

Hunter Rose
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Protagonists: Huntsmen
Circa: 1583 AD, Mythic France

What is this game about:

This game is about protecting the things you care about. You live in an isolated and tight-knit mountain community called Millebourne. The people are quaint, and mostly farmers or shepherds. The climate is harsh and made all the harsher by the terrors that surround this small, stockaded community. Dire wolves, infernal spirits, and other horrific abominations roam in the shadows in the forests and mountains in Vercove, France. It falls on the shoulders of the Huntsmen to protect the community from these dangers. Though the title of Huntsman is a badge of distinction, it is not a badge of honor. Every Huntsman that ever lived has died at a young age leaving behind a loved one and a grateful community.

What the characters do:

Player Characters in this game, male or female, are called Huntsmen. They are the guardians of Millebourne and the small province of Vercove. Each character has something he or she loves above all else. This is the source of their power.

You see, a Huntsmen is a special person. They are different from birth. They are stronger, taller, sleeker, and smarter than the other children. They are identified at a young age as different, and trained for their Destiny- which is to give their life so the community can prosper.

Huntsmen, however, are a conflicted people. Their power, as I said earlier, comes from love. At a young age, it is the love of their parents. As they get older, it is the love of a mentor. Then as an adult, they have to choose something that they will love and cherish for their rest of their life. When they choose their love (it a person from the character's life), they bring their Love to the village church. There the priest binds them together and presents each Huntsman with a Sacred Rose. The Rose connects the Huntsmen to his or her Love and augments his power. As long as the Rose keeps its petals, the Huntsman's life will be preserved. If the Rose fades, the Huntsman dies. And the Roses will fade. Each time the Huntsmen go out, each time the village is threatened, his love grows stronger but the Sacred Rose grows weaker. Huntsmen must protect their loved ones, but in doing so they assure that one day they will be separated from them. It is a hard sacrifice for them to make.

What the players do:

In Hunter Rose, most of the participants will be players. However, one must take on the mantle of GameMaster. The GameMaster supplies the opposition and situations for the players to face. He will create a "Change" that is coming to Millebourne. This "Change" is something the town wants. It could be a merchant coming to town, a new priest on his way to the church, or a shipment of winter supplies from the King. The village elders will charge the Huntsmen with protecting this Change. They will go out into the countryside and ensure its safe arrival. After the GameMaster creates the Change, he will play the opposition to the Huntsmen. He will have all the terrors of the night at his command to challenge the Huntsmen and threaten their loved ones.

The Huntsmen understand their charge, but they know that leaving the city will likely put their Love in danger. The players must balance their personal desires versus the desires of the community. When the characters leave the confines of the Millebourne stockade, the Players get to take over the direction of the story. They do not immediately have to go out, find, and protect the coming Change. In fact, the GM should never give the players an exact timeline. The players get to choose what parts of the setting they will explore, where they will meet challenges, and how they will make the way safe for the Change. How long it takes is up to them. In fact, they may not even meet that Change face-to-face (although they can). The Change comes to Millebourne when the players feel they have created a safe path for the Change to follow. All of this will be explained in more detail in later parts of this book.

What you need in order to play:

Hunter Rose can be played with two people, but it's best if you have three to five. So the first thing you will need are some friends to sit down with and play. Second, you will need some six sided dice- at least a dozen or so. You can find them pretty easily if you raid your board game boxes or visit a hobby store. Finally, you will need a rose. A real rose. This is the symbol of your character's power. Choose a kind and color of rose that represents your idea of your character. You can easily pick these up at a local grocery store or mega-mart on your way to your game session. Keep it safe. Your rose will become a very important part of play.

You will also need a piece of string or yarn. It will probably need to be at least three feet long. You will add beads to this "Thread" as you play, so bring along a 15 to 20 or so beads. Make sure you have five different colors. These will be tied to your character's components and the contests your character will face during the game.

The Situation:

Millebourne always teeters on the edge of catastrophe. It produces enough crops, wool, and meat to sustain a slowly growing population. It has a well-maintained stockade and an effective defense force. Normally, this would be enough to ensure the town's survival. However, it isn't. What was once a scenic mountain retreat has turned into a breeding ground for dark terrors. Evil monsters have crossed over the mountains and infested the province of Vercove. The things that were once only part of terrible legends have come true. Vampires steal away children at night. Werewolves devour travelers who sojourn on the King's Road. Dire beasts slaughter the livestock and kill the brave shepherds who tended the flocks of sheep and goats.

The elders realized that if this were allowed to continue the town would slowly die from starvation. The village was forced to do something. The priests banded together and prayed for a miracle to save their town. That miracle was delivered through the children. The adults noticed that some of the children grew stronger and brighter while eating less food and spending less time in school than the other children. They grew up to be the tallest and strongest in the community. It was natural, at first, to encourage them to join the ranks of the village militia. However, when more and more of these special children were discovered, an idea came to the village elders.

They sent for soldiers from the King to come and train their children in fighting, wilderness survival, and tracking. The children learned with eagerness and ease. Even the royal soldiers were surprised at how quickly the young ones picked up new skills. When the first dozen or so were trained, they were sent out into the forest. The next day a pack of dead dire wolves was presented to the Millebourne Court. An idea was born. These blessed children would become the guardians of their town. Because they had to actively go and track down their evil prey, the mayor suggested they be called Huntsmen. Thus they are known as Huntsmen to this day.

