

The village of Stonetop

*Prosperity: Poor // Population: Steady (~250) // Defenses: Militia
Resources: Stone, Furs, Whiskey // Trade: Gordon's Delve (metal)
Trade: Marshedge (textiles, herbs, glass) // Blight: goblins*

Everyone in town is expected to pull their weight, but few think badly of those who suffer misfortune. The town pulls together; its community is its strength.

Able-bodied men and women are expected to know how to fight and protect the village when needed. Everyone keeps a spear, a round wooden shield, and maybe a bow. Folk rotate through guard duty, manning the three **WATCHTOWERS** each night.

There's no government. When decisions need to be made, the leaders come together and make them. Everyone knows who the leaders are: the old and wise, the cunning, the brave. It's not a formal thing.

Most of the buildings in town are stone, low and squat, scavenged from the crumbling Old Wall about a mile out of town and the half-buried ruins that litter the area. The roofs are almost all of thatch. Families pass these homes on, with two or three generations living in one or two small buildings.

A **LOW STONE WALL**, cobbled together and about waist-high, rings most of the town. It'd be no use against a real army, but it provides some cover against goblin raiders. The houses built outside the wall are newer ones, their families mostly newcomers to the village.

A relic of the Builders, **THE WEST ROAD** crosses the Highway a few miles out of town and runs all the way to Gordon's Delve in the Western Stonewall Mountains. The roads never get overgrown, and

Most folk in town are farmers, growing beans, potatoes, and some barley in nearby fields. **THE FIELDS** stretch out to the edge of the Old Wall. Beyond that, the weedy, inedible grasses of the Flats choke out anything the villagers plant.

There's no mill in town, not much in the way of bread. Families keep goats for milk and chickens for eggs. The town owns two horses in common, plus a couple carts and a wagon they bought from Marshedge.

Well over 30 ft tall and etched in faint runes, **THE STONE** appears to be older even than the giant-sized ruins of the Builders that the village is built on.

When storms roll in from the southeast (and they often do), lightning strikes the Stone repeatedly. The locals barely even notice.

The **PUBLIC HOUSE** is the largest building in the village, where the locals meet after sundown to drink and socialize. It offers floor space in the common room for travelers and boasts a small stable. The town's two horses are kept here.

Next door is the **GRANARY**, where the town stores foodstuffs for winter. Everyone contributes, everyone shares.

The village sits on a bluff overlooking the **GREAT WOOD**. A few brave souls ply its depths for fur and meat, which the town trades to its neighbors. Trappers bring in most of the town's wealth, but hunters get more respect. It's dangerous, hunting in the Wood.

By compact with the elves of the Wood, the people of Stonetop never fell a living tree. They're free to gather fallen wood, but if they need timber they send folk northwest to the foothills. But the **ELVES HAVEN'T BEEN SEEN IN A DECADE**, and some grumble that there's plenty of timber in their own back yard.

GOBLINS are known to lurk in the Great Wood. The elves once hunted them and kept them in check, but their numbers have been growing and they grow bolder.

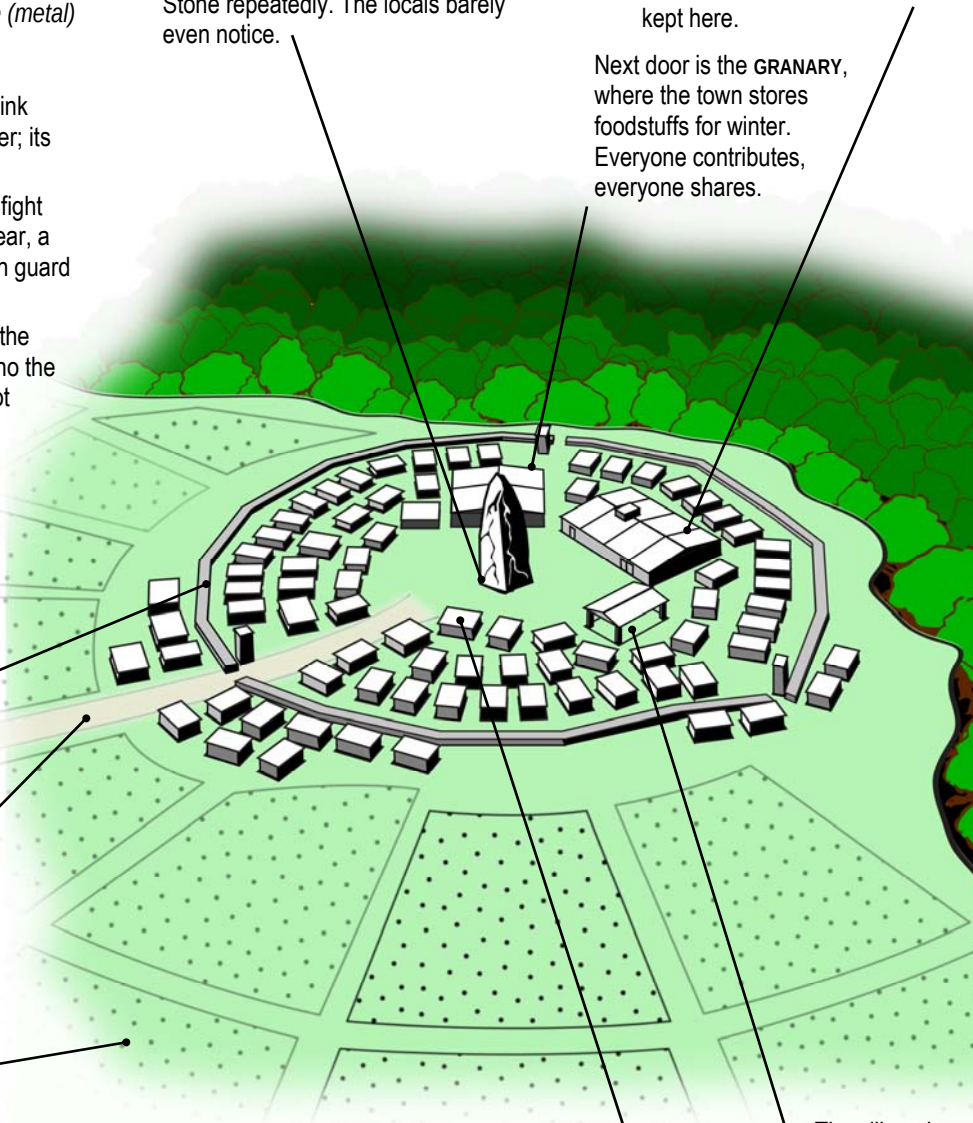
The area's always had its share of earthquakes, but the elders say they've grown more frequent.

Perhaps it's related to the strange stones that've been found in the Wood?

The village boasts no temple but does have a **PAVILION OF THE GODS**, an open building with shrines to Helior (the Daybringer), Danu (the Earth Mother), and Aratis (keeper of laws and lore), and Tor (rain-maker, thunderer, slayer-of-beasts). Tor is the most popular and widely associated with the Stone itself, but all four gods are given their due respect.

All sane folk shun lakes, rivers, and other large bodies of water. *Things* live in the water, things that slither forth and drag you in with them. Everyone knows this.

The village stores as much rainwater and snowmelt as it can in an ancient **CISTERN**. But in a dry spell, someone's got to take the wagon and some barrels to the Old Wells, a couple days' journey north of town.



Steading Playbook:

Stonetop

Starting: Village, Fortunes +1, Surplus 1, Prosperity -1,
Defenses -1, Population +0

Size

☐ Hamlet (~50) ☐ Village (~100-200) ☐ Town (~300-600) ☐ City (1,000+)

Fortunes

Surplus

Prosperity

☐ -2 Dirt ☐ -1 Poor ☐ +0 Moderate ☐ +1 Wealthy ☐ +2 Rich

Resources

Farming (beans, potatoes, barley)
Game from the Wood (furs, meat, hides)
Whisky (from surplus barley)
Stone (from the Old Wall)
Trade: Gordon's Delve (metal)
Trade: Marshedge (textiles, herbs, glass)

Defenses

☐ -2 None ☐ -1 Militia ☐ +0 Watch ☐ +1 Guard ☐ +2 Garrison ☐ +3 Battalion

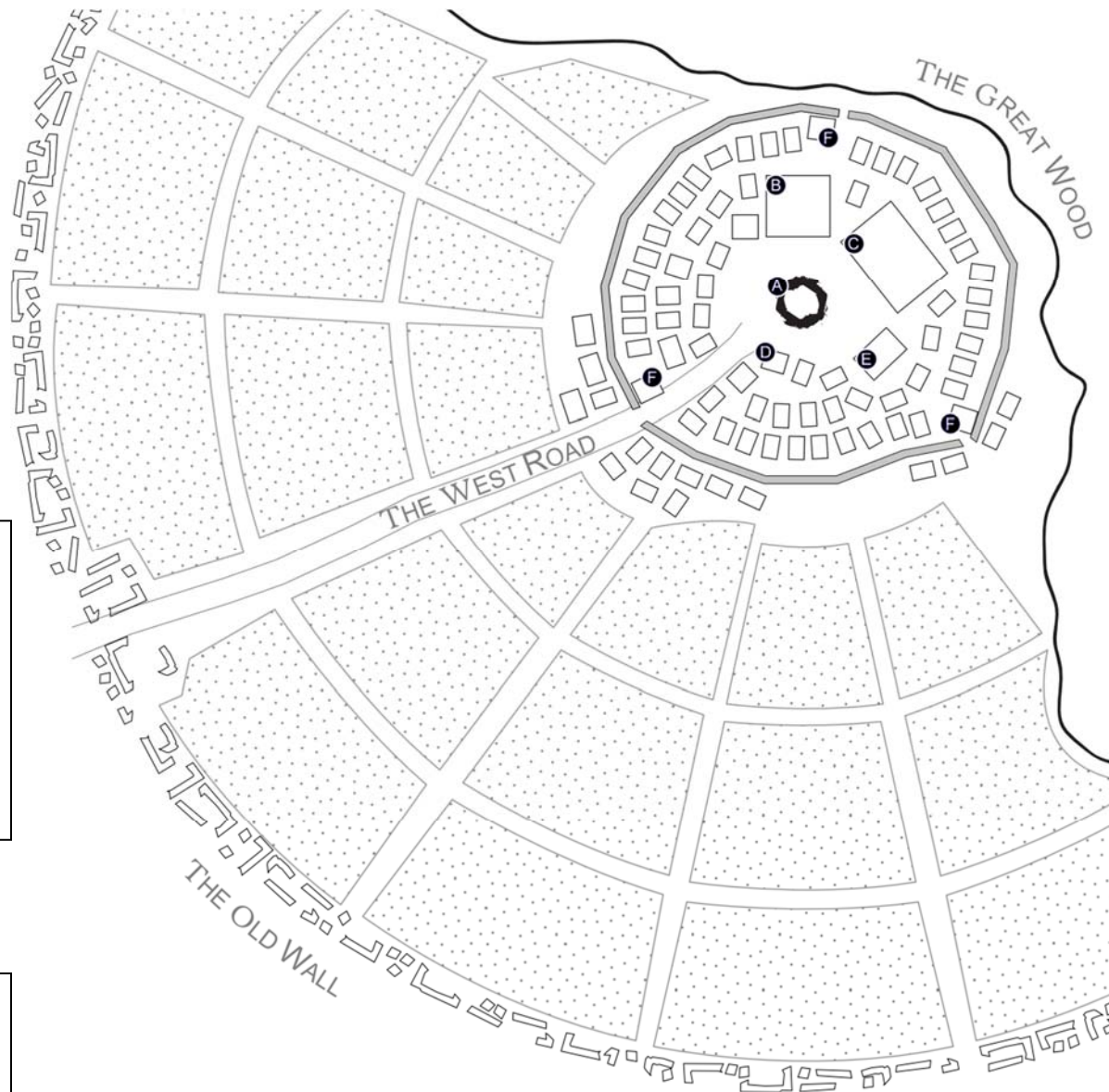
Fortifications & Related Features

Low stone wall
Three watchtowers, manned nightly
Spears & wooden shields in each home, some bows

Population

☐ -2 Exodus ☐ -1 Shrinking ☐ +0 Steady ☐ +1 Growing ☐ +2 Booming

See **Notables** on reverse side



Places of Note

- A The Stone
- B Granary
- C Public House & Stables
- D Well House & Cistern
- E Pavilion of the Gods
(with Chronicle below)
- F Watchtowers

Drive | choose 1

At the end a session, if you've met your drive's requirement, mark XP.

☐ DEFENSE

Defeat an agent of chaos and ruin.

☐ EXPANSION

An NPC from another community acknowledges your authority.

☐ HARMONY

Settle a dispute without violence.

☐ KNOWLEDGE

Teach an NPC something important about the world.

The Chronicle

The Judge of Aratis is charged with maintaining the Chronicle, a history of the community, it's people, and their traditions.

The lore contained in the Chronicle depends on your background, but describe its physical structure.

- On the plus side, it... (pick 3):
- ☐ is a sturdy vault from the time of the Builders
 - ☐ has plenty of room to grow
 - ☐ is hidden underground
 - ☐ has but one entrance which is magically sealed
 - ☐ bears minor magicks that preserve its contents
 - ☐ is warded and proof against spirits and magic
 - ☐ includes space for your living quarters & office

- But alas it... (pick 2):
- ☐ sits on the outskirts of town, near the Old Wall
 - ☐ is cramped, chaotic, and overflowing
 - ☐ is little more than a crude cellar
 - ☐ seems to be haunted
 - ☐ contains a few dangerous artifacts as well as lore

Mark the Chronicle on the Stonetop Playbook map. If you haven't already, mark your home as well.

Bonds | write up to 5, with PCs or NPCs

☐☐☐☐☐

Pick at least one of these:

- *_ resents my authority. I will win them over.*
- *_ is a liar and a coward. They cannot be trusted.*
- *_ will bring ruin to us all. I must keep them in check.*
- *A grim fate looms over _, but it must be so. I will guide them toward it.*

Make up the others. Bonds should always have two parts: an relationship to, experience with, opinion of, or observation about them, and a course of action that follows. Examples:

- *_ is my brother/sister/cousin; they disappoint me. I must keep them at arm's length.*
- *I am betrothed to _. I hope to make a good spouse.*
- *_ is my father/mother, and thinks that gives them some special privilege. I must show that it doesn't.*
- *_ and I have been friends since youth. I trust them completely.*
- *_ is a credit to the community. I hold them up as an example for others.*
- *I have taken _ as my apprentice. I'll teach them the proper way of doing things.*
- *_ was my mentor as a Judge. I strive to live up to their example.*
- *_ does things properly. I follow their lead.*
- *_ is bold and cunning, perhaps too so. I must guide them to wisdom.*
- *_ cares more for the wilds than their fellow towns-folk. I must keep an eye on them.*
- *I see great things in _'s future. I will protect them.*

THE JUDGE

a character playbook for Dungeon World: Stonetop

Look here at this little town, this flickering flame in the darkness. Its vey existence is an act of hope. Its every stone an altar to the goddess Aratis. And Aratis has charged you to keep it. To settle its disputes. To chronicle its tales. And to defend it from the chaos and ruin that surround it on all sides.

Take up you hammer, Judge. Take up your shield, your quill. Your town needs you.

Background | choose 1

☐ LEGACY

You are the 17th Judge of Stonetop. You were born here, apprenticed to the prior Judge, and are charged to pass the mantle on.

The Chronicle is rich repository of lore, but there's no index so good luck finding anything. When you **Spout Lore about the people or history of Stonetop**, take +1. When you **spend weeks or months pouring through the Chronicle**, ask the GM a question. They'll tell you what the Chronicle has to say.

☐ MISSIONARY

You are part of a larger order of Aratis's chosen, with Judges in Gordon's Delve, Marshedge, Lygos, and the smaller towns of the arid south. You were sent to Stonetop from one of these places to spread the faith of Aratis and protect the flickering flame of civilization. The Chronicle is still new and a work in progress; your position in town is far from certain.

When you **call upon the Judge of another steading for hospitality, information, aid, or succor**, they are oath-bound to give it. You are likewise oath-bound to support them. Add these Judges to the Neighbors list on Stonetop's playbook now.

The Judges of your order uses carrier pigeons to communicate. When you **send a message via carrier pigeon**, roll +WIS. *On a 10+, you receive a reply in a few days later. *On a 7-9, the reply is delayed but it arrives eventually. *On a miss, you receive no reply and the GM decides why.

☐ PROPHET

The line of Judges was broken long ago and the Chronicle lost or fallen into ruin. Aratis has called you personally to her service though dreams, omens, and visions. Some in town resent the authority you've assumed.

When you **spend time (a few hours at least) in communion with Aratis**, you receive visions of a threat to your community or wider civilization. Roll +WIS. On a 10+, you also gain some hint as to how it may be stopped.

Starting Gear

- Choose a symbol of your authority (pick 1):
- ☐ An ancient steel cuirass, helm, and greaves (3 armor, worn, clumsy, 4 weight)
 - ☐ A huge, cold-iron warhammer (close, forceful, +1 damage, awkward, two-handed, 3 weight)
 - ☐ An ancient shield of unknown material, hard as diamond and bearing Aratis's seal (+1 armor, unbreakable, 2 weight)

- Beyond that, choose up to 3 of the following:
- ☐ A warhammer (close, 1 weight)
 - ☐ A staff (close, two-handed, 1 weight)
 - ☐ A leather cuirass (1 armor, worn, 1 weight)
 - ☐ Thick hides (1 armor, worn, warm, 2 weight)
 - ☐ A wooden shield (+1 armor, 2 weight)
 - ☐ Bag of books (5 uses, slow, 2 weight)

Look & Origin

- Choose one of each:
- young & eager | in my prime | showing my years
 - kind eyes | fiery eyes | stern eyes
 - calm voice | booming voice | a voice that carries
 - hard body | lean body | well-fed body | flabby body
 - spit-polished gear | robes of office | modest clothes

- I and my family are am from... (choose 1 and a name)
- ☐ Stonetop
Feminine: Arianrhod, Eleri, Mair, or Nerys
Masculine: Caerwyn, Einion, Macsen, or Trefor
 - ☐ Marshedge
Feminine: Bridget, Eleanor, Liadain, or Siomha
Masculine: Aonghus, Comhghall, or Muiredach
 - ☐ Gordon's Delve
Pick from any other list
 - ☐ Lygos or some other southern town
Feminine: Despina, Hypatta, Nomika, or Sofia
Masculine: Abram, Cassander, Leon, or Yosef

My name is...

The Great Wood

IMPRESSIONS:

- From above: an endless sea of fog-shrouded trees.
- From below: massive trunks reaching up up.
- The feeble light of stars and moon barely glimpsed above.
- A cloying stillness, more like being indoors than in nature.
- Wind shaking the canopy; rain showers despite clear skies.
- Smells of pine, of moldering leaves, of damp earth.
- Pools of fresh water and cold, gurgling streams, lined with ferns and shallow enough to be safe.
- Snares left by some of the trappers: some waiting, some sprung, others torn apart by vandals.
- A majestic hart, startled briefly, then gone into the brush.
- Whispers heard in the wind. No, it must be your imagination.
- Hidden paths and doorways, visible only to those with the elfsight or minds touched by madness.
- Massive ruins from the time of the Builders, now overgrown.
- The cry of a baby echoing from somewhere in the distance.
- A strange jut of rune-etched rock, pushed out of the undergrowth like a pustule. Nothing yet has come to grow on it.
- A grove of low trees, grown together to almost be a cave.
- Another stone protrusion, carved into an idol by crude tools.
- A jet black stone set in the idol like an eye, oozing malice.
- More damn trees.

QUESTIONS:

- Who in your family used to ply the Wood for a living? What happened that shattered their nerve?
- What did you once see deep in the Wood that you've never told anyone else about?
- Who did you lose to the Great Wood? What happened?
- Of all the stories you've heard about the dangers of the Wood, which one scares you the most?
- What did the elves teach your elders to always do when travelling the Wood? Why?
- Who in town was arguing that you should start harvesting good timber from the Wood, now that the elves are gone? What's your stance?
- How is it that you came upon the Blood Red Grove during autumn? What did you see there that haunts your dreams?
- What did your grandfather tell was the Erlking's one weakness? Why do you believe him?

LOCATION MOVES:

- Change the environment: *the trees open into a clearing // a rocking outcropping looms // they stumble on some caves // old ruins come into view // night falls // day breaks // the weather changes // fog settles or lifts // a storm rolls in*
- Point to a looming threat: *a desiccated deer in spider webs // distant singing, so beautiful as to break your heart // a splash of blood on fresh snow // eyes seen in the brush, then gone // a trapper's snares, sprung but their prey since torn apart // a distant horn, then the rushing of wind.*
- Introduce a faction/creature: *a pair of bear cubs in front of them // low growling coming from behind // crunching noises of something in the distance, something big // an old goblin camp, must've been dozens of 'em // "what was that?"*
- Use a threat/creature move: *snare them in spider webs // surprised goblins scatter into the wood // lure them into a trap // pounce on them from above // snipe at them from cover // snuff out a light source // surround them*
- Make them backtrack: *ruin their water so they must return to a spring for more // fill them with nameless dread // put a dangerous beast in their path, easier to avoid than fight*
- Present riches at a price: *a glint of gold on that goblin corpse dangling in the spider webs // the old Builder stones bear faded runes // black stones whispering promises of knowledge and power, if only you'll let them in // the Erlking himself challenges you to a contest or marks you as prey*
- Present a challenge to one of the PCs: *the goblins left a trail // the stones mark a place of power // the voices compel them to act // living darkness advances on them // a mighty beast bellows a challenge // the sentries haven't spotted you yet // the spirits of the Wood are angry*

When you **go looking for something in the Wood without a guide**, roll +WIS. On a hit, gain +1 *PROGRESS*. On a 7-9, also choose one. On a 10+, choose two.

- You make good time
- You can retrace your steps
- You discover something else of interest or value
- You avoid the dangers of the Wood

When you've accumulated 3 *PROGRESS*, you find what you were seeking.

