

THE WITCHER

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The Witcher

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The Witcher Collected Works

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Table of Contents

Cover

Title

Copyright

Support

Journal Entries

Alchemy

Arachnid oil

Brock

Dancing Star

Falka's Blood

Flare

Gadwall

Grapeshot

Lapwing

Mongoose

Red haze

Rook

Stammelford's philtre

Stenchbulb

Tiara

Virga

Whirl

Bombs

Devil's Puffball

Dragon's Dream

King and Queen

Samum

Zerrikanian Sun

Oils

Argentia
Brown oil
Crinfrid oil
Hanged man's venom
Insectoid oil
Necrophage oil
Ornithosaur oil
Specter oil
Vampire oil

Potions

Bindweed
Black Blood
Blizzard
Cat
Dagon Sap
De Vries' extract
Frightener's Vision
Full Moon
Golden Oriole
Golem's Pith
Hellhound's Soul
Kikimore's Ire
Kiss
Koshchey's Core
Maribor forest
Perfume
Petri's Philter
Potion for Triss
Shrike
Striga's Urge
Swallow
Tawny Owl
Thunderbolt

Werewolf's Wrath
White Honey
White Raffard's decoction
Willow
Wives' Tears
Wolf
Wolverine

Bestiary

Abaya
Alghoul
Alp
Arachas
Archespore
Armored arachas
Armored hound
Barghest
Basilisk
Bear
Berserker
Bloedzuiger
Botchling
Bruxa
Bullvore
Cemetaur
Chort
Cockatrice
Crones
Cyclops
Dagon
Devil by the Well
Devourer
Djinn
Dog

Doppler
Dragon
Draug
Draugir
Drowned dead
Drowner
Earth Elemental
Echinops
Ekimma
Endrega drone
Endrega warrior
Endrega worker
Endrega
Erynia
Fiend
Fire Elemental
Fleder
Fogler
Forktail
Frightener
Gael
Gargoyle
Garkain
Ghoul
Giant centipede
Godling
Golem
Grave hag
Graveir
Greater brother
Greater mutant
Griffin
Hagubman

Harpy
Harrisi
Hellhound
Higher Vampire
Hound of the Wild Hunt
Howler
Hym
Ice Elemental
Ice giant
Ice troll
Ifrit
Ignis Fatuus
Imp
Jenny o' the Woods
Katakan
Kayran
Kernun
Kikimore queen
Kikimore warrior
Kikimore worker
Koshchey
Leshy
Melusine
Morvudd
Mourntart
Mutant assassin
Mutant
Nekker
Nightwraith
Noonwraith
Opinicus
Penitent
Plague maiden

Rock troll
Rotfiend
Royal wyvern
Sarasti
Shrieker
Siren
Skullhead
Striga
Succubus
Sylvan
The Apiarian Phantom
The Dragon of Fyresdal
The White Lady
Therazane
Troll
Ulfhedinn
Vedymin
Venomous arachas
Vodyanoi priest
Vodyanoi warrior
Vodyanoi
Warg
Water hag
Werewolf
Wham-a-Wham
Wolf
Woodland Spirit
Wraith
Wyvern
Zeugl

Character

Abigail
Adalbert

Adam Pangratt
Adam
Adda the White
Alina
Alvin
Anaïs La Valette
Anabelle
Anezka
Anna Strenger
Archpriest
Arnolt Malliger
Arnvald
Arthur Tailles
Aryan La Valette
Assire var Anahid
Auberon Muircetach
Auckes
Avallac'h
Azar Javed
Baltimore
Bart
Berengar
Bernard Loredó
Birna
Blue-eyed lass
Blueboy Lugos
Boussy La Valette
Bran Tuirseach
Bras of Ban Ard
Brewess
Brigida Papebrock
Caleb Menge
Caranthir Ar-Feiniel

Carduin
Carlo Cleaver Varese
Carmen
Cecil Burdon
Cedric
Celina
Cerys an Craite
Chappelle
Chorab
Ciaran
Ciri
Corinne Tilly
Crach an Craite
Cynthia
Cyprian Wiley
Dandelion
Declan Leuvaarden
Demavend III
Derae
Detmold
Dmitri
Donar an Hinder
Dudu
Earso
Edwin Leistham
Einar Gausel
Ele'yas
Elihal
Elthon
Elves of Murky Waters
Emhyr var Emreis
Enzo Etcheverry
Eredin Bréacc Glas

Eskel
Falas
Farid
Felicia Cori
Fioravanti
Folan
Foltest
Francis Bedlam
Fringilla Vigo
Fugas
Gaspar
Gaunter O'Dimm
Ge'els
Geralt of Rivia
Golan Vivaldi
Graden
Graham
Gran
Gridley
Halbjorn
Half-elf
Harald Houndsnout
Haren Brogg
Harmond
Hendrik
Henselt
Hjalmar an Craite
Hjort
Holger Blackhand
Hubert Rejk
Ilona
Imlerith
Iorweth

Irina Renarde
Isidor Kay
Jacques de Aldersberg
Jethro
Joachim von Gratz
Johnny
Kalkstein
Kalten
Keira Metz
King of the Wild Hunt
Lady of the Lake
Lambert
Lasota
Leo
Letande Avet
Letho
Linus Maravel
Liva
Louis Merse
Madman Lugos
Mael
Magnus
Malena
Manfred
Marabella
Marcus
Margarita Laux-Antille
Margot
Maria Louisa La Valette
Marietta Loredo
Mavrick
Mikul
Molly

Moril
Moritz Diefenthel
Morvran Voorhis
Mousesack
Myron
Nathaniel Pastodi
Newboy
Nurses
Odo
Odrin
Olcan
Otrygg an Hindar
People of Murky Waters
People of the Outskirts
Philippa Eilhart
Phillip Strenger
Polycarp of Rinde
Poor townsfolk
Prince Stennis
Priscilla
Professor
Prostitute
Proximo
Radovid V
Ramsmeat
Ravanen Kimbolt
Rayla
Raymond Gessler
Raymond Maarloeve
Relic peddler
Reverend
Roach
Roderick de Wett

Rupert Brandhuber
Sabrina Glevissig
Salma
Sambor
Sendler
Serrit
Shani
She-troll of Vergen
Sheala de Tancarville
Sheldon Skaggs
Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen
Siegfried of Denesle
Sigismund Dijkstra
Skalen Burdon
Skjall
Succubus
Svanrige Tuirseach
Sven
Tamara Strenger
Tavar Eggebracht
Thaler
The Ghost in the Tree
The Incredible Lockhart
The Mighty Numa
The Mysterious Elf
The Pellar
Thorak
Townsfolk
Triss Merigold
Troll of Flotsam
Troll of Vergen
Udalryk
Uma

Vanhemar
Vaska
Velerad
Vernon Roche
Ves
Vesemir
Vesna Hood
Vespula
Vetala
Vigi the Loon
Vimme Vivaldi
Vincent Meis
Vinson Traut
Visionary
Weavess
Whispess
Willis
Yaevinn
Yennefer
Zoltan Chivay
Zyvik

Glossary

Adda
Additional substances
Aedirn
Aelirenn
Catriona plague
Codringher and Fenn
Conclave of Sorcerers
Conjunction of the Spheres
Coram Agh Tera
Destiny
Dice poker

Dimeritium
Dol Blathanna
Dun Banner
Dwarf
Dwarves
Elf
Emperor Emhyr var Emreis
Eternal Fire
Fisstech
Francesca Findabair
Gifts
Gnome
Ithlinne's Prophecy
Kaedwen
Kalkstein's notes
Loc Muinne
Lodge of Sorceresses
Lormark/Upper Aedirn
Mage
Magic
Medical Science
Melitele
Mines of Vergen
Nilfgaard
Order of the Flaming Rose
Redania
Scoia'tael
Sorcerers
Temerian History
The Lodge of Sorceresses
The Supreme Council of Sorceresses
Veyopatis
Vizima Rebellion

Wild Hunt

Witcher

Location

Altar of Veyopatis

Battlefield

Black Tern Island

Cáelmewedd

Camp followers' encampment

Camp of the Order of the Flaming
Rose

Crypt in the outskirts

Detective's house

Druids' grove

Dungeons of La Valette Castle

Flotsam brothel

Flotsam forests

Flotsam

Forest ravines

House of the Queen of the Night

Hut on the cliff

Iorveth's hideout

Kaedweni camp

Kayran's lair

La Valette Castle

Lady of the Lake's altar

Lobinden

Loc Muinne amphitheatre

Loc Muinne sewers

Lormark

Murky Waters

Nilfgaardian Quarter

Nonhuman district

Old mine outside Kaer Morhen

Old Vizima
Outskirts Inn
Pontar Valley
Prison barge
Redanian Quarter
Royal Palace (Vizima)
Ruined bridge
Ruined library
Safe house
St. Lebioda's Hospital
Swamp cemetery
Swamp
Temerian Quarter
Temple Quarter
The Hairy Bear
Triss' house
Vergen
Vivaldi Bank
Vizima dike
Vizima sewers
Vizima
Witchers' laboratory

The Witcher

A Description of the Vodyanoi or the
Fishpeople
A Guide to Vizima
A Small Book of Minerals
Against Nonhumans
Against the Institution of Marriage
Ain Soph Aur
An Invitation to Magic
Animating the Inanimate
Ars Amandi

Barghests
Basics of Alchemy
Berengar's notes on the Beast
Cults and Religions of the Nordlings
Curses and the Cursed
Diary of a Dice Collector
Disenchanting a Striga
Elder Blood
Experiment Notes
Fairytale and Stories
Feainnewedd
Field Plants
Foreign Lands
Forensic Medicine
Grandma's diary
Greater Brothers
Hymns of Madness and Despair
Ithlinne's Prophecy
Lara's Gift
Lectures on Security and Hygiene in Magic
Monstrum, or Description of the Witcher
Ornithosaurs
Ostrit's journal
Physiologus
Plants of Barren Lands
Recent History
Ritual Plants
Shadow People, or the story of His Majesty's
Secret Service
Sorceresses and Sorcerers
Specters, Wraiths, and the Damned
Subterranean Plants
Swamp Monsters

Swamp Plants
The Aftermath of the War
The Book of Animals
The Conjunction of the Spheres
The Curse of Baron Wolfstein and Other Love Stories
The Disease of Civilization
The Double Cross of Alzur
The Druid's Herbarium
The Flower and the Flame
The Frightener
The Great Book of Minerals
The History of the World
The Kingdom of Temeria
The Last Wish
The Rivian Pogrom
The Road of No Return
The Secret Gates
The Story of Lara Dorren and Cragen of Lod
The Tome of Fear and Loathing, volume I
The Tome of Fear and Loathing, volume II
The Wonderful World of Insectoids
Tower mage's book
Transmutations and Metamorphoses
Vampires: Facts and Myths
Zerrikanian Insects and Other Vermin
The Witcher II
 A Hog Named Henselt
 About Dragons
 Ambassador Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's first letter to the Emperor
 Ambassador Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's second letter to the Emperor

Ambassador Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's third
letter to the Emperor
Ancient manuscript
Arrest warrant
Aryan La Valette - Interrogation Report
Balin's journal I
Balin's journal II
Balin's journal III
Balin's journal IV
Baltimore's directions
Baltimore's notes
Bane of the Vrans
Baroness La Valette - Interrogation Report
Beings of the Element of Earth
Beings of the Element of Fire
Bernard Loredó's letter
Blood of Elves
Bruxae - Eulogists of Death
Captain's log
Captain's report
Count Maravel's Correspondence
Dandelion's poetry sketchbook
Dearhenna's memoirs
Dearhenna's Notes I
Dearhenna's Notes II
Dearhenna's Notes III
Dearhenna's Notes IV
Dearhenna's Notes V
Dmitri's letter of safe passage
Do It Yourself
Dorian's Diary
Drowners: A Textbook for Initiates of the
Order of the Flaming Rose

Falsified orders changing the convoy's route
Finely scribbled notes
From the Annals of Mahakaman History
Gargoyles, Gutters, Splutters - Maintenance
and Repair
Harpies - Daughters of the Gale
Hospital files I
Hospital files II
Hospital files III
Hospital files IV
How to Kill a Bullvore
Invisible Ink
Journal from the Eyla Tarn
Legend of the Blasphemer
Legend of the Kinslayer
Legend of the Oathbreaker
Letter with a soldier's supplication
Lure of the Temptress
Magic and Power
Malget's notes
Margot's farewell letter
Margot's letter to Iorveth
Margot's notes
Marshall Milan Raupenneck
More Than Aretuza
Nekkers in the Mist
Note for Scribe
Of Trolls and Trolling
Orders changing the convoy's route
Renuald aep Matsen's letter
Report for Thaler
Rites of Midaëte
Rites of Midinværne

Scribe's Notes
Serrit's notes
Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's order
Slaves of the Curse
Soldiers' note to Visionary
Soldiers' orders
Song of the Hunt
The Alchemical Wedding
The Arachas - A Study
The Art of Magic
The Conclave of Mages
The Dun Banner
The Duties and Goals of the Lodge
The Feudal Society and Its Enemies
The Good Book
The Grand Triple
The Great Book of Herbs
The History of the Council of Mages
The Horrors of War: Rotfiends
The Immortelle or the Dwarven Herb
The Kayran - A Monograph
The Legendary Accursed
The Life and Death of the White Rose
The Nilfgaardian Provinces
The Pontar Valley
The Realms of the Nordlings
The Rose and the Flame
The Rudiments of Pathomorphology
The Runes of Power I
The Runes of Power II
The Runes of Power III
The Runes of Power IV
The Temerian Royal Dynasty

The Temerian Special Forces
The Thanedd Coup
The Valley of the Flowers
The Visionary's notes I
The Visionary's notes II
The Visionary's notes III
The Viziman Uprising
The Wars for Upper Aedirn
The White Flame
The Wild Hunt
Three Years Among the Endregas
Tournament Announcement
Venoms and Poisons
Wild Hunt investigator's notes
Wraiths: Fear and Trembling
The Witcher III
 A mother's letter
 A Portrayal of the Elder Races
 A Prayer
 A Sword for Witches
 Adalbert Kermith's first map
 Adalbert Kermith's fourth map
 Adalbert Kermith's second map
 Adalbert Kermith's third map
 Aen N'og Mab Taedh'morc
 Aeramas' notes
 After the White Frost
 Alchemist's notes
 Alexander's notes
 Amaverick of Sorano's journal
 An Ancient Ballad
 An invitation to the Memorial Derby
 Angrily scrawled notes

Anna's notes
Arrest warrant for the witcher Gerd
Arrest warrant
Ballad of Torgeir the Red
Ballads and Hymns
Ballads
Balstick's letter
Balton Dubis' notes
Bandit's notes
Bandit's notes
Bandit's notes
Beasts of the Tukaj Foothills
Behind the Great Veil
Beliefs of Skellige: Druids
Beliefs of Skellige: Freya
Berengar's notes
Beware of Trolls!
Beware! Haunted House & Cheating Merchant!
Blood-smeared notes
Blood-soaked military orders
Bloodstained document
Brother Adalbert's bestiary
Brother Missing
Burned papers
Captain's log
Care for Your Sword, Soldier!
Careful! There's a Swindler About!
Cargo list
Certificate
Change your life! A Handbook
Chronicles of Clan Tuirseach
Concerned Citizen's sermon
Contract: Beast in the Oxenfurt Forest

Contract: Devil by the Well
Contract: Devil in the Woods
Contract: Haunted House
Contract Issued by the Temple Guard of the
City of Novigrad
Contract: Jenny o' the Woods
Contract: Missing Miners
Contract: Missing Soldiers
Contract: Missing Son
Contract: Monster from the Swamp
Contract: Monster in Oxenfurt
Contract: Monster in the Bits
Contract: Monster in the Cemetery
Contract: Monster on the High Road
Contract: Morkvarg
Contract: Nils' Disappearance
Contract on... Gods Know What On!
Contract: Shrieker
Contract: the Beast of Honorton
Contract: The Phantom of Eldberg
Contract: The White Lady
Contract: Woodland Spirit
Crafting notes
Crumpled letter
Crumpled letter
Crumpled letter
Crumpled letter
Crumpled letter
Crumpled notes
Damp, moldy notes by Hieronymus on the
witcher Elgar
Dandelion's Planner
Dead soldier's letter

Diary of a Fire Swallower
Diplomatic report
Distiller's letter
Distiller's log
Dolores Reardon's diary
Druzus the Hermit's notes
Edwin Greloff's first map
Edwin Greloff's fourth map
Edwin Greloff's second map
Edwin Greloff's third map
Elemental Empires
Elven Sages
Emhyr var Emreis: A Biography
Ermion's correspondence
Ervyl's diary
Eternal Fire letter of safe conduct
Fauna of the Northern Realms, Volume 1
Fauna of the Northern Realms, Volume 2
Ghouls and Alghouls
Gnomish Prankings
Golem, or Man's Most Faithful Servant
Gottfried's Omni-opening Grimoire
Griffin in the Highlands
Gwent Lessons
Gwent: Looking for New Players
Gwent: Play a Round with Stjepan
Gwent: Vimme Vivaldi Cheats!
Heavily faded notes by Hieronymus on the
witcher Elgar
Hendrik's notes
Heraldic Animals
Heroes of Skellige: Broddr
Heroes of Skellige: Grymmdjarr

Heroes of Skellige: Modolf
Heroes of Skellige: Otkell
Heroes of Skellige: Sove
Heroes of Skellige: Tyr
Hieronymus' notes
High Stakes Gwent Tournament!
Highwaymen's journal
Holy Tome of the Eternal Fire
How to Avoid Colossal Vessels
Ibrahim Savi's first map
Ibrahim Savi's second map
Ibrahim Savi's third map
Ibrahim Savi's fourth map
In Beast's Clothing
Innkeep's notes
Interrogation report
Introduction to Applied Magic
Invoice for a golem
Itinerant merchant's notes
Journal from the Moldavie Residence
Journal kept by Chird, the mage Hieronymus' assistant
Journal of a Thief, Part II
Journal
Journey to the End of the World
Kovir and Poviss
Laboratory notebook
Lands of the North: Velen
Letter
Letter
Letter
Letter
Letter

Letter about treasure
Letter found in a grave
Letter found on Joris Aquinus' body
Letter from a druid
Letter from A
Letter from Agda's father to Timmon
Letter from an alchemist
Letter from Bohmil de Rabbe
Letter from Dudu
Letter from Frann
Letter from Nilfgaardian's wife
Letter from Toben
Letter from witcher Kolgrim of the Viper
School
Letter of apology
Letter of safe conduct
Letter sealed with impermeable wax
Letter to a mother
Letter to Alexander
Letter to Caleb Menge
Letter to Gaetan
Letter to Ingeborga Kalebsdotter
Letter to lighthouse keeper
Letter to Philippa
Letter to Tamara
Letter to Yanne
Letter to Yennefer
Letter written on elegant stationery
Letter
List of debtors
List of prisoners
Loose scraps of paper
Love Letter

Love Letter
Love Letter
Love Letter
Love Letter
Lumberjack's letter to his wife
Mage's notes
Marauder's notes
Menge's Holy Tome
Message from Carlo Varese
Message from Igor
Message
Missing merchant's letter
Missing: Mikel
Missing Wife
Monstrum, or a Portrayal of Witches. Volume
1
Monstrum, or a Portrayal of Witches. Volume
2
Monumenta Elforum
Moribundia: The Vampire's Last Likeness
Morkvarg's journal
My Evening with a Vampire
My Manifesto - The Life of Jacques de
Aldersberg
Mysterious letter
Mysterious letter
Mysterious note
Mysterious note
Mysterious notes
Mysterious recipe
Mystery of Mysteries
Naransen, son of Gunnestad
Necromancy, the Forbidden Magic

Necronomicon
New admissions to Miss Marabella's shelter
Nilfgaardian demands
Nilfgaardian's notes
Nithing
Note left by spy
Note
Notes of a pirate
Notes on parchment by Hieronymus on Elgar
the witcher
Notes written in a shaky hand
Of Sweat and Blood
Old letter
Old letter
Old, yellowed letter
Orders from Hammond
Pearls of the North - Novigrad
Pearls of the North – Oxenfurt
Pirate leader's notes
Pirate's notes
Poem
Polymorphy
Prince Adrien's journal
Professor Sigismund Gloger's notes
Radovid V the Stern - The Hard Slog to
Greatness
Recipe for black eyeliner
Religion and Life
Report
Research notes
Royal Lineages of the North
Sage's notes
Sawmill owner's notes

Scoia'tael note
Scrawled notes
Scribbled document
Script
She Who Knows
Short letter
Short letter
Skellige: Its History and Geography
Slightly torn notes by Hieronymus on the
witcher Elgar
Smuggler's notes
Soaked letter
Soaked letter
Soaked letter
Sodden note
Spy's notes
Stoneworker's notes
Tales and Legends About Humans
Tales of the Wild Hunt
The Aen Seidhe and the Aen Elle
The Ballad of Witcher Gerd
The baron's notes
The Bear Legend
The Chronicles of Redania
The Collected Verse of Gonzal de Verceo
The Corpse of Novigrad
The Cult of Freya
The Curious Cases of Virtuous Vegga
The Doppler's Salvation
The Elder Blood
The Horse Whistler
The Illustrated Atlas of Insectoids
The knight Chalimir's letter

The Ladies of the Wood
The Last Wish
The Little Peasant Who Confounded His Lord
The Lodge of Sorceresses
The Lonesome World Guide to An Skellig
The Lonesome World Guide to Ard Skellig
The Lonesome World Guide to Faroe
The Lonesome World Guide to Hindarsfjall
The Lonesome World Guide to Spikeroog
The Lonesome World Guide to Undvik
The mage Aeramas' last journal entry
The mage Alexander's log, part 1
The mage Alexander's log, part 2
The Merry Adventures of Muriel the Lovely
Harlot, Illustrated Edition
The Natural Obscurity of Curses
The Opposition in Nilfgaard
The Poisoned Source
The Slaughter of Cintra
The Treatment of Furuncles Through
Cauterization: A Study
The Ways and Manners of Skellige Folk
The White Frost
The Wonders of Zerrikania
Thief's journal
Thief's Journal
Thief's journal
To the Most Beautiful Woman in the World
Toussaint, a Duchy Out Of Tales of Fantasy
and Wonder
Transit pass
Trapped mage's notes
Travel Between Worlds

Traveler's notes
 Traveler's notes
 Trial of the Grasses registry tome
 Tristianna and Isador
 Tyromancy, or the Noble Art of Cheese
 Divination
 Unfinished book
 Unsent Letter
 Unsent Letter
 Unsent Letter
 Unsent Letter
 Unsent Letter
 Unsent Letter
 Unsent Letter
 Unsent Letter
 Unsent Letter
 Unsent Letter
 Varin's journal
 Warrant
 Water-damaged letter
 Well-preserved notes by Hieronymus on the
 witcher Elgar
 What shall become of Temeria?
 Witcher experimentations - cont.
 Witcher George's confession
 Witcher George's journal
 Witcher Needed!
 Witcher Signs
 Witcher wanted!
 Witchers: Not Quite the Devils You Thought
 Wondrous World of Insectoids
 Worn-out and faded notes by Hieronymus on
 the witcher Elgar

Yellowed diary
Yennefer's journal
Yennefer's letter

Journal Entries

The journal entries from *The Witcher*, *The Witcher II*, and *The Witcher III* have been combined. It should be noted that the entries from *The Witcher II* are written by Dandelion even though it is not displayed on the following entries.

Alchemy

Arachnid oil

Arachnid Oil is a universal formula that is effective against any creature susceptible to poison. Simply apply it to a blade, wound your opponent, and wait for the poison to take effect.

The oil is ineffective against creatures resistant to poisons.

Brock

Brock helps the witcher focus. It increases the effectiveness of all strikes designed to cause one of the many critical effects in the witcher's arsenal – Poisoning, Bleeding, Incineration and the like.

Such close concentration, however, weakens the witcher's defenses. Intent on dealing damage to his foes, the user becomes susceptible to their attacks as his resistances decline. This loss can be counterbalanced by the Golden Oriole potion.

The potion increases Toxicity very markedly when imbibed.

Brock is recommended in situations where the witcher has applied an oil to his blade or has specialized in combat employing an additional effect like Incineration.

Dancing Star

Witchers rarely use fire in combat as it conjures up shadows that can be disorienting during a fight. However, when facing hordes of monsters, they often set aside finesse in favor of using weapons of mass destruction. The Dancing Star, a bomb that bursts flames, is one such weapon.

This bomb is especially effective against creatures that attack in swarms and are vulnerable to fire. It can also be used to ignite the cloud of gas produced by the Dragon's Dream bomb.

Falka's Blood

Falka's Blood increases the maximum damage dealt with a sword. It differs from Whirl in that luck determines whether a witcher using the oil will land a hard or light blow. This blade grease owes its name to King Vridank's daughter, a rebel known for her cruelty.

Falka's Blood is especially effective against resilient and heavily armored opponents.

Flare

Flares can be very convenient if the witcher is out of the Cat potion or is accompanied by comrades who do not share his ability to see in the dark. Detonate the Flare bomb and the alchemical reaction will illuminate the surrounding area for a short time.

Gadwall

Gadwall helps a witcher's mutated body regenerate much faster than usual. No wonder witchers often consume it when preparing to fight especially powerful beasts. Gadwall is a stronger version of the Swallow potion. As Gadwall courses through the veins, however, it burdens a witcher's body, causing him to deal less damage and lose Vigor at an accelerated rate. These side effects can be reduced by drinking the Rook and Tawny Owl potions.

Potion significantly increases Toxicity when imbibed.

Gadwall is recommended before long fights. Its slow but constant regeneration of Vitality provides its user with an advantage over opponents..

Grapeshot

While Alfred Nobel's most important invention failed to find broad application, it proved splendid as the basis for the Grapeshot bomb, a highly democratic explosive that wounds everyone within range, whether human or monster.

The Grapeshot is effective against nearly all creatures, except perhaps the most powerful.

Lapwing

Just as Gadwall regenerates Vitality slowly but consistently, Lapwing restores Vigor. The potion's effect is stronger than that of Tawny Owl, but it produces some side effects. Lapwing intensely weakens the body, reducing the witcher's Vitality and resistances. To strengthen themselves, witchers take Golden Oriole and Swallow together with Lapwing.

Potion causes serious intoxication when imbibed.

The potion is mainly used by witchers who specialize in casting Signs in combat, and by those preparing to fight monsters that perform strong attacks which must be parried.

Mongoose

Provides protection against the kayran's highly venomous mucous. This potion should be consumed before fighting a kayran.

Red haze

Perhaps the most insidious invention of Zerrikanian alchemists, the reddish haze emitted by this bomb upon detonation causes hallucinations and aggression, leading creatures which inhale the gas to fight each other.

The bomb is ineffective against creatures that cannot be hexed.

Rook

Rook is especially popular among witchers who believe that killing monsters quickly is their best defense. This potion increases muscular power, and thus damage dealt to foes in close combat. Unlike Thunderbolt, it has no side effects.

Rook can alleviate the side effects of White Raffard's Decoction, Gadwall and Tiara.

Potion causes minor intoxication when imbibed.

The potion is recommended for witchers who prefer to use their swords in fights and employ Signs sporadically. Rook is especially helpful against resilient and heavily armored opponents.

Stammelford's philtre

Created by Herbert Stammelford, a famous member of the first Conclave, this brew is readily used by witchers who rely on magic, since it augments the intensity of Signs – the damage done by the Igni, the impact of the Aard, the defenses of the Quen, and so on.

Unfortunately, the potion taps the witcher's Vitality for its power, thus reducing it. Witchers compensate for this loss by consuming the Swallow potion.

The potion moderately increases Toxicity when imbibed.

It is recommended for witchers who rely more heavily on magic than on traditional weapons, and before any fight against monsters vulnerable to the special attacks issuing from Signs.

Stenchbulb

This bomb releases a cloud of gas whose odor is so unbearably foul that it chases away even dwarves, not to mention rotfiends and bullvores. A practical joker might use it to ruin a banquet, but witchers use Stenchbulbs to flush monsters out of their lairs or to catch a breather during an exhausting fight.

Tiara

This singular potion affects the witcher's skeleton, hardening bones and strengthening tendons. Each time the witcher parries an opponent's blow while under the potion's influence, he loses less Vigor than he would had he not consumed a dose of Tiara.

The catch, however, is that stronger bones and joints denote stiffer limbs and weaker soft tissue. The witcher strikes with less confidence, so the sword damage he deals is reduced. His Vitality also declines.

Potion causes serious intoxication when imbibed.

This potion is recommended for witchers who rely more heavily on their swords than on magic, and before fights against monsters that employ strong attacks which must be parried.

Virga

Virga is favored by witchers who assign greater importance to safety than to mounting bold attacks. The brew increases the witcher's resistances, rendering him less vulnerable to the special attacks of monsters, including Poisoning, Incineration and Bleeding. Virga is stronger than Golden Oriole, but it has some side effects.

When focusing on defense, the witcher is limited in his ability to execute subtle attacks. The witcher thus cannot employ tactics to which he himself has become more resistant, be it Poisoning, Incineration or oils that increase Bleeding. The Wolf potion can be used to limit this unwanted side effect.

Potion moderately increases Toxicity when consumed.

The potion is recommended before fights against monsters that employ powerful special attacks. It is effective against creatures which cause Bleeding, are venomous or breath fire.

Whirl

Whirl is a highly universal oil. Applied to a blade, it increases damage dealt to foes, regardless of their type. Witchers, however, generally prefer to use blade coatings designed for specific opponents, as they are more effective.

Whirl is recommended for situations where the identity of the possible foe or foes is unknown.

Bombs

Devil's Puffball

The Witcher

The formula for this bomb was developed by Zerrikanian alchemists and migrated to the Northern Kingdoms thanks to traveling merchants.

The Witcher 2

Devil's Puffball, also known as the Peasant's Fart, emits a cloud of poisonous gas centered on the detonation site. Any creature within range of the toxic cloud is poisoned.

The bomb is ineffective against creatures resistant to poison. It is advisable to use it against creatures attacking in groups.

Dragon's Dream

The Witcher

The Zerrikanians worship dragons, so it is no surprise this mixture, which releases a cloud of flammable gas, is named after the fearsome beasts. Whosoever detonates a Dragon's Dream is sure to conjure the spirit of the creature itself.

The Witcher 2

The members of certain Zerrikanian religious sects claim that Dragon's Dream bombs are filled with visions of all-consuming, destructive fire - from whence the bomb's name. Upon detonation, the bomb releases a cloud of gas that ignites violently when exposed to an open flame.

Clouds from multiple Dragon's Dreams can ignite one another in a chain reaction that incinerates creatures spread out over a large area.

King and Queen

Zerrikanian wizards have mastered the dangerous art of crafting explosives. King and Queen is an example of their handiwork — such a simple looking item and yet it is enough to send enemies scrambling, panic in their eyes.

Samum

The Witcher

Zerrikanian wizards have learned to harness the energy of hot desert storms and bind it into an arcane mixture. When detonated, the Samum releases this energy and stuns opponents with the ferocity of desert winds.

The Witcher 2

A Zerrikanian invention, Samum found its way North thanks to merchants and was later adopted by the witchers. The bomb stuns and immobilizes all creatures within range, rendering them defenseless against the witcher's blade.

This bomb is ineffective against creatures resistant to Stunning.

Zerrikanian Sun

The Witcher

Assassins from the sect known as the Zerrikanian Sun use this flash bomb to cover their escape after they eliminate a target. Sentries and guards blinded by the flash are more likely to attack each other than their opponent. The sect trains its assassins to close their eyes instinctively at the moment of detonation; witchers need not do this as their mutated pupils automatically narrow in response to the explosion.

The Witcher 2

The explosion of the Zerrikanian Sun is so abrupt and bright that it instantly, though temporarily, blinds anyone who glances at it. Foes thus blinded become easy prey for the witcher.

This bomb is ineffective against monsters that cannot be blinded.

Oils

Argentia

Silver brings ruin to all beasts, but even a brave knight bearing a silver blade may not have the strength to defeat the most dreadful monsters. There is a way, though, to awaken the spirit of a silver sword — by using the moon oil known as Argentia.

Brown oil

The Witcher

Curse your enemy bearing the name of Coram Agh Tera, the Lionhead Spider, and dip your blade in oil. An enemy wounded with the dagger will bleed to death even from a slight wound.

The Witcher 2

Wounds caused by a blade covered with Brown Oil do not heal. The blade grease also augments hemorrhaging. Hit an opponent with a blade covered with Brown Oil, adopt a defensive stance, and stall for time. The adversary soon drops to the ground due to loss of blood.

This oil is ineffective against creatures resistant to bleeding.

Crinfrid oil

The formula for this substance comes from the city of Crinfrid, where it is widely employed by dark characters of all kinds.

Hanged man's venom

The Witcher

In preparation for an assignment, an assassin applies Hanged Man's Venom to his blade. He grinds the ingredients with a mortar and pestle until he gets a thick paste, and then lightly coats the tools of his trade while taking care to keep the substance from touching his skin. Then comes the hard part, but even a hastily aimed slash can be fatal if Hanged Man's Venom slips into the wound.

The Witcher 2

Hanged Man's Venom is a toxin that is equally lethal to humans, elves and dwarves. Applied to a blade, it deals more damage than any other coating.

This oil is ineffective against monsters.

Insectoid oil

The Witcher

Huge viys, kikimores and other insectoids suffer greater damage from weapons coated in this poison invented by witchers. Witchers also use Insectoid oil to rid their fortresses of bugs and parasites.

The Witcher 2

This blade grease increases sword damage dealt to arachnids and creatures similar to insects in their physiology. It is the most effective oil against monsters of this type.

This oil is ineffective against humans and monsters other than insectoids.

Necrophage oil

The Witcher

Necrophages are accustomed to poisonous vapours. Yet even the most rancid ghouls and graveirs cannot withstand the poison wounds inflicted by a blade coated with Necrophage oil.

The Witcher 2

This blade grease increases sword damage dealt to necrophages - i.e., all creatures that devour corpses. It is the most effective oil against monsters of this type.

This oil is ineffective against humans and monsters other than necrophages.

Ornithosaur oil

This oil, sometimes called Basilisk Bane, contains a poison that is deadly to all reptiles. Even the basilisk, which possesses its own venom and is resistant to poisons, cannot withstand a blade coated with this substance.

Specter oil

The Witcher

There is a mysterious boundary between the worlds of the dead and the living, one which is easier to cross for restless specters than for humans. To injure a spectral opponent, first anoint a blade with this oil. Only then will the weapon truly part the curtain dividing the worlds, thereby damaging the specter.

The Witcher 2

Witchers apply this grease to their blades before fighting ghosts, apparitions and all manner of damned phantasms. It is the most effective oil against foes of this type.

This oil is ineffective against humans and monsters other than wraiths.

Vampire oil

Whosoever seeks to destroy a vampire, to banish it from this world forever, should prepare St. Gregory's Oil, called Vampire Oil by witchers. No fleder or bruxa can withstand it.

Potions

Bindweed

Bindweed was created specifically to counter monsters which employ acid as a weapon. Witchers also call it 'swamp potion', because monsters which spit acid or have caustic blood are most often found in swamps.

Black Blood

In the distant past, mages working with witchers developed this potion specifically for use in fighting cemetery and crypt dwellers that drink the blood or eat the innards of their still living victims. Witchers use Black Blood unwillingly because the potion only works when a monster begins to feast on their body. Their transmuted blood proves to be a deadly drink.

Blizzard

Witchers usually drink the Blizzard potion immediately before combat. The potion is also favored in especially dangerous situations.

Cat

The Witcher

Cat is said to have been the first potion created specifically for witchers. The concoction allows witchers to pursue monsters into their lairs, including dark caves, ruins and crypts, because it augments vision to pick up additional wavelengths of light. To prevent blinding, the imbiber's pupils automatically narrow when in bright light. This is possibly the potion most commonly used by witchers.

The Witcher 2

Cat is one of the potions witchers use most often. After imbibing it, the witcher is able to see in total darkness and will avoid being surprised by any nocturnal creatures. The potion allows its user to see both living creatures and those made of inanimate matter, even through walls. Cat slightly disrupts perception, however, as a result of which its user deals less damage to monsters. The Rook potion can be used to alleviate this side effect. Potions cause minor intoxication when imbibed. The Cat potion is recommended before entering a cave or a crypt, and before a midnight stroll through dangerous terrain.

Dagon Sap

The mages of old created the formula for this mutagenic potion which should, in theory, greatly strengthen a witcher physically. Their notes indicate that the secretions of the mythical being named Dagon are required to produce the potion.

De Vries' extract

The talented sorceress Tissaia de Vries is credited with discovering this powerful potion, which won her considerable renown. The potion improves the imbiber's vision and allows opponents to be detected even through walls.

Frightener's Vision

The sorcerers who pioneered the witcher mutations discovered that mixing rare and powerful ingredients with more common substances resulted in potions that strengthened witchers' mutations. This potion, made with a frightener's eye, transforms and fortifies a witcher's body when consumed.

Full Moon

Full Moon is an all-purpose potion. Witchers imbibe it before combat when they are not certain what kind of opponent awaits them. The downside to Full Moon is its high toxicity.

Golden Oriole

The Witcher

Before fighting a venomous creature like the basilisk, a witcher drinks Golden Oriole to release enzymes that increase his resistance to toxins. The truly cautious prepare a second dose in case an opponents' poison somehow overcomes this resistance.

The Witcher 2

Golden Oriole, one of the best-known witcher potions, increases resistance to special attacks, such as Poisoning, Incineration and Bleeding. The brew also negates the side effects of the Lapwing and Brock potions, while producing no side effects of its own. The potion increases Toxicity slightly when imbibed.

Golden Oriole is recommended before fighting monsters that employ powerful special attacks. It is effective against venomous and fire breathing creatures, as well as those that cause Bleeding.

Golem's Pith

Golems are usually described as unthinking constructs and have effectively become synonymous with insentience. Yet only the most powerful mages know how much effort is required to cast a spell on a golem's stone heart, to force the creature to follow even the simplest commands. Renegade mages somehow learned to draw on the complex magic contained in a golem's obsidian heart to produce a powerful mutagenic potion that affects witchers' brains.

Hellhound's Soul

Witchers are capable of extracting components even from the carcasses of unique creatures. This potion formula requires the iridescent mark of the mythical Hellhound, known also as the Beast. The resulting beverage causes further mutation in the witcher's body.

Kikimore's Ire

Kikimore queens' unique nervous systems inspired renegade mages to develop this strong mutagenic potion. The potion causes changes in the ventral cavity and also prompts production of mutated digestive enzymes. Broad use of the potion was curtailed due to the scarcity of its core ingredient.

Kiss

This potion affects witchers' mutated bodies by forcing their blood to congeal almost instantaneously. It is often consumed before taking on monsters known to inflict hemorrhaging wounds.

Koshchey's Core

By using the heart of a koshchey — a legendary alchemical component — a witcher can create a powerful potion which deepens the process of mutation begun during the Trial of the Grasses.

Maribor forest

The Witcher

According to an old tale, this potion was first made by dryads from the forest of Brokilon. The formula was obtained by the druids of Maribor Forest, who then passed it on to their brethren in other corners of the world. The formula also reached Kaer Morhen, where the practical-minded witchers began producing the potion using ingredients obtained from monster carcasses.

The Witcher 2

Maribor Forest considerably boosts Vigor. After consuming it, the witcher tirelessly parries blows and can cast many Signs in a row.

It is, however, a devastating brew that causes minor twitching. It reduces Vitality and the accuracy of special attacks, such as those causing Poisoning, Incineration, or Bleeding. Its side effects can be alleviated by consuming the Wolf and Swallow potions.

Potion causes serious intoxication when imbibed.

This potion is used by witchers who specialize in casting Signs and by those preparing to fight monsters with strong attacks that must be parried.

Perfume

Legend has it that perfume was created by an alchemist for his wife. The woman accused the scholar of devoting too much time and energy to his work without generating any practical results. He responded by creating a formula for producing perfume from almost any ingredient.

Petri's Philter

The Witcher

Throughout his life, the mage Petri sought a way to strengthen his magical powers. He failed in this endeavor, but several interesting potions came about through his attempts. One of these, known as Petri's Philter, is useful to witchers with magical skills. Witchers who prefer hand-to-hand combat rarely use Petri's Philter, however, especially since it is highly toxic and thus renders the use of any other potions impossible.

The Witcher 2

This potion, created by a student of a famous mage of the first Conclave, is weaker than Stammelford's Philtre, but has no side effects. Petri's Philtre increases the intensity of witcher Signs - the impact of the Aard, the defenses of the Quen, the effectiveness of the Yrden, and so on.

The potion increases Toxicity very markedly when imbibed.

It is recommended for witchers who rely more heavily on magic than on their swords, and before fights against monsters vulnerable to Signs.

Potion for Triss

According to Lambert's instructions, the potion for the unconscious sorceress Triss can be made of celandine, a frightener's claw and a sewant mushroom, though Calcium equum can replace the latter ingredient. Once gathered, these components should be mixed with White Gull.

Shrike

Shrike — the potion of revenge — mutates the blood itself. Whosoever spills a drop of Shrike-laced blood will earn a measure of pain in return.

Striga's Urge

The mixture of a striga's heart with common ingredients results in a mutagenic potion which, when consumed, strengthens a witcher's abilities, making him even more deadly.

Swallow

The Witcher

There is no bird more beautiful than the swallow, the harbinger of spring. Even the dark mages who developed the formula for witchers' potions appreciated the charm of this bird, lending its name to the potion that accelerates regeneration of a mutated organism.

The Witcher 2

Symbolizing spring and rejuvenation, the swallow lent its name to this potion that accelerates the rate at which wounds scab over and heal. As a universal brew, it is good on many occasions and additionally produces no side effects.

The witcher can use the Swallow potion to balance out some of the undesirable effects of potions like Thunderbolt, Maribor Forest, Tiara and Stammelford's Philtre.

The potion increase Toxicity slightly when imbibed.

It is recommended before long fights. Slow but consistent Vitality regeneration will provide a significant advantage over foes. Witchers unsure of the dangers they might face in a given battle should take Swallow.

Tawny Owl

The Witcher

In preparation for an all-night vigil at the side of a cursed man, or before a battle which is certain to be prolonged, a witcher mixes a dose of Tawny Owl potion to boost his endurance.

The Witcher 2

Tawny Owl speeds up the regeneration of Vigor. After consuming it, the witcher can parry monsters' blows and cast Signs more often. The potion is weaker than Lapwing, but generates no side effects. It can also be used to alleviate the side effects of Gadwall.

Potion moderately increases Toxicity when imbibed.

The potion is recommended for witchers who specialize in casting Signs and those who fight monsters that employ strong attacks which must be parried. Its low toxicity and virtual lack of side effects make it ideal for combining with other potions.

Thunderbolt

The Witcher

Witchers take this potion before fighting strong, heavily armored opponents. Imbibing Thunderbolt causes witchers to enter into a battle trance. While in this state, witchers attack more efficiently and cause greater damage, while at the same time neglecting their own defense and becoming an easier target.

The Witcher 2

The Thunderbolt potion augments muscle power and thus damage dealt using a sword. As simple as it is effective, the brew is a more powerful version of the Rook potion.

Unfortunately, Thunderbolt may cause weaker muscle fibers to rupture, decreasing both Vitality and its regeneration. These side effects can be alleviated by taking the Swallow potion.

Potion significantly increases Toxicity when imbibed. This potion is recommended before fighting particularly resilient or heavily armored monsters.

Werewolf's Wrath

It was determined ages ago that a potion containing the fur of a werewolf could strengthen a witcher's mutations and augment his predatory instincts. Opponents of this potion's use argued that it made witchers similar to monsters. As a result, use of Werewolf's Wrath was restricted, though few objected since acquiring the beasts' fur is risky business.

White Honey

White Honey strongly stimulates the production of purifying enzymes in witchers' mutated bodies. Thus, it frees their bodies of the effects of toxicity, though it simultaneously nullifies the beneficial effects of any potions previously consumed. White Honey does not alleviate the effects of common venoms and poisons.

White Raffard's decoction

The Witcher

White Raffard, a famous mage of times long past, developed a healing potion for the human warriors who conquered the new world for their race ages ago. Witchers have found new, more efficient ways to produce White Raffard's Decoction, using ingredients obtained from monsters. Classic witcher training suggests that the Swallow potion be consumed simultaneously, for White Raffard's Decoction is highly toxic.

The Witcher 2

Invented by a famous mage, this potion helps the witcher survive wounds that would normally be lethal to him. The buzz from this powerful brew, however, adversely affects coordination. After consuming it, although he is fortified, the witcher deals reduced damage for a short time. This side effect can be alleviated by drinking the Rook potion.

This potion very significantly increases Toxicity when imbibed.

It should be consumed before fights that could prove particularly difficult.

Willow

Willow augments a witcher's physical coordination and resistance to damage. It should be taken before a fight during which the witcher risks being knocked down or stunned.

“Willow augments a witcher's physical coordination and resistance to damage. It should be taken before a fight during which the witcher risks being knocked down or stunned.”

Wives' Tears

Village witches sell this brew to women whose husbands patronize local inns too frequently. Witches, lacking mastery of the arcane secrets of alchemy, usually know only one method of creating Wives' Tears.

Wolf

The Witcher

Wolf is widely used by witchers employing the Group Style. The potion improves its imbiber's precision, meaning that the witcher's slashing blade finds its opponents' soft spots all the more readily.

The Witcher 2

Witchers who drink the Wolf potion are more agile during fights. Their special attacks, like those causing poisoning or heavy bleeding, are more accurate and effective.

The potion has no known side effects. When imbibed, the brew can cancel the side effects of the Maribor Forest and Virga potions.

Potion causes minor intoxication when imbibed.

Wolf is recommended for witchers who apply oils to their swords or specialize in inflicting additional effects, such as Incineration, during fights.

Wolverine

It is not by accident that the witchers have named this potion after an animal known for its fierce and aggressive nature. Wolverine unleashes the entire potential of mutation, turning the witcher into a dervish of destruction. Witchers use this potion when they are certain that Signs will not help them in combat.

Bestiary

Abaya

Seen a lot o' ugly critters in me life – morays, lampreys, blobfish... But never nothin' like this!

— Bjorg, Kaer Trolde shipbuilder

The bay below Kaer Trolde had a pernicious reputation. At times fishermen who chose to cast their nets in its waters would never come home again. Something would drag oarsmen off their longships or knock the ships themselves over. The locals blamed this on sea devils – the Skelligers' name for drowners. The truth, however, proved far worse.

A water hag had made her lair in the caves beneath the cliffs of Kjerag. An old and experienced water hag. With powerful claws able to demolish any attempt to block or parry. And the ability to blind opponents from a distance, then strike with a lightning-quick counterattack. Signs would be needed to best her – Yrden, to slow her, and Quen, to protect from her blows. Needed most of all, however, would be a great deal of luck.

The witcher, though, never was one to count on luck alone. Instead, he pulled a few tricks from up his sleeve to even the odds. By masking his scent, he managed to catch the monster by surprise... and slay it.

Alghoul

The Witcher

Alghouls are ghouls which had been devouring corpses for so many years that human flesh becomes irresistible and they begin to prey on the living. They are seen in crypts and on battlefields, frequently surrounded by ghouls. Simple folk do not notice the differences between these two types of scavengers — unlike witchers, who know that the alghoul is a more aggressive and challenging opponent.

The Witcher III

An alghoul's basically a badarse ghoul.

Yarpen Zigrin, dwarven warrior

Alghouls differ from normal ghouls in size, strength, coloring and, most importantly, intelligence. Whereas ghouls and graveirs are primitive creatures unfit to plan even the simplest ambush, alghouls and their kindred (such as cemetaurs) are capable of forethought, and are thus much more dangerous.

Ghouls seem to possess wits enough to at least know a brighter mind when they see it, and so let alghouls and cemetaurs lead their packs. A pack so led will terrorize all in its path, attacking not only lone travelers but also caravans and even farmsteads. When encountering such a pack the alghoul should be

eliminated as a first priority, leaving the other beasts for once their leader is gone. One be particularly careful when fighting alghouls around dusk and at night, when they fight with doubled strength.

During combat alghouls and cemetaurs try risky maneuvers aimed at knocking their opponents to the ground so the others can finish the job by tearing them to shreds. Like a normal ghoul, an injured alghoul can fall into a frenzy and attack with blind fury. An experienced witcher knows to get out of its way on such occasions and strike from behind, while for an inexperienced witcher, such a turn of events often marks the end of his Path.

Alp

“No other monster inspires so many myths and fallacies as the alp. People believe that this vampire is able to turn into a black dog or a venomous toad. They mistake alps for succubi, believing them to be lecherous and inclined to seduce handsome young men. Folk tales describe their charm and their beautiful, seductive voices, as well as their loathing of virgins. What is true beyond any doubt is that they move noiselessly and attack by surprise, rarely giving their victims as much as a chance to scream in terror.”

Arachas

The Witcher

Arachnids are lone hunters - they patiently wait for their prey to kill it with one swift strike when it appears. The same is true for the arachas, a huge creature that took a liking of the riverside forest, becoming it's undisputed king. A ruler who does not tolerate other hunters on it's territory. Including witchers.

Arachasae are large, slow and protected by a durable armor. The carapace, as the witchers call this armor, is especially tough from the front, so it is much easier to wound the creature from the side or the back. The arachas' charges make an excellent for that - one has to evade the charge at all costs by stepping out the beast's way, and then make one's blow. Without doubt it's the best to use the strong style then.

The arachas has no fear of poison, and not much fear of fire. It's primitive nervous system barely reacts to wounds, and it's incredible vitality allows it to take even great wounds. The beast will heal them after the fight anyway, all the while digesting its prey.

All said and done, the arachas is a bug, so one's blade should be coated with the Insectoid Oil before fighting it. The monster's susceptibility to this blade coating is probably its sole weakness. The beast can easily all shrug off other witcher

tricks, so common poisons and Signs are of no use, not to mention attempts to knock the colossus down.

The Witcher III

N'aracche aen woed endicen [Let sleeping arachasae lie].

— Elven proverb

Powerful pincers, a maw filled with razor-sharp teeth and venom glands packed with deadly toxins — these creatures constitute the arachas' deadly arsenal. Since people and farm animals make up an important part of these creatures' diet, contracts on arachasae in turn constitute an important source of witcher coin.

Once native to the far south, this invasive species migrated north over the course of decades, adjusting as it went to new climates and temperatures. It found damp woodlands and swamps most hospitable and made them its home, making use of the much and moss found there as blankets during its winter hibernation. The arachas hides its unprotected, sack-like abdomen under a covering of hollow tree-trunks worn on its back.

At first glance, a stationary arachas often looks like a part of the forest undergrowth, a fact it uses to deadly advantage when hunting. It usually begins a battle by spitting venom, then tries to grab its prey with prehensile feelers in order to drag it within reach of its crushing pincers.

Archespore

Fortunately, fire proved an equally efficient remedy for these cursed plants, and using the Igni sign does not require carrying an inconvenient tank on one's back.

Armored arachas

That's the kinda john we call an 'armored arachas.' Hard and prickly on the outside, but get 'im undressed and everything's soft and squishy.

— Foxy Lisa, Maribor prostitute

An arachas' only weakness is its soft, sensitive abdomen. Some arachasae hide this under hollow tree stumps, while other, "armored" varieties exist which have grown a thick carapace that covers all the more delicate parts of their bodies.

An armored arachas is a true behemoth. It uses its enormous mass to knock over and trample its victims then devours their crushed remains. Like all arachasae, it is highly venomous, and this Golden Oriole should always be consumed before fighting it.

It is also worthwhile to stock up on healing potions and crossbow bolts before setting out, for this arachas' thick plating can withstand a great deal of damage, making battles with it a long and exhausting affair.

Armored hound

“During the first stage of research, we performed experiments on animals only. Having bred a mutated hound, we are certain that the potion formulae are suitable and if we administer them to human subjects, we will achieve exactly what we seek.”

Barghest

– “Sermons for Feasts and Funerals,” by the Reverend Yomen of
Tretogor

Basilisk

The Witcher

Simple people call the basilisk the king of the Zerrikanian deserts and often mistake it for a cockatrice. They claim that the beast is filled with such hatred towards all living things that even its breath is venomous and its glance turns the unwary to stone. The fact that witchers often encounter basilisks in dungeons and cellars contradicts the legend and suggests these creatures can reproduce under any conditions like many of their nasty monster brethren. In fairy tales, the only certain way to kill a basilisk is by holding a mirror in front of its eyes to divert its deadly gaze. Witchers reply that it is far better to smash the mirror on the creature's head.

The Witcher III

In memory of the noble knight, Roderick, slain during a valiant struggle against a basilisk. Let's hope the beast choked on his bones.

— Gravestone inscription, Vizima cemetery.

Contrary to popular belief, basilisks cannot turn anything to stone with their gaze. That is small comfort, however, given that their acid, venom, claws and teeth provide them many other ways to kill.

Basilisks love dark, damp places such as cellars, caves and city sewers. They hunt by day, waiting patiently in hiding for their prey to come, then jump out in a flash to unleash a deadly attack.

When preparing to fight such a creature one should drink Golden Oriole, which will provide resistance to its venom, and also prepare Dancing Star or shrapnel bombs, which work particularly well against basilisks.

Basilisk leather is a highly-valued material used to make fashionable shoes and women's handbags. For this reason many men, their courage girded by goldlust, take to hunting them. Most of these hunts end in disaster, but some do manage to bag their prey, which has led to a drastic decline in this creature's numbers in recent years. Some mages and druids are of the opinion that basilisks should be included in programs meant to safeguard dying species. Everyone else thinks those mages and druids have gone completely mad.

Bear

Know that ditty about the bear “climbing the mountain, to see what he could see?” Biggest load of rubbish I’ve ever heard. When a bear climbs a mountain, it’s not to see. It’s to hunt. To kill.

Bears are omnivores - meaning men find a place in their diet beside berries, roots and salmon. When they snack on humans, they most frequently partake of the meat of travelers unwittingly trespassing on their territory, or else that of hunters for whom besting such a creature is a lifelong ambition.

There are several subspecies of bears - black bears, polar bears and cave bears - which differ from one another in coloring as well as in size and strength. All share one trait in common, however: a near-unmatched ability to kill.

Berserker

Now finish your soup, or a berserker'll come and swallow ye whole.

— Skellige mother scolding a child.

Skellige legends speak of men known as berserkers who transform into bears when overwhelmed by battle rage. In doing so, they lose all self-awareness and are driven by a bloodlust which they must satiate in order to return to human form. Few believe these blood-curdling tales, however, not even in Skellige, where the inhabitants usually treat even the least probable legends with the utmost gravity. This indicates either that berserkers are in fact mere figments of mead-sodden imaginations, or else that they have learned to hide their abilities from the rest of the islanders.

The skalds' ballads indicate a berserker transformed in the heat of battle cannot be distinguished from a true-born bear. Only minute anatomical details – such as the shape of their tongues and teeth – reveal their secret. Descriptions of their fighting prowess paint them as invulnerable to pain and able to heal any wound received almost at once.

If these men-turned-bears truly do exist, one can suppose that, like werewolves and lycanthropes, they are particularly vulnerable to oils that harm cursed creatures. But if we are to give credence to ancient songs about these creatures' deeds,

about the mass murders and massacres they have committed, we can only hope that no witcher will have to test this hypothesis.

Bloedzuiger

Developer CD Projekt's characterization of the Bloedzuiger taken from the monsterbook, which was enclosed with the Collectors Edition of the computer game The Witcher (PC) for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic:

Botchling

Saying a botchling's ugly is like saying shit's not particularly tasty: can't say it's a lie, but it doesn't exactly convey the whole truth, either.

— Lambert, witcher of the Wolf School

Botchlings are perhaps the most repulsive creatures a witcher will ever have the displeasure of meeting. Born of dead, unwanted babies discarded without a proper burial, their appearance is that of a partially-decayed fetus, their unformed flesh twisted with hate, fear and malice. These hideous creatures feed on the blood of pregnant women, driven by a mad hunger that most often leads to their victim's death.

A botchling will emerge from its lair at night to lurk by the bedside of an expectant mother, draining her strength and that of her unborn progeny as she sleeps. A woman thus beleaguered first suffers from troubling dreams, then fever, delirium and a general weakening of the flesh. After a few such nights she is enfeebled and unable to defend herself – it is then the botchling attacks directly, sinking its long, sharp fangs into her body and drinking her blood until mother and fetus perish together.

A botchling stands around a foot and a half in height, but, when threatened and if gorged with blood, it can change form. At such times it grows into a deformed man, hunched over and

striding, ape-like, on its forearms. Stronger and fiercer after this alteration, it hurls itself into direct, physical combat, gnashing at its opponent or attacking him with sharp claws.

A botchling's curse can be lifted by transforming it into a lubberkin – a guardian spirit of the hearth that watches over the family it never knew in the house it never could call home.

Bruxa

The Witcher

It is said that at night bruxae haunt attractive young men and drink their blood. These vampires move quietly in the dark to suddenly emerge near their victims. Bruxae are womanoids and may take the form of beautiful girls, leading some to mistake them for water-nymphs, but their long fangs and unrestrained thirst for blood always betray them.

The Witcher II

The bruxa is a higher vampire, that is a post-Conjunction creature, an intruder in our world. She appears as a beautiful woman, but when she is hungry or attacking, she is terrifying. As a vampire, the bruxa drinks blood. She often finds a victim to become her lover and a constant supply of sustenance at the same time.

The bruxa finds the smell of garlic to be socially inconvenient at most. And she considers holy symbols to be interesting examples of handicraft. She endures the light of the sun well, but she prefers the darkness of the night. As you see, you can stuff most stereotypical preconceptions about vampires up your arse when it comes to a bruxa. So what works? The blade of the silver sword, as usual. Apart from silver, she can be wounded with fire and a stake, provided that the latter is as long as a wagon's drawbar.

Less powerful bruxae often hunt in packs, making it easier to corner prey. If threatened, they attack with their talons and rip the victim apart, pausing only to savor the blood of their dying foe. The greatest threat to a witcher is the bruxa's voice. The creature can screech with such force that the Shockwave will knock even a huge man down, making him easy prey for the vampiress. Blindness is as great a threat as this ghastly scream. Bruxae deprive their enemies of sight in order to play cat and mouse with them. Until sight returns, one should defend against their attacks in any way possible, for example by using the Quen Sign.

The bruxae have masterful control over their blood circulation, rendering poisons and oils that increase bleeding ineffective against them. They are good at defending themselves against witchers' tricks, but they are vulnerable to fire and can be knocked down and finished off as they try to get up.

The Witcher III

If you must travel through the woods, steer clear of any places where you can hear several different kinds of birds at once. That sound means you're entering a bruxa's territory and can kiss your life farewell.

- anonymous piece of advice

Fortunately for us all, bruxae are rare creatures. Most live far from population centers, for they care greatly for their own safety and make their lairs in places where they cannot be taken by surprise. Those who decide to live near men avoid crowds and emerge from their shelters only at night. When they do, one could almost mistake them for delayed travelers hurrying towards their night's lodging, yet subtle details give

them away: their close ties to birds, their piercing voices and the breathtaking speed of their movements. Bruxae are far swifter and stronger than men, but their greatest asset is their ability to turn invisible.

Bruxae dart about with uncanny speed, and with their power of invisibility they can easily confuse opponents and attack unexpectedly or from behind. Thus when fighting these vampires the Moon Dust bomb is a great aid - while it cannot eliminate the vampire's invisibility altogether, it can make it easier to track its motions. A generous smearing of vampire oil is also effective.

Bruxae use their sharp claws to attack and can easily break through an opponent's guard by buffeting him with a hail of blows from all directions. They will try to bite their prey and drink its blood once it is weakened, so every witcher who expects to encounter such a monster should swallow a Black Blood potion beforehand. Bruxae are also known for their sonic attacks, which knock down and stun their prey.

Bullvore

The bullvore can be compared to a heap of muscles constrained by a sack of hard, elastic skin. It's head is that of a buffalo's, yet it's mouth is filled with sharp teeth adapted to rending flesh. Bullvores are post-conjunction beasts. The visible mark of Chaos are the horns and vestigial hands the creature barely moves, growing all over its body.

This monster does not like the company of its own kind. One might even say it is like a poet in that it is an individualist. Much like an artist, it likes to show off before its lessers, thus it is at times accompanied by smaller, weaker beasts like nekkers and rotfiends. Bullvores are prone to giving peculiar displays wherein they kill their retinue in a fanciful manner, for example, by spitting acid on rotfiends that, in turn, explode.

As they are slow creatures, the strong style should be used when fighting bullvores. Their skin is tough, so they easily shrug off weaker blows, apart from which they heal as quickly as trolls do. A bullvore can kill slower opponents with the sheer momentum of its terrible charge. One should wait for this attack and dodge it, as immediately after it rushes forth and misses, the bullvore will be stunned and thus defenseless. The bullvore uses a terrifying weapon against swifter foes: it vomits filth that is both caustic and poisonous, so its foe both chokes on the venom and dissolves into a puddle.

The bullvore is a necrophage, so it should be fought using a blade coated with Necrophage Oil. This coating aggravates the beast's wounds and gives the witcher a huge advantage. There's no point in preparing common poisons or oils that increase bleeding, as the creature is immune to both.

Cemetaur

Much has been written about ghouls and graveirs, since they are encountered by common people in times of war or in cemeteries. Cemetaurs are female graveirs, rare and stronger than it's graveir husbands, but when they appear in a necropolis, they take it over. All ghouls respect them and must bow to them.

Chort

Chorts are smaller than fiends, true. But still big enough to kill.

— Agnes Thistle, herbalist from the Black Forest

Chorts are the somewhat smaller kin of fiends and bumbakvetches. Yet any witcher who thinks their diminutive stature means they present no danger commits a grave error — the kind that can end his career permanently. These denizens of dark and ancient woods are some of the most dangerous monsters known to man.

Legends often mistake chorts for sylvans, ascribing to them the ability to speak, stand on two legs, gobble up cabbage, play pranks and work mischief around the household. The arrival of a true chort in a region soon puts an end to such tales. The creatures do not speak, at best communicating with each other through grunts, snorts and moans. They get about on four legs and as for their “mischief”... they destroy farmsteads, devouring anything that can be devoured, including cabbage, if such is available, but also extending to poultry, pork, the family dog and then the family itself.

Chorts fight with little finesse, running straight towards their opponent and trying to knock him to the ground with the force of their charge. After downing their foe they bite, kick and strike with their claw-tipped paws. Due to their size and four-legged posture, they are mostly unperturbed by the force of the

Aard Sign, and the regenerative powers of their body allow any wounds they receive to heal at a rapid pace.

Cockatrice

The Witcher

Cockatrices are born of eggs laid by roosters consorting with other roosters. The egg must be incubated for forty-four days by a toad, which is devoured by the little beast as soon as it hatches. A cockatrice hates everything that lives so fiercely that its glance turns the living to stone. Only a bold adventurer with a mirror can deflect its deadly gaze and defeat the cockatrice.

The Witcher III

Had meself eight heifers, five of 'em milchers. Then this cockatrice sprung up nearby, and now all's I got left's dried patties in an empty field.

— Jethro, peasant from Pindal

Foolish superstitions claim cockatrices, like basilisks, can kill with their gaze alone. That is utter nonsense, however, a cockatrice's gaze being no more dangerous than that of an angry goose. One should instead watch out for its sharp beak and long tail, which it can whip to murderous effect.

Cockatrices thrive in dark caves, abandoned ruins, cobwebbed dungeons and old basements. Though small compared to

griffins and manticores, they are more than capable of killing anyone who stumbles across them in a dark corridor.

Cockatrices do not shun direct fights, in which they strike furiously with wing and tail in an attempt to exhaust their foes. Blows from their beaks are especially dangerous, as they aim with deadly precision at exposed flesh and vital organs and leave bleeding, life-threatening wounds. When fighting them one should make liberal use of draconid oil as well as Grapeshot, whose shrapnel will pierce their delicate wings with ease.

Crones

Sister crones, hand in hand, terrors of the sea and land, thus do go about, about: thrice to thine and thrice to mine, and thrice again, to make up nine.

Macbeth, Act 1, Scene 3

The isolated corners of our world harbor creatures older than humans, older than academies and mages, older even than elves and dwarves. The Crones of Crookback Bog are such creatures. No one knows their true names, nor what breed of monstrosity they in fact are.

Common folk have given these three sisters the names Weavess, Brewess and Whispess, and call the threesome “The Ladies of the Wood” or simply “The Good Ladies.” The Crones act as the true sovereigns of Velen, whose inhabitants they help survive through harsh times in return for unquestioning obedience. They wield powerful magic, but one different from that of mages. They draw power from water and earth and are bound to the land in which they live. The Crones can hear everything that happens in their woods, predict the future, twist the threads of human lives and bring blessings as well as curses.

The Crones seem for all intents and purposes to be immortal. Magic elixirs keep them from aging and allow them to take the appearance of young women. These elixirs and their mystical

ties to the swamps in which they live also give them supernatural strength and vitality.

Cyclops

How about this... we take a big stake, sharpen its tip, jam it in the cyclops' eye — then sneak out of the cave disguised as sheep. How's that not a good idea?

— Odess Thaka, traveler. Died tragically on Spikeroog

Cyclopes can easily be recognized by the single eye located in the center of their foreheads. If for some reason that is not visible, other tell-tale signs are their enormous size, incredible strength and a seething hatred for all humans.

Dagon

Dagon is one of the boss monsters in the game. He appears in Chapter IV as part of the Ripples quest. He is worshipped by one faction of the vodyanoi who inhabit the underwater city in Lake Vizima. The other vodyanoi worship the Lady of the Lake.

Devil by the Well

Wears a dirty dress, all rags, its skin flakin' off of its bones. And it howls...like it's sufferin'.

—Odolan of White Orchard

The residents of White Orchard have suffered more than their fair share of misfortune. Passing armies had trammelled [sic] their spring planting, a griffin had begun abducting their livestock, and, the rotten icing on this painful cake, a noonwraith haunted a nearby well. No wonder the locals called this final evil a 'devil'. The witcher could sense something bound her to this place, and that in order to send her off into ethereal realms he would first need to learn her secret.

Once that was done, he would have to prepare for battle – and a noonwraith is a demanding opponent. She can disorient her victim by blinding him and creating mirror images of herself. These copies suck their victim's life energy – while their mistress remains untouchable. In order to defeat her, the witcher could not rely on his silver sword alone – the Yrden sign would also be needed to trap her and force her to take on material form.

Witchers don't normally feel a limited range of emotions regarding the monsters they slay. They despise the particularly cruel ones and are repulsed by the disgusting ones, but rare indeed is the monster for which they feel sympathy. Yet that is

exactly what Geralt felt for the noonwraith of White Orchard. For a long time he was haunted by thoughts of the young woman whose horrible death and powerful emotions had transformed her into that terrible monster.

Devourer

Devourers are often called night witches, because they resemble old, ugly women and are famous for their witch-like viciousness. These creatures gorge themselves on human flesh; although they willingly eat carcasses, above all they crave flesh that is fresh and warm. Devourers hunt after dark in groups that peasants refer to as sabbaths. They like to deceive their victims and torture them, but there is no truth to the tales of their midnight flights on broomsticks and their gingerbread houses.

Djinn

The pitcher emitted a puff of glowing red smoke. The smoke pulsed, then gathered up into an irregular sphere floating in front of the poet's head...

— The First Longing, a Tale Fantastic in All Ways.

A djinn is a powerful air spirit, a condensation of the power of that element endowed with consciousness and character — the latter usually nasty. According to legend, djinn can grant even the most far-fetched wishes, though they do so very begrudgingly.

Unusually powerful mages can capture and tame these beings. The mage can then draw on its energy, using it to cast spells without having to call on Power from traditional sources. Only a sparse handful have managed this feat, however, for djinn fight to avoid such a fate with stubborn determination. To imprison a djinn and bend it to one's will, one must first weaken it — and that is no easy feat.

Fighting a djinn is extraordinarily difficult. They can fling off spells in an instant that the most accomplished human mages could never cast with years of preparation. What's more, by manipulating the element of air they can summon powerful storms, hurricanes, and gales. Luckily, as magic beings, they are vulnerable to silver — yet steel will do them no harm.

Dog

The Witcher

Whoever claims that dog is man's best friend, has probably never tamed a wyvern.

— Anonymous druid

The Witcher III

They say a dog's a man's best friend... But in these foul times one best be wary, even of his friends.

— Alfred Pankratz, beggar from Novigrad

Some claim dogs are reflections of their masters. A well-treated pet repays his owner with loyalty and trust, whereas an ill-treated one repays this treatment in kind as well, meeting yells with barks and kicks with bites. Since there is an abundance of bad men, so, too, is there an abundance of bad dogs. Most dangerous of all are the vagrant mutts who have lost all respect for men and developed a taste for blood and carrion.

Dogs usually attack in packs, choosing isolated victims, especially ones in whom they sense some kind of weakness. Packs of rabid dogs usually only dare attack children, drunkards, the elderly and cripples. Yet when backed into a corner, they will defend themselves with frothing bites and sharp claws against all and sundry.

Doppler

Your package? Your brother picked it up. You know, you two're damn near identical... Hey! Where you running off to?!

— Hanne Kluger, postmaster

Dopplers, also known as vexlings or changelings, are beings able to take on the form of any humanoid or animal they please. This transformation is no mere illusion able to be shattered with a simple spell, but an authentic and complete metamorphosis. This means no protective amulets or witcher medallions will signal a doppler's presence – they emanate the same aura as the being whose form they have assumed. This, combined with their incredible intellect and cunning, would make dopplers supreme assassins or thieves – had not nature endowed them with generous and timid spirits which make them avoid the shedding of blood at all costs.

Dragon

Once dragons were commonplace and ruled the continent absolutely. Dragon fire was the bane of cities, and dragon appetite was a constant threat to the first colonizers. Sorcerers stood against these creatures witchers were created to fight them. Today dragons are nearly extinct. Sometimes forktails and slipzards can be seen, but compared to dragons, they are like stray cats to tigers. The beasts were exterminated by professional hunters, such as the famed Crinfrid Reavers. Alchemical components found in a dragon's body are among the most expensive on the market, and are in high demand among sorcerers. The beast's roasted tail is a real delicacy.

The legends are true: dragons like to gather hoards and have a voracious appetite that they satiate by eating all living creatures with no exceptions. Like cats, they like to lounge in places of power - they nap there, drawing energy, yet nobody knows what they use that energy for. There are five species of these great wyrms: white, black, red, green and rock. Golden dragons, extremely intelligent, gifted with the ability to assume the shape of any creature, are of course a fairy-tale for little children. Dragons are smart indeed, but they cannot speak, much less polymorph.

The best tactic when meeting a dragon is to pray to all the gods with no exceptions. Atheists should run -they can thus extend their lives for a few heartbeats. It must be stressed that any of these choices would end in death when made by an amateur.

One fighting a dragon should watch out for its fire above all else -the breath is lethal, momentarily ending the fight. The wyrms can also fly, and are excellent at maneuvering, so they use the advantage of altitude in combat. A witcher should climb high buildings to surprise the reptile flying by, and to use walls as protection. The beast's jaws are even worse than its paws - they bring instant death. Dragons, like cats, like to toy with their prey, so they sometimes lift it to the air, and drop from height when they are bored.

Dragons are immune to poisons, unworried by oils which increase bleeding, and unaffected by traps or bombs. One would be hard pressed to find a soul brave enough to drop a dragon, unless it had been hacked to pieces with an axe first. And I wish such an outcome of the battle to all dragonslayers with all my heart.

Draug

The draug is a mythical creature, straight from ancient legends of heroes and epic deeds. When the hero enters the burning hells to rescue his beloved, or when he has to avenge his father's death, the draug is often his opponent. Why are poets so keen to cast this monster as the arch-enemy? Well, the draug is a wraith, so it fits any dark story featuring a curse or vengeance from the beyond. There's no telling how what it actually looks like, so its terrifying visage can be described in many ways without risking accusation of confabulation. Furthermore, it is a powerful creature, a prince of the damned, so it makes an ideal villain.

As an arch-wraith, the draug never stoops to doing anything with its own hands. It has lackeys for that, always wraiths, revenants or other restless spirits. Having been a king or a commander in life, the draug retains its charisma in death, and its deathly subordinates always blindly obey its orders. Thus one needs to exterminate all manner servants on the way to its underground palace, wilderness keep or other foreboding abode. Only then can one face the draug itself. That's literary tradition for you.

The draug can be described in various ways, as has been said, but is always a lethal foe. Forget its huge strength, invulnerability to pain, fearlessness and bloodlust. One cannot just defeat a draug using conventional means. As with every wraith, there is some tragic event connected to it, forcing the creature to

remain among the living. The draug is untouchable, unreachable for anyone who is not part of that story. That is why the mythical hero has to get involved in various brawls and pass through many trials. By overcoming these obstacles, he enters the draug's world and becomes worthy of facing the monstrosity.

The wraiths' leader is so powerful that it mocks simple wraiths' tricks. The one sure thing in fighting the draug, it must be said, is a silver sword.

Draugir

The draug is a commander, and his wraith soldiers are called draugirs. The draug's will calls them into existence on battlefields or in cemeteries. Like the draug, they are borne of damned souls and trapped shells created from the remnants of arms and armor, machines and corpses torn apart by scavengers.

The draugirs are absolutely bound by the draug's orders. They feel no fear or pain, they cannot be forced to retreat. They are ideal soldiers. Their coming is always sudden, so one must remain constantly vigilant in the presence of their leader, for his subordinates appear in dire moments to defend the draug and tip the scales in his favor.

These wraiths are protected by heavy armor and a shield. A witcher should first force them to expose themselves, knocking away their shields and grinding down their armor. The best chance to wound the creature comes when the draugir charges. One should evade the attack and lunge at its unprotected back. The monsters are slow in battle, so one needs to weaken them methodically with strong sword blows, and then finish them off. In life, draugirs were soldiers or knights, and in death they retain their proficiency in combat, so one needs to defend oneself against their blows - their lethal counterstrikes in particular - with extreme care.

The draugirs are susceptible to the Specter Oil, so one should coat a silver blade with it before battle. Poisons and oils increasing bleeding are of no use. These wraiths can be defeated using fire, but the silver sword is, of course, the most effective.

Drowned dead

Particularly strong and dangerous drowners are known as the drowned dead. Simple people see no difference between the drowner and the drowned dead — encountering either of them is equally deadly. We might suppose, though, that the most gloomy legends concern the drowned dead rather than drowners.

Drowner

The Witcher

The drowner, a frightful creature of mud and scum, drags people down into mires and bubbling eddies. It feeds on young women who bathe in rivers and on occasion will pull men off their horses or carts as they cross a bridge or weir. Drowners arise from the bodies of villains who meet their end in running water or in undertows that appear after storms. These watery creatures embody the spirits of those who can not rest after death and are sometimes born of fetuses aborted by magical means. They are ugly in appearance, skinny, tall and bony. Their bodies are slimy and green, as is their hair. Wherever a drowner steps, pools of their slimy substance form. This creature can be fought using ordinary weapons.

The Witcher II

Sometimes a drowned man returns as a monster, to haunt the living. Tormented with his death, he murders his victims. He prefers to draw them beneath the water's surface, tearing the drowning victim to shreds with sharp claws, and eat them like a wet biscuit. Such creature is called a drowner. They are quite often found at the banks of the Pontar, since the huge river with regular shipping and riverside villages provides them with ample sustenance.

“When monsters are really crappy, ganging up makes them happy”. Drowners are not the mightiest beasts in the world, so they hunt in groups, in accordance with the above saying. They are surprisingly fast on land, but are a threat only to fishermen and washerwomen. They can best a witcher only if he is drunk or in love. Sometimes, however, a more robust specimen is found among the drowners. It is called a drowned dead and can command the entire band. Thus it's best to eliminate it first.

One could say that if drowners chatted among themselves, Geralt would be highly esteemed among them after his exploits in Vizima. Yet drowners do not chat - they are dumb like a left shoe. And good. Fast style should be used when fighting them, and one must spin swiftly before they flee from a witcher's blade. Enough said.

As they are already dead, drowners do not fear poisons, and even a large loss of blood makes no impression on them. This ends the list of the monsters' strong points, however, as the rest of the witchers' arsenal is extremely effective against them. Thus the drowners can be killed with fire, immobilized by traps, knocked down and, above all else, sliced and diced until slime spills from their ears.

The Witcher III

When at the water's edge, you gotta be quiet. First of all, so as not to scare the fish. Second - so you don't attract drowners.

- Yanneck of Blaviken, fisherman

A drowner resembles a corpse dredged from the bottom of a pond. It is sickly blue or green in color, with slime and sludge oozing out of every pore and the acrid stench of rot wafting off

of it. That is why it is often thought drowners - along with their more dangerous cousins: vodniks, mucknixers and drowned dead - arise from the bodies of those who drown in shallow water: lost travelers falling into bogs, children who swim too far from the shore or, in the case of vodniks, inebriated peasants who stumble off narrow swamp trails.

Earth Elemental

The Witcher II

The earth elemental is the younger brother of the legendary d'ao, the genie capable of creating earthquakes and flattening mountains. Younger, and less powerful, but also more mischievous. Felling trees, crushing walls and smashing people to pulp can be counted among this creature's pranks. But only if their master allows it, of course.

The earth elemental always serves its summoner faithfully. It is most often employed as a guard, as it is tireless and always vigilant. It does have senses as living beings do, but it always recognizes the presence of intruders. It has no fear of monsters, let alone humans.

This monster's most dangerous weapons are its mighty arms. A blow from the earth elemental is akin to a battering ram hitting a city gate, and turns a normal human into a bloody stain. Its ripostes are especially dangerous, for this apparently sluggish creature can strike swiftly as well as strongly. Thus one has to defend oneself against its blows with all available means, including potions and Signs. According to the "fight fire with fire" rule – or rather the "fight strength with strength" – one should also use strong blows against the elemental, since only such attacks can grind its stone body down.

The earth elemental's body is solid rock, so the creature cannot be poisoned or blooded. It is best to summon a team of dwarven miners to use pickaxes on it until its done for. However if the witcher has no such team at hand, he should use regular means. The earth elemental, though it has no weaknesses, can be beaten.

The Witcher III

How to survive an encounter with an earth element? Simple. Run. Fast as you can.

— Nino Murk, bounty hunter

Earth elementals are made of mud, clay, sand and rock dust clumped together with water and brought alive with magic. While seemingly slow and ponderous, there creatures are nevertheless dangerous and should be avoided at all costs.

Echinops

Unlike the novels, Echinopsae in the game are huge, carnivorous plants. see also Archespore

Ekimma

Bah, ain't nothing to fear. Ekimmaras, why, they ain't nothing more than overgrown bats.

— Anonymous city guardsman's last words

Like other vampires, ekimmaras are not, despite what village gossips might say, undead humans. They are instead post-Conjunction monsters who have no particular feelings about garlic, holy water or religious symbols.

Unlike their portrayals in ballads and legends, they look nothing like handsome, pale aristocrats with charming eastern accents, though, like katakans and nekurats, they do bear a strong resemblance to overgrown bats. They also do not suck blood from the necks of virgins with a delicate, kiss-like bite — they tear them to shreds using long, sharp claws and then slurp the splattered blood off the ground.

Ekimmaras are unusually cruel and exceptionally swift. They are able to quickly land blow after blow capable of smashing even the best Mahakaman-made armor into tiny shards. They should be fought with a silver sword, remembering that they can regenerate back health over time. One should thus never attempt to tire them out or, gods forbid, wait for it to bleed to death. Instead, cut them down as quickly as possible and, if possible, burn the body to ash and scatter it to the four winds.

Endrega drone

Lazy, good-for-nothing men are sometimes called drones. That's an insult to endrega drones, who at least get off their arses to fight.

— Evelyn Harker, herbalist'

Endrega males — called 'drones' — are gluttonous creatures whose only aim in life is to eat, fight and reproduce. Yet when venturing outside their nests, these aggressive hunters attack any and every creature they come across.

Endrega warrior

Scared of these endregas, are you? Just wait till you see the warriors.

— Klaus Altman, forester

Endless waves of endrega workers are enough to overcome most attackers, but when confronting more dangerous foes, endrega colonies unleash their larger, stronger members — the so-called warriors. This caste lives only to fight, and gets ample opportunity to do so while defending the colony's borders or conquering new territory.

An endrega warrior's main weapon is its long tail, which is tipped with a club-like growth and spiked with venomous quills. Powerful abdominal muscles allow it to swing this tail with enough force to kill most lesser opponents in one blow.

Endgrea warriors also use their mass and strength as a weapon by charging their opponents in an attempted [sic] to knock them over. As invertebrates with sectioned carapaces, endrega warriors do not bleed profusely, yet recoil in great pain when hit with a blade coated in insectoid oil.

Endrega worker

I thought the workers were harmless. I thought wrong.

— Janne the Gimp, trapper.

Workers are the most numerous, and thus the most frequently encountered, caste of endrega. Within the colony their duty lies in building nests and cocoons, acquiring food and caring for eggs and larvae. When threatened they will summon warriors to aid them, yet if forced to defend themselves they will — and do so surprisingly well.

Endrega

Endregas are forest creatures that resemble arachnids. They are especially fond of flood-plains, as moisture and tall grass suit them. Longer than they are tall, they move about on all fours and are extremely difficult to spot as they lie motionless, awaiting their prey. Like kikimores, endregas are divided into castes, with warriors being most numerous, guards being less common, and queens being a real rarity.

These monsters, like arachnids, hatch from eggs. Impregnated queens lay the eggs in cocoons which hang from trees in areas known as nests. The lesser creatures zealously guard their queens, as colonies depend on them for survival. The queens themselves remain hidden, caring little for what happens to other adult specimens. However, when their nest is threatened, they emerge swiftly and fight ferociously. Thus, to exterminate an endrega colony, one must set fire to its cocoons to lure out and kill the queen.

When fighting an endrega, use the strong style and target the beast's abdomen, where its armor is weakest. Trusting in the toughness of their armor, the creatures often willingly take blows, only to respond with a sudden counter-attack that can be deadly if not evaded or blocked.

Endregas can bleed to death if hit with a blade coated with the appropriate oil. They are also susceptible to all witcher Signs. The monster can easily be tripped up, knocked down or

immobilized by a trap. However, the endrega's peculiar metabolism makes it immune to poison.

Erynia

A merchant once told me I reminded him of an erynia. Naturally, I immediately teleported him to one of their nests, so he could see for himself how ill-fitting a comparison it was.

— Lytta Neyd, the sorceress also known as Coral

Hard as it is to imagine, the erynias found in Skellige are even more repulsive – and dangerous – than harpies, their close relatives. Though well-rotten carrion is their food of choice, they will not turn up their noses at fresh meat, man flesh included.

When they spy a potential victim, erynias, like harpies or shishigas, will try to make full use of the strength of their numbers and their ability to control the skies. They will circle above their prey then attack from several directions at once, striking with razor-shark [sic] talons and tearing their targets to shreds.

While attacking they aim for the neck, eyes and other vital organs, often causing their prey to bleed to death as a result. In this way a small flock of erynias is able to make quick work of larger and better-armed victims, who often are not able to defend themselves effectively from several opponents at once.

Fiend

I regret to inform Your Grace that Your Grace's son fell while hunting a fiend. He died on the spot, along with his squire, his guide, the beaters, his peasant entourage and his hounds.

— Kavin Jell, manager of the Villepin Estate near Vizima

Fiends are walking mountains of muscle capped with horned, tooth-filled heads. Like their rarer cousins, bumbakvetches, they live in thick forests, swamps and bogs. When possible they avoid humans, but when not possible, they kill them, and without much difficulty.

Their size alone makes fiends and bumbakvetches extremely dangerous — one blow from their powerful paws can kill a knight along with its fully armored mount. Their enormous heft also makes them invulnerable to Aard: even witchers specializing in the power of Signs could not move one even an inch. Furthermore, any wounds they receive heal at lightning speed.

If that weren't trouble enough, fiends need not rely on their strength and stamina alone with fighting. They can also call on a more refined weapon: the third eye located in the center of their forehead, which they use to draw their prey into a state of hypnosis. During these times their victim does not see anything beyond this single burning eye — the last thing they see before their death.

A fiend's only weakness is its fear of loud noises — bombs such as Samum or Devil's Puffball are thus quite effective when fighting this monster. Furthermore, a blade covered in relict oil can increase a witcher's chances of victory — or at least of walking away from the fight.

Fire Elemental

Sorcerers proficient in the Art can create gateways to dimensions ruled by the four elements and force the creatures dwelling there to serve them. Herbert Stammelford, one of the members of the first Conclave, had a d'ao, a genie of earth, at his beck and call. At the mage's command it moved a mountain that blocked the view from a window. Contemporary sorcerers are but a pale shadow of the old masters, but they still can do a lot. The most proficient among them can summon fire elementals, perfectly obedient guardians and defenders.

A fire elemental, similarly to post-conjunction creatures, comes from another reality, and our world is alien to it. According to philosophers, it does not have emotions and does not think the way even trolls and other familiar creatures do. Totally controlled by magic, it obediently carries the sorcerer's orders out. If its master is a passionate smoker, the elemental will provide fire to light the pipe, and if he is threatened, the elemental will incinerate his enemies.

Fire is not the elemental's sole weapon. If you were ever hit by a flaming bough, you might have a notion what it's like to fight this monster. Witchers rarely deal with them, but they know that the igni sign is useless, unlike the strong style. The elemental's riposte's are truly lethal, thus one should not expose oneself too much. Still, one must keep in mind the possibility of many surprises involving flames. In truth, it is best to politely ask the sorcerer to call his pet off.

Setting a fire elemental aflame is never a wise idea, so one can forget the igni sign when fighting this being. The creature is also immune to poisons and bleeding. The elemental has no weaknesses, but most of the means available in the witchers' arsenal can be used against it to good effect.

The first fire elemental was created by Ransant Alvaro. Sadly, flames engulfed his entire laboratory, burning it – along with every other building on his block – to ash.

— Tarvix Sandoval, “Origins of Magic Arcana”

Fire is the most destructive of the elements, thus the aggressive lethality of the creature that embodies its essence should come as no surprise. Fire elementals are forged in complicated magic rituals for one purpose: destruction. And they pursue this with murderous determination.

Fleder

They are known by other names as well: kites and fliers to name only two.

Fogler

If night ever catches you in the swamps, stay put and wait for dawn, even if it means standing waist-deep in water with leeches crawling down your trousers. Most important of all, if you see a light in the fog, never, and I mean never, go towards it.

– Johannes Strudd, guide

Fog is the traveler's foe. In the forest, it can make one lose one's way, at sea, it can send one sailing into the rocks. Yet such dangers are nothing compared to the monsters known as foglets which sometimes lurk within it. These creatures have powerful arms and claws like Zerrikanian kinjals, yet what makes them truly dangerous is their mastery of deception, beguilement and disorientation. Many times they need not attack at all, instead simply driving their prey to madness or into boggy marshlands, after which they wait patiently for it to drown in the muddy waters.

Forktail

Forktails... Bah! Fuckers' tails're more like cleavers.

— Yavinn Buck, veteran of the Mahakaman Volunteer Regiment

Forktails owe their quaint name to the long sharp growths at the tip of their tails. A blow from this weapon can slice an oaken shield in two — along with the arm that was carrying it. Thus, though its name conjures images of cutlery, fighting a forktail is nothing like a dinner party and ends in death rather than dessert.

Frightener

The first frightener was created by the mage Dagobert Sulla. After creating the beast, he is said to have exclaimed “What have I done?” and promptly destroyed it.

Gael

Vampire bites... and the strong stench of alcohol.

— Geralt of Rivia

Contrary to popular belief, monsters are not all alike. Like people, individual members of the same species can each have their own unique traits, preferences and weaknesses. A good example of this is the katan which once fed on the inhabitants of Oxenfurt. Perhaps influenced by its close proximity to the hard-drinking student youth of the city, this vampire had developed a keen appetite for blood spiked with a hefty dose of hard alcohol – and also baubles and gaudy jewelry of all kinds.

The vampire had clearly thrived on its high-octane diet. It had grown exceptionally strong and gained the ability to regenerate lost life quickly, cause heavy bleeding with its claws and, if all that were not enough, meld into the air and appear again behind its opponent's back. Luckily the Quen Sign meant the witcher was well-equipped to defend against this surprise attack, and the Yrden Sign would let him catch the monster in a trap.

To bait the vampire, Geralt took note of its dietary preferences and seasoned his blood to match by loading up on cheap wine. This made it somewhat harder to aim his blows, true, but he still managed to defeat the beast – then had another battle

awaiting him the next morning, this one against a powerful hangover.

Gargoyle

The Witcher II

In times long gone, when youth was more polite, everything was cheaper, and girls were more eager, sorcerers could breathe life into inanimate matter and create stone servants this way. Gargoyles - for I have them in mind - can be found in ancient cities to this day, but their magic has vanished and now they are nothing more than cornice decorations. There are, however, exceptions such as the Loc Muinne gargoyles - still enchanted and still dangerous.

Theoreticians of magic still argue about classifying gargoyles. I favor the school claiming they are a type of golem. For gargoyles are nothing more than fancy sculptures animated with magic and programmed to do simple tasks. They can complete only the most rudimentary works, so they are most often guarding a territory, even if their creator turned to dust long ago.

The gargoyle is a magical creature and often has surprising tricks at it's sleeve. Teleportation for example: an opponent makes a blow, and the gargoyle disappears only to emerge elsewhere at the same moment. Like behind it's enemy. It's even worse when the gargoyle appears over his opponent - then it just falls down and crushes it's victim beneath the weight of it's stone body. Thanks to their medallions, witchers can perceive disturbances in magical aura, so they see the point where the

gargoyle will appear moments before it materializes, so they have time to react. However ordinary people tend to die crushed.

Fighting the gargoyle means fighting solid rock, so it should not be surprising that poisons are useless, as are fire and oils causing bleeding. Because of its great mass, the gargoyle's stone body cannot be unbalanced, let alone knocked down.

Immobilizing one with a trap will fail, as gargoyles can teleport and will flee snares using this ability. They have no weaknesses at all.

The Witcher III

It just me, or is that gargoyle ogling us?

- Lara Estevann, burglar from Loc Muinne

Gargoyles are stone statues brought to life by magic in order to guard mages' laboratories and lairs from intruders. Their appearance alone has scared off more than one prospective burglar. Those who do not take fright at the sight of these horned and winged monstrosities usually die shortly thereafter, torn to shreds by stony claws.

Garkain

Vampire oil

Ghoul

The Witcher

A horrible, low, and nasty beast, this abomination nests in cemeteries, old burial mounds (kurgans), necropolises, and on battlefields. Disgusting in form and character, it emerges to feed usually during the full moon, and well-rotted corpses are a delicacy for it. When driven by hunger, the ghoul will not hesitate to prey on the living. Only by fire, silver, and bright light can they be harmed. For this reason, it hunts only at night.

The Witcher III

Ghouls creep and crawl at night
Eating everything in sight
In a snap they'd eat you, too'
Chop you up for a ghoulish stew!

— Children's rhyme

Ghouls and graveirs are hard to describe. In part, they resemble humans – yet on the whole, they are the utter negation of all that is human. Though they have arms and legs like men, they walk on all fours like dogs or badgers. Though they have eerily familiar faces, one searches them in vain for any sign of sentiment, reason or even a spark of consciousness. They are

driven by one thing and one thing only: an insatiable craving for human flesh.

Giant centipede

While on their way to Duén Canell, Geralt and Braenn confront such a beast who is threatening what appears to be a halfling in the short story “The Sword of Destiny”. The “halfling” ultimately turns out to be Ciri.

Godling

Not too long ago the areas around peasant hamlets were chock full of guardian spirits. Today it's nigh unto impossible to spot a brownie, bucca or lutin. And godlings, they are always the first to go. Such is the price we pay for civilization's forward march.

