
EXPEDITIONS

Making Preparations • Running the Journey • What to Prep

The characters decide to leave town. Maybe you've presented a threat and they're off to deal with it. Maybe you've dangled an opportunity and they want to seize it. Maybe they have plans of their own, something they want to accomplish, and it involves leaving home. It's time for an expedition.

When the players leave town and head out into the wild, here's how it typically goes:

- ② They make preparations: Chart a Course, Outfit, and whatever else they need to do before leaving home.
- ② They head out, and you make GM moves that show their progress and force them to make decisions.
- ② You ask lots of questions: about the places they pass, about how they spend the time, and about how get along.
- ② When the time is right, you present challenges (from Chart a Course), introduce dangers, and offer up discoveries.
- ② They trigger moves and resolve them. Often, they Struggle as One. When they rest, they Make Camp. When they run out of food, they Forage.

You zoom in and out. They might reach their destination with ease. Or, they might encounter something that distracts them from their primary goal, or that gets them lost, or that beats them up so badly that they turn back and head home in defeat. It's all good.

Travel—and the challenges it presents—is an important part of *Stonetop*. It's a chance to flesh out and explore the wider world. It's where a much of the game takes place. It's dangerous, and hard, and that reinforces the importance of home and its relative safety, and the fact that the PCs are special simply because they'll risk the wider world. No, travel isn't something to gloss over. Give it the screen time it deserves!

MAKING PREPARATIONS

Before the leave home, the PCs will make preparations. At the very least, that usually means making these moves:

- ☉ Chart a Course
- ☉ Outfit

CHART A COURSE

When you *wish to travel to a distant place*, name or describe your destination (for example, “Gordin’s Delve,” “the hagr’s lair,” or “wherever these tracks lead”). If the route is unclear, tell the GM how you intend to reach it. The GM will then tell you what’s required, the risks, and how long it will likely take.

When you *set out on the journey*, the GM will present each of the challenges one at a time—plus any surprises that you couldn’t have seen coming—in whatever order makes the most sense. Address them all and reach your destination.

When the players start saying that they need to leave town for some reason, direct them to this move. Use it to clarify their destination and how they intend to get there. If they have no idea, prompt them to Spout Lore or maybe Make a Plan. Their route doesn’t need to be perfectly clear—something like “*we follow their tracks*” is just fine—but they should have some idea of where they’re going and how they’re going to get there.

Once they’ve established their destination and route, tell them as many of the following as make sense. Make your choices based on the seasons, the terrain, how well they know the area, the dangers that lurk there, the threats you’ve established and their grim portents. Don’t worry so much about the order right now, and feel free to rephrase or tweak the wording. If it makes sense, add entirely new items.

- ☉ You must first travel to ____, and from there to your destination
- ☉ You must wait until ____
- ☉ You need a knowledgeable guide/accurate map/detailed directions
- ☉ You’ll need to bring ____
- ☉ You need to watch out for ____

- ⊗ The way is perilous, plagued with dangers
- ⊗ You risk getting lost
- ⊗ You must surmount/cross/brave ____ on the way
- ⊗ The terrain itself is treacherous; you risk injury on the way
- ⊗ The way will be hard and grueling; you risk exhausting yourselves or your resources
- ⊗ You risk drawing the attention of ____
- ⊗ It'll take at least ____ days (and a corresponding number of rations)
- ⊗ You don't know how long it'll take

You'll usually link these with "and" but can also use a merciful "or." *"You'll need to bring warm clothes OR the way will be hard and grueling."* *"You need to wait until daybreak OR you risk getting lost."*

If you choose **First you must travel to** __, then Chart a Course for each leg of the journey. You can nest this requirement two or three levels deep. A journey to Lygos might require traveling to Marshedge, and from there to the arid South, and from there to Lygos proper.

Answer whatever questions the players have. Clarify your statements. Don't be afraid to negotiate with them or even change your mind.

Write your choices down with tic boxes next to them. Ideally, put this someplace public so the players can see it, too. This list will serve as your narrative to-do list once the journey starts.

Winter has been brutal and Stonetop is running out of food. If they don't get some Surplus soon, people will die. Rhianna and Caradoc decide to go hunt the cave bears south of town, despite Blodwen's reservations. "Sounds like you're Charting a Course," I say. "How do you intend to get there?"

Rhianna: "They lair in a cave in the bluff, right? If we follow the bluff south, we'll find them."

I look at the list and jot down:

- You'll need to bring warm clothes
- You'll need to watch out for crinwin (of course)
- The way is hard and grueling (because of the cold and deep snow)
- You risk getting lost
- You risk drawing the attention of the cave bears as you approach!
- It'll take at least 1 day there and back
- You'll need to bring sledges, 1 for each surplus of bear meat you hope to bring back (or make them once you're out there)

I read these off and Rhianna's like "Wait, we risk getting lost? We're just going to follow the cliff face south." Oh, sure. Of course. I cross it off the list.

Vahid has gotten it in his head to visit Three-Coven Lake in search of some workings of Azm Qadir. "How do you intend to get there?" I ask. He says that they'll take the Highway to Marshedge and resupply there. Then they'll follow the stream upriver into the Steplands and to Three-Coven Lake.

That seems legit, so I look over the list and write down the following:

- First, you'll need to travel to Marshedge
 - You need to wait until summer *OR* you'll need to bring warm clothes
 - You need to watch out for nosgolau on the Flats
 - It'll take at least 8 days and a corresponding number of rations
- You need a knowledgeable guide *OR* you risk getting lost
- The way is perilous, plagued with dangers
- The Steplands themselves are treacherous; you risk injury
- The way will be hard and grueling; you risk exhausting yourselves
- It'll take at least 4 days from Marshedge, and a corresponding number of rations

Vahid asks why we need a guide or risk getting lost. "Won't we just be following the stream upriver?"

"Sure, I say, but that stream winds through the Steplands, which are notoriously confusing and treacherous. And who knows how many little tributaries feed it?"

"Oh, sure. Makes sense. Though, I did spend some time wandering around the Steplands before I got to Stonetop. Maybe I've got the lay of the land?"

“Sounds like you’re Spouting Lore to me. Roll it!”

That autumn, Rbianna, her crew, and Caradoc find themselves out in the Great Wood. They just had a run-in with the shadowy presence that killed Rheinal, and Eira (Rbianna’s lieutenant) has been seriously hurt. It’s getting dark.

“We need to get home. Fast. No way we want to be stuck out here with that thing. Can we make it?”

“Sounds like you’re Charting a Course. You all know the Woods, so finding your way isn’t really an issue. But if you want to get back before dark, you’ll have to book it. The way will be hard and grueling—especially for Eira—and at that speed, the terrain will be treacherous, too. And you’ll have to watch out for the shadowy presence!”

“Is there any way we could make it less grueling?” asks Caradoc. “Like a shortcut?”

“Well... yeah, totally. But you’d have to brave the Red Grove, and it’s in full crimson right now! What do you do?”

OUTFIT

When you *undertake a mission on behalf of a friendly steading*, choose someone to roll +Fortunes: **on a 10+**, together with your allies you pick up to 6 things from the Gear list that corresponds to the steading’s Prosperity; **on a 7-9**, you pick 3; **on a 6-**, you get nothing (not even XP).

Regardless of the result, you can make up to 3 additional picks, but doing so reduces the steading’s Fortunes by 1.

This move mostly takes the place of going shopping before an adventure. The items they pick might be stuff that the PCs had lying around, but more often it comes from the good will of the steading, from their friends and neighbors and communal stores. (That’s why they roll +Fortunes.)

This move triggers only when the PCs go on an adventure *on behalf* of the steading. It represents the steading's outpouring of support. A foolish jaunt to the Ruined Tower to satisfy the Seeker's curiosity doesn't count.

Use this move to show off what NPCs think of the PCs. Maybe the town blacksmith gives the Would-be Hero a new dagger as a sign of respect. Maybe the party's provisions came from the missing boy's kin—packing up a good lunch is the least they can do. Ask lots of questions, too!

The “picks” are from the Gear Lists matching the steading's current Prosperity. They can “trade down” freely (for example, picking 3 Dirt items instead 1 Poor item) but can't trade up. More expensive and valuable stuff just isn't freely available.

If they choose to reduce Fortunes for 3 extra picks, they're asking for things that the town *needs*. They'll hand it over, but folks will be going without.

If they don't Outfit (or roll a 6- and choose not to reduce the steading's Fortunes), then they are on their own. They can still Trade and Barter for supplies, but no one's going to be particularly generous.

On a miss, don't make a move. Getting nothing is bad enough.

Rhianna says “Okay, let's go get us some bears. Me, my crew, Caradoc, Vahid, and Blodwen. Plus Andras, the new kid, to see if he works out. Outfit?”

“Sure,” I say. “Don't forget, you'll need warm clothes. And a few sledges, one per Surplus you hope to bring back.”

Rhianna rolls +Fortunes and adds an extra +1 because of her Logistics move. She gets a 7-9, so that's 3 picks off the Poor list. “My crew and I already have wool cloaks, so we're good. What about the rest of you?”

Blodwen's set (her thick hides are warm). Vahid's got a cloak. Caradoc needs a cloak, though. “I guess I've been keeping watch huddled under a blanket.”

“Andras will need a cloak, too,” I say. I hadn't thought of that before, but it makes

sense. We know his family doesn't have much.

"Can't we just give him Gareth's old cloak?"

"Didn't you burn him in it?"

