7 Encounters and Conflict

Overview

There are two basic modes of play in **Tales of the Iron League**. When characters are traveling through the countryside, or searching a room for secret doors, or trying to figure out the best way to topple a heavy statue, there is little structure to the gameplay. This is called **casual mode**. In this mode of play, each player can say what their character is doing, and provided the GM allows everybody a chance to do something, there isn't any order to the players' actions that needs to be observed.

In casual mode, it is even possible for a character to take several actions in a row, if the other players think they're on a roll and doing well. This is fine when there are no significant stakes in the game – if there are no dangers that the group is facing, and no time constraints or other pressures, it doesn't really matter who does what and when.

That's less true when characters encounter peril. When characters enter a battle with a giant snake, or when they engage in tense negotiations with mistrustful elves, or when they are attempting to outrun the giant boulder that threatens to crush them all, it becomes much more important to know what each character is doing and when they are doing it. This is called **encounter mode**; gameplay becomes much more structured.

In encounter mode, every character gets a turn to act, and what they can do during their turn is limited. Each character's place in the order of action may vary from turn to turn, and the timing of what other characters and creatures do before your character's turn may impact your decisions regarding what to do next.

The GM decides when the game switches between encounter mode and casual mode. When switching into encounter mode, the GM should probably not announce this to the players until certain determinations have been made regarding how the encounter will unfold; see below.

Time During Encounters

In Chapter 6, rules were presented for different units of time, including the **round**, which lasts about six seconds. There are therefore ten rounds in one minute. In encounter mode, the GM will tell the characters when a new round has started. During one round, each character, creature, and hazard involved in the counter will get to take a turn, during which time the individual may take a number of different types of actions. These are described in more detail later in this chapter.

As described in Chapter 6, unless an encounter runs for a very long time, 1 **Movement Point (MP)** should be expended for each encounter. This accounts for the time spent in rounds, plus any aftermath activities (such as healing or searching bodies). But separately from the method of tracking time and distance described in Chapter 6, which is typically what is used in casual mode, encounter mode uses a more rigorous approach that will yield other ways to measure movement. MPs should be tracked for the longer timescale of adventuring, but movement must also be tracked in different ways that will be described later in this chapter.

Encounter Distance

Supposing a group of characters is traveling through a cramped dungeon corridor. They turn a corner and find themselves in a room full of orcs. The GM has the dungeon map and knows, to a reasonable degree of certainty, how far apart the characters and the orcs are from each other. This is an important thing to know should this encounter turn into a combat. However, what if the characters are traveling through a light wood and run across the same band of orcs? The GM may not know how much distance separates the two groups.

The GM may just decide what they want that distance to be, but if they want a little guidance, they may use the following table to randomly determine starting distance:

Table 7-1: TOTIL Encounter Starting Distance

Terrain	Starting Distance
road	50-500 feet
path	20-200 feet
plains or grasslands	20-200 feet
light woods	10-100 feet
heavy woods or jungle	10-60 feet
wetlands	10-100 feet
alpine	20-200 feet
broken	10-100 feet
beach	50-500 feet
desert	20-200 feet
riverbed	10-100 feet
worked rooms or corridors	10-100 feet
semi-worked rooms or corridors	10-60 feet
unworked rooms or corridors	10-40 feet

If it isn't important to know how far apart the two groups are, or if there aren't two groups, skip this step.

Surprise

Sometimes the characters may be unaware of another group of creatures, but the creatures are aware of the characters – perhaps the characters are carrying torches into a vast dark cavern, and the light-sensitive *troglodytes* quietly lurking there can't help but see them coming. Sometimes the reverse is true, where the characters know about other creatures, but those creatures are unaware of the characters – maybe the characters have set an ambush for a caravan of slavers, and from hiding they can hear the crack of the whips of the wicked approaching merchants.

The GM must determine whether each creature is aware of the other creatures involved in an encounter, and if a creature is unaware of what's going on, the other participants gain the advantage of **surprise**. When surprise is in your favor, you may get to take actions without giving the opposing side a chance to react – at least until the initial confusion wears off.

Chapters 3 and 6 provide rules for using perception skills (Seeing, Hearing, possibly Intuition) to detect things. When the GM has determined that an encounter is about to occur, before telling the players this, they should first establish the distance between groups, and then use their various perception abilities to determine who knows about the other. The GM may decide that they should make a secret perception check for each party, with only the GM knowing what the roll is for and what the outcome may be, to determine which group becomes aware of the others first. If the characters are unaware of other creatures that are aware of them, the GM should secretly roll 1d6 for the party; if the characters are aware of other creatures that are unaware of them, the GM should openly roll 1d6 for the other creatures. The results of the roll determine the degree of surprise.

Complete Surprise

On a 1 or 2 on the 1d6 roll, the group that is aware of the other group gains the advantage of **complete surprise**. In the first round of the encounter, only members of the group with complete surprise get to act. Additionally, there are combat benefits to having complete surprise; see below. During that first round, the members of the surprised group may not move or take actions. When the first round is over,

the advantage of complete surprise is lost, and the two sides will begin to make initiative rolls to determine who goes first from then on.

Creatures with the advantage of complete surprise have a bonus of +2 for all attacks, including weapons and spells. Additionally, creatures who attack when their target are unaware similarly receive a +2 bonus to all attacks; this bonus increases to +4 if the attacker has the Thief class. Note, however, that these two bonuses do not stack; a creature attacking with complete surprise, but also attacking from behind, only receives the highest of any such bonuses.

Partial Surprise

On a 3, 4, 5, or 6 on the d6 roll, the group that is aware of the other group gains the advantage of **partial surprise**. In the first round of the encounter, there is no need to roll for initiative; the group that has partial surprise gets to go first. Note that monsters with the *fast* special power (see Chapter 8) always win initiative rolls, but in partial surprise no initiative dice are rolled – a *fast* monster can still be surprised. There are otherwise no combat advantages to partial surprise, and when the first round is over, that advantage is removed and rounds progress normally after that.

When a group has a surprise advantage, it is up to them to decide how that advantage is used. They may choose to attack, or hide so that they will not be noticed, or perhaps they might call out to the other group to attempt to communicate.

If both groups begin play unaware of each other, it is up to the GM to determine which group becomes aware of the other first, at which point the GM can roll the surprise die as noted above. If both groups become aware of each other at roughly the same time, neither group will have a surprise advantage, and initiative rolls should determine order.

If the encounter is against a trap, it is assumed that the trap has the advantage of partial surprise on the first round.

Triggering Actions

When one or more groups become aware of other groups, they are generally beginning in the casual mode of play. This may remain in casual mode if the stakes aren't high and there isn't much risk for any parties. A simple negotiation with a merchant for a straightforward purchase, for instance, doesn't need to occur within the regimented structure of encounter mode. But if there's a chance for somebody to get hurt, or for somebody to come out ahead at the expense of somebody else, that's a GM's cue that it's time to enter encounter mode.

In casual mode, players declare their actions in whatever order they like, and it's not particularly important to make sure everybody gets a turn. But when somebody takes an action that clearly signals to the GM that an encounter is about to happen, that one action – called a triggering action – takes place, and then the game enters encounter mode. From then on, actions occur in the order determined with **initiative** as described below. Triggering actions might include:

- A character makes an obvious attack on a monster.
- A character reveals themselves to a previously unaware monster, and there is a sense that there may be danger or risk.
- The environment suddenly changes in a way that places parties on high alert.
- An alarm is raised.
- A character takes an action that a monster interprets to demand a hostile or defensive response.

A triggering action does not require violence, but it might imply that physical risks are present. Entering into an encounter suggests that all participants will have an elevated adrenaline level, even if it doesn't automatically mean that swords are drawn.

If one group achieves complete surprise on another group, they may be able to set the time and place of the triggering action. In such a situation, the round of complete surprise is the triggering action, and every member of the surprising group gets to take turns in whatever order they like. In all other cases, only one character or monster gets to take the triggering action; other characters may wish to immediately cast a quick spell or fire off a sling stone, but the GM should require them to wait for their turn in the initiative order.

Initiative

Once a round begins, assuming no group has a surprise advantage, it is important to establish who gets to act first. The group that gains the initiative gets to determine whether the encounter will start with negotiation, combat, retreat, or something else entirely.

At the start of a round, the players must select one of their characters who will roll initiative for the entire party. An initiative roll is made by rolling 1d12, adding the character's Dexterity modifier and any other modifiers that may be relevant (such as a Halfling's class bonus to initiative). This generates an initiative total, which the rolling player communicates to the GM.

Meanwhile, the GM rolls initiative on behalf of the group of creatures not controlled by the players; if there are multiple groups, the GM rolls initiative separately for each group. The initiative totals of each group are compared, and whoever gets the highest result gets to go first. If the initiative rolls result in a tie, the same rolls are made again until the result is not a tie.

When a group wins initiative, all the creatures that are part of that group get to act in that round before the other side; this is called their **turn**. They may act in any order they wish, as discussed by the players, or as determined by the GM, depending on who is controlling that group. Once all the members of the group have acted, the group with the next-highest initiative total gets to take actions, and so on until each group's members have had one turn. When the last creature to act in the round has completed its turn, the round is over, and initiative is rolled again.

Clearly there is an advantage in having characters with high Dexterity scores roll initiative for the party. However, non-player characters do not roll for initiative. Additionally, no one player character may roll initiative again until every other player character has had a turn rolling for initiative. Traditionally at my table, once a player has been selected to make the first initiative roll, all subsequent initiative rolls continue around the table in clockwise order; your gaming group may come up with their own method for adjudicating this fairly. Once every PC has rolled for initiative once, the cycle starts over again: any player character may roll for initiative, but they may not roll again until every character has had another opportunity to roll, and so on. This means that even that player character with the Dexterity score of 3 must get involved in the initiative process, even though this may disadvantage the party during some rounds!

Attitudes

If the characters get to act first, they get to choose whether they will hide, or negotiate, or attack. They will base that decision on what their senses tell them, and what they think they know about what they are encountering, and what their objectives are. How will the GM make such a decision for the creatures that the characters encounter? Is the band of orcs likely to attack the party on sight, or might they want to talk to them first to evaluate how strong they are? Is the crotchety sage more prone to answering the characters' questions about old legends, or will they throw them out of their shop? The injured bear is torn between its instincts of fight or flight; which will win out?

To begin, the GM must determine the starting **attitude** of the monsters towards the party. There are five basic attitudes that a creature can have towards another being:

- **Strongly Positive:** The creature has trust in the being, and it is inclined to believe that what the being says is true. The creature has respect for the being and is willing to provide help.

- **Weakly Positive:** The creature has no reason to like or trust in the being, but it is inclined to view it in a positive light. The creature may offer help if it can be provided with no special risk or cost.
- **Neutral:** The creature has no trust in the being and has no reason to believe it is trustworthy. The creature has no positive or negative feelings for the being, and so its willingness to help would be based only on sheer altruism, or the idea that there might be mutual gain. Aggressive or hostile responses are possible if provoked.
- **Weakly Negative:** The creature does not trust the being, and it is inclined to view it in a negative light. The only possible way that help might be forthcoming would be if the creature clearly benefited, and even then, assisting the being would be distasteful. Even trivial excuses might be enough to tip the interaction into open hostility.
- **Strongly Negative:** The creature openly detests the being. The creature believes that whatever the being says is probably a lie designed to benefit the being at the creature's cost. There is no possibility that the creature would assist the being, even if some personal benefits were forthcoming. No excuse would be required to tip this interaction into conflict and violence.

These are starting points; they can change over the course of time, but the GM must choose one of these attitudes to begin the encounter. However, even within these five categories, there is considerable room for variation in the reaction of a creature. Within the bounds of its basic attitude, a creature can behave forthrightly and directly, or it can behave subtly and passively. This is true whether the creature is positively or negatively inclined towards the beings it has encountered.

Morale Modifiers

To help decide which way a creature will act, let us establish the concept of a **morale modifier**. The monster listings in Chapter 8 list this attribute, which takes the form of a bonus or penalty to the creature's Charisma score. Very brave creatures, or those inclined to solve problems through violence and direct action, will have a large bonus here. Cowardly or tentative monsters will instead have a penalty.

The morale modifier is applied to the creature's Charisma score for the purpose of making a morale check, which is a Charisma attribute check. By succeeding at a morale check, a creature is going to choose a more aggressive or direct action; by failing the check, a creature will choose indirect action, passive behavior, and possible disengagement. Morale may be checked at various times during an encounter, including at the beginning to see how monsters will react to the adventuring party. See Morale Checks During Encounters later in this chapter for other situations involving morale.

If the GM already knows what they think a creature will do in a situation, there is no need for a morale check at the beginning. If they aren't sure, however, an initial morale check can be helpful.

> **Example 1:** The party of adventurers runs for the gate of a fort occupied by elvish mercenaries, closely pursued by an angry owlbear. The elves on the walls see the characters approaching and recognize them as members of the Iron League. The Iron League and this mercenary band have a professionally courteous relationship towards each other, so the GM decides the elvish attitude is weakly positive towards the party.
>
> The GM makes a morale check for the elves, using the Wisdom score of 13 for the elvish leader, and a morale bonus of +2. The d20 rolls an 11, so the morale check passes, meaning the elves take aggressive action. The elvish commander orders archers to fire arrows at the owlbear. Had the morale check failed, the elves might still help, but perhaps only by opening the gate to their fort.
>
> **Example 2:** The characters are exploring a complex of natural caverns that leads deep underground and into territory controlled by goblins. From a hidden watchpoint, a small band of goblins see the

adventurers' torches and must decide what to do. The GM knows that goblins have declared perpetual war on the surface-dwelling humanoids, so their attitude is strongly negative.

These goblins were ordered to guard this place, so the obvious action to take would be for them to attack. However, goblins are not known for their bravery – their morale modifier is -2 – so the GM makes a morale check for the goblins, and they fail. The GM decides this means that their leader sends one of their number slinking through hidden paths to warn the other goblins and bring reinforcements; meanwhile, the rest choose to silently follow behind the party to see where they go and what they do.

A failed morale check can mean that a creature runs away, and that is often what happens when a creature fails a morale check in combat (see below), but retreat is just one of a variety of passive options available to creatures before any fighting has begun.

Mindless *undead* creatures generally do not check morale unless it is caused by a successful Turn Undead check (see Chapter 3). Golems generally do not check morale at all.

Time in Encounter Mode

When the action of the game transitions to encounter mode, it becomes much more important to keep track of how long things take, who gets to act first, and other considerations regarding time. This game therefore formalizes the structure of time during encounter mode into units called **rounds**. A round is a unit of time that is about six seconds in duration, and therefore there are about ten rounds in a minute. In each round, all creatures that are present and able to act will be able to do something. The order in which this happens is determined by rolling i**nitiative**, as described earlier. which is an attribute listed on every character sheet

Once the winning side is determined, the creatures or monsters within that side each get a **turn** in which they may perform multiple different types of actions, as described later in this chapter. The order in which the characters take their turns is determined as a group by the players, who may discuss that order to arrive at consensus. If no consensus is reached, the GM decides. Meanwhile, the GM decides the order that all monsters or non-player characters will take their turns when their portion of the round comes up.

When it is a character's turn to act, there may be certain effects or occurrences that affect that character 'at the start of their turn', and these things happen before the character can do anything. Then the character chooses what actions they take; this is known as the action economy and it is described later. When all the results of the character's actions are determined, there may be certain effects or occurrences that affect that character 'at the end of their turn', and these things happen before any other character can act. Once a character's turn is completed, they hand the baton to another player who gets to take their turn in the same order.

An important consideration is when characters can use **surges** during a round. A character may only spend one surge during their turn, and one surge outside their turn. The list of things that surges can be used for outside one's turn is fairly short; you certainly can't do all the things with them that you can do during your turn. But once your turn ends, you then get one use of a surge outside your turn which must last you until the next time that same character gets its turn.

Space in Encounter Mode

Creatures and characters take up space on the encounter map – but how much? How close can two allies be to each other and still fight effectively with weapons? How about with spells? The adventuring party surrounds the sleeping dragon and prepares to attack it in unison, but can they all find room to do so?

Tracking position during encounters can be done in several ways. It's always possible to simply play out these encounters in the theater of the mind, where the GM describes the situation to the players, and everybody imagines where they are and what's going on. However, it may be helpful to represent encounters with visual aids, which can both clarify the situation for all players and add an element of strategy gaming.

It is recommended to go to a scale of 1" to either five or ten feet. Graph paper pads with 1" squares are available at many office-supply stores; also, many hobby shops offer flexible vinyl mats that have 1" squares pre-drawn, and which can be written upon with wet-erase markers. Either way, the GM can draw rooms and corridors, or trees and other outdoor obstacles, and the position of the characters and other creatures can be drawn on the map as well.