Later, the priests discovered that the Huntsmen's powers could be augmented by love. The ritual of the Sacred Rose was developed by the priests to give the Huntsmen a constant link to the one they loved. It enhanced their strength and agility. They became strong enough to take on the greatest foes in Vercove. However, it became apparent that a Huntsman's life would be short. So the town elders decided to commemorate their sacrifice.

In the courthouse of Millebourne there is a room. In this room are a myriad of threads hanging from the ceiling. Each thread is dedicated to one Huntsman. The threads have differing kinds of knots tied into them at varying intervals. Each knot represents a major victory, defeat, or tragedy in the Huntsman's life. Children from the schools are brought to this room and taught history- history they can feel. The trainees for the Huntsmen program are brought here to be taught appreciation- appreciation for the sacrifices others have made and for the sacrifices they will make. Your thread will soon be added.

Character Creation:

When you begin making your character, you are creating his Thread. His Thread is the story of his life. A life is made up of many things. Most of them are way more important than things like birth, puberty, adulthood, and death. They are things like profession, love, desires, and destiny. This is what your character's Thread shows: the things he did, the people he loved, and the greatness he achieved.

When you begin thinking about your character, answer the five following questions to yourself-

What are my character's strengths?

Who does my character love?

How does my character prove his toughness?

What does my character want?

What will my character grow to be?

Answering these five will give you a good foundation for the rest of this section. From your answers you will build your character and the story of his life.

Character Components:

Characters in Hunter Rose are made up of five components. They are: Prowess, Thirst, Body, Destiny, and Love. Each component has two aspects: Tags and Value. Players should rank their five components from 5 (most important) to 1 (least important) according to how important that component is to their concept of their character. Then they should write that number next to the "Value:" on their character sheets. Love (represented by the Sacred Rose in the middle) always starts with the 5. After assigning the Values, each player will need to create Tags for each Component. A Tag is something that is related to a component and is something with which the character is familiar. They can be actions, skills, people, locations, emotions, desires, equipment, and so on. Each character component is described below and some example Tags are given for each. Players should feel free to create their own customized Tags to fit their character concept.

Prowess:

Prowess is how your character fights against the forces that threaten Millebourne and the Change that is coming. This is how he hunts the terrors and defeats them. Imagine your character in combat. What would he do? How would he overcome the challenges that he will face? For your Prowess you can create up to five Tags. Write them in the space provided in the claw print on your character sheet. Here are some examples:

Example Tags: Sword and Shield, Wrestling, Charging, Taunting, Bow and Arrow, Blunderbuss, Knife, Setting Traps, Matchlock Rifle, Teamwork, The Forest.

Thirst:

Thirst is what your character wants. Consider how your character will try to achieve his desire. What will he do to get what he wants? Who does he know that can help him get what he wants? Why does he want this in the first place? Create up to five Tags for your Thirst. Put them in the space provided on your character sheet. It looks like a glass that you might drink from. To help you, here are some example Tags for Thirst:

Example Tags: Talking, The Mayor, Memorization, Bargaining, Charm, Stealing, Concealment, Smithing, Tinkering, Making Friends, Grandmother, Exploration.

Body:

Body is how your character survives in harsh conditions. This is how he shows his toughness. Vercove is a hard place to live. The winters are long and cold. Evil lurks behind every rock and tree. How will your character deal with these situations? What are his survival instincts like? Come up with one to five ways your character will survive in the wilderness or in adverse conditions and write them on your character sheet. Below are some examples of Tags for Body:

Example Tags: Fire, Foraging, Find Shelter, Tracking, Take the Pain, No Fear, Timbering, Strong Constitution, Herbalism, First Aid, Iron Will, Energetic, Muscular.

Destiny:

Your character will achieve something great before he dies. It will be something more than just killing a few vampires and protecting his town. But what is it? What is some dream or aspiration

that you have had that you might like to explore with your character? How will your Huntsman prove his worth before he expires? Create a number of Tags (up to five) that are tied to your character's Destiny. Write them in the place provided on your character sheet. It resembles a bright star or sun at the end of your character's Thread. Here are some examples that might spark your imagination:

Example Tags: Wealth, Happiness, Endurance, Heroism, Legend, Song, History, Killing, Lifesaver, Just-in-the-nick-of-time, Lucky, Save the Day, Politics, Threads.

Love:

Love is where your Huntsman draws his power. It keeps him company in the long, cold nights. It drives him towards his enemies and calls him back to his home. Your Love is represented by a rose. Your character wears a Sacred Rose on his cloak as he travels into the wilds. It gives him the strength to fight against anything that threatens him. You have a rose. It's a real rose that you bring to the game with you each time you play. It links you to your character. It's a physical representation of him. Imagine who your character loves. Maybe it's someone similar to who you love. Why does your character love that person? What would your Huntsman do for his or her love? Create up to seven Tags for your Love. Write them on your character sheet in the space provided. Here are some sample Tags that might give you an idea:

Example Tags: Compassion, Lover, Husband, Wife, Sacrifice, Betrothed, Child, Sex, Protect, Huntsmen, Shepherds, Priests, Faith, Cherishing, Memory, Millebourne.

After creating your Tags and assigning Values to each component, choose a color to represent each component. These colors should match the five colors of beads you brought for the game. Assign only one color to each component.

