if the bullet is exposed to any flame even as small as the one produced by a match, the bullet will detonate, either by the fire itself or the rapidly heating Coal Hare Round.

The Coal Hare Round is regarded as one of the more tactically useful forms of mythrill ammunition by the Furta military. Because it can eventually lead to fires even if embedded into damp wood, it is an extremely reliable way to stir

pandemonium in an enemy encampment or fort, and is less expensive than the devastating Powderbug Round. Individual soldiers, however, find the ammunition to be rather loathsome, because being cooked from the inside out is a terrible way to die.

The coal hare itself is an adorable breed of rabbit with especially fluffy, black fur. They are common in dry grasslands and forested regions, and have a magical capacity to withstand a surprising amount of heat. From reports, they appear able to simply hide in their burrows and hibernate through wildfires. The Coal Hare Round box features a particularly cuddly rendering of the animal, sitting cheerfully in front of a raging forest fire.

Fester Toad Rounds – 20 J

Fester Toad rounds carry dangerous disease, and when they wound a living creature they tend to cause gangrene or otherwise deeply complicate the healing process. The exact nature of the illness isn't precisely known, but these rounds can affect all forms of plants and animals. The illness is not contagious.

Fester Toad Rounds began with supposedly noble intentions. Legerdemain and Sons, attempting to develop a healing round, are known to have visited many hospitals and performed a broad variety of experiments using mythrill needles and surgical equipment. Though the details and development of imbuing techniques are kept tightly under wraps, eventually rumors began to circulate regarding cursed needles, which when used on patients almost entirely assured they would die from worsening infections.

Today, such mythrill is now used exclusively in weaponry, though they haven't observed much popularity use among civilians nor the Furta military. Perhaps by merciful fate, because the disease inflicted by the ammunition does not spread, it is not so much more tactically

effective than standard ammunition to justify their cost. The box of the Fester Toad Round features a grimacing fester toad, a magical amphibian famed for its fast-acting poison, brandishing a shotgun and sporting a long, white beard. They are advertised as “munitions you know will kill ‘em”.

Rubber Goat Rounds – 5 J

An uncommonly seen form of ammunition, Rubber Goat rounds have a certain amount of bounce to them that makes them less lethal than most rounds, while still able to incapacitate targets. They remain dangerous, of course, and they leave giant, ugly bruises wherever they land. They can bend and damage armor, but are known to be just as likely to reflect off a steel cuirass or sewn plate.

It’s not entirely clear what Legerdemain and Sons were trying to develop that led to the Rubber Goat Round, but it seems to be salvaging a bad situation. Advertised almost whimsically as a “non-dangerous round”, with a rubber goat dressed as a deputy on the box, Legerdemain insists it is the ammunition of choice to secure that “Wanted Alive” bounty alive. However, reports of the ammunition killing its targets regardless leave it with a professional reputation for not quite living up to its claims.

The Rubber Goat is an almost laughable breed of magical mountain goat that is saved from its occasional clumsiness by having an unusually bouncy body. They can fall from great distances without injury, and are very good at leaping away from prey. The character featured on the Rubber Goat Round box was eventually adapted to appeal more to children, and parents who can afford it are sometimes cajoled by their demanding kids to purchase this ammunition to learn to shoot with, though when parents observe how quickly it depletes they tend not to buy it again.

Sol’s Eel Rounds – 35 J

Sol’s Eel Rounds are simply the Light imbuelement applied to a bullet or shot. They emit a constant stream of highly visible light that will fill a small theater (approximately 1,100 ft², equivalent to 100 m²), yet the rounds themselves are not blinding to look at. Once fired, it will be easy to view them traveling in dim light conditions, and if they are still visible after hitting a target, will light up the area. If they become embedded inside a person, the person tends to be illuminated by the round, creating a visible glow inside them.

Sol’s Eel Rounds, named after the Sol Eel for its vibrant bioluminescence, were something of a happy accident for Legerdemain and Sons. Having already perfected the Light imbuelement and using at a civilian capacity, a few engineers decided to load some cutting chaff into shotgun cartridges instead of sweeping it into a recycling receptacle. It turned out that the shrapnel was quite visible for distances further than the bits of scrap metal would travel, and after a bit of playing with the stuff the whole wilderness was lit up like broad daylight.

When the engineers reported what they’d found, they were promptly fired for stealing company property. Afterward, their idea was used to produce the Sol’s Eel Round, which was marketed to the military as a compact and portable solution to night-time engagements.

Sweetfoot Rounds – 50 J

Sweetfoot Rounds can be neither seen nor heard unless they are exposed to direct sunlight. This means that, unlike most ammunition, they do not produce the characteristic “whip-crack” sound of supersonic travel, and if they become embedded in a target they may be catastrophically difficult to find and remove. Even when hitting a target, no sound will be produced, although the sound of a man falling over is still likely to be heard by anyone close enough nearby.

Sweetfoot Rounds are available almost exclusively on the black market and are outlawed in most cities and townships.

The sweetfoot is a nocturnal animal with unnervingly large eyes and long, spindly limbs. They hide in trees and have a diet consisting of berries and insects. The Sweetfoot Round is given different nicknames regionally, but is most widely known thanks to an early law enforcement incident where a box of the rounds were recovered.

After the silent, midnight murder of Senator Ralph Nikos, police went about questioning the staff of the hotel where the killing had taken place. When one staff member failed to make an appearance to work the next day, the investigation went straight to his apartment in downtown Furta City. By the time they'd arrived, the man had already fled the scene, leaving behind a few personal belongings and a box of ammunition with a crude picture of a sweetfoot doodled on it. Within, a few mythril rounds still remained, mixed in with cheaper, conventional ammo.

The police put out a national reward for any information regarding the "Sweetfoot Killer", as he came to be known, and since then most people have associated the sweetfoot with the silent rounds.

The GM Details

Alright, so as a GM, your work is cut out for you with this system. Players can't see the numbers, so it's up to you to tell them what's happening in a way that makes sense. You don't want a character on his last legs chasing after some giant, unholy insectoid beast just because you underestimated how hurt he was. But before we get into the *how*, let's establish some hard numbers, which the GM *will* use.

Character Attributes

The base characteristics of an ordinary person are as follows:

Standard Attributes	
Strength	3
Dexterity	3
Resolve	3
Wits	3
Perception	3
Charisma	3
Ego	3
Combat Attributes	
Reflex	3
Combat Skill	3
Health	6

Strength

Strength is your ability to lift and move things. It also affects the amount of damage you do in melee combat.

Dexterity

Dexterity represents your fine motor movements, such as those used to perform sleight of hand, to pick a lock, or perform surgery. It does not impact your ability to bludgeon someone to death in combat.

Resolve

Resolve is your ability to take a hit without falling unconscious, or to fight through a disease or a poison. Passing out from an injury is a common threat to an Easy Boy, especially the loner types. If at any time a character takes damage exceeding his Resolve, he is incapacitated. Being incapacitated does not necessarily mean knocked out – it may mean his leg is too messed up to stand on or he's suffered a concussion and can't see straight any longer. Either way, he is out of the fight and in need of some assistance.

Wits

Wits are your ability to think fast and reason through things. A character with a lot of Wits will have an easier time recalling facts and figures, doing quick math in his head, or otherwise figuring stuff out. Of course, a character with a strong professional background is not necessarily possessed of a lot of Wit. A well-read professor may have memorized plenty of details about his subject of expertise, but may not have a lot of Wit in general.

Perception

Perception is your ability to notice things with their senses. High perception means keen eyes and a young man's hearing. Poor perception may mean the character should be wearing glasses, if they could afford them.

Charisma

Charisma affects your social capabilities. A character with high charisma will be more likely to persuade, intimidate, or otherwise convince other people of things through conversation or acting.

Ego

Ego is your mental certainty about yourself, and of how others relate to yourself. A character with higher Ego is more likely to see through various forms of mental manipulation, magical or otherwise, and is more liable to know

if someone is lying to him. Ego will not make a character innately capable of determining if something is true or not, but it may help them realize whether the details add up.

The result of Ego checks will often depend on why the player is making it. For example:

Lucille Diedre is arranging a contract with a banker to confiscate a local man's mythrill refrigerator. The banker promises Lucille 40% of the profits from the repossession, a cut which seems a little too good to be true. Lucille checks her Ego against the banker's Charisma and Lucille succeeds. She realizes that after legal fees and other financial shell games, there won't be any profits, so Lucille renegotiates to 20% of the gross income, to which the banker begrudgingly agrees.

This is one reason why players who are trying to get too much out of character creation are instead simply given a lot of Ego. They're fishing for good deals, and having a high Ego means they won't be swindled out of a reward any time soon.

Reflex

Reflex is simply the order the player will act during combat. It's a measurement of just how itchy your trigger finger really is.

Combat Skill

Just because a man can lift a bear doesn't mean he can win a fight with one. Combat skill determines how good you actually are at fighting, whether it be attacking or dodging.

Health

Health is all that separates you from a visit with the reaper. If a character takes twice his health in damage, he'll die. If his health reaches zero, he's bleeding profusely and is likely to die soon.

Character Accounting

Starting off, every new character is given 40 experience points, which you as the GM will spend based on how the player described the character. Attributes cost 2x the next rank to acquire, and skills cost 1x the next rank to acquire.

For example, the player behind Lucille Diedre described the character as a fast talker. The GM, therefore, decides to increase Lucille's Charisma to 4, which costs Lucille $4 \times 2 = 8$ XP. The GM also decides to buy three ranks of Persuasion, costing $1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ XP.

During character creation, you can also sell characteristics if the player described themselves as having certain weaknesses. If, for example, they're an older man and their eyes are going, you might reduce the character's Perception from 3 to 2, freeing up an additional 6 XP to spend elsewhere.

If a player doesn't seem to have a very firm idea of who his character is, and as a result you aren't sure what to do with their points, just put their starting XP into combat attributes and skills. In most cases, this is the correct answer and you'll find it's where such players interact with the game more often.

Gaining Experience

As the game progresses, you'll want to advance the players along. A base allotment of 3 XP to increase everyone's combat abilities is recommended, and no more regardless of how much fighting the characters engage in. Otherwise, you should award experience depending on what a player did during the session, up to a certain maximum amount of XP. This is because you want to encourage interaction and roleplaying – and not just little character vignettes, but behavior that drives the game forward and has real meaning.

No more than 5 XP per session is recommended for non-combat related improvements, so you should spend the points on things the player is using most frequently. If they are using a very broad set of skills, invest them into the related attribute. If they are narrowly resting on the same tactic, by lying to everyone they meet, for example, then you might invest those points into Persuasion, specifically.

Some professional skills may require the player to find a teacher, invest in some reading, or exhibit some specific constructive behaviors. For example, a player who keeps opening locked doors by shooting them probably shouldn't gain experience in Lock Picking, even though he is destroying locks, which is part of the skill. But you may be able to justify giving Lock Picking to a character who keeps trying to mangle padlocks with tools. Eventually he will learn which tools to use and where to harm the locks.

So Why Am I in Charge of All This?

This system and its setting strives to be, above all else, an exploration of the unknown to reinforce the mistakes already in the making. To delve deep into lands your characters have never been, and then pee on them, as your characters have urinated in so many other places, consequences not known and be damned.

In a nutshell, it's important that players not have a precise grasp of their limitations, and even more important that they not know the limits of their environment and the beasts that dwell within it. No two people are the same, some wolves are stronger than others, and some animals are secretly shape-shifting fae creatures that will eat your insides. The player shouldn't see the dice rolls and realize before the numbers are even added up that they're necessarily dealing with something supernatural if the creature's whole basis for survival is being able to blend in. If the party is being watched from the shadows, you shouldn't have to tell everyone to take perception checks. You do it all behind the scenes and have things play out as it happens.

It's especially important where it comes to mythrill items, which are explained in further detail in a later section. Mythrill is alive, in a very vague and inaccurate sense: that is, it will learn from the character it belongs to and try to help the character do what he does, whether that's shooting, running, lying, or gambling. But the metal will gradually grow into this relationship, and it should not be clear to the player when this help begins, how it manifested, or if it manifested. If a player decides to trade his current mythrill item away for another one, he shouldn't know for sure what he's giving up. A certain amount of sentimentality towards this magical equipment should be encouraged through superstition, and if your player misattributes some of his good luck to his favorite gun, then all the better!

Curses, hexes, diseases, and mystical elements should be abound in every session, such that your players should be genuinely nervous about every little bit of folk-lore they hear.

Throw the Poor Easy Boy a Bone

An important premise of this system is to get players performing their roles, acting as characters rather than thinking a lot about their builds and the data on the sheet, but that doesn't mean we're out to get anybody. Quite the contrary, if you notice a player isn't interacting much and only participating during combat, you should break the "no extra combat XP" rule and help them out a little. Don't tell them about it, but make them a little stronger, a little more accurate, and a bit tougher than the others. When they start to realize they're the team bruiser, they may grow into it.

Likewise, you shouldn't punish people who are trying to game the system too much or create problems. Roll with it. Exacerbate it. If you have a player constantly trying to upgrade their mythrill weapons, never satisfied with what they have, then start dramatically escalating the power of something they've hung on to. It's something the mythrill learned from the character, you see.

Depending on the demeanor of the player, you may be able to take this all the way to a tale of “wax wings”, making the power of the item greater and greater until it becomes volatile, difficult to control, and an existential threat just to use.

“Easy, Boy” makes problems worse, bigger, and more interesting. So long as you get a memorable story out of it, it’s all for the better.

Skills

The following is a non-exhaustive list of skills you may find useful in Easy Boy. Players can attempt any kind of skill without any penalty, but if they have no ranks in the skill they will be approaching it as a total novice.

A skill may rely on one or more attributes, depending on how the player is using it. It's up to the GM to decide which attribute is most relevant.

Acrobatics

This skill allows a character to perform dramatic acrobatic movements without slipping and falling. If a character decides he's going to vault off the shoulders of one of his foes, for example.

Acting

Not just limited to a stage, if a character pretends to be someone else or carry on in a false persona, they will use acting. A character who is good at acting may also be able to cobble together a very convincing story about their fictional self, and may pass unnoticed quite some time.

Animal Handling

Animal handling must be bought as a category. For example, "Animal Handling: Horses" grants the player a bonus to any attempt to understand or manage a horse. This *may* allow them to ride the animal if it can support the character's weight, and keep the animal under control, but without the Riding skill the player won't be able to do much else as he's carried along.

Appraisal

Appraisal lets a character know how much something is worth at the basic level, and what the margins and going prices are for things at a higher level.

Break-fall

Falling down can hurt, but sometimes you have to leap out of a flaming building and into the convenient hay cart below! Break-fall can reduce the odds of taking damage from such events.

Bribery

Knowing how to bribe people doesn't merely mean knowing how to establish the right price to get dirty deeds done. It also means knowing how to approach someone to give or receive a bribe without getting caught. When using this skill, as long as the failure is not too severe, the character may be able to play off a rejected bribe as a perfectly legal joke or "low interest loan".

Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy must be purchased as a category. For example, Bureaucracy: Clown School will help a player submit all the necessary paperwork and whoopee cushions to the clown school in order to receive their degree without getting a pie in the face. There are many forms of bureaucracies but all of them are similar to clown school.

Climbing

A characters who fails a climbing check normally gets tired and climbs back down, rather than falling to their deaths. In the event of a critical failure, they may get stuck half way up. With the climbing skill, characters can climb higher or up more unlikely terrain.

Concealment

Concealment allows a character to hide things on their person or elsewhere. It can be used to hide traps, guns, or contraband anywhere things can be hidden. It also provides knowledge of how to find things that have been intentionally concealed, and how to build hidden compartments.

Cooking

Cooking allows a character to prepare high quality meals if they have the ingredients, and also to preserve meats and other foods for long-term use. A cook can also stretch three days worth of food into four, assuming he successfully puts together a palatable dish of leftovers.

Cryptography

This skill allows the character to create or crack codes. Many military communiques are encoded, but a talented enough cryptographer may be able

to break such codes and read them anyway. This skill does not apply to things like the codes of a safe, which are not so much a pattern as they are a series of randomly chosen numbers.