"Crap. Right," says Rhianna. "Two wool cloaks, then. That leaves us with one more 'poor' pick. You said we needed sledges? Ugh, those are poor, too. And we've only got 1 pick left. How many do we think we'll need?"

"Well, one per Surplus. And you need, what? 3 Surplus? So, three sledges. You can pick an extra 3 poor items, but it'll reduce the town's Fortunes by 1."

"Really? We can't just borrow them? Wouldn't my crew already have them?"

"Sure, you can say that your crew already has three sledges, but then the two cloaks are what you have to beg and borrow for. Or you could Trade and Barter for them, I guess."

They kick it around for a while, and finally decide it's worth the -1 Fortunes. "If we don't feed people, we'll be -1 Fortunes anyway," says Blodwen.

They've got one choice off the Poor list left, and they opt to get three Dirt items instead: two sets of bandages (4 uses each) and some shabby adventuring gear (3 uses). I mention that Andras doesn't have any weapons and Rhianna's like "I am giving him Gareth's old shield and spear. It's not like they're getting used anymore." I'm okay with that.

Now I start thinking about where this stuff came from. I want to work in that -1 Fortunes, so I **reveal an unwelcome truth**: "Okay, Rhianna, you go around looking for supplies and a cloak for Andras and, like, no one has much to offer. Certainly not food. You can tell folks feel bad about it, too. Ashamed. You're just barely able to scrape together the gear and the bandages. The only reason you find a cloak is because old Elios died last night. His daughter, Lewela, said he'd been sick and breathing bad for the past week, and, well, he just didn't make it. So, do you think she offered the cloak? Or did you have to ask for it?"

Rhianna sneers. “Oh, I had to ask for it. It was ugly. I think I left her sobbing.”

I make a note. We’ll see more of Lewela later, I think.

“Caradoc, what about you?” I ask. “Where did you get your cloak?”

“Um... from Morwena, I think.”

“Oh, totally! She catches you in the square as the crew is gathering. She’s got a bundle under her arm and avoids eye contact. ‘I... I was weaving this for you... before... and, well, the embroidery on the back isn’t done, but if you insist on going out there again... well, you’ll need something warm. So... here.’ And she blushes and shoves it in your arms and runs off. What do you do?”

Other preparations

Aside from Chart a Course and Outfit, there are plenty of other preparations the PCs might want to make, including but not limited to the following. These might happen before the PCs Outfit, or after, or sometimes in the middle of them picking choices.

Heck, it’s entirely possible that you’ll jump back and forth in time as they take care of all the details. Don’t sweat it.

TRADE AND BARTER

If the PCs want or need something for the expedition, but they couldn’t get it with Outfit, they’ll need to Trade and Barter. The move is discussed in full in the HOMEFRONT chapter (page [XX](#)), but here’s the GM-facing version:

TRADE AND BARTER

When the PCs **go looking to buy, sell, or trade goods in a steading**, they can freely exchange items from gear lists matching the steading’s current Prosperity or lower. For example, in a Poor steading, they can freely exchange Poor or Dirt items.

If they wish to acquire or sell something from a list higher than the steading’s Prosperity, tell them one or more of the following, linked with “and” or “or” as you see fit.

- ☉ You won’t find anything like that, but you could probably get ___ instead
- ☉ You’ll need to wait for a merchant from ___ to arrive

- ⊗ You'll need to travel to ____
- ⊗ You'll need to talk to ____ for that
- ⊗ First, you'll need to ____
- ⊗ It'll take some coin to grease the wheels
- ⊗ You risk drawing unwanted attention
- ⊗ It'll take some convincing on your part
- ⊗ They'll probably try to fleece you

As with Outfit, you can use this move to bring the village to life. Use it to push them into interactions with NPCs, especially NPCs they have complicated relationships with. Even if they don't have to make special arrangements, you can ask them who they got something from and maybe play out a little scene.

For stuff that's more valuable than the steading's Prosperity, or things that just aren't on the list, make your choices with your principles in line. In particular, remember to both **be a fan of the characters** and to **begin and end with the fiction**.

Vahid is muttering a bit about going out in the cold, and he flat out refuses to do it without some decent whisky. Fortunately for him, in Stonetop, a flask of decent whisky counts as a "dirt" item (instead of poor). "I've got a handful of coppers," he says, "can I just, like, buy it?"

"Sure!" I say. "Alun's still got some of the decent stuff at the pub, and he's always willing to pick up some coin. But when you pick it up, he's like 'Heard you're going on that bear hunt, aye? Doesn't exactly seem like your sort of thing."

"I'll say," says Vahid. "But it's the only time I'm ever going to get a look at what's in those caves."

Rhianna would really like some steel-tipped arrows for this bear hunt, but they're on the Moderate list. Even if she had the coin or something else to barter, she'd have to make special arrangements. As she doesn't even have the coin, I think about telling her that she's just out of luck.

But, no, she's got some history with the blacksmith. So, I tell her "You'll have to talk to Cadi the smith for that, and it'll take some convincing."

"Cadi, huh? Ugh, fine. I stop at her shop the night before we go with some whisky as a peace offering."

"Oh, the good stuff?"

"Hell no. Rotgut. If I had good stuff lying around I wouldn't be stealing dead men's cloaks from their grieving daughters, would I?"

BORROWING ASSETS

The PCs might want to borrow town assets, like the horses or the wagon. Or they might want to borrow important assets that are owned by individuals, like the smith's anvil or the tanner's vats.

- ☉ If their standing in the steading is questionable, they might need to do some convincing.
- ☉ If they take these resources when they're needed most—like taking the horses during the spring planting or the autumn harvest—it'll reduce the town's Fortunes by 1.
- ☉ If they fail to bring these resources back, it counts as Meeting with Disaster (see page XX). That will reduce the town's Fortunes by 1 (at least).

As time goes on, the town might acquire more assets (more horses, a second wagon, magic items, etc.). You'll need to decide what's involved in borrowing assets like those.

FOLLOWERS

As a rule, followers that are established by a character's playbook (like the Marshal's Crew, or the Blessed's fellow Initiates of Danu) will join the PCs on an expedition if asked. At most, the PC will need to Order Followers.

Other NPCs might offer to join the expedition, or insist on doing so. If the PCs bring them along, write these NPCs up as followers. Followers might also become apparent through a Muster (see page XX), or just organically in play.

If the PCs actively look for NPCs to join them on the adventure, handle that with GM moves (like **offer an opportunity** or **introduce someone interesting**) and **player** moves like Spout Lore (*“Do I know anyone who’d be willing come into the Woods with us?”*), Discern Realities (*“Of all these volunteers... who here is useful or valuable to me?”*), and/or Parley (*“Rheinal, we need your help”*). If they find someone and bring them along, write them up as a follower.

When the PCs go looking for a follower, always follow your principles and your sense of the world. **Begin and end with the fiction**, but also **be a fan of the characters** and **ask questions and build on the answers**. *“No, there’s no alchemist in town. But the tanner probably knows their chemicals... what’s the tanner’s name, and how well do you know them?”*

If the PCs bring the horses or a hound (or even a goat), consider writing them up as followers, too!

Unless a follower is *self-sufficient*, the PCs need to provide rations for them. This might affect the choices they made when they Outfitted. It’s totally fine to let them go back and make changes.

See the FOLLOWERS chapter (page [XXX](#)) for more details.

GATHERING INFORMATION

The PCs might have all sorts of questions they want answered before they go. They might Spout Lore (*“Has anything like this happened before?”*) or Discern Realities (*“I go down an investigate the scene of the attack”* or *“I’ll ask around the village, see if anyone has noticed anything strange”*). They might interview a specific NPC to see what they know. They might use class-specific moves like the Blessed’s Call the Spirits.

Reward and encourage them to do these things, but don’t let them dawdle, either. If they spend too much time on preparation, **tell them the consequences and ask**. *“Yeab, you can ask around town and see if anyone saw anything, but it’ll take a few hours at least. And the longer you wait, the harder it’s going to be to follow that trail.”*

Zoom in and out as appropriate. Play out the scene in which they interrogate the sketchy newcomer, but gloss over the hours spent interviewing townsfolk. *“What here isn’t what it*

appears to be?” “Folks have all sorts of stuff they try to tell you, but it’s all fear and nonsense. Except Cadi. She tells you that her smithy didn’t get touched, at least not on the inside. Every other house near hers got broken into, and stuff in her yard got messed up, but the inside of the smithy was untouched. She seems as confused about it as anyone else.”

Don’t be a stickler for timelines here. Maybe something they learn changes the gear they want to pick from Outfitting. Let them. Maybe you’re playing out a nighttime scene in the pub when the Ranger realizes they should have gone down to the Stream and investigated before sunset, while the tracks were fresh. Sure, hand wave it, play it out as a flashback. Whatever. As long as it doesn’t undo something consequential, it’s fine to do a little retconning. Lots of details that’d be obvious to the characters are easy to miss when we’re glossing over hours and days at a time.

PUTTING OTHERS TO WORK

Before the PCs head out on an expedition, they might set the townsfolk to work. For example:

- ☉ They could Muster (see page [XX](#)), putting everyone on alert and ready for trouble. Have them make the roll before they leave, because it might generate a potential follower and they’ll need to choose “the muster holds together... even without your presence” if they want readiness to remain high while they are away.
- ☉ They could Pull Together (see page [XX](#)), having folks attempt to repair the granary or build new fortifications or prepare some damn fool scheme that the Fox dreamed up. They might need to Parley or otherwise convince folks to get to work, but assuming they do, you should probably hold off and have them roll for Pull Together when the characters head home. That way, they players learn the success of the plan at about the same time their characters do.
- ☉ They might set an individual or two to a task, like searching the Chronicle for references to the Wandering Market or just keeping an eye on Ergben. They might need a Parley (or Order Followers) to get that to happen, but if they do, it either doesn’t trigger a roll (and you just decide what happened when they get back) or it triggers Do Their Thing (if it’s a capable follower). If there’s a Do

Their Thing roll, hold off on rolling until they PCs are heading back (for the same reason you hold off on a Pull Together roll).