Equipping Your Character:

The village of Millebourne relies on the Huntsmen for protection. They make sure that all of the basic needs of the Huntsmen are met. Your character begins with any gear or equipment he would like, plenty of food and rations, and a place to live. A Huntsman should never have to worry about any of these things. Anything beyond that, however, may cost him a few pieces of silver. Say he or she wants to buy a gift for their Love or have a special cloak made by the tailor; the Huntsman will have to pay for those things. It won't be much, but the people of Millebourne will appreciate your business. In the character advancement section, there are rules for earning silver pieces. But your character will never want for basic necessities.

Resolution- Getting Things Done:

Inevitably, your character will come into conflict with some adversary. Sometimes it might be the unforgiving terrain of Vercove. Sometimes it might be the evils that lurk in the night. It could even be a citizen of Millebourne who wants to haggle over the price of something in the general store. In these instances, players will turn to the dice to settle the dispute. Anyone can call for a roll to settle a conflict of interest, GM or player. The players will always use their Huntsman in a conflict, but the GM has many options. He could play dark terrors like a vampire or a werewolf. He might play dire wolves or grizzly bears. He can even play locations like the Everpeak Mountain, the Haunted Forest,

or the forge in the village Smithy. The GM gets to portray any one or any thing that opposes what the player-character wants to do.

To use the resolution system for Hunter Rose, you will need several six sided dice (abbreviated as “d6”). Then, unless it is some kind of conflict between two Huntsmen, the player will roll against the GM. Below is a description of steps participants should take to resolve a conflict.

Step 1: Choose Arena, Select Tags, and Ready Dice

Each conflict will involve one of the character components. Whether a Huntsman is hunting vampires in Castle Blackstone, fighting dire wolves, performing first aid at the Physician’s House, or schmoozing town politicians for a little extra pay, one of his or her five components (Prowess, Thirst, Body, Destiny, or Love) must be involved. Whatever component is chosen will then be the “Arena.” Normally, the palyer of the Huntsman (or Huntsmen) will choose in which Arena the conflict will take place. However, the GM can spend two of his “Adversity Points” to change the Arena to the one he wants. Adversity Points will be explained later in this book. For now, just remember that the player usually chooses.

Once the Arena is decided, everyone involved in the conflict must choose a Tag. The GM will consult his NPC-Sheets, the players will consult their character sheets. If you find a Tag that might apply (say “Sword and Shield” if you are fighting a Vampire), announce it to everyone else. This is how you will engage your opponent. After announcing your Tag, pick up a number of dice equal to your component’s Value. This is your dice pool for this conflict. If you do not have a Tag that fits the situation (say you are trying to build a fire in a blizzard, but have no Fire Building or Wilderness Survival Tags) then you get dice equal to only half of your component’s Value rounded up. Since everyone gets to choose what tags they use, this should be a rare occurrence.

Step 2: Order of Play and Rolling Dice

The participant who has the least number of dice in their pool will roll first. If there is a tie, each participant with the same number of dice will roll 1d6. Whoever has highest roll gets to go first (repeat as necessary). This sub-step is called Initiative.

The next sub-step is Intent. In this phase, the player will declare what she is trying to do. For instance, she might say, “I hack at the undead spawn with my Nocturnal Blade!” or another player might say, “I frantically rub two sticks together hoping, praying that a spark lights the tinder.” Announcing one’s intentions doesn’t make them happen, but it does bring everyone else at the table into your story. You let them get a glimpse of your desires and intents for your character. There is no limitation on what you can announce except those you and your fellow participants agree to. Everyone is empowered to say, “Hey, I don’t think that’s right for this situation...” and then try to work it out. It probably won’t be a problem for your group. The Intent step isn’t nearly as important as the next two.

Execution is the third sub-step in this part of the resolution. You can “intend” to do a lot of things, but until you roll the dice, you won’t know how it comes out. Take your pool of d6s and toss them on the floor (or table). The object is to group your dice into groups that equal 5 or more. The number “5” is considered the “Default Difficulty.” It is the base adversity level you must beat with

your rolls. For every grouping of dice you get that equals 5 or more, you earn one success. So if a player rolls a 2, 4, 5, 2, and 3, he might group them like this: “5”, “2&4”, and “2&3.” Each group would count as one success because they beat Default Difficulty. The GameMaster can alter the Default Difficulty using his Adversity Points, but this is covered more later on in this book.

Effect is the last sub-step in this phase of the resolution system. This is where you get to narrate what your successes (or failures) resulted in. You are given quite a bit of leeway here, just like you were during the Intent sub-step. This is your moment to use your creativity to show the others just how amazing your character is. This is how you tell them what your ideas mean in the game and how important this conflict is to the story you want to tell.

These sub-steps may need to be repeated until a victory is achieved. Gaining a victory is covered in the next section.

Step 3: Victory and Defeat

To overcome an opponent, you must gain a number of successes equal to or greater than their Value in the current Arena of the conflict. If the Arena is Destiny, and your opponent has a value of 4 in Destiny, you must get at least 4 successes to win. The winner of the contest gets to narrate what happens. Here the rules are a little bit stricter, and they diverge for Players and GMs. Rules for the GM will be discussed first.

Rules for Victory for the GM:

If a character or environment controlled by the GM defeats a Huntsman, then several things happens. First, the player of the Huntsman must pull off a petal from his or her rose. Second, the GM narrates how the character is hurt or maimed during the contest. Third he will select any component of the Huntsman, even a component that is not the Arena, that the wound affects and assign it a –1 penalty. That means the Value of that component is reduced by one. Vercove is a harsh place, and the GM is encouraged to not hold back on his narration. The life of a Huntsman is not easy.