Deduction

If characters spend a lot of time not sure what to do next and looking for clues, deduction will help them find those clues and potentially realize what they mean. Treated as a bit of a GM's fiat, even if the logic doesn't add up, sometimes the character's reasoning is correct regardless. Players who often draw wrong conclusions or pursue incorrect threads should develop this skill and eventually be right about their hunches whenever this skill is rolled successfully.

"I can tell by the type of cheese left on the counter that the murderer wasn't fond of sharp cheddar. There can be only one man! Watson, our culprit is none other than "No Cheddar" Johnson, the owner of the steamboat, 'Pretty Unlikely'!"

- Marshall Buttz, shortly before arresting "No Cheddar" Johnson for the murder of the town mayor. Johnson went on to confess to everything, including that he found the "No Cheddar" nickname to be quite accurate in spite of nobody ever calling him that before.

Demolitions

A character with demolitions knows how to make bombs, and also how to arrange them properly. This may mean maximum destruction, but with sufficient skill can also mean knowing how to perform safe, controlled detonations that minimize collateral damage.

Disguise

Disguise permits a character to alter their looks to be less distinguishable from their normal features. Very talented masters of disguise can even disguise their voices to become indistinguishable from who they are impersonating.

Fast Draw

A successful use of the fast draw skill may allow a player to draw their weapon without counting it as an Action. Additionally, it will allow a player to spot when someone else is going for their weapon, potentially before their foe is able to draw it.

Forgery

Forgery allows characters to create official looking documents and currency. Making perfect fakes may require special machinery, but with enough time and a bit of know-how, many documents can be passed off at a glance as the real thing.

Gambling

Gambling does not make a character inherently more lucky, but it does mean they know what forms of gambling have the best odds and how to fix a game to their advantage. Characters skilled in gambling may know how to count cards or hustle other people into gambling traps.

Intimidation

Being skilled at intimidation means knowing how to scare people off, into compliance, or into giving information to you. It will not necessarily make a character good at or comfortable with torture, but it will help characters realize an opponent's weaknesses and how to leverage them in a conversation or demand.

Knowledge

Knowledge must be purchased in a category. For example, "Knowledge: Filadel" would give a character in-depth knowledge about the city of Filadel, including its movers and shakers, where the crime is, and other important facts that might not be available second hand. Characters do not need a knowledge skill to know general information about something, or even to know something specific that they've learned over the course of the game. It's a broad, detailed quantity of useful information which the character can regurgitate at will.

Language

Language must be purchased in a category. By default, most players are assumed to fluently speak the same language without spending any points for it. Knowing another language will not cost points if the GM does not anticipate using it during the game, and may be provided as free “flavor”. A rank of 1 implies the character knows some basic phrases. A rank of 2 means the character can communicate, albeit slowly and with an accent, and can slowly compose or read writing. A rank of 3 implies the character is fluent in the language and may read and write in it at a natural pace.

Lock Picking

Lock Picking provides knowledge on how to open locks. At a basic level, this means knowing how to efficiently destroy most locks, but with higher skills the character may know how to unlock things without harming them. Lock Picking also provides a character with knowledge about complex security devices, such as safes, and the measures by which they may be broken into.

Medicine

Medicine provides a character with knowledge and abilities related to surgery, first aid, and how much liquor it takes to stop feeling it when your leg gets chopped off. Not precisely an exact science in this era, it is still useful to stabilize bleeding or save people from gangrene.

Navigation

Navigation means knowing how to figure out where one is through the position of the sun, the stars, or local landmarks, and how to make maps based on those things.

Persuasion

Persuasion covers a broad variety of social skills, but mainly has to do with non-confrontationally getting people to come around to a point of view. Attempting to seduce someone is also a form of persuasion, as is bargaining for prices, fast talking, and similar types of social interaction.

Profession

Profession must be purchased as a category. It allows a character to know how to make money in a particular field. For example, “Profession: Clown” might inform a character where he can go in town to get paid for falling down into a pie, or if indeed anyone in these parts would pay to see that. Higher skill values in profession may mean the character knows some more creative ways to make money in a field, so if they won’t go for the ol’ pie butt routine, he knows they will throw money if flaming chainsaws get involved.

Repairs

Repairs must be purchased as a category. “Repairs: Revolvers” would allow a character to disassemble and make field repairs to any kind of revolver. The category shouldn’t be bought as a specific material. “Repairs: Mythril”, for example, would be nonsensical. Players can learn to repair wagons, guns, clothes, and cookware, but not something as broad as “wood” or “any weapon”.

Riding

Riding must be bought as a category, such as “Riding: Horses”. A character with riding can stay mounted on a horse while performing other complicated tasks, such as shooting, avoiding gunfire, or while juggling. A highly skilled rider will not lose control of the animal or wind up careening off into a tree while he’s trying to aim.

Running

A character with the running skill can not only run faster, but also run for longer than the average person. This skill comes especially in handy when trying to evade pursuers.

Sharpshooting

Sharpshooting is purchased in a category, such as “Sharpshooting: Rifles”. A character with this combat skill is able to shoot targets at longer distances without incurring penalties to their attack rolls. Each two ranks in sharpshooting will eliminate a single range penalty. For example, a character with a bolt-action rifle and four ranks in

sharpshooting may shoot their weapon without ranged penalties all the way out to “Further” ranges, instead of only “Far”.

Sleight of Hand

Slight of hand can make it easy for a character to misdirect someone’s point of attention. Useful for card tricks, it can also be used to create distractions in general because it’s an understanding of where the eye is drawn and how to exploit that. A character very skilled at sleight of hand may be able to make a woman on stage seem to disappear before your very eyes, when all along he merely prevented you from looking in the right places.

Stealth

Stealth means knowing how to stay hidden an unnoticed. This doesn’t mean hiding in shadows alone, but also how to walk into places as if you belong, so that people don’t question you being there. Blending in with a crowd, giving the appearance of waiting for someone, or even standing out too much can all be valid forms of stealth.

Survival

Survival must be bought as a category. For example, “Survival: Desert” would provide a character with knowledge of how to find food and shelter in a desert. It may also provide them with knowledge of when not to travel or where not to go, or if they should pack additional rations due to food scarcity in the environment. Extreme levels of survival may permit a player to find food and water anywhere it can be found, but at an ordinary level merely informs the character of how best to endure the area within their expected time of staying.

Tactics

Tactics can inform some characters of how to approach fights in a way that will reap the most rewards with the fewest risks. Like deduction, it is another form of GM fiat, where although the plan may not make practical sense, it may all the same be true as a form of convenient. Characters who

consistently make failing plans should eventually develop this skill, and then have their plans succeed against the odds if they make a successful tactics roll.

“So if we set their camp on fire, they should run right into the river, and that’s when the sharks will get them!”

“Sharks, sir?”

“That’s right, they’ll smell the blood. And the opportunity. Why do you think they call an opportunist a shark? They’ll be there.”

- Marshall Buttz, speaking to Dennis Goesalong, just before successfully routing the 131st division of the Furta infantry by feeding them to river sharks who just happened to be there.

Tracking

Characters with tracking can hunt people and animals alike across a variety of terrain. Tracking can be used to follow footprints and trails, and to identify what made those trails, but the skill can also be used for hunting down people through trails of information, such as last known addresses and personal acquaintances.

Trapping

A character with Trapping is capable of building and recognizing a wide variety of traps. Using only what’s available from the surrounding area, they may be able to make snares which will trap careless animals. Trapping alone is not enough to be able to hide the traps from smarter creatures – that would require Concealment.

Weapon Familiarity

Weapon familiarity must be purchased as a category and provides a character with a bonus to hit with attacks using a specific weapon. Two ranks in “Weapon Familiarity: Revolvers” would give a character +2 to hit when using revolvers, for example. Ranks must be purchased for specific types of weapons, such as “Revolvers”, “Swords”, or “Bare Hands”.

Peculiarities

Sometimes there's something that's just downright peculiar about a character, and it's such a defining feature that you'd like to reinforce it mechanically. These abilities shouldn't normally be given to characters during creation, but should be purchased as the game progresses if they seem warranted based on a character's behavior.

To give a character a Pecularity, purchase it using XP by spending the cost listed. The following options are by no means an exhaustive list, and if the GM observes a character is building a reputation for something not represented here, he should consider inventing a Pecularity to mechanically enhance the character's legend.

Brick Wall – 4 Points

This guy walks in the bar and he's decked out like a damn knight. Full plate armor, just strutting around with a shield on each arm like it's the most natural thing in the world. And I guess it must have been a full moon, because a fight broke out, and the scuffle doesn't go on for long before everyone realizes they don't know what they're going to do with this guy. He just flips over a table, then shoves it full force into somebody, pinning them against the wall. Then somebody shoots him, and he still had to go to a doctor for some bruised ribs, but honestly, the type of people sometimes.

Brick Wall increases the Health of every piece of armor being worn by a character by 1, without increasing the weight of that armor. This means a character wearing five pieces of overlapping armor will have 5 total extra Health in that armor. The extra health does not require time or money to repair, and is simply patched up in the process of regular maintenance. A character should earn this for being a bit of a defense nut – if they choose to forgo weaponry to hold a shield in each hand on top of wearing sewn plate, two chain shirts, and a cuirass, for example. This

character will practically forgo the ability to move in order to have more defense.

Coward's Coward – 3 Points

I've seen a book about a man who wrestled a bear, read a poem about a lady that faced down an entire bandit gang, and seen a news article about a drifter who fought off the sheriff and three deputies by himself, but all those people could have died. I wouldn't know for sure, because I ran off before I got to the end of the story.

A character with Coward's Coward no longer consumes a free Action by moving, or by diving for cover, and he will always pass his Acrobatics checks on his free Actions so long as they are intended to get him safely away from danger. This Pecularity should be given to a character who always seems to vanish well before the fighting gets in over his head or sometimes even when he's winning. Don't let the name deceive you, it isn't an insult – a character who never fights a battle he didn't choose is choosing to live!

Darn Lucky – 3 Points

When a man has been shot about a hundred times without dying, fallen off six roofs without breaking his legs, and walked away from at least two explosions without so much as an upset stomach, you've got to admit, that guy is darn lucky.

Darn Lucky is a Pecularity that reduces any damage the character takes by 1, and causes any attempt to stop him from bleeding to succeed. A character who receives this peculiarity should have probably had a good several situations where he's been shot a few times in a row, but not enough to kill him. If the GM feels like the character should be dead by now, but against all odds he isn't, he should probably be awarded this Pecularity.

He Hits People – 4 points

So I hired this team of drifters to watch my back while I was doing my prospecting, and you know drifters. They're a pretty weird bunch. But one of the guys – he's kind of small, just wearing jeans and a shirt, nothing remarkable about him – for six days he doesn't say a word. Not once! The only time I saw him do anything was when he ripped a bobcat in half.

A character with He Hits People doesn't do much, but he does get a +3 to damage whenever he lands a hit on anything. Additionally, NPCs should find this character bizarrely unnerving, and it will be clear through most interactions the NPC can't keep their worried eyes off him. It's hard to explain why, by the character is scary. A character should earn this Peculiarity by doing almost nothing but combat. This character doesn't talk much, they don't have many ideas, and they won't use their skills unless someone explicitly orders them to. All they do is *hit people*.

Fastest Gun – 2 Points

So I said something about his mother's orangutan, and he just leans in and asks me to repeat it. I feel something poking into my chest, and I think it's his fingers, but I look down and it's the barrel of a shotgun. A shotgun! I didn't even see him pull it on me!

Fastest Gun allows a character to draw any weapon without counting it as an Action. Anyone the character shoots after drawing the weapon will be treated as though they are surprised, meaning they are hit on a base roll of 14, without consideration of their Combat Skill. A character should be awarded this Peculiarity if they're frequently performing a Fast Draw to initiate combat on their own terms, especially if they're doing it with large weapons you wouldn't normally expect to have pulled on you in the blink of an eye. You'll know a character deserves it if it feels like no NPC ever gets to act first because the character always starts shooting before the NPC expects it.

Learned the Sword – 3 Points

See, you guys are stupid. You use these guns and waste so much money on ammunition, but me? I kill enough stuff with a knife and only had to buy the thing once. If it weren't for all my medical bills, I'd be making a danged fortune!

A character with Learned the Sword gets a bonus to their Combat Skill whenever they're being shot at. Additionally, if they are hit by a ranged attack, they may reduce the damage by 1. Characters should earn this Peculiarity by being insistent on using melee attacks, whether their fists, a sword, a knife, or a polearm, even in situations where a gun would clearly be a lot better. Instead of holding a rifle and participating properly in an ambush from a safe distance away, this character waits in the bushes to leap out directly on top of his enemies. This Peculiarity does not provide its advantages if the character is using a working firearm – only by fully dedicating one's self to the blade, or a blunt instrument of trauma, can one truly walk the path of the man who brings knives to gun fights.

Never Catch Me – 3 points

You think you've snuck up on me, but the truth is I was waiting. Right now you've got that revolver trained on my back, but I'm wearing a vest stuffed with black powder, and if you pull the trigger you'll blow us both sky high! See, what's really happened is I've snuck up on you.

A character with Never Catch Me cannot ever really be surprised or otherwise caught flat-footed. In every fight, no matter how big or small, how surprising it was guns got involved, or how unlikely it was that a giant centipede would swoop down *right then* and try to grab him, the Character was *expecting it*. Characters should be given this Peculiarity if it seems like they're always going well, far out of the way to stack the deck and succeed at everything before it begins. Merely declaring they are paranoid or suspicious of people is not enough. The type of character who earns this Peculiarity is actively plotting, and

always seems to slip between the fingers of every NPC that's out to get him.

Siren's Voice – 2 Points

The last time I trusted that woman I wound up in the woods, some fifty miles from home in nothing but my underwear, holding a letter telling me not to go anywhere because she'd be back by morning. I waited three days, and she didn't show up, but I tell you, so help me I'd probably do it all again.

Siren's Voice makes it so that a character has the strange and horrifying ability to regain someone's trust even after the character has blatantly stabbed them in the back once or more. No matter how bad off the character left them, NPCs are willing to forgive again and again so long as the character apologizes or promises things will turn out better this time. A character should probably get this peculiarity if they've already managed to convince a horribly wronged NPC to trust them a second time. It's especially warranted if they keep talking their way out of a comeuppance with false promises, only to be followed up with more disaster.

Struggling With Modernity – 3 Points

I'm not sure what story book this guy crawled out of, but he was wearing a green tunic and carrying around a bow and arrows. So somebody gets the idea to ask him where his Merry Men are at, and before you know it, it's twenty paces at dawn. So they walk their separate ways, this guy draws his bow and arrow, and, twang! Shoots the other guy in the forehead. Afterward he bought everyone a round and we had to sing a toast to the health of King Tucker the Third.

A character who is Struggling With Modernity can draw and fire a bow in a single action, permitting them to use the weapon almost as well as a gun. A character should earn this peculiarity by refusing to move on from medieval times, insisting on using weapons that would have only been available before the discovery of gunpowder, particularly bows and arrows. Such a

character should be fully under the dubious belief that a well-trained Bowman is every bit as good as a soldier with a bolt-action rifle.

Playing the Game

Here's where you, as the GM, are thankfully given some consideration. A lot of games try to offer players a very broad variety of ways to mechanically do things, which results in a bit of a "mother may I" situation where your players might start asking you if they can "ready action: close door" to perpetually prevent monsters from chasing them through a room. Hey, it says they can in the rules!

In "Easy, Boy", you're mother and you're the one who's handling all the mechanics, so you don't need to ask yourself what rules your players can exploit.

Rollin'

Every event in "Easy Boy" except for damage is determined by rolling 3d6 and adding them together. Then add the related attribute value and any skill ranks to that result, and there you go. A fairly hum-drum challenge, such as trying to safely jump down from a high place or apply a tourniquette, has a difficulty of 14, meaning a character would want to roll a 14 or greater to succeed.

Each rank of difficulty imposes a penalty of 2 to the required roll. Such that an average challenge requires a roll of 14, a task of medium difficulty requires a roll of 16, a difficult task requires a roll of 18, and a very difficult task requires a roll of 20, and so on.