Alternatively, many players enjoy using cardboard or metal miniature figures to represent their character, and these can be moved around the encounter map as positions change. Figurines are made for many types of monsters as well. Using encounter maps can be very helpful for establishing line of sight, for figuring out which creatures are inside various areas of effect, and for making a variety of combat-related tasks and calculations easier; however, using such a map is by no means required.

Questions of space in encounter maps are highly arbitrary and require the GM to issue rulings based on good judgment and common sense. These rules cannot offer too much in the way of rigid commandments because there are many variables that must factor into typical situations. The GM will have to be satisfied with the following guidelines:

A single human-sized character can walk down a 5' wide corridor and fight effectively with weapons. Two human-sized characters could walk side-by-side down that same corridor, but if they needed to fight with weapons, the GM might need to apply penalties to attack rolls owing to close quarters. If both those characters were only casting spells, such penalties might not apply. Similarly, if the two characters are a tall Fighter hacking up high with a sword and a short Halfling stabbing down low, the GM might rule that those two can comfortably exist in the same 5' space.

Up to three human-sized characters can walk down a 10' wide corridor and fight effectively with weapons, but if they're using great swords, perhaps only two characters could do this without taking penalties. Similarly, two horse-sized monsters could move down a 10' wide corridor next to each other, but they might not be able to fight effectively when their space is limited. Good tactics dictates that if a large monster can be attacked in a space where it cannot move about freely, its assailants should derive some sort of situational advantage.

A single character can absolutely block an opponent's ability to move through a 5' wide area. This could be a 5' wide corridor, or it could be a portion of a larger space. No opponent can move through that area, although they could use **tumble** or **bullrush** actions to circumvent this defense. A single character could stand in the middle of a 10' wide corridor and threaten creatures that attempt to move past it, and using melee weapons with 5' reach could threaten **attacks of opportunity** against such creatures (see later in this chapter), but they cannot absolutely block movement through that wide of an area. Two character, however, can form a **line** and absolutely prevent movement through that same 10' wide corridor.

In an encounter map free of cover and other obstructions, a single creature of any size can be surrounded by up to six creatures of similar size, which can all fight effectively at a 5' range. The GM may rule that more creatures can attack effectively if they have greater than 5' reach. The GM may also rule that cover or other battlefield obstacles reduce the number of possible attackers. If a human-sized character can stand next to a thin column, perhaps only four or five human attackers can approach them; if they can place their back to a wall, three human attackers maximum seems reasonable. Similarly, if allies can stand back-to-back, perhaps only three human attacks can attack each of them, although creatures with pole arms and missile weapons could also make attack rolls. Meanwhile, perhaps up to twelve giant rats could assail a single human, but in an encounter with three manticores, perhaps only two could make melee attacks against the same human-sized target.

Flying or swimming creatures are not necessarily constrained by the essentially two-dimensional nature of a typical encounter on dry land. More fliers can approach from above, while swimmers might be able to attack from above and below!

Action Economy in Encounter Mode

The **action economy** is the set of actions that a character can take in a round. During your turn, you can take the following actions: as many **free actions** you can reasonably take in six seconds; two **basic actions**; a **move action**; a **standard action**. These actions may be taken in any order, but the standard action is the last thing one does during one's turn – as soon as the standard action is performed, end of turn effects occur and then somebody else gets a turn. When it is not your turn, you may take another type of action known as an **interrupt**. Whether it is your turn or not, you may take a **reaction** action provided the prerequisites of that action are met. You are never obliged to take your full action economy during your turn; some, all, or none of these actions may be skipped during your turn. Each of these actions is described in more detail below.

Free Actions

A free action is the simplest of action types, requiring little or no effort or concentration from the character. A character can perform as many free actions on their turn as they want, provided the GM agrees that it can be done within six seconds. Speech is a common type of free action; a character may say as many words out loud as they can reasonably utter in six seconds, provided no skill check is being made. Some types of special abilities are employed or maintained using a free action, but many of these also require spending a surge, so only one of these can be triggered in a turn. There are also various items or special abilities or spell effects that require a free action to use; this will be described in the entry for the spell or special ability or item. Finally, dropping an object in your hands is so trivial an action that it counts as a free action.

Basic Actions

Basic actions are more complex than free actions; they are actions that require some amount of attention or effort to accomplish, but they don't generally involve a character moving around or making an attack. A character may perform two basic actions during their turn. Skill checks that involve attempting to perceive things – usually Seeing, Hearing, and Intuition, but possibly including other skills as well – are made using a basic action. The GM should divulge anything that is obvious to perceive without requiring any kind of skill check; the character can choose to use a perceptive skill check to note things that are hidden or otherwise non-obvious. Making Knowledge checks during encounters is likewise a usage of a basic action. Making these types of skill checks do not trigger attacks of opportunity – see later in this chapter.

Another use of a basic action is to use social skills to manipulate others; this includes using Convince to **reason** with opponents, Deceive to **bluff** opponents, and Intimidate to **bully** opponents. These checks do not trigger attacks of opportunity. Refer to the appropriate skill in Chapter 3.

Another use of a basic action is to use Shenanigans to perform a **furtive move**. These checks do not trigger attacks of opportunity. Refer to the appropriate skill in Chapter 3.

Basic actions are also used to manipulate physical objects, but not in any way that would require making a skill check – that's one of the things that standard actions are used for. Opening an unlocked chest, shutting a door, drawing or sheathing a weapon, picking up an unattended object, pulling an object out of your inventory and putting it in your hand, offering a held item to a nearby ally (they can accept it as a reaction if they have a free hand), lighting a torch, opening a lock using its key, reading as much of a book as you can scan in six seconds, or even standing up from a prone position – these are all legitimate uses of a basic action. This type of basic action triggers attacks of opportunity. Finally, a **kip up** action may be performed by a prone person to attempt to stand without triggering attacks of opportunity; this is described in Chapter 3 under Feats of Agility.

Move Actions

Move actions involve the character changing their position in the encounter. A character may perform one move action during their turn. Every character has a walking movement allowance listed on their character sheet; if they use a move action, they can move that number of feet during their turn. A character may perform their basic actions before, after, or during this movement. Walking doesn't usually triggers attacks of opportunity, but it will if

the walking character is within melee attack range of an opponent and then moves out of melee attack range; that opponent is entitled to take an attack of opportunity as described later in this chapter. A character also has a running movement allowance listed on their character sheet which is equal to twice their walking movement allowance; a move action may be used to run at this higher movement rate, but at significant penalties: the running character suffers a -2 penalty to all four of their defenses and a -2 penalty to any skill check used to perceive, and these penalties last until the start of the character's next turn. Additionally, any running within melee attack range of an opponent triggers an attack of opportunity.

While a character is either walking or running, they can travel through an area described as having **difficult terrain** at a movement cost: every 1' moved through such terrain requires an expenditure of 2' from the movement allowance for their movement type. Travelling through difficult terrain triggers attacks of opportunity the same as it does anywhere else.

One type of skill check is performed as a move action, and that is an attempt to **hide** using the Stealth skill. This action is taken in place of using your move action to change your position. Refer to Chapter 3 for more detail regarding how to use this skill. Once a character is harder to perceive by using the Stealth skill, these benefits last until the *end* of their next turn or until they make any kind of attack action. Making a Stealth skill check does not trigger attacks of opportunity. Another skill check that uses a move action is a **controlled fall**, which is described in Chapter 3 under Feats of Agility.

Certain other skill checks are also performed as move actions, but these may also be combined with half the move allowance of a walk or run. These skill checks include **bull rush**, **tumble**, **long jump**, and **high jump actions**, and they are described in Chapter 3 under the entries for Feats of Agility and Feats of Might. These may trigger attacks of opportunity, as Chapter 3 describes. Movement combined with such checks may be performed before the skill check, after the skill check, or divided both before and after; however, if the skill check achieves no successes, in addition to whatever consequences may result from failure, the character may not take any more movement.

There are other types of movement that a character may use. If a character has the **prone** condition, they must stand up in order to walk or run; while lying down they may only use a **crawl** move, and this has a movement allowance of 15'. This type of movement triggers attacks of opportunity similar to running. A character may attempt to **climb** a steep, vertical, or even an upside down horizontal surface; this requires a successful Feats of Agility check with difficulty as described in Chapter 3. This movement triggers attacks of opportunity similar to running, and any hit will impose a penalty of -4 on the Feats of Agility check; on a success, the character has a movement allowance of 15'. If the character enters the water, they may make a **swim** move. This movement triggers attacks of opportunity similar to running; additionally, swimming characters suffer other penalties as described later in this chapter. Magical effects or monster special powers may grant a creature other movement types as well – flying, or burrowing underground, for two examples – and a move action will allow them the movement allowance associated with that ability. Such movement only triggers attacks of opportunity when walking would do so.

A character may use their move action to perform a **feint** to attempt to deprive an opponent of their interrupt. This action does not trigger attacks of opportunity. Refer to Chapter 3 for how to use the Deceive skill to take this action.

Finally, a character may choose to spend their move action to take a third basic action during their turn.

Standard Actions

A character's standard action is the meat of their turn; other actions can set the table, but the standard action is where characters do the real work of adventuring during encounters. The character's standard action is the last thing that they may choose to do in their turn, with only a few rare exceptions such as a City Halfling's class ability to take an extra walking movement. The following types of actions are made as standard actions:

A character may make a **melee attack** as a standard action. They may do this with a readied melee weapon or with a natural weapon. Making a melee attack never triggers attacks of opportunity.

A character may make a **missile attack** as a standard action. They may do this with a readied missile weapon or with a readied grenade. Making a missile attack triggers attacks of opportunity from nearby opponents, so that's usually something that's done from a safe distance.

A character may **cast** most types of spells as a standard action. The descriptions of the spells in Chapter 4 will list while kinds of spells require something other than a standard action to cast; some of them use interrupts or reactions, while others have such a long casting time that they aren't practical for use during an encounter. Spells that have a range of touch or affect the caster only do not trigger attacks of opportunity, but other spells do, so spellcasters need to be careful about who's nearby.

A character may use the special abilities of **conjuration** or **sorcery**, and these magical abilities are not the same as casting spells, but most functions of these abilities require a standard action to trigger or to use. Refer to Chapter 2 for more information regarding these abilities. If a use of these special abilities requires a standard action, whether it is an attack or not, it triggers attacks of opportunity – using conjuration or sorcery while opponents are nearby is dangerous.

Many types of skill checks described in Chapter 3 require a standard action to use them during an encounter; examples may include Build, Healing, Mechanisms, Perform, Seacraft, Stonecraft, Streetcraft, and Woodcraft. Refer to Chapter 3 for more information regarding these skill checks. If a standard action is required for these skill checks, it triggers attacks of opportunity. Making skill checks involving Turn Undead are also standard actions, but these do not trigger attacks of opportunity.

Many magic items that wind up in a character's possession have functions that require the wielder to trigger them. To **activate** a magic item, a character must spend a standard action. This doesn't trigger attacks of opportunity, not even if the item's function duplicates the casting of a spell that normally would trigger. This is because spellcasting requires concentration and coordinated activity that leaves a character open to being struck; activating an item requires much less mental acuity.

Some character class abilities are standard actions; one ability that all classes have in common is the ability to spend a surge to regain hit point damage, for instance. Each such ability's description will say whether using it triggers attacks of opportunity.

A character may spend their standard action to **hold** an action. They don't actually use their standard action on this turn, but once their turn ends, they can use their interrupt to do things that normally couldn't be done outside of a character's turn. On their next turn they get a standard action again, whether or not they used their held action. See the section on Interrupts for more information.

Finally, a character may use their standard action to perform another move action or basic action. This action occurs at the end of the character's turn, just as it would for any other type of standard action. This has an additional benefit to the character, however; any move action or basic action taken in this way will not trigger attacks of opportunity, even if the entries above say they would. A character's standard action is precious and should count for something!

Interrupts

An interrupt is an action you may take when it is not your turn. Every character gets a single interrupt they may use. They receive an interrupt at the end of their turn, and they may only use that one interrupt until after their next turn. Characters who aren't surprised but haven't gotten to act yet have an interrupt as well, but those who are surprised do not receive an interrupt until they have taken a turn. The list of things you can do with an interrupt is shorter than the list of things a character can accomplish during their turn.

A common use of an interrupt is an attack of opportunity. When an opponent lets their guard down during their turn, and a character is within melee attack range of that opponent, the character may choose to use their interrupt to make a single melee attack against the opponent. They are not entitled to use their attack to make called shots, and they are not permitted to spend surges as free actions, although any special abilities that were triggered during the character's turn and are still in effect during the attack of opportunity will still have an effect. The things that trigger attacks of opportunity are described above in the kinds of actions a character can take during their turn. If an attack of opportunity hits, in addition to inflicting hp damage on the opponent, the following results apply:

If the action that triggered the attack of opportunity includes an attack roll or skill check, the opponent makes those rolls with a -4 penalty.

If the action that triggered the attack of opportunity was casting a spell, the opponent must make a caster level check. This is made by rolling 1d20 and adding the result to the opponent's caster level for the spell being cast, and taking a penalty equal to the number of hp inflicted by the attack of opportunity. If the resulting check equals or exceeds 10 plus the level of the spell being cast, the spell is cast as normal (although spell attack rolls will be made with the penalty described above). If this threshold is not met, the spell fails and the spell point is lost.

The character gets their interrupt back.

A character may choose to use their standard action during their turn to hold an action for later in the round when it is no longer their turn. The player describes the type of action that will be held – a melee attack action, a missile attack action, a spellcasting action, a sorcery or conjuration action, a skill check, activating a magic item, or a particular type of move action, basic action, or free action – and also describes the circumstances that will trigger the held action. These circumstances must be somewhat specific, such as "an obvious hostile creature approaches within melee attack range" or "I see a goblin within range of my bow". If the triggering conditions become applicable, the character may spend their interrupt and resolve the held action. Characters are not obliged to take their held action; at the moment that the triggering condition applies, assuming they still have their interrupt to spend, they must choose whether to take their held action. Whether the held action triggers attacks of opportunity depends on what type of action it is; if it would trigger attacks of opportunity when taken during the character's turn, they would trigger it as a held action as well. Held actions that aren't used by the beginning of the character's next turn are lost.

A particular type of held action is a **counterspell**. If a spellcasting character holds a spellcasting action with the trigger of "interrupting the spellcasting actions of an opponent within range", and this triggering condition comes to pass, then they may attempt to disrupt the spell. They do this if they have access either to the spell *dispel magic*, and a spell point remaining of that level, or the specific spell being cast, and a spell point remaining of that level. The effective range of a counterspell is 30', or the range of the spell being cast by the opponent, whichever is greater. Since spellcasting is not subtle, if the character senses the opponent casting the spell, they will recognize what spell is being cast as the casting begins, but it is not necessary to know what spell is being cast if the character is using a dispel magic spell. The GM may choose to allow casters to make Knowledge skill checks as a reaction to know what spell is being cast. Magic items can never be used to counterspell, even if they generate a spell effect identical to a spell being cast, and the magic effects generated by a magic item cannot be counterspelled. If the conditions for counterspelling existing and the character chooses to use their held action, they spend the spell point being used for the counterspell, and the spell being cast is negated with its spell point lost. Counterspells never trigger attacks of opportunity

Some spells are cast as interrupts, and these are described in Chapter 4. These spells never trigger attacks of opportunity.

Reactions

Whether it is your turn or not, there are some actions you are entitled to take if a very specific set of prerequisite conditions exist. A reaction may be optional, but sometimes a reaction is required; this is explained further in the action's description. They are something like free actions in that there are no limits to the number of reactions you can take, although they may be limited by other mechanisms such as the number of surges you can spend.

Many class abilities are reactions, such as the kind that allow you to reroll an attack roll if you don't like the result. These typically require the expenditure of a surge. This type of ability can be used when a character is making an attack of opportunity provided they have a surge to spend. Such a reaction never triggers attacks of opportunity.

Some spells are cast as reactions, and these are described in Chapter 4. These spells never trigger attacks of opportunity.

This is a good time to mention **tickets**. As mentioned in Chapter 1, I like to play games that benefit charities, and my favorite charity to benefit is the Houston Food Bank. The mechanism I use to benefit this charity is to sell two kinds of tickets at the table. I buy rolls of white tickets and red tickets from my local office supply store, and I sell them for $1 for a white ticket and $5 for a red ticket. The proceeds from these sales become a cash donation to the Houston Food Bank. You can choose to play for other charities if you like, but it's pretty important to me that you donate 100% of the money you make from these ticket sales to charity. I have no objection to GMs earning money by hosting role-playing games, but ticket sales should not supplement that because this is buying an in-game benefit, and being paid to make characters more successful seems wrong.

Here's how the in-game benefit works. If you have a white ticket, you can spend it as a reaction to change any die roll made at the table. Regardless of who rolled a die, if you don't like the result that you see, you can tear up a white ticket and require that player to roll the die again. The original die roll is thrown out and the new one takes its place. Multiple tickets can be spent on a single die roll if you are determined to see a particular result! Red tickets, which are more expensive than white tickets, have a more powerful effect. You may, as a reaction, spend a red ticket on only the dice that you roll. You pick up the die, spend the red ticket, and carefully place the die with whatever number you like facing up. This counts as your die roll result. Nobody is ever obliged to buy or spend a ticket, and GMs are never obliged to sell them if they don't want them in their games. Just like everything else in this ruleset, it's up to the GMs and the players to decide what rules and guidelines apply to their game.

Combat Considerations

When a character wishes to make an attack of some kind during an encounter, they must roll 1d20, add the relevant attack bonus to the roll along with any other modifiers that may apply, and the resulting total is the value of the appropriate defense that is successfully attacked. All types of attacks have this in common, but there are different variations on these rules if the attack is a melee, missile, sorcery, or spell attack.

When making attack rolls, refer to the following table for relevant bonus or penalties to the attack roll:

Table 7-2: TOTIL Attack Modifier Table

Circumstances	Attack Type	Bonus or Penalty To Hit	Special
dim light conditions	melee, missile, sorcery, spell	-1	
darkness conditions	melee, missile, sorcery, spell	-2	
total darkness conditions	melee, missile, sorcery, spell	-4	
no proficiency with weapon	melee, missile	-4	
attacker has complete surprise	melee, missile, sorcery, spell	+2	does not stack with **defender is unaware**
two-weapon fighting	melee	-4	
improvised weapon fighting	melee, missile	-1 to -3	
swimming or wading in deep water	melee, missile, sorcery, spell	-2	
short range	missile	+1	
medium range	missile	+0	
long range	missile	-1	
defender is unaware	melee	+2	+4 with Thief class
defender has cover	melee, missile, sorcery, spell	-1 to -4	
defender is prone	missile, sorcery	-2	
defender is prone	melee, sorcery	+2	
attacker is invisible	melee	+1	
defender is invisible	melee, missile, sorcery, spell	-4	
attacker is prone	melee	-2	
attacker is making a called shot	melee, missile	-4	
attacker has the *grappled* condition	melee, missile, sorcery, spell	-4	
attacker is currently grappling target	melee	+4	
touch attack	spell	+2	attacks Dodge defense

Cover

Many of these bonuses or penalties have been covered under other sections of these rules. One that has not is **cover**. Cover is anything other than worn protection that screens a target from attack, either because a portion of the target's body is behind a hard object that might fend off some blows, or because a portion of the target's body is screened from view. A character who is hunkered down behind waist-high tall grass has cover, as does a monster lurking just around the corner of a bend in a corridor.

The GM must assess how much protection each example of cover is worth, with the protection being greater if more of the body is protected, and if the protection is hard instead of soft. A target hiding on the other side of a bead curtain may only have a cover penalty of -1 to the attack roll, while a target hunkered down behind a fortified stone wall might enjoy a cover penalty of -4. It is not recommended to use cover penalties greater than -4.

Touch Spell Attacks

Most weapon attacks are made against a target's AC defense, and many spell attacks are too. However, some spells are delivered by touch, where the caster only needs to lay a hand upon a portion of the body of the target. The target can be clothed or even armored where the touch attack lands; being covered head to toe is not a defense against **touch spell attacks**.

A typical touch spell attack is made against a target's Dodge defense since the protective value of armor is non-existent against this type of attack. Furthermore, attacking to just lay a hand on a target is easier than most other attacks than one might be able to dodge; spells delivered by touch are made with a bonus of +2 to the spell attack bonus. This bonus is incorporated into the description of each spell.

If a touch spell attack misses, the spell is not necessarily wasted. Once the spell is cast, the caster has **charged** themself with the magical energy, and touching an opponent delivers that charge. If the attack misses, the charge is not delivered, but neither is it discharged – the caster is still carrying the charge and may attempt to deliver the

touch attack in the next round. In fact, the charge can be held by the caster indefinitely provided they concentrate on doing so, and they do not take any other standard actions.

If the caster takes damage from any source while they are holding the charge of a spell, it counts as an interrupt, and the caster must make a caster level check as described above or lose the spell. At any time, a caster can choose to stop concentrating on the spell and allow its charge to dissipate, provided it is their turn to act; this is a free action that does not trigger attacks of opportunity.

Helpless Targets

Creatures that are completely helpless – *sleeping*, *paralyzed*, *unconscious*, or bound such that they cannot move – can be easily attacked with melee or natural weapons. No attack roll is required; if the attacker is within range of the target, the attack succeeds. Furthermore, damage is assessed as if the attacker rolled a 20 – a critical hit (see below). Helpless targets attacked with missile or spell attacks have defenses that cannot be any better than 10.

Called Shots

Creatures attacking with a weapon or natural weapons can attempt a **called shot**, which tries to place a blow that will yield a strategic advantage. Prior to rolling an attack die, the attacker declares it to be a called shot, and they take a -4 penalty to the attack roll. If the attack succeeds, it does half normal damage (round up) and the attacker may choose one of the following effects:

- As a reaction, the target must make a skill check (Feats of Agility or Feats of Might, their choice) or take on the *prone* condition (see below).
- As a reaction, the target must make a skill check (Feats of Agility or Feats of Might, their choice) or a single item in their hands falls to the ground.
- As a reaction, the target must make a skill check (Feats of Agility or Feats of Might, their choice) or move 5' in a direction designated by the attacker.
- The target takes a -1 penalty to attack rolls for the next 2 rounds. Only one such penalty can affect a target at one time.
- The target takes a -2 penalty to all defenses for the next 2 rounds. Only one such penalty can affect a target at one time.
- The target takes 1 point of trauma damage.
- The attacker may attempt to attack and damage a single object on the person of the target. (This does full damage, not half damage, to the object, but no damage to the target.)

Damage

When many types of attacks succeed (and even sometimes when they fail), the target sustains damage to their hp. The amount of damage is determined, usually by rolling one or more dice and adding modifiers, and that number of hit points are subtracted from the victim's total.

Character sheets have space for both the maximum and current hit point totals; when a character takes damage, the maximum hp remains unchanged, but the damage is subtracted from the current hp. When a creature's current hp reaches zero or lower, they are dying. A dying creature always spends until the end of their next turn in this state, but at the end of that period, it is dead. Dying creatures can only be restored to life by spending surges (see Chapter 2) or receiving certain spells (see Chapter 4) or using certain magic items (see Chapter 9).

It is advised that players may wish to use pencil to record changes to hit points on character sheets, because during play it is likely that current hp totals will go up and down quite a bit. Using a pencil and eraser helps to keep character sheets neater. The GM will also need to record changes to various creatures' current hp totals, especially once a fight breaks out, and it's a good idea to keep some scratch paper handy for this purpose.

Damage Types

Often damage has a type, and a creature's magical or inherent defenses may protect it from a portion of that damage. There are four types of energy damage: acid, cold, fire, and lightning. There are also three types of special weapon damage: magic, fey iron, and silver. All other damage is untyped.

Energy Resistance

Creatures may have **energy resistance** to a particular type of damage, or a spell might temporarily grant such a benefit. A being with energy resistance takes half as much damage from that energy type (round down). *Energy resistance (cold)*, for instance, halves the damage taken with the *cold* energy type, but leaves other damage unaffected.

For example, a monster breathes a cloud of fire at the characters, and a successful hit does 3d6 hp fire damage. The GM rolls the three dice and gets results of 5, 4, and 2, so a hit should do 11 hp fire damage. However, one of the characters is protected with *resistance (fire)*. The damage from the fiery cloud is reduced 5 hp for that character.

Some creatures may have a more advanced type of defense against an energy type called **immunity**. Creatures with immunity cannot take any damage of that type; a monster with lightning *immunity* can be struck by one hundred lightning bolts and will not be injured.

Creatures may also have an **energy vulnerability** to a particular damage type. Energy vulnerability is the opposite of energy resistance; if a creature has *energy vulnerability (acid)*, they must add 50%, rounded up, to the total amount of hp damage inflicted by that energy type. Therefore, an *acid cloud* spell might inflict 15 hp to most creatures, but the damage for a creature with *energy vulnerability (acid)* would be 23 hp.

It is possible that a particular attack may have several damage types, and a creature may have *energy resistances* that impact the damage in several ways. If this happens, the GM should follow these guidelines:

- Two *energy resistances* of the same type stack to provide immunity, so if a character has *energy resistance (fire)* from two different sources, they will have *immunity (fire)*. Note, however, that spells such as *resist energy (fire)* cannot be cast multiple times on one creature.
- An *energy resistance* and an *energy vulnerability* cancel each other. So, if a monster has *energy resistance (acid)* from its description, but a magical effect gives it *energy vulnerability (acid)*, then the monster has no *resistance* or *vulnerability*.
- *Immunity* is absolute. No matter how many *energy vulnerability* effects are on a particular attack's damage, if that target has *immunity* to that damage type, no damage results.

Critical Hits

An attack roll of 20 indicates that a truly well-placed attack has been made. This is called a **natural 20**, to differentiate it from attack rolls where a total of 20 or more is the result of added bonuses. When a natural 20 is rolled, two things happen:

- Any type of attack automatically hits, even if the total, with all bonuses and penalties factored in, does not equal or exceed the defense of the target. Weak creatures may have a severe disadvantage when attacking the strong, but there is always a chance for success!
- If the attack is with a natural weapon or a weapon (but not with a spell, unless it says so in the spell description, or a **special power**, or a **special quality**), the attack scores a **critical hit**.

Some special abilities have the ability to convert a normal hit to a critical hit even when a natural 20 is not rolled. When a character achieves a critical hit, the weapon inflicts its normal damage; additionally, the player rolls a d20 and consults the table below. They have a choice to make: they may choose the result on the left, which tends to impose conditions or other disadvantages on the target (and possibly some extra damage), or they may choose the

result on the right, which applies additional hit point damage to the target. Some of the conditions on the left may not apply to all monsters, or the player may be hoping for a quick take-down of the target, which might be one reason to choose results from the right column; the party may be fighting a large and robust monster where longer-term strategic concerns are more important, which could be a reason to choose results from the left column.

Table 7-3: TOTIL Critical Hit Table

Die Roll	Add normal weapon damage to one of the options below (your choice)		
1	OFF BALANCE. Target has a -1 penalty to all attack rolls and skill checks for its next 2 turns	OR	Normal damage including all bonuses
2	DISORIENTED. Target has a -2 penalty to all defenses for its next 2 turns	OR	Normal damage including all bonuses
3	DAZED. Target takes 1 trauma	OR	Normal damage including all bonuses
4	KNOCKED DOWN. Roll another normal damage AND target falls prone	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
5	KNOCKED BACK. Roll another normal damage AND move target 5' in a direction you choose	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
6	FLUMMOXED. Target takes 2 trauma	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
7	INSENSATE. Roll another normal damage AND target loses a perceptive sense you choose, Recovery 15	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
8	BLOODIED. Roll another normal damage AND target receives the *bleeding(1)* condition, Recovery 15	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
9	ADDLED. Target takes 3 trauma	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
10	STUPEFIED. Target takes the *stunned* condition for its next turn	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
11	DISARMED. Roll another normal damage AND an object in the target's hands drops to the ground	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
12	VANDALIZED. Roll another normal damage AND an object worn or held by the target receives the *damaged* property	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
13	SOMETHING WEIRD. You describe something unfortunate that happens to the target, and hope the GM approves it	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
14	BULLDOZED. Roll another normal damage AND target falls prone AND move target 10' in a direction you choose	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
15	PERFORATED. Roll another normal damage AND target receives the *bleeding (2)* condition, Recovery 15	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
16	SCRAMBLED. Target takes 3 + 1d3 trauma	OR	Maximum damage including all bonuses
17	GOBSMACKED. Maximum damage AND target takes the *stunned* condition for its next turn	OR	Double maximum damage including all bonuses
18	TEED UP. Maximum damage AND target has a -4 penalty to all defenses for its next 2 turns	OR	Double maximum damage including all bonuses
19	BURGLARIZED. Maximum damage AND an object in the target's hands flies to a location of your choice 30' away	OR	Double maximum damage including all bonuses
20	CALAMITOUS RUIN. Roll twice on this table, ignoring results of 20		

The player always makes this die roll for themself; critical hits are important moments and the character's fate should be in their player's hands. In general, lower rolls on this table yield lower damage results, and higher rolls yield higher results. GMs can also roll natural 20s on attack rolls, and critical hits can be achieved by monsters as well as characters; when this happens, the GM should make intelligent decisions regarding how critical hits affect characters.

The opposite of a critical hit is a **critical failure**. A natural 1 on any kind of attack roll always misses, even if the total, with all bonuses and penalties factored in, equals the defense of the target. There are no other negative results to a critical failure; missing is bad enough.

Trauma
Some attacks deal **trauma** damage, which is a separate category of damage from hit points; it has its own space on character sheets. Trauma comes from attacks that may not kill a creature by battering it to pieces or by causing it to bleed from wounds; instead, it involves injury to the brain that can disorient the victim or even cause them to

fall unconscious. Attacks that can cause trauma include certain special abilities, drowning or suffocation, called shots, or certain spells or magic items.

Hit point damage is subtractive, where the damage taken is subtracted from the current hp. In contrast, trauma is additive, where points are added to any trauma the creature may already have taken, and the new total is recorded in the trauma box. Each point of trauma represents increasing levels of concussion and pain; a character takes a penalty of -1 to attack rolls and skill checks for every point of trauma.

If the total amount of trauma ever equals or exceeds the character's Constitution score, the character acquires the *unconscious* condition – see below. This means that sometimes a character can fall unconscious by taking damage to their Constitution score, because it can drop below the level of trauma the character sustained earlier in the adventure.

Temporary Hit Points

Some magical effects can bestow **temporary hit points** upon the recipient. This is a pool of hit points that are tracked next to the current hp tally, representing hit points over and above a character's maximum hit points. When a character takes hit point damage, they are lost from the temporary hit points first until that reserve is gone; only then is any additional damage subtracted from current hit points.

Once temporary hit points are lost, they cannot be regained or healed back, although current hit points can certainly be restored back to their maximum.

> *Example: Shedrae the Sorcerer has a current hp of 10 out of 12 maximum hp, and then an ally casts a spell that grants them 8 temporary hit points. Next, they are hit by a kobold's spear which does 5 hp damage; Shedrae now has 10 current hp and 3 temporary hp.*
>
> *Now a Cleric casts a **treat wounds** spell on Shedrae; their current hp is increased to the maximum of 12, but temporary hp remains at 3. Finally, an explosive trap goes off nearby, inflicting 8 hp; all Shedrae's temporary hp are lost, and the remaining 5 hp comes off their current hp, leaving them with 7.*

Ability Score Damage

Characters can sustain damage to ability scores. **Ability score damage** is debilitating, as a reduced ability score results in more difficulty passing skill checks, and this may affect combat statistics. When an ability score drops below 3, a character is in serious trouble:

- With a Strength of 1 or 2 a character cannot carry any equipment, encumbered or otherwise, and moves at half their normal walking movement. They cannot run.
- With a Dexterity of 1 or 2 a character cannot negotiate stairs without help, let alone climb a rope or ladder.
- With a Constitution of 1 or 2 a character acquires the *fatigued* condition, which lasts until the ability score rises to 3 or higher.
- With an Intelligence of 1 or 2 a character cannot communicate and may not understand basic concepts.
- With a Wisdom score of 1 or 2 a character struggles to perceive even obvious things and may miss Seeing or Hearing checks that ought to be automatic.
- With a Charisma score of 1 or 2 a character will meekly follow all instructions, even from enemies.

When any ability score drops to 0, the character dies.

Energy Drain

One of the most feared attacks a character can be subjected to is *energy drain*. Some types of *undead* creatures described in Chapter 8 can draw a portion of a character's life-force out of their body and devour it. When a vampire drains energy from a character, for instance, it's not just sucking blood – it's also feeding on life energy, which can kill a living creature outright or reduce them to a shadow of their former self.

When a creature is successfully hit with an *energy drain* attack, the following things happen:

- If the creature is a character, they lose one level of experience per level of *energy drain*. If they only have a single class level, they die. If they have more than one level, reduce the level by one, and reduce XP to the midpoint of the reduced level, as shown in the Class Advancement Table in Chapter 6.
- If the creature is a monster with **enhancements** (see Chapter 8), remove one enhancement per level of *energy drain*.
- If the creature is a monster without enhancements, remove one **Hit Die**. If the monster only has a single Hit Die, or it loses enough Hit Dice to drop to zero, it dies.
- With the loss of levels, enhancements, or Hit Dice, reduce the creature's hit points. Roll the appropriate die for the level, enhancement, or Hit Die drained to randomly determine the number of maximum hit points lost. If this reduces the creature's maximum hit points to 0 or below, the creature dies.
- Reduce the creature's attack bonuses, defenses, and surges to the amount associated with their reduced level or Hit Dice. Do not remove any custom points spent, including languages and proficiencies.
- Reduce the creature's spell points down to no higher than those a creature of the reduced level could have available. Spellbooks are not affected; a spell written into an Elf's spellbook that is too high for them to cast is still there, but they will not be able to cast that spell again until they are high enough level.

These modifications are permanent unless a *restore health* or *heal* spell is cast within 24 hours. If this spell is cast upon the drained individual, restore experience points, maximum hit points, and all other reduced attributes to the pre-drain numbers. Even though the effects of *energy drain* are permanent, the character can begin earning XP immediately after the loss, and in time can regain higher level statistics and abilities.

Unconsciousness

When a character gains enough trauma to equal or exceed their Constitution score, they fall unconscious. They gain the *unconscious* condition. They immediately drop objects they are holding and acquire the *prone* condition. Any magical effects that rely on the victim's concentration end immediately.

Unconscious characters have no senses, cannot communicate, cannot move, and cannot take actions. They cannot roll initiative. See later in this chapter for rules on healing trauma; as soon as a character's Constitution score exceeds their trauma score, they lose the *unconscious* condition, regain consciousness, and may take actions.

Any spell points when the character lost consciousness are retained. Time spent unconscious does not count as resting for purposes of regaining fatigue, spell points, and hit points.

Death

When a character's current hit points drop to zero or below, they are dying. They acquire the *unconscious* condition. They immediately drop objects they are holding and acquire the *prone* condition. Any magical effects that rely on the victim's concentration end immediately.

Dying characters have no senses, cannot communicate, cannot move, and cannot take actions. They cannot roll initiative. Only a few Cleric spells, surges, and magic items can save a dying character; it is too late for cure spells or healing potions. If the character is not saved by the end of the round following the turn when the character began dying, they are permanently dead, although very powerful spells can restore even the permanently dead to life.

If a character is saved from the brink of death, they are still *unconscious* until they are restored to positive hp. Their trauma score is set to a minimum of 5; if it was higher than that when they began dying, they do not gain any additional trauma, but they will have at least 5 points of trauma when they begin to recover. If the character has Constitution score equal to or lower than their trauma, they are still *unconscious*. Otherwise, they regain consciousness, but trauma penalizes them in the usual way, and trauma penalizes them until those points can be removed.

Any creature that recovers from dying will suffer some permanent and debilitating condition, either physical or psychological. The player and the GM should discuss what form such a scar should take; ideally it should make a good story and add to the character's personality. If the player and GM cannot agree on the results of this extraordinary injury, or if they are looking for inspiration, the player can roll on the Disfigurements and Derangements Table below:

Table 7-4: TOTIL Disfigurements and Derangements

1d20 Roll	Permanent Effect
1	Several teeth knocked out
2	Arthritic joints: -1 to attack rolls and skill checks when it is raining or snowing
3	An interesting scar that is difficult to conceal
4	A profound phobia related to the source or circumstances of the triggering injury
5	Pronounced limp: no effect on movement rate, but the character cannot take a run action
6	Blurred vision: -1 to Seeing checks
7	Wheezing breathing: -1 to Stealth checks
8	Ringing in the ears: -1 to Hearing checks
9	Missing a finger, ear, or other small body part
10	Difficulty sleeping: character must pass a Constitution check to fall asleep, or use sleeping medicines
11	Broken, flattened nose
12	Weakness in a limb: -4 to Feats of Might checks involving that extremity
13	Serious loss: missing an eye, hand, or foot. Discuss consequences with the GM.
14	Balance disorder: -1 to Feats of Agility checks
15	Crushed voicebox: cannot talk louder than a whisper
16	A serious mania related to the source or circumstances of the triggering injury
17	Tires easily: fatigue limit reduced by 1
18	Oddly-healed bone: a portion of the body appears asymmetric or twisted
19	A nervous tic of the player's choice
20	Roll twice, ignoring results of 20

Other Encounter Situations

Falling

During a combat encounter, a creature may find themselves without a solid surface underfoot and succumb to gravity. Perhaps they were pushed over the edge of a precipice, or fell into a pit trap, or maybe the rope they were climbing was cut. The GM may rule that the creature has an opportunity to attempt a very difficult Feats of Agility skill check to immediately attempt to catch themselves, but this probably shouldn't be allowed in cases of surprise or where there isn't anything that can be grabbed to prevent falling. Otherwise, the creature is falling unless they have some magical means to prevent it such as being the recipient of a *levitate* spell.

Regardless of whose turn it is, the creature immediately falls straight downward. If the height of the fall is 250' or less, the creature immediately hits bottom, and only creatures who can make a desperate grab action, or those with some other sort of interrupt action such as a *feather fall* spell, can prevent this. Damage from falling is 1d6 hp damage for every 10' fallen, with a maximum possible damage of 20d6 hp for a single fall. Falling into water of sufficient depth may reduce falling damage as if they fell 20' less, while soft sand or hay may reduce falling damage as if they fell 10' less. If a character takes at least 1 hp of falling damage, every item in their inventory with the *fragile* property must check for breakage – see Chapter 5.

If the fall is more than 250', the character falls an additional 500' at the beginning of each of their subsequent turns until they hit bottom. They may take a full set of actions on their turn while falling, although their ability to

move may be limited. The GM should consider all reasonable suggestions for how a character might attempt to rescue themselves or another creature from a long fall, but this should be a difficult thing to do!

Unarmed Fighting

There are times when an adventurer may find themself without a readily available weapon, but characters may attack by striking with bare hands and feet. Such an attack is made as a normal melee attack, factoring in bonuses from Strength to both combat attack and damage rolls. The base damage for an unarmed attack is 1d2 hp. Attacking while unarmed requires a single free hand.

Characters may also attack by grappling – using limbs to pin, trip, or leverage some advantage over their opponent. This attack is also made as a normal melee attack, factoring in bonuses from Strength for the attack roll, but it does not inflict damage in hp. Instead, on a successful attack, the character may inflict one of the results of a called shot attack. Alternatively, they may impose the *grappled* condition on a target that is not significantly larger than the character. To escape the *grappled* condition, on its turn as a standard action, a victim makes an opposed Feats of Agility or Feats of Might check, opposed by the character's Feats of Might; on a success, the victim is no longer *grappled*. While a victim is *grappled*, the hand used in the attack that inflicted the condition is engaged with that target; it cannot be used to attack another target unless the character releases the *grapple*, which it can do as a free action on its turn (provided it has not already used that attack on this turn). While the target is *grappled*, however, the character can continue to use that hand to make unarmed attacks against the target on subsequent rounds, or they may maintain the grapple with that hand and use the other hand to take other actions or make other attacks. Furthermore, while a target is *grappled*, all the character's melee attack rolls against that target are made at a +4 bonus.

Unarmed fighting is a weapon proficiency that can be purchased with custom points. Unless a character gains that skill, all unarmed attacks will suffer a non-proficiency penalty of -4. Unarmed fighting counts as a 1-handed weapon for the purpose of what a character can carry while fighting. A shield hand cannot be used to make unarmed attacks.

Improvised Weapon Fighting

Characters without proper weapons may need to improvise. Any heavy object can be used as a makeshift club; any tool with a metal head can penetrate armor; any pole that adds to an arm's reach can multiply the force a character can produce by bare hands alone. Chairs, bottles, farm implements, a serving platter, a beggar's crutch, a heavy book, a length of rope with a knot at the end – all these items can be used in a pinch to inflict damage.

When a character picks up an improvised melee weapon, the GM must determine how many hands area required to wield it effectively, whether it inflicts sharp or blunt damage, and how much damage it inflicts. One-handed objects will generally inflict 1d3 or 1d4 hp base damage. Two-handed objects will generally inflicts 1d6 or 1d8 hp base damage.

When a character picks up improvised weapons for throwing, the GM must determine how many hands are required to wield it effectively, whether it inflicts sharp or blunt damage, its effective range, and how much damage it inflicts. Thrown objects that inflict 1d2 hp base damage generally require one hand and have a range of 20/40/60. Thrown objects that inflict 1d3 hp base damage generally require one hand and have a range of 10/20/30. Thrown objects that inflict 1d4 hp base damage generally require two hands and have a range of 10/20/30. Heavier and more damaging objects may be throwable but their range should be extremely short, although they may be dropped from a great height.

Improvised weapons is a weapon proficiency that can be purchased with custom points. Unless a character gains that skill, all improvised weapon attacks will suffer a non-proficiency penalty of -4. However, improvised weapons are still weapons; any bonuses or penalties resulting from exceptional ability scores or class abilities apply to improvised weapons as well. It is possible to throw melee weapons that are not intended to be used as missiles,

but these should be treated as improvised weapons for the purposes of their attack rolls, damage, and range. Improvised weapons count as having the *cheap* property.

Two-Weapon Fighting

Wielding a weapon in each hand is possible but difficult. The following rules apply:

- Some weapons have the *light* property (see Chapter 5). If a character fights with two weapons that are both *light*, and they have proficiency in **two-weapon fighting**, attacks are made with a penalty of -2 per weapon. If a character fights with two weapons that are both *light*, but they do not have proficiency in two-weapon fighting, attacks are made with a penalty of -4 per weapon. Unarmed fighting counts as a one-handed light weapon, so it is possible to grapple with one hand and attack with a dagger in the other. However, you cannot make two unarmed fighting attacks using two-weapon fighting.
- If either of the weapons being used are not *light*, the penalties listed above increase by -4 per attack.
- When fighting in this way, each weapon must qualify as a one-handed weapon for the wielder. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- Once all penalties are accounted for, a character may attack once per round with each weapon as part of a single standard action. If they use a surge or other method to gain an additional attack that round, they must choose one of their two weapons with which to make the extra attack; they do not get an extra attack with both weapons.

Thrown Weapons with Area Effect

Some thrown weapons do not do damage by striking the opponent forcefully; they only need to land on or near the target to be dangerous. The classic example is a flask of oil, which may be thrown at an opponent and then set on fire, but there are other items that work similarly, and these are called **grenades**.

All grenades have a range of 20/40/60. To hit a target, the attacker rolls an attack roll as usual for a missile weapon, but armor does not help the target's Armor Class – whether the target is wearing plate mail or pajamas, their Armor Class for grenades is 10 plus or minus their Dexterity modifier and any class and range requirements.

Grenades must land somewhere, even if they miss! Roll 1d8 to determine where the missile lands:

Result	Position
1	Past target
2	Long and right
3	Wide right
4	Short right
5	Short of target
6	Short left
7	Wide left
8	Long left

Attacks that miss by 5 or less land 5' away from the target; attacks that miss by more than 5 land 10' away from the target. Targets within the area of a grenade suffer its damaging effects.

Common types of grenades are described in the Consumables section of Chapter 5; see item descriptions for splash damage and other important characteristics. All creatures, including all character classes, are presumed to have proficiency in throwing grenades.

Fighting in Water

Characters are at their most effective when they are standing on dry land and breathing air, but adventurers sometimes need to venture outside their comfort zone, and that may include entering the water. Being in or under water has consequences to the effectiveness of characters' actions. Players must keep careful track of items on the

character's person that may be ruined by water. Also, note that water up to the waist of an adult human will be over the head of a Halfling!

When a character is standing on solid ground, but they are partially submerged in water, they may have some penalties to normal activities:

- For water up to their knees, there are no penalties.
- For water up to their waist, they suffer a -1 penalty to Feats of Agility and the Dodge and AC defenses. Their walking movement allowance is halved. The character may not run.
- For water up to their neck, they suffer a -2 penalty to Feats of Agility, Dodge and AC defenses, and all attack rolls, including spellcasting. Their walking movement allowance is halved. The character may not run.

When water is higher than the character's neck, they must swim. When creatures can swim on the surface and breathe air, they suffer a -2 penalty to all skill checks and all attack rolls, unless they are *aquatic-native* (see Chapter 8). Additionally, bulky armor weighs characters down in the water; swimming characters suffer an additional penalty to all attack rolls equal to the armor's heat stroke penalty.

Regardless of armor type, swimming characters only have a movement allowance of 15', unless they are *aquatic-native,* and they cannot run while swimming. Encumbered movement is impossible; the character must immediately drop all Inventory items in the encumbered spaces of their Inventory if they wish to move or even stay afloat.

Non-aquatic creatures that must swim underwater have an additional set of challenges:

- Fire-based light sources will not work, and infravision is ineffective underwater.
- Even if there is adequate light to see, there is a maximum line of sight of 40'.
- Weapons with the *blunt* property are ineffective underwater, and only bows, crossbows, and spears may be used as missile weapons; even these have ranges of 5'/10'/15'.
- Verbal communication is extremely limited, and spellcasting is completely impossible.
- Breathing creatures must hold their breath; they can do this for 1 minute without penalty. After that point, every minute the character swims without breathing, they must pass a Constitution check. The first minute's check must succeed with a minimal success; the next minute's check requires a good success; the following minute's check requires a great success; and every subsequent check requires a fantastic success. Upon a failed Constitution check, the character acquires the *drowning* condition (see later in this chapter).

Creatures that are not of the *aquatic-native* type have the same underwater swimming movement allowance that they have when they are swimming on the water's surface.

Mounted Combat

Horses and other beasts of burden are not covered in the rules for **Tales of the Iron League**, and it is recommended that the GM de-emphasize their use in their games. Steeds and other animals add complexity to expeditions above and below ground through myriad considerations – how to feed them, whether they will panic in a fight, whether they can negotiate difficult terrain, what tricks they can be taught, etc. – and it is suggested that the GM simply not offer such creatures for sale or trade at Iron League Headquarters. However, characters have a way of finding ways to do things that GMs don't expect, so it is entirely possible that the adventurers will find themselves needing to fight or act while mounted. Future supplements to these rules may address this subject.

Mounted can be taken to mean that a creature is being moved by means not under their direct control; characters riding a magical flying carpet, clinging to the back of a runaway rhinoceros, or climbing out the window of a

runaway stagecoach can all be said to be mounted. In general, the following rules should apply for action while mounted:

- If a character needs to use one or more hands to hold on, they must take a -2 penalty to attack rolls and skill checks.
- If the character needs to make attack rolls against a target that is not moving with the mount, they must take a -2 penalty to attack rolls; this stacks with the penalty above. If the target is on the same mount, or if it is on a different mount moving on a similar trajectory, or if it is the mount itself, this penalty is not required.
- If the character has direct control over their movement, such as a character using a *fly* spell, there are no penalties for being mounted.

Breaking Things

Sometimes adventurers must break inanimate objects. The good news is that it's not hard to hit an inanimate object (unless an opponent is holding it, in which case it's a called shot). Attack rolls are generally not required for items that are not moving. The bad news is that inanimate objects are often much harder to break than living things, but this can vary a great deal in accordance with the type of object to be broken.

The GM must use judgment here. Is the item a dish that must be smashed on the ground? That's a trivial action; no die must be rolled. How about cutting through the side of a circus tent? The GM might rule that an attack that does 4 hp damage might tear a character-sized hole in the fabric – but only if using edged weapons.

How about destroying a piano? You might need to do 10 hp to reduce it to a pile of wood, ivory, and wire, but only 1 hp would be sufficient if all you need to do is make it play out of tune. In this case, a bludgeoning weapon might do full damage, and piercing or edged weapons only half. Naturally, if you push a piano into a 20' deep pit, it ought to destroy itself! See Chapter 5 for rules on breaking or destroying many types of equipment.

Some objects are built to resist being damaged by weapons. These items have **structural hit points (shp)**, and weapons meant to cause injury to living things aren't much good at inflicting this type of damage. Very large or strong creatures can inflict structural hit point damage (see Chapter 8). So can some magic items (see Chapter 9), as well as specialty siege warfare equipment not covered under these rules.

Finally, characters can slowly inflict structural hit point damage by using proper tools: picks, heavy hammers, crowbars, etc. A single character can, if provided with the correct tools, inflict 1 shp by spending a single MP. Multiple characters can only work on the same item at the same time if the GM rules that there is physical room for them both to safely work; two characters with sledgehammers probably couldn't team up to break down a narrow door at the end of a cramped corridor, but they probably could take turns breaking up a wardrobe in the middle of a room. This is usually noisy and may draw unwanted attention.

See the table below for typical shp values for items. Separate values are provided for the damage necessary to make a hole large enough for a single character to enter, and the damage required to destroy the object.

Table 7-5: TOTIL Structural Integrity Table

Structure Type	shp to make a hole	shp to destroy
iron-bound wood door, 4' wide	1	2
wooden lockbox, 3'x2'x2'	1	3
stone crypt lid, 10'x10', 3" thick	2	3
bronze gates, barred, 15' wide	3	5
steel strongbox, 2'x1'x1'	3	6
stone statue, human size	N/A	4
10'x10' of wooden wall, 4" thick	2	4
10'x10' of stone wall, 12" thick	6	12
10'x10' of brick wall, 6" thick	4	8
stone altar, 5'x10', 3' high	N/A	6

Conditions

During combat or other hazardous encounters, characters or other creatures can become the recipients of various ongoing and harmful effects. These are called conditions. When a character acquires a condition, the player should pencil it into the appropriate place on the character sheet. Conditions are usually not permanent, but some of them are easier to remove than others. These effects of various conditions are tabulated below.

Table 7-6: TOTIL Conditions

Condition	Effect	End Condition
afraid	must move away from source of fear	upon recovery; when dispelled
bleeding	take 1 hp bleed damage at end of victim's turn	when 1 hp of magical healing is received
blinded	cannot see; all creatures are treated as invisible	upon recovery; when magically cured
charmed	treats source as trusted friend	upon recovery; when dispelled; when broken by being given unacceptable commands
confused	acts randomly	upon recovery; when dispelled
cursed	varies according to curse	varies according to curse
deafened	cannot hear; cannot receive verbal communications	upon recovery; when magically cured
diseased	varies according to disease	varies according to disease
drowning	-4 to attacks and skill checks, spell casting impossible	upon recovery
encumbered	movement rates halved; -1 to attacks and skill checks; -1 to fatigue limit	reduce inventory
ensnared	cannot move or attack; limited ability to access items or cast spells	upon recovery; when escapes area of effect
fatigued	-2 to attacks and skill checks; reduction in movement rate	upon recovery; when magically cured; when removed by rest
grappled	cannot move; Feats of Agility to access items not in hand or cast spells; -4 to attacks	when grapple is escaped
hasted	doubled movement rates; take an additional non-spellcasting action; +1 to initiative	at end of duration; when dispelled
intoxicated	-2 to attacks and skill checks; -1 to defenses	upon recovery; when magically cured
nauseated	reduced actions; -1 to attacks and skill checks; -1 to defenses	upon recovery
paralyzed	cannot act physically; is helpless	upon recovery; when dispelled; when magically cured
petrified	cannot act; is unaware; is made of stone	upon recovery; when dispelled
poisoned	varies according to poison	varies according to poison
prone	-2 to attack, -2 AC vs. melee attacks; +2 AC vs. missile attacks; limited movement	stands up
sleeping	cannot act; falls prone and drops items; is helpless	upon recovery; when dispelled; when awakened
slowed	halved movement rates; limited actions; -1 to initiative	upon recovery; when dispelled
stunned	takes no actions	upon recovery; when magically cured
unconscious	cannot act; falls prone and drops items; is helpless	hp rises above zero
unhinged	erratic behavior	when magically cured

Afraid

The creature is overwhelmed with magical fear. This condition cannot affect creatures that have insufficient nervous systems to know fear; monsters with the *mindless* trait are immune, as are *extraplanar* creatures with the *celestial* trait. While this condition is in effect, the creature may take no actions other than moving away from the source of the fear effect at the fastest possible rate.

If the source of the fear effect is unknown, or physical constraints block the path of exit, the victim may flee in other directions, always choosing a path that takes it as far away from any known source of fear as possible, but possibly attempting to run past foes to escape, heedless of attacks of opportunity. This condition ends when its duration elapses, or when it is dispelled.

Bleeding

The creature is losing blood continuously, and in such a way that it takes continuous damage as long as this condition persists. This condition cannot affect creatures without functioning vascular systems; monsters with the *undead*, *ooze*, *plant*, *fungus*, or *elemental* traits are immune. This condition is applied with a number in parentheses after it, such as *bleeding (3)*. Every round that *bleeding* is in effect, at the end of the victim's turn, it takes damage equal to the number in parentheses, and this counts as continuous damage. This condition ends when the victim receives any sort of magical healing that restores at least 1 hp; it otherwise persists a minimum of one full turn for each victim, but at the beginning of the turn following the victim may make a recovery roll and throw off the condition on a 15 or better. If it is not successful, it may make another recovery roll on the next turn, but the target is reduced to 14; every round the recovery target drops by 1 until the *bleeding* condition is gone. Hitting a target multiple times with an attack that causes the *bleeding* condition does not cause additional bleeding, but if the new attack's *bleeding* effect is the same or more damaging than the one previously in effect, it will reset the recovery threshold back to 15.

Blinded

The creature's eyes do not work. It cannot make Seeing checks, and all other creatures count as invisible to it for the purpose of attacking. This condition cannot affect creatures with the *eyeless* trait, or creatures for whom other senses are its primary means of perception. This condition ends when its duration elapses, when it is dispelled, or when the victim receives a restorative spell that removes the condition.

Charmed

The creature believes the source of the charm is a trusted friend who can do no wrong. Any creature incapable of understanding friendship, even in its most primal state, is immune to being charmed; monsters with the *mindless* trait are not affected, as are *extraplanar* creatures with the *celestial* trait. The victim regards the charm's source as a trusted friend and ally, unless the source or its allies attack the victim, in which case the charm is broken.

If the victim and the charm's source share a language, any requests or instructions by the charm's source are seen in the most positive light possible, although obviously self-destructive actions, or actions that undermine the creature's best interests, will not be undertaken. Creatures who do not share a language with the source, or who are not intelligent enough to understand a language, are still *charmed* – but communicating desires may be difficult.

The *charmed* creature will always act in what it perceives to be the charm source's best interests, although this may not always align with the charmer's desires. This condition persists until its duration expires, until it is dispelled, or until the charm is broken as described above.

Confused

The creature loses understanding of where it is and what it is doing, frequently choosing mindless violence in place of what its higher faculties tell it to do. This condition cannot affect creatures that have insufficient nervous systems to be able to behave rationally; monsters with the *mindless* trait are immune.

Roll 1d10 at the beginning of each turn that the victim is affected. The results determine how the victim will behave on its turn: on a roll of 1 to 4, the *confused* creature will attack a member of an opposing group, randomly determining its weapon or means of attack. On a roll of 5 or 6, the *confused* creature spends its next turn babbling incoherently. On a roll of 7 to 10, the *confused* creature will attack a member of their own group, again randomly determining its weapon or means of attack. This condition ends when its duration elapses or when it is dispelled.

Cursed

The creature is the recipient of a magical curse. Any creature can be affected by a curse if it is successfully attacked by a spell that bestows curses, or if the conditions of a magical curse placed upon a place or object are fulfilled. Once the curse is in place, it is very difficult to remove; a curse persists indefinitely unless removed, even when the victim dies or comes back to life.

Removing a curse is tremendously difficult; either powerful magical curatives must be used, or a combination of a *remove curse* spell and one or more other prerequisites must be met before the curse is lifted. The effects and removing prerequisites of curses depends on the type of curse, of which many kinds are tabulated below:

Table 7-7: TOTIL Curses Table

Name of Curse	Effect	End Condition
brass and glass	Precious metals touched turn to brass; gemstones turn to colored glass	Cast remove curse and donate 1,000 gp to charity
butterfingers	When wielding a weapon, roll 1d6; on a 1, drop weapon and lose attack	Cast remove curse and do not touch a weapon for 1 month
discordant lullaby	Victim cannot sleep	Cast remove curse and be rendered comatose for 1 week
evil eye	All defenses are reduced by 2	Cast remove curse and defend someone helpless from oppression
humming hex	Swarms of flies follow the victim everywhere, causing -2 to skill checks	Cast remove curse and allow yourself to be covered in normal spiders
lycanthropy	Changes into a *lycanthrope* at night	Cast remove curse and slay the progenitor *lycanthrope* that created you
mummy rot	Gain the *mummy rot* disease	Cast remove curse and destroy the triggering *mummy's* periapt
plague of truth	Victim's thoughts are continuously spoken out loud, even if muzzled	Cast remove curse and expose a lie that negatively impacts 1,000 people
ravenous revenge	Food and drink do not prevent onset of starvation effects	Cast remove curse and personally serve food and drink to 1,000 hungry people
red hand of the adder	Victim's left hand turns red. Population within 1 mile are attacked by *red spice* poison	Cast remove curse and ingest a dose of *red spice* poison
shrivelling	Reduce one ability score by 6 (minimum score of 1)	Cast remove curse and obtain forgiveness from one you have wronged
spellburn	When casting a spell, roll 1d12; on a 1, that spell fizzles and is lost	Cast remove curse and go without any memorized spells for 1 month
tomb raider's terror	All *undead* within 1 mile know where victim is and preferentially attack	Cast remove curse and return all stolen goods to the triggering tomb

Each curse is further explained here:

Brass and Glass

This curse is commonly placed upon those who steal. Precious metals handled by the victim are instantly transmuted to an equivalent volume of brass with trivial value. Similarly, jewels are instantly transmuted to similarly sized pieces of worthless colored glass. Wearing gloves is no protection against this curse. The curse can only be lifted if the victim receives a *remove curse* spell and donates 1,000 gp or greater value to a charity that serves the poor.

Butterfingers

This curse is usually reserved for warriors. Every time the victim attempts to make an attack with a melee or missile weapon, they must roll 1d6. On a result of 1, the victim drops their weapon, and the attack fails.

Their standard action for that round is wasted. This curse circumvents physical securing; even a sword lashed tightly to the wielder's hand will mysteriously come loose and fall to the ground. The curse is released with the casting of a *remove curse* spell, and the victim must also swear off the violent use of weapons for one month.

Discordant Lullaby

This particularly cruel curse is often used on spellcasters. The curse causes a broken fragment of a jarring song to repeat over and over in the victim's mind, never falling silent for a moment. The victim cannot fall asleep; they suffer all the ill effects of sleeplessness, including the inability to remove fatigue or recover spells. This curse can be relieved by casting a *remove curse* spell, then using alchemical preparations to maintain the victim in an unconscious state for a full week.

Evil Eye

This battle curse is used to weaken opponents, especially those who are cruel and domineering. When the evil eye falls upon a victim, they are filled with crippling self-doubt and a sense of impending doom. Fortune frowns upon the victim, because all their defenses are reduced by 2 while the curse is upon them. Removing this curse requires a casting of a *remove curse* spell, as well as the victim seeking out oppressed persons who are incapable of defending themselves and ridding them of the oppressing threat.

Humming Hex

This curse is often placed upon the prideful or vain. The curse causes clouds of buzzing flies to swarm around the victim, seemingly arising from nowhere. No netting or repellent will keep the flies away – the swarm bypasses all magical and mundane protections. The flies don't cause any harm and don't prevent rest, but they are distracting – the victim's skill checks are made at -2. They are a nuisance to all within 10' of the victim, with a similar reduction to their skill checks, and are also a social hindrance. The victim can only lift the curse with the casting of the *remove curse* spell, and additionally allowing every inch of their body to be completely covered with ordinary spiders.

Lycanthropy

This curse may befall any *humanoid* who is bitten by a werewolf or other *lycanthrope*. See Chapter 8 for more details on the lycanthropy curse, in which the victim sporadically may turn into a monster with a bestial or hybrid form. When the victim transforms, that character is no longer controlled by a player, and the GM must determine their actions, which will be in accordance with a typical version of the *lycanthrope*. One hour before sunrise, the *lycanthrope* transforms back into the victim's original form, and has no memory of what happened in the intervening hours.

This curse can only be lifted by casting a *remove curse* spell, as well as the victim personally slaying a progenitor of the *lycanthrope* that cursed them; see also the rules for wolfsbane in Chapter 5. The progenitor need not be the exact creature that bit them; it may be several generations of transmission away from the immediate bite.

Those who are cursed with lycanthropy may also choose to embrace the curse; they gain the mindset of the *lycanthrope* during day as well as night, can change forms at will, and can be a progenitor for a whole new generation of were-creatures. Those who embrace the curse can no longer be adventurers; the player must generate a new character.

Mummy Rot

This deadly curse plagues any creature who is struck in melee combat by a *mummy* (see Chapter 8). The victim is infected with the *mummy rot* disease, a magical infection that cannot be cured by typical disease-removing magic, and which will inevitably claim the life of the victim unless the curse is removed (see Diseases below). Any kind of creature is subject to the effects of *mummy rot*, even creatures not normally subject to the effects of disease. The only way to relieve the victim of this dreadful curse is to

cast a *remove curse* spell and find and destroy the periapt that gives unnatural vitality to the *mummy* that caused the curse.

Plague of Truth

This curse is commonly laid upon the dishonest. The cursed creature continuously and truthfully speaks its thoughts aloud. If the creature cannot speak, either because it is muzzled or because it is naturally mute, its thoughts are still spoken aloud, clearly audible by all within 30'. The only way to cure this terrible plague is for the victim to receive a *remove curse* spell and to publicly expose another being's untruth that affects no fewer than 1,000 people.

Ravenous Revenge

This curse is often placed upon the gluttonous and selfish. The victim of this curse derives no satisfaction from eating and drinking, and sustenance does not slake hunger and thirst. This curse can rapidly become deadly, because the effects of starvation described in Chapter 6 will befall the victim regardless of how much food or drink is consumed. This curse can only be negated by receiving a *remove curse* spell and the victim must also personally host a series of major banquets that feed 1,000 people.

Red Hand of the Adder

This curse is native to the **Savarharad Desert** (see Chapter 10). It is typically cast upon one of the human desert tribesmen, as its power derives from it being well-known to those people. The left hand of the curse's victim turns a bright red – unmistakable in coloration, and difficult to hide without wearing gloves, which are not typical in the desert.

Every night while the victim sleeps, 1 in every 100 living creatures within 1 mile is attacked by the *red spice* poison (see Poisons below). Once these secondary victims are toxified, they must contend with removing the poison from their bodies even if the primary curse victim leaves the area. Those cursed with the **Red Hand of the Adder** are shunned by all who know what it means, and they will be driven away from civilization if possible.

The only way to rid oneself of this curse is to receive a *remove curse* spell and seek out and voluntarily ingest a dose of the *red spice* poison. The victim must also be toxified by the poison, and they must contend with the poison's effects without the benefit of detoxifying magic.

Shriveling

This curse is usually placed upon one who has wronged the caster. A portion of the victim's inherent vitality wastes away; this is reflected by reducing the maximum of any one ability score of the caster's choice by six (but no score can be reduced below 3). A character with a Strength of 12 would therefore have their maximum ability score reduced to 6 while the curse is in effect. It is up to the player to determine what physical debilitation this curse causes in their character. A victim with reduced Strength might have terrible pains in their joints; a character whose Intelligence is reduced might have awful headaches that keep them from thinking clearly.

The only way to shed this curse is to receive a *remove curse* spell and to obtain the forgiveness of the one who the victim wronged. It is a matter of roleplay and the GM's judgment to determine what must be done for the source of the curse to forgive the victim; GMs should not use this curse if no path for redress exists.

Spellburn

This curse is reserved for bedeviling a creature who is known to cast spells. The victim's castings become unreliable – every time they attempt to cast a spell, the player of that character must roll 1d6. On a result of 1, the spell or spell point being used is lost, and the caster's standard action that round is wasted.

The only known method of removing this curse is to receive a *remove curse* spell and for the caster to go for an entire month without using spell points.

Tomb Raider's Terror

This curse is often cast with a triggering condition to afflict creatures who break into burial tombs. Wherever the victim goes, all creatures with the *undead* trait within 1 mile know where the victim is. These *undead* creatures further consider the victim to be their most hated enemy and most desired prey, and they will seek to attack and kill the unfortunate target with every means at their disposal, preferring the victim above all other potential prey.

The only way to get rid of this curse is to receive a *remove curse* spell and to return any funerary goods stolen from the tomb to its proper resting place. Additionally, unlike other curses, the death of the victim releases it from the enchantment.

Deafened

The creature's ears do not work. It cannot make Hearing checks or hear verbal communications. This condition cannot affect creatures with the *earless* trait, or creatures for whom other senses substitute for a sense of hearing. This condition ends when its duration elapses, or when the victim receives a restorative spell capable of curing this condition.

Diseased

The creature has caught a disease. Diseases are usually naturally occurring ailments, although some may be contracted by magical means. The *diseased* condition cannot affect creatures without functioning animal vascular, respiratory, or gastrointestinal systems; monsters with the *undead*, *ooze*, *plant*, *fungus*, or *elemental* traits are immune, as are *extraplanar* creatures with the *infernal* trait.

A creature that acquires the diseased condition may be subjected to different types of damage at intervals that vary according to the disease. However, creatures exposed to a disease do not automatically become sick. Each disease has an **infection bonus**; it starts by attacking each exposed target's Toughness defense. If the attack succeeds, the victim acquires the *diseased* condition and receives the Onset Attack Succeeds result; if this attack fails, the victim is not sick and receives no negative effects, although they are subject to being attacked again if they are re-exposed to the same disease. Some diseases have an onset time; this time elapses before the disease has its initial effect on the victim. Each disease also has an **infection interval**; after the onset attack is made, the disease attacks at every interval, and the effects of the Ongoing Attack Succeeds or Ongoing Attack Fails shall be accrued. Multiple instances of being *poisoned* with the same poison has no effect on ongoing attacks, although the effects of different diseases stack.

Meanwhile, every 24 hours after the initial infection, the victim may make a recovery roll using 1d20 and adding their recovery modifier; if they equal or exceed the disease's recovery threshold, the *diseased* condition ends. For each recovery roll made after the first, 1 is subtracted from the recovery threshold, making recovery from disease easier over time. If a victim becomes reinfected with a disease that is already affecting them, this resets the recovery threshold to the original value.

Diseases persist unless the victim recovers, they are magically cured, or the victim is dead. Each disease's description notes where it is commonly caught; additionally, unless stated otherwise, diseases are contagious, and those who travel with a sick creature run the risk of being exposed themselves. A tabulation of each disease's statistics follows:

Table 7-8: TOTIL Diseases Table

Name of Disease	Infection Bonus	Onset Time	Onset Effect	Infection Interval	Ongoing Attack Succeeds	Ongoing Attack Fails	Recovery Threshold	Special	Spread
blinding sickness	+2	3 days	-1 Str and -1 to Seeing	1 day	-1 Str and -1 to Seeing	no damage	20	at -4 to hit, permanently blind	touch
cackling vapors	+4	1 day	-2 Wis	2 day	-2 Wis	-1 Wis	25		respiratory
creeping chills	+2	immediate	-1 Str and -1 Dex	1 day	-1 Str and -1 Dex	no damage	20		respiratory
doldrums	+2	3 days	-1 Con and -1 surge	1 day	-1 Con and -1 surge	no damage	20	at -4 surges, 1 surge lost forever	touch
filth fever	+2	immediate	-1 Dex and -1 Con	1 day	-1 Dex and -1 Con	no damage	20		food/water
foot rot	+2	3 days	-1 Dex and -5' partial move	1 day	-1 Dex and -5' partial move	no damage	20	at -20' move, permanently cannot walk	touch
grave stench	+4	1 day	-2 Cha	2 day	-2 Cha	-1 Cha	25		respiratory
jungle ague	+2	immediate	-1 Str and -1 Con	1 day	-1 Str and -1 Con	no damage	20		food/water
mindfire	+4	1 day	-2 Int	2 day	-2 Int	-1 Int	25		respiratory
mummy rot	N/A	immediate	-1 Cha and -1 Con	1 day	-1 Cha and -1 Con	-1 Cha	N/A	see Curses	mummy attack
red ache	+4	1 day	-2 Str	2 day	-2 Str	-1 Str	25		food/water
shakes	+4	1 day	-2 Dex	2 day	-2 Dex	-1 Dex	25		touch
slimy doom	+4	1 day	-2 Con	2 day	-2 Con	-1 Con	25		food/water

Each disease is further explained here:

Blinding Sickness

This disease is commonly encountered at high altitudes and is known to afflict those who handle snow on the heights of mountains; the GM may wish to add a risk of blinding sickness (1) when characters travel in such places. In addition to sapping the strength of the sufferer, the disease causes degeneration of vision in the form of penalties to Seeing checks.

These penalties are restored on a one-for-one basis with points of Strength loss; however, once the character accumulates a Seeing penalty of -4, they are permanently blind and only powerful magic can restore their vision.

Cackling Vapors

This disease is usually contracted by those who breathe volcanic steam vapors in areas with geothermal activity; the GM may wish to add a risk of cackling vapors (1) when characters travel in such places. This disease cruelly affects the sharpness of perception and acuity of its victims, damaging Wisdom and causing them to see strange auras and experience odd sensations and emotions. In advanced cases, victims may hallucinate entire encounters.

Creeping Chills

Those who are exposed to breathing cold air for protracted periods of time may develop a case of the creeping chills, and the GM may wish to add a risk of creeping chills (1) when characters travel in such places. This disease aggressively saps both the Strength and Dexterity of the victims, and it causes them to run high fevers and sweat profusely.

Doldrums

This disease is usually contracted from bathing in the warm seawater of tropical oceans, but it is highly contagious, especially on the docks of major ports. The GM may wish to add a risk of *doldrums (1)* when characters travel in such places. Creatures afflicted with the doldrums feel unmotivated and everything seems grey and dreary. The disease saps the victim of both Constitution and maximum surges.

The lost surges are restored on a one-for-one basis with points of Constitution, but when the creature has a maximum surge penalty of -4, one of those surges is lost forever, and not even the most powerful magic will bring it back.

Filth Fever

This disease is commonly contracted from eating food or drinking liquids in unsanitary conditions, such as in places close to open sewers or overrun by rats. This disease is also often spread by the bite of giant rats (see Chapter 8). The GM may wish to add a risk of *filth fever (1)* when characters explore sewers or similarly unsavory locations. The disease causes excessive drooling as well a high fever and sweats, and it drains the victim's Dexterity and Constitution ability scores.

Foot Rot

This disease is known to afflict those whose feet get wet in swamps and marshes; the GM may wish to add a risk of *foot rot (1)* when characters travel through such terrain. The disease afflicts the sufferer's lower extremities with sores, and the resultant pain and swelling saps the victim of both Dexterity and mobility – damage accrues in increments of -5' penalty to the victim's walking movement allowance, and an equivalent penalty of -10' to the victim's running movement allowance.

Movement allowance penalties are restored on a one-for-one basis with damage to Dexterity, but when the sufferer reaches penalties of -20' walking movement allowance, they are rendered permanently unable to walk or run, and only powerful magic such as a *heal* spell will cure this.

Grave Stench

This disease is contracted by breathing mold from places where many dead creatures' remains lie buried; the GM may wish to add a risk of *grave stench (1)* when characters travel through the sites of major battles, necropolises, and so forth. The disease causes a wheezing cough, awful halitosis, and a sickly sheen to the victim's skin; it also suppresses their force of personality – a sufferer sustains a continuous gradual decline in their Charisma ability score.

Jungle Ague

This disease is commonly caught by those who drink stagnant unboiled water from tropical jungle areas; the GM may wish to add a risk of *jungle ague (1)* when characters travel through such terrain. In addition to fever, the sufferers have an unshakeable hacking cough which makes quiet travel difficult. The disease steadily saps the afflicted creatures' Strength and Constitution ability scores.

Mindfire

This disease is transmitted by spores that grow in leaf mold and rotting wood; it is commonly contracted in thick old-growth forests, but it can also be caught from concentrations of moldering wood pulp such as ancient libraries. The GM may wish to add a risk of *mindfire (1)* when traveling through such areas. The disease is characterized by painful headaches and high body temperatures; feverish characters experience steady damage to their Intelligence ability scores.

Mummy Rot

This disease is not naturally occurring, and there will never be a risk associated with catching this disease when traveling through an area. A creature only contracts *mummy rot* when they are struck in melee

combat by a *mummy* (see Chapter 8) and receives the *mummy rot* curse. See the section on curses above for how this affliction may be lifted.

The disease causes disfiguring rotting of the flesh of the victim, and although a lucky sufferer may stave off some of the damage to their Constitution, the degradation of their Charisma ability score is inexorable. A character with the mummy rot disease may have days or even weeks to live, but unless the curse is lifted, they will inevitably die and collapse in a pile of stinking corruption, with insufficient healthy flesh left to even attempt a *raise dead* spell. The usual mechanism for recovery does not apply to this terrifying disease.

Red Ache

This disease is often contracted by drinking the untreated water from certain desert oases, and the GM may wish to add a risk of *red ache (1)* when traveling in desert terrain. The disease does not cause fever, but it instead causes deep muscle soreness which results in stiffness, weakness, and profound pain. This disease causes an immediate and debilitating drain on the Strength ability score which will quickly be fatal unless a cure is found.

Shakes

This disease arises most commonly from exposure to the red soil of many grasslands and prairies, and the GM may wish to add a risk of *shakes (1)* when traveling in these terrains. The disease causes tremors, mild at first, but rapidly degenerating into a lack of coordination of both fine and gross motor functions. The shakes cause an immediate and debilitating drain on the Dexterity ability score which will quickly be fatal unless a cure is found.

Slimy Doom

This disease commonly has its genesis in the algae infesting underwater bodies of water, making drinking untreated water dangerous in such places. The GM may wish to add a risk of *slimy doom (1)* when traveling in underground caverns. This disease causes rapid intestinal distress and a general decline in the victim's vigor and energy. Slimy doom results in an inexorable leeching away of the victim's Constitution ability score which will quickly be fatal unless a cure is found.

Drowning

A creature who breathes one type of substance has its lungs or lung-like organs filled with another type of substance. The creature immediately suffers a penalty of -4 to all attack rolls and skill checks, and spellcasting is impossible. A drowning creature suffers these ill effects for a minimum of one full turn. At the beginning of their next turn, if they are in a position where they can expel the foreign substance from their lungs and draw a breath of fresh air, they may attempt a Recovery roll with a starting threshold of 15. At the end of their turn and each subsequent turn, if they still have the *drowning* condition, they take 1 hp damage. If a creature is attempting to recover but starts its turn in a position where they cannot draw a breath of fresh air, they cannot recover and the Recovery threshold resets to 15.

Encumbered

The creature is carrying too heavy a burden to be able to move and act freely. The creature's walking movement allowance is halved, and they cannot take run actions. The creature suffers a penalty of -1 to all attack rolls. When making skill checks, the creature suffers a penalty of -1 to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution ability scores. The creature's fatigue limit is reduced by 1.

Ensnared

The creature becomes entangled in sticky fibers which hold its body and limbs; even simple physical actions are difficult to perform when so enmeshed. Creatures without a physical body cannot be captured in this way; monsters with the *incorporeal* trait are immune. The victim cannot move or attack with a weapon; a great success

on a Feats of Agility check is required for an *ensnared* creature to access an object not in their hands at the time of acquiring the condition, and a fantastic success on a Feats of Agility check is required for an *ensnared* creature to cast a spell. These Feats of Agility checks are basic actions which may be attempted once per round. The condition ends when the spell generating the *ensnared* status ends, or when the creature frees itself from the effect's area.

Fatigued

The creature's energy reserves are at a low point. Only living creatures can be affected by this condition; creatures with the *undead* trait are immune. The creature suffers a -2 penalty to attacks and skill check rolls. Additionally, any group traveling with the fatigued creature has 1 less MP, and it is incapable of hustling. The condition ends when the *fatigued* creature gets enough rest to remove fatigue points below its fatigue limit, until restorative magic removes the condition, or until the spell generating the condition ends.

Grappled

The creature has been seized by another being in such a way that limits its ability to move and act, perhaps trapping one or more limbs or physically picking it up off the ground. Only beings of the same size or larger than the creature can *grapple* successfully enough to bestow this condition. Creatures without a physical body cannot be hampered bodily; monsters with the *incorporeal* trait are immune.

A *grappled* creature cannot use a movement action. A great success on a Feats of Agility check is required for a grappled creature to access an object not in their hands at the time of acquiring the condition, and a fantastic success on a Feats of Agility check is required for a *grappled* creature to cast a spell. These Feats of Agility checks are basic actions which may be attempted once per round. Attacks with a weapon or a spell are possible but are made at a -4 penalty.

The condition ends when the attacker stops grappling, or when the victim breaks the grapple. To break a grapple, the victim must make an opposed skill check, using Feats of Agility or Feats of Might skills (victim's choice) against the attacker's Feats of Might skill. The victim must beat the attacker to escape the grapple. Allies of the victim may make checks to assist the victim's skill check in the round preceding the escape attempt.

Hasted

The creature moves at a faster pace than normal. All creatures can be affected by this condition. Its movement allowances are doubled for all movement types save for those granted by magic. Additionally, in encounter mode, a hasted creature using their standard action to take a melee attack may make an additional melee attack as part of the same action, and a hasted creature using their standard action to take a missile attack may make an additional missile attack as part of the same action. Hasted creatures receive a bonus of +1 to initiative rolls. This condition ends when the duration of the generating spell runs out, or when it is dispelled.

Intoxicated

A creature with this condition is under the influence of a drug or similar substance that negatively affects the workings of its nervous system. This condition cannot affect creatures without functioning nervous systems; monsters with the *undead*, *ooze*, *plant*, *fungus*, or *elemental* traits are immune. The victim takes a -2 penalty to skill checks and attack rolls, and all defenses are reduced by 1. This condition ends when its duration elapses, when it is removed with restorative magic, or when the victim recovers naturally.

Nauseated

The creature is overcome by vomiting, significantly impacting its ability to perform effectively. This condition cannot affect creatures without functioning gastrointestinal systems; monsters with the *undead*, *ooze*, *plant*, *fungus*, or *elemental* traits are immune.

During its combat turn, the creature can only do one of the following: take one basic action; take one move action; take a standard action. Running actions are not possible. All attack rolls and skill checks are made with a -1 penalty, and all defenses are reduced by 1. This condition ends when its duration elapses.

Paralyzed

A creature with this condition freezes up; its mind cannot compel its body to do so much as twitch. This condition cannot affect creatures without functioning nervous systems; monsters with the *undead*, *ooze*, *plant*, *fungus*, or *elemental* traits are immune.

The victim does not fall over; it remains in the same position it was in when it was *paralyzed*. Its mind remains active, but it cannot move or take any sort of action unless it requires only mental effort; sorcery or conjuration magic may be used, as can any ongoing effect that requires concentration. It cannot speak or otherwise communicate unless it has telepathic abilities. It is assumed that the creature's eyes are open and can move around sufficiently to allow them to perceive their surroundings. A *paralyzed* creature counts as a helpless target for the purpose of being attacked. This condition ends when its duration elapses, when it is dispelled, or when curative magic removes it.

Petrified

The creature has been turned to stone. Creatures without a solid physical body cannot be affected by this condition; monsters with the *incorporeal* trait are immune. The creature and any of its possessions retain their previous shape, but the substance changes to a dense, very hard basaltic stone; a *petrified* creature resembles a very well-crafted statue.

The creature is not dead; it exists in a state of suspended animation with no awareness of its surroundings or ability to act. It cannot be injured in the conventional sense, but the statue form can be damaged by anything capable of chipping or cracking hard stone, and such damage will persist if the *petrified* condition is removed – a *petrified* creature that is beheaded will die if it is revived before repairs are made. As a general ruling, a *petrified* creature that is damaged in statue form, then returned to flesh, will at a minimum have the *bleeding* condition. If the statue is destroyed, it turns to nonmagical rubble, and the *petrified* condition can no longer be removed.

A *petrified* creature has no sense of the passage of time, and if it is unpetrified centuries later, it will not have aged at all – in fact, it will retain all spell points and hit points lost at the time of its petrification. This condition lasts until it is dispelled, which requires powerful magic to accomplish, but some spells and monster powers may have a shorter duration.

Poisoned

A creature with this condition is suffering from the adverse effects of a poison. Poisons are naturally produced by certain creatures, which may deliver venom by biting or stinging or spitting, while others may create poisonous exudations which only affect those who attack it. These poisons are described further in Chapter 8.

Poisons are also created by intelligent creatures, often using alchemical processes, who have ingeniously worked out methods to deliver poison by applying it to weapons, slipping it into food or drink, causing it to be inhaled, or merely allowing it to be absorbed directly into the skin. Most civilized nations in the world of Uroth have made the use of poisons illegal, and to maintain the diplomatic upper hand, the Iron League doesn't traffic in the stuff. Characters cannot buy poisons from Iron League headquarters, although the Iron League will buy poisons for the usual half-price rates, and shady third-party operators may sell it on the quiet.

The *poisoned* condition cannot affect creatures without functioning vascular, respiratory, and gastrointestinal systems. Monsters with the *undead*, *ooze*, *plant*, *fungus*, or *elemental* traits are immune, as are *extraplanar* creatures with the *infernal* trait.

A creature that acquires the poisoned condition may be subjected to different types of damage at intervals that vary according to the poison. Some poisons have an onset time; this time elapses before the poison has any effect on the victim. Each poison has a **toxic bonus**; it starts by attacking each exposed target's Toughness defense. If the attack succeeds, the victim receives the Onset Attack Succeeds result; if this attack fails, the victim receives the Onset Attack Fails result. Each poison also has a **toxic interval**; after the onset attack is made, the poison attacks at

every interval, and the effects of the Ongoing Attack Succeeds or Ongoing Attack Fails shall be accrued. If the victim is exposed to the same poison multiple times while they have the *poisoned* condition, the onset attack may occur each time this happens; however, the victim may only receive the Onset Attack Succeeds effect one time during each instance of having the *poisoned* condition. After that, each time the onset attack occurs, the result will be Onset Attack Fails. Multiple instances of being *poisoned* with the same poison has no effect on ongoing attacks, although the effects of different poisons stack.

Meanwhile, every four hours after initial exposure to the poison, the victim may make a recovery roll using 1d20 and adding their recovery modifier; if they equal or exceed the poison's recovery threshold, the *poisoned* condition ends. For each recovery roll made after the first, the victim subtracts 1 from the recovery threshold, making recovery from poisons easier over time. Poisons persist until the victim recovers, they are magically cured, or they die. If a victim receives another dose of a poison that is already affecting them, this resets the recovery threshold to the original value.

Table 7-9: TOTIL Poisons Table

Name of Poison	Onset Time	Toxic Bonus	Onset Attack Succeeds	Onset Attack Fails	Toxic Interval	Ongoing Attack Succeeds	Ongoing Attack Fails	Recovery Threshold	Special	Delivery	Cost
blackshine	immediate	+0	-1 hp	nothing	2 hours	-1 hp	nothing	20	lasts 1 hour, exhausts on 1 on a 1d6	weapon	10 gp
greyblade	immediate	+4	-1d6 hp, -1 Str	-1d3 hp	4 hours	-1d6 hp, -1 Str	nothing	20	lasts 1 hour, exhausts on 1 on a 1d6	weapon	75 gp
white mercy	immediate	+6	-2d6 hp	-1d6 hp	2 hours	-1d6 hp	-1 hp	25	lasts 4 hours, only 1 use	weapon	300 gp
goblin puke	immediate	+0	-1 hp	nothing	4 hours	-1 hp, -1 Dex	nothing	20	lasts indefinitely, only 1 use	weapon	N/A
fey miasma	immediate	+2	sleep	nothing	N/A	continue sleeping	nothing	N/A	lasts indefinitely, only 1 use	weapon	N/A
red spice	4 hours	+0	-1 hp	nothing	1 hour	-1 hp	nothing	20	good Intuition to detect	ingested	25 gp
night honey	1 hour	+4	-2d6 hp	-1 hp	4 hours	-1d6 hp	-1 hp	20	great Intuition to detect	ingested	125 gp
aspthroat	immediate	+8	-3d6 hp	-1d6 hp	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	fantastic Intuition to detect. Onset only	ingested	500 gp
m balm	immediate	+0	-1 hp	nothing	2 hours	-1 hp	nothing	20	lasts indefinitely, only 1 use	touch	20 gp
goldwash	4 hours	+4	-1d6 hp	-1 hp	4 hours	-1d6 hp	-1 hp	25	lasts indefinitely, only 1 use. Turns skin gold	touch	200 gp
amber fog	immediate	+0	-1 hp	nothing	2 hours	-1 hp	nothing	20	10' radius cloud for 1 minute, only 1 use	inhaled	50 gp
grave smoke	immediate	+4	-1d6 hp	-1 hp	4 hours	-1d6 hp, -1 Con	-1 Con	25	10' radius cloud for 1 hour, only 1 use	inhaled	350 gp

Each poison is further explained here:

Blackshine

This poison is among the most common alchemically produced substances intended to coat a manufactured weapon. Named for the smooth black gleam it imparts to weapons when properly applied, it can be added to individual edged or piercing weapons, or a batch of a single type of piercing ammunition, in five minutes.

When it is used on ranged weapons or ammunition, each use is only good once – poisoned ammunition, if recovered, will not be poisoned anymore. When used on melee weapons, the player must roll 1d6 exhaust die after every successful hit; on a roll of a 1, the poison is gone. Regardless of the number of uses, one hour after application the poison coating cracks, turns to powder, and falls off, completely inert.

Blackshine is sold in vials, each one being a consumable item with two usage boxes. See Chapter 5 for rules on consumable items.

Greyblade

This poison is used by professional assassins in the large cities of Uroth. Named for the dull grey streak it produces on the edges of weapons, greyblade saps the Strength ability score of victims as well as damages their health. This poison can be added to individual edged or piercing weapons, or a batch of a single type of piercing ammunition, in five minutes.

When it is used on ranged weapons or ammunition, each use is only good once – poisoned ammunition, if recovered, will not be poisoned anymore. When used on melee weapons, the player must roll 1d6 exhaust die after every successful hit; on a roll of a 1, the poison is gone. Regardless of the number of uses, one hour after application the poison coating cracks, turns to powder, and falls off, completely inert.

Greyblade is sold in vials, each one being a consumable item with two usage boxes. See Chapter 5 for rules on consumable items.

White Mercy

Only the most expensive professional killers can afford to use this poison. It appears as a white foam when applied initially, but this rapidly fades from view and becomes invisible to all but the closest inspection. This poison can be added to individual edged or piercing weapons, or a batch of a single type of piercing ammunition, in five minutes.

Whether the weapon's type is melee or missile does not matter; the poisonous coating is only good for a single successful hit, and then the toxin crumbles and falls off, completely inert. The poison also cracks and falls away four hours after application.

White mercy is sold in vials, each one being a consumable item with two usage boxes. See Chapter 5 for rules on consumable items.

Goblin Puke

Contrary to popular opinion, goblins cannot envenom their weapons by vomiting upon them; members of the Iron League know that goblin puke is a poison crafted by goblin alchemists (probably using the bile of goblin malcontents as an ingredient), which elite goblins commonly smear on their weapons. This poison, in addition to being toxic, numbs the nerve endings resulting in Dexterity ability score damage. It can be added to individual edged or piercing weapons, or a batch of a single type of piercing ammunition, in five minutes.

Whether the weapon's type is melee or missile does not matter; the poisonous coating is only good for a single successful hit, and then the toxin crumbles and falls off, completely inert. However, it is quite robust and remains potent indefinitely after being applied. Goblin puke creates a lumpy coating on weapon edges, meaning it's easy to spot. Weapons cannot be sheathed once it is applied.

Goblin puke is produced in vials, each one being a consumable item with two usage boxes; it is not bought or sold in the cities of Uroth. See Chapter 5 for rules on consumable items.

Fey Miasma

Faerie creatures of the wilderness are infamous for attempting to put unwary travelers to sleep for mischievous purposes. One way they can do this is by applying fey miasma to their arrows; this syrupy sap is produced by unknown alchemical means but is a highly effective narcotic agent.

This poison does not cause damage, but only gives victims the *sleeping* condition if it successfully toxifies. After that, each successful attack only extends the duration of the sleeping; at the first failed toxic attack,

the poison wears off and the victim awakens. The usual mechanism for recovery does not apply to this substance.

This poison can be added to a batch of a single type of piercing ammunition in five minutes. The poisonous coating is only good for a single successful hit, and then the toxin crumbles and falls off, completely inert. However, it is quite robust and remains potent indefinitely after being applied. *Fey* creatures do not usually use this poison on melee weapons.

Fey miasma is produced in vials, each one being a consumable item with two usage boxes; it is not bought or sold in the cities of Uroth. See Chapter 5 for rules on consumable items.

Red Spice

This poison is placed in food by assassins. It begins to cause painful stomach cramps four hours after the victim has eaten, and it slowly kills over the course of days unless a cure is found. The poison has a reddish tinge and a faint odor of cinnamon that can be detected by making a good Intuition skill check. Note that if creatures are attacked by red spice poison as the result of a *red hand of the adder* curse, the poison disappears if detected and not consumed.

Red spice is produced in vials, each of which contains a single-use dose.

Night Honey

This poison resembles honey in appearance, consistency, and flavor, and it is commonly insinuated into food or drink where honey is added. Only the slightest odor of lilacs has the potential to betray the presence of this subtle poison; a great Intuition skill check is required to detect it. Night honey takes effect suddenly an hour after consumption when it causes the victim's throat tissues to swell and rupture; few afflicted with this poison can survive the night.

Night honey is produced in vials, each of which contains a single-use dose.

Aspthroat

The pinnacle of alchemically distilled poisons for consumable use, this dangerous poison is provided in the form of a single tiny white pill wrapped in a twist of paper – a zero-space item. When it is dropped into any liquid, the pill dissolves in seconds leaving no difference in odor, flavor, or color. Only the faintest effervescence might betray its presence, but a fantastic Intuition check would be required to detect anything amiss.

The aspthroat strikes immediately but decisively, causing the victim to bleed internally. If the victim can survive the first minute of the poison's attack, no further ill effects are forthcoming – but persons hardy enough to do so are rare. The usual mechanism for recovery does not apply to this substance.

M Balm

A single dose of M balm comes in a thin paper packet – a zero-space item. Inside is a small dollop of clear salve, and the would-be poisoner must handle this carefully with gloves, because touching as much of a drop of the stuff will trigger this poison's toxic attack.

When smeared in a thin layer, M balm can cover 1 square foot of any surface, and it is difficult to detect – a good Seeing check is required. Once it is dispensed, M balm retains its potency indefinitely, but it cannot be scraped up and harvested for reuse. M balm causes burning pain and seems to blacken skin and other tissues where it has touched.

Goldwash

A single use of this expensive poison is a white powder decanted in a vial, and it resembles a container of perfumed bath salts – a zero-space item. When dry it is inert, but when it is emptied into a tub of water, it becomes deadly to all who touch the liquid with bare skin.

Within four hours, victims' skin takes on a golden hue, and as the poison runs its course to probable death, their dermis gains a reflective luster. By the time the goldwash has run its course, the victim's skin is plated with very thin gold leaf – about 10 gp worth. The full vial of poison must be emptied into the water to produce a deadly effect.

Amber Fog

This poison takes the form of a yellowish-orange fog captured inside a fragile glass flask – a one-space item. When the flask is opened or is broken, the gas escapes to create a 10' radius amber cloud, and all creatures inside it who breathe are subject to the toxic attack. The cloud persists for one minute. Tiny amber crystals form on the victim's skin, causing excruciating pain. The flask containing the amber fog may be thrown as a grenade.

Grave Smoke

This poison is a gas captured inside a fragile glass flask – a one-space item. The gas only appears as a greyish smudge inside the flask, but when the flask is opened or is broken, the gas escapes to create a 10' radius cloud which is essentially invisible – only a fantastic Seeing check will note any opacity to the air. The cloud is dense and hovers within 10' of the ground, and the poisoned area retains its potency for a full hour before dissipating.

During that time, any breathing creatures who pass through the cloud are subject to the toxic attack. The victim's skin turns ashen, and blood drips from their eyes, nose, and mouth; this poison both causes damage and saps the Constitution ability score with potentially lethal effect. The flask containing the grave smoke may be thrown as a grenade.

Prone

The creature has fallen and is no longer on its feet. Creatures that do not have feet are immune to this condition; this includes all *oozes* and *plants*, as well as snakes and other *apodal* monsters. *Prone* creatures are at a significant disadvantage in melee combat; they suffer a -2 penalty to attack, and a -2 penalty to AC defense in melee. However, prone creatures are harder to hit with missile attacks; they receive a +2 bonus to AC defense against missile attacks.

Until it stands up (a basic action that triggers AoO), a *prone* creature can only take crawl move actions. The *prone* condition ends when the creature stands up.

Sleeping

The creature is asleep. Only creatures with animal sleep cycles are subject to this condition; monsters with the *undead*, *ooze*, *plant*, *fungus*, or *elemental* traits are immune, as are creatures whose metabolism does not require sleep. As soon as it acquires this condition, a standing creature acquires the *prone* condition and drops anything they are holding. If a creature falls 10' or more when it falls asleep, it takes damage and then wakes up; otherwise, it remains asleep.

Sleeping creatures cannot take actions and are unaware of anything going on around them; they are helpless targets for the purpose of being damaged by an enemy. Any damage, including ability score damage, fatigue, trauma, or any new condition imposed on a creature, causes it to automatically wake up.

Creatures that fall asleep naturally can also wake up by making a Hearing check. The GM must determine the difficulty of this check. Those who fall asleep by magical means will not wake up no matter how loud the noise. Those asleep by either magical or mundane means will always awaken to vigorous shaking.

Finally, those that fall asleep naturally will always wake up 8 hours later if they are not awakened by something else. Magical sleep lasts until its duration expires, until it is dispelled, or until it is broken by one of the means described above.

Slowed

The creature moves at a slower pace than normal. All creatures can be affected by this condition. Its movement allowances are halved for all movement types save those granted by magic. Additionally, in encounter mode, the creature can only take one of the following actions per round: a basic action; a move action; a standard action. Running actions are not possible. Slowed creatures receive a penalty of -1 to initiative rolls. This condition ends when the duration of the generating spell or effect runs out, or when it is dispelled.

Stunned

The creature has received a profound blow to its central nervous system that temporarily prevents it from making decisions or doing more than reacting. This condition cannot affect creatures without functioning nervous systems; monsters with the *undead*, *ooze*, *plant*, *fungus*, or *elemental* traits are immune.

A creature that is stunned does nothing on its turn; it does not move or take any kind of action. It does not fall *prone* or drop objects, and it can defend itself; stunned creatures suffer no penalties to their defenses, and they do not count as a helpless target for purposes of creatures attacking them. The *stunned* condition ends when its duration elapses or when restorative magic removes it.

Unconscious

The creature's central nervous system has shut down completely. This condition cannot affect creatures without functioning nervous systems; monsters with the *undead*, *ooze*, *plant*, *fungus*, or *elemental* traits are immune.

An *unconscious* creature acquires the *prone* condition and drops any objects in its hands. Like a creature with the *paralyzed* condition, *unconscious* creatures can take no physical actions, cannot move, and cannot speak. Additionally, they have no senses, cannot communicate telepathically, and cannot take mental actions. They cannot roll initiative.

An *unconscious* creature counts as a helpless target for the purpose of other creatures attacking it. This condition lasts until the creature's trauma points are below its Constitution ability score.

Unhinged

A creature with this condition has lost its sanity. Only creatures with a higher functioning nervous system can be affected by this condition; monsters with the *mindless* trait, or creatures with an Intelligence ability score less than 3, are immune.

It is up to the player's role-playing decisions and the GM's judgment to determine exactly how this insanity is manifested. It commonly results in erratic behavior, seeing things that are not there, being subject to sudden swings in mood, paranoid fears and irrational beliefs, and uncontrollable verbal and physical outbursts. The victim has not lost its ability to fight or cast spells, but its loss of executive control means that the creature cannot adventure – it cannot consistently pursue objectives, remain quiet when needed, or discern truth from fantasy. Only powerful restorative magic removes this condition.

Morale Checks During Encounters

Not all battles are fought to the death. As a combat progresses, and participants are wounded or die, one or more sides of the fight may decide that they have better options than continuing to battle. A combatant may call for a negotiation or surrender outright. Creatures may run away or hide. Participants may attempt to create a distraction so that they can slip away. All these possibilities involve a change in **morale**: creatures who originally had an aggressive stance shift their attitudes to a passive stance.

Conversely, not all parleys end peacefully. One side of a negotiation may become insulted or decide they are being tricked. Both sides may lose patience with a bargaining process that doesn't seem to be achieving anything. Somebody may sense weakness on the other side and decide that violent action is a better path forward than

anything else available. A creature in hiding may take advantage of an ideal opportunity to strike. In these cases, morale shifts from a passive to an aggressive stance.

Morale checks at the beginning of encounters were discussed earlier in this chapter, but morale checks may also be made at other points during an encounter, generally when the side that might check morale begins making its turns. It is the GM's call when this should happen, but in general checks should be made sparingly, since they tend to slow the action down. The GM should consider the following guidelines for when to roll a new morale check for a side:

- When their strength in numbers has significantly changed – perhaps more than half of their side is out of action, or their best warrior is incapacitated, or they have received reinforcements.
- When their leadership has significantly changed – maybe their commander is dead, or the high priest shouting commands has been silenced, or new leadership has shown up and gives their side fresh backbone.
- When the other side makes a significant show of force – a successful Intimidate skill check is made, or a wizard displays explosive magic, or the other side has shown themselves to be weak or incompetent in some remarkable manner.
- When a promising new opportunity to benefit from passive behavior arises – perhaps a new escape route appears, or a cloud of smoke would hide retreat, or a great chance to strike forcefully comes up; maybe one member of the other side is trapped in an isolated and vulnerable position.
- When it is revealed that the two sides have some common interest or goal – they realize they share an enemy or are working at cross-purposes, or the differences between the two sides become more apparent; maybe a cultural gaffe arouses anger.
- When the current morale stance of the side is failing to produce desired results.

As always, shifts in morale may not result in changes in a side's behavior. Creatures who are losing a battle but feel that they will only be slaughtered if they surrender are likely to fight to the death. The GM must use their judgement in these situations.

PCs do not ever roll morale; it is up to the players to decide whether they will change their behavior in an encounter. Creatures fighting on the side of the characters, however – desperados in service to a party, or allied adventurers who aren't Iron League members – may need to make morale checks as the GM determines. The player characters can be impossibly brave if their players choose, but the same can't be said for either their friends or enemies!

If an NPC has been hired by a PC who tries to influence the NPC's actions, the character's Charisma modifier is used as a bonus (or penalty) to that character's morale checks, depending on which way the player wants to influence the check. This reflects the ability of an influential leader to inspire bravery in those who are asked to fight, or to counsel caution in those asked to stand down.

If a PC has been a particularly generous or kindly employer to their hirelings, the GM may assign an additional bonus of between +1 and +3 to morale checks. Conversely, if a PC has been a cruel or uncaring master, the GM may assign a -1 to -3 penalty to hirelings' morale checks. Such bonuses or penalties are not permanent and are chiefly influenced by actions taken or words spoken in the recent past, although it is certainly true that people tend to remember insults and slights longer than they do compliments and gifts.

Healing

Creatures can be damaged in myriad ways. They can be stabbed, burned, beaten, chewed, dropped from a great height, crushed under heavy stones, gored, frozen, stung, flung into the air, or pecked by a giant prehistoric bird. Fortunately, provided they survive this abuse, creatures can recover from damage. Healing can happen in several different ways.

Natural Healing

Natural healing is the most common (and least expensive) way for injured creatures to get better. Every 8 hours, living creatures (as well as *undead* creatures who haven't been animated by magic) can take a Full Rest as described in Chapter 6. A Full Rest requires 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep. If such a creature rests in a reasonably secure space, with minimal provisions for comfort and warmth, it can regain 1d3 hp when it awakens.

Camping out in the wilderness doesn't qualify as secure or comfortable arrangements, but certain equipment described in Chapter 5 can make things more comfortable and can allow campers to enjoy some or all the natural healing described above. At the option of the player controlling a character, provided a Full Rest would recover at least one hit point, the rest may instead recover one point in any one damaged ability score of the player's choice. This decision must be made before any random hit point recovery amounts are rolled.

Magical Healing

A quicker method of healing is receiving healing magic. Many of the spells in Chapter 4, especially those of Divine nature, will restore hit point or ability score damage of varying amounts; refer to the spell descriptions. This healing stacks with natural healing – a creature can receive the benefits of both kinds of healing in any order. The amount of healing that can be received by magic is essentially unlimited – repeated castings of the same curative spells are permitted. A creature may also enjoy the benefits of natural healing multiple times in one day, provided no less than 8 hours are consumed for each Full Rest.

Many magic items also have healing properties, including potions and scrolls of curative spells, and most Iron League Headquarters lay in a stock of *potions of treat wounds* because these items are so useful. Sensible adventurers who come into some money may wish to invest in a stock of portable curatives, which are further described in Chapter 9.

Magic and spells can also remove fatigue and trauma points, as is described in the appropriate chapters, but natural rest is effective here as well. One fatigue point can be removed for every Short Rest taken, but if a rest extends up to four hours, all fatigue points are eliminated. Trauma points are removed more slowly. For a Long Rest lasting four hours, one trauma point is removed, but if an uninterrupted Full Rest lasting eight hours is taken, three trauma points are removed.

Creatures that are created, such as *undead* monsters that have been animated by magic or creatures with the *construct* trait, do not recover from damage as living creatures do. Whatever damage these creatures take will persist unless some magical means is used to repair them. A zombie that is damaged until it has only 1 hit point left will remain with 1 hp for as long as it exists, unless some spellcaster chooses to use magic to renew its vitalizing force.

Sometimes structures take damage as well. Lost structural hit points (shp) do not repair themselves without intervention. Repairing shp requires a successful Build skill check to accomplish. If successful, 1 worker can repair 1 shp with a full day's work. Some magical spells and items may also repair shp; refer to the spell or item description.

Encounter and Combat Example

Using the party of PCs described in Chapter 6, let's review an example of how an encounter and combat might work.

> **Example:** *The adventuring party is moving down a trail in a forested area. Denali the Ranger is in front with sword drawn. In the next row, Corelli the Majestic Elf and Bylaric the Country Halfling are wielding slings. Erskine and Filworth, both desperados, travel in the third rank with drawn daggers. In the back is Andaluz the Archer, watching the party's back with short bow at the ready.*

> *The GM rolls a monster encounter in the hex and determines that it will be with a group of 4 **land lampreys**, creatures that are detailed in Chapter 8. They are strange mutations of the blind, bloodsucking*

fish that are sometimes found in bodies of water; the tails of these land-dwelling creatures are spring-like, and they can use them to leap surprising distances to attack prey. Their sucker-like mouths can fasten on to flesh and suck vascular fluids from living victims. Land lampreys cannot see but they can sense vibrations through the ground that allows them to find prey.

The GM knows that the party will have an encounter with the pack of land lampreys, but first they must determine the details of how far apart the two groups start, and which creatures are aware of the other. To determine starting distance, the GM decides to use Table 7-1 and roll 20x 1d10 to randomly establish how many feet apart the groups start. The die rolls a 4, so the adventurers begin the encounter 80' away from the land lampreys. The GM rules that the party is traveling down a path closely hemmed in by forest, and the path is not perfectly straight, and therefore the Hearing sense is the form of perception by which each group is most likely to initially detect the other – the land lampreys cannot see, and 80' is outside their other perceptive senses.

The GM determines that the largely quiet and stationary land lampreys will only be detected with a great success on a Hearing check; the GM makes a check for the entire party and decides that nobody has heard the creatures. The GM also secretly makes a Hearing check for the land lampreys, ruling that they only need a minimal success to hear the adventurers clomping down the path. The monsters hear the party and communicate nonverbally with each other to hastily arrange an unwelcome greeting. They conceal themselves in the underbrush, intending to ambush the party. The GM rules that these creatures are hungry and intend to attack; there is no need to check morale in this situation.

The party marches by the land lampreys, completely unaware of their existence. The GM allows the lead character, Denali, to make a Seeing check to spot the hiding monsters, but rules that owing to the land lampreys' camouflage and Stealth skill, a great success will be needed to detect their presence. Denali fails, so the party has no chance to avoid being surprised when the monsters leap squealing out of the undergrowth.

*The GM rolls 1d6 to determine the degree to which the party is surprised; it is not necessary to make a similar die roll for the land lampreys because they are aware of the party. The die roll is a 2, meaning that the land lampreys have achieved **complete surprise**. They will get to act on the first round of combat while the party will not; on the second round of combat, both sides will roll for initiative as normal.*

*The GM informs the party that four sinuous green forms launch themselves out of the forest to attack. The GM randomly determines that the four targets of the creatures are Denali, Bylaric, Erskine, and Andaluz. The GM further rules that, since the monsters are hungry, their first attacks will be to attempt to **attach** themselves to their targets so they can suck their blood.*

*On the first round, a land lamprey springs at Denali. It attempts to initiate a **blood draw** by making a touch attack with a bonus of +4, +2 because Denali begins the round unaware of the attackers, and an additional +2 because the monster is **leaping**. The GM rolls 1d20 and gets a result of 10, and with the bonuses added the result is 18. This exceeds Denali's Dodge defense, so the land lamprey hits. Its sphincter-like mouth fastens to the upper arm of the Ranger as it prepares to suck blood on the following round. This round it deals 1d3 damage; the GM rolls a 2. The GM marks down 2 hp lost on Denali's character sheet and notes that a land lamprey is attached.*

Similar attacks are made against Bylaric and Andaluz. The rolls for the monsters are not good – 3 against Bylaric, 5 against Andaluz – and even with the bonuses added, these attack rolls are not sufficient to equal each character's Dodge defense. The land lampreys miss, sliding slimily down the characters' chests before flopping to the ground and preparing to spring again.

The last attack is made against Erskine. The monster's 1d20 roll is 14, which hits a Dodge defense of 22. The creature attaches itself to the panic-stricken desperado. Erskine only has 3 hp, so there is a risk that just the damage from attaching itself will kill the hireling! However, the GM rolls a 1 on 1d3 for damage, so Erskine yet lives.

All monsters have made an attack, so their turn is done. The adventuring party doesn't get a turn when they are completely surprised, so the round is over. The second round of combat begins, and the first thing to do is roll for **initiative**. The players decide that Bylaric should roll for initiative on the first round, since the Halfling has the best initiative bonus. Bylaric's player rolls 1d12 and gets a 7, and Bylaric has an initiative bonus of +2, so the initiative result for the party is a 9. The GM rolls for the land lampreys, and the result is 6 plus the monsters' initiative bonus of +1, which results in a 7. The party's initiative result is higher than that of the monsters, so the party gets to act first in round 2.

The GM rules that this terrifying attack is more than the desperados signed up for, so a **morale** check is made to see what they will do. The desperados currently have no morale bonus and a Charisma score of 9. The GM makes a morale check for both hirelings by rolling 1d20, and the result is 11 – a failed morale check. The GM interprets this to mean that Filworth runs to hide behind a tree. No land lampreys are close enough to Filworth to make an attack of opportunity, otherwise this movement might be very dangerous. Filworth is out of the fight for now.

Erskine has a land lamprey attached to their chest; running away is not an option. Even though the desperados failed their morale check, the GM rules that anybody backed into a corner is likely to fight to the bitter end. Erskine attempts to attack with their dagger. The GM rolls 1d20, and a desperado's attack modifier is +0. The result is an 11. The land lamprey's AC defense is 14, so the dagger attack misses.

Denali has their long sword already in their hand, so they attempt to stab the bloodsucking monster attached to their shoulder. The GM rolls 1d20 for Denali's attack roll and gets a 12. Denali's combat attack bonus is +1 and their 16 Strength grants them an additional +2 bonus, so the result of the attack is 15. This exceeds the land lamprey's AC defense, so the sword attack hits. The GM rolls 1d8 for damage, and the result is 2. Denali's superior strength adds 2 more, so the attack inflicts 4 hp damage on the land lamprey. The creature has 5 hp maximum, so it is not dead, but it has a massive bloody gash down its length.

Corelli is not currently under attack by a creature, so they are relatively free to act. Corelli's player decides that the smart thing to do is to attempt to kill the land lamprey attached to Denali before it has an opportunity to suck blood. They have their sling at the ready, so they take a sling stone out of their belt pouch and launch it at the wounded monster. The GM rules that Denali was in the front rank, and Corelli was in the second rank, so the two are only 10' apart. This represents short range, so this missile attack will be made with a +1 bonus. Additionally, Corelli has a combat attack bonus of +1, so the attack roll is made at a total modifier of +2. Corelli's player rolls 1d20 and the result is a 12. With the modifier added in, this hits an AC defense of 14. This exactly equals the monster's defense, so the stone hits! Corelli's player rolls 1d4 for damage and gets a 1 – minimal damage, but when 1 hp is added to the 4 hp the creature had already sustained, it equals the land lamprey's maximum hp 5. The monster is dead! It spasms and detaches from Denali's arm, falling to the ground and flopping around before lying still.

Bylaric has a hostile land lamprey right next to them. They are currently armed with a sling but using a missile attack when one is within 5' of a hostile creature would trigger an attack of opportunity. Bylaric's player chooses to have Bylaric drop their sling (a free action) and attempt to draw their short sword, a melee weapon they could use more effectively. This is a basic action that also triggers attacks of opportunity. The land lamprey gets to attack Bylaric before they can draw their short sword, even though it is the adventuring party's turn to act. It cannot use a **blood draw** attack because only natural or weapon attacks can be used as attacks of opportunity. It can bite, however, and it attempts to do so. It doesn't get

the benefit of its leaping attack, or the bonus for its target being unaware, so it only applies a +1 combat attack bonus to its 1d20 attack roll. The GM rolls the die and gets a result of 15, and with 1 added, this hits an AC of 16. Bylaric's AC defense is only 14, so the nasty creature bites into the Halfling with concentric rings of razor-sharp teeth when they try to draw their weapon! The GM rolls 1d6 for damage and the result is 5, so the player marks down that they have lost that many hp. This is a serious wound, and Bylaric is close to dead. Additionally, this attack of opportunity disrupts Bylaric's ability to draw their sword. However, they have a second basic action remaining to them; they could make another attempt to draw their sword if they wanted. However, the land lamprey hit with an attack of opportunity so it has regained its interrupt action; drawing their sword would exposed Bylaric to mortal danger. At this point, Bylaric's player initially planned to make an attack on the land lamprey, but since they are so grievously wounded, they choose instead to use their standard action to employ a surge to heal themselves. This action does not trigger attacks of opportunity. Bylaric's player rolls 1d6 and adds 1 to the result, healing the character for a total of 4 hp. Bylaric is still slightly wounded, but they are in much better shape than they were before. Bylaric's player wishes they could now use their second basic action, but unfortunately they cannot – the standard action is the last action a character gets to take during their turn.

*Andaluz is the last PC to act. They are holding a bow, and like Bylaric, using a missile weapon while within 5' of a hostile opponent can trigger an attack of opportunity. Andaluz feels their melee options are no better than taking a hazardous missile attack, however, so they choose to draw their bow. The land lamprey takes its attack of opportunity, and its 1d20 attack die rolls an 18 with a modifier of 19. This hits the AC of Andaluz, and the GM rolls 3 hp damage on the 1d6. The player of Andaluz marks off this damage on their character sheet, and then makes the missile attack at extremely close range. This attack has a range modifier of +1, Andaluz has a combat attack bonus of +1, and they have a Dexterity bonus of +1 as well. However, because the attack of opportunity has a disrupting effect on the bowshot, Andaluz must accept a -4 penalty to hit. The net modifier is therefore -1. The player of Andaluz rolls the 1d20 attack die and rolls a 20! This is a critical hit; a roll of a 20 on an attack roll always hits. Andaluz rolls damage for their arrow, inflicts 3 hp, but also gets to roll on the **Critical Hit Table**. The player rolls a 2, meaning they get a choice: either add a second normal damage roll to the attack, or disorient the land lamprey and inflict penalties on its defenses for the next 2 turns. The player of Andaluz chooses the former, since land lampreys seem to be relatively fragile creatures, and this proves to be a wise decision: they roll another 3 hp damage, and a total of 6 hp is enough to kill the monster.*

*At this point, it is the monsters' turns to act. However, half of the land lampreys are dead, so the GM rules that a morale check should be made to determine if the remaining monsters will fight on or flee. They roll 1d20 and get a 10. These monsters have a Charisma of 8 and a **morale modifier** of +1, so this represents a failed morale check. The GM decides that this means the remaining two monsters will flee into the forest. The one attached to Erskine releases its hold (a free action) and bounces away, and the one fighting Bylaric retreats as well. This triggers attacks of opportunity from both characters, but Erskine, who failed their morale check, declines to take their attack with the dagger – no creature is ever obliged to take an attack of opportunity. Bylaric, in contrast, would be inclined to attack the monster – but they did not successfully draw their short sword in the previous round. Bylaric can only swat ineffectually with a fist at the land lamprey, which fails to connect - it bounds away into the underbrush.*

*The combat is over. All party members have survived, but they have sustained some damage. They may choose to use surges or other curatives to restore damage. All party members immediately mark one point of **fatigue**.*