However, there are a few things the GameMaster is prohibited from doing. Unless done so under the “Putting My Life on the Line” conditions mentioned later in this section, the GM may not kill off the losing Huntsman. He also may not kill off the Huntsman’s Love. Deaths such as these will be taken care of by the story itself. It is not the province of the GM to decide who lives and who dies.

Rules for Victory for Players:

For the player, however, it may very well be his decision to make concerning who gets to live and who gets to be spared. Huntsman will have to overcome many challenges. The Everpeak Mountains are every bit as formidable as an evil sorcerer. If a player wins the contest, he or she may do as he chooses to whatever opposed him. If it were the aforementioned blizzard, the player may elect to successfully start a fire that stays lit all night. If the player is facing a dire wolf, killing it is totally within bounds. The only restriction a player faces is concerning other Huntsmen and the Love. A player may narrate the death of their own character, but not the character of any other player nor the Love of any Huntsman- including his own. These deaths must be left up to fate, chance, and the acts of other, more desperate men.

Pulling a Petal:

Sacrifices are sometimes necessary. The greater good is more important than a single person's desire. A Huntsman knows this, and is willing to sacrifice the thing he holds dear to protect his village. At any time during Step 2, a player may elect to voluntarily pull one petal from his or her rose. Doing so will increase a player's dice pool by 2 dice. So if a player has a dice pool of 6 dice, pulling a petal will raise his pool to 8 dice. This is a great sacrifice. Doing so brings the Huntsman closer to his demise and close to losing his beloved forever.

Putting My Life on the Line:

During a conflict, players have an option to put their character's life on the line. This is dangerous and should only be done in a time of utmost need. A player must declare this during the Initiative phase of a conflict and before any dice are thrown. The player's dice pool is doubled from what it would normally be, but the Value for his Arena is halved. An example may be helpful to demonstrate this.

Say a Huntsman is trying to run through the Haunted Forest to get to the village to warn the people before a horde of vampires descend upon them. He decides that this is part of his Destiny, and chooses that for the Arena. He chooses the "Runs Fast" Tag from his Destiny component and readies his dice pool. Say the Huntsman now has a Value of 4 and a dice pool of 4 at the beginning of this conflict. He then declares he is "putting his life on the line." Now that he has done that, he will have a dice pool of 8 and a Value of 2 for the rest of this conflict. This is what he will use against the GM who will be playing the Haunted Forest.

If the Huntsman wins the conflict, then things proceed as normal. The player will narrate the nature of the success. If the Huntsman loses, however, the GM is to grab the player's rose, rip out all the petals and toss them in the air while whispering the single word, "Death." The character died somehow while on his mission. The GM will narrate how this happens, but the player is given one last chance to say something to a fellow Huntsman or to the Huntsman's Love who might happen by. This is the end of that player-character.

Death of a Huntsman:

One way a Huntsman can die was just discussed in the previous section. Essentially, all Huntsman deaths will be similar. Any time a player's rose is completely deflowered, the Huntsman dies. Unless it is during a "Putting My Life on the Line" situation, the players always get to narrate the death of their characters. Death can be a beautiful thing; don't waste this opportunity to give your character the ending they deserve.

Creating Your Thread:

Each time you win a conflict, you should place a bead on your Thread. The color of bead you tie to your Thread should correspond to the component you used during the conflict as your Arena. If you lost the contest, you should put two beads.

Character Advancement:

Over time, your Huntsman is going to learn new skills, acquire new equipment, and become more familiar with his environment. The more your character engages in activities that hone his abilities, the more effective of an effective force he or she will become. There are several ways that your character can advance. The following sections describe when and how that may happen.

Gaining Advancement Points:

Sometimes when your character is involved in a conflict, you will have extra dice left over that never make it into groups of 5. For instance, you might roll 3, 5, 3, and 1 while tracking an escaped criminal. You make two groups: “3, 3 and 5” but the die with a result of “1” is left over. What you may elect to do is to convert that unused die into an Advancement Point. At the top of your character sheet, there is a place for you to write down how many Advancement Points you have collected.

You are allowed to save as many dice as you like from any conflict roll, but be forewarned. Skirting the edge of a conflict by saving more dice than necessary is dangerous. The petals on your rose are precious. Losing them in a meaningless contest against the mountain cold would be a waste. You, the player, are in total control of your fate. Never forget that.

Spending Advancement Points:

After you have accumulated some Advancement Points (APs), you may want to spend them to improve your character. Look at all the things on your character sheet. Most of them can be changed. For instance, you can add new tags, increase your components’ values, even buy earn silver. Below is a simple table that indicates how many APs you must spend to alter your character.

Advancement Table:

1 AP: Gain a new Tag for one of your Components

3 AP: Earn 10 silver from the town officials.

5 AP: Increase the Value for one of your Components by +1.

The Retirement of a Huntsman:

Sometimes the rigors of being a guardian are too much. The constant battle for change and the tenuous position of the Love may be more than one can bear. It is not unheard of for a Huntsman to hang up his quiver and fade into obscurity as a shepherd or blacksmith. Perhaps, this is happening to you?

If you decide that you no longer wish to carry on the story of your Huntsman, there are a few procedures you need to follow to retire him. First, announce this to your groupmates. See what they say, and if they have any suggestions for your character. Second, give your Rose and Thread to the GM. You are now done with them. Third, you may create a new Huntsman if you like. It is encouraged that your new Huntsman take on your old Huntsman as the Love, but this is not a requirement. You will need to purchase a new rose and a new Thread (and perhaps new beads) for your new character.