For example, Lucille Diedre finds herself pursued by a gang of four other Easy Boys who are mad she beat them to a contract. She's unprepared and cut off from her crew, so she opts to leap out a second story window, hoping the fall will do less damage than her assailants intend to. The GM rolls 3d6, scoring a 3, a 2, and a 5. Lucille has 3 points in Dexterity and a single rank in Break-Fall, meaning she adds these values together to get $3 + 2 + 5 + 3 + 1 = 14$.

This is just enough to succeed at a novice breakfall, so Lucille takes a bit of a hard landing, but manages to spring with it enough she'll walk off the pain and not be in bad shape over the long run. A bit of bruising is better than being drawn in quarter!

Dice rolls can go the other way, too. If the players have done something that should make a task easier, or are working together in a productive way, then you should provide a bonus to make the difficulty 2 points easier. If it feels tough knowing exactly how many degrees of penalty or bonus to apply, don't overthink it: a lot of times, if the dice roll *feels* right then that's good enough. You may also sometimes find players asking to do things that seem impossible to you, in which case they simply won't succeed. Normally failing at an impossible task shouldn't take a lot of explanation.

Be generous with results. Easy Boys are pretty liable to be killed by a few dumb decisions, and they really don't need the GM's help to make it into the grave.

Below is a table providing an example of a type of challenge and how difficulty might be applied in terms of medicine.

Task	Challenge Penalty
Apply a tourniquet	- 0
Stitch up a wound	- 2
Safely remove a bullet from a wound	- 4
Cut off a limb without killing the patient	- 6
Safely remove a bullet from a vital organ	- 8

Contested Rolls

In cases where two characters are pitted against one another, the difficulty of the roll is affected by the opposition's abilities. The target to hit is $11 +$ the opponent's related attribute $+$ the opponent's related skill.

For example, the local sheriff has just broken up an illegal cockfight, discovering Marshall Buttz holding a dog in a chicken costume and a bag full of money. Marshall decides to insist he never saw some of the money and presses it into the sheriff's hands. The GM rolls 3d6, which turns up as a 5, a 4, and a 6 – a 15, a pretty good roll for Marshall. Marshall also has a Charisma of 4 and three ranks in bribery, which brings the roll to $15 + 4 + 3 = 22$.

The sheriff's Ego is 3, and he has some familiarity with Bribery, giving him 2 ranks in the skill. This means Marshall's target was $11 + 3 + 2 = 16$, which Marshall has exceeded. The sheriff takes the money, looks at the dog in the costume, and realizes that there's no way this has ever happened more than once. He tells Marshall not to do it again, knowing that certainly Marshall couldn't do it a second time, and leaves the scene safe in the belief that this is easier than filling out the report.

As with other rolls, the GM may see fit to impose penalties or bonuses depending on the circumstances. If Marshall in the above example were a known criminal, the GM might give Marshall a penalty of -2, or possibly more depending on whether there's a big reward for capturing Marshall.

Combat

As with most systems, combat gets a bit trickier, but not by much. You have to do all the rolling, after all. It stays as simple as it can be so your players aren't left waiting.

Starting Combat

Combat is started by whoever started it. That is, whoever fires the first shot, hits the first person, or throws the first tomato. That character goes first. After that, the order characters take their turn is determined by Reflex. Whoever has the highest Reflex goes first, descending from highest to lowest. If players and NPCs have tied Reflex, the NPCs go after the players do – again, Easy Boys are not fantasy knights, they're a sprained ankle in the desert away from death, so let the players have advantages where they can get them.

If players who have equal Reflex are competing with each other, perhaps to harm one another or do something before someone else can take their action, tell the players to roll one d6, then disregard the number and proceed in the order of whoever rolled the dice first.

Tom, Derek, Larry, and Sally are all trying to snatch up a bag of money before their compatriots can, and have resorted to grappling and fist-fighting to do it. Tom started the fight by punching Sally's character, but Derek, Larry, and Sally all have the same Reflex score. To resolve the tie, the GM asks everyone to roll a d6. Sally throws her die first, followed closely by Derek and then Larry. Sally gets to take her turn first, then Derek, then Larry. The numbers on the dice are disregarded. Players do not roll numbers in "Easy, Boy", only the GM's numbers matter.

Once everyone has had a turn, if anyone is still left standing, the round begins again with the highest Reflex on top regardless of who initiated the fight.

Actions

Each character gets two free Actions. However, they can actually take as many Actions as they like on their turn. An "Action" is defined as anything the player does, whether it be moving, shooting, ducking for cover, or anything else. When a player's turn comes up, ask them what

they would like to do this round, and let them describe what they're attempting in full detail.

Each action they perform beyond their free Actions imposes a penalty of -2 on their whole turn, effectively causing them to attempt each Action in the chain at -2 to their roll. That is, if a player tells you they run behind the table, flip it over to use it as cover, then fire their revolver at a bad guy, that's three separate Actions, meaning you'll impose a penalty of -2 when they start shooting. If the player had to also draw their gun to shoot, drawing a weapon is an Action, placing them at a -4 penalty to every task they try to perform that requires a roll.

This gives players opportunity to do a whole bunch of dramatic things – swinging from chandeliers, shooting multiple opponents, tossing a barrel of black powder and then shooting at it – but the odds they'll botch any step of the plan goes up the more steps there are. Just because they fail at one action in a chain doesn't mean they won't try to complete the others, but be fair. If the player drops the black powder directly in front of his own feet, you can imagine he won't still go ahead and shoot it there. If the player objects to something because a part of what he was doing failed, then skip it and keep going with his other Actions using the same penalties until his turn is complete.

If the player gives you such a long list of Actions that there's no way it could all be completed within about five seconds, then it's safe to assume those cumulative penalties are so bad that the character fumbles around trying to do everything at once and gets nothing accomplished. Do at least try to explain some of how this plays out before moving on, however.

Moving

Each round in “Easy, Boy” takes place of the span of five seconds. Therefore, there are not precise move speeds in “Easy, Boy”. Rather, when a character says they're going to run somewhere or climb something, if the GM feels it

might be a little far-fetched to cover that distance in five seconds, he rolls a skill check to see if the character is able.

The average person can actually run fairly quickly at full tilt, achieving a speed of approximately 41 feet per second. This means that a character might be able to travel as far as 200 feet in a dead sprint, and that's on average. In two turns, that's more than enough to cross a football field. With the Running skill, they're liable to make it further than that, and by falling, leaping, climbing, or hitching a ride on a moving wagon before jumping off at the end of their turn, characters might cover a lot of ground.

If a character fails a test of their movement, it doesn't normally mean they fall down or suffer somehow. It just means they didn't cover as much distance as they intended and that Action in their turn will only be partially completed. A particularly bad roll just means they stumbled over something, but presumably picked themselves back up right away – they will not have to waste an Action getting up, saying they tripped is just flavor to explain why the sprinting didn't pan out. The only time they should be in danger on a failed movement roll is if they're doing something wild, like trying to pass in front of a moving train, leap between tall rooftops, or anything else that is clear to both you and the player as a potentially life-threatening thing to be trying.

Getting up from being prone does count as an Action, and in fact can be a bit exhausting on its own. If a player is moving around a *lot*, it may eventually feel prudent to have them take a Resolve check. If they don't pass, the character is likely winded and will have to slow down. As with failing a movement test, this really only means the player covers less distance than they intended. A character with Running, Climbing, or Acrobatics can add the relevant skill to Resolve tests for Actions related to those skills.

Ranged Combat

Combat works the same as Contested Rolls. When a character shoots at another, roll 3d6, add the character's Combat Skill, then add any ranks in Weapon Familiarity with the weapon they are using. To hit the opponent, the attacker must roll equal or greater to 11 + the target's Combat Skill. Stationary objects have a general target objective of 14.

Because there really are no “dodge” skills, this does mean that success favors the attacker, but never fear! If the target is moving swiftly, lying prone in tall grass, hiding behind reasonable cover or any kind of rational advantage, the GM should inflict a penalty on the roll that reflects the target's defensive position. A rifleman hiding inside a fort can be quite difficult to actually hit! As the GM you'll have to use your best judgment here. Simply running across a room or hiding behind a table shouldn't offer a significant advantage against someone fifteen feet away, but it may at least help.

To get a feel for how to apply these penalties, here's a chart with a few recommended penalties:

Type of Cover/Action	Recommended Penalty
Target is moving quickly	- 2
Lying prone in tall grass or a ditch	- 2
Target is behind “soft” cover	- 2
Target is behind a brick wall	- 4
Target is nearly impossible to see	- 4
Target is behind a reinforced rampart	- 6

Your players (or their adversaries), may also try tricks like attacking with the sun to their backs so that their enemies are looking into the

sun while shooting. This would impair the enemy's vision and impose a -2 penalty from being moderately blinded. Being trapped in a burning building full of smoke and fire would also be likely to impose a penalty. Penalties are cumulative, so if your players built a reinforced wall on wheels and rolled it towards the enemy from the east at dawn after setting the enemy's house on fire, if the enemy even tries to shoot at the players he's going to be doing so at a whopping -10 penalty. Frankly the guy should probably just run for his life.

Because the availability of reliable armor is quite sparse in “Easy, Boy”, and medicine is rather unsophisticated, employing clever tactics and good discretion is the number one fast track to fighting more than one battle.

It's also important to be mindful of how far away people are from one another. Certain weapons have shorter effective ranges and will suffer a -2 penalty for each “degree” they are outside their range. Below is a table describing approximately where the various penalty regions lie.

Point Blank	20 ft (6 m)
Near	80 ft (24 m)
Intermediate	160 ft (49 m)
Far	300 ft (91 m)
Very Far	600 ft (182 m)
Further	850 ft (259 m)
Long Range	1,200 ft (366 m)

You may notice that “Point Blank” is still long enough to hit someone across a room. In a lot of cases you won't have to consider range penalties unless characters are fighting at lengths greater than a football field. Fifty paces at dawn is enough to have no trouble killing one another with revolvers. That means that, fortunately, you won't spend much time using measuring sticks to see if anyone's close enough to shoot because the

answer is generally, yes, they're in range. None of the weapons listed can actually exceed "Long Range" and still be within lethal firing range.

If an attack hits, roll the weapon's damage and apply it to the target.

For example, Lucille Diedra finds herself in a tight spot when a group of thugs bursts into the bar demanding to know who Lucille Diedra is. Her companion, Marshall Buttz, draws his weapon and shoots one of the guys before anyone can say anything. Lucille gets a chance to go next and dives behind the bar, drawing her weapon as she does so. Next is one of the thug's turns.

The thug fires a shotgun at Lucille. Lucille's Combat Skill is 4, so her assailant's target is $11 + 4 = 15$. He rolls 3d6, and gets a 3, a 4, and a 5, scoring $3 + 4 + 5 = 12$. He adds his Combat Skill, which is 3, and his Weapon Familiarity: Shotguns rank, which is 2. Dierdra was moving, which inflicts a -2 penalty, and she was able to dive behind the "soft" cover of the bar, which won't stop bullets but will make her harder to hit, inflicting another -2 penalty. The thug's final roll is $12 + 3 + 2 - 4 = 13$. That's not enough to hit Lucille thanks to her evasive maneuvers, so instead he blasts a hole in the bar, dramatically spilling alcohol across the floor.

Throwing Things

Characters may sometimes wish to throw things. In such a case, treat it as a ranged attack, as above. The effective range of a thrown item is Point Blank, with a maximum range of Near, meaning that the attack is performed at a penalty if the character is throwing the object further than Point Blank, and it will lose its lethality if thrown for further distances than Near.

A sufficiently dangerous thrown weapon (that is, something like a knife or a hefty rock, rather than an egg or a tomato) will always deal $1d6 + STR - 5$ damage. The lowest amount of damage that can be dealt is 0, implying the target

may have been struck, but at such an angle that the object simply glanced away.

Melee Combat

Wild animals and wild players will continue to find themselves at a disadvantage with melee weapons, but the silver lining is that they are still handy in a bar fight! When attacking in melee, take a contested roll as usual. Roll 3d6 for the attacker, then add their Combat Skill and their related Weapon Familiarity. Their target is $11 +$ the target's Combat Skill + the target's related Weapon Familiarity. It can be assumed most stationary objects can be hit automatically in melee if the attacker is close enough to strike it.

However, there's a twist here in that the target may defend and counter. If the attacker fails to hit by 4 points or more, the attacker is hit by the target instead, and the target gets to roll damage against the attacker. Obviously, this does not apply if the target is incapable of fighting back for some reason, or if the target is not aware of their assailant.

Damage in melee combat is the weapon's damage plus the character's Strength attribute. If the character is unarmed, he simply deals damage equal to his Strength attribute.

For example, Dennis Goesalong has found himself in the middle of a bar fight. He isn't sure how this happened, and before people started throwing beer mugs he heard something, something, "your mother's orangutan." Still not knowing what Dennis did to deserve it, a drunk runs up to Dennis intent to knee Dennis in the groin. Dennis has a Combat Skill of 2, but a Weapon Familiarity: Bare Hands rank of 3, because he seems to find himself among these drunken brawls a lot.

The drunk's target is to therefor roll an $11 + 2 + 3 = 16$. The drunk rolls 3d6 and gets a 3, a 2, and another 3, scoring $3 + 2 + 3 = 8$. Additionally, the drunk, being drunk, suffers a -2 penalty to his attack. The drunk has a Combat

Skill of 3 and no related Weapon Familiarities, so his score is $8 + 3 - 2 = 9$. Because this roll is 4 points or more below the target, Dennis simply takes a step back and slugs the drunk in his face before the drunk can hit him. Dennis doesn't have a weapon and his Strength is 2, so the drunk will take 2 damage to his Health.

Called Shots, Small Targets

Generally, any character in combat is already trying their best to kill their opponent, so if a player tells you “I shoot that guy in the head!” they really only mean they’re trying to kill the enemy. All you need to do is roll the attack as normal and calculate damage.

However, sometimes a player might be trying to shoot an enemy in the leg to disable them or stop them from running, or he may try to shoot the gun out of someone’s hand. These are effects that matter beyond simply doing damage, and they’re important! In these cases, you should treat the attack as trying to attack a “small” target. That is, apply a penalty to the attack roll, and if the attack succeeds, describe its effects as appropriate.

Below is a chart to get a general idea of how to apply penalties for aiming at things smaller or larger than a man’s whole body.

Size	Example	Penalty/Bonus
Tiny	A gun, a squirrel, a hand	- 4
Small	An arm, a leg, a coyote	- 2
Average	A man, a mountain lion	0
Big	A horse, a bear	+ 2
Huge	A covered wagon	+ 4

Surprise! And Other Advantages

If a person is totally flat-footed – that is, they aren’t expecting an attack or taking any

precautions to avoid being hit – then they’re treated as a stationary object, which by default has a target to hit of 14. This will apply in any case where, logically, the target hasn’t been given a chance to react or for some reason is choosing to stand in place and hope for the best.

For example, if negotiations break down and a player decides to simply shoot a person under the table, his target isn’t really actively avoiding attacks, so he’s hit on a 14. Likewise, if an argument begins to escalate and a player draws his gun, then shoots someone, that person isn’t expecting it and will be hit on a 14. Penalties for taking more than two Actions still occur, so if a player draws a gun, shoots a man, then dives behind a bush, then the player still does all this at a -2 penalty to all those actions. This attack is considered initiating combat, so once those actions complete, combat begins as normal, with the initiator having already taken their turn, and everyone gets to apply their Combat Skills as usual.

You may notice that a default target of 14 is actually better than if an active character had a Combat Skill of 1 or 2. This is correct. Sometimes holding still is safer than flailing your arms around and running in front of your friends’ guns. People with lower than average Combat Skills have *terrible* instincts in a fight, and can actually be less likely to get hit if they curl up in a ball and wait for the fighting to end.

Players can also even the odds by employing tactics that benefit them. Surrounding an enemy is one way to get a bonus to hit. If an enemy can’t see two attackers because one of them is outside his field of vision, then the attacker the target is not focused on will get a +2 bonus for shooting at the target. Being fully behind a target may confer a +4 to the attack. A person who *knows* he’s in a fight isn’t flat-footed enough to be hit on a 14 by default, and still uses his Combat Skill even against attacks from behind. The attacker can receive the bonus

regardless of whether or not the target is expecting to be shot at.