— From the preface to “The World We Have Lost,” by Professor Dorregaray

Godlings (sometimes mistaken for lutin) are woodland creatures dwelling in burrows and moss-covered hollow stumps on the outskirts of human settlements. They are similar to children in behavior and appearance, and, like children, delight in mischief. Godlings are deeply rooted in their home territory and perform acts of care and guardianship to those dwelling near their burrows. They watch over people as well as animals, but, shy creatures by nature, they try to do so while remaining unseen. Godlings are drawn to joy and innocence, and so delight in the company of children and usually only show themselves to the young.

These hard-working and clever creatures gladly perform small services for those in their care, asking only for respect and payment in the form of food or cast-off tools in return. They are easily offended by churlish, ungrateful or simply rude behavior. Godlings also treasure their peace and quiet. When the village a godling watches over becomes too populous or its

inhabitants forget the old ways, it will abandon its burrow for good and walk off to destinations unknown.

Golem

The Witcher

Once an absent-minded mage created a golem, animated it by casting Alzur's Thunder, and ordered his new servant to fetch water, before burying himself in his scholarly books. The golem kept carrying water day and night, without pause, and ultimately flooded not only the mage's house, but the whole city. As you can see, my young students of the Art, improper use of tools and a lack of elementary training may cause a tragedy.

Anabelle Radfind, Lectures on Security and Hygiene in Magic

The Witcher III

If [you] want us to break through this wall, we're gonna need twenty sappers, seven mules and a hundredweight of saltpeter. Or one golem.

— Vilmir Brass, foreman at Mount Carbon

Golems are mindless matter brought to life by a spell. They obey their creator's orders without question. Their boundless strength, ability to withstand pain, endless patience and the fact that they need not one jot of food or drink makes them the best servants or guards anyone could ask for. Once provoked,

they will not tire of battle until they have either crushed their opponent or themselves crumbled to dust.

Grave hag

Cremation, now that's one thing men could learn from gnomes. Burying bodies out in the fields, why, it's like laying out a welcome mat for monsters! Best case scenario, some ghouls will sniff them out, eat their fill and be on their ghoulish way. But if, gods forbid, a grave hag takes to feeding at your cemetery, you'll have no end of trouble.

— Jacques de Villepin, Oxenfurt Academy

Few monsters' names fit as well as the grave hags'. As one might guess, these creatures resemble aged, deformed women and loiter near graveyards and battlefields. Grave hags feed on human corpses and in particular on the rotten marrow which they slurp from human bones using their long, prehensile tongues. Once a hag has devoured all corpses within reach, she turns to killing men and burying them in the cemetery as she waits for them to decompose.

Graveir

Graveirs are depraved, lecherous and treacherous bastards. Larger than ghouls, they have three bony combs on their head and short but cruel, thick claws. Their teeth and thin tongue allow them to eat marrow — and the more rotten and rancid the marrow, the more it is to their liking. The vile graveirs have cadaverine in their teeth, so anyone who engages one in battle beware. Graveirs fear fire, silver, and magic, but weapons of steel cause them no harm.

Greater brother

These mutated knights are clad in heavy armor and wield humongous shields, making them tough nuts to crack, even for a witcher. The only thing worse than a Greater Brother would be a monster that uses weapons with great skill and demonstrates mastery of complex combat tactics.

First Fight with Greater Brothers

Greater mutant

While ingenuity and technique have their advantages, sometimes a sweeping blow with a huge club is the best solution in combat. That is why Salamandra created greater mutants. After all, someone (or something) has to wield that huge club.

Griffin

Aye, half-eagle, half tomcat, just like on the lord's crest. 'Cept this 'un was carryin' me dead cow 'stead of a scepter.

— Griffin attack witness, name unknown

Griffins were once only found high in the mountains, where they would hunt marmots and wild goats. When humans encroached on their lands, however, griffins soon discovered a new source of much more plentiful and easier-caught prey: cows, sheep and shepherds.

Though still wary of main roads and towns (where folk with the means to hire a witcher are like to dwell), these half-eagle, half-wildcat creatures have gone from rarities to oft-encountered pests known throughout the Northern Realms. Especially hated are the subspecies known as royal griffins and archgriffins.

Hagubman

Ye or anyone ever heard of a beast settin' a wagon in the read, then waitin' in ambush? They're too ploughin' dumb for that, dammit!

— Egil, warrior from Hindarsfjall

Your average nekker is cowardly and weak and only ever attacks in groups, even then only when the group greatly outnumbers its opponents. Yet at times there will appear among them an individual who towers over the rest in terms of strength, stamina and cunning. Such nekkers are usually called warriors, though that name is misleading. Warriors fight with honor, face to face. These overgrown nekkers act more like assassins – they strike by surprise, from hiding, in the back, or when their opponent exposes himself while attacking. Luckily, like other nekkers warriors are vulnerable to all the Signs, and their blows can be easily parried or countered.

Such a monster lived near the village of Larvik on Hindarsfjall – and not even the strongest of islanders were capable of slaying it. A witcher though... A witcher's another story.

Harpy

The Witcher II

Some are repulsed by rotfiends, other cannot stand tales of bullvores, but I find harpies, beasts of ugly temper and penchant for thieving, the worst of all. Fortunately, harpies prefer wild, mountainous areas, full of rocky ledges they can build their nests on. However they always establish themselves near a human settlement. This is done for thus simple reason that they wouldn't be able to steal much from animals.

There are many harpy species, and all are kleptomaniacs, though some steal dreams instead of baubles. They especially like dreams laden with strong emotions, such as nightmares that recur time and again. The harpies' victims lose such dreams - which is actually a blessing in the case of nightmares - and the beasts enclose them in crystals, creating items that strongly radiate magic. Mages desire the dreams stolen by these creatures, so much so that they breed harpies in order that they may filch their booty at daybreak. Yet it is rare for a stolen dream or nightmare to be powerful enough, or to come from a powerful enough creature, to satisfy a sorcerer.

As winged creatures, harpies attack swiftly, from a great distance, before their prey can notice them. After landing a blow, they flee for a safe spot. Pinning them to the ground and denying them flight is often the only solution. Thus incapacitated, they become as clumsy as hens. Stunned with a

bomb, hit with the Igni or Aard Sign, the beasts prove easy to kill, especially with the fast fighting style.

The harpies' greatest strength is their ability to fly, but they can be grounded with the use of a trap. Because the creatures' wings are feathered, they are easily set aflame, so using the Igni Sign against harpies always has good results. The beasts have an excellent sense of direction and balance, and even when flailing about near the ground they can easily regain the sky, so attempts to knock them down are doomed to fail.

The Witcher III

“Most monsters don't actually keep any treasure in their lairs. Harpies, though- they like shiny things”

- Letho, Viper School Witcher

It is hard to say what is most repulsive about harpies and their cousins, the Shishigas: their hideous appearance, the overwhelming stench of rot and bird excrement that clings to them or their bloodcurdling screech. Suffice it to say that even rats, who dwell happily among the rankest fecal matter and rotten waste, give their nests wide berth.

Harpy nests are most often found atop high cliffs, or rocky ravines. Sure signs of having strayed near one are crumbling human and animals remains, guano-streaked rocks and feathers littering the ground.

Harpies and Shishigas hunt in flocks consisting of a handful to up to twenty individuals. Though rather cowardly and cautious, harpies fiercely defend their nests and will not hesitate to attack when outnumbering their foes.

During combat they use their ability to fly swiftly to strike their victims one by one before soaring back up out of reach. They can kill with their wings or their sharp beak and talons. Once on the ground they move slowly and clumsily, and thus no longer present much of a threat.

Harrisi

It attacked us... Gods, I dunno what it were, but 'twere at least four spans high!

— Velen peasant woman

Velen's woods and bogs brim with monsters. This fact is well known, and thus when the war drove refugees into this hostile land, certain of their number thought to avoid the dangers of the lowlands by hiding in an abandoned mine. They were in for an unfortunate surprise. The shaft they chose for their sanctuary was inhabited by a poisonous arachas - a merciless and bloodthirsty monster.

The witcher knew he was in for a tough fight. The arachas had dwelled in the mine for years and had grown large and particularly strong and resilient in that time. Like other members of its vile species, it would be dangerous both at close quarters and at a distance. What's more, it was almost certainly venomous - he would need to imbibe Swallow or Golden Oriole (or both) before attacking if he was to stand a chance of surviving. As a small consolation, the witcher knew the monster would be vulnerable to his Signs - especially Igni, Aard and Yrden - as well as to the Northern Wind bomb.

The witcher arrived at the cave too late to save the refugees - but he could still avenge their fate. He slew the powerful arachas and destroyed the eggs bearing its vile offspring.

Hellhound

When fighting the Hellhound:

Higher Vampire

Men, the polite ones, at least, would call me a monster. A blood-drinking freak.

– Emiel Regis, higher vampire

Only a mutual thirst for blood links higher vampires to their distant and much more primitive cousins: ekimmaras, alps, katakans and the like. Higher vampires are, in fact, much more similar to humans than to those bat-like blood slurpers. They not only resemble us in appearance, but also share our intelligence and behavioral patterns. This means they do not squat in distant forest or hide in the shadows. On the contrary, they are particularly fond of cities, where they live out deceptively normal lives. Even witchers are not capable of recognizing them at once, for their medallions remain perfectly motionless in the presence of higher vampires. Yet all these similarities should not blind us to an essential difference: unlike men, higher vampires are immortal. Those who have faced them in combat and survived can be counted on one hand.

It is a witcher's good fortune that higher vampires are extremely rare – and not all are dangerous to humans. Though they do have a taste for blood, they do not need to drink it to survive. Some higher vampires have renounced feeding on humans altogether and do no harm to anyone, but others give in to their desires. A witcher who braves fighting a higher

vampire must bear in mind that he faces a monster endowed with incredible strength, one able to manipulate men and animals, turn invisible and transform into a giant bat - and furthermore one which it is nearly impossible to kill. In other words, even an experienced monster slayer should think twice before accepting a contract on one of these creatures, even if half a kingdom and a princess' hand is in the offing.

Hound of the Wild Hunt

Baying at the heels of the Wild hunt are its Hounds, fierce beasts which follow it like dust clouds trailing after a comet. Hushed legends speak of them losing their way at times and descending from the night sky to earth, cold and death following in their wake.

— Essi “Blackjack” Daven, trobairitz

Born, or so some experts believe, of magic ice crystal, the Hounds of the Wild Hunt race alongside their spectral masters. Like ravenous, feral dogs they are capable only of mindlessly attacking whatever crosses their path.

Howler

Here about the contract? Any idea what this monster is?

Naye, but proper huge it must be. Slaughtered no less than a dozen wolves.

— Conversation overheard in Lindenvale

One is hard-pressed to name another area of our world more thoroughly riddled with monsters than Velen. There is on silver lining to this sad fact, however: the beasts living there must compete fiercely for hunting territory, meaning monsters often end up killing other monsters. An aggressive chort known as Howler went on just such a fratricidal rampage, tearing a pack of wolves to shreds before attacking and killing a fiend significantly larger than itself.

Howler was a truly fearsome foe. Each one of its blows was enough to kill – only heavy armor or the Quen Sign could protect one from mortal damage. Particularly to be avoided was its charge – and whenever possible, the monster was best attacked from the side.

Geralt slayed the Howler without much trouble, yet killing such a fierce fighter might very well have proved impossible, had not its previous conflicts with its monstrous kin weakened it considerably. The lesson, I suppose, is that when two monsters fight, a witcher wins.

Hym

Some men have got good reason to fear their own shadows.

— Svargmitt, An Skellig druid

Monsters most commonly claim innocents as their victims: tardy merchants, reckless children and traveleres who wander into dark woodlands out of misplaced curiosity. None of the above need fear hymns, however. These wraiths only latch onto particularly despicable individuals who have committed some unspeakable crime. To all others, they remain completely invisible. When they do show themselves to the one they torment, they appear as a tall, shadow-clad, humanoid silhouette with long, sharp claws.

Yet hymns do not sink these claws into their victims. Instead, they sap their strength directly, through inflicting suffering. Speaking in a voice only the victim hears, they drive him to commit acts of violence, aggression and self-harm. A hym will seize on a guilty person's worst fears and weave out of them hideous visions, slowing[sic] driving the poor soul into madness.

Those tormented by a hymn are incapable of restful sleep, for they are tormented by ever-more-frequent, incredibly-realistic nightmares. At times the victim will become extremely on edge, yelling pleas or threats at invisible phantoms or confessing his guilt out loud in the hope this will end his

torment. This act does not, however, bring any relief, for the
hym will not leave until it has addled its victim's wits
completely or driven him to suicide.

Ice Elemental

I thought to myself - what's a hunk of ice doing in the middle of some lab? And then that hunk of ice got up and broke my legs.

– Yannick Lovt, burglar

An ice elemental is a mass of frozen water animated by magic. Deprived of consciousness or independent will, this elemental is boundlessly obedient to the orders of the mage who created it. Those orders usually contain but one syllable: kill.

Ice giant

Fled one time in my life. From the Ice Giant. And know what?
I'm not a bit ashamed.

— Rasmund Kvaalkje, Clan Tordarroch oarsman

This powerful, primeval monster is quite possibly the last of its race. The Ice Giant resembles a man in many respects, but is blue as frost and taller than a tree. Though it seems capable of reason, all attempts to communicate with it to date have ended the same way – in a quick and painful death.

Ice troll

Our winter's cold and deep, frostbite eats your feet, snow falls down and hides the ground and ice trolls wake from sleep!

— folk song heard in northern Kaedwen

Climbing to the top of snow-covered peaks is never a safe endeavor. One can slip and fall into a ravine, be buried in an avalanche — or stumble across ice trolls. Unlike the rock trolls found at lower altitudes, these permafrost-dwelling monsters treat every man they encounter as a possible ingredient for a tasty meal.

Luckily ice trolls live atop high mountain ridges so inaccessible they rarely encounter humans, and some suppose this is why they have not mastered the basics of Common Speech. Others claim their harsh mountain home has stripped them of an ability they once possessed, for in a land of never-ending cold there is no room for mercy or understanding.

Ice trolls are crueller than their rocky kin. Though they use similar tactics in battle – tossing stones and swinging with their mighty fists – they are heartier and stronger than rock trolls and thus more dangerous. Like rock trolls, their backs are covered in thick protective armor, meaning one should never strike them from the rear. Meanwhile their mass means that the Aard Sign cannot move them. Lastly, never think of attacking them during a blizzard. At such times they draw

power from the surrounding cold and fight with increased strength.

Ifrit

“An ifrit is a minor genie of fire, or, as some say, an elemental. It does not fulfill wishes, build palaces or make anyone rich, but it serves mages who research the element of fire if they can force the creature to be obedient.

Elementals use their physical strength mostly, and their main goal is to stop the opponent, no matter what the cost is.

Ignis Fatuus

Careful, sir, a monster prowls the bog. Enter the mist and ye'll never see home again!

— Leslav, peat digger

The monster haunting the peat bogs of Velen turned out to be an ancient foglet. These are exceptionally long-lived creatures – some have even dwelt on this earth for over two hundred years, growing stronger and stronger all the while. Blows dealt by foglets of such an age carry so much power blocking them is out of the question. These foglets possess the ability to move extremely quickly, and not even Yrden can slow them down. Furthermore, they can meld completely into the mist, then suddenly rematerialize to strike from behind. Wearing heavy armor or making good use of the Quen Sign is highly recommended.

This ancient foglet proved particularly adept in the art of forming illusions. Only a professional monster slayer skilled with Signs and swords could best such a foe. Luckily, Geralt fit that description.

Imp

Really wanna see an angry witcher?

Do you?

— Conversation overheard on the streets of Novigrad

The imp pestering the merchants of Novigrad turned out to be a doppler. These monsters usually avoid confrontation – to everyone's great relief, for when pinned they become extremely dangerous. Fighting them quickly turns into a fight against oneself. Or, to be precise, against a mirror image gifted with one's own strengths and abilities. In a conflict with such even odds, only luck – or destiny – decides the victor.

Geralt has an extra helping of both, and so won his fight against his doppler doppleganger – then decided to let him go free, for unlike other monsters, this creature's motives for harming humans were noble.

Jenny o' the Woods

It is said true love's flame is never extinguished. This sad truth is the reason why Zula of Midcopse, whom an early death had separated from her beloved, was unable to find peace in the next life, and instead returned to haunt her former environs as a nightwraith.

Fighting such an apparition is extremely difficult. A nightwraith will form mirror images of herself to confuse her opponent and aid her in battle. She herself can take on immaterial form, rendering her invulnerable to blows. The best way to force her out of this state is to set a trap with the Yrden Sign, then quickly followup with Igni while she is caught. Most important of all, however, is this: never attempt to fight one in the middle of the night, when the moon hangs high in the sky.

This vengeful wraith might very well have killed every last inhabitant of the village, had not a famous witcher, Geralt of Rivia, appeared in Velen - and been in need of a bit of coin.

Katakan

Melitele, Great Mother, protect us from evil, from unclean devils and foul demons, and most of all from the clutches of katakans and nekurats...

— fragment of a prayer

Katakans and their more dangerous kin, nekurats, are the embodiments of human fear. They hide in the shadows. They feed on blood. They resemble enormous bats — though with long fangs and even longer talons. And, as if that weren't terror enough, they can turn invisible, waiting unseen while dread of their unpreventable attack overwhelms their victim.

Kayran

The kayran stands apart among all creatures, large and small, beautiful and horrible: it is unique, not alike any other being. Doubtless it is a post-Conjunction creature that appeared in our reality in the time when worlds intermingled. It took up residence in the Pontar's waters, where it lives to this day. The chronicles mention instances when the kayran appeared on the river's surface in various places over the ages. There is no certainty whether it is the same creature slowly moving up and down the river, or perhaps his progeny seen here and there.

Over a hundred years ago the kayran made its lair near the trading post of Flotsam. The folk of the nearby village call it the Old Man. People have grown used to the monster's presence. Until recently, they even considered the creature harmless. Lately, however, the kayran awoke and now emerges from the water. It has become aggressive: it shatters ships, shreds nets, snatches people from the river banks and pulls them beneath the water. Even the military cannot handle this plague, for the kayran hides in the water, where it is impossible to fight.

To defeat the kayran, one first needs to pull it onto dry land or drain the river meander where the monster lies in wait. If that trick works, it will be possible to approach the monstrosity. The creature defends itself with long, heavy tentacles - an ordinary man would die from a single blow, for these appendages weigh as much as a trebuchet arm and are covered in poisonous mucus. These tentacles should be cut off or immobilized

during combat, for example using a special trap. Once the kayran is unable to shield itself, one should approach its trunk - but beware its venom! The monster spits its vile poison as skillfully as a street urchin. Its armor, tougher than that of any other creature - with the possible exception of dragons - is the final obstacle to overcome. One needs to find a way to pierce the carapace and get to the inner organs. Good luck!

The kayran laughs at poisons, or it would laugh if it had a sense of humor. It might even fall over from laughter, and that would be the only way to knock it down, but it's not going to happen. If the creature had a circulatory system like humans do, it might be possible to bleed it to death. Unfortunately it is a monster that makes other monsters seem like house pets, thus oils reducing blood coagulation cannot harm it. It treats most traps as garbage strewn on the ground, but witchers may be able to construct traps to immobilize its tentacles.

Kernun

We told the prick something lurked in them woods, but he refused to believe it...

— Louis Clsster, woodcutter

Novigrad - the greatest metropolis in the world, the acme of civilization, material proof - or so one is tempted to think - of mankind's ability to tame and control nature. Yet right outside the city walls lies the Novigrad Wilderness - and whoever sets foot in it soon finds out that man's primacy does not extend past the city walls.

One of the monsters who made its lair in that thick tangle was an old, powerful leshen. It killed any who strayed into its territory with its species' characteristic cruelty: lacerating them with razor-sharp claws, sending strangling plants shooting out of the ground or feeding them to packs of hungry wolves. If not for its vulnerability to fire, the Igni Sign included, and the protection of the Quen Sign, one could wager not even the toughest witcher would be able to slay the beast.

Geralt of Rivia was only able to finally put an end to this leshen after a long and exhausting battle. Once the beast died, the way was clear for loggers to move into its former domain. The woods now gradually fall to the ax. Perhaps one day they'll disappear altogether - and their monstrous denizens along with them.

Kikimore queen

The Queen cannot be fought properly, as it will inevitably kill Geralt in a single hit since the player is meant to escape, so don't waste time drinking potions for a boss fight. The player must instead run away from the Queen and use the Aard sign to first collapse the passage to slow down the queen and then use it to destroy the supports of the Salamandra Cave, which will bring down the section on top of the Kikimore and cause its death. You can then retrieve the Professor's remains and acquire the Kikimore Queen's nerve that can be used to make the Kikimore's Ire potion.

Kikimore warrior

The Witcher

“A more abominable beast is indeed hard to find. Not quite a cockroach nor a spider, it makes ladies faint and gentlemen feel disgusted. The kikimore warrior reeks of the swamp. For this reason, I insist that exhibit no. 88 be removed from the university assembly hall. And anticipating the question “what should be done with it then?”, I answer: throw it to the compost heap.

From a request submitted to the president of Oxenfurt University”

The Witcher III

Then the kikimore princess summoned all her loyal sisters and off they went! Together they charged the enemy trying to harm their queen.

– “The Kikimore Princess and the Mountain Giants”

Cornelius Briggs (dwarven children’s fable, fragment)

It is unknown how exactly it is kikimores communicate with each other. Autopsies are hampered by the high toxicity of their subjects. Scholars have established that kikimores do not seem to possess any detectable auricles. One amateur researcher, Count di Salvaress, put forth a theory in his treatise

“A Microscope Among Monsters” suggesting kikimores have a highly developed sense of smell and use airborne particles undetectable to humans to transmit information. This theory has yet to be proved or disproved.

Kikimore warriors defend their nests from attackers. They attack somewhat slower than kikimore workers. They are able to spew streams of caustic venom a great distance and leap to attack. This venom is highly unique in that it reacts with a witcher's body to raise the level of his potion toxicity. They are covered with thick, hard armor which easily deflects blows from even the sharpest sword.

Kikimore warriors are protected by swarms of workers which obey their orders until they are themselves eradicated.

They are completely immune to the effects of the Axii Sign, but vulnerable to Igni, oils and bombs harming insectoids and blows dealt by a silver sword.

Kikimore worker

Kikimore workers were reintroduced with the Blood and Wine expansion.

Koshchey

The first koshchey was created by an ex-druid called Fregenal using either the Triangle Within a Triangle or Alzur's Double Cross and destroyed by Visenna using the Mirror Effect spell.

Leshy

We never hunt in these woods. Never. Even if it means the whole village starves.

— Mulliver, ealdorman of Hoshberg in lower Aedirn

Leshens dwell in dense, primeval woods. Fiercely territorial creatures, they hunt with stealth and cunning as their only companions. They use their inborn magic to control the plants and animals within their territory — and so, when stalking them, half the battle is merely getting near enough to strike. Leshens old enough to earn the appellation “ancient” wield advanced skills and tactics that make them particularly dangerous.

Melusine

I... I saw a shadow... Great wings, like a cloud passin' o'er the sky. Then I heard him scream.

— Britt of Svorlag

In the mountains near the village of Svorlag in Skellige lies an enormous complex of caves. For many centuries they were given a wide berth on account of the bloodthirsty ekhidna known as Melusine who had made them into her lair.

Melusine was a beast so powerful some islanders worshipped her as a semi-divine being. The witcher, however, harbored no such delusions. He knew she was an extremely powerful monster – but a monster all the same. This meant she could be killed. To do so, he would need the highest quality bolts, a solid silver blade – and a steady hand.

Morvudd

Ate only the entrails. Fussy.

— Geralt of Rivia

They say every journey made in the Skellige Isles ends in adventure. And sometimes, that adventure ends in death. Such was the case for a group of adventure-seeking Skelligers who set out in search of treasure in forgotten ruins – which turned out to lie in the hunting grounds of a powerful fiend known as Morvudd.

The witcher knew there was little room for error in a fight with such a creature. A moment of carelessness and the beast could hypnotize him with its third eye, then tear him to shreds while he remained in a trance. Morvudd was a particularly large individual, so one could presume fast attacks would not prove effective against it – and that its blows would kill anyone not protected with heavy armor or the Quen Sign.

Though Morvudd killed the Skellige warriors without much trouble, it proved no match for the witcher. It even tried to save its life by fleeing at one point, but that only delayed its inevitable death by the witcher's silver blade.

Mourntart

Somebody's doing some cooking... This... it's a human femur...
a child's

— Geralt of Rivia

Most grave hags rarely attack humans, preferring instead to feed on the rotten remains they dig out of graves. Yet some individuals grow bold over the years and begin sneaking into huts to steal children and kill the elderly. Just such a monster was tormenting the inhabitants of Lindenvale.

The witcher knew this grave hag would put up a fierce fight. He would have to watch out for her powerful claws, capable of smashing through any block or parry, and her long, venomous tongue. He also realized her attacks would be so quick not even his mutated reflexes would be able to keep pace – meaning only judicious use of the Yrden Sign would all [sic] him to survive and conquer.

The outcome of the fight was not hard to predict. The grave hag perished in the very graveyard which had heretofore served as her feeding grounds, and her body was dumped in a grave she had dug with her own claws.

Mutant assassin

Mutation and training makes witchers excellent killers. The problem is their conscience, which prevents them from carrying out political assassinations or causing terror among common folk. The laws of the market say that if there is demand, it must be satisfied as soon as possible — which is why Salamandra created the mutant assassin.

Mutant

It seems that the proposed method of mutation leads nowhere. Fast, agile and aggressive creatures are born as a result of the transformation; however, they lack intelligence. They are closer to animals than men. Of course, that does not mean we will not find any practical use for them. On the contrary, simplified mutating procedures guarantee that we can create many Mutants, which are perfect tools for spreading chaos and terror.

Nekker

The Witcher II

Imagine a drowner that burrows tunnels, climbs trees, is more vicious than usual, and when ambushing its prey, it does so with many of its kin. Now you have a good idea of what a nekker is. These primitive creatures are the bane of the wilderness - the inhabitants of forest villages fear them, and animals give their nests a wide berth. Nekkers are social creatures, gathering in something akin to tribes, for they can only repel the attacks of stronger assailants en masse.

When nekkers venture out as a war or hunting party, they are led by chieftains. These are larger and mark their faces with red clay. Chieftains give orders, turning a wild band into an organized unit, thus they should be eliminated first.

The nekkers' basic tactic is to strike en masse. They burrow from beneath the ground and swarm upon their prey. Though primitive, the tactic is surprisingly effective. One must be ready to repel many foes at once - the fast style is best suited to this. As with other agile creatures, running from nekkers is not the best idea, for the monsters will catch up to their prey and swiftly kill it with multiple hits of their claws.

Witchers can use their full range of skills and techniques when fighting nekkers. Signs, bombs, poisons and oils that augment

bleeding are all extremely effective against the beasts. Nekker nests are best destroyed with Grapeshot bombs.

The Witcher III

Take heed, gents, there's nekkers under this here bridge. If you all cross at once, without slowing or stopping, there's nothing to fear. But if your cart throws an axle and you get stuck out there... Well, close your eyes and pray to Melitele.

— Kurt Hammerbach, city guardsman in Vengerberg

A lone nekker is harmless. Five are dangerous. Ten can kill even a veteran monster slayer. Particularly troublesome are the larger, stronger individuals known as warriors, as well as the rare breed of nekkers known as phoocas.

Nightwraith

The Witcher

Nightwraiths are born of moonlight, wind and the earth cooling after the heat of the day. They rise above the ground and whirl in a mad dance, which should not be seen by any mortal. If caught peeping, the mortal is blinded by moonlight, then taken into the circle and forced to dance until he expires, at times becoming a nightwraith himself.

The Witcher III

Nightwraiths exude this immense sadness, this helpless wraith... I fear them, same as anyone. But most of all I feel sorry for them.

— Aelline Altsparr, elven trobairitz.

Compared to other creatures of the night — katakans, nekurats and werewolves, for example — nightwraiths (and their rarer cousins, duskwraiths) might not seem all that dangerous. After all, one might ask, how much harm could a pale, withered woman in a tattered dress do? The answer: quite a bit. Instead of finding this out the hard way, avoid crossing fields and meadows at night at all costs.

Like noonwraiths, nightwraiths are only found in rural areas. Travelers fall victim to them most often, but if legends are to

be believed they also sneak into huts at times and murder peasants in their sleep.

When they attack nightwraiths remain immaterial for most of the time, meaning physical blows pass right through them. They only take on more tangible form for the brief moments in which they strike. When weakened, they will create several projections of themselves which cannot attack directly but act as transmitters of sorts through which the nightwraith can sap her victim's vital energy.

Nightwraiths can turn immaterial and are at such times very difficult to wound. In order to force one to take on corporeal form, trap it with the Yrden Sign or hit it with the blast of a Moon Dust bomb.

Do not believe the old wife tales and think yourself completely safe from nightwraiths during the day. They appear under the light of the sun as well - but are much weaker then than after dusk.

Noonwraith

The Witcher

Noonwraiths are born at high noon out of heat, sadness and the sweat of ploughmen. In the hot air above the fields, they gather to dance madly, creating air vortexes, but the specters dislike being watched. Those who peep are forced to dance with them.

Noonwraiths stop their dance when the sun goes down, once the abducted mortal is long dead from fear and exhaustion.

The Witcher III

Despite what is commonly thought, peasants do not interrupt their labors at midday to get out of the sun — they do it to avoid noonwraiths.

— Vlad Reymond, Peasants and Their Customs

On particularly searing summer days, when the sun reaches its zenith, wraiths will at times appear, resembling sun-scorched women dressed in long, white robes. These are noonwraiths — the spirits of young women and girls who died violent deaths right before their weddings. Driven mad with pain and anger, they wander the fields searching for their unfaithful lovers or backstabbing rivals, though they will kill anyone who does not get out of their way in time. They are often held in this world

by some object of intense emotional significance. That is why, if one ever finds a wedding ring or torn veil in the middle of a field, one should not pick it up, but instead back away as quickly as possible.

Noonwraiths are only known to haunt rural places, and usually stay near the place of their deaths. They prey on peasants working in the fields or children playing nearby.

Noonwraiths do not bleed and are for the most part immune to the effects of Witcher Signs. They can create mirror images of themselves which circle their victims in a kind of morbid parody of a dance. This ghastly ritual drains their victims' life energy while adding to their own strength. Noonwraiths are also able to manipulate the physical world to a limited degree, kicking up clouds of dust which temporarily blind and disorient their opponents.

Noonwraiths can turn immaterial and are at such times very difficult to wound. In order to force a noonwraith to take corporeal form, one must first trap it with the Yrden Sign or strike it with a Moon Dust bomb. Once the monster has regained physical presence, one can mount a fast attack with a silver blade, preferably one coated in specter oil.

Contrary to popular belief, noonwraiths can also be encountered at night, but are much weaker then than during the day.

Opinicus

Killers of various stripes - mercenaries, knights errant, ambitious lawmen - try at times to compete with witchers as monster slayers. This usually ends in a massacre that not only does not solve the problem, but in fact only makes it worse - the beast walks away from the fight unharmed, enraged and out for vengeance. Such was the case in the mountains outside Oxenfurt, where a powerful archgriffin had made its nest.

Once again it fell to the witcher to clean up after amateurs. He knew neither Igni nor bombs dealing fire damage would have any effect against this fire-loving creature. He would also have to look out for its acid, which can eat through even the thickest armor - leaving one vulnerable to its razor-sharp talons.

After a long fight, the witcher slew the archgriffin. Some scholars in nearby Oxenfurt might accuse him of having contributed to the disappearance of an endangered species and disrupting the local ecosystem. Somehow, the witcher didn't seem likely to lose much sleep over the matter.

Penitent

I run back inside, hasp the doors, and then I hear it — someone whispering my name. Mikkjaaal, Mikkjaaal!

Mikkjal, Eldberg lighthouse keeper

It turned out the monster haunting the isle of Eldberg and its lighthouse was a rare type of specter known as a penitent. Wherever this wraith haunts immediately becomes enveloped in thick fog and darkness – and those that wander into it usually never return. In order to defeat a penitent, one must remain in constant motion in order to avoid being struck by this agile creature, which can disappear and reappear in the blink of an eye to attack from behind. Most importantly of all, however, one must discover what keeps the monster bound to its haunting grounds – and break that bond as soon as possible.

With the lighthouse keeper's help, Geralt drove the mist from the isle – then dispatched the penitent from our world for good. Now ships were once again able to sail to Arinbjorn's port, and the witcher's coin pouch grew a little fuller.

Plague maiden

“Patients seem to have hallucinations of a woman covered in scabs and boils, with rats scurrying about all around her. These ravings subsided after an administration of henbane and poppy extract.”

— Joachim von Gratz’s notes, Vilmerius Hospital in Novigrad

When plague ravages a region, a spirit will sometimes walk its lands, a ghost resembling an ill woman whose flesh rots off her bones and in whose wake crawls a cavalcade of rats. No one knows whether this spirit brings the pox with her or is merely drawn to it like a moth to a light. Yet it is certain that she delights in dealing pain and suffering, in hearing the howling and moaning of men.

Many have called into question the very existence of plague maidens, or pestae, as they are sometimes called. Only two sightings of such a creature have ever been recorded, both during times of raging epidemic.

As the name “plague maiden” suggests, these wraiths take the appearance of females, though exactly why that is remains a mystery. Some speculate they, like other such specters, arise from the powerful emotional charge associated with certain circumstances of death, such as death preceded by a long and particularly painful illness.

Not much is known about how to fight a plague maiden, though one can assume they possess many traits in common with other phantoms and wraiths. They undoubtedly pose a great danger, though a witcher's immunities should at least prevent him from catching the contagious illnesses they carry.

Rock troll

Man must riddly talk. But no tricksy. Or troll boom man head.

— rock troll dwelling in a cave on Undvik

If while hiking high in the mountains you come across a walking stone, do not think your eyes deceive you. Instead, draw your sword — for before you stands a rock troll. True, not every encounter with these creatures ends in a fight – while not particularly intelligent, trolls are capable of reason — but it is better to prepare for the worst. Otherwise, your hike might end not on the summit, but in their stew.

Trolls are able to use fire and simple tools, and some of them have even mastered the basics of Common Speech. Though linguistic nuances such as conjugations and declinations escape them, they are extremely fond of riddles, rhymes and all sorts of wordplay, a fact a witcher in possession of a bit of wit can use to his advantage.

If a fight proves inevitable, one must watch out for the stones these trolls throw with great strength and shocking precision. Their powerful, heavy fists also present a danger, for they can buckle even the sturdiest breastplate or cuirass. Since their backs are covered in a layer of rocky growth, blows delivered from behind will not do them much damage. They must thus be fought directly, standing face to face – and preferably armed with a sword covered in a fresh coating of ogroid oil.

Rotfiend

The Witcher II

What rotfiends are, everyone can see. Even seeing them is not necessary, as hearing their name should be enough to tell anyone what creatures might bear this unpleasant title. The creatures multiplied after the last Northern War and today plague wilderness villages and forest settlements.

Given that they are necrophages, rotfiends feed on carrion and human corpses, though this does not mean they do not attack the living. They appear on battlefields, near cities afflicted by plague, or around villages touched by famine. See a rotfiend and you can be sure there are many more in the area. They appear of a sudden, and disappear even more quickly if threatened, so exterminating them is difficult. Trapping rotfiends makes little or no sense. Instead, they are best dealt with by cutting off their food supply, that is, burning all corpses in the area. Corpses must be incinerated rather than buried, for rotfiends are avid and skillful diggers. Without sustenance, the beasts will leave in search of new feeding grounds.

Both the fast and strong styles can be used to fight rotfiends, though the fast style seems to be more appropriate. Killing a rotfiend is not difficult, yet one must remember to survive the moment of the beast's death, for the monster's corpse releases explosive fumes a mere spark could ignite. The resulting

explosion can hurt the witcher, but it might also kill nearby rotfiends, creating something of a chain reaction. Thus, a dying monster should be drawn away from its kin. Backed against a wall, a rotfiend flies into a fury, attacking madly. This attack should be evaded, for the beast's chaotic blows carry a strength that can only be called hysterical. Running is never a good idea when fighting rotfiends, as the creatures will pursue their foe, jump on his back, knock him down and overwhelm him. Stopping rotfiends from escaping can be difficult, unless one has a bomb that will stun the monsters and render them defenseless as they try to burrow into the ground.

Rotfiends are necrophages, so Necrophage Oil is lethal to them. Common poisons, on the other hand, are useless - the beasts have gained immunity to these by devouring carcasses. Rotfiends cannot bleed to death, as their blood congeals very quickly, but all other witchers' techniques, from Signs to traps and bombs, are effective in fighting them.

The Witcher III

Course it reeks. Think they're called rotfiends because they smell like roses?

— Vesemir, witcher of the Wolf School

Rotfiends resemble decomposing human bodies that have been stripped of their skin. Their presence is given away by the overwhelming stench of the rot which gives them their name. Devourers are a particularly dangerous kind of rotfiend marked by an insatiable appetite for human flesh.

Rotfiends and devourers were once rarities, but in the present age of constant warfare and violence they have become a

veritable plague, particularly around battlefields and in disease-stricken areas. Though they feed mainly on carrion, they will at times attack the living. They usually feed in large groups and thus present a danger to lone travelers – especially considering their speed, which is more than a match for a horse at full gallop.

The rotfiend's decomposing body is filled with gasses which are poisonous even to those who, like witchers, are immune to most other toxins. These emissions are also highly flammable, meaning any spark, not to mention a carelessly-cast Igni sign, can lead to an explosion. This is particularly likely after a rotfiend dies, when its body thrashes around in uncontrollable tremors.

Rotfiends and devourers feed in the twilight hours and at night, when they become much more dangerous than during the day.

Royal wyvern

The Witcher

The female royal wyvern is smaller but more cunning and venomous than her male counterpart. She can be aggressive towards both males and other females. She is a perfect example of how gender relations among humans have their source in the animal world. This is altogether not surprising.

— Master Dorgeray, *Against the Institution of Marriage*

The Witcher III

It were huge. And those teeth, ugh! We barely escaped.

Wonder if it killed the traders... Whoresons sure had it comin',

— Conversation overheard in Velen

A hunter who knows his prey's habits and behavior will rarely return from his hunt empty-handed. To know what forest paths deer are like to trod, to know in what much boars will wallow, to guess when a hare will emerge from its burrow – that is half the battle.

What most men do not know is that some monsters also possess such knowledge. For example, a royal wyvern from Velen had learned the danger of exposing itself to human eyes and arrows by flying high to pick out its prey from afar.

Instead, it would lurk by the roadside and wait for military transports. In this way it grew fat on salted pork and beer, expanding until it resembled a dragon more than other, lesser members of its own kind.

The witcher thus knew this beast would be much stronger and more resilient than a normal wyvern. Even one blow from it could kill – which is why he would need to avoid its charge at all costs. He would also be wise to force it to the ground with his crossbow or a bomb whenever it tried to fly into the air and hurtle down in a deadly dive.

In the end the witcher slew the hideous creature, though not without some difficulty. Thanks to this feat, the soldiers could once again send shipments of food and equipment needed to conduct the war. Whether that was a good or a bad thing – that is an entirely different matter.

Sarasti

We dug out a chamber. There was a beast sleeping inside. We fell over the props to collapse the ceiling, but it must not have buried the monster...

Bytomir of Velen

Raiders of elven tombs either get rich quickly, or die trying. The Aen Seidhe's disintegrating temples and palaces hold priceless treasures, true, but within them many a foul monster waits in deep slumber. Such was the case in Byways, where a few peasants, unaware of the dangers they faced, awoke an unusually dangerous ekimmara.

The witcher knew this monster would be no easy kill. That the vampire would quickly regenerate, that its blows would cause heavy bleeding, that it was able to disappear into thin air. Yet he also knew he could overcome these advantages. He needed merely to use Yrden and Quen Signs and strike heavy blows. Oh, and avoid getting killed.

The vampire had already managed to kill several peasants and a patrol of heavily-armed Nilfgaardians. The list of victims would surely have grown even longer, had not Geralt of Rivia, the White Wolf, happened to waltz into town.

Shrieker

Heard you have a problem – a monster you call a shrieker?

Aye, prowls about, it does. Snatches cows and goats, mostly, but it won't scorn a man if it runs into one.

— Conversation overheard at Crow's Perch

The monster tormenting the residents of Crow's Perch turned out to be a particularly nasty cockatrice. Geralt was not surprised the baron's men had been unable to stop it. They could not possibly withstand the surgical precision of its strikes, which slice open arteries and provoke an outpouring of blood only the Swallow potion could hope to stop. Neither did they know to force it to the ground with a crossbow, a bomb or a Sign, and then evade its charge by rolling under the monster's outstretched wing.

Just when it seemed the villagers would have to learn to live in the shadow of a bloodthirsty beast, to always look to the sky with fear, the witcher arrived – and put an end to the shrieker for good.

Siren

Out at sea, if you hear a beautiful woman singing, turn the ship around at once. You understand? Even if it means sailing straight back into a storm.

– Arike of Hindarsfjall, advice given to his son before his first solo voyage

Like skilled hunters setting out wooden ducks to lure in drakes, sirens and lamias lure men near - using their own bodies as decoys. They can transform to resemble beautiful human maidens, though with tails covered in silver scales instead of legs. Once a naive sailor gets within arm's reach of these beautiful creatures, their fair faces suddenly turn to fang-filled, fish-like maws, and lovely tails promising unknown delights become sharp, death dealing talons.

One legend claims sirens and lamias were once friendly towards men – and supposedly were even known (albeit on rare occasions) to accept some sailors' clumsy attempts at courtship. In our day, however, they are decidedly aggressive, perhaps soured by the numerous kidnappings of carried out by frustrated sea salts. Whatever the truth, one thing is certain: these days the monsters display no signs of good will, and so when spotting them one should immediately reach for one's silver sword.

Sirens and lamias (the sirens' more dangerous cousins) usually hunt in flocks, making use of their numbers as well as their ability to move effortlessly through water and air.

On the ground, however, they are virtually defenseless, and so a wise tactic is to damage their fin-like wings to force them to land. The Igni Sign also proves effective when fighting against them. Threatened or injured sirens will let out a terrifying shriek, leaving their opponents stunned while they escape – and their sisters swoop down for an easy attack.

Skullhead

Archeological research is the only source of knowledge about skullheads. Skeleton reconstructions make it possible to describe the creature's appearance and movement. Addressing his students, Professor Sendivoy Barren summed up research on the skullhead thusly: 'We are more than lucky that the bastards died out.'

Striga

There is not much known about the curse that turns females into striga. The only well-documented example of a striga's lifetime was that of Adda the White, daughter of Foltest, king of Temeria. She was cursed prior to her birth, then born a striga. She and her mother, who did not survive the birth, were laid to rest in a single tomb. For seven years she grew inside the sarcophagus, only to emerge a creature of predatory instinct with the size and skill to carry it out.

Succubus

Again?! Good grief, woman, I'm spent...

— Lester of Smallton to a succubus, a few days before taking a vow of celibacy

Unlike other monsters, succubi and menads feel no desire to kill, do not crave human blood and usually do not, in fact, mean any harm at all. They are motivated by one thing and one thing only: an insatiable lust. They try in vain to slake this by engaging in sexual acts with any other humanoid species they encounter. While it must be admitted that their “victims” rarely put up much resistance, this does not mean succubi and menads do not present any danger: their never-ending advances, though pleasurable at first, have pushed more than one man to madness or even death.

Succubi and menads usually can be found near human settlement, including small villages and populous cities. They prowl at night, though when stricken by serious need they will leave their lairs during the day as well. They shower their affections on men as well as women, the young as well as the old, the ugly as well as the beautiful. Some of them are particularly fond of pastors and other holy men, whose seduction they treat as a sort of game.

Though succubi are peaceful by nature, when forced to fight they will defend themselves fiercely. One should thus not be

fooled by their fair appearance – under the velvety skin of their arms lie muscles of iron, and a blow delivered with their rear, goat-like legs or the thick horns on their head can easily crush bone.

Sylvan

Sylvans are cruel, greedy and treacherous. Still, I prefer them to dh'oine.

— Yaevinn, legendary Scoia'tael commander

Sylvans and Yakshas, a kindred species, are extremely rare woodland creatures whose appearance combines traits of goats and rotund men. These beings usually pose little danger, for they limit their contact with humans to playing harmless (though often bothersome) tricks and eating crops from their fields.

The Apiarian Phantom

Something's destroyed our fields and hives. We think it's... the apiarian phantom.

Holofernes Meiersdorf

The "Apiarian Phantom" destroying the Meiersdorf family's hives turned out to be a lost Hound of the Wild Hunt. When fighting such a beast, one must bear in mind three things. First of all, that the thick armor of ice covering it can only be pierced by strong blows. Second, that, like any other frost-born creature, it is vulnerable to fire, the Igni Sign included. Third and last: that it shall show no mercy.

Though the Hound fought fiercely, it nevertheless fell to the witcher's blade. By killing this dangerous monster, Geralt saved the humans, halflings and, last but not least, bees of the area from further torment'.

The Dragon of Fyresdal

It's got scales, wings, claws... A dragon's a dragon! No point gabbin', just go kill it!

— Vagn, village elder of Fyresdal

Few truly know what a dragon looks like, for those who have seen one up-close rarely have a chance to share their impressions. That is why people are forever mistaking other monsters for dragons. This was the case in Fyresdal, where the so-called dragon wreaking havoc turned out to be a forktail.

Yet this mistaken attribution did not mean there was no reason to worry. The forktail harassing Fyresdal was a particularly vile representative of its kind, one equipped with an endless store of deadly venom. Fighting it without first drinking a regenerative potion or a poison antidote would be tantamount to suicide.

In his fight with the forktail, Geralt gave proof not only of his masterful swordsmanship, but also of a previously-undemonstrated flair for shepherdry. With a little help from a brave sheep lent by the village elder, he lured the monster into a trap - then ended its life.

The White Lady

The apparition haunting the fields outside Novigrad turned out to be a noonwraith. Some powerful emotion must have bound it to that place - love, hate, anger or perhaps all three at once. Like every wraith of this type, she was surely capable of forming mirror images of herself, which served to mislead opponents and restore her vitality. Luckily, these mirages could be dispelled with a quick slash from a silver blade. Like any noonwraith, she would undoubtedly seek to assume immaterial form while fighting, making her almost impossible to injure - unless she is first caught in a trap laid by the Yrden Sign, or blasted with a special bomb. Once thus forced into materiality, she should be attacked with strong blows or the Igni Sign. Finally, one must always keep in mind two witcher sayings: "The longer you fight a noonwraith, the lower your chances of surviving," and "Fight a noonwraith at midday and you'll be dead before dusk."

Therazane

I do not believe in ghosts – it is that simple. But my men say the house shakes at night, walls crumble, why, even the floors move about...

— Kurt Dysart, Count of Anchor

There's not such thing as a risk-free real estate investment. It might turn out your new home has a leaky roof, structural rot in the attic, a scratched floor in the living room... or elven ruins beneath its foundations, and within them an enormous earth elemental just waiting for a chance to break free of its chains.

Fighting such a monster is no easy task. Its tough outer husk deflects all but the strongest blows. It can liquefy a man's bones with one crushing blow from its fists – thus, one should never near it without first casting the Quen Sign. One should have the Yrden Sign at the ready as well, whereas the other signs, – Igni, Aard and axii – are completely ineffective against it.

In the end the witcher triumphed over the powerful earth elemental, and in doing so won gratitude and a reward from Count Dysart.

Troll

According to legend, trolls are creatures born of earth and their body is made of rock. They hate sunlight, which kills them by turning them into inanimate stone, so they subsist only at night. That's much for legends. And the reality? Well, as always, truth is much more prosaic. Trolls are living creatures like me and you, and they prefer day to night, for they are so clumsy that they stumble on stones in the dark, spilling vodka. Their skin is indeed hard like stone, but beneath there are muscles and a heart that pumps blood. And since they bleed, they can be killed.

Trolls are primitive, true, but they are counted among sapient creatures. They can speak our tongue, though not very colorfully. They mate in pairs for life and, despite what the spiteful would have, they have feelings (even if they express them unceremoniously). All trolls share fondness of building and alcohol. They combine these passions by erecting bridges and drinking away the money gained from collecting tolls. Thus originated the sayings: "straight like a troll bridge", when something is twisted, and "trolling it a day", when construction workers make a brake for "lunch".

If a troll spots his opponent from a distance, he will try to crush him by throwing huge rocks. Trolls are surprisingly accurate when throwing missiles, and their thick skin provides them ample protection from arrows, so exchanging fire with them always end in the trolls' victory. The beast must be

reached as fast as possible, and slaughtered with strong blows. They are sluggish, so a swordsman that evades first a thrown rock, than w rock-heavy fist, has a chance of survival. One should not take risks, however, and if possible reach an understanding with the monster.

Trolls are huge beings, so knocking them down or unbalancing them in combat is highly unlikely. Their ability to regenerate is legendary, and means they need not fear wounds or oils increasing bleeding. However their fast metabolism has a darker side, since these monsters are very susceptible to venoms -these swiftly reach all recesses of the trollish body.

Ulfhedinn

Ulfhedinn? What's that, some kind of fish?

- Professor Artibus Joannes Rack, geographer, disappeared during a surveying expedition in Skellige

Ulfhedinn are a breed of werewolf found mainly in Skellige. The harsh and barren conditions of the isles might explain why they primarily hunt men and are stronger than their continental brethren. Older and particularly dangerous ulfhedinn are called olrefs. Only a few daring warriors in Skellige history have managed to defeat an ulfhedinn, and each of them is commemorated in ballads as a hero to this day.

Like werewolves, ulfhedinn and vorefs are active at night, particularly when the moon is at its fullest. Fast, strong, and amazingly resilient, these creatures kill with disturbing ease. Silver blades should be brought against them, as should Devil's Puffball. Take note that when near death the ulfhedinn becomes particularly dangerous and will attack with doubled fury, while calling on wolves to come to its rescue.

Vedymín

Eeee... But careful one must be to touch not the witchman, for thus the mange can one acquire. And lasses do from him hide away, for lustful the witchman is above all measure—

In the original game, the term used was witchman. This following journal entry is, in fact, a slightly paraphrased quote from the short story “The Edge of the World”.

Venomous arachas

Barley nicked me, I'll be fine.

— Last words of an unknown hunter

Though all arachasae are highly venomous, this breed produces an especially strong toxin. A few drops are enough to kill a grown man — unless that man is a witcher, whose mutations will neutralize small amounts of this venom. Large quantities, however, will kill anything they touch, with mutations only prolonging an inevitable and painful death in such instances.

Venomous arachasae produce colossal amounts of this toxin and deploy it during combat in many ways. Before striking a venomous arachas will cover its pincers and teeth with a thick coating of the deadly liquid. It will then squirt the venom at its opponent to weaken it, and once locked in direct combat, will continue spraying the noxious ooze all around itself, meaning every breath brings its victim closer to death. Like other members of this species, venomous arachasae use prehensile feelers to grab and immobilize their prey. When attempting to fight such a creature a witcher should drink Golden Oriole, which will reduce his body's vulnerability to poison, and then attack from a safe distance with crossbow or bombs before dealing the finishing blows with a silver sword enhanced with a coating of insectoid oil.

Vodyanoi priest

see also: Vodyanoi warriors

Ripples Quest: Humans and Vidyanoi

Killing Dagon and His Priests

Vodyanoi warrior

see also: Vodyanoi priests

Vodyanoi

In Sword of Destiny, the residents of the underwater city of Ys are not called “vodyanoi” but simply “People of the sea” (“Morski lud”), but it seems quite clear that the creatures in the game were based on this story.

Warg

Particularly dangerous are wargs, a nasty and ferocious subspecies of wolf.

Water hag

Folk say water hags are drowner's wives. If that be true, 'tain't no wonder why they're such ornery bitches.

— Shemhel of Dregsdon

Some tales mention water hags and swamp bints masquerading as lost old women to lure travelers back to the rickety shacks they build in the wetlands. In truth, only a blind man, or a sighted man blinded with drink, could mistake the rank sludge and rotting carrion of a water hag's den for a cozy cottage, and the hideous hag herself for an innocent grandmother. Their wrinkled, wart-covered bodies stand nearly two yards tall, with skin the color of a long-dead cadaver and stinking of muck and fish. Bony growths two spans long stick out from their backs, with hair like a tangle of seaweed and claws that would make a werewolf proud completing the picture.

Werewolf

The Witcher

Baron Wolfstein buried his face in his hands. His heart was throbbing. Suddenly the scent of his wife's blood and the blood of his children intensified. The baron's body swelled as his muscles grew, his noble attire fell in tatters on the marble floor. 'My beloved, you... you are so hairy. You are a werewolf!' Bianca went pale. 'What about our love?' In reply she heard a terrifying roar.

Danielle Stone, *The Curse of Baron Wolfstein and Other Love Stories*

The Witcher III

Wolves aren't as bad as they're made out to be. Werewolves, though — they're every bit as bad and worse.

— Elsa Vilge, archer

Werewolves are creatures with both men and wolves inside them. When in beastly form, they take the worst traits of each: the wolf's drive to kill and hunger for raw flesh and the man's cruel and calculating intelligence. A werewolf's condition comes about through a curse, and the transformations happen outside his conscious control. When he reverts to human form,

he has no memory of his deeds — otherwise he would surely go mad and take his own life.

Werewolves are active at night, particularly when the moon is full. Though they hunt alone, when threatened they will summon wolves to aid them. Werewolves rarely feel the need to flee, for few adversaries put up much of a fight against them. They strike as swiftly as lightning with claws sharp as razors and regenerate any damage received in mere moments. When fighting werewolves a witcher should wield a blade covered in oil harmful to the cursed and have a large supply of Devil's Puffballs handy.

A werewolf's curse can at times be lifted, yet there is no universal, surefire method for doing this. A witcher seeking to undertake such a task must there equip himself with a great deal of patience – and sturdy armor.

Wham-a-Wham

Thems in-walk troll house. Troll say, “Out mans!” But they wham-a-wham troll rocks. So troll wham, too!

— Rock troll known as Wham-a-Wham

Rock trolls come across as dim-witted, ponderous, slow – stupid, to be frank. It’s easy to dismiss them – and even easier to enrage them. When this happens, one’s best bet is to run as fast as possible, for an angered rock troll is as deadly as a thundering landslide. The truth held in the case of the massive rock troll known as Wham-a-Wham. HIs [sic] every blow struck like a battering ram – meaning one needed either avoid them entirely or protect oneself with the Quen Sign. Its hard skin meant it was near invulnerable to sword strikes – especially those dealt from behind, where its rock armor is the thickest. The only hope for defeating it lay in taking advantage of its typical troll slowness – especially if further exploited using the Yrden Sign.

A certain set of Skellige miners learned first-hand just how dangerous rock trolls can be. Ignoring all warnings, they started to mine a rich silver vein in the cave which Wham-a-Wham called home. They died soon thereafter – crushed or torn to rough bits. This time, a trolls killings were a justified act of self-defense – after all, the witcher reasoned, every troll’s cave is his castle.

Wolf

The Witcher

There was so much snow that winter that we had to dig tunnels just to get to the privy and had icicles in our pants by the time we got back. Wolves came out of the forest, ate the cattle and then surrounded the house. They were howling madly. Surrounded by that pack of wolves, we felt like three little pigs.

The Witcher III

Friend of mine used to say that with all these griffins and basilisks and whatnot, good old fashioned wolves weren't nothing to worry about... Then the damned beasts devoured half his flock.

- Yngvar, shepherd

Once upon a time wolves were the absolute rulers of the forest. Men used them to frighten children, while adults, too, trembled at the sound of their howling. Post-Conjunction monsters not only pushed wolves into the deepest wilds but also took over their place in human nightmares. Yet this does not mean the old predators ceased to be a danger. Wolves do not have a drop of magic within them, breathe no fire and spit no acid, but that in no way stops them from killing unwary travelers and hunters.

Particularly dangerous are wargs, a nasty and ferocious subspecies of wolf, and the snow-white wolves which today can only be found in the wild highlands of the Skellige archipelago.

Wolves usually feed in packs counting from a handful to over a dozen members, though some particularly strong males hunt alone. Though wolves are weaker than many post-Conjunction monsters, they make up for any lack of strength with their intelligence. When fighting them one must be especially careful not to become surrounded. The presence of wolves can also signal more serious trouble - these predators often share their hunting grounds with werewolves and leshens.

Woodland Spirit

We've offended him, Sven. The Woodland Spirit seeks revenge. This here is him saying we've strayed from the old paths.

— Harald of Fayrlund

Some monsters are so powerful local populaces begin worshipping them as gods. Such was the case with the leshen dwelling in the woods near the Skellige village of Fayrlund. The elders were absolutely convinced the monster watched over them by defending them from their enemies and training their hunters.

The witcher had his doubts, however. Leshens are mean, self-serving creatures – and the ancient one living in the woods near Fayrlund was surely no exception.

Geralt knew freeing the villagers from their supposed protector's grasp would be no easy task – if he decided to even try. The leshen known as the Woodland Spirit was so powerful as to have mastered the art of marking. This meant the monster had inserted his essence into one of the residents of Fayrlund. As long as this unfortunate soul remained alive and near the settlement, the leshen would always be reborn near its lair.

Yet even with the marked one eliminated, killing the leshen would be no easy task. The monster commanded the obedience

of the denizens of the woods – it could thus call on wolves, ravens or even the trees themselves for help. Luckily, it had a weakness as well: it was vulnerable to fire, that born of the Igni Sign in particular.

In the end, however, there never was a battle between Geralt and the Woodland Spirit. Geralt knew that the leshen was surely less benevolent than the elders thought – but he also knew killing it would do more harm than good.

Wraith

The Witcher

If you want to get rid of a wraith, you must first find its body. Try searching on unhallowed ground or in the corner of the cemetery where outlaws are buried. When you dig up the corpse, you will discover that it is not rotten and that there is blood on its lips. Pierce the corpse with an aspen stake, cut off the head and place it between the corpse's legs. To make certain that the wraith will never return, set the corpse on fire. One false step will mean your demise.

The Witcher II

The wraiths are not, as some claim, a projection of an inner fear. They are visible, tangible and dangerous on top of that. The priests teach that people who die suddenly, leaving this vale of tears with important tasks left unfinished, become such ghosts. So wraiths have their own aims. Sometimes they are unaware of them, but more often they aim to achieve them, not caring for the living.

The wraiths are always connected to the sites of their demise. They may protect their former homes, or they may seek vengeance. One may even find small groups of the wandering damned in crypts and catacombs or on battlefields. It is not true that they only appear at night. I can confirm, however,

that one cannot communication with them, and that they have no fear of man or monster.

Wraiths hover just above the ground, so they move very swiftly. One should strike at them strongly and make ample use of Signs. As immaterial beings, they can appear and disappear at will. If the witcher swings his sword too slowly, giving the ghosts time to react, he might find himself striking nothing but air and then sense a quick riposte on his back.

Wraiths do not bleed, and common poisons cannot harm them. They are, however, susceptible to fire and of course to silver. The best means of fighting a wraith is the so called Specter Oil, which should be used to coat a silver blade.

The Witcher III

Finish all your business before you die. Bid your loved ones farewell. Write your will. Apologize to those you've wronged. Otherwise, you'll never truly leave this world.

— Paule Vikar, peasant healer, advice to a dying man

Clerics and scholars are forever debating whether spirits do in fact journey to another world after death, one where eternal joy or suffering awaits. Both groups agree, however, on what happens to spirits who, for one reason or another, remain in our world after their body breathes its last: they transform into wraiths. To hear their mournful howls, one can surmise this is not a fate to be envied.

Wyvern

The Witcher

Wyverns are unlucky to be frequently mistaken for dragons. Seeing a reptile approaching a flock of sheep, peasants panic. They expect it to breathe fire, massacre everyone and abduct the local virgins. While it is true that wyverns hunt sheep, they neither breathe fire nor lay waste to whole villages. And they are completely indifferent to virgins.

The Witcher III

Most dangerous of all are the royal wyverns. Or, as they're called in some circles, the royal pains in the arse.

— Albina Tottelkamp, lecturer in natural sciences at Aretuza

Wyverns are often mistaken for dragons, and, though they are much smaller than their more famous kin and do not breathe fire, they are likewise extremely dangerous monsters.

Especially feared are the so-called royal wyverns who, like their namesake monarchs, are exceptionally ornery and extremely deadly.

Zeugl

The zeugl is the best example of a monster that has grown accustomed to human settlements. The beast feeds on the waste and filth produced by the city, so it need not hunt or fight to survive. It simply grows and gradually becomes a danger to people. This shows how detrimental continued degradation of the natural environment can be in the long run. Therefore, I implore the reader: respect nature.

Character

Abigail

A witch named Abigail lives in a village in the Outskirts. Though the villagers buy herbs and potions from her, she also faces much hostility.

If Geralt saves Abigail from the mob:

The Reverend informed the congregation that Abigail had uttered the Curse of the Hellhound and the witch was surrounded by an angry mob. I decided that she did not deserve to die, and saved her from being lynched. Abigail left the Outskirts for good.

I met Abigail again in the village of Murky Waters. The witch still trades in herbs and potions.

If Geralt leaves Abigail to be lynched:

The Reverend informed the congregation that Abigail had uttered the Curse of the Hellhound and the witch was surrounded by an angry mob. I decided not to interfere in the shadowy internal affairs of the Outskirts. The witch was burned at the stake just after I left.

Adalbert

Adalbert was a member of the scientific expedition that had set out to explore the caverns beneath Loc Muinne. The man stood out as unpleasant even among sorcerers. One could say that Geralt disliked him from the start - and the feeling was very much mutual.

When Abalbert and Cynthia departed with the artifact they had found in Dearhenna's laborator, Geralt breathed a sigh of relief. He had his fill of the haughty, malicious Nilfgaardian. Adalbert had had it coming since the start. As the explorers penetrated the underground corridors, he was ever haughty, offering caustic remarks and never really being useful. Once the expedition discovered Dearhenna's laboratory, Adalbert sought to prevent Geralt from getting his part of the loot. Heated words turned to violent deeds, and Geralt gladly killed the mage.

Adam Pangratt

Anyone familiar with military history and the annals of war has probably heard of Adam “Adieu” Pangratt, who was one of the “Sly Cats” – rabble rousers, political prisoners and other convicts whom King Esterad Thyssen freed to aid unofficially the military effort of the Northern Kingdoms during the second war against Nilfgaard. These men formed the core of the Koviri and Povissan mercenary units that streamed south at that time. Adam Pangratt commanded the valorous Free Company during the Battle of Brenna, where the Nilfgaardian offensive was finally broken and the Black Ones were pushed back beyond the Yaruga. They say that Adam later wed another soldier of fortune, one Julia Abatemarco, known also as Pretty Kitty, who also rose to fame at Brenna. Truly, without people like them, the battle would have taken an entirely different course...

If Geralt chooses Roche's Path:

At the time of the tale related herein, Adam Pangratt had been hired by, and was directly serving, King Henselt. He owed this engagement, as he had owed many previous ones, to his reputation, and he could expect to profit from it handsomely as his employer paid those who proved their worth very well. Pangratt and his battle-hardened veterans certainly earned their pay. They accepted the order to guard the cursed mist's perimeter with the composure and cold professionalism characteristic of elite soldiers.

If Geralt chooses to kill him during Chapter II: Roche's Path:

Geralt ran into Pangratt once more while sneaking through the underground tunnels to Vergen. Sadly, they met this time as antagonists, and so their short acquaintance ended with the soldier of fortune's death.

If Geralt chooses to side with the mercenaries during Chapter II: Where is Triss Merigold?:

While exploring the ravines, Geralt chanced upon Pangratt and his men fighting a troll. The witcher joined forces with them, and together they brought down the beast. The soldier of fortune was grateful. With no way to return to Henselt's camp, Pangratt easily abandoned his employer, deciding that he and his unit would join the Vergeni forces in the coming conflict.

"Adieu" kept his word. During the battle for the second gate, he proved that his reputation was not at all exaggerated.

If Geralt chooses to side with the she-troll during Chapter II: Where is Triss Merigold?:

While exploring the ravines, Geralt chanced upon Pangratt and his men fighting a troll. Since the monster's death would decidedly not suit the witcher's interests, and Pangratt and his men refused to back down, tempers flared and a fight broke out between them. Yet the soldier of fortune was shrewd enough to recognize the witcher's technical superiority. He surrendered to Geralt, thus becoming the conflict's first prisoner of war.

Adam

Adam is one of Murky Waters' more interesting residents. He's desperately and hopelessly in love with Alina, but that hasn't helped his poetry a bit.

If Geralt exposes Adam:

Adam, a young poet in love with Alina, accused of killing Celina. He has been arrested and awaits trial.

Adda the White

At Leuvaarden's reception I had the chance to meet Princess Adda. Some years ago I relieved her of the striga curse, and the princess has grown into a pretty, if somewhat wild and spoiled girl.

According to the Professor's notes, Adda collaborated with Salamandra. She was behind the counterfeiting of the royal seal and forged the proclamation of the state of emergency. She was promised the throne of Temeria, though in reality Salamandra believed her to be unpredictable. The organization planned to break the alliance.

It turned out that Adda was behind the forgery of the royal seals and responsible for the chaos in the Trade Quarter. The princess had been collaborating with Salamandra, but it seems this alliance was too much for her. Thanks to Triss' intervention, I managed to escape Adda's claws by the skin of my teeth.

Princess Adda was born of an incestuous union and came into this world as a striga. This was the consequence of a curse cast by a jealous courtier who had loved her mother. For several years the striga roamed Old Vizima, stalking and devouring the unwary. Until I arrived, no one had been able to kill her or lift the curse. Adda did not fully regain her personality, however, and there is still danger of a relapse. That's why the princess

wears amulets and participates in rituals designed to ward off the curse.

If Geralt kills the striga:

The curse of the striga returned and Adda changed into a monster again. This time I had to kill her.

If Geralt lifts the curse:

The curse of striga returned and Adda changed into a monster again. I managed to free her of the spell once more.

Princess Adda was born a striga as a result of Ostrit's curse. The magnate was in love with the king's sister and Adda's mother, whose name was also Adda. When he learned of the incestuous relationship between the king and his sister, Ostrit put a curse on the king and described the process in his diary. Whoever possesses the diary may renew the curse and transform Adda back into a striga.

King Foltest's daughter had been cursed even before leaving her mother's womb and turned into a striga as a child. The jag-toothed princess had long terrorized Vizima, until Geralt lifted the curse. It returned after a few years, but the witcher managed to lift it a second time. Later Adda became the wife of Radovid V, king of Redania.

Alina

A young girl from Murky Waters. Soon she will marry Julian, against the will of her jealous sister Celina and the poet Adam, who loves her.

Alvin

A boy named Alvin managed to escape the barghest attack which cost his foster mother her life. As a result of the shock, he started to divine the future and uttered the Prophecy of Ithlinne. I suppose Alvin is a Source — he has magical powers he cannot control.

Alvin lived with Abigail until the witch gave the boy to the Reverend. The preacher gave the orphan to a group of Salamandra thugs, who demanded that the dwellers of the Outskirts surrender their children. I killed the bandits and saved Alvin.

If Geralt leaves Alvin with Triss:

I met Alvin again, this time in Old Vizima. Both Triss and Shani wanted to take care of the boy. After some consideration I left him with Triss.

If Geralt leaves Alvin with Shani:

I met Alvin again, this time in Old Vizima. Both Triss and Shani wanted to take care of the boy. After some consideration I left him with Shani.

Alvin disappeared and was found in the village of Murky Waters, where a young couple took him in. Wild magical skills

still dwell in him, but the amulet I gave him from Triss should suppress them.

The boy seems to have taken to me. When I was in Murky Waters he followed me everywhere and asked a multitude of questions. My answers impressed him. I think Alvin can travel through time and space, though he cannot control these abilities and they surface when he is under stress.

When the Order's units appeared in Murky Waters, Alvin was taken hostage by the elves. The boy got so scared during the ensuing fight that he used his extraordinary skills to disappear. I still hope to meet him again.

Anaïs La Valette

The daughter of Baroness Mary Louisa La Valette was a scant few summers old at the time. Rumors that King Foltest was her father gave beginning to many important events.

Anabelle

Geralt encountered this young woman's ghost in the uppermost room in the haunted tower on Fyke Isle. She told him that in life she had been the local lord's daughter.

When enraged peasants stormed the tower, she feared they would ravage her honor if they found her alive and so took a magic potion that put her in a corpse-like state of paralysis. When she woke, she found herself lying amidst the bodies of her family and servants, unable to move. She watched in helpless horror as rats feasted on the pile of corpses and began to nibble on her as well.

This grisly death must have somehow put a curse on her and the tower, for her ghost had wandered it in restless torment ever since. Geralt engaged his vast experience with such curses to search for a possible solution. Having learned that Anabelle had loved a simple fisherman named Graham, Geralt decided this man and the bond of true love the two youths shared could be their salvation.

If Geralt takes Anabelle's remains from the isle:

Geralt agreed to take the young woman's remains to her love to have him give her a proper burial. Geralt hoped this would lift the evil spell on the cursed isle and bring Anabelle peace at long last.

Sadly, what Geralt took to be the ghost of an innocent woman was in fact death and disease in spirit form – a being known as a pesta, or plague maiden. Having lured Geralt into the open, it killed the unfortunate Graham and then escaped to spread the pox and feed on human suffering.

It is possible that this incident caused the local outbreak of Catriona that devastated the kingdom of Kerack and sowed the seeds of the coast city's ultimate downfall.

If Geralt refuses to fulfill Anabelle's request:

Perhaps there was something in the girl's words that had put Geralt on his guard, or perhaps his witcher instincts simply warned him in time - either way, Geralt knew what he was dealing with a literal second before Anabelle revealed her true nature. The spirit was in fact a pesta - a plague maiden, a terrible wraith which spreads death and pestilence.

Anezka

Anezka, the local herbalist in Lobinden, took care not to stand out in any way. Though some people respect women who know much about herbs and folk medicine, others fear them. Skilled herbalists are often thought to be witches and suspected of sorcery, so they must remain mindful that human mistrust can quickly turn into hostility.

Anezka's anxieties were augmented by the fact that she was also a priestess of Veyopatis - a deity that had once been revered in the region. Thus, she generally preferred not to draw too much attention to herself.

Anna Strenger

Geralt did not meet Anna Strenger, the Bloody Baron's wife, when he visited Crow's Perch. Some time before his arrival this woman had disappeared in unexplained circumstances along with her daughter Tamara.

Geralt did, however, receive a detailed description of the missing woman. Anna was a comely forty-something woman with green eyes and hair dark as raven wings which she kept tied in a tight bun behind her head.

Geralt discovered that Anna's marital life had not been working out as well as she might have hoped. She had recently been pregnant, but lost her child for unknown reasons shortly before her disappearance.

When Geralt pushed the baron about the matter, the ugly truth finally came out. Desperate and miserable, Anna had fled, taking Tamara with her, after her drunken husband beat her badly.

The baron was convinced Anna had miscarried because of his actions, but Geralt was not so certain about this - he couldn't stop thinking about the strange talisman meant to ward off evil power Anna had received from the pellar.

During their heart-to-heart the baron gave Geralt a somewhat clearer image of the Strengers' married life. While her husband

was off leading military campaigns, Anna would seek comfort in the arms of a childhood friend.

Once the baron discovered the truth, he fell into an indescribable fury and killed Anna's lover, something which, predictably enough, further deepened the chasm separating the couple.

The situation grew even more entangled when Geralt discovered that, after fleeing Crow's Perch, Anna had been taken captive by some gigantic beast who carried her off into the darkness. As if that weren't horror enough, eyewitness testimony claimed her hands had burned with strange, glowing symbols shortly before this.

Perhaps this was precisely what the talisman Anna had received from the pellar had been meant to guard against?

If Geralt talked to Tamara:

Tamara only deepened Geralt's sad understanding of her mother's situation. The women had decided to flee together because they had had enough of the baron's drunken rages and beatings. Anna hated her husband so much that she was ready to do anything in order to be free of the man - and the child he had put inside her.

Geralt put the facts together and realized the old woman in the swamps was, in fact, Anna, the baron's missing wife. He also learned that the signs on her hands were symbols of the pact she had made with the Crones in order to get rid of her unwanted child.

Geralt's suspicions were confirmed shortly thereafter. The curse afflicting the unfortunate woman was indeed the Crones' doing. Anna had turned to the ghastly sisters because she did not wish to give birth to the baron's child.

The Crones granted her wish in their own, twisted way: with a curse which made the fetus inside her wither on the vine, taking Anna's life energy with it. In despair she turned to the pellar, who made her a talisman to hamper the evil magic's influence. Anna had lost this during her fight with the baron and was thus rendered defenseless against the Crones' magic.

After that, the worst was free to happen - the markings on her palms began to burn and a fiend dragged her to the heart of Crookback Bog, where she paid back her debt as the Crones' slave.

If Geralt frees the Ghost in the Tree...

Though Anna was found in the end, she was no longer herself, for a terrible curse had transformed her into a monster. The witcher had a good idea who had prepared this fate for her.

and lifts the curse from Anna:

Geralt snapped the evil spell afflicting Anna, restoring her true form. Yet the Crones had included one last nasty pinch of vengeance in their vile brew that caused Anna to die as soon as she regained her freedom.

Anna's loved ones had time only for a brief farewell before she parted.

and fails to lift the curse from Anna:

Despite the witcher's best efforts, he did not succeed in lifting Anna's curse. To the despair and horror of all who witnessed it, Anna Strenger died a horrible death, incinerated by the Crones' last act of vengeance.

If Geralt killed the spirit or freed it before being given the task:

Anna was found in the end, but the events she had witnessed and took part in had left such a deep mark on her body and mind that she would never again be the same. Her mind had quite simply cracked under the weight of it all, dropping her into an abyss of horror and despair.

Archpriest

This church dignitary, confident of his god's protection, greeted the intruders with harsh words. Yet he succumbed to persuasion and revealed where the king would find his illegitimate offspring.

Arnolt Malliger

Supposedly involved in commercial dealings with Bernard Loredó, this man was a frequent guest at the commandant's abode.

In point of fact, Arnolt was an agent serving the kingdom of Kaedwen, which sought to annex the trading post so as to take control of the trade route upon which it lay. Unfortunately, mortality rates are terrifyingly high among spies who are captured and then prove uncooperative. Arnolt failed to survive his interrogation, and so this "living proof of Kaedweni scheming" was history.

Arnvald

After Guthlaf, trusted seneschal to the An Craite jarls, passed away a portion of his duties were taken over by the jarl's cupbearer, Arnvald. This elderly Skelliger did not possess the far-reaching authority of his predecessor, but still had managed to make himself irreplaceable in his few years in the position. His purview included not only stocking the larders and cellars of Kaer Trolde but also seeing to the needs of the keep's inhabitants, as well as the guests that visited it during feasts and other important ceremonies.

If Geralt catches Arnvald:

That is why his betrayal could not have come as a greater surprise. When caught, Arnvald confessed to his role in the murderous conspiracy, revealing his patron as well as his long-seething hatred for Clan an Craite.

If Geralt fails to catch Arnvald:

That is why his betrayal could not have come as a greater surprise. His motivations, however, remained a secret that he took to his grave, for he died while trying to escape, killed on his patron's orders.

Arthur Tailles

If Geralt chooses to intimidate him:

Though he would not show it, meeting Tailles was a great surprise to Geralt at that time. They met each other in the past - in rather unpleasant circumstances - and the knight had a scarred face as a reminder of that meeting. Their next meeting also led to blows. Oh the irony. Tailles should wear a helmet while in the witcher's presence.

If Geralt chooses not to intimidate him:

Though he would not show it, meeting Tailles was a great surprise to Geralt at that time. They met each other in the past - in rather unpleasant circumstances - and the knight had a scarred face as a reminder of that meeting. This time Tailles got away cleanly, the witcher having confined himself to a few acrid words.

Aryan La Valette

Baroness La Valette's eldest child, Aryan, was beyond all doubt her and the old baron's son. Raised to be a knight, he sought to uphold the virtues of this state, valuing courage and valor, and striving by his every deed to embody them. He must have felt extreme discomfort by the conflict that engulfed him, as at its roots lay his mother's and family's honor, pitted against widely discussed rumors of a love affair between the Baroness and King Foltest. Though the situation was dire, the young knight valiantly commanded the defense of his family's castle, intending to give not an inch of ground.

If Geralt persuades him to surrender during the Prologue:

Seeing that further resistance was hopeless, Aryan yielded, laid down his arms and placed himself at the king's mercy.

Unfortunately, he could not count on it after Foltest's death, and only Geralt's intervention saved him from torture and disgrace.

Honor prevented the proud youth from fleeing his family seat while it was in enemy hands. Aryan made a decision that meant certain death for himself, but he nevertheless made it without hesitation, sealing with his sacrifice the bloodiest chapter ever in La Valette family annals.

Imagine the witcher's surprise when he learned that the heroic youth had survived after all and then turned to King Radovid of Redania for help in finding his sister, Anaïs.

If Geralt kills him and his men during the Prologue:

Faced with a choice, Aryan preferred to die leading his men in battle than to stain his honor by yielding to Foltest.

If Geralt duels him during the Prologue:

Seeking to save his soldiers' lives, Aryan decided to do or die. He faced the witcher in a duel and died by his hand.

Assire var Anahid

This sorceress came from Nilfgaard, or more precisely from Vicovaro - a distinction of extreme importance to the highborn of the Empire, as I can attest from personal experience. That is because the term “Nilfgaardian” is reserved for native residents of the Empire’s capital and its immediate vicinity. Assire var Anahid was nothing like stereotypical Nilfgaardian sorceresses – unkempt things in unfashionable attire. On the contrary, she wore well-cut dresses and underlined her beauty with just the right touch of makeup, following the example of our sorceresses in the North.

As momentous events played out in Loc Muinne, Assire was murdered - probably by her own countrymen, possibly on order of the emperor himself. The hazy circumstances surrounding her death gave rise to much speculation in Nilfgaard, fueling propaganda and political conflicts for some time to come.

Auberon Muircetach

Auberon Muircetach, also known as King of the Alders, was ruler of the far-off land of Tir ná Lia - the world which is home to Avallac'h and the Wild Hunt. He died after being poisoned by Eredin Bréacc Glas, who then declared himself king. At the time of his death Auberon had been exhausted and embittered by over six hundred and fifty years of living.

Auckes

When he first heard Auckes' name, the witcher had no idea who this was. Hah - he did not have the slightest inkling of the role this individual would play in our story.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of chapter I:

The assassin's identity was revealed only after his death. The accomplice of Letho and Serrit fell at Geralt's hand, but his memories provided very important information. The kingslayers responsible for the deaths of Foltest and Demavend, as well as the attempt on Henselt, had played a game of their own, in which both Síle and Iorveth had been pawns. Furthermore, it seemed that they and Geralt shared a common past.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of chapter I:

Auckes was probably one of the witchers Roche had mentioned. He and Serrit were trying to cover Letho's escape when Síle located their hideout. Though both died in the end, they completed their task, buying the last kingslayer time to flee.

Avallac'h

The being trapped within Uma's tortured husk turned out to be Avallac'h — a powerful Sage of the Aen Elle elves. Geralt had made his acquaintance years before. Already during these prior encounters Avallac'h had displayed an intense and frankly, rather unnerving interest in the Elder Blood and its bearer, Ciri. His exact motives were unclear at the time, and he had made no particular effort to explain them to Geralt.

Geralt likewise had no idea what bound Ciri and the elf now. There was no doubt Avallac'h had helped her, had saved her numerous times from the Wild Hunt — but why? Alas, the Sage, quivering on a razor's edge between life and death, offered no answers to Geralt's burning questions. He did, however, muster enough strength to utter a crucial piece of information — Ciri's location. When Geralt got a chance to talk to Ciri about Avallac'h, he learned that the Sage had been her tutor and mentor for some time. They were bound by a common enemy. Avallac'h had been the chief advisor to the previous ruler of the Aen Elle, whose demise had precipitated a conflict between Avallac'h and the successor, Eredin. The Sage had thus made it his mission to protect Ciri from his new king's malicious designs, whatever the cost. Ciri made it clear to Geralt that she trusted the Sage. He had saved her life on numerous occasions — including when, feeling the onset of the curse that would transform him into Uma, he resolved to hide her from the Wild Hunt on the Isle of Mists. Avallac'h played a key role in staving

off defeat during the defense of Kaer Morhen. After the battle, he advised the witcher that ultimate victory over Eredin and his ghastly cavalcade would only be possible with magic assistance. That meant Geralt would have to once again pact with members of the infamous Lodge of Sorceresses... Seizing the calm before the storm, Avallac'h tried once more to teach Ciri to control her incredible talent. He soon found that Ciri was as stubborn a pupil as she was gifted - something that Geralt had discovered for himself much earlier. Drawing on his knowledge of internal Aen Elle politics and the strengths and weaknesses of the Wild Hunt's commanders, Avallach [sic] crafted a plan to eliminate one of Eredin's most powerful allies - his master of manipulation, Ge'els. Journal entry picture In order to accomplish this, Avallac'h was willing to do anything - even risk a dangerous journey to Tir ná Lia. Geralt's trip to Avallac'h's laboratory confirmed that the Sage was interested in Ciri and her genealogy. The elf they stumbled across in Avallac'h's laboratory claimed his interest in Ciri was purely pragmatic and that he secretly loathed her for the human blood in her veins. Was Avallac'h truly so two-faced - or was the mysterious she-elf merely twisting his words to hurt Ciri? Avallac'h remained shockingly unperturbed when he heard Geralt and his companions had visited his secret laboratory. He openly admitted that he was interested in Lara's bloodline and in protecting her descendants. When they brought up the she-elf they came across in his lab, Avallac'h reacted with mild amusement, as if that particular subject was not worth treating seriously. Avallac'h played an active role in the war council preceding the luring of the Wild Hunt into their trap. During these discussions he and Ciri briefly got into a heated argument because Avallac'h firmly insisted she not engage directly in the coming conflict. Eredin's last words sowed seeds of doubt in Geralt's heart, and Ciri and Avallac'h's sudden

disappearance led them to spring into thorny shoots.
Everything seemed to indicate that the Sage had been pursuing
a hidden goal the whole time – to open the gates between
worlds.

Azar Javed

The mage attacked Kaer Morhen in order to steal the witchers' secrets hidden in the fortress.

One of the leaders of the forces that attacked Kaer Morhen was a mage so powerful that even Triss Merigold could not oppose him. The organization that he leads uses the symbol of the salamander. The mysterious mage using the salamander symbol is a skilled alchemist who is researching mutation. The mysterious mage is Azar Javed — an exotic name suggesting that he comes from a distant place. The mage is in hiding, yet his influence extends over the whole of Vizima and possibly beyond. The man I'm looking for is addicted to fisstech. He takes large amounts of the drug in its purest form. My adversary is a renegade mage. This means that, for some reason, he was expelled from the wizards' circle. In the past, renegade mages performed the witchers' mutations. Even powerful men have their weaknesses — Azar likes to bask in luxury. Women are another weakness of this wizard, and his lust is equal to his appetite for magical power. Azar Javed specializes in the element of fire. Not only does the mage use fire magic with great expertise, it seems that fire has become a part of his being. I have learned that Azar Javed has political ambitions, which is quite typical of wizards. If Javed is not found out until the tower confrontation:

The illusion is gone. It turned out that Azar Javed, the Salamandra leader, has been deceiving me by pretending to be

detective Raymond. I didn't unmask him in time and he was able to outsmart me.

If Javed is found out before the tower confrontation:

The illusion is gone. It turned out that Azar Javed, the Salamandra leader, has been deceiving me by pretending to be detective Raymond. Luckily I managed to see through the ruse and outsmart him. During the fight with the Professor, the mage came to his companion's rescue. This time he was unable to stop me, and I forced him to flee. According to the Professor's notes, Azar Javed is in Salamandra's hidden laboratory, where he is working to put the secrets of Kaer Morhen to use. Azar Javed died by my hand after the duel in the Salamandra laboratory.

Baltimore

Having spent some time in Vergen, I'd heard much about the famous runesmith, Master Baltimore, whom the local dwarves revered. Mastering the profession in question requires practice over scores of years, and runes cast into weapons or tools supposedly grant them unusual properties. We did not meet Master Baltimore, however, as he had disappeared several years before the events described herein. Yet his handiwork was, and is still, reputed to be the pinnacle of the difficult art of forging runic signs.

Either Baltimore really was paranoid, or he had had good reason to believe that his life was in danger.

If Geralt does not choose to give Baltimore's notes to Thorak:

Thanks to some notes, Geralt ascertained that the runesmith's disappearance had been the work of his apprentice, envious of his teacher's secrets.

If Geralt chooses to give Baltimore's notes to Thorak:

Thorak revealed that near his life's end Baltimore had lost his mind. Under these circumstances his disappearance, though still a mystery, was not that surprising.

Bart

Bart, the troll guarding Dijkstra's treasure, could have been the poster boy for the latest craze among Novigrad's wealthy strata, a trend that had swept over everyone from bankers and merchants to underworld crime bosses. The fashion in question prized guards marked not just by fierce loyalty, but also by massive size, endless stamina and crushing physical strength. A well-developed intellect, on the other hand, was considered unnecessary and quite possibly detrimental to the guard's performance. To be blunt, a good watchman should be brainless enough to render any thought of betraying his master impossible.

That is why trolls, ogres and, as a last result, magic crossbreeds were highly prized for such roles.

Berengar

Vesemir mentioned a witcher who had left Kaer Morhen before my arrival. His name is Berengar.

Berengar was seen in the Outskirts earlier. He agreed to kill the Beast but then disappeared. Did he fear facing the monster?

I found out Berengar had dealings with Salamandra. I don't know whether he was their associate or enemy.

Berengar remains one step ahead of me. He was in Vizima, where he was hired by Kalkstein the alchemist. Just like me.

Berengar the witcher is dead.

The early rumors about Berengar proved false. The witcher was working with Salamandra, and the Professor had ordered him to find Alvin.

I finally met Berengar in the village of Murky Waters. A bitter and unfriendly outcast, he bears a grudge against other witchers. Apparently, I'm included.

I had a serious conversation with Berengar, which left me with a better understanding of his experiences and motivations. Berengar seemed moved and decided to seek peace elsewhere, far away from trouble.

Berengar wrote a letter in which he admitted that he was a coward, that he had collaborated with Salamandra and that he had betrayed Kaer Morhen. I was moved by our meeting — Berengar set off to Vizima to catch Azar Javed in a hidden Salamandra laboratory.

If Geralt kills Berengar:

After a tense conversation, Berengar challenged me to a duel. I had to kill him.

If Geralt spares Berengar:

This time it was Berengar who followed me. He came to my aid as I fought Azar Javed. Unfortunately, he perished, but his sacrifice was not in vain.

Bernard Loredó

At the time of this story, Bernard Loredó was commandant of the town watch of the river port and trading post of Flotsam. He was well-suited to the position, amply demonstrating this through his brutal and heavy-handed approach to enforcing the law and meting out justice to the town. This boorish veteran of the Temerian army was perfectly happy with his posting to this backwoods, as he had turned the borderland settlement into a private fiefdom which he ruled through fear and might, passing and executing judgment at whim. I was exceptionally lucky to escape the noose back then. Despite my deepest desire to the contrary, it would not be the last time we saw Bernard Loredó.

In spite of maintaining a smokescreen of law and order in Flotsam, Loredó was as benevolent to nonhumans as Emperor Emhyr was to proponents of democracy. Given the slightest excuse, Bernard would have gladly rid the trading post and its environs of all who were not human, using any means available.

Much evidence suggested that Loredó was profiting heavily from his position through extortion, unlawful confiscation of goods and brazen bribe-taking. He would enlist local goons to beat and intimidate all who were uncooperative, and this was very much the order of the day.

Loredo yearned for some spectacular success in his fight against the Scoia'tael. Though his prison barge was overcrowded already, capturing Iorveth remained his deepest desire.

If Geralt sides with Roche during the end of Chapter I:

We did not learn the full measure of Bernard Loredo's corruption and twisted decadence until we found the elven woman he had kidnapped and imprisoned in his residence. She had been treated with exceptional cruelty, she had been beaten and raped. The man truly deserved no mercy.

To this day the people of Flotsam maintain that nothing less than a witcher could have rid them of the town's bestial, self-appointed ruler, Commandant Bernard Loredo. Though he could not match the kayran in size, he was without a doubt the greatest monster in the area. Many breathed a sigh of relief when the white-haired witcher sent him to the world beyond.

If Geralt sides with Iorveth during the end of Chapter I:

This vile individual's duplicity, his fidelity to his purse alone, were apparent to anyone who paused to look at him. His sale of Flotsam, an important trading post, to the kingdom of Kaedwen was to be his crowning swindle. And the provincial ruffian cared little that it would also render him a traitor to his country.

Birna

It can be difficult for a woman to gain the esteem of knights and warriors not accustomed to seeing female hands on the reins of power. It helps little when, like Birna, widow of King Bran of Skellige, the woman seeing power is filled with acrid disdain for her countrymen and their customs. One might argue that disdain is a valid reaction when, in the case of the passing of a man of power who embodies tradition, those customs call on her to follow along since outdated ritual and cast herself upon her husband's funeral pyre.

Justified or not, Birna's desire to rewrite age-old Skellige traditions put her at odds with the jarls and made it unlikely she would be remembered alongside Calanthe of Cintra or Meve of Lyria as a successful and revered ruler. Birna likewise refused to hide her disgust with the custom of choosing a ruler by vote of the jarls. She dreamed of establishing a hereditary kingship in Skellige and thought the ideal dynasty to hold it was her own, starting with her and Bran's son, the young Svanrige. In all probability it was this longing for power that drove Birna to concoct the conspiracy that ended in the massacre at Kaer Trolde. The evidence gathered by Geralt and Cerys sealed Birna's fate.

Blue-eyed lass

The blue-eyed beauty from the House of the Night has an interesting scar on her neck. Looks just like a vampire bite...

Blueboy Lugos

Madman Lugos' sole child and heir was a dour, strapping lad who was nothing like his father. His nickname dated from his childhood, when bruises often covered his body, supposedly from the rough and rowdy play Skellige boys engage in.

Yet others suspected they came from his father's belt, rod and fists, for rumor had it Lugos Senior did not wish to spoil his only child and thus punished him harshly for any minor cockup or grander failure.

If Geralt is set free by Madman Lugos and helps Blueboy:

The events Geralt witnessed in the Cave of Dreams confirmed rumors of Lugos' troubled relationship with his father. Blueboy's greatest fear turned out to be the Madman in his family tree.

Blueboy Lugos was one of the victims of the massacre that took place during the feast at Kaer Trolde. Later people claimed he had knocked one of the beast's heads off by clobbering it with a barrel of beer.

True or not, that is how the skalds commemorate him in song to this day.

Boussy La Valette

No more than a lad back then, Boussy already displayed the pride and obstinacy typical of the La Valettes. Some, however, attributed these qualities to the fact that King Foltest was his father.

The boy had died in mysterious circumstances, but the significance of this event was clear. Of Baroness La Valette's and King Foltest's two children, only Anaïs remained alive – a young girl born out of wedlock, the sole and highly problematic heir to the Temerian throne. As Geralt was sailing up the Pontar, Boussy was packed up and placed in a convoy that was to take him to Loc Muinne. The boy never reached the city. The rumors Geralt had heard from King Radovid proved true. Vile intentions had bred a series of unfortunate coincidences. In short, Boussy was dead.

Bran Tuirseach

King Bran, former King of the Skellige Isles, lived a long and storied life. When he finally felt decrepitude taking a hold of him, he went into the woods to hunt a bear armed with only a knife – and thus ended his reign. It was remembered as an honorable and respected one, though some complained he preferred raiding to confronting the Isles' long-term problems, and that he let his wife's tongue wag too freely. Some connected the two, claiming Bran sailed out to fight overseas battles to put off dealing with the ones awaiting him at home.

Bras of Ban Ard

Human sorcerers have been fascinated with Loc Muinne from the very beginning, and Bras of Ban Ard was one of the many who wanted to fathom its mysteries. During his travels and research, he had come into possession of several quite interesting weapons. He sold these to any whose pouch was deep enough to cover the expense.