You may then join the ranks of the Huntsman. Your new character will probably be weaker than the others, but hopefully the experience of your previous character will give you wisdom and insight into the role of hunter and protector.

The Setting:

The province of Vercove is a diverse ecological area. It stands at the base of a great mountain range and is full of lush pastures and thick forests. Despite its horrific dangers, it is a fertile land. The town of Millebourne, the only spec of civilization in this province, is nestled in the South amongst a great wood. Huntsman must be familiar with all of the important locals in Vercove to protect their village.

The following sections will detail the entire province. First, you will read a brief description of a location. This will be followed by a listing of **Auto-Tags**. An “Auto-Tag” is a Tag that Huntsmen automatically adds to all their components while they are in this area. Example: If the Huntsmen travel to the Everpeak Mountains, which has the Auto-Tag of “Climbing”, they will treat each of their components as if they had Climbing written there. As soon as they leave the Everpeak Mountains, however, they lose that Auto-Tag. The purpose of Auto-Tags is to save players from spending Advancement Points on Tags that might only get used in specialized situations or never used at all. Think of it as a short cut that liberates the players to concentrate on other, more important matters. Finally, each location has a Opposition Value. If a Huntsman ever comes into conflict with the environment in some way, this is the Value the GM will use to generate his dice pool and the Value the player must overcome with his successes. The back of this book has an appendix that has each location listed with just its Auto-Tags and Opposition Values. You may wish to keep a photocopy of it handy to save time during play.

Setting Descriptions:

The Haunted Forest:

Covering a giant swath in the province of Vercove is an immense pine forest. Towering evergreens stretch from the small town of Millebourne to the steep slopes of the Everpeaks and all the way down to the bountiful Furrows. It is a rich, dark, and verdant forest with a shadowy secret: most of those who tread there walk softly. Evil resides in this wood.

This expanse of evergreens has come to be called the Haunted Forest. Many woodsmen have disappeared while logging here. Many merchants have vanished from their carts, leaving their wares to rot in the dense wood with no trace left for man or beast to track. Locals say ghosts and goblin-men walk there at night, but the truth is far more insidious.

Ferocious animals, controlled by an unseen master, roam these untamed wilds. The supernatural is as thick in the forest as the bed of needles covering the earthy floor. Of all the places Huntsmen dread to walk, this is the place they dread the most.

Auto-Tags: Wood Cutting, Animal Identification, Fire Starting Material, Plant Identification, Cooking, Fire Starting, Tell Ghost Story, Resist Poison, Lashing, Find Shelter, Digest Questionable Sustenance.

Opposition Value: 6

Everpeak Mountains:

The Everpeak Mountains are an impenetrable mass of rock, dust, and snow. They reach over ten thousand feet up into the wintry skies of Vercove, cutting off the town of Millebourne from the rest of the world. Their snow-capped peaks suffer no traveler to pass, save through a narrow gorge named “Everpass Hold.”

Everpass Hold is a gap in the mountains wide enough for two ox carts to barely slip past one another that was carved out by the racing Everpeak winds eons ago. A road was built, and a small outpost erected to shelter weary travelers from the bitter nights. The outpost is not garrisoned, but is kept stocked with food and provisions by the people of Millebourne. It is their only link to the rest of France. Huntsmen frequently spend the night here when patrolling the unforgiving mountain faces.

The outpost has at its very top a bell. The acoustics of Everpass Hold amplify its resonance any time it is sounded. If a Huntsman or other traveler sees bad weather or a hostile force pressing toward the town of Millebourne, the bell is to be rung in order to warn its citizens. Those who ring the bell and save the village are heralded as heroes and honored with a feast.

Auto-Tags: Find Shelter, Identify Rock, Identify Gemstone, Weather Forecasting, Balancing, Throw Stone, Stone Tools, Mineral Ore, Break Fall, Tell Time, Grasp Object, Resist Vertigo.

Opposition Value: 5

The Furrows:

North and West of Millebourne lay a series of lush and rolling hills. Farmers graze their sheep and goats along these hills and harvest grain in the valleys. Far from the bitter cold of the Everpeaks, the Furrows provide sustenance and comfort to the people of Vercove. Many poems have been composed while sitting atop a grassy knoll at sunset.

These fertile knobs are the main source of food in Millebourne. Shepherds and goatherds are common here, and one can see their portable tents erected on the hilltops. The shepherds of the Furrows are a friendly lot. They treat any man they meet as a friend, and any woman as a noble. Their stews are renowned for their taste and hardiness. No one knows these foothills better than those who tend their flocks on the gentle slopes.

The Furrows are a place of refuge in a land swarmed by evil and violence. Occasionally a dire beast of some kind makes its way here to prey on hapless sheep, yet seldom are the Huntsmen needed. The Shepherds are able to handle most dangers in this pastoral part of Vercove.

Auto-Tags: Sheer Sheep or Goat, Cooking, Taste Testing, Identify Plant, Fire Starting, Run Fast, Run Far, Weather Forecasting, Wool Blanket, Empty Tent, Fire Starting Material, A Tuft of Soft Grass, Write Poetry.

Opposition Value: 2

The Darking Moor:

The dense foliage of the Haunted Forest slowly dissipates into a brackish legion of swamps in the South of Vercove. These dank and eerie waters are known as the Darking Moors. They are a cursed place, infested with vile creatures and those practicing evil sorcery. It is the last place anyone from Millebourne would want to go, yet the Huntsmen must traverse this rotted land to keep their village safe.

The swamps stretch out in all directions. The black waters ebb and flow as if controlled by an invisible will. Every year, the Darking Moor grows larger. The Huntsmen monitor the water's creep, but there is little they can do about it. Only in the dead of winter is its undulation stalled. The cold winter winds freeze the swamp solid. In these times, it takes on a strange and horrifying beauty. The deafening silence only and hoary frost seem only to magnify the dangers that lurk nearby.

Auto-Tags: Boating, Identify Plant, Identify Animal, Swimming, Build Shelter, Build Raft, Sleep Lightly, Balance, Purify Water.

Opposition Value: 3

King's Road:

There is one main road that crosses through Vercove- it is the King's Road. King's Road was once a great trading route. Exotic spices would come from the kingdoms of the south and durable items like swords and sculptures would come from the north countries along this route. The people of Vercove and the other provinces along King's Road profited greatly from travelers and merchants. But since the coming of evil and the availability of safer sea routes have caused King's Road to be mostly abandoned.

The people of Millebourne still maintain the section that runs through Vercove. Occasionally a merchant, traveler, politician or coal trader will come by and stay at the village inn. The King's Road is the town's sole link to the outside and their only escape route through the mountains.

Auto-Tags: Run Far, Run Fast, Fire-Starting, Sense Heading, Tracking, Slay Animal, Bend in the Road, Repair Road, Slay Animal, Cooking.

Opposition Value: 3

Darkstone Keep:

North and East of the Darking Moor lies its namesake, Darkstone Keep. Many legends exist about this accursed mass of stonework. Some have said a great vampire lord lives here, others say the

founder of Milleboune, immortal and undead, has taken up residence in its infernal halls, and still some say it is the incarnation of all evil in the world. The true nature of the malignity in Darkstone has never been revealed, but its vile affect on the land is ever-present.

A blackness permeates the ground near the keep. The soil has turned the color of tar. A constant, but faint wail can be heard coming from the lonely spires of the soul forsaken castle. Even the moon and clouds look more menacing when viewed while standing just outside its lifeless walls.

Travelers unfortunate enough to blunder near the castle are rarely seen or heard from again. The palace is roamed with the unnatural and sunlight offers no safety. Even the Huntsmen are wary of treading this ground where the stones cry and the soil seems to scuttle beneath your feet.

Auto-Tags: Slay Undead, Climbing, Balancing, A Dark Corner, Translate Languages, Resist Fear, Identify Sound, Run Fast, Rope and Hook, Dodge.

Opposition Value: 7

Lake Serenity:

Not far from Darkstone Keep sits the gentle waters of Lake Serenity. In the warmer months, the shepherds bring their flocks to this tranquil spot to water them and fill their own skins with the lake's refreshing liquid. During winter, the lake becomes a frozen mass, perfect for skating and ice fishing. Though not far from the seat of villainy in Vercove, this place has been largely unspoiled by the powers of Darkstone Keep.

From time to time the Huntsmen are called to drive out wolves from the Haunted Forest or to defeat a sorceress who is seeking to use the lake for nefarious purposes. Still, the threats here are few, and if called, the Huntsmen welcome it as a break from the mind shattering horrors found in the woods and mountains.

At any time, one could find shepherds resting here with their flocks, or a half dozen fishermen trolling the shores for a tasty dinner. There is even a small dock for boating when the weather is nice.

Auto-Tags: Swimming, Fishing, Ice Skating, Fire Building, Boating, Sheep Herding, Identify Animal, Forecast Weather, Tell Time, Sense Heading, Improvise Shelter, Ice Sculpturing, Purify Water.

Opposition Value: 2

The Village of Millebourne:

The South-central part of Vercove is marked by the small village of Millebourne. It has stood for centuries as a haven for weary travelers and pastoral shepherds. It is a quaint village with many provincial rituals and customs. There's a festival for almost everything. The people are from a hardy stock, but lyrical in their laughter and in their speech. Wayfarers often stop at the Milled Inn for rest and provincial entertainment.

The town has many important features. There's a smithy, a steam mill, and a great brewery. The people here are known for producing fine ales and thick wool. They take pride in it. Guests should be forewarned that insulting either their dress or their drink will provoke a hasty quarrel. In all respects, Millebourne would seem like an average town in an average province. In all respects, that is, save one.

Surrounding this story-book village are terrors the mind shudders to even dream about. The people live with the constant knowledge that night brings with it dangers no normal man or woman could face. Children are plucked from their homes on moonless nights. Flocks of goats are slaughtered by unseen assailants. The town has a stockade, but it serves only as reassurance. The true horrors need no gate to enter.

All hope for Millebourne is not lost, however. Its hardy people have produced a breed of man and woman capable of fighting back against the encroaching malevolence. They are called Huntsmen. Even the blood drinkers and flesh eaters fear that word. The Huntsmen stand between the darkness and the people. They draw a line, and say, "You will not pass me by!" The village is safe, precariously so, but safe none-the-less.

Auto-Tags: Talk with People, Tell Jokes, Alcohol Tolerance, Spinning and Weaving, A Close Friend, The Smithy, The Tavern, Mayor Tenille Laveretta, Repair Equipment, Sound the Alarm, Defend the Weak, Resist Fear, Rally the People.

Opposition Value: 3

The Set Up:

Setting up to play Hunter Rose is easy. Each player will need to supply the following: 1 rose (preferably a real one), 1 piece of string or yarn that is at least 3 feet long, and at least a dozen beads divided into five different colors. The players should each have their own character sheet filled out and ready to go. The GameMaster should also provide each player with a copy of the setting locations and Auto-Tags associated with each location. Everyone will need three to seven six-sided dice to roll. Finally, the GameMaster should have some extra copies of the Adversary Record Sheets and Opposition Record Sheet made. This will help keep track of what opponents the players may face and how many Adversary Points the GameMaster has earned.

Playing the Game:

There are several things you will have to keep in mind as you play Hunter Rose. The GameMaster will start the game by presenting the players with a situation that involves some change coming to Millebourne. The players will be responsible for driving the action. The Change must be resolved one way or another, but it is up to them what happens before, during, and after it comes. The following sections detail the responsibilities of the players and the GameMaster and gives general guidelines for playing Hunter Rose.

The GameMaster's Role:

Your job as the GM is to push the players to further the story. You should be asking them leading questions that prompt them to act and explain. Questions like, “Where do you go?”, “What do you do next?”, “What do you find?”, and “What does that mean?” are good starters. Players will need time for their characters to unwind every now and then. Perhaps by enjoying a drink at the Harvest Moon tavern and Inn. That’s fine. But do not let them get complacent. As a GM, you have many resources at hand. You get to create the Change that is coming to Millebourne, you receive Adversary Points to challenge the players, and have pre-generated NPCs to use. The following sections detail each of these resources.

Creating the “Change”:

The Change that comes to Millebourne is something that should take it out of the insular, provincial present and into a more cosmopolitan future. The Change will often be a person, but may also be a shipment of supplies of some kind. Below are some generic suggestions you can use to build Changes of your own:

- A New Politician Coming to Town
- An Emissary from the Parliament
- An Emissary from a Foreign Country
- A Shipment of Coal
- A Shipment of New Firearms
- A New Doctor
- A New Alchemist
- A New School Teacher
- A Merchant Coming to Town
- An Entertainer Coming to Town
- A Strange Wanderer in the Forests
- A Religious Prophet Preaching in the Furrows
- A New, Powerful Vampire Arrives

The Change must pass through or involve at least three locations mentioned in the Setting portion of this book and one of them must be the Everpeak Mountains, King’s Road, or Lake Serenity. The Huntsmen must “secure” the path for the Change by traveling to at least two of these locals and clearing out any dangers that might exist there.

Once you have decided what form the Change will take, you must decide what the village elders want to do about it. Perhaps they want the Huntsmen to escort the merchant to town. Perhaps they want them to drive out the new Vampire. Perhaps they need the Huntsmen to collect rare wood from the Haunted Forest to furnish a new home for the King’s Emissary. You are totally free to create the Change the players must address. However, once you do that, it is up to them what to actually do about it with their characters.

In addition to the Change, a GameMaster can create side quests if the players seem like they are looking for some. The village elders always have a job that needs to be done or an area of the King’s Road that needs to be patrolled and cleared. Then there’s various duties like manning the stockade,

postings at the watchtower, and restocking Everpass Hold. Ask the players what they want to do, and follow their lead.

Gaining and Spending Adversary Points:

Adversary Points are a resource for GameMasters to escalate the dangers and challenges the Huntsmen face. The GM starts out with 5 Adversary Points per player, but gain accumulate more during play. Just as the players gain Advancement Points, the GM will gain Adversary Points. Each time the players choose to sacrifice unused dice for an Advancement Point, the GM gains an Adversary Point. The GM can spend these points at any time to purchase hazards, traps, non-player characters, and monsters. Each of these is keyed to a specific location in the Setting. Below is a table that lists each of the things the GM can purchase with his points. There is an appendix in the back of this book that has record sheets and more detail about each of these options.

Adversary Point Purchase Table:

- Change Arena of Conflict: 1pt
- +1 to GM's Arena Value for this Conflict: 1pt
- Lesser Hazard: 1 pt
- Greater Hazard: 2pts
- Blizzard: 2pts
- Lesser Trap: 2pts
- Greater Trap: 3pts
- Infestation of Vermin: 3pts
- Lesser Dire Wolf: 4pts
- Greater Dire Wolf: 5pts
- Plague: 5pts
- Lesser Dire Bear: 5pts
- Greater Dire Bear: 6pts
- Village Traitor: 6pts
- Lesser Werewolf: 7pts
- Greater Werewolf: 8pts
- Lesser Sorcerer: 9pts
- Greater Sorcerer: 10pts
- Lesser Vampire: 11pts
- Greater Vampire: 12pts
- Lesser Shade: 13pts
- Greater Shade: 15pts

The Player's Role:

Players in Hunter Rose have a great deal of personal responsibility for play. You are the ones who drive the story. The GameMaster isn't going to tell you where to go and what to do. Indeed the GM created the Change that is coming to Millebourne, but the Huntsmen are in no way required to immediately go out and make it happen. In fact, you may want to explore other areas of the setting, establish personal quests, and make the village safe from threats such as wolfpacks or infestations.

The thing to remember is the fun is made by you. Let your GameMaster know what parts of your character and what parts of the setting you want to explore. Want to collect rare flowers for your Love? Say you're doing that. Want to slay a werewolf to make yourself a hunting out fit? Tell the GM that's what you want to do. Don't be afraid to take control of the story and guide it in whatever direction you and your fellow players want. That's the point of this game. You get to tell your story about Love, Tragedy, and Sacrifice.

Final Advice:

Hunter Rose is a game designed to provoke thought and reflection. How important are things like Love and Destiny to you? The actions of your character will reflect your own values and desires. Hunter Rose is also designed to provoke socialization. What kind of Rose will you choose? What will your Thread look like? The kinds of physical artifacts you create and bring to the table are an expression of your own creativity. Don't hold back your personal feelings and ideas. Use this game to explore and reflect. That's where the true fun comes from.

Special Thanks:

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GameMaster Adversary Record Sheets

Lesser Hazzard

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	N/A	Everpeak Mts.	Adds +1 to the Value of a location or character
Thirst	N/A	Haunted Forest	opposing a Huntsmen for one conflict.
Body	N/A	Darking Moor	There may be only one Hazard in affect
Destiny	N/A		at a time.
Love	N/A		

Greater Hazzard

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	N/A	Everpeak Mts.	Adds +2 to the Value of a location or character
Thirst	N/A	Haunted Forest	opposing a Huntsmen for one conflict.
Body	N/A	Darking Moor	There may be only one Hazard in affect
Destiny	N/A	Darkstone Keep	at a time.
Love	N/A	Lake Serenity	

Blizzard

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	N/A	Everpeak Mts.	Doubles the Opposition Value for its location if the
Thirst	N/A	Millebourne	Huntsmen try to leave that location for 24 hours.
Body	N/A		Attempting to leave a location that has a Blizzard
Destiny	N/A		forces an automatic conflict with that location.
Love	N/A		

Lesser Trap

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	2	Darkstone Keep	Forces an automatic conflict with one Huntsmen.
Thirst	2	Haunted Forest	
Body	2	King's Road	
Destiny	2		
Love	2		

Greater Trap

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	3	Darkstone Keep	Forces an automatic conflict with one Huntsmen.
Thirst	2	Haunted Forest	
Body	3	King's Road	
Destiny	2	Everpeak Mts.	
Love	2	Millebourne	

Infestation of Vermin

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	3	Millebourne	Requires at least 2 Huntsmen working together to
Thirst	2	Haunted Forest	defeat this foe. All Huntsmen who engage the
Body	3		Infestation of Vermin lose 1 die from their dice pool
Destiny	2		(a Huntsman's pool may never be reduced to fewer
Love	2		than 1 die).

Lesser Dire Wolf

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	3	Darkstone Keep	
Thirst	3	Haunted Forest	
Body	3	King's Road	
Destiny	2	The Furrows	
Love	2	Lake Serenity	

Greater Dire Wolf

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	4	Darkstone Keep	
Thirst	3	Haunted Forest	
Body	3	King's Road	
Destiny	2	Everpeak Mts.	
Love	3		

Plague

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	N/A	Millebourne	Each Huntsman loses 1 petal from their Rose. This option may only be selected by the GM once per Change. A plague can be cured by completing a quest for the physician or alchemist. If successful the Huntsmen gain 2 APs, but no petals are restored.
Thirst	N/A		
Body	N/A		
Destiny	N/A		
Love	N/A		

Lesser Dire Bear

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	4	Darking Moor	
Thirst	3	Haunted Forest	
Body	3	King's Road	
Destiny	3		
Love	3		

Lesser Dire Bear

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	4	Darking Moor	
Thirst	3	Haunted Forest	
Body	3	King's Road	
Destiny	3	The Furrows	
Love	3	Everpeak Mts	

Village Traitor

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	3	Millebourne	While the Village Traitor is in play, the GM gains 3 Adversary Points each time a Huntsmen loses a conflict.
Thirst	2		
Body	2		
Destiny	4		
Love	4		

Lesser Werewolf

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	4	Darking Moor	
Thirst	3	Haunted Forest	
Body	4	King's Road	
Destiny	3	Everpeak Mts.	
Love	3		

Greater Werewolf

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	5	Darking Moor	
Thirst	3	Haunted Forest	
Body	4	King's Road	
Destiny	4	Darkstone Keep	
Love	3		

Lesser Sorcerer

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	3	Darking Moor	
Thirst	4	Haunted Forest	
Body	4	Lake Serenity	
Destiny	5	The Furrows	
Love	4		

Greater Sorcerer

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	4	Darking Moor	
Thirst	5	Haunted Forest	
Body	4	Lake Serenity	
Destiny	5	Darkstone Keep	
Love	4		

Lesser Vampire

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	5	Darking Moor	
Thirst	5	Haunted Forest	
Body	5	Darkstone Keep	
Destiny	5	Millebourne	
Love	5		

Greater Vampire

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	6	Darking Moor	
Thirst	5	Darkstone Keep	
Body	6		
Destiny	5		
Love	6		

Lesser Shade

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	7	Darking Moor	
Thirst	6	Darkstone Keep	
Body	7		
Destiny	6		
Love	6		

Greater Shade

<u>Components/Arenas</u>	<u>Value:</u>	<u>Keyed Locations</u>	<u>Special</u>
Prowess	8	Darkstone Keep	If a Huntsman loses a conflict with a Greater Shade, he or she loses an additional point from the Value of a component.
Thirst	7		
Body	7		
Destiny	7		
Love	8		

Character Record Sheet

Prowess

Name

Value

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

Destiny

Value

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

Love

Value

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

Body

Value

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

Thirst

Value

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

Tag

APs