Bracing a weapon is a good way to obtain a bonus, and is the main advantage of a bolt-action rifle over a lever-action rifle. The lever-action must be continually cocked, which makes bracing the weapon awkward. Lying prone is a form of bracing. Players may also obtain a bonus to aim by spending a round aiming their weapon carefully. The entire round must be dedicated to aiming, because if they distract themselves with anything else then they're simply operating the weapon as normal. Once they fire they would have to take the time to aim carefully again – the extra “aim” does not remain perpetually.

In melee, attackers who outnumber their opponents receive a +2 to hit for each extra man. That is, in a 2-on-1 fight, the two get a +2 to hit. In a 3-on-1 fight, the three all get a +4. In a 4-on-1, all four get a +6, and so on. These bonuses are provided *in addition* to those provided by being outside the target's field of vision or by attacking from behind. Being cornered and surprised by a gang of assailants can be extremely dangerous to an individual person. This also means that if an Easy Boy doesn't run when the rest of his gang does, he may be quickly surrounded and overwhelmed.

It's An Awful Lot of Numbers. I'll Need to Print Some Charts!

The golden rule here is: don't overthink it. It may seem like there are a lot of ways to gather bonuses and penalties, and you'll want to make sure all your figures line up in case a government agency audits your roleplaying game, but don't fall into that mentality. GMing may be work but it's not usually a job. One of the drawbacks in any system is how boring it is to watch other players sit around crunching numbers to see if they can pull off some esoteric maneuver, but in “Easy, Boy”, it'll be especially bad for the players if the GM sits in silence for fifteen minutes consulting charts and playing with an abacus.

In a lot of cases, if a player seems to be racking up a ton of bonuses or a ton of penalties, you'll probably know if they succeeded or not by just glancing at the dice. If it seems fuzzy or you're not sure, rule in favor of the player. There will be plenty of times where you look at the numbers and know you *definitely* just killed a player character. Trust us, it's easy; if the first .45 round doesn't do it, the second one will. Relax and wait for the disaster instead of stressing about whether you're one or two points over the limit to blow a PC's head off.

Just to emphasize again, in most cases if the dice *feel* right, they're right, and if you aren't totally sure the player made it, then the player made it. Nobody should be looking over your shoulder to reverse engineer enemy stats from dice results, so nobody is going to call you out if the math is a little fuzzy.

A single “penalty” is always -2, while a single “bonus” is +2, meaning that if you feel especially uncomfortable with making rough decisions, you can try setting down “pips” to track positive and negative modifiers, then count them when you're ready to do your dice rolls. Just be aware that trying to audit your “pip” counting may still slow down the game and reduce player engagement, so you might be sacrificing narrative pacing for numerical accuracy.

For example, Mark Gamemaster, the group's permanent GM, is trying to resolve combat for his players. One of his players tells Mark that his character plans to run into a burning building, draw his gun, and shoot a person inside the room. This is three Actions, so Mark holds one “pip” on his fingers to count one penalty. Mark notes the smoke in the burning building will cause a penalty to attack accuracy, so he holds up a second finger. Mark knows the target of the attack will require a base roll of 15 to hit, so he multiplies the fingers he's holding by 2, getting 4, and then adds that to the base roll or subtracts it from the character roll, depending on how Mark feels comfortable doing the math.

Mark likes addition more than subtraction, so he imagines the required roll to be a 19, rolls the dice, and sees the character rolled a 14. The character has a Combat Skill of 3 and a Weapons Familiarity of 3, so the character hits his target. Of course, if the character had rolled a 12, Mark might fudge it, call things “close enough” and decide the player succeeded in his attack anyway. There may be modifiers being forgotten, or bonuses that could be acquired if the character acted in a certain way, and by the wording it’s clear the player is fishing for as many bonuses as possible. Quibbling and scraping for those things would slow the game down, and Mark would rather keep things moving because he has other players who’d like to act, so although a 12 doesn’t hit the exact value by Mark’s accounting, it works in the player’s favor and Mark moves on.

If you are *still* worried that getting everything exact is more important than continuing forward, be mindful of the reality that if you are spending an average of five minutes per player to calculate numbers and fish for bonuses, it will take *twenty minutes* for four players to complete a single round of combat (and let’s be honest, that time is usually spent almost entirely on one player. You know which one). Playing more by the gut can reduce that average to a minute or less and allow your players to take five times as many turns in the same amount of time, and if you’re worried about being unfair because you didn’t do the accounting right, that’s why you rule uncertain results in favor of the players.

Dealing Damage

Once a character is hit, they’ll take damage. Damage is determined by rolling 1d6 and adding a modifier from the ammunition used, or from the type of weapon. Subtract this damage from the target’s Health attribute. If the target loses more Health than they have Resolve, then they are incapacitated, either due to pain, injury, or by being knocked unconscious – this means they are no longer able to take Actions and will

wind up laying on the ground, gripping their wounds, screaming in agony, or otherwise not doing anything productive.

If a character is wearing armor or using a shield, reduce the Health of the armor and transfer any remaining damage to the character. If armor is reduced to 0 Health it is broken and needs to be repaired. Damage applied to armor doesn’t contribute to incapacitation, so if a character with 3 Resolve takes a hit of 4 damage but they have a shield that suffers 1 damage, the character is still standing after losing 3 Health.

If a character is reduced to 0 health, they will begin bleeding. In this event, they’ll be dead within a few minutes if they don’t receive aid. The number of minutes they will survive is equal to their remaining health before death.

If a character suffers twice their Health in damage, they are dead.

For example, a prospector thinks he has the rights to a recent mythril find, but the party disagrees. Losing his cool, the prospector fires a shotgun into the chest of Roger Deadman, hitting Roger by surprise. The prospector rolls damage on his twelve bore round, scoring a 6 on a D6 and adding +1 from the ammunition type, dealing a total of 7 damage. Roger has 3 Resolve, so this hit causes Roger to collapse in dazed agony. Roger started with 6 Health, so he’s still alive at -1 Health, but he’s bleeding out and will die in five minutes if he doesn’t receive aid.

On her turn, Lucille Diedre retaliates, shooting the prospector twice with her .30 Rian revolver. She hits twice. On the first damage roll, Lucille rolls a 3. The prospector also has a Resolve of 3, so he’s able to remain standing and could still act if he wanted. The prospector’s 6 Health is reduced to 3. The second shot also deals three damage, reducing the prospector to 0 Health. The prospector is now bleeding too, and will die within about six minutes from his injuries if he doesn’t receive aid, but because his

individual wounds are minor enough he could still try to make a run for it on his own.

Finally, Marshall Buttz gets a turn and whacks the prospector with a pole arm, dealing 1d6+1 damage from the weapon and +3 from Marshall's Strength of 3. Marshall rolls a 5 on the d6, for a total of 5 + 1 + 3 = 9 damage. This lowers the prospector to -9 health after his first injuries, which is more damage than twice his starting health of 6. The prospector dies there on the spot, his head caved by a medieval weapon.

Being Wounded and Recovering from Wounds

Recovering from damage is as simple as resting in "Easy, Boy". For each full day a character rests while being tended to by someone with know-how in medicine, he will recover 1 Health. If no medical help is available, double this time such that it requires two days to recover 1 Health. This means that if a character has 6 base Health, has suffered enough damage to be reduced to -1 Health, and is being seen to by a doctor while he recuperates, he would be back to his usual 6 Health within a week.

Any rank in Medicine is enough to count for "medical know-how" where it comes to bed rest, as the body does most of its own healing.

Being wounded will cause a single penalty to any action a character takes while wounded. This means that if a character decides to keep fighting in spite of taking a .22 to the gut, they'll do so at a -2 to everything.

If a character is bleeding to death, saving him from bleeding will be subject to as many penalties as the character has negative Health. -1 Health incurs one penalty, -2 Health incurs two penalties, and so on. This means that if a character attempts to save a friend who's bleeding to death with -2 Health, the target of the roll would be $14 + 4 = 16$. Don't forget that receiving help with actions can provide a bonus, so if two or more people work together they may be able to offset one penalty. If it looks bad, a character might take

a desperate action, as described under "I've Only Got One Bullet Left", and could acquire two more bonuses to save a friend's life.

Characters who fail to stop the bleeding don't make the situation worse, and there's still a chance they may be able to drag their wounded friend to a doctor before he dies. A character with a higher medical skill than the ones who originally tried to stop the bleeding may also make a separate attempt to do the same. However, do not let your players "game" this. If there's a doctor in the party, or a mere five feet away, the effort *begins* with the highest ranking medical skill available. Players who are familiar with the rules cannot start with the least skilled person and then work their way up to obtain more rolls.

If the bleeding cannot be stopped and a more skilled doctor cannot be reached before the inevitable, the character will die. It may be appropriate for the party to say a few kind words and then put their friend out of their misery.

Hold the Door! And My Actions!

Players can, if they like, hold their turn in preparation for something or just to see what happens. If they do so, it works exactly like taking their turn normally. This means that on a player's turn, he may announce, "I train my gun on the door, and the minute someone runs through it I'm blasting them!"

This is perfectly valid. If someone walks through the door, their turn will be interrupted by the other character shooting them. The interrupting character can then complete the rest of their turn ahead of the character that was interrupted, after which the interrupted character may go back to what he was doing, or may restructure his plans with respect to what just happened.

If an interrupted character decides to change their course of actions after being interrupted, they are considered to have already taken as many actions as it took to arrive at that

point, and will suffer a penalty with reference to the number of actions they plan to take now. So if, for example, a thug originally planned to burst through a door and shoot someone, which was two actions, after being shot, he may choose to still take a shot, but afterward will take cover behind the door frame. Opening the door, shooting a gun, and then taking cover is three actions (more than the free two he originally planned to use), so the thug will now take a single, -2 penalty to his attack.

This can also work towards the benefit of the interrupted character in some cases. If the thug's original plan was to open the door, run behind a box, then shoot, that's three actions and a single penalty. However, after being shot, he might instead choose to remain in the doorway and end his turn by shooting back, in which case he is taking two actions and will not suffer a penalty.

For example, Lucille Diedre is in the back room of the general store. Her crew is outside with the wagon, helping her load up, when she hears the heavy footsteps of a group of men. Lucille peeks through the door and spots a sheriff and several of his deputies. Lucille decides to take the initiative and shoots first, hitting one of the men before she slams the door shut and takes cover behind a box. On the lawmen's turns, she hears them gather at the door, preparing to make an entry.

Lucille declares that when the first man opens the door, she'll shoot him, then make a run for the wagon. When the door opens, Lucille does exactly this! The deputy she shoots, is hurt but not incapacitated. Originally he had planned to open the door, take cover, and shoot at Lucille, but now that he sees her running, he chooses instead to complete his turn by simply shooting at Lucille as she runs out, and since he's only taking two actions now instead of three, his only penalties are the one imposed on him because Lucille is moving and the one imposed from his injury after being shot.

If it seems complicated, this is another case of overthinking. Basically, penalties and bonuses are in the "now". Characters take penalties based on how many actions they intended to take when they structured the plan, or in the case of being interrupted, how many they intend when they *restructure* the plan. A character may not restructure to hold actions (because that would get too confusing), and must follow through with the rest of their turn.

If multiple characters decide to hold actions or declare a sort of interrupt (for example, if the whole gang declares they'll shoot the first person to walk through the door), then resolve the interruptions in order of Reflex, or however seems most convenient in the event of non-conflicting ties, with players acting first as always.

A held action that interrupts another character's turn is considered to be happening at the same time as that character's turn. This means that even if a character declares that they are waiting to shoot someone, then run away, the character that did the interrupting can still be shot at by the interrupted character afterward. After all, you want to try to avoid letting players game the mechanics to do something illogical like always miraculously getting a shot off and disappearing around the corner before anyone can do anything about it. For melee engagements, you may wish to do a contested roll for running to see if the attacker can dash up and swat his victim before they escape.

That is, held actions are not meant to be a super power. In another case, you may imagine all the lawmen who want to shoot Diedra when the door opens are holding their action for when their friend opens the door. At that point, everyone is interrupting simultaneously, meaning that although Diedra goes first and "runs away" as part of her turn, everyone who was holding an action to start shooting when the door swung open gets to shoot at the fleeing Diedra. Lying in wait can give the enemy time to prepare too!

This type of thing can be used to the logical effect of working together. If a group of characters all decide to wait and move at once, then they all move and act simultaneously in the same kind of temporal space. This does mean, however, that if the stated intention is to “shoot the first person we see”, then when the group rounds the corner everyone will shoot that person simultaneously, probably wasting ammo, though likely getting the job done via overkill. Characters working together may need to declare specific target picks to avoid such an instance.

Suppressing Fire

Sometimes a character will prefer to be proactive and give their teammates an opening, and one logical way to do this is through suppressing fire. In essence, this is as simple as firing towards the enemy, scaring them into keeping their heads down lest they get nailed by the stray rounds coming their way. If a character asks to do such a maneuver, inform them that they fire two times this round in the general direction of their choosing. For the GM’s consideration, both shots are considered individual Actions, so a player that moves and then commits to suppressing fire will be taking three Actions, and so on.

If the enemy being suppressed decides to risk moving or poking his head out to do anything, then the character performing suppressing fire may attempt one free shot at that person, with one bonus to his aim. If the target chooses to leave his cover by moving, then the target doesn’t get any benefit from being behind cover when he’s shot at, relying only on movement and whatever ambient advantages exist for him. This free shot doesn’t consume any ammo, as it is considered to be one of the shots fired as an act of suppression.

The free shot from suppression fire should happen before any interruptions from held actions occur, meaning a character should take care if they try to hold actions too liberally. Staying put

may result in being suppressed, then killed during what should be their opportunity to strike.

I’ve Only Got One Bullet Left!

Sometimes, the player characters will be down on their last leg. One last bullet to save their hides, one last swing before the last man goes down. In these cases, they *really* want things to work out, and adrenaline is likely to be surging. In the event it’s clear something may be a player character’s last chance, you may award two bonuses, for a total +4 to that action.

This can apply to combat, skills, or anything if it feels dramatic enough. However, there’s a catch. The player character in question must really go full out to achieve this task, meaning that depending on the circumstances they might be risking their own health or well-being to see things through. At the end of this action, the player character will be hurt, exhausted, or both.

For example, Roger Deadman has been wounded during a scuffle, and he’s bleeding out. Nobody in the crew is experienced with medicine, but Roger has been in the crew for years, and truth be told, Lucille Diedre had a bit of a thing for him. With hot tears streaming down her face, Lucille does all she can to tie the wound off and stitch it closed. The GM decides to give her a desperation bonus of +4, and thanks to that and a +2 bonus from Dennis Goesalong who fetched some alcohol and water to assist, she succeeds on her medicine test.

But that doesn’t mean the ordeal stops here and now. To get to that point of success, a crying Lucille has to throw Roger onto her horse. Then, navigating the stallion with one hand and clutching the bleeding Roger like a vice in the other, Lucille rides into town, barely keeping herself mounted with the strength of her legs and heart. Minutes pass – five, ten – it feels like an eternity that Lucille only gets through by blocking any other considerations out of her mind.

By the time Roger finds himself before a doctor, Lucille has become dehydrated and overexerted. She herself will need a few days of rest to recover, but the doctor must admit, Lucille was nowhere near to death as Roger, who her valiant efforts have just saved his life.

It can be helpful to let the character guide these heroic, desperate actions by describing them to you, but if they aren't sure then you should do your best to really sell the stakes and just how by the skin of their teeth the character made it. Of course, if a player objects to something like riding back into town to save their friend, then they probably weren't really feeling it! You can't award a bonus for pulling out all the stops if, in fact, stops remain.

Even if the character fails at these heroic actions, a great display of effort and personal sacrifice still occurs. They are just sadly in vain. Try to play up these moments too, and make them feel earned. Had Lucille not made it, the doctor would have had to inform a distraught and exhausted young woman that her friend was gone, and after quite a few tears she'd have to spend a few days recuperating in pensive despondence.