Brewess

The Crone known as Brewess was the middle of the three demonic sisters in terms of age – but the first in terms of size. Brewess was said to be a master concocter of magical mixtures, and, in the more ghastly legends, was said to know over a dozen different recipes for human soup.

During the Crones' sabbath it turned out the sisters truly did feed on human flesh, cooking them up in infernal pots spiced with root from the cursed tree growing on Bald Mountain. In the end Brewess shared Whispess' fate: she was slain by Ciri's blade.

Brigida Papebrock

A none too significant figure, Brigida Papebrock was a minor courtier who had the fortune or misfortune, depending on how one looks at it, to meet Vernon Roche. Though she lacked powerful friends, connections and patrons, she nevertheless managed to become embroiled in matters far beyond her capabilities. Brigida would surely have become the victim of a political murder if not for the help of the witcher, who agreed to escort her out of Loc Muinne.

Brigida was unique in that she was the only adult to have survived the attack on the convoy transporting Foltest's children to Loc Muinne. Thus, she had witnessed the events leading to Boussy's disappearance.

If Geralt fails to safely delivery Brigida (the quest fails):

Yet the witcher proved a poor bodyguard. He failed to lead Brigida to safety, and the young woman perished at the hands of hired assassins.

Caleb Menge

In those days rampant persecution and the smoke of a hundred pyres choked Novigrad's air. This grim climate provided cover in which a great many bloody butchers built comfortable nests for themselves. Drummed-up conspiracies, mass arrests and show trials resulting in group executions were the favorite building blocks.

Caleb Menge, the fanatically ambitious commander of the Church of the Eternal Fire's Temple Guard, was one such opportunist, his moment of triumph coming when he unmasked his superior, the former Temple Guard commander Chappelle, as a doppler in disguise. Geralt first saw Menge lighting Chappelle's pyre in Novigrad's main square and had no doubt that, for this man, the appellation "fanatical whoreson" was too mild by far. Which is why I was not pleased - to say the least - when an unfortunate turn of events led to my capture by the agents of this vile man. The paranoid executioner never set a foot outside his fortified headquarters without a crowd of armed guards to accompany him. Knowing my life was on the line, my friends decided to pursue a risky plan to infiltrate Menge's offices - their only hope for a face-to-face meeting with the man. Menge only confirmed Geralt's initial impression of his bestiality upon closer acquaintance.

Caranthir Ar-Feiniel

This Aen Elle elf was one of Eredin's advisors and also, on account of his extraordinary abilities, an important officer of the Wild Hunt. Calling on arcane magic Caranthir would guide the Riders of the Hunt along mystic pathways through time and space in order to reach other worlds.

He was also a master of more immediate forms of transport, such as the teleportation he made ample use of during the attack on Kaer Morhen. Yet even with his tricks and spells Caranthir still died during the final battle against the Wild Hunt, his body swallowed up by the cold waters of the ocean.

Carduin

The Witcher

Carduin of Lan Exeter had once been a member of the Council of Sorcerers. During the Thanedd coup he had attempted to maintain both reason and neutrality. He certainly offered proof of the former when it turned out that those conspiring with Nilfgaard thought nothing of his impartiality - teleporting back to Kovir was an extremely reasonable, and life-saving, course of action.

If Geralt chooses to rescue Triss during Chapter III:

After hearing the accusations against Síle, Carduin demonstrated keen intuition and political savvy. He immediately demanded that she be removed from the Conclave, thus proclaiming the newly formed institution's stance on the matter.

If Geralt chooses not to rescue Triss during Chapter III:

Their protests were for naught – Carduin and the other mages were arrested in connection with the accusations against the Lodge of Sorceresses.

The Witcher III

Carduin of Kovir was once a wealthy and influential member of the Council of Sorcerers, a man known and respected by all the

rulers of the North. After the Council imploded during the coup on Thanedd Isle, Carduin spared no expense in his quest to rebuild his brotherhood's hard-won position.

This motivated him to take part in the eventful summit in Loc Muinne, during which a handful of mages seeking to reactivate the Council were forced to accept King Radovid's patronage. After that Carduin found himself on the king's leash, completely dependent on the whims and moods of a mad ruler whom he served not out of respect but fear. The mage's pride, however, forced him to don a brave face and play out the hand fate had dealt him.

Carlo Cleaver Varese

A joke circulating through the back alleys and seedy taverns of Novigrad claimed the dwarf Carlo Varese, one of the four leading lights of the local criminal strata, was, in his own way, a fierce proponent of racial coexistence. He applied this principle in a rather selective fashion, however.

Cleaver firmly felt that he personally had every right, as an assimilated inhabitant of the city of Novigrad, to run his own business. Anyone who had a problem with the way he ran it or the nature of its dealings, be he dwarf, human or halfling, revealed himself as a vile racist. The only fitting thing to do with such scum? Feed them to a herd of ferociously hungry hogs – right after slicing off the interloper's fingers with his namesake cleaver. Such tales, of course, could very well have been mere rumor and slander – but very few had the courage test their veracity. Cleaver was famed for his hot-temper. What boiled his blood hottest of all, however, was when somebody thought they could pull one over on him. No wonder, then, that the attack by Whoreson's thugs got him somewhat riled up. The violent tirade he directed at Wiley clearly contained not idle threats but promises he meant to keep, even if doing so meant demolishing half the neighborhood.

Carmen

I met Carmen, a prostitute from Vizima's slums. All the local strumpets value her opinion, and it could be said that Carmen is their representative.

Only if Geralt invites Carmen to Shani's party:

I invited Carmen to Shani's party. She turned out to be quite entertaining, as I expected she would be.

Only if Geralt cures Vincent:

I freed Vincent from the lycanthropy curse and managed to convince him that Carmen is worthy of his love. I hope things work out for them.

Only if Geralt kills the werewolf:

I met Carmen in a strange house in the rebellion-ravaged Temple Quarter.

Cecil Burdon

When we arrived in Vergen, we learned that the town's elder was named Cecil Burdon. This former dwarven miner was typical of his kin - realistic, substantive and possessed of a sober outlook. Vergen needed an administrator like that, so Burdon was, beyond all doubt, the right dwarf in the right place.

Cedric

For reasons that were not entirely clear, this wise and experienced elf had chosen to live among humans. He worked for the people of Flotsam as a lookout and trapper, and none had a better knowledge of the surrounding forests. Whether it was the local plants and wildlife or the dangers that lurked amidst the trees, Cedric was the local inhabitants' chief and often only source of information.

Heroism sometimes exacts the highest price. When Triss' life was in danger, the elf did not hesitate to defend her and was wounded - mortally, as it turned out. Thus Cedric died, though his sacrifice was not in vain.

Celina

Seems like Tobias Hoffman's elder daughter is jealous of her little sister Alina, who is getting married...

Cerys an Craite

While in Skellige Geralt finally had the chance to meet Cerys an Craite, the younger of Crach's two children. Known as Sparrowhawk to her friends, she was as fierce and swift as this name would indicate.

Cerys was an islander through and through and the spitting image of her father, having inherited all his courage, resolve and stubbornness. Dauntlessly she sought to prove at every turn that there was no task she could not fulfill as well as – or better than – any man in the islands, including her older brother Hjalmar.

Though Cerys' decision to stake a claim to Skellige's throne came as a shock to everyone else, she had thought it over quite thoroughly beforehand. Striving as always to outdo her brother, she intended to perform a great deed that would earn her widespread recognition and respect.

That is why she had sailed to Spikeroog to free Jarl Udalryk from the strange affliction that seemed to curse him.

If Geralt helps Cerys in Possession:

Cerys did what she set out to do - with the witcher's help she freed clan Brokvar's leader from the wraith that had tormented him for years.

If Geralt sides with Cerys in King's Gambit:

Once again Sparrowhawk gave proof of her cunning, this time by unmasking Birna's plot and cleansing the shame from her clan's name after the infamous "bloody banquet" at Kaer Trolde.

All these feats convinced the Skelligers that Cerys was fit to be queen. Though it was clear it would take some time before the young ruler could step entirely out of her father and brother's shadow, the greater part of the islanders were pleased and proud with their choice of ruler.

Chappelle

Geralt and I had long known that Chappelle, Chancellor of Security for the Church of the Eternal Fire in Novigrad, had died years ago and been replaced by a doppler masquerading under his name. We didn't breathe a word of this to anyone, of course, for the change was decidedly in everyone's best interest. The doppler had proved a reasonable creature deprived of the true Chappelle's cruelty, and under his watch life in the city had much improved.

Sadly, the chancellor's conciliatory style must have raised suspicions as a wave of terror and persecution began to swell over Novigrad. The doppler was found out, arrested and burned at the stake for the greater glory of the Eternal Fire.

Chorab

Chorab was Lobinden's alderman. A simple man, he nevertheless blended his penchant for storytelling with a desire to teach and impart wisdom. His tales pertained to times long past, traditions worthy of preservation, and legends that had all but been forgotten. He cared for the community he led and represented, and any honest villager could count on his help.

Ciaran

Ciaran had served in Iorveth's unit as the elven commander's adjutant. Captured and imprisoned on the prison barge by Loredo's men, his position was unenviable to say the least. Yet he still demonstrated the pride and stubbornness so characteristic of the Aen Seidhe.

Ciri

Cirilla Fiona Elen Riannon - what can I possibly say about her? That we call her Ciri for short, that she was born in 1251, that she has ashen hair and a scar on her cheek?

All true, and that's the Cirilla I know best, one I first laid eyes on those many years ago, the one who seemed thoroughly, well, not ordinary, but certainly not as extraordinary as she in fact is.

For Cirilla is also a highly-skilled witcher, heiress to several thrones, the last bearer of the Elder Blood, a powerful Source endowed with exceptional magic talent and the Lady of Time and Space. Her hair colour and date of birth seem... rather incidental now, don't they?

I could also tell you she is Geralt's adopted daughter - but that would be a gross simplification. Ciri is much more. She is his Destiny, his Unexpected Child, someone bound to the witcher by Fate's most inextricably tangled fetters.

Following age-old witcher tradition, Geralt took Ciri to Kaer Morhen when she came into his care. There he and Vesemir taught her in the ways of the professional monster slayer. It was then that her magic talents were first revealed, and they discovered she was a Source.

Yennefer made it clear why the Wild Hunt wanted Ciri: Eredin wanted the power latent in her Elder Blood. She also let Geralt know that Ciri had been seen in war-ravaged Velen as well as in Novigrad, the largest city in the world.

Reports that Ciri had spent time at Crow's Perch proved true. She was there as the guest of the local warlord, Philip Strenger, also known as the Bloody Baron. Despite his violent moniker, this man treated Ciri with kindness and respect.

It seemed that during Ciri's time in Velen she got into a quarrel with some sort of witch or witches in the swamps.

Geralt learned the truth of Ciri's time in the swamps from the mouths of the hideous Crones themselves. Even Ciri, better able to hold her own than most anyone in existence, was lucky to escape from these powerful beings alive and intact.

The visions revealed by the Mask of Uroboros made it clear beyond all doubt: Ciri had played a role in the magic catastrophe on Ard Skellig. More importantly, they confirmed she had been in Skellige - and then fled in the face of grave danger.

Ultimate, tangible proof of the truth that the emperor had spoken the truth about Ciri's pursuers came in the form of a corpse - one belonging to a warrior of the Wild Hunt. The Riders truly were on Ciri's trail.

In hindsight, putting Ciri in touch with Whoreson was not one of my brightest ideas. In my defense I can only say that her situation was so perilous even the riskiest plan seemed better than inactivity.

After my adventures and mishaps, Geralt finally found Ciri on the Isle of Mists. When he crossed the threshold into the room in which she slumbered, the protective spell Avallac'h had cast upon her snapped under the sheer weight of their combined destinies. Geralt was reunited with his adopted daughter after years of separation and searching. No words can describe the joy he felt in that moment.

Avallac'h's prediction that the Wild Hunt would descend on Kaer Morhen as soon as Ciri arrived was proven true. All present spared no effort in defending her. In the end, though, it was she who defended them - through an outburst of unbridled power, the raw strength of her Elder Blood, she saved the protectors of Kaer Morhen from certain death.

Though it was Cirilla who convinced Geralt to go with her to exact vengeance on Imerith, it was the witcher who stood against Vesemir's killer in a final duel. Ciri slay some evil that day, however, killing two of the three monstrous sisters who had usurped for themselves rule over Velen.

Ciri had not seen her father since she was a young child. Emhyr was in effect a stranger to her, and one responsible for the deaths of many people she cherished at that...

If Geralt does not take Ciri to Vizima:

...It was thus no surprise that Ciri did not even want to see him.

If Geralt does take Ciri to Vizima:

...Standing face to face with him was surely one of the most difficult challenges she had ever undergone.

If Geralt refuses the reward:

Ciri emerged from this trial victorious, and with an enhanced awareness of how deeply and unconditionally Geralt, her adopted father, loved and cared for her.

Confronting the Lodge - now there is a difficult task, one many a brave soul would move mountains to avoid. Cirilla, however, decided to stand and face the powerful sorceresses. From the accounts that reached my ears I can conclude that she let the mistresses of magic know...

If Geralt accompanied Ciri to the Lodge meeting:

...that she had a mind of her own and would not be a servile tool in their hands.

If Geralt does not accompany Ciri to the Lodge meeting:

...in clear terms that she had a mind of her own and would not be a servile tool in their hands.

A visit to Avallac'h's secret laboratory revealed facts that shook Ciri to her core. Though she had long known she was the last of Lara Dorren's line, the only remaining heir to the so-called Elder Blood, only now did she realize this line had been an object of unbroken interest to elven Sages and human mages for two centuries. Another blow came from the words of the arrogant she-elf, which rankled in her heart like a thorny bramble.

If Ciri wrecks Avallac'h's lab:

Though unleashing anger on inanimate objects might not be considered mature behaviour, it definitely helps bring one

relief. Ciri thus reached for this most simple of solutions.

Eredin had perished - but the evil king's death only ever heralds the end in fairy tales. In our Story, this meant it was time for Ciri to face her destiny. Only she possessed the power to stop the White Frost - the near mythical force which threatened not just our world, but countless others as well.

Corinne Tilly

Oneiromancy, the magic art deciphering the past and the future as they appear in dreams, is difficult for even a highly trained sorceress to master. Those born with the latent, however, excel at it without any formal education. Such was the case of Corinne Tilly, whose fame as a dreamer, as such diviners are known, had spread far and wide

This gifted woman could not only dream of past events herself, but also induce revelatory dreams in persons searching for direction or answers to specific questions. These abilities proved to be of great use to Geralt in his search.

Crach an Craite

Skellige sagas brim with praise for war chiefs and warrior-braves of ages past, yet the saga of Crach, jarl of the Clan an Craite and lord of Kaer Trolde, will outshine them all. It will sing of his strength, his courage, his wisdom, his generosity, his loyalty to friends and his relentless pursuit of his foes.

There will be few exaggerations in such a tale, for Crach, the mightiest of Skellige's jarls, truly did possess all the traits of a hero. He aroused terror in his enemies – in fact, Nilfgaardian mother would use his name to frighten their children into obedience, and all in that empire spoke in hushed tones of the infamous Tirth ys Muire, the Wild Boar of the Sea, who devastated coastal provinces during frequent and terrible raids.

Geralt had known Crach for long, since a time when as a young man the jarl had sought the hand of young Pavetta, Ciri's mother.

After Bran's demise, Crach could easily have claimed the throne for himself. Yet he preferred to support the claim of his son, Hjalmar. When his daughter Cerys announced her intention to seek the throne as well, the jarl also gave her his support, showing no favoritism when it came to his children.

To the islanders, honor is the most prized of virtues. Crach thus agreed without hesitation to live up to the pledge he made

many years ago on behalf of himself and his entire clan and supported the search for Cirilla with any means Skellige could offer.

Crach also did not balk when the time came to stand and fight Eredin. Though Eredin killed Crach during this fight, the jarl's death did not break the islanders' spirit, instead becoming a model of how to die like a true hero.

Cynthia

Philippa Eilhart's preferences in partners were widely known, yet they were audibly commented upon only in a specific circles, and only when the sorceress could not hear. Cynthia was Philippa's lover at the time – not the first one, and probably not the last.

As it turned out, Cynthia was also a spy for the Nilfgaardian Empire. However, those who could have stopped her saw through her games too late. Added in Enhanced Edition: Geralt had not expected to run into Cynthia again, let alone in such an unusual place. But he did. The Nilfgaardian was leading a scientific expedition that was to explore the caverns beneath Loc Muinne. Their objective was to reach the laboratory of the famous mage Dearhenna. Once the expedition reached its destination and the sorceress found Dearhenna's powerful artifact, Geralt and Cynthia parted. Overcoming mortal danger together had melted the ice between them and brought them closer. Cynthia went her way with her finding, and the witcher went his. Throughout their quest beneath the city's ruins, Geralt had remained wary of Cynthia - and for good reason. Yet as they worked together to overcome mortal danger, the ice between them melted. When a quarrel broke out over Dearhenna's legacy, the sorcerer Adalbert wanted to kill the witcher. Cynthia, however, took Geralt's side. The corridors beneath Loc Muinne became the sorceress' tomb. A quarrel

over Dearhenna's legacy exploded into a fight, and Geralt killed Cynthia.

Cyprian Wiley

Cyprian Wiley the younger was one of Novigrad's most dangerous criminals. He had inherited his father's casinos, fighting ring and brothels - as well as the old man's sadistic tendencies, ruthlessness and lack of scruples.

These traits had made the moniker "Whoreson" something of a family heirloom for his powerful criminal clan.

Cyprian also took after his father in terms of ambition. He broke the unwritten armistice between Novigrad's various criminal groups and tried to murder the other three leading underworld bosses.

Whoreson's audacity had a very specific cause - King Radovid, who had commissioned the gangster's actions.

As it turned out, Radovid's plan was for Whoreson to start a gang war in Novigrad. In the resulting chaos, Radovid would take control of the city with ease.

While searching Cyprian's home den of iniquity, Geralt discovered the nickname "Whoreson" was in fact an understatement - something much stronger was needed to describe a man who delighted in murdering captive women.

If Geralt spares him:

Though few would have mourned his passing. Geralt decided not to kill Whoreson. As soon as Radovid withdrew his protection and his old enemies were free to exact revenge. Whoreson's career was doomed to an inglorious end.

If Geralt kills him:

In addition to blackmail, extortion, murder and torture, the list of Whoreson's crimes also included trying to harm Ciri. Geralt took this very personally and made the bandit pay for this last sin with his life.

Dandelion

The Witcher

I've heard rumors that the famous bard and poet Dandelion visited the Outskirts.

I met Dandelion, who has supposedly always been my best friend. From what I've heard, Dandelion is an indefatigable windbag, a buffoon, and a wastrel. He is also a womanizer with an incredible talent for getting into trouble. At the same time, Dandelion is a truly talented artist, despite his tendency to wander the countryside and eke out a living through occasional performances.

Dandelion got into trouble and I had to help him out. Everything I've heard about him has proven to be true.

A friend in need is a friend indeed. Dandelion somehow convinced Triss that I needed him and she teleported him here. He has joined me in my exile in Murky Waters.

I ran into Dandelion again and I think it was no coincidence. Either Dandelion wants to aid me in my search or he wants to witness the end of this journey so he can compose a ballad afterwards. It could also be both.

The Witcher II

It is always awkward to write about oneself, yet I cannot shirk this duty. In an effort to preempt any accusations of partiality, I shall set down the humblest of notes, relating only the best-known facts. Dandelion, in reality the Viscount de Lettenhove, though titles are unimportant, is a certified troubadour, a lecturer at Oxenfurt University, a persona known among society as a charmer, poet, dandy and unparalleled lover. Almost everyone north of the Yaruga has heard of him, and those who have not are either boors or simpletons or both, as a result of which their opinions do not matter in the slightest. Dandelion played a significant part in the most important events of the era. He loved, fought, negotiated, and acquired immense knowledge, even that of the forbidden variety. His works are a testimony of the times, but it is his moving poetic tropes that have brought him true fame. The important thing in this story is that Dandelion was a friend to Geralt of Rivia – possibly his only true friend. He was Geralt's confidant, advisor, and companion in misery (for it was impossible to experience good fortune in the witcher's company). What Geralt did, Dandelion faithfully recounted, and one should not give credence to those who accuse this humble chronicler of confabulating.

Discretion, a virtue I have always professed, obliges me to remain silent about the circumstances in which, through the person of Vernon Roche, I began working with the Temerian intelligence service. Suffice it to say that there comes a moment in everyone's life when, facing great events, they cannot remain indifferent. And so I could not stand aside as history took shape before my very eyes. My dedication to the cause brought me to Flotsam at the time. There, through an unfortunate incident involving twins at the local brothel, a town guard, a dog, a cat, and an oil lamp, I wound up on the

scaffold in the town square, from which I barely escaped with my life.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of chapter I:

Obviously, when Geralt decided to continue his search in King Henselt's military camp, located in a borderland soon to be engulfed by the flames of war, I chose to accompany him, for the witcher could at times be naive as a child and knew as much about politics as a ghoul knows about cooking. Thus the chances were slim to none that, bereft of my help, he would manage to find new leads without getting embroiled in some trouble along the way. As his friend, I clearly could not allow that.

In hindsight, the pamphlet against Henselt's rule could have been better written, yet I am pleased with it anyway. I'm not accustomed to ignoring human misfortune, and Henselt made a mistake when he insulted art – I was merely the instrument of its retribution.

When Geralt and Roche headed for Loc Muinne to meet their destiny, I had little desire to sit in Henselt's camp. Despite their victory, the Kaedwenis' mood was as sour as milk in the udders of a dead cow. Therefore I packed up, resolving to reach Loc Muinne in time to witness the important events transpiring there. This was not to be, however, as Geralt's arrival accelerated events as usual. Thus I know the rest of the story only from the accounts of others, yet I present it here as faithfully as possible – anything omitted was surely not worth a mention in the first place.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of chapter I:

Obviously, when Geralt decided to continue his search in Vergen, located in a borderland soon to be engulfed by the flames of war, I chose to accompany him, for the witcher could at times be naive as a child and knew as much about politics as a ghoull knows about cooking. Thus the chances were slim to none that, bereft of my help, he would manage to find new leads without getting embroiled in some trouble along the way. As his friend I clearly could not allow that.

Having taken part in many adventures by Geralt's side, when he asked for my help I agreed without hesitation. I had already been imperiled when helping him in less rewarding tasks than using poetry to lure an unparalleled demonic lover. Thus I had the chance to risk my life in the name of three most beautiful values: friendship, poetry and love – there was no other decision to make.

Geralt and Iorveth headed for Loc Muinne to meet their destiny, yet I decided to stay in Vergen a bit longer. I had more than enough material for new ballads, therefore I fought the urge to reach Loc Muinne in time to witness the important events transpiring there. Thus I know the rest of the story only from the accounts of others, yet I present it here as faithfully as possible – anything omitted was surely not worth a mention in the first place.

The Witcher III

I would wager anyone that you, dear reader, are a person of culture and taste - and therefore already familiar with me, Dandelion, and the role I am to play in the following tale. Nevertheless, allow me to sketch a few lines by way of self-portrait, for the sake of thoroughness, and in the event you

have spent much of the last half-century in some dark corner where the light of my star has yet to reach.

“Born in 1229, a talented poet and troubadour, a graduate of Oxenfurt Academy, a frequent performer at royal courts, an unequaled lover appreciated, and in some cases adored, by ladies worldwide, a skilled negotiator and a stirring orator” - such is the image of the bard Dandelion as painted by his friends and promoters.

This image is, of course, somewhat overbright in its coloring - I personally prefer to think of myself as a dedicated artist in thrall to his Muse, one whose work has benefited immeasurably from the fact that I was, am and forever will remain a close friend and steadfast companion to the witcher Geralt. It is his fate I chronicle in this present work and his story which I shall sing till the end of my days.

Having learned of my disappearance, Geralt dropped everything to find out what had become of me. Though at first he suspected the cause of my trouble lay in my many and turbulent affairs of the heart, he later determined that I had strayed into a life of crime, seeking to steal treasure belonging to one of the leaders of Novigrad's underworld.

The motivations for my actions became clear some time later. I proved that, when it came to helping Cirilla, I would not balk at sticking my head into the lion's maw, let alone crossing such common scum as Cyprian Wiley, better known (for good reason!) as Whoreson.

Only a madman calls it courage to fight when faced with overwhelming odds. Though known for my capricious and unpredictable charm, I am not yet considered mad, and so,

while defending my companion's escape to the very last, I ultimately allowed the temple guard to take me to their prison, where I awaited my imminent execution.

The saying does not lie - "true friends show when fortune hides her face." My dear comrades gave ample evidence of this by breaking me free from my prison transport, saving me from certain and painful death.

Declan Leuvaarden

I met Declan Leuvaarden, a rich merchant from Nilfgaard, at an inn in the Outskirts. Leuvaarden seems a resourceful and wealthy man with extensive contacts. He lives in the Trade Quarter of Vizima. During the day he can be found on the Dike, from where he runs his business.

Although Leuvaarden seemed to be working with Salamandra, he turned out to be innocent. But I still sense the Nilfgaardian has something to hide. It seems Leuvaarden belongs to a secret organization. He refused to reveal any details. Leuvaarden represents a secret organization euphemistically referred to as the Merchants' Guild. They wish to destroy Salamandra, because the bandits have become too powerful and threaten the Guild's interests. This is why Leuvaarden has aligned himself with Triss Merigold, who represents the sorceresses. I joined them to create a triumvirate, though I only represent myself. Not all his businesses are legal. He prefers to keep some of his deals very quiet. The city guards are used to receiving bribes from Leuvaarden, who clearly is not the city's most law-abiding resident. In the world of big finance, Declan Leuvaarden is in his element. He does business via banks and other middlemen, which makes tracing his transfers a very difficult task.

Demavend III

Demavend, son of Virfuril, ruled the Kingdom of Aedirn, which was mightily aggrieved during the last war with Nilfgaard. A proponent of authoritarian rule, he was seen as having no love for nonhumans. He often moved radically against the Scoia'tael, though he drooled in spite of himself when the guerrillas perpetrated massacres on his own people, as these justified the punitive expeditions he delighted in sending into the foothills of Dol Blathanna. He also showed no shyness towards imprisoning and torturing rabble-rousers and street prophets who would interfere in his politics. Thus it is no wonder that many could not wait to see him dead. In spite of this, his subjects could not help but be surprised by his death, for it is not every day that a crowned head paints the palace floor with its blood.

Derae

The elven girl at the brothel in Flotsam was a favorite of many clients and of Margot herself.

If Geralt sided with Roche:

As it turned out, female inquisitiveness has its merits. In telling her story, Derae provided us with some valuable information.

If Geralt sided with Iorveth:

Unfortunately, she was bestially murdered by the blood-drunk mob during the massacre.

Detmold

Sorcerer Dethmold is one of the more distinctive characters in the Witcher 2. One of the more distinctive, and one of the most despicable too. Dethmold, one of the witcher's opponents, is a wind mage. We thought hard on how should he look to become synonymous with that element. We dressed him... warmly. His entire neck. As if he lived in a constant draught. And we gave him a staff with a rooster weathervane usually found on roofs.

Dialogues with this guy are generally wacky, because Dethmold is... Dethmold is so... unsettling, I should think. We were looking for an appropriate voiceover for Dethmold for a long time. We wanted him to be a guy whose voice sends shivers down your spine, signalling something is way off.

Apart from a few chance encounters at official banquets, Geralt had the occasion to meet and speak more extensively with this sorcerer on Thanedd Island, during the bloody coup, when all manner of mages jumped at each others' throats and their Council and Conclave ceased to exist. Dethmold and his brother Drithelm, both in the service of King Esterad of Kovir at the time, attempted to remain neutral as events unfolded. To no avail, however, as those who had allied themselves with Nilfgaard thought nothing of the impartiality of others, and many mages simply perished, brought down in fanciful ways by their colleagues' spells or pierced by the arrows of the Scoia'tael summoned to the island by the plotters. Drithelm met just such a fate, while Dethmold saved himself by fleeing.

Dethmold then filled the opening for a sorcerer-advisor at the court of King Henselt of Kaedwen, and proceeded to place all of his abilities at the monarch's disposal.

All said and done, Dethmold was certainly a talented sorcerer. It was only his power that brought the king and his retinue safely through and out of the mist of wraiths.

The sorcerer believed that the ends justified the means and thought nothing of the ethical ban on necromancy.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of chapter I:

The sorcerer was Henselt's creature in full, a lackey who served his master in any way possible. This included tracking real and imagined spies and thwarting conspiracies on the monarch's life. He was also among those chiefly responsible for the deaths of Vernon's men, whose grisly demise Henselt himself had ordered.

Dethmold fled, unwilling to risk a clash with the witcher. It proved a sound decision, which bought him a bit more time in this life.

Their next meeting proved to be their last, as Dethmold died at the hands of the vengeful Roche. Geralt never revealed the details of the sorcerer's demise. I've concluded that it must have been quite savage, though I would prefer to hope that Vernon's threats had been but figures of speech...

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of chapter I:

During the Battle of Vergen, Dethmold aided the attackers, using his magic to destroy fortifications and key defensive

positions. It is clear that had they been deprived of his talents, the Kaedwenis would not have penetrated so far.

Though Henselt was spared because of his royal lineage, Dethmold met a fate appropriate for a tyrant's faithful and hated servant. The sorcerer's life ended in the central square of Vergen, a town he had hoped to help seize and bring to its knees.

Dmitri

Comparing Dmitri to a Zangwebari hyena would be an insult to the poor animal. Unlike the beast, this scoundrel fed not only on carrion, but also on human and nonhuman misfortune. It was thus that he gathered his blood money.

Even mentioning Dmitri in this story elevates him far more than he deserves, thus let us merely note that the witcher took his life and say nothing more of the son of a bitch.

Donar an Hindar

Few jarls of Skellige were as honored and obeyed as Donar an Hindar, the eldest of their number. Despite his advanced age he remained the active leader of his clan and its representative at all official gatherings. The only person able to break his composure was Madman Lugos, whose clan had long feuded with the an Hindars.

Donar's home was, like Freya's temple, on Hindarsfjall. As befits a neighbor to the gods, Donar was famed for his wise, considered opinions and his piety. This last did not, however, extend to the gods of the Continent, whose rich sanctuaries he had often raided in his youth.

Dudu

Geralt and I had known the doppler Dudu for years - from before the moment we had actually met him, in fact.

You see, we first unwittingly talked to him when he was in Novigrad impersonating another friend of mine, a halfling merchant named Dainty Biberveldt. Dudu had assumed Dainty's form to use the merchant's network of contacts for some business endeavors of his own.

Dainty was infuriated at first at his inability to locate the impostor who had inserted himself into his dealings, but when Dudu's investments began generating sizable returns, the halfling changed his tune. He took the doppler on as a partner, introducing him to everyone as his cousin, Dudu Biberveldt.

Geralt learned that Dudu had crossed Whoreson Junior, one of Novigrad's most ruthless crime bosses. That Dudu extracted himself from this predicament while only losing one eye should be considered a fortunate turn.

Ciri, Dudu and I had all embroiled ourselves in quite the fiasco, but unlike me, the doppler was not caught by the temple guard.

Dudu was a theater aficionado and frequent attendee of Irena's [sic] mummers' performances. Apparently he had even stepped in to replace indisposed mummers on several occasions - and,

given his special abilities, proved himself a uniquely convincing understudy.

Finally, after a great deal of trouble and thanks to a clever ruse, Geralt was reunited with his old friend - and a certain imprisoned poet's only hope.

If Geralt chose to kill Whoreson Junior:

To end Dudu's story, let me just say that, as usual, he found a way to land on his feet. Dudu disguised himself as his one-time adversary, Whoreson Junior, and took over his business, announcing it was going clean and investing all of its ill-gotten wealth in a legal (and very profitable) overseas trading company.

In a way, you could say he was living the "Novigrad dream."

Earso

Shit, stench and rats are inherent elements of every larger population centre. Unable to dispose of the first two, the authorities of Vergen were trying to deal with the latter. Earso was a rat catcher they had hired, but it was worth noting that some of the traps he was selling were large enough to catch a wolf...

A highly talented individual, the man known as Earso had dabbled in many professions. From his times as a rat catcher in Vergen he still had a wide selection of traps among his wares. They were, in his words, “for rodents, among others”. Changing his profession also called for a change of surroundings, so Earso joined a circus and left Vergen. One could still buy some useful things from him, however.

Edwin Leistham

Knightly eccentricities such as speaking in rhymes or offering ladies feathers from the helmets of one's vanquished foes are of classical origin. Edwin Leistham earned the moniker of "Petal" by putting flower petals into the mouths of slain enemies. These eccentricities, however, worked on the females – at the sight of such knights, maidens from Buina to Yaruga ran towards them so fast that, if they were to be laden with bales of hay, the hay would immediately catch fire.

As a result of this epic clash Edwin Leistham fell to the blood-soaked ground and there was scarcely a breath in him as he was carried from the field. That's evidence, dear readers, that if one's substance does not equal one's style, it is better to devote more time to training than to picking flowers.

Einar Gausel

If Lobinden's nonhumans had been organized as a community, the dwarf Einar Gausel would have been the closest thing to its leader. Though the Scoia'tael considered him a collaborator on a human leash, Einar tried to represent the nonhuman minority as best as he could, even if that meant mediating between its members and the commandant. Furthermore, he ran something akin to a bookshop. Given its location in what was a complete backwater, his selection of titles was quite impressive.

In addition to being a well-informed bookseller, Einar Gausel was also an accomplished barber. In discovering this, Geralt learned of the only person in Flotsam who would be able to do anything about his hair.

Ele'yas

Scoia'tael units are made up chiefly of young, rash elves who need not think twice before they take up arms in the fight for nonhuman freedom. Ele'yas was one such elf, and was considered one of the best warriors in Iorveth's unit to boot.

If Geralt sides with the succubus during Chapter II - With Flickering Heart:

Ele'yas hired the witcher to kill a succubus, a monster that seduced and killed young men. The succubus, however, claimed that the jealous elf was actually the murderer. Indeed, there was evidence to prove her claim against Ele'yas. When the witcher decided to tell Iorveth about his suspicions, Ele'yas took the chance and fled, a fact that would support the notion his conscience was burdened.

If Geralt sides with him during Chapter II - With Flickering Heart:

Ele'yas hired the witcher to kill a succubus, a monster that seduced and killed young men. The succubus, however, claimed that the jealous elf was actually the murderer. Geralt did not believe a single word from the monster's mouth and ended its existence, gaining the gratitude of Iorveth's adjutant in the process.

Elihal

Geralt erroneously interpreted one of my notes to mean that Elihal and I had been a couple. Alas, while anyone would be thrilled to count this outstanding elf, wonderful conversation partner and superb tailor among their conquests, in fact no more than friendship and fine wine had ever passed between us.

Geralt found this out when he visited Elihal's tailor shop, where he also got a first-hand glimpse at the elf's unusual hobby – adopting the dress and mannerisms of those different from himself in race, sex and social status.

Elthon

This inhabitant of a hut near the quarry had one of the oddest jobs I have ever heard of. Namely, Elthon served as a purchasing agent for a collector of harpy feathers, offering the witcher generous sums for pinions and retrices picked from the carcasses of harpies.

As it turned out, Elthon was not buying feathers for a collector but for himself. With the sackful of plumage Geralt supplied, he finally fulfilled his dream of transforming himself from an ugly duckling into a swan, or more precisely a queen harpy.

Elves of Murky Waters

Elves are proud beings with fiery temperaments, but they can't take care of themselves. It's a good thing they find those who bring them food once in a while.

Emhyr var Emreis

The Witcher II

Emhyr var Emreis – among all the rulers of that time, one cannot omit the Nilfgaardian emperor, known as Deithwen Addan yn Carn aep Morvudd, which means, in the Elder Speech, White Flame Dancing on the Barrows of His Enemies. Kings from the Buina to the Yaruga trembled at the sound of his name. His legions of steel-clad soldiers crushed countries under their heels and cast monarchs from their thrones. In his insatiable ambition, he had tried to conquer the north on several occasions, yet he had been forced to sign peace accords each time. Though he does not appear in our story personally, his long shadow often fell over the events I describe here.

According to Shilard's words, Geralt had had the honor of facing the Emperor, who spared his life at the time. Though I am well aware of the circumstances surrounding that event, I shall omit them here, as they are not directly connected to this story.

The Witcher III

Few names in the Continent's history arouse as much terror and respect as that of Emhyr var Emreis, Deithwen Addan yn Carn aep Morvudd - The White Flame Dancing on the Graves of his Foes. Emperor of Nilfgaard, lord of Metinna, Ebbing and Gemmera, sovereign of Nazair and Vicovaro, he was ruler of

half the civilized world and aspiring conqueror of the other half. He was a personage whose deeds and decisions shaped the fates of whole kingdoms and populations.

What then could he possibly want of a simple witcher?

The emperor clearly and succinctly laid out what he wanted. His daughter and Geralt's ward, Cirilla, was in great danger, for the Wild Hunt was on her trail. Geralt, a superb tracker linked to Emhyr's daughter by the iron bonds of Destiny, stood a better chance of finding her than anyone else in the world.

Enzo Etcheverry

If Geralt manages to shoot him with a ballista bolt:

Before he got entangled in the revolt against Foltest, Sir Etcheverry was known for his valor and tenacity as a knight, proving both in more than one tournament, either mounted or on foot. Yet valiance and tenacity meant nothing in the face of a ballista bolt, and thus the brave Etcheverry paid with his life for his ill-advised participation in the rebellion.

If Geralt does not manage to shoot him with a ballista bolt:

Before he got entangled in the revolt against Foltest, Sir Etcheverry was known for his valor and tenacity as a knight, proving both in more than one tournament, either mounted or on foot. Yet valiance and tenacity were not enough to survive a cut from the witcher's blade, and thus the brave Etcheverry paid with his life for his ill-advised participation in the rebellion.

Eredin Bréacc Glas

The name of the King of the Wild Hunt, the identity of the lord of nightmares, the being behind the frightful mask - this long remained unknown. Over time, however, scraps of information gradually coalesced into a full likeness of our foe - but did nothing to detract from the terror he inspired.

The Wild Hunt was in truth an elite cavalry brigade from the world of the Aen Elle, the Alder Folk, and was commanded by their ambitious and ruthless king, Eredin Breacc Glas. He would travel via secret paths through the cold emptiness between his world from ours to capture victims and take them back to his homeland as slaves. The current object of his Hunt was Cirilla, whose power he wanted to harness for his own uses. The only obstacle in his path - Geralt of Rivia. Ciri was able to shed a bit of light on the commander of the Wild Hunt's motivations. The threat of annihilation hung over the Aen Elle homeland. Eredin, a warrior and a conqueror by nature, decided to solve this problem in the simplest possible way - by seizing our world. The key to doing so? Ciri's power, which would allow him to open the gates to a full-scale invasion. Trusting in the strength of his magic and the skill of his Riders, Eredin boldly launched a frontal assault on Kaer Morhen. Despite the defenders' noble sacrifices, he came close to victor. Only Ciri's unleashed power forced Eredin to fall back. It was clear, however, that he would learn from this defeat and that his next attack would be insurmountable. According to

Avallach'h, it was Eredin who bore responsibility for the death of Auberon Muircetach, the previous ruler of the Aen Elle. Revealing this fact would certainly not earn him friends and popularity amongst the Alder Folk. Eredin's last battle is worthy of a poem - nay, an epic - all to itself, yet this is neither the time nor the place to pen it. To be brief, on that fateful day the cruel King of the Hunt seemed unstoppable and tore asunder all who dared stand in his way - until, that is, his way led him smack into Geralt of Rivia. The two expert fighters faced off in a last skirmish on the ghastly deck of the Naglfar. The fight was long and difficult, but the witcher's blade struck true in the end, cutting down Eredin's dreams of power and conquest. So died Eredin Bréacc Glas, King of the Wild Hunt.

Eskel

The Witcher

The calm and reasonable witcher is my peer. We are similar in many ways and people often think we are brothers.

The Witcher III

All witchers have a great deal in common, but with Eskel and Geralt, the similarities are particularly striking. They first met as two boys of the same age swinging wooden swords at Kaer Morhen. They then went through an ordeal together: the first round of selections, the murderous Changes, the Trial of the Grasses, and training on the Gauntlet - the witchers' daunting obstacle course. They also received hidings together for more than one act of childish delinquency. When they became adults, they walked the Path separately, but still reconvened at Kaer Morhen nearly every winter to wait out the cold, drink to their successes and remember fallen comrades.

Though Eskel never gained Geralt's renown, he equaled the White Wolf in experience and carried out his contracts with care and efficiency. Death had almost taken him many times during his hunts, yet in an ironic twist the hideous scar on his face came not from a monster claw but from the blade of Deidre Ademeyn, his highly unpredictable Unexpected Child.

Perhaps this traumatic experience lay at the root of Eskel's dislike for Yennefer, though he tried not to let this get in the way of friendship with Geralt.

Eskel took active part in the defense of Kaer Morhen, standing bravely in the face of overwhelming odds to fight one of the Hunt's generals. When Vesemir died, he took over responsibility for watching over the witchers' keep.

Falas

In business, the ability to adapt one's skills is half the battle. After losing his workshop, the former elven sword smith Falas earned his living as a sword swallower. And though clients were few, Falas still provided reliable services in his former profession.

Farid

The witcher ran into Farid once more in unexpected circumstances. The alchemist was part of an expedition that was to scour the caverns beneath Loc Muinne in search of the laboratory of the famous mage Dearhenna.

The expedition ended tragically for Farid. He died in a trap set by the malicious Dearhenna.

Felicia Cori

The Witcher II

Young sorceresses from the school at Aretuza must, apart from passing exams, complete an internship under a mistress' watchful eye. As part of such an internship, the young Felicia Cori peddled magical curios of her own production in Vergen.

Hoping to earn approval and a passing grade, Felicia had come to Loc Muinne with Philippa. She waited there for her instructor to find some free time for her.

As it turned out, the young adept of magic, Felicia Cori, was also a talented coiffeuse. Geralt could avail himself of her services and change his hairstyle for a modest fee.

In Loc Muinne's central square, in addition to selling a variety of useful items, Felicia Cori also offered hairstyling services.

The Witcher III

Geralt had been in situations where he could not prevent someone's death on more than one occasion. In fact, you might say he had grown accustomed to that particular form of agony. It is another thing altogether, however, to stand powerless and watch the unjust, cruel execution of an acquaintance for whom one has developed a fondness.

Such was his lot as regards Felicia Cori, a young sorceress whom Geralt had met while chasing the kingslayer, Letho. Though Geralt had not gotten to know her deeply, he had nonetheless taken a liking to this former pupil of Philippa Eilhart, who had seemed to him a pleasant and enterprising young woman. Yet she was a wielder of magic and, as such, met her end on a pyre.

Fioravanti

A truly enterprising man, the merchant Fioravanti had found a niche that produced for him a decent income. Though his specialization was extremely narrow, this was the very key to his success. For the secret of commerce is to be the exclusive provider of a certain category of goods or services. Thus, Fioravanti was still in business despite his forced stopover in Flotsam.

Folan

Many brave warriors answered Hjalmar's call to join him in reconquering Undvik from the Ice Giant. Among them -Folan, son of Ulf, Hjalmar's frequent comrade in battle and dear childhood friend. Folan, a member of Clan Tuirseach, was a fearless sailor and an unequaled archer, and so did not hesitate to join his dangerous expedition that stood to shower him in glory.

It would have ended horribly for him, however, had the witcher not kept his wits about him and saved him from the clutches of hungry trolls by winning a riddle contest. Folan proved his skill with a bow by riddling the Ice Giant with arrows during the final fight against the colossus, a deed recounted to this day during Kaer Trolde feasts.

Foltest

The Witcher

King Foltest is the ruler of Temeria. He inspires both fear and respect in his subjects. Foltest rules with an iron fist; he is decisive and hot-headed. Under his rule Temeria has become the most powerful of the Northern Kingdoms.

The king left the city. Theoretically, Burgomeister Velerad is to rule in his stead. In practice, the decisions come from an entirely different source, which causes chaos in the city.

Foltest returned to Vizima and began restoring order right away. He decided to put an end to the chaos and punish the culprits. It turned out that the king had a job for me, and my deeds influenced his plan.

If Geralt kills the striga:

I spoke to Foltest about his daughter's death. It was a difficult conversation. If this stern man had one weakness, it was Adda.

If Geralt lifts the curse:

I spoke to Foltest about freeing his daughter from the curse. Adda is the apple of her father's eye, so I definitely lifted his spirits, though the stern ruler showed no emotion.

The Witcher II

In retrospect, His Royal Majesty King Foltest was certainly an exceptional persona when compared to the other crowned heads of the time. This King of Temeria, Prince of Sodden, Sovereign of Pontar and Mahakam, and Senior Protector of Brugge, Angren, Riverdell and Ellander was a firm and decisive ruler - as, I suppose, one should expect from someone so abundantly titled. He was the kind of man who, when hit, made a sound suggesting he was forged of steel and not molded of bird dung. Being unmarried, he led a rather casual private life. In his youth, while still a prince, Foltest strove to demonstrate what he was capable of, and he proved capable of much. The love affair he had with his own sister, by whom he fathered his eldest daughter Adda, is widely known, as is his later affection for Baroness Mary Louisa La Valette. Both relationships bore heavy consequences, so to speak, and in both instances Geralt found himself stuck in the middle of the resulting mess.

Foltest most certainly still harbored feelings for his former lover and decided to save the children that were the fruit of this affair. He feared they would otherwise become trump cards in the game of politics, tools of intrigue. Once Foltest made a decision, no one and nothing could stand in his way.

The deaths of the great and powerful of this world do not always befit their lives. The blow was so unexpected that even the witcher failed to react in time. A dagger's blade ran across the throat of Foltest, ruler of Temeria, cleanly slitting it, and his blood flowed out onto the floor of the temple solar. Thus died one of the most powerful kings of the North - at the hands of an assassin in the garb of a monk.

Francis Bedlam

“The Free City of Novigrad had known no king’s rule for nearly two hundred years. Francis Bedlam surely has this fact in mind when he anointed himself the King of Beggars, a title that mocked the pomposity crowned heads while simultaneously stealing a bit of said pomp for itself. Bedlam was a pragmatic man, a trait of great use in his profession, which involved managing a network of thieves, beggars, tramps and street urchins that tricked through every part of the city.

His contacts provided him with the freshest gossip and tastiest morsels of information, and the cut he took of his “subjects” earnings guaranteed a sizeable income for the maintenance of his “court” in the Putrid Grove. Francis despised fanaticism and prejudice in equal measure, which meant that mages fleeing the witch hunter’s pincers often turned to him for protection.

Fringilla Vigo

Emperor Emhyr had once presented the mages of Nilfgaard with a simple choice: either serve their country unquestioningly or die in prison.

Fringilla Vigo, a mistress of magic holding office in the vassal duchy of Toussaint, refused both options and instead joined the infamous Lodge of Sorceresses, whose aim was to stand up to the dictates of kings and emperors. These bold ambitions were never fulfilled, however, and Fringilla Vigo lived in fear that her ties to this subversive organization would be discovered and she would meet a quick end at the hands of the emperor's executioners. One must mention here that Geralt first met Fringilla at the ducal palace in Beauclair many years ago, when we were there enjoying the hospitality of my one-time love, Duchess Anna Henrietta. The witcher, always a sucker for sorceresses, conjoined with Madame Vigo during this time in a quite lively relationship that surely was no cause of joy for Triss or Yennefer. All indications were that Fringilla had been arrested and remained in a Nilfgaardian prison, undoubtedly awaiting execution for acts of high treason. She was later released, however, thanks to a bargain Yennefer had struck with Emhyr.

Fugas

The devil Fugas held a very prestigious and responsible position during the Crones' sabbath: that of goon restricting access to the peak. He in no way resembled Torque, the irritating but harmless "deovel" Geralt and I had encountered many, many years prior.

Fugas' size resembled that of a somewhat overgrown troll, and he likewise displayed a troll's lack of subtlety. There was not a jot of mischievous puck or cunning verbal trickster about this "devil." Instead, he carried out his task with the commitment and professionalism of a Novigrad bouncer. Trying to stop Geralt, though, turned out to be Fugas' dumbest and final idea, ending both his life and his flourishing career in the Crones' employ.

Gaspar

The witcher ran into Gaspar once more in unexpected circumstances. The alchemist was part of an expedition that was to scour the caverns beneath Loc Muinne in search of the laboratory of the famous mage Dearhenna.

The expedition ended tragically for Gaspar. He died in a trap set by the malicious Dearhenna.

Gaunter O'Dimm

Geralt has escaped a great many predicaments, sometimes of his own doing, sometimes aided by others. One of the strangest helping hands was that extended to him by Master Mirror. The witcher was on an Ofieri ship, held captive and bound for a date with the gallows... when, out of nowhere, in came Master Mirror. He reminded the witcher of their first encounter, when he helped Geralt find Yennefer in White Orchard. Now he was offering help as well — this time, for a price. In exchange for freeing Geralt from the ship, he demanded Geralt meet him at a certain crossroads. When the witcher agreed, a strange mark appeared on his face. It was as though Master Mirror had put a stamp on him to show they had entered into a pact – a suspicion later confirmed beyond all doubt...

Gaunter O'Dimm explained he and their mutual acquaintance, Olgerd von Everec, had entered into a strange pact. Their deal stipulated O'Dimm must grant von Everec three wishes – yet could not do so on his own, but instead had to call upon the services of a proxy. And who better to provide such assistance than a witcher? Since O'Dimm made agreeing to be this proxy a condition for receiving help off the Ofieri ship, Geralt had little choice but to agree.

Master Mirror appeared once again – suddenly and out of nowhere, as usual – after Olgerd proclaimed his first two wishes. Mirror told Geralt of a way to show Olgerd's brother the time of his life, even though this life had in fact ended years

earlier. He equipped Geralt with von Everec blood and the knowledge of how to summon Vlodimir's ghost. Just how O'Dimm had managed to collect a vial of von Everec blood was never made clear, but then again, burning question marks hung over everything this strange figure did.

Master Mirror made an appearance at the wedding Geralt attended with Shani and the ghost of Vlodimir, who inhabited Geralt's body so that he may enjoy one last night of earthly revelry. When midnight struck, Vlodimir was unsurprisingly in no mood to abandon the pleasures of the witcher's flesh. Yet Master Mirror intervened to put an immediate and cruel end to Vlod's stay among the living. Geralt later told me the cries of torment Vlod's ghost made haunted his dreams for months to come.

If Geralt seeks out Professor Shakeslock:

Geralt came away from his meeting with Professor Shakeslock knowing of a way to outfox Master mirror. The demonic pact-maker could be lured into a wager: win it, and he would be defeated once and for all.

If Geralt chooses to help Olgierd:

Geralt soon discovered Professor Shakeslock's words were true. Master Mirror could indeed be defeated at his own game. Geralt made a bet with him, wagering everything on one battle of wits, and won. By solving Master Mirror's riddle, he drove the demon from our dimension - though I fear he may yet return. His kind always returns.

If Geralt doesn't intervene:

Geralt decided to deliver Olgierd to Master Mirror's murky hands, thus completing their bargain. Geralt knew it was over at once, for in that moment the mark which had appeared on his face on the Ofieri ship disappeared like charcoal smudges drenched in a rain shower. That was the last Geralt ever saw of Master Mirror. I do not think he was missed.

Ge'els

Intelligent, composed and endowed with massive charisma, Ge'els enjoyed the respect and trust of the inhabitants of the Aen Elle world as well as that of their previous ruler, Auberon Muircetach.

For this reason Ge'els not only retained his high-ranking position after Eredin took power, but also became one of the new king's most powerful allies, acting as his viceroy while Eredin traveled at the head of the Wild Hunt. Though Ge'els was one of the most influential of the Aen Elle, power had never been among his driving aims. According to Avallac'h, his loyalty and sense of right and wrong constituted a weakness that could be used - possibly to tip the scales of the final battle. As predicted, Ge'els acted out of loyalty to his former king and withdrew support for Eredin once he learned the truth about Auberon's death. This momentous act portended important ramifications for the outcome of the coming battle.

Geralt of Rivia

The Witcher

A book entitled “The Rivian Pogrom” claims that Geralt, known also as the White Wolf, died during a massacre of non-humans. The pogrom took place in the city of Rivia just after the second war with Nilfgaard. Geralt was killed by an angry mob when he tried to defend the oppressed. The sorceress Triss Merigold and the dwarf Zoltan Chivay witnessed his death. The witcher’s body was never found.

The bard Dandelion recounts the adventures of the witcher Geralt in his ballads. After reading them, one may conclude that the White Wolf was the most famous witcher of his time. He actively participated in many historical events, such as the mage rebellion on Thanedd Island. Dandelion’s poems are mostly devoted to Geralt’s fights against monsters, the numerous romantic entanglements for which he is famous, and to his love for a certain sorceress.

Some years ago, Geralt of Rivia came to King Foltest’s court in search of work. He obtained a contract to free the monarch’s daughter Adda from a spell which had turned her into a striga, or to kill her if all else failed. The witcher managed to free the girl from the spell, and discovered that one of the courtiers had been responsible for the curse.

The Witcher II

Behold our hero: subjected to mutations and rigorous sword and sorcery training as a child, he has become a superhuman monster slayer. Always penniless and often disdained by those whom he protects, he wanders the world seeking work. Fate has little mercy for him, piling obstacles in his way, yet he trudges on. He has more scruples than a beggaring bum has fleas. Doubts haunt him even when a band of ruffians, knives drawn, approaches him on the highway. Is he a good man? I do not think so. Does he try to maintain his humanity? I believe he does.

You must know that Geralt of Rivia died once already, or at least everyone thought him dead. During a massacre in Rivia, he sought to defend nonhumans and fell to overwhelming odds. Placed in a boat, he floated into the mist, into a realm where he finally found peace, but not for long. Because of forces mentioned later, Geralt returned just in time to defend the witchers' ancient home fortress, and then embarked on a mission to recover the secrets stolen from it. Along the way he took part in a Scoia'tael uprising, shattered a powerful criminal organization, and killed the Grand Master of the Order of the Flaming Rose. All the while his fame as a lover grew. Well, that's Geralt for you. As if all this wasn't enough, he then foiled the attempted assassination of King Foltest of Temeria and became one of the monarch's most trusted men.

The Witcher III

Many cannot fathom the friendship Geralt of Rivia and I, Dandelion, have shared all these years. When we first began breaking bread together, spiteful tongues said he'd be better off cutting my throat and dumping my body in a hollow tree – before I provoked someone else into doing that same to us

both. Those individuals spoke out of pure jealousy, for Geralt was my dearest friend, a fact which he gave ample evidence of on numerous occasions.

I could say a great deal about that world-famous monster hunter, the man known in Elder Speech as Gwynbleidd, or, in our younger (yet no less noble) tongue, as the White Wolf. For Geralt of Rivia is a truly exceptional individual. A brief encounter might tempt one to label him a mere swinger of swords, a simple monster-catcher, a rough-and-tumble practitioner of a dirty trade – but peer closer and you will soon discover he is a man of unplumbed depths, unique views and vast, world-spanning experience.

On the surface, he is introverted, tight-lipped, and one might even say gruff, but underneath lies an overflowing sea of goodwill, good humour, and an honest readiness to help his friends, be it with a bit of sound advice or the masterful application of his blade.

Setting aside cumbersome false modesty, I can say that I know his story better than any man alive. I was with him through hard times and good, helping with wise advice, warm words and razor wit. As a result, I am a vital part of his story, both in its earlier and present portions. It is thus my duty to continue my chronicle and, for the benefit of future generations, put in writing the next chapter of his deeds and exploits.

Golan Vivaldi

Golan Vivaldi is a dwarf who's very touchy about his race. The Vivaldis are financiers and one of their banks is located in Vizima's Trade Quarter.

The money for the Professor's bail came from Vivaldi's bank. That's how the criminal walked free. Vivaldi lost control of the family business. There was a hostile takeover and the bank is now controlled by human owners. That explains the dwarf's bitterness as well as his poverty. I unfairly suspected Vivaldi of financing Salamandra. The evidence indicates he is innocent. The dwarf hates humans. Apparently, in doing business with them, he's had a chance to see them at their worst. Vivaldi has relations with nonhumans, including the persecuted Scoia'tael.

Graden

Graden was one of the witch hunters in King Radovid's service. Unlike a great many of his comrades, he came across as a level-headed fellow, one free of prejudice, at least in his dealings with witchers.

Geralt's subsequent encounters with Graden confirmed his suspicion that the man was not a typical hunter. Graden was unorthodox in his methods, prioritizing results over ideological purity and a strict adherence to the hunters' codex, even though, as he was undoubtedly aware, this approach would hardly endear him to his superiors. After the affair in the swamp was over, he returned to Oxenfurt, taking Tamara with him.

Graham

Graham was a simple fisherman from an even simpler village, Oreton, yet the role he played in local events was anything but. Fyke Isle, the tower, the curse – he had been a key part of it all. Geralt had learned from Anabelle about the deep feelings the two had shared, but the rest of their tragic story only emerged later...

Exactly how the young man had participated in the incident in the tower remained rather unclear. What was certain was that he tried to defend his beloved and fled Fyke Isle right after what he thought was her death... Stories about poor fishermen in love with their lord's daughter are not wont to end happily, but even the most tragic-quilled poet would find what Graham and Anabelle experienced excessively cruel. Their desire for happiness and mutual love defeated by the cruelty of fate and the greed of men, damning the young couple to eternal suffering — Graham without his love at his side, Anabelle as a tortured soul wandering between the living and the dead. There was nothing left to the witcher but to bring the young man Anabelle's earthly remains, hoping that a proper burial would bring peace to the girl's spirit and lift the curse. Yet though the evil spell was indeed broken, this story still did not have a happy ending. A devious ghost of the plague was freed, and Graham became its first victim... Graham filled Geralt in on the rest of the story, one in which youthful longing for happiness lost out to fate's cruelties and human greed. Having

learned there was a slim chance he could save his beloved's ghost, the fisherman set out at once to help the witcher lift the curse weighing down on the isle. Yet though the evil spell was indeed broken, this story still did not have a happy ending. Despite his courage and dedication, Graham died while saving the one he had never ceased to love.

Gran

In times of war one often encounters those who have suffered cruelly at the hands of fate. Geralt was thus not shocked to meet the woman who the children of the Velen swamps called Gran, though she seemed to have suffered manifold unspecified ills.

Whatever her woes, it was clear she cared for the war orphans in her charge with love and devotion. Gran bore strange marks on her hands that burned with living fire. In time they proved to signs of indentured servitude to the Crones. How exactly the old woman had come to be in their power, however, remained unknown. When Geralt saw the marks on the woman's hands, he quickly realized she must be the Bloody Baron's wife, though changed beyond all recognition by the hardship she had suffered. Geralt's first attempts to talk to her came to nothing. He was only able to break through her mistrust with the help of Johnny. A few words from the latter convinced Gran to help Geralt talk to the mysterious Ladies of the Wood.

Gridley

Rupert's friend was in a dire state, lost amidst somber ruins in a wilderness forsaken by gods and humans alike. Geralt found him easily and learned more about him, including what had led him to take such risks.

Gridley had been stationed in the area during the war. His unit had tortured a Nilfgaardian soldier to death, all in the name of finding a treasure. Years later, the murdered man's wraith used its power to force Gridley and Rupert to return to the site of their crime.

If Geralt decides to give him and Rupert to the wraith:

Gridley shared Rupert's fate and paid for his past crimes, for Geralt decided that he would not stop the wraith from exacting revenge.

If Geralt decides to give him and Rupert to Loredo:

Geralt did not hand Gridley over to the damned soul, yet he decided that both Rupert and Gridley needed to pay for their deeds. Their fate was sealed when a certain woman intervened – the degenerates had committed other crimes for which they would now face punishment.

If Geralt tells him and Rupert to go away:

Geralt did not hand Gridley over to the damned soul, yet he drove him and his friend away, ordering the villains to leave the area immediately.

If the quest fails:

Subsequent events hit Geralt like an avalanche, so he never learned the end of Gridley's and Rupert's story. We can only guess at the fate of the two adventurers, but I leave that to the reader's imagination.

Halbjorn

Young Halbjorn was the nephew of Holger Blackhand, the jarl of Faroe, and one of the claimants to Skellige's crown.

Despite his young age he had already managed to achieve some renown, both during overseas raids and while fighting the monsters dwelling in the dangerous regions of the archipelago. His deeds had earned him enough fame, name-recognition and treasure that he stood a good chance of being elected king. Halbjorn's courage and bravery were not enough, however, to save him from the massacre of Kaer Trolde.

Half-elf

Vizima is also home to half-elves, born of unions between humans and elves. Female half-elves are possessed of a delicate, inimitable beauty. Many are fluent in the Elder Language.

Harald Houndsnout

Geralt's encounter with the crazed man building an enormous ship while conversing with the cut-off heads of his former crew was, to say the least, an unusual experience.

Though this strange shipbuilder was forced into his labors by the ice giant and his bloodthirsty sirens, it seemed his work had become a kind of escape for his beleaguered mind.

Surely that was why this unfortunate man showed such dedication to his dubiously worthy cause.

In the end Geralt learned the true identity of the mad shipbuilder of Undvik. He was in fact Harald Houndsnout, a jarl who was thought to have been killed by the giant along with his crew.

Though rumors about his death were clearly exaggerated, it was hard to say whether surviving had not proved the worse fate.

If Geralt doesn't find out that the castaway is the Jarl:

News of the Giant's death clearly delighted the madman - but he rejected the witcher's offer to take him back to Ard Skellig. For some reason he felt he could not rest until he finished building the ship.

If Geralt finds out that the castaway is the Jarl:

News of the Giant's death clearly delighted the madman - but he rejected the witcher's offer to take him back to Ard Skellig. He could not live with the knowledge that he had failed as leader of his clan, and thus was determined to build a ship to serve as his funeral pyre.

Haren Brogg

Haren Brogg is a suspicious character who fears only the Reverend. He sneers at the law and surrounds himself with thugs who protect his shady dealings.

Brogg lives in the Outskirts, in a little lakeside settlement that he rules outright. He never strays far from his home. Brogg runs a store trading in weapons and alchemical ingredients used to produce bombs.

Harmond

The two jesters display truly clownish humor. Their coarse, at times even vulgar situational comedy was meant as a foil to the monarch's majestic presence. Though this is achieved, they simultaneously underline the king's evidently plebeian tastes. The ruler finds their bumbling funny – as most probably many people in the Middle Ages would.

Hendrik

Considering the way spy corps of all stripes tend to function, “Hendrik” was undoubtedly not this man’s real name. Nevertheless, that was the only appellation the witcher knew for His Imperial Majesty’s nose to the ground in Velen.

After asking around, Geralt learned a “Hendrik” lived in the village of Heatherton. Sadly, Geralt arrived too late. The village had been ravaged, its inhabitants slaughtered and Hendrik’s service to Nilfgaard terminated in a most violent and disturbing manner. Yet the agent showed such determination before he died that Vattier de Rideaux, chief of the imperial spy corps, surely beamed with pride if he ever heard of it. Despite undergoing horrific tortures, Hendrik preferred to die in agony rather than reveal where he hid his reports. They remained in his hut for Geralt to find, providing him with several pieces of important information.

Henselt

The witcher once said that in his life he had met thieves who resembled city councilors, councilors who were like begging louts, harlots who behaved like princesses, princesses who smelled like pregnant cows and kings who looked like thieves. King Henselt did not look exactly like a thief, but, with all due respect, he was not far off. He owed this resemblance only partly to his bearded countenance, beady eyes and wandering, yet penetrating gaze. His annexation of Lormark, called Upper Aedirn by its natives, at a time when Aedirn was fighting off the Nilfgaardian hoard at its southern border, was also considered a theft. The now dead King Demavend judged this deed severely and communicated this in curt yet resonant words. Yet that was not the sole reason for King Henselt's reputation as an unpleasant person, much bolstered by the monarch's ambitions and quarrels with his neighbors, and by his ruthless policies towards nonhumans, whom he persecuted with a passion, squandering his realm's strength and funds.

The aging Henselt did not have a living heir, and the rumor was that he had found producing another son somewhat troublesome.

Henselt's virility may have lessened with age, but his ambition certainly had not. The king wanted to wage a war and reclaim Lormark, a province he had already given up once, no matter the cost.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of Chapter I:

The king reaped that which his deeds had sown years earlier, when he and Nilfgaard jointly partitioned Aedirn. Though he returned the stolen lands, there were many among the Kaedweni who considered Henselt's assault on an ally to have been dishonorable. These men created a conspiracy against their corrupt ruler, adding a new cause for concern to his pile of worries.

Kaedwen's king had been terribly cursed by the sorceress Sabrina Glevissig, whom he had condemned to death.

Thanks to the witcher, the curse plaguing Henselt was lifted. The king breathed a sigh of relief and returned to realizing his plans with redoubled energy. Apart from invading Aedirn, these probably included killing Stennis, hanging all nonhumans and ploughing Saskia, not necessarily in that order.

Henselt revealed the entirety of his rotten character when he had Roche's men murdered and personally defiled Ves. In this way he gained a mortal enemy in the form of Vernon Roche.

The king of Kaedwen satiated his ambitions. He led a victorious assault on Vergen and strengthened his kingdom.

If Geralt chooses to let Roche kill Henselt in Chapter II:

Henselt made a mistake in underestimating the determination of the Blue Stripes' captain to avenge his men. Thus ended the line of Kaedweni rulers bearing the Unicorn on their seal.

If Geralt chooses to stop Roche from killing Henselt in chapter II:

Henselt should consider himself lucky that Geralt was content with simply bruising his grizzled face, for Vernon would not have treated him as leniently. Thus grew the debt of gratitude which Henselt owed the witcher, though I don't think the Kaedweni ruler saw it that way.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of Chapter I:

Henselt accepted the unthinkable. He shed some of his royal blood for a stranger – anything was acceptable if it furthered the pursuit of his longed-for war.

The ruler could not have felt worse if he had been kicked in the crotch. Defeated by the Vergenian irregulars, comprising peasants, local gentry, dwarves and elves and led by a female, he was forced to renounce his territorial claims to Aedirn and to officially confirm this at the Loc Muinne summit. I will remember the look on his grizzled mug for the rest of my life.

If Geralt chooses to rescue Triss in Chapter III:

Henselt eagerly engaged in another partition – Kaedwen and Redania divided their weakened neighbor, the chaos-riddled Temeria.

If Geralt chooses to rescue Anaïs La Valette in Chapter III:

Despite his appetite for new land, Henselt was forced to do without. The chance to snatch a part of Temeria passed right under his nose.

Hjalmar an Craite

The saying “like father, like son” fits Crach and his first born son to a tittle. Young Hjalmar took after his father in both posture and character, and many predicted that in time he would overtake his elder in the honor and fame he would gain.

An extremely able, broad-shouldered swordsman, he had the makings of a superb warrior, and his charisma and tendency towards almost mad bravura meant he could stir the hearts of loot- and glory-craving youths from all Skellige’s clans.

All these traits made Hjalmar an obvious choice for the next King of the Skellige Isles. He thus did not hesitate to stake his claim when the time for this arrived and immediately set up for Undvik to prove his heroism by battling the legendary Ice Giant.

Hjalmar accomplished what he set out to do. Fighting side by side with the witcher he defeated the fierce colossus of Undvik.

If Geralt sides with Cerys in King’s Gambit:

Though his sister was chosen to be ruler instead of him, Hjalmar did not bear a grudge and decided to lend her reign all his strength, an act that showed surprising political maturity.

When discussing Hjalmar’s heroic deeds it surely must be mentioned that he did not hesitate to support Geralt by

answering his call and defending Ciri at Kaer Morhen.

Hjort

It is my humble opinion that the most one can learn from staring at the innards of a gutted animal is whether the poor beast was infested with parasites. Nevertheless, Hjort, like many other druids of Skellige, placed a great deal of trust in both haruspicy and chiromancy (and oneiromancy as well, though that's more understandable, dreams being the royal route to one's soul).

Word was that he commanded a great deal of respect and esteem amongst his fellow practitioners, having more than once accurately prophesied the future and interpreted the meaning of obtuse dreams. This druid was devoted to Clan Brokvar with all his heart, and his knowledge and ability made him an excellent advisor, one in whom the jarl of Spikeroog, Udalryk of Clan Brokvar, placed a great deal of trust. Hjort had tried to alleviate the suffering brought on by his jarl's strange condition, but despite his efforts no progress was made in stopping the decline in Udalryk's mental health.

Holger Blackhand

The dour-faced jarl of Faroe owed his nickname to the dark coloring of his hand and forearm, left there by frostbite he suffered when his longship hit an underwater boulder during a freak autumn blizzard.

Even judging by Skellige standards, where pillaging and plundering are practically rites of passage, Holger was considered a brutal pirate and raider. This opinion surely resulted from the fact that he attacked the villages and ships of enemy Skellige clans with as much nerve as he did the coastal settlements of Cidaris, Novigrad and Nilfgaard.

Hubert Rejk

The wave of religious and racially-motivated killings that swept through Novigrad in the spring of 1272 coincided with Hubert Rejk's term as coroner at the city morgue.

Because of this he was overworked and additionally had to bear the harassment of his dislikeable superior, Reverend Nathaniel. It is thus no surprise that he came across as unpleasant and sarcastic when Geralt and he first met. Furthermore, it was clear there was bad blood between him and Joachim von Gratz, a fact that did little to improve the already rather stiff atmosphere at the morgue. Nevertheless, having learned the reason for Geralt's unexpected visit, Hubert made it clear Geralt and Joachim could count on his help. Hubert proposed to help the witcher perform an autopsy on the serial killer's latest victim, which revealed valuable new clues. Rejk might have succeeded in shifting the blame to another suspect if not for the witcher's perspicacity. Geralt had already figured out Rejk was the true murderer, but was shocked to learn he was also a powerful vampire. Luckily Geralt had considerable experience and a honed skill set to draw on for fighting such a creature. He killed the beast and ended his twisted moral crusade.

Ilona

A bearded elven woman is an exceptional sight, even if the beard is false. When there were no crowds, Ilona made ends meet by running a food shop.

Imlerith

Imlerith – a general of the Wild Hunt and a frequent guest in Geralt's nightmares – had been chasing Ciri for quite some time, striving to deliver her to his ruler, Eredin.

This powerful and brutal warrior had fought in the countless battles and campaigns for conquest waged by the Aen Elle in other worlds. He prized physical confrontation above all else, seeking out direct, bloody skirmishes where opponents pit their strength, agility and training against each other in a contest to the death. Imlerith attacked Kaer Morhen along with the rest of the Hunt. There the keep's defenders witnessed heart-wrenching proof of this warrior's dangerous might. Vesemir, who had spent most of his long life with a sword in his hand, heroically stood to fight this foe but, to everyone's great despair, was bested after a bloody and hard-fought confrontation and perished at this monster's hands. Regardless of race or birth, most warriors share common desires and delights. Imlerith was no exception. Avallac'h informed Ciri that he was wont to wallow in corporeal pleasures and would take advantage of his stay in our world to attend the Crones' sabbath.

Iorveth

They say all elves are beautiful, that they are born thus. In Iorveth's case someone set out to change this, marking his face with an ugly scar that the elf partially hid beneath a crimson headscarf. Iorveth was a living legend, the elusive leader of a Scoia'tael unit whose members gave no thought to laying down their arms and continued their war against humans. Stories of his deeds, of his deep hatred of dh'oine, painted him as more akin to a vengeful ghost than to an individual made of blood, bone and flesh. Certain sources claimed that Iorveth was the kingslayer's ally and thus involved in recent events, yet Geralt's first meeting with the elf brought few answers and ended with Scoia'tael archers laying down a deadly barrage. Indeed, it seemed at the time that the elf would only ever answer the witcher with arrows.

In the eyes of some people, like Loredó or Roche, Iorveth was a common criminal, his hands stained by the blood of innocents. Indeed, the list of those he had cut down in his "fight for freedom" could easily rival the number of ballads, romances and ditties in my repertoire.

The elf was certainly a dangerous individual. He was not, however, a bloodthirsty monster. Ever cautious and aware of the game he was playing, he jumped at the chance of testing Letho's loyalty, becoming Geralt's ally, at least temporarily.

If Geralt does not give him his sword during Chapter I: The Assassins of Kings:

We can safely assume that Iorveth long remembered both the wallop Geralt gave him and the witcher's sudden turn, though the elf's pride probably hurt a lot more than his head.

If Geralt gives him his sword during Chapter I: The Assassins of Kings:

Fighting side by side certainly helps dispel distrust. The witcher kept his word, which Iorveth appreciated, and the path to further cooperation stood open.

The Scoia'tael leader had a vision, and his pursuit of it put him in an altogether different light. Grand as it was, the plan could either be considered incredibly ambitious or purely insane. Whatever the case, he needed allies, though if he found none he was more than prepared to forge ahead alone.

If Geralt chooses Roche's Path during the end of chapter I:

Yet Geralt ultimately decided not to work with the Scoia'tael leader, choosing Vernon Roche's help instead. Thus the paths of the witcher and Iorveth began to diverge.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's Path during the end of chapter I:

Iorveth was loyal towards those who placed their trust in him, and he returned their trust. This was undeniable. His respect for Geralt grew after they freed the prisoners, and the elf would not hesitate to repay the debt he had incurred.

The relations between Vernon Roche and Iorveth were certainly complicated. The Scoia'tael openly hated the Blue

Stripes' commander, and doubtless wanted his death. Yet one could see in him a shadow of respect for the Temerian's abilities and tenacity. The fact that the elf could give even a hated enemy his due was, I think, to his credit.

Iorveth had been living in hatred and shedding human blood for years, and the question of whether he still knew what he was fighting for remained an open one. Even those who had known him longer had their doubts.

When Iorveth chose to fight for a free Pontar Valley, when he swore an oath of allegiance to Saskia, he stood alongside the humans defending Vergen. Few trusted this sudden shift in this uncompromising enemy of the Dh'oine, an elf responsible for more than one razed village and the tears of more than one mother over a slain son. The Squirrel commander had Saskia's full confidence, however, and that put an end to all discussion.

If Geralt chooses to aid Iorveth during Chapter II: "The Siege of Vergen":

Though the fall of Vergen marked the ruination of the Scoia'tael commander's dreams, the fact that Geralt appeared during the battle must have been a pleasant surprise for him. Elves tend not to express their emotions effusively, but Iorveth's behavior indicated that the witcher's aid was not without meaning to him. However the two finally parted ways, and that short meeting was their last, at least where this story is concerned

If Geralt chooses Roche's Path and aids Iorveth during Chapter II: "The Siege of Vergen" but did not give him his sword during Chapter I: "The Assassins of Kings":

Iorveth neither forgave nor forgot, thus he had trouble accepting the fact that Geralt assisted him in battle after what had happened in Flotsam. So the proud Scoia'tael clenched his teeth and quashed his anger, saving it for future battles. However the two finally parted ways, and that short meeting was their last, at least where this story is concerned.

When Iorveth disappeared after the poisoning of Saskia, nobody expected to see him again. Some whispered he had been behind the poisoning, or that he had simply lost the will to fight. Nobody believed his talk of elven archers. Time would show what his promises were worth.

The Scoia'tael doubtless had a sense of dramatic timing. His reinforcements could not have come at a more appropriate moment, and the emotion felt by all the defenders, including yours truly, was pure euphoria. Iorveth proved himself a person who does not waste words or abandon allies in need. If I had had any doubts about him, they dissipated together with the smoke which hung over Vergen.

Iorveth was determined to save Saskia and settle the score with the sorceresses. He and Geralt set out to Loc Muinne to close the final chapter of this story.

There they had to split up – Iorveth went to search Philippa's quarters and Geralt didn't hear from him for some time. It's a fair guess the Scoia'tael leader was not idle in the meantime.

If Geralt chooses to help to save Philippa in Chapter III:

Iorveth, as he was wont to do, appeared as if from nowhere – just in time to help escort the sorceress to her quarters. On the

way he made it clear to her that, if not for the circumstances, their meeting would have been far less pleasant to her.

If Geralt chooses to help to save Saskia in Chapter III:

The elf helped Geralt recover the dagger needed to lift the spell from Saskia. Though Iorveth could only hope that Geralt would do his best to not kill the dragon, the Scoia'tael took the risk and placed his trust in the witcher. They had already been comrades-in-arms for good or ill for some time.

Irina Renarde

Irina Renarde's vast experience in the performing arts had made her not just the informal leader of the mummers' troupe known as the Foxen, but its brightest star as well. This talented artist was famous for her brilliant performances as the leading lady in both comedies and tragedies.

Her performance in such acclaimed plays as "Love in a Time of Contempt," "The Barber of Kovir" and "Seven Brides for Seven Emperors" had made her name well-known to any with even a modicum of interest in culture and the arts.

Isidor Kay

Whether it was building fortifications or constructing clever traps, dwarven technical skills had no equals and Isidor Kay used them well. The mercenary made money on the side, running a small stall in the royal camp.

Jacques de Aldersberg

The Witcher

The Grand Master of the Order of the Flaming Rose is Jacques de Aldersberg. He is said to be a pious worshiper of the Eternal Fire, almost to the point of fanaticism. He is charismatic and widely respected. His aversion to non-humans, particularly elves, is well-known. Jacques de Aldersberg orders his knights to persecute the Scoia'tael just as much as monsters.

I met the Grand Master in rebellion-torn Vizima. Jacques de Aldersberg is a man of action — he personally led the knights who came to King Foltest's rescue as he was ambushed.

It turned out that the Grand Master of the Order of the Flaming Rose was behind the actions of Salamandra. Jacques de Aldersberg was giving orders to the Professor and Azar Javed.

By means of magic I was transported to the Ice Plains, as mentioned in the Prophecy of Ithlinne, which exist in the mind of Jacques de Aldersberg. The Grand Master wanted to show me what will eventually befall humanity if he does not lead them.

I dueled the Grand Master in the Ice Plains and defeated him. Thus the person responsible for Leo's death and the theft of the witchers' secrets has been punished.

The Witcher II

History is full of charismatic leaders who, by their deeds, etched their names in the annals of kingdoms and nations. Jacques de Aldersberg, Grand Master of the Order of the Flaming Rose, was beyond any doubt one such figure. He died at Geralt's hand and his rebellion against King Foltest was crushed, yet both these events left their mark on Temeria and its political situation, and their echoes can be heard to this day.

Jethro

Jethro is a guard in the city dungeon. He would merely be a standard smartass, except that he's addicted to fisstech.

Joachim von Gratz

We met Joachim von Gratz, chief surgeon at Vilmerius Hospital, in very unfortunate circumstances. My Priscilla had been attacked and he was tending to her wounds.

I must admit I was so shaken I hardly remember our first meeting, save that he was a cool-headed doctor who seemed to know a great deal about the previous murders and offered his help investigating the matter.

It seemed the surgeon was no stranger to violence, for he bore a formidable scar worthy of a veteran of the Battle of Brenna.

Geralt also noted that Von Gratz seemed quite experienced at navigating the sewers and fighting the monsters dwelling within it.

It was hard not to notice that Joachim von Gratz did not care much for the city coroner, Hubert Rejk, who dropped in unexpectedly on Geralt and the doctor at the morgue.

If Geralt didn't catch the real murderer:

In the end von Gratz was eliminated as a suspect, but like Geralt he had to admit defeat in his attempts to outwit the psychopathic murderer.

Johnny

When the children in the swamp clearing first told Geralt about Johnny, the witcher had every reason to suppose no such person actually existed. It was difficult to imagine anyone living in such inhospitable surroundings without quickly becoming food for drowners and water hags.

Geralt thus suspected Johnny was the figment of childish imaginations, an imaginary friend for lonely orphans. Long years of experience, however, told him not to ignore any possible lead, so he decided to search the nearby swampland for any additional signs of Johnny.

It turned out the orphans were not lying – Johnny really did exist. He was not a human child but a godling, one of a rare breed of creatures that can be found scattered about the Continent's wildernesses.

Unfortunately Johnny had lost his voice in circumstances he obviously could not explain, and so neither could he provide much in the way of answers to Geralt's questions.

Once Geralt had helped him regain his voice, however, he talked up a veritable storm, giving the lie to all the tales of these legendary beings' supposed shyness. Johnny also agreed to convince Gran to put Geralt in touch with the Ladies of the Wood.

I know from personal experience that a good heart, noble reflexes and the wrong word at the wrong time can get a fellow in all sorts of trouble. Johnny learned this as well when he tried to intercede on Gran's behalf with the Crones and succeeded only in attracting their wrath.

If Geralt chased Sara from the haunted house in Novigrad:

Geralt had thought his and Johnny's paths would never cross again, but fate had other plans. When he and Ciri arrived at the Crones' sabbath they ran into Johnny. He was with Sara, another Godling Geralt knew from a previous adventure in Novigrad.

The witchers learned both godlings had received an offer they couldn't refuse from the Crones and, willing or not, would have to attend the sabbath. They had no intention of tarrying there long, however, and when the first opportunity arrived they seized it and left that filth-ridden place. Before they did, Johnny told Geralt and Ciri what to do to gain access to the peak of the mountain, where Imlerith himself was celebrating the dark feast.

If Geralt leaves Sara with Corinne in Novigrad:

Geralt had thought his and Johnny's paths would never cross again, but fate had other plans. When he and Ciri arrived at the Crones' sabbath they ran into Johnny. It seemed the godling had received an offer he couldn't refuse from the Crones and, willing or not, would have to attend the sabbath. He had no intention of tarrying there long, however, and when the first opportunity arrived he seized it and left that filth-ridden place.

Before he did, Johnny told Geralt and Ciri what to do to gain access to the peak of the mountain, where Imlerith himself was celebrating the dark feast.

Kalkstein

The absent-minded alchemist seems nice, but it is obvious that scientific theories are of greater concern to him than the more prosaic aspects of life.

He lives in the part of the Temple Quarter inhabited by non-humans. He runs an alchemy workshop there, earning his living selling potions. But he devotes himself to his greatest passion — gnomish alchemy. The alchemist sometimes uses the services of witchers. Berengar used to work for him. Kalkstein has dealings with Vizima's criminal underworld. Strange company for an alchemist to keep. I have proved that Kalkstein is not the Salamandra leader. I'm glad, because I've actually grown fond of the alchemist. For the first time since I arrived at Kaer Morhen, I saw a truly happy man. The door to the tower in the swamp stood wide open, and at the thought of all the alchemical secrets waiting inside, Kalkstein was as delirious as a drunken dwarf. Even though he calls himself a scientist, Kalkstein is an alchemist, so he definitely dabbles in magic. Kalkstein is the author of many alchemical works, including a treatise analysing attempts to animate inanimate matter, an activity known otherwise as constructing a golem. Apparently the alchemist has been interested in this matter for years. Kalkstein's convoluted style makes his work difficult to read. Riots and fires in the city drove Kalkstein from his laboratory. I met the alchemist in Old Vizima, to where he fled.

Kalten

Revolutions breed monsters, and Kalten was one beyond all doubt. Embodying the most primitive peasant desires, frustrations and fears, he was not bound by moral chains. Such people can commit acts most foul, and the list of this once simple farmer's atrocities was long indeed.

Keira Metz

Geralt first met Keira Metz when she literally dropped on top of him out of nowhere. During the infamous coup on Thanedd Island, Keira was defenestrated and nearly landed right on the witcher's head. The next time Geralt saw her, in the swamps of Velen, was shocking in a different way - the luxury-loving sorceress was the last person he expected to see in such a grim and barren place.

Geralt later learned the reason for this, and Keira's fate gave him ample fodder for contemplating the cruel whimsies of the wheel of fortune. Once the esteemed advisor to the now late King Foltest, she had been chased out of Temeria when she lost that ruler's trust. Later she joined the Lodge of Sorceresses, which earned her the hatred of Redania's king and Nilfgaard's emperor alike. Because of this, she had gone deep undercover, posing as a cunning woman, a village witch of sorts, deep in the Velen boondocks. It was not at all difficult to tell that she despised every minute of this.

Keira then asked Geralt for another favor: lifting the curse from the tower of Fyke Isle. Curses and favors being what Geralt does best, he obliged.

Keira had never stopped longing for the luster of life at a royal court. Thatch-roofed huts could hardly compare to elegant ballrooms and palace gardens. One day she decided to organize

an interlude from Velen's grim atmosphere by treating herself to a sumptuous meal.

If Geralt does not sleep with Keira:

Acquiring the refined ingredients proved less trouble than finding an appropriate dinner partner - that is, until Geralt showed up. The witcher gladly accepted the sorceress' invitation for dinner - but showing unusual restraint, turned down her other, decidedly unambiguous propositions.

If Geralt does sleep with Keira:

Acquiring the refined ingredients proved less trouble than finding an appropriate dinner partner - that is, until Geralt showed up. The witcher gladly accepted the sorceress' invitation - and continued saying yes all evening.

Sadly, an evening that started out so nicely ended quite unfortunately for the witcher. Keira put him to sleep with a secretly-cast spell. Clearly, she wanted to hide something from him...

It turned out that Keira had played the witcher like a well-tuned harp, strumming all the right chords to keep him occupied while she stole the mage Alexander's notes from Fyke Isle. She was planning to use the notes as a bargaining chip while making a deal with Radovid. His plague research could be her ticket back to life without lice, ticks and omnipresent filth.

If Geralt refuses to let Keira go to Radovid:

Keira was determined to get her way, but Geralt could not allow her to carry out her plans. Both refused to budge, leading to a fight in which Keira Metz lost her life.

If Geralt convinces Keira to go to Kaer Morhen:

In the end Geralt succeeded in squelching Keira's mad plan to bargain with a man whose favorite negotiating tools were red-hot pincers and burning pyres. Keira changed her destination from Oxenfurt to the decidedly safer confines of Kaer Morhen.

During the battle for Kaer Morhen Keira fought bravely against Eredin's minions and saved Lambert from certain death.

Later it turned out that fighting side by side had forged a bond between Keira and Lambert and they decided to continue developing it after the battle was over. This confirmed my theory that witchers and sorceresses clearly share some mystical mutual attraction.

If Geralt let Keira go parley with Radovid:

Though her planned move was as stupid as it was risky, Keira was deaf to all Geralt's arguments. In the end he had to admit he had no right to stop her, and so Keira left, taking Alexander's notes with her.

King of the Wild Hunt

The Witcher

I am persecuted by the Wild Hunt, a cavalcade of ghostly riders on skeletal steeds. Leading them is the King of the Wild Hunt, the harbinger of war and despair. I know he seeks me, but I don't know why.

The King of the Hunt appeared again and appointed one of his wraiths to fight me. He exploited a weakness — the wraith was the specter of Leo.

The spectral sovereign appeared in the village of Murky Waters near Vizima. I'm certain his appearance heralds disaster.

The King of the Wild Hunt appeared in the Grand Master's vision. I now know that I'm not the only one haunted by fate. The ghostly king seeks Jacques de Aldersberg as well, and wants his soul perhaps even more than he wants mine.

I fought the King of the Wild Hunt for the soul of Jacques de Aldersberg — in the Ice Plains, I defeated the specter.

The Witcher II

According to Nordlings, the Wild Hunt is a procession, or rather a cavalcade of skeletal horsemen. They rush across the sky on the bony remains of steeds. Clad in rusty remnants of armor, they wear jagged swords at their waists. Like comets,

the Wild Hunt is an omen of war, which has been confirmed beyond all doubt.

The spectral cavalcade ventures out in search of victims every several years, but its harvest was never as rich as just before the last war with Nilfgaard, when over twenty souls went missing Novigrad alone after the Hunt passed through. Curiously, elven and dwarven legends make not the slightest mention of the Wild Hunt.

Lady of the Lake

The Witcher

On an island in the middle of the lake I encountered a supernatural being known as the Lady of the Lake. She is a nymph or a vila. Both the inhabitants of the nearby villages and the monsters of the lake worship her.

The Lady appointed me her champion and gave me a silver sword. Thus was I admitted into the ranks of the many noble knights who have served her over the centuries. The Lady predicted that the sword she gave me will prove important as I pursue my mission.

I left Murky Waters and returned to Vizima. I have a feeling the Lady of the Lake's domain was the only place where I might have found peace. What a pity.

The Witcher III

Geralt had first encountered the Lady of the Lake when his search for what had been stolen from Kaer Morhen took him to the village known as Murky Waters. There a mysterious female being dwelled in the murky depths of the village's namesake waters and watched over the residents living on the shores. Such was their esteem for their underwater guardian, they erected a monument in her honor. The Lady of the Lake once had many knights in her service, but they had all died, as

valiant knights tend to, during campaigns in far-off lands. She now lived in near solitude, so was glad to accept Geralt's company, the witcher being someone she liked and respected.

Once the witcher had believed the Lady of the Lake was some kind of local goddess, but their reunion at Lac Célvay made him realize she did not dwell only in Murky Waters. Instead, the Lady of the Lake calls home any place where virtue and chivalry are honored.

Lambert

The Witcher

The young witcher I met at Kaer Morhen sure is quarrelsome and he has a biting tongue... He is rude, especially to Triss Merigold, who he addresses by her last name. I think at times he uses rudeness to express his fondness for someone.

The Witcher III

If destiny truly chooses which boys become witchers, then in Lambert's case it had made a twisted, cruel choice. After hearing his story, Geralt had to admit that Lambert had every reason to be unenthused about the lot fate had granted him.

A chance encounter of two witchers hunting the same ekimmara turned into a tale of old friendship, murder, and vengeance. The moral of the story? Don't mess with Lambert.

Though Lambert made no secret of his hatred for Kaer Morhen, when the time came to stand in its defense, he did so without a second thought.

If Keira didn't go to Kaer Morhen and Geralt didn't save Lambert in time:

Sadly, during the battle, Lambert found himself overwhelmed by enemy forces. Relief came too late and he was cut down by the Wild Hunt's soldiers.

If Geralt convinced Keira to come to Kaer Morhen:

During this battle, he came within a hair's breadth of losing his life. Luckily, Keira arrived in the nick of time and together they held back his attackers.

It just might be that Lambert and Keira's later (and somewhat unexpected) relationship came about as a result of that moment, when they fought for survival at each other's side. It is also possible it was a simple matter of two attractive people taking a liking to each other. At any rate, only time could tell what would become of the couple.

Lasota

When it turned out that the break-up letter from his beloved had just been a bad joke, Lasota proved to be a really helpful person. As the quartermaster's assistant, he had access to both armor and weapons, obviously for a price.

Leo

Leo is the youngest of Kaer Morhen's residents. He's not a full witcher — though he has completed his training, he was not subjected to mutation. Leo comes across as a hot-headed whelp, but is also kind-hearted and good.

It appears that Leo is somewhat fascinated with me. He has heard the ballads about the White Wolf and now holds me in high regard. Leo was killed by the Professor, one of the leaders of the assault on Kaer Morhen. The boy was too hasty and inexperienced. I wasn't able to help him, even though I was right beside him. I saw Leo's face again — this time on a specter. It reminded me that I failed in the cellars of Kaer Morhen.

Letande Avet

Letande Avet did not enter tournaments to prove himself, but to maim and kill. Above all, he cherished those moments when he had crushed an enemy and could mercilessly pound him into the bloody mud. Called the Butcher of Cidaris, he owed this moniker to his infamous role in a tournament a few years earlier that was interrupted before time but still ended with a trifling five deaths. After those events, Avet chose to accept the hospitality of King Henselt, known for his less strict approach to the concept of chivalrous rivalry.

In the arena the Butcher of Cidaris faced Geralt, who proved that he had not been dubbed the Butcher of Blaviken without reason. The first Butcher was butchered by the second. Thus ended Letande Avet's bloody career.

Letho

The Witcher II

Disguised as a blind monk, the mysterious assassin took Geralt by surprise. Displaying immense self-control and lightning reflexes — not to mention a talent for acting — he murdered the king before the witcher's very eyes. He then leapt out the window of the solar before Geralt could grab him. Surviving the fall unharmed, the assassin fled with the aid of some Scoia'tael.

The information in Vernon Roche's possession served to confirm what Geralt had witnessed. A man matching the kingslayer's description had been seen in the company of Scoia'tael near the trading post of Flotsam. Finding him seemed like the witcher's only chance.

The mysterious individual now had a name. It appeared that this Letho, whoever he might be, was playing his own game — one in which the Scoia'tael had become an impediment. Yet his ultimate objective remained a mystery to Geralt.

Letho had indeed been working with the Squirrels, doing their wet work for them. Geralt would soon learn the answers to many more questions.

In the ruins of the elven bath, Geralt and the mysterious assassin stood eye to eye a second time. Geralt was surprised by

what he learned. Letho of Gulet had been a witcher! What is more, there were other kingslayers, and they and Letho had worked together to assassinate the two dead northern monarchs. The witcher and the assassin were also no strangers — in fact, Geralt had once saved Letho's life. Their discussion ended abruptly as arrows whistled through the air and swords clashed. Letho demonstrated his strength and skills by beating Geralt black and blue. Before leaving, he announced that he was on his way to Aedirn.

The kingslayer proved true to his word and kidnapped Triss, wounding Cedric mortally in the process. He forced the sorceress to aid him by teleporting them both to Aedirn.

The magic sent Geralt a vision and gave us another bit of information. Letho had been in the area earlier and had ordered his accomplices to assassinate King Henselt. The kingslayers had been working with Síle de Tansarville, but, just as with Iorveth, their paths had diverged. Whatever finale would conclude this story, Letho claimed it would take place in Loc Muinne.

I listened to the rest of the tale with bated breath. Led to the summit by Nilfgaardian envoys, Letho publicly accused the sorcerers of commissioning the assassinations of the northern monarchs.

The kingslayer's intricate plan was revealed too late. Letho had been working for the Nilfgaardian Empire from the very beginning — his mission, to seed chaos before the Black Ones embarked upon a new war. Taking advantage of the ambitions of the Lodge of Sorceresses, its contacts and financial means — not to mention the support of the oblivious Scoia'tael partisans

— Letho had eliminated two of the Nordlings' most important monarchs, plunging their realms into chaos.

On top of that, he had thrown suspicion on the sorcerers, who were just regaining their standing. Thus was the force which had stopped Nilfgaard at Sodden dealt a truly shattering blow.

Now Geralt had only to confront the kingslayer himself, so that the man could confirm or deny the witcher's suspicions. Only Letho knew the truth of the backroom intrigue which had left the north running with the blood of kings. Now I shall tell you about their final meeting, and its conclusion...

The Witcher III

Some friends you see after many years apart and you immediately develop a headache. Not out of antipathy, but as a somatic premonition of the hangover sure to follow your drunken reunion. Seeing others, however, gives you an itching pain in your back and a desire to reach for your blade.

For Geralt, Letho of Gulet had a foot in both of these camps. This renegade witcher of the school of the Viper had the blood of at least two Nordling kings on his hands, the fruit of his cooperation with Nilfgaard's emperor, Emhyr var Emreis. Accused of these crimes, Geralt was forced to chase down Letho to clear his own name. Though both walked away from their final confrontation in the ruins of Loc Nuinne alive and unharmed, Geralt did not think he would ever see Letho again.

It thus came as quite a shock when he happened across Letho in a barn loft somewhere in the war-ravaged Temerian borderlands.

If Geralt decides not to follow Letho:

It turned out Letho's former employer was less than satisfied with his performance and had set a variety of blood hounds on his trail. In these circumstances, the presence of another witcher to guard his back was more than welcome. Geralt, however, could not shake the bad taste left in his mouth by their prior interactions and went his own way, leaving Letho to clean up his own mess.

If Geralt decides to help Letho:

It turned out Letho's former employer was less than satisfied with his performance and had set a variety of blood hounds on his trail. In these circumstances, the presence of another witcher to guard his back was more than welcome. Geralt remembered the care Letho had given Yennefer and, in a show of solidarity, decided to help his former companion deal with his pursuers.

If Geralt kills Letho's pursuers:

In order to shake the hounds off his trail, Letho had decided on a risky maneuver — faking his own death. His plan would have worked perfectly, too, had Geralt's hero reflexes not been a tad overstrung, causing him to butcher any and all witnesses who might have spread the news.

If Geralt goes along with Letho's plan:

In order to shake the hounds off his trail, Letho had decided on a risky maneuver — faking his own death. Although Geralt had no forewarning of this, he improvised with aplomb and sent

Letho's pursuers off convinced they had rid the world of a kingslayer.

If Geralt asks him to go to Kaer Morhen:

After that, there was nothing more for Letho to do but disappear. Geralt proposed he hide out at Kaer Morhen for a while, and after a bit of thought Letho agreed.

If Geralt doesn't ask him to go to Kaer Morhen:

After that, there was nothing more for Letho to do but disappear. He and Geralt shared a brief farewell and then went their separate ways once more.

Linus Maravel

Count Maravel belonged to that singular category of individuals who can strike a bargain with anyone, who are so pragmatic in their thinking that they can persuade, at least in part, even those most strongly opposed to their viewpoint. Maravel thoroughly enjoyed the game of Temerian politics. He was an active and reputedly highly effective player, in addition to being one of the country's most influential aristocrats. Much like Baron Kimbolt, he had grand ambitions, yet he held them in check and was much more ingenious and precise in pursuing his plans.

One of Maravel's more daring schemes involved kidnapping Foltest's children as they traveled to Loc Muinne in a convoy. I should add that the count had reached an agreement with the Nilfgaardians, promising to deliver Boussy and Anais to the Black Ones in exchange for their backing his claim to the Temerian throne. Though he wanted Temeria to be strong, he had committed treason. Having completed his investigation, Geralt concluded that Maravel was guilty of Boussy's death. The witcher gave the rogue up to John Natalis. Although Geralt suspected that Maravel had committed many a despicable act, he decided that the count would not answer for Boussy's disappearance. Thus the nobleman remained an innocent man in John Natalis' eyes.

Liva

Because the hygiene of nearly every army's troops leaves a lot to be desired, military brothels have a reputation as dens of questionable pleasure and indubitable gonorrhea. Therefore Liva, fulfilling both the role of camp follower and medic, was an important element of the military machine. A brothel without medical supervision can easily turn into a seed of infirmity, and that is just one step away from becoming a source of sabotage and damaging military capability.

Liva had worked in the camp during the previous Kaedweni-Aedernian campaign, and knew a lot about the events of those terrible days.

Louis Merse

Louis Merse was a typical example of widespread bureaucratic nepotism. It was rumored that he had outright fled Vizima after bringing some unsavory troubles down upon his head. His cousin Loredó then granted him a comfortable posting in Flotsam, and Merse saw this as his second chance.

Madman Lugos

Though Madman Lugos, jarl of Clan Drummond, was nothing special in terms of size or strength, most men in the isles still stepped aside when they saw him coming. Eternally feuding with his neighbors, Lugos had a reputation for a furious and violent temper and managed to get into shouting matches with even the usually-placid Donar an Hindar.

Yet Lugos' biggest rival was Crach an Craite, whom he accused of stealing part of his domain (which in his reckoning encompassed all of Ard Skellig). The clans' quarrel went back hundreds of years and there was nothing to indicate it would end while these two fierce enemies lived. Lugos hated Crach with a passion dampened only by the laws of Skellige and the disproportionate balance of power between the two clans. If Cerys or Hjalmar become the next ruler: Seeing his own son die and Crach an Craite's child take the throne of Skellige proved too much for Lugos to bear. Enraged and embittered, he refused to listen to reason and attacked the witcher, thus picking a fight that could only end one way.

Mael

If “speech is silver, but silence is golden” then Mael must have been sufficiently rich to do something more interesting than run a shop. Nevertheless, the silent elf had some really interesting goods to offer.

Magnus

Every military camp has uses for a blacksmith – from shoeing horses, to making and repairing weapons, to freeing the wounded from warped armor after a battle. Magnus was a reliable artisan, a huge man with the strength of a bull. Rumor had it that his grip was not unlike that of iron pincers.

Malena

Life was not easy for the nonhumans of Flotsam, and Malena was no exception. The elven woman was suspected of leading soldiers into Scoia'tael ambushes, a charge that could easily send her to the scaffold.

If Geralt decides to not interfere when Loredó's men accuse Malena:

The witcher decided not to interfere. Malena was arrested and charged with being an accessory to murder. Her fate was easy to predict.

If Geralt decides to defend Malena against Loredó's men:

The elven woman had indeed been luring soldiers into a trap. Her fate was now in Geralt's hands.

If Geralt decides to tell the truth about the corpses in the cave:

Malena was arrested and charged with being an accessory to murder. She suffered the consequences of her deeds.

If Geralt decides to lie to Loredó's men, saving the girl:

Though the witcher did not reveal her complicity in the murders, the elven woman could not trust him. This led her to repay him with betrayal. Yet even then the witcher did not

stoop so low as to kill an unarmed woman, and simply drove Malena away.

If Geralt decides to lie to Loredo's men and then kills the girl:

Though the witcher did not reveal her complicity in the murders, the elven woman could not trust him. This led her to repay him with betrayal. For this Malena paid the ultimate price.

Manfred

A father's care for his son, even an adult son, can cause even the bravest to grieve and worry. Manfred was an old soldier, a Kaedweni veteran of many battles who had lived a full life. Yet the thought of outliving his son, who was to face the terrifying Butcher of Cidaris in the arena, had broken the brave man. Manfred tried to drown his sadness and despair in booze in the camp canteen.

If Sven survives in the arena during the quest The Butcher of Cidaris: After his son emerged from the arena victorious, Manfred rewarded Geralt. He was extremely helpful to the witcher, proving himself a man of honor. If Sven dies in the arena during the quest The Butcher of Cidaris or the quest fails: His son's death was a terrible blow to Manfred. Though the witcher had failed to save Sven, the old warrior behaved honorably and helped him as best he could.

Marabella

Though her cries are divine when behind closed doors,
Standing on stage, her squawks are drowned by snores.

Marcus

Mighty Numa's assistant made money on the side by, among other things, selling "healthy food", the foundation of a healthy diet.

Margarita Laux-Antille

The full list of Margarita Laux-Antille's outstanding mental, spiritual and physical attributes would consume a mountain of parchment. Rita, as her friends called her, once held the position of rector at the Aretuza Academy for Sorceresses on the Isle of Thanedd - the same school attended by her famous ancestor, Ilona Laux-Antille.

Quite unusually for one of her profession, Margarita showed no interest in politics - it was only care for the good of her school that led her to join the Lodge of Sorceresses. Finally, her beauty deserves mention as well. It was said that not even the marble likenesses of goddesses and nymphs chiseled out by the greatest sculptors could rival this sorceress's figure. Yet with all her astuteness, Laux-Antille still could not escape the same fate that so many of her fellows met. She had been arrested some time before our tale begins and was staying in the Oxenfurt prison, awaiting a summary and pre-determined trial. Only Geralt and Yennefer's daring jailbreak saved Margarita from certain execution.

Margot

Margot, the proprietor of the brothel, was a hard-nosed businesswoman, yet she shepherded her flock of girls with almost motherly care.

If Geralt gives Iorveth his sword during “The Assassins of Kings” in Chapter I:

It turned out that Margot was a spy for Iorveth. She decided to use that connection to avenge her lover’s death.

If Geralt does not give Iorveth his sword during “The Assassins of Kings” in Chapter I:

Margot had been a spy for Iorveth. Fearing this would come to light after the elven commander was captured, she took her life.

Maria Louisa La Valette

The Witcher 2

I have chanced to visit the court of the La Valettes on several occasions in the past. Invariably, I was greeted and received in a manner befitting my fame and talent. Baroness Mary Louisa was a very comely lady, her beauty having fully blossomed, her hair dark, her lips sensuous. As with many women married to markedly older men, rumors about her were plentiful. Among them, one claiming that she had had a love affair with King Foltest himself, and that the monarch had fathered her younger children.

If Geralt manages to save her from the dungeons:

The witcher got a chance to behold the baroness in nearly all her beauty when he ripped her from the hands of a cruel torturer in the dungeon of her own abode. Mary Louisa La Valette eluded a terrible fate as they fled the underground prison, though they did so with the aid of an emissary of the Empire of Nilfgaard. The Nilfgaardian, however, was not helpful out of the kindness of his heart...

If Geralt does not manage to save her from the dungeons:

Mary Louisa La Valette managed to flee the cell in the dungeon of her own castle with the help of an emissary of the Empire of Nilfgaard. She thus eluded a terrible fate, but it can be said with

some certainty that the Nilfgaardian was not helpful out of the kindness of his heart...

The Witcher 3

Baroness Maria Louisa la Valette was the talk of Temeria in her time. This noblewoman had been King Foltest's mistress and even bore him two illegitimate children.

This caused quite the scandal and prompted several notable families to take up arms in revolt, only to be bloodily crushed by the king's forces, who took La Valette Castle during a hard-fought siege.

If Geralt has previously saved her son:

To the Baroness' good fortune Geralt of Rivia was with King Foltest at the time and saved her son Aryan from the fate that otherwise would have been his for having participated in the revolt.

Louisa la Valette thus had every reason to think quite highly of the witcher and her esteem became quite apparent the next time they crossed paths.

If Geralt has previously killed her son:

Sadly, the siege led to the death of the baroness' eldest son. Sword in hand he had fought to defend his mother's honour but fell to Geralt of Rivia, who was with King Foltest at the time.

No one could blame Louisa la Valette for harboring a deep-seated hatred for the witcher, a hatred which became quite apparent the next time they crossed paths.

Marietta Loredo

Having met the commandant of Flotsam's town watch, I did not expect his mother to be a charming old lady always prepared to treat her guests to fruit tarts. Yet Geralt's experience with the hag destroyed any illusions I may have still harbored regarding Loredo's family. Marietta proved to be a drug-addled creature living in her own world of madness and hatred. Thus, I think it may be for the better that she is no longer among the living.

To Geralt's surprise, Loredo's mother, Marietta, proved to be the same woman who had taken Rupert and Gridley away earlier. All the pieces of the puzzle thus fell in place, for she was probably the inmate they had mentioned as being the sole survivor of the fire. Since that time Marietta had lived in her own world of madness fueled by narcotic visions. The witcher's blade finally brought her suffering to an end.

Mavrick

One does not need to move in high society for a public defecation to end his social career. Exactly such an event made a Kaedweni soldier, Mavrick, the laughing-stock of the entire camp. Yet it turned out that neither rations nor dysentery had caused him to fill his pants.

In truth, his reputation – and not just that – had been soiled by the events of one ghastly night when Mavrick had encountered a terrifying specter.

According to the ghost, Mavrick's conscience was as stained as his undergarments.

If Geralt doesn't believe Mavrick:

Mavrick's death was the fault of the witcher, who assumed one time too many that a damned spirit tells the truth.

If Geralt believes Mavrick:

Yet Geralt believed his words. Mavrick knew that there was only one way to remove the brown blemish from his honor. He battled not only the monsters, but also his own fear. After the fight ended, he told Geralt of the dark events of years past which had led to this story.

Mikul

Mikul is widely respected because he has become a city guard, and that's quite a career for someone from the Outskirts. He seems lazy and lecherous. He cares little about the problems of the Outskirts and tends only to his own interests.

By day Mikul stands guard at the gate to Vizima.

Molly

Though well she knows the touch of silk and lace, she shuns
not straw when gripped in lust's embrace.

Moril

At times a man is left to wonder whether there are any limits to depravity in this world. The elf woman Moril had disappeared from Flotsam many months before and was found in the tower in Commandant Loredó's house. At the mercy of the degenerate and his mad mother, beaten and abused, she was but a pale shadow of a once proud Aen Seidhe.

As long as she was with child, the elf had a purpose, a goal to live for. Yet as soon as that child was born, the tormented Moril decided to end her life and opened her veins. Thus her tragic story came to an end.

Moritz Diefenthal

If Geralt doesn't intervene at the burning pyre:

Moritz was subsequently killed.

If Geralt intervenes at burning pyre:

The witcher saved Moritz from being burned at the stake and the mage went and found the other fleeing mages.

If Geralt does Now or Never:

Moritz was able to flee with the rest to Kovir.

Morvran Voorhis

Morvran Voorhis - commander of the Alba Division, an officer of the highest rank and pure-blooded aristocrat, one who with pride could call himself a Nilfgaardian, a designation truly deserved only by the native-born inhabitants of the empire's capital and its immediate surroundings.

Mousesack

Most druids on Skellige differ from the deeply rooted Continental stereotype of a graybearded old man in white robes bowing before sacred oaks, taming wyverns and pestering local lords with petitions to add yet another species to the list of protected beasts. Ermion, Geralt's old acquaintance, was no exception in this regard.

This stiff-bearded, spindly man was the leader of the Druids' Circle in Skellige. He was also Jarl Crach an Craite's advisor on matters of magic and the mystical, as well as on any and all issues requiring more refinement than a well-timed uppercut or a hard-swung axe. Ermion was known to be obstinate and to have a tendency, quite rare in Skellige, to consider all possible consequences of a particular course of action before it was undertaken. All this meant conversing with him demanded a considerable amount of time and patience. Given all this, one can hardly be surprised that Yennefer and Geralt's "rash" and "highly irresponsible" actions regarding the magic anomaly – stealing a priceless artifact from a private chamber being first among them – put Ermion quite out of sorts. However, despite his difficult character and his somewhat testy relationship with Geralt, Ermion agreed at once to travel to Kaer Morhen and help defend Ciri from the Wild Hunt's forces. When persuasion and reason failed, Ermion would, as a last resort, turn to violence - and then he became a foe to be reckoned with. Madman Lugos found this out personally when, in a fit of

rage, he attacked Ermion and Geralt. As they had in the past, witcher and druid stood side by side and fought a common enemy.

Myron

Stiff as a halberd, the apothecary Myron ran the field hospital and sold alchemical ingredients on the side.

Nathaniel Pastodi

Reverend Nathaniel, supervisor of the city morgue and cleric of the Church of the Eternal Fire, was a man with a vile character – and a stormy past. Before donning the frock he had served for years as the city torturer.

One would be hard pressed to find a more inferior candidate for a pastor than a former hangman – but, as the saying goes, in Novigrad anything is possible.

To say Geralt caught Nathaniel red-handed would be an ill-considered pun. Yet though the situation Geralt found him in clearly proved Nathaniel was a cruel sadist, it did not prove he was a serial killer. Geralt kept a cool head and decided the priest was not the man he was after.

If Geralt kills Nathaniel:

Nevertheless, Geralt still felt Nathaniel deserved death. At times I have thought Geralt too eager to play judge, jury and executioner – but this time, I took no issue with his actions.

If Geralt spares Nathaniel but didn't catch the real murderer:

Afterwards, however, a new victim's body was found and Nathaniel's name was cleared - well, of the killings, that is, for nothing could absolve this priest of his countless other sins.

If Geralt realizes Nathaniel is not the murderer:

Not tarrying any further, Geralt raced off to catch the true perpetrator.

Newboy

If Geralt decides the pendant is useless:

This soldier had acquired an allegedly miraculous amulet and truly believed its power would protect him from any and all harm. Recognizing that the pendant was useless, Geralt informed Newboy of this fact.

Grateful for the warning provided earlier, Newboy not only believed that Geralt was innocent, but helped the witcher avoid the guards. And thus honesty had proved to be the best policy - which is true sometimes, at least.

If Geralt gets caught by guards during the end of prologue:

Grateful for the warning provided earlier, the soldier believed Geralt was innocent. Though he strove to help our hero avoid the guards, a fight broke out and Newboy died crossing blades with the witcher.

If Geralt refuses to help the Crinfrid Reavers:

This soldier had acquired an allegedly miraculous amulet and truly believed its power would protect him from any and all harm. Geralt did not have the time or patience to discuss the trinket, so Newboy went into battle without his armor, clad only in the faith that he was invulnerable.

If Geralt decides the pendant is useful / refuses to help the Crinfrid Reavers:

Either his faith was too weak or the amulet, even if magical, served a different purpose. Newboy fell during the assault on La Valette Castle.

Nurses

Some women feel compelled to care for others, bring them relief from their suffering. They become nurses, priestesses and medics, treating the sick and wounded, providing comfort and hope to those in need.

Odo

The wealthiest person in the Outskirts is a grim drunkard who inherited a fortune from his brother. Odo is distrustful and stingy.

He lives at the end of the village, in a house surrounded by a fence with a high gate.

Odrin

To say that Odrin was not shy about drinking is like saying that Iorveth was not shy about shooting humans. Such was his reputation as a drunkard that wherever moonshine could be smelt in Henselt's camp, one assumed that Odrin could not be far off.

A secret, or a full mug of beer – keeping one is easy enough. Keeping both is another matter altogether. During an alcohol-fueled conversation, the soldier provided much interesting information. Given his passion for drink, I was surprised that Odrin had managed to keep the secret for so long. His reputation as a mighty drinker was well deserved, but as a conspirator he was a flop.

Olcan

Olcan, the priest from Prince Stennis' retinue, turned out to be directly responsible for the poisoning of Saskia. The clergyman apparently thought that a heavy dose of thaumador would be more effective than prayer or excommunication.

Unfortunately, because he was already dead, he could not answer for his deed.

Otrygg an Hindar

Otrygg an Hindar, Jarl Donar's grandson and heir, was the youngest of the claimants to Skellige's throne. He dreamed of the heroic deeds and daring raids he would one day lead his subjects in accomplishing.

Otrygg never got to live out those dreams, however. During the tragic feast that came to be known as the "Bloody Banquet" he lost is [sic] life when a furious bear tore his flesh to small pieces.

People of Murky Waters

I felt dizzy almost constantly in the idyllic settings of Murky Waters. Love is in the air and, like the scent of flowers warmed by the sun, it distracts me. The people here seem to feel the same.

People of the Outskirts

Though the peasants here seem gloomy and unpleasant, the Outskirts nevertheless have their advantages...

Philippa Eilhart

The Witcher

This was hardly the first time Geralt and I encountered Philippa Eilhart – jewel of the court at Tretogor and once the trusted sorceress of King Vizimir II. Philippa was one of the most talented mages of those times – only a handful ever mastered the art of polymorphy. Her intellect and the influence she held at the Redanian court were not to be underestimated. Proud, independent, and extremely beautiful, as graceful in a fanciful yet elegant dress as in a man's traveling outfit, she was beyond any doubt one of the most attractive women I have ever known. Yet I would not count Philippa among the most pleasant of females, despite her indisputable though chilly charm. Her gaze alone was enough to make the most confident men shudder, and the mere thought of spending a night with her would make their flesh creep.

At the time, Philippa Eilhart was staying in the town of Vergen as part of Saskia the Dragonslayer's inner circle. Her motives remained unclear, to say the least – the former court magician had never been known for her altruism.

However, one cannot deny that without her help Geralt would not have found his way through the magical mist. Philippa rendered him an invaluable service at that time.

Her qualifications in the area of curses, magic, and supernatural phenomena were undeniable. If there was anyone to help the witcher in this regard back then, it was certainly Miss Eilhart. Still, I was extremely glad that it was Geralt, and not I, who was forced to speak with the Tretogor magician.

It was Philippa who gave the witcher the list of the ingredients for the antidote for the poison plaguing Saskia. The knowledge of recipes, ingredients, and their specific properties is always extremely helpful in learning magical arcana, and few could equal Eilhart in that regard.

Philippa tricked everyone, not only casting a charm on Saskia under the guise of aid, but also using Geralt and Iorveth in her machinations. On the one hand, it was inevitable. On the other, it left a bitter aftertaste, giving rise to the thought that sorceresses' misdeeds are responsible for the widespread mistrust towards their profession and perhaps even towards the female gender. Eilhart abducted Saskia and left for Loc Muinne. Back then we did not know what she was planning.

If the Kaedweni win the siege of Vergen:

Fleeing the victorious Henselt, Philippa Eilhart moved with Síle and Saskia to Loc Muinne, where a summit of sorcerers and crowned heads was to take place.

If Philippa Eilhart had counted on her troubles coming to end in Loc Muinne, she miscalculated. She was arrested by the Redanians just after arriving, and placed in a dungeon where she awaited the king's judgment.

In retribution for certain events of the past, not to mention her recent activities, the sorceress was brutally blinded during an

initial interrogation. Death seemed an increasingly likely prospect, and it seemed only a miracle could save her.

If Geralt chooses to help Philippa instead of saving Triss:

Geralt had no desire to help a magician who repaid his trust with treason, but Philippa's arguments were justified. Only she could lift the spell from Saskia, and thus the witcher was forced to trust her words once more.

One might have thought that a blind, exhausted sorceress would have no hope of flee. Yet she seized a moment in which both her guardians were distracted and deceived them. Philippa Eilhart risked it all on one gambit and transformed into an owl, fleeing Loc Muinne. Given the presence of the vengeful Iorveth, one might say that fear gave wing to her escape plan.

The Witcher III

Philippa Eilhart, one-time advisor to King Vizimir II, called the Just, member of the Council of Mages and later founder of the Lodge of Sorceresses, had played a momentous part in the history of the world as well as in Geralt's life.

There could be no denying her talent, yet neither could one claim she did not also at times demonstrate sickly ambition. Very trustworthy reports indicated she had had a hand in King Vizimir II's death, and, as a member of the Lodge, was implicated in the murder of two other monarchs as well - Demavend of Aedirn and Foltest of Temeria.

For this reason the one-time "Jewel of the Court at Tretogor" was now a wanted woman, the quarry of special forces from

the North and Nilfgaard alike.

Vizimir's son and successor, Radovid V, was particularly eager to capture her. During their last encounter in Loc Muinne he had had Philippa's eyes gouged out, yet she had fled and he wanted nothing more than to stick the head of "Tretegor's Jewel" on a spike above the city gates.

Thanks to her mastery of the difficult art of polymorphy, Philippa had been able to evade her pursuers by transforming into an owl. Then she had holed up in a hideout outside Novigrad to wait out the worst.

Imagine our surprise when we learned Philippa had been right under our noses the whole time! During her flight from her pursuers she had sought shelter with an old lover and fellow mage. He must've still born a grudge, however, for he tricked her and imprisoned her in her owl form. After the witch hunters carted him off, his house was plundered and the owl wound up in the hands of... our dear friend Zoltan. Sadly Triss discovered this right after Zoltan had lost the owl in a game of cards - meaning our search had to continue.

Philippa's new "owner"? Dijkstra. Was it a coincidence that she was now in the hands of her spurned-ex-lover and hated enemy? Triss certainly didn't think so, instead suspecting the former spy had woven a gwent-centered web of subterfuge in order to settle some old score.

Luckily for Philippa, Geralt got things under control and saved her from whatever delights Dijkstra was planning.

Though the Lodge's prior actions were highly controversial, Philippa stubbornly worked toward its reconstitution, offering

Ciri the chance to join it as a full and equal member.

If Geralt chooses to complete Reason of State:

One can call historical justice the fact that Philippa Eilhart, Radovid's old tutor, ended the crazed monarch's life. In doing so she also exacted revenge for her blinding and the death and persecution of her fellow mages, so many of whom had died in agony on Radovid's orders.

Phillip Strenger

...and killed the spirit or released it before getting the task: the group found Anna, but she had lost her mind and was babbling about nonsense. Phillip, filled with regret and sincerely wanting to make up for it, decided to take his wife to the Blue Mountains where a powerful hermit lived, in hopes he could cure Anna. Tamara, who couldn't go with them due to other obligations, made her father swear he'd take care of her before they left.

...and released the spirit after getting the task: the group found Anna, but in the form of a water hag. Desperate to find a way to cure her, Graden and Geralt investigated and found several dolls, one of which was linked to Anna. ...picked the wrong doll: Anna burst into flames and died. Suddenly very stoic, Phillip merely told the witcher to come to Crow's Perch for his pay. Before Geralt did though, Phillip proceeded to hang himself off the tree in Crow's Perch's courtyard. ...picked the right doll: Anna turned back into her normal self, but as her life was tied to the curse, she knew she'd soon die. Phillip apologized to her for everything he'd done. After Anna died, he then told Geralt he could collect his pay at Crow's Perch. Before Geralt did though, Phillip proceeded to hang himself off the tree in Crow's Perch's courtyard. During his first encounter with "Baron" Phillip Strenger, Geralt found the man's many contradictions puzzling. This former Temerian soldier was clearly an opportunist who, after his army's resounding defeat,

served, dealt and negotiated with the occupying Empire of Nilfgaard. The local peasantry anointed him the “Bloody Baron,” a clear indication that he did not handle his vassals with kid gloves. On the other hand, he proved a surprisingly gracious host to an unexpected guest who was also a stranger and a hired monster slayer. His treatment of children and young women, towards whom he demonstrated wholly sincere, near fatherly-concern, likewise contradicted his bandit-like appearance and terrifying monicker. Ciri had learned this for herself, finding care and shelter under his roof. In exchange for information about Cirilla, the baron ask Geralt to find his wife, Anna, and their daughter, Tamara. Both had disappeared without a trace some time ago, and Phillip was slowing losing hope of ever seeing them again. Under these circumstances, a witcher was a gift from the gods. Yet the baron had hid certain facts from Geralt, such as his wife’s recent pregnancy, her subsequent miscarriage and his own predilection towards strong drink and violent quarrels. It turned out the baron would drink regularly and to excess, and Geralt got a first-hand view of how dangerous he can be to those around him during such moments when he returned to talk to the baron about what he had learned from the Pellar. Phillip had known from the start that his wife and daughter had fled, not disappeared, but, torn between shame and concern over their fate, he had tried to save face while still doing all he could to find them. On this subject there was no denying his determination. Paying no heed to the fact that a confrontation with the Crones might end tragically for him, he decided to ride into the swamps and try to free Anna from their clutches. If the Baron’s wife survives:

They say that a man’s true nature is revealed in times of crisis. The baron’s reunion with his wife was certainly such a time -

her deplorable state shook Phillip to the core. Yet when he learned there was a sliver of hope that Anna could be cured of her madness, the baron seized that thought with all his strength and decided to ride with his wife to the very end of the known earth, to the Blue Mountains, and seek help for her tortured mind there.

If the Baron's wife dies:

Despite the combined efforts of the baron, his men and Geralt, Anna could not be saved. Alas, this was not the end of the bad news - Tamara, who had also ventured into the swamp to save her mother, made it painfully clear to the baron that she no longer wanted to have anything to do with him. Having lost on all fronts and without uttering a single word, he trekked back to Crow Perch alone... Not long afterwards Geralt learned that Phillip Strenger, the one-time terror of all of Velen, had hanged himself out of grief and despair, desolated by the loss of all that he had loved in his lifetime.

Polycarp of Rinde

Despite the favors Geralt had done the Order, half-brother Polycarp of Rinde, the master at arms, was not exceptionally cordial. It was also difficult to convince him to allow the witcher to use the stock of the Order's armory.

Poor townsfolk

City life is a departure from the peaceful rhythms of the countryside. The locals here are more confident. They know what they want.

Prince Stennis

After King Demavend's death, Prince Stennis became heir to the Aedirnian throne, at least in name. However, pride and a chilly disposition rarely win the love of one's subjects, and that was very much Stennis' problem. His youth did not strengthen his claim either. Though no one openly questioned the Prince's claim to the crown, Stennis did not have enough support to actually have it placed upon his head. Given this situation, sitting out important events would have been political suicide. The war for the Pontar Valley gave him the ideal chance to bolster his position by demonstrating what a good ruler he would make. History has shown time and time again that when a realm is in chaos, deeds rather than words grant one legitimacy in the eyes of one's subjects.

Stennis greatly desired to prove himself the equal – or superior – of the Virgin of Aedirn. He had strong support from the nobility, yet the common folk had few reasons to sympathize with him.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of chapter I:

He was not lucky enough to leave the ghastly battlefield in one piece. Thus the Aedernian throne was left without a legal heir.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of chapter I:

His refusal to help Saskia said much about the youth's personality – none of it good.

If Geralt finds him guilty during Chapter II - The Walls Have Ears:

When he got involved in the conspiracy against Saskia, the young prince forgot that crowned heads fall as easily as those of serfs. He was found guilty as an accessory to the assassination attempt and paid for it with his life.

If Geralt does not find him guilty during Chapter II - The Walls Have Ears:

The young prince was found guilty of poisoning Saskia, but he could consider himself lucky as he was merely imprisoned, and not torn to shreds by the mob.

Priscilla

As a poet and a romantic, I have immortalized in flowery verse the charms both corporeal and spiritual of many women. Yet when I open my mouth to sing the praises of Priscilla, I find - hard as this might be to conceive - that my throat constricts, words turn to meal in my mouth, and all elaborate turns of speech seem artificial and empty when compared to the natural beauty, talent, sensitivity and intellect nature has bestowed her.

Priscilla (or Callonetta, the stage name under which she gained artistic renown) was, around the time of our story's beginning, enjoying the last stop on a triumphal tour of concerts that had taken her from the sumptuous courts of Lan Exeter and Pont Vanis, through Tretogor and Caelf, finally bringing her to the glorious city of Novigrad.

Professor

One of the leaders of the Salamandra attack on Kaer Morhen was a man called the Professor, who seemed to be a cunning assassin. The other leader was a mage.

It turned out that the assault on Kaer Morhen was not the Professor's first foul deed. The arrest warrant shows clearly that my opponent is a wanted man. The Professor is a wanted man and the City Guard is looking for him. A warrant for his arrest has been issued. The Professor was released from the dungeon right in front of my eyes. He mocked the law and proved to me just how powerful Salamandra is. The Professor is dead. Defeating him wasn't easy, but it was very satisfying.

Prostitute

Vizima's Temple Quarter offers joys aplenty to those who can afford them.

Proximo

Proximo, the arena master, had a talent for oration and the fights he organized were famous in all of Kaedwen and beyond. Blows rained down, armor fragments and teeth flew left and right – in other words, the audience found his arena to be equal to the merry dancing of a fair day.

Radovid V

The Witcher II

When Radovid's father, Vizimir II, had fallen victim to an assassin a few years earlier, the prince had had but thirteen summers. The country fell into chaos, as usually happens in such circumstances, and queen Hedwig would not have been able to control things. The aristocracy, as they tend to, started to organize themselves into factions, attempting to tear something out for themselves. Some practically licked the boots of Nilfgaardian emissaries, doing so with much practice and a real sense of commitment. The Regency Council appointed to save the kingdom from the conflict managed to do so, and properly hung the traitors, yet its members disregarded their underage ruler. Therefore nobody among the Redanian nobles expected that Radovid would grow up to become a firm monarch who would repay all humiliations he and his mother had suffered during the regency. The king was quick to show that, if his father had earned the moniker of "the Just", he would be remembered by history as "the Stern".

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of chapter I:

The sorceress Philippa Eilhart had the dubious pleasure of seeing the aptness of Radovid's moniker with her own eyes, so to speak. After presenting her with a list of charges, reinforced with personal animosity and information from the Imperial

envoy, the king had her eyes put out. You might say that Radovid couldn't turn a blind eye to her sins.

Even before Geralt related his impressions of the discussion with Radovid to me, I already had an feeling that it would be best to avoid attracting the Redanian monarch's interest to my modest self. When Geralt ended up in his dungeon, the king unhesitatingly provided him with a list of arguments detailing why it was in Redania's national interest that the future be deeply unpleasant for the witcher and Triss. He did point out, however, that it was nothing personal.

Unlike the proud and sometimes self-centered Foltest, or the fitful, coarse Henselt, the king of Redania was a reserved, calculating politician. Geralt learned that he was not the sort of man that would allow himself to be deceived or led astray by prevarication. The king could instantly sense falsehoods and was gifted at maneuvering his opponents into revealing whatever information he desired.

Radovid had very specific plans concerning his neighbor, the chaos-riddled Temeria. With the prospect of another war against Nilfgaard looming, he and the Kaedweni monarch aimed to partition Temeria in order to forestall the Empire from acquiring its lands.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of chapter I:

Radovid wanted to use Geralt to recover Anaïs La Valette, King Foltest's youngest child. Although she was oblivious to the fact, the girl was a trump card in a high-stakes game. The prize: Foltest's legacy.

If Geralt chooses to give Anaïs La Valette to him:

Radovid had very specific plans concerning his neighbor, the chaos-riddled Temeria. In this situation Fate, embodied by a certain witcher and a military captain, had delivered Anaïs La Valette, Foltest's illegitimate daughter, into his hands. Thus the Redanian king had a strong argument that Temeria should be acknowledged a Redanian protectorate. Thanks to skillful political maneuvering, Radovid greatly strengthened himself and his kingdom's position.

If Geralt chooses to give Anaïs La Valette to John Natalis:

Radovid had very specific plans concerning his neighbor, the chaos-riddled Temeria. Yet Fate, embodied by a certain witcher and a military captain, had delivered Anaïs La Valette, Foltest's illegitimate daughter, into the hands of Temeria's regent, John Natalis. Radovid would have to find some other way to expand his dominion.

The Witcher III

It did not take long for King Radovid of Redania to prove himself a hard and ruthless ruler, one fully deserving to be styled "the Stern." His father, King Vizimir, was murdered when Radovid was quite young, and his mother, Hedwig of Malleore, and a Regency Council ruled in his stead.

Young Radovid soon seized power in his own right, however, and wrought vengeance on those who had treated him with disrespect. He took to forcing all his potential political opponents to swear allegiance – or face death.

He waged war not only against Nilfgaard, but also against mages, whom he saw as the root of all evil. Radovid also made every effort to gain control over the Free City of Novigrad,

whose fleet and treasury could tip the scales of the ongoing conflict towards Radovid's victory.

Geralt's meeting with Radovid confirmed the rumors circling around the king's mental state. The Redanian king was a dangerous madman trapped in his own world of disturbing visions. This did not make him one jot less intelligent or cunning, however.

Despite his mental afflictions, the young king was manipulating his opponents like an adroit puppet master.

Radovid burned with particularly intense hostility (first kindled in his earliest childhood days) for the sorceress Philippa Eilhart. Rumors spoke of how he had prepared a special torture regimen just for her - and while the two dozen points they mentioned were surely an exaggeration, they accurately conveyed the general scale of his hatred.

If Geralt completes Reason of State:

The terror of Radovid's reign had led not just enemies, but also his allies and even his subjects to long for his death.

The phrase "monster in human flesh" fit Radovid the Stern perfectly. Perhaps it was awareness of all the cruel and bestial acts this madman perpetrated that led the witcher to get involved in the plans for his assassination.

Hatred for Philippa Eilhart proved to be Radovid's weakness. He was ready to do anything to capture her - even abandon the safe confines of his flagship.

The plan for luring Radovid out of hiding worked, though not without complications. Irritated by Geralt's typical cheek,

Radovid brayed for the witcher's blood, and Geralt only dodge the executioner's axe thanks to the intervention of his co-conspirators.

Perhaps the delay this caused was what allowed the ruler to nearly escape his assassins, but in the end he could not cheat fate and died at the hands of Philippa Eilhart, who descended suddenly, a veritable demon of vengeance, to revenge the wrongs he had done her.

Ramsmeat

I met Ramsmeat, the leader of a gang from the Temple Quarter. He didn't make a good impression. I think the feeling was mutual.

His boys react nervously to the symbol of Salamandra. It is evident that they have some links to the organization.

The thug probably had something to do with Berengar's disappearance.

Ramsmeat sent his people to Saint Lebioda's Hospital. His bandits attacked me when I tried to interrogate the prisoner being kept there.

Only if Geralt clears Ramsmeat:

My suspicions turned out to be false. I found proof that Ramsmeat is not the leader of Salamandra.

Only if Geralt kills Ramsmeat:

The gang leader died by my hand.

Ravanen Kimbolt

In pursuing their profession, witchers meet individuals both warm and unfriendly, yet they're mostly indifferent to the types with which they must deal, since they themselves can become so unpleasant that only tax collectors and sorceresses can rival them. Be that as it may, Baron Kimbolt made an extremely bad impression on Geralt. He was one of the most powerful individuals in Temeria, yet after Foltest's death his influence grew further. He was known to deal remorselessly with any who stood in his way. The sole thing that could be said in his favor is that he supposedly adored his hunting dogs. Yet he had to leave them behind when he travelled to Loc Muinne, and perhaps that had made him even more discourteous than usual. Why did Geralt put up with him? Well, Kimbolt apparently had something to do with the disappearance of Boussy, Foltest's son.

Did I say "something to do with the disappearance of Boussy"? Forgive me the euphemism. Geralt discovered that Baron Kimbolt had commissioned someone to murder Foltest's son. The baron was intent on assuming the Temerian throne, and the boy simply stood in his way. Kimbolt had planned to dispose of both of Foltest's bastards and become king. His claims might have even been viewed as legitimate, since he was related to Foltest in some convoluted way. The nuances escape me, though one thing is sure - he was a very distant relative.

In recounting the baron's sins, one should add that he was also the one who had ordered Aryan La Valette tortured. He wanted the youth to confess in writing that Boussy and Anais had been born of incestuous relations between Aryan and his mother Louisa. At that point the baron's plans had been different - to become king based on his personal merits alone.

Kimbolt had also had Louisa La Valette tortured. He wished her to confess that she had been sleeping with her own son, and that both Boussy and Anais had been born of the incest. Obviously, there was no truth to this.

If Geralt accuses Kimbolt:

Fortunately, through Geralt's efforts, John Natalis had Baron Kimbolt arrested. The nobleman then answered for his part in Boussy's disappearance.

If Geralt accuses Maravel:

Kimbolt was who he was, and he had done what he had done. Yet Geralt decided his investigation of Boussy's disappearance had not yielded enough evidence to accuse the baron. In John Natalis' eyes, the nobleman would remain innocent.

If Geralt accuses both Kimbolt and Maravel:

Through Geralt's efforts, both Baron Kimbolt and Count Maravel would answer for their iniquitous intentions and their parts in Boussy's disappearance. However, John Natalis lacked the manpower in Loc Muinne to deal with them both. Thus, Kimbolt's hide was saved for the time being, while the forces he commanded eagerly assisted in Count Maravel's arrest.

Rayla

The hunt for the free elves who had been resting near Murky Waters was led by White Rayla, a mercenary hired by the Order. Rayla is a natural-born soldier and a veteran of the wars with Nilfgaard, during which she was maimed and disfigured. Rayla is used to discipline and has but one passion — she hates elves and hunts them with unwavering ruthlessness.

Rayla surrounded Toruviel's elves in the village of Murky Waters, but the situation got out of control. A fight broke out between her soldiers and the elves.

Order Path:

I decided to help Rayla during the siege of Murky Waters, thus helping her to defeat Toruviel's elves.

White Rayla returned to Vizima. She was slain by elven arrows as non-humans and knights of the Order clashed in the burning city.

I met the mercenary again. Salamandra found her close to death and subjected her to mutation. Rayla recuperated and, as a mutant, regained her strength in no time. In return for her second life, she had to swear absolute loyalty to her new masters. She tried to stop me and I had to kill her. For good this time.

Raymond Gessler

The prophet Lebioda's wisdom, as recorded in the Good Book, was Raymond Gessler's recipe for life. This food peddler looked to the prophet's teachings at every step, following them even in pursuing his enterprise. This worked surprisingly well.

Raymond Maarloeve

I hired a detective named Raymond Maarloeve to help me search for Salamandra's leader. Raymond, a bitter and cynical man, refused to lift a finger until I paid him. But he also seems to know a lot, including his craft.

Someone has assumed the detective's identity and I can prove it. I found the detective's body. Someone discovered I was working with him and clearly didn't like that. They killed him and assumed his identity. I need to know why.

Relic peddler

Business, as a certain halfling would say, must keep rolling, and nearly anything can facilitate this. Wondrous amulets, invisibility caps and pornographic scenes carved in cedar wood always sold well on market days, during fairs and in military camps. Benefiting from the popularity of Sabrina's cult, a certain enterprising man had begun selling relics from the site of her execution. The demand for protective amulets always grows before a battle, so this individual did not lack for customers.

He was selling shiny new nails and in numbers great enough to nail up every participant in the Thanedd summit, but those were trifling details. As long as both buyer and seller are happy, who cares?

Reverend

The leader of the community in the Outskirts is a domineering priest of the Eternal Fire called the Reverend. His authority reaches well beyond the realm of the spiritual - people from the town and village in the Outskirts do exactly what he says. The Reverend is a religious fanatic and a hypocrite. He easily finds guilt where it doesn't exist, ignoring real offences.

The Reverend lives in the town, just left of the temple. During the day he either prays or tends to the church.

The witch Abigail was probably gone by the time I arrived at the Reverend's. Irreconcilable differences is all I can call it. We argued and I had to kill the priest.

The escalating conflict between the Reverend and the local soothsayer ended grimly. A lynch mob accused Abigail of summoning the Beast and then burned her at the stake.

After tending to the witch Abigail, the Reverend unleashed his congregation on me. I had to kill the priest.

Roach

A horse is more to a witcher than merely a means of locomotion - just ask any bandit who has taken a well-aimed hoof to the head during combat. Additionally, many a witcher has talked over the nuts and bolts of his current contract with his horse while staring at the stars shining above the lonely road, though few would ever admit to this.

Geralt named his every mount Roach, though no one really knows why or what Geralt had in mind with this name. When asked, Geralt would dodge the question or give an evasive answer. Perhaps this had just been the first word that came to his head? Roach, for her part, seemed to accept the name with no reservations. Geralt would grow annoyed and curse whenever Roach panicked and tossed him in the middle of a battle, as well as when she would suddenly turn a different direction that he wanted while he was riding at full gallop towards some urgent destination. In truth, though, he was very attached to her and would never trade her for any other horse. Not even one which, when summoned, would never stand helpless in front of a seemingly easily surmountable obstacle, such as a low fence or stray piece of timber. Nor even one which would sometimes, in some incomprehensible fashion, wind up dancing on some peasant's roof. "Well," Geralt would say with a shrug. "A witcher's horse isn't a normal animal. Constant contact with magic beverages and Signs must have left a mark." While completing a contract in Toussaint,

Geralt had the chance to find out exactly how serious Roach took her role and how well-versed in the arcana of the witcher's trade she was. He also discovered she was an entirely pleasant conversation partner.

Roderick de Wett

I met Count de Wett at Leuvaarden's reception. He hails from Nilfgaard, belongs to the Order of the Flaming Rose and advises King Foltest on behalf of the Order. He is exceptionally loathsome and arrogant, and he came to hate me from the moment we met. De Wett arrived at the party in the company of Princess Adda. I sense there is something going on between them.

De Wett turned out to be the sworn enemy of Thaler, the chief of the Temerian intelligence service."

The Order acknowledged De Wett's achievements and promoted the rat. I don't know what the count did in response, but it apparently pleased his superiors.

The Nilfgaardian spilt the beans. Now I am certain he is to blame for the return of Adda's striga curse.

I killed De Wett in a fight. One less son of a bitch to worry about.

Only if Geralt kills both the werewolf and the striga:

I encountered De Wett's ghost in the Ice Plains.

Rupert Brandhuber

Geralt first encountered Rupert near the ruins of the asylum in the forest beyond Flotsam. The Aedirnian medic claimed he had come to the area with his friend Gridley in search of rare herbs. However, it appeared they had underestimated the dangers lurking in both the forest and the ruins.

Something was missing from his story, however. Rupert had been a medic in a field hospital during the war. He and his friends had committed a crime back then. Years later the wraith of the Nilfgaardian soldier they had tortured to death summoned them to the scene of the crime so to have its revenge.

If Geralt decides to give him and Gridley to the wraith:

Crime begets punishment, and this case was no different. Geralt had no desire to defend murderers, and Rupert and his friend got what they deserved.

If Geralt decides to give him and Gridley to Loredo:

Even though Rupert was a reprehensible criminal, Geralt did not give him to the wraith. Yet he decided the villains must pay for their deeds. Thanks to the unexpected intervention of a certain woman, they were arrested, possibly for other crimes.

If Geralt tells him and Gridley to go away:

Even though Rupert was a complete criminal, Geralt did not give him to the wraith. He was content to drive both villains away.

If the quest fails:

Because later events hit him like an avalanche, Geralt did not have an occasion to learn how Gridley's and Rupert's story ended. We could make conjunctures [sic], but I leave that to the imagination of my readers.

Sabrina Glevissig

Sabrina Glevissig is one of the most powerful and influential sorceresses in the Northern Kingdoms. She lives in Ard Carraigh, Kaedwen's capital, acting as an advisor to King Henselt. The sorceress, who is sometimes unceremonious and quick to judge, is justly called the "true daughter of the Kaedwenian wilderness." She often underlines her somewhat predatory and vivid beauty by donning provocative outfits.

Sabrina arrived at Kaer Morhen while pursuing Deidre Ademeyn. She suspects the girl of being a mutant affected by the Curse of the Black Sun, which renders her a monster, a serious threat to the human race. To prove this contention, the sorceress must capture Deidre and subject her to detailed testing.

The sorceress Sabrina Glevissig was from Ard Carraigh, the capital of Kaedwen, and had been King Henselt's advisor. The reader, however, should not be deceived by that term – this true daughter of the Kaedweni wilderness was famous for her determination and temperament. There was no exaggeration to the rumors that on many occasions she would interrupt the King, thumping her fist on the table and yelling that he should shut up and listen - and the King would indeed shut up and listen. Sabrina Glevissig's predatory nature was paired with an equally predatory beauty, which she emphasized through appropriately chosen attire. Add to that the power she commanded as a sorceress, and it should become clear to what

she owed her strong position not only in Kaedwen, but also beyond its borders.

This position could not protect her from the king's wrath, however, and when she failed Henselt one time too many, the sorceress ended up at the stake, where her life ended.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of chapter I:

Sabrina cast a curse on the monarch and the battlefield with her dying breath. Many years later we were to feel the effects of this malediction.

Sabrina had become a martyr in the eyes of some soldiers, thus possibly achieving greater esteem in death than she had enjoyed in life.

It cost Geralt a great deal of sweat, but he finally found a solution to the problem. Sabrina's spirit finally found solace, and the curse she had placed on Henselt was lifted.

Salma

I'm not one to lie. Nor do I kill without reason.

The witcher's investigation uncovered that a succubus named Salma was responsible for the string of killings afflicting the Novigrad city guard. This came as a surprise, for succubi do not usually commit premeditated, cold-blooded murder. This is not to say they are not dangerous: they will at times kill on accident, when carried away on a particularly gushing stream of ecstasy. At other times, they kill in self-defense: though they have the look of slender maids from the waist up, their supple limbs hide incredible strength. They are also invulnerable to fire, the igni sign included. They present witchers with an intractable dilemma: does this monster, who wishes me no ill yet all the same often causes harm, deserve death, or mercy? That is exactly the perplexing question faced by Geralt of Rivia. In the end he believed Salma and decided to let her go free – though he could not shake off the feeling that he might live to regret it.

Sambor

The saying “No sweets without sweat” was certainly true in Sambor’s case. This trader with a proverb for every occasion ran a thriving pawn shop, selling interesting scrolls, books and manuscripts among other items.

Geralt was surprised to learn that Sambor was also a skillful barber. For a fistful of orens, the trader could work wonders with the witcher’s mane.

Sendler

In Lobinden tanning and leather-working was the trade of Sendler, a skilful and reliable artisan. He ran a small stall with goods of his own making, but also accepted commissions for specific products. In these hard times, he made ends meet by working hard with his own hands.

Serrit

Sometimes a person's name sinks into memory and brings fear to one's heart at its first mention. Who was the mysterious Serrit? What goals drove him and what role would he play? Geralt had yet to learn all of this.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of chapter I:

The vision of Auckes' memories lifted the veil of secrecy surrounding the other kingslayer. Serrit had also been acting on Letho's orders, and all three had been behind the deaths of Foltest and Demavend, as well as the attempt on Henselt. Serrit could certainly answer more questions, and Geralt knew where to find him.

Unfortunately, Síle found the assassin first. With his dying words, however, he confirmed de Tansarville's complicity in their conspiracy, as well as the fact that he knew Geralt. Serrit died before saying anything more, leaving the mystery unsolved.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of chapter I:

Serrit was probably one of the witchers Roche had mentioned. He and Auckes trying to cover Letho's escape when Síle located their hideout. Though both died in the end, they completed the task, buying the last kingslayer time to flee.

Shani

The Witcher

Soon after I arrived in the Outskirts I met Shani, an acquaintance from a long time ago, in quite dramatic circumstances. Shani is completely devoted to medicine, her passion, and she had plenty to do in the Outskirts, so there was no time for small talk. I got the impression that this sensible, intelligent girl likes me a lot.

I dragged Shani into the business with Salamandra, and although the girl was in danger, it all ended well. Shani finished what she had to do in the Outskirts and returned to Vizima, to her house in the Temple Quarter.

Shani works at Saint Lebioda's Hospital during the day and spends evenings at her lodgings in the Temple Quarter. She hates it when people disturb her at work so it's best to visit her later in the day.

During the party Shani recounted her experiences during the Battle of Brenna, where she tended to the wounded. I have a feeling Shani has come to like me a lot.

If Geralt left Alvin with Triss:

I left Alvin in Triss' care. Shani decided that I don't trust her and that I prefer the sorceress. She is angry with me, and it

seems our affair is over.

If Geralt left Alvin with Shani:

I've decided to leave Alvin in Shani's care. The medic took my choice to be a proof of my trust. She decided that I like her more than Triss, which only improved our relationship.

Dandelion delivered a letter from Shani. The girl asks me to find Alvin, who has gone missing. Her letter exudes worry for the boy and me - Shani hopes to see us both soon and also hopes we can become a family.

I answered Shani's letter and explained my feelings.

Shani has moved back to rebellion-torn Old Vizima. She is tending to the wounded of both factions in a makeshift field hospital.

I met Shani, or actually a vision of her created by my mind, in the Ice Plains. The medic aided me as I pursued the Grand Master.

The Witcher II

If Geralt left Alvin with Shani:

Some of you have surely heard the rumors about the relationship that bloomed between the young medic Shani and Geralt. I hasten to inform you that they are all true. I consider Shani a friend both true and old. We go back to the days when I lectured in minstrelsy at Oxenfurt University, and I was the one to introduce her to the witcher. Upon Geralt's return to the living, they were reunited in Vizima, where the red-haired medic competed with Triss Merigold for Geralt's heart. She

emerged victorious from the rivalry. The flame of their romance blazed bright, but it burned out quickly. Though a very young woman, Shani proved more mature than the witcher, who had always found relationships puzzling and difficult. Geralt would dodge his obligations towards her, preferring instead to pursue the missions King Foltest assigned him. The medic quickly realized this flour would yield no bread. She had a serious conversation with the witcher, and they parted amicably. Shani accepted an offer to teach at Oxenfurt and left for that city, whereas Geralt followed Foltest to the lands of the La Valettes. After splitting with Shani, the witcher needed comforting and quickly found solace in Triss Merigold's arms.

The Witcher III

Geralt entered the Oxenfurt sewers expecting to hunt down a hideous monster – so you can imagine his surprise when down one of those dank, slimy corridors he ran into Shani, an old and dear friend. Geralt and I had first met this extraordinary young woman years earlier, when she was just a coltish coed, but by this time she had grown into a dignified doctor and a fearless field medic for the Redanian Army.

This latter role had led her, and a unit of soldier escorts, to descend into the sewers. Their goal was to gather a sample of the venom spewed by the monstrosity squatting there. Geralt, a gentleman through and through, agreed to help her in her task.

Geralt's encounter with Vlodimir von Everec reminded him that he and Shani had once shared passionate (though passing) feelings for each other. He also became aware some remnant of these feelings was still lodged in his heart...

At times fate composes tales so shocking no poet would dare put his name to them, for fear his public would mock them as overly outlandish. Such was the case when Geralt and the ghost of Vlodimir von Everec shared a body for an evening and accompanied Shani to the wedding of Aldona, her friend from the Academy. Some might have let this unusual escort interfere with their enjoyment of the evening – but not Shani. Looking around at the tasteful wedding decorations, smelling the rich odor of berry-laden rowan – a plant near and dear to her heart, one which summoned up fond childhood memories – Shani felt the heedless abandon of her younger years return and, overjoyed, threw herself into the thick of the festivities.

One thing is certain – Shani was not bored by the company of Vlodimir von Everec, who showered her with professions of burning desire and swept her off her feet with his maniacal energy. Yet when the hour came for him to return to the netherworld, she breathed a sigh of relief, for now she could spend some time alone with Geralt, who was much more sensitive and predictable (though Vlod would probably just call him boring).

A pleasantly-begun evening blossomed into a night of rapture, then settled into a golden dawn on the shores of a lake, serenaded by nature's first awakening murmurs. Though Shani seemed delighted by this course of events, the morning air had put her in a reflexive mood. She parted ways with Geralt, explaining she had to think through what had just happened.

Fate decreed Shani would not linger long in her hometown of Oxenfurt. For as long as the war lasted, she was the Redanian army's to command, and her commander had decided to send her to Kaedwen, the conflict's eastern front. Before setting off

she managed to inform Geralt about a certain Professor Shakeslock, who might be able to help with Gaunter O'Dimm. Geralt thanked his friend and they parted ways, hoping they would meet again, later or, quite preferably, sooner.

She-troll of Vergen

I can confirm, based on my own experience, that feelings of jealousy for a partner and demands for monogamy (even if made for the wrong reasons) can cause many a quarrel and even, on occasion, outright end a relationship. As it turned out, she-trolls are not immune to these feelings and are perfectly capable of turning into “screamers,” thus spoiling the idyll of the family hut.

If Geralt chooses to kill her during Chapter II: Where is Triss Merigold?:

If a monster is busy killing humans, Geralt tends to put his scruples aside. Seeing no chance for dialogue, he ended the female troll's life.

If Geralt chooses to help her against Adam Pangratt during Chapter II: Where is Triss Merigold?:

Once more Geralt put the cart before the horse as the witchers' rules go and stood alongside the monster, rather than the humans. He even managed to convince the troll to return to her husband, who eagerly awaited her.

The final episode took place when both creatures arrived in Vergen to help defend it. The Kaedweni had occasion to learn that the phrase “the monstrosities of war” can be more than a figure of speech.

Sheala de Tancarville

The Witcher

I know from experience that magicians are not above lusting for power. Among sorceresses alone, there are many whose ambition leads them pull strings, moving kings and other mighty forces of this world. To command the elements in spectacular fashion, summon genies, bend fate, dictate royal proclamations, or at least to force others to eat chicken with cutlery. That is why magicians such as Síle de Tansarville, known as the Koviri Loner, stood apart from the others. Lady Síle was not known to interfere in politics, at least not visibly, instead dedicating her days to research. Strict, calm and collected - unlike other sorceresses, she did not display her feminine charms. Nor did she flirt with men, jiggling her posterior before them at every occasion. Though -and I must remain true to myself here - the world would undeniably be a much poorer place without typical sorceresses.

The reason for Síle de Tansarville's presence in a backwater town like Flotsam was initially a mystery, yet it quickly became clear that she had come there because of the kayran - a river monster. For sorcerers gladly use the organs of exotic creatures as ingredients for magical preparations, and Síle was no exception.

Síle's presence also turned out to be a lucrative opportunity for Zoltan, however odd that might sound. The dwarf cut gems for

her magical apparatus.

One has to admit that Síle's help proved to be useful. The sorceress did not fear the monster and bravely fought, aiding the witcher with her powers.

It appears Síle had very specific plans concerning the King Henselt of Kaedwen and his attempts to father a heir. From what we've been able to tell, the meddling of Síle and other sorcerers in the world of politics was further-reaching than anyone had imagined.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path:

Meeting Síle in Henselt's camp came as a slight surprise. On the other hand, it was hard to ignore her arguments – another regicide would plunge the north into utter chaos, and she did not intend to let that happen.

The sorceress helped to repel the attackers, once again proving that her powers should not be underestimated.

The posthumous examination of the would-be assassins' memories revealed something shocking – Síle had been directly involved in at least one ruler's death. Things were getting increasingly complicated... Unfortunately, the sorceress had already managed to flee the camp.

The interests of the sorceress and the assassins were no longer the same. It appears that de Tansarville began to cover her tracks, beginning with the elimination of her former allies.

Following the sorceress was no easy task. The Koviri fled for Loc Muinne, always one step ahead of Geralt.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path:

The shocking truth about Síle de Tansarville and the more important pieces of the puzzle concerning her role in the events in the north would not be fully revealed for some time, but Geralt chanced upon the first clue of her complicity by pure coincidence. One of the dreams stolen by the harpies pointed to her as the one who had commissioned the assassination of the king of Aedirn, Demavend.

If Geralt removes the flawed diamond from Síle's megascope during the quest "Enter the Dragon":

The sudden failure of the megascope would have had tragic consequences, but Geralt's heart was soft. Síle disappeared from Loc Muinne and there was no further news of her.

If Geralt does not remove the flawed diamond from Síle's megascope during the quest "Enter the Dragon":

The sudden failure of the megascope had tragic consequences for Síle, whose life came to a grisly end. As they say, magical travel can be hazardous to your health – consult a doctor or a folk healer first.

The Witcher III

Geralt and I both knew Síle de Tansarville, the Recluse of Kovir, the once proud member of the Lodge of Sorceresses who in her day plotted, persuaded spellcast the world into a shape of her liking. Síle always claimed she acted only out of concern for the good of magic and mankind, yet the blood of a great many people stained her hands, including that of kings who stood in the way of her aims. She took part in countless conspiracies

and herself devised many intrigues in which the witcher often figured as an unwitting accomplice, obstacle or incidental victim.

Thus Geralt's prior meetings with the sorceress were stormy at best. On at least one occasion it could be said that Geralt saved Síle's life, but this did not mean he felt very warmly about her.

Be that as it may, the sight of the tortured and maimed sorceress in King Radovid's dungeon made the witcher's cold heart swell with sorrow and sympathy. Perhaps it was these feeling, or perhaps it was simply respect for a defeated former enemy now suffering at the hands of cruel fanatics, that made Geralt take pity on her. Aware of what fate awaited her if she lived, Síle de Tansarville was grateful to be given a dignified death, one free from torment and humiliation.

Sheldon Skaggs

I met the dwarf Sheldon Skaggs for the first time, if I remember correctly, a few years back under the ancient oak Bleobheris, where I treated the local count-palatine and the public gathered in great numbers to hear my performance. Skaggs is a mighty warrior, straightforward like all his folk, plain of word, yet at the same time sensitive about his race, and especially the honor of dwarven women. As a veteran of Soddan and Brenna, where he fought as an officer of the Mahakam Volunteer Detachment, he appreciates songs of military and heroic deeds. He does not hesitate to express his appreciation through material means, thus disproving those who would portray all dwarves as misers insensitive to true art.

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

Many Northern kings appear in this story: rash and thoughtful, amorous and frigid, brave and cowardly. The reader should easily see that should their crowns be removed and a pitchfork, sword, a bunch of bills, or a goat's apple given in a scepter's stead, they would be as human as we are. The same, however, could not be said of the Emperor of Nilfgaard, the White Flame Dancing on the Barrows of His Enemies, whose shadow fell over all the events I written down. In this case, that shadow was represented by Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen, a consummate diplomat who started more than one war, only to end it accepting homage from the defeated.

If Geralt chooses to kill Aryan during Prologue:

It was difficult to guess the role of this black-clad Imperial emissary, yet even such an unskilled politician like Geralt could easily assume that nothing Fitz-Oesterlen did was done out of fancy or by chance. He also had reasons for giving a helping hand to the witcher and Marie Louise, yet these reasons were revealed only much, much later...

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of chapter I:

We met Shilard again in King Henselt's camp, which was not surprising, since Fitz-Oesterlen always circled monarchs like an old vulture circles a carcass. The discussion he had with Geralt brought no hard facts, but a careful listener could take

more from the questions the Imperial diplomat asked offhandedly, than from the answers he offered the witcher. He was interested in the situation in the north, the sorcerers and their summit in Loc Muinne, as well as in seemingly unimportant trifles. Either way, I already suspected back then that he was playing a game of the highest stakes.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of chapter I:

The meeting with Shilard during Geralt's visit to the camp was not as friendly as their previous ones. It turned out that Shilard's gambit saw the witcher as a pawn blocking the way to Triss Merigold. Shilard intended to use her in his political intrigues, and, since Geralt had become an inconvenience, the envoy ordered him killed without a second thought. Then he headed for Loc Muinne.

I do not know the nature of the deals which linked Fitz-Oesterlen and Radovid V the Stern, but one could easily assume that they served the Empire's political interests first and foremost. Geralt had had enough of Shilard's political games, and began repaying the debts the ambassador had incurred with a delicate assault on the envoy's personal inviolability. Then came the smashing of his face.

If Geralt chooses to rescue Anaïs La Valette or help Philippa Eilhart in chapter III:

The Nilfgaardian emissary's speech caused more confusion at the Loc Muinne summit than an attack by the Emperor's "Impera" brigade would have. If sowing chaos was the Empire's goal, then Fitz-Oesterlen discharged his duties exquisitely.

If Geralt chooses to rescue Triss in chapter III:

Shilard was to be the witcher's trump in recovering Triss. Unfortunately he turned out to have less value than either he or Geralt thought, a fact they learned when Renuald aep Matsen shot his countryman in cold blood. If anyone was more surprised than Geralt, it was – for a moment, anyway – Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen.

Siegfried of Denesle

The Witcher

Siegfried of Denesle, a knight of the Order of the Flaming Rose, is an idealist who adheres to the Order's rules but is not devoid of common sense. Polite and open, he is unlike many of his brothers from the Order in that he is not prejudiced. He is undeniably courageous and demonstrated this when he descended alone into the sewers to fight the cockatrice.

Siegfried and I defeated the cockatrice together. The knight proved both polite and a skilled swordsman.

I have a feeling Siegfried is starting to see through his own misapprehensions. He has realized that killing monsters will not eliminate all the evil of this world, and his duties towards the Order sometimes force him to choose the greater of two evils.

During the bank robbery in the Trade Quarter, I opposed Yaevinn and his forces together with Siegfried. The attack reinforced the knight's conviction that the Order's dislike of non-humans is justified.

I asked Siegfried for military support during the assault on Salamandra's headquarters in Vizima. The knight, who was among those invited to Leuvaarden's party, agreed to help me break up the organization.

If Geralt does not side with Yaevinn in Force Recon:

The knights led by Siegfried defeated the Scoia'tael during the clash in the Golem Burial Ground.

If Geralt chooses the Order path:

On the hill under the Old Manor, during the fight against Salamandra, my friend aided me again.

If Geralt chooses the neutral path and decides to kill Siegfried:

Siegfried of Denesle died by my hand when he stood between me and the Grand Master. He remained loyal to the Order of the Flaming Rose to the very end.

The Witcher II

The knightly caste should oblige its members to follow the path of honor, of certain rules and ideals. Unfortunately in our rotten times, many among the knighted, dismissive of the vows they made, are often more interested in their own privileges and chances to stuff their pouches. Compared to all those false knights, robber barons and other heraldic rabble, the House of Denesle stood apart like a lion among mongrels. Like his father Eyck of Denesle before him, the young Siegfried always followed strict moral rules in life and an iron code of honor, to the point that his devotion sometimes bordered on fanaticism. During our last meeting, Siegfried had served in the ranks of the Order of the Flaming Rose, and he played no small part in the events at that time in the capital of Temeria.

If Geralt chose the Order Path in The Witcher:

It was because of those past times that Siegfried made no objections and allowed Geralt to enter Loc Muinne.

If Geralt decides to give Anais to John Natalis:

Their friendship proved its worth for a second time when Geralt and Roche faced a patrol sent to bring Anais La Valette under Radovid's protective wing. Because the Temerian and the witcher's interests differed from the king's, bloodshed seemed inevitable – yet, remembering their friendship, the knight of Denesle conveniently “forgot” that he saw them in the Kaedweni camp.

Sigismund Dijkstra

The individual masquerading as Sigi Reuven was in fact none other than Sigismund Dijkstra, the former head of Redanian intelligence and a man Geralt and I had had many dealings with in the past.

He had fallen out of King Radovid's favor and nothing had been heard of him for many years. Now it seemed he had finally decided to emerge from the shadows, but instead of returning to high political wrangling he dove deep into the criminal underground – and quickly surfaced as one of its leading figures.

Though he did not show it, in his own way Dijkstra respected Geralt – even though the very thought of their last meeting brought a pained grimace to his face. The two had found themselves standing in each other's way during the coup on Thanedd Island. The stalemate was quickly broken when Geralt summarily broke Dijkstra's leg.

The spy's life story would make for a positively enthralling adventure tale. A victim of Philippa Eilhart's intrigues, he had been forced to flee Redania at breakneck speed – or have his own neck broken by assassins. For a certain time he sought refuge in far-off lands, but in the end he decided to return to the Free City of Novigrad.

Well aware of Geralt's extraordinary talents, Dijkstra asked him to help find his stolen treasure. Though Geralt knew the identity of the criminal mastermind responsible, he decided not to divulge this information and set about investigating as if the case were a complete mystery.

Though the witcher's lips remained tightly sealed regarding my role in the treasure heist, Dijkstra still sniffed out his dishonesty – and made it clear how much he disliked being played for a fool.

Though Dijkstra did not aid the persecuted mages out of the goodness of his heart, Triss appreciated his support all the same, for it proved vital to the endeavor's success.

Dijkstra opposed the mage hunts sweeping the city, but for Philippa Eilhart he was willing to make an exception. He had never forgiven his one-time friend for betraying and then trying to kill him. Unfortunately, Geralt needed Philippa alive - and knew how to free her.

Though Dijkstra craved vengeance, he was willing to resign from his plans in return for valuable information.

Anyone who thought Dijkstra had broken all ties with the world of political schemers and plotters was sorely mistaken. His great comeback was to be a patriotic act that would free Redania from the rule of a madman – the assassination of King Radovid.

If Reason of State is completed:

As an experienced dragonslayer once commented, more than once heads have only rolled after the dragon's been slain, the

mead broken out and the campfire lit, for when it comes time to share the treasure, hunters of beasts often become slayers of men instead. Such was the case after the assassination of Radovid, when Dijkstra tried to renege on the terms of their arrangement and do away with Thaler and Vernon.

If Geralt decides to intervene:

Dijkstra counted on Geralt maintaining witcher neutrality in this matter - a miscalculation which cost him his life.

Skalen Burdon

Cecil's nephew, the young Skalen Burdon, had been taken in by the alderman after the lad's parents perished in one of the nonhuman massacres that occurred in Aedirn. As friendly, hard working and efficient as his uncle, Skalen took it upon himself to act as Vergen's official representative in his uncle's absence, providing all newcomers to the town with any information or assistance they needed.

Skjall

Ciri encountered plenty of liars, scoundrels and villains along her path - but luckily happened on some decent folk as well. Certainly worthy of being counted among the latter was Skjall, a young warrior from Lofoten. Initially, he and his family tended to Ciri's wounds, nursed her back to health, then he helped her flee the Wild Hunt. In doing so, he sacrificed the thing Skelligers hold dearest: his honor. Accused of cowardice, he was forced to perform a heroic deed to clear his name. Sadly, he failed. Mortally wounded by a beast in an abandoned garden, he suffered a slow, painful and lonely death.

Ciri could not restore Skjall's life or even clear his unjustly sullied reputation - but at least she was able to give him a proper burial. Skellige legend holds that Skjall's soul now dines with his ancestors in the Heavenly Fest Hall, where mead flows in torrents and the ballads never cease. Though my own nature does not tend towards the religious, I must admit I would very much like this to be true.

Succubus

The torched village near Vergen proved to be the home of a real succubus. This beautiful creature, possessing hooves instead of feet, drew handsome young men to it in order to seduce them and feed on their life forces. The seductress was accused of brutally murdering many young men, and the accusation seemed to be solid. For you must know that the unpleasant scent of sulfur is not the sole inconvenience one must endure when encountering succubi, which can be as dangerous as vampires.

If Geralt chooses to side with Ele'yas during Chapter II - With Flickering Heart:

Geralt investigated the murders and concluded that the succubus was indeed guilty of the murders of which it was accused. The witcher had no choice but to slay the dangerous, though intensely beautiful, creature.

If Geralt chooses to side with the Succubus during Chapter II - With Flickering Heart:

Geralt investigated the murders thoroughly. He concluded that the succubus was innocent and that it was being framed by a jealous lover. The witcher cleared the seductress of the charges, and she proceeded to thank him for it in her customary, beautiful manner.

Svanrige Tuirseach

A hard life awaits the child who cannot escape his parents' shadow. Following the death of his father, the beloved King Bran, Svanrige became the formal ruler of Clan Tuirseach, which controlled vast territory on the isle of An Skellig.

Yet this quiet and mild-mannered young man seemed firmly tied to the apron strings of his mother, Birna, who sought to control his every waking deed. With such an overbearing caretaker it was hard to imagine how Svanrige could ever grow into a man able to rule a mighty Skellige clan in his own right.

If Geralt does not intervene during King's Gambit:

Svanrige's election as ruler of Skellige was a rather unexpected turn of events. It was widely thought to have been the result of backroom maneuvering by Birna, who used the chaos in the aftermath of the other claimants' deaths and the shame that fell on the an Craites to achieve her ambition of placing a puppet in her control on the Skellige throne.

It thus came as a great shock for her when young Svanrige showed his claws and tore up the humiliating treaty with Nilfgaard she wanted him to sign - and then washed the shame of this near-submission from the isles with the blood of their eternal enemy. This blood simultaneously wiped away any doubts whether the new king was worthy.

Sven

Fate would have it that a youth named Sven was to represent his unit in a duel with the famous Butcher of Cidarlis. Since Sven's heart was full of valor, he was not about to back down, though the chances were slim that he would survive the fight with his empty head still attached to his shoulders. I will tell you soon how the story ended.

If Sven survives in the arena during the quest The Butcher of Cidarlis:

Fighting side by side, Geralt and Sven emerged from the duel victorious, defeating two exquisite swordsmen. In recognition of the youth's valor and skills, King Henselt knighted him, and Geralt gained several valuable allies in the Kaedweni camp.

If Sven dies in the arena during the quest The Butcher of Cidarlis:

Geralt and Sven fought side by side, yet the youth was no match for their opponents. Only the witcher left the arena alive.

Tamara Strenger

The baron's daughter, Tamara, had disappeared with her mother some time before Geralt arrived at Crow's Perch. The baron described her as a charming young maid of nineteen summers and the apple of his eye. No wonder, then, that the lord of Crow's Perch was desperate to find her.

Yet it seemed Tamara had finally had enough of the way the baron treated her mother and decided to flee along with her.

Geralt found his way to a hut belonging to a fisherman who had helped Tamara and her mother in their flight. There he learned that a horrible beast had captured Anna and dragged her into the swamp. Tamara was able to escape with her life, and had found shelter with a relative of the fisherman in Oxenfurt.

If Geralt talks to her in Oxenfurt:

Tamara had indeed made it to Oxenfurt safe and sound and would not even consider returning to her father. Determined to save her mother from the clutches of the creatures that had imprisoned her in the bog, Tamara had joined the ranks of the witch hunters, hoping their support would allow her to survive a trek into Crookback Bog.

If Geralt freed the Ghost in the Tree:

Tamara and her escort of witch hunters made it to the swamp clearing and there, to her great astonishment, was her father, who had also set out to free Anna. This family reunion was not, however, to be a moment of celebration - though Anna regained human form and a sound mind for a brief moment, she had only enough strength to bid farewell to her loved ones before passing on.

If Geralt killed the spirit or freed it before being given the task:

Tamara and her escort of witch hunters made it to the swamp clearing, but what she found there was no cause for joy, to say the least. The Crones no longer controlled her mother, true, but the experience had left her with an addled mind.

Tamara's father, the Bloody Baron, whom hithertoforeshe had held in contempt, took the high ground this time and swore to travel to the ends of the earth to search out even the slightest hope of returning Anna to a sound mind. Though Tamara did not want to admit it, she appreciated her father's gesture.

Tavar Eggebracht

The Nilfgaardian Tavar Eggebracht came from a family with a long military tradition. His ancestors had proudly served under the Golden Sun banner during the conquests of Maecht, Geso and Metinna, fighting and dying for their emperor.

That last fate was met by Tavar's cousin, Colonel Tibor Eggebracht, who fell in the Battle of Brenna during the previous Northern War. Despite this fact Tavar felt no hatred for Nordlings, considering his cousin's death a grievous yet inevitable consequence of war. He performed his duties as quartermaster diligently, with the good of his soldiers his top priority.

Thaler

The Witcher

In the Temple Quarter of Vizima lives a fence named Thaler. He has many things that belonged to Berengar, and also deals in illegal goods. The fence is a repulsive man and uses particularly foul language.

During the day he can be found in his store, which is located in a house in the Temple Quarter.

Thaler put Berengar's witcher equipment up for sale. I wonder how he acquired these things.

The fence's circle of influence is really wide. It also includes city guards.

For a fence and a thug Thaler has surprisingly extensive contracts, not only with thieves, but also among the affluent.

There was a lot of circumstantial evidence suggesting that Thaler was working for Salamandra, yet he proved to be innocent.

To my surprise Thaler the fence was invited to Leuvaarden's reception, at which only the rich and influential were present.

It turned out that Thaler is the chief of Temerian intelligence and his fence guise is simply one of many assumed

personalities.

If Geralt stays neutral when Count de Wett and Thaler are in the courtyard:

When Count de Wett accused Thaler of treason, I did not object. The former head of Temeria's Intelligence Service was summarily executed.

If Geralt defends Thaler from Count de Wett in the courtyard:

Thaler is interested in the political situation in Vizima. He's also investigating an important case involving forgeries.

The Witcher III

Geralt was not expecting to meet Bernard Ducat, former head of Temerian intelligence, in such circumstances. Their relationship went back a long ways, to the time when Ducat was leading an espionage operation in the Vizima Temple District disguised as a fence named Thaler. Thaler the fence was known for his gruff manners and extremely filthy tongue.

Much had changed since those days, but Clogs the cobbler (as Ducat now called himself) was as rude and vulgar as Thaler had ever been.

His exact role in the attack on Radovid was not clear, but considering his experience and professionalism, one could hardly expect him to share that information, not even with an old friend.

Spycraft leaves no margin for error, sentiment or dropping one's guard...

If Geralt chooses to intervene and fight Dijkstra:

...Thaler should have known this, but instead he left himself exposed and only escaped death thanks to Geralt's intervention, his life saved by the witcher's departure from his usual neutrality.

If Geralt chooses to not intervene and lets Dijkstra kill Thaler:

...Thaler died in a violent bout of political maneuvering when it turned out his plans conflicted with the greater good of Redania.

The Ghost in the Tree

The Whispering Hillock – if the world were not as it is but as it should be, this name would denote a place of hidden nooks and lovers sharing heartfelt lies in hushed voices. Instead, it stood for danger and terror, for a place where wild animals, driven by some mysterious power, had killed many an inhabitant of Downwarren. Geralt agreed to investigate the problem, and soon discovered the animals were controlled by a spirit entrapped in a tree growing atop the hill. The spirit spoke to him in a woman's voice, and claimed to have once been a druidess who had kept watch over the Velen grove until the Crones murdered her and imprisoned her ghost in the tree. The forces of nature she had once served now protected her from the fiendish sisters' further designs. The unfortunate locals had died as collateral damage, for, the spirit attested, nature's wrath is unrestrainable and distinguishes not between unwary innocents and unwelcome ill-wishers.

The spirit begged Geralt to lift her curse and free her from her torment. In exchange, she promised to rescue the orphans from the swamp clearing, who would otherwise face a cruel death at the hands of the Crones.

If Geralt decides to kill the Ghost in the Tree:

Yet too much innocent blood had been spilt on the Whispering Hillock. Geralt did not believe the spirit's explanation and

destroyed its cursed heart. In doing so he expelled it from this world for good.

If Geralt decides to spare the Ghost in the Tree:

These whispered words convinced Geralt and, following the spirit's instructions, he lifted the curse, transferring the druid's ghost into the body of a black mare. And so the spirit was set free, and the dark powers afflicting the Whispering Hillock were dispersed.

The Incredible Lockhart

Expelled from the Ban Ard magical school for carousing and gambling, Lockhart was selling his magical tomes and amulet at quite moderate prices.

The Mighty Numa

Mighty Numa's moniker was not baseless. This huge man supposedly had inhuman grit which he was liked to show off by, among other things, arm wrestling. He had no equal in this discipline. They say his grip could crush the hands of weaker opponents. Many tried to win the title of champion from him, yet nobody had managed to best him at this competition.

The Mysterious Elf

It turned out not only Geralt was looking for Cirilla. Also on her trail — a mysterious elven mage. Like the witcher, he had gone to Keira Metz to inquire after Ciri's whereabouts. During this conversation he also revealed that he kept a hideout in the ruins near the village of Midcopse.

Geralt decided to follow up on this lead. Though he was not able to establish the mysterious mage's identity, he did learn that he had been traveling with Cirilla some time before and the Wild Hunt was after him as well. Geralt's investigation in Skellige unearthed evidence that the mysterious elven mage had protected Ciri from certain death at the hands of the Wild Hunt's warriors. Skjall's words drew a new detail onto the emerging picture of the mage. After the Wild Hunt's attack, Skjall had seen Ciri and a mysterious elf sail away from Skellige, their course set for the high seas.

The Pellar

As is often the case with charmers, diviners, healers and other such cunning folk of the countryside, the pellar of Blackbough was a man of mystery, around whom circled a great many rumors and legends. Some claimed he could commune with the dead, other, that he had a different sort of familiarity with the grave, having put an axe in his father's head in a fit of rage when he was a young man. Still others said he showed an indecent fondness for barnyard animals.

All of these rumors aroused the fear and respect of the backwater peasants of Velen, and the pellar most likely did little to discourage them. Yet even the most cunning of men make the occasional professional error – had Geralt not intervened, who know what might have become of the old seer at the hands of the Baron's enraged men. The pellar turned out to be more skilled at soothsaying than curing indigestion. Though what he divined for Geralt was murky at best, the witcher managed to put the pieces together into a somewhat logical whole. Sometime after that the old pellar asked Geralt to help him hold Forefathers' Eve. When witch hunters sought to break up the ritual, Geralt defended its participants and earned the soothsayer's trust and respect. Many people have proverbial skeletons in their closet that they would be aghast to have exposed to the public eye. One can thus imagine the pellar's horror when his darkest secret literally emerged from the grave during Forefathers' Eve in the form of his murdered father's

ghost. To the unfortunate shaman's further horror, old man Ambros was clearly out for revenge. Yet Geralt intervened and the pellar was saved from otherworldly vengeance. The circumstances of the murder were explained, and the pellar, though still guilty of murder, was revealed to be a victim in his own right. By helping the pellar do battle with the demons of his past, Geralt earned himself the old man's undying gratitude.

Thorak

The local rune master had been an important figure in the dwarven community of Vergen since time immemorial. At present that role was filled by Thorak, a dwarf who had taken up the legacy of his master, Baltimore, a few years earlier. Thorak ran his workshop impeccably, earning the respect and trust of his kin. He offered services of the highest quality and, like any ambitious artisan, was looking for a way to perfect his techniques and abilities.

If Geralt gives Thorak Baltimore's notes:

Thorak proved to be a most helpful dwarf, and, after doing him a favor, Geralt could count on large discounts at his workshop.

If Geralt refuses to give Baltimore's notes to him:

Only after he died at Geralt's hand was it revealed that Thorak had been behind the disappearance of his master, Baltimore. Thus ends a story of envy that pushed even an honest dwarf to crime.

Townsfolk

Unmarried townswomen are treated strictly by their parents and largely kept at home. They're a bit bored, but also curious.

Triss Merigold

The Witcher

Along with me and the other witchers, Triss fought in defense of Kaer Morhen. The sorceress stood against the mysterious mage, one of the leaders of the assault. She was injured and lost consciousness. Ironically, Triss is allergic to magic and she can only be administered natural healing potions.

Triss Merigold is my friend. She saw me die and my return to the world of the living surprised her. Triss is a sorceress — one of the most influential and talented of her kind. She has numerous powerful friends, and she knows the Kaer Morhen witchers. She is one of the few people who know the way to the fortress. I have a feeling Triss likes me a lot.

After Leo's funeral, the sorceress teleported to Vizima. She decided to use her extensive contacts and search for information on Salamandra. Triss promised to find me as soon as I arrive in Vizima.

Triss found me in the swamp, where I lay unconscious after my clash with Azar Javed. She transported me to her house in the Trade Quarter and took care of me until I came round. Lying there awake I overheard Triss gossip with her friend on the magic communicator, and I now know that other sorceresses are also interested in Salamandra.

If Geralt leaves Alvin with Shani:

I left Alvin in Shani's care. Triss decided that I don't trust her and that I prefer the medic. She is angry with me and it seems our affair is over.

If Geralt leaves Alvin with Triss:

I concluded that it would be best to leave Alvin in Triss' care. She saw my choice as proof of my trust. She decided I liked her more than Shani, which only improved our relationship.

Dandelion delivered a letter from Triss. The sorceress has asked me to take good care of Alvin. She is also worried about me — she hopes we can have a steady relationship and raise Alvin together when I complete my mission.

I answered Triss' letter and explained my feelings.

After Foltest's return to Vizima, Triss fell into disfavor — the monarch didn't approve of her political scheming. The sorceress is practically a hostage at the Royal Palace and her fate is in my hands.

Neutral Path:

Triss joined me during the attack on the Old Manor. As a friend, she aids me in my search. I think she seeks revenge on Azar Javed for their magical duel at Kaer Morhen.

I met Triss, or rather a vision of her, in the Ice Plains. The sorceress helped me pursue the Grand Master.

The Witcher II

I have known the sorceress Triss Merigold for a long time, for she is one of the Geralt's closest friends. The young, pretty, talented, auburn-haired mage from Maribor hardly reminded me of the giggling flapper of years past. Her knowledge, abilities and loyalty had brought her far. A hero from Sodden, known as the Fourteenth of the Hill - for she was mistakenly counted as the fourteenth mage to die in that battle - she sat on the royal council of King Foltest of Temeria. And though they say that a monarch's favor is uncertain - for the king had once expelled all mages from Temeria - Triss had managed to gain Foltest's trust. As regards the witcher, everyone who was witness to Triss' friendship with Geralt, anyone who saw them together, would easily confirm that these two had much in common... And it is common knowledge that an old flame never dies...

For those reasons, after Foltest's death the sorceress decided that she would help the witcher most by staying by his side. Not heeding her threatened position at court, she harnessed all her strength and powers to helping Geralt, whom she still had feelings to.

I was not there at the time, but I heard tales of the show of power Triss put on at that beach near Flotsam. Though she was weakened and barely conscious, the sorceress managed to sustain a magical barrier and the three survived the Scoia'tael arrows thanks to her.

Nobody was surprised that Triss knew Sile de Tansarville. A more attentive observer would certainly have noticed the chill in their greetings, as well as Triss' evident dislike of her elder colleague.

If Geralt agrees to forget about chasing the king slayer:

The sorceress' greatest desire was to be the one and only woman in Geralt's life, and to forget about all the troubles and dangers they had recently experienced. Geralt agreed to her proposal, but before they could act, Fate showed them how hard it can be to carry out such romantic plans.

If Geralt decides he must continue chasing the king's slayer:

The sorceress' greatest desire was to be the one and only woman in Geralt's life, and to forget about all the troubles and dangers they had recently experienced. Geralt was close to agreeing to her proposal, yet he knew that it would be impossible to lead a quiet life until he could clear his name. His decision saddened Triss, but the sorceress understood.

Triss was kidnapped by Letho. Geralt and I feared what he might do to her. Believe me, it was eating me alive, making rest impossible.

Searching Sile's quarters and talking to her neighbor brought more questions than answers. It appeared that Triss had known the woman she had talked to, but the fragments of the conversation recounted to us remained mysterious.

Triss had reached Aedirn – there was evidence to prove it. Finding her would prove difficult, however.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path and helps Philippa in order to lift a curse from Saskia instead of rescuing Triss:

In Aedirn, the search for Triss ended with the discovery of a bitter truth - transformed into a nephrite figurine, she had ironically been in the possession of an oblivious Geralt for a time and he had brought her straight to the Nilfgaardian camp.

The Nilfgaardian emissary envisioned a special part for her in Loc Muinne...

If Geralt chooses Roche's path and rescues Anais La Valette instead of Triss:

In the end the sorceress was freed by a witcher, yet it was not Geralt. Thanks to Letho she escaped unharmed, but I am sure she would be glad to forget the time she spent in Nilfgaardian captivity. Thus were the lovers reunited among the ruins of Loc Muinne after their long parting, and the story of Triss Merigold's kidnapping ended.

If Geralt rescues Triss instead of Anais La Valette or Philippa:

Yet the witcher foiled this plan, wrestling Triss from Nilfgaardian hands. I described the story's finale in one of my ballads, omitting the carnage Geralt wrought there, however. For his part, he thinks that my version, with its colorful description of a mounted pursuit of Renuald aep Matsen, a limp sorceress trundled across his saddle, is too pretentious. Witchers...no sense of *licentia poetica* at all.

Triss had one more part to play, and a significant one at that. Thanks to her, De Tansarville's machinations were publicly revealed. The scene – now known as “Triss Merigold accuses the Lone Witch of Kovir” – passed into history and presently is one of the more common motifs in contemporary painting.

The testimony Shilard extracted from Triss was used to accuse the sorcerers. In this way Miss Merigold contributed involuntarily to a witch-hunt greater than any before it.

The Witcher III

I always considered it a point of particular pride to count Triss Merigold of Maribor among my closest and dearest friends. This exceptionally talented sorceress was a shining star of her profession, the former mage advisor to King Foltest, and a famous hero of the Battle of Sodden, known as the Fourteenth of the Hill. yet in no way did she resemble her often unbearably haughty sisters in magic. Her deft mind, warm smile and considerable personal charm had always won over even the hardest of hearts.

Though my personal relations with Triss never ventured beyond the fraternal, Geralt of Rivia at one point found her allure irresistible. From then on the two shared feelings that ran far deeper than a superficial and fleeting fancy.

Yennefer told Geralt that Triss had recently taken up residence in the Free City of Novigrad.

It seemed Triss had gone into hiding from the so-called witch hunters persecuting magic wielders in the city, turning to one of the leaders of the local underworld for protection.

After a bit of a run-around Geralt found the sorceress, who had indeed entered into an arrangement with the so-called King of Beggars. She paid for his protection by providing magic services to his organization. Though Triss did not know anything about Ciri and her stay in Novigrad, she promised to do all within her power to aid Geralt's search.

Though theoretically Triss and Geralt had ended their romance half a year earlier, it was clear the feelings they felt for each other had not vanished so easily. To deal with this, the sorceress pretended that nothing had happened and the witcher, as is his wont, sheepishly masked his feelings with a

mix of hesitant interest and fake indifference. It must be said that both of them handled the situation quite awkwardly.

The plan to get close to Caleb Menge that Triss presented to the witcher was very risky and placed her in great danger. The sorceress knew, however, that Ciri's life might be on the line, and so did not hesitate for even a moment.

If Geralt kisses Triss:

The sorceress' laugh, the look in her cornflower blue eyes, the memory of enchanting moments spent together - all that surely weighed on Geralt's decision to kiss Triss in the Vogelbuds' garden. And though their moment of sweet oblivion lasted briefly, it breathed a gale's worth of new life into feelings between them.

If Now or Never is completed:

Though Triss and Geralt said their final goodbyes on that wind-swept Novigrad dock, in the end the sorceress decided not to leave for Kovir after all. She knew that when Geralt asked her to stay, the witcher was opening up his heart to her for the first time.

Geralt and Triss met again at Kaer Morhen. Triss arrived there at the witcher's behest to help defend Ciri, whom she had always treated as a younger sister.

Troll of Flotsam

Like most of his kind, the troll living near Flotsam had built a stone bridge and demanded a toll from those crossing it. The folk of Lobinden quickly realized it was a preferable alternative to keeping the structure in good order themselves, so the troll's presence was not a problem for anyone. But, believe it or not, the troll took to drinking like the most degenerate hobo, thus proving that alcoholism is not unique to the more developed races.

A personal tragedy was behind the troll's drunkenness - the death of his wife. She had been killed by unknown assailants.

If Geralt chooses to kill the troll:

Geralt did not think long and, in accordance with his profession, cut the troll down, ending this story.

If Geralt chooses to help the troll:

Once the death of his beloved had been avenged, the troll pulled himself together, promising to rebuild the bridge and quit drinking.

Troll of Vergen

A troll kidnapping a beautiful sorceress? I could believe that. A troll abandoned by his wife for that reason? That's ballad material. Yet not many people would believe a ballad in which a troll asks a witcher for help.

If Geralt chooses to kill him during Chapter II - Where is Triss Merigold?:

Discussions between monsters and witchers almost always end the same way. This time was no exception and the troll departed this world.

If Geralt chooses to help him during Chapter II - Where is Triss Merigold?:

The grateful troll returned Triss' ribbon to Geralt and so ended this part of the story.

The final episode took place when both creatures arrived in Vergen to help defend it. The Kaedweni had occasion to learn that the phrase "the monstrosities of war" can be more than a figure of speech.

Udalryk

Jarl Udalryk was an enigmatic figure to say the least. Some mysterious ill surrounded him, causing others to shirk his company.

Geralt could not help but notice that Udalryk did seem to be acting strangely, muttering to himself often and showing signs of suppressed panic, as if he lived in constant fear of something - or someone.

Geralt's private talk with the jarl confirmed the rumors. Udalryk was convinced the gods spoke to him, sending him prophetic dreams and demanding he make sacrifices.

The tale of the strife between Udalryk and his brother Aki over the family sword threw new light on the jarl's mysterious problems. That the voices he heard demanded he injure himself suggested a vengeful spirit was involved.

Udalryk's madness deepened ever more, finally prompting him to pluck out his own eye as payment for unspecified sins.

If Geralt chooses to fight the Hym:

In the end Geralt's determination and skilled use of his witcher blade saved the day by freeing the jarl from the wraith that was tormenting him. With this, Udalryk could finally know peace.

If Geralt goes along with Cerys' plans:

In the end Cerys' ingenuity freed Udalryk from the wraith that was tormenting him. With this, the jarl could finally know peace.

Uma

If Geralt discovered Skjall before Uma:

Geralt didn't know exactly what the deformed being that had sailed to Skellige in Ciri's boat was. He had no doubt, however, that it was somehow tied to her fate - and just might be the key to finding her.

It turned out the diminutive freak had spent sometime in the possession of Donar, jarl of Hindarsfjall. Later Donar sold him to a Novigrad merchant who thought he was perfect material for a top-notch jester.

Based on Skjall's detailed description, Geralt was able to recognize the creature at the Baron's castle as the very same deformed midge Skjall saw on Hindarsfjall.

Sadly, it was impossible to communicate with this "Uma" (as the creature had come to be called). he seemed to dwell in a world all his own. Yet Geralt knew Uma held the key to finding Ciri. Even if no pertinent information was forthcoming from the creature's lips, surely further investigation would squeeze some solution out of this riddle.

If Geralt discovered Uma before talking to Skjall:

When Geralt encountered a misshapen midget at the Bloody Baron's court, he didn't think much of it. Yet when he heard a

similarly deformed being has washed up on Skellige's shores in the same boat in which Ciri and her mysterious companion had sailed off shortly prior, he connected the two at once. It was clear this rough-hewn hunk of flesh was the key to finding Cirilla.

Sadly, there was no communicating with Uma. The gnarled twiglet lived in his own miniature world. Yet Geralt knew Uma was the key to finding Ciri. Even if no pertinent information was forthcoming from the creature's stunted lips, surely further investigation would squeeze some solution out of this riddle.

Though Yennefer and Vesemir agreed Uma was suffering from a powerful curse, they could not reach a consensus about how to go about lifting it. Sharp words were exchanged before Vesemir stepped in and announced that before Yennefer did anything he would try one of the traditional witcher methods.

All that was left to the others was to wait.

Though Vesemir's method had worked to disenchant the famous Swan of Poviss, it brought no breakthrough here. Vesemir did, however, succeed in confirming that Uma's body was a sort of magic prison in which some other being was trapped.

Yennefer's method did not prognosticate a high chance for Uma's survival - yet was now the only remaining option for lifting the curse.

The ritual succeeded beyond their wildest expectations. The person cursed inside Uma turned out to be none other than Avallac'h, a powerful elven Sage the witcher had met before.

Vanhemar

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's personal sorcerer had only just made Geralt's acquaintance when he died at the witcher's hand.

Vaska

Vaska is the leader of the brickmakers who live in the swamp. She talks in riddles and seems a bit crazy.

She seems to worship the Water Lords — probably vodyanoi — and is quite touchy when it comes to them.

Velerad

Velerad governs Vizima, the capital city of Temeria. In Foltest's absence, Velerad holds the highest authority in the city. The burgomeister knows me from long ago, since he was the one with whom I negotiated the contract for lifting Princess Adda's striga curse. Although I don't remember Velerad, I have a vague feeling that he has grown old and taken to drink since we first met. People say that Velerad has lost his authority and doesn't run the city as efficiently as he used to.

The burgomeister seemed glad to see the striga problem solved. He told me his hands were tied and he could not help me find those guilty of reactivating the curse. I got the impression that Velerad cannot handle the situation now that a rebellion has engulfed Vizima.

Vernon Roche

The Witcher II

There is a man like Vernon Roche in every monarch's retinue. Brave and determined, ready to execute any command, and thoroughly hated at court, he knows that only allegiance and service to the king keep him in his position. Roche was the leader of the Blue Stripes - King Foltest's special forces - renowned, among other things, for battling the Scoia'tael and quelling many a rebellious nonhuman community. It was under his command that the unit rose to fame. Vernon earned Foltest's favor and trust through his deeds. One word from the King and he would jump headlong into fire, asking only how long he was to stay there and hold his ground. That's the kind of man Vernon Roche was at the time.

Vernon proved to be perceptive when he refused to flatly believe Geralt's guilt. Too many things needed to be explained, and the Blue Stripes' commander decided risking cooperation with the suspect to get his hands on Foltest's real killer. Thus he remained loyal to his king even after his death.

Continuing his private investigation, Vernon headed for the Temerian-Aedernian border, where he expected to find clues the kingslayer's whereabouts. Thanks to his very best informant, Roche knew that the man could have been hiding among the Scoia'tael located in the vicinity of Flotsam, a

trading post. Thus way the royal hound, Vernon Roche, was on the hunt once more...

The list of Vernon Roche's achievements and heroic deeds was almost as long as the list of the atrocities and depravities he had allegedly committed along the way. It is a fact that, as the scrawlings on the wall of the University of Oxenfurt say: "Pacifying nonhumans is like wallowing in mud – everyone gets dirty, generally with blood."

If Geralt chooses to help Roche in Ruined elven baths:

It is hard to please men such as Roche. However, capturing Iorveth had the Blue Stripes' commander practically beaming with joy.

If Geralt chooses to help Iorveth in elven ruins:

To put it mildly, Roche was irritated with Geralt's decision and his trust in the witcher did not grow.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of chapter I:

Vernon was a man of action. When he learned of Loredó's treason, he crafted a bold plan to remove him from office.

Roche achieved his goal, getting rid of the blackguard Bernard Loredó. The Blue Stripes' captain did not forget the witcher's help. From that moment on Geralt and Vernon became allies through thick and thin.

Roche was behind the conspiracy against Henselt. The plan to weaken the Kaedweni ruler's position had been formed back when Foltest was still alive, and Vernon was one of its

architects. It placed him in a very risky position, but the captain of Temeria's Special Forces kept his cool.

After the conspiracy was revealed and his men massacred by Henselt, there was no turning back for Vernon – he had become a wanted criminal in Kaedwen. He decided to settle the score with Dethmold and Henselt no matter the cost – yet he did not forget his primary goal.

If Geralt chooses to let Roche kill Henselt during the end of Chapter II:

When Fate placed the king of Kaedwen in his hands, Vernon used them to kill Henselt. Thus he demonstrated the weight of his threats and the distance he would go in order to settle his scores.

If Geralt chooses to stop Roche from killing Henselt during the end of chapter II:

Fate placed the king of Kaedwen at his mercy, yet Vernon chose not to stoop to using the same tactics as the kingslayers. Though his hand itched, this cold professional knew how to keep his emotions at bay.

The Blue Stripes' captain wanted to settle scores with the kingslayer and Dethmold. Thus he left with Geralt for Loc Muinne to close the final chapter of this story.

If Geralt chooses to rescue Triss Merigold during Chapter III:

There they split up – Vernon left to square things with Dethmold. Taking into account the determination previously displayed by the commander of Foltest's Special Forces, I

wouldn't have bet a wooden nickel on the magician. As it turned out, my instincts were right.

If Geralt chooses to rescue Anaïs La Valette during Chapter III:

Vernon Roche always settled his accounts – the Kaedweni king's pet sorcerer learned that the hard way. The Temerian captain made good on his promise and avenged the deaths of his men – now only the question of the kingslayer remained unanswered.

If Anaïs is handed over to Radovid:

Vernon felt the burden of great responsibility when he freed Anaïs La Valette, the heir to the Temerian throne. He acknowledged Radovid's arguments and decided to serve his country's interests by supporting the Redanian king and placing the girl under his care.

If Geralt convinces Roche to hand Anaïs over to John Natalis:

Vernon felt the burden of great responsibility when he freed Anaïs La Valette, the heir to the Temerian throne. He felt, however, that the kingdom's interests required him to support John Natalis, so he placed the girl under his care. Thus he remained loyal to the Temerian crown.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of chapter I:

Because of his contacts with the Scoia'tael, Geralt lost the chance to work with Vernon Roche. Their ways parted.

Vernon's help was as unexpected as it was invaluable. Even though Geralt stood with his opponents, Roche helped the witcher, saving him from certain death. Furthermore, he did so

out of kindness, thus proving that tales of his callousness are somewhat exaggerated.

Roche not only provided him with valuable information, but also risked his neck, helping him to acquire royal blood.

Though Geralt had not sided with him fully earlier, Vernon trusted that the witcher would be able to get to Foltest's murderer. Though that meeting was to be their last, at least in this story, Geralt never forgot the debt he owed the Blue Stripes' captain.

The Witcher III

As commander of Temerian Special Forces - an elite squadron known as the "Blue Stripes" - Vernon Roche had been one of King Foltest's most trusted subordinates. Time and time again Roche proved himself loyal, effective and a thorough professional. Few could match his skill at subduing revolves, fighting off Nilfgaardians or snuffing out bands of Scoia'tael.

At the start of our story, however, he had lost his king, his men and his homeland, and so had resorted to waging a guerilla war against the overwhelmingly occupying forces.

In his war of assassinations, ambushes and night raids, Roche depended on Redanian help, though it was clear he took no pleasure from working with Radovid.

Some time later it was revealed that Roche had took part in a conspiracy to assassinate Radovid. He had realized that once the war was over this mad king would offer no prospect of a free Temeria, making Roche himself a liability and a potential foe.

If Vernon takes part in the assassination:

Roche took part in the assassination personally. The king of Redania's death was to be a guarantee of Temerian independence. In order to achieve this, Roche was not afraid to strike a deal with the Nilfgaardians. This move played right into Dijkstra's hand.

If Geralt does not intervene, letting Dijkstra kill the others:

Geralt, refusing to get involved in their conflict, left them to work it out for themselves. As a result, Roche died at Dijkstra's orders.

If Geralt does intervene, killing Dijkstra:

Fortunately, Geralt intervened and Roche escaped from the co-conspirators' meeting-turned-bloodbath.

If Geralt asks Vernon for help fighting the Wild Hunt:

When asked to help defend Kaer Morhen Roche kept his word and went to the keep, lending his considerable martial prowess in the fight against the Wild Hunt.

Ves

The Witcher II

The fair-haired Ves stood apart from the rest of Vernon Roche's unit, and not only in that she was the only woman in an elite formation of hardened cutthroats and swashbucklers. Her girlish face and shapely body would stand out even if a uniform did emphasize them. For there is something in soldier women that attract a man's gaze, and Ves was no exception. The reader should not, however, be misled by this description - one does not earn a Blue Stripes membership with good looks, but with skill, determination and, at times, ruthlessness. Anyone disregarding Ves would pay dearly for misjudging this young woman."

Because of her gender, Ves would sometimes receive assignments where her beauty was more important than her combat abilities and efficiency. Roche had used Ves as his trump card more than once.

Ves had a steady hand and sure eye, making her the best sharpshooter in the unit. Not many could match her at throwing knives either.

The Witcher III

Ves was a veteran officer of the Blue Stripes and the only soldier from Roche's former unit to have survived the war. After the

Blue Stripes were decimated and officially disbanded, Ves remained at her commander's side to continue with him the seemingly hopeless struggle for Temerian freedom.

Energetic and tough, Ves had always impressed with her skill with crossbow and sword alike, outshooting and outshining all the men in her unit to a laughable degree.

Though usually well-disciplined, Ves refused to heed Vernon's command and set off alone to face enemy forces.

Ves' rash move landed her in a horrible pot of trouble that only Geralt's sword could dish her out of.

If Geralt asks Roche for help at Kaer Morhen:

Even had Ves not owed Geralt her life, she would have come to the defense of Kaer Morhen all the same, for she would follow Vernon Roche into the very bowels of the abyss.

Vesemir

The Witcher

Vesemir is the oldest and most experienced witcher, possibly older than Kaer Morhen itself. He spends each winter in the fortress and sets off on the road when spring comes, just like all the other witchers. Despite his age, Vesemir is robust and lively. Many youngsters could envy him his health. An excellent fencer, he was the one who taught me swordsmanship.

He has raised many witchers, including me. His disciples treat him like a father. Leo was probably the old witcher's last protégé — the boy's death shocked him.

He was one of a few to survive the assault on Kaer Morhen. He is well aware of the magnitude of the hatred some people feel for witchers.

The Witcher III

Vesemir was the oldest living member of the Wolf School and most likely the oldest witcher of any school on the Continent.

About as long in years as the ruins of Kaer Morhen themselves and eternally complaining about his creaky bones, this master of the witcher trade gave no thought to a well-deserved retirement. Gray, but still spry, he continued to ply the monster

hunting trade into his golden years – effectively, too, as he'd seen more beasts than all his students put together.

A harsh and demanding instructor in Geralt's youth, over the years he had become something of an adoptive father and mentor to the other witchers, always ready to help with sage advice and steady hands.

In the spring of 1272, when our story begins, Vesemir had joined Geralt on his search for Yennefer, trekking with him through war-ravaged Temeria.

Vesemir always said no witcher had ever died in his own bed, so death in combat surely awaited him as well. Death's waiting ended on the mournful day when the Wild Hunt descended on Kaer Morhen in pursuit of Ciri. Vesemir gave his all to protect his former ward, whom he had always treated like an adopted granddaughter, and died a hero's death at the hands of Imlerith, the Hunt's cruel general.

Vesna Hood

A barmaid from the tavern in the Outskirts, Vesna is quite a determined girl. She sells food and alcohol.

Vespula

Though timid in looks, no adventure did skip her.
My heart melts when she asks, “Ever had a Big Dipper?”

Vetala

Vetala is a mythical beast, invented by the common people. Tales about him are typical examples of urban legend, spread by word of mouth, which grow increasingly fantastic with each retelling. Vetala is believed to be an intelligent ghoul or graveir who lives in the city cemetery as the absolute ruler among scavengers. Not only does Vetala speak the human language, he is also known for his sophisticated manners. Vetala is said to prefer corpses over living flesh. He rarely attacks humans and demonstrates unusual courtesy on the rare occasions when he does.

I met a talking ghoul, a real freak of nature.

If Geralt decides to kill Vetala:

I decided to kill him, for despite his eloquence he was still a monster, a threat to humans. And I'm a witcher.

Vigi the Loon

Even for Skelligers, who value courage above all else, Vigi's fearlessness went far beyond the pale of bravery, deep into the realm of suicidal madness. This Clan Tordarroch warrior had strived to earn the right to be called Vigi the Unfearing. Instead, his actions earned him the nickname Vigi the Loon – and it seemed this outcome suited him just fine.

It was Vigi who, craving glory and wanting to save his home isle from the Ice Giant, had convinced Hjalmar to brave the journey to Undvik. Many of their crew were killed during this expedition, and Vigi himself wound up a prisoner in the Ice Giant's cave. The second Geralt freed Vigi from his cage, the Skelliger lived up to his moniker and awoke the sleeping giant with a hearty kick. To be fair, afterwards he fought bravely and effectively against the monster, proving he had the making of a mighty warrior behind his madness. That was not the last time Vigi and Geralt fought side by side. Vigi answered Geralt's call and went with Hjalmar to Kaer Morhen to fight the Wild Hunt. Though once again he fought with skill and courage, this time he fell in battle. News of his heroic death reached Skellige, where in ballads he has earned the title that eluded him in life: Vigi the Unfearing.

Vimme Vivaldi

The dwarves have been in the banking business since the legendary King Desmond of Temeria was just a snot-nosed brat in short trousers asking for me “yam” with his “bwed.” Since then, the prominent dwarven banking families – the Giancardis, the Vivaldis and the Cianfanellis – have only expanded their services, establishing branches in all the larger cities of the North.

Vincent Meis

Vincent is the Captain of the City Guard and the main executor of the king's law in the Temple Quarter.

It appears I've fallen into disfavor with the City Guard, or more to the point with Vincent himself. He thinks I'm hindering his attempts to break up Salamandra's network.

The Captain of the City Guard released the Professor, one of the most wanted criminals of Temeria.

On his orders the city guards are forbidden to talk about Salamandra.

Vincent Meis was one of the few who knew that I was going into the sewers to kill the cockatrice and that I could only leave by the exit where I encountered the Salamandra bandits.

The Captain of the City Guard is innocent. I have evidence to prove that he wasn't collaborating with Salamandra.

Vincent is the Captain of the City Guard and the main executor of the king's law in the Temple Quarter.

People say that it's impossible to get in touch with Meis at night. After dark, the captain vanishes into thin air.

If Geralt kills the werewolf:

It turned out that Vincent Meis had a dark secret. The Captain of the City Guard is a lycanthrope. As a werewolf, he roamed the streets at night and fought criminals. I decided the monster was too big a threat to the people of the city and killed him.

If Geralt spares the werewolf:

It turned out Vincent Meis had a dark secret. The Captain of the City Guard is a lycanthrope. As a werewolf he roams the streets and at night and fights crime. I decided that Vincent poses no threat to common folk and let him live, though he is in fact a monster.

Carmen, a prostitute who is in love with Vincent, asked me to find a remedy for lycanthropy and I told her how to cure her beloved. Vincent is no longer a werewolf, so nothing stands in the way of his and Carmen's love.

Vinson Traut

The owner of Seltkirk's armor was an officer in Henselt's army. Suspected as an accessory to the conspiracy against the king's life, Vinson Traut was hiding somewhere.

Though Geralt wanted to solve things amicably, Vinson was less than eager to cooperate. On top of that, he decided to commit a fancy form of suicide – by attacking the witcher. Left with no choice, Geralt sent him to the great beyond.

Visionary

During my travels I've seen many prophets, preachers of "divine truth" who frothed and gibbered foretellings about the end of the world, depravity of women, lechery of kings and rising taxes. The Visionary extolled the martyrdom and sanctity of Sabrina Glevissig, and these ideas had become the foundations of a local cult. Supposedly the sorceress' favor made him invulnerable and safe. However there was no way to decipher how much truth lay in his tales.

If Geralt takes Roche's path:

There was a relatively simple explanation for his ardent faith. The Visionary was none other than Yahon, the soldier who had ended the sorceress' suffering by piercing her with a spear during the execution. That event had changed his life and guided him down the path to prophethood.

One theory to explain his invulnerability ascribed warding qualities to the suet used to make his candles. Indeed, their scent would keep even ghouls at bay.

Weavess

Though the youngest of the three Crones, the Weavess was not one jot less ugly or evil than her older sisters. It was she who wove their magic tapestries of human hair gathered as tribute from the young children of nearby villages during their “cutting” ceremonies. These tapestries were how the worshipers of the Ladies of the Wood made contact with and paid homage to their deities.

The fight on Bald Mountain was meant to put an end to all three Crones, but Weavess evaded her elder sisters’ fate. She was able to escape by transforming into a flock of ravens and took Cirilla’s medallion with her.

Whispess

The Crones of Velen were not just old — they were literally ancient, having been around since the reign of the first human kings and possibly even since the coming of the elves.

Of the three ghastly sisters, the Whispess was the most ancient, or at least so claimed the swamp dwellers' whispered legends. Whispered, for if they spoke too loudly the Crone would hear it — for she demanded tribute in the form of human ears, which she hung from trees and through which, using primeval magic, she heard all that happened in the swamp. Yet no magic, new or old, could save her from Cirilla's wrath.

Willis

If Geralt takes Napp's bribe:

Unfortunately for Willis, Geralt couldn't find the culprit.

If Geralt turns in Napp:

Willis berated Napp, whose late mother the armorer never charged for his services. Having gotten fed up with the locals, he then called over the Nilfgaardians to turn Napp in and who was summarily hung for his crimes. However, this deepened the rift between the locals so much that they began to travel half a day's ride to another armorer to have work done, even though the other armorer did shoddy work.

Yaevinn

Yaevinn the elf is as conceited as he is eloquent. He seems cunning and wise; moreover, he despises humans, considering them aggressive barbarians, and has respect only for the Elder Races. Still, this disillusioned elf treats me with respect in his own, peculiar way. Everything suggests that Yaevinn is preparing for battle — in the swamp he has created a training camp for the Scoia'tael under his command.

Scoia'tael Path:

The Scoia'tael led by Yaevinn defeated the Order of the Flaming Rose during the clash in the Golem Burial Ground.

Yaevinn is interested in artifacts of historical value for the nonhumans — he's looking for something which could serve as a banner for his Scoia'tael. Yaevinn remains a cynic and a pragmatist even when thinking about the heritage of the Elder Blood.

During the bank robbery in the Trade Quarter I decided to support the Scoia'tael. Yaevinn believes that the stolen money will finance an uprising.

I asked Yaevinn for military support during the assault on Salamandra's headquarters in Vizima. The elf, who was among those invited to Leuvaarden's reception, agreed to help me dismantle the organization.

On the hill under the Old Manor my friend aided me again. We stood shoulder to shoulder against Salamandra.

Order's path:

Yaevinn accused me of causing Toruviel's death. A fight broke out and he died by my hand.

Neutral path:

Yaevinn accused me of causing Toruviel's death. I didn't let him provoke me and he went his own way.

Yennefer

The witcher first met the raven-haired sorceress a good twenty years back. Their friendship and feelings between them were born of a common adventure involving a genie and a wish granted to Geralt that intertwined their fates inextricably.

In the time since then their relationship had, however, been quite stormy - rich in ups and downs, crises and break-ups. Geralt and Yennefer's love provides irrefutable proof that "opposites attract."

A few years ago Geralt and Yennefer had, after a long separation full of adventures for them both, gotten back together again. Their moment of repose was interrupted by the Wild Hunt, which took Yennefer captive. The witcher set out at once to save her, but lost his memory while doing so. When he finally recovered it, he immediately set off once more on his quest to find his beloved sorceress.

The circumstances of Geralt's initial reunion with Yennefer after two years were quite different than he had imagined. The sorceress was not only safe and sound, but had even secured the aid of an unexpected and mighty ally - the Nilfgaardian Empire.

If Geralt romances Yennefer in Skellige:

A thick air of repressed hostility reigned during Geralt's time with Yennefer in Skellige. More than once the sorceress sharply expressed her displeasure, sparing no cutting remark - just like during the best years of their relationship. In the end, however, the witcher's patience was rewarded, and their expedition to retrieve the mask of Uroboros brought the former lovers back together.

The gulf that had arisen between them during their time of separation seemed that much narrower.

In order to obtain the information they needed Yennefer did not hesitate to resort to necromancy, and destroyed the goddess Freya's garden while doing so. If the proud sorceress felt any guilt as a result, as usual she showed no sign of it.

If Geralt helps Yennefer in The Last Wish:

The idea of hunting another genie together did not at first arouse Geralt's enthusiasm, but Yennefer had a truly valid reason for wanting it. If she succeeded in forcing the genie to take back the wish binding her to the witcher, she would finally know if the feelings between them were truly love or merely magic.

If Geralt tells Yennefer he loves her in The Last Wish:

The genie granted Yennefer's request and broke the thread of destiny binding her to Geralt. Luckily it turned out their love could continue - without the need for supernatural assistance.

Though the sorceresses' difficult character had made life miserable for everyone at Kaer Morhen, in the end it was her

stubborn determination that led to Uma's disenchantment and lifting of Avallac'h's curse.

Yennefer had always felt some ends justified otherwise unsavoury means. When it became clear rescuing Ciri would require the help of Philippa Eilhart and the other sorceresses of the reviled Lodge, she forgot about any bad blood and convinced Emhyr to grant them amnesty.

Zoltan Chivay

The Witcher

The dwarf's name is Zoltan Chivay. He claims to have witnessed my death years ago in Rivia. Zoltan seems reasonable and pragmatic. He takes the world with a grain of salt and sees irony in most things. Just like other nonhumans, he also seems vexed by the racist atmosphere in Temeria.

I helped a dwarf being attacked by racists. He recognized me as an old friend of his.

In front of the inn in the Outskirts a group of racists attacked a dwarf, but I ignored them. It turned out the dwarf is an old friend of mine.

Zoltan managed to get to the Temple Quarter. The dwarf was happy to see me again.

I met Zoltan again. This time it was on a hill, when the fight between nonhumans and the Order began for earnest.

Zoltan organized the nonhumans' escape from the ghetto. I helped him and the group managed to get through the burning city. I bade farewell to Zoltan. I have a feeling I will not be seeing him soon.

The Witcher II

The dwarf Zoltan Chivay is a close friend of Geralt's and mine, met while we were sneaking through the forests and wilderness of Brugge and Sodden, when war raged all around and the hooves of Nilfgaardian cavalry thundered on the high roads. Like many of his kin, he later fought at Brenna in the Mahakam Volunteer Detachment, a unit that contributed greatly to the victory, although this fact is sadly ignored by most chronicles. After the war he wanted to start a business, and even thought about taking a wife, yet fate had things arranged a bit differently. Zoltan had proved his friendship to the witcher many times, eagerly standing at his side in any moment of need, disproving those who claim that each and every dwarf is a spiteful, aggressive son of a bitch, that they do not care for human plight and that coexistence is impossible. I know many nonhumans and if anything stands in the way of coexistence, it is human ignorance, spite and ungratefulness.

They say a dwarf would get himself hanged for a friend, but Zoltan was in my company on the scaffold for another reason. The local authorities had accused him of colluding with the Scoia'tael, and that is usually enough to earn one the main role in entertainment like a morning execution.

The charges that Zoltan had contacts with the Squirrels were not entirely baseless. Though he did not actively participate in military action, the dwarf knew the unit's leader, Iorveth, among others.

It was not surprising, really, that, having encountered the aforementioned human spite and ungratefulness at every step, Zoltan sympathized with the dwarven and elven freedom fighters. He was balanced in his views, however, and valued loyalty to old friends above all else.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path:

Though it was not exactly Zoltan's cup of tea to visit Henselt's camp, a place where non-humans were at best treated with mistrust and disdain, he decided to go with us. Yet he felt rotten, knowing nearby his kin were preparing to repel the same Kaedweni we were visiting.

Everyone's patience has limits. Thus it should not be surprising that he eagerly took the chance to leave Henselt's camp and head to Vergen.

After the fall of Vergen the roads were flooded with refugees. On one such road outside Henselt's camp, I met Zoltan, who had luckily managed to flee safely. It is hard to remember the last time I was as happy as when I saw his bearded face. Zoltan and I kept each other company during that journey and we reached safety together. But that is a different story altogether.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path:

Zoltan went with us to Vergen and, with enthusiasm worthy of his military past, began training the local militia that would soon see it's baptism of fire. Though it appeared they would have a hard time, Zoltan was ready to defend the cause he believed in, fighting at the side of elves and men.

Given an occasion to heave an axe in good company, Zoltan grabbed it faster than I can unlace a woman's corset – which is pretty fast, provided I'm sober. He followed Geralt without hesitation and proved his worth, showing that there's more to him than just a loud mouth.

Zoltan won great renown during the defense of Vergen, closing the gate and stopping King Henselt's retreat nearly single-handedly. Thus he sealed the victory over the Kaedweni army that memorable day.

Just as I did, Zoltan decided to remain in Vergen when Geralt and Iorveth chose to travel to Loc Muinne to complete the final chapter of this story. There was still much to do in the newly independent Pontar Valley, and the dwarf turned out to be the right sort to take up some of the responsibilities.

The Witcher III

A dwarf, a soldier of fortune, a veteran of the Battle of Brenna, an unassailable optimist, a committed altruist, a lover of rough drinks and rougher songs, a master gwent player and, above all, a dear and loyal friend to me and Geralt – ladies and gentlemen, allow me to present Zoltan Chivay. We first became fast friends years ago, when Geralt and I ran into Zoltan and the band he was leading at the time across war-stricken Riverdell.

It proved our fate to cross paths many times after that, and we eventually became inseparable companions, sticking together through good and ill. At our tale's beginning Zoltan and I had gone into business together running a Novigrad tavern called the Rosemary and Thyme.

By saving me from the transport taking me to my doom Zoltan proved yet again he would never abandon a friend in need. In return, Zoltan soon found himself on the receiving end of an act of friendship. Suffering some financial difficulties, he had taken out a loan from one of the Novigrad mob bosses, and as a result had made many unfortunate enemies.

He planned to repay his debt by gathering a prize collection of gwent cards – a risky endeavor, given the cutthroat nature of Novigrad gwent circles at the time, and one that would have never worked without Geralt's help.

Zyvik

Though the generals and marshals are the ones to earn the laurels and honors from glorious battles, victorious campaigns and successful wars, the core of every army is made up of simple soldiers and non-commissioned officers. Lance-corporal Zyvik of the Dun Banner was the best example. Like any good soldier, he was no philosopher and did not question his superiors' orders, yet ruled his subordinates with an iron fist at the same time. His combat experience and years of practice had taught him a few key rules: One sleeps whenever possible and rises whenever awoken. Drinking on duty should be discreet and restrained, and a mouthful of booze must always be left for the superior officer. And finally, while on the march women should only be raped when nobody's watching. Add to that a sense of extreme pride in duties fulfilled, a trait so characteristic of a career soldier, and you get, my dear readers, a portrait of the model Kaedweni veteran.

The lance-corporal had taken part in the previous war with Aedirn, which had proven fatal for the Dun Banner. Isolated on the battlefield, the unit had been decimated and its standard fell into enemy hands. Though Zyvik might have considered himself lucky – he had been recuperating at a field hospital at the time, and was thus spared the same fate – the memories of those days, and of his fallen comrades-in-arms, were still fresh to him.

Glossary

Adda

King Foltest's daughter had been cursed even before leaving her mother's womb and turned into a striga as a child. The jag-toothed princess had long terrorized Vizima, until Geralt lifted the curse. It returned after a few years, but the witcher managed to lift it a second time. Later Adda became the wife of Radovid V, king of Redania.

Additional substances

An alchemical ingredient can contain one of three additional substances: albedo, nigredo or rubedo. If all of the ingredients chosen for the creation of a potion have identical additional substances, the resulting potion will provide additional benefits beyond its basic effect. — Source: Basics of Alchemy

Aedirn

This realm is bordered by Kaedwen to the north, Redania to the northwest, Temeria and the massif of the Mahakam Mountains to the west, and Lyria to the south. The Blue Mountains line its eastern frontier. Aedirn's coat of arms is a golden-red chevron on a black field, and its capital is Vengerberg. Not long ago the country nearly disappeared when Nilfgaard occupied its southern territories and its northern neighbor and supposed ally, Kaedwen, treacherously annexed Upper Aedirn. Though the invaders were defeated and Kaedwen withdrew from Aedirn's northern lands, the kingdom's fate still hangs by a thread. The country has been ravaged by peasant revolts and its central government seems ever unsteady.

Aelirenn

The story of the one known as the White Rose of Shaerrawedd is both sad and tragic. Over two hundred years ago Aelirenn led elven youth into a hopeless fight against humans. This heroic dash could end in only one way. They died for freedom, for stone and marble of their cities... and for Aelirenn. Just as she promised, they died with dignity, heroism, honor, yet elves could not raise again after that defeat. However she remains a symbol of fighting for freedom to this day, and elven insurgents go to battle with her name on their lips.

Catriona plague

A disease which quickly spread through all the northern countries after the war with Nilfgaard. Those who suffer from catriona die a terrible death — their convulsions become stronger each day, they vomit blood and mucus, and have bloody diarrhea. After a fortnight or so they die in agony.

Codringher and Fenn

A famous pair of lawyers who ran a firm in Dorian until both partners died tragically under mysterious circumstances. At its height, the firm was retained by people from all over Temeria. If someone had difficulties, troubles, problems - they went to Codringher and Fenn. So the firm's clients quickly received proof of dishonesty and malpractice by their business partner. They could count on receiving credit from a bank without insurance or security. As one of a long list of creditors, they would be the only one to exact what was due from the company declaring bankruptcy. Their son would be released from the dungeon and cleared of all charges based either on irrefutable evidence or a lack thereof, because if evidence existed it disappeared mysteriously while witnesses retracted any earlier testimony. The wife's lover or the daughter's suitor would suffer complicated fractures in three limbs, including at least one upper one - all as a result of an unfortunate accident. And an enemy with a grudge or some other troublesome individual would soon stop being a nuisance, often vanishing into thin air. That's how Codringher and Fenn worked.

Conclave of Sorcerers

The Conclave was, next to the Supreme Council of sorcerers, one of the two main bodies ruling the magicians. The most powerful sorcerers of their times sat on it. One of its duties was regulating the standards and rules of using magic - the ban on necromancy was one of its edicts. Before the Thanedd rebellion, a large part of the Conclave conspired with Nilfgaard. During those events most of its members died, the sole survivor being Francesca Findabair. After the coup the Conclave was not reactivated, thus many mages do not respect the restrictions it had created.

Conjunction of the Spheres

The Witcher

A cataclysm which occurred 1,500 years ago, trapping in our dimension many unnatural creatures, including ghouls, graveirs and vampires. These beasts have no ecological niches of their own and are merely relics of bygone times.

According to elven lore, humans arrived during the Conjunction, their own world having been destroyed. These human ancestors learned how to harness the power of primordial Chaos, and thus the first human wizards were born. Looking for a place in the world, humans took up arms against the Elder Races, who were unable to withstand the barbarians and ultimately surrendered. This is how humans came to rule the world.

The Witcher 2

There are scores of learned works, dissertations and treatises about this magical cataclysm from about 1,500 years ago. Because of this event, creatures never seen before entered our world, and still do not have their own ecological niche here. Among others, graveirs and ghouls are relics of the permeation of the spheres, though elven tradition has it that we, humans, are also newcomers from that time. The sorcerers claim that humanity received both the wondrous gift and the terrible curse that they consider magic to be at that time.

Coram Agh Tera

Coram Agh Ter, called the Lionhead Spider, is a cruel deity who expects bloody sacrifices from his worshippers. The Cult of the Lionhead Spider is banned and there are but a few places in the world where its adherents can openly declare their faith.

Temeria strives to eradicate belief in the Lionhead Spider, and the cultists are tried as murderers.

Destiny

Many people believe in the existence of Destiny, a mysterious force which binds certain people together, determining their fates. According to believers, one can either follow the path of Destiny or one's free will or try to resist it, although the latter can bring grim consequences. On the other hand, some feel that Destiny is not everything. These people say that something more is needed in order to bind two lives together, even if the rules of fate decide otherwise.

The poet Dandelion contemplates whether human life is ruled by Destiny. Dandelion mentions the Law of Surprise — when a witcher demands from a man rescued on the road that which he does not expect once he returns home. It turns out to be a child born during the father's absence. Witchers take the Unexpected Children to their fortresses and train them to be their successors. Dandelion also wonders whether love can bind people with bonds of destiny. In no ballad does he provide a clear answer to the questions posed.

Dice poker

“In his diary, the dice collector claims that dice poker became popular in the village of Murky Waters during the war with Nilfgaard. There should be loads of enthusiasts in the area.”

— Diary of a Dice Collector

Dimeritium

Dimeritium is a rare and precious metal with an interesting feature — it represses the transfer of magical energy. A bluish alloy of iron and dimeritium is used to produce handcuffs and necklaces. Those who wear them cannot cast spells or use magic in any way. There are known cases, however, of extraordinarily powerful sorcerers managing to overcome the shield generated by dimeritium.

Dol Blathanna

In the elven tongue Dol Blathanna means the Valley of the Flowers. Anyone who sees this land with their own eyes would admit to the aptness of this poetic name. Once the southeasternmost province of the Kingdom of Aedirn, it became the sole and sovereign realm of the Free Elves following the last war against Nilfgaard, when Emperor Emhyrvar Emreis gave the elves these lands in return for their wartime service. Dol Blathanna is ruled by the elven sorceress Francesca Findabair, known also as Enid an Gleanna, the Daisy of the Valley. It remains a thorn in the side of neighboring realms, even though its queen has been forced to distance herself officially from the guerrilla war waged by the Scoia'tael.

Dun Banner

The Dun Banner rose to fame during the last wars with Nilfgaard. A Kaedweni light cavalry regiment, initially it patrolled the area around Ban Glean. Called to the front, it proved its mettle during the incursion into Upper Aedirn, but it was the chroniclers of the Battle of Brenna who made the unit famous. Because history likes to repeat itself, several years later the Dun Banner once again led Henselt's foray into Aedirn. This time, it suffered a crushing defeat, at the hands of an ostensible ally, no less - the sorceress Sabrina Glevissig. Decimated beyond resurrection, the unit was never reformed, and its characteristic cloaks and beaver-skin caps, which once bred terror in the hearts of Kaedwen's foes, became a thing of the past, though they remain identifying marks by which the unit's few surviving former members recognize one another.

Dwarf

The Witcher

Dwarves are shorter than humans, but tougher and more muscular. Male dwarves wear long beards. They are usually gruff but can be merry, and are renowned for their stubbornness. Considered excellent craftsmen and warriors, many have earned grudging acceptance in human society. Still, it is not uncommon for young dwarves to join the Scoia'tael rebels to fight for more rights for non-humans and an end to persecution.

Dwarves are one of the Elder Races. They were once a dominant race, along with the elves, but now their sole enclave is Mahakam, a mountain-city rich in metal and mineral deposits. Of all the elder races, the dwarves have assimilated best and many now live in human cities. They run businesses and are often wealthy, although they meet with disdain and distrust. During the war with Nifgaard, dwarves made a name for themselves as mercenaries, although many of them also fought in Scoia'tael commando units against the Northern Kingdoms.

The Witcher 2

Dwarves are one of the Elder Races. Stocky and bearded, with strongly built bodies and low voices, they are distinguished for their height, which is lower than human. Of simple and direct manners, they are sometimes seen as grumpy, unkind and

greedy. I have to stress that my own opinion of the dwarfs is by no means similar to the latter part. I only cite it here to present the views of other people - even if they are dull-minded, hate-blinded buffoons. Mahakam is the dwarves' mountainous homeland, famed for its numerous mines where precious stones and ores are mined. Many dwarves also live in human cities, for that race usually adapts to new neighbors easily, something that cannot be, unfortunately, said about a large part of humanity. Despite vexations, persecution, and even bloody pogroms, the coexistence with dwarves goes a lot better than with elves. Their flair for trade and craft makes them excellent merchants, bankers, smiths and armorers.

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Elf

The Witcher

After gnomes, elves are the eldest race on the continent. They created a magnificent civilization and the greatest human cities, like Vizima and Oxenfurt, were built upon elven ruins. Elves also have a special affinity for magic, although their magic is different from that of humans.

Elves are long-lived, yet the reproductive period of their lives ends quite early and, moreover, they reproduce much more slowly than humans. This is why they were defeated, the reason why they lost their re-eminence in the world. Today only two enclaves of the race remain: the Blue Mountains, where elves suffer privation and are dying out; and Dol Blathanna, the Valley of the Flowers, which is ruled by the sorceress Enid an Gleanna. The Valley of the Flowers is a dependency of Nifgaard.

Elves are a beautiful and long-lived race. They have pointed ears, sharp features and possess no canine teeth. Elves are arrogant and proud, and over many centuries they have developed a high and sophisticated culture. Few remain today, however, and these are in constant conflict with human civilization. That is why so many younger elves, eager to fight for their rights, join Scoia'tael commando units.

Elves don't discuss their faith in the presence of humans, because they think the barbarians would be unable to grasp its philosophical and mystical subtleties. Most humans, on the other hand, don't care about elven beliefs. It is a fact that some elves believe in Dana Méadbh, the mother goddess, who seems to be an embodiment of the Goddess Melitele.

Humans have their own version of the legend of Lara Dorren and Cragen of Lod, which differs greatly from that of the elves. An elf and a human came together just after the Conjunction of the Spheres and the rise of the human race. The legendary lovers became a symbol of the peaceful co-existence of the two races until some elves, jealous of Lara's attentions, treacherously killed 'the barbarian' who had dared to get involved with their kinswoman. In the human version, Lara is portrayed as a witch. Cragen's death resulted in much treachery and scheming and thus the hostility which exists today between the races is the elves' fault.

The elves tell the story of Lara Dorren and Cragen of Lod — an elven sorceress and a human wizard — the legendary lovers who formed the first union between the two races. Elves claim this relationship proved that peaceful co-existence between the races was possible, at least until humans treacherously killed the wizard and banished Lara. Thus — according to the elves — human hostility, possessiveness and aggression were first demonstrated. These 'barbarian' qualities make co-existence with humans impossible, so the lovers' tragic end triggered a war that continues to this day.

The Witcher 2

Elves, or Aen Seidhe, as they call themselves, are a folk known for their beauty and longevity. Their sages, scholars, and artists

were at the fore of their fields, creating real, breathtaking masterpieces. The glory of this Elder Race is long gone, however. After a series of bloody conflicts with humans, their cities were ruined, and the elves themselves were forced to retreat to the east, into unapproachable mountains, or to recognize human domination and accept their lot. Years of wars, persecution, and mutual enmity created a rift between our races. Many elves saw a chance of winning freedom in the last war against Nilfgaard, so they took up arms, creating the partisan groups of Scoia'tael. Though they managed to secure the creation of the partially independent realm of Dol Blathanna, some feel they were deceived and still wage war on humans.

Emperor Emhyr var Emreis

Emhyr var Emreis - among all the rulers of that time, one cannot omit the Nilfgaardian emperor, known as Deithwen Addan yn Cam aep Morvudd, which means, in the Elder Speech, White Flame Dancing on the Barrows of His Enemies. Kings from the Buina to the Yaruga trembled at the sound of his name. His legions of steel-clad soldiers crushed countries under their heels and cast monarchs from their thrones. In his insatiable ambition, he had tried to conquer the north on several occasions, yet he had been forced to sign peace accords each time. Though he does not appear in our story personally, his long shadow often fell over the events I describe here.

According to Shilard's words, Geralt had had the honor of facing the Emperor, who spared his life at the time. Though I am well aware of the circumstances surrounding that event, I shall omit them here, as they are not directly connected to this story.

Eternal Fire

Worshippers of the Eternal Fire believe in the undying flame as a symbol of survival and a guide through darkness. They view it as a harbinger of progress and better days to come. Clerics of the Eternal Fire oversee the faithful as well as their temples, where flames burn continuously. The Order of the Flaming Rose is the cult's militant arm.

Fisstech

Fisstech is an illegal narcotic that is used widely in Temeria. It takes the form of a white powder and is highly addictive. It can be manufactured only by professionals with the use of complicated alchemical equipment.

Francesca Findabair

Though she does not appear in our story, the elf Francesca Findabair, known also as Enid an Gleanna or the Daisy of the Valley, certainly deserves mention. After the coup on Thanedd Island, during which she sided with the mages who had allied themselves with Nilfgaard, Francesca became the queen of Dol Blathanna, the state of the Free Elves created somewhat whimsically by Emperor Emhyr. Enid is widely considered the most beautiful woman in the world. This pureblood Aen Seidhe with dark gold hair and penetrating azure eyes is also a powerful sorceress, possessing a tremendous command of the famed elven magic.

Gifts

Geralt can present gifts to many of the characters in the game. Usually the recipients express their gratitude by offering useful items or information. Gifts can also help Geralt win the affections of women. The trick is to choose the right gift from Geralt's inventory. Usually, characters themselves suggest the kind of gift they would like to receive and Geralt can figure out what would make them happy based on hints. For example, peasant women like to receive flowers, while townswomen prefer jewellery or clothing. Prostitutes would rather get money, and elegant courtesans desire precious gems. It is important to remember that a badly chosen gift may insult the recipient.

Gnome

Gnomes are secretive and mysterious. Most of them live in Mahakam and are allied with the dwarves; they seldom interact with humans. Gnomes are talented craftsmen, miners and inventors. Their technology is superior to that of humans, and gnome weapons can be equaled by no others. They are also considered the eldest race on the continent.

Ithlinne's Prophecy

An old elven prophecy about the end of the world: "The Wolf's Blizzard approaches, the time of the sword and axe. The Time of the White Frost and White Light, the Time of Madness and Disdain, Tedd Deireadh, the Final Age. The world will perish amidst ice and be reborn with the new sun. Reborn of the Elder Blood, of Hen Ichaer, of a planted seed. A seed that will not sprout but burst into flames!

Ithlinne, an elven prophetess, is famous for her foretelling of the end of the world. According to her prophecy, the world will be destroyed by an ice age and all humans will die. The only survivors will be elves, saved by an offspring of the Elder Blood, known also as the Swallow. Several signs will herald the destruction of the world, and the cataclysm will begin when elven blood soaks the earth. This will mark the advent of the 'Time of Disdain, the Axe and the Wolf's Blizzard', which can be interpreted as a long war or a return to barbarism.

Kaedwen

The formidable ranges of the Blue, Kestrel and Fiery mountains define the eastern and western boundaries of the densely forested, cold and harsh domain of Kaedwen, whose coat of arms is a black unicorn rearing on a golden field. The realm's capital at Ard Carraigh was the seat of power of King Henselt, a man known for having a violent temper and pursuing radical policies towards nonhumans. The latter could be attributed to the fact that Scoia'tael units consistently caused great injury to the wooded land and its inhabitants, launching many brutal guerilla attacks. The local human populace responded with massacres perpetrated on the assimilated elves and dwarves inhabiting the country's cities. And so hatred burned on and blood bred blood. Those who called for peace were accused of treason and often died at the hands of their kinfolk. Furthermore, Kaedwen was involved in an age-old feud with neighboring Aedirn over the territory of Lormark, and that conflict cast a pall over relations between the two countries. As you will clearly see, its echoes rang out in this story as well.

Kalkstein's notes

In his sharply inclined hand, Kalkstein scrawled some notes about where to look for the Sephirot.

“Here's what I've read from Kalkstein's notes: Compassion — Tipperath: Declan Leuvaarden. Fortunately Kalkstein spelled this one out for me. I never would've drawn the link between Leuvaarden and compassion. Mercy — Kezath: Vaska, leader of the brickmakers in the swamp. Now, how does mercy figure into our relationship? Kingdom — Maal'kad: The sewers beneath Vizima. One of my favorite places. Kalkstein must have had a gnome for an ancestor if he managed to associate sewers with some bit from a book. Understanding, Power, Glory — Veen'ah, Ghe'vrath, 'Oth: The statues of Melitele, one in the swamp, the other in Saint Lebioda's Hospital. I have no idea what prayer without faith can possibly mean, but it's worth a try. Foundation — Y'esath: The cave in the swamp. More evidence to show that Kalkstein's ancestors were gnomes. A cave in the swamp and the concept of a foundation — I can't make anything of it. We'll see. Victory — Neh'tza: The Tower Sentry, right, that wasn't hard... Except that I need to defeat him... Crown — Keth'aar: Destiny. Here Kalkstein outdid himself. His notes indicate I'll find the last sephirah by chance, for instance, while sitting in the privy or in the roast chicken I order at The Hairy Bear. An unknown. Destiny will throw it in my hands. Next time I see Kalkstein, I'll ask him if he hides his gnomish roots on purpose, fearing racist persecution...”

Loc Muinne

Not much apart from memories of its former glory remain of Loc Muinne, an elven city situated along the upper reaches of the Pontar, amidst the peaks of the Blue Mountains. It must at one time have been a breathtaking sight, emerging from the morning mists... Today only white ruins mark where it once proudly stood. Centuries ago it was here that the sorcerer Geoffrey Monck brought with him the Sources, a group of human children with a gift for the Power, to hand them over to the elven Sages for training. He managed to overcome the distrust of this Elder Race, and it seemed that a path to coexistence and cooperation between humans and elves had been opened. Yet history took an altogether different course. A few years later Redanian armies massacred Loc Muinne's population, killing all the elves, regardless of gender or age. Thus began a war that ended with Aelirenn's uprising and the massacre at Shaerrawedd, after which most of the surviving elves retreated east into the inaccessible Blue Mountains. This example, dear reader, readily shows that but the slightest bit of effort can summarily spoil even the best of relations.

Lodge of Sorceresses

The Lodge of Sorceresses was founded after the mutiny on Thanedd Island as a substitute for the Council of Sorcerers. The founders' aim was to bring the war between Nilfgaard and the Northern Kingdoms to a close while maintaining the mages' influence on the fate of the world. It is effectively an association of the most powerful female mages from both the northern and the southern realms. The Lodge has significant political influence, although its activities are not entirely understood by the public.

Lormark/Upper Aedirn

The part of Aedirn that lies between the Pontar and Dyphne rivers is called Lormark or Upper Aedirn, depending on the interested party's political persuasion. These lands have been disputed for ages, with Kaedwen laying claim to them as well. During the last war with Nilfgaard, Aedirn found itself in deep trouble, fighting an uneven battle to repel the onslaught of the Black Ones in the south. Sensing that its southern neighbor would ultimately bow to the invaders, Kaedwen, Aedirn's ostensible ally in that conflict, sent its armies into Lormark, annexing the region. Several days later Margrave Mansfeld of Ard Carraigh and Marshal Menno Coehoorn, commander-in-chief of the Nilfgaardian army, greeted each other on a bridge spanning the Dyphne River. They shook hands over the bleeding, tortured corpse of the Kingdom of Aedirn, sealing -let us not mince words - a criminal partitioning of plundered lands. And even though Kaedwen restored Lormark to Aedirn after the war, its taking of the territory with Nilfgaardian support was one of the most disgraceful acts in history - though I venture to say it was probably not the only or last act of its kind.

Mage

The Witcher

Only rare individuals have the potential to become mages and many of those with this potential are doomed to madness. Unless the

individual in question — known as a Source — learns to control their power quickly, he or she may end up a half-insane, slobbering oracle. That is why schools of sorcery were created, where talented children study for many years, acquiring knowledge and mastering magical skills. Because of their powers, mages age more slowly than ordinary people. They can extract magical energy from the four elements, transport themselves long distances and heal, as well as kill, in the blink of an eye. They have extensive scientific and political knowledge; in the latter respect, many mages are the equals of rulers.

The early days of the war with Nilfgaard saw the end of the Brotherhood of Sorcerers, an organization which grouped mages and closely controlled the practice of magic. During the Brotherhood's last assembly, a rebellion broke out on Thanedd Island; some of the mages were accused of high treason, that is, working for Nilfgaard, and were either arrested or killed. The remaining sorcerers won independence and set up smaller associations.

In the wake of the rebellion, the mages retained their influence. Many of them remained royal advisors, sometimes even ruling countries from behind the scenes. Philippa Eilhart strengthened her position as eminence grise of Redania, whereas the elf Francesca Findabair, the queen of Dol Blathanna, took greater interest in the affairs of humans and became ruler of elven lands in general. Triss Merigold, one of the youngest sorceresses and a representative of King Foltest, also joined in creating the new order.

Simple folk fail to differentiate between witches, sorcerers and witchers. Anyone who wields magic is regarded as suspicious and godless. But the better educated, and those who dwell in large cities, know to treat mages with due respect.

The Witcher 2

‘Sorcerer’ is the name customarily applied to male persons capable of commanding the Power, though it is but one of the many terms or phrases, most of them highly unflattering, to have been used over the ages. These terms have ranged from the rather respectful title of “Wise One” to the somewhat less specific “bloody son of a bitch - the plague take’im.” As for women of this persuasion - that is, sorceresses - they have been called everything from “archmistress” to a colloquial expression I will not repeat out of regard for the language and respect for the female gender. The command of the Power these mages possess sets them above mere mortals - which can be good or bad. From the dawn of time, history remembers mages either as pure-intentioned and courageous heroes or as rogues bereft of reverence and faith. Human memory tends to remember the latter for longer, which may be why common folk mostly hold people of this profession in contempt.

Magic

The Witcher

Magic is the art of bending the power of Chaos to one's will. Practitioners of the art must master a vast and complicated corpus of knowledge and, it seems, women have a special predisposition for it. Sorcerers seek out talented children and teach them.

The Power bound in spell formulae may be used for healing, teleportation, destruction, creating illusions, and altering form. The most famous spells are named after their creators, e.g. Alzur's Thunder or Merigold's Hailstorm. Thanks to magic, it is also possible to create magical glyphs and amulets, such as the witchers' medallions.

The witchers' Signs are very simple spells, mostly kinetic or mind-influencing. To use them, one needs concentrated will and a hand gesture. Casting Signs is not time-consuming, so witchers use them when fighting monsters.

Magically gifted children are born all over the world. They are called Sources. The Brotherhood of Sorcerers was charged with finding and training such children. Descendants of Lara Dorren are a special case — their magical gifts are very strong. They can travel through time and space, and release the pure energy of Chaos. These powers are wild and difficult to control,

though, and are activated in moments of stress, often surprising their possessor.

The power used to cast spells is drawn from the elements. Fire is the best but simultaneously most dangerous elemental source. Mages who specialize in the magic of fire often achieve great power, but they pay a price for it: as fire addicts, they often suffer burns or even die engulfed in flames. The essence of fire becomes their essence, which makes them vulnerable to water.

The Witcher 2

The Power the sorcerers can command is commonly called magic. In the opinion of a certain sorceress I'm acquainted with, magic is chaos, an art and a science, a curse, a blessing and progress. However poetic it may sound, it is hard to find a better simile. Everything depends on the person that uses that Power, of course. Still, it is a fact that it can be used to achieve things not possible to normal humans. The witchers' Signs are also a form of magic, but sorcerers look at them with disdain, since they cannot be compared to the forces the sorcerers themselves command. Without magic our world would certainly be less interesting, and many beautiful things would be forgotten.

Medical Science

For centuries, diseases have plagued mankind, yet when Jan Bekker subjected the Power to his will, people gained a powerful weapon in their fight against disease. Mages study bacteria and viruses, the ways germs spread as well as genetics. Their research is used by medics, who set up hospitals and produce increasingly effective medicines. There are also magical potions capable of healing wounds and internal injuries. Many magic users, such as Marti Sodergren or Visenna, have become healers, traveling the world and using their magic for the good of others.

Medicinal Science

Autopsies are not universally approved of in criminal investigations. However, experts acknowledge the value of forensically examining a corpse after witnesses have been questioned and experts consulted. An autopsy can provide valuable information on the identity of a victim and on the precise means by which a crime was committed. While performing an autopsy, you should ask detailed questions based on the knowledge you possess. By rejecting impossibilities one by one, you may ultimately find that the truth lies in the most unlikely of hypotheses.

Melitele

The Witcher

Among the numerous faiths of the Nordlings, the most widespread is the cult of Melitele, the goddess in three forms: young girl, woman and crone. Melitele is the Mother Goddess, extending her care over her children. Her following is not solely composed of women — men pray to her as well. Clerics of Melitele preach love and peace. They run many hospitals, shelters and orphanages.

The Witcher 2

Great Melitele is, among others, the patron of love, marriage, fertility, nature and abundance. Her cult came to be through the blending of those beliefs many different races and cultures held about these aspects of life. Melitele's popularity never waned, and the phenomenon is explained in various ways. I think the causes are prosaic myself. The Cult of Melitele is a predominantly woman cult, and the goddess is, among others, the protector of women in childbirth. A delivering woman has to scream and, apart from the usual yells and empty promises that she will never give herself to another mangy man again, the woman has to call some deity for help, and Melitele fits the bill perfectly. Because women were delivering, deliver and will be delivering, the goddess Melitele does not have to worry about a lowering of the number of worshippers.

Mines of Vergen

They said plants unseen anywhere on the surface grew in these mines - among others, the one needed for Saskia's cure.

The area around Vergen was supposedly riddled with mining shafts and corridors. Some had had not been used for long, others had been closed more recently. I'm hardly an expert on mining, and dwarves can be extremely secretive and tight-lipped about the subject. The few allusions they made, however, painted a picture of caves, tunnels and excavations drowned in darkness. At one time these mines had accounted for Vergen's significance, but now they were abandoned and haunted by dangerous creatures. Needless to say, this description did not encourage yours truly to examine them closer.

Nilfgaard

The Empire of Nilfgaard is the largest state in the known world, its rule extending over a more than a dozen provinces. It has conquered all the realms south of the Amell Mountains and united them under one crown. Black Imperial standards adorned with the golden sun flutter over buildings and outposts from the Yaruga River in the north to Vicovaro in the south and the mountain massif of Tir Tochair in the east. The Empire's mighty armies lie in wait, ready to bring death at their ruler's command or to die eagerly in his name. The Black Ones' continued march northward was last stopped several years ago, through the united effort of the Northern Kingdoms and the sacrifice of much blood at Brenna. Yet peering across the Yaruga on a bright day, one still can see their dark cloaks and the sun glancing off the points of their lances.

Order of the Flaming Rose

The Witcher

The Order of the Flaming Rose was established after the war with Nilfgaard by a charismatic leader, Jacques de Aldersberg, on the foundations of the deteriorating Order of the White Rose. De Aldersberg's aim was to protect the people from monsters and other evils, and to promote belief in the Eternal Fire. The Order's headquarters are located in Vizima, with numerous commanderies spread across the whole of Temeria.

The book "People of the Shadows" reveals some secrets regarding the genesis of the Order of the Flaming Rose. According to the author, the Order was established with the help of the Redanian intelligence service to counter the sorceresses, who were organizing themselves and growing in power. Furthermore, the author believes that Redanian intentionally refused to grant a charter to the main commandery of the Order, thus preventing a strong organization from planting roots within the country's borders.

According to the author of "The Aftermath of the War", the Order of the Flaming Rose is underestimated and treated too lightly. The Grand Master may be calculating and cunning, but he is above all a fanatic. Furthermore, the author believes that the Order aims to gain as much power over people's souls as possible. To achieve this, the Order wages secret wars with other clandestine organizations, such as the one founded by

the sorceresses. The persecution of witches and freaks is but a prelude to the real attack, which will be directed against the sorceresses.

The Witcher 2

This knightly brotherhood originating in Temeria initially followed sublime ideas. It could not have been otherwise, as it was founded on the basis of fighting corruption and depravity in the Order of the White Rose - a declining association that, in effect of those reforms, was then transformed into the Order of the Flaming Rose.

Unfortunately, strong racist tendencies, even strengthened by the leadership of Jacques de Aldersberg, turned the new order into a nest of intolerance. It's role in the Vizima Rebellion still remains morally ambiguous.

Redania

The Witcher

Redania borders Temeria in the north. It is ruled by King Radovid V, also known as Radovid the Stern, son of the murdered King Vizimir. The monarch was thirteen when his father was killed, so the Royal Council assumed power until the prince came of age. After his coronation, Radovid gained notoriety for dealing brutally with anyone who had previously mistreated him or his mother Hedvig. The most important cities in Redania are the capital of Tretogor, the Free City of Novigrad, which enjoys far-reaching autonomy, and Oxenfurt, with its famous university.

One of the Northern Kingdoms, Redania is a wealthy realm which profits from trade and agriculture. For ages, it has fought a customs war with Temeria, which is its main competitor in the north. The country possesses the best intelligence service in the world. The government of Redania is heavily influenced by sorceresses.

The Witcher 2

Situated between the Braa River in the north and the Pontar in the south, Redania is one of the North's more important kingdoms. Its coat of arms is a crowned silver eagle on a red field. The eagle grips a golden scepter in its talons and a small black shield bearing a golden cross adorns its proudly

protruding chest. Despite recent unrest, the country survived, unscathed and intact, the crisis that followed the death of King Vizimir the Just. Tretogor, King Radovid's seat of power, is the country's capital, though the Free City of Novigrad is its largest population center. In fact, Novigrad is something akin to the capital of the world - a center and cradle of commerce and culture, where an enlightened man can breathe his fill as long as he does so away from the back alleys. Old, musty and scholarly Oxenfurt, the home of this author's alma mater, is another of the kingdom's noteworthy cities. During the last war with Nilfgaard, Redania joined with Temeria, Aedirn, Kaedwen and other northern realms to repel the invaders, and the Royal Redanian Corps played an important part during the Battle of Brenna.

Scoia'tael

The Witcher

The Scoia'tael are a group of elven and dwarven rebels fighting against the discrimination of nonhumans. They are divided into commando groups, or independent squads. Their protest against racism quickly turned violence. Scoia'tael rob merchant caravans, plunder and burn villages, and kill. Instead of finding a peaceful solution, humans send troops to fight them.

Scoia'tael means 'squirrel' in elven and the name probably comes from the rebels' habit of attaching squirrel puffs to their clothing.

According to the author of "The Aftermath of the War", the Scoia'tael are inspired by Nilfgaard and other powers. The leaders of the rebellion send their people to certain death because they are blind or manipulated. The author also claims that wars between humans and non-humans will never cease because there is too much hostility between the races. In his opinion, the elves are doomed to extinction.

The Witcher 2

Scoia'tael is a name used by the rebels fighting for nonhuman freedom. In the common tongue it means "squirrels". As some would have it, it is because of squirrel tails that adorn the rebels' caps, or from the forest board they had to survive on. Scoia'tael formed units over a score strong, consisting mainly

of elves, yet sometimes dwarves and halflings joined too. During the last war against Nilfgaard, the Scoia'tael fought on the side of the Empire, making diversions and great damage beyond our lines. Despite the provisions of the Peace of Cintra, many did not disarm and continued to fight, especially when it turned out that Nilfgaard sacrificed them in the name of peace and gave the units' leaders to the Nordlings to be executed.

Sorcerers

“Sorcerer” is the name customarily applied to male persons capable of commanding the Power, though it is but one of the many terms or phrases, most of them highly unflattering, to have been used over the ages. These terms have ranged from the rather respectful title of “Wise One” to the somewhat less specific “bloody son of a bitch - the plague take ‘im.” As for women of this persuasion - that is, sorceresses - they have been called everything from “archmistress” to a colloquial expression I will not repeat out of regard for the language and respect for the female gender. The command of the Power these mages possess sets them above mere mortals - which can be good or bad. From the dawn of time, history remembers mages either as pure-intentioned and courageous heroes or as rogues bereft of reverence and faith. Human memory tends to remember the latter for longer, which may be why common folk mostly hold people of this profession in contempt.

Temerian History

Before Lara Dorren died in solitude, she gave birth to a daughter, who was adopted by the queen of Redania and named Riannon. At the age of seventeen, Riannon married Goidemar, the king of Temeria.

Three years after the wedding the famous Falka rebellion began, during which the pregnant Riannon was accidentally captured. In prison, she gave birth to twins and subsequently descended into madness. At the same time the fierce Falka gave birth to a daughter, whom she abandoned to wage war, leaving the child for the mad prisoner to nurse. Soon thereafter the rebellion was suppressed, Falka was captured and burned at the stake and King Goidemar regained his wife - with three children.

The first Nilfgaardian invasion began ten years ago. After crossing the Yaruga river, the Black Ones attacked Cintra. The capital was taken by surprise, its citizens were slaughtered, and the queen committed suicide.

Brugge, Sodden and Temeria stood against Nilfgaard. It seemed the Nilfgaardian offensive was unstoppable, but the three states managed to halt it at the Battle of Sodden. Altogether twenty-two mages fought for the Northern Kingdoms, fourteen of whom died. Yet in the end it was the mages who negotiated a truce.

After three peaceful years, during a meeting of the Brotherhood of Sorcerers, there occurred a schism in the organization and its members fought each other. As a result, many died and the Brotherhood disbanded. At the same time, the Imperial forces attacked the Northern Kingdoms. The kings were divided, arguing, and couldn't face Nilfgaard on their own. King Foltest signed a truce with the Black Ones, yet it proved short-lived. The Imperial army pushed forward and was not defeated until the Battle of Brenna. This victory proved pivotal, reminding the feuding rulers that Nilfgaard is not invincible - the kings of the north reunited and faced the Black Ones together. Finally, a peace treaty was signed, changing the balance of power in the world forever.

The Lodge of Sorceresses

The actions of this secret organization, which united sorceresses from the Northern Kingdoms and Nilfgaard, were revealed relatively late. The ten-member Lodge had been envisioned as a successor to the Conclave and the Supreme Council of Sorcerers. It was supposed to focus on the interests of magic and protect the world from the cataclysm that would result from the disappearance of the Art. However, at the time this story was unfolding, not many knew the organization even existed. Apart from the sorceresses belonging to it, of course.

The members of the Lodge also interfered in politics, attempting to influence monarchs and the fates of entire countries. They even used murder as a means to their ends. The removal of Demavend was supposed to stabilize the situation of Aedirn, but it began a series of events that shook the Northern Kingdoms.

The Supreme Council of Sorceresses

The Supreme Council of sorcerers consisted of talented mages, most of whom also were advisors to rulers of Northern kingdoms. Philippa Eilhart and Carduin of Lan Exeter were, among others, its members. Though only one member of the Council turned out to be a Nilfgaardian supporter during the Thaneedd rebellion, a large part of its members were neutral mages, and that caused a split in the body. Though most of the Council's members survived those events, the loss of importance and the kings' support resulted in disbanding the association, and sorcerers lost most of their previous influence in the North.

Veyopatis

Veyopatis, a forgotten god of the Pontar Valley, is still worshipped in certain forest settlements, but the times of his greatness and popularity are long past. A few priestesses and witches make offerings to him, yet no common folk wish to take part in their rites. In the era of human colonization, Veyopatis was a guardian god, often associated with rivers from which humans drew benefit. He guarded people from the dangers of the forest. Poles bearing his likeness marked the border between areas that had been tamed and those that remained wild and dangerous. Veyopatis gave people fish, made sailing easier and his name was used to ward off beasts. Yet, he remained petulant and fierce. In these times, if those wandering through the woods come across stone idols with gaping jaws, they believe them to be the likenesses of fierce monsters rather than statues commemorating a once-loved deity.

Vizima Rebellion

The events known under that name took place not long after the witcher mysteriously came back. The leader of the Order of the Flaming Rose, Jacques de Aldersberg, made plans to build a new, better world (under his own leadership). Using the power he had over the Order, and fanning the conflict with the Scoia'tael until it threatened the city itself, he marched against king Foltest at the head of an army of mutated creatures. The battles that took place in the city between the Order, the Scoia'tael and the troops loyal to the king, are remembered as the Vizima Rebellion. Though historians cannot agree on their opinions of these events, the fact is that Foltest managed to contain the situation and the rebellion ended.

Wild Hunt

The Witcher

The Wild Hunt is a horde of specters that roams the sky during storms and is an omen of disaster. The appearance of the Wild Hunt foreshadows war and woe, much as a comet does. The spectral Wild Hunt sometimes appears in nightmares of the cursed or those touched by Destiny.

The Witcher

According to tradition and eye witness accounts, the Wild Hunt abducts people, forcing them to join its mad gallopade on the sky. It's harvest is especially rich just before or during a great war, like a few years ago in Novigrad, when over twenty people went missing without a trace after the Wild Hunt passed. Some of the abductees managed to escape the cavalcade back into the world of the living, but the stories they told were so extraordinary that they were always considered insane.

Stories of the Wild Hunt do not appear in the dwarven and elven cultures. It is quite interesting, for the Elder Races must have faced the Hunt long before humans did. As it seems, the dwarves ignore everything on mutual terms, while the elves are mysteriously silent on that subject.

Sorceress Yennefer of Vengerberg was abducted by the Wild Hunt, just like witcher Geralt of Rivia. Her fate remains

unknown, though she certainly did not join the host of wraith horsemen, unlike her lover who was one of the Hunt's riders for some time. The motivation of the gallopades leader, the King of the Hunt, remains, as always, unknown.

According to the Nordlings, the Wild Hunt is a procession, or rather a cavalcade of skeletal horsemen. They rush across the sky on the bony remains of steeds. Clad in rusty remnants of armor, they wear jagged swords at their waists. Like comets, the Wild Hunt is an omen of war, which has been confirmed beyond all doubt. The spectral cavalcade ventures out in search of victims every several years, but its harvest was never as rich as just before the last war with Nilfgaard, when over twenty souls went missing in Novigrad alone after the Hunt passed through. Curiously, elven and dwarven legends make not the slightest mention of the Wild Hunt.

One of the insane asylum's patients claimed to have been abducted by the Wild Hunt and taken to a world where unicorns saunter about lush elven gardens. When he finally succeeded in escaping the Hunt's grasp, he returned to this world only to find that his children had aged and died, so many years had passed...

According to the notes of a sorcerer, who spent his entire life studying the phenomenon of the Hunt, there is a mysterious power behind the wraith host's incursions into the world.

Philippa Eilhart also has a theory about the origin, motivation and essence of the Wild Hunt. It is a surprisingly shallow theory for such a learned woman and not worthy of mention next to such illustrious deductions as the ones above.

Síle de Tansarville showed absolutely no interest in the spectral riders of the Hunt. This was puzzling to say the least given her reputation as a very learned sorceress.

There are more opinions about the Wild Hunt than there are stars in the sky. Some claim the Hunt is a retinue of the specters of knights who perished in various worlds. Others think the phantoms were created by a powerful force that sends them out into different worlds in search of slaves.

Astronomical observation can be used to calculate the frequency of the Wild Hunt's appearances. This seems to confirm the hypothesis that the spectral riders come from another world.

Mages remained silent about the Hunt, as if beset by a hoard of tongue-hungry cats. This silence from so many learned minds was as telling as words, but you'll not learn any more on this subject from me within this tale.

The poem "The Song of the Hunt" is a book as rare as hen's teeth, and a pile of rubbish about the Hunt at the same time. Experts on the subject are willing to kill for that item, but fortunately there are not many of them. The multilayered narration sends the reader into the world of the author's rich imagination where each verse equals another interpretation. Truth mingles with fantasy in that work, but there's nothing of interest there for one researching the Hunt.

No poem can remain vague when interpreted by a consummate poet. Master Dandelion thinks that "The Song of the Hunt" symbolically describes how the cavalcade enters our reality from another one. It means that the wraiths of the Hunt are the inhabitants of another world, not necessarily the world of

shades, who use the primordial magic of chaos and entropy. The poem, however, fails to explain the reasons they might have for such journeys.

Aramil, an elf from a parallel world, was pursued by the spectral riders.

Witcher

The Witcher

Witchers came into being when the first settlers were colonizing the untamed lands of present-day Temeria. The elite caste of warrior-monks was to defend Humans from the monsters which inhabited the wild. Thanks to mutagenic mushrooms, herbs, and plant stimulants, the bodies of young apprentices developed superhuman speed and endurance. As a result of the painful and dangerous Trial of the Grasses, young witchers gained cat-like eyes, which allowed them to see in the dark. With the help of sorcerers they learned to utilize simple combat spells called Signs as well as magic potions that augmented their fighting skills. Nowadays, when monsters have become something of a rarity, the demand for the witchers' services has declined significantly. Only a few representatives of the caste still travel the world, and no more monster slayers are being made.

Due to their otherness, unusual abilities and magic skills, Witchers are treated as outcasts and sometimes even meet with hatred. This hatred was made manifest during the infamous attack on Kaer Morhen, which led to the destruction of the fortress and the death of most of the Witchers wintering there. Those who survived are doomed to extinction since they no longer train successors.

People need Witchers but are simultaneously afraid of them. The itinerant warriors inspire fear because they are mutants and have superhuman powers. A Witcher is rarely a welcome guest and contacts with members of this profession are almost always limited to business. Witchers are invariably attacked during pogroms and social upheavals directed against those who deal in magic.

Mutagens and magic render witchers' bodies resistant to all kinds of disease, even to the point of outright immunity.

The Witcher 2

Despite my long friendship with Geralt, I know little more about this peculiar brotherhood or guild than learned tomes provide. On top of that, I am obliged to discretion, so I shall write nothing more than necessary on the subject. Once as numerous as the beasts they fought, today the witchers are seen as a relic of times long gone. The exact character of their training remains a mystery. It is known it consists, among others, of the Trials - processes that transform the organism using a specific combination of secret herbs and infusions. Those who survive them gain superhuman reflexes, speed of reaction, the ability to see in the dark and many other traits making them lethal foes. During their training they learn swordplay and basic magic, known as signs. Armed with this set of abilities, the witchers can effectively fulfill their objective, that is protecting humans from the monsters inhabiting our world.

Location

Altar of Veyopatis

The forested wilderness lining the banks of the Pontar conceals many secrets, among them an altar dedicated to an ancient deity named Veyopatis, nestled deep in a forest glade. The spot is well hidden from prying eyes, and the dangers of the wood discourage those who would seek it frivolously. Geralt, however, had no fear of monsters and good reason to visit the mysterious site.

Battlefield

The site was not much to behold, even on a sunny day, yet it was here that several years earlier a bloody battle had ended in a magical cataclysm. Rocky gullies opened onto a plain scarred with furrows and craters dug by trebuchet missiles and magical explosions detonated by the sorceress Sabrina Glevissig. Tall, reddish grass covered part of the flatland, the rusting armor and bleached bones of the fallen nestled among it. Once the curse was activated, however, a ghastly mist engulfed a section of the battlefield. Within it stretched a world seemingly pulled from a nightmare, a world in which ghosts of the fallen endlessly re-enacted the battle that had claimed their lives.

Once the witcher lifted the curse, the mist dissipated and the specters of the fallen vanished into the beyond.

Black Tern Island

A picturesque island rises unexpectedly from the lake. This is where the chosen few can meet the Lady of the Lake. The small strip of land, overgrown with trees, is also a haven of hundreds of animals. The degenerate vodyanoi have built an altar there from stone extracted from the Deep. They use the shrine to offer bloody sacrifices to Dagon.

Cáelmewedd

The inhabitants of Flotsam and its surroundings described the nearby elven ruins in less than flattering terms. They mostly limited themselves to “A heap of stones, m’Lord. Don’t be goin’ there alone, or a nekker will catch ye” and other similar phrases. I learned more when I bought Cedric a drink. Where bindweed and briar entwined splintered marble, buildings of captivating beauty had once stood. Today only the ruins of the baths and elven statues remain, testifying to the past splendor of the place.

Camp followers' encampment

The inevitable hodge-podge of camp followers had settled in just beyond the palisade of Henselt's military camp. The area was home to all manner of rabble, such as craftsmen, prostitutes, traders, thieves and vagabonds - in other words, all those needed to keep an army on its feet. Vernon Roche was directed to settle with his soldiers among the camp followers. This instruction from the Kaedwenis was meant as a jab at the Temerians, but the Blue Stripes honestly preferred the company of scoundrels to that of warriors bearing the unicorn on their chests.

Camp of the Order of the Flaming Rose

The knights of the Order of the Flaming Rose brought to Loc Muinne by King Radovid of Redania had made camp at the city's gates. Tasked with maintaining order and providing security for guests arriving for the summit of mages and monarchs, they were keen to observe the traffic streaming into the city.

Crypt in the outskirts

There is an old crypt in the Outskirts, and it has not been used for a long time. People are afraid to enter it because of the monsters that dwell there.

Detective's house

As in many large cities of the north, in Vizima one can enlist the services of a private investigator, an expert in sensitive issues, discreet investigations and tracking suspects. Detective Raymond Maarloeve is available at his office day and night.

Druids' grove

“The swamp is a place where man must bow before Nature in all its wild, tangled grandeur. That is why the druids have settled there, establishing a sacred grove with the tree of life at its centre. The disciples of Nature allow no violence within the grove, where they tend to sick animals, even taking in wounded dryads.”

Dungeons of La Valette Castle

During one of my visits to the La Valette family's vast abode, when I had the pleasure of meeting the old baron's niece - a charming creature but sixteen springs old - my host, clearly proud of his lands and holdings, offered to show me around the keep's expansive and varied cellars. While he entertained me with conversation and anecdotes on various subjects, including the unique system of penalties designed for seducers of the underaged, I got a thorough tour of the dungeon beneath La Valette Castle. The guards were exceptionally polite and seemed to have an unerring sense of direction within the labyrinthine network of vestibules, cells and winding corridors. I imagined that without their help it would be easy to lose one's way there, wandering around for hours, unable to find an exit. I would not envy any soul imprisoned there.

Flotsam brothel

Flotsam's brothel was one of only two noteworthy attractions available to visitors and locals. Yet unlike the scaffold, the bordello kept regular hours, offered a regular repertoire and had a regular staff.

Flotsam forests

The wilderness surrounding Flotsam was a thick impassable wood where inexperienced travellers could easily lose their way and fall victim to wild beasts or, even more probably, elven arrows. A rarely used, thickly overgrown route led to Aedirn, but, given the forest's dangers, most travelers preferred to journey by river.

Flotsam

Flotsam, a river port and trading post, lies along the upper course of the Pontar, among inaccessible forests in the valley that bears the river's name. Numerous trade routes meet here, and the Temerian-Aedirnian border is located nearby. Land travel in the region was arduous and dangerous, for Scoia'tael units prowled the woods. However, as they say, "elves, like cats, are shy of water", so most travellers and merchants chose to sail the river. Flat-bottomed barges, punts, scows, and even seagoing cogs visited the harbor, ferrying goods between Aerdirn, Kaedwen, Temeria, Redania, and Cidaris on the seashore. No wonder, then, that this ostensibly small outpost was of vital economic importance. He who controlled it drew immense profits from trade. At the start of our story, Flotsam belonged to Temeria, and its small garrison was tasked with enforcing the law and providing protection from river pirates, Scoia'tael units and monsters inhabiting the surrounding forests.

Forest ravines

Wooded gullies scarred the land between Vergen and King Henselt's camp. Innumerable monsters, including trolls, inhabited these ravines, so they were not exactly ideal places to picnic. But a traveler following the gullies would be relatively hidden from prying eyes, a fact which – as you will learn – Geralt took full advantage of.

House of the Queen of the Night

For people who can't complain about the lightness of their purses, Vizima's Trade Quarter offers entertainment of the highest quality. The most beautiful women await their clients at the House of the Queen of the Night. They offer refined pleasures and a chance to forget about the dreariness of daily life.

Hut on the cliff

The abandoned hut on the cliff had witnessed a monstrous event. The entire family inhabiting the home had died a bloody death in unclear circumstances.

There were many derelict settlements and farms in the area around Verger. Some had survived in better shape than others.

Iorveth's hideout

Few had any knowledge of Iorveth's hideout near Flotsam. The Scoia'tael leader used it as a command post from which to coordinate his unit's operations. The way there was dangerous as it was defended by more than elven swords and arrows – monsters inhabiting the surrounding forest were its natural guardians. Having a guide increased one's chances of reaching it alive. Yet finding it did not necessarily mean that one would return safely. Upon entering the lion's den, one could only hope for its owner's favor, and not many dh'oine could count on that.

Kaedweni camp

The Kaedweni military camp greeted us from afar with the cacophony of sounds typical of such encampments. Officers' commands and sentries' shouts mixed with the growling of platoon leaders enlightening enlisted men as to their mothers' professions and why these ladies charged so little for their services. Veterans cursed, recruits sniveled, whores giggled, horses neighed and dogs barked. The din was accompanied by a jumble of smells. The stench of several thousand men who consider guard duty in the rain to be an adequate bath cannot be mistaken for any other, and this blended with the scents of boiling cabbage, foot wraps and stables. Compared to the noxious odor the wind carried from the camp latrines on sunny days, the smell of the kayran's lair seemed like that of a flowering meadow.

Kayran's lair

The monster's lair was located near a small shoal by the ancient ruins of an elven bridge. Wrecked riverboats, heaps of algae and the stench of rotting flesh unmistakably identified the spot to which the kayran had taken a liking. That, at least, is how it was described to me, for I was in no hurry to risk an expedition through the forest only to tease the cranky Old Man in his den. When the wind blew from the ruined bridge, one could smell for oneself that there was little exaggeration to the tales of the kayran's aromatic presence. It stank so bad my eyes watered.

La Valette Castle

During my travels I visited the dynastic abode of the La Valette family several times. Anyone who considers Vizima an impressive city is unlikely to have seen the ancestral citadel of the La Valettes. The immensity of the fortress is simply breathtaking, to the extent that calling it a mere castle is either a gross inaccuracy or a jest. Expanded over generations, the walled town boasts the greatest fortifications in Temeria, and perhaps in all the Northern Kingdoms. The citadel is located near the strategically important White Bridge, which connects the banks of the Pontar. It commands the entire area, including nearby trade routes and the crossing. No wonder then that the rebellion of the La Valettes disturbed Foltest's sleep.

Lady of the Lake's altar

... For the Lady of the Lake is a goddess of elder peoples of such wisdom and might that her single utterance conquered hatred and greed. She spoke but one sentence, one sentence so filled with truth that they had no choice — for no man and no vodyanoi can resist the ultimate truth. And so humans and vodyanoi shook hands and presented each other with gifts, forging a truce. Wondrous were the gifts indeed! A gold bracelet belonging to the village's founder, richly ornamented by a true master's hand, went to the vodyanoi. And an old vodyanoi looked upon the Lady's face, and said: "Thy word can make this world sink just as it can make it burn until only ashes remain." And as the people saw a fine statue of alabaster appear, they were all speechless. And by the lake, in a wondrous land, a great feast was held. And so on the story goes...

Lobinden

This small settlement nestled against the walls of the trading post was supposedly founded long ago by Aedirnian settlers. Even if true, this is of little consequence. Though the village was a complete backwater compared to the provincial outpost, Lobinden and Flotsam depended on each other because most of the area's fishermen, boat builders, tar-makers and hunters inhabited the settlement, providing products and services which no frontier community could live without. Elves and dwarves made up a large share of Lobinden's population. Tensions between them and the local humans were lower than in the trading post proper, as they were all united in their daily labors.

Loc Muinne amphitheatre

The amphitheatre in Loc Muinne was once the jewel of the city. Even stripped of its former trappings and ruined by time, it remained impressive. The elves had used it as a theatre, a venue where troubadours performed, perhaps even as an arena for gladiatorial combat. During the memorable events recounted herein, it served as the site for a summit of mages and monarchs.

Loc Muinne sewers

For ages humans viewed elves as beings both beautiful and refined, as a race seemingly molded out of better clay than men. While perceiving them thus, humans also asked themselves - do elves pee? Few wonder anymore, but if any still need tangible proof, it can be found in the sewers of Loc Muinne. This colossal system of corridors and canals arouses envy in human builders. It served the city's inhabitants for long years and today has become a shelter and breeding ground for monsters. Those who do not fear beasts can use the sewers to travel discretely between the city's quarters.

Lormark

The part of Aedirn that lies between the Pontar and Dyphne rivers is called Lormark or Upper Aedirn, depending on the interested party's political persuasion. These lands have been disputed for ages, with Kaedwen laying claim to them as well. During the last war with Nilfgaard, Aedirn found itself in deep trouble, fighting an uneven battle to repel the onslaught of the Black Ones in the south. Sensing that its southern neighbor would ultimately bow to the invaders, Kaedwen, Aedirn's ostensible ally in that conflict, sent its armies into Lormark, annexing the region. Several days later Margrave Mansfeld of Ard Carraigh and Marshal Menno Coehoorn, commander-in-chief of the Nilfgaardian army, greeted each other on a bridge spanning the Dyphne River. They shook hands over the bleeding, tortured corpse of the Kingdom of Aedirn, sealing – let us not mince words – a criminal partitioning of plundered lands. And even though Kaedwen restored Lormark to Aedirn after the war, its taking of the territory with Nilfgaardian support was one of the most disgraceful acts in history – though I venture to say it was probably not the only or last act of its kind.

Murky Waters

The origins of this settlement's depressing name are unknown, for anyone who visits Murky Waters quickly realizes that the ruddy peasants who inhabit its sturdy-looking houses and work in its tidy farmyards are merry and welcoming people. The numerous wreaths of field flowers that shapely peasant girls have hung everywhere indicate an approaching wedding.

Nilfgaardian Quarter

The Nilfgaardians made camp at a distance from all the other factions because they harbored distaste for the other nations present at the summit. Though they found the barbarous Nordlings loathsome, the sight of Loc Muinne itself touched a sensitive chord in their hearts. If my words seem overly mysterious, let me remind the reader that the blood of elves runs in the veins of native Nilfgaardians, albeit thinly, and the language of the Empire is a variant of Elder Speech.

Nonhuman district

A separate area has been designated for elves and dwarves in Vizima's Temple Quarter. Members of these races live and work here. Those who venture into the nonhuman district do so at their own risk.

Old mine outside Kaer Morhen

“The mine near Kaer Morhen is at least as old as the fortress. Once a rich source of iron ore, it is now deserted, mining having ceased long ago. Its abandoned tunnels have fallen into ruin, and the witchers venture there solely to gather sewant mushrooms. When the witchers return from their Paths each autumn, they must exterminate the monsters that make their lair in the mine while the beast-slayers are away.”

Old Vizima

Surrounded by a low palisade, Old Vizima conjures the spirit of yesteryear, when even the capitals of powerful nations looked like the makeshift collection of thatched wooden huts, and their streets were filled with hens and dirty children.

Relocating his seat from the old manor to the Royal castle, King Foltest began the long process of converting Vizima from a wooden village into a brick town.

The war was merciless to Old Vizima's inhabitants. At its end, the area became something of a ghetto for non-humans - assimilated elves and dwarves were forced to settle where even the poor did not want to live. Currently Old Vizima is an area of skirmishes between knights of the Order of the Flaming Rose and the Scoia'tael.

Outskirts Inn

The inn in the Outskirts was established to cater to the needs of travelers and merchants headed for Vizima. The owner has surrounded it with a high palisade. Although the inn doesn't feature extravagant comforts, it is a safe place to spend the night and eat a meal. The innkeeper also offers a wide selection of alcohol. It is a favorite meeting place for the inhabitants of the Outskirts, so there's always someone to talk to or dice with.

Pontar Valley

If you have but a morsel of geographical knowledge, one glance at a map is enough to know why the Pontar Valley is strategically important. It is here that the borders of Temeria, Redania, Kaedwen and Aedirn meet, it is the valley that physically marks these frontiers. They say that “He who controls the Pontar Valley, controls the North.” So it is no wonder that the cited realms have clashed here more than once. Blood has often mingled with the waters of the Pontar, though the reasons for this have varied. Wars waged by nobles in pursuit of political interests and merchants seeking trade privileges have been intermingled with riots and massacres, elven uprisings, and the revolts of frontier barons. All these have been garnished with the occasional peasant rebellion, an event that forces often quarreling factions to unite and crush plebeian mobs drunk on blood and carnage. As the reader will soon learn, this time the region would again bear witness to events both important and bloody.

Prison barge

The barge moored in Flotsam's harbor was used as a floating prison for captured Scoia'tael and those accused of collaborating with the guerillas. In unusually cramped and squalid conditions, the prisoners awaited transport to their final place of imprisonment, and then interrogation and the inevitable noose.

Redanian Quarter

King Radovid and his men annexed a large swathe of the city in which to make camp. A full regiment of soldiers and an elite detachment of hand-picked knights protected Redania's ruler, who had every reason to fear an attempt on his life.

Royal Palace (Vizima)

The castle was completed around the time when King Foltest's previous seat was taken over by a striga, the product of the ruler's incestuous affair with his own sister. Spacious stone halls, stained glass windows and vaulted ceilings indicate that dwarven engineering was employed here. King Foltest is a very active ruler and often travels, though when in Vizima he usually occupies his chambers and generally remains at the castle with his modest court. In the throne room, the King grants audiences to his subjects, be they petitioners or trusted advisors.

Ruined bridge

The stone bridge on the road to Aedirn had certainly seen better times. The local troll had been renovating and maintaining it, but this unusual toll collector had succumbed to alcoholism, leaving the bridge to fall into ruin.

Ruined library

According to legend, the library in Loc Muinne had once been the richest in the world. Its collection of books was used by the Sources – magically gifted human children sent to the city ages before to learn from the elves. By the time of this story, nothing but walls remained of the once great library, now completely plundered and razed. Dethmold made it his quarters during the summit of mages and monarchs.

Safe house

A special place, this house has become a shelter for many people fleeing the war. They differ in terms of status, views and walks of life, yet they have all found peace and safety here, amidst other refugees, while fires rage and fighting continues in the streets of Vizima. Those here are obviously not aware that this temporary haven can become a trap.

St. Lebioda's Hospital

The hospital, named after the prophet Lebioda, was set up in a former temple of Melitele. To this day a triple-bodied statue of the goddess stands inside. Nurses and novices work there, trying to help those struck by the plague. It is not a pleasant place, filled with the moans of the suffering and the stench of their excretions. Those who do not survive the disease, meaning the overwhelming majority, are thrown into a pit behind the hospital. Every once in a while, the bodies are burned to prevent the plague from spreading. Recently the Order of the Flaming Rose placed the hospital under its protection.

Swamp cemetery

When the royal court was at the Old Manor, the marshes around this structure were regularly dried and cleared of monsters. An old cemetery dating back to elven times occupies a good portion of the area. Currently, Vizima's main necropolis lies within its walls, and the swamp cemetery has turned into a dangerous, haunted place. Entrances to numerous crypts have been flooded by muddy water, and numerous unpleasant creatures lurk among the stinking vapors. Nevertheless, refugees from Old Vizima have found shelter in the small caves which litter the marshes.

Swamp

Across the lake from Vizima lies a large area of marshlands which is home to small human communities, but also to various monsters. It is not safe there, even during the day — a drowner or a bloedzuiger can spring from the murky water at any moment. The casual traveler should also be mindful of the misleading will-o'-the-wisps, which have a tendency to lure unwary adventurers further and further into the swamp, until they become mired in mud and perish. To reach the swamp, one must hire a ferryman at the Dike in Vizima and take the boat across the lake.

A group of lumberjacks works deep within the marshlands, making money by selling lumber to Viziman craftsmen. They are lead[sic] by a dwarf named Yaren Bolt, who rules the small community with an iron fist. The swamp is home to brickmakers who make their living excavating and firing clay. There is a small, secluded village, where life proceeds at its own pace. A somewhat crazed woman named Vaska leads them. The swamp is a place where man must bow before Nature in all its wild, tangled grandeur. That is why the druids have settled there, establishing a sacred grove with the tree of life at its center. The disciples of Nature allow no violence within the grove, where they tend to sick animals, even taking in wounded dryads. The misty marshes hide many secrets. For example, there is a small clearing where statues of powerful golems are half-buried in the mud as if frozen mid-step. One of

them is particularly unsettling, towering ominously over the clearing

Temerian Quarter

During the summit of mages and monarchs, the camp of the Temerian delegation led by John Natalis extended over an entire district of Loc Muinne. Plenty of diplomats milled around the camp, but soldiers were present in far greater numbers.

Temple Quarter

The Temple Quarter of Vizima is strangely reminiscent of a quarrelsome, dirty prostitute, who — despite her disagreeable appearance and personality — remains somehow alluring. This may be because of the uncomplicated, illicit entertainment it offers — always a temptation. Beggars, shady characters, scowling poor folk, frustrated nonhumans and, of course, “ladies” occupy every corner. Recently, Vizima’s Temple Quarter was cut off from the rest of the world by the threat of an epidemic. The few City Guard patrols that come here try not to venture too far into the quarter’s dark alleys, where brutal deeds take place each night. At the centre of Vizima’s Temple Quarter stands St. Lebioda’s Hospital (previously a temple of Melitele), the only place of solace for the poor and plague victims. Alongside the hospital stand the headquarters of the Order of the Flaming Rose, which tries to combat local crime and the monsters creeping in from the sewers and the cemetery.

The Hairy Bear

The Hairy Bear Inn is located in the southernmost corner of the slums in the Temple Quarter. It is just kitty corner from the Eager Thighs brothel, and if you lack the orens for a proper room, there is a conveniently located campfire just outside.

The Hairy Bear is the place for indiscriminate clientèle. The innkeeper obviously holds back on the lye, though he waters down the ale generously enough. Patrons share the thin mattresses with rats, but most everyone can find their entertainment of choice here. Illegal fistfight enthusiasts, hustlers and drunkards will all find something to do at the Hairy Bear.

It is said that you can even buy the illegal drug fisstech here, provided you can find a dealer named Coleman.

Triss' house

Triss lives in a corner building on a small square where a statue plinth stands, bereft of its monument. The statue itself, which bore the likeness of an elven philosopher, was recently melted down to make a new bell for the Cloister of the Order of the Flaming Rose. The sorceress has decorated her home very luxuriously, if not extravagantly. There are many expensive devices here, as well as magical components and equipment.

Vergen

This town in the North of Aedirn was founded by dwarves who established mines in the surrounding hills. As was their custom, they carved their homes and community edifices directly into rock formations, granting Vergen a unique architectural style. The town was an important trade center, one of the roads through it leading into the country's interior. Humans had also attempted to settle in the area, but the disturbances that plagued Pontar Valley left most of their villages burned and in ruins. Nevertheless, when we arrived in Vergen it was teeming with humans in addition to its mainly dwarven population. Saskia's peasant rebels and a group of Aedirnian nobles had made camp there and promptly begun to measure each other with menacing glares. Meanwhile, all the groups that had assembled in the area were mistrustful of Iorveth's Scoia'tael, who strove to keep to themselves with unmistakably elven aloofness. Truly, if not for Henselt's army making camp nearby, the whole rabble would have been at each other's throats in no time.

If Geralt chooses Roche's path during the end of Chapter I:

Despite demonstrating unparalleled valor, the hastily recruited units of peasant militiamen, knights without title or estate, and Scoia'tael guerillas could not withstand Henselt's army of experienced, battle-hardened Kaedweni veterans. Vergen fell after mounting a heroic defense, though the victory cost the attackers dearly.

If Geralt chooses Iorveth's path during the end of Chapter I:

Peasant militia units, knights without title or estate, and seasoned dwarven volunteers fought heroically, side by side, forcing the Kaedweni veterans to pay for every inch of ground with their blood. Yet the hour of doom seemed nigh, the battle's outcome inevitable. That is, until Iorveth arrived with Scoia'tael reinforcements - just in time to turn the tide. Vergen won its independence with courage, steel, and the blood of the fallen.

Vivaldi Bank

Like any large city, Vizima also has a branch of the

dwarf-owned Vivaldi and Sons Bank. It is located in a sturdy building with thick stone walls. Guards armed to the teeth watch the armoured safes, while wealthy clients can count on discreet, professional service. The bank is renowned and so its reputation did not suffer when rumours began circulating of a hostile takeover. Apparently, the bank's owner was having financial problems, and an anonymous investor took advantage.

Vizima dike

Just outside the Vizima's walls is a landing where merchants and travelers dock their boats. You can hire transport to the nearby swamp from there or look at wares that will soon find their way to marketplace stalls. There is also a passage from the Dike into Old Vizima, though the gate leading to that quarter is closed due to the quarantine. The epidemic, or fear of it, has also brought boat traffic on the lake to a nearly complete halt.

Vizima sewers

The sewers beneath Vizima were built in the age when an ancient elven city stood on this site. Not much of their original greatness remains, but they still serve their function well. Connecting the Temple Quarter and the Trade Quarter, they carry off sewage from the entire city, rendering the stench of the gutters a little less overbearing. The sewers have recently become infested with monsters, especially drowners. Apparently, a cockatrice has also made its lair there.

Secluded and rarely visited, the sewers have become an ideal refuge for the worshippers of the forbidden Cult of the Lionhead Spider. I found a way to reach the Salamandra hideout in the city sewers.

Vizima

The Witcher

Vizima, the capital of Temeria, is the largest city in the kingdom. It is located on the shore of Lake Vizima, at the intersection of important trade routes, one of which is a waterway. Owing to a developed network of roads, the city draws considerable profit from trade. By King Foltest's order, the city is governed by Burgomeister Velerad. Vizima is divided into three large districts. The poorest one is the Temple Quarter, where Saint Lebioda's Hospital and the Cloister of the Order of the Flaming Rose are located. The Trade Quarter is home to the wealthiest and most important inhabitants, and both the town hall and the main marketplace are situated there. The oldest part of the city, Old Vizima, has been recently converted into a ghetto for non-humans.

I acquired a pass which allows me to pass through the gates into the city in spite of the quarantine.

The Witcher II

Lying where important trade routes converge, Temeria's capital sits picturesquely on the shore of Lake Vizima in the valley of the Ismena River, a tributary of the Pontar. The city is divided into four teeming quarters, which are home to thousands and host travelers from all corners of the world. The Royal Palace and court are both found here, and the city boasts many

markets, temples, forges, shops, banks, workshops, inns and brothels. Since our story does not concern Vizima directly, I will end my description here and urge those interested to consult other sources.

Witchers' laboratory

The castle was completed around the time when King Foltest's previous seat was taken over by a striga, the product of the ruler's incestuous affair with his own sister. Spacious stone halls, stained glass windows and vaulted ceilings indicate that dwarven engineering was employed here. King Foltest is a very active ruler and often travels, though when in Vizima he usually occupies his chambers and generally remains at the castle with his modest court. In the throne room, the King grants audiences to his subjects, be they petitioners or trusted advisors.

The Witcher

A Description of the Vodyanoi or the Fishpeople

Unknown

A bestiary describing the underwater race of vodyanoi warriors and clerics, as well as the mysterious Dagon.

A Guide to Vizima

Marco Knopf

Like most human cities, Vizima was built on the foundations of an elven city. The seat of the Termerian kings grew over the centuries and today consists of three large districts, a port and sprawling outskirts. In the Temple Quarter, the visitor's attention is drawn to the monumental Cloister of the Order of the Flaming Rose. Saint Lebioda's Hospital, famous for the many miraculous recoveries that have occurred there, is also hard to miss. While admiring these edifices, avoid wandering into the nonhuman district, which has become a den of poverty and the lair of social outcasts. Most nonhumans have been relocated to Old Vizima, which has become a ghetto inaccessible to visitors. Currently the Trade Quarter is developing rapidly. This is hardly surprising as it is home to wealthy merchants as well as trade and political officials. The city's leading bank and the town hall can also be found here. While in Vizima's Trade Quarter be sure to visit the famous marketplace, where traders offer goods from around the world.

A Small Book of Minerals

Unknown

The book describes basic mineral ingredients used in alchemy, including sulfur, Ginatz's Acid, wine stone, Naezan salts, Calcium Equum and phosphorus. It also discusses the alchemical substances found in these minerals.

Against Nonhumans

Unknown

It was then that the elven wise men called the Sages gathered in the dungeons beneath Reinhold Castle. The eldest of them said: "The day and the hour have come. We are here to discuss the fall of humans. We will avenge the death of Lara Dorren, we will shed their blood and drown the world in chaos. We will hide in the fortress for five hundred years while the chosen live in human cities and become their neighbors. Everyone knows their place in the Plan, whether elf, dwarf, gnome, sorcerer, or Nilfgaardian. Whoever betrays us is doomed. We will call ourselves Superiors, because we have no lords over us and we spit on gods."

Then all swore an oath and each drank the blood of an innocent child from a golden chalice to seal their obedience to the Plan.

Against the Institution of Marriage

Master Dorregaray

The female royal wyvern is smaller but more cunning and venomous than her male counterpart. She can be aggressive towards both males and other females. She is a perfect example of how gender relations among humans have their source in the animal world. This is altogether not surprising.

Ain Soph Aur

Unknown

Ten wordly elements, ten corner stones. All emerged from these ten. Seeker, lift your eyes, search your past and you shall find.

He who knows your course holds Wisdom and will share it when asked.

Another has gained uncountable riches, yet has Compassion in his heart.

Your heart, in turn, does not harbor Love, but it is with one who knows mercy, one able to love.

Once blind, now plunge into your mind, your memory. Dark and dangerous is the path from enslavement to the promised Kingdom.

A goddess thrice over — Virgin, Mother, Old Woman. Three faces, three graces: Understanding, Power, Glory. Achievable through sacrifice and prayer.

The Foundation lies in the deep. Be not tempted by the errant fires. Defeat death and you will be rewarded.

Victory is gained only by fighting its sentry.

He who leads through labyrinthine mysteries will offer you the Crown of consciousness.

At your path's end, Awareness will be yours, you will comprehend. What is locked will open before you.

The ten names are: Wisdom — Chocc'mah, Understanding — Veen'ah, Love — Kezath, Compassion — Tipperath, Power — Ghe'vrath, Victory — Neh'tza, Glory — 'Oth, Foundation — Y'esath, Kingdom — Maal'kad, Crown — Keth'aar.

An Invitation to Magic

Anabelle Radfind

Magic is an incarnation of Chaos, a key which opens forbidden doors to nightmares, to the powers of pure Evil capable of annihilating the entire world. Do you not fear magic? Do you still want to tame it, to wield it?

Know then that magic is a talent given only to the chosen few. Have you found this talent within you? Do you want to tap into this source?

Know then that years of intensive study await you. You must gain extensive knowledge and constantly sharpen your mind. Creative magic is not witcher Signs and parlor tricks. Magic is an Art.

Once you learn to control the Art, you will gain power over fire, water, earth and air. Power over people's minds. Power over yourself.

Animating the Inanimate

Unknown

The book contains useful information about golems.

Ars Amandi

Publius Naso

The way to a mans's heart is through his stomach. The way to a lady's heart is paved with beautiful words and appropriate gifts. Many have lost fortunes trying to win a woman's heart. This book explains how to avoid that fate.

One must know that ladies' tastes vary according to their status. A gift fit for a peasant girl will not please a noblewoman. Simple girls will be happy with a flower, while refined courtesans will laugh at a bouquet and only show favor [when she] is presented with a gold ring. But beware of traps! Sometimes, with much effort, you win a lady's heart only to become her slave, ready to fulfill her every wish! Avoid earning the heart of your woman at the cost of your own head!

Barghests

Unknown

The text consists of statements by people who have seen barghest attacks. These eyewitness accounts provide a lot of valuable information.

Basics of Alchemy

Master Jeremiah

To understand alchemy, you must understand two great truths. First truth: “As above, so below.” Second truth: “Everything is one.”

These truths teach that alchemical substances are everywhere around you — in field herbs, in human and animal bowels, even in rocks. This is because alchemy is life, and life is alchemy. Once you understand alchemical processes, you will understand the processes of life and the world of nature will become an open book.

Yet alchemy is also knowledge. Does the potion require a flower or a leaf? Where is vermilion found — in the kidney or the eye? These questions are answered by books. Therefore, read both the old masters and new works. Practice your herbalist skills and mixing oils and powders.

However, first and foremost experiment — because the greatest discoveries in alchemy have come about through experimentation.

Berengar's notes on the Beast

Berengar

First night: 95 kg of muscle, height around 4,5 feet, fangs the length of a man's thumb - to be avoided. Shares characteristics with Alzur's Demon.

Second night: summons barghests with its howling, has the ability to 'disappear', probably by assuming spectral or spiritual form, can only be seen with the help of a potion.

Third night: highly resistant to iron and Signs, walked right over three Yrdens without noticing.

Fourth night: all features of Alzur's Demon confirmed. The Beast asks a question, those who answer correctly stand a chance of slaying it.

Cults and Religions of the Nordlings

Stefan Keller

Among the numerous faiths of the Nordlings, the most widespread is the cult of Melitele, a goddess in three forms: young girl, mature woman and old hag. Melitele is a Mother Goddess, caring for her children. Primarily women pray to her, though men in need might also utter supplications. The religion is a vestige of the old matriarchy and testifies to the weakness of the Nordlings — people who worship female deities are soft-hearted and incapable of preparing their sons for war.

In recent years, the cult of Melitele has found a rival in the cult of the Eternal Fire, which came out of Novigrad. Clerics of the Eternal Fire demonstrate fanaticism and almost complete devotion. The religion is hostile toward any form of otherness, including non-humans. The Order of the Flaming Rose is the cult's military arm.

The treatise also examines other faiths, including the cult of the Lionhead Spider.

Curses and the Cursed

Unknown

The treatise deals with echinopsae and archespores. It also discusses cases of lycanthropy and striga spells.

Diary of a Dice Collector

Unknown

Summer, 1263. A dwarven regiment of the Mahakam Volunteer Army is stationed near my estate. The officers spend their days playing dice poker. It seems an interesting game.

Autumn, 1263. The dwarves have marched south toward a great battle with Nilfgaard. Dear old Molnar gave me a set of dice. I think he meant to compensate me for all the games I lost.

Winter, 1264. My trip to Vizima was worthwhile — I won a decent sum at the inn. It's a pity the locals don't want to play me anymore. I must learn to lose a bit more often.

Spring, 1264. The jade dice cost me a fortune, but my collection would be incomplete without them. Every now and again I manage to convince someone to play a round with me, but I feel I must move to the city again.

Autumn, 1264. What rotten luck! I had to sell father's estate. As soon as I start winning again, I'll buy it back.

Spring, 1265. I was told a band of deserters stalks the area. I doubt the poor village or my humble abode holds anything of value around. There's nothing of value around here... Maybe they would fancy a game of dice poker?

Disenchanted a Striga

Unknown

The witcher then said to King Foltest: "Pay me, Sire, and I will find your daughter in the dark tomb. I will restore her human form if I can, and if I cannot then I will not hesitate to kill the princess."

The king understood this was his only chance and so placed his daughter's fate in the witcher's hands.

The conjurer struggled with the striga for hours. He warded her off with silver and magic arts. He grappled with the beast and did not let her wound him, but avoided causing serious harm to her as well.

Finally, he locked himself in the crypt, sealed the entrance with magic and waited until dawn.

Witchers possess great knowledge about monsters and know that the rooster's morning call is enough to disenchant a cursed creature.

Elder Blood

Vilgefortz of Roggeveen

The Witcher

A genetic program initiated by elven mages (known as Sages) for the purpose of creating an extraordinarily gifted child whose power would exceed their own. According to the prophecy of the elven diviner Ithlinne, the Child of Elder Blood will one day save the elves from annihilation. However, the last carrier of Aen Hen Ichaer, Lara Dorren aep Shiadhal, bonded with a human instead of an elf, thus shattering all plans regarding her offspring.

The Witcher III

It is impossible to accurately trace the genes of Lara Dorren. The fates of entire generations are lost to time, their picture further distorted by unclear lineages, bastard children, intentional historical falsification and a simple lack of records. In many cases, Elder Blood is too thin and has lost its power.

Moreover, not every Source attributes their magical skills to the presence of Lara's genes. A few, in whom the mutation has occurred, are marked by extraordinary abilities. They are able to travel through time and space and possess certain magical abilities. These talents are, however, wild and uncontrolled, manifesting themselves in times of stress or strong emotions, surprising even their possessors.

History knows of travelers flung far in time and space by their own abilities. That is why the Brotherhood of Sorcerers should take special care of Source-children, raise them under its watchful eyes.

Experiment Notes

Unknown

The book describes the results of research on mutated warriors, referred to as Mutants and Greater Mutants, and on mutated war hounds.

Fairytales and Stories

Flourens Delannoy

Then the fairy said to the witcher: "I will tell you what to do: put on a pair of iron shoes, pick up an iron staff. Walk in the iron shoes to the end of the world, pat the ground before you with the staff, and sprinkle it with tears. Walk through fire and water, do not stop, do not look back. And when your shoes wear out, and when the iron staff shatters, when the wind and the heat dry your eyes so that you cannot shed another tear, then you will have reached the world's end, and you will have found what you seek what you love. Perhaps."

And so the witcher walked through fire and water without looking back. But he took neither the iron shoes nor the staff. He took only his witcher's sword. He did not heed the words of the fairy. And that's a good thing, because she was an evil fairy.

Feainnewedd

Unknown

The book provides information required to recognize feainnewedd and obtain alchemical ingredients from it.

Field Plants

Unknown

The book describes white myrtle, hellebore, celandine, balisse, crow's eye, berbercane and sewants. It also provides information on the methods of obtaining alchemical ingredients from these plants.

Foreign Lands

Marco Knopf

The Nilfgaardian Empire is gigantic. It was once but a single realm that went on to conquer neighboring lands and assimilate their populations. Today all who hail from the south are called Nilfgaardians, though some take offense as they have sought to preserve their national identity.

Nilfgaard is ruled by a tyrannical emperor. He tolerates no opposition and knows no pity. Some call him the White Flame Dancing on His Enemies Barrows. His symbol (and the Empires) is a silver sun on a black background. It is worth noting that the female ruler of the Valley of Flowers (the sole existing elven state) considers herself a vassal of the emperor.

Forensic Medicine

Milo Vanderbeck

Before beginning an autopsy, we must gather as much information as possible to help us interpret any marks we discover on the body. It is good to know who the victim was and in what setting the corpse was found. Witnesses should be questioned and experts consulted.

A well conducted autopsy gives almost as much information as talking to the victim. We can learn when death occurred, its circumstances, and what happened to the body afterwards. We may also learn about the murderer, any objects used in the murder and the manner of their use.

A corpse cut with a scalpel is like an open book. Whoever examines the details and carefully tests every hypothesis will understand it.

Grandma's diary

Grandma

“Grandma's diary. Contains memories of the old hag's younger days...”

The diary is bound with a pink ribbon. The inscription on the cover, in a child's handwriting, reads: “Whosoever reads a page will a monster enrage.”

Greater Brothers

Unknown

The documents describe super-humans, or super-mutants, called Greater Brothers.

Hymns of Madness and Despair

Philip Ward

I tell you: When the Sleeper awakens, Dawn will come for the
Children of the Deep.

I tell you: It is I — I am the Doom of the World, I am its Hope.

The unjust walk a straight path. My paths are unknown. The
lips of the unjust are caked with filth. I am the cleansing. The
unjust bow before false lords and will be tramped into the
ground. For who is above the Lords?

Ithlinne's Prophecy

Unknown

Aen Ithlinnespeath

The Prophecy of Ithlinne Aegli aep Aevenien

The Witcher

“I tell you that the time of the sword and axe approaches, the time of the Wolf’s Blizzard. The Time of the White Frost and White Light, the Time of Madness and Disdain, Tedd Deireadh, the Final Age. The world will perish amidst ice and be reborn with the new sun. Reborn of the Elder Blood, of Hen Ichaer, of a planted seed. A seed that will not sprout but burst into flames!

Ess’tuath esse! So shall it be! Watch for the signs! I will tell you what these signs will be — the earth will run with the blood of Aen Seidhe, the Blood of the Elves...”

The Witcher 3

Behold! For nigh is the Time of the Sword and Axe, the Age of the Wolven Blizzard. Nigh is the Time of the White Frost and White Light, the Time of Madness and Disdain, Tedd Deireádh – the Final Age.

The world shall perish amidst ice and be reborn with the new sun. Reborn of the Elder Blood, of Hen Ichaer, of a planted seed.

A seed that will not sprout but burst into flames!

Ess'tuath esse! So shall it be! Watch for the signs! And I say unto you what signs they shall be: first the earth will run with the blood of the Aen Seidhe, the Blood of the Elves...

Lara's Gift

Unknown

...but even pleas and invocations didn't soften the stone hearts of the dh'oine, the cruel and merciless humans. And when Lara grabbed the carriage door, begging for mercy — not for herself, but for her child — the queen ordered a thug to swing his sword, cutting her fingers off. The winter cold set in that night, and on a hill amidst woods, Lara drew her last breath while giving birth to her daughter, whom she protected with what warmth was left in her body. And even though night, winter and blizzard were all around, springtime suddenly came to the hill and feainnewedd flowers bloomed. To this day those flowers are found in only two places: the valley of Dol Blathanna and on the hill where Lara Dorren aep Shiadhal died.

Lectures on Security and Hygiene in Magic

Anabelle Radfind

Once an absent-minded mage created a golem, animated it by casting Alzur's Thunder, and ordered his new servant to fetch water, before burying himself in his scholarly books. The golem kept carrying water day and night, without pause, and ultimately flooded not only the mage's house, but the whole city. As you can see, my young students of the Art, improper use of tools and a lack of elementary training may cause a tragedy.

Monstrum, or Description of the Witcher

Unknown

Indeed, there is nothing more repulsive than these monsters that defy nature and are known by the name of witcher, as they are the offspring of foul sorcery and witchcraft. They are unscrupulous scoundrels without conscience and virtue, veritable creatures from hell capable only of taking lives. They have no place amongst decent and honest folk.

And this Kaer Morhen where these villains nest and practice foul rituals must be wiped off the face of the earth, and all evil traces of it need be treated with salt and saltpeter to complete the deed.

Once as numerous as the beasts they fought, today the witchers are seen as a relic of times long gone. The exact nature of their training remains a mystery. It is known it consists, among others, of the Trails – processes that transform the organism using a specific combination of secret herbs and infusions. Those who survive them gain superhuman reflexes, speed of reaction, the ability to see in the dark and many other traits making them lethal foes. During their training they learn swordplay and basics of magic, known as Signs. Armed in this set of abilities, the witchers can effectively fulfill their

objective, that is protect humans from the monsters inhabiting our world.

Ornithosaurs

Unknown

The book contains information on female and male wyverns, as well as on cockatrices and basilisks.

Ostrit's journal

Ostrit

I curse you, Foltest, and hope you rot amidst worms in hell. I curse your incestuous deeds. Your sister Adda deserved better. I implore destiny to render the child born of your lechery as monstrous as you. If the witch spoke truly, you will soon taste my vengeance. I need only prepare the ingredients and utter the words thrice. Some say that not even the words are necessary, that hatred alone suffices. Know that my hatred is fierce.

On the margins someone made notes, as if researching how to renew the curse of the striga.

Physiologus

Unknown

This famous work contains vast information on different kinds of monsters.

Plants of Barren Lands

Unknown

The book describes wolf's aloe, bryonia, verbena, honeysuckle and ginatia. The methods of obtaining alchemical ingredients from these plants are also discussed.

Recent History

Unknown

Field Marshal Coehoorn's strategy failed when his flanking maneuver was stopped by the heroic Viziman infantry led by Governor Bronibor, though they paid dearly for their heroism in blood. While the Vizimans resisted, Nilfgaard's left flank crumbled — some began to flee while others banded into small groups to defend themselves as they were surrounded. The same soon happened on the right, where the tenacity of the dwarves and mercenaries finally broke Nilfgaard's momentum. A loud cry of triumph rose on the battlefield as the hearts of the royal knights filled with new courage. Nilfgaardian spirits fell, the men's hands went limp, and our warriors began cutting them down.

And Field Marshal Menno Coehoorn realized that the battle was lost as he saw his men being killed and dispersed all around. His officers and knights came to him leading a fresh horse, urging him to flee, to save his life. But the Nilfgaardian marshal's heart was fearless. "It wouldn't be right", he said, refusing the reins. "It wouldn't be right to run like a coward from the field on which, under my orders, so many good men have fallen for the emperor.

Ritual Plants

Unknown

The book allows one to recognize allspice root, ergot seeds, wolfsbane, mandrake, han, hops, and mistletoe. It also describes the methods for obtaining alchemical substances from them.

Shadow People, or the story of His Majesty's Secret Service

Oribasius Giafranco Paolo Reuven

Redania's political situation was best grasped by Sigismund Dijkstra, who could accurately foresee the future and would have assessed present events level-headedly.

Dijkstra knew the kings of the North were weak and that actual power rested with the sorceresses. He assumed that a counterbalance for their magic could only be provided by a strong religious cult offering an ideology that would appeal to the masses and possessing real armed forces.

The chief of Redanian intelligence supported the newly-formed Order of the Flaming Rose, but disagreed with the concept of establishing its main commandery within Redanian territory. Dijkstra is reported to have said: "It's good to have fanatics and sorceress-scarers on one's side, but it's even better when they live beyond one's borders.

Fundamentalists always cause trouble, so it's best to transfer this trouble to somebody else. Like the Temerians, for instance. And if we need fanatics, if we need to unleash them against the sorceresses or Nilfgaard, we'll just whistle. They will not be far — just beyond the border." Time will tell how much truth there was in these words.

Sorceresses and Sorcerers

Marcus Marcellinus

The Brotherhood of Sorcerers ceased to exist after the revolt on Thanedd Island, when some of the mages were accused of serving Nilfgaard and were arrested or killed. All the important sorcerers were there for a meeting due to transpire on the following day. Neutral mages also perished during the fighting. Among them was Hen Gedyndeith, who remembered the beginnings of human colonization.

Soon after, Tissaia de Vries committed suicide. Her death marked the end of the Brotherhood and the advent of a new order.

After the revolt on Thanedd Island some of the surviving sorceresses grew in prominence. Philippa Eilhart consolidated her position at Redania's court, while the elf Francesca Findabair, queen of the Valley of Flowers, expanded her involvement in human affairs. Triss Merigold, a younger sorceress representing Foltest's interests, also joined in shaping the new order.

Specters, Wraiths, and the Damned

Unknown

The book contains information on noonwraiths, nightwraiths, specters and the terrifying Wild Hunt.

Subterranean Plants

Unknown

The book describes sewants and green mold, as well as the methods of obtaining alchemical ingredients from these plants.

Swamp Monsters

Unknown

The bestiary describes swamp monsters: the drowner, the drowned dead, and the bloedzuiger. It provides information on fighting them and on alchemical ingredients that can be obtained from the bodies of these beasts.

Swamp Plants

Unknown

The book describes celandine, beggartick and fool's parsley, as well as the methods of obtaining alchemical ingredients from these plants.

The Aftermath of the War

Jurga of Maribor

It should be stated clearly and plainly: the order created after the war with Nilfgaard is no order. It is a mess. Kings still tremble before the might of the Black Ones, Nilfgaard still threatens the North. Sorceresses and spies work from the shadows, pulling puppet strings. Monsters roam the roads, while soldiers do what they want and oppress simple folk. A mess, I say.

Amongst all the dangers, two are especially significant. The first comes from the nonhumans, who have assimilated only superficially. Nilfgaard has given the elves hope for a rebirth, it has placed swords in their hands and a slogan on their lips. We will know no peace while nonhumans walk the earth. The second resides in new religious movements. Only a few years ago the cult of the Eternal Fire was laughed at: how can one worship fire? Some mocked it, saying: "Maybe we should start worshiping mud or the winds?" They now bow their heads before the might of the Order and demonstrate themselves to be zealous neophytes.

Fundamentalism has always drawn strength from hypocrisy and ignorance. Never before in history, however, has there been so much on which to draw.

What then can an ordinary man do in such turbulent times?
Maintain his integrity and decency — that's what.

The Book of Animals

Unknown

The book describes dogs and wolves. It provides hints on combating them and alchemical ingredients that can be taken from the corpses of these animals.

The Conjunction of the Spheres

Adam Nivelle

The Witcher

The cataclysm commonly known as the Conjunction of the Spheres happened one and a half millennia ago. A cosmic collision of several parallel universes, this disaster left numerous creatures not native to our reality trapped here. For example, ghouls and graveirs, which lack their own ecological niches are simply relics of the Conjunction.

The elves claim that humans also arrived in this world during the Conjunction. This occurred soon after they managed to destroy their own world. The elves claim that it was during the Conjunction that humans learned to use magic.

Of course, these are all vile lies and foul fabrications circulated by nonhumans, who will resort to the most malicious slander to justify their claims.”

The Witcher 2

There are scores of learned works, dissertations and treatises about this magical cataclysm from about 1500 years ago. Because of this event, creatures never seen before entered our world, and still do not have their own ecological niche here. Among others, graveirs and ghouls are relics of the permeation of the spheres, though elven tradition has it that we, humans,

are also newcomers from that time. The sorcerers claim that time humanity received both the wondrous gift and the terrible curse that they consider magic to be at that time.

The Witcher 3

Scholars have many vices. Possibly the worst among them is a tendency to describe the simple in unnecessarily complex terms, to dress the plain in the garb of false learning.

“The Conjunction of the Spheres” might serve as an excellent example of this. This name, so mysterious to a commoner’s ear, could be replaced with a much simpler alternative: When the Worlds Collided. The phenomenon itself can also be explained in terms simple enough for a child to understand.

Imagine, dear reader, that our world is a ship sailing on a great sea. From its deck we can see other, distant vessels – those are the stars. These vessels each bear their own goods and their own crews. They usually pass us at some distance, barely visible specks, even views through a spyglass. Once every few thousand years, however, a storm breaks above this cosmic sea, a storm so strong it tosses the ships towards one another, making them sail cheek by jowl. Part of the crew of one ship can, at such times, move to another, and some of the cargo from one ship’s hold can spill onto a neighboring vessel. When the weather calms, the ships separate once again and sail their separate, invariably different ways.

The so-called “post-Conjunction beings,” namely monsters such as ghouls and basilisks, are precisely such passengers from another vessel. And we humans are castaways, flung against our will from somewhere far away onto a world

previously inhabited by the Elder Races. Once here, we learned the arcane mysteries of magic. unbeknownst to us before.

Could the worlds collide once more? Perhaps. Can this cataclysm be avoided, or thet opposite – hastened? Some scholars believe there are beings who have mastered this skill, who possess rare genes [which] allow some to seize the helm of our vessel and steer us... to safer waters, or to our doom.

The Curse of Baron Wolfstein and Other Love Stories

Danielle Stone

Baron Wolfstein buried his face in his hands. His heart was throbbing. Suddenly the scent of his wife's blood and the blood of his children intensified. The baron's body swelled as his muscles grew, his noble attire fell in tatters on the marble floor. 'My beloved, you... you are so hairy. You are a werewolf!' Bianca went pale. 'What about our love?' In reply she heard a terrifying roar.

The Disease of Civilization

Unknown

Zeugls are very much the focus of this work. These monsters live in trash heaps, amidst waste. The author warns of the danger they pose and describes the methods for combating them.

The Double Cross of Alzur

Unknown

An edition censored by the Brotherhood

I was vested with the thankless responsibility of preparing a new edition of the incomplete tome of Alzur (some of its pages have been torn out), which describes the methods of creating monstrous beasts. Whoever remembers the koshchey or the viy of Maribor knows the evil the book has caused, especially the Double Cross of Alzur described therein. The following edition provides information on creatures such as the frightener or the koshchey, but does not contain the secrets of creating these beasts.

To ensure safety, I would nevertheless suggest that readers never utter any formulae outloud and speak all vowels while inhaling.

The Druid's Herbarium

Unknown

This book discusses various plant substances used by the druids, including hellebore petals, allspice root, wolf's aloe, verbenas, mistletoe and ginseng. It also details the methods of obtaining alchemical ingredients from them.

The Flower and the Flame

Knight Eric Vogel

It was at the time when the Order of the White Rose was falling into decay and declining in power.

Masters and knights were equally corrupt, lacking in faith; they preferred a warm bed to fighting, street girls to prayer.

Rudolf Valaris ceded the title of grand master to Jacques de Aldersberg, a man of great piety and righteousness. It is said that during the conclave, a white rose in his hand burst into flames and pious fear seized those present. Jacques had a clear vision of necessary reforms and did not hesitate to put them into effect. He changed the name of the order, which is now known as the Order of the Flaming Rose.

Above all, he set the knights a new goal — to serve and protect humans from creatures of darkness and monsters, a category he expanded to include those known as the Scoia'tael.

The Frightener

Unknown

A collection of information on an unusually rare monster known as the frightener.

The Great Book of Minerals

Unknown

The book discusses minerals used in alchemy, including sulfur, Ginatz's Acid, wine stone, Naezan salts, Calcium Equum, phosphorus, powdered pearl, pyrite, Optima Mater, the Fifth Essence, Ducal Water, Albar's Crystals, Lunar Shards and quicksilver solution. The alchemical substances present in these ingredients are also discussed.

The History of the World

Roderick de Novembre

When the criminal's stake had been lit and the flames reached her, she began insulting all the knights, barons, mages and councilors gathered in the square in such foul language that they were all filled with dread. Though wet logs had been stacked to prevent the hag from burning too quickly and provide her a chance to suffer in the flames, dry wood was soon added to the fire to end the execution more swiftly.

She must truly have harbored a demon inside her as she uttered not a single scream though she sizzled fair enough. Instead, she began cursing horribly.

"An avenger shall be born from my own blood," she cried. "From the defiled Elder Blood, a destroyer of nations and worlds will rise! He shall avenge my torment! Death, death and revenge upon you and your offspring!" That was all she managed to articulate before she perished. Such was the death of Falka, her punishment for the innocent blood she had spilled.

The Kingdom of Temeria

Alice Kim

Temeria, the jewel of the North, has silver lilies on a black background as its emblem. The kingdom, always powerful, has gained even more prominence in recent years under the wise rule of the good King Foltest. Redania lies to the north, across the Pontar river, while mountain ranges can be found to the south and east. One of them is Mahakam, a stronghold of dwarves and gnomes, past which the lands of Lyria and Aedirn lie. The capital of Temeria is Vizima, located on the shores of Lake Vizima. Maribor is the realm's second largest city.

The Last Wish

Unknown

The work mainly discusses fire genies, also known as ifrits.

The Rivian Pogrom

Unknown

After the war, the people of Rivia were unhappy. Poverty was the plight of many and most believed the kings and magnates had betrayed them during the peace talks by not exacting reparations from Nilfgaard. A scapegoat was needed and as usual it was the changelings — nonhumans and witches.

A mere spark was required to send a furious crowd into the streets. Anyone who seemed different was targeted. Dwarves, elves and those accused of using spells were all murdered. People also used the situation to settle old scores, loot and rape. I admit shamefully that few were brave enough to stand in defense of the persecuted. Among those few was the famous Geralt of Rivia, who in seeking to protect his friends was struck with a pitchfork and died. There would have been more victims if not for the intervention of Triss Merigold. The sorceress sent a powerful hailstorm down on the crowd. Only that powerful spell could stop the rioting. What happened to the body of Geralt of Rivia and those who stood by his side, I do not know.

The Road of No Return

Unknown

The book provides information on a magically created monster known as the koshchey.

The Secret Gates

Ransant Alvaro

Old men say that long, long ago a mage lived in the swamp. He spent his days and nights pouring over his books and pipettes. They say he was seeking a stone that turns lead into gold and springs water into moonshine; in other words, a stone that sublimates all matter.

The Gods were not pleased because his pride would reach where no mortal should. Thus, one night a terrible storm struck the mage's tower down. However, he built a new one and cast spells to tame the storm. This tower stood until another dark night, the earth itself moved and toppled it. Yet he built a new one and cast spells to bind the earth itself.

And so neither heaven nor earth could harm the mage. Then one day, he disappeared. Some say he took on an apprentice and this brought him to his doom, others claim a woman was his undoing, yet others that his own creations turned against the mage. In any case, the tower stands locked and guards its secrets, and what lurks inside, nobody knows.

The Story of Lara Dorren and Cragen of Lod

Unknown

The Story of Lara Dorren and Cragen of Lod

as told by humans

The queen said: "Don't plead for mercy, but beg those whom you harmed with your sorcery. You had the courage to commit evil deeds, be brave now, when justice is near. It is not in my power to pardon your sins." The witch sniggered like a cat in response, her wicked eyes glimmered. "My doom is near," she shouted, "but yours is not far either, my queen. At the hour of your terrible death you will remember Lara Dorren and her curse. And know that the curse will touch all your descendants over the next ten generations." Yet, realizing that the queen was fearless at heart, the evil elven witch stopped swearing and threatening with curses, and began whining like a bitch, begging for mercy and help...

The Tome of Fear and Loathing, volume I

Unknown

The bestiary describes necrophages: the ghoul and the graveir. It provides information on fighting methods and alchemical ingredients that can be obtained from the bodies of these monsters.

The Tome of Fear and Loathing, volume II

Unknown

The tome provides information on alghouls, cemetaurs and devourers.

It discusses methods of fighting the monsters and alchemical ingredients that can be obtained from them.

The Wonderful World of Insectoids

Master Dorregaray

The book provides valuable information on kikimores: workers, warriors and queens. It also mentions giant centipedes.

Tower mage's book

Unknown

Regardless of all his madness, Alzur managed to arrive at some surprising results. He came to the conclusion that he would discover the secrets of animating inanimate matter when he learned to animate energy. According to Alzur, a golem would work only when filled with living power that would imitate a divine pneuma — a soul.

The wizard did not have a chance to finish his research but his experiments revealed the secret of the Thunder and Shield spells.

Alzur was able to summon living lightning capable of locating and following its target, and a living shield capable of releasing such lightning. The fools would only see his discoveries as weapons even more powerful than the viy of Maribor or the infamous koshchey.

However, I can clearly see that Alzur's Thunder is yet another stop on the path leading to creating a perfect being.

Transmutations and Metamorphoses

Adalbertus Aloysius Kalkstein

To follow the example of the sorcerer from the tower, we first need to classify substances, diving them into superior and inferior varieties. Only the former can be described by the theory of interdependence presented here.

Inferior substances do not produce a chain of quasi-life structures, for their nature is substandard in quality and they cannot exist independently. However, it has been proven that they are paradoxically essential for the chain to exist in spite of their inferiority. The hypothesis of interdependence assumes that the chain of quasi-life must contain one substance of each superior element. Nonetheless, the chain's structure, proposed by Raffard the White, has one too few places for them, namely only five. If the chain were transposed and then transmuted, the problem would easily be solved. Alas, the first operation cannot be performed without damage to the chain's integrity. The only solution is to use a so-called reversed transmutation, which will eventually cause the chain to rotate. As a result of rotation all six superior substances will constantly leave and join the chain without destroying it. From the holistic point of view, there will always be six superior substances occupying five places. The ingenuity of this solution lies in the chain having all the qualities of the three inferior substances. Thus

the paradox of interdependence, or as some say coexistence, is no longer a problem.

Unfortunately, since none of the modern works describe how to perform reverse transmutation, the problem of animating the inanimate remains unresolved.

Vampires: Facts and Myths

Unknown

The book contains information on lesser vampires like fleders and garkains, as well as higher vampires, including alps and bruxae. It describes methods of fighting blood-drinkers and dispels myths that have accumulated concerning these monsters.

Zerrikanian Insects and Other Vermin

Marco Knopf

Zerrikania, home of the venomous basilisk, has given birth to other equally hideous creatures. Among them are spotted spiders so huge that they trap elephants in their webs and the no-less terrifying tse tse flies. The flies are especially repulsive, laying their eggs in the human body, the resulting larvae maturing within the host's head. The victim's brain serves as sustenance and when the larvae turn into adult flies, they leave the body through the eye sockets, now void of the previously devoured eyes. These and other vermin are born in the far land of Zerrikania. Thank the gods that similar filth has not infested the Northern Kingdoms.

The Witcher II

A Hog Named Henselt

Dandelion

... Yet Henselt courts the Imperial envoy like a cheap whore who has singled out a burgher with a full pouch at the brothel. Keep in mind that a whore can let anyone she wishes plough her. Her arse – her choice. The King owes us more. His arse belongs to all of us and its name is Kaedwen. Dare we allow a Nilfgaardian prick to plough our country? As my friend who is a witcher says, “If that’s what the world needs to be saved, perhaps it would be better that it perish.”

From Collector’s Editions

King Henselt is like a hog in countless ways. Firstly, his appetite is unlimited: just as a hog sinks its teeth into all things edible, lecherously licking its chops, so Henselt bites at his neighbors. Swine pay no mind to the freshness of their fodder, pouncing upon carrion with reckless abandon. And Henselt ventures into Aedirn – a realm orphaned of its ruler and gravely weakened like a dying man. A hog’s eyes remain fixed on the ground beneath its trotters, and Henselt is likewise short-sighted, failing to foresee the consequences of his deeds. Driven by his hog-like desire to stuff himself, he now leads his army and realm to destruction. It is no wonder, then, that some have appeared who seek to slay the crowned swine of the North one by one.

A new order must arise in the Northern Kingdoms. A wave of turmoil has passed through Aedirn and Temeria, and now it rushes towards Kaedwen.

A swell murky with blood rises in its wake.

Once it reaches Henselt's realm, we shall not speak of regicide, but of the simple slaughter of a pig.

About Dragons

Unknown

Dragons were once commonplace, their rule over the continent absolute. Dragon fire was the bane of cities, and dragon appetites were a constant threat to the first colonizers. Mages stood against these creatures, witchers were created to fight them. Today dragons are nearly extinct. There are occasional sightings of forktails and slyzards, but these creatures are to dragons as stray cats are to tigers. Dragons were brought to the brink of extinction by professional hunters like the famed Crinfrid Reavers. Alchemy ingredients from the dragon's body are among the most expensive and highly sought after by mages. The beast's roasted tail is considered a true delicacy.

Ambassador Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's first letter to the Emperor

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

To His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Nilfgaard Emhyr var Emreis – private and confidential

Your Imperial Majesty! I hasten to report that the sorcerer Vanhemar has indeed proven right for the role assigned to him. He keeps his apprentice Cynthia on a short leash and displays nothing approaching excessive ambition. I believe him to be of unquestionable loyalty, and his abilities are more than adequate to server Your Imperial Majesty's objectives. The summit will be the final test. We will see how he behaves there, and if he proves more capable of resisting temptation than his female colleagues did. Please convey my kindest regards to Your Consort.

Your Imperial Majesty's Ever Faithful Servant,

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

Ambassador Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's second letter to the Emperor

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

To His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Nilfgaard Emhyr var Emreis - private and confidential

Your Imperial Majesty! After visiting Foltest (may he rest in peace), as planned I am now the guest of Henselt, whom I aim to present Your Imperial Majesty's offer. Kaedwen is a quarrelsome nation with an unreliable king and a wild nobility. Sympathies and allegiances shift time and again. Manipulating them takes no real skill. I note that Renuald aep Matsen has also taken up station in the barbarous North. I would take this occasion to express my doubt that sending him was necessary. Your Imperial Majesty knows that I do not trust the man and suspect he is hiding something from me.

Your Imperial Majesty's Ever Faithful Servant,

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

Ambassador Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's third letter to the Emperor

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

To His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Nilfgaard Emhyr var Emreis - private and confidential

Your Imperial Majesty! As Your Imperial Majesty foresaw, my negotiations with Henselt proved an uphill battle. He rejected Your Imperial Majesty's proposition. Furthermore, I believe the so-called Lodge will soon cease to serve our aims. For now, the headstrong sorceresses are mitigated by the actions of witcher Geralt, but in my opinion he knows too much already and will need to be eliminated soon. Upon the conclusion of the summit in Loc Muinne, I will immediately inform Your Imperial Majesty of the summit's results and of the circumstances of the witcher's death.

Your Imperial Majesty's Ever Faithful Servant,

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

Ancient manuscript

Unknown

GUR SNZVYL BS QNFUJBBQ UNQ YBAT ORRA FRGGYRQ VA
FHFFRK. GURVE RFGNGR JNF YNETR, NAQ GURVE
ERFVQRAPR JNF NG ABEYNAQ CNEX, VA GUR PRAGER BS
GURVE CEBCREGL, JURER, SBE ZNAL TRARENGVBAF, GURL
UNQ YVIRQ VA FB ERFCRPGNOYR N ZNAARE NF GB RATNTR
GUR TRARENY TBBQ BCVAVBA BS GURVE FHEEBHAQVAT
NPDHNVAGNAPR. GUR YNGR BJARE BS GUVF RFGNGR JNF N
FVATYR ZNA, JUB YVIRQ GB N IREL NQINAPRQ NTR, NAQ JUB
SBE ZNAL LRNEF BS UVF YVSR, UNQ N PBAFGNAG PBZCNAVBA
NAQ UBHFRXRRCRE VA UVF FVFGRE.

GAARBLLLGARBL WWARGHARBHUL BARBUHLGARBL
WRARBRABLEARBLARBLWAR JARBLGARBL WARGARBLE
FARBLEGARB

Translated

The family of Dashwood had long been settled in Sussex. Their estate was large, and their residence was at Norland Park, in the centre of their property, where, for many generations, they had lived in so respectable a manner as to engage the general good opinion of their surrounding acquaintance. The late owner of this estate was a single man, who lived to a very advanced age, and who for many years of his life, had a constant companion and housekeeper in his sister.

Arrest warrant

Vincent Meis

It is hereby declared that the man known as the Professor is guilty of numerous crimes against the Crown, including, but not limited to, murder, assault, defying city guards and officials, and other wrongs against the Kingdom's subjects. Whosoever provides him shelter will be deemed guilty of aiding and abetting him in his crimes. It is thus the duty of each subject of the Crown to assist the effort to seize this man. A reward of 1000 orens is hereby offered to anyone who assists in bringing this man to justice, dead or alive.

On Behalf of His Majesty King Foltest,

Vincent Meis, Captain of the City Guard

Arrest warrant: Geralt of Rivia

It is hereby made known to all that the witcher named Geralt, a native of Rivia, has committed the high crime of regicide in slaying Foltest, King of Temeria. As a murderer and traitor, Geralt of Rivia has been sentenced to die by fire. A generous reward is offered for his capture and delivery to the proper authorities. He who delivers the criminal's head shall receive one-half of said reward. Those providing reliable and confirmed information as to the criminal's whereabouts shall also receive remuneration. Beware! The witcher is armed and dangerous!

Aryan La Valette - Interrogation Report

Joachim Pyle

Record of Aryan La Valette's Interrogation

Upon completing the initial procedures, we began the interrogation proper. Aryan La Valette was informed of the tools which would be used. His answer, being vulgar and unworthy of a highborn man, was not recorded. Then the unkind master began to brand him with a hot iron. I proceeded to ask him my Lord Baron's questions. Unfortunately, I came upon a wall of resistance, and the subject's answers were full of filth that shed no light on the issues at hand. The unkind master then reached for another tool, and after it was applied I began to ask my Lord Baron's questions anew. Joachim Pyle,
Bailiff

Balin's journal I

Foreman Balin

Foreman Balin's journal - the first fragment

Work is going as planned. It seems our yield will be even greater than anticipated. Moreover, I believe we can squeeze much more from this mine. We'll delve deeper, bring up more wealth and Vergen will regain its past significance.

Balin's journal II

Foreman Balin

Foreman Balin's journal - the second fragment

This morning we discovered small slits in the tunnel walls. The cracks don't seem to be dangerous, but I ordered additional wooden supports placed just to be sure. Rudolph Ferdinand is spluttering, I think he does not enjoy the temperature at this depth. Old Nain Zammenhof claims to hear knocking, I bet he has finally flipped for good. I think we're getting close to a large lode and I've sent for a geologist.

Balin's journal III

Foreman Balin

Foreman Balin's journal - the third fragment

Monsters! Monsters everywhere! The legends were true - it's Durin's Bane! Too deep we delved and awoke a nameless fear. This is all my fault, so I must try to stop the beasts myself. Fly, you fools!

Balin's journal IV

Foreman Balin

Foreman Balin's journal - the final fragment

I, Balin Fergusson, record these words in the event I should die, for I wish to be recognized by name. It is the fourth day since I hid in this branch of the shaft. Separated from the monsters by traps, I am safe, but how long will I survive without water? I have the key to the storeroom and can think of nothing else than to sneak there quietly to get provisions. Reason, however, tells me the storeroom is too far and I won't be able to make it. The monsters are trying to reach me again, so I have to wait anyway. Later, when I'm desperate, who knows?

Baltimore's directions

Baltimore

Start looking at the well, where loud echoes dwell

Take ten paces t'wards the river, walk left and do not shiver.

Meager two tens of paces, pass the gate in my good graces.

The one that our safety keeps. Go where the crossroads' patron sleeps.

Every road you need to take, yet the middle one is safe.

Heed and look for Ingrand's signs, and you'll follow my designs.

Should you choose to go right, you'll soon see someone in plight.

At noon this drowned soul, points its shadow at your goal. r

Baltimore's notes

Baltimore

Thorak, if you're reading these words, it means you were finally my undoing. But know this, you son of a bitch – I will return the favor. Even if I have to traverse all the seven hells, I will return, living or undead, to torment you. You will suffer and you will weep, but there will be no mercy. Let fear now be your constant companion, for I will have my revenge, by my own hand or by that of another.

Baltimore

Bane of the Vrans

Aep Dearhenna

Of the existing hypotheses about the downfall of the Vrans, if one discards those that are unserious or unsupported by evidence, one is left with but a few. Among these, that which states the race was brought down by an epidemic seems very likely. It is hardly new, for Dorregaray proposed it in his treatise, yet he failed to investigate the matter thoroughly.

My research, the results of which I present in this text, allowed me to pinpoint an interesting strain of bacteria. They do not cause illness whose symptoms would resemble those of smallpox or the black death. Yet they spread just as quickly and attack the gonads, leading to infertility. It is therefore probable that the Vrans as a race were indirect victims of the disease, while infertility was the direct cause of their extinction.

It is too early to advance any bold theses on the matter, yet I consider it nearly impossible that a bacteria strain would mutate in this way naturally, without anyone's interference.

The remaining text has been encrypted with a spell.

Baroness La Valette - Interrogation Report

Joachim Pyle

Record of Mary Louisa La Valette's Interrogation

The preparations were completed without interruption. Louisa La Valette remained silent throughout. In accordance with custom, the unkind master presented the tools he would use. The baroness merely clenched her teeth and observed a dignified silence. With the initial procedures completed, I began the interrogation proper. I asked the subject questions from my Lord Baron's list, however I failed to extract satisfactory answers. After consulting the unkind master, I decided that the subject was not fully ready. We then placed her upon the rack. After some time I asked her my Lord Baron's questions again... Joachim Pyle, Bailiff

Beings of the Element of Earth

Unknown

The earth elemental is the younger brother of the legendary d'ao, the genie capable of creating earthquakes and flattening mountains. Younger means less powerful, but also more mischievous. Felling trees, toppling the walls of buildings and crushing people into a pulp number among this creature's pranks. Of course, it performs only those its master wishes it to.

Beings of the Element of Fire

Unknown

Fire elementals, like post-Conjunction creatures, hail from another reality and are aliens in our world. Philosophers claim they experience no emotions and do not think the way trolls and other, more familiar creatures think. Controlled completely by magic, a fire elemental obediently carries out its summoning mage's orders. If its master is a passionate smoker, the elemental will provide fire to light his or her pipe, and if its master is threatened, the elemental will incinerate any and all foes.

Bernard Loredó's letter

Bernard Loredó

To His Excellency Dethmold of Ban Ard - private and confidential

I wish to apologize for the behavior of my mother once more. The hag has been mad since I can remember and I always wondered how she managed to acquire enough wealth to buy the house and guarantee my office in Flotsam. I hope His Highness's emissary was not permanently disturbed by her excesses. I solemnly swear that the red hot circlet was just a foolish jest. Furthermore, I confirm that I will use my position and office according to His Royal Highness's wishes, as was agreed at the meeting. As a patriot, I wholeheartedly agree with Your Excellence's opinion: Flotsam cannot allow chaos and lawlessness - plagues inseparable from interregnum - to rule its streets. The King is dead, long live the King! Bernard Loredó, Flotsam Garrison commander

Blood of Elves

Unknown

Elves, or Aen Seidhe, as they call themselves, are a folk known for their beauty and longevity. Their sages, scholars and artists were at the fore of their fields, creating real, breathtaking masterpieces. The glory of this Elder Race is long gone, however. After a series of bloody conflicts with humans their cities were ruined, and the elves themselves were forced to retreat to the east, into unapproachable mountains, or to recognize human domination and accept their lot. Years of wars, persecution and mutual enmity created a rift between our races. Many elves saw a chance of winning freedom in the last war against Nilfgaard, so they took up arms, creating the partisan groups of Scoia'tael. Though they managed to secure the creation of the partially independent realm of Dol Blathanna, some feel they were deceived and still wage war on humans.

Bruxae - Eulogists of Death

Unknown

The bruxa is a higher vampire, that is, a post-Conjunction creature, an intruder in our world. She assumes the form of a beautiful woman, then turns terrifying when she grows hungry and attacks. As befits a vampire, the bruxa drinks blood. The victim of a bruxa is often both her lover and her chief source of sustenance.

Captain's log

Captain of the Petra Silie

[...]The expedition to Loc Muinne has proven a success that will doubtlessly please both King Foltest, who so generously backed our expedition, as well as the university. Oswen seems exceptionally pleased. I have never before seen a sorcerer jumping for joy. [...]

[...] Oswen tried to get the crew to mutiny, offering them the valuables we had discovered, in order to keep the artifacts for himself. Fortunately Foltest's marines remained loyal. Passing Vergen, there was a battle in which we sunk the Daerdin. We had to flee though, continually attacked by the harpies summoned by Oswen's spell.[...]

[...] Oswen's spell still has the power to attract monsters, even though the sorcerer now lies at the bottom of the river. The soldiers bravely repel the monstrosities that harass us. I'm almost finished with my report for Oxenfurt, which sums up the results of our research and marks the location of the Daerdin's resting place. We're almost home. [...]

Captain's report

Captain of the Petra Silie

Sealed copy of the personal diary of the Petra Silie's captain

An exact copy of the personal diary of the Petra Silie's captain.
An elegant note on the cover states: "Deliver via the Royal Mail directly to His Magnificence, the Chancellor of the University of Oxenfurt."

Count Marvel's Correspondence

Count Marvel

Marvel's letter to Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

Your Excellency! I am happy to report that Anais, Foltest's bastard daughter, has been handed over to the Kaedwenis in Your Excellency's name, as per our agreement. The girl is now under the sorcerer Dethmold's care, and he appeared to be more than pleased with the gift. I trust that since I have concluded my end of the matter, I can now expect swift closure thereof on Your Excellency's part. Sadly, not all went as planned. Foltest's bastard son Boussy perished through a series of unfortunate coincidences. Yet when dealing with such complex situations rife with unforeseen circumstances, one must be prepared to risk certain losses. I mourn for the lad, yet I trust Your Excellency will see the advantages of this turn of events. Besides, can one really expect to cheat Fate? Your Excellency's Faithful Servant, Count Marvel

Dandelion's poetry sketchbook

Dandelion

1.

If you wish, my love, at my side to repose...

My heart would inquire of your hands pale and fine, if they'd
grasp it gently, to hold like a rose...

Or grasp me elsewhere and leave me satisfied?

2.

If you wish, my love, at my side to repose...

We'd admire our virtues, me yours, and you mine. I could pet
your cheeks, you might twiddle my nose...

Or treat it as a morsel upon which to dine?

3.

If our bodies could a song compose...

My heart would inquire of your hands pale and fine, if they'd
grasp it gently, to hold like a rose...

Or treat it as a morsel upon which to dine?

Dearhenna's memoirs

Dearhenna

I find the study of bacteria interesting, but focusing on a single subject affects me poorly. I am also plagued by a lack of company. Not of other people, who are almost always troublesome ignoramuses, but of someone with whom I could converse at my level.

I decided to work on one of the golems and attempt to expand its ability to think and converse. The latter proved simple, yet time will tell if having it memorize poems and philosophical treatises was a good idea. For now, I play at riddles with it.

Codifying on a single tablet the ability to think properly and logically was the true challenge. I am still having trouble simulating common sense — all my attempts thus far have ended in semantic overload. I am, however, certain that logical axioms will suffice as the most basic rules of thinking.

Dearhenna's Notes I

Dearhenna

Dearhenna's memoirs I

I have started reviewing the manuscripts. The city annals have survived only in part, the most interesting volumes seem to be missing. Curiously, up to this point I have not found a single mention of the Vrans.

Dearhenna's Notes II

Dearhenna

Dearhenna's memoirs II

I have happened on an intriguing document. Its content is encrypted, and the dialect itself is strange. Deciphering it is consuming a lot of time. I have recognized the word "reptiles," which is a promising thread. The document bears the seal of one Goeveth. I have never heard of this individual.

Dearhenna's Notes III

Dearhenna

Dearhenna's memoirs III

I have finally reached the place described by Goeveth. My worst suspicions have been confirmed as I have found cells filled with the bones of lizard men. There are more documents too. If the figures can be trusted, the mutated virus was terrifyingly effective. The reptilian tissue must have decomposed instantly.

Dearhenna's Notes IV

Dearhenna

Dearhenna's memoirs IV

I have started to record the mutation procedures once more, this time in a magically protected tome. I now also realize how serious and far-reaching my discovery might prove. If this disease attacked both the Vrans and those Aen Seidhe who were not vaccinated, what will happen if someone mad or vile enough can be found among humans?

Dearhenna's Notes V

Dearhenna

Dearhenna's memoirs V

I regret having learned of this dark episode in the city's history. I have become wary of danger, as the elves must surely be aware that someone has discovered their secret. I have made my last stroll into the ruins of the Black Academy. I will seal my laboratory and disappear. The time has finally come to see Zerrikania once more.

Dmitri's letter of safe passage

Louis Merse

To all unit commanders and officers:

The bearer of this document, a man named Dmitri, is acting under orders from Commandant Bernard Loredó. He should not be hindered in any way. In the event of his violation of Temerian law, punishment should not be exacted, though the deed should be reported immediately to the Commandant.

By order of Bernard Loredó, Commandant of Flotsam and its garrison,

Louis Merse

Do It Yourself

Unknown

The Witcher 2

Witchers can enhance their weaponry through crafting. Crafting an item - be it a sword, armor, armor enhancement or a rune to be branded on a blade - requires a diagram and the components it lists. Diagrams can be bought from merchants or obtained as a reward from appreciative employers. Components can be cut from the corpses of defeated foes, though some may also be found lying around among everyday items. Having collected all the necessary elements, a witcher must find and pay a craftsman to produce a given item in his workshop.

The Witcher 3

How many times have you cursed a tailor for sewing a shirt more crooked than that infamous home in Novigrad? How many times have you argued with a smith who proved unable to forge a simple horseshoe in a month? How many times will you steal food from your children's mouths because some armorer demands a Koviri fortune for a ho-hum helmet? Enough! Basta, I say - and so should you! Empowered by the tome you hold in your hands and a few simple tools, you shall be able to perform basic repairs all by yourself, and perhaps even create something from scratch. So show those

extortioners from the crafting guilds who shall make the fool
of whom, roll up your sleeves and get to work!

Dorian's Diary

Dorian

The bite wound festers and burns like fire. Poultices are of no help, yet I still trust in the beneficial effects of herbs. I am unsure whether to remain here and continue looking for healing plants, or whether to seek aid in the city. The idea observing the habits of wolves in mating season was one of the most idiotic my master ever had, may he rest in peace. And it highlights one of the problems plaguing the educational system: in studying magic one must fulfill the whims of senile old men.

I think I smell sausages. Strange as it is, it seems my sense of smell has improved. Maybe hunger has sharpened my senses? Today I managed to spot and sneak up on a hare, while usually I would not spot one even if it kicked me in the arse. Hmm, garlic? I think I shall go out and see if there are humans nearby. The moon is full and so bright that I will not lose my way.

Drowners: A Textbook for Initiates of the Order of the Flaming Rose

Unknown

Sometimes drowned men return as monsters to haunt the living. Tormented by their own deaths, they seek to murder others. They prefer to draw their prey under water. As their victims drown, they tear them into shreds and consume them like soggy biscuits. Such creatures are called drowners. They are numerous on the banks of the Pontar, as this large river, with regular shipping and riverside villages, provides them with ample sustenance.

Falsified orders changing the convoy's route

Kimbolt

Falsified letter, purportedly from Kimbolt to the convoy commander

Honorable Sir! I'm the last man who would tell others how to do their job, knowing even less about leading convoys than about carpentry - and I hasten to inform you that I deal with wooden items only in the privy. However, with the safety of Foltest's children in mind, I must warn you and suggest a change to your course. The original route proved to be very dangerous and ridden with brigands, a fact that we, traveling ahead of you on the trail, experienced personally. Constable Natalis himself was lightly wounded by a treacherous arrow. Due to the importance of those in your care, and the responsibility resting upon your shoulders, I suggest you travel through Starling Valley, rest at the local tavern, and then follow the Old Trail, which Foltest successfully rid of robbers in his time. Remember, should anything happen to those in your care, their blood shall be on your hands. Kimbolt

Finely scribbled notes

Síle de Tansarville

Síle de Tansarville's Notes on the Kayran

It is beyond any doubt the same creature as that mentioned in accounts of old (the local bookseller's offer was surprisingly broad). I have investigated it as thoroughly as possible from afar. The monster is larger than I thought, and I will probably be unable to slay it on my own. More research might help, but there is no time. Might a witcher suffice?

From the Annals of Mahakaman History

Unknown

Dwarves are one of the Elder Races. Stocky and bearded, with strongly built bodies and low voices, they are distinguished for their height, which is lower than human. Of simple and direct manners, they are sometimes seen as grumpy, unkind and greedy. I have to stress that my own opinion of the dwarfs [sic] is by no means similar to the latter part. I only cite it here to present the views of other people - even if they are dull-minded, hate-blinded buffoons. Mahakam is the dwarves' mountainous homeland, famed for its numerous mines where precious stones and ores are mined. Many dwarves also live in human cities, for that race usually adapts to new neighbors easily, something that cannot be, unfortunately, said about a large part of humanity. Despite vexations, persecution, and even bloody pogroms, the coexistence with dwarves goes a lot better than with elves. Their flair for trade and craft makes them excellent merchants, bankers, smiths and armorers.

Gargoyles, Gutters, Splutters - Maintenance and Repair

Unknown

Theorists of magic still argue about how gargoyles should be classified. This author favors the school which claims they are a type of golem. For gargoyles are nothing more than fancy sculptures brought to life by magic and ordered to perform menial duties. They can complete only the most rudimentary tasks, so they are often found guarding a territory, even if their creator turned to dust long ago.

He who seeks to deactivate the creatures permanently must first locate the place from which they are controlled, Once there, he extinguish the magic runes that control the constructs' will.

Harpies - Daughters of the Gale

Unknown

There are many species of harpy, and all are kleptomaniacs, though some steal dreams instead of trinkets. They especially like dreams laden with strong emotions, such as nightmares that recur every night. The victims lose their dreams – which can actually be a blessing where nightmares are concerned – and the harpies encase them in crystals, creating items that strongly radiate magic. Mages desire the dreams these creatures steal. They are even known to breed harpies on perches with a view towards filching their booty at daybreak. Yet it is rare for a dream or nightmare to be powerful enough, or to come from a powerful enough creature, to satisfy the desires of a mage. He who would destroy a harpy's nest perched atop a rocky ledge must set a special, glistening explosive trap. When the harpy snatches its loot, the charge is detonated, and anything that survives the explosion is dealt with by gravity – the eternal foe of all avian creatures.

Hospital files I

Unknown

Medical record of patient no.14

The woman manifests strong symptoms of schizophrenia. To avoid marring her beauty, I decided not to employ the standard therapy, the red-hot circlet, but instead to increase her herb dosages. As she was prone to having fits of aggression, I have had the patient chained. The pictures she has painted on the walls should be analyzed.

Hospital files II

Unknown

Medical record of patient no.19

The eldest of our residents, this patient has been with us longer than any other. Cold-water therapy has failed in his case, and there seems to be no promise of improvement. I have had him chained and reduced his food rations to weaken the strength of the illness and limit his self-destructive tendencies. I have begun to employ herbs.

Hospital files III

Unknown

Medical record of patient no.71

The patient has contracted Dysentery. There is no hope for him now. I had him isolated and ordered that prayers be said for him. I also increased the dosages of his herbs. They seem to have some healing properties, but incidentally also loosen tongues.

Hospital files IV

Unknown

Appendix to medical record of patient no.14

The patient's drawings seem to confirm the diagnosis of schizophrenia. The cruelty in them undoubtedly stems from childhood events. A strong trauma (to be confirmed) coupled with a dominating mother have warped this poor creature's mind. The patient will receive treatment. I have decided to increase the dosage of her herb mixture. In addition to its healing properties, the concoction seems to force patients to reveal the truth about themselves. And the truth frees us.

How to Kill a Bullvore

Unknown

The bullvore can be compared to a heap of muscles constrained by a sack of hard, elastic skin. It's head is that of a buffalo's, yet it's mouth is filled with sharp teeth adapted to rending flesh. Bullvores are post-conjunction beasts. The visible mark of Chaos are the horns and vestigial hands the creature barely moves, growing all over it's body.

Invisible Ink

Unknown

Those wishing to conceal the true contents of their missives from third parties often resort to penning their letters with invisible ink. A message set down in this manner becomes visible only when the document is treated with a substance that reveals the writing.

Some use invisible ink as a dye, soaking entire pages in it instead of using it to write. The recipient of a message thus treated can confirm its authenticity by applying a substance that will turn the page a specific color, usually blue.

Journal from the Eyla Tarn

Oswen

Captain's journal from the Eyla Tarn

To the Supreme Council of Mages: The research and exploration conducted in Loc Muinne has produced surprisingly good results. Our discoveries went well beyond simple valuables and historic items. Namely, we unearthed a relic that belonged to a member of the first Conclave. The fools accompanying me on this journey have no notion of the significance of this find. The item is simply too important to land in a dark storeroom of the Faculty of History. As a spiritual successor [sic] of the first mages, I hereby claim ownership of it – in my own name as well as yours. The find is bound to cause a fuss, thus I request your support and the appropriate lobbying at Foltest's court. Oswen

Legend of the Blasphemer

Unknown

A long time ago the dragon Ostreverg ravaged and plundered the sacred Temple of Freya on the Skellige Islands. Three brothers, the sons of a jarl, vowed to recover the goddess' relics. The priestesses granted them diagrams of three ancient suits of armor so that they would be able to face the dragon's formidable fangs and devastating breath of fire. The smith Sigurd Ironlord forged the sacred armor for them.

[...] Once the brothers defeated the dragon, they were amazed at the size of its hoard. According to the vow they had made, all of it would belong to the goddess. The youngest brother, however, decided to keep the most valuable relic for himself. He shattered Freya's statue and took the sapphire set in it, called the Eye of the Goddess. They say that he then got drunk and gave it away as payment for love in one of the dens of pleasure in Cintra.

[...] The priestesses cursed the youngest brother, and from then on he would be known only as the Blasphemer. As the curse was worded, he would live as long as he wore his complete outfit. The prophecy was fulfilled when the Blasphemer was crossing the Pontar on horseback, searching for a sorcerer who could lift the curse. They say that he spotted a silver fish beneath the surface. When he reached for it, his gauntlet slid off his hand. The youngest brother never reached the Pontar's

other bank, yet his belongings were not lost. Rumor has it that the diagrams of the Blasphemer's Outfit, which remains cursed, can be found in one of the many backwater towns that lie along the Pontar.

Legend of the Kinslayer

Unknown

A long time ago the dragon Ostreverg ravaged and plundered the sacred Temple of Freya on the Skellige Islands. Three brothers, the sons of a jarl, vowed to recover the goddess' relics. The priestesses granted them diagrams of three ancient suits of armor so that they would be able to face the dragon's formidable fangs and devastating breath of fire. The smith Sigurd Ironlord forged the sacred armor for them.

[...] The second oldest brother ultimately slew the dragon. He deemed it unjust that his elder brother, who had proved himself a coward and fled the beast, would inherit their father's title and lands. Thus, he pursued his brother to strip him of his birthright. Since he could not force the Oathbreaker to renounce his claim, he killed his brother with his sacred blade. This deed brought a curse down upon him, and he became known as the Kinslayer. As the anathema was worded, he would live as long as he wore his complete outfit.

[...] The Kinslayer traveled to Loc Muinne, for a sorcerer who claimed he could lift the curse had summoned him there. In fact, the mage had lied - he merely wished to unlock the secrets of the wondrous armor. He asked the Kinslayer for his sword, and when the brother parted with his blade, the prophecy was fulfilled. The diagrams of the Kinslayer's Outfit remain hidden amidst the ruins of Loc Muinne to this day.

Legend of the Oathbreaker

Unknown

A long time ago the dragon Ostreverg ravaged and plundered the sacred Temple of Freya on the Skellige Islands. Three brothers, the sons of a jarl, vowed to recover the goddess' relics. The priestesses granted them diagrams of three ancient suits of armor so that they would be able to face the dragon's formidable fangs and devastating breath of fire. The smith Sigurd Ironlord forged the sacred armor for them.

[...] They say the eldest brother did not take part in slaying the dragon. He fled in terror when he saw the beast, leaving his brothers to perish in the flames. Since he was the first to take the oath before the priestesses and the one to convince his brothers to do the same, he became known as the Oathbreaker. Like the two other brothers, he was cursed. As the anathema was worded, he would live as long as he wore his complete outfit.

[...] The Oathbreaker died at the hands of the middle brother. A coward, he was fleeing his would-be murderer and removed his boots to sneak away unnoticed. The prophecy was fulfilled when he was pierced with a sword as he sought refuge in the waters of the Pontar. They say someone on the Aedirnian bank of the river found his possessions, including the diagrams of the Oathbreaker's Outfit, which remains cursed.

Letter with a soldier's supplication

Unknown

Letter of supplication to Saint Sabrina

Saint Sabrina, I humbly beg you to hear my supplication. Grant me, oh Fair Lady, your blessings and protection. Deign to save me from the snares of my enemies and from all dangers.

Lure of the Temptress

Unknown

The succubus, often mistakenly believed to be a higher vampire, is a post-conjunction creature. Therefore a visitor from another world, trapped in our reality. The beast has the form of a comely female with hooves instead of feet. However, her partial animal appearance has no meaning for the youths the monster entices like a consummate temptress. Those seduced by a succubus lose their heads, as if it was a woman, and the beast accepts all attentions, leading the young men to ruin, draining their life force. One seduced by a succubus becomes melancholic, loses appetite and all interest in the world. Bereft of strength, he moons around with a pale face and sighs heavily. He also reeks of sulfur, as the smell permeates him when he mates with the beastie. To cure him of this fatal addiction, one should acquaint him with pleasant, dowered lassies and treat him to cold decoctions.

Magic and Power

Unknown

‘Sorcerer’ is the name customarily applied to male persons capable of commanding the Power, though it is but one of the many terms or phrases, most of them highly unflattering, to have been used over the ages. These terms have ranged from the rather respectful title of “Wise One” to the somewhat less specific “bloody son of a bitch – the plague take’im.” As for women of this persuasion – that is, sorceresses – they have been called everything from “archmistress” to a colloquial expression I will not repeat out of regard for the language and respect for the female gender. The command of the Power these mages possess sets them above mere mortals – which can be good or bad. From the dawn of time, history remembers mages either as pure-intentioned and courageous heroes or as rogues bereft of reverence and faith. Human memory tends to remember the latter for longer, which may be why common folk mostly hold people of this profession in contempt.

Malget's notes

Malget

Nanna Kanpa Zi Uddu-ya Ia Ia Gat Exa Nanna Zi Uddu-Zi Gat
Kanpa Nibbit

Margot's farewell letter

Margot

Margot's farewell letter

I see there's no hope for me now. I will soon hear the tramp of booted feet upon the stairs, then fists in armored gauntlets will bang on my door. I admit that I was Iorveth's informer, but I will not divulge the name of my courier. Bernard Loredó is a loathsome hog and I'd hoped someone would slaughter him like the pig he is.

I admit, I wished death upon all the odious specimens that visited the brothel to satiate their lusts, who then returned home to beat their wives and guzzle beer. I hate this place and I'm happy to leave it, though in a way different to what I imagined. You, who read this letter, know that I don't care about Scoia'tael ideals. I just want your death.

Margot

Margot's letter to Iorveth

Margot

Contrary to your claims, Einar Gausel is no collaborator. He yields to Loredó only as much as it is necessary, and is never servile. Louis Merse, however, should be a target. He's kin of some sort to the commander, brought here from gods know where, and has become the most important cog in the bureaucratic machine. He dances to that old bag Clovisse's tune. You should get her too. I have a personal score to settle with her. Those from Lobinden are all right, don't touch them. I suggest you make contact with Anezka. People have grown used to her trips into the forest. She could carry messages and nobody would notice. I think she might be a witch, at the very least she helps my girls whenever they get into trouble. someone will try to lynch her sooner or later, so you may offer her protection in exchange for her aid. And I've no idea what to think about Malena [...]

Margot's notes

Margot

[...] I don't like that sorceress at all. All female mages put on airs and smell of bitchiness, but this one is evidently up to something. It's clear she's not just after coin, as she's pitting people against each other as if they were toys. Does she suspect me of spying? If it's true that sorceresses can read minds, I must be wary. Were my collusion with the Scoia'tael to be revealed, I would rather off myself than suffer in Loredó's gaol. [...]

Marshall Milan Raupenneck

Unknown

Not much apart from memories of its former glory remain of Loc Muinne, an elven city situated along the upper reaches of the Pontar , amidst the peaks of the Blue Mountains . It must at one time have been a breathtaking sight, emerging from the morning mists... Today only white ruins mark where it once proudly stood. Centuries ago it was here that the sorcerer Geoffrey Monck brought with him the Sources , a group of human children with a gift for the Power, to hand them over to the elven Sages for training. He managed to overcome the distrust of this Elder Race, and it seemed that a path to coexistence and cooperation between humans and elves had been opened. Yet history took an altogether different course. A few years later Redanian armies massacred Loc Muinne's population, killing all the elves, regardless of gender or age. Thus began a war that ended with Aelirenn's uprising and the massacre at Shaerrawedd, after which most of the surviving elves retreated east into the inaccessible Blue Mountains.

More Than Aretuza

Unknown

Among Kaedweni cities, Ban Ard certainly deserves a mention, for it is famous for the school for young adepts of the magical arts. Many eminent sorcerers of our times were taught there. Ban Ard also provides an armored banner, a formation highly esteemed in the Kaedweni army.

Nekkers in the Mist

Unknown

Imagine a drowner that burrows tunnels, climbs trees, is more vicious than usual, and when ambushing its prey, it does so with many of its kin. Now you have a good Idea of what a nekker is. These primitive creatures are the bane of the wilderness - the inhabitants of forest villages fear them, and animals give their nests a wide berth. Nekkers are social creatures, gathering in something akin to tribes, for they can only repel the attacks of stronger assailants en masse.

Witchers can use their full range of skills and techniques when fighting nekkers. Signs, bombs, poisons and oils that augment bleeding are all extremely effective against the beasts. Nekker nests are best destroyed with Grapeshot bombs.

Note for Scribe

Unknown

The pages have been soaked in a substance that will turn blue when treated with the activator. The activator's composition must be kept secret, but I offer it here in encrypted form as a reminder:

Light, quench, shit, rinse.
Thus you will the facts evince.
To read the truth by lies deformed,
guano into piss transform.

Of Trolls and Trolling

Unknown

According to legend, trolls were born of the Earth and their body is made of rock. They fear and despise sunlight, which kills them by turning them into inanimate stone, so they only prowl at night. So much for legends. What is the reality? Well, as always, the truth is far more mundane. Trolls are living creatures like you and me, and they prefer day to night, for they are so clumsy they stumble over stones in the dark, spilling the vodka they cherish so much. Their skin is indeed hard as stone, but beneath it there are muscles and a heart that pumps blood. Given that they bleed, they can be killed.

Orders changing the convoy's route

Kimbolt

From Baron Kimbolt to Horst Lubovitz

Honorable Sir! I'm the last man who would tell others how to do their job, knowing even less about leading convoys than about carpentry - and I hasten to inform you that I deal with wooden items only in the privy. However, with the safety of Foltest's children in mind, I must warn you and suggest a change to your course. The original route proved to be very dangerous and ridden with brigands, a fact that we, traveling ahead of you on the trail, experienced personally. Constable Natalis himself was lightly wounded by a treacherous arrow. Due to the importance of those in your care, and the responsibility resting upon your shoulders, I suggest you travel through Starling Valley, rest at the local tavern, and then follow the Old Trail, which Foltest successfully rid of robbers in his time. Remember, should anything happen to those in your care, their blood shall be on your hands. Kimbolt

Renuald aep Matsen's letter

Renuald aep Matsen

Letter of the Emperor of Nilfgaard to Renuald aep Matsen

Private and confidential I agree with the conclusions of your reports. Fitz-Oesterlen has failed and we cannot allow his ineptitude to foil my plans. I hereby authorize you to resolve this problem by any means you deem fit, should such a need arise. VE

Report for Thaler

SI Earwig

Report for the Temerian Secret Service

I've no idea who's the worse liar: Loredó or his kin, Merse, brought here to the office of Castellan after the scandal in Vizima. Not one thing in their reports is true. Dmitri is alive, the elves are well off, Iorveth has not left and has even made a deal with some witcher. Furthermore, it seems Loredó brought some remnants of the Salamandra here, to traffic in fisstech for him, as if the money he gets from fraud is not enough. The question of why the Commander isn't afraid of the capital's wrath begs an answer. Even excluding the fact that Loredó uses the chaos caused by Foltest's death to his advantage, he is plotting high treason. I've no idea what his goal is and I've no intention of finding out. Send a real spy here - it doesn't suit my nerves. SI Earwig

Rites of Midaëte

Unknown

Midaëte, or Midsummer, is the day of the summer solstice and marks the beginning of the first month of summer in the elven solar calendar. Elves believe that all things under the sun occur in cycles. After Midaëte the days grow shorter and the dying commences - to last until the winter solstice. Summer Shrines erected on this day give praise to the sun and life, while acknowledging death's certainty.

Spells that protect living things and draw power from the sun's heat are particularly strong near these shrines. Witches use them to bless crops and summon fire. Even Godless witchers bow before Summer Shrines to augment the intensity of their Signs.

Rites of Midinváerne

Unknown

After Midinváerne, or Midwinter, the day of the winter solstice, the days grow longer. According to the elves, Midinváerne marks the beginning of a new cycle: the sun gradually gains power and all things beneath it are born once again. Winter Shrines erected on this day celebrate the revival of life and light, but also honor the winter, as death and resurrection are two sides of the same coin.

Magic connected to death and cold are particularly strong near the Winter Shrines, and witches can use them to prolong frost and destroy crop. Even witchers bow before the shrines to honor winter and increase the intensity of their Signs.

Scribe's Notes

Unknown

I ask kindly, my good lord,
My good lord, my summons, my chord,
My good lord, heed it keenly, My good...

Serrit's notes

Serrit

He seems different, but in reality is so similar. Our paths have been the same: we survived the Trials, endured the same training and have slain so many monsters that we no longer keep count. So many men, also. The difference is in the details – when I see him moving in combat, I want to laugh, but I also see that he is just as effective, if not more so. There is, however, one critical difference I cannot describe adequately. He has a goal, he is committed to something. He doesn't wander the world as if blown about by the wind. I believe he feels emotions at a level I cannot attain, yet these emotions are not typically human. Is it an illness of some kind? I think he teeters on the brink of instinct and emotion, and that he uses up a lot of energy to maintain his mental health. I hope I get a chance to know him better and learn from him. Nothing specific – just life.

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's order

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

To all unit commanders:

By order of His Imperial Majesty, I hereby command the capture of the sorceress Triss Merigold, considered to be at large in Upper Aedirn. The sorceress should be brought to me alive and in secret. Not a single hair is to fall from her head.
Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

Slaves of the Curse

Unknown

Draugs are commanders, and draugirs are their wraith soldiers. A draug calls draugirs into existence on battlefields or in cemeteries by the sheer force of his will. Like the draug himself, these minions arise from damned souls trapped within shells formed of the remnants of arms, armor, war machines and corpses that were torn apart by scavengers.

Soldiers' note to Visionary

Unknown

Candle invoice

As for the candle payment, we humbly admit that we've no more money. We'll obtain the remaining amount as fast as possible.

Soldiers' orders

Unknown

To unit commanders:

All forces are to fall back immediately to defend the routes leading to the temple. These positions must be held at all costs. Death to the tyrant!

Song of the Hunt

Unknown

Tracing an ever wider spiral,
The Hunt circles the world of mortals.
Everything decays in the centrifugal vortex,
Pure anarchy rages over the world.
The winds of war swell on blood,
Flooding the rites of ancient innocence.
The best lose all hope, and the worst
Revel in fervent and fitful power.
Looking glass images without heart or mind
Haunt the worlds in the name of those,
Who have preserved blood from blood,
And feed on unrestrained lust.
Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst Are full of
passionate intensity.

The Alchemical Wedding

Unknown

Witchers are famous for brewing potions that give them supernatural abilities in combat. To brew them, they harvest alchemy ingredients from roadside shrubs and from the corpses of monsters they kill. Each ingredient contains one of the following basic substances: aether, caelum, fulgur, hydragenum, quebrith, rebis, sol, vermillion or vitriol. Alchemy formulae describe the proportions of these substances which must be mixed to obtain the desired potion. To make a potion while meditating, the witcher must have both a formula and the ingredients it requires.

In addition to potions, witchers can also prepare oils that they apply to blades to poison opponents or irritate their wounds, and bombs which can be cast to wound or kill many foes at once. Potions have a delayed effect, so they should be consumed before a fight, while meditating. Oils can only be applied to sword blades in the Inventory panel. Bombs should also be prepared in advance and placed in the "Pocket" slots.

The Arachas - A Study

Unknown

Arachnids are lone hunters — they patiently wait for their prey to kill it with one swift strike when it appears. The same is true for the arachas, a huge creature that took a liking of the riverside forest, becoming its undisputed king. A ruler who does not tolerate other hunters on its territory. Including witchers.

The Art of Magic

Unknown

The Power the sorcerers can command is commonly called magic. In the opinion of a certain sorceress I'm acquainted with, magic is chaos, an art and a science, a curse, a blessing and progress. However poetic it may sound, it is hard to find a better simile. Everything depends on the person that uses that Power, of course. Still, it is a fact that it can be used to achieve things not possible to normal humans. The witchers' Signs are also a form of magic, but sorcerers look at them with disdain, since they cannot be compared to the forces the sorcerers themselves command. Without magic our world would certainly be less interesting, and many beautiful things would be forgotten.

The Conclave of Mages

Unknown

The Conclave was, next to the Supreme Council of sorcerers, one of the two main bodies ruling the magicians. The most powerful sorcerers of their times sat on it. One of it's [sic] duties was regulating the standards and rules of using magic – the ban on necromancy was one of it's [sic] edicts. Before the Thanedd rebellion , a large part of the Conclave conspired with Nilfgaard . During those events most of it's [sic] members died, the sole survivor being Francesca Findabair . After the coup the Conclave was not reactivated, thus many mages do not respect the restrictions it had created.

The Dun Banner

Unknown

The Dun Banner rose to fame during the last wars with Nilfgaard. A Kaedweni light cavalry regiment, initially it patrolled the area around Ban Gleán. Called to the front, it proved its mettle during the incursion into Upper Aedirn, but it was the chroniclers of the Battle of Brenna who made the unit famous. Because history likes to repeat itself, several years later the Dun Banner once again led Henselt's foray into Aedirn. This time, it suffered a crushing defeat, at the hand of an ostensible ally, no less – the sorceress Sabrina Glevissig. Decimated beyond resurrection, the unit was never reformed, and its characteristic cloaks and beaver-skin caps, which once bred terror in the hearts of Kaedwen's foes, became a thing of the past, though they remain identifying marks by which the unit's few surviving former members recognize one another.

The Duties and Goals of the Lodge

Unknown

The actions of this secret organization, which united sorceresses from the Northern Kingdoms and Nilfgaard , were revealed relatively late. The ten-member Lodge had been envisioned as a successor to the Conclave and the Supreme Council of Sorcerers . It was supposed to focus on the interests of magic and protect the world from the cataclysm that would result from the disappearance of the Art . However, at the time this story was unfolding, not many knew the organization even existed. Apart from the sorceresses belonging to it, of course.

The Feudal Society and Its Enemies

Unknown

Scoia'tael is a name used by the rebels fighting for nonhuman freedom. In the common tongue it means "squirrels". As some would have it, it is because of squirrel tails that adorn the rebels' caps, or from the forest board they had to survive on. Scoia'tael formed units over a score strong, consisting mainly of elves, yet sometimes dwarves and halflings joined too. During the last war against Nilfgaard, the Scoia'tael fought on the side of the Empire, making diversions and great damage beyond our lines. Despite the provisions of the Peace of Cintra, many did not disarm and continued to fight, especially when it turned out that Nilfgaard sacrificed them in the name of peace and gave the units' leaders to the Nordlings to be executed.

The Good Book

Unknown

Once a disciple of his said to the prophet Lebioda: "Teach me, master, how should I proceed? My neighbor desires my favorite dog. Should I give him my dog, my heart shall break from grief. Yet should I deny him the dog, I shall be unhappy, for I shall harm my neighbor with my refusal. What should I do?"

The Grand Triple

Unknown

Great Melitele is, among others, the patron of love, marriage, fertility, nature and abundance. Her cult came to be through the blending of those beliefs many different races and cultures held about these aspects of life. Melitele's popularity never waned, and the phenomenon is explained in various ways. I think the causes are prosaic myself. The Cult of Melitele is a predominantly woman cult, and the goddess is, among others, the protector of women in childbirth. A delivering woman has to scream and, apart from the usual yells and empty promises that she will never give herself to another mangy man again, the woman has to call some deity for help, and Melitele fits the bill perfectly. Because women were delivering, deliver and will be delivering, the goddess Melitele does not have to worry about a lowering of the number of worshippers.

The Great Book of Herbs

Unknown

Witchers possess extensive knowledge of herbs as they use them to brew potions. Useful plants can be found almost anywhere. Of course, herbs are more plentiful wherever the vegetation is lush.

Quantities of harvested herbs increase as abilities from the Alchemist path are acquired. The witcher's medallion is also very helpful. Using it reveals all useful herbs in the vicinity.

The History of the Council of Mages

Unknown

The Supreme Council of sorcerers consisted of talented mages, most of whom also were advisors to rulers of Northern kingdoms. Philippa Eilhart and Carduin of Lan Exeter were, among others, it's [sic] members. Though only one member of the Council turned out to be a Nilfgaardian supporter during the Thaneedd rebellion, a large part of it's [sic] members were neutral mages, and that caused a split in the body. Though most of the Council's members survived these events, the loss of importance and the kings' support resulted in disbanding the association, and sorcerers lost most of their previous influence in the North.

The Horrors of War: Rotfiends

Unknown

Given that they are necrophages, rotfiends feed on carrion and human corpses, but this does not mean they do not attack the living. They appear on battlefields, near cities afflicted by plague, or around villages touched by famine. See a rotfiend and you can be sure there are many more in the area. They appear of a sudden, and disappear even more quickly if threatened, so exterminating them is difficult. Trapping rotfiends makes little or no sense. Instead, they are best dealt with by cutting off their food supply, that is, burning all corpses in the area. Corpses must be incinerated rather than buried, for rotfiends are avid and skilful diggers. Without sustenance, the beasts will leave in search of new feeding grounds.

The Immortelle or the Dwarven Herb

Unknown

The dwarven immortelle is called the devil's tail by the dwarves themselves, and Feainne Ichaer, that is the sun's blood, by the elves. The plant has powerful medicinal properties, but is relatively unknown and extremely rare. According to elven legend, an archer once managed to pierce the sun with an arrow. The sun's blood dripped from the sky, sinking into the ground so deeply that it penetrated ancient hollows in the rock. This herb may today be found in places where the blood settled. That account may or may not be apocryphal, but it's a fact that the immortelle is sought after as an ingredient for antidotes and beauty elixirs. It grows in caves and old mines, for it does not require sunlight, and that's why it is described as "dwarven."

The Kayran - A Monograph

Unknown

The kayran stands apart among all creatures, large and small, beautiful and horrible: it is unique, not alike any other being. Doubtless it is a post-conjunction creature that appeared in our reality in the time when worlds intermingled. It made its home in the waters of the Pontar, where it lives to this day. Over the ages, the chronicles mention several instances of the kayran appearing on the river's surface in various places. There is no certainty if these mentions apply to one and the same creature slowly moving up and down the river, or perhaps to the original creature's progeny seen here and there.

The Legendary Accursed

Unknown

The draug is a mythical creature, straight from ancient legends of heroes and epic deeds. When the hero enters the burning hells to rescue his beloved, or when he has to avenge his father's death, the draug is often his opponent. Why are poets so keen to cast this monster as the arch-enemy? Well, the draug is a wraith , so it fits any dark story featuring a curse or vengeance from the beyond. There's no telling how what it actually looks like, so its terrifying visage can be described in many ways without risking accusation of confabulation. Furthermore, it is a powerful creature, a prince of the damned, so it makes an ideal villain.

The Life and Death of the White Rose

Unknown

The story of the one known as the White Rose of Shaerrawedd is both sad and tragic. Over two hundred years ago Aelirenn led elven youth into a hopeless fight against humans. This heroic dash could end in only one way. they died for freedom, for stone and marble of their cities... and for Aelirenn. Just as she promised, they died with dignity, heroism, honor, yet elves could not raise [sic] again after that defeat. However she remains a symbol of fighting for freedom to this day, and elven insurgents go to battle with her name on their lips.

The Nilfgaardian Provinces

Unknown

The Empire of Nilfgaard is the largest state in the known world, its rule extending over a more than a dozen provinces. It has conquered all the realms south of the Amell Mountains and united them under one crown. Black Imperial standards adorned with the golden sun flutter over buildings and outposts from the Yaruga River in the north to Vicovaro in the south and the mountain massif of Tir Tochair in the east. The Empire's mighty armies lie in wait, ready to bring death at their ruler's command or to die eagerly in his name. The Black Ones' continued march northward was last stopped several years ago, through the united effort of the Northern Kingdoms and the sacrifice of much blood at Brenna . Yet peering across the Yaruga on a bright day, one still can see their dark cloaks and the sun glancing off the points of their lances.

The Pontar Valley

Unknown

If you have but a morsel of geographical knowledge, one glance at a map is enough to know why the Pontar Valley is strategically important. It is here that the borders of Temeria, Redania, Kaedwen and Aedirn meet, it is the valley that physically marks these frontiers. They say that “He who controls the Pontar Valley, controls the North.” So it is no wonder that the cited realms have clashed here more than once. Blood has often mingled with the waters of the Pontar, though the reasons for this have varied. Wars waged by nobles in pursuit of political interests and merchants seeking trade privileges have been intermingled with riots and massacres, elven uprisings, and the revolts of frontier barons. All these have been garnished with the occasional peasant rebellion, an event that forces often quarreling factions to unite and crush plebeian mobs drunk on blood and carnage. As the reader will soon learn, this time the region would again bear witness to events both important and bloody.

The Realms of the Nordlings

Unknown

This realm is bordered by Kaedwen to the north, Redania to the northwest, Temeria and the massif of the Mahakam Mountains to the west, and Lyria to the south. The Blue Mountains line its eastern frontier. Aedirn's coat of arms is a golden-red chevron on a black field, and its capital is Vengerberg. Not long ago the country nearly disappeared when Nilfgaard occupied its southern territories and its northern neighbor and supposed ally, Kaedwen, treacherously annexed Upper Aedirn. Though the invaders were defeated and Kaedwen withdrew from Aedirn's northern lands, the kingdom's fate still hangs by a thread. The country has been ravaged by peasant revolts and its central government seems ever unsteady.

The Rose and the Flame

Unknown

This knightly brotherhood originating in Temeria initially followed sublime ideas. It could not have been otherwise, as it was founded on the basis of fighting corruption and depravity in the Order of the White Rose - a declining association that, in effect of those reforms, was then transformed into the Order of the Flaming Rose. Unfortunately, strong racist tendencies, even strengthened by the leadership of Jacques de Aldersberg, turned the new order into a nest of intolerance. It's role in the Vizima Rebellion still remains morally ambiguous.

The Rudiments of Pathomorphology

Milo Vanderbeck

The world should finally understand that examining the dead can save the living. We owe the dead respect, that is true, and that is exactly why such examinations should only be done by doctors or students under the watchful eyes of their professors. In further sections of this work I describe how a respectful dissection should be conducted, and what tools should be used to reach the truth with proper respect for the deceased.

The Runes of Power I

Unknown

Book of Magical Signs, Volume I

[...] The rune of the art resembles a harp.

The rune of war looks like a clenched fist.

The rune of thunder is a faithful representation of a striking lightning bolt [...]

The Runes of Power II

Unknown

Book of Magical Signs, Volume II

[...]The rune of death resembles a scythe.

The rune of the sky is a line within a parallelogram or,
as some would have it, a pursed mouth.

The rune of the butterfly is a line crossed twice[...]

The Runes of Power III

Unknown

Book of Magical Signs, Volume III

[...]The rune of life looks like a blooming flower.
The rune of the animal resembles a snake creeping along a
riverbed.

The Runes of Power IV

Unknown

Book of Magical Signs, Volume IV

[...]The rune of weather is an arrow sliced in half.

The rune of reason looks like a bear dancing on dew.

The rune of time resembles an open hourglass or a chalice[...]

The Temerian Royal Dynasty

Unknown

If Geralt chose to lift the curse in The Witcher:

King Foltest's daughter had been cursed even before leaving her mother's womb and turned into a striga as a child. The jag-toothed princess had long terrorized Vizima, until Geralt lifted the curse. It returned after a few years, but the witcher managed to lift it a second time. Later Adda became the wife of Radovid V, king of Redania.

If Geralt chose to kill the striga in The Witcher:

King Foltest's daughter had been cursed even before leaving her mother's womb and turned into a striga as a child. The jag-toothed princess had long terrorized Vizima, until Geralt lifted the curse. Unfortunately it returned after a few years and the witcher was forced to slay the monster.

The Temerian Special Forces

Unknown

The creation of these formations began it turned out that shitty shield bearers are as good at fighting the mobile Scoia'tael units as a knight's saddle on a pig. The first special forces were formed by king Demavend, and they were commanded by the infamous White Rayla. Their effectiveness went [sic] hand in hand with cruelty and ruthlessness in their battles with the Squirrels, and their hatred to nonhumans usually extended, mildly speaking, beyond professional spheres. Elves from the units had equally strong enmity towards them, and the clashes between the partisans and the special forces were always extremely brutal and bloody. Besides fighting the Scoia'tael, the Temerian special forces carried out a variety of other dangerous tasks, justly earning their reputation of effective professionals.

The Thanedd Coup

Unknown

The coup at Thanedd Island was one of the most significant events in history. In that memorable day, during a sorcerers' summit, the magicians loyal to the Northern kingdoms intended to arrest those of their brotherhood that conspired with Nilfgaard . The conspirators, on the other hand, prepared a coup against their confratres. They secretly let Scoia'tael and Nilfgaardian agents on Thanedd. Many members of both factions died on the bloody battle that raged in the palace chambers, yet in the end the traitors had to flee for their lives. This event greatly reduced the mages' confidence and many fell out of favor of the kings they served until then.

The Valley of the Flowers

Unknown

In the elven tongue Dol Blathanna means the Valley of the Flowers. Anyone who sees this land with their own eyes would admit to the aptness of this poetic name. Once the southeasternmost province of the Kingdom of Aedirn, it became the sole and sovereign realm of the Free Elves following the last war against Nilfgaard, when Emperor Emhyr var Emreis gave the elves these lands in return for their wartime service. Dol Blathanna is ruled by the elven sorceress Francesca Findabair, known also as Enid an Gleanna, the Daisy of the Valley. It remains a thorn in the side of neighboring realms, even though its queen has been forced to distance herself officially from the guerrilla war waged by the Scoia'tael.

The Visionary's notes I

Visionary

My Path to the Light – first fragment

[...] I must be repentant, after years spent living in error. No soldierly vice was too vile for me. During my years of service, I embraced gambling, alcohol, sloth, lies and evil profanity. I took lives, and not just when ordered. I was cruel. Today I see clearly that I had sunk into a darkness from the depths of which I could not see the light. Miss Sabrina Glevissig, bright and pure as a goddess, shone like the light of a candle in the blackest night. She always supported the soldiers and tried to draw me on to the path of righteousness. Yet I was blind to the light. [...]

The Visionary's notes II

Visionary

My road to the Light, the second fragment

[...] We nailed Miss Glevissig to a wheel. We pierced her slender hands and throttled her narrow waist with a rope. The pyre was readied beforehand. Henselt laughed and encouraged us to mock her, so we did. As the flames licked the wood I looked into her bright eyes, yet I could see no fear in them, only peace. I trembled for the first time. I trembled once again as the flames themselves starved – the fire would not accept the victim. Then Henselt ordered to feed the flames with more wood. The branches were wet, and the smoke stung our eyes, filling us with remorse. Through the flames I could see Miss Glevissig suffocating and I trembled for the third time. I grabbed a spear used to push the wood on the pyre. Unmindful of the heat, I scaled the flaming wood and pierced her heart. Thus was I transformed in the fire. [...]

The Visionary's notes III

Visionary

My road to the Light, the third fragment

[...] Henselt was furious that I had ruined his spectacle. I was beaten to a pulp. Soon I was stripped of my rank, and those I had thought friends turned from me. I started drinking more than ever and sank into sloth, so I was regularly punished. I spent all my free time in solitude. Until one day, as I sat with a bottle of foul spirits, staring at a sizzling candle-stub, I understood that it had all happened for a reason. I had a calling. The flicker that miss Glevissig had lit within me spread over my heart and it burned with the flame of faith. [...]

The Viziman Uprising

Unknown

The events known under that name took place not long after the witcher mysteriously came back. The leader of the Order of the Flaming Rose, Jacques de Aldersberg, made plans to build a new, better world (under his own leadership). Using the power he had over the Order, and fanning the conflict with the Scoia'tael until it threatened the city itself, he marched against king Foltest at the head of an army of mutated creatures. The battles that took place in the city between the Order, the Scoia'tael and the troops loyal to the king, are remembered as the Vizima Rebellion. Though historians cannot agree on their opinions of these events, the fact is that Foltest managed to contain the situation and the rebellion ended.

The Wars for Upper Aedirn

Unknown

The part of Aedirn that lies between the Pontar and Dyphne rivers is called Lormark or Upper Aedirn, depending on the interested party's political persuasion. These lands have been disputed for ages, with Kaedwen laying claim to them as well. During the last war with Nilfgaard, Aedirn found itself in deep trouble, fighting an uneven battle to repel the onslaught of the Black Ones in the south. Sensing that its southern neighbor would ultimately bow to the invaders, Kaedwen, Aedirn's ostensible ally in that conflict, sent its armies into Lormark, annexing the region. Several days later Margrave Mansfeld of Ard Carraigh and Marshal Menno Coehoorn, commander-in-chief of the Nilfgaardian army, greeted each other on a bridge spanning the Dyphne River. They shook hands over the bleeding, tortured corpse of the Kingdom of Aedirn, sealing a criminal partitioning of plundered lands. And even though Kaedwen restored Lormark to Aedirn after the war, its taking of the territory with Nilfgaardian support was one of the most disgraceful acts in history.

The White Flame

Unknown

Emhyr var Emreis – among all the rulers of that time, one cannot omit the Nilfgaardian emperor, known as Deithwen Addan yn Carn aep Morvudd, which means, in the Elder Speech, White Flame Dancing on the Barrows of His Enemies. Kings from the Buina to the Yaruga trembled at the sound of his name. His legions of steel-clad soldiers crushed countries under their heels and cast monarchs from their thrones. In his insatiable ambition, he had tried to conquer the north on several occasions, yet he had been forced to sign peace accords each time. Though he does not appear in our story personally, his long shadow often fell over the events I describe here.

The Wild Hunt

Unknown

The Witcher II

According to the Nordlings, the Wild Hunt is a procession, or rather a cavalcade of skeletal horsemen. They rush across the sky on the bony remains of steeds. Clad in rusty remnants of armor, they wear jagged swords at their waists. Like comets, the Wild Hunt is an omen of war, which has been confirmed beyond all doubt.

The spectral cavalcade ventures out in search of victims every several years, but its harvest was never as rich as just before the last war with Nilfgaard, when over twenty souls went missing in Novigrad alone after the Hunt passed through. Curiously, elven and dwarven legends make not the slightest mention of the Wild Hunt.

The Witcher III

Death and war gallop in its wake, or so the superstition goes. Yet evil enough is the Hunt itself. It takes folk captive, youths, most often, in the prime of their wilding years, with ten to twenty summers behind them. The Hunt rushes in and they disappear, only to return long years later with no memory of what passed in the time between. (...)

Three Years Among the Endregas

Unknown

Endregas are forest creatures that resemble arachnids. They are especially fond of flood-plains, as moisture and tall grass suit them. Longer than they are tall, they move about on all fours and are extremely difficult to spot as they lie motionless, awaiting their prey. Like kikimores, endregas are divided into castes, with warriors being most numerous, guards being less common, and queens being a real rarity. These monsters, like arachnids, hatch from eggs. Impregnated queens lay the eggs in cocoons which hang from trees in areas known as nests. The lesser creatures zealously guard their queens, as colonies depend on them for survival. The queens themselves remain hidden, caring little for what happens to other adult specimens. However, when their nest is threatened, they emerge swiftly and fight ferociously. Thus, to exterminate an endrega colony, one must set fire to its cocoons to draw out and kill the queen.

Tournament Announcement

Unknown

Tournament in the Grand Arena!

Warriors of the world! Knights, gladiators, soldiers and armed ladies! The Grand Arena, famous throughout the North as the site of the ultimate combat trials, opens its gates before you!

Demonstrate your courage and sword skills! Claim the glory and the coin due to true heroes!

Those acknowledged as worthy of the tournament will receive an invitation enabling them to enter the Grand Arena and win eternal fame!

Venoms and Poisons

Unknown

Most poisons are lethal to the body, yet a small group of venoms influence the mind, destroying free will. Administered regularly, such substances render their subjects susceptible to the influence and suggestions of those closest to them, making them appear as if they had no will of their own. Yet these poisons are very difficult to concoct, for they require very rare ingredients. In addition, their creator must summon the Power in quantities far beyond those available to the everyday village witch. Impotence is caused by poisons of yet another variety, used chiefly by court plotters seeking to control the fate of dynasties and noble houses. These poisons must be administered in very small doses, as in excess amounts they can topple a horse. The worst of all are delayed-action venoms. Poisons of this kind may kill many years after being consumed, years during which the victim's health declines, though no sound medical reason for this can be found.

Wild Hunt investigator's notes

Unknown

I spent all my life researching the Wild Hunt and without false modesty I can say I read everything that exists on the subject. Furthermore, I saw the wraith gallopade with my own eyes three times. I managed to perform quick measurements on the second and third sighting and I actually examined the observational material in detail. Based on my knowledge and experience I came to a crushing conclusion: I am certain that there is a terrifying, alien force behind the hunt. A mind completely mad, yet still a mind, not pure chaos. I firmly note that the wraith raiders are someone's or something's, emissaries and their deeds are governed by a Plan.

Wraiths: Fear and Trembling

Unknown

Wraiths are not, as some claim, the outward manifestations of an inner fear. They are visible, tangible and dangerous on top of that. According to the teachings of priests, those who died suddenly without completing their tasks in this vale of tears become such specters. Wraiths have their own aims. Sometimes they remain unaware of them, but more often than not, they pursue their calling without the slightest regard for the living.

The Witcher III

A mother's letter

Mother

Dearest Lilly,

If you are reading this, that means both your father and I are dead. I have asked Egward to give you this letter only when it is certain neither of us will return.

A great deal happened while you were away at the Academy. One of your father's ships sank and we fell into debt. I did not write you then because I did not want to worry you, did not want you to return – your education and future are what matters most to us. Our creditors began to call in our loans and refused to accept payment in installments. When we were forced to admit we could not return the entire sum, they swore to destroy us. Some thugs began following our every step, never letting us out of their sight. It was only a matter of time before the family secret was discovered. They directed the witch hunters to us and we were thrown in the dungeon. I heard the guards gossiping about how we are to have a show trial – and a show execution. I gave one my wedding ring and he agreed to allow Egward to visit us. Your father wishes to give him some final instructions and I want to give him this letter - our last, unexpected farewell.

Be strong, my sweet, for in your veins flows the blood of men and wolves, and with that comes responsibility. I forbid you to

avenge us. That will not bring us life, and will only bring you the executioner's axe. You cannot die, not in that way. You must prove with your life and conduct that men and lycanthropes can live together in harmony. Leave town as soon as possible. Take only what is necessary, say farewell to no one, do not show yourself in public. Journey to where we used to hunt when you were a young girl and brace for the worst. The people there surely do not remember us, but they are good, simple villagers – they will treat you with kindness. Let us hope the madness of this persecution will soon end and you will be able to return home. In the meantime, take care of yourself and do not let them provoke you. Remember who you are and do not let anyone convince you that is something evil – this is how you were born and you should be proud of it. Live for us. We love you.

Mother

A Portrayal of the Elder Races

Unknown

What is a nonhuman? The answer is simple. As the very name suggests, it is something which resembles, and yet nevertheless is not, a human. Though it walks on two legs, speaks a tongue similar to our own and dresses in similar attire, it all the same has more in common with base beast than noble man.

Dwarves are like moles. They feel best underground and avoid direct sunlight. They like to live in filth, forever smudging themselves in mud and slime. They love everything that can be found within the earth - rocks, metal, minerals of all shape and color. It is also said that, like their kindred moles, they feed most readily on worms, roaches and other nightcrawlers.

Halflings, for their part, are more reminiscent of gophers. Fat, lazy and loud in that typical rodent way, their minds are filled only with thoughts of food and drink, which they steal from other, nobler beasts and greedily squirrel away in their hovels. They are marked by a cruel craftiness. You could be dying of hunger and they would not share a meal with you. You could be howling from poverty, and they could be swimming in gold, and yet they would still fleece you to the last crown. You could do nothing but good to them, and they would still stab a knife in your back.

Elves, in turn, seem related to the birds of prey that dwell in far-off Zerrikania. They care most for colored feathers. They would most readily spend all day staring at their reflections in the water and singing their own praises. They are so awash in self-love that they no longer feel any desire towards members of the opposite sex of their own species. Their appearance, unquestionably pleasant to the eye, is highly misleading, for they are extraordinarily cruel and any who judge them by looks alone they first dupe and then kill in cold blood. The best proof of this? The so-called Scoia'tael, bandits that claim to fight for freedom, but in truth only long to kill humans.

All these vile so-called "elder" races are, to our great fortune, slowly dying out. Joy fills the heart of every right-thinking man at the thought that his great-grandchildren will never know them, that in their day dwarves, halflings and elves will be merely fairy-tale characters used to scare young, impressionable children.

A Prayer

Tamara

Eternal Fire, which lighteth our hearts and giveth us light,
Heat us with Thy warmth,
Dry our tears,
Burn our foes,
Embraces our friends in Thy care.

Give my mother health,
Punish my father,
Help me fulfill my destiny.

A Sword for Witches

Unknown

Who are the hunters, you ask? Folk like you and yours, I reply. The decent kind, haters of lies, doers of good. The kind who live according to the gods' laws, and nature's laws, too. Those disgusted by the machinations of witchers, magickers and nonhumans. All that separates us from common folk is that we've the courage to take up arms, to defend our lands from evil, to slice out the gangrene that eats us from within.

We haven't a leader. We haven't forts or land. Though gods-fearing Radovid supports us with his gold at times, we've not sworn him nor any other ruler any oath. We serve only the Eternal Fire, and we listen only to our own conscience.

Who can join us? Any who is right of soul and sound of body. You can find us in every larger city in the North. We will give you board, lodging and a weapon. We will explain how to spot the tell-tale signs of evil – birthmarks in strange and arcane shapes, smooth skin on a matron aged more than thirty springs, and black cats kept in the yard, to name but a few. We will show you how to defend yourself from witchcraft, how to tame and snuff out magic elements with dimeritium. We will instruct you how to squeeze the sinners' darkest secrets out of the with a hot iron, and how to grant them cleansing death with the help of sacred fire.

Adalbert Kermith's first map

Adalbert Kermith

While conducting studies under the guidance of Professor Slavko Atimstein, I happened across four places where carved engravings portraying the sign of the Cat School of witchers could be found. All these pictograms are identical to that which we discovered in the caverns beneath the Temple Isle in Novigrad. I have marked them on this map.

Adalbert Kermith. Adjunct in Natural History at the Oxenfurt Academy.

Adalbert Kermith's second map

Adalbert Kermith

There are more locations marked with the cat's head pictogram than we had suspected. Yet each remains identical to the one we found in the caverns under Temple Isle in Novigrad. I have marked their locations on this map.

Adalbert Kermith. Adjunct in Natural History at the Oxenfurt Academy.

Adalbert Kermith's third map

Adalbert Kermith

As per Professor Atimstein's instructions, I will not be conducting further explorations of the sites where I discovered pictograms relating to the Cat School of witchers. These pictograms are identical to the one which the Professor found in the caverns beneath Temple Isle.

Adalbert Kermith. Adjunct in Natural History at the Oxenfurt Academy

Adalbert Kermith's fourth map

Adalbert Kermith

The trail of symbols relating to the Cat School of witchers led me to four additional locations marked with the same sign. I was not surprised to see that the pictograms found in each do not differ from the one Professor Atimstein discovered in the caverns beneath Temple Isle.

As instructed, I have marked these locations on this map.

Adalbert Kermith. Adjunct in Natural History at the Oxenfurt Academy.

Aen N'og Mab Taedh'morc

Unknown

(book is burned, only a few pages still intact)

Yviss

Yviss, m'evelienn vente caelm en tell

Elaine Ettariel

Aep cor me lode deith ess'viell

Yn blath que me darienn

Aen minne vain tegen a me

Yn toin av muireann que dis eveigh e aep llea...

L'eassan Lamm faeinne renn, ess'ell,

Elaine Ettariel,

Aep cor aen tedd teviel e gwen

Yn blath que me darienn

Ess yn e evellien a me

Que shaent te cáelm a'vean minne me striscea...

Aeramas' notes

Aeramas

The vision stabilized and, lo and behold, I saw as if through a moonlit haze the Four Princes, each clad in armor and astride a horse. The first rode a steed the color of fog, the second of sulfur, the third black as the abyss, and the fourth — a pony.

And then I beheld a fountain, a clear spring, but the Princes did not drink of it, for it was forbidden.

And then a Bird of Paradise, shining in ruby and gold, flew above them and alit upon the branch of a tree. And the tree had arms numbering a thousand and forty.

“Draw from the source,” said the Bird, but they pointed to the Sun’s bloody tears and did not draw.

And then a pure Virgin appeared with bared breast, exposing her modest bosoms, ruddy and firm like ripe linden berries.

Then my nose became accustomed to the aroma and the vision passed.

Tomorrow I shall try to unseal that well-aged sample from Genno Myvort. It is said to have a refined, deep scent with slightly nutty aftertastes. Well. We shall see.

After the White Frost

Unknown

Spiring ash down dreamy hills
past sparkling waters, Tir ná Lia drifts
slowly, softly, silently,
into oblivion.

Sage lips blacken, frosted bones quiver.

Before an ice-bound eye can blink
in distant skies I will watch your descent.

Alchemist's notes

Unknown

Jester had one task. ONE. To write incantations on the ribbons used in creating the golem. And what did he do? Made a dog's dinner out of it, of course - and as a result, instead of a guard we have a murderer walking our lab. And I asked "Did you double check the incantations?" "Oh, aye, yessiree." "Are you sure?" "Sure as shooting, aye." And yet the results prove otherwise. To think that I could have had one of my students do it instead of that imbecile...

We've barricaded ourselves in, but he'll get us, it's only a matter of time. At least I can dull the horror of my last minutes with fisstech - prime quality stuff, at that. We would have garnered top coin for it... had Jester not been a complete, and probably illiterate, idiot. Well, guess I didn't have many years left in me anyways, and better to go out with a bang than die slowly in a hospital. So I suppose it's va faill, cruel world!

Alexander's notes

Alexander

Conclusions:

- One droplet from a colony of plague bacteria diluted in one hundred quarts of pure water is sufficient to induce infection,
- In the absence of medical care, the illness terminates in death in 93% of cases,
- When medical care is provided, the illness terminates in death in 89% of cases,
- Individuals who survive develop complete immunity to the disease and never succumb to it again.

There are two interesting directions in which further research can proceed.

- Firstly, increasing the time during which the bacteria colony remains active after dilution (currently less than 12 hours) would allow for its use as a weapon, one idea for diversions or sabotage behind enemy lines.
- Second, the development of immunity in survivors suggests a vaccine may be possible.

Undertaking either of these would require an enormous dedication of time and means, neither of which, sad to say, I possess at the moment.

Amaverick of Sorano's journal

Amaverick of Sorano

When dealing with Beings of this Nature, it is most vital to achieve Equilibrium between giving free rein to its Will and obstructing it with the Fetters of Servitude. The sagacious Elementalist who has tamed a magic Minion should not heed the sweet yet pernicious Urge to unbind the Being, for only Harm will come of it, Wailing and Gnashing of Teeth will be the only result. Likewise he who tightens his Servant's yoke overmuch will gain nothing from it, for his enchained Being will be to him dumb and dull as a Lump of Earth.

The Key is to prepare a proper magic Barrier, one whose effectiveness shall be backed by a crystal of power. This crystal is of the utmost importance: if it should break, the barrier shall fail, yet worry not overmuch, for neither axe nor blade can harm it. A barrier thus secured shall serve as the Minion's Prison without unduly hindering its Power. THE Ability to erect it properly, however, demands a high level of Proficiency, the kind no mere superficial Study or Practice can provide. The Bunglers and Ne'er-do-wells of our Profession need not apply!

Right. Sounds suitably pompous. Must have Dukas make a clean copy of this first draft, prepare it for publication. Wonder where that clod is, I sent him out for cheese and ink ages ago...

An Ancient Ballad

Unknown

They say 'neath the arms, of the giant of ice

grew man-child and maid together

And foot with foot, did the wise one fashion

A son that six head bore.

Eighth answer me well, if wise thou art called,

If thou knowest it, Vafthruthnir, now:

What farthest back, dost thou bear in mind?

For wide is thy wisdom, giant!

Winters unmeasured, ere earth was made

Was the birth of Bergelmir

This first knew I well, when the giant wise

In a boat of old was borne.

Ninth answer me well, if wise thou art called

If thou knowest it, Vafthruthnir, now:

Whence comes the wind, that fares o'er the waves

Yet never itself is seen?

In an eagle's guise, at the end of heaven

Hraesvelg sits, they say

And from his wings, does the wind comes forth

To move o'er the world of men.

An invitation to the Memorial Derby

Unknown

Take Heed, One and All!

Citizens of the Free City of Novigrad and foreigners alike!

The venerable Vegelbud family has the honor of inviting you to the annual Great Erasmus Vegelbud Memorial Derby.

We welcome both spectators and contestants wishing to take part in the races.

As it is every year, the Derby will be held on the grounds of the Vegelbuds' residence. Seek out the Master of the Races with any and all questions.

Angrily scrawled notes

Unknown

What am I supposed to fucking die for? Temeria? Da died for that, so died my three brothers, and what'd that get them? Fuck all, that's what. Not even a decent burial. Da always said a wise man learns from others' mistakes, so here I am, learning from his - and instead of dying for Temeria, I'm going to rob those who killed Temeria's sons. We've pitched a camp, got us a great spot, middle of the woods, near that old mill. Now we're all set to go out on our first raid.

Anna's notes

Anna

I know not what we will do. Our food stocks ran out long ago, save for one sack of onions. For a week we have each eaten a few bites of onion a day, and nothing else. The children once detested onions, but now gobble their morsel greedily and suck on the skins. Soon our bag will be empty. We have no wood or fuel, and the snows keep falling. The mayor has been sending men door to door to hand out modest rations and a bit of wood from the lighthouse storeroom, but no one has come for days. I am not surprised. The snow is piled nearly to the top of our windows - no one could get to our door. I am afraid, so horribly afraid, that we will not outlast this winter...

Arrest warrant for the witcher Gerd

Helena Lange-Haare

Let it hereby be known that the witcher known as Gerd has committed foul crimes against the Ducal Tiara, namely: insulting Her Grace's majesty, resisting Her Grace's guards, collaborating with the usurper and other such deeds bringing harm to Ducal Tiara.

Any persons providing him shelter will be considered complicit in his crimes. It is the duty of each and every one of the Ducal Tiara's subjects to provide any and all possible help to the agencies of the law who seek to capture the bandit. For the apprehension of Witcher Gerd, dead or alive, we have set a reward in the amount of 300 arcsea denars...

in the name of Her Grace Helena Lange-Haare, heiress to the duchy of Arcsea, souzeraine of Gelibol

Hieronimus Ussar, castellan

Arrest warrant

Unknown

Arrest warrant: Geralt of Rivia

It is hereby made known to all that the witcher named Geralt, a native of Rivia, has committed the high crime of regicide in slaying Foltest, King of Temeria. As a murderer and traitor, Geralt of Rivia has been sentenced to die by fire. A generous reward is offered for his capture and delivery to the proper authorities. He who delivers the criminal's head shall receive one-half of said reward. Those providing reliable and confirmed information as to the criminal's whereabouts shall also receive remuneration. Beware! The witcher is armed and dangerous!

Ballad of Torgeir the Red

Unknown

Hark! ... I shall sing you a tale
Of a jarl, brave and true, a warrior bold
Friend to his people, and to his foes wrath unrolled.
Like a sturdy dhip, his courage never leaked.
Might was Jarl Torgeir of Clan Tuirseach.
For a man so grand, the Isles held plunder too few
So up Alba's shining waters he sailed with his crew.
Arriving at the City of Golden Towers' walls
He razed, ravaged and roared and shook the emperor's halls.
But Nilfgaard knows to suture strife with coin
And so out cutthroats crept, the jarl in battle to join
Lured by the fattened Nilfgaardian purse
To Skellige sailed bandits, villains and worse.
Girded for battle, the jarl stood in his fort

Yet Nilfs know no more honor than demon or chort.

A catapult they brought 'gainst the jarl's mighty keep.

The walls crumbled, buying his warriors deep.

An ocean of rubble swallowed men a great many,

Here we name but few of that noble company:

The pilgrim Tore, Stig of Dovre born, Slumbering Sigvard

And the witcher Gerd, to the last the jarl's faithful guard.

[rest of ballad illegible]

Ballads and Hymns

Unknown

The Wolven Storm

1.

These scars long have yearned for your tender caress
To bind our fortunes, damn what the stars own
Rend my heart open, then your love profess
A winding, weaving fate to which we both atone

Chorus

You flee my dream come the morning
Your scent - berries tart, lilac sweet
To dream of raven locks entwisted, stormy
Of violet eyes, glistening as you weep

2.

The wolf I will follow into the storm
To find your heart, its passion displaced
By ire ever growing, hardening into stone
Amidst the cold to hold you in a heated embrace

Chorus

You flee my dream come the morning
Your scent - berries tart, lilac sweet
To dream of raven locks entwisted, stormy
Of violet eyes, glistening as you weep

3.

I know not if fate would have us live as one
Or if by love's blind chance we've been bound
The wish I whispered when it all began
Did it forge a love you might never have found?

Chorus

You flee my dream come the morning
Your scent - berries tart, lilac sweet
To dream of raven locks entwisted, stormy
Of violet eyes, glistening as you weep

Ballads

Unknown

Winter

The first scents of autumn can be smelt,
The sense of words is gone in a blink.
No changes in view - it is what they felt
Tears of diamonds on your lashes sink.

Your home all surrounded by snow,
Glassy frost covers rivers and lakes,
That's the way it must be, please don't show,
This yearning and grief on your face.
When the spring comes along with the rain,
The sun will warm up us both,
That's the way it must be for we burn,
With fire eternal like hope...

Balstick's letter

A. Balstick

May the gods smile on you and me sis. Now I'm asking you to read this careful, for what I got to say's important.

Soon as you set hand on this writing, gallop off to that fence Kramer what's based in Maribor. Tell him we've got some first-class gear and witcher sword diagrams to sell. Aye, I can see you now, scratching your head, or more likely your arse, and asking, "Did I hear that right?" You sure did – 'twas my luck to come to care for a witcher what got one foot in the grave and t'other hovering right above. I was sat there looking at the poor man suffer in agony, and thought to meself, "He don't need this kit and these papers where he's going, while for us, that's the fixings we need to get us started in the world of business, if we sell them for the right price, that is. "Aye, I hear you fretting, so stop. I didn't take everything, in fact, nobody'll even realize ought of his shite's missing.

Sad, though, ain't it – this witcher's a good man. First he helped the baronet solve the riddle of that lighthouse what was sending ships into the rocks, then he killed that dragon ate all the peasants. Problem is, a dragon's no easy pickings, and our valiant hero got quite the licking taking it out. He's done for, that's certain, so soon as they bury him in the tomb on Crookback Hills, I'll head straight to your place. Come to think

of it, I'm curious how they'll put him in that crypt at all, for word is a vampeer's made it his lair.

P.S. I also lifted a few flasks off the witcher, but since they're like not to survive the journey, reckon I'll sample them myself, see how witcher hooch goes down - maybe we'll make a business out of that, too!

Your brother-in-law, A. Balstick

Balton Dubis' notes

Balton Dubis

Advice to my fellow tradesman: NEVER take on a phylactery repair job. Unless, that is, you don't mind sleepless nights. Don't be fooled by the infernal contraptions' uncomplicated appearance. I have been struggling with this blasted phylactery for two weeks now. I have used every tool I own, every trick I have ever learned - and I am no pink-cheeked novice, having practiced this trade for a good thirty years. I will next try applying a concentration of chestnut, but I have little hope it will do anything.

Bandit's notes

Unknown

Nilf bastards must have coin coming out of their arses. They buy every peasant I capture, no matter if he's lame, cross-eyed or dumb as a rotten stump. Never haggle, neither. They need folk for the silver mine, they say, and no one ever lasts more than two months there anyway, so every hand helps. Fine by me. Business is good. Only thing worrying me is that soon I'll have caught all the peasants around, and then who'll I sell?

Bandit's notes

Unknown

What's that, dear papa? You're kicking us off the family plot? Your younger sons are good-for-nothings who deserve a mess of porridge at most, you're gonna give Joefer everything, and we're to go make our own sorry way in the world? Well, we went, papa, we went - and now we've our own plot. Sure, might be a hill barely sticking out of the bog, a few trees and some rushes. No crops will take here, but we don't mind. There was no room for us in the fields, so now, well, guess we'll just never touch rake nor hoe ever again.

What's that you ask, papa? How we plan to live? I'll tell you. We've never met with much good from our fellow men, so we've decided to repay the favor. Either they'll give us what we want, or they'll end like you, papa, you and your dear Joefer. With a knife between their ribs.

Bandit's notes

Unknown

They say can you can't catch an elf in the woods. Oh, you can, in fact. You just gotta try real hard. We've got living proof in our camp – a Scoia'tael archer. I thought we'd eliminated all those vermin after the last Nilfgaard war, but it seems we missed some.

I'd rather hang the long-ears right off. Well, maybe after a couple a days of torture, but still, hanging's what he needs. Thing is, Cula says as long as we have him alive and in our camp, the other Squirrels won't attack us, outta fear we'll kill him before they can stop us.

I listened to his advice – and so far I don't regret it. Used to be an arrow'd come flying towards your arse every two steps, now it's dead quiet. That elf stays calm, doesn't eat much, and when you get some vodka in him, he even sings in that language of theirs, pretty good, too. "Bl'oede dh'oine, aespere evellienn," or something like that. Must be about flowers, sunshine – they love that shite. "Bl'oede dh'oine, aespere evellienn," translates roughly as: "Bloody humans, shoot them all".

Beasts of the Tukaj Foothills

Unknown

The peasants of the Tukaj Foothills say fiends are born of magic. For at times witches cast spells on bears causing them to mount boars, and the resultant offspring is neither boar nor bear, but has the makings of a fiend.

Usually such boar piglets die of hunger, but they are at times found and taken in by witches. Raised on enchanted milk, they grow in strength, and soon enough the milk is no longer enough for them. Now fiends, they start hunting and kill their victims with the ferocity of a boar and the strength of a bear. Yet they remain ever true to their mothers, meaning the witches. The witches protect them from danger, answer their every summons and aid them in all things.

Behind the Great Veil

Unknown

Of the many demons which reside in the outer spheres, hymns are among the most dangerous. Other demons usually must take on concrete living form - be it of man or beast. Hymns, on the other hand, appear in our world in their own immaterial form, which is invisible to all save their chosen victim.

Hymns feed on fear, regret, a sense of guilt - in a word, on negative emotions, and since they are eternally hungry, they provoke these emotions in the humans they torment. These demons cannot be exorcized. A man a hymn takes as a victim is lost and will inevitably succumb to madness, and then death.

Beliefs of Skellige: Druids

Unknown

The disciples of the Isles' local pantheon are not the sole spiritual devotees in Skellige, for some druids also call the archipelago home. Yet this is no cause for conflict, for Freya's adherents and the Druids' Circle coexist and treat each other with great respect. What welds these two faiths together? A common worship of the divinity found in the earth, fertility, love and birth. To the druids, men form a part of nature and should treat the world around them with the utmost respect. They hold that since nature gave life, her most precious gift, to humans and the other civilized races, they should live in harmony with her, yielding their will to hers.

Druids are seen as wise men and priests are held in high esteem by society. They act as spiritual guides, herbalists and alchemists. Skelligers seek their council in times of trouble, summon them when ill and ask them to settle thorny conflicts. Like their continental brethren, the druids of Skellige have a Circle - an area set aside in their holy grove where they assemble, meditate and study sacred tomes. Many druids are capable of wielding magic.

Beliefs of Skellige: Freya

Unknown

As is true of most realms, the predominant religion in the Skellige Isles has its roots in the prehistoric cult of the Great Mother, Mother Nature. On the Continent, such worship has taken as its object and namesake Melitele. In Skellige, her counterpart is Freya.

Like Melitele, Freya is represented in three aspects - virgin, mother and old crone. That of mother is most common, and sculptors chose to depict her thus in her greatest sanctuary in the Isles. There she stands, a pregnant woman draped in loose robes, her face partially revealed, her head bent and her hands folded across her breast. A golden necklace hangs around her neck, and on it a large, pure diamond (Brisingamen) shines like a clear summer sky.

Freyja Modron, or Freya the Great Mother, is the goddess of fertility, love, beauty and abundance. She is also the patron of oracles, soothsayers and telepaths. Warriors pray to her before setting out on sea raids, and the wives they leave behind pray to her for their husbands' safe return. Only priestesses serve the goddess – men may worship Freya, but only women may do her work. Freya's priestesses, like the clerics of other cults, treat mages and sorceresses with great reserve.

The center of Freya's worship is her temple on the isle of Hindarsfjall, in the sacred grove called Hindar. Worshippers place offerings to the goddess before her statue, on an altar that incorporates a great stone basin surrounded by figurines of cats and falcons - her sacred animals. In addition to this temple, sprinkled throughout the isles are other, smaller places where one can worship the goddess and make offerings to her (...).

Berengar's notes

Berengar

Damn hunk of metal. A week sweating with bellows and forge and, what do you know, there's Tor'haerne, shining in my hands... and then there it goes, cracking into shards with the first practice strike. Must've botched something in the alloy composition or cooled it too fast after forging. Hard to say. Just gotta try again, I guess, but not here, because Vesemir's already badgering me with his blasted words of wisdom. Should've known asking his advice was opening a bottomless can of worms... Don't know how Geralt puts up with that without going the rest of the way crazy.

Beware of Trolls!

Berto Bertolomiu

CAUTION!

A troll's been seen (and heard) to the east of Oxenfurt, on the left bank of the Pontar.[1] Said troll has been known to sing Redanian marching tunes. It is suspected this is part of some Nilfgaardian diversion tactic.

It is recommended that this area be avoided until the appropriate branch of His Majesty's services can take care of the problem.

In the event of an encounter with the troll, it is recommended to remain immobile, keeping low to the ground and covering one's head with one's arms. There exists a chance that the beast will not then attack, for it will mistake the potential victim thus situated for a rock.

Berto Bertolomiu, Captain of the Garrison

Beware! Haunted House & Cheating Merchant!

Unknown

To all upstanding residents of Novigrad! Hark the words and warning of a loyal fellow townsman – do not do business with that blackguard de Jonkheer! Though his line is held in high esteem and considered honorable, he himself is a swine and a cheat. He sold me a residence at a most attractive price – knowing all the while the house was haunted! There can be no thought of inhabiting it, for an evil spirit torments all who set foot therein! For now the ghost contents itself with rattlings and prankings, but who knows what foul deeds it will turn to in time!

Let then anyone with half a bit of wit about them stay far away from said home, and never make a deal of any sorts with this defrauding de Jonkheer!

Blood-smeared notes

Unknown

Note to self:

Small isle with ruins or a bridge built of red brick - that's the spot. Traces of a camp left on the isle.

Will need to dive down among the submerged ruins. Chest visible among them.

Blood-soaked military orders

Randal Vittgenberg

To Whom It May Concern, By Order of the Legion Commander:

The men bearing htis missive are to be escorted north, to the border post near Oxenfurt, where they will find a Redanian division waiting for them. As noble-born Temerians, they are under special protection and not a hair on their heads is to be harmed. Everything they carry is their own private property and is to remain in their possession.

Any failure to heed this order will be punished in an accelerated military tribunal.

Randal Vittgenberg

Bloodstained document

Unknown

I've stopped the bleeding. I need to collect my thoughts.

I could go for help. There's a village not far, I can hear dogs barking. But people would see what uniform I wear. They'd ask what I was doing in the swamps. They'd figure it out. They'd take everything, maybe kill me. This is Velen, after all.

I've lost a quart of blood. Maybe more. If the wound is still clean come dawn, I should pull through. I'll leave at daylight, maybe then the drowners won't attack. I'll bury the treasure and head to Novigrad. Should be able to find a decent man there to patch me up. Someone who won't ask questions. Who doesn't care if you're a deserter.

All that's left to me now is to parry that no one sees the tracks I left. That they don't follow the blood trail and find treasure. But no one will come through here. I hope. Everything will be fine.

Brother Adalbert's bestiary

Brother Adalbert

Each beast herein described in two manners ye may hunt. Either seek ye tracks, follow and strike the foulness wherever in its wild ye find it, or lure it to a chosen place and engage it there in advantageous battle. The latter poses less risk, for the hunter exposes no chance for an unexpected fight. Note, however, that to lure a beast into a trap, first its tastes and behaviors ye must know. As for forktails, bait them thusly: pound a stake in the soil, bind a goat to it, then hide ye in nearto shrubbery posthaste. The beast, lured by the caprine odor, will without fail soon come. If it is a griffin ye seek to slay, take ye buckthorn from deep water. The mighty stench of this herb is to griffins like fresh-roasted meat of the prime sort, and so come they will forthwith, though faraway they might be. Turning to drowners and water hags, it is known to all and sundry that fish and rotting mollusks are their loves, and as for trolls, common hooch is their weakness.

Brother Missing

Dune Vildenvert

Bastien, my brother, went off to fight the Black Ones. I've reason to think he stood in the great battle nearby. He's not returned to this day. Like many others, you'll say, and you'll be in the right. But if he fell, and I know it's like he did, I'd give him up to the ground the least, like our fathers have done always. I'd bury him 'neath the barrow where our parents lie, not leave his corpse to be ate by the corpser prowling the battleground.

So I seek a man brave, able with a sword, and willing to venture out with me to find Bastien. I won't pay much, for I've not much to give, but I'm not stingy with gratitude and sure to show it aplenty.

Any man willing to help - look for a razed hut along the road to White Orchard, just near the bridge. I've made camp there.

Dune Vildenvert

Burned papers

Unknown

(...) and when you arrange to meet, you fucking show up! I did, risking my life and this entire blasted operation, and ended up standing there with my ploughing cock in my hands, waiting for nothing (...) I thought the Nilfgaardian army was better organized than that, but you [illegible]... Tell that blessed Lord General of yours that me and my companions don't hold grudges, so we won't break off negotiations. But since our old plan's gone tits-up, this time we'll choose the time and place for the next meeting (...)

Captain's log

Unknown

Left Novigrad. Heading south, to Bremervoord. All's calm.

Arrived in Bremevoord. Port's full. Four hulks, six cogs, one carrack and nigh on a dozen longships. Strange. Near half of the longships carry privateers in the Empire's employ. Now what old Nilfgaard want a pirate fleet for? And why's she anchored in Bremervoord?

Done loading. All passengers on board. We're leaving Bremevoord, course set for Novigrad.

Strange. A mage paid through the nose to share a cabin with the witcher. Freaks are drawn to each other, it seems.

That witcher's a real treasure. It's not just about monsters — even customs officers are more civil with Kiyan around. And they aren't as annoyingly scrupulous as usual. Seems the legends surrounding our witcher have curtailed their zeal.

Pressure's falling rapidly. Wind's changed directions. Could use that mage now, one that followed the witcher like a shadow, but the two of the are nowhere to be found. Cowards.

Boatswain says he heard a terrible ruckus in the witcher's cabin this morning, with bright flashes coming out from under the door. Been quiet since. Must investigate.

Their cabin's empty. Can't search the ship now, need to reef the sails. Won't make it to port, must stay out at sea. Well raise the staysails and hope the gods watch over us from there.

Captain's log for the Amuanda

Day 69, Elinud

Hatred has set in for the guide and the foreign royal family he was hired to escort. I should never have agreed to give them passage. They've meant endless trouble from the moment we pulled out of Val, and all indications are that plenty more awaits ahead. The foreign royals' bizarre behavior does nothing to help – the crew calls them barbarians behind their backs and mutters about the expedition being cursed. The guide said he had been hired to take them to Beauclair – perhaps such strange customs will accord with those at Anna Henrietta's court, but first we must reach the Continent safely. Yet ever since we lost sight of our sister ship, I've had a bad feeling about our chances of doing so.

Day 73, Elinud

I might have known there would be trouble when the guide explained these royals were fleeing a coup that knocked them off their throne on their home island. I hear the woman speak to the child in that strange tongue of theirs. She spits out words whose very sound is so filled with hatred and contempt I need not guess at their exact meaning, for they are sure to be curses aimed at the usurper. She scans the horizon constantly, the dread plain on her face, no doubt fearing assassins have been sent after her.

Day 78, Elinud

My worries have been confirmed – our passengers will be our doom, The ship will soon sink. May our gods and theirs watch over us.

Care for Your Sword, Soldier!

Unknown

A soldier can wear a dirty jerkin, rank footcloths and stained greaves. A soldier can walk around unshaven, can stink to high heaven or even have the mange. But his sword must always shine as if straight from the forge! For in a battle neat clothing and an eye-pleasing appearance will not save anyone's life, but a sword will, as long as its well-cared for and the main at the dull end knows what he's doing.

So how should you care for your blade? Simple. After every battle, wipe all the blood and guts off of it, take an oil-soaked linen rag and give it a good rub down. If you're fighting in swamplands or in heavy rain, it's worth your while to coat the blade in beeswax. You should sharpen its edges regularly, using a good whetstone. It's important to take your time in doing this – each movement should be steady and delicate, like you're stroking a virgin on your first night together.

If your sword develops rust, it means you're slovenly and lazy oaf. Take some sand in your hand at once and scour the blade till the stains disappear. Take heed, though, not to cut your fingers in the doing, for then you won't be any good to anyone.

Careful! There's a Swindler About!

Felippe Cannalia

Attention, countrymen!

Don't get taken in by the platitudes and false prophecies dealt in by a certain so-called 'soothsayer' dwelling in Benkelham! This man calls himself a Sage, but knows as much about divining the future as any toothless village hag, and all he truly cares about is extracting coin from the unwary! Don't let him cheat you, it'll only encourage him!

-Felippe Cannalia, fifth-year student in the Faculty of Medicine and Herbology at Oxenfurt Academy

Cargo list

Unknown

Four barrels of salted herring

–8 barrels of drinking water

–3 barrels of vodka

–5 barrels of whale blubber

–4 bails [sic] of fur and rabbit pelts

–1 chest of various treasures, worth a sum total of one thousand Nilfgaardian florens.

The chest is sealed. If the seal is found to be broken upon delivery, no payment shall be issued.

Certificate

Unknown

Let it hereby be known that the Bearer of this document is entitled to fight in the ring under the name of Zdenek.

Change your life! A Handbook

Unknown

And so, I, Jacob the Rebel, once well-known as a libertine and brawler extraordinaire from Nazair with its myriad taverns to the wilds of Zerrikania, used what strength I had left to pull my craft ashore. The raft I had strapped together out of an old boot, bits of strap and a burst barrel had taken on so much water that two ells more and I'd have sunk to the bottom. Instead, I stood on dry land, and that was all that mattered. With not a living soul in sight and my stomach growling something mighty, I began to explore. The isle was bereft of game, but offered fruit in great abundance. I ate so heartily the juice nearly poured out my ears, and then I began to gather wood with which to build my shelter for the night and fuel the fire that would warm me.

It was then I came upon the strange plant that would change my life till the end of my days. Ignorant of its value at this time, I frivolously used it for kindling. Yet as soon as it began to smolder and its sweet scent filled my nostrils, I felt light and the coastal breeze whisked all my troubles away.

I devoted the subsequent years of my life to researching this miraculous weed and its properties. As a result, I was able to develop a method that is likely to transform the life of any who puts it into practice. Here is how to begin... (...)

Chronicles of Clan Tuirseach

Unknown

... and so there was much rejoicing in the castle at the appearance of an itinerant monster slayer in the person of the witcher Gerd. Jarl Torgeir, whose face in the months since the death of his battle brother, Ingmar, had worn a listless and saddened frown, came alive with renewed strength. Jarl and witcher fast found common tongue, and soon were venturing on hunts together and hosting feasts at which there was no end of laughter nor bluster... [illegible]

...then Jarl Torgeir told Gerd of the hideous striga which prowled the ruins of Etnir, desecrating that once-proud fortress, which in happier times had stood a steadfast guardian of the northern expanses of Ard Skellig. The jarl's lament moved the witcher, who announced he would slay the beast. Yet witcher Gerd was a craftsman ever diligent and true, and so explained he first had to complete a prior contract and rid a cave on Spikeroog of sirens...[illegible]

And so the jarl gave Gerd a full pouch of coin and the services of Olven, Org's son, as a guide to take him safely to Spikeroog and, if the danger grew fierce, to fight the sirens at the witcher's side. His heart filled with gratitude, Gerd entrusted an armor diagram to the jarl, one he had long carried and held most dear, as a token of his sincere intent to return as soon as he finished his allotted task...

Concerned Citizen's sermon

Concerned Citizen

Remember, good people, that fire can be both a blessing and a curse. Fire can warm with its flames, fire can prepare our nourishment, fire can drive off the horrors of the dark. Yet fire can also scorch, burn and incinerate. That is why we must live in harmony with Eternal Fire and its commandments.

Whoever fails to heed its lessons, whoever lives in ignorance of it, whoever mocks it, the same shall lose his life in its flames.

Take my counsel to heart, good people, or you will reap the consequences of your deeds.

Remember, good people, the light cast by the Fire dispels every darkness, reveals each lie, exposes every unworthy and debauched soul. Not even shape-shifting dopplers can hide from its light, not even witches and sorceresses, so adept at fooling the common folk, not the loose women who walk the street and fog men's minds with their charms. Abandon then the treacherous and immoral magic arcane, cover your bodies in modesty and provoke no unclean thoughts, and the Eternal Fire will expose for you all monsters and sinners – or else burn you too in its flames.

Remember, good people, that the Fire devours everything in its path, sparing no one and stopping for nothing. The Fire burns all sinners alike, be they paupers or princes, men or nonhumans, weak or powerful. Whoever breaks its

commandments, whoever does not heed the Church's counsel, whoever worships false gods, the same shall be turned to ash in its flame. Live then in the truth of the Eternal Fire, listen to its holy men - for they are your shepherd.

What Fire has turned to ash, no man can restore. Thus we too, having surrendered our souls to its Church, can never abandon our holy faith. He who once knows the warmth of its holy flame and then renounces it commits a sin a thousand times worse than the ignorant man who spits on our faith without ever knowing it. Such an apostate will surely suffer a long and painful death, and then eternal torture in the afterlife.

Remember, dear people, that a fire once lit cannot be stopped, that it consumes everything in its path and only ceases to rage once all has been turned to ash. Men cannot flee this element, and if they bow before it, if they let it into their hearts, they too turn to ash. Search then your consciences and live in accordance with the Church's dictates - before the time for penance has passed.

- Concerned Citizen

Contract: Beast in the Oxenfurt Forest

Hans of Cidaris

If you know no fear and seek work, read this notice, for the call contained therein will be of great interest to you.

Hans of Cidaris, soldier of fortune and veteran of many wars, hereby makes known the following: Being greatly concerned about the fate of the local peasantry, which suffers horribly from the attacks of some monster nesting in the forest near Oxenfurt, I have decided to grant a purse of Novigrad crowns to the man who slays this beast.

Yet may it be known that nay man who comes to me without a trophy shall receive no gold, but instead shall be tossed out on his arse so hard he shan't sit again till the end of his days.

Hans of Cidaris,

World-famous soldier of fortune,

veteran of numerous wars, Honored member of the Order of the Lily

Contract: Devil by the Well

Odolan

Good folk,

I know there's a war on and every man's got trouble enough of his own, but perhaps there's one of you who could help a father in need.

You all surely know the well in the ruined village, and the devil that guards it with a jealous fury - and if you don't know, well, come ask and I'll tell you all about it.

Whoever drives that monster away from the well will get a fat purse full of gold. Just don't tarry, for it's an urgent matter.

– Odolan

Contract: Devil in the Woods

Brean Hotsch

Dear witcher, sir (if any be present hereabouts, that is)

I've a hunch - eh, what am I saying - I'm dead certain that the woods I was lucky enough to gain possession of - or at least, I felt lucky about that till recently - that these woods are home to a cruel evil, a devil of some kind. I hired a gang of dwarven loggers not long back to harvest lumber. Strapping lads, every last one having cut down many a mighty tree in his life. So you can imagine my surprise when said loggers disappeared, all save one, and he claimed to have seen a monster. I've marked out a bounty for freeing my stretch of woods from all foul creatures, and dearly hope that soon I will have the pleasure of giving it to someone.

Sincerely,

-Brean Hotsch

Contract: Haunted House

Kurt Dysart

I seek a witcher of unsullied reputation (documentation regarding prior achievements and written references preferred) who will undertake the task of combing the residence on the outskirts of the city recently acquired by the undersigned, Count Kurt Dysart, in order to find and drive off or kill the creature which is haunting it. A sizable reward is guaranteed.

Sincerely, -Kurt Dysart, Count of Anchor by writ of King Foltest
(temporarily in residence at the Kingfisher)

Contract Issued by the Temple Guard of the City of Novigrad

Sergeant Gilbert Witschke

Fellow Followers of the Flame,

In recent days several officers of the Temple Guard have been ravaged to death in a most bestial manner. An investigation has been launched to look into the matter, so the perpetrator shall soon feel the iron grip of justice closing around his throat. Anyone able to help the guardsmen track down and punish this murderer - or murderers, as the case may be - is asked to report to the nearest guardpost at once. A reward is foreseen.

It is likewise hereby announced that any man aiding or abetting these bandits or withholding evidence regarding these crimes shall be punished by torture, imprisonment or even death.

-Sergeant Gilbert Witschke

Contract: Jenny o' the Woods

Bolko

Hark!

Some devilry's taken hold of our fields, something neither spirit nor phantom. Old Wil swears on his mother's grave it's like to be Jenny o' the Woods. Whether it is or it ain't, be careful and don't go out in the fields alone, and most certainly not without scythe or rake in hand.

But if you've the courage to drive the foul thing off, you'll receive a handsome reward.

– Bolko, ealdorman of Midcopse

Contract: Missing Miners

Gjarr

It'll not come as news to most, but let me repeat for the ignorant: a few of our lads went looking for ore in the mountains and never returned. They must've run into trouble, and since those brave warriors couldn't handle it themselves, it must've been serious trouble indeed. That's why I'm looking for a brave man to go up and suss out what's become of them. Whoever does so will get gold to match his glory.

-Gjarr, village elder of Svorlag

Contract: Missing Soldiers

Milan Noran

Let it be known that the Imperial Army is in need of a man who knows the area - a hunter or a scout, for example - to help us find a missing patrol.

It is possible the soldiers fell prey to a monster. If this suspicion is confirmed, anyone delivering the beast's head will be paid a reward by the undersigned. Address any and all questions to the same individual.

Glory to the Emperor!

-Milan Noran, commander of the division stationed in Oreton

Contract: Missing Son

Odhen of Rannvaig

Be ye Skelliger or Continent man, read attentively and to the very end. My son, Olve, he went off to seek adventure and never returned. So I'm asking all travelers to keep their eyes out for him - and if you bring him back or find out what's happened to him, I'll pay a generous reward and keep you in my prayers to Freya.

-Odhen of Rannvaig

Contract: Monster from the Swamp

Leslav

Anyone knows how to read, read this, and read it careful, so that it's known far and wide, or at least throughout the whole village.

Out in the bog, by where we dig peat, there's a beast what [sic] feeds on men and spurts out deadly mists all around itself. If you're good with a sword and looking for coin, know that I'll pay and pay well for that beast's head. And to everyone else, stay out of that accursed bog if you value your lives. Don't say I didn't warn you.

-Leslav

Contract: Monster in Oxenfurt

Commander of the Oxenfurt City Regiment

By orders of our most magnanimous ruler, King Radovid V, any itinerant monster slayer reading this notice is obliged to abandon any currently-unresolved contracts immediately and devote himself to tracking and slaying this monster. The beast in question has befouled the cradle of human intellect, the city within whose territory lies the oldest of academies of learning, namely: Oxenfurt. The swordsman who puts an end to its criminal doings will be rewarded with the King's full generosity.

-Commander of the Oxenfurt City Regiment

Contract: Monster in the Bits

Lund

By order of the City Council number 1408/DZ/185, a reward has been set aside for the killing of the monster which torments and murders residents of the Bits after dark.

The only acceptable proof of having performed this deed shall be a trophy taken from the monster's body.

Yes, this means your mother's or cousin's or aunt's eyewitness testimony will not suffice, nor will the sworn word of any other person, regardless of his or her claimed relationship to you, the Hierarch or anyone else, and also without caring one whit for his or her alleged trustworthiness, which supposedly can be attested to by anyone at your favorite drinking hall.

For more information and/or to collect the reward, see the District Superintendent for the Bits.

-Lund

By writ of the City Council

Superintendent of the Bits

Contract: Monster in the Cemetery

Unknown

People of Lindenvale and thereabouts!

If you've got any notion of wandering over to the graveyard, rid yourself of it at once, for some evil's taken it over, digging up graves and doing other such damage. Lately it's begun preying on any who enter, and has even kidnapped the miller's lad.

So if you've an ounce of sense, stay far from it, and if you've the courage and skill, slay the monster for us, and your efforts will surely be rewarded.

Contract: Monster on the High Road

Thorleif

I need a hero. A man favored by the gods. Or a witcher. Anyone, really, who's not afraid to stand up to the ghastly creature what's been attacking folk walking the main road to Larvik.

A reward's been set aside.

If you don't fear death and long for fame in ballads, come see the village elder.

–Thorleif, son of Bear Haugs

P.S. Sverre, you stay home. You've done enough as it is.

Contract: Morkvarg

Sister Josta

Sons and daughters of Freya,

Another year has passed in which Morkvarg plagues our goddess' gardens. Whoever musters the courage to eliminate this evil will gain fame amongst mortals and the favor of the immortals, as well as a prize from the temple's vault.

–Sister Josta

Contract: Nils' Disappearance

Kevan

To anyone who might know anything!

Nils from our village – he's disappeared! It's been many a day now and he's still nowhere to be seen. So if you know what's become of him, don't keep it to yourself, come see me and let me know, even if the truth's grim and dark, for my sister, Britt, who was his betrothed, she's going out of her mind with worry, crying seas of tears and such. I swear to Hemdall, whoever brings me news will get an honorable reward.

–Kevan

Contract on... Gods Know What On!

Huntsman of Lindenvale

Good Folk!

Walking the woods recently I spied some odd tracks and couldn't for the life of me figure out what left them, even though I've many a hunt under my belt. You know me, I'm not one to make a fuss, but I can't help but reckon they bode ill and we all should be on guard. And if anyone's seen something or figures he can identify the tracks, come see me. There's a reward.

-Huntsman of Lindenvale

Contract: Shrieker

Chet

To Whom It May Concern:

Let it hereby be known that whoever kills the shrieker, the monster that's wove its nest near Crow's Perch and has taken to killing both men and beasts, will be given a sizable reward. Take heed that she's a dreadful dangerous creature and killing it'll take a trained fighter, not just a pack of peasants with pitchforks.

-Chet at Crow's Perch

Contract: the Beast of Honorton

Sobemir

Good Folk!

There's a vile and dangerous spook, beast or devil of sorts causing no end of trouble near our village, Honorton. We promise our profoundest gratitude - and a sizeable reward - to any brave lad who can slay it.

If you're looking to learn more, come pay us a visit. Ask for the ealdorman, Sobemir.

Contract: The Phantom of Eldberg

Jorund of Arinbjorn

If you got this far, clearly you know how to read, so read the rest, and read it well.

A wraith's sprung up on Eldberg and covered the whole isle in fog and put out the light in our lighthouse. If you're afraid to face a ghost in battle, stay far from Eldberg, for there you'll find neither gold nor glory, only death. But if you've faced such phantoms before, then know that I, Jorund of Arinbjorn, will pay my own gold to you if you drive off the spirits from our clan's territories.

Contract: The White Lady

Helma

Good People,

Take pity on the poor lot of us peasants. The fields outside of town are haunted by a wraith somewhat like a maid in appearance, though her visage is ghastly and sullied. You cannot walk within ten spans of the evil and hope to escape alive. It's thus keeping us from harvesting our crops, meaning famine and misery await us if nothing changes. So we plan to hand all our remaining gold to whoever drives this White Lady off or kills her.

-Helma, Ignatius' widow.

P.S. Since I've got many an inquiry into the matter already, I'll let it be known right here: I'm not interested in remarrying.

Contract: Woodland Spirit

Sven

Warriors of Skellige!

If there's man of ye brave enough to face the Woodland Spirit, the cruel oppressor of the inhabitants of Fayrlund, he'll get a reward that'll keep him in mead for a long while. We're not rich, but we've gathered a fair bit of coin between us.

Come to Fayrlund and ask for Sven

Crafting notes

Unknown

(...) now there's a commission I haven't seen the likes of in ages. Got a visit from that witcher the baronet summoned about them evil powers took over the lighthouse and were crashing ships against the rocks. He stood there in the doorway of my forge, looking noble as a prince or duke or something, and said his silver sword got damaged during his last job. Blade was chipped bad, almost broken in two spots. I asked how he expected me to know how to fix a weapon like that, and he gave me a diagram and said I was to forge him a new one, and promised quite the sum in return.

...damn near tuckered myself out making that thing! Aye, I did my apprenticeship with Master Barnaby of Novigrad and I've made a witcher blade or two in my life, but it's been over three years since I last touched anything of the sort. In the end didn't matter, though – afore I could finish, the witcher figured out what was going on with the lighthouse and had to make haste to the baronet's castle, for... [rest illegible]

Crumpled letter

Olle

Jouke,

Master Varese's asked after his coin. For the first and last time. Either you repay it all with interest tomorrow or learn exactly why Master Varese's called "The Cleaver."

Olle

Crumpled letter

Robert de Mere

Dear Sir,

You were kind enough to share with me your doubts concerning the contract. You made it clear you believe it impossible for a man to turn into a nekker. You even drove the point home with a humorous comparison, saying, I believe, "same as a pig won't turn into a horse, not even if you strap a saddle on it and call it Black Beauty."

It is entirely possible that you are right. But if there exists even the shadow of a chance that my son has been imprisoned in the body of that monster, that some spell or curse has done this to him, then I will not rest until I try every possible way of helping him.

That is why I would ask you to refrain from further attempts at humor and keep your doubts to yourself. Instead, channel those energies towards doing the job for which you shall be paid. Catch the nekker, and collect your gold. The rest should not interest you.

Respectfully yours,

-Robert de Mere

Crumpled letter

Robbe

Tuur,

Ulrich told me to send you one of those stolen diagrams. He's dead set on puzzling them out quick as possible. No idea what's put the fire to his breeches – but knowing him, there's coin involved, sure as shaving. So if you do manage to decipher anything, write me first and we'll reconnoiter on what to do next. That lout's starting to rile me – sits on his arse all the time, getting up only to come chew us out. High time he was taught a lesson.

-Robbe

Crumpled letter

Jochen Brandt

Janne,

Dean Marcellus has made it clear that as a specialist in postconjunctive species I am to provide you with all the help necessary in preparing for the trip you are planning. Maybe I will start with a warning: it's pure madness. Assuming that you survive teleportation – and opening a stable portal several dozen meters above the ground is, as you know, highly risky – you will then be torn to shreds. As much as Vampires Superiores are actually rational creatures with developed cognitive and analytical functions, other species may be less open to attempts to make contact.

If by chance you do live to have an audience with this Unseen Elder, do the following immediately: genuflect, say words of greeting in their language – “eclthi, lautni ama” – and place on the ground the attached Haakland aragonite crystal as a gift. Then, and only then, is there the slightest chance that you will be heard. But, by the gods, speak quickly and don't waste your words.

-Jochen Brandt

Crumpled letter

Halley

Janne,

Come back to me, I'm begging you. Each day's more dangerous than the last. There's strange men lurking outside the house. Watching me. Carrying weapons. I'm afraid they know something about our stash of valuables and are waiting for a chance to rob us – or worse.

I remember what you wrote earlier. That you can't abandon your post now, that they owe you back pay, that if you don't wait, the coin's gone for good. But what would you rather be – a rich widowers, or a poor husband?

Your Halley

Crumpled notes

Unknown

Soldiers have come. Whether ours or there's [sic] – don't know. Don't really matter anymore. I heard them riding down the road. Hid. Nailed the door shut. Maybe they won't get in.

They spent the whole night killing and raping. I saw it all through the cracks in the wall. Bit my finger to the bone trying to keep from screaming. Don't know if anyone else managed to hide. Maybe not. I saw them drag Antosh out. He had hid in the fields, next to the haystack where he'd stashed his things. They flailed him.

They've heard me. Know I'm in here. I didn't open up when they pounded. I thought they'd burn me out, just like they did those who hid in the granary. Then they got on their horses, rode off. Quiet, now. All I can hear's the flies circling the bodies.

I tried to knock open the door. Open the window. Dig myself out. Make a hole in the wall or roof. Nothing doing.

I heard people who came to rob corpses. Don't know of what, all's left is soiled shirts and foot wrappings. I called for help. They didn't answer. Only ones who'll come now are the ghouls.

I always said Musky was a clever pup! He understands more words than quite a few men. He can do all sorts of tricks - sit,

roll over, and if you give him a scrap of bacon, he'll even shake your hand. But today, why, he's outdone himself today.

I look, and there's Musky, running in from the field carrying something in his mouth. I think, "Maybe it's a hare, and I'll be able to whip up a stew, sell the fur?" But no, it was a sack. All covered in blood, so no wonder he sniffed it out. I look inside... and inside there's a key. A little one, all engraved and ornamented, like it fits some fancy chest or box. So I think, "Maybe there's treasure hidden hereabouts, and that's what this key's for?" So I think I'll go for a walk, see what I can see. If I find it, I swear to Melitele, Musky's going to eat nothing but veal for the rest of his days!

That blood on the sack's got me a bit worried, though... But I'll take a thick club with me, so if anything pops out of the bushes, it'll get a thumping. You don't live but once, so you might as well take some risks, I always say!

Damp, moldy notes by Hieronymus on the witcher Elgar

Hieronymus

Elgar hid further improvements to the equipment used by the School of the Wolf in various regions of the Skellige Isles. He put some in a wooden fort in southern Ard Skellig. Another set he hid in the ruins in the western portion of Hindarsfjall. A third stash was hidden in the burial mounds found in western Ard Skellig.

Dandelion's Planner

Dandelion

Rosa var Attre

Like a rose abashed of its crimson hue,
fair Rosa would sink into humors blue.

She shunned her lessons in civility
to swing her Dwarf with agility.

~ a charming garden-enclosed villa in Gildorf

Molly

Though well she knows the touch of silk and lace,
she shuns not straw when gripped in lust's embrace.

~ Gildorf, villa next to the morgue

Vespula

Though timid in looks, no adventure did skip her.
My heart melts when she asks, "Ever had a Big Dipper?"

~ Farcorners, laundry near the mouth of the Pontar

Marabella

Though her cries are divine when behind closed doors,
Standing on stage, her squawks are drowned by snores.

~ The Bits, near Pauper's Square

Elihal

A figure most rare, her nature dual.

Look deep in her eyes, or be made a fool.

~ Tailor's shop across from the tannery

Dead soldier's letter

Johenn

Gustav, I've got something to ask of you. I've come into the possession of quite the stash of valuables. Don't ask how - modesty prevents me from trumpeting the heroic deeds I performed in the fight for our beloved fatherland. At any rate there's so damned much of it that there's no way in any hell I'll carry it back on my own, so I've put everything in a chest and buried it on the beach, at the base of the cliff with the two burned-out huts on it. You know, we'd go crayfish hunting there, remember?

So here's what you've got to do: grab a wheelbarrow, throw a shovel in it and take it to the beach - but make sure no one sees you. We'll load the treasure and sell it all in Vizima - and split the earnings fifty-fifty, like family should.

See you later. And remember - not a word to anyone!

Johenn

Diary of a Fire Swallower

Unknown

I was at Loc Muinne – that’s right, the summit of summits itself. We’d gone there, my troupe mates and I, knowing there’d be a meeting of the mighty in the ruins. You see, whenever big shots gather to chew some particularly gristly fat, there’s coin to be had for performing men like us – tired jaws need to relax with some laughing and indulging in other sorts of simple delights. I learned this as a lad from my old man, who’d drag me around to juggle outside courts and conventions all over the Continent. And so now, plying my own trade as a fire swallower, I told the lads up soon as I caught word of what was brewing in Loc Muinne and we turned our wagons thataway at once.

I’m not much one for politics, but I couldn’t help but listen to some of it this time – you see, we Temerians had just lost our king, and our future was to be decided at that very summit, with John Natalis representing our side in the matter. Radovid was there, too, a young pup then, though emanating strength like a grey-haired alpha wolf. It seemed this wolf was licking his chops over Temeria like it was a bit of ripe carrion...

The rest was dull – a lot of talk about the uprising in Aedirn and its leader, Saskia, who they called the Virgin – though I never got the chance to check personally whether that was accurate. The Nilfgaardians had a delegate, some Shilard fellow, and

mage were there, talking about restoring the Conclave and Supreme Council of Sorcerers.

I didn't listen to much of that – my eyes were glued to the unusually large number of armed troops present at these “peaceful” talks. Steel-plated grunts clenched pointy weapons and paced the ruins' courtyards everywhere you looked. Radovid had even brought the knightly Order of the Flaming Rose, those arrogant pricks ready to bash anyone who doesn't think the same as them. Though the coin was coming in amply, we didn't wait around to see how things would develop, just loaded our stuff onto our wagon and left at a trot. As we mounted the pass, we looked back to see pillars of smoke, black as pitch, rising above Loc Muinne...

Diplomatic report

Henry var Attre

To: His Imperial Majesty Emhyr var Emreis, Emperor of Nilfgaard

Since the time of my last report, remarkably swift progress has been made and sentiment in the the city has crystallized. If anyone previously believed the ongoing war did not concern the free city, not a single resident now doubts the further course of the conflict will be determined within its walls. Our agents have confirmed earlier reports contending that King Radovid has important plans for Novigrad, and lately we have observed an increase in his agents' activity as well as the spread of propaganda. His prime objective seems to be seizure of the wealthy held by the Church of the Eternal Fire. Yet though Hierarch Hemmelfart officially rules the city, true power is in the hands of local crime lords. I recommend the emperor's agents focus further activity in that direction.

Henry var Attre

by decree of His Imperial Majesty

Ambassador of the Empire of Nilfgaard in the Free City of Novigrad

Distiller's letter

Dagfin

Tjalfe,

I'm giving you one last chance. Either do everything properly, or your apprenticeship is over and you can start packing your bags.

Here are your instructions. Read them twice to make sure they make it into that watery brain of yours.

- Put the mash in the evaporator.
- Light the fire under the evaporator
- Cool the the condenser. FIRST turn the right lever, then the left. NOT the other way around.

Now, is that hard? No. The answer's no. So get to work.

Dagfin

P.S. Don't toss rotten malt out behind the distillery – dump it in the stream. Otherwise someone will catch a whiff of something and come investigate.

Distiller's log

Dagfin

Damn. Beast's come round again. Refused to go till I poured some spirit in the basin. Till I filled it to the brim. It drank it all in one slurp and left.

Note a week's passed and it's come again. I threw stones to chase it off. Then it threw stones back and broke three of my ribs. Howled and screamed till I poured some more.

I've gone through my ledger. That ploughing beast's drank half my supply. I shan't give it another drop, no matter what. Think it's time I called for a witcher.

Dolores Reardon's diary

Dolores Reardon

The 3rd of Feainn

Hot summer days have come earlier than usual this year. Humbert has grown unbearable. He gets angry whenever I accompany the milkmaids to the river. He says I'm not to fraternize with the help. But what makes him truly furious is when I converse with Yan and Fred. He claims a well-born lady should not mix with men of lower rank. That doing so undermines his rightful authority over them. Perhaps once the summer swelter begins to fade he'll become more tolerable.

The 20th of Feainn

The boredom weighs heavier and heavier upon me. I love my brother and am glad we did not sell the estate after our parents died, but at times I daydream of what it would be like to live somewhere else, with other people...

The 43rd of Feainn

We've a guest. He's the son of a lord from somewhere near Gors Velen. A hunt took him across our land and he asked for lodging. Oh, what joy! Finally, something is happening!

The 15th of Lammas

The time has come to admit it – I love Roderick. And I feel he loves me too. I hope Humbert will be pleased!

The 18th of Lammas

I told Humbert about Roderick and me. He flew into a rage. He said that match was out of the question. Perhaps I can convince him otherwise.

The 21st of Lammas

Humbert remains implacable, but I shan't abandon the love of my life for him. If I'm left with no other choice, I will run away with Roderick.

Druzus the Hermit's notes

Druzus the Hermit

For years and years I succeeded in living a quiet life, far from the stink and cry of the big city.

When I entered this voluntary exile, I left the whole world behind and hoped it would do the same to me. Yet lately I have noticed someone observing me. Times are unsettled. War turns men into wild beasts. I suspect it is not a friendly neighbor keeping an eye on me.

Barylka, the only companion in my solitude, stands by the door at night and barks. What has happened to Alexis, Hector, Gizmo, Dex? Hunger drives men to do the worst — perhaps bandits now prowl the ares? Fools. They know I have nothing, Tomorrow I will attempt to explain everything to them.

Edwin Greloff's first map

Edwin Greloff

After being recruited by Professor Slavko Atimstein to join his research group, I began a study of the Griffin School of witchers. My base of operations was the tomb under the Crookback Hills. The professor claimed this was the final resting place for one of the “griffins” and wished to find a way inside it.

I quickly discovered a range of places of interest, each marked with a pictogram in the shape of a Griffin School witcher medallion. I've marked these points on this map.

Edwin Greloff. Adjunct in Natural History at Oxenfurt Academy.

Edwin Greloff's fourth map

Edwin Greloff

[the writing on the map is smeared with dried blood, cannot be read]

[addendum] Map ain't worth shit. Only thing I found were some griffin symbols scratched on the walls. Can see we're not going to get anything worth near enough to pay back the debts that dandy doctor wracked [sic] up with us. Good thing he's worm food now. But maybe it would be worthwhile to loot that tomb under Crookback Hills? I doubt our doctor friend would've wasted his time just running around looking for primitive drawings – there's gotta be some treasure about.

Edwin Greloff's second map

Edwin Greloff

Ploughing syphilitic son of a poxy whore. I lost the first map I prepared for Professor Atimstein in a game of gwent. I must now return to my base camp near the tomb under Crookback Hills and start anew. Meanwhile, I will mark further points of interest on this map.

Edwin Greloff. Adjunct in Natural History at Oxenfurt Academy.

Edwin Greloff's third map

Edwin Greloff

Beautiful. Professor Slavko Atimstein will be furious. I lost the first map in a game of gwent, and then the second was stolen from me while I was slightly indisposed after a hard night in the casino. I cannot arrive empty-handed at the station near the tomb under Crookback Hills or the professor will vivisect me on the spot. The four new locations I have marked on this map might be enough to protect me from his wrath.

Edwin Greloff. Adjunct in Natural History at Oxenfurt Academy

Elemental Empires

Gianbattista

None of the four Planes or Dimensions - those of Fire, Water, Earth, and Air - is accessible to mere mortals. They are inhabited, however, by creatures known as genies. There are four types, each corresponding to one of the four Elements which comprise their respective essences. Each type of genie also counts its antithesis among the others. Thus, the marides, aligned with the Element of Water, are opposed by the fiery ifrits. The Plane of Earth is inhabited by the d'ao genies, and the Dimension of Air which opposes it is home for d'jinni - whose name, incidentally, is the root of the word genie. This last term is often used by simple folk to refer to all creatures that inhabit the Elemental Planes, which is an obvious blunder...

Unusually powerful sorcerers can sometimes bind such beings and bend them to their will, thus acquiring tremendous might to the point of near omnipotence. For a genie, being the living personification of an Element's energies, is akin to an almost boundless reservoir of the Power. Thus, its master can draw energy from the genie for spell casting, without the tiresome need to channel from traditional sources. However, those who are able to bind a genie are few and far between, for the strength of the inhabitants of the four Planes is matched only by the cunning which they employ to avoid such a fate.

Elven Sages

Unknown

Many think “Aen Saevherne” - meaning Sage - is simply the Elder Speech term for sorcerer. Yet, to equate a Sage with a common practitioner of magic is akin to considering a newly-drafted private, hay sticking out of his breeches, a witcher’s equal simply because both wield swords.

A Sage wields magic, true, and does so with greater skill than even the most accomplished human mages. The great renown and regard in which they are held, however, comes not from this skill but from the other, truly rare abilities they possess.

Nothing is a secret for an elven sage. They see both past and future as easily as the present. They have mastery over all the arcana of magic as well as every domain of scholarship. They are the only ones who understand the nature and operation of the so-called Elder Blood and the gene of Lara Dorren - and they guard this knowledge jealously.

How numerous are the Elven Sages? In all my life I have met only one, Ida Emean of the Blue Mountains. She might possibly be the last representative of this mysterious caste. It is true I have encountered mention of a male elf who might also belong to it, but as of this writing I have been unable to confirm this.

Emhyr var Emreis: A Biography

Unknown

Childhood and Early Manhood

Though the Nilfgaardian throne was his by right of birth, it would be many long years before Emhyr var Emreis sat upon it. When he was but thirteen, an uprising engulfed the empire's capital. A usurper seized power, overthrowing Emhyr's father, Fergus var Emreis, who then refused to grant legitimacy to the coup. The usurper then decided he would break Fergus by having mages torture his son and heir, Emhyr. He failed in his plan, was forced to kill Fergus, and Emhyr escaped, presumably to a land beyond the empire's borders.

No reliable accounts of the emperor's actions in exile exist. Some claim he fell into the company of a knight errant, serving as his squire. This seems plausible enough, though the tales about the eccentric knight's proclivity to charge at windmills must surely be storytellers' exaggerations. A few unreliable reports claim a connection between Emhyr and the fabled Urcheon of Erlenwald who saved the life of King Roegner of Cintra. This seems far less likely, for it is public record that when the witcher Geralt of Rivia lifted the Urcheon's curse, he was revealed to be a duke named Duny, who later wed Roegner's daughter, Pavetta, and perished at her side when their ship went down at sea.

What is known for certain is that around the time of this great tragedy for the kingdom of Cintra, Emhyr reappeared in the empire and led a revolt to overthrow the usurper and restore his own birthright. Soon after he led the empire's armies in their successful conquest of Cintra, setting a tone of determined military expansion that would endure through the rest of his reign.

Ermion's correspondence

Ermion

Brother druids,

Be forewarned that a sorceress has arrived on Ard Skellig. Her name is Yennefer and she hails from Vengerberg. I know you are immune to feminine wiles and will not let a well-draped skirt muddle your reasoning. Nevertheless, I want you not to be taken in by her intelligence and refinement. I know who Yennefer is — I do not, however, know the true goal of her stay in Skellige. I see no point in asking her this question directly, for Yennefer is known for her cunning and eloquence. She says not what she thinks, but what she wishes you to hear. You must remember this is no second-rate sorceress. This is a person who breaks bread with the rulers of the North and who most recently has been working with the Nilfgaardian emperor himself. Familiar with courts the world over, she possesses an ability to manipulate that even the wiliest diplomat would envy.

Yennefer has displayed an unhealthy interest in the site of the cataclysm we are striving to study. I have not given her permission to go near it, but I caution you to keep your eyes and ears open all the same. The sorceress from Vengerberg is a stubborn and effective manipulator. I know that in the past her and Crach's paths crossed. I suspect that she will wish to use this old friendship for some ulterior purpose. What that is,

exactly... I will try to determine. Once I do, I will inform you in a separate letter.

May the Power be with you, Brothers

Ermion

Ervyl's diary

Ervyl

The 30th of Birke

This time of year the flowers should be in full bloom, but instead snow covers all. Spring's clearly going to be late. Food will be dear soon, that's certain.

The 12th of Blathe

It's colder and colder. Snow has been falling non-stop for 37 days now. Folk don't even bother clearing it anymore. There are no more streets, only tunnels dug through the snow.

The 21st of Feainn

The snow never stops falling. Our larder is bare. At least we can melt snow to slake our thirst - though I don't know how long our wood will last. For now, we're alive.

Eternal Fire letter of safe conduct

Hierarch Hemmelfart

To whom it may concern,

Let it be known that the bearer of the present document may enter and leave the Free City of Novigrad at will, both during the day and at night, and shall for no reason be perturbed, harmed, harassed or molested in any way.

His Holiness,

Hierarch Hemmelfart

Fauna of the Northern Realms, Volume 1

Unknown

What a wolf is, every man knows. Who hasn't heard them howling at nights or seen their tracks in the snow come morning? Who hasn't felt a cold chill run down his spine when he catches sight of a pack of five or twenty of them hunting in the woods?

These beautiful animals are treated by men as enemies – and not without reason, for they attack our flocks and will even kill our horses during times of deep frost. Yet they are noble beasts, endowed with great intelligence and displaying a strength and independence that no man can help but admire.

Fauna of the Northern Realms, Volume 2

Unknown

Bears dwell in the wildernesses of the North, in its high-mountain regions and in areas gripped with eternal frost. These animals can even be found where the human eye sees nothing but ice and snow – for they are skilled omnivorous hunters and gatherers always able to find nourishment of some sort, even in the most hostile conditions.

Bears are best avoided. While they are not usually aggressive, it is always a good policy to stay out of the way of any massive and fast-moving animals, in particular ones equipped with sharp claws and teeth.

Ghouls and Alghouls

John of Brugge

As for the genesis of ghouls, there are hypotheses aplenty. Some scholars claim these monstrosities arose from scoundrels who indulged in a taste for human flesh and for this misdeed drew the wrath of the heavens down upon themselves. The gods punished them by taking away their souls, their minds and their human forms.

My experiments have shown, however, that ghoul anatomy displays far too little in common with that of humans for this thesis to seem at all probable. Any and all similarity in appearance between ghouls and men, such as their somewhat kindred shapes and the measures of their physiognomies, are pure matters of incidental circumstance. It thus follows that ghouls, like their vile cousins the alghouls, are post-Conjunction creatures – that is to say, such beings as came to our universe in an abrupt cataclysm disrupting the normal laws of nature.

Gnomish Prankings

Unknown

Scrub the greasings from a dog's ear, soak into cotton twine, place in a new lamp of greenish hue and set said lamp betwixt an eager crowd - forsooth shall they swear that a dog's head they behold, and this shall be no sorcery, but good betidings.

For the prince of Ellander's nuptials, a paltry gnome armed with a miniature cutlass behid himself in a pie. When guests partook of the princely banquet, anon jumped out of the besabred gnome, giving a terrible fright to all at first, then causing much merriment once the jest was figured.

A cynocephalus, or a doghead, in our tongue, a beast that in the wastes of Zanguebar dwells, has the corpus of a man but the head of a dog. The Prince of Ellander did receive such a specimen from those far-off lands. The cynocephalus lets stream its urine with the tolling of every hour, both day and night, and this is why the Zanguebarians engrave its likeness on timepieces and compasses.

Golem, or Man's Most Faithful Servant

Unknown

Despite what you might have heard, the first golem was created not by a powerful mage or an elven Sage, but by a simple dwarf from Maribor named Bonaventura Sesto - a brickmaker.

The fateful act of creation took place over a century ago, when the persecution of nonhumans was in full swing in Maribor. Elves and dwarves had been accused of bringing an epidemic to the city - though it was later discovered the outbreak had been caused by a man named Mattheo, a barkeep's dogsbody at the Golden Goose Inn. This Mattheo was charged with both serving meals and cleaning the latrines, and would only wash his hands once a month, and then not very thoroughly. The rest, as they say, is history.

The persecution of nonhumans was limited at first to robbing their shops, arson and the occasional beating, but the violence soon escalated into a bloody pogrom. As the city guard looked on without lifting a finger, humans murdered elves and dwarves during three days and three nights of slaughter, killing over three hundred individuals, including the aforementioned Bonaventura Sesto's entire family.

Driven mad with grief and thirsting for vengeance, Bonaventura molded a ten-foot-tall humanoid out of clay, and then carved the names of the slain nonhumans onto it, along with a smattering of dwarven curses. Once finished, he slit his own throat - and when his blood splattered the gigantic statue, it came alive and started walking towards the city.

Bonaventura had his sweet revenge on his persecutors - his creation killed almost five hundred humans, including the mayor and the entire city council, before the soldiers of the city garrison could take it out using their ballista.

The Conclave's later investigation found that Bonaventura had possessed hidden magic talent. Though he had never had any training, the torrent of powerful emotions running through him at the time of his death flushed out his latent powers and created from them a new spell. After numerous alterations and improvements, one can now cast this spell without sacrificing one's life - and golems guard laboratories, libraries and palaces across the Continent.

Gottfried's Omni-opening Grimoire

Unknown

The Defensive Regulatory Magicon (or DRM for short) belongs to the above mentioned group of the longest-lasting, most effective and hardest to break defensive mechanisms. In order to recognize the individual administering it, it makes use of a portal mounted at the entrance of the area it is to defend. This portal passes streams of magical energy through the body of the person entering and can, in the blink of an eye, determine if this person has the corporeal signature (eyeball structure included) of the entitled administrator. As a result, the only unauthorized individuals that can possibly hope to enter are mimics.

DRM thus makes for an extremely effective and near-unbreakable security measure – but you are in luck, for you hold in your hands the key to bypassing it, namely the present tome, Gottfried's Omni-opening Grimoire, or GOG for short. In the pages to follow you will find innumerable methods for deactivating DRM, or, even better, bypassing it altogether(...)

Griffin in the Highlands

Quartermaster of Crow's Perch

Read close if you want to earn good coin and help your fellow men!

In the hills north of Crow's Perch, there's some sort of beast lurking about, a griffin, it would seem. If you kill it, bring the trophy to the quartermaster of Crow's Perch and you'll get a fitting reward.

And if you don't give a whit about your fellow men and don't have the bollocks to face a griffin, stay far away from that place, or else you'll end up as the beast's dinner.

Which I suppose means if you're feeling suicidal, you can go right ahead, waltz up to the monster and end your sorry life.

-Quartermaster of Crow's Perch

Gwent Lessons

Ermion

I am currently taking on pupils for lessons in the playing of gwent. I shall only teach those who display discipline, a logical mindset and the will to learn. Those with special aptitude are particularly welcome. Pupils must acquire and supply their own decks.

I am also seeking more experienced players as partners to provide a challenge and a chance for the mutual improvement of our skills.

–Ermion , druid

Gwent: Looking for New Players

Unknown

The Sharpers, a gwent playing society based at Crow's Perch, is looking for new members - and opponents.

Experience preferred, but we will also school newcomers to the game (but not return any coin lost during training matches).

For more information see the club's chairman, Phillip Strenger, known as the Bloody Baron.

Gwent: Play a Round with Stjepan

Stjepan

Beat everyone you've ever played in gwent? Consider yourself a prime player ready to face the best of the best? Then try your hand against Stjepan - a man so good it seems the cards play themselves!

To learn more, come to the Alchemy Inn in Oxenfurt.

– Stjepan, barkeep

Gwent: Vimme Vivaldi Cheats!

Unknown

To all gwent players!

The dwarven banker Vimme Vivaldi is a villian and a cheat!
Using typical nonhuman trickery, he conned his way to victory
over me, then forthwith demanded I surrender my cards,
without the slightest consolation or giving me the chance for a
rematch!

Anyone tempted to play with him - resist or regret!

—A well-wisher

Heavily faded notes by Hieronymus on the witcher Elgar

Hieronymus

Elgar placed upgrades to School of the Wolf witcher gear in three different caves in the area immediately to the south of Kaer Morhen. He hoped future generations of witchers would find them in an hour of need.

Hendrik's notes

Hendrik

Ledger

Payment for a sack of grain - 35 NC

Invoice for charcoal - 24 NC

“Missing and Wanted”

Subject sought in Skellige and Novigrad.

Appearance unchanged. Ashen hair. Scar on her face.

Avoids contact with others.

“Drunken Swine.”

So-called baron hosted subject at his castle, or should I say, illegally appropriate fort. Reason - unknown.

Talk to baron at Crow Perch.

“Clashed with a Witch”

Subject landed in swamp, encountered a witch.

Conflict ensued. Cause unknown.

Find the witch. Talk to the peasantry - village of Midcopse.

“Caution Advised”

I’m being observed. Don’t know by whom or why. Unsettling signs...

Dog ran off. Water in bucket froze solid.

Strange glow observed in the sky. Ill omen, peasants say.

Heraldic Animals

Unknown

Of all the heraldic beasts, lions and griffins are the most noble and pure. Let us speak first of griffins, for the creatures from which the armorialists draw inspiration combine elements of both eagles and lions, and thus contain within them both rulers of the Animal Kingdom.

Griffins are brave hunters and the most chivalrous of creatures known to man. Before they snap down from the heavens upon their prey like a divine whip, they let out a long, piercing shriek in warning, so that the victim may prepare itself for the imminent attack. Griffins do not fear to attack armed men - in fact, they prefer such prey, for defeating a knight flatters their pride. They even attack fiends, the terror of the Velen wilderness, so honorable is their nature.

Heroes of Skellige: Broddr

Unknown

Broddr, founder of Clan Dimun, whose members dwell on the Isle Faroe, was an extraordinarily good and fair man, giving advice and help to all who came to him. He loathed looting and deception and never told a lie - in short, he was a paragon of virtue. He ruled his people wisely and lived to a venerable age. At the dusk of his life he was summoned before Hemdall, but a whale devoured his longship and he never reached his journey's end. Ever since, descendants of his line have hunted whales in search of the bones of their great and beloved ancestor.

Heroes of Skellige: Grymmdjarr

Unknown

Grymmdjarr, first lord of Ard Skellig and founder of Clan an Craite, was famed for his incredible strength. When he traversed the isle for the first time and found no place worthy of making his seat, he asked Hemdall to give him the thickest chain he could forge. Once he received the chain, Grymmdjarr dove into the depths of the sea and used it to drag an enormous rock to the surface, placing it on Ard Skellig's north-eastern shore. Then he carved Kaer Trolde out of this rock with his bare hands, and there it stands to this day, the pride and glory of his clan.

Heroes of Skellige: Modolf

Unknown

Modolf, progenitor of Clan Drummond, who was granted mastery over the isle of Undvik, unlike his brothers displayed no extraordinary abilities: he was neither wise nor especially brave, nor did he possess any particular gift which would make him a great individual. He resented Hemdall for not bestowing greater talent upon him. Hemdall, however, insisted he had blessed each of his sons with equal gifts, but not all revealed themselves at once - Modolf would have to wait for the right moment for his gifts to step forward. Yet the hero was impatient and could not wait for this moment. Instead, again and again he sought out trouble of the worst sort, hoping each time his hidden talent would shine. Hemdall grew angry with his son and decided to bury his gift even deeper. Modolf died after a long and unruly life filled with incredible adventures, but a life during which he never discovered his talent. His descendants decided to continue his search elsewhere. They abandoned Undvik and invaded Ard Skellig, eventually taking half of that isle for themselves. They now seek to take the other half, but whether doing so would finally reveal their line's unique gift – no one knows.

Heroes of Skellige: Otkell

Unknown

A portrayal of the heroic deeds of Otkell of Skellige.

Legend states that when Otkell, son of Hemdall, was sailing to Hindarsfjall, a terrible storm broke. Otkell called for his father's help, but his father could not hear, for powerful thunder drowned out Otkell's voice. In despair Otkell began yelling for anyone who heard his cries to come to his aid. In reply, Freya descended and gave Otkell a set of pipes.

When the hero blew on them, the waves calmed, the storm passed and Otkell could safely reach the shore. When Hemdall learned of the help the goddess had given Otkell, he ordered him to raise a temple to her on the isle. Ever since that day, Skelligers have worshipped Freya, and the women of Otkell's line have often chosen to become her priestesses.

Heroes of Skellige: Sove

Unknown

Legend states that Clan Brokvar, based on the isle of Spikeroog, was founded by Sove. This hero took as his wife the lovely yet extremely quarrelsome Ulula. He tried countless ways to tame her, but no matter what lengths he went to, he could not get along with her. Finally he sailed to Hindarsfjall to meditate in Hindar, the sacred grove. Hemdall and Freya took pity on him and gave him the formula for a potion that would grant him Understanding. They also instructed him to take a new approach, do something he had never done before, to resolve his conflicts with his wife. In order to gather the required ingredients, Sove had to kill a monster, climb the highest mountain in the isles and dive into the deepest undersea chasm. Then he prepared the potion, quaffed it and, searching for another approach to the conflict, began meditating while hanging from the tree Irminsul by one leg. In this manner he achieved enlightenment, and returned to Spikeroog to live with Ulula in peace and harmony to the end of their days.

Heroes of Skellige: Tyr

Unknown

Clan Tuirseach, master of An Skellig, was founded by a hero named Tyr. Legend has it that to take possession of the land promised him by Hemdall, his father, Tyr first had to defeat a great and powerful bear named Yngvar. It was well known that no mortal had ever survived an encounter with Yngvar, so Tyr decided to prepare properly for the fight. He ventured into the deepest cave in Skellige and with the fire of the bowels of the earth as his furnace, he forged a blade so fine it could slice a hair lengthwise and so strong it could fell a hundred-year-old tree in one blow and not be dulled. Heulyn, his mother, engraved protective runes upon the sword by the first light of dawn so that it would protect Tyr from the bear's attacks. Yngvar was defeated, Tyr became master of An Skellig, and his descendants are one of the wealthiest and most powerful clans in the Isles to this day.

Hieronymus' notes

Hieronymus

My study of Elgar's armor has allowed me to devise new alloys and increase the magic conductivity of the second crystal. This might be the breakthrough I needed in my work on the teleport. For my trial run, I have calibrated the portal to exit in the cave near the tower's base. I need now only charge the crystal with solar energy, for which purpose I have placed it in the outer wall of the tower, near the scaffolding. Only hours remain before it is entirely charged!

I have finished my work on a diagram which will allow us to replicate this armor and equip the entire School of the Wolf with it. Varin, the witchers' fencing instructor, has taken credit for this find, but it was I who, using logical deduction and only a slight dollop of magic assistance, uncovered the chamber where Elgar must have once resided. The space was hidden behind a primitive illusion, one needed merely look carefully to see through it. I found notes which indicate Elgar had worked out diagrams for improvements to his equipment which he then hid for safekeeping in various locations around the world. Careful study of his notes allowed me to write up instructions of howto finde these upgrades. I went to the old watchtower and gave this research to Chird. As soon as he finishes preparing the silver sword diagram, he will set out to gather all the upgrade diagrams. Varin has the finished steel sword diagram and will begin forging blades based on it. I hope he

will distribute them to the poor lads he trains - they at least deserve proper equipment after going through the horror he calls training.

By the gods - I think I see fire on the horizon, coming from where the old watchtower stands! I can also hear some kind of commotion outside my tower.

The way down is blocked - what is going on?!

High Stakes Gwent Tournament!

Unknown

Gwent lovers!

Count Tybalt invites you to come to the Passiflora, where he shall proudly host a high stakes gwent tournament! On offer will be not only riveting play against superb opponents, but also fabulous prizes for the victors.

Only ladies and gentlemen with fortunes vast enough to cover the entry fee are invited to join.

We also require all entrants to be in possession of an above-average deck, one fitted with a good measure of neutral cards. Decks shall be checked before entry is permitted.

Hope to see you at the Passiflora!

Highwaymen's journal

Unknown

elven ruins elven ruins! fucking bollocks. treasure! gold! magic
cocksucking wild vipers! fuckface sold me that map musta
come here first & took it all the ploughing thief. fucking
blighters don't respect nothing no thought for others just me
me me all the fucklong day. brought more blasted gold in me
pockets for spending coin thans here to be looted.

least this caves warm & dry & someot fit for wintering.

Holy Tome of the Eternal Fire

Unknown

The Fire protects. Whosoever [sic] shall in Its light stand, him no Evil shall ever harm.

The Fire cleanses. Like a wound puffed up with dirt and pus, so, too, must a soul inflamed with sin and vile deeds be burnt clean.

The Fire cannot be contained. Whatsoever shall lie in its path, it shall be burnt. Whosoever shall raise a hand against it, he shall be reduced to ashes.

The Fire illuminates the darkness. The Evil that in shadows lurks will be revealed in the Fire's harsh light and perish in its smoldering embers. Whosoever shall seek to hide his guilt and lecherous works in darkness shall stand naked before the devouring flames.

Let us pray, brothers and sisters. The Fire enlightens, burns and cleanses. The Fire protects, warms and lights the path. The Fire exposes, incinerates and destroys Evil.

How to Avoid Colossal Vessels

Unknown

On the rolling deep, when there's nothing to rest your eyes upon save the horizon, you get lulled into a false sense of security which can easily spell your doom. For no man knows the day or the hour, nor does any sailor know when a small dot at the edge of his vision will turn into a Nilfgaardian dromond racing towards him, its sails puffed full and its prow ready to cleave his hull like an axe.

Prevention is the first and best way to avoid such collisions: you must keep your eyes pried wide open, even when the waters are smooth as a newborn's hinterquarters and there's not a speck of land nor a hint of foreign flag to be seen. When vision fails in dark or murk, one must keep an ear cocked, especially in the waters near Skellige, for the oarsmen of the Archipelago add muster to their rowing with song and their thunderous voices carry far, so they can often be heard before they are seen. And it's a powerful boon that they thus reveal themselves, for a collision with a Skellige longship damns one doubly, for the vessel itself is armored prow to stern, while inside are ferocious, battle-hardened warriors.

Ibrahim Savi's first map

Ibrahim Savi

After the discovery of marks relating to the Bear School of witchers in the ruins of castle Tuirseach, Professor Atimstein sent me to prepare a map similar to the one prepared by A. Kermith indicating the various locations in the archipelago where these symbols occur. Professor Atimstein was of course correct in his suspicions – I quickly found such locations and have marked them on this map.

Ibrahim Savi. Adjunct in Natural History at Oxenfurt Academy.

Ibrahim Savi's second map

Ibrahim Savi

Following Professor Atimstein's instruction, I am studying remnants of the presence of witchers from the Bear School. I have discovered more and more locations marked with their bear symbol. Naturally, I have marked each on this map.

I have noticed something disturbing – for some time, a certain strange gentleman appears to have been following me. He stays at the same inns and road houses as I, sticking close to me like a shadow... I have decided to return at once to the place where I began my research, namely the ruins of Castle Tuirseach, to meet with the other members of the expedition.

Ibrahim Savi. Adjunct in Natural History at the Oxenfurt Academy.

Ibrahim Savi's third map

Ibrahim Savi

I am charting a direct course for the spot where we commenced our study, the ruins of Castle Tuirseach. As I travel I have been marking additional locations with the bear symbol which I have discovered.

[written in an unsteady hand] He's still following me!

Ibrahim Savi. Adjunct in Natural History at the Oxenfurt Academy.

Ibrahim Savi's fourth map

Ibrahim Savi

[the map is damaged and covered in blood, hard to decipher which locations are marked and only a portion of the text is legible]

...in the ruins of Castle Tuirseach. That is where we made our first findings. I shall be safe there...[blood stains]

[this portion covered in blood] Ibrahim Savi. Adjunct in Natural History at the Oxenfurt Academy.

In Beast's Clothing

Unknown

They entered his hut and began to search. First they tore through his bed, Dried twigs covered the sheet - that was the first proof, for werewolves return at dawn after a night of hunting, their bare feet covered in the forest's droppings. They found the second proof under his bed: a wolf's hide. The werewolf surely dressed himself in it when transforming with the setting sun, and shed it again when he turned to man the next day. Having found these powerful proofs they ceased deliberation and began the hunt, vowing to find the lycanthrope and bind him in silver chains.

Innkeep's notes

Unknown

...that was right before dusk. Then a witcher showed, dirty and unshaven and stinking worse than a fisherman from Faroe. Asked for a room and a bucket of water so's he could freshen up some. First I didn't want to let him in, on account of the bloody sack he was carrying, but then it came out he had arranged to meet Jorgen Iron Hand here – and a friend of Jorgen's a friend of mine...[illegible]

Sun had long set by the time Jorgen showed. Witcher handed him that sack and we all learned why it stank so bad – inside was the head of a siren. Jorgen had contracted the witcher to take it down after it attacked some folk in a cave in the northwestern part of Spikeroog. Seeing it dead cheered folk awful fast, and Jorgen, happy as a clam, started buying everybody rounds. The witcher refrained at first, saying he was off to take care of a striga that's infested the ruins of a fortress on the northern edge of the isle, but in the end he gave in – after all, there's no refusing Jorgen...[illegible]

...made a lovely heap of coin that day, for the sun started rising and not a man had gone home. The witcher got drunk with Jorgen and started telling us tales, then we sat down for some gwent. That Gerd, he might be a first-class warrior, but he's one lousy card player. Lost half his reward for that siren to me (and drank the other half), then, wanting to win it back, he wagered

a diagram for some kind of steel sword. To my eye it was a scrap of rubbish, but fuck it, some things you gotta do for the sake of sportsmanship and camaraderie, so I accepted the wager...[illegible]

Interrogation report

Unknown

Location: Amavet fortress

Persons taking part: Sir Ignatius Verrieres, Bart., the bailiff
Andreas Blume, Sir Ignatius' underlings: Carmy, Gardy and
Bellsy.

Suspect: Kolgrim, witcher of the Viper School.

The witcher Kolgrim stands accused of kidnapping Vitty, son of Paul, a beekeeper residing in White orchard. Suspect was detained pending trial. Upon detention he was searched and a diagram for the forging of a steel sword was found on his person. It is suspected this sword was used to intimidate or possibly kill the kidnapped child. It is likewise suspected that the accused possesses other such diagrams for the forging of death-dealing implements, though none have been found to date. Sir Ignatius has requested the witcher undergo preliminary interrogation with the application of torture. This will take place once a torturer with the proper qualifications has been found.

Addendum:

It was later discovered Drowners were responsible for the boy's disappearance. Unfortunately Kolgrim died before this information reached the investigators, for rather than face the

baronet's judgment, he chose trial by ordeal. Sir Ignatius agreed and ordered he cleanse the Verrieres family crypt of specters. Kolgrim never emerged from said crypt. It is highly likely the motley wraiths, specters and evil powers residing therein proved too much for him.

Introduction to Applied Magic

Unknown

Magic is the science of harnessing, subduing and making use of the power of the elements. It is also an incarnation of Chaos, which is why no one without proper training should ever dabble in any of its domains. Expert mages make of magic an art, but the road to virtuosity leads through years of practice, study, and hard work - and requires a considerable amount of required inborn talent. Magic was implanted in our world through the Conjunction of the Spheres, and was discovered to be a living, changeable and controllable being shortly thereafter. The name of the first mage, the one who first discovered this talent within himself and grappled with its power, is unknown. We do know, however, that in a relatively short period of time after the discovery of magic groups began to form in which talented beings could work together on developing their abilities. This period is usually considered the beginning of magic as a science, and these groups - the prototypes of magic schools.

The fundamental planes from which one might draw magic power are: earth, water, air and fire. In the tome which you currently hold, each of these will have a separate chapter dedicated to it, ordered according to the level of difficulty and danger associated with the element discussed (...).

Invoice for a golem

Jehuda Löw

Issued by: Jehuda Löw. Purchaser: Irenues var Steingard

Good purchased: Guaridan golem, clay (porcelain)

Warranty: In the even of damage to the ceramic, please report immediately to the nearest branch of Jehuda Löw and Apprentices. The golem can only be serviced by qualified company personnel.

Itinerant merchant's notes

Unknown

Praise be to Freya, Our Great Mother!

They said the road was fraught with danger, that sea devils awaited any who traveled it, that a bandit lurked behind every tree.

But I sacrificed a lamb to Freya and donned an amulet of falcon feathers – and lo and behold, I traversed the entire isle without so much as drawing my sword! And did some damned fine trading along the way – packed my chest so full of silver and other treasures that my back near snapped setting it on the wagon.

If everything goes as planned, I'll be home by tomorrow around sunset. I owe the goddess mightily for the tender care she's taken of me!

Journal from the Moldavie Residence

Unknown

What a lovely home! I cannot believe we were able to buy it so cheaply. Valeria always had a keen mind for business - she haggled so fiercely the broker dropped his price by a third. Incredible!

Valeria says the room layout is exceptionally well-conceived. Tomorrow we will move all our things in. It will be good to have our own place. Finally, some peace and quiet.

Once we had arranged all the furniture, Valera decided we needed to paint the walls yellow. Perhaps that is for the best, it will make it more cozy.

Valeria's mother visited us. Tomorrow I shall paint the walls green.

Valeria heard some noises during the night. She woke me several times, but I did not hear a thing.

This night I heard them. The walls shook.

Valeria has learned from the neighbors that previously a powerful mage resided in this home. They all say he would

summon demons, and his spirit still haunts its rooms. People will believe the most outlandish nonsense.

Valeria has decided to move back in with her mother for some time. Until I do something about the walls. I joked that perhaps I could simply repaint them, but I don't think she found that amusing.

The plaster has begun to fall off. It seems to me that I heard a noise last night, something like a muffled roar.

Valeria has returned. She found a buyer for the home. Avoided any suspicion by claiming to be the mage's widow, selling off the estate after her husband's unfortunate death at the stake. Fool count must think he has found himself an incredible bargain.

Journal kept by Chird, the mage Hieronymus' assistant

Chird

I write in great haste, for each moment might bring my demise. A band of peasants wielding all manner of sharp or heavy farmyard implements has stormed the keep. I was in the workshop when they attacked, working on a new silver sword diagram, and did not notice the mob's approach. I have barricaded the doors but know this cannot last forever. I can only hope Varin will come and rescue me before they break through.

Luckily we completed work on a new steel sword diagram a few days ago and gave it to Varin to forge. Armed with this fine weapon and aided by his witcher pupils, I'm sure he'll easily handle a bunch of peasants swinging hoes and rakes. Yet even rakes can do great harm to an unarmed scholar such as my master. Hieronymus has been shut up in his tower for days, absorbed in his work on a new armor diagram. He might remain oblivious still to the danger he is in. Should the mob find him before Varin can slice them down...

And to think I nearly escaped this nightmare! If I had only listened to my master... Hieronymus had drawn up some notes for me on locations connected with the legendary Elgar, a witcher of the School of the Wolf. It is said Elgar had devised

some improvements to the School's gear, and I was to follow his trail in search of these diagrams. Had I left even as late as yesterday, I would have been a safe distance from Kaer Morhen by the time the mob attacked. Instead, I tarried, and now I cower, fearing for my life...

Journal of a Thief, Part II

Kjarre

I, Kjarre, son of Knut, have twice disgraced myself. First by running from the field of battle out of fear of dying. The shield I abandoned then rests on the bottom of that marsh, and there it will stay until Ragh nar Roog, as testimony of my cowardice. The second time was when Orn Two Heads convinced me to help him steal Holger Blackhand's horn. Orn thought I'd sell the horn to smugglers, but I won't. If I'm to live like a thief and a bandit, I prefer not to live at all. The one thing I can do to regain my honor is to return the horn to where it belongs, to its ancestral home. Mathios, who Holger charged with getting the horn back, has family near these cliffs. I hope he'll come here for the equinox festival. Then I'll be able to give him back the stolen horn and ask for him to vouch for me with the jarl. That's all the hope I have left.

Journal

Unknown

Five weeks have now passed since I was hired by that “Prince Valgridovt of a far-off land” to help guide his family safely to Beauclair. At first I merely suspected it, but now I am certain: our ship is being followed.

We’ve charted a course for shore. The captain wants to replenish supplies in a small village called Ursten, and then sail up the Pontar. The masts of the ship which sails after us are constantly visible on the horizon.

The worst is upon us. We shall drown. The shore was within our reach when a horrible wind blew us back. The gale tossed our ship against the rocks. We’re taking on water. The yard fell and crushed my legs. I don’t know what will come to pass now. I have failed them, have failed the heirs to the royal dynasty whom I was charged to escort safely to Beauclair... The sealed letters were in the chest which the sailors tossed overboard when the ship began to sink.

If they ever wash ashore, if anyone ever finds them and this journal, know that they need to be given to a woman answering to the name of Viki. She does not know the local tongue, but if you read the words “Viedhog latrut alame hoire,” she will know what to do. I hope she has survived – luckily, she and the child sail in another ship. The elder insisted we travel

separate. He was right, I don't know who chases us... I only know that I shall soon die..."

Journey to the End of the World

Unknown

Sirens, the harpies' distant relatives, are winged monsters found in the Skellige Archipelago, most frequently on unpopulated isles or in the inaccessible coastal areas of populated ones. According to legend they are daughters of the mythical winged giant Hräsvelg, who lives on the edge of the world and births gales with the waving of his wings. Hräsvelg's daughters seek out the company of giants and often make their nests near their lairs.

These creatures attack boats and ships from the air, tearing sails and rigging to shreds and rendering vessels immobile. At times they will snatch men or cattle from the deck and drop them from great heights to their death. They also attack travelers trekking across isolated beaches.

Kovir and Poviss

Unknown

Kovir and Poviss are without a doubt the richest realms in the North. Few today remember that this was not always the case, yet their poverty was once literally on everyone's lips, in the form of now-antiquated common sayings. As recently as the days of Heribert the Quarrelsome, one spoke of a particularly impoverished person as being "poorer than a mouse from Poviss," called bone broth "Koviri delight" and referred to beggars as "praxedes," after the bay along the shores of which these kingdoms lie.

Similarly, few remember that a mere handful of generations ago Kovir and Poviss were still part of Redania. King Radovid I, known as Radovid the Great, handed dominion over them to his hated brother, Troyden, with one stipulation – that he never leave his newly-acquired demesne and not interfere in matters of state.

Handing over this rocky scrap of far-northern ground (where, the saying went, the year had two seasons – August and winter) was naturally meant as a cruel joke, a slap in the face for the over-ambition Troyden.

Yet time soon proved that Radovid the Great had made a grave error. Before long it was discovered that Kovir's bare rocks hid priceless treasure in the form of enormous deposits of precious

metals and rock salt. This discovery in turn led to tremendous growth in productive industry. Mills, forges and workshops sprouted up like mushrooms after a hearty rain.

Radovid III decided to correct his famous forebear's mistake and take back the northern frontiers of his kingdom. He was convinced the combined armies of Redania and its then-ally Kaedwen would quickly bring this ever more audacious vassal in line. History took a different turn, however, and Kovir won a resounding, crushing victory. Radovid III was forced to sign the First Treaty of Lan Exeter, granting Kovir independence while binding it to eternal neutrality – a promise Troyden's successors have kept with great diligence.

Until recently Kovir was ruled by Esterad Thyssen, a king as wise as he was greedy. Yet his untimely demise did not stop his lands from continuing to develop and blossom. Koviri metallurgists proudly compete with the best Mahakam can offer, and many believe the University of Lan Exeter long ago surpassed the famous Oxenfurt Academy as the leading seat of higher learning in the North. And so it has come to pass that, over the course of a few generations, the inhabitants of Kovir and Poviss have turned from paupers into princes, from beggars into bankers.

Laboratory notebook

Kiyan

Day 1.

Luckily the teleport deposited us directly in my laboratory. It's good to be home. I had grown sick to the gills of that leaky tub. I hope that storm I summoned smashed it into those craggy rocks off the Grassy Knoll shore. The experiments which my students conducted on drowners in my absence did not yield the expected results. As usual, I must do everything myself. I will administer a brew of medicinal opium to the subject. This "milk of the poppy" will keep the witcher in a state of half-consciousness, and thus incapable of resistance. Commencing studies.

Note: I must hold off on my planned experiments while I clear up the demolished portion of my laboratory. I have set the bones in the forearm of one of my assistants. I will now administer a quadruple dose [sic] of "milk of the poppy" to the witcher.

Day 4.

Subject shows incredible resistance to physical torture. Only broke after the second day of intense labor. Moderately satisfactory results from the interrogation. Garnered information about witcher training and the Cat School of witchers in general. As I suspected, the Cat School witchers are

for the most part of elven stock. This school must have some tie to the Elder Races (addendum: perhaps its founder was a member of the Aen Seidhe?)

Subject unfit for further study. I have discontinued his doses of poppy.

Day 7.

Administered extract of cowbane and hemlock. In typical representatives of the human and Aen Seidhe species such a mixture provokes paralysis of the peripheral nervous system, and eventually the nerve endings as well. This results in muscular, skeletal, pulmonary and cardiac paralysis, and ultimately death through suffocation. The witcher is not, however, a typical representative of any species. Though the poison did seem to cause some mild irritation (sic!) in his nervous system, his mutated body quickly managed to neutralize the harmful alkaloids. In a matter of hours all symptoms of the poison I administered have vanished.

Day 15.

Stinging him with sea wasp toxin did not provoke the expected results. In order to strengthen the toxin's effect I have poured ethyl alcohol into his wounds. His nervous system seems to be immune.

Day 26.

The subject has been tortured, poisoned, burnt, frozen, starved and dehydrated, and despite it all, his body continues to function. He eats and drinks by himself, moves about his cell

on his own and is able to articulate simple words (“please”, “drink”, “don’t hurt”, “stop”)

Conclusion: as I suspected, the witcher is a superb energumen! A demon trapped in such an excellently prepared body will become death incarnate, vengeful wrath made flesh - and placed at my command. No one has succeeded in creating a being of such power since the times of Malaspin and Alzur.

This is a great day for science! Time to begin the incantations.

Lands of the North: Velen

Unknown

The land of Velen, located in western Temeria with its capital in Gors Velen, is one of the poorest provinces in the kingdom. Its territory encompasses the isle of Thanedd, home to the famous magic academy, which, along with Gors Velen, constitutes the commercial and developmental mainspring of the entire province. Velen is a stop on the Novigrad trade route running through Cidaris, Vergen, Brugge, Cintra and other such southerly realms.

Veleners subsist primarily on agriculture, crafting and animal husbandry. The province is practically deprived of all natural resources. It contains a great deal of forests, wetlands and cultivated woods, though the greatest part of it is covered in swamps and bogs (...).

Letter

Matsk

Juenner,

Of course you can stay with us! What kind of question's that?! Come, bring the whole family. War hasn't struck here yet, we've got plenty of food - my belly's even grown a bit in recent weeks. So if you take a bit of beer and bacon out of my mouth, you'll actually be doing me a favor.

We're already preparing a bed for you. You'll stay in the attic - it's comfortable there, long as you don't forget to duck when you go up the stairs.

Happy trails, Juenner. See you soon.

—Matsk

Letter

Varlind

Fjale,

I've got bad news for you, Your father's ship sank off the southern coast of Ard Skellig. Far as I know, there were no survivors. Only a few bodies were recovered. They were already blue and bloated. I could only recognize Jovik by his tattoo. I'll do what I can top prepare the body for the funeral, but brace yourself. It won't be a pretty sight.

I know what was on that ship. Everything you had. So if you need to borrow some coin, don't hesitate to write. Your father and I were bound by blood – I'll never refuse you help.

—Varlind

Letter

Lessica

Baby Brother,

I got your letter. The children are healthy, thank you. Little Racleath's not so little anymore - he's almost tall as my shoulder. Kit's sweet as ever.

But enough small talk. I'm so glad you were able to return to your own home! I'm worried, through - are you sure those pirates have gone away for good? Best have eyes in the back of your head and don't burn any lights at night, so that no one cruising the coast can spy you.

-Your Lessica

Letter

Gruggen

Villard, you old bastard!

I ken where you can drub up the coin to pay off your many debts - Velen. Now, blatherheads say those bogs ain't worth a muffled fart from a saggy sow, but don't ye believe them, mate, they dinnae ken shite from sugar! A man can make a killing there - and a dwarf can do twice as good, I'm sure.

So here's the craik. While crossing Velen a week or so past, I spied a few well-dressed stiffes laying about the forest, travel bags untouched. Refugees, see, fleeing the war - and whoever flies up to them first gets all their worldly belongings. You ken what I'm saying, mate? Grab a chest, head off cross the Pontar posthaste and strip those stiffes of rings, necklaces and everything else afore some nimbler prick does! Oh, but keep a sharp axe round your belt all the while, for Velen's pure heevin with monsters. But hey, it's all in the name of a good casue - filling your pockets!

Your ever-loving Gruggen

Letter

Mettky

Drabik,

Listen up, you stupid git. Go on keeping the treasure out for all to see like that, we won't keep it very long at all. What, you think we're the only bandits around? Well, knowing what a fool y'are, perhaps you do, so here's me telling you - no. We ain't. So be a good little dunce and hide it somewhere where only you and me will know how to find it again. Otherwise I'll tan your arse till it's red as a watermelon.

-Mettky

Letter about treasure

Fritz

Mates,

Way things are now, ain't a snowball's chance in summer we're gonna move the goods at a decent price. Too many finks, too few buyers. We gotta hide it and wait for better times to come, assuming they ever do.

I know what you're thinking. That I'm trying to fuck you over. That I'll hoof it along with the treasure. Not that I hold that against you - don't trust you one whit either. So in order for us all to sleep soundly, let's do the following.

We'll hide the loot at my place - behind a door with three locks, which, as you geniuses surely guessed, can only be opened with three keys, one held by each of us. That way we'll be sure no one'll plough the others and we'll split the gold evenly once it's all blown over. Deal?

Fritz

Letter found in a grave

Zula

... even though I told him I don't want to know him. I know you're not afraid of Bokhai, but I am. He says he loves me, but it's not the kind of love I have with you. It's a fierce, frightening kind.

Bokhai won't leave us alone, ever. We have to run.

Leave your reply in the usual spot.

Your Zula.

Letter found on Joris Aquinus' body

Unknown

Patricia Vogelbud

– Concerned Citizen

Letter from a druid

Unknown

You have gone mad if you think that these attacks and accidents are our doing. Not a single druid has taken action against you and none of us wish you harm. Our calling is to care for nature, but not at the price of human lives. In fact, man is also a part of nature and we are not allowed to do him any deliberate harm. Note, however, that nature is ruled by her own laws and if she has let you know you are not welcome here, it would be wise to consider a halt to your woodcutting. For your good, and for the good of the forest.

Letter from A

A

Witcher,

In the ocean of possibility, some events are more likely, and some less. It is not easy to fish out the first, not even when one's intellect stretches through all time and space.

I left this letter for you in the hope that, despite all odds, you will come across it one day, for I must warn you. Mankind is threatened. The prophesied destruction by the White Frost is not just the babbling of some mad she-elf. Perhaps I will have the opportunity to convince you of this in person. If not, I must rely on this letter, which you will read many years from now, at a time when you know more than you did when we first met.

Know that nothing will save the world except preparing its entire population for this catastrophe. The old tales say a Child of the Elder Blood can stave off the danger, but I tried and failed. Ever since I have been haunted by a hideous vision, a crowned wraith. The specter of my failure.

I was the chosen one, and the chosen one failed. You and your brotherhood are our only hope. When the time of the wolf's blizzard comes, men shall perish and only the ubermen will survive. Your duty is to give the world ubermen.

Whatever you think of me, do not fail as I have failed.

-A

Letter from Agda's father to Timmon

Yorgen

Timmon of Clan Dimun!

I am delighted my Agda will wed as virile a warrior as yourself. Pride fills my heart to think your marriage will unite our two families. I trust you will forgive my absence, but with my many years and many more injuries, travel is no longer possible. I thank you for sending your brothers to escort Agda – my own lads are all drinking mead with our ancestors, so if not for Ulf and Mikkell, Agda would have no worthy company on her journey to her wedding ceremony. To start you on your path together properly, I will entrust Agda's dowry to your brothers, on behalf of myself and all our clan. I also convey to you both my sincerest blessings. Respect each other and live in harmony. May you thrive and prosper.

Yorgen of Clan Heymaey

Letter from an alchemist

Klaus Kellerman

Dearest Sir Robert de Mere,

Thank you for sending a bill of exchange in advance, and for your understanding - if I gave out advice for free, I'd very quickly run myself out of business.

You wrote that your son went missing while on a voyage - and that near the place he was last seen there now lurks a nekker who wears a tattered shirt with your son's monogram sewed on it. You asked if it is possible that this nekker was your son, transformed by some spell.

After consulting the relevant literature, it pains me to inform you that your hypothesis is highly improbable, and there exists a much simpler and more likely explanation. Contrary to popular belief, nekkers are a sapient species. Like forest trolls, they will at times decorate themselves with pigment or scraps of human garments. One can with some confidence surmise that this nekker killed your son, tore up his shirt, and then put on it or some fragment thereof.

While that is most likely the case, one cannot be certain. Though I have not heard of any curse capable of turning a man into a nekker, I cannot rule out the possibility of its existence. In order to find out if the above-mentioned nekker truly is a creature born of a curse, the tattered shirt it wears must be

taken from it, cut into shreds and burned. The shirt's ashes can then be mixed with dimeritium dust. If the resulting substance changes color, it will confirm your hypothesis.

if the experiment I described returns a positive result, please write me. I would gladly undertake further examinations meant to find a way to life this curse - for additional payment, of course.

Greetings,

Klaus Kellerman, Magister Artibus Oxoniensis

Letter from Bohmil de Rabbe

Bohmil de Rabbe

Dear Viscount,

Once more I would like to convey my thanks for agreeing to grace my son's wedding ceremony with your song. Your presence warmed our hearts, and the sweet notes with which you serenaded us so touched my wife's mother, the Baroness Deuvlett (called in some circles a cold and heartless bitch), that tears of tender emotion appeared in her eyes.

Bohmil de Rabbe

Letter from Dudu

Dudu

Ciri,

If you're reading these words, that means you have solved my riddle, for which you have my congratulations. It also means you have not yet been caught and are still in Novigrad - which worries me greatly. I do not know exactly what you did on Temple Isle, but Menge is furious and will not rest until he captures you, skins you alive and burns you at the stake. And now that he's got his sanctimonious paws on Dijkstra's treasure, he can hire enough men to search every home in the city thrice over. I am a doppler, so I will be able to hide... But you, you must flee. While you still can.

Your Dudu

P.S. Don't even think about trying to break Dandelion free from Menge's clutches - it's impossible. But knowing our friend, he'll wriggle his way out somehow. Or at least I hope he will.

P.P.S. Forgive me for not writing how to contact me, but a) you are to flee, remember? b) Melitele guards those who guard themselves.

Letter from Frann

Frann

When will you return to Cidaris? I hope it will be soon – for I miss you terribly. Waiting to see you again literally pains me. If you are to come, send me a message beforehand. I'll ask my mistress for a day off.

Letter from Nilfgaardian's wife

Alveen

Dilvyn,

I lost my father and brother in the last Nordling war. Please, come back to me, for I'm afraid I'll lose my husband, too, and our little Beatrys will lose her father.

I know the punishment for desertion. But I also know some men have made it home unscathed. We'll hide at Iffan's farm, you'll wait out the war in peace there.

I pray for you every day.

Alveen

Letter from Toben

Toben

Dear Mother,

Everything has gone very well so far. I still have a considerable ways to go to the city, but as soon as I get there I will dispatch this letter and set about writing another.

I miss you and Father horribly. I am being extremely careful with the coin you gave me. I have not spent hardly a thing. Once I find employment, I will set aside an amount every week, and send you my savings regularly.

Tell Yolanda I love her greatly and will send for her soon. To come and be my wife, of course, I spoke with a certain Temerian who told me there are more merchants in the city than ants in the woods, and that scribes are always wanted. I believe he spoke the truth.

Your Toben.

Give Fido a good belly rub for me.

Letter from witcher Kolgrim of the Viper School

Kolgrim

To: Ivar Evil-Eye, master witcher of the Viper School.

I have now found all the legendary diagrams once belonging to our order. Certain complications have arisen, however. On the way back to our keep, I stopped to rest the night in a village in the Temerian borderlands. The blasted peasants decided to make me into their scapegoat and accused me of kidnapping some beekeeper's brat. They took me into the local lordling's castle for interrogation, during which they found and confiscated one of the diagrams. But do not fear, I will get it back. They did not find the others.

I have invoked Temerian common law and demanded a trial by ordeal instead of submitting to the whims of this baronet. My request was granted and tomorrow I am to cleanse the baronet's family crypt of wraiths. I expect this will prove little trouble. Perhaps I will already have returned to our keep by the time you receive this letter. Light the furnances -we'll have some forging to do.

Kolgrim

Letter of apology

C. de P.R.

[illegible fragment] ...we all make mistakes, for to err is human. The key is to learn from one's errors. If something breaks, it must be fixed. And if our mistake harms another, the injured party must be recompensed for his frazzled nerves and lost time.

We thus apologize and ask for forgiveness. Evil is not what we do!

C. de P.R.

Letter of safe conduct

Unknown

In the name of His Majesty Radovid V, King of Redania, the bearer of the present document is entitled to the right of unfettered passage across all blockades on the Pontar River.

Letter sealed with impermeable wax

Cypress

Maen vire fi mode in llaid unaddan en. Nidyn vir bodi plaentin
aer vid. Ir wifin diniwaed purfel blaedin mode. Dilai unrhiv
unsin dwidfel araell, maehynin slande fiaid.

Cypress

Letter to a mother

Fabrice

Darling Mother,

Forgive me for fleeing without saying a word, but you know if Father learned my intentions he would sooner break my knees than allow me to leave. You must understand, the life of a village scribbler is not for me! I do not want to end up like Father, spending my entire life hunched over tomes and slowly losing my eyesight during days and nights spent in dark offices. I want to live a life of adventure! Perhaps one day I'll visit you, my darling mother. Meanwhile, may you know health and happiness!

Your Loving Son,

Fabrice

Letter to Alexander

Keira Metz

Darling,

I'm writing because you must be worried that I'm still angry. Silly man, you know full well I never hold a grudge long. I forgive you.

It's all because of that secretiveness of yours. Is it so strange for me to take an interest in your plague research? I adore watching you at work in your tower - please, if you still refuse to discuss the results of your experiments with me, at least don't deny me that small pleasure.

If Vserad doesn't need you tomorrow evening, come see me. We'll clear everything up over a glass of wine - or two, or more...

Your K

Letter to Caleb Menge

Yamurlak

Caleb, I have new instructions regarding the organization of the next execution. When you are ready to meet, place your Holy Tome in the drop box located in the column of the Eternal Fire altar in the southwest corner of the Bits. We will meet at the usual spot. Do not tell anyone where you are going and bring no one with you. Burn this letter after reading.

Yamurlak

Letter to Gaetan

Joël

Gaetan

It's over. Soldiers have taken the school. They killed Axel and Cedric. As for Schrödinger, well, I can't say for sure – might be alive, might be dead. Bounties have been put on your head and mine. Avoid cities and the high roads. Don't attract any attention.

– Joël

Letter to Ingeborga Kalebsdotter

Unknown

My dearest Ingeborga,

[illegible fragment] ... arrived at Fort Tuirseach on summer's first day. He tarried there a while, draining more than one barrel of mead with the jarl. Soon both were fast friends. Then one day Jarl Torgeir summoned me and ordered me to sail to Spikeroog with him, to show him to where the sirens were thickest.

It's no exaggeration, my little mountain goat, to say I've never met a warrior like him in my life. He's lithe as an eels and strong as a bear! When the sirens came at us, I hadn't even time to seize my axe before he'd gutted them all. And his weapon, why, I've never seen its like — a crossbow, but so small he wields it with one hand. I know he has a sketch of it in his saddlebags, for I spied it when he was packing up. Once he's asleep, I'll try to sketch a copy to take to our smith on An Skellig, so he can make others. So we can protect ourselves from the sirens, case they return.

[illegible fragment]... soon as dawn breaks, we're off, sirens are swarming thicker and thicker, my hands are numb from so

much sword-swinging and my breath's ragged, but thinking of
you gives me strength... [rest of letter illegible]

Letter to lighthouse keeper

Unknown

Got work for you, Mikkjal. A ship's going to sail from Faroe to Arinbjorn with a load of hides on board. At midnight you're to put out the light in the lighthouse and keep it dark until we give the sign with our torch. We'll split the loot same as always – you'll get a tenth of what the sea tosses ashore.

Till we meet again.

Letter to Philippa

Unknown

Dear Philippa,

As I write this I am sipping your favorite cocktail on the terrace of my father's Metinna estate and wondering... what the devil are you thinking?! I'd understand if you'd simply grown bored with me, I'd accept it if it had turned out that the pair we made was not to your liking or you had found yourself a younger, prettier model, but for the love of the bleeding gods - Dijkstra?! That (with all due disrespect) pot-bellied swine?! Over me?! I do not know if you have been testing new concoctions that have addled your mind or if perhaps this is another one of your games... yet even if you must seek intimacy with that primitive for political reasons, I do not see why this should mean the end of our relationship. After all, it would not be the first time we would hide our love (...)

Letter to Tamara

Unknown

(...) We are more like a family. We support each other and help each other survive tough moments, grapple with the past. For each of us has a past. So you needn't worry about anyone digging into yours. We've got a rule — never ask more than someone offers on their own. The past doesn't matter to us, only the future does, that and our common fight against evil and depravity, against perverse and loathsome practices of all kinds (...)

Letter to Yanne

Unknown

Yanne, my dearest son!

Ill is our lot of late. Singa's husband's ship crashed in a storm during its last expedition. Bjorn survived, thank the Gods, but weeks will pass afore his captain builds another and meanwhile life must go on. He weren't taken on for the building, so he's earning no coin. We're eating our winter stocks now, and I fear to think what we'll do when they run out. That's why I'm sending Singa to you and asking for your help on behalf of us all. If you can, find work for Singa, and then Bjorn and I will come ot Kaer Trolde to stay with you. Perhaps there's some work for Bjorn with you at the forge? And if work is scarce around Kaer Trolde, as well, lend Singa a few coppers, at least, and I'll give it all back with interest once we're out of this plight.

With belief in your good heart and thanks in advance,

Your loving mother

Letter to Yennefer

Fringilla Vigo

Yennefer, my dear friend,

Thank you for your letter. Forgive me for not answering your earlier attempt to reach me via megascope. I am trying to limit my magic communication to the absolute minimum. One never knows who's listening, don't you agree?

I am delighted you have found a position at our gracious emperor's court and wish you the best of luck in the search for his daughter. It is good to know that Emhyr's intentions for her have become more, how shall I put it, mundane. Perhaps in these circumstances an agreement regarding the Lodge will prove possible after all?

In response to your first question, I can state beyond all doubt that Ciri has not appeared anywhere south of the Yaruga. Believe me, I could recognize her magic signature in my sleep.

I have not had any contact with Triss for a long time. I only know that things in Novigrad have taken an ill turn. She mentioned something earlier about fleeing to Kovir, but I am afraid that in the current political climate that amounts to an impossible daydream.

I hope I will soon be able to join you in Vizima. First, however, I must take care of some unfortunate yet urgent matters in

Beauclair.

With my fondest regards,

Fringilla Vigo

P.S. Thank you for the news about Geralt. He always seems to land on his feet, doesn't he?

Letter written on elegant stationery

Jad Karadin

Hammond,

Thought I made it clear during our last face-to-face talk. I don't want to keep in touch with you, and I especially don't want to do any business with you. I've no doubt the enterprise you proposed would be profitable. Nevertheless, to speak colloquially: count me out.

There are plenty of other potential buyers in Novigrad: goldsmiths, jewelers and merchants dealing in luxury goods, for starters. I don't want to get involved.

Whatever you decide, I wish you well in it. Treat this letter as our final farewell.

Karadin

Letter

Hugo

Collect the goods from the same crate as usual. If you get it to the drop-off on time, you'll get the full sum we agreed to. If you get it there no later than a week after we agreed, you'll get half. If you're later than a week, you're dead.

-Hugo.

P.S. Don't want any witnesses. If someone notices you - kill them first, ask questions later.

List of debtors

Unknown

Adalbert Zimmer

Gwyn Hooys

Letice Billayce

Segemor Prokop

Rico!

Mortimer Schvindell

Stan de Gries

Ardvark van der Boltimor

List of prisoners

Unknown

Prisoners of Deireadh

Page 258

Blaix de Villmon

Imprisoned the 3rd of Birke for use of magic.

Admitted no guilt despite exhaustive interrogation.

Died during questioning on the 7th of Blathe.

Arthur de Vleester

Imprisoned the 5th of Birke for use of magic.

Admitted his guilt the 10th of Birke.

Sentenced to death by pyre.

Burned at the stake the 11th of Birke.

Margarita Laux-Antille

Imprisoned the 6th of Birke for use of magic.

Has admitted no guilt.

Recommendation: enhanced interrogation.

Keth

Imprisoned the 6th of Birke for illicit soothsaying.

Has admitted no guilt.

Sentenced to death by pyre.

Undomiel

Elven witch of the forests, imprisoned the 6th of Birke.
Sentenced to death by pyre for cursing the residents of
Oxenfurt.

Has admitted no guilt.

“Zelona”

Sorceress, true name unknown.

Imprisoned the 7th of Birke for use of magic and aiding other
fugitives.

Sentenced to death by pyre.

Shipek

Imprisoned the 7th of Birke for printing and distributing
pamphlets slandering the Redanian nation.

Admitted his guilt.

Sentenced to death by hanging.

Vatt

Dwarf, imprisoned the 7th of Birke for tearing down wanted
posters of witches.

Admitted his guilt.

Sentenced to lose his right hand.

Gregski

Imprisoned the 8th of Birke for harboring fugitives.

Admitted his guilt.

Sentenced to death by hanging.

“Hunt”

True name unknown. Imprisoned the 8th of Birke for pestering
elegant dames.

Sentenced to one month in a dark cell.

Dona

Imprisoned the 8th of Birke for chiromancy.

Has admitted no guilt.

Recommendation: enhanced interrogation.

“Dragonbird”

True name unknown. Imprisoned the 9th of Birke.

Accused of practicing numerology, admitted her guilt.

Sentenced to death by pyre.

Second Child

Elven diviner, crazed, imprisoned the 9th of Birke for inciting discord and hatred for the Church.

Appears comatose, uncommunicative - possible ruse.

Recommendation: outlast, wait for response.

Corylea

Imprisoned the 10th of Birke for allegiance to Scoia'tael.

Admitted her guilt using crude language.

Sentenced to death by hanging.

“Highland Tommy”

Refuses to reveal true name. Imprisoned the 11th of Birke for assault sword in hand.

Admitted his guilt.

Sentenced to death by decapitation.

“The Seeker”

True name unknown. Imprisoned the 11th of Birke on suspicion of spying.

Recommendation: enhanced interrogation using hot irons.

Imperative: learn identity of prisoner's operator.

Man of N'vah

Imprisoned the 12th of Birke.

Convicted for many bold home and shop burglaries.

Has begun strike to protest his innocence.

Recommendation: let him starve.

Petra Silie

Imprisoned the 12th of Birke for practice of herbalism and publication of banned utterances.

Admitted her guilt.

Sentenced to death by pyre.

Sidspsyker

Imprisoned the 13th of Birke - denounced by neighbor for use of magic.

Acquitted of charges and released.

"Reptile Man"

True name unknown. Imprisoned the 13th of Birke for engaging in many bloody rows.

Remains unconscious due to sustained head injuries.

Recommendation: hospitalize.

"Sardukhar"

Nilfgaardian, true name unknown, member of the Elite Palace Guard of the emperor of Nilfgaard. Imprisoned the 13th of Birke as enemy of the Realm.

Held under close watch pending arrival of military intelligence personnel.

Nars

Halfling from Knotweed Meadow. Imprisoned the 14th of Birke for tax evasion and extortion.

Has admitted no guilt.

Recommendation: enhanced interrogation.

Momotek

Imprisoned the 14th of Birke for possession and use of magic amulets. Weak of mind.

Recommendation: fit to assist in guarding other convicts.

Please note: not to be trusted with sharp implements.

Loose scraps of paper

Humbert Reardon

And so the time has come for me to die. Of starvation, in the dark, alone, in my own manor, while my servants bring in a fresh harvest just beyond these walls. My cries are in vain. No sound escapes from this stony grave, from the tomb that fiend Roderick sealed me in. Yet that is not the worst wrong he has done me. He stole my Dolores... and so I curse him, a thousand curses I call upon Roderick of Gors Velen! Not for taking my life, but for taking from me the one who gave my life meaning.

If anyone ever finds my remains and this letter, please, seek out my sister, Dolores Reardon, and tell her the truth – that I was killed by the man who seduced her, the man she left me for, the scoundrel Roderick of Gors Velen. He struck me from behind, dragged me here and then walled me in while I lay unconscious. He did not even have the courage to slit my throat.

Yet, despite it all... I hope he brings her happiness – if so, I will rest in peace... But if he fails her, my ghost will haunt him to the end of his miserable life, and he will die as I have – alone and forgotten.

Love Letter

Fabien

Laura,

O, my dearest love, o lone ray of sunshine on the firmament of my life... I shall speak from my heart. For weeks I have been shooting stolen glances in your direction, hiding the hope I dare nurture deep within my bosom that perhaps you feel for me even one iota of the affection I feel for you...

I have waited long, gathering the courage to confess my feelings for you. I would certainly be waiting still, had not you appeared at tonight's soiree in the company of that womanizing, carousing, drivel-scribing pretentious pig named Alfons de Reside! When I saw that emaciated turd fawning over you, I immediately knew I had to act! I turned to the best weapon in my arsenal—the quill and the well-turned phrase—and began writing you this letter (forgive me, it is written on a napkin, for I had nothing more appropriate at hand at the time). O, most marvelous of all women, do not believe a word he whispers in your ear – he is as slippery as a viper and twice as venomous! Reject his advances and let me walk hand in hand with you, feed you grapes and with you radiate happiness to the heavens themselves!

Yours Forever,

Fabien

Love Letter

Albert

My Beloved Clara!

You have no idea how happy I am that the warehouse has been closed. How good it is to know each time we wish to embrace, no one shall stand in our way. Neither my father, nor your mother. It shall never occur to them we rendez-vous in this shuttered warehouse. I already laugh at the thought of them clambering over rooftops, like before, or looking through the rushes by the river. Even now, writing these words, I feel how much I would like to see you. I hope it will be like yesterday. I cannot speak for you, but as for me, I would just as well we never set foot out of this our warehouse, our wonderland.

Longingly,

Your Albert

Love Letter

Ghilbert Blith

My Darling Rosa!

From the first moment I set eyes upon you that fateful evening at the Vegelbuds', my heart has only beaten for you. I can't eat or sleep, my master threatens to terminate my apprenticeship – and I don't even know if you remember me! Albert Vegelbud introduced us near the roasted capon table – I happened to be eating one when I saw you, it stuck in my throat and I started to choke – and you laughed, oh, how sweetly, how brightly you laughed! That marvelous sound still fills my ears to this day and I live in the hope that I will be given a chance to hear it once more. I beg you, meet with me, even if just for a moment, just for a second. I will wait by the well in Gildorf every day at dusk. If you care for the life of a poor lad fallen hopelessly in love with you, take pity and come – do not torture me with eternal waiting.

Your truly devoted admirer,

Ghilbert Blith

Love Letter

Anna

My dearest husband,

I breathed a sigh of relief after reading your last letter. I am so glad you are on the mend after your injury. I know how upset you must be at having to spend the next few weeks in a field hospital, but my heart rejoices that you will not be risking your life on the battlefield.

Tamara grown and grows and grows. She can even stand up now, if she holds on to something, though she's still quite unsteady on those chubby little legs. She needs constant minding, for every time I turn my back she's climbing onto the table and grabbing whatever her little hands can find. Yesterday she almost poured a bowl of hot soup all over herself! I think I will that on that miller girl as help, because I'm afraid one day I won't catch Tamara in time. Especially now, when you are gone and I must look after all our household affairs myself. Dear Phillip, I miss you dreadfully and eagerly await your return. Every day I pray to Melitele for your health, and your daughter's, and for our family to be whole once more. I hope this horrible war will end soon. I love you.

Your forever,

Anna

Love Letter

Olgierd von Everec

[Annotation: item acquired with the rest of the von E. estate.
Put up for auction, starting price: one crown. No bids.]

My love,

Don't give up. There's still a week till you're to wed the Ofieri. I'll think of something. Perhaps I'll get the coin by then, perhaps my tears will convince your father, perhaps the gods will hear our prayers – or if not they, perhaps some devil will. If nothing else helps, I'll crash into the temple through the window and swoop you up from the altar. We'll flee somewhere far, far away, to the edge of the world, where no one will find us.

You write of sadness. I feel its weight, too. I think of you constantly. Of how we sat at the Alchemy till dawn nursing a bottle of wine, and you traced our dream house in the sawdust on the floor. Of how we dangled our feet in the water from the dock and you sang those bawdy songs and made me laugh and laugh. I kiss the medallion carrying your portrait before I fall asleep and as soon as I wake.

I swear on all that is holy: we shall be together forever. Be brave.

I Love You!

-Your O.

Lumberjack's letter to his wife

Unknown

Don't know how long I'll stay here. Till now the work was tough, sure, but we earned a decent living. Lately, though, I fear for my life. Something haunts the place at night. It roars and wails, we can't stand it no more. And the wolves, they're always howling. Yesterday Seamund went to the privy during the night and never returned. Didn't find no body nor tracks. Who knows, maybe he ran off? I'd rather that than something worse to have happened. Truth be told, I think about leaving more and more lately, about going back to you and the young one. I'm no fool, maybe I could learn another trade and we'd get by somehow.

Mage's notes

Unknown

Kiyan has enlisted with the Flying Stag as a guard of sorts. A hefty sack of Novigrad crowns convinced the captain to lodge me in his cabin. All is going according to plan.

I'm actually finding this expedition amusing. I'm glad I didn't contract the kidnapping out to some bulgy armed halfwit. I'll do it more gracefully myself.

He's cautious. I won't be able to put him down with a casually placed poison apple. Guess I'll have to zonk him out with a spell and whisk him away via teleport. I just hope it won't plop us down somewhere in the middle of Temple Isle instead of in my quarters below it. The power pulsating from my laboratory tends to throw off a good portion of my attempts to teleport home.

Very high level of resistance to psionic spells. Time needed for full penetration of his nervous system – a half an hour at least.

A few more moments and the witcher will be ready for transport. Now I just need to wipe our tracks. Perhaps a little change in the weather?

While waiting for more favorable atmospheric conditions, I looked through his things. Some very intriguing documents. A map of Est Tayiar, crafting diagrams of elven provenance

(margin note: highly interesting sketch for a one-handed crossbow, most likely used to hunt draconids or ornithosaurs, must ask about this during interrogation. Confirms my theory that the witchers of the Cat School use elven weapons.) and, wait for it.... Professor Sigismund Gloger's notes. It's clear the witcher had something to do with the famous professor's disappearance.

Think I might have overone it a bit with those cumulonimbi... No point in tarrying, time to evacuate.

Marauder's notes

Unknown

Last week the three of us grabbed this traveler. Looked like the kind of cowardly fuck starts shitting his breeches at the first sight of you. But seems looks can be deceiving. Bastard started waving a sword, cut my ear off and sliced Olaf's arse so deep he's got an extra crack, except the new one's horizontal. Then he smacked Ivar in the forehead with the hilt. Poor sod's still dizzy.

We snuffed him in the end, of course – every fellow's doomed when he's outnumbered. But it turned out he had a handful of coins in his pouch, a copper ring on his finger – and that's it. We lost out on that robbery – paid more to the herbalist for patching up than we took from that whoreson. So afterwards Olaf said, "Why the devil risk our necks waiting around for travelers, when gold's literally sitting right under our feet – buried with the dead?" A corpse can't defend itself, so the risk of injury's nil. No need to wait around all day till someone walks by – there's already a couple dozen someone's waiting for us, lying in their graves, each one marked out like veg at a grocer's.

So I gave it a good think and concluded Olaf's talking sense. So starting tomorrow we're going to stay off the roads and do our looting in the graveyard instead.

Menge's Holy Tome

Unknown

Property of Caleb Menge.

May Thy Flames cleanse my thoughts

May They temper my heart

May all that is evil burn and vanish into smoke

May all that is good be warmed by Thy Fire

May the righteous flock to Thy Light like moths

May the wicked flee from it like beasts from a burning wood.

Message from Carlo Varese

Carlo “Cleaver” Varese

Witcher

I’ve heard about your victory in the Vogelbuds’ Derby. Such talent shouldn’t go to waste – in fact, it needs to develop, and to make sure it develops, it needs to be generously rewarded.

If you’re interested in either development or the reward, come visit me at my usual headquarters.

Varese.

Message from Igor

Igor the Hook

Since there's been some misunderstanding lately about the valuables, and a bit of blood's been spilt for no ploughing reason whatsoever, I'd like to reassure you - all the coin is safe and sound in the lock box. The blind arsehole who thought it was missing was looking in the wrong place - walk down the corridor leading from the upper level towards the arena, turn so your back's to the grating and look to the wall opposite you. If you've eyes to see, you'll find what you're looking for.

Let me emphasize that Whoreson Junior's crowns have not been touched, not a single copper's missing. I swear on my own handsome head that they're secure and waiting to be picked up.

Igor

Message

Vrogg

Njall,

We hid the treasure, and hid it good – no one's gonna find it, not in a million years. Writing exactly where and how would be plain foolish. So let's just say it's high time you return to our old puffin hunting grounds.

Soon as you join us, we sail to the Continent. We gotta to hurry. They say Jorre swore to the gods he wouldn't rest tell [sic] he's found us, flayed us and took back his treasure. Hypocrite bastard. He could have split it evenly, like we first agreed. But no. He wanted to cheat us. And then got what was coming to him. Fucking weasel.

– Vrogg

P.S. When you get there, keep your sword at the ready. Those are dangerous waters.

Missing merchant's letter

Klaus

Volker,

We've hit gold, old friend. Not only have we sold all of our stock – we have sold it for three times its cost! Our customer wants it all – wine from Beauclair (everything from Beaujolais Nouveau to the oldest vintages, white, red, rosé... you name it), catoblepas meat, pickled beef, pepper, cinnamon, cloves... I'm telling you, old friend, everything!

There's one catch, however: we must deliver the goods to Velen, to a village called Midcopse. I know, I know – dangerous, what with the war and all, but think of the coin! I've managed to secure a pass that will get you across the Pontar. Then it's just a hop, skip and a jump and you're there. You'll be fine!

Klaus

P.S. We'll split the proceeds 50/50.

Missing: Mikel

Bruno

My true-born brother, Mikel, is missing. Anyone who finds him or at least finds out what fate has met him will be generously rewarded - and I'll slip a good word to the baron about you as well.

You'll find me at the Inn at the Crossroads.

-Bruno

Missing Wife

Niellen

Good people, take pity and hear my plea.

My wife, Hanna, she's missing. A few days ago she went into the woods and hasn't yet returned. I'm near out of my wits with worry and will pay any price to the man who brings her back to me, or at least tells me where to look for her.

Niellen, hunter from Blackbough

Monstrum, or a Portrayal of Witchers. Volume 1

Unknown

In truth, there is naught more repulsive than these monsters that defy nature and are known by the name of witcher. They are the offspring of foul sorcery and witchcraft. They are veritable scoundrels without conscience and virtue, unscrupulous creatures off hell able only to take lives. They have no place amongst decent and honest folk.

And this keep, this Kaer Morhen where these villains nest and practice their foul rituals must be wiped from the earth, all traces of it treated with salt and saltpeter to complete the deed.

Monstrum, or a Portrayal of Witchers. Volume 2

Unknown

For it is well known that when a witcher inflicts torment, suffering and death, he experiences a semblance of pleasure and delight, the kind a normal and righteous man only feels when performing his marital duties with his spouse, *ibidem cum eiactulatio*. From this it clearly follows that the witcher is, in the very matter of his being, a defiler of nature, an immoral and loathsome degenerate, born from the darkest and rankest depths of hell, for only one such as the devil himself can derive pleasure from suffering and torment.

[note in margin]

The book is a key. The mines near Kaer Morhen.

Monumenta Elforum

Istredd

To my beloved Y. I still await your kestrel.

Istredd of Aedd Gynvael

Let us begin, dear reader, with a riddle. What links a town like Vizima the proud capital of Temeria, or Oxenfurt, a center of learning for all the North, with Aedd Gynvael, a provincial settlement at the end of the known world? Nothing, it would seem... After all, each of these places looks, sounds and even smells different. Their origins, however, are identical — all were founded atop ancient elven cities. The ruins sprawling beneath their streets bear witness to this fact.

A tour of elven monuments is best begun in Vizima – in the city sewers, to be precise. A dangerous place, to be sure, so it is worth bringing along a well-armed guide. A branch of the sewers leads to the remains of an Aen Seidhe city. One can still admire its masterfully carved plafonds, peer into its immaculately polished marble facings, find artifacts discarded by the Elder Race and hold ancient tomes that disintegrate in one's hands. Equally impressive monuments of elven culture can be found only in Oxenfurt — as well as somewhere in the wilds of Velen, though I have been unable to verify this information personally.

What caused elven civilization to collapse? Plague? Cataclysm? No, dear reader. Their destruction was caused by us, by humans. We drove the elves from their cities and, instead of occupying their marvelous palaces, we dismantled them to build our meager and crooked huts. All that remains is that which we covered in debris and sludge, and then wiped from our memories for centuries.

Moribundia: The Vampire's Last Likeness

Unknown

Thereupon Isabella took Edward's glistening visage in her hand and embraced his icy lips, which were twisted into a cynical grin.

"Forgive me, my love," she whispered, stifling the sobs heaving her bosom. "But my heart doth long with fiercer passion for yon werewolf, whom though hatest with all thy vampiric thouness."

"'Tis for the best," spoke Edward, shifting his pale face towards the equally pale moon. "With me thy life was ever endangered. With yon werewolf thou shalt know peace and happiness."

Edward turned around and took a step towards the exit, but Isabella grabbed his wrist and bade he stop. The touch of her hand was so tender, his heart newly began to beat anew after centuries of deathly stillness.

"There is more," she spoke, averting his penetrating gaze. "I am with child."

Morkvarg's journal

Morkvarg

Day 24

Tjostar the Wise has proven unworthy of his moniker. He paid me not to attack his village and then, pleased at his own cleverness, called off the watch. Never had easier work in my life - we slit the men's throats in their sleep and ploughed the women till dawn. Not much loot, but primo entertainment.

Day 26

When we were sailing from Rannvaig, we heard owls hooting. An ill omen, so I ordered us to turn back to shore. Pukke laughed about how I'm supposed to be so brave, yet I'm afraid of the gods. I tossed him overboard with a knife between his ribs, but I could tell I'd lost a bit of respect in the lads' eyes. Will have to do something to prove I've still got the biggest prick on board, keep them from getting any stupid ideas.

Day 33

Our visit to Hindarsfjall was a success. Priestesses dead, monument smashed, holy tomes burned, mead barrels drained. We divvied up the silver - I took the votives, Norulf son of Oddleik took the basins and spoons, Mons son of Gudvar took the candlesticks and jewelry, while Einar son of Toradar forfeited his share out of fear for Freya's wrath. Fine, all the

more for us. Tomorrow we'll sail to Spikeroog, see what the merchant wenches have brought to market.

My Evening with a Vampire

Unknown

You will no doubt call me a liar, a cheat and a madman. You will shake your head in pity and snort in disbelief. But I promise you, I swear by all the gods: everything which you shall read in the pages to follow is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

I met the vampire of which I write years ago, in an inn in Beauclair. He introduced himself to me as Regis and said he was a barber and a medic. Since he looked in every aspect like a mortal man, I might never have even suspected his true nature – had not a fire broken out shortly thereafter in the establishment in which we were residing. This Regis, if that truly was his name, stood completely untouched by the flames, whereas my own clothing quickly caught fire. The vampire carried me out of the burning inn, saving my life from certain death, then treated my numerous wounds.

At first Regis refused to answer my query as to how he had miraculously survived the furnace-like temperatures inside the burning inn without so much as a scratch on his body or a hair singed on his head. Eventually, however, he must have sensed I was a man of the world, one who would not jump to hasty judgments based on appearance or species, and revealed his identity – along with a great number of highly interesting facts.

According to Regis, not all vampires are alike. This vast family contains both mindless katakans, fleders and ekimmaras, who in form resemble overgrown bats far more than humans, as well as alps and bruxae, who look remarkably like comely maids. In addition to these, there are the even more powerful higher vampires, to which genus belonged my unexpected acquaintance.

Not even a witcher can discern a higher vampire from a mortal man. Contrary to popular belief, they cannot be killed by pounding aspen stakes into their chests nor by cutting off their heads, nor, as I can vouch for based on personal experience, by fire. They do not fear running water, garlic or the symbols of any creed. It might be some consolation to learn a vampire's bite does not turn a human into one of their number, and they do not in any way need our blood in order to survive – to them, it is merely a delicacy in which they indulge from time to time, like men do with fine wine.

Regis asked me to keep his tale to myself. But now, as I lay on my death bed, I feel that I must share this secret knowledge, even if it means breaking my word to this most noble individual...

My Manifesto - The Life of Jacques de Aldersberg

Unknown

The reasons for choosing Jacques de Aldersberg as Grandmaster remain a mystery. The Order of the White Rose had gone through a crisis in those times and was on the verge of collapse, so one might guess that the brethren wished to have someone decisive as their leaders [sic], someone with a clear vision. De Aldersberg was precisely such a man. One of his first decisions was to change the brotherhood's name to the Order of the Flaming Rose.

The most puzzling aspect, however, is that the order and the king himself decided to trust a man who, for all intents and purposes, had appeared out of nowhere. They say he was a wanderer, an itinerant priest who moved crowds with his speeches declaiming nonhumans. They say he worked miracles and showed his flock visions of a world destroyed by the White Frost. He was undoubtedly a man of great charisma, one instilled with unshakeable principles which he in turn tried to instill in others.

Was he truly a Source? Was he indeed gifted with raw magic talent? That we will never know for certain.

Mysterious letter

M.

To Whoreson Junior

King Radovid is unhappy with your performance. You were to rid of the other members of the so-called "Big Four," yet not only do they still live, but they also now know of your role in their attempted assassination. That was not our arrangement.

For the time being, hide in the place which the messenger delivering this missive will indicate to you and stay out of sight. His Majesty lives in the hope that mutual animosity between the other members of the Big Four will finish the job which you attempted, yet flubbed so badly.

M.

Mysterious letter

Unknown

All is prepared. We await only your arrival. When I told the commander of your commitment and zeal, he agreed to welcome you into our ranks at once. At first, you will be put through preliminary training, but you already know how to ride and wield a blade and thus have already mastered the essentials. The rest will not take much time. As soon as you don our colors, we will set out in search of your mother. And we will find her – I promise. Even if we have to comb every inch of Velen.

Mysterious note

Unknown

Keep an eye out for castaways. Lone travelers. Drunk warriors.
Bring them to me, to the cellar. The Ancient One craves blood.

Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn.

Mysterious note

Dandelion

The wine from your birth year - it's simply brilliant. Startling bouquet. You absolutely must try it. But afterwards, please place the bottle back where you found it.

With love from D

Mysterious notes

Niellen

I am who I am. I can't change that. Shirts woven of parsley and potions made of virgin's tears might work in old wives' tales, but not for me. It is time to come to terms with it. With Hanna's love and iron discipline I have found a way to manage. But I must remember to hide in the woods before the full moon rises. To go somewhere far from others. Far from Hanna.

The attack comes and then passes. I wake up with wounds on my hands and the taste of blood in my mouth. Perhaps it is for the best that I don't remember. Killing prey with bow and arrow is one thing — to tear it apart with fang and claw... At least here, deep in the woods, I won't hurt any people. Merciful Melitele, watch over any who stray too close...

Mysterious recipe

M.T.

Dear Pascal & Timo,

I've got a bit of time between these treatments I have to administer to these stinking drowners, so as promised, I'm writing you the recipe for my famous spiced chicken and pumpkin stew.

Pumpkin

Chicken thighs (or alternatively chicken breast)

Mix of exotic spices

Milk of the Cocos Nucifera (hard to get, but there's a ship from Opiekenberg and Sons import company that arrives in the Novigrad port first Wednesday of every month, and those guys sell everything, striped horse included!)

[reminader of the list is illegible]

I'm sure you'll figure out the process on your own. Good luck!

M.T.

P.S. You owe me now.

Mystery of Mysteries

Agnes of Glanville

Among the many creatures of our world there are but two that are able to draw and absorb the Power, and these are cats and dragons. Both species instinctively sense the presence of magic intersections and often choose them as resting places, which is strange, for other animals avoid these same spots. Numerous theories attempt to explain this behavior, but none do so with thorough success. Some scholars claim dragons use the Power they imbibe to fly - for as the natural philosophers have proven, no creature of their size and mass should be capable of lifting itself into the air using such meager wings.

As for cats, there is a theory stating the Power is behind their gift for seeing things in complete darkness. Others claim this ability is theirs by nature, and they use the Power of the intersections for other, unknown purposes. Indeed, that all members of the felidae genus are able to see beings from other planes, invisible persons and emanations of the Power has been proven beyond any doubt on numerous occasions.

Naransen, son of Gunnestad

Unknown

When he awoke, he saw before him an endless swath of blue. On the horizon the sky merged with the glassy sea. The storm had passed. So had the longship and all its crew. He never learned how long he had lain unconscious in the lifeboat.

The sun had scorched his skin a purplish red and turned his lips to brittle parchment. He was overcome by a great thirst, but there was nothing on the boat with which to quench it. Had he been spared from so much only to die now? No... Naransen was the son of the great Gunnestad and he would never give up. He had had twenty springs under his belt when he embarked on this voyage. When was that? Long ago... very long ago. Back when his friends still lived. When he still had his left hand, not this stiff stump. When his beard was still red and not streaked with silver.

The drive for glory which had driven him from his family home had demanded a high price. Naransen had never given that a second thought, but now, alone in a lifeboat in the middle of an endless ocean, he felt tired. He wanted to once again set eyes on the farm on which he had been raised. To see the eyes of his mother, who had lulled him to sleep with tales of the deeds of the legendary heroes. Now he had become one of them. Now mothers would tell their sons about him. His greatest dream had become reality. He should have been happy,

but he wasn't. Perhaps if he had known then what travails and hardship awaited him...?

Yet no man can know his future. One thing is sure, however: even if Naransen had known what horrors this life had in store for him, he never would have chosen another. He was the son of the great Gunnestad and he had walked the path of Glory, from which one can never stray. No matter the cost.

Necromancy, the Forbidden Magic

Unknown

It is commonly said that magic is neither good nor evil, that it transcends the moral criteria of men, that it depends on the mage whether it will be used for worthy goals or for shameful and immoral deeds. There is, however, one key exception to this principle - necromancy.

Proponents of this branch of magic once supposed that one can also do good by reviving corpses. Dead men can, after all, hide secrets which may save the living. It is better to send an army of reanimated corpses into battle than to squander the life of those in whose veins hot blood still flows. Moreover, a revived soldier may be reused many times, until such members are chopped off so as to make his flesh unusable.

Though it is hard to refute the logic of these arguments, the practice of necromancy is still forbidden. This is not at all based on the rabble's superstitions about the living dead, nor the resistance of the powerful afraid those they have murdered could be forced to confess against them, nor the moral scruples of the older members of the Conclave, who were, in fact, laughed down as reactionaries when it was discussed. The fate of necromancy was sealed by the observation of Hen Gedyndeith, which was later confirmed by manifold

experiences proving the revived dead are always unpredictable and reviving them always involves entirely negative side effects. In other words, no matter how noble a mage's motives might be, necromancy will always lead to evil. It seems that in this way the gods let us know that we should not transgress the laws they have given us. And even the Conclave must respect the will of the gods.

Necronomicon

Unknown

To think that man appeared on an empty world and gained mastery over it unchallenged is as foolish as thinking the world will cease to exist after man's passing. Before the first human set foot on our world, it was inhabited by beings superior to men in terms of wisdom, strength and every other virtue.

The beings I have in mind still exist in our present time, though they do not exist in a sphere available to human understanding. They occupy no dimension known to us - where they live can best be described as a space between worlds.

At times one can sense their presence through a sudden, unknown scent or a strange feeling of anxiety with no apparent cause. A wind which blows in several directions at once is another example of their subtle manifestation in our realm. There exist various imaginings of what these creatures might look like, yet these have nothing to do with reality, for man is incapable of conceiving something which he has not seen, even in his wildest nightmares.

The greatest horror these beings bring comes precisely from their indefiniteness and lack of concrete form. Yet it would be a mistake to think that a formless creature is necessarily

harmless. The power they possess is sufficient to lay waste to a forest, level a city or whip an entire sea into froth and waves. Today man is master of the world, but only for a short while. They await patiently and will soon arise and regain their one-time glory. This is as certain as dawn follows dusk, and dusk then follows again soon after, to drown everything once more in darkness.

New admissions to Miss Marabella's shelter

Unknown

Recent admissions:

- Aynara
- Mikula
- Travik
- Yagna
- Genny

All most likely of Temerian origin. They were left on the shelter's doorstep during the night and were asleep when found. We have not been able to determine how they came to be in Novigrad.

Nilfgaardian demands

Havart var Moehoen

Phillip Strenger,

Your supply problems do not interest us. The pact we signed was clear and the Empire of Nilfgaard demands you fulfill its terms. If you do not, our mutual obligations will be rendered null and void and your privileges will be revoked.

Sincerely,

Havart var Moehoen

Field Marshal

Army Group 'Center' Command

Nilfgaardian's notes

Unknown

Join the army, they said. You'll kill Nordlings, they said, you'll carry the Great Sun banner to the Dragon Mountains, you'll make the emperor proud!

So I enlisted. And they sent me to Velen. If this is what the whole North is like, then I swear on all the gods, I don't have a clue why we're even bothering. Nothing but filth, clap and graves.

I've been sitting here for two months. Haven't seen a single Redanian yet. Instead of fighting, they got us running errands, each stupider than the last. Now the sergeant's sent us to find some chest. Baubles robbed from the Nordlings, seems. Fell off a wagon as the transport was heading south.

We've been wandering this swamp for three days now. Only thing we've found was a hole-riddled boot and a cow's skull. What a waste... but if we come back without the chest, they'll send us to the hole and deduct three weeks' wages, so we're going to keep searching. For the glory of the fatherland.

Nithing

Lothar

I'm asking for help from any who can give it. Someone has cast a cruel and treacherous curse on my line for which I cannot find a remedy. If you've skill in undoing such charms, or even if you have heard of a worthy cunning man or pellar who has such a gift, seek me out in my house near Rannveig and rescue me from this misfortune. I shan't spare the coin in recompense.

–Lothar

Note left by spy

Unknown

Negotiations with the Trade Corporation continue. The merchants have agreed to almost all of the emperor's conditions. Outlook positive.

Rumor is Radovid's found a way to get his hands on Novigrad. The key to Novigrad's the Eternal Fire - control the hierarch, you control the city. A plan's in the works. Next message - the stash at Crippled Kate's.

The Trade Corporation is haggling about the price of its support for the emperor - the merchants want more influence in the east and south. Unsure how that will end.

We know Hemmelfart's weakness. You get our girl into the Vegelbuds' bash. I'll put the kit and the coin in the stash in the Gildorf sewers. Here's the key.

The Trade Corporation has broken off negotiations! Inform the emperor immediately - he cannot count on its support!

Operation Hemmelfart remains unchanged. All good to go on our side. Your girl better not let us down. Given the merchants' treachery, the outcome of the war might depend on it.

Note

Unknown

The crooked mast marks the spot – but not just any fool can find the treasure.

Notes of a pirate

Unknown

Hauled in a mighty fine catch this time. Seven women and ten men, each healthy and strong. Top-quality goods. Captain doesn't know yet where we'll sell them, but for merchandise like this, we're sure to get a good price anywhere. Perhaps we'll sail to [illegible]

There's this one we've got who's damned pretty - but a damned pain the arse, too. If not for that, I'd keep her for myself. But when she's not bawling her eyes out, she's yelling threats at us. Demands we let her go or drop her off at Freya's temple. And that if we don't, her brother will sail after her and slaughter us all. Now that'd be the day when [illegible]

First three days at sea were quiet, but now a storm's blowing in. Blasted Skellige weather. Why couldn't it just wait till we left these waters [text ends abruptly]

Notes on parchment by Hieronymus on Elgar the witcher

Hieronymus

Some of the improvements to School of the Wolf gear are hidden in the Skellige Isles. Elgar left them in the central part of Ard Skellig and in the ruins of two watchtowers: one on Undvik, one on Spikeroog. He wanted them to be available for witchers who need them and are clever enough to find them.

Notes written in a shaky hand

Unknown

Cannot move. Spine broken, liver (perhaps spleen?) pierced. Knew jumping into portal was extremely risky with only 1 crystal powering it - but still better than certain death at the hands of enraged peasants. Mob broke into tower, cut off path to second crystal. Had to flee. Grabbed diagrams for Wolf School gear before going - hoping Varin would come save them, if not me. Perhaps he will come still, will jump through the portal, retrieve his diagrams, rescue me... A foolish hope. My time is very short.

Of Sweat and Blood

Unknown

A Veil hangs between the world men see and the one they cannot. This Veil blocks the dead from the view of the living, and the living from the view of the dead. Some mages can break through this Veil and communicate with the dead, or else summon them to the World of the Sun for short periods of time. This is the art known as necromancy.

The dead can also break through the Veil and enter the world of the living on their own. Yet unlike the necromancers, in doing so they are not driven by reason and will, but by a thoughtless, irrational need. This need arises from powerful emotions such as regret, longing or wrath. Very often these emotions gain their power by being invested in a material object by the dead individual while he or she still knew life. The objects most frequently so endowed? Wedding rings, favorite toys – or the instrument used for the crime which sent the returned individual to the other world in the first place.

Old letter

Alyssandra Deviel

Dear Sir Roderick de Wett,

Please forgive me for my tardy response – I was waiting for Golan Vivaldi to confirm sufficient funds were available to redeem the bill of exchange you provided. Not that I don't trust you, but the gods help those who help themselves, as the Kaedweni saying goes.

Getting straight to your question: Princess Adda's curse could indeed be caused to return. The witcher from Rivia had only a rudimentary knowledge of magic arcana, and so was not able to fully remove the spell, and instead only temporarily disrupted its workings.

For Adda to become a striga once more, one would have to sprinkle her food with three drops of blood from her father, King Foltest, three drops of blood from a wolf and three drops of bile from a freshly-buried woman, one who died having finished one hundred years but not yet having started her hundred and first. Then one must cast the Incepted Triangle over the meal thus prepared. That should do the trick – yet please consider carefully whether you truly wish to carry out such an ignoble deed.

Hoping to do business again with you in the future,

-Alyssandra Deviel

Old letter

Azar Javed

All those chosen by the Professor should be present outside the keep at the designated time. Tardiness, failure to bring the proper equipment or insubordination will be punished with death.

We shall mount our principle attack on Kaer Morhen with our frightener. Gaining mastery of the keep should not present much of a problem, for we have heard only a handful of witchers remain in residence there. Therefore you must make haste: a 50 orens reward awaits you for every mutant head you sever.

Once we have taken the witchers' secrets, we must separate, in order not to attract attention. Every one of you will then be left to find your own way back to Vizima, where we will reunite.

-Azar Javed

Old, yellowed letter

Unknown

Janne,

As I write these words, you are six years old. I am thirty. I am in my prime, but I know already I'll never teach you how to shoot a bow, nor how to ride a horse or care for a sword. I'll never take you on a raid nor out fishing.

I took a wound to my knee during the last raid. It's taken a turn for the worse. It shouldn't have taken more than a few days to heal over... but something got in my blood. Wound's full of pus, stinks. I'm losing feeling. The druids say it's beyond their help, and that I'll bleed to death if they cut off my leg.

So I'm preparing for death. You're in for some tough years, lad. Our family's got a great many enemies. I've defended you against them, but now you'll be on your own. Perhaps someone will help you - and perhaps not. That's why I've had part of our goods hidden - in Old Ule's house, under the floorboards. That way no one can take it from you, no one can steal it - and you can dig it up once you're all grown. I've asked your mother to give you this letter when you start your eighteenth spring.

You take that silver, son. Buy yourself a fine blade, some armor, a horse. Raid the Continent. Exact revenge on the men who did you wrong after my death. Make me proud.

I never told you this, but I've always felt it: I love you, Janne. I hope one day we'll meet in the halls of Freya's eternal green garden and you'll tell me about your life. The life I was not able to see.

You have my blessings, son.

Orders from Hammond

Hammond

Next time I gotta make sure to visit the shrine on the hill and make an offering before setting out. The gods' favor – that's what matters most. So if any customers come, tell them to wait till I get back. They'll understand – they know I'm liable to get ornery when someone interrupts my prayers.

Keep your eyes peeled.

Hammond

Pearls of the North - Novigrad

Unknown

No one can claim to have traveled the Northern Realms who has not been to Novigrad. If I were forced to list what during my many meanderings has made the greatest impression on me, it would be precisely this great, and yet at the same time free, city.

A metropolis worthy of the Empire, its only flaw is that the civilization Nilfgaard carries within her has not yet enlightened it. That is why hordes of reactionary cultists of the Eternal Fire dwell in the midst of its excellent buildings and superb commercial infrastructure. One feels as though superstition is how the local Hierarch and his temple guard cement their power over the city dwellers. And many they are to control, for the city counts no less than thirty thousands of inhabitants.

While strolling through its fabulous port, surrounded by marvels of architecture, it is hard to imagine that centuries ago Novigrad was a mere minor elven townstead. When the city fell into the hands of the Nordlings, its problems grew exponentially, for as is well known the people of the North can do a great many things, but peaceful and orderly cohabitation is not one of them. And so Novigrad first belonged to Redania, and then fell under Temerian rule, until finally, after endless compromises and bargains, it at last became a Free City.

But is the city truly free? I dare to doubt it. Redanian influence makes itself felt too strongly on every street corner, and the fact that the city is located within Radovid's territory speaks for itself...

While wandering the city's streets I came across four water mills, eight banks and nearly nineteen pawn shops. There are also a great many houses of simple pleasures such as taverns and brothels, and Novigrad's commitment to matters of faith is borne witness to by the fact that the city contains no less than - I kid you not - nineteen temples to the Eternal Fire!

What more can be said... I think Novigrad has all the makings of the capital of the world, and perhaps that is what it will one day become. First, however, someone needs to bring order to within her walls.

Pearls of the North – Oxenfurt

Unknown

Oxenfurt - a gem snuggling into the bosom of the Pontar to the east of Novigrad. A cradle erected upon Redanian soil, nurturing the greatest minds not only of that kingdom, but of all the North. To walk its hallowed Academy's halls is to embark on a journey through learning, from the finest points of Philosophy to the grandest strokes of Art, with stops made to admire Architecture and dissect Medicine along the way.

Peer to either side, and you will spy fellow travelers in your pilgrimage of learning - the students. They throng Oxenfurt's streets, lending it an indelible imprint of youth that can be felt the moment you pass through its gates. Dormitories stand cheek by jowl, booksellers hawk used tomes on every corner, and under every tree fresh faces debate poetry with passion.

Yet youth is not all slate and compass, and the young here shirk none of its other typical pastimes. Raucous and merry are the city streets, both by day and, even more so, by night. Through the city councilors have forbidden the sale of alcohol after dusk, no one seems eager to enforce this with stricture - and wisely so, for any loss of sleep is more than made up for by gains: profits to fatten its inkeepers' pockets, and the late-night crooning of troubadours to enrich its soul.

As for architecture, of particular note are the recently renovated elven aqueducts used to clean the city sewers. They stand as witness to the city's innovative spirit - you will not find their like in all the civilized world. Yet dominating the town's architectural visage like a glistening crown is the complex of buildings that comprises the Oxenfurt Academy. Few today remember that these edifices, constructed by the elves, predate the city itself - it is the institution that named the city, not vice-versa.

Today Oxenfurt Academy enjoys a reputation matched only by the Imperial Academy of Nilfgaard. Of greatest renown - the departments of Alchemy, Natural History, Minstrelsy and Poetry, Medicine and Herbology, Engineering and, last but certainly not least, Philosophy.

Pirate leader's notes

Unknown

Nothing quite like war! The Redanians and Nilfgaardians are at each other's throats, and no one pays a whit of attention to us. We can rob, raid and kill till we get bored of it - which'll never happen.

Usually I never set ashore near populated places, but this time we had no choice. Our boat started taking on water after the last storm, we had to drag her onto dry land for some repairs. We were ready for a fight when we stepped onto the beach, but no one even tried to chase us off. Sometimes one [of] the baron's blowhands come to us, but taking care of them's no trouble.

Since we're not in any particular hurry, I've decided to build us a new vessel instead of patching up the old dinghy. Why not? Best take advantage of the turmoil while it lasts. I hear there's a boatyard nearby - that'll do just fine. And while we wait for a new ship, I'll send men out to look around for Queen Zuleyka's famous treasure. If it's worth a tenth of what I've heard, we'll all be rich. Well, I will, at least.

Pirate's notes

Unknown

Yesterday we found a silver basin and a ruby brooch on the bottom. Means Queen Zuleyka's treasure really is somewhere around here. Maybe in the hold of one of the wrecked ships off the west coast – but we can't check them at the moment, waves are too high. We'll hve to wait till the seas calm. We're pitching camp.

What a beaute of a ship we're gonna have! She's going to be as yar as they come. True, that masthead the shipwright carved looks more like a sea cow than a buxom siren, but that's a minor detail.

Question is, will the lads be eager to set back out to sea? Some have made a nice little home in a hut nearby. I half expect to turn around and see them planting turnips and milking goats. Each according to his own, I guess - but it's a pirate's life for me.

Poem

Unknown

When the sun peaks in the skies,
Seek where shadow's end lies.
Where light into darkness folds,
You'll find treasures untold.

Polymorphy

Philippa Eilhart

To change form – to shape one’s matter as clay – this is no novice’s trick, no flickering glowlight or rat-killing blue bolt. Only those with bowels soaked in oceans of magic arcana – and few are born with bowels so absorbent – can hope to master it.

There are exceptions, of course. Dragons, as is well known, possess such a talent innately. With no need for study they can, guided by some otherworldly intuition, change between humanoid and reptilian form. As for the other races, higher vampires (e.g.. bruxae) are known to flicker between states, yet given the understandable difficulties of conducting research in this area, we do not know if this transition constitutes an act of polymorphy.

The human race is, obviously, much more accessible to scholars of polymorphy. Their years of study have borne fruit in the form of a set of methods and guidelines for the identification, nurture and deployment of this talent. The most accomplished result of the careful application of these methods – Philippa Eilhart.

Prince Adrien's journal

Prince Adrien

Kiyan performed wonderfully! It's a shame, of course, that Professor Gloger disappeared somewhere in the ruins of Est Tayiar along with the rest of the elven diagrams, but those sketches for a steel sword alone are worth as much as a village in southern Redania!

We split the takings equally, as per our agreement: I kept the diagram for the silver sword, while Kiyan took the crossbow diagram. I must admit, I didn't exactly need every member of the expeditions head preserved in vinegar, but they do constitute impressive proof of Kiyan's conscientiousness and professionalism. The witcher swore none of the archaeologists would leave Est Tayiar alive – and none did.

All the more shame, that, that Kiyan didn't accept my offer. As my personal bodyguard, he would never have wanted for a thing. Steady pay, caviar and strawberries for breakfast, lobster for lunch, daily baths, a court surgeon and courtesans of both sexes for all his needs... and if he still lacked for anything, he had but to knock on my chamber door.

He must very much love all that trudging around the world, because I do not believe Jacob of Dembich could have dangled a better offer than I did! Really now – Jacob of Debich?! A second-rate captain transporting whores to dockside Novigrad pimps

for a fistful of crowns? With any luck, sooner or later a storm will sink that leaky tub of his and Kiyan will return to me, tail between his legs!

[illegible scribbling] scrubbed [illegible] waxing [illegible]
[illegible] blade oil [illegible] Devil's Puffball [illegible]
contortions (...)

[ink visibly fresher than previous entries, many years must have passed] I have heard the Flying Deer, the vessel on which Kiyan was sailing, wrecked off the coast of Grassy Knoll. Was it my curse? Hm. Not bad, for a beginner. Perhaps I should think about enrolling at Ban Ard?

Professor Sigismund Gloger's notes

Professor Sigismund Gloger

Excavations to be carried out by Gottfried Oss, Michelle Sabina Ruxer and Marco Gedl, under the supervision of Professor Sigismund Gloger. We have begun excavation work under the aegis of the Oxenfurt Academy and with kind sponsorship from Prince Adrien of the Sea Cats. Our goal is to find the legendary treasure of King Maeglor of Est Tayiar.

8th of Blathe, 1st day of excavations

I am deeply worried about the witcher present among our company. I had a bad feeling about him at the very start, during the first meeting at Castle Drahim. Now, as we trek dark underground caverns, his presence gives me shivers. Are we entirely sure his task is to protect the expedition? Furthermore, Castle Drahim is too close to Oxenfurt for us not to have heard those unsettling rumors about Prince Adrien... (illegible fragment).

11th of Blathe, 3rd day of excavations

Kiyan demanded we surrender all notes found in the ruins of the elven armory. I refused.

13th of Blathe, 5th day of excavations

We pitched camp in a vast and dry cavern in the easterly portion of the complex. There are a few active portals here. I am afraid they are very likely unstable and unidirectional.

14th of Blathe, 6th day of excavations

The witcher murdered Marco! He was deciphering one of the priceless elven sketches when suddenly, as I watched on aghast, the witcher slit his throat and grabbed his incuinabulum! I panicked and jumped into one of the portals. It deposited me in some chamber which has no exit. Unless an echo of the portal appears, I am stuck here for good. I hope Michelle and Gottfried managed to escape. [remainder of the notes difficult to decipher and no dates are indicated]

I must conclude the witcher had from the very start been operating on Prince Adrien's orders. I would not be surprised if they were toasting their scheme's success at Drahim Castle at this very moment. Blast it, perhaps I should have given those elven diagrams to Kiyan after all? What good are they to me here, if I am to rot in this crypt? I have finished the last drops of my water. There is nothing to eat. No echo from the portal has appeared. Gods... I don't believe in you... But if you do in fact exist... If you exist, save me.

Radovid V the Stern - The Hard Slog to Greatness

Unknown

(...) Which brings us to the epithet of the current ruler of Redania – “the Stern.” Allow me to diagnose the causes and consequences of this appellation.

Firstly, the seeds of Radovid’s Sternness were surely planted in his childhood. When Radovid was born to King Vizimir and Queen Hedwig in 1255, his care was immediately entrusted to Philippa Eilhart, the court sorceress. While none dared question if she was fit for the role of tutor, few now envisage her as having been a warm caregiver to a young child – and whatever harsh lessons she gave Radovid clearly left a lasting mark.

The next step on Radovid’s path to becoming the Stern? The death of his father when Radovid was but 13 years of age. Though rumor has it father and son barely knew one another, the mere fact of being thrust into one’s inheritance at such an early age and in such murky circumstances must have had a hardening effect.

Finally, the regency finished schooling Radovid towards becoming the Stern. Led by Sigismund Dijkstra of Tretogor, the Regency Council imparted upon Radovid a style of politics

seeped [sic] in Dijkstra's aggressive, no-holds-barred, reason-of-state-first principles.

Such are the causes of Radovid's temperament – now on to the consequences. Most manifestations of his fierce manner are well known, however, a few illustrative examples might prove useful here. They include his summoning of the Order of the Flaming Rose to be his armed enforcers, his later support for the witch hunters in their zealous cause, and finally, there is the massacre at Loc Muinne...

Yet it is in the fight against Nilfgaard that Radovid has proven himself truly the Stern. While the forces of other realms disintegrated in the face of the empire's onslaught, he has strengthened his own realm and taken command of the joint armies of the North. Whatever their opinion of him before, all clear-eyed observers now agree: Radovid V, known also as Radovid the Stern, is the North's last bulwark against Emhyr's expanding power.

Recipe for black eyeliner

Unknown

Black eyeliner in a pinch

When deprived of professional products, one can mix up black eyeliner from crushed medicinal charcoal mixed with (fresh!) egg yolk and a drop of lavender oil (to keep contaminants at bay). Store the eyeliner in a cool place for at most 3 days, then make a new batch, because the old one has surely rotted. Ingest the remaining medicinal charcoal, for it can only do you good.

Religion and Life

Unknown

And should we thus submit our life to religion, or should we interpret religion so that it serves our lives instead? There are as many schools as there are philosophers, as many stories as there are human beings (and let us not forget elven beings, nor dwarven, halfling, gnomish ones, nor any other such sapient creature familiar with the quandaries of the soul). I, for my part, having survived now more than one hundred and twenty years (vodka and radishes work wonders, lend no credence to anyone who claims differently), can swear with all certainty that there is no way to reconcile everyone at once, and what pleases one will provoke whingeing and sulking in another, and will undoubtedly cause a third to reach for his knife if it dares depart from his known, narrow world by so much as a hair. What then are we to do? How should we live? Why, as we like, as our soul urges, disregarding all the brayings of philosophers and ethicists, those contained in this tome included - disregard them as we would fairy tales or old wives' legends.

Report

Inglor Helyanwë

Despite the significant measures already undertaken, the situation in the outer regions of Tilath na Viell, Tilath na Lia and Tilath na Crob've provinces has not improved. The Sages sent to handle the matter in the field have merely succeeded in delaying the advance of the White Frost, which slowly yet surely engulfs more and more territory. We must accept that Tilath na Buhne is now completely lost - the Sages did not reach it in time.

I recommended the swift evacuation of the endangered provinces and a strengthening and radicalization of measures intended to seize Aen Seidhe territory. Otherwise i must ask to be freed of responsibility for the provinces under my jurisdiction.

Inglor Helyanwë, Viceroy of the Western Shore

Research notes

Matteo Sykula

As per the instructions of our supervisor, Ireneus var Steingard, we have conducted a series of studies on the genotype of the creatures commonly known as drowners. Sadly, administering a poison made of fugu fish induced a coma in all the specimens in the study. After 24 hours the vital functions of all above-mentioned specimens ceased, prohibiting us from continuing the study.

Matteo Sykula

Royal Lineages of the North

Inglor Helyanwë

Cirilla Fiona Elen Riannon, born in 1251, heiress to the throne of Cintra, Princess of Brugge and Duchess of Soddien, heiress to Inis Ard Skellig and Inis An Skellig and Suzerain of Attre and Abb Yarra. Daughter of Pavetta (see Pavetta Fiona Elen) and the Urcheon of Erlenwald (see Emhyr var Emreis). Granddaughter of the famous Lioness of Cintra, Queen Calanthe (see Calanthe Fiona Riannon).

A shipwreck occurred during a journey from Cintra to Skellige which took the lives of the Urcheon and Pavetta. Cirilla's further upbringing was then entrusted to her grandmother. In 1260, afraid of the looming Nilfgaardian threat, Queen Calanthe sent Cirilla to the court of King Ervyll (see Ervyll of Verden), where the heiress of Cintra was to marry the heir to the throne of Verden, Prince Kistrin (see Kistrin of Verden). Though allying with Verden and gaining the aid of that realm's army was at the time Calanthe's top priority, no marriage ever occurred, and Cirilla returned to her grandmother's court. In 1262, during the so-called Cintra Massacre, Cirilla went missing (...).

Sage's notes

Inglor Helyanwë

Day 3275. Final conclusions regarding the lamp.

My experiences with the magic lamp unequivocally confirm that by using it active centers of condensed spiritual energy can be coaxed into contact and can communicate a limited set of the being's last memories.

Lara Dorren's remains, however, emit entirely inert spiritual energy despite the violent conditions of her death, which should have strengthened the desired tendency.

Lara remains silent.

At this point further research on lamps enabling contact with the dead seem entirely useless for my purposes.

Sawmill owner's notes

Inglor Helyanwë

The druids are on the warpath. Moved from words to deeds. Every morn we come to the mill to find our equipment damaged, destroyed. Last night someone tossed an axe into Vill's door. Folk are scared. I'll talk to the druids one last time. This must end.

Scoia'tael note

Inglor Helyanwë

Dh'oine have captured Cerbin. They keep him on a leash, like a dog. Two bandits guard him constantly, so I cannot attack, or else they might hurt him... And I have no intention of negotiating with dh'oine.

But Cerbin has a good head on his shoulders. The dh'oine force him to drink alcohol, make him sing. He then insults them or calls out to us in Elder Speech. His voice carries over the swamps, so we hear every word. We know these humans' routine. We know when they change watches. What weapons they have. I take note of it all. When I know enough, I shall strike. Quickly. When they are not expecting - and where it will hurt the most.

Scrawled notes

Inglor Helyanwë

Things are going better and better for us. we've pitched camp in the heart of the forest, near the old mill, and have already done quite nice for ourselves. Folk are poor, so they say, but squeeze them and something always comes out – a sack of grain here, a few crowns there. Not bad for easy work, certainly better than the army. At least we've got something to fill our bellies, and the risk that we'll pay for this all with our lives, well, it's still less than when we were charging the Nilfs at Natalis' orders.

Scribbled document

Caius

Himmy,

No wonder we're losing this war, with cowardly cunts for soldiers! All it took were a few arrows and a wallop of the mace for seasoning, and that was that – battle was over and the whole convoy was ours for the picking. Maybe they were having such a hard time of it because of all that vodka they were carrying. Our brave warriors must've taken a sip from time to time, with obvious results – when you're seeing double, it's damned hard to hit your target.

Take everything we gathered to the cubby, then fence it quick as you can. Except that showy parade shite – you'll have to bury or burn that. I reckon someone might recognize the insignia and then there'd be trouble.

– Caius

Script

Unknown

BANDIT

(with feeling, threatening)

Tremble, flaxen haired wench! Bow before the prince of thieves!

CRIMSON AVENGER

(threatening)

Not so fast! Drop your sword, scoundrel! This is your first and last warning.

Moment of improvisation – Sophronia will undoubtedly reply with something.

CRIMSON AVENGER

(threatening)

'Tis I, the Crimson Avenger!

BANDIT

(terrified)

No! Not the Crimson Avenger!

CRIMSON AVENGER

(threatening)

Silence, vermin! You shall regret the day you were born!

She Who Knows

Unknown

Folk say they were four at first. The Mother, She-Who-Knows, the Lady of the Wood, came here from a faraway land and, since she suffered terribly from loneliness, she made three daughters out of dirt and water.

A long, long time ago the Mother was sole ruler of all of Velen. Her daughters brought her the people's requests and served as her voice. Each spring, sacrifices of grain, animals, and men were made to the Lady of the Wood on her special night. Yet as the years passed, the Lady of the Wood slipped deeper and deeper into madness. Her madness eventually spread over the land - men took to abandoning their homes and setting out into the bog, where they became food for beasts. Before long, Velen was drowning in blood.

The daughters saw their land nearing destruction and took it upon themselves to save it. When spring came once more, and with it the night sacrifices, