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1 Navarr

?Actions have consequences.?



From the great forests they call home, through the cold lands of Wintermark and Varushka, to the Marcher fens, the high mountains of Urizen and even the streets of the League - the Navarr are the great travellers and pioneers of the Empire. Direct and efficient, few know better than they how to use the lands of the Empire to survive - and to fight. Practical, adaptable and focused, they do what they need to do to succeed. Fierce in appearance and dress, they have made themselves the allies of everyone who stands with civilisation and the savage and relentless foes of any who oppose it.

The Navarr are the blood that runs through the Empire?s veins. Spirited, they throw themselves wholeheartedly into the job of serving the Empire. They carry news, messages and even people with them as they travel. For those who dwell in inhospitable places, the Navarr may be the only Imperial contact they have. Vigilant, they roam through the wild places of the Empire and keep a constant watch for the dangers that lurk there. They serve as the Empire's scouts - their work keeps the roads open and their warnings ensure the armies are ready to face the threat.



The Navarr display their fierce heritage in battle. Warriors explode from ambush, slaughtering enemies with barbed spears. Navarr magicians fuel magic with the primal power of blood. But in peace they are a generous people, noted for their festivities and celebrations to which all are welcome. Throughout the Empire travellers may stumble across Navarr settlements, the steadings, which offer welcome shelter and respite.

More than anyone else the Navarr know how fragile civilisation can be. Centuries ago their forebears dwelled in cities, but they were lost to war with the orcs and magic run amok. They carry the memory of that loss with them everywhere they travel, and though they still seek to reclaim the lands they lost, what drives them more is the need to ensure that it does not happen again. The Navarr know what happens to an Empire that believes itself invincible. They have lost one Empire - they are determined they will not lose another.

?Navarri fight as Thorn.?

1.1 Five things about the Navarr

- **The Empire is our home.** They travel the Empire carrying messages, information and people across the land.
- **Survival is change.** Their lifestyle is one of constant change as they travel the wilds, and they adapt accordingly.
- **Actions have consequences.** The Navarr take the long view; they are often magnanimous and see their actions in terms of the effects they will have in years to come, not just today.
- **You cannot betray your enemies.** The Navarr are fierce in battle; they don't let sentiment get in the way of finding practical solutions to their problems.
- **Tread carefully in wild places.** The Navarr are vigilant to the dangers of the world they travel through.

1.2 What the Navarr are not

- **They are not uncivilised or outcasts.** They may not possess all the trappings of civilisation now, but they once did. They helped form the Empire and see themselves as an essential part of it. They are happy to use any practical innovation of the Empire, so long as they can travel with it. Their somewhat brutal practicality may shock members of other nations, but it's born out of necessity, not ignorance.
- **They are not animists, nature worshippers or Celts.** The Navarr are adept at living in the wilds but they do not romanticize that lifestyle and they take a dim view of those who do. Their culture bears a few similarities with some Celtic mythology, but there are no triple goddesses, no Wild Hunt, no wholesale-lifted Celtic myth. The Navarr have their own stories.
- **A nation of murderers.** While the Navarr often employ brutal tactics against the enemies of the Empire, they do so in defence of civilisation. The Navarr expect those who break the law face the consequences of their actions. The hero Isaella exemplifies this attitude - after killing Emperor Nicovar she stood trial for her crime rather than attempting to evade justice.

1.3 Further Reading

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2 Navarr people



Self sufficient does not have to mean standing alone.
The Navarr were once part of a great nation that was lost to Orcs and failed magic centuries before the Empire began. Although they continue to wander through the wild places, they embrace the Empire as an opportunity to be a part of a great civilisation again. Their cities still exist, buried in the depths of their forests and infested by the vallorn, a monstrous presence from the past.

Today the people dwell in steadings, settlements cut into the heart of the woods, or travel in loose groups called stridings. Individual Navarr move back and forth between the settled life of a steading and the mobile life of a striding as the mood takes them or circumstance dictates.

The Navarr love to travel. The journey can be a means to an end or an end in itself. Some of their journeys serve an arcane purpose, but wherever they are travelling, they carry news, messages and people with them. The Navarr see moving people and items around the Empire, to the places where they can do the most good, as a method to solve many problems. The philosophy of the Great Dance teaches that everyone has a place where they can prosper, and helping other people find that place is a calling for many Navarr.



The Navarr value self-sufficiency, and seek to test themselves against the world

They value self-sufficiency, priding themselves on their ability to prosper in dangerous and inhospitable areas. They make a virtue of being prepared and ready. Many Navarr love the excitement of the hunt; stalking prey heightens their senses and tests their skills, and the thrill of the chase gets their blood pumping, reminding them they are alive. Young Navarr, especially, like to test themselves against the world; they like to push themselves, whether it is conquering a mountain peak or blazing a trail to a new destination. They enjoy demonstrating their mastery over nature.

The Navarr are sophisticated enough to realise that self-sufficiency does not mean each individual stands alone. They are a gregarious folk who welcome strangers to their steadings and stridings. They like to cultivate friends and alliances, and relish the opportunity to work as go-betweens. Anyone in the Empire who needs to travel somewhere, or who is looking for a new start, knows that the Navarr are happy to embrace fellow travellers.

The Navarr keep a watch throughout the Empire. When they move through an area, they make an effort to look for problems and dangers, and warn their fellow Imperial citizens about them. A Navarr who discovers a ruined Marcher fortress is now a haven of orcs or bandits will seek out nearby Marcher stewards and beaters, inform them of the problem, and offer whatever assistance they can to help them deal with the threat.

Navarr Archetypes	
Brand	Thorn
Broker	Vate
Guide	Vine

They also maintain a network of small shelters or safe havens along the trods known as Tarries. Each Tarry is a well-prepared shelter stocked with enough a supply of firewood and dried food for a day or two. These can be used by any traveller in need of shelter, so long as the food and firewood is restocked in return.

The Navarr are as fierce towards their enemies as they are welcoming to their allies. When they march to battle they don war-paint so their allies can see they have committed themselves to the fight and their enemies know to be afraid. The Navarr have little time for notions of honourable combat; ambush, traps, misdirection and poison are all weapons that the Navarr readily employ.

2.1 Names

2.1.1 First names

Navarr names are primarily Celtic, mainly drawing on Welsh names.

A child's name is given to a Navarr at birth by the parents, whereas an adult chooses the name they wish to be known by during the Binding of Thorns.

2.1.2 Sample Names

Aedan, Angharad, Arawn, Breanainn, Brianna, Bronwen, Cadaen, Caiside, Cordelia, Donndubhan, Dradan, Drustan, Elisedd, Enys, Faelan, Gwynedd, Hywel, Ifan, Iona, Lindir, Logan, Maddoc, Megan, Myfanwy, Niamh, Olwen, Paul, Raelyn, Rhiannon, Saeros, Siani, Teleri, Tomas, Wyl

N.B. Whilst some names are inspired by real world names which may be given to specific genders, Empire is a gender blind setting and people of any gender choose any name they like that is appropriate to their nation.

2.1.3 Naming resources

- Celtic names
- Welsh names

2.1.4 Second names

A Navarr takes the name of their steading or striding as their second name.

Steadings and stridings are named for the event that founded them but these are commonly abbreviated or inferred from a much longer descriptive. The oldest communities have names founded in the myths of the nation while those more recently founded may seem more mundane by comparison.

2.1.5 Sample second names

- **Seventh Day** - Abbreviated from "On the seventh day of the Battle of Lower Mirsh, Pwyll slew the Warlord of the Scaled Host."
- **Black Blood** - Abbreviated from "... the rivers of Mitwold ran black with the blood of the traitors."
- **Long Stride** - Inferred from "... and we parted ways in 307YE as Dylan and Lowri, the vates of our striding, could not keep pace with us."

Names are not static; when a Navarr moves between the steadings and the stridings they change their name accordingly.

2.2 Further Reading

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3 Navarr culture and customs

3.1 The Great Dance

The central philosophy of the Navarr is the idea that life is a Great Dance in which all humankind is engaged. Some may lead and some may follow, but the Dance is better for everyone when the dancers have the right partners at the right time and place. Many Navarr try to help people find their place and their partners in the Great Dance. People who do not feel ?right? where they are should be encouraged to travel to find a new place in the Great Dance, a chance to find a place they will belong, where their partners will be right for them.

Reincarnation is central to this belief - to the Navarr the dead are simply resting for a while before they resume their place. People who find their perfect partner in the Dance are destined to find that partner again and again each time they are born. A partner may not always be a lover, it could be a sibling or simply a close friend.

3.2 Tattoos and Vows

The Navarr mark vows, oaths and promises with a physical sign of their intent and commitment, often through tattooing or scarification. The more enduring the commitment, the more permanent the marks. The Navarr mark the most significant vows with brands. These marks help hold a person to their pledge, but they also make it easier for others to identify those who have sworn themselves to a given role or cause (as discussed in Hearth Magic). Most important tattoos are done with a dark red ink, symbolic of the blood that flows beneath the skin. Thorn motifs are the most common design, but other common motifs include blood, twisting plants, star-shaped flowers, and feathers.



Tattoos are a way to demonstrate oaths and commitments

Many Navarr who choose to follow a specific calling, such as a thorn or a brand, take on a new mark to signify their commitment. Tattoos that mark an oath of service are generally worn openly on the hand, arm, or face. The mark commemorating a brand's oath - often a literal brand rather than a tattoo- is worn on the left cheekbone, while thorns sometimes eschew a publicly visible mark and instead don facepaint every day to announce their calling.

Skilled tattoo artists are very much in demand in Navarr society, as it is rare that someone will mark an oath or vow with a tattoo or brand that they create themselves. The artist always expects the patron to explain their oath, and will often want to be present personally when they swear that oath. Some tattooists are also priests and may accompany an oath with a testimony that marks the soul as the tattoo marks the body. This combination of skills might also be used by a tattooist-priest when creating a normal testimony - believing that the act of combining a spiritual mark and a physical mark not only makes the testimony "visible" to others but enhances its potency.

While oaths are marked with permanent tattoos or brands, more ephemeral methods of decorating the body are also used by the Navarr. Before engaging an enemy or going into a risky environment many Navarr will paint symbols on their bodies intended to last for the length of the battle or challenge, while henna tattoos are used for commitments expected to last for a few weeks.

3.2.1 The Binding of Thorns

Everyone who joins the Navarr swears the oath their predecessors swore centuries earlier when their cities were destroyed by the vallorn. Once the oath is taken, the new Navarr mingle their blood with all other Navarr who have attended the ceremony, and receive the traditional Navarr tattoo, called the Binding of Thorns - an intricate pattern of intertwined briars or thorns. The Binding does more than just denote an individual as a member of the Navarr. It stamps the oath they have sworn in their flesh, binding them to their commitment for as long as they live. An individual may leave the Navarr, but they cannot put aside the fight against the vallorn without breaking their oath.

All Navarr who have undergone the Binding of Thorns bear this tattoo, one of endless variations on the motif of intertwined briars or thorns. This ceremony is also used when an adult from outside the Navarr wishes to become one of them. The Binding reminds the new Navarr that wherever they go they are part of the Navarr, and that regaining the remnants of their former civilisation from the vallorn is their ancient purpose.



Unburdening yourself from ones oaths and starting on a new path can cause much joy.

3.3 The Vallorn

The appearance of the vallorn started the downfall of the Terunael Empire, and caused the destruction of the great cities that the Navarr once called home. In their place was a fecund abomination, a dense ever growing forest that had cracked and crumbled stone, and shot great trees up through streets and buildings. Here there were monstrous plants and warped beasts that attacked anything that disturbed them. Everywhere the trees grew, the air was so infused with the magic of the Spring realm such that made the plants resistant to all efforts to destroy them.

In response, the Navarr created the trod netowrk, a system of paths and roads that draws on the Spring magic at the heart of a vallorn, like tapping the sap of a tree. Now the structure of Navarr society reflects their generations long struggle to defeat the vallorn, with stridings and steadings each performing a vital role in the war against the horrors of the Spring realm. Magic is a vital component of that battle, with Navarr vates using Spring rituals to extend the trod network anywhere they can reach. But the Navarr treat Spring magic with respect, knowing that it is a weapon that can turn on you at any moment, if you lose control.

As a result there was a longstanding concern about briars who were often shunned as an outward manifestation of the overabundant growth of the vallorn and as a reminder of what was lost. The discovery that briars make particularly dangerous husks when exposed to vallorn miasma only increased the distrust. This discrimination continued until Autumn 383YE, when it was directly challenged in two statements of principle passed the Imperial Synod, by Josephine of Adina's Charge and Friar Jack Reed. Since that time, Navarr citizens have challenged any who would distrust Briars, or assume they have some sympathy for the vallorn based on lineage alone.

3.4 Celebrations

The Navarr have a long tradition of marking important moments in their lives with celebrations. Usually these take the form of a shared meal followed by dancing, drinking and gaming. Marking important times strengthens the links between members of a community - especially an extended community such as the Navarr possess. Three important celebrations observed by the majority of the Navarr are *Unburdening*, *The Binding of Thorns* and *Welcoming*.

3.4.1 Unburdening

Navarr Stridings and Steadings are not fixed ? they shift and change over time, as people die, retire or move from one to another, perhaps due to a love-match or to a desire to see other climes. When an individual decides to leave a Steading to join a Striding (or even just to travel to another Steading), the event is celebrated with a simple feast in which they ceremonially burn a list describing the belongings they are leaving behind. This symbolises an intent to give up ownership, and comes with a general assumption that these possessions can be claimed by or redistributed among the Navarr who remain behind. The Navarr are far too pragmatic to burn valuable goods, but the ceremony helps people to let go of the things they do not need.



The Welcoming celebrates the coming of Spring.

3.4.2 Welcoming

Conscious of the passage of the seasons, the Navarr Stridings congregate at festival times, either together or at the Steadings. The Navarr celebrate the turning of all the seasons but the birth of a new spring and the end of the harsh winter that makes travelling difficult is their major festival. This grand celebration is a time for revelry, feasting, raucous music and wild dancing. It is also traditionally a time for making a new start, abandoning grudges and putting aside past failures to concentrate on the possibilities of a new year.

Welcoming begins with a ceremonial hunt. The traditional quarry of the Welcoming are the Vates, who often adopt fanciful costumes or headdresses that represent game animals, such as stags, hares and pigeons. Details of the hunt vary from year to year; a glorified game of hide-and-seek one year may be followed by a mock hunt through light woodland the next, or a chase across open ground. The hunt is good natured, but some Vates relish the opportunity to employ their magic to make the hunt more exciting.

Come, come, why the tears my sweet? Death is just another step in the Great Dance. We all take it.

Nana Bronwyn Wordless

3.5 Funerals

In death, what remains are the memories of your deeds in the minds of your partners in the Great Dance. The Steadings use a traditional corpse-glade where the bodies are laid out in the forest. Such glades are rarely troubled by scavengers or carrion-eaters, and the bodies are simply left undisturbed to moulder.

The Stridings usually commit bodies to a simple cairn but a Striding may decide to transport a corpse to a Steading before performing a funeral. There is also a custom where the friends of the deceased make a pilgrimage to a corpse-glade to hang a reminder or memento of their fallen comrade among the branches.

3.6 Icons and Artistry

The iconic symbol for the Navarr is the White Tree, a stylised, leafless oak with branches and roots representing the different paths leading to, and extending from, the present moment. It is often depicted surrounded by crimson thorns, representing the sacrifices needed to walk a path. The organic curves and shapes featured in the banner that hangs in the Imperial Senate are common in Navarr paintings, sculptures, and decorations, as well as in

the designs for their architecture, landscaping, and body art. Many Navarr decorate their clothing and belongings with images of vines and thorns.

The Navarr prize living art that emphasises the idea of things being maintained or built upon with every passing year or passing striding. A painting on a rocky outcrop might need retouching each time a striding passes by, or they may add a new detail to a tree stump carved to mark the location of a trod. In Navarr eyes, the best art must be constantly maintained so that it can be developed with each iteration or each hand that contributes. Music and performance can be continuously updated with new lyrics and lines to adapt to changing circumstances. Even a piece of furniture can have new carvings added to the wood. The aim is not to improve a piece, so much as to keep it "alive" as a piece of art by constantly working on it.

Seren, in Miaren, is considered the centre of Navarr art. The flowering glades and immaculate gardens are testimony to what humanity can achieve when the natural world is tamed. To the Navarr tending nature to make it both benign and beautiful is a crucial artform - one that can be practised by everyone whatever their level of skill. Every part of the surrounding forests that can be improved on is available, glades can be opened up to allow flowers to grow on the floor below, seeds planted to create tree-lined paths and lanterns strung from branches to make the forest a riot of colours at night.

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4 Navarr look and feel



This is a placeholder page for content that PD are actively working on.

4.1 Overview

Wild, unsettling, otherworldly, alert, pragmatic, tattooed, fierce, primal, blood
The Navarr look draws heavily on the forests for its inspiration. The colours are primarily greens and browns with occasional splashes of dark autumnal red or yellow. Materials are practical, primarily those that come from hunting - leather and fur. Face paint, tattoos, and brands are common, especially on the face and around the eyes. Navarr mark oaths and other important commitments with brands, tattoos or scars. Most warriors only apply warpaint before they go into battle, but some Navarr choose to wear it every day, a symbol of their constant readiness.

Rather than rich materials or unusual colours the Navarr personalise their appearance by adorning their costume with embroidery, beads, feathers, fetishes, and other accessories. It is also common to weave such items into the hair.

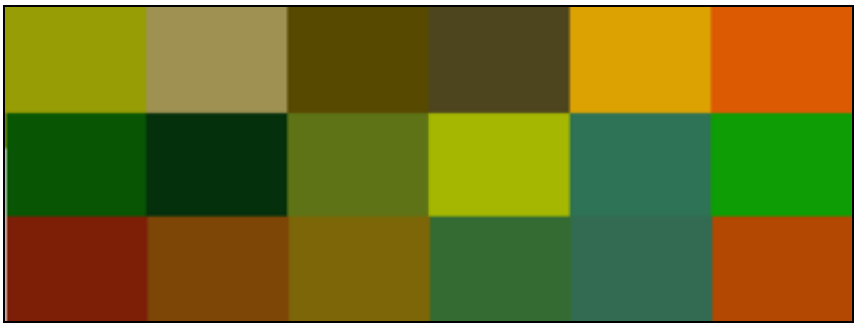
Also see Navarr Costumes.

4.2 Breakdown

Influences
Wood elves, The Rangers from Lord of the Rings.

Materials
Primarily leather and fur, with some layers of cotton, linen or wool. Fine fabrics such as velvet or silk are rare.

Colours
Navarr takes its colour inspiration from the forests and environments in which they live. From the bright and eye-catching yellows and greens of the forest in spring, to the rich and earthy browns and reds of autumn. If it is found in nature, it is likely to have inspired Navarr in some way. The colours are primarily greens and browns with occasional splashes of autumnal reds or yellows.



4.3 Clothing

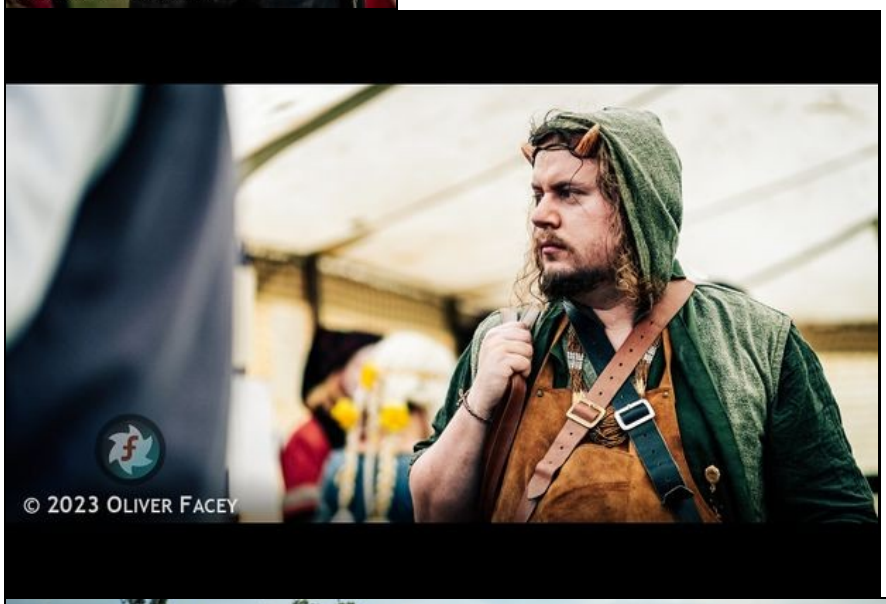
Navarr clothing is layered, serviceable and well-worn, The Navarr are a practical people and their clothes reflect this. Even for civilians, it often features pieces of leather armour, though this is to protect against the environment as much as enemy weapons. Clothes are suitable for people who live their lives in the wild forests. Not just a robust construction but practical designs, for instance, hooded cloaks that give protection against the weather, but can also serve as bedding. Layered clothes are common, so that outfits be easily changed no matter the weather. Belts and straps feature quite heavily ? both to secure clothing so it doesn?t snag and to hold a variety of gear securely while moving through woodland. Patched and mended fabrics are frequent, as worn and ripped clothes are mended 'on the go'.

Navarr style of dress varies, depending on how much contact their striding or steading has with the other nations. Those Navarr who trade with their neighbours are more likely to have access to wool and similar materials so their costume reflects their closer contact with fellow members of the Empire. These clothes are given a Navarri slant though, with fur trims, decoration in natural materials and a natural colour palette. Layers of well-worn, practical wool and leather in natural shades often serve as the foundation of Navarr costume. More remote Navarr may adopt a rougher, more practical or primitive look, primarily comprised of leather, furs and natural materials, suitable for hunters who are used to sleeping rough. In practice, most Navarr fall somewhere between these two extremes. For more formal functions many Navarr wear highly decorated leathers and their most impressive furs, but more importantly, wear their most intricate paints and markings.

Navarr shoes can take many forms, as long as they are practical. For this reason close-fitting leather boots are most common, often coming to or even past the knee, to protect the lower legs while walking. Ankle boots in soft suede and canvas are also seen, often with the addition of puttees and wraps in cloth and leather.

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4.3.1 Jewellery and Decoration

Navarr favour jewellery that represents the twisting journeys of the Great Dance. Knotted metalwork in either base or precious metals; rings, bracelets, armbands, torcs and brooches are the most common types found. When it comes to decoration, natural materials are drawn from heavily. Feathers and fur may trim clothes, and beads made from seeds, wood and stones will adorn many of their garments. Patterns may also be painted onto clothes, again using natural colours like ochre, red, black and white.

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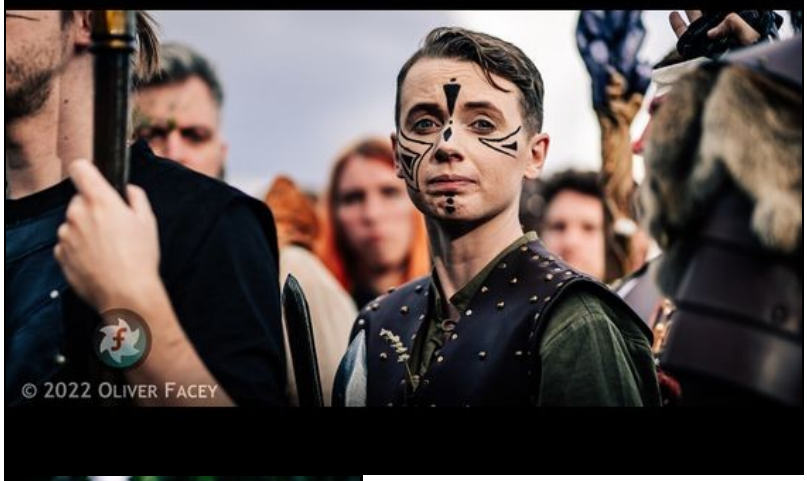
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4.4 Tattoos

Tattoos are used to memorialise significant moments in a life. They mark sworn oaths with tattoos, brands and scars, as a visible sign of the commitment they have made. It is not unknown for thorns and brands to permanently tattoo their warpaint. Thorn motifs are the most common design.

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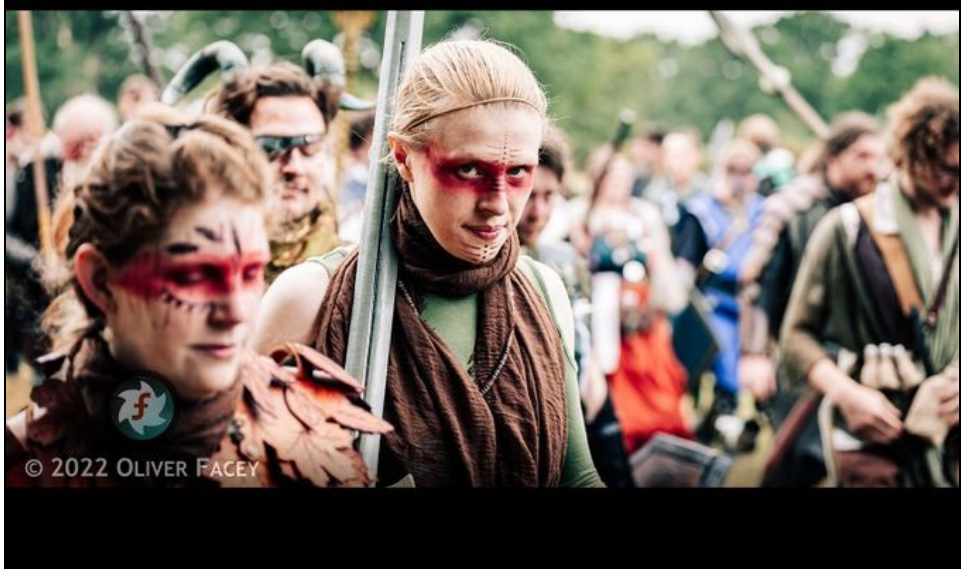
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Warpaint

Navarr use less permanent warpaint on their face or hair when preparing for conflict. It can be meticulously applied in intricate entwined patterns or simply daubed with a finger. Donning the paint helps them prepare themselves and commits them to their course. Many Navarr warriors wear warpaint every day as a sign of their readiness to fight.

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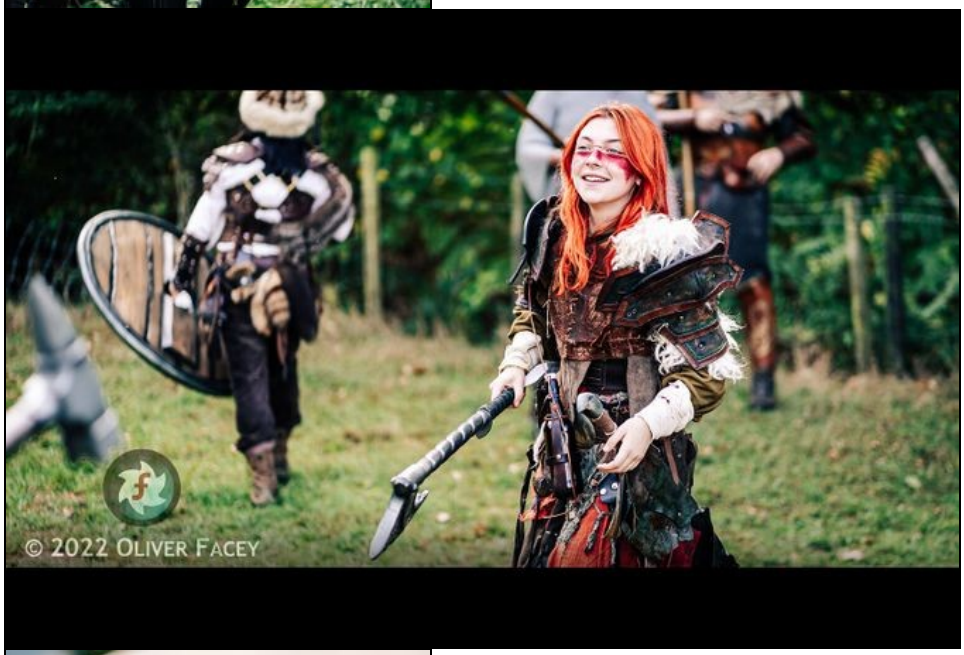
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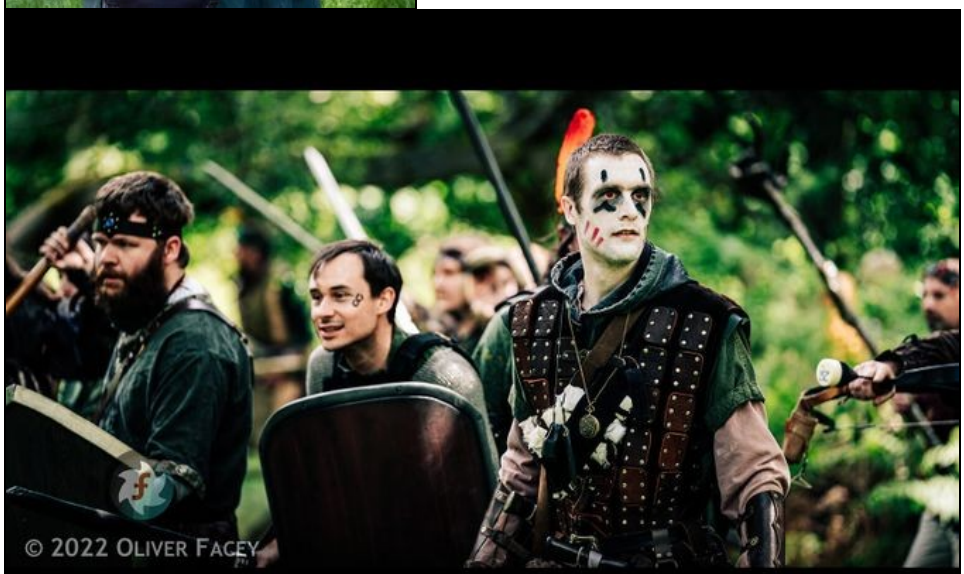
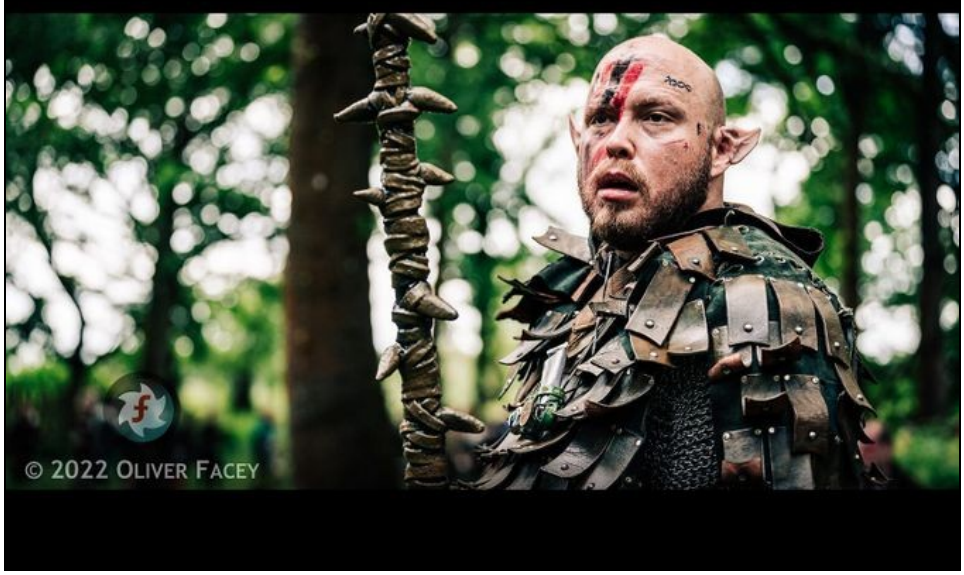
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4.5 Arms and Armour

4.5.1 Armour

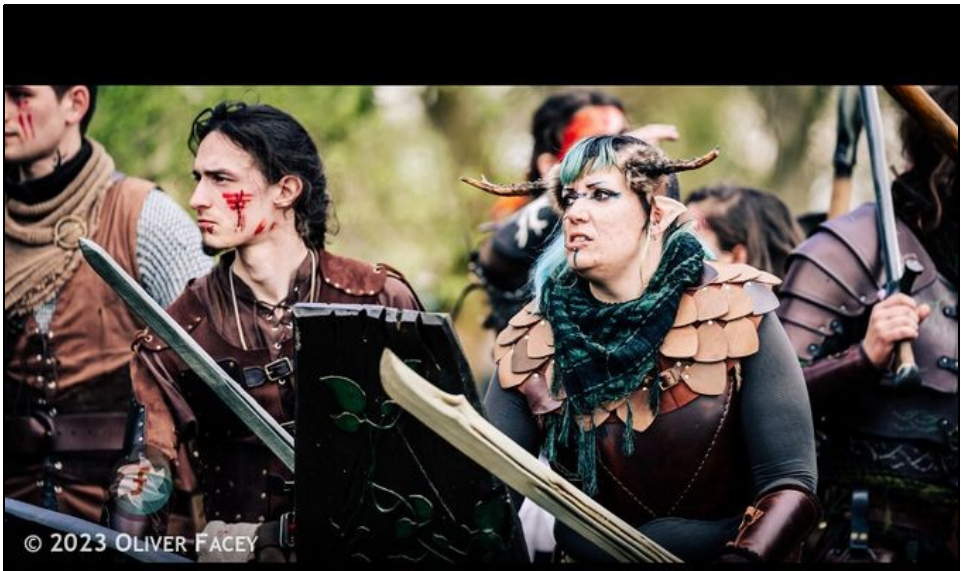
Thick hardened leather is the most common form of armour for the Navarr, occasionally supplemented with light chain or scale. Navarr armour often has lines and closures that run diagonally across the body rather than vertically. Wintermark styled runes on armour are rare and more often than not Navarri armour is decorated with intricate patterns of the Navarr thorns often tracing out their own journey through the Great Dance.

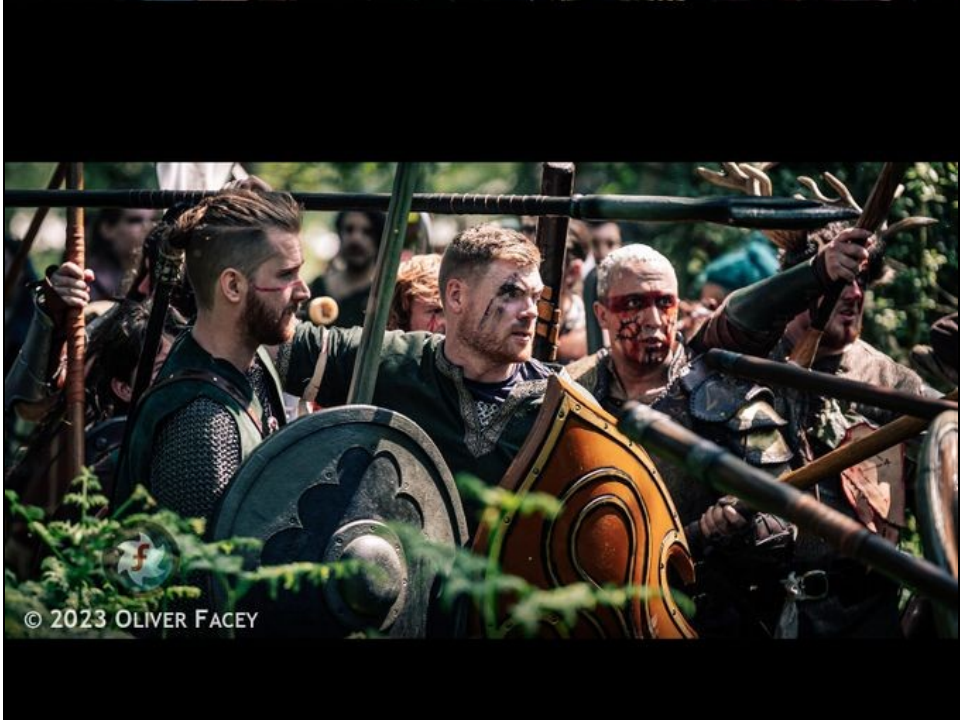
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4.5.2 Shields

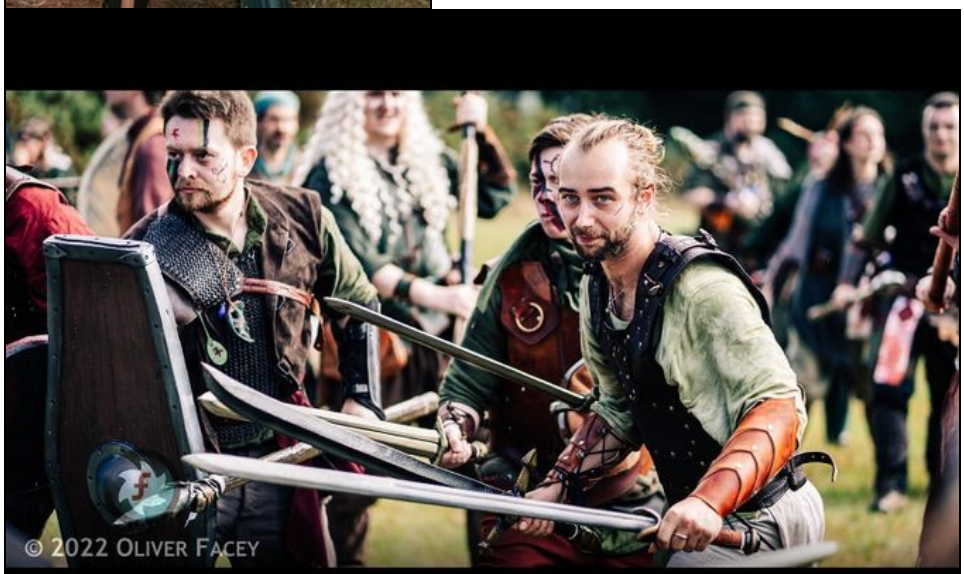
Shields are narrow and fluted, barely wider than the wielder. They are often heavily decorated with the thorn motif.

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4.5.3 Weapons

The iconic Navarr weapon is a spear, often with a barbed shaft and decorated with thorn motifs. This echoes the spear of their legendary hero, Navarr. Navarr particularly favour one-handed spears coupled with a small shield. Otherwise, weapons are light, practical, and good for skirmishing rather than heavy combat.

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Bows

Bows are another favoured Navarr weapon. Like the spear they are an effective tool for hunting as well as a weapon of war.

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4.5.4 Mage Implements

Navarr Mage implements are normally simple and practical pieces of wood. Sometimes intricate designs are carved down the implement as befits their hearth magics.

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4.6 Children

Navarr children are taught the value of being prepared and ready at all times. They are encouraged to learn to fight with sword, spear, and bow from an early age. Their clothing tends to be simplified versions of adult clothing - garments that are practical for play but also easy to keep clean. Older children are often given adult clothing and then belted, tied and strapped to fit.



Modern highland kilts do not fit the setting



Traditional dark age tartan wool is fine

4.7 Less Appropriate

Whilst this look and feel page provides the ideal costume for the nation, it is important for players to familiarise themselves with the general costume rules for further guidelines, including those for inappropriate costume.

4.7.1 Celts and Native Americans

As Navarr are not based on Native Americans, large quantities of turquoise beading, and leather tassels are best avoided. Similarly, Celtic style knot-work isn't suitable as decorative patterns.

4.7.2 Kilts

Skirts, especially war-skirts are fine for anyone of any gender in the Navarr (and indeed elsewhere), but players should take care to avoid kilts. The classic highland kilt made of bright tartan, either short or full, is inescapably linked with the 16th century Scottish Highlands. The Navarr are not based on the Scottish clans, a kilt - or the associated items like a sporran do not fit with the Navarr brief.

It is fine to include some plaid in your costume if you wish - fabric with a tartan pattern is found throughout the Empire and elsewhere. However the best tartans to use are overwhelmingly the patterns that use a few colours at most, usually in subdued tones. The modern tartans that have bright contrasting colours are best avoided wherever possible.

4.7.3 Similar nations

4.7.3.1 Wintermark

Navarr tend to wear light leather armour and simple, earth tone clothes, much like the Steinr. Navarr decorations are more likely to come from nature, in the form of paints, feathers and beads, rather than the woven trims popular with the Steinr. Runes are a lot more common in Wintermark clothing

Kallavesi mystics may also be occasionally mistaken for Navarr vates; however, the Navarr do not wear animal headdresses and do not believe in evoking animal spirits.

4.7.3.2 The Marches

There are also overlaps between the Marches beaters and the Navarr. The beaters tend towards later medieval period clothing, like jacks rather than the tunics and vests popular with the Navarr. The Navarr also tend to use large amounts of furs, pieces of leather and paints that the Marchers would avoid.

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5 Navarr hearth magic

5.1 Overview

In the world of Empire, formal magic is the application of learning and willpower to create supernatural effects. There is another form of magic, however which does not require the user to be a magician. Hearth magic employs the innate natural magic of the world to produce subtle but significant effects in much the same way that a compass needle always points true north. The magic is not based on the abilities of a magician, but relies on the innate mystical properties of the world. Hearth magic is usually subtle rather than potent, and where formal magic is predictable and reliable, hearth magic is none of these things.

While the principles that underlie hearth magic are common throughout the world, among the Navarr there are certain specific practices, customs, or traditions that draw on the power of the world's innate magic. Often these proud customs are nothing more than traditions - but sometimes their practice taps into some facet of the world resulting in a truly magical effect.

You can learn more about hearth magic, what it is and how it works, here.



5.2 Tattoos

There is a widely recognised hearth magic in sworn oaths - especially when the oath is witnessed by others. To invoke this power, the Navarr mark the most important oaths and commitments with tattoos, or sometimes with ceremonial scars or brands. Those who choose to cement vows and solemn undertakings in this way are often hoping to use the power of the mark to help keep them true to their pledge. A mark that can be clearly seen is known to be more powerful than a similar mark hidden on the body, so the more important the oath, the more prominently placed the mark that signifies it is likely to be.

In most cases the resulting designs are constant and unchanging - but stories of such marks suddenly growing or transforming are commonplace. Sometimes a change heralds a warning of dangers to come. Sometimes a mark warns of dangers within, if a Navarr's commitment to that oath wavers for some reason. There are credible reports that the tattoos or brands of oath breakers may twist into wounds that permanently weaken their bearer or torment them with dreams and visions of their betrayals. In other stories, a forsworn Navarr who tries to conceal their treachery by removing the tattoo finds that the mark of their broken oath reappears in another place on their body. There are a few more positive tales as well, of Navarr whose tattoos were damaged or lost due to misadventure or war, finding the design reappear somewhere else provided they stayed true to the oaths.

Very rarely a brand might be used as a punishment. Some scholars believe that the Freezing Brand of Irremais was first developed by a group of Navarr and Wintermark magicians in Hercynia. It deals with a darker side of this hearth magic - the idea that those who have committed unforgivable crimes should bear a permanent reminder of their misdeeds. A handful of Navarr take this a step further, and bear tattoos or brands designed to remind them of failures although in this case the mark is usually combined with an oath to make those failures right or redress the wrongs they have committed.



Tattoos in Play

There are a wide variety of temporary tattoo solutions or make-up options that exist for creating tattoos and brands in the field. It is usually better to focus on one or two tattoos that you can replicate accurately over successive events, and which represent promises or oaths that are important to your character, than to try and recreate too many intricate designs every event. Actual out-of-character tattoos can work fine as in-character tattoos of course, as long as they are appropriate to the setting. In each case the design you use for your tattoos should be meaningful to your character.

When your oath is challenged, or when you want to indicate that you are renewing your commitment to your goals, touching or tracing a tattoo is a way for your character to draw on the power of their oath. There is no taboo in Navarr society about asking people what their tattoos represent. The assumption is that a mark is public so that everyone will know that an important oath has been sworn; so asking another Navarr about their tattoo or brand may be a good way to find out more about them.

While tattoos and brands are permanent changes to a character, the Navarr can also evoke this hearth magic by painting designs on themselves during rituals, or when committing to an immediate course of action. The idea of drawing designs on people is often used in ritual magic that creates a personal enchantment. It's also an easy way to call out some of the elements of the blood magic tradition so popular among the Navarr. Temporary designs are a good way for someone using a ceremonial skill to create a simple ceremony, perhaps tracing a design on the hand or face of someone they are anointing, dedicating, or creating a testimony for. You can combine this with a promise to use the power granted in a certain way - such as to fight the vallorn, destroy the Jotun, or similar.



Blood Magic is a tradition not a Hearth Magic.

5.3 Self-Sacrifice

Self-sacrifice, the idea of selflessly giving yourself to a cause, is particularly important to the Navarr. The founders of the nation, Navarr and Thorn sacrificed themselves to create the ritual that allows the Navarr to fight the vallorn. Isaella sacrificed herself to spare the Empire from the depredations of a mad Emperor. The unselfish devotion to a cause is the essence of the Navarr nation - they are a people defined by their decision to give up everything to oppose the vallorn.

Acts such as these can tap into immense power. While the most tragic stories culminate with the death of some noble figure, death itself its not required.

It is the act of giving which grants sacrifice its power, not the loss of life. All that matters is that what is given up is of great value to the one who gives it. If the most famous Navarr stories end in death is it simply that there are few things in this world of greater value than life itself. Many nations have traditions of giving gifts, whether in hospitality or charity, but the Navarr perhaps more than anyone understand the value of dedicating yourself to a cause worth giving your life for.

The appreciation of self-sacrifice may be what makes blood magic such a common ritual method employed by Navarr vates. There is no power in blood itself, mortal blood contains no notable properties, but drawing blood is a powerful way to perform ritual magic.

Sacrifice in Play

Sacrifice is a tricky hearth magic to evoke in play, but can form the basis for stories or character histories. The game has numerous examples of situations where the sacrifice of a small number of people allows others to overcome seemingly impossible odds. Telling a tale of how someone you respect held a pass against an orc warband for the crucial moments needed to escape is entirely acceptable. Likewise, there will often be opportunities for players to sacrifice things presented in Winds of Fortune or the like - in which cases the situation often draws on the hearth magic of sacrifice creating significant results, however obliquely.

When someone sacrifices themselves, or something they hold dear, recognising that sacrifice can add additional roleplaying nuance to the event. When a group of characters stay behind to engage the barbarians buying crucial minutes for others to escape through the Sentinel Gate back to Anvil, this is the kind of behaviour the Navarr in particular should identify and recognise as evoking a powerful hearth magic.

The key element with the idea of sacrifice in Empire is that it has to be *willing* - it cannot be coerced. There's no hearth magic power in making someone give something up for you, only in the idea that they choose to give something up. The game does not reward human sacrifice; while some eternals might offer boons in return for murder the killing itself does not provide any power or magic it is merely a currency that the supernatural evil demands in return for its aid.

5.4 Sharing a Meal

Sharing a meal creates a bond between those who break their fast together, potentially allowing them to benefit from each other capabilities. Beneficiaries commonly report feeling refreshed and invigorated from such a meal. There are rare stories of individuals finding themselves able to accomplish tasks they had no prior experience with, but which those they shared food with are known to excel. A communal meal can create a hospitable and relaxing atmosphere, but the food alone is not enough to evoke this hearth magic. Both groups need to share stories about their experiences and the challenges they face. If that happens it creates a bond that allows each to draw on the other's strengths and abilities. Such benefits rarely last more than a few days at most, perhaps as long as the memory of the meal endures.

This hearth magic is at its strongest when everyone contributes a little of their own provisions to a communal meal, pooling their supplies. This often happens when two stridings meet unexpectedly on the road, or when a striding passes through a steading, with the two communities coming together to enjoy a shared feast. Many steadings in safe locations, such as Miaren or regions where the vallorn has been largely tamed, see this as an important responsibility for it allows them to support the great task of defeating the vallorn by lending their strength to those who walk the trods.

Navarr teachers will often share a meal with a student before a lesson, hoping that their protégé will benefit from the rapport that results. Guides also often evoke this hearth magic, encouraging those who need their help to share a meal with them while they talk about their metaphorical burdens. Doing so allows the guide to lend their strength to those who need it, while also granting them insight into the challenges they face, making it easier for them to offer advice or see where the person they are trying to help may be happier.

As with most nations, the Navarr are aware of the significant hearth magic bound up with hospitality. Accepting an offer of hospitality, or making such an offer to someone, can create a bond between people even if they are enemies. Even the most ruthless Navarr is cautious about breaking hospitality in this way. For a host to betray a guest they have freely granted food or a place to sleep, or for a guest to turn on their host, is to risk bringing a terrible curse down on their head and those they care for.

Sharing a Meal in Play

Sharing a meal can be as simple as you need it to be at Anvil. It could be just a jug of water and a handful of fruit, almonds, or hard biscuits. The important thing for this hearth magic is that both parties contribute something to the meal - both food and conversation.

Hearth magic alone is not enough to allow you to share character skills but you can still roleplay that you are sharing abilities such as a knowledge of strategy, tactics, magic, or command. If your character is planning to encounter a specific eternal for the first time, you might arrange to share a simple meal with a vate who has previously dealt successfully with that eternal. That will give you a great opportunity to discuss the experience - which will definitely help you prepare for your own encounter - and you are free to assume that some of the insight comes from the hearth magic of hospitality.

You can make use of this hearth magic when performing rituals that allow characters to share skills such as Shared Mastery of the Magician's Guild or Barked Command of the Iron Serjant. It's also a great hearth magic to use to complement the apprentice skill when roleplaying with a character who doesn't have any skills of their own.

5.5 Braiding

According to the Great Dance, it is possible for two or more people to share a powerful connection to one another, and the practice of braiding has been shown to heighten that connection. Techniques vary; what matters is that strands are braided together, one for each person to be connected, and each has a strong connection to the person it represents. Some Navarr contribute strands of hair, while others write their names on ribbons, or mark a little of their blood onto cord or twine.

By bonding people together in this fashion, a talisman is created that helps people remain connected regardless of the distance between them, time that passes, or even death. Regardless of who carries the physical braid, while it remains intact either party may occasionally feel a profound connection to the other. The hearth magic is commonly used by friends, family members, or lovers who face separation such as when individuals move from a steading to a striding or back, so that even though they are apart they preserve a connection to each other. There are accounts of people sensing when the other is in need, in danger, or has died. The power of these braids can also reach beyond death; there are several tales of ghosts returning to spend a few last minutes with a loved one who carries a braid.

Keeping a braid after it has served it's purpose may prevent those bound to it from finding new partners in the Great Dance. Simply discarding or destroying the braid is seen as disrespectful, and may even be dangerous. If a relationship runs its course, the braid is usually burned as part of a ceremony of unburdening.

Braiding in Play

Braiding can form part of any ceremony in which characters declare a commitment or connection to one another. Weddings are an obvious time to employ braiding, but it is also a way for friends or family members to strengthen their connection to one another. If you carry a braid that represents your connection with a distant partner, you might touch or handle the braid when speaking or thinking of the distant person to try and get a sense of if they are well.

If you have created a braid with a character who has died, and you discover this fact out-of-character, it is appropriate to have a sudden feeling that that character is no longer alive. Normally, you should not use information you've gained out-of-character in this way but this is an exception. It is acceptable to use the hearth magic of braiding as a way to explain knowing when someone is in-character dead or in peril. You can't check this information with a referee, but if you know out-of-character that someone is definitely alive or definitely dead, then you can communicate this knowledge to other characters *if you have made a significant braid with that character*.

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6 Navarr history

6.1 Origins of Navarr

Centuries before the Empire was formed, humans already lived in the fertile plains around the Bay of Catazar. They built cities, organized themselves into loose kingdoms, and formed alliances with one another. Even then the humans were threatened by the orcs. At the heart of these kingdoms was the flowering of civilisation that served as the forerunner of the Navarr. Navarr stories call this nation Terunael and record that its cultured cities were run by its magicians.



In the ongoing war against the orcs, Terunael increasingly relied on magic. Over time the stresses of constant magic use took their toll, and without warning the rituals around Terunael unwound catastrophically, creating or summoning the vallorn into the heart of their kingdom. The cities were consumed by spreading forest, their people attacked by monstrous insects and deadly plants, and though they tried everything to fight it, in the end they had no choice but to abandon their homes.

The Navarr are descended from those who followed the eponymous heroine Navarr and her lover Thorn who swore an oath to restore the civilisation of Terunael. Bound and branded by their oath to regain the cities, they fought desperately to destroy the vallorn. When it became clear that their enemy could not be defeated by force of arms alone, a magical solution was sought. Navarr and Thorn gave their lives to set in motion a powerful Ritual that would eventually allow the Navarr to defeat the vallorn.

The Ritual required the Navarr to walk paths of magical power, called Trods. These migrations drew off the life-energies of the vallorn, weakening it. The further the Navarr travelled, the stronger the effect. Once the vallorn was sufficiently weakened in an area, then the Navarr were able to attack, reducing the spread of the vallorn.



The arrival of humans from across the sea drove the orcs from the fertile lowlands. Initially the Navarr viewed the newcomers with suspicion, but they soon realised that these people were potential allies. They made contact, seeking to ensure the safe passage of their stridings, and encouraging the new humans to focus their attention on the orcs rather than engage in costly squabbles with each other.

During this time, Navarr traders introduced the Highborn to Vinum. Vinum was a sap that could be cultivated to a chewable gum which was relaxing, aiding with restful sleep. Highborn chapters experimented with Vinum and one - the Scions of Atun - learned how to process it into a new form. This form which they called liao, possessed many unique mystical qualities, including the ability to unlock visions of past times and places.

6.2 Joining the Empire

A Navarr Striding were among the first people to hear the Empress' message of unity. Its leader, Myfanwy of Hercynia, was one of her earliest companions, protecting and guiding her through human lands. After the historic encounter, the Navarr carried her message to anyone who was prepared to listen. They helped arrange the initial meeting at which the foundations of the Empire were laid. The goals and philosophies of the Empress struck a resonant chord deep in their hearts. The Navarr Stridings became the standard-bearers for the Empire, carrying its message to the divided human nations.

Most Navarr could see that the Empire represented a great opportunity for them; a chance to drive back the barbarian orcs meant that their stridings could travel further than ever. The more perceptive saw something deeper, that the proposed Empire was not just a tool to help them regain their cities, it was the first glimmer of the civilisation their ancestors had once enjoyed.

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6.3.1 Historical Links

- Reclamation of Seren - Historical research relating to the cleansing of Seren and the liberation of Miaren
- Steward of Brock's Heath - Historical research into the life of "old Morgan", a pre-Imperial Marcher steward, which discusses early-Marcher relationships with the Navarr

7 Navarr leadership



Leadership is as much about knowing when to listen as when to speak.
Throughout their history the Navarr have always adapted and followed the most suitable people required to meet the challenges of the time. It is expected that their leaders will be Brands. The Navarr see leadership as an important but onerous responsibility, with the leaders viewed as servants of the community. Although not all Brands are leaders, Navarr who persistently try to offer leadership to others who haven't become Brands are regarded with suspicion. The purpose of leadership is to give direction to the community- it should be for the benefit of everyone in the Striding or Steading - in the Navarr eyes you can't be a fit and proper leader unless you have become a Brand first.

Rather than formally appoint their leaders, the Navarr follow those Brands whose leadership seems wisest and most effective. The Navarr have no need of mechanisms to remove their leaders; since their leaders have no formal authority their importance comes from the people who elect to follow them and do what they say. If a leader makes unwise decisions, if people have become so unhappy with the current leadership, then they are expected to find themselves a new leader.

In theory the leadership of a Striding or Steading is totally fluid - in practice the Navarr are not gadflies. They understand that leadership is difficult and arduous and that leaders must often make unpopular decisions. Most Navarr strive to give their leaders as much support as they can and it is relatively rare for them to leave a Steading or Striding simply to follow a new leader. The fact that they can do this at any time, however, underpins their social system; the Navarr feel it ensures their leaders stay focussed on serving their community but also helps to prevent grumbling or whining about decisions that have been made. Individuals are expected to either support their Brand's leadership or move to follow a different Brand.

It is common for a larger community of Navarr to have more than one Brand providing leadership, each with an area of responsibility or specialism. Such communities operate either through the informal co-operation of the Brands, or employ a system where the Brand whose responsibilities apply most appropriately to the current crisis takes the lead. When Navarr groups meet, the Brands usually cooperate or choose to follow one of their number who seems to offer effective overall leadership if that is required.

7.1 Leading a territory

The Navarr appoint the Senator for a territory by communal agreement. Those who would speak for the territory step forward; the candidate must be Navarr but may be from any territory. Once the candidates are clear, the Navarr present choose who to stand behind. The process is very fluid, it is common for individuals and groups to move to coalesce support where it appears to be most effective. Once it is clear that everyone has made a choice, the individual with the most support becomes senator for the territory.

Only Navarr whose personal resource is located in the territory may participate in the vote. Although Stridings travel around the Empire, individual resources are always in a territory, so this is the legal basis for determining where you may vote. The law means that Navarr whose personal resource is in a non-Imperial territory such as Liathaven, Brocéliande, and Therunin cannot vote in a senatorial election (although they can still volunteer themselves as candidate for the title of senator).

Anyone who has recently taken part in choosing a senator who then moves territory is forbidden from voting in an election in their new territory until a year has passed.

Navarr Senators have a reputation for tactical voting. They accrue political capital with Senators of other nations which they use on key votes, either for the good of Navarr as a nation or for the Empire as a whole.

The senators for each Imperial territory are re-elected at specific equinox and solstices during the year. The senator for Miaren is elected at the Summer Solstice, the senator for Therunin would be elected at the Autumn Equinox (but currently is not Imperial territory), and the senator for Hercynia is elected at the Winter Solstice.

7.1.1 Incumbent

The current Navarr senators are listed below - see the individual territory pages for a full election history for each position.

- Hercynia - Rowyn of the Waystone Path
- Miaren - Rhisiart Heartsbane

Senator Jonquil. You would interdict the passage of Ivawr's Striding through Dawn because of what? Some nascent ill-founded fear that our journeys beyond the borders of our glorious Empire will bring a barbarian horde in its wake?

Your Imperial Majesty, it was Riordan who risked all to bring news of the Scaled Host?s march on the Brass Coast. It was the bravery of Pwyll of Therun that lured the Black Byter into the embrace of the vallorn and it was the Thornborn of Mourn ? the like of whom we shall never see again ? who defied the Swarm of Vasseir to see your Lord Husband safe to this assembly.

We have walked the Trods of these lands since the Sun and the Moon began their heavenly dance, we have witnessed the deep places and we have guarded your hearth. We leave behind the light so you can rest behind stone-walls. We have earned our place in this magnificent endeavour and we shall claim our birthright. Come, walk with us, noble Jonquil. We have no fear ? let us banish yours.

Transcript, Senate Meeting

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8 Navarr economic interests

A ship of Navarr timber, that is a ship to trust.

Brass Coast proverb

A common Navarr philosophy is that wealth is measured in the number of allies you have, not the coins in your pocket. Few Navarr have much interest in personal wealth. Trade is a means of making allies and ensuring that people have the things they need rather than a way for merchants to enrich themselves. The Navarr are well aware of the value of money and don't avoid its acquisition, it's just that most of them count allies as considerably more valuable than possessions.

Although the Navarr stridings are small, they play an important role in the Imperial economy. They specialise in moving valuable items, people and messages around the Empire. The Navarr may be the only people that some isolated communities see for months on end. From the earliest days of the Empire they acted as couriers, carrying important messages to far-flung places. They also act as guides, escorting individuals on difficult treks between nations.

Some Navarr choose to create a Wayhouse on the edge of civilised areas. Built along the Trods outside the Navarr heartland, the wayhouses are generally small - often no more than a single farmstead - and are maintained as places for travellers to rest and recuperate before continuing on their journeys.



Brokers serve as paid intermediaries.
Like the Freeborn, the Navarr sometimes travel beyond the Empire's borders bringing back rare goods not found within its lands. The trade of dyes and pigments, spices and rare herbs is the what the Navarr are most commonly known for, but they also bring to the Empire unique flora from the deep forests that are especially prized by physicians and mages alike. However, for those rich enough, a ship or house built of Navarr hewn timber from the great trees of the heartwoods is a prize beyond reckoning. Across the Empire, Navarr-carved lintels and door frames are widely known for their properties of warding and defence. From dinner plates to spear-hafts, where timber is concerned the Navarr trade in the best.

The Navarr expect everyone to work in the best interest of their Steading or Striding.

8.1 Brokers

Navarr who are interested in money often become brokers. A broker serves as an intermediary between a buyer and a seller, usually claiming some sort of payment from the deal. The Navarr are in a good position to prosper as brokers; as travellers they often come into contact with people with needs or a surplus they want to sell. Clever brokers spend a lot of time getting to know merchants and traders from other nations, working out where they can make the best introductions to either ensure profit or to achieve some goal of their own.

You should?ve seen their faces!
That Navarr Thorn outbid the University of Hundstag
for a first folio print of The Crimes of Indulgence!

Harald Nornesborn at the Great Auction of Flowberg, Wintermark

Brokers do not just concentrate on physical goods. A broker might know of someone with a valuable skill and put them in touch with a patron, for example, or put a band of mercenaries in contact with a marcher lord who needs additional troops and is prepared to pay for them. Sensible traders use the brokers to perform legwork for them, and pay them a premium wage based on the results they deliver.

Many brokers are motivated by their belief in the Great Dance rather than monetary gain. They have a free choice of who to put in touch with who, and how they arrange the meeting, and some use this to discreetly ensure that a struggling business gets the work it needs to stay afloat, or that a greedy Earl is put in touch with an equally greedy blacksmith who will charge top rates for their work.

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9 Navarr military concerns



War is not a game.

9.1 Overview

War is not a game, it is a life-and-death conflict. Most Navarr warriors have little interest in forming battle lines and engaging their enemies in honourable battle. They are pragmatic, and favour war through ambush, skirmish and guile. They disdain heroic charges and single combat with enemy leaders - better to fade back and draw the enemy into a trap than face them in one-on-one combat.

The warriors of the Navarr have two primary areas of interest. They are concerned with the defence of the Steadings and Stridings against bandits and barbarians. They also take responsibility for fighting the forces of the vallorn. The vallorn represents a hostile environment, replete with dangerous plants and monstrous insects. These creatures make infrequent incursions into Imperial territory, and the Navarr are at the forefront of driving them back. They also prepare for the day when they will be able to assault their enemy directly, both by scouting the areas of vallorn influence, and by locating areas that might serve as bases of operation, or recruiting allies to help in the inevitable challenge of defeating the vallorn's progeny.

Donning warpaint ? often embellished with a stylised thorn motif ? is an important pre-battle ritual and warrior bands work together to paint each other. By donning warpaint, the Navarr warriors display their commitment to the coming fight. Members of a Steading or Striding will often use similar themes, colours or designs to give themselves a clear battlefield identity as a unit, in the same way that other nations use livery or heraldry.

?You can?t betray your enemies.?

Leather and chain mail are favoured along with the ubiquitous barbed spear, which honours the original spears wielded by the Navarr forebears. Shields, when used, are narrow and fluted, barely wider than the wielder and often heavily decorated with the thorn motif.

9.2 Thorns

Those Navarr who devote themselves specifically to war are called Thorns, who form a professional warrior caste of the Navarr. Like brands, Thorns make an active decision to commit themselves to their chosen course; they literally swear to be ready at all times to fight in the defence of their community. They mark their oath, usually with a tattoo but many also choose to don warpaint each day. This ritual ensures that they remain focussed regardless of where they are. By marking themselves out in this way they make their identity and pledge clear and remind others that they are ready to fight.



Fight to live, do not live to fight.

9.3 Imperial Armies

The Navarr field two armies: the *Black Thorns* and the *Quiet Step*. *Isaella's Dance* was destroyed shortly before the Winter Solstice 386YE.



9.3.1 The Black Thorns

This large army is especially fast moving, able to cross great distances very quickly. They are especially adept at using the trods to move large numbers quickly, and have excellent logistical support as well as several covens of vates and apothecaries who help restore troops after forced marches. They have a knack, historically, of turning up just in time to help tip the outcome of a campaign.

The first Navarr general leads the Black Thorns army, and is appointed (or re-appointed) at the Summer Solstice each year.



9.3.2 The Quiet Step

The army of the Quiet Step is loosely organised, allowing individual components a certain amount of leeway to operate as they see fit, but benefiting from a central logistical core. They were once known for their experienced scouts capable of quickly gathering information about the enemy armies they encounter. They are equally adept at facing barbarian orcs, vallornspawn and Varushkan monsters. Since the Winter Solstice 381YE, however, they refocused their purpose toward more aggressive tactics, employing cunning strategies to confound and slaughter their foes. This shift in emphasis was effected with the assistance of the eternal known as the Spider King - heralds and creatures loyal to Arhallogen sometimes accompany or support the

army.

The second Navarr general leads the Quiet Step army, and is appointed (or re-appointed) at the Autumn Equinox each year.



9.3.3 Isaella's Dance (Destroyed)

The army of Isaella's Dance finished mustering just before the Summer Solstice 384YE. The army was able to use their mastery of Spring magic and their expertise with herbs to create powerful blade venoms to apply to their weapons. These poisons were designed to kill quickly and without suffering, ensuring that the enemy did not linger in pain. The thornbound army was founded following an opportunity presented by critics of the Spider King.

Isaella's Dance fought in campaigns across the Empire, especially against the Jotun in the west. Following the Autumn Equinox 386YE, however, the army was involved in vicious fighting in Therunin, where the Druj had laid a carefully crafted trap. They were able to lead the other armies fighting beside them out of the magical snare the orcs of the Mallum had created, but in the process they were cut to pieces and ultimately disbanded.

The third Navarr General led the army of Isaella's Dance, and was appointed at the Spring Equinox each year.

9.4 Army Orders

Before the campaign in Therunin that cost the lives of Isaella's Dance and the Iron Helms, the generals of Navarr were able to call Spears of the Pines. This warband of the Great Forest Orcs suffered significant casualties during the retreat, and as of the Summer Solstice 387YE it is not possible to call the Spears of the Pines.

Calling the Spears of the Pines
As long as relations between the Great Forest Orcs and the Navarr remain cordial, and the orcs continue to live in Therunin, any Navarr general who is fighting in Therunin can call for the Spears of the Pines to fight alongside them. If they do so, a band of orcs and briars with a fighting strength of 1,000 will fight alongside that general in the coming season. To call the Spears of the Pines, the general need merely mention that they are doing so in their orders. Further, if any Navarr army is fighting to conquer the Barrens, they may likewise call for the Spears of the Pines, again by mentioning them in their orders. The Great Forest Orcs will only fight alongside Navarr armies in this way.

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10 Navarr religious beliefs



The guides help people to find their place in the Great Dance
Navarr priests are called Guides, partly because of the guidance they try to give the Navarr, but more for the practice of trying to guide people to their rightful place in the Great Dance. Although all Navarr see life in terms of the Great Dance, what makes the Guides unique is their concern for the virtue of the people they help. Guides understand that virtue is not inherent in an individual, that it is a product of the person and their circumstances. By helping a person change their circumstances, by guiding them to a place more suited to their temperament, they can help that person become more virtuous.

Guides also work to bring partners together, finding people whose spirits or virtues complement each other, or who were partners in a previous life. The Guides seek to ensure that the people they encounter are given the best opportunity to flourish and in turn add to the Empire and the Great Dance. This might involve recruiting an individual to join the striding and Navarr; or it might be aiding the individual to leave a life of farm-work in the Marches to become a Scrivener on the Brass Coast.



Many guides prefer to perform religious ceremonies in the open
air, in the presence of other Navarr.
This has led to friction ? in some places *running away to join the Navarr* is seen as irresponsibly betraying one?s own life and family. In other circles it?s seen as a desirable goal and a path to high adventure. The idea of joining the Navarr is a common daydream in the Empire for people who feel underappreciated or "stuck in a rut." The truth is a little more prosaic. Few outsiders stay with the Stridings for long, but the Navarr provide these individuals with a home, guiding them towards a place where their skills are needed and they will be welcomed. In this way, the work of the guides helps communities as well as leaving a network of friends of the Navarr across the Empire.

Lock your door, child dear,
Bolt it fast, choke back your fear.
The Forest walks and the vallorn sigh,
The Stridings tread to feed the Thorn.
Sleep tight, my dear, ?till break of dawn.

Varushkan Nursery Rhyme

Before the Navarr joined the Empire, their priests served as judges as well as guides. It was the Navarr who insisted that the Synod members have the right to offer sanctuary and to plead for clemency on behalf of those who admitted their guilt. The Navarr do not believe in allowing actions to go unpunished; they believe that actions have consequences and people should make amends for what they have done ? no matter the reasons for their actions. A Guide who is asked for clemency will often take personal responsibility for the criminal, asking that they be remanded into their custody, and then use all their skills to help that criminal improve their life and their virtue. Guides believe in practical experience and positive deeds as a way to improve individual virtue, rather than lectures or merciless punishment.

All Guides are taught to beware of the dangers inherent in what they are doing. It is a small step to move from helping people to be virtuous, helping them find the best place for them in the Great Dance, to manipulating people and moving them in such a way that best serves the Guide's own interests. To be accused of manipulating people is a serious accusation and one that brings a degree of public shame to a Brand or a Guide. If any Navarr individual knowingly sets out to manipulate others to achieve their own desires they keep it to themselves.

You think there's no wilderness in your city, but more people lose their ways in the cities than in the woods

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11 Navarr magical traditions



Magic is dangerous, and selfish magic doubly so.

11.1 Overview

When the cities of Navarr were consumed by the vallorn, much of the Navarr magical lore was preserved by distributing it between the Steadings and Stridings. Most still have a few ancient tomes from this time, either the originals meticulously cared for, or copies that have been painstakingly written out. By themselves these books do not offer sufficient knowledge for a young Navarr to learn what is required, but they are enough that those children who become fascinated with magic can begin to learn. To ensure that they can retain a mastery of magic through the generations, the Navarr periodically trade books whenever they meet.

As a result of this approach, magic is seen as the legacy of the nation as a whole, rather than any individual Striding or Steading. Those who devote themselves to the study of magic are expected to acknowledge the gift they have been given and to seek out ways to employ their magic in the service of the Navarr. Not all choose to do this of course; there are selfish individuals in the Navarr as in any nation, but those that do are called Vates.

11.2 Vates

Vates are expected to make themselves known to all. Like Brands and Thorns, they usually mark their oath with a brand or tattoo. Because of the similarities with the oaths that Brands and Thorns swear, Vates who enjoy battle often become Thorns and the wisest amongst them sometimes become Brands. The work of a Vate is difficult; they are expected to use their magic carefully but to ensure that the spells they cast serve their community without charge. In return many Navarr try to ensure that they give what support they can spare to the Vates.



For the Navarr, magic is in the blood.
Guides make a habit of knowing who the Vates are, so that they can bring individuals to them who need magical help, and the Vates are often called on by the Senators to perform rituals that benefit territories, the Navarr nation or the Empire as a whole. This life of service to the Nation can be arduous and difficult, but most Vates shoulder it willingly. Their reward is the acknowledgement and respect they receive from other Navarr and the opportunity to practise their magic often.

Vates are the only Navarr who are trusted to meet with the eternals or their heralds. There is a belief that the oaths of the Vate help them resist the influence of the other Realms, and that they will use their influence with the eternals only in support of the nation and the Empire. Other magicians - including those of other nations - who have regular contact with the eternals are often viewed with a little suspicion, especially if they are not prepared to talk about their experiences.

For the Navarr, magic is in the blood. The Vates use blood-letting to draw on their power, to focus their rituals and incantations. The practice preserves the memory of the sacrifice made by Navarr and Thorn, the first Vates, who gave their life to protect the people from the threat of the vallorn. Blood is a common motif in Navarr rituals.

The Vates only ever use their own blood and the blood of willing participants when performing magic. Blood drawn from an unwilling or dead victim is useless to Navarr magic; it holds no power. Because of their use of blood-letting, it is rare to find a Vate who does not have some ability with the healing arts, either mastery of the powers of Spring or else chirurgery. Many Vates are skilled with both, able to use magic and skill alike to heal wounds and knit bones.

11.3 Patterns

The creation and tracing of complex designs to create magical resonance is well known and long practised by the Navarr. At its most basic, it is found in the concept of map-making - of creating designs that mirror the world - and in journeys along paths and roads. A complex design represents a journey, but it can also represents the idea of permanence. Following a path, repeating the actions of someone who has gone before, gives extra weight to the journey and if that journey already has a magical meaning, the repeated tread of many feet recreates and reinforces that magic.

The trods are the most obvious example of the use of patterns - tracing out a great complex design, which is then reinforced over and over not only by

the Navarr stridings but by every other pair of feet that walks on or near the path. It is important to note that the trods are neither arbitrary, nor human-made. The paths are formed when the ritual, The Dance of Navarr and Thorn is performed in a territory creating an intricate pattern that serves a vital magical purpose. The vates who perform the Dance do not define how they are laid out; rather they say that the ritual draws out a fundamental pattern created by landmarks and the flows of magic making it visible to the Navarr who travel the trods.

The marks that accompany the swearing of oaths are often abstract designs. Some Navarr ceremonies include retracing the designs to encourage participants to relive the moment when the oath was first made, strengthening both the oath and the participant in the process. Some Navarr guides believe the Great Dance is the ultimate expression of this, which each life a person takes they trace a pattern through the world as they circle round and again.

Navarr magicians often incorporate repeating patterns into their rituals, especially those that create enchantments. Drawing a similar pattern on the hand or face of each participant in a ritual, or creating a pattern to represent a territory or the magic that will be brought to bear. Sometimes these are scratched into the ground, but there are many different ways to make a large pattern during a ritual - pouring out a trail of water, for example, or having every ritualist moving along a simple path around and between the others and the rituals targets.

The patterns employed in Navarr magic are usually curving, swirling and looping, folding back in upon each other with few straight lines or corners. Scholars note that this tendency is very much at odds with the angular patterns found on many Terunael ruins and artefacts. There is a great deal of speculation as to why this may be the case, but so far no conclusive explanation has been reached.

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12 Navarr territories

The Navarr territories are scattered throughout the Empire. Most of the land they claim is heavily forested, surrounding the ruins of one or more ancient Navarr settlements.

12.1 Territories

- Brocéliande - Never conquered
- Hercynia
- Liathaven - Lost 349YE
- Miaren
- Therunin - Lost 386YE

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13 Navarr children



Artwork by Andrea Cradduck
Choosing to bring another life into the Great Dance is something to be celebrated. In the making, in the bringing into the world, in the life, the learning and ultimately even in death. Parents are considered much like Guides, individuals with a great responsibility for helping their offspring find their place in the dance.

Navarr children are encouraged to take the Imperial Test of Citizenship as early as possible, and once they pass they become true members of a Striding or Steading. At that point anyone can offer the youngster help, giving them what guidance they can.

Many Navarr believe that though children are precious they need to be exposed to risk, if not danger. They should be tested often, to challenge and stretch them, but with care so that they gain confidence with each test. Questions are an opportunity to teach and should be answered with thought and care. The children of other nations are an Imperial resource that the Navarr think are often under-valued. Orphans are a particular concern and in the Brass Coast and other lands they often offer a home in the Stridings to children who have lost their homes and their parents to war with the Barbarians. In Varushka naughty children are even warned that unless they behave they will be sent away with the Navarr.



13.1 Things every child should know

- **Find your place in the Great Dance.** Try to experience as many different aspects of life as possible, so that you can see which one suits you best.
- **The world is dangerous, learn to outsmart it.** The Navarr try to be the smartest and most cunning warriors in the world - learn to outsmart any problems you encounter rather than using brute force.
- **Help build the Empire.** You are the child of a great Empire, make it stronger by helping people where you can.
- **Carry their words to the winds.** The Navarr often carry important information for the Empire, always make yourself available to run messages for people if you can.
- **Tread carefully in the wild places.** Be careful and alert at all times. Be vigilant and look for danger wherever you go.

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14 Navarr music



14.1 The Music of Navarr

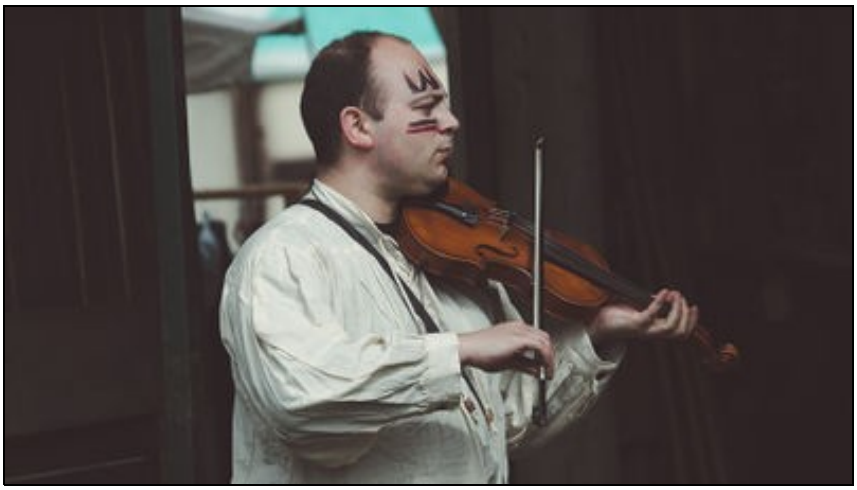
14.1.1 Style summary

Navarr music reflects a dichotomy of wistful remembrance for their old culture and the practicalities of survival in the wild. Recent music has a practicality underlying it. Loud and high calling noises appear throughout the music in order to develop vocal cords for the relay of messages, cries of warning and the roar of a fear inducing charge from hiding. Drumming is widely used for similar reasons. The sounds, in contrast to the melodic music of their old culture, are often harsh which reflects the Navarr attitude towards nature - not one of harmony but of dominance. Much of the music of their lost cities has changed over time to include primal sounds, for example, fast fiddle and pipes or soft unison singing is joined by loud calling and percussion. Lyrics reflect the dichotomy of the memory of lost cities and the practicalities of life in the wild. References to nature are common but are dark and evocative rather than romantic. Work songs and cautionary tales are common as are the themes of travelling, fate, forests, and blood. Songs of the old culture; lost cities and sacrifice concentrate on remembrance rather than lamentation.

To achieve this sound, look at music that fuses Celtic folk styles with African and Amazonian sounds . Music can draw on Scottish, Irish, Greek, Galician, and Basque/French folk tunes as well Tolkienesque fantasy for lyrics, with added African-style percussion (such as Ngoma, Mutuashi and Didadi), Amazonian and Amazigh music, to fuse with the sounds of the old culture.

14.1.2 Commonly known songs

- Painted - often sung during the binding of Thorns ceremony
- Ten Thousand Miles - song of love/travelling.
- Thorn Battle Cadence? - A war cadence, easy
- Caution for the Dawnish Youth - Cautionary song popular for expressing the Navarr World view



14.1.2.1 A musical tradition

Music has a practical use in Navarr society. Music plays a prominent part to create social harmony and to invoke the powers from beyond. It is used for work songs and for teaching.

Social rituals are often performed to music, such as courtship rituals where one lead, supported by their chorus, makes their case, and the other lead, supported by their own chorus, questions them.

Blood Rituals often rely on percussion support to evoke the feel of the pumping heart and helps focus the arts of the Vates.

14.1.2.2 One for the kids

- All the Pretty Ponies - lullaby remembering extinct horses, very easy.

14.1.2.3 Songs about notable people/entities in Navarr

- Redhound - A song about a Navarri hero, hard.
- The Walls of Terunael - An address to the Egregore Liaven about walking the trods, the loss of Terunael and the importance of the Empire, easy.
- Ode to Shadowglyn Distillery - A song commemorating the restoration of the Shadowglyn Distillery by Wern Taur Thorntarry, medium.

14.1.3 Further songs



14.1.3.1 Songs from Terunael

- By Chance It Was - A love song, easy.

14.1.3.2 Songs about the fall of Terunael

- Teurnael: Empire's Rise and Fall - Song about the fall of Terunael
- Brocéliande Be Stronger Now? - Powerful song about Brocéliande, medium with difficult lead vocal.
- I Come and Stand at Every Door - sad song about the fall of Navarr cities, easy.
- On the Wall - Song about the final fight for Brocéliande, medium.
- The Ruins of Terunael - A song about the vallorn, easy.
- A Sudden Farewell - A duet about the last moments together of Navarr and Thorn, medium.
- Terunael - A remembrance song.

14.1.3.3 Songs on Travelling

- Down in the Rugged Glen - Joyful song of travelling, easy.
- Heart of the Song - A song of respite. Associated with the Brackensong Steading, medium.
- Miaren - Wistful song on the competing desires to travel and to return home to Seren , Hard.
- Ten Thousand Miles - song of love/travelling, medium.
- Run Thorns Run - A boisterous call and response, easy.
- We will go Home (Across the Mountains) - A song about the return from the long trods, easy.

14.1.3.4 Battle Music

- 7000 Thorns - A song to remind the Navarr that we have had great victories in Liathaven and we will one day again.
- Navarr Running Song - A war cadence, easy
- Thorn Battle Cadence? - A war cadence, easy
- Windblow, home - A call to arms.

14.1.3.5 Festival Music

- It Is Not Yet Day - A celebratory song, medium.
- Navarr - An old song about the Navarri - traditionally used at the start of dances, medium.
- Striding One - An invitation to dance. easy.

14.1.3.6 Cautionary, Teaching & Work Songs

- Caution for the Dawnish Youth - Cautionary song popular for expressing the Navarr World view, easy
- If it had a Heart - A dark song about the monstrous nature of the vallorn, medium.
- Outside in the Distance - A Sentry's song, medium.
- The Oak - Song about sensible use of trees, easy.
- Through the dark places - A song about the Navarri involvement in forming the Empire, easy

14.1.3.7 More Songs

- All the Pretty Ponies - Lullaby remembering extinct horses, very easy.
- The Wind That Shakes The Barley - A song of mourning.
- Crow on the Cradle - A dark lullaby, easy

14.1.3.8 Instrumentation and tunes

Strings, whistles, chanters, djembes, bodhráns and voices. Pretty much any instrument works well in Navarr.

14.1.3.9 Other performance traditions

- Storytelling is discussed in Navarr Culture and Customs
- Dance
- Poetry e.g. Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening by Robert Frost.



14.1.4 How to adapt your repertoire

- Western Folk tradition - Stick to folk songs from the folk traditions mentioned as sources or that have a primal sound. Simplify arrangements and then maybe add non-western rhythms, percussion, shouting, calling and mouth music. This will lend the sense that the old culture has been a little forgotten over time and will give added poignancy to the occasional song performed with a pure 'Celtic' sound. Maybe keep one or two songs unchanged and perform them unaccompanied as a powerful reminder of the old culture.
- Non-western traditions - Move songs into English. Try to lean melodies towards a more 'Celtic' sound.
- Try to avoid frenzied drumming circles - the Navarr are an urban culture turned traveller, but wants to return to city life ? and try to avoid the ceilidh vibe. Jigs and waltzes don't match the feel of primal otherworldliness.

14.1.5 Our sources

- Modern Gaelic artists; Modern Welsh Language Artists such as Fern Hill; World Fusion such as Afrocelt Sound System (although less electronic) and Baka Beyond; Scottish-influenced Canadian songs and tunes e.g. Ashley MacIsaac, Great Big Sea (although less poppy), the instrumental stuff by Shooglenifty e.g. Arms Dealer's Daughter (CD), Michael McGoldrick (e.g. Wired), Irish folk, Greek folk tunes and dances. modern pipers e.g. Finlay MacDonald,
- Travel-themed songs and poems by Tolkien could provide inspiration e.g. http://allpoetry.com/poem/8500011-I_Sit_And_Think-by-J_R_R_Tolkien and the Misty Mountain song is spot on for the Navarr sound.

Here is a youtube playlist of appropriate or inspiring music and here is one for dances.

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15 Category:Archetype

15.1 The Brass Coast

Dhomiro	A dhomiro is a member of a Freeborn family who is chosen by the family to be their representative to the wider world; sometimes as a leader, sometimes as an emissary.
Kohan	Kohan are groups of volunteer and outcast warriors-without-family, who traditionally pledge loyalty to a group of hakima.
Sutannir	Sutannir perform inspiring religious ceremonies for the Freeborn, and encourage people to exemplify and celebrate Virtue.
Hakima	Hakima are highly-organised groups of magic-users whose loyalty is to the nation, not their family. They are taken to be wise.
Corsair	Freeborn corsairs are traders and privateers who deal with - and raid - barbarian shipping in the Bay of Catazar.
Scrivener	Scriveners are Freeborn contract-writers who help traders frame the terms of their deals, and then decorate them with artwork and calligraphy.

15.1.1 Dawn

Earl	The Earl of a Dawnish Noble House is the House's leader, who leads the House in all its great achievements and who sets its conditions of membership.
Knight-errant	Knights-Errant are engaged in their Test of Mettle. Still technically yeofolk they are expected - and are questing - to prove themselves glorious.
Questing knight	Questing Knights are those Knights who have proved themselves worthy in their Test of Mettle and have chosen to keep on questing for ever-greater glory.
Troubadour	A Troubadour is a priest who learns all the stories of their Noble House, past and present, and tells them in poetry and song to inspire their people to greatness.
Witch	Witches are Dawnish magic-users. In noble houses, they fight alongside the House's warriors. Most others belong to Weaver Cabals, independent groups of ritual witches which accept both yeofolk and noble members.
Guiser	Itinerant entertainers who often combine magic with their performances and practice dramaturgy. They are often (sometimes justly) accused of being spies, tricksters and mountebanks as well as performers.
Enchanter	Some Earls who have studied magic choose the title "Earl-Enchanter" or simply "Enchanter". Most learn ritual magic to benefit their people; some build relationships with powerful Summer Eternals.
Seneschal	A Noble House's Seneschal is a trusted yeofolk who oversees its financial affairs, arranging deals and trades and keeping the House solvent.
Advocate	Dawnish Advocates are yeofolk politicians who navigate the murky waters of Senate politics for their noble masters.
Retainer	A yeofolk Retainer is a Dawnish Noble's most trusted attendant, who works closely with a particular Noble, or sometimes for the whole House.

15.1.2 Highguard

Exarch	The Exarch, or Exarchs, are those who are appointed by a Highguard Chapter as their leader(s) as determined by the Chapter's creed, or by embodying its principles.
Guardian	Guardians form the core of Highborn military, taking on a range of roles in defence of their Chapters, and in prosecuting vigilant warfare.
Unconquered	The Unconquered are Highguard's elite guerrilla troops. They are prone to using ruthless tactics, even operating behind enemy lines, to destroy the enemy's capacity to make war.
Cataphract	Cataphracts are Highguard's elite heavy warriors, who once rode horses into battle but who, in modern times, represent a resolute and unbreakable wall of steel.
Wayfarer	Wayfarers are Highborn priests with a long-standing tradition of teaching the truth of The Way to the ignorant, and seeking out Exemplars and Paragons born in other lands.
Inquisitor	Highborn Inquisitors are zealous defenders of The Way from those that would threaten it, whether mortal or supernatural.
Steward of the Dead	Stewards of the Dead dedicate their lives to preserving the legacies of the worthy. This includes the interring of remains as well as the preservation of legacies and tales.
Magister	Magisters are the master magicians of Highguard, often with an affinity for Winter Magic. They shape magic using movement, sound and the chime of bells.
Benefactor	Benefactors are affluent Highborn merchants and tradesfolk who do not pursue wealth for its own sake, but who sponsor individuals, great works and endeavours.

Archivist	Archivists are a unique class of Highborn scholar dedicated to preserving the essence, or truth, of history, over and above accounts and evidence that may seek to undermine that truth.
Grey pilgrim	Grey pilgrims are a recent phenomenon. They walk the trods in a crusade to free the souls believed to be trapped between life and death by the vallorn, but they also oppose heresy and idolatry, convert foreigners to the Way, and seek to guide the other human nations of the Empire toward enlightenment.

15.1.3 Imperial Orcs

Warlord	Legions chose their own commanders, called warlords, with individuals chosen for their ability to provide clear effective leadership in battle, according to the traditions of the individual legion
Pitfighter	Professional fighters of the Pits in which the Orcs hone their combat skills; trading on the reputation for skill and strength that they have built up in previous fights, pitfighters build their careers until their notoriety means that other orcs begin to seek them out and actively challenge them.
Shaman	Most orcs only experience communion with the ancestors when battle is upon them but a few individuals - called shamans - are able to hear the voices more frequently; they are almost incessantly surrounded by the constant input of ancestral advice much of it bearing a contradictory or even hostile message.
Preacher	Those Imperial Orcs who embrace the Way and become priests.
Warcaster	The highly physical traditions of the Wintermark runesmiths has appealed to some orcs who adopt a similar approach and become Warcasters.
Oathwright	Oathwrights believe that the bond between an item and a person affects them both, items may gain worth by being owned and bonded to the right person and the right item affects an individual?s hopes of becoming an ancestor.
Bonesetter	Usually trained apothecaries, physicks or both, Bonesetters are expected to attend to the physical needs of the legion, but their remit runs well beyond this.
Thief-taker	Working closely with Imperial Magistrates, Thief-takers earn their income by collecting bounties on criminals who have fled the law and more rarely by taking payments from private individuals looking to identify perpetrators of crimes.
Reaver	Soldiers of the Legions who become dedicated to raiding and mercenary work.

15.1.4 The League

Merchant Prince	A Merchant Prince is the head of a Guild, the tight-knit mercantile organisations which define the shape of League society.
Bravo	Bravos are the members of the mercenary Free Companies, as rough and rowdy off the battlefield as they are disciplined and professional on it, and immensely proud of their Companies.
Bishop	The Bishops of the League are its high priests, who provide Virtuous guidance to any who can afford it, and who compete using the size and influence of their congregations.
Troupe Magician	Troupes are bands of actors who often go masked while performing, and when performing ritual magic. To them, magic is a commodity like any other.
Mountebank	Mountebanks are street magicians whose tricks may be sleight of hand or genuine magic, many of whom skirt the edges of the law playing short-cons and rigging street games.
Cicisbeo	A Cicisbeo is an expensive professional paramour, the only exception to League culture's absolute prohibition on extramarital relations.

15.1.5 The Marches

Steward	A steward is the chosen head of a Marcher household. However a steward leads their household only with the consent of the other yeoman.
Beater	Beaters are a roaming informal police force, learning every part of the land, watching for thieves, vagrants and other ne?er-do-wells. Beaters are often instrumental in settling land disputes between neighbours and they have a vital role in the tradition of beating the bounds. Most are skilled foresters or hunters.
Yeoman	The yeoman is to many the archetypal inhabitant of the Marches. They are a hard people, who own their own land and are well accustomed to a long day working it. Military service is a proud tradition in the Marches, and the majority of yeomen are also soldiers.
Monk	Monks minister to the spiritual welfare of the folk around their monastery, largely ignoring household boundaries. They divide their time between study of the Imperial Faith and working the farmlands claimed by the monastery.
Friar	Friars work their own land and provide spiritual advice and counsel to their fellow yeomen in their household. Many also serve as scholars for their community, acting as a chirurgeon, and teaching letters and history to young children.
Landskeeper	

	A landskeeper is a figure from the Marches magical tradition, who supports the territories or the nation as a whole. Landskeepers can use a variety of methods, from hearth magics and good practical advice to rituals.
Mummer	Itinerant entertainers who combine theatrical performance with magic using the techniques of dramaturgy. They attend fairs, markets and other regular gatherings performing plays and feats of skill but are often greeted with suspicion and (sometimes unfairly) accused of being tricksters and mountebanks.
Alder	Alders are the appointed leaders of market towns, and are the rough equivalent of the yeomen. In most cases these are wealthy merchants of the town, but often they include prominent town folk such as a friar or blacksmith who lives in the village.
Smith	A skilled crafter who has used a lifetime's experience selling their wares to become a canny trader and experienced negotiator.
Thresher	A thresher dedicates their life to tracking down those who use magic for nefarious purposes and finding ways to punish them.

15.1.6 Navarr

Brand	Navarri who have dedicated themselves to the service of the community, who work tirelessly to aid others without fee. They might be from any profession - Thorn, Vate, blacksmith, tanner, it doesn't matter. They are named for the brand burned into the skin on their left cheekbone.
Dreamspeaker	Philosophers, visionaries, and activists who aspire to make dreams into reality.
Thorn	A Navarri sworn to service in battle - usually, but not necessarily, a warrior. Always tattooed, they often wear warpaint into battle.
Guide	A Navarri who follows the path of the Virtues, and takes it upon themselves to ensure that members of the Empire have found the place in society that they are best suited to.
Broker	A Navarri who serves as an intermediary between a buyer and a seller, usually claiming some sort of payment from the deal.
Vate	The magical practitioners of Navarr. Often called upon to perform rituals in service of the nation and the Empire, they are the Navarri most trusted to meet with eternals or their heralds.
Vine	A Navarr who has dedicated themselves to healing the wounds caused by the vallorn.

15.1.7 Urizen

Arbiter	An arbiter is the elected leader of the spires, citadels, and temples of Urizen. They are often called on to resolve disputes within a community or to represent it to outsiders.
Architect	Architects are interested in economics and how money moves around and the influence it exerts on the world.
Illuminate	Illuminates use their understanding of the Net of the Heavens to perfect the world; focusing on building up the virtuous... and removing the unvirtuous from prominence.
Mage	Mages are magicians motivated by politics. Ambitious and potentially ruthless, a mage understands that all magic is inherently political.
Seer	Seers believe that perfect understanding is they key to unlocking the Net of the Heavens. They seek out opportunities to get the right information to the right people so they can make the right decisions.
Sentinel	Sentinels study the art of war with dedication and commitment that matches that of any magician.
Stargazer	Stargazers are scholars of magical lore who love magic in all its forms; they are the theoreticians and debaters who push knowledge to its limit.
Sword scholar	Sword scholars are warrior priests with a passionate commitment to reason and wisdom. They exhort others to test what they have learnt.
Torchbearer	Torchbearers are dedicated to ensuring that as many people as possible know the truth. They work to keep fellow citizens informed about current events and abhor falsehoods and secrets.
Questor	Questors consider the Way of Virtue to be an unfinished work and the Doctrines of the Faith as incomplete. Questors are radical priests who are willing to tear apart the Way in their quest for perfection.

15.1.8 Varushka

Boyar	A Varushkan Boyar is the hard heart of a Varushkan community, whose first duty is as a strong protector of their people. Second to that, they arbitrate and govern their vale in council with their Wise Ones.
Warden	The Warden brotherhoods are heroic warriors who employ magical protection along with their armour and weapons to hunt down the terrors of the Varushkan wilderness, and to uphold Imperial Law.
Schlacta	The Schlacta are Varushka's well-organised bands of soldiery, who provide defence to a place or an employer.
Wise One	Wise Ones are the true hearts of Varushkan communities. They are the thinkers who deal with those problems which cannot be dealt with by strength, and who look through the appearance of things to discover the threats lurking beneath.
Volhov	A Volhov is a Varushkan who studies magic, particularly warding magic (so necessary to Varushka's safety) and divination, to uncover threats before they grow too great to deal with. They often find it necessary to deal with Eternals, and sometimes even to pacify

	Varushka's deadly Sovereigns with rituals or bargains.
Cabalists	Cabals are teams of ritual magic users, who often act as individual groups, independent of their vales. Each Cabal is different from each other, but their magical might grants them considerable influence.
Storytellers	Varushkan Storytellers are the nation's ragged priests, often itinerant, around whom entire communities will gather to hear news, entertaining tales, and spiritual messages told well.
Stzena	The inheritors of a tradition of night sentries, Stzena are bands of musicians who perform at local events.
Wagon raider	Opportunists who seek their fortunes by launching forays into barbarian lands to grab whatever riches can be found.

15.1.9 Wintermark

Thane	The leader of a Hall in Wintermark, a Thane settles disputes that lie outside the law and provides civic and military leadership.
Banner-Bearer?	Warriors whose purpose is to raise the morale and fighting spirit of their companions. Banner-bearers often literally carry their warband's banner.
Stormcrow	The ragged priests of Wintermark, who act as guides, witnesses and confessors, and who provide spiritual and moral inspiration and guidance for the Winterfolk.
Runesmith	Artisans who specialise in the magic of the old runes of Wintermark, who create engraved weapons and armour, or scribe warding marks to protect people or places.
Icewalker	The cunning mages of the Suaq, who use their magical skills and their knowledge of the Ice as part of their hunting tradition.
Mediator	A Wintermark merchant who specialises in negotiating weregild between aggrieved parties.
Maggot	A scavenger, a looter on the battlefield; "Maggots" are seen as scum by most Winterfolk.
Mystic	Deeply spiritual Kallavesi who make predictions about the future and advise their fellows on the wisest course of action. Often a magician, but some do it with hearth magic and intellect.
Scop	The professional entertainers of Wintermark, Scops are known for their mastery of saga and song, and their skill with alliterative poetry. They are responsible for granting an adult name to a child coming to adulthood.
Grimnir	The battlefield doctors and healers of Wintermark, Grimnir swear an oath to stay clear of the front lines.

16 Navarr groups

This is a placeholder page for content that PD are actively working on.

16.1 Overview

There are many important steadings and stridings across Navarr. Despite the number, only a comparative handful are involved in the affairs of the Empire (that is, attend the seasonal summits at Anvil). Their influence can wax and wane, and involvement in Imperial affairs is not always a reflection of their prominence within the nation itself. This page presents in-character information about the groups that attend, or have attended, Anvil ? the kind of thing that someone who asked about them might uncover from talking to their peers. In each case, the information is provided by the players and edited before being put on the wiki.

The majority of groups listed here are made up of player-characters. You should not create a character who is part of a group, or has personal history with one, without first clearing it with the appropriate players. You should also check before including other players' groups in your background. The background team are unlikely to approve a background that significantly impacts or involves another player character group without their permission. There are also a handful of prominent NPC groups included for completeness, but they are not intended for use by player characters.

16.2 Steadings



Autumngale

16.2.1 Autumngale

The steading of Autumngale is a fairly young settlement, having been established in the last twenty years when the Autumngale Striding felt that their place in the Great Dance was no longer to roam. Autumngale is situated in Greenfalls, Miaren along a tributary of the River Gancio, at the base of a series of waterfalls. It features humble mooring capable of accommodating a handful of rivercraft and is renowned for claiming host to a number of artists, sculptors and creatives. The steading makes use of waterfalls and pools in the area for bathing and encouraging relaxation and creativity in its denizens and visitors. Several members of Autumngale cultivate woodlands near these pools for the rearing of iridescent butterflies, for use in the creating of art or artisanal crafts leading to a series of 'moon pools' that become beautiful spectacles of colour and wonder at night. When they hold unburdening, the steading provide paints, beads, thread, so when something old is taken the option to decorate it to make something new is given, encouraging the living art tradition in Navarr. This penchant for creativity extends beyond just the arts, thorns and vates from Autumngale have a habit of providing and utilising inventive solutions to problems and proposing inspired suggestions that might often seem atypical.

16.2.2 Brackensong

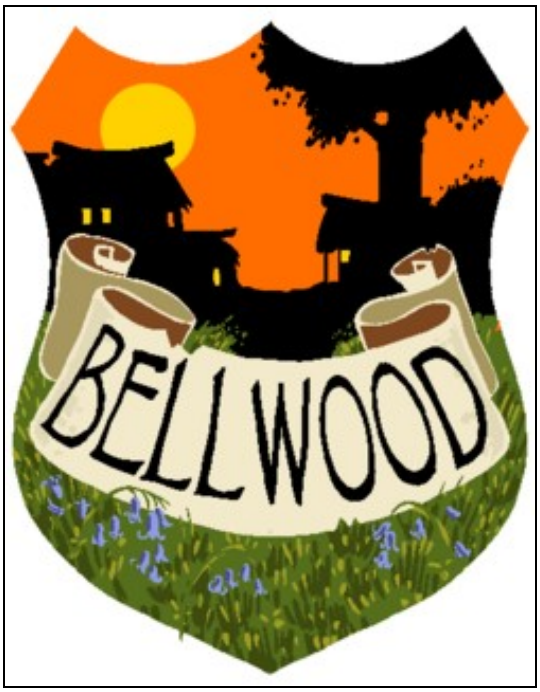
Formed (along with Splitroot striding) some time before the death of Empress Britta from members of the Foxden steading, the wooden palisaded Brackensong Steading is the first line of defence against the vallorn in East Brocéliande. It is situated in the former home of Whispering Dray in Elerael, where its position grants it an eye over the movements of the husks, miasma, and the giant insects that roam the area. To date, the steading is the largest to come out of Brocéliande to the Imperial Summits. As befits its vigil against the vallorn, Brackensong is the home of the Voice of the Quiet Forest, one of the larger covens within the Navarr. Additionally, the constant threat from the more physical agents of the vallorn has given rise to a core of hardened Thorns, ready to stand against the evils that lurk in the forest and beyond. Since the Interregnum, the Brackensong have worked to bolster the living heart of the nation, using the Dance of Navarr and Thorn to repair and nurture the trods, and playing host to songs, stories and revelry long

into the night of every Summit.

16.2.3 Broken Bough

A days walk east of Lorenzo's Deep Pockets in the Goldglades NorthWestern Miaren is Broken Bough Steading. A relatively small and quiet steading, it has typically been home to Navarri who for one reason or another desire hidden ambiguity. Broken Bough is situated along a creek, nestled in the large trees found in the area. The location was likely originally chosen to be around a small watchtower structure believed to be Terunael in origin. The Steading is home to The Drunken Goose, a wayhouse underneath a large tree on the edge of the settlement. Always the focal point for those passing through looking for food, drink, and a place to stay, The Drunken Goose has recently become a place to sample a wide variety of cocktails from all over the Empire.

16.2.4 Bellwood



Bellwood

- **Brand:** Gavynn Bellwood

The steading of Bellwood is so named for the dense carpet of bluebells that surrounds the steading in the spring.

A young steading, it was established just over twenty years ago. Originally nothing more than a campsite, along what was then a particularly quiet stretch in the northwest of Goldglades forest. When time came to move on, some Navarr simply didn't, feeling that here was exactly where the Great Dance had led them.

Bellwood aims to be a welcoming waypoint for weary travellers, lending aid to those who need it. The steading does, from time to time, attract those who would exploit their kindness. Bellwood's retribution for this insult is always swift and usually final.

16.2.5 Bronwen?s Rest

Situated on the trod that runs through Peakedge Song in Therunin, Bronwen?s Rest Wayhouse was founded in 360YE by a small and ageing Striding looking to settle down. Younger Navarr started to arrive over the next few years including the current Brand, Eleri, and the wayhouse became a regular stopping point for not only Stridings moving through the area, but also a few Highborn and Urizen travelling across the Empire. Bronwen?s Rest now boasts a well-appointed bath house and small printing press- unsurprisingly for a place run predominantly by merrow- as well as the smithy, workshop and inn that form its core. The wayhouse comes to Anvil to provide some of the same services that it does to travellers on the trod on a smaller scale: repair jobs to clothes and equipment, drinks, snacks, packed lunches and of course a social hub for people to sit, unwind? and gossip their hearts out. A number of representatives of other stridings and steadings also camp with Bronwen?s Rest at Anvil, forming a collective known as the Open Skies.

16.2.6 Drifting Bough



Drifting Bough

- **Brand:** Kelia Drifting Bough

Nestled on the banks of the Gancio, in the heart of Holtford, lies the Drifting Bough Steading. It was founded after a chance rescue in 384YE when a Navarr fleet captain saved some Wintermark brothers from certain death in the Bay of Catazar. Despite the sea almost claiming their lives, the Drifting Bough have not run from the nautical way of life. Operating out of their Steading, they sail not just for the love of adventure, but also to watch over the waters and ensure others return home safely as they once did. Fiercely loyal, they stand together as the family they have become. ?*Together against tides, the crew survives*?

16.2.7 Splinterspears

No one knows the origin of the Splinterspear steading. Splinterspears have an odd past twisted with the other steadings from the north, sandwiched between Varushka and Wintermark. There has never been a time when the Splinterspears weren't around, the wayhouse pops up all through the Empire's history; it is said Myfanwy herself stayed at the wayhouse. It is literally carved from the fingers themselves (mountain range) some say the wayhouse is older than the steading itself, it is a large house with many passages and secret entrances, they even host a natural hot spring and a Navarr banquet hall. They hail from Old ranging in Hercynia and are isolated over much of the dark winter months. they operate the wayhouse which is literally carved into the fingers which opens its doors and offers the yearly celebration ?the last feast north? all weary travellers are welcome, as long as they agree to leave weapons and grudges at the entrance, Splinterspear wayhouse is a place for rest and regaining strength after the long trods and many battles faced, this is to honour the passage of the fallen through the Labyrinth. A proud and vigilant Navarri steading who it has been whispered have been blessed by summer eternals, it is a rear thing to find a Splinterspear who is not a vate, (this sounds grander than it is, its a massive cave network set in forest up the side of a mountain that is part of a mountain range, with plateaus and softer inclines, it is situated right next to a major trod north, the hall is where the last feast north is hosted yearly)

16.2.8 The Waystone Path



Waystone Path
Formed in 385YE after years of being a striding, its members settled in Old Ranging, Hercynia. The region's harsh woods prove a safe place to settle and begin farming. Historically, the group walked along the trods of Hercynia, stopping at piles of rocks on the way for a break. They called them "waystones", and eventually started calling the long road "the Waystone Path". Now, they spend the bulk of their time in Old Ranging, tending to their farms, forests and herb gardens. The steading's members dedicate themselves to protecting and maintaining the Waystone Path with vigilance and pride

16.2.9 Foxden

Foxden Steading was founded a few hundred years ago by a changeling Navarr, Jhessail Cedny and a draughir Navarr, Rymel Cedny. The two had met on a trod, as their stridings passed each other. Jhessail and Rymel travelled north with those who wished to follow them, to where the boundaries between Varushka and Wintermark met, into the lands of Hercynia. Here, in the place where in winter the darkness is great, and in summer the light seemingly never-ending, they came upon a hill clearing with sparse forest around it. In this region of Summersend atop the hill sat a vixen with her cubs, looking down upon the pair. She yipped, and then trotted away into the trees with her cubs. Here is where they built the steading of Foxden, its eyes watchful to the North and to the vallorn of Hercynia. The steading is a place where the Navarr, and other nations, can come to rest, trade news and goods, and seek guidance on the many paths on which life takes them. Here is a place dedicated to preserving history and stories, music and art. A place to gather and organise against the vallorn. It is the home of an ever-growing information network set in place by Jhessail and Rymel to ensure that the Empire is upheld against the many forces that oppose it.

Foxden is a diverse steading with many different focuses; it has produced many a fine thorn, vate, broker, guide and brand. It is a home to any in need, and is willing to accept any into its fold, provided they bring no harm to it. Over the years the steading has produced a number of stridings, as the Dance of those within has dictated. Strong ties still bind a number of these groups together into a collective of stridings and steadings, who regularly get together at Anvil to share information and the like.



16.2.10 Silent Watch

Hailing from the ruins of ancient Terunael in Miaren, the Silent Watch were formed after they were led by star fall to a mana site in Therunin. Here they found it overrun by vallornspawn and fought to clear it of the scourge. They vowed to act, silent as the darkness, watching over the weary that walk the trods of the empire. This event stirred a fascination with magic within the striding and many have sought to deepen their knowledge since this moment. Due to the tutelage of Therunin traders many within the striding took up waterfaring and in doing so expanded the scope of the group to waterways lesser travelled. They sought to transport people displaced by war and ruin. Others felt called to the ways of the blade and still more, to wielding the magic of the realms. Many found their place within the great dance, but others were left with questions that remained unanswered. The Silent Watch now seek to welcome into their number all that strive to embody the sacrifice of Navarr and Thorn, meeting the Empire?s enemies in field, channel, and grove.

16.2.11 Springwake

Springwake was formed many years ago, though the records have been long since lost. In Brocéliande, in Dark Ranging, on the border of the Barrens, Springwake stood as a wayhouse, a tavern for travellers and Stridings alike. Eventually, as so many things do, it fell- to vallorn on one side, and bandits the other.

Those few who escaped became Ashwood Striding. One day, those who lived long enough found their way back to Springwake, and along with support from the heroes of the Empire, were able to reclaim it.

It stands once again, a proud Steading that, occasionally, holds parties, their Brand Rhain Springwake a steady and wise leader; and the Steading maintains its links with Ashwood through the Burning Forest Alliance.

16.2.12 Scarletsong



Scarletsong

- **Location:** Ossium
- **Icon:** Songbird skull with thorns around the top, Naeve rune in the centre, with blood tears
- **Colours:** Blood red, bone white, and black
- **Brand:** Enfys Scarletsong

Whether it was out of desperation or opportunity, a group of Navarr found their way into Ossium. All scarred by the brutality of the Druj, they have come together, bound by their past and swearing to protect each other by any means necessary, and to make sure other fellow Navarr around the Empire succeed in their efforts.

Their steading keeps watch over the forests, eliminating any threats to the trods or other settlements and wearing trophies from these fights with pride.

Whilst the Navarr relish in the coming of spring, some choose to represent the darker seasons, leaves coloured like fire and blood; blood which all Scarletsong members shed like tears to remember those who have fallen.

16.2.13 Strangers Song

Strangers Song is a steading based in Miaren. They have a notable forge where Karrow, the brand and thorn, produces weapons and shields in the traditional Navarr style. He and Alarna occasionally bring a few examples to Anvil for trade. Bryn Strangers Song is a young and spirited Autumn vate who is part of the order of rod and shield, Cadagan is an experienced Autumn ritualist and Emir is the laconic thorn. together with White Foxes and Night Grove they are also known as Entwined paths.

16.2.14 SilverCloud



SilverCloud
The SilverCloud steading was formed when a group of Navarr, having spent a long year looking for their place in the great dance and wandering between various stridings and steadings, found themselves in Miaren sitting staring into the reflective waters of the Pool of Silver Clouds. Whilst in contemplation one of them saw a vision of two clouds reflected in the pool, although the reflected clouds were bound together in thorns. Whilst watching the reflection more clouds floated nearby and also became bound in thorns.

This was seen as a sign that their place in the dance was not to be found with another steading but to be made by forming their own and welcoming others similarly adrift in the dance. This vision and the steading's proximity to the magical pool has seen its members become focussed on Night magic. The SilverCloud steading suffered heavy losses in Summer 385YE following an attack by heralds of Cold Sun

16.2.15 Whispering Dray

The Steading of Whispering Dray stood sentinel in Elerael, the eyes of it people turned always towards the shrouded desolation of Terunael, protecting the trods and driving back any vallorn creature that stumbled into the untainted woods.

What happened to the steading is not currently a matter of record, except that their homes are now inhabited by the Brackensong, and in recent years a number of individuals named Whispering Dray have been found guilty of treason and sorcery.

OOC Note: Whispering Dray are an NPC steading.

16.2.16 Hearts? End

The Steading of ?We swear that the Empire shall not fall as Terunael did, but that this shall be the End of the vallorn?s Hearts? or Hearts? End was founded shortly before the Autumn Equinox by a group of Navarri concerned by the state of the nation and its seeming lack of readiness to take the fight to the vallorn, and the lack of defensive preparations in territories surrounding. Based in Seren, Miaren, the steading has seen a steady influx of new members since the Stridings ceased to walk the trods.



Thorn's Rest

16.2.17 Thorn's Rest

Thorn's Rest was formed in the winter of 385YE in response to the Cold Sun?s destruction of much of the land in Miaren. It was established by a group of concerned Navarri who chose to bond together with the shared aim of rebuilding and repairing the green lush fields of Goldglades; intent on restoring the land to its former greatness. The Thorn's Rest steading motto ?Never Tire? stands as a reminder of their vow to defend Miaren against any future attacks, and to offer hospitality, healing, and full support to any travelling thorns that may encounter them as they pass through Miaren. The steading comprises several farms, a small congregation of Wisdom dedicants and a large comfortable wayhouse, all of which is based in and around the Goldglades area.

16.2.18 TangledSong

Formed in the wake of Summer 386YE with the decision of Navarr to encourage their stridings to return home. An agreement was made between two brands, the TangledPath and the RavenSong stridings, to form the TangledSong steading within the boundaries of Miaren. Unusually for a Navarr group, the TangleSong has three brands that form a leadership council within the Steading - aiming to guide their members and all that join them to the path that suits them best whilst ensuring the martial ability to stand on their own, with their steading, with their nation and with the Empire.

Whilst both stridings were relatively small before forming the steading, they have started to expand their numbers. The members of the steading will also lend their strength, fighting under different banners.

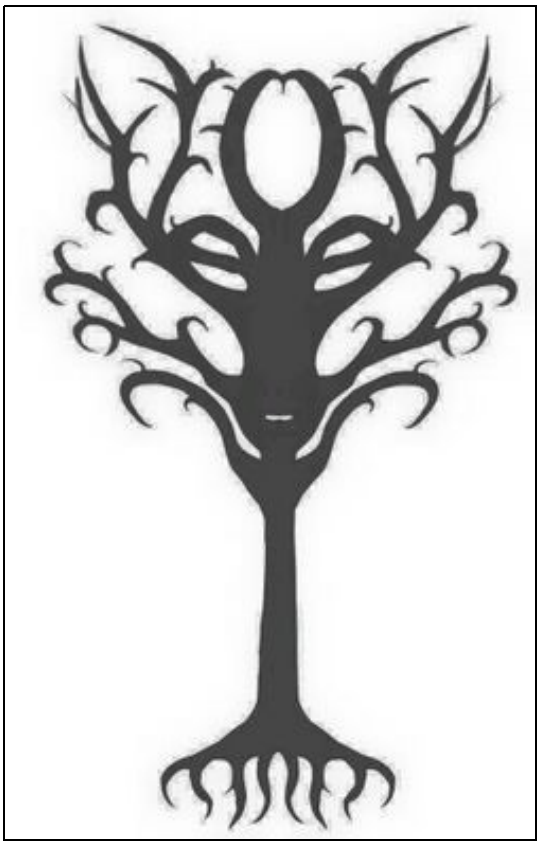


Bladeroot Round

16.2.19 Rootround

- **Location:** Dark Ranging, Brocéliande
- **Icon:** A stylised depiction of a bladeroot plant, sometimes displayed in a wreath of branches

In the depths of vallorn miasma in Brocéliande, an almost idyllic glade of bladeroot flowers with clean air is home to a young steading. Founded in the winter of 381YE by escapees from the Barrens, its members come from a variety of backgrounds and nations, becoming a steading only after choosing a pair of twins to become their brands. With a thicket of cultivated brambles on the border, homes woven into living trees and a system of pulleys scattered throughout, the steading is ready to hide itself at a moment?s notice. Loyalty and Vigilance prevail here due to the harsh nature of their surroundings, and it is not uncommon to see a Rootround making friends in other nations, promising their help in times of danger. Anyone is welcome to stay with the Bladeroot Round for as long as they are in need of a safe haven. ?*We will not kneel; We won't be bound; Protect the Round; and Family Found*."



Ruis Farkas

16.2.20 Ruis Farkas

The steading of Ruis Farkas was formed during the time of Emperor Frederick when a courageous Thorn called Farkas carved into the massive tree behind him and instructed the thorns he was leading to not fall behind that mark, and keep the Druj at bay. To this day, the massive tree that the way house is built around displays the carving of the wolf, reminding the steading members of their Navarr oaths, and the threats they face.

Located in East Ashes, on the edge of the Feverwater near the old Terunael docks, the steading houses several thorns dedicated to watching the swamp for dangers both natural and barbarian, as well as a number of physicks and herbalists, well used to working against Druj poisons.

Those who walk alone in the forest are merely prey

16.3 Stridings

16.3.1 Everwatch



Everwatch
The Everwatch Striding maintains ties to the territory of their founding, Hercynia, but wanders freely wherever the trods guide them, having done so since their founding in the wake of the Thule invasion of Skarsind in 373YE. Trapped between barbarians to the north and east and the vallorn of Deer?s Folly to the west, Navarr from the northern Glen of Shadows attempted to make the perilous journey through the winding mountain passes and forest trails to safety, travelling by nightfall to reduce the risk of detection.

On one such night, those that had survived the journey nearly stumbled headlong into a Thule scouting party, but found themselves inadvertently warned by the fitful hooting of an owl in its roost. By dawn, the Striding had found itself formally founded, its first members swearing oaths to each other that would not have been made "if not for the owl ever watching from its roost".

Unsurprisingly, many members of the Everwatch Striding have come to be dedicated to the Virtue of Vigilance.

16.3.2 Ashborn

The Ashborn striding was formed by members of an expeditionary force sent to Hordalant between 379 and 381. They are the Navarr scouts, spies, explorers and military personnel who found themselves harried and cut off from the Empire by overwhelming Jotun forces.

Though separated from the Empire for 3 years the Ashborn continued to resist, forming themselves into an effective unit of guerrilla fighters, sabotaging Jotun activities where possible in a number of daring raids. Later, when the Empire launched a doomed military campaign into the region the Ashborn made their boldest move ? slipping through enemy lines to unify with and assist the now retreating army. The Ashborn now return to Anvil after surviving alone outside the Empire. They were formed to survive the suffering they found there, uniting together in common course. Now they find themselves facing a new challenge ? reintegration within the Navarr and the Empire.

From ashes we rise, from sorrows we grow.



Brittlebones

16.3.3 Brittlebones

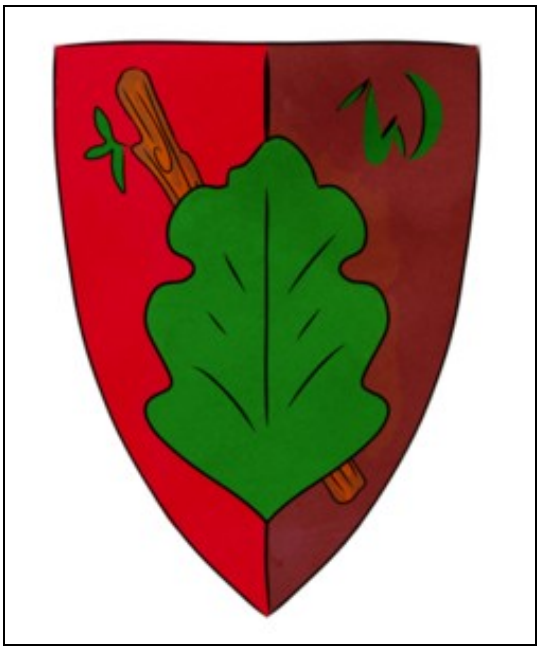
The Brittlebones striding trod a path around the central Empire with Miaren at the heart, undisputedly distinguishable by their unifying feathered garb and red cross bone sigil, few would not know when the Brittlebones caravan was in town. Perhaps one of the most noticeable aspects of the Brittlebones is that they all bare the lineage of the Summer realm. All changelings fiercely loyal to Navarr, the majority of their members battle wounded thorns, no longer able to fight, that have found their new place in the great dance delivering messages and trade all around the central Empire and her waterways.

On the fields of Anvil they created and maintain the Navarr notice board, encourage Navarri art forms such as painting and tattooing and deliver important messages from nation to nation. If you need anything they will likely know who to send you to.

16.3.4 Ashwood

Ashwood Striding has risen from the ashes twice now. Once, the ashes of Springwake led to a small band, trying to find some more normalcy. They were set upon by Grendel and those children left alive were sent to a Dawnish orphanage.

When grown, Zayn and Rhain, brought up in Dawn and once of Foxden, refounded the striding. Since the reformation, many things have changed. Now a Striding made mostly of scouts, physics and brokers, and those who came to Navarr from other nations, Ashwood wanders mostly through Miaren but often finds its way back to Brocéliande and the Steading it was born of. The first and so far, only Striding of the Burning Forest Alliance, Ashwood stands proud and is proof that a forest fire is needed for new life to begin.



The Woodwose

16.3.5 The Woodwose

- **Brand:** Efa Woodwose

These Navarri had been wandering the trods and forests of Brocéliande for many years, but all felt that their place in the Great Dance was about to change. One night, as they rested in the forests of Elerael, their camp was overrun by miasma that had blown in unexpectedly on the wind, forcing them to flee. They fled deeper into the looming and unfriendly forest, not knowing that it was also choked with miasma.

Blinded and scared, the Navarri scattered and lost each other, certain they would all perish in the dark. Yet fortune favoured them, and faint flickering lamps could be seen in the distance. Without any other choice, they followed the light deeper into the woods. All night they sang around the great oak tree in the middle of the clearing, hoping to attract their companions and come day break many of the group had been reunited, along with others who had found themselves in a similar situation. The survivors laid down their roots at the foot of the lone great oak in the clearing and called themselves the Woodwose steading.

16.3.6 The Edgestalkers

The Edgestalkers are a Striding formed in 375YE by Pan ?Summer Wolf? of White Oak Pass, his wife, brother, and three friends. Their purpose, to walk the trods along the Empire?s northern borders, protecting the scattered settlements and rendering aid to those in need. The Striding has a diversity of personalities, backgrounds, and interests, bound together by a mutual Loyalty and trust. In the past, each member took a "wolf name" to reflect their place in The Great Dance or a particularly noteworthy achievement. Now, the members earn a wider, more varied animal name - as the Striding has grown, so have their ideals and morals - as well as their message to protect any and all citizens of the empire. Their motto reflects this, being ?Our Lives for the Empire, Our Blood for our Own? - this shows their commitment to all nations, all territories, any lineage and any citizen. While they take any and all who have earned their place, prospective new Striding members are first asked The Question, and those who can?t give a satisfactory answer are turned away.

What with their habit of taking in wanderers looking for a home, even non-Navarri, and absorbing the smaller Swift Bark Striding in ?81 and the Autumn Trod?s Wake striding in ?85, their numbers have grown over the years. Now they operate out of Thorn?s Pass, a Prosperous waystation they established in Northpines, Hercynia. Those who can?t or don?t want to travel remain behind as a Steading in Thorn?s Pass at their secret mountain home above the Pass. On nights when the moon is full, the howling of wolves can often be heard in forests and hills around Thorn?s Pass, and locals tell stories to travellers about a pack of beast-headed warriors that guard the valley and devour those of ill intent. The Edgestalkers haven?t gone out of their way to dispel those stories.



Summergleam

16.3.7 Summergleam

- **Oath:** Summer's warmth in the great dance
- **Brand:** Taren Summergleam

Originally founded in Therunin on the banks of the Feverwater, the early members of Summergleam banded together to satisfy their wanderlust and take up the striding life. Picking up odd jobs and making a simple living, they travelled, all sorts of others joining as they went, forming an eclectic group looking for change in their lives. They became a true striding when they got lost, despite the number of skilled navigators in the group. Deep in a forest one day, the group encountered a huge and majestic beetle, sunlight reflecting off its shining carapace flashing suddenly in their eyes. Everyone who was there claims a different description of the encounter, and - according to the story - each of the manifested the changeling lineage over the next few weeks.

Brought together by their experience, the striding named themselves after that summer?s gleam of light and swore to bring warmth and kindness wherever they went. Swearing an oath to travel and spread joy, Summergleam tends to form friendships with others from many nations. To this day, their members tend to be changelings, though they welcome everyone. Together with their friends in other nations, they form a small but multi-skilled network, dedicated to bringing summer?s warmth wherever they go, and fighting to protect it wherever threatened. With each other?s support, there is no individual goal that cannot be achieved.



Hill-Striders

16.3.8 Hill-Striders

The Hill-Striders are focused on the lucrative and complex world of Imperial commerce within the Empire. Comprised mostly of highly pragmatic brokers and scouts, often seen wearing earth-tones subtly accented with a gold-legged triskelion, reflecting their dedication to profitability and the ever-moving way of life. Their services are particularly sought by merchants from all over the Empire who value their guarantee of minimising loss and maximising profit.

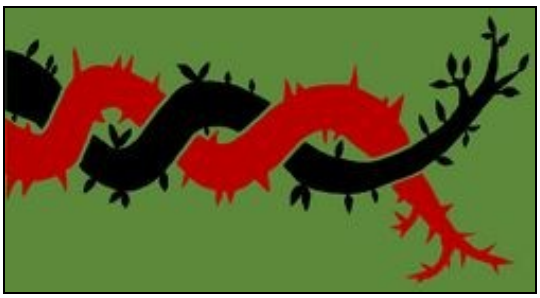
16.3.9 Eternal Family

The Eternal Family is an old striding, so old it is claimed that their roots trace back to the days of Terunael. Whether this is true or not is unclear but it is clear that the striding is very old. The Family is made up of an extended group of both blood relations and adopted individuals who are collectively recognised as family.

Highly active as a group, those able to travel journey widely along the trods and beyond. They offer support to those in need and explore old ruins, trying to find out all they can about the history of their people. Those unable to travel live in and run a wayhouse in Goldglades, in the territory of Miaren.

In recent years the Family has become known for the core of the striding being a strong coven specialised in the magic of the Day realm and the Spring realm. Something very unusual happened around 378YE, however, and the ritualists? affinity for Spring magic has changed markedly. Today, the Eternal Family are known to be powerful practitioners of Summer magic, in addition to their mastery of the arts of Day. Alongside their use of ritual magic, the Family use all skills at their disposal to help their nation and the Empire. On the battlefield they are reputed to fight defensively, using shields, medical skills and magic to support frontline warriors.

16.3.10 Twisted Branch



Twisted Branch
After Therunin was lost to the Druj in 386YE, many Navarr fled the territory. The Twisted Branch striding was formed of those who had been forced from their homes in Therunin, led by Helvetie. Displaced from their homes and sworn, in revenge, to take back their lost lands. The Twisted Branch symbolises the difficult and twisting paths which are trod and that through adversity we may come together stronger.

16.3.11 Embercast

One Summer?s night in Therunin, a number of riverside steadings unexpectedly found themselves under attack by a tide of vallornspawn. In the confusion, a fire flared amid the dry undergrowth, and the dwindling survivors realised their only hope was to cast themselves into the water. Clinging together for safety, watching their homes burn, they might easily have abandoned hope? but then they saw that their way was being lit by burning debris that had fallen to the water?s surface. ?Embers cast adrift,? one said, ?but still aflame.? These words became an oath, and a new striding was born, sworn to aid those who had found themselves similarly beset by disaster, war or invasion. Nowadays, Embercast is fairly diffuse, its members often splitting into smaller groups to walk the trods. It functions as an extended family: spread across the Empire, but always keen to come together around a fire to tell tales and sing songs. Since 382YE, its members have been congregating at the Anvil summits in ever-increasing numbers, where they always ensure there?s a seat at their fire for anyone who might be in need of one.

16.3.12 The Leafstalkers

The Leafstalker Striding are a modern band of Navarr based out of Serenael, famed for their signature cloaks that allow them to blend in with the weirwood trees of the region.

16.3.13 The Umbral Path

The Umbral Path Striding is a secretive group with their origins in Dark Ranging in Brocéliande, where they have long fought to protect the Empire from the threat of vallorn and barbarian alike with their mastery of Night magic and other tools.

Since the barbarian incursion into Elerael, The Striding has begun to more regularly range out across the Empire, spending time with all manner of citizens and learning what they can of all they encounter, whilst always maintaining a presence in Dark Rangings. The Striding rarely stay in one place long and often splinter into smaller groups in order to seek out anything that they feel will help them achieve their goals. Members of this Striding are adept at blending into the crowd except when they choose to be seen and their presence at Anvil was first noticed in Anvil in Spring 380YE, as a new Empress was chosen.



Founders' Dance

16.3.14 Founders' Dance

The Founders' Dance striding was formed from a number of Navarri walking in constant pilgrimage to the exemplars Navarr and Thorn. The path Navarr and her followers first took to re-establish the trods after the fall of Terunael. The striding walks this path as closely as it matches our modern trods, spanning almost the entire Empire.

Formed mostly of pilgrims and priests, they aim to inspire others to test what they know and act on it. Through the spreading of information regarding Navarr and the vallorn's history, they strive to help the Empire learn from the mistakes of the past, Terunael or not. "*Terunael will never be rebuilt, but one day there will be an Empire, governed by wisdom, not by greed*".

16.3.15 Two Feet

?So I left my hearth and home behind with naught but a knife and my own two feet.? - Filch Two Feet y83 imperial
No one is really sure how old the Two Feet Striding is. The exact circumstances of their founding have baffled curious historians throughout imperial history. Though surviving records first mention the striding some 3 centuries ago, the Two Feet themselves aren't much help on the subject. Though most agree on the time frame each branch of the striding seems to possess a radically different Tale of their origins, although recurring themes have been noted.

Uncertain origins aside, the Two Feet have a solid reputation within the Empire. Though some speak of their Loyalty to their friends, their canny trades and ruthless prowess on the battlefield. Its their songs that have truly put the striding on the map. Coupled with a talent for the brewing of strong drink and an overall cheerful outlook on life the striding is a welcome sight wherever it may roam Another curious habit sets the Two feet apart from most other stridings is that they always return to their steadings to wait out the winter. Since the death of Britta, increasing numbers of the Two Feet have made their way to Anvil to further their ambitions and carve out a legacy the empire wont forget.

16.3.16 Dancer



Dancer
The original Dancer family left their commune in Mournwold after the territory was reclaimed from the Jotun. They travelled to Anvil as they tried to learn more about the different lands and the culture of the people who helped liberate them from Jotun control. When they arrived at Anvil, they felt an almost calling towards the Navarr camp, drawn in by the music of Songs and Stories.

Enchanted by the music being played and felt the need to dance along. The family asked about the nation and learned of how its people walk the trods. After that summit, they returned to the commune and convinced others to join them in taking the oath to defeat the vallorn; not by walking the trods, but dancing and playing music along them.

16.3.17 The White Foxes

The White Foxes Striding do not draw their name from the most? ?reputable? of origins. Initially formed by the mercenary Crenshaw of Miaren in 377YE, The White-Fox Renegades were a guerrilla mercenary unit led by Crenshaw on paid contracts all across the Empire and into the Iron Confederacy. Whilst not famous or prosperous by any degree, the unit was greedy, violent and loyal only to the string of their coin pouch.

This would change immensely, however, when Crenshaw recruited the mage Carwen in 379YE, and visited Anvil for the first time in the year 380YE. Assisted by this friendly young companion and introduced to so many fascinating people, the hardened mercenary heart of Crenshaw melted, and decided on the second day of the First Summit to redesign his unit into an established, respectable Striding.

The White Foxes Striding endeavours to aid the Navarri people and the wider Empire in any way they can- the group embrace all into their fold with a desire to better the lives of their fellow Imperial citizens, and they pride themselves on an upstanding, diplomatic reputation. Indeed, they hope to shape

the Empire into forming closer bonds of fellowship through their example.

16.3.18 Y?Basden

Y?Basden Striding traces its roots back to the earliest days of the Empire and was first established by three Navarr outcasts (The Three Thorns) who banded together out of a mutual and visceral dislike for each other and a desire to both ?one up? and profit from each other?s failures. Their bond was later cemented by an event known as ?The Battle of the Black Woods? - an incident where reputedly they destroyed (and looted) an entire raiding contingent of a hundred barbarians whilst outwitting a pursuing force of vallorn. Official Imperial records cast doubts around the stories of this alleged event.

The story drew like-minded citizens and the striding grew in relation to their reputation (or notoriety) throughout the Empire. It is not uncommon in bars for many tall tales to be told of The Three Thorns' exploits with eternals or adventures across battlefields. It is assumed that most of these tales are allegorical in nature as many conflict with established Imperial historical records (or are simply too far-fetched to be believable). In the intervening years, the direction of the striding went through many changes in both role, name, and attitude. These ranged from fringe outcasts to established traders, mercenary bands and even a period outside of Imperial territory? allegedly.

Y?Basden Striding was the eventual result. A disciplined fighting force led by a trio of leaders; The Wit, The Wisdom and The Brand in honour of the original Three Thorns. They consider themselves serving soldiers who will give anyone, including non-Navarr, a chance to travel with them awhile and they take pride in their ability to scout into dangerous, even vallorn, territory. Their reputation as an aggressive and effective fighting force on the battlefield has yet to be disproved. Visits to Anvil are considered opportunities for rest and relaxation and as a result they can seem a little less refined than the average Imperial citizen but tend to treat allies as firm family regardless of nation or circumstance.

The last decade has had them at the lead of insurgency actions in Liathaven where they have helped found the Black Scar Thornborn along with the support of other Liathaven stridings and steadings.



Longest Path

16.3.19 The Longest Path

During his many battles fighting for Navarr, Merionnen the Bloody Huge felt the Empire had lost its way. He felt that the Empire was focused on making decisions for short term gains and were not considering the long term consequences of their actions. That they had lost sight of the quest to reclaim Navarr?s lost lands, especially Liathaven. Over the following months, Merionnen shared his views with the people he met on the trods and wayhouses - eventually joining like-minded people into a new striding - The Longest Path.

The striding is interested in pushing Navarr forward, using all the tools available - whether it is words, weapons or wit. They believe that actions and inaction all have consequences, that understanding and planning for those consequences grants an advantage over perceived rivals. The striding understands the need to strengthen Navarr?s voice in the Empire ? to reclaim what is Navarr?s and to build the nation?s influence. Supporting Navarri ambitions brings strength to all. With no set abode, members of Longest Path scatter across the nation (and the wider Empire) between summits ? seeking opportunities for Navarr to grow in land and spirit.

16.3.20 The Roamer Striding

A newly formed striding, bringing together those Navarr with a passion to destroy the vallorn. Created by an individual that travelled alone for many years, Loma the Roamer finally found his purpose. Years of pushing back the vallorn husks, and delving deeper and deeper into the vallorn in Brocéliande created an urge inside to do something meaningful with his life. Spring magic bubbled within, forcing him to ignore his calling no more.

Sloane was rescued from the Broch, a dangerous area surrounded by the vallorn. Her tenacity to keep the husks away from her farmlands and family was not enough, and left her alone, realising that only with numbers could her campaign to destroy the vallorn be successful.

Alani is the latest addition to the striding, found deep within Brocéliande, striving to find the heart of the vallorn, or anything that could be used to explain its existence, and importantly its destruction. Saved by the Roamer Striding and now with forces combined, the battle to end the ancient enemy is renewed once more.

Only the most fervent haters of the vallorn will be invited to join this striding, and where these brave adventurers roam is definitely not for the faint hearted.



Winters Reach

16.3.21 Winter's Reach

Completed in the months preceding Autumn 384YE, under the enduring effects of Wither the Seed, the construction of the Steading of Winter's Reach was completed in the region overlooking the eaves of the weirwood forest found in Westwood, Liathaven by the remnants of the Companions of Tarw and other Liathaven refugees. A new hope for the dwindling few remaining Liathaven Navarr.

The steading formed a bastion against the encroaching vallorn and miasma-affected creatures leaving Liath's Heart into Westwood and provided a resting and trading location for the Black Scar, civil servants and other Imperials still operating across the territory.

During the Jotun's reconquest of Liathaven in Winter 384YE, the battle-hardened Liathaven survivors escaped into the numerous hidden pathways of the great forest as a striding once more.

16.3.22 Thornweavers

"With bloody fingers we weave"
The Thornweaver Striding live by the examples left by a draughir known only as the Weaver who according to local tales managed to unite two warring steadings that had lost their way. The moral being that the Empire is stronger when its citizens and nations are forged together through hard work. As their oath states "With bloody fingers, we will weave strength into the Empire". The members of the striding are a varied homogeny of talents who enter into all parts of society, identifying needs and then working together to link those with problems to those with solutions, if they are not capable of solving the issue themselves.

Rather than always travelling together the striding work like a logistics company splitting, reuniting and then splitting again into different permutations as needed. The striding has most of its holdings in Hercynia with Treji as a central point. After the Thule attack on Treji the striding had to regrow and has

welcomed the Blackhawk striding into their ranks.



Greywood

16.3.23 Greywood

The founder of the Greywood striding was originally a yeofolk of Dawn. Realising the life of A Dawnish noble wasn't for him he abandoned the nation and journeyed to Therunin to explore a new way of life. Whilst sat under a grey wooded tree the inspiration to form a striding, built on cooperation, came to him. He set out on the trods encountering passionate individuals with his desire to walk the trods with him and commit their lives to the service of others as family.

The Greywood's belief is that a person who belongs is an asset to the Empire more so than someone without direction and if someone is lost on the path it is the striding?s duty to assist them.

The striding aims for the prosperity of all individuals. Those who have been invited to join are encouraged to pursue their own goals and find their true place in the great dance. Whether it be guiding new members to their aspirations or fighting on the frontlines as a unit, to many other ways of finding purpose.

16.3.24 Pathfinders

A proud Striding, the Pathfinders lay claim to a heritage that reaches all the way back to Navarr & Thorn and the months following the fall of Terunael. Sprung from the village of Tywyn, in Brocéliande, the folk who would become the original Pathfinders were inspired by the lovers? tale of courage in face of the newly born vallorn; hope for the restoration of the lost empire; and their commitment to each other. It is a message the Pathfinders help to spread to every corner of the Empire to this day.

Time changes us all, and though the Pathfinders? birthplace is in Brocéliande, the Striding has been happy to welcome citizens from across the Empire and beyond. Helping them take the Binding of Thorns, and with it the oaths that the original Pathfinders made so long ago. Today, many of the Striding hail from the South and Western Empire, with refugees from Liathaven and former Freeborn making up many of their number.

As you can imagine the Pathfinders are best known as skilled traders, alchemists, healers, artisans as well as, boasting a coven of powerful Winter vates. However, while by no means a Thornborn, the martial spirit of the Pathfinders should not be underestimated. Under the leadership of their current Brand, Valeska, the entire striding sold their farms, mines, and businesses to take up arms and recruit fighters to aid in the liberation of Liathaven. Always on the lookout for lost or badly maintained trods, Pathfinders will often be found volunteering to act as war scouts or stride at the vanguard of a campaign in search of the darkest paths and lost trods where others fear to tread.

16.3.25 Swift Hart



Swift Hart

- **Brand:** Torin Swift Hart

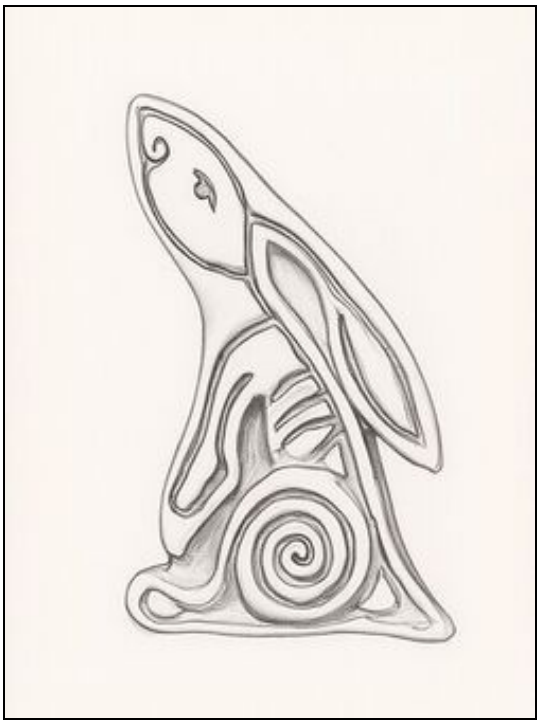
The swift hart is never truly lost it simply runs the paths that others have yet to see
In 385YE four Navarri became separated from their military unit. Lost within the dense Hercynian pines and greatly outnumbered by the looming Cold Sun they would not have found their way had it not been for a startled hart. Swiftly, they pursued this creature back to the trods carrying with them news of the Cold Sun's movements. These wanderers who had been independent, traversing the paths of the empire alone, found their paths within the great dance were now intertwined.

16.3.26 Splitroot Striding

Formed a year or so before the death of Empress Britta alongside Brackensong Steading from members of Foxden Steading, Splitroot has since grown to be a sizeable group. The striding walks the trods of Brocéliande, using Elerael as a home base, and venturing into Dark Ranging. Previous to the declaration of war in Winter 378YE, they were one of the few stridings to trade with the Orcs of the Barrens, and still maintain close ties to the Great Forest orcs.

Splitroot comprises of an eclectic mix of skills and personalities, including all manner of bards, brokers, vates, thorns, ambassadors to foreign nations, and fire dancers. As befitting a group so closely associated with Brackensong and Foxden, many of its vates are members of the Voice of the Quiet Forest.

16.3.27 Lopoldë's Flame



Lopolde's Flame
The Lopoldë's Flame striding has its roots in Brocéliande, though they travel farther afield. The striding first came together in the aftermath of Druj attacks in the region, when disparate groups of herbalists and crafters offered their skills to those affected, banding together for the sake of survival. Over time, what began as cooperation out of necessity grew into tradition and strong bonds, and so the striding was born.

Their brand is a priest of Courage, currently based in Reikos. From there, the striding works to lend support to efforts to reclaim Vale?s Lament. The striding?s oath, "'?Swift and true, always.?'" is a reminder of the virtues of Courage and Loyalty. To be swift is to act without hesitation when faced with fear or doubt. To be true is to hold fast to loyalty and to one another. The striding holds these virtues close during these uncertain times.

16.3.28 Cefn Digoll

A striding born from the frontlines of Hercynia fighting back the vallorn, the Cefn Digoll is a small striding that treads the ways - trading, guiding, protecting as we go. Reinforcing the trods between Hercynia and Brocéliande, helping push new paths ever further out, and keeping watch for the vallorn and its corruption.

Taking the field under a black on white banner featuring a stag

"*Protecting the land, defending the innocent*"

16.4 Wayhouses



Firekeeper

16.4.1 Firekeeper

- **Location:** Old Ranging, Hercynia
- **Colours:** Yellow, orangey red, and golden brown
- **Brand:** Eurion Firekeeper

Founded just before the Spring Equinox 385YE, the Firekeeper Wayhouse sits upon the slopes of Old Ranging. Overlooking the vast forest, the settlement acts as a shelter for travellers. The wayhouse is home to many, with a focus on supporting others, providing hospitality and healing to those resting between conflicts. Firekeepers will often bear upon their skin the Wayhouse's symbol: an icon of a hearth with a burning flame. Each Firekeeper makes an oath to provide service and aid to those fighting.

"*Tending the Hearth and flame, keeping the fire alive for those out fighting to return to once more.*"

16.5 Contributing

Any player character group in Navarr can submit an entry for this page. The entry should come from the out-of-character group leader and be emailed to plot@profounddecisions.co.uk.

It should contain the following information:

- Group archetype (steading, striding, wayhouse). If your group doesn't have one of these archetypes, it will be listed in the "other" section.
- Territory and region where the groups lands are physically located. Steadings and wayhouses are linked to a specific area, and stridings are often tied to a physical location that serves as their base of operations.
- A description of your groups icon, with an image if desired.
- If your group has specific colours, you can mention them here.
- The name of your brand

You should also include up to 250 words of description, detailing the kind of things that other characters might know about your group. Have a look at the descriptions for steadings, stridings, and wayhouses. You should also include a few sentences of history, especially around the circumstances of the group's formation or origin.

Some other questions to consider include:

- Do you have a specific oath? Is there an expectation that all members will take this oath?
- Are there one or more particular archetypes the group is particularly associated with? Is it a steading of mostly vines who work to cure those who fight the vallorn? Is it a striding of brokers who use their connections to build a vast web across the Empire?
- Does your group have a focus on one specific vallornheart?

Things to avoid include:

- Too much worldbuilding detail ? this represents information other characters may know about your house. It's not a place to define elements of the game world
- Lists of character names ? this isn't a place for getting your name on the wiki
- Too much emphasis on the past ? while it's useful to have a few lines of history, what matters in Empire is what your house does on the field at events

It's possible to update the information on this page over time (for example, if your brand changes) with an email to plot@profounddecisions.co.uk.

17 Navarr Egregore

17.1 Liaven

The Navarri Egregore is Liaven, who shares a place in the Great Dance with all of Navarr. Tell Liaven your stories, share how you dance your place in the Dance.

In Spring, Liaven is youthful and energetic, with possibility and curiosity in every step. In Summer, Liaven is more tempered; there is work to be done and preparations to make. In Autumn, time has passed, Liaven knows the path and steps surely. In Winter, Liaven is knowing and steady still, hair grey but eyes bright. Time is short, and life is hard, but there is readiness for what comes next, a looking forward to when Spring comes to again and new life flows once more.

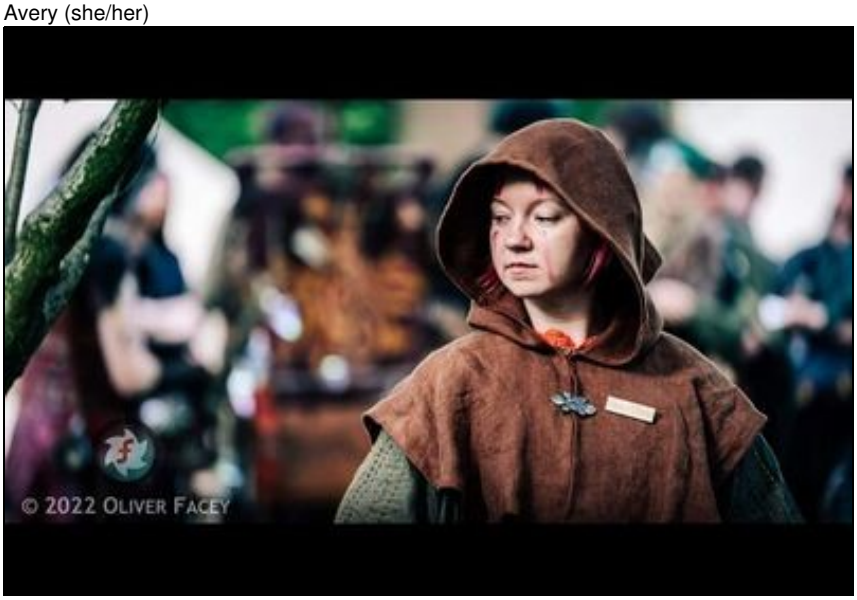
Liaven is all of these things in time as each season comes and goes, a reminder that all seasons pass, and all passings can be adapted to. Liaven is always watching and wandering the Empire near and far, to wherever the Navarr roam. Liaven can be found equally at home in the deepest Forest or the most Urban maze, never forgetting the past, or the consequences of not remaining vigilant, the fate of the lost cities an ever present reminder of the cost of failure.

?Sit, share a fire, rest your feet and tell your story."

17.1.1 Current Hosts



Avery (she/her)



Darrach (they/them)



Cullain (he/him)



Cassidy (they/them)



Drew (he/him)