Weapons, Armor, and Imbuements, the Hard Data

Weapons

All damage is determined by rolling 1d6 and adding a modifier. The modifier is determined by the ammo or weapon type, and generally larger caliber rounds have higher modifiers. Refer to the following table for a general idea of how these modifiers are assigned:

Ammunition	Damage
.172, .22, 20 bore	1d6 -1
.30, 16 bore	1d6
.375, .38, 12 bore	1d6 +1
.40, .45, 10 bore	1d6 +2
Slug	1d6 +3

Weapon	Damage
Bare Hands	STR
Buck Knife, Bayonet	1d6 -1 + STR
Spear, Hand Axe	1d6 + STR
Pike, Sword	1d6 + 1 + STR

Arrows and Bolts	Damage
Makeshift Arrow	1d6 - 2
Arrow	1d6
Bolt	1d6 + 1

As you can see, if for some reason you wanted to allow players to wield more radical weapons, such as an executioner's axe or a .50 caliber weapon, it's really just a matter of throwing another +1 on top of whatever you feel is beneath that. Be advised, the least damage a melee would should usually do is 1d6 -1, or else there runs a risk that the character could do less damage than their bare hands. This should make it

pretty easy to remember what types of weapons do what kinds of damage.

And yes, melee weapons do a considerable amount more damage than guns thanks to adding STR to damage, but between the risks of being counter-attacked, surrounded, and out of cover, melee fighters have to have some advantage or else the players you *know* will want to wield swords are going to have a pretty bad time. Don't forget, the most popular kind of imbued ammo *explodes*. It's high risk and may as well get some reward.

A Bayonet is a bit special in that it can be affixed to a rifle, such that it is considered "drawn" when a person has drawn the rifle it is attached to. This can help save characters an extra action of fishing a knife from their pockets.

Firearm Type	Effective Range	Max Range
Derringer	Point Blank	Near
Revolver	Near	Intermediate
Shotgun (firing slugs)	Near	Intermediate
Shotgun (firing shot)	Intermediate	Far
Lever-Action Rifle	Intermediate	Long Range
Bolt-Action Rifle	Far	Long Range

With firearms, every gun has an "Effective Range", which, in this system, refers to how far the weapon can be fired by an amateur without much difficulty. With the Sharpshooting skill, some guns will continue to be lethal at longer ranges and the penalty for aiming outside their Effective Range can be offset. However, every gun has a maximum limit at which the ammunition will continue to do lethal damage, and if the player is still able to hit a target at these distances, it's assumed the damage is only superficial if still painful.

The effective range of a firearm and its accuracy is a much more complex question that's difficult to boil down to convenient dice rolls that you can remember for short-hand, but the simplest way of thinking of it is that Derringers are meant to be used indoors, revolvers are good firing down streets and alleyways, shotguns are respectable mid-range weapons for hunting from a safe distance, and rifles, with a sufficient vantage point, can reliably hit a man from as far away as a football field or several times further with practice.

Slugs may do more damage, but that's because they're bigger and heavier than normal shot. Any shotgun can use slugs instead of normal shot, but they wind up exchanging range for penetrating power.

Shotguns and rifles may be braced, which provides a bonus to accuracy. However, bracing a weapon is an action. With lever action rifles, cocking the lever forces the character to reset the brace between each shot, using an action for each reset. Shotguns and bolt-action rifles only need to reset a brace after reloading. Even if a character is bracing by being prone, they still have to use an action to reset the brace in the above situations.

Reloading a magazine requires a single Action, whereas breach-loading a round requires one Action per round. Revolvers generally require one Action per round to reload, but because a player can take as many actions as they can manage within a round, it's feasible to imagine them quickly refilling the whole cylinder if they dedicate an entire round to reloading. Otherwise, speed loaders can be purchased, which will reload the entire cylinder in one Action.

Missile Weapon	Effective Range	Max Range
Short Bow	Point Blank	Intermediate
Long Bow	Point Blank	Far
Crossbow	Near	Intermediate

Bows and arrows require a lot of practice to be able to aim and use in the heat of battle, and exploiting whatever range capabilities they have requires learning how their ammunition responds to the effects of physics over those distances. It requires a single action to notch another arrow into the bow, and one action to draw the bow. Therefore, firing a bow usually requires three actions – notching an arrow, drawing the string, then firing the arrow.

A crossbow is fired just like a gun, and can be accomplished in a single action. However, reloading the crossbow requires an entire turn dedicated to the task, and a character trying to reload will be considered a sitting duck if he can be attacked, meaning, while reloading, he will be hit on a base roll of 14 or higher regardless of his Combat Skill.

A Bowman may choose to fletch arrows on their own if they have survival skills in the area they're in. The main trick is finding the proper resources to make an arrow, but it's not too hard when knowing where to find the right sap and a few feathers. However, these rather traditional "makeshift" arrows have less penetrating power than the steel bodkins sold in stores, so they do less damage, as listed in the chart above. They still can be quite useful to preserve ammunition when hunting, however.

Armor

Armor is also a bit tricky because of how it handles different kinds of stress and impact. In the modern day, woven fabrics like Kevlar are excellent at stopping bullets, but would not do amazingly against a spear or a poleaxe. And although there did exist such a thing as "proven plate", its practical function as armor diminished as rifling technology led to more powerful firearms. Such armor can still slow munitions down and sometimes prevent a serious injury, but afterward it may be badly deformed.

All the same, the cuirass continued to see historical use by a variety of militaries up until

more modern armor was invented, and there are historical cases of frontiersmen sewing steel plates into their clothing or the like. Furthermore, our setting introduces a magical metal, so it's only logical your players are going to want to wear armor.

However, without things getting very complicated, it's difficult to reflect how different kinds of materials express their compressive and sheer strengths, or how every type of weapon exploits that. So yes, a guy with a dagger would totally be stopped if the blade hit a cuirass, whereas a rifle would still be fatal if it hit the cuirass at point blank. So, all armor simply has Health, which is damaged before the character wearing it, and when that Health is depleted it's assumed the armor has been deformed or otherwise damaged beyond providing useful protection.

If you wish, for the purpose of believably, you might choose not to deplete the health of a character's armor if they're attacked by a knife, a beer mug, or bare fists, and instead simply reduce the damage done to the character wearing armor, but it's up to you, and making exceptions may open you up to fascinating yet nerdy arguments about metallurgy and weapon design.

Armor	Health
Wooden Shield	1
Sewn Plate	1
Metal Shield	2
Chain Armor	2
Cuirass	3

Most defensive equipment is expensive to purchase and should take about a day and 5 J per lost point of Health to repair. This does mean that in a lot of cases, it's faster and cheaper to completely replace a piece of armor that's been totally mangled.

Players can overlap armor, and may be tempted to do so. If a character winds up with more than 8 base Health worth of armor, you should start inflicting penalties to tasks that require Dexterity, Strength, and Resolve to reflect just how overburdened they are draped in all that metal. Just because a character has a high Strength doesn't mean they're exempt from suffering a penalty – that high Strength is already offsetting related rolls, after all, and the armor is generally restrictive to movement while sapping the character's stamina.

You will observe that mythril armor can give a player more Health in armor, but that shouldn't be a factor in suffering a penalty because mythril is actually quite light for its durability. Only these base values are significant, and a character decked out in 16 Health of mythril is as free to move around as a character wearing 8 health of steel.

Imbuements

It's an important to have some hard numbers on what, exactly, certain weaponized imbuements will do when fired. Below is a list of all of such imbuements and how you should treat them.

Coal Hare Rounds

Coal Hare rounds do damage just like mythril rounds of their caliber. That is to say, +3 damage to whatever damage is listed for the caliber of the round. If a person is actually hit with one of these, they're liable to die from the internal burns they cause from heating. For players, you should rely on the damage done to decide how this works. If they will die from the damage of being hit anyway, you might describe the particularly horrible effect of this round burning them, but if they'll live, then explain the bullet quite thankfully passed through them without stopping. For less significant NPCs, you might assume being hit by a Coal Hare round results in a noisy, screaming death.

If a Coal Hare hits a flammable object, that object will tend to ignite by the next round, unless it's wet enough it would have to smolder for a while. A "near miss" when shooting at someone behind cover may result in the round hitting the cover instead, then igniting the cover.

Devil Rounds

Devil rounds do 1d6+6 damage to anything within 10 ft of where they land. If someone survives one of these rounds, a doctor will usually be picking small pieces of lead out of their skin with a pair of tweezers.

Fester Toad Rounds

Fester Toad rounds do damage just like mythrill rounds of their caliber. That is, +3 damage to whatever damage is listed for the caliber. Whenever a character is wounded with one of such rounds, it will take them a week per Health to heal the damage caused by the round. The process will require hospitalization and oversight by a medically trained professional, without which the victim is likely to die due to infection. Player characters will always recover under the given specifications, but less significant NPCs may succumb to infection regardless.

Powderbug Rounds

These will deal 1d6+12 damage to anything within 150 ft. Afterward, anything caught in the blast will be burned to a crisp by a napalm-like substance released by the round. The fire will continue to burn for several minutes. The exact time is up to you as the GM, and should depend on how flammable the local area is, but it's safe to assume most things affected directly by a Powderbug Round will typically die, and any human should run for their lives from any creature that isn't killed by one.

Sol's Eel Rounds

Aside from producing light in a fashion similar to an object with the Light imbuelement, these rounds do damage like normal mythrill rounds of their caliber. That is to say, they do +3

damage in addition to the damage determined by their caliber.

White Viper Rounds

This ammunition will do as much damage as is listed for their caliber, but also releases a powder, if inhaled, that requires a Resolve roll. If the character hit by the round fails to roll an 18 or higher, they will immediately be considered incapacitated due to uncontrollable coughing and gasping for breath. Once exposed to the effects of this round at all, a character's lungs will be damaged and they will require Resolve rolls for any physical task they perform for the next week, as though they were exhausted. Players always recover from these effects at the end of the week, but at the GM's discretion, NPC's may suffer these effects for life.

Two characters especially close to one another, such as shoulder to shoulder, can both be affected by a White Viper round at once, since it is a burst of airborne powder. Additionally, at the GM's discretion, shots that only just barely miss may be considered to have impacted into nearby cover, exposing the person behind that cover to the effects of the round as listed above, though they will not take damage directly from the bullet itself.

Rubber Goat Rounds

Rubber goat rounds do -3 damage from their listed caliber, but are treated as doing their full damage when considering Resolve and incapacitation. That is, if a .30 rifle hits a character and rolls a 4 for damage, the character that was struck will only lose 1 Health, but they will still be incapacitated if they have 3 Resolve or less, because 4 damage exceeds a Resolve of 3.

Mythril

Mythril is really special. It's something everybody wants and is capable of some truly fantastic things, and yet nobody really understands it. Except for you, the GM. Some of what does is consistent, but other things are up to you to decide based on the game and the characters in it.

Even though mythril is a superior metal in most regards, it's also quite expensive, meaning that not every object that uses mythril is made *entirely* out of mythril. Mythril is also light-weight, so mythril ammunition is often mythril-tipped with a lead core to maintain the integrity of travel distance compared to other types of ammunition. Likewise, a "mythril sword" may actually be made primarily of steel, but will have a mythril edge fastened to it, and a mythril shield will be plated in mythril but not actually entirely composed of mythril. You also wouldn't be likely to see a whole train made of mythril, but a train would use imbued mythril in its engine for the advantage of perpetual heating.

The Consistent Benefits

Mythril is not just a superior metal, it's also magical. There's something about it that makes the person using it *luckier*, and when you cook with a mythril pot, you'd swear it makes you a better chef.

- Mythril items that are *NOT weapons* always provide a bonus to whatever task the item was designed for. That means that, when actively used, a pair of mythril spurs can provide a bonus to horse riding, a mythril compass can provide a bonus to navigation, a mythril jewelry item can provide a bonus to persuasion, as examples.
- Mythril weapons always provide a bonus to Combat Skill when actively used, which is particularly significant since

Combat Skill determines a person's ability to hit and evade.

- Mythril ammunition, including arrows and bolts, without an imbue does an extra +3 damage (check details on imbued rounds to determine their damage).
- Mythril armor has double the listed Health for its type, yet still weighs the same, meaning a mythril cuirass has 6 Health rather than 3, but won't slow a character down any more than a steel cuirass would.

It requires one day and costs 25 J to repair 2 Health to a mythril armor. If any kind of mythril equipment is damaged or destroyed, it doesn't lose its imbue, and it will continue to express that imbue even while broken.

These consistent bonuses are only ever applied ONE time. That is to say, just because someone is wielding a dagger in either hand, they don't get two bonuses. They get ONE bonus to Combat Skill from wielding two mythril daggers. A person also can't obtain a bonus unless they are using the item in its intended fashion. That is, keeping a mythril knife in your pack will not provide a bonus to Combat Skill – you have to be brandishing the knife as a weapon. Likewise, you can't wear a mythril ring and then hide it under a glove and still receive a bonus to persuasion; the point of jewelry is to be seen, so if people aren't seeing you wear it as intended, it doesn't work. The magic is a little fickle like that and works the way the mythril understands it, not how the players think a lawsuit should play out.

For example, Dennis Goesalong has a mythril buck knife, a mythril bayonet, a Mythril Miracle Cooker, and a standard .38 Anthog Bolt-Action Rifle. When in combat, if Dennis draws his Anthog with the bayonet attached to it, he will only get the bonuses that make logical sense. That is, while he is being shot at, the bayonet is being brandished, so the magic of the mythril gives a

bonus to Dennis's Combat Skill for the benefit of evading bullets.

However, when Dennis goes to fire the .38 Anthog, he uses his normal Combat Skill, with no bonus, because his mythrill bayonet is not intended to shoot people at long range, it's intended for stabbing. And although Dennis has a mythrill buck knife as well, even if he drew it, Dennis would still only receive a single bonus in melee, in spite of having two mythrill weapons.

Finally, Dennis has a habit of knowing when he's being given a raw deal, even though he always cooperates with everything anyway. Because Dennis always wants to know when he's being cheated, the GM decides to give Dennis a single bonus to his Ego for determining such things. He gets this bonus just for having mythrill on him, but only one bonus in spite of having multiple mythrill items.

The Inconsistent Benefits

Here's where the GM having a monopoly on the numbers really comes into play: characters are encouraged to have mythrill equipment, and over time, that equipment will begin to express itself in a way that suits the character. At its simplest level, this means that having mythrill on the character's person will provide a bonus whatever type of thing the character seems most prone to doing, whether it be talking, running, acting, or tactics. Providing the bonus is just the tip of the iceberg, however.

Depending on dramatic sense and what the character does during the course of the game, mythrill items can grow to develop almost legendary magic properties that reflect the properties of the person wielding them. Although humanity had access to very little mythrill in the prior eras, plenty of famous stories revolve around the use of legendary magical weapons. And indeed, the magic weapons were magical, because they are mythrill, but the weapons learned their magic *through the person wielding them.*

This is why it's appropriate to take a character who's always trying to get more, have higher attack bonuses and more mythrill equipment, and escalate their gun to grow more and more powerful until it starts to become volatile. That character is restlessly seeking power, and his equipment grows into that thirst. Reflecting it, growing it, expanding it, and then becoming that on its own.

Of course mythrill isn't a monkey's paw. If a character has a particular and often expressed sense of justice, his mythrill weapon may strike especially hard against people who the character thinks have done wrong. As if a story book, and the character is the protagonist of the story. Whether he's really right or not doesn't matter, it's what the mythrill learns from the wielder.

These properties are ascribed to those who are especially driven and ambitious, who have a very firm sense of self. That is to say, you shouldn't have to force a legendary property on someone. It should develop as something the mythrill is doing in tandem with the character, and will make a certain kind of sense. Think of it like Excalibur, which supposedly chooses a wielder worthy of the sword, only in this case the sword becomes worthy of the wielder.

Mythrill learns from other mythrill, meaning that if one mythrill item reflects such a property, all the character's mythrill items will in some form. That means that if the mythrill sticks to basics, every item the character owns will provide a total of ONE bonus to whatever the character seems to do most often. That is to say, it doesn't matter how many mythrill knives, stoves, or rings they have, they will get ONE bonus to whatever their most common behavior is. If that most common behavior is combat, it may well overlap with a Combat Skill bonus being provided by weapons.

Ultimately, the type of bonus and dramatic properties assigned to the mythrill carried by the character is up to the GM. It can come and go,

always be there, only be there when convenient for the plot – whatever. The characters are not to know how or when these properties manifest. A sword won't glow or announce itself unless the GM feels like that would somehow relate to and improve the story, or the drama of the character using it. Talking, especially, should be avoided because it can spoil a lot of the mysticism.

It can be an especially good idea to have mythril items help with desperate actions if their function is related. For example, if an NPC is racing the clock to ride his horse into town before an invading army arrives, his mythril spurs might kick in and drive the horse to travel with almost supernatural speed and endurance, if you feel that love of country or hatred of this invading force is truly a motivating factor for the character.

Nobody knows exactly what causes mythril to behave like this or to become so much more than what it appears, but there are many stories of it having those abilities, and it is therefore not wrong for players to treat mythril like it can produce miracles out of nowhere. It can. It may not, and for most people it doesn't, but it absolutely can do miracles.

Because mythril learns from mythril, even if a character loses their legendary gun, or their folklore spurs, that doesn't mean they've lost everything. So long as they had another mythril item on their person, the next mythril spurs or gun they buy will learn the legend and express it like the previous item. The magic will not work for another person, of course, and thieves will be profoundly disappointed, because the mythril reflects the properties of the person using it, and is not by itself capable of legend.

Elves

Elves are not the long-lived, aristocratic people of the ancient world you may be familiar with. Nor are they those ridiculous guys at the North Pole who wear striped stockings and pick on disabled reindeer. In “Easy, Boy”, the term is a broad one referring to those magical beings who exhibit some inkling of language, civilization, or some kind of organization that people are willing to relate to. There are more types of Elves than man knows, and the tendency to lump every Elf together as being part of one blob is patently mistaken.

The two things that all Elves have in common is that they are always found around naturally occurring deposits of mythrill, and that they seem to hold mythrill sacred somehow. Elves don't regard mythrill as being important because of how it helps them, like humans do. They believe it should not be disturbed at all, because whenever it is, disaster follows. Elves get sick more easily, their abilities are weakened, magical prey sources they may have been eating start to die off, and all kinds of horrible things occur. That's why, almost universally, they will guard and protect mythrill deposits quite viciously, because those that didn't have already died off.

The Origin of Elves

The existence of an Elven species begins gradually, like all things do. Mythrill is naturally magic, and where a great deal of it is gathered, it tends to release that magic as a kind of pollutant. Over time, organic life begins to incorporate magical properties into itself by absorbing that mythrill pollution, and the animals most dependent on magic never stray too far from the metal.

But unlike, say, a bird who develops a beak best suited to eating seeds, Elves can be all sorts of fantastical things, and their bodies may not develop around a mundane purpose. They can also build fantastic things, including, by some reports, dangerous, booby-trapped religious temples that lead directly to a mythrill vein.

Almost all develop a language and some kind of higher intelligence, and many are communal because they all have to live in the same territory. No two species of elf are liable to share a single language, but some particularly widespread mythrill veins may have several kinds of Elves living in the area, and the different tribes may be cooperative, or they may squabble.

Elves are also sometimes mistaken for hauntings. They've been worshiped as gods. Before man's rapid acquisition of mythrill, it was sometimes heard of for Elves to live at the edge of human society, trading with man and accepting offerings. It was said that angering them would lead to bad luck, whereas respecting their whims could lead to blessings. Some historical battles have also been won by leading an opposing army into Elven woods, wherein the Elves seemed to sympathize with one side and helped their favorite.

Because they do not stray far from their mythrill source or communicate with one another, every Elven tribe is liable to have their own opinions and interactions with humans. A tribe which has had no contact with man may find them to be odd, or amusing. Another may regard humans as being some kind of demon, and try to drive them out on principle. In the modern day, it's frequently heard of for some thoughtful Elves to try to communicate and negotiate with humans, only to regret it. Others still are predators at heart and would view people as an exciting new type of meat.

Many of those peaceful tribes that might barter and trade with man were already wiped out during the Mythrill Rush. The Elves remaining tend to be vicious or somehow dangerous by nature, or they've learned to distrust humanity in its entirety. There exist some rather large Elven tribes who have quickly learned tactics and strategy, and have proved virtually impossible to dislodge from their homes. Such large tribes are presumed to be sitting on equally sizable spoils of

mythril, however, so a local government may try again and again to bring them to heel.

With so many remaining mythril pockets guarded by deadly supernatural powers, rumors of non-violent Elves that have yet to come in contact with humans are highly sought after, because such lands are likely to yield massive profits to those sordid enough to take advantage. Many organizations and individuals alike will pay high prices for credible information leading to such a location.

But it's not enough to simply say, "There are a lot of Elves, and they can be anything", so below are some notable examples.

The Great Antlion

Out in the badlands of Mikatonee, a group of locals made an exciting discovery. A recent rock slide had revealed a small trove of mythril in a cliff face, proving suspicion over the years that the place was magical. The number of unusual animals was the clue, but here was evidence! Before long, they'd called out their friends, mined some of it up, and then taken it down to Oaky City for an appraisal and sale.

By the time Allen Cupperman had arrived at the scene to act as a prospector for Legerdemain and Sons, the locals had already made a second trip to the cliffs for another round of mining, and then hadn't been heard from for days. A search party had gone out to look, but didn't find anything near the mythril or otherwise, and after one of the search party went missing, the town mayor ordered everyone to wait for professionals.

When an ad goes out in the newspaper asking for Easy Boys, a mob of violent criminals and gangsters tend to make an appearance, so Allen decided to set out ahead of the crowd. Having had a bit of experience with dangerous Elves in the past, he hired on two men to keep an eye on his behavior, in case he started acting "not

quite like myself", and came to see the cliff with his own eyes.

His fears proved founded, but his method of caution not entirely accurate. After setting up camp, Allen stepped a bit away to relieve himself, and that's when the ground caved in. Like a great whirlpool, the earth swallowed up Allen's whole camp and his traveling compatriots. Allen himself was just lucky enough to be near a tree, which he grabbed at entirely by instinct. Some terrible creature at the center of the pit inhaled, and the suction threatened to tear Allen from the branch. His trousers, already around his ankles, vanished off into the darkness, and when the breath stopped Allen hoisted himself up the limb and scurried as high as he thought his weight would allow.

In the dim night, he could hear the beast below breathing. A large, raspy sound, with the rattle of sand making pitter patter as it slipped into some hole down there. With nowhere else to go, there Allen sat, nothing to do but listen to this beast, and eventually it spoke. The language was guttural, and like most Elvish, had no root that Allen could identify, but Allen had past experience with Elves and made an effort to communicate. By the time dawn broke, Allen had established that they both knew what a tree was, and he'd also developed a terrible rash from sitting naked from the waist down in a tree for nine hours.

In the light of the sun, Allen could make out a large, mandibled mouth at the center of the pit. The Elf, apparently tired of waiting, returned the earth to the relatively flat shape it had been in, restoring it as though it had never been disturbed, and left. Allen hopped down after another hour and ran back into town, only pausing half way there to tie his shirt into a loin cloth.

In the months to follow, several Easy Boy gangs would vanish into the badlands without so much as a trace, and Allen would return to the

tree each evening to call out to the Elf. Allen wasn't certain if the Elf would return to the same spot, but it did, and their nightly meetings became a habit. The Elf was as curious about Allen as he was about it, because prior to this time, the Elf had never met food that could talk.

Allen named the Elf "the Great Antlion", and would come to learn that the word the Antlion was using to describe Allen meant "food", and that in fact it described most living creatures in the area by the same word. It had a fairly straightforward understanding of things, in that it was one thing, and all other creatures were edible things. Though Allen couldn't say if this was a mistake of translation, the Antlion seemed to imply there was only one Antlion. Generally, it's not the case that there is ever just one Elf in an area, because they usually reproduce, but some folklore has insisted it does happen.

After hearing a variety of failures from hired guns to do much of anything about the Antlion, Allen concluded that, because the beast was underground and had a magical ability to move the earth at will, any effort to remove it from the area would cost significantly more than the mythrils were worth. Thus, Allen submitted his report, packed his belongings, and returned home. The Great Antlion of Mikatonee, and its mythrils, still remain to this day.

The Hor'Tan

The Hor'Tan are well known to the people of Lake Providence. The city of Lake Providence sat on the east bank of the spanning body of water, and the woods of the Hor'Tan sit on the opposite end. In times before the Mythrils Rush, the people of the city would meet the Elves on an island in the center of the lake, where they would offer up various trinkets that the Elves would trade for a medicinal berry, which in common terms became known as the Hor'Tan Berry.

The berries had an anti-viral property, and were handy in fighting off colds, flues, and

even more lethal diseases if an individual were lucky. The upper crust of Lake Providence were known to serve them at parties, in spite of their bitter flavor, or turn them into liquor, even though they lost their medicinal properties that way. It was a cultural staple of the area, and the relationship worked well so long as humans stayed out of the woods.

During the Mythrils Rush, the benefits of mythrils were proven to far outweigh those of the berries, and a small platoon was dispatched to conquer the forest. The Hor'Tan were not thought to be especially intelligent, having the appearance of small, mossy squids and never expressing a clear language, at best uttering garbled, throaty nonsense such as "Lok, lok, hor, hor'tan," from which they derived their name. However, once facing down a clear threat to their territory, they responded with a stunning knack for tactics that took the soldiers entirely off guard.

Able to flatten themselves and blend in well with foliage, they proved especially skilled at feinting and setting ambushes. They would launch an attack by dropping from the trees, bite at the men and steal equipment, then stretch their long appendages into the canopy, scrambling and swinging away in a disorganized mess. In the first of such encounters, the soldiers pursued the Hor'Tan to recover their supplies if nothing else, and quickly found themselves surrounded by hundreds of green appendages. It was a disastrous rout.

After this defeat, the Hor'tan were reassessed. It was found they were still willing to offer trades at the island, perhaps content in their belief that they had taught the humans a lesson. Linguistic experts eventually realized that although their language was minimal in vocabulary, it did exist and was tonally based, such that any one syllable might have a broad variety of meanings depending on how it was spoken.

Concluding that it would be difficult to learn this language at best, and that such a large gathering of Elves was a sure sign of a formidable mythril deposit, Lieutenant Michael Tamzen decided a slash and burn policy would be the safest way forward. The locals, who had never been able to rely on that section of the woods for timber anyway, were in support of these measures, and so the Furta military torched the forest.

This drove the Hor'Tan back. Without the plant life to hide among, their small bodies were not especially dangerous in a direct fight with a grown man. Operations went smoothly and eventually Tamzen found a large vein of mythril, around which the Hor'Tan had built a wooden shrine. The carved edifice contained many cubbyholes, hooks, and vertical surfaces for climbing, all decorated with the trinkets the Hor'Tan had traded from the citizens of Lake Providence over generations.

The mining operation was fruitful, carrying on for numerous years. Ardent raiding parties of Hor'Tan attacked miners and their guard in that time, but they were not able to dislodge the Furta military until the vein was exhausted. Afterward, the Furta military withdrew. Today, some Hor'Tan still remain in the woods, now pushed far away from Lake Providence which is surrounded on all sides by human settlement.

The fact that any still live at all is proof that some mythril remains, though it can't be much from the sickly appearance of the creatures. All the same, anyone going in the wilderness in search of that mythril is required to take serious precaution, because the Hor'Tan now stalk humans in their remaining woods with relentless determination. They no longer trade berries, and the berries no longer grow, having lost whatever magic they relied on to bare fruit.

The Sleep Walkers

In the forested regions of the Identen Mountains, there is a valley of tall redwoods where a being called "the goddess of the woods" was a matter of legend. So named by the locals in the town of Redvale, according to folklore "the goddess" was first discovered by a lazy husband taking a nap in the woods to avoid doing chores for his wife. As he slept, he dreamed of a "wide bottom young woman with hair that shone like a prism". She asked him why he was in the woods, and he confessed he was skipping out on chores. The woman asked if the man would like to spend his time with her instead, to which the faithful husband reiterated that he had a wife.

When next the man awoke, he found himself sitting in his back yard helping his wife fold laundry, with no recollection of how he'd gotten there. His wife had remarked that he seemed tired, was barely keeping his eyes open, and she was all the more grateful he was putting in such an effort in spite of being so exhausted. When the man recounted the dream, he was met with a bit of a mixed reception, but by the end of the tale, the man resolves never to shirk his responsibilities again, and above that, never to sleep in that part of the forest again.

More concrete incidents in the woods of Redvale describe children getting lost in the wilderness only to sleepwalk their way home. On occasion travelers have been known to disappear in the woods, and then emerge back in Redvale after making camp. This sleepwalking isn't particularly restful, and the person subjected to it usually needs another long rest after they snap out of their fugue, but until the Mythril Rush, most incidents of the like ended peacefully or even happily.

However, once the rush began, Redvale found itself a location of interest for a group of prospectors led by a man named Kelly Houston. At first Kelly had a difficult time obtaining the blessing of Redvale to make an expedition into

the woods, but after several demonstrations of mythril was able to convince town leaders that it was worthwhile to explore the possibility of the Goddess being linked to the metal.

With ample supplies and camping gear, Kelly's crew set off into the woods. They traveled as far as they could reach, and found the place to be serene and almost dream-like in the waking hours. The deeper parts of the forest were filled with brightly colored birds who sang complicated little songs, and in the night it was discovered that bioluminescence was a common trait of the region's insects and fungi.

Kelly's men slept in shifts, and within two hours of the first shift turning in, the men stumbled out their bags, lids still drooping, and began marching listlessly back towards Redvale. The first shift had to be shaken out of their sleep, and upon awaking they all insisted they had been talking to a naked woman with shining hair. It took several minutes for the men to shake off their stupor, and then the expedition was faced with a conundrum.

If they never slept, they'd be in poor condition to travel, but if they always walked back to Redvale while sleeping, they would be much better off. So the second shift took their rest, agreeing to let their hands and legs be bound. And though it provided some issues with comfort, served its purpose. The second shift also dreamed of a nude woman by the same description, and she questioned why they were so intent on being in the woods.

They tried to explain they were merely charting the area, to let others know what was in the woods, to which the woman stated that she already knew the woods backwards and forwards, and saw no value in the errand. Kelly himself suggested, rather cleverly, that if he were allowed to make these maps, it would sate humanity's curiosity, and thus assuaged, they would no longer explore among the trees.

The goddess agreed to let them carry on, under the condition that they cause no mischief and take nothing that was not essential to their survival. For the next six weeks, the goddess was true to her promise, and Kelly's team was able to map the area with as little hindrance as a wild place will allow. At last, they discovered mythril.

They took some ore, as a sample to demonstrate the proof of their find, and proceeded back to Redvale without stopping for rest. Once they arrived, it was already night. Kelly's men retired to their inn, while Kelly stayed awake only ten minutes longer to prepare his paperwork. As he discovered his inkwell, an orange glow crept upon his curtains.

The town of Redvale was burning. Many hundreds of sleeping men and women had found torches, lit their own homes afire, gone back inside, and locked the doors. Their children still slumbering inside none the wiser, mothers and fathers not cognizant to save them. Because it was so simultaneous, destruction spread quickly.

Kelly pounded on the doors of his fellow travelers, but each was locked as tight as a fortress. Clutching what maps and papers he could find, he leapt out of his window and ran down the streets. At first he tried to dash to safety, but found himself with no choice but to dive in the river among a few other erstwhile night owls who had managed to avoid disaster. Screams echoed across the mountains.

It was the wet season, and the fires didn't spread far once they'd consumed so many homes. Few were left standing. All told, about a tenth of the town had survived the night, and Kelly was the only survivor of his group. His maps were ruined, but he still his sample of mythril ore.

A locomotive was loaded up with as much of Redvale as could be found, and Kelly returned home a changed man. He would retire from his prospecting work after submitting his last report. The Furta Military's retaliation was swift. The

soldiers bound themselves at night and kept their bunks in portable cages, their sleeping habits closely monitored throughout the entire razing of Redvale woods.

The soldiers who participated in the operation all reported being visited in their sleep by a now irate woman with shining hair. As their war on the forest raged on, she resorted to pleading and open sobbing. When the mythril was mined away, she appeared only rarely, then looking thin, fragile, and aged. It was never clarified exactly where the Elves were really, or what they must have looked like, but a few of the men recall the woman's hair resembled the glow of one of the local insects, which appeared at night and were always seen among the camps, chirping their demure songs, their bodies shining like little prisms.

The Tiger Bears

In the dry grasslands west of Furta City there lived a breed of Elves called "Tiger Bears". These creatures were covered in striped black and orange feathers, but had bodies more akin to man-sized raccoons, with hands and opposable thumbs on their forelegs. They were hunter predators, but with a distinguishing ability to design crude traps. Their favorite trick was to dig deep holes, fill them with sharpened sticks or bones, then cover the holes with brush. When animals, or people, fell into the holes, the Tiger Bears would burst out of hiding and gobble them down.

They were mainly solitary hunters, and because of their hungry-eyed expressions and voracious attitude, it was speculated that they were not Elves at all. Their wide-spread roaming territory was one testament to the possibility that they were simply magical animals, and even during the Mythril Rush prospector teams hadn't managed to stumble across any substantial mythril veins in the region.

It wasn't until extensive study by a man named Ollie Gottfried that the Tiger Bears were even vaguely understood, but through years of observation, the aid of some expertise with camouflage, and a .45 Mustang, he was eventually able to confirm that they did, indeed, fit many of the qualifications that would leave the creatures described as Elves. He noted that they had a language consisting of something like birdsong, based on the incredible complexity of their exchanges when they met and the clear interactions they expressed while calling to each other.

He also found that they sharpened traps by simply molding sticks and bones as though they were clay. With a single motion they would slide their odd hands over the tool and bring it to a point. Magic as clear as day, so long as you could stay a safe enough distance away to observe it. After Ollie's discoveries it was difficult to deny that Tiger Bears were both intelligent and magical, even if not profoundly so.

But though this revelation might have prompted an explosion of expedition elsewhere, the reaction was rather tepid. After all, these lands were close to Furta City itself, and previous expeditions had turned up nothing. Where was the mythril upon which a species of Elves depends on? The Tiger Bears also had a terrible reputation among locals, such that no person in the Elves' range would travel alone, especially at night where it might be harder to spot aberrations in the ground.

Still, in the modern day, so long as one watched their feet and spotted the beast soon enough to shoot them with a rifle, they were not especially threatening, and after further sweeping of the area, it was concluded that while there were no major veins of mythril, there were a few decent-sized pockets of the metal here and there throughout the region. By being so spread out, the mythril never attracted any major mining operation, and it seemed this also caused the

Tiger Bears to be less defensive than usual of the small veins that could be tracked down.

Once this was confirmed, there was nothing notable for any major national power to do except to remind locals that, should they stumble across mythril, Legerdemain and Sons are always willing to purchase or refine it. Since then, locals sometimes strike off into the grasslands hoping to get lucky, although it takes brave men, because the traps dug by the Tiger Bears around such locations are more common.

The Rochatten Haunting

During the Mythril Rush, armed conflict erupted between Furta and Valding, during which Valding was able to hold a wide swath of land from Furta City to Randa Vista. Recovering that territory was bloody, and only happened thanks to innovations in mythril imbueement which gave Furta an edge over Valding forces. Potent though it was, heavy use of the magic led to some unexpected consequences.

In especially prolonged, deadly slugging matches, battlefields would become inhabited by wisps and strange incorporeal entities that vaguely resembled bloated, mangled, humanoid shapes. Though terrifying, and an extreme source of psychological horror to the men who found them lingering amid their positions, most were fundamentally harmless. The exact cause of their manifestation is still not entirely understood, but the current prevailing theory is that highly saturated bursts of magical power must leave some kind of lingering, supernatural pollution.

Usually these creatures would vanish over time once the fighting died down. Scavenging teams would pick the battlefield over for any mythril that could be recovered, and an area could be rebuilt. However, Valding soldiers in the city of Rochatten, found at the southern fork of the Iden River, received advanced word of the incoming Furtan soldiers and dug themselves in.

The fighting was one of the bloodier and more destructive chapters in the conflict.

Spectres loomed over the battlefield for weeks. Even long enough that once the war ended and refugees began to return home, civilians were still making terrified reports to authorities about being haunted by vengeful ghosts. The ghosts spoke in a horrible language of tongues only vaguely similar to Valding, and had a habit of hiding behind walls and dashing for cover when spotted in the open, making them all the more unnerving in dim lights. Usually removing mythril from the area would make these creatures go away, but despite the Furta government's best efforts, it was certain not all the shells and ammunition had been cleared.

Part of the problem was that rebuilding efforts had already begun, so debris had been simply swept away or built over. So many small bits and pieces were now likely laying beneath the fresh streets. Already devastated, Rochatten's remaining population dwindled away rapidly as people fled for greener pastures. By the time the situation had seemed to stabilize, the city had been reduced to a town, and one without many young people left to make a future. The locals remaining had grown almost used to the idea of harmless specters roaming the streets, but the situation grew much more concerning when it was discovered that graveyards were being pillaged, and the bodies interred there had gone missing.

Authorities were quick to remind residents that wild animals could be the culprit, especially because the number of graves being exhumed were not great in number. It could have been the work of a single beast. Of course, in a provably haunted town, it's difficult to persuade the locals that mischief isn't being caused by more haunting.

Further, rumors began to surface of a man-like beast attacking people from the alleyways in the small hours of the night. Said to look like a hunched over man with gray skin and

great tumorous masses stretched across his hide, it mauled its victims by scratching and biting, exhibiting the strength of feral wolf. It would steal money being carried on those it assailed, and then vanish off into the darkness again.

After attempting to dismiss the claims as alarmist and a hoax, the mayor eventually caved and formed a militia to sweep the streets of the mostly abandoned city and its many empty homes. In the daylight, the creature was discovered in the bedroom of a decrepit residence, and after a brief volley of gunfire was laid to rest, presumably for a second time. In its den, they found it had been hoarding mythril-plated coins. What became of the bodies missing from the graveyard was never determined. Scarcely anyone still lives in Rochatten today, and at the rate things are going, the former city will eventually be nothing but the ruins of a previous era, lived in only by a shaded mockery of the dead.

Not classified by scholars as Elves per se, many common people still refer to them as "Death Elves". More places than just Rochatten have rumors of demons, spirits, and zombies roaming the cities where difficult battles were fought. Even Furta City, which returned to its status as a bustling hub a decade after the war, has its legends. But due to the transient nature of these creatures and the events associated with them, it's difficult to say what might be actually happening, and what may be public hysteria and leaping at empty shadows.

So, Where Are My Numbers? I Need Stats!

As the GM, you really don't need strict numbers for Elves, and if you feel the need to put the exact capabilities of your Elves down on paper, you're missing the point. Like people, no two Elves are the same, and you generally regard the base stat-line of a man as being the average ability of a man. Your Elves may be stronger or weaker than humans in general, but it should be safe to assume that one Elf may be smarter or

stronger than his peers even though they are the same species.

Additionally, the point with this aspect of the game is not to create a situation where your players can conveniently memorize a grimoire of monsters and always know exactly what they're dealing with. Elves are a part of the unknown world. What's in the wilderness? Below the waters? Beyond death? Each encounter with an Elf should be something mysterious and steeped in folklore and hearsay. What you'll need to run a session involving Elves is an idea, and a reason for your players to want to travel into uncharted territories, whether as part of a job or something else.

When inventing a species of Elf for your game, think about the environment in which they live, how they live, and what culture might develop around that. Then, for folklore, think of stories people would have to explain these supernatural occurrences at their border. The potential for variety is endless. And remember, if the locals already knew all there was to know about a nearby Elven population, somebody would have already figured out a way to steal the mythril that makes it possible for them to live. The only Elves people have relatively complete knowledge of are those who have already been killed off or who are dying.

Furta

Furta is a proud empire with a history dating back to the filth and scrounging of earlier times. Like most human empires of the pre-mythril days, Furta's territory was heavily restricted by the whims of Elves, ducking and dodging along those regions safe to travel. The unification of Furta was led by a brutal man named Derrick River, whose reign would be tyrannical and bloody. It lasted for approximately one generation, at which point rule was passed along to a new family who killed less people, on average.

The Furtan monarchy worked out well enough until approximately the discovery of gunpowder. Related more to wealth inequality and unfair tax burdens than to gunpowder, it all the same proved a useful tool in overthrowing the old rulers and replacing them with a democratically elected President for Life: Jacob Lewis.

Furtan Government

Furta's current government consists of an executive branch, a legislative branch, a judicial branch, and a corporate branch. A new President of Furta is elected each time the old President dies. A new candidate is usually selected by the former President, and his rival for the election is chosen by the Senate. The President of Furta may make laws, conduct international diplomacy, set taxes, declare war, and command the military.

The Senate of Furta is able to veto a law the President proposes, provided they can manage a three fifths majority vote in opposition. The Senate consists of thirty men selected by voting from the large provinces of Furta. Other than vetoing laws and providing a contender against the sitting President's electoral candidate, the Senate of Furta has few responsibilities.

The judiciary branch consists of ten judges appointed by the President of Furta. These people

will preside in their positions for a lifetime, and are in charge of interpreting laws in the event of significant national disputes. They are also a formal channel through which wealthy entities can entreat to the President directly, because the President may sometimes be obliged to sit in during such court meetings to weigh in on or overturn the court's opinions.

The Corporate Advisers are the most recent governing branch, established after the Mythril Rush to oversee matters of financial benefit to the nation. The Corporate Advisers consist of the owners of Furta's top five companies: Legedemain and Sons, Roland's Farms, Kaiden Railroad and Transit, Denzil Mining Authority Inc., and Grady Gravy. Grady Gravy is actually a conglomerate holding a wide variety of different companies, but started off as a mom and pop operation – a real rags to riches story the company likes to tout to the public.

The responsibility of the Corporate Advisers is to propose laws and tax plans that would better facilitate the nation's private income, which the president may sign off on if he agrees. They also have some limited authority over the military, which the President may revoke. Finally, they can override any veto passed by the Senate.

The Mythril Rush

As man began finding himself capable of conquering Elves and taking their mythril as spoils, most of the world made a mad dash for those territories, and every nation began redrawing their borders to show lands once marked of as "Elven" to be part of their own nation.

This led to quite a lot of border conflict and no shortage of sparks and minor explosions, but the most notable for Furta was coming to blows with their Eastern neighbor, Valding. A great deal of public saber rattling occurred with regards to the forests east of the Iden River, which stretches all the way from the Identen Mountains

to Furta City and south of Randa Vista. Valding insisted that most of the forest was no-man's land that Furta had no claims over, to which Furta countered that of course the Balt River would serve as a natural boundary for their nations and that Valding had no right to claim otherwise.

This all came to a head when an influential member of the Valding President's family crossed the Balt River with a private expedition team to prove some kind of point. Before he could reach the woods, he was captured by authorities at Randa Vista and executed to serve as an example. Officially, the government of Randa Vista did not know who they had apprehended and killed, but this didn't stop Valding from retaliating.

The Sack of Furta City

Valding attacked swiftly and almost entirely without warning, seizing Furta City with barely a fight as President Gareth Lewis fled north via rails to Slimseyville, which was at the time a major processing hub for mythril and other metals. A defense at Slimseyville was briefly considered, but Valding troops instead chose to launch steam ships from the Furta Gulf up the Iden River, which threatened to place the city in a pincer position, trapping the President and forcing a flight further west into the badlands.

Facing a grim proposition, the decision was made to once again move the bulk of the Furtan forces northward, to the city then known as Tottyville. Then the central headquarters of Legerdemain and Sons, the nation's largest mythril manufacturer, Riley Legerdemain, Mr. Legerdemain himself, made every effort to welcome President Lewis and his entourage to the city.

At first this was mainly a diplomatic measure by Legerdemain, but as efforts to deliver ammunition to Slimseyville stalled due to loss of both river and rail routes, the infamous Devil's Incident occurred, wherein a large stockpile of mythril ammunition became unexpectedly volatile

and detonated across various locations. At first appearing to be a disaster, the surviving ammunition was recovered, then carefully repurposed to respect the mythril's newly explosive state of being.

Some testing later, it was certain that these new "Devil Rounds" could be deployed as weapons that far exceeded the capacity of typical mythril ammunition, and Legerdemain ordered a large batch of this new ammunition for the war effort at no additional charge to the Furtan forces. All the while Legerdemain hobknobbed with the President, keeping him filled in on every effort they were making to lead the nation to victory, playing up successful efforts to great effect.

The "Devil Round" turned the tide of the war. Furta began pressing outward, retaking lost territories. In order to make up for the occupation of Slimseyville, railways were built between Mythril City and Mesabego. Mesabego was turned into a new production hub for mythril weaponry, and numerous mythril hunting towns sprung up along the rails.

It took six years, but by the end of it, Furta was able to drive the Valding military back across the Balt River. The two nations came to a truce which officially recognized the river as Furta's natural boundaries and declared that all resources west of the river belonged to Furta. In honor of their efforts, the city of Tottyville would be renamed "Legerdemain City". However, although this served as a lauded moment in Furtan history, the Elves of the woods south of Randa Vista had grown wise to man's designs on their mythril over the span of the war, and have since proved especially resistant.

Because so much central operation had been moved to the newly christened Legerdemain City, Riley Legerdemain was able to cajole the President to go one step further and name the city as Furta's new capitol. It was more centrally located, after all, and Furta City would require rebuilding. President Lewis agreed. And, as an

additional measure to prepare for future potential attacks, the Corporate Advisers would be officially established, to help coordinate industry for the future.

The Aftermath

The war with Valding had demanded the rapid acquisition of mythrill. To meet those needs, the Mikatonee mountains and areas eastward were savaged and stripped bare of whatever could be found. Prospecting towns sprung up along the rails, then vanished into skeletons after the nearest Elves and their mythrill had been conquered. What followed was a large-scale extinction across the western reaches of Furta.

The Mikatonee Badlands, as they are now called, now stretch for hundreds of miles, leaving nothing but the most hardy animals and some of the region's most stubborn Elves. Formerly much of the land was used for agriculture, but with dust storms rolling in regularly, Mikatonee no longer has many farming families to speak of.

The swift and simultaneous devastation of farms has led to food shortages throughout Furta, driving up the prices on grains and livestock alike. This would leave Furta in a precarious situation with Valding if Valding weren't suffering similar ecological devastation.

Yet though the Mikatonee Badlands have been picked over, there still remains a notable amount of mythrill to be plundered by anyone with the skill to do it, and easy access to the railways where it is processed means high and fair prices are provided when mythrill can be recovered. Moreover, there are many struggling town in the area who depend on the acquisition of mythrill to survive, and are willing to hire Easy Boy teams at equitable rates to get from one week to the next.

Locations of Note

Andrewsborough

Andrewsborough is the primary point of trade with Furta's southern neighbor, Eurlone. The city is so filled with Eurlone visitors that many of its residents are bilingual and have adopted Eurlone slang into every day use. The surrounding area is hot and swamp-like, which has prevented much excursion into the nearby wilderness in search of mythrill. The difficult terrain alone is enough to keep most Easy Boys out.

Balt Springs

Balt Springs is a hub of the trapping and hunting industry. Animals with thick coats of fur can be found in the area year round, and hunters from all across the north eventually find their goods reaching the fresh water Balt Lake, which they will be taken by steamship southward to the rest of Furta.

Fort Felicitous

Not exactly a populated hub, nor a long-standing cultural staple of Furta, Fort Felicitous is situated in a region that is officially disputed territory with Eurlone. The fort exists thanks to hare-brained Easy Boys striking out into the desert in search of mythrill. During these expeditions, one team came across a strange mound near a small reservoir of water. Inside the mound was a vast network of tunnels civilized by at least two separate species of Elf.

The first species is a sort of insect-like builder that regurgitates a sturdy stone material that maintains the structural integrity of the tunnels. The second is a kind of hunter species, which not only chases off threats to the tunnels, but cleans and maintains them. These underground structures sprawl for miles and are rife with mythrill deposits. The mounds can be found in a variety of locations near Fort Felicitous, and all serve as entryways and exits to the surface.

Fort Felicitous was established with interest towards that mythril, but the Mikatonee Desert itself has generally been regarded as the territory of Eurlone, with the Mikatonee Mountains being Furta's natural boundary. The sheer remoteness and difficulty of getting to Fort Felicitous has provided it some protection from international conflict, and it also employs relatively few official soldiers of the Furta Military, instead relying on contractors who cast a less invasive presence.

The fort is thus a place that is *always* hiring Easy Boys, provided those mercenaries can cross the desert, deal with Eurlone harasser units and bandits trying to score easy mythril along the way, and then come out of those strange desert mounds with anything worthwhile. And the mounds themselves are, of course, a deadly trial of mazes. Reports indicate there's practically a second world under there, with trained animals and the like waiting to tear apart interlopers, but getting secondary confirmations on any information is difficult at best.

Furta City

The former capitol of Furta, after rebuilding Furta City still remains an important crown jewel of the nation. There is a great deal of industry here, and Furta's largest university is found in the wealthier section of its bosom. A robust fishing trade is also present thanks to being situated along the Gulf of Furta, along with sea trade. There are, however, quite a few unverified rumors of hauntings and undead since the Mythril Rush, and the homeless are known to go missing.

Idenborough

Not everything can be made of mythril, and the Iden Mountains contain a great deal of important metals such as tin and iron. There exist a few extinct volcanoes in the further reaches of the mountains, and at least one known active one a safe distance away from most civilization. The various mining villages of Iden eventually ship

their spoils to Idenborough, where ores are smelted into raw materials and then processed into final products or shipped off to other factories abroad.

Legerdemain City

The current capitol of Furta, Legerdemain City is the central location for all things mythril development and mythril sales. Here, among all places, is where the largest spread of mythril street lights, stoves, and refrigeration can be found. It's also a city struggling with organized crime and an endlessly complicated maze of corporate politics and espionage. Many people come to Legerdemain City hoping to make their living among the nation's big players, only to find the decks are all stacked and that you can't hardly spit in the streets without three separate organizations taking notice.

Mesabego

Formerly a trading hub with Furta's western neighbor, Yordmin, after the Mythril Rush, Mesabego was transformed into a smelting and processing hub for raw mythril. It's also become the seat of power for Kaiden Railroad and Transit, featuring massive train yards and related infrastructure. But though the city has enjoyed a great deal of wealth, the encroaching badlands have started to cause trouble for the poorer on the outskirts of town, and there has become a rather firmer culture of haves and have-nots even than the rest of Furta. Incidentally, perhaps because of this culture of inequality, it is also the headquarters of Grouper, Crouper & Associates, Furta's most powerful and ruthless law firm.

Mythril City

Now on desperate times, Mythril City used to be central location for collecting and appraising mythril coming in from all points of Mikatonee. In the early days of the Mythril Rush, the halls of vendors, banks, the post, and appraisers alike would be rushed with a thick mass of eager bodies trying to pawn off or resell mythril, whether it be things found in the wild or

old family heirlooms. Once assessed and purchased, the mythrill would have been rerouted to Slimseyville, but after the Mythrill Rush it all usually goes to Mesabego. These days, as the search for mythrill has grown more desperate, a lot of Mythrill City's old shops have closed up for good, and the dust storms keep people off the streets whenever they roll in. Operations are still going, but for how much longer is anyone's guess.

Rally

Though not especially populated, Rally is regarded as the last-chance trade location for hopefuls expecting to get to Fort Felicitous. Because of the type of people who pass through here, the town is now filled with saloons, casinos, brothels, and other dens of vice. Many men having a last drink or a night of irresponsible debauchery before setting off into the desert to never be heard from again. It is now also shamefully a popular resort location for some of Furta's wealthy movers and shakers, and spontaneous crime is such a problem that some rugged travelers are able to find plenty of work catching bounties in Rally instead of moving on.

Randa Vista

Furta's biggest cow town and the central headquarters for Roland's Farms, Randa Vista and the sprawling farmlands it draws from now feed most of Furta. On the whole it's not the wealthiest city, most of its industry revolving around low-wage meat packing and grain counting, it is all the same an essential location, especially as the western reaches of Furta shrivel and become infertile. Though wages haven't gone up for workers, the food shortages have led to booming profits on behalf of Roland's Farms, who has been free to increase prices on certain "luxury" meats and produce.

Slimseyville

Once a former processing hub for mythrill goods, after the Valding occupation Slimseyville lost its key position in the trade and has struggled after being returned to Furta. It still had a few

smelting operations, but unlike Mesabego it lacks the advantage of foreign trade. Today, Slimseyville makes do with a lumber industry, trying to weave between difficult Elven populations to provide enough timber and wood processing to keep a city's population employed. Like other locations ravaged by mythrill conflict, Slimseyville has plenty of unsubstantiated reports of haunting. Encroaching badlands have only made things worse for the city, but it tenaciously hangs on by virtue of its convenient middle point between Legerdemain City and Furta City.

Furta's Neighbors

Eurlone

Eurlone is a tropical, constitutional monarchy to the south of Furta. Thanks in no small part to the lands between them being mostly swamp and desert, the two nations have had relatively few conflicts. Even now, with Furta making potentially illegal claims in the Mikatonee Desert, a desire to actually come to formal, armed conflict over it is somewhat lacking, because that would mean deploying troops into the desert to hold land occupied by violent, non-cooperative Elves who will try to kill whichever nation is staying there.

That doesn't mean there hasn't been saber rattling and a few wars of words, but trade between the two nations has continued uninterrupted, and barring any major incidents the likelihood of war erupting over the existence of Fort Felicitous remains relatively low.

Valding

Like Furta, Valding has an elected "President for Life", but they lack any form of Senate – a fact which Furta uses to ridicule them as less a nation of the people than Furta is. The countries are not on pleasant terms with one another and are mutually distrustful. Because of this, criminals from either nation notoriously cross the borders to evade their own local

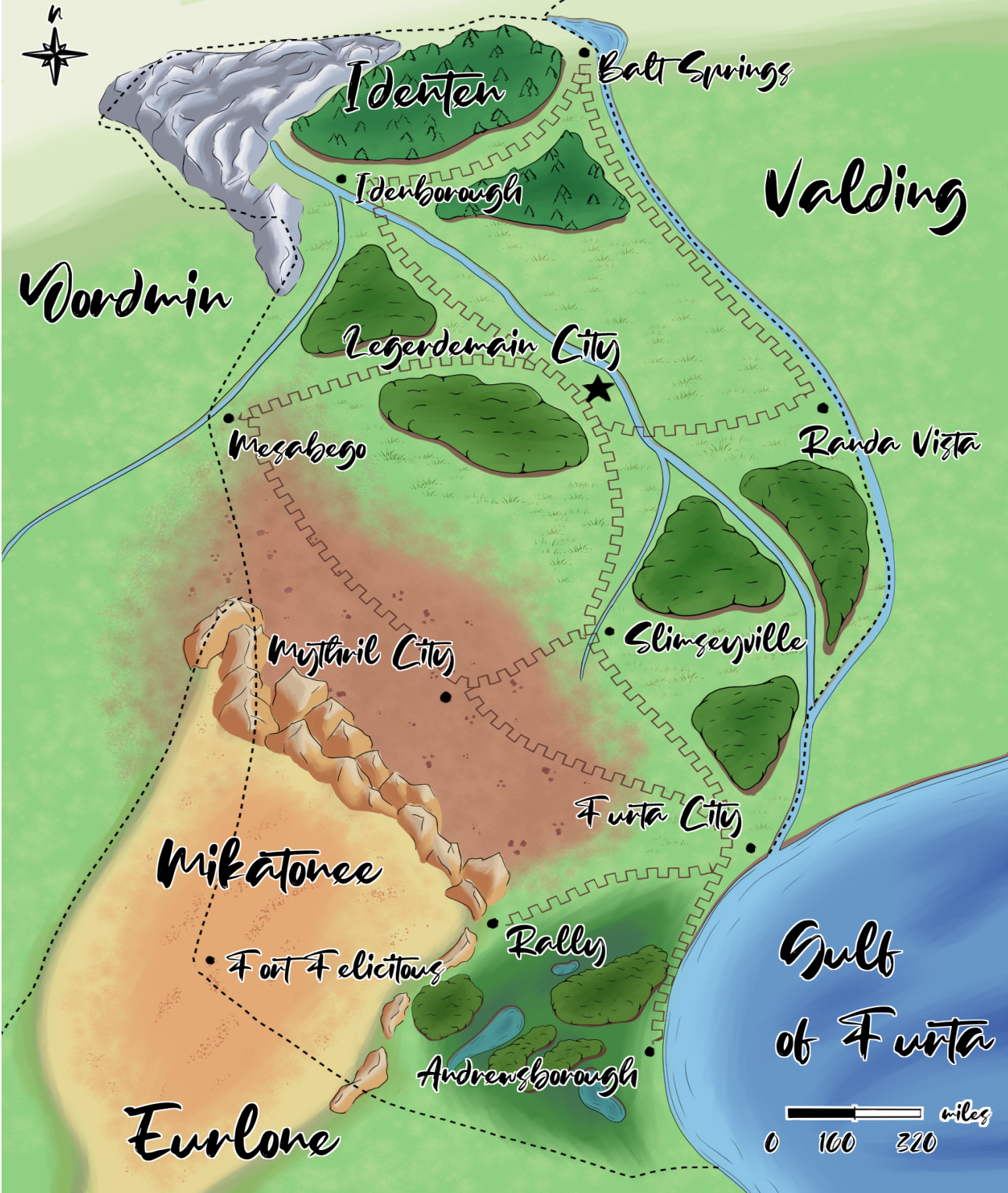
authorities, further increasing the Furtan public's negative opinions towards the people of Valding.

Like Furta, Valding has struggled with the ecological devastation of excessive mythrill mining. Since the Mythrill Rush, they've been able to develop their own mythrill imbuelements thanks to espionage, and once again pose a concerning military threat to Furta's territory, assuming things should sour again.

Yordmin

Yordmin is a largely mountainous monarchy to Furta's west. They are on generally good terms with Furta, but mainly act as trading partners. The western mountain ranges are a natural barrier to conflict, and Yordmin itself would be quite difficult to invade. Of course, the mountains also limit Yordmin's resources and ensure that they would lack the ability to hold much of Furta's lands in the long run even if they had a desire to attack. They technically hold claim to the regions north of Furta, but those areas are mostly tundra and haven't been considered a strategically important stretch of land. It is a claim of "no conflict", but not something legally agreed to by the two states.

A map of Furta, displaying geography only within its border



A Summary of Useful Tables

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Hands	Cost	Damage
Buck Knife	1 Hand	1 J	1d6-1 + STR
Bayonet	1 Hand	2 J	1d6-1 + STR
Spear	2 Hands	4 J	1d6 + STR
Hand Axe	1 Hand	4 J	1d6 + STR
Pike	2 Hands	6 J	1d6+1 + STR
Saber	1 Hand	8 J	1d6+1 + STR

Missile Weapons

Weapon	Hands	Cost
Short Bow	2 Hands	9 J
Long Bow	2 Hands	11 J
Crossbow	2 Hands	20 J

Missile Ammunition

Arrows and Bolts	Cost	Damage
Makeshift Arrow	NA	1d6 - 2
Arrow	1J /10	1d6
Bolt	2 J /15	1d6 + 1

Armor

Armor	Cost	Health
Wooden Shield	5 J	1
Sewn Plate	5 J	1
Metal Shield	8 J	2
Chain Armor	9 J	2
Cuirass	13 J	3

Firearms

Weapon	Rounds	Hands	Cost
Derringers			
.22 Minerva	1	1 Hand	8 J
.30 Harding	1	1 Hand	14 J
.38 Diantha	1	1 Hand	20 J
.40 Tiger Deer	1	1 Hand	28 J
Revolvers			
.22 Rotterdam	6	1 Hand	12 J
.30 Rian	6	1 Hand	18 J
.375 Quincey	6	1 Hand	25 J
.40 Cow Panther	5	1 Hand	30 J
Lever-Action Rifles			
.172 Irma	20	2 Hands	10 J
.30 Coyote Eater	16	2 Hands	16 J
.38 Florent	16	2 Hands	24 J
.45 Mustang	12	2 Hands	32 J
Bolt-Action Rifles			
.22 Lorayne	8	2 Hands	11 J
.30 Edmond	7	2 Hands	15 J
.38 Anthog	5	2 Hands	26 J
.45 Bull Wolf	4	2 Hands	31 J
Single Shotguns			
20 Bore Albie	1	2 Hands	9 J
16 Bore Springhook	1	2 Hands	15 J
12 Bore Baxter	1	2 Hands	22 J
10 Bore Bearlk	1	2 Hands	30 J

Firearms Cont.

Weapon	Rounds	Hands	Cost
Double Shotguns			
20 Bore Sunshine	2	2 Hands	10 J
16 Bore Warrick	2	2 Hands	16 J
12 Bore Armadillo	2	2 Hands	23 J
10 Bore Gerhard	2	2 Hands	29 J

Ammunition

Caliber	Quantity	Damage
.172	7 J /50	1d6 – 1
.22	6 J /40	1d6 – 1
.30	7 J /35	1d6
.375	8 J /40	1d6 + 1
.38	9 J /40	1d6 + 1
.40	6 J /25	1d6 + 2
.45	5 J /20	1d6 + 2
20 Bore	6 J /40	1d6 – 1
16 Bore	5 J /30	1d6
12 Bore	5 J /25	1d6 + 1
10 Bore	4 J /20	1d6 + 2
Slug	8 J /30	1d6 + 3

Animals

Animal	Cost
Mutt	10 J
Attack Dog	20 J
Bloodhound	25 J
Horse	30 J
Race Horse	40 J
War Horse	45 J
Mikatonee Steed	60 J

Survival Equipment

Item	Cost
Animal Feed (1 week's worth)	5 J
Backpack	5 J
Bed Roll	4 J
Canteen	1 J
Coffee	2 J
Compass	12 J
Cookware	8 J
Dynamite (12 sticks)	10 J
Fishing Gear	3 J
Flint and Steel	1 J
Fool's Tablets	25 J
Lantern	2 J
Liquor	1 J
Madam Linda's Cleaning Tablets	20 J
200 Matches	1 J
Medical Kit	7 J
Mythril Miracle Cooker	35 J
Pocket Moon	35 J
Rations (1 day's worth)	2 J
Rope (per 10 feet)	1 J
Sasquatch Ice Box	35 J
Sewing Kit	2 J
Tent	9 J
Trunk	7 J
Tobacco	1 J
Spade	2 J
Spyglass	28 J

Meals

Groceries	5 J /week
Restaurant	1 J /day
Lavish Restaurant	3 J /day
Chicken	2 J
Goat	8 J
Cow	20 J

Lodgings

Commons	2 J /week
Private	5 J /week
Bed and Breakfast	10 J /week
Fine Hotel	2 J /day

Weapon Ranges

Weapon Type	Effective Range	Max Range
Derringer	Point Blank	Near
Revolver	Near	Intermediate
Shotgun (firing slugs)	Near	Intermediate
Shotgun (firing shot)	Intermediate	Far
Lever-Action Rifle	Intermediate	Long Range
Bolt-Action Rifle	Far	Long Range
Short Bow	Point Blank	Intermediate
Long Bow	Point Blank	Far
Crossbow	Near	Intermediate

General Imbuements

Imbuement	Cost
Acid	20 J
Alkaline	15 J
Cooling	30 J
Heating	30 J
Imperceptible	85 J
Light	30 J

Cartridge Imbuements

Imbuement	Cost
Devil	25 J
Powderbug	100 J
White Viper	40 J

General Ammo Imbuements

Imbuement	Cost
Coal Hare	35 J
Fester Toad	20 J
Rubber Goat	5 J
Sol's Eel	35 J
Sweetfoot	50 J