Make note of any such tasks or projects the PCs set their neighbors to, so that you don't forget them later.

MISCELLANEOUS

I'm sure your players will come up with other things they want to do prior to an expedition. In general: follow the fiction and your principles. Zoom in and out as you see fit. Tie their actions back to the townsfolk and ask lots of questions. If the preparations trigger a move that needs to be resolved before they leave, have them roll it now. If they trigger a move that takes time to resolve, roll it when they are on their way home.

Box Text: Flashbacks

Sometimes, the characters get into the field and realize that they wish they'd have done something before they left. Consider playing this out as a flashback. Frame the scene in the past and play it out normally, with moves and rolls and such. When the scene is done, jump back to "now."

The key thing about flashbacks is that they shouldn't contradict or nullify anything that's happened "on screen" already. For example, if the PCs have already Struggled as One to trudge through a few miles of deep snow, it doesn't make sense to flashback to a scene in which the acquire snowshoes for everyone.

It's your call whether to allow a flashback, but keep your principles in mind (especially **be a fan of the characters**). When in doubt, ask the table at large for their opinion.

While out on the bear hunt, Blodwen realizes that she'd really like to have borrowed one of the horse's moves, "Sniff out danger on the wind." "Is it okay if we say I just did that?" she asks.

Now, Blodwen can calm animals with a touch and they generally love her, but this isn't a sure thing. I decide to do a flashback. "Okay, quick... it's back this morning, just before you all left. You're in the stable, the horses are still sleeping. Which one do you wake up, and how?"

“Oh, Fflur, I think. She’s the more sensible of the two. I put my hand on her snout and whisper her name, and as she wakes up I offer her a little handful of barley that I secreted away.” Fflur munches away and nuzzles Blodwen’s hand asks for some more. “I need a favor first, old friend. I’m going out in the Wood today, and you’ll be here, safe and sound. I could use your sense of smell. Can you loan that to me?”

That’s clearly a Parley. I think about Fflur, and whether she has any reason to object. Her instinct is “to panic”—she’s the more sensible horse, but still a horse—so I think she’d resist. I ask Blodwen to roll +CHA and she gets a 7-9. Fflur’s like “But, how will I know if predators are coming? Or if the stable burns? Or... or... or predators?” I tell Blodwen that she needs to give Fflur some concrete assurance that she’ll be safe without it.

“Oh, sure. I remind her that she’ll be safe in the stable all day, and I weave her a talisman that’s proof against fire. I need to use up 1 Stock anyway to make room for the Borrowed Power. Does that work?” Sure it does. Fflur agrees. Blodwen updates her notes.

And we jump back to right now, in the Woods. “I want to sniff the wind for danger,” says Blodwen. Away we go!

RUNNING THE JOURNEY

They PCs have made their preparations. They're doing this. "We head out," they say. They're looking at you. What do you do?

What you do is run the game: describe the situation, follow the rules, make moves, and exploit your prep.

Travel in *Stonetop* works best as a "point crawl." You don't follow the characters step-by-step, mile-by-mile, or even hour-by-hour. Instead, you zoom in and out to match the level of interest or importance.

Here's how:

- ⊙ First, describe the situation: where they are, what it's like, the time of day, the weather. *"You head down the path from Stonetop into the Great Wood. A few minutes later, you find yourselves standing at the Stream: wide, shallow, and swift, a constant, noisy rush of water, a feeling of mild dread."*
- ⊙ If it's the first time they've been here in play, or something has significantly changed, you might dig in and ask some questions. The various almanac entries are loaded with these. *"Rhianna, what little ritual do villagers do each time they cross the Stream? Why?" "Blodwen, what detail here tells you that this is a place people come, but not a place where they tarry?"*
- ⊙ Make a GM move (often an exploration move, described below), following your principles. Maybe you'll **hint at more than meets the eye**. Maybe you'll **present a discovery** or **introduce a danger, person, or faction**. Maybe you'll **provide a choice of paths**, or **bar the way and make them backtrack**. Or you'll make any other GM move that makes sense.
- ⊙ Ask them "what do you do?" Go from there.
- ⊙ If and when they decide to move on, **change the environment**. Zoom in on the next point of interest, the next terrain, the next challenge. Describe the new situation, ask questions, make a move, and see what they do.

Exploration moves

Add these to your arsenal of GM moves once the players leave town and head into the wider world. These same moves get used when exploring POINTS OF INTEREST (see page XX), but here, we'll discuss how to use them as part of a journey.

Your exploration moves are:

- ☉ Change the environment
- ☉ Provide a choice of paths
- ☉ Bar the way; make them backtrack
- ☉ Hint at more than meets the eye
- ☉ Present a discovery
- ☉ Point to a looming danger
- ☉ Introduce a danger, person, or faction
- ☉ Offer riches at a price
- ☉ Have them Struggle as One

CHANGE THE ENVIRONMENT

Frame the scene in a new location, or say how the current location changes (night falls, it starts to rain, etc.). This is one of your most important exploration moves. Use it to show that they've covered distance and reached some place different.

This is a good move to pair with questions. You can ask who's been here before, or what they know about it, or what they've heard about it. You can ask about local customs or beliefs. You can ask "painting the scene" questions that prompt the characters to add details on a theme.

Or you can just tell them what's there and move on.

"You all march down into the Great Wood and start heading south. The forest is eerily still and quiet, just the crunch of snow beneath your feet and your breath floating in front of you. Hey, Vahid, you're from down south... what's the worst part of all this trudging through the snow and cold?"

"About an hour after you slip past the crinwin, Lowri motions for everyone to stop.

He points up towards the bluff on your right, and you can all see the cave in the side, short and wide. It's the bears' den. What do you do?"

"You're all sweating and grunting, taking turns dragging these sledges through the snow and over uneven ground, you barely even realize it's getting dark until it's almost too late. The sun's already down, it's gonna be pitch black in like 10 minutes, and you're still like an hour away from home. What do you do?"

PROVIDE A CHOICE OF PATHS

With this move, you present the proverbial fork in the road and ask them which way they go. There might be other options, and maybe they do something different, but you're presenting the obvious options and asking them to choose.

When you use this move, try to give some indication of how the choices are different. Otherwise, the choice isn't meaningful.

The available paths don't have to be literal paths, or they don't *both* have to be.

"Okay, the sledges are loaded. Are you going to head back the way you came? The crinwin will almost certainly notice you if you do. Or you could cut deeper into the Woods and try to circle around them, but that'll take longer. What do you do?"

BAR THE WAY; MAKE THEM BACKTRACK

Sometimes, they hit a dead end. Or they realize that they don't have what they need. They've got to turn around and go back, find another way, acquire something behind them, etc.. Or just plow ahead, heedless of cost and risk, breaking themselves on the barrier.

Describe what's barring the way forward, and maybe give an option or two for what they could do instead.

"It's just not going to happen. Caradoc, you're able to scale the bluff up to the Flats, but it's a dicey thing. You don't see any way you could drag those sledges up here laden with bear carcass. And it's not like there's anything up here you could tie a rope around for leverage. What do you do?"

“Okay, you drag the sledges northeast, trying to circle around the crinwin, but a while after you cross the Stream, you get to a spot that’s relatively open and the drifts are just too deep. You could try to wade through them, but it’ll be grueling work and you’ll never get home before dark if you do. It’s looking more and more like you’ll have to cross through crinwin territory again. What do you do?”

HINT AT MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Drop a hint that there’s something interesting here, a discovery to be discovered or a lie to be uncovered. This move often prompts the players to Discern Realities or Spout Lore or otherwise look closer.

To make this move, point out something out of place or something fraught with meaning, but don’t say what it means. Be a little coy about it. It’s a *hint*, not an announcement.

“Blodwen, while Rhianna and her crew are creeping up towards the cave, you spot tracks in the snow. Big ones, leading away from the cave. What do you do?”

“Vahid, as you watch the crinwin flee, you realize that they all headed for this great big redwood pine, maybe fifty paces away. And you think that maybe there’s a something hidden in the boughs, like a huge bird nest or something. Everyone else is busy catching their breath or wiping crinwin blood off themselves. What do you do?”

PRESENT A DISCOVERY

Discoveries are interesting things that the PCs find but that aren’t (inherently) dangerous. They might be useful or valuable, or just something worth investigating. Yes, this is incredibly broad.

When you make this move, you just put the discovery in front them. Describe it, tell them what they see/hear/smell/feel, what (if anything) it does. Make it clear that this is something of note. What they do next is up to them.

“What here is useful or valuable to you? Well, you check the bedding and it’s clear that they didn’t, like, bring back shinies or anything like that. But you notice that your torch light is guttering a bit, away from the entrance, towards the back wall. And

there, down on your hands and knees, you find an exit from the cave, going further into the bluff, just big enough to squeeze into. And it's got little glyphs carved all around it, like the ones the Forest Folk used to put on things. What do you do?"

"Yeah, Vahid, now that you're closer, and looking up at it, you can see that it's definitely a nest. A papery thing, like a wasp nest, but way, way bigger. This must be what the crinwin live in. What do you do?"

POINT TO A LOOMING DANGER

This is the claw-print in the mud, the wolves howling in the distance. This is the piles of sticks, strangely neat and tidy, sure sign that a hagr dwells nearby.

Use this move to foreshadow future dangers, to make the PCs nervous and to prompt them to investigate or take precautions. Or flee. They could also flee.

Here's a good twist on this move: instead of telling them what they find, ask them what they find that tells them ___ is afoot, or what their experience is with ___, or what they've heard about the ___ that haunt these hills.

"Rhianna, you've all been quietly trudging for a couple hours through the snow when the hair on the back of neck stands on end. What do you see or hear that tells you that you're passing through crinwin territory?"

"Blodwen, as you sniff the air, you catch the unmistakable scent of a predator, one of the bears, you're sure of it. And not coming from the cave... it's coming from the east, towards the Stream. What do you do?"

"Like a half-hour after dark, Caradoc, you realize that you're just shivering. Your teeth are chattering, even though you're sweating from pulling at the sledge. The rest of you are starting to notice it, too. Burning fingers, numb toes, the air catching in your throat. What do you do?"

INTRODUCE A DANGER, PERSON, OR FACTION

With this move, you put a danger on screen. You're not pointing to it, it's not looming, it's *here*, what do you do?

Alternately, you're introducing an NPC, putting them on screen and giving the PCs a chance to interact with them. Or, you're revealing that there's a subset of creatures or people that they didn't know about before: different tribes of crinwin, a cult within the Hillfolk, rivalries and allegiances among the fae.

"You creep through the Wood toward the Stream, following the tracks and Blodwen's nose. You start to hear the rush of running water, and then you see it. It's huge, like a horse but stouter, pacing back and forth at an opening in the ice. It's snout darts into the water and pops up with one of those silvery, scaly slug-things that you sometimes see in the river, and it just gobbles it down. Ugh. What do you do?"

"Crunch crunch squeak. Huff huff huff. Crunch squeak. Rhianna, it takes you a bit to realize it, but you're hearing footsteps in the snow, and heavy breathing, and scrapes of the sledges... from the party, of course, but also coming from up in the trees, all around you. And just as you realize that, Eira pulls back on her bow and fires. 'Crinwin!' she yells!"

"As you're all looking up at the nest, thinking about what to do, Caradoc, you notice a pair of big pale eyes, watching you, from behind a tree at ground level. As soon as you realize what you're seeing, they're gone, and there's a scurrying up the tree, and you see those eyes poking around, looking down at you. It seems... different... than the others. Curious, rather than angry. What do you do?"

OFFER RICHES AT A PRICE

Show them something valuable, but difficult to get. Gold glitters in the webs, 30 feet up. Those gipgwin flowers smell better than anything and would fetch a handsome price, but the spiny vines crave blood and flesh. That ceirwmawr could feed the whole village, but it's said that only the Pale Hunter can give one chase.

Consider "riches" to be anything the PCs would consider valuable. That could be actual riches, or just some sort of supply or resource they desperately need. And consider "price" to be any sort of cost: time or safety, effort or attention or retribution. Then sit back and see if they think it's worth it.

“These pictograms... they mark the tunnel as a sacred place, home to some sort of sleeping tree or forest spirit. But there’s also a warning against entering ‘unprepared?’ Or maybe that’s ‘unpurified.’ Regardless, it looks like you’d be crawling down a narrow tunnel in the earth for who knows how long. What do you do?”

“You know, if that is a crinwin nest—and it sure looks like one—there’s probably all sorts of stolen stuff up there. Like, all the things they’ve swiped from people this past year. Maybe even your grandmother’s ring, Caradoc. What do you do?”

HAVE THEM STRUGGLE AS ONE

Sometimes there’s a challenge that everyone must deal with but that you don’t want to explore in detail. In that case, ask the players to Struggle as One. See PC moves, below.

Box Text: Use Your Other Moves, Too!

Just to be clear: you can and should continue to use your basic GM moves and threat-specific moves while the PCs are on a journey. Moves that will get be particularly useful on a journey include:

- ⊙ **Ask a loaded question** (*“What here tells you this place is touched by the fae?” or “Rhianna, what does Vahid do while you travel that’s getting on your nerves?”*)
- ⊙ **Use up their resources** (*“The next three days are mostly uneventful. Mark off 3 rations each.”*)
- ⊙ **Tell them the consequences and/or requirements, then ask** (*“Well, you need to start a fire if you want to cook the game you caught, but that’ll almost certainly draw attention from the crinwin.”*)
- ⊙ **Have them roll the Die of Fate** (*“Let’s see what the weather’s got in store today... Blodwen, roll me a d6, will you?”*)

Weather

The weather is an important part of any journey. It colors the whole trip and can be a challenge all by itself.

You can invoke the weather with any GM move. You can **change the environment** and say that it starts to rain or **announce trouble** by describing how the wind picks up and the canopy sways and the sky goes dark. You decide when it rains and when the sun

shines, and you can do so whenever you feel like it, based on your agenda and principles but also on your sense of theme and story. Or, you can **have them roll the Die of Fate** and let that guide your choices.

One way to use the Die of Fate is to ask the players what sort of weather they hope for, and let the roll tell you how well the gods comply. For example, if they're trying to sneak into a camp of southern mercenaries in the dead of winter, they might hope for heavy winds and driving snowing, all the better to hide their approach. On a 1 or 2, nope, it's a clear, still night with a bright moon reflecting off the snow and it's so cold that every step squeaks. On a 3 or 4, maybe it's a driving wind or a gentle snow, one or the other. On a 5 or 6, yeah, just what they wanted.

Another way to use the Die of Fate is with preset results, based on the season. Here are some general tables that do just that. Use these as-is, or make your own for specific locales and specific seasons, informed by the Seasons Change move (see page [XX](#)).

<p>Late winter/early spring</p> <p>1 Snow/sleet/hail, an early thunderstorm, or a day of cold, soaking rains</p> <p>2-3 Cold and windy, maybe some showers</p> <p>4 Clouds on the horizon and steady wind; roll twice tomorrow and take the lower roll</p> <p>5-6 A fine, sunny spring day; some clouds; some gusting winds</p>	<p>Spring/early summer</p> <p>1 A heavy storm; high winds, hail, thunder, lightning</p> <p>2 A day of steady, chilly rain</p> <p>3-4 Warm and windy, maybe some brief showers</p> <p>5-6 Warm, sunny, pleasant</p>
<p>Summer</p> <p>1 A heavy storm; high winds, hail, thunder, lightning, tornadoes</p> <p>2 Blazing heat, still air, not a cloud in sight</p> <p>3 Hot and humid, with brief, drenching thunder storms</p>	<p>Late summer, early autumn</p> <p>1 One last powerful thunderstorm or a day of cold, soaking rain</p> <p>2 Windy with a few rain showers</p> <p>3 Warm, clouds on the horizon, a steady wind (roll twice tomorrow and take the lower roll)</p>

4-5 Hot, muggy, some wind	4-5 Hot and dry during the day; cooler and windy at night
6 Warm, sunny, breezy, perfect	6 Warm, sunny, breezy, perfect
Autumn	Winter
1 Cold, drenching rain and/or sleet all day	1 Blizzard: wind, snow, all of it
2 Cold, windy, an early snowfall	2 Intense cold and wind
3 Chilly, windy, maybe some quick rain showers	3 Very cold, very clear, very still
4-6 Crisp, breezy	4 Cold and snowy, or cold and windy
	5 Some snow, but mostly just dreary
	6 Warm (for winter) and sunny

PC moves

These moves become relevant while the PCs are on an expedition.

STRUGGLE AS ONE

When *the GM calls on you to struggle as one*, they'll describe the challenge(s) you face. Say how you do your part and each roll +STAT: **on a 6-**, you find yourself in a spot, the GM will describe it or ask you to; **on a 7-9**, you pull your weight; **on a 10+**, you do well enough to get someone else out of a spot, if you can tell us how.

If you roll a 6- but someone saves you, don't mark XP.

This is one of the only PC moves that you get to explicitly call for, as opposed to the move being triggered by the fiction. Use it when the party decides on a course of action that challenges everyone, usually over a period of time, and you don't want to dwell on the details. If you're ever thinking of having everyone roll to Defy Danger, consider using this move instead.

Mathematically, Struggle as One is much more forgiving than everyone Defying Danger on their own. That's intentional.

When you call for the move, it's your job to describe what they're struggling against. You don't have to be specific (that's the point of this move), but you do have to be clear enough for the PCs to tell you how they deal with it. Use same trick you use with Defy

Danger: *“Sounds like you’re Struggling as One, and the struggle is against the mud and mire of the fen.”*

If the PCs are dealing with multiple challenges at once, you can blend them into a single Struggle as One or split them up. You could say *“Okay, I need to you Struggle as One to avoid the hunting drakes, how do you do that?”* and then follow it up with *“Okay, now you’ll need to Struggle as One to reach the hilltop before nightfall. I assume you’re just all trying to keep up a steady pace?”* Or, you could say *“Sounds like you’re Struggling as One, and the struggle is to reach that hilltop before nightfall while avoiding hunting drakes. How do you do that?”*

Zoom to the level of interest, yours and theirs.

With that said, don’t use this move when one PC is essentially responsible for everyone else’s fate. If the party risks getting lost and the Ranger is navigating, then that’s the Ranger Defying Danger (maybe with someone providing Aid). You can choose to have them Struggle as One if you want, but only if there’s some other danger or challenge you want to roll into it, something against which they must all contend.

After you call for the move and describe the challenge, it’s up to them to say how they deal with it. That will inform what stat they should roll. Sometimes it’s just obvious, sometimes it takes negotiation. Follow the same guidelines you would for Defy Danger.

As a rule, the PCs can’t Aid each other—everyone is involved already. If someone makes a compelling case and justifies it in the fiction, go for it. But by default, they can’t Aid.

Followers with an appropriate tag or move can Aid the appropriate PC(s); the PCs might need to Order Followers, but the followers don’t need to Do Their Thing. If the follower has no applicable tag or move, decide whether they pull their weight or find themselves in a spot. If it’s not clear to you, have their player roll +Quality for them as if they were a PC.

Everyone rolls at once and figures out what they got. Encourage them to keep their results quiet for the moment.

Ask who got a 6-. **Put them in a spot.** (If a PC was Aided by a follower, then put the follower in the spot with them, or instead—your call.) Make the GM move, following your principles and exploiting your prep.

Once you've described the spot, ask if anyone got a 10+. Ask them to describe how they get the character(s) out of their spot. If they come up with something plausible, then they do it—no more rolls required.

If multiple characters get a 6-, you've got a few choices:

- ☉ Put them all in the same spot, or close enough. *“Caradoc, Vahid... you're both trudging along at the back, right, and at first you think you're seeing things. The hillside isn't really moving, is it? And then you realize, yeah, it is, it's a mudslide, and the path under your feet starts to give way.”* In this case, a single 10+ could theoretically save everyone, depending on the fiction and what that player comes up with.
- ☉ Put them all in spots at the same time, but different spots each. *“Blodwen, as twilight falls, you find yourself falling further and further behind, panting, out of breath, a stitch in your side, losing sight of the others. At the same time, Rhianna, you realize that you've lost track of Eira in the tall grass. Like, oh crap, where is she?”* In that case, each 10+ will probably save only one of them.
- ☉ Pick one and put them in a spot, ignoring the other 6- results for now. Resolve that spot. Then say how time or distance has passed and put the next character in a different spot. This is a great technique to demonstrate a really long and arduous trek. In this case, each 10+ can only be used once.

If anyone finds themselves in a spot and there isn't a 10+ to save them (or the player who rolled 10+ can't come up with something plausible, or chooses not to), then zoom in and play out the scene from there. Ask the other affected character what they do. Or, tell someone else what they see and ask *them* what they do. Maybe they just Defy Danger and roll a 10+ and it's all good. Maybe it snowballs into an absolute disaster. Play to find out.

When the scene resolves itself, don't make them Struggle as One again against the same challenge. Just skip ahead to the end of the struggle. But if, in the process of resolving

any 6- results, the situation is now fundamentally different and they face a new or different challenge, *then* it's okay to have them Struggle as One again.

Regardless of the results, this move is a great time to ask questions. “*Blodwen, have you ever been someplace this high up? How does the view make you feel?*” “*Caradoc, as the path slipped out under your feet and you started to fall, what went through your mind?*” “*Rhianna, after you've hauled Caradoc back up on the path, huffing and puffing... what do you say to him?*”

One of Rhianna's crew just came back with a rusty spade, the shaft snapped in two, and Rhianna's sure of it—this is crinwin territory. They hope to sneak through and avoid a fight, kill the bears, then find a way up the bluffs and head home via the Flats.

“*So, you're being sneaky?*” I ask. “*What's that look like? Are you all together, or spread out, or what?*”

“*We go single-file, weapons out,*” says Rhianna. “*Just a pace or two between each of us. Lowri scouts ahead, he's got the sharpest eyes. I'll go first, and you three follow me. Step where I step. The rest of my crew will bring up the rear. I'll go for the firmest ground, least likely to make noise. There's no point in hiding... we'll just have to move quietly and hope that no one's watching.*”

Okay! I tell Rhianna she can roll +DEX or +WIS, since she's looking for the firmest and quietest path, but everyone else will be rolling +DEX to follow her steps.

Rhianna's crew doesn't need to roll (they're stealthy). “*Does my crew Aid us?*”

Rhianna asks. Sure. I have her roll an extra d6, and everyone can use it in lieu of a die they rolled. The dice hit the table.

“*Okay, anyone get a 6 or less?*” Vahid did. “*Okay, cool. Don't mark XP just yet. Let's see... oh, yeah. All that gear you carry around? It's not stowed right for this stealthy stuff. There's this metallic CLINK and you feel a pull on your pack. Something fell out of your pack onto the rocks you're stepping over. What was it?*”

“*A ball bearing,*” says Vahid. “*Like, marble-sized. I've got a whole pouch of them.*”

"Why do you... no, never mind. Well, that pouch is now snagged on a branch, suspended like this. You move even a little, it's going to spill open and make a terrible racket. Anyone got a 10+, able to help him out?"

Rhianna does. "Any sign of crinwin? Like, did they hear that clank?"

"Yeah," I say. "It's like painfully quiet. You're all stock still, not even breathing, and you then you hear it. 'Clink! Clink! Clink clink CLINK!' in the distance. Crinwin, mimicking the sound. A way off, though maybe getting closer? What do you do?"

"I motion for everyone to be still, then I take that rusty spade we found and I hurl it behind us, north and east. I'm hoping it'll hit a tree and draw their attention while we skedaddle. Yeah?"

"Smart. Sounds like you're Defying Danger with INT?"

"I got a 10+ on my Struggle Together. Doesn't that mean I can just do it?"

"Oh, right, sorry. Yeah, it's like you say... you throw the spade, just hurl it, and maybe 30, 40 paces away it ricochets off a tree, PING. And then the crinwin start going 'PING! PING!' and you can tell they're moving in that direction. What do you do?"

"I slip back to Vahid, unsnag his pouch, give him a dirty look, and we get out of here."

"Cool! Okay, off you go. Hey, Blodwen, what was racing through you mind during all of that?"

Blodwen noticed bear tracks leading away from the den, then sniffed danger on the wind. Yup, one of the bears is out there, probably down near the Stream. They decide to sneak up on it and bring it down before dealing with the bears in the cave.

"We fan out," says Rhianna. "Keep low, slowly approach the Stream. Whoever sees the bear first signals to the others, then we'll encircle it."

"Okay, cool, it sounds like you're Struggling as One again. You're struggling against the bear noticing you as you approach. That's DEX, I think."

"Is it really a struggle?" asks Blodwen. "I mean, if the bear is near the Stream, it's unlikely to hear us coming. And we're downwind of it, so it won't sniff us out. I guess it could spot us, but at that point we'd spot it, too."

"Huh. You know, you're right. Good call. You creep through the Wood toward the Stream, following the tracks and Blodwen's nose. You start to hear the rush of running water, and then you see it..."

The PCs have put fire to the crinwin nest and started heading back toward Stonetop. "Between the fight, and dealing with the nest, and dealing with the bears... it's getting late. You're going to have to Struggle as One to get back home before dark. The struggle is the distance, and the heavy load, and the chance you'll run into something else out here. How do you do it?"

"Let's put two people on each sledge and just haul ass. Vabid, Caradoc, and I will each take one, pared up with one of my crew. Blodwen, you should take point with Eira and Lowri, keep us going the right direction and watch for trouble. Yeah?"

Everyone agrees. "Blodwen, you'll be rolling WIS. Everyone else, I think either STR or CON, your choice. As for your crew, Rhianna, they're not hardy or athletic, right? So, I think you'll be rolling Quality for them to see if they pull their weight. Blodwen, Eira and Lowri are Aiding you, so Rhianna, roll an extra die for that."

Everyone rolls. Vabid and Caradoc both get a 6-. I could put Vabid and Caradoc in a spot together, but I feel like spreading it out.

"Vabid, your hauling, hauling, hauling, right? Your noise is running, you're crying, your lungs are burning. When was the last time you worked this hard for this long?"

"Oh, I pull my weight around the village," he says. "It's not a matter of hard work, it's the damn cold that's doing it to me. My lungs are just raw."

"Sure, cool. Anyhow, you start stumbling. You get up each time, but you and Andras are falling behind. Does anyone have a 10+ and a way to help them out?"

Rhianna does. "I curse a little, then tell Lowri to take over for Vabid. And I have

Eira to take over for me. We'll rotate through, every ten minutes or so, two people get a breather and the two resting get back to hauling."

That takes care of Vahid, but Caradoc still has a 6-. "Okay, you rotate through like, three times, pacing yourselves but making progress, when, Caradoc, there's this lurch on your sledge. And a grinding sound. You tug a little and think you hear something tear. Vahid, you see that they've hit a log, buried in the snow. One of the branches snagged the sledge, and the whole thing is stuck. Anyone else got a 10+?" They all look around, but no one does. Blodwen and Rhianna's crew both got 7-9s. "Okay, Caradoc, mark XP. What do you all do?"

And we play out the scene from there.

MAKE CAMP

When you **settle in to rest in an unsafe area**, answer the GM's questions about your campsite. Then, each player (including the GM) takes turns asking one of the following questions of a character in camp.

- ☉ What do you do in camp that's so annoying/endearing?
- ☉ What do I do in camp that you find so annoying/endearing?
- ☉ Who or what seems to be on your mind?
- ☉ What do we find ourselves talking about?
- ☉ How do you pass the time?
- ☉ What new thing do you reveal about yourself?

When you've **eaten 1 ration, drunk your fill, and gotten at least a few hours of sleep**, pick 1. If your rest was particularly comfortable, peaceful, or enjoyable, pick 2.

- ☉ Heal damage equal to half your maximum HP (rounded up).
- ☉ Expend 1 use of an appropriate resource (rations, whisky, remedies, etc.) to clear a debility
- ☉ Take +1 forward

There's a lot going on in this move. It's arguably two moves tucked into one.

First, the trigger: Make Camp happens when you *settle in* to rest *in an unsafe area*.

There's a lot of judgement calls to be made. If you're handwaving a few days of travel on the Maker's roads, the move doesn't trigger every night. You can just **use up their resources** ("*okay, everyone mark off 4 rations...*") and **change the environment** ("*...and towards the end of your fourth day of travel, you round the bend and Gordin's Delve looms above*") without ever bothering with Make Camp.

But! If there's danger afoot, or the PCs have been hurt, or they're investigating a point of interest and they're like "I think we need to rest," *that* is when this move triggers.

When they announce that they want to Make Camp, think about where they are and what they are (or should be) worried about, and ask them questions:

- ☉ If the route is perilous, or they need to watch out for __, or they risk drawing the attention of __, then ask them how they address that.
- ☉ If it's cold, ask them how they cook and how they stay warm.
- ☉ If they start a fire, ask them what they use for fuel or how they start it.
- ☉ If it's wet, ask them if they camp in the muck or look for someplace dry.
- ☉ Ask what precautions they take to keep animals out of their food.
- ☉ Ask them if they set a watch, and the order.

As you ask these questions and get their answers, be sure to **show downsides** to their stuff ("*if you plan to eat porridge, you'll need to start a fire*") and **tell them the requirements or consequences and ask** ("*if you start a fire, you're certainly going to attract attention... do you make one?*"). But also, **offer them opportunities, with or without a cost** ("*sure, you could look around for a better camp sight, maybe Discern Realities, but it'll take some time and you might not find anything before dark*").

Once they settle in, prompt the players to start asking questions. Pick someone to go first (it can be you if you want). Have them pick a question, a character to ask about, and go. They can ask about other PCs or NPCs in camp; you, of course, should ask about PCs.

If there's a question or an answer that piques your interest or that seems a bit vague, ask follow-up questions (and encourage the other players to do the same). *"Oh, you're thinking about Morwena? How can we tell? Blodwen, what do you do when you see that?"*

Sometimes these questions will lead to little scenes of interaction between the characters. That's great, run with it! This can even lead to moves being made between PCs or PCs and NPCs. All good.

You decide what (if anything) happens during the night. Consider all the dangers you've established, the preparations they've made (or not made). Think about relevant threats and their grim portents. If it's obvious to you that a particular encounter would occur, then it occurs. Decide who's on watch when it happens, make an appropriate GM move, and go.

If you think there's a chance that something might interrupt their rest, but you aren't sure, then call for the Die of Fate. Consider having them roll twice and take the higher/lower roll, depending on the precautions they've taken. Here's a general-purpose result table:

- 1 Something dangerous approaches, inclined to do harm
- 2 Something dangerous approaches, curious but not aggressive
- 3 Something annoying happens (critters in the food, rain, a follower acts up, etc.)
- 4-5 The night passes uneventfully
- 6 They observe something interesting, find something useful, or otherwise gain some small boon (or the night passes uneventfully)

For the recovery part of the move, yes, they must meet all three conditions (eat, drink, and sleep) in order to make a choice. In order to get two choices, things need to be *great*: 8 hours of rest, a mattress or soft place, not too cold, not too hot, decent food, maybe someone to get intimate with. Play it by ear, but two choices should be the exception, not the rule.

To clear a debility, everyone has to agree that the resource they expend makes sense. Take the source of the debility into account. If they're Weakened because of drudgery and hard

work, then a ration or some whisky will do just fine. If it's from the cold, they could expend some adventuring gear to keep the fire going all night, or a use of poultice and herbs to sooth their frostbit fingers. If they ask "what could I use to treat ___," remedies are always a good answer. Or they can Spout Lore and you can give them some ideas.

Box Text: Deprivation

If PCs don't get food, drink, or rest, then at first the only consequence is that they don't get to make a choice when they Make Camp. But the longer they go without enough food, water, or rest, the more danger they are in. Start by asking them to Defy Danger (the danger being their hunger, thirst, or exhaustion). Escalate with a debility, then more debilities. Make increasingly hard GM moves (**tell them the requirements or consequences, reveal unwelcome truths, show downsides**, etc.) as they endure more and more deprivation. Between sessions, write up a threat (affliction) with some grim portents.

Vahid, Caradoc, Blodwen, and Rhianna are en route to Marshedge (they've got Andras with them, but left the rest of Rhianna's crew behind). It's early spring, so they're bundled up in thick hides or wool cloaks, but they're sticking to the Highway. It's been easy going so far. They need to watch out for the nosgolau; I'm planning to spring an encounter the second night out, while they camp in view of Titan Bones.

"Okay," I say, "The first two days pass without incident. Mark off two rations each. The second night out, you find yourselves stopping at the next wayside. The sun has dipped behind the mountains and the light is fading fast. Titan Bones looms to the west, like a half-mile away." I provide a choice of paths. "Are any of you planning to investigate the hill, or do you just make camp?"

They're curious, sure, but Rhianna has the good sense to make them to wait until morning. They Make Camp.

"So," I ask, "are you going to eat porridge or dip into the provisions you brought? You'll need a fire if you want to eat porridge." They opt to use up their provisions now and camp without a fire. They plan to sleep huddled together for warmth, and they set a watch (Blodwen, then Caradoc, then Andras, then Rhianna, then Vahid).

“Are you doing anything else, like to prepare for the nosgolau or something?” Vahid says that he rigs up a little contraption, a thin rope strung with old potsherds, propped up around them on blocks of wood. “If one of us wanders off, we’ll trip the rope and it’ll make a racket and hopefully wake the rest of us up.” That triggers Vahid’s Magpie move. He rolls a 10+ and takes the time to dig it out, no problem.

“Okay, who wants to ask the first question?”

Rhianna goes first. “Andras, what do you do in camp that’s so endearing?” Andras is a follower, so it’s my job to answer. “I think, mostly, he’s just being competent and helpful and doesn’t need to be told to do anything. He’s come a long way since you first took him under your wing. And maybe, too, the way he’s mooning over Blodwen. It’s pretty cute.”

That makes me wonder how Blodwen we’ll react, so I take my turn. “Blodwen, what is Andras doing that you find so annoying or endearing?” (Notice how I didn’t choose one or the other; I’m genuinely curious how she feels about him.) She thinks about it a bit and says “The way I keep catching him looking at me, but then pretending he isn’t. He’s been doing it most of the trip.” “Is that annoying?” I ask, “Or endearing?” “Annoying” she says. “Even though I’m doing the same thing to Caradoc.” Oh? Oh!

I ask Blodwen to go next. “Caradoc, who or what do you seem to be thinking about?” As if she needs to ask. “Morwena,” he says. “Definitely Morwena.” I ask how we can tell and he’s like “Oh, I’m just sitting here moping, the cloak she made for me pulled tight. I’m kind of fingering the hem and staring off into space.” He gives a longing sigh.

*I ask Morwena what she does when she sees that and she goes over and gives him a bit of provisions (“Like what?” I ask. **Play up the mundane!** “Probably a bit of flatbread, maybe some goat cheese. It’s too early for fruit.”). She sits down next to him, tears off a chunk and hands it over. “Want to talk about it?” she asks. “No,” he sighs. But then he blurts out “I mean, what am I supposed to do? Just stay home and do nothing when there’s danger afoot? Let other people take care of it? Like, Rhianna? Or, like, like you? Gods, I thought women wanted someone brave and*

tough and all that. But no, not Morwena. She just wants me to stay home and dig in the earth.”

“Ain’t nothing wrong with staying home and tilling the earth,” Rhianna says under her breath. I shoot her a little grin.

The scene with Caradoc and Morwena plays out a little longer, with Andras looking kind of sullen. Rhianna uses Take the Measure to ask if she can trust him to keep things professional, and I’m like “For now, yeah.”

Vahid still hasn’t asked a question, so he goes. “I think I sit down and next to Rhianna and offer her a smoke. What new thing do you reveal about yourself? I’m interested in that comment of hers, about staying home and tilling the earth.”

Rhianna thinks a bit. She’s always been a little cagey about her past, and I half-expect her to cop out and say something like “Nothing. I tell everyone to shut up and get some sleep.” But out here, without her crew around, she surprises us and opens up a bit. “I was betrothed to be married, once,” she says. “To a boy named... Urien. He was a farmer’s son. Worthless with a spear, but gentle and good with animals. You’d have liked him, Blodwen.” Vahid asks what happened and she sighs and shakes her head. “Got sick. Caught the fever in late autumn, was dead by winter.” She gives a little smile. “Life sucks, then you die. Grab onto the one’s got.” And then she’s like “I’m looking straight at Caradoc when I say this.”

“What?” he says. We all laugh a little.

They settle in to sleep and I need to decide if and when the nosgolau show up. They didn’t light a fire and they’ve stayed safe on the wayside, but I still think they’re going to show. I ask Blodwen to roll the Die of Fate to see which shift they show up in, and I figure if they get a 6 then I’ll let them off easy. But, no, she rolls a 2. Caradoc’s shift.

*I ask Caradoc a couple questions about what he does to keep awake, and what he’s thinking about, and then I **introduce a danger**. “About an hour into your watch—you think, it’s hard to tell—you realize you’re watching this light in the distance, up on Titan Bones. And then it’s closer, and you hear Morwena’s giggle, and she’s calling*

your name.” There’s a custom move for this, so I have Caradoc roll +WIS and surprise, surprise, things don’t go so well...

The next morning, after they deal with the nosgolau and get Caradoc back, they’ve all gotten a few hours of sleep. “Everyone mark off a ration for last night if you haven’t already,” I say. “And pick one from the Make Camp list.”

Blodwen got a little beat up in last night’s adventures, but nothing too bad. She chooses to heal damage. Her max HP are 20, so she heals 10. She’d only lost 6 HP, so she’s back up to max.

Caradoc, though... he had a rough night. He’s down to 10 HP (out of 18) and he’s suffering the Dazed debility (-1 ongoing to INT and WIS) because of what the nosgolau did to his brain. He’s lost in himself, a bit out of it, not really trusting his own senses. He’d like to clear that debility. “What resource do you use?”

“Well, I’ve got some whisky,” he says.

“That’s gonna bring you back to reality?” I ask.

“No, no. Right. Umm... oh, I’ve got it. I think the next morning, before we get going, I fish a candle out of my adventuring gear and get it lit. And I’m like doing that thing where you put your hand as close to the flame as you can. I probably burn myself a little but keep doing it, just to convince myself that this really is the real world.”

“Cool, that works for me. Everyone else? Okay, clear Dazed and mark off a use of adventuring gear. And Morwena, you wake up to see Caradoc maybe trying to burn himself with a candle, what do you do?”

FORAGE

When you *spend a few hours seeking food in the wild*, roll +WIS: **on a 10+**, gain 1d4 rations and...

- ... +1d4 if you have the gear to hunt or trap
- ... +1 if the land is verdant and full of life

- ... +1 if you know the land and its creatures well
- ... +1 if it's summer or autumn
- ... if it's winter, roll twice and take the lower roll.

On a 7-9, as above but you must deal with a danger of the GM's choice.

Foraging in barren terrain is usually impossible.

If the PCs end up in the wild and out of rations, they'll probably need to use this move.

The move represents one "party" going out to gather food. If two or more go together, one of them is Foraging while the other Aids. If they split up, they can gather more food but they put themselves in more danger.

It's possible to travel while Foraging, but as a rule they'll cover only half the distance they would otherwise.

Interpret "the gear to hunt or trap" pretty widely: just about any sort of ranged weapon will do, as will dedicated equipment like wire snares. If they need to improvise, they can Spout Lore.

On a 7+, use the fiction-as-established and the number of rations they gain to inform what those rations look like. A rabbit or two could provide maybe 3; a deer might be in the 5-10 range. Feel free to ask the player what they found, especially on a 10+.

On a 7-9, the danger could be the prey itself. That's a particularly good choice if they score a bunch of rations. But it could also be scavengers or other predators drawn to their kill, or just about any other danger they might encounter in the wild (including hazardous terrain or weather or getting lost).

On a miss, you might **reveal an unwelcome truth** that land is barren or picked clean, or **show the downside** to their lack of experience in the wild, or **hurt someone** and inflict the Weakened condition (on the Forager and/or others) because of hunger. Or you could drop them right into a bad situation, like getting gored by a wild boar or surrounded by a group of feathered drakes, and maybe they can score some rations after all.

After a week on the road, mishap and misadventure have depleted the party's provisions. They're out of rations and still a couple days from Marshedge. Rhianna goes a-hunting, bringing Andras with her.

"Are you, like hunting game? Looking for plants to eat? What's the plan?"

"Hunting game. We've both got bows. This is, like, what we do back home. For a living." Sure, of course. She rolls (with an Aid die from Andras) and gets a 10+. They get 2d4 rations (1d4 base, +1d4 for hunting; neither of them knows the Steplands well and it's early spring, so the land is hardly verdant or full of life) and roll a 3.

"Well, that's not great. What do you think you brought down?"

"Probably just some birds," says Rhianna. "Maybe a few morning doves?"

Works for me.

Meanwhile, Blodwen and Caradoc are foraging near the road, looking for edible plants and the like. Caradoc is Aiding; Blodwen rolls +WIS and gets an 8. Caradoc's got a bow, but he's not really using it—Blodwen's taking the lead. They get 1d4 rations (the base, no modifiers) and end up with 3 rations.

That's a fair number of rations, but there's a danger to be dealt with. "So, there's not much that you can find worth eating. Some wildflowers have started to bloom, and there are buds on the trees, but no, like, fruit, right? But Blodwen, on a hunch, you follow a swath of wildflowers up and around a curve in a hill, and there, coming from a dead old tree still gripping the side of the hill, there's a big buzzing sound. Bees! There's lots of honey in there, for sure, 3 rations worth, but you'll have to get it out. What do you do?"

Later, after resupplying in Marshedge and heading out towards Three-Coven Lake, they once again find themselves short on food. Rhianna takes Andras hunting again, but the rest of them stay put at their campsite. They're well off the roads, now, and don't want to take chances.

Rhianna and Andras, alas, roll a 6- to Forage. The party is reasonably close to

Three-Coven Lake, less than a day's hike away from it (though they don't really know that). My notes include a run-in with Hillfolk who are devoted to keeping people away from the lake, and this seems like a good time to spring it.

*"Okay, it's a dreary, miserable day, but at least it's no longer raining. Rbianna, you and Andras tracked a big old ram through the hills for a bit, and finally brought it down while it was drinking from a wide stream. Plenty of meat for the taking, like maybe 8 rations worth? Andras has gone down to butcher the thing while you keep lookout." That's just me setting the scene. Now I use the Hillfolk's monster move, **outmaneuver their prey**, and use it hard and direct. "You're scanning the hills around you, and then, like, out of nowhere, there's a mounted warrior on one of the peaks. A Hillfolk. He whistles, and as he does, you realize the trap! He's a distraction, and right then, an arrow comes from out of nowhere and pops right into Andras! He's taking a d8 damage. Is he still up? Okay, cool, I think it took him in the leg, he's down and grabbing at it and scanning about in a panic, what do you do?"*

Resolving Chart a Course

When the characters prepare for the journey, they Chart a Course (see page XX). You tell them any of the following that apply, linked with "and" or "or" as you see fit:

- ⊙ You must first travel to _____, and from there to your destination
- ⊙ You must wait until _____
- ⊙ You need a knowledgeable guide/accurate map/detailed directions
- ⊙ You'll need to bring _____
- ⊙ You need to watch out for _____
- ⊙ The way is perilous, plagued with dangers
- ⊙ You risk getting lost
- ⊙ You must surmount/cross/brave _____ on the way
- ⊙ The terrain itself is treacherous; you risk injury on the way
- ⊙ The way will be hard and grueling; you risk exhausting yourselves or your resources
- ⊙ You risk drawing the attention of _____
- ⊙ It'll take at least _____ days (and a corresponding number of rations)

☺ You don't know how long it'll take

Once they set off on their journey, present these challenges one at a time—along with any surprises they couldn't have seen coming—in whatever order makes sense. When they have addressed them all, they reach their destination.

But, what do each of these challenges mean? How do you use them in game? Let's discuss.

YOU MUST FIRST TRAVEL TO _

This just means you're breaking the journey up into stages. Resolve the first journey (and its challenges) and then move on to the next.

YOU MUST WAIT UNTIL _

This challenge is often combined with an "or." *"You must wait until daylight, OR you risk getting lost."* *"You must wait until summer, OR the way will be hard and grueling."*

To present this challenge, **tell them the requirements, then ask**. If they wait, cool. Think about what happens in the meantime. Maybe make another move and see what they do. (This is a great time to **advance a grim portent**). If they want to go sooner, then **tell them consequences**. If they still go, hit them with that consequence, now or whenever makes sense.

YOU NEED A KNOWLEDGEABLE GUIDE/ACCURATE MAP/DETAILED DIRECTIONS

Present this challenge while they make their preparations, by **telling them the requirements, then asking**. Depending on what they do next, you might **offer an opportunity** (likely with a cost) and/or **challenge a specific character**. *"Remember, you'll need a knowledgeable guide to get to the Lore Tree of Pharlain. Blodwen, you think the wisents in the Great Wood probably know the way. Maybe you could convince them to take you. What do you do?"*

YOU'LL NEED TO BRING _

Another one that pairs well with an "or." *"You'll need to bring warm clothes OR the way will be hard and grueling"* is pretty common. Sometimes, though, the thing they need to bring

is just a requirement to get the job done. *“You’ll need to bring a horse (or similar) to drag the wagon home.” “You’ll need to bring a skilled tracker or a hound in order to follow the trail.”*

Present this challenge while they make preparations by **telling them the requirements and consequences, then asking**. It’ll inform the character’s choices when they Outfit, drive them to Trade or Barter, or otherwise acquire the needed resource before they head out.

If they don’t bring __, then waste no opportunity to show them the consequences. Likewise, if they do bring __, feel free to threaten it any chance you get. And if they lose __, make them feel it.

YOU NEED TO WATCH OUT FOR __

At some point during the journey (or while they Make Camp), actively **point to a looming danger** or just **introduce the danger** if it makes more sense. Ask what (if anything) they do about it. If they...

- ... ignore the danger, then hit them with it, hard. Don’t pull punches. You warned them.
- ... try to avoid it, ask them how. If their plan has any chance of succeeding, **have them Struggle as One**.
- ... do anything else, play it out normally—describe the situation, follow the rules, make moves, exploit your prep.

Another way to present this challenge is to **introduce a danger** as a hard move when they’re doing something else. *“Oh, you got a 6- to Forage? Well, you’ve snuck up deer, and have your bow drawn, when you spot a pair of cold, reptilian eyes staring at you from the undergrowth... a feathered drake! And that’s just the one you’re meant to see—there are at least two more out there, you just know it! What do you do?”*

Just because the characters address this challenge doesn’t mean it can’t come back to haunt them. If they slip past a nest of crinwin on their way to the cave bear den, they’re going to have to watch out for those crinwin on their way back, too!

THE WAY IS PERILOUS, FILLED WITH DANGERS

When you tell them this, you're basically saying "here there be monsters." Save this for truly dangerous excursions: the deep parts of the Great Wood, Ferriers Fen, the Labyrinth, the Steplands near the lakes, etc.

This challenge is less of a specific danger and more of an ongoing threat. Whenever they travel from one point of interest to another, or whenever they Make Camp, either **point to a looming danger** or **introduce a danger** that's already been established. Then, see what they do about it.

If you prefer, you can **have them roll the Die of Fate**:

- 1 A danger springs on them, unavoidable
- 2 Introduce a danger, directly in front of them
- 3-4 Point to a looming danger, what do they do?
- 5-6 Point to a looming danger, but also present a discovery

If a journey includes this challenge, feel free to spring dangers on them any time they roll a 6- or a move generates attention or a complication.

Caradoc just tried to convince Andras that he's not interested in Blodwen (and maybe that's even true? the boy's conflicted). He rolled a 7-9 to Defy Danger with CHA. Andras was mollified, but I offered Caradoc an ugly choice: stay and keep talking about it or make an excuse and slip out of camp by yourself. He chose the latter, heading off to relieve himself, and as he's finishing up I tell him that "you spot a weird, wide print in the dirt, like a hand but the fingertips are all big and round. There's another one. And another. And you head back towards camp, you spot a weird, bloated shape in a nearby tree, what do you do?"

YOU RISK GETTING LOST

To present this challenge proactively, wait until they enter the environment in which they could lose their bearings and then **tell them the consequences** and ask what they do about it. *"You're entering the deep woods now, an area none of you are familiar with. Who's*

navigating? How do you do it?” Very often, their answer will trigger Defy Danger (usually with INT or WIS). If someone does something to help, they’re Aiding.

You can also present this challenge reactively (even if they already addressed it). After a missed roll or a bad decision, **reveal an unwelcome truth**. *“After tracking the beast for over an hour, you realize that you’ve lost your bearings, Rhianna. You’re lost. What do you do?”*

YOU MUST SURMOUNT/BRAVE/CROSS _ ON THE WAY

Change the environment to put them in front of the obstacle. Then, **introduce a danger** by describing what’s challenging about it and making the risks clear. Ask what they do.

If someone Spouts Lore or Discerns Realities, maybe you **provide a choice of paths** or (if they miss) **bar the way and make them backtrack**. If they just go ahead and attempt to surmount it, all together, maybe you **have them Struggle as One**.

THE TERRAIN ITSELF IS TREACHEROUS; YOU RISK INJURY ALONG THE WAY

When they enter the treacherous terrain (the mountains, the fens, the snow-covered hills), then **introduce the danger** or even jump straight to **putting someone in a spot**.

Make it clear that this is an ongoing problem, and then (usually) **have them Struggle as One**.

This is a challenge that might come back to haunt them even after they’ve addressed it. If they’re still in treacherous terrain when they roll a 6- or suffer some other consequence, feel free to bring up terrain-related trouble!

THE WAY WILL BE HARD AND GRUELING

Announce trouble as they travel. *“It’s just a slog, with the mud sucking at your boots. Your legs are just aching from the effort.”* Or *“Your fingers are burning, your feet are numb, you feel yourselves shivering.”* Or *“The rain picks up and starts coming down in sheets. You’re all soaked through and you’ve got hours of travel ahead of you. What do you do?”*

Assuming they press on, you can:

- ☉ **Tell them the consequences and ask.** *“If you press on, you can reach Gordin’s Delve by nightfall but you’ll each have to mark Weakened or Miserable.”*

- ⊙ **Have them Struggle as One**, the struggle being against the terrain or the environment that's wearing them down
- ⊙ Treat it as each of them Defying Danger (probably with CON) individually, the danger being their own exhaustion. Maybe on a 7-9, they mark a debility and on a 6- they just can't make it and you put them in some sort of a spot.

If they don't want to press on, you can **make them backtrack** (*"You could head back and maybe look for a different pass, one that isn't covered in snow?"*), **provide a choice of paths** (*"well, you can either keep going this way or you can cut through the Red Grove"*), **offer and opportunity with a cost** (*"you could search for some shelter to get out of this storm, but that means you won't get home before sunset"*), **tell them the consequences and ask** (*"if you don't keep moving, it's just going to get worse; you'll probably freeze to death"*), or whatever else makes sense.

YOU RISK DRAWING THE ATTENTION OF __

When they approach the area where __ is, **point to a looming threat** and then ask what they do about it. The easiest way to resolve the party sneaking around is to **have them Struggle as One**. But if they come up with an alternative that sounds reasonable (like the Blessed using Veil or someone going off on their own to cause a distraction), go with that instead.

If they Make Camp where __ could notice them, ask them what they do to remain hidden. This is a great chance to **tell them the consequences/requirements and ask**. *"So, do you start a fire? You'll need to if you want to warm up and cook dinner, but it'll almost certainly draw attention from the Hillfolk."*

The risk of being noticed remains even after the characters have initially addressed it. You might **have them Struggle as One** to keep quiet as they move through crinwin territory, and if successful they go unnoticed. But if, a little later, someone makes a loud noise or starts a fire or whatever, the crinwin will certainly come looking.

IT WILL TAKE AT LEAST _ DAYS (AND A CORRESPONDING NUMBER OF RATIONS)

When the characters are Outfitting or otherwise making preparations, remember to **tell them the requirements and ask**. *“It’s going to be at least two days there and two days back, so you should have 4 uses of rations each. Otherwise, you’ll need to Forage or go hungry. Have you got enough?”*

Once the journey is underway, periodically **use up their resources** and have them use up rations. *“After another two days of travel, you reach the edge of the Steplands. Mark off another 2 rations each.”* If they don’t have enough rations (or choose not to use them), **tell them the consequences/requirements and ask** what they do. *“Yeah, sure, you can stretch your rations and only use half as many. But no one gets to heal when you Make Camp, and you risk exhausting yourselves tomorrow. Do you do it?”* See the Deprivation sidebar (page xx) for more ideas.

YOU DON’T KNOW HOW LONG IT’LL TAKE

Present this right away, as the characters are making preparations. Maybe give them a ballpark (*“probably a few days each way”*), but the point is: they don’t really know. So, how many rations are they going to bring with them?

Of course, *you* should know how many days travel it will. Maybe it’s a range (it’s probably a range), but you should know the minimum number of days, at least.

This challenge usually means the characters are heading out on an unknown path. It will often be combined with a risk of getting lost and/or the need for a guide/map/directions. Expect this type of journey to take more “screen time” than other, more familiar journeys, because each point along the journey will be new to them and warrants describing.

In play, periodically **use up their resources** and tell them to mark off some rations. Or **tell them the consequences** of going without food.

WHAT TO PREP

If you know that an expedition is in the PC's future, there's plenty you can to prepare in advance. You don't *need* to prepare these things, but they can help make the journey go more smoothly in play.

First, **chart the course**. Look at where they are going, they're likely route(s), and make your choices for the Chart a Course move. Write them down with little check boxes next to them, so you can tic them off as you present them in play. See page [XX](#) for examples.

Next, **draw a map** of the route you expect them to take or the area you expect them to traverse. Grab a map of the vicinity around Stonetop or the World's End region and highlight or add the points of interest relevant to the journey. Consider making a more zoomed-in map for areas that aren't very well detailed on the regional map.

Make a list of locations (on the map or elsewhere) that includes the different environments and points of interest you expect them to travel through or pass by. For each item on your list, if it hasn't been explored in play, or if there's some significant change you want to highlight, then make a few notes:

- ☉ A brief description, no more than a sentence.
- ☉ 2-3 impressions, ideally hitting senses other than visual.
- ☉ Some questions you want to ask of the players
- ☉ Any dangers or discoveries you expect to be encountered there
- ☉ Any challenges (from Chart a Course) that are tied to the location

For locations that are described in the Almanac, you can either copy the relevant details or just add a page reference to your notes (and maybe put a sticky on the page in the Almanac). Feel free to add questions or other details of your own devising!

Write out 5-7 **possible encounters** that could occur along the journey—dangers, discoveries, or events you can use when the characters miss a roll, when a 7-9 implies some sort of complication, or when you just need to break up the journey a bit.

For each encounter, limit yourself to 1-3 sentences but try to tie them into a larger story. For creatures, include a disposition or activity—what are they up to and how are they likely to react to the characters? For any encounter, use it to show the characters (and more importantly, the players) the bigger picture. For example, don't just have them encounter a random hagr; have them encounter a hagr who is sullenly building a new home for itself because the Mother of Spiders and her brood chased it out of its old home.

Finally, **create each POINT OF INTEREST, each DANGER, and each DISCOVERY** they are likely to encounter, in as much or as little detail as you feel valuable and appropriate, using the following chapters for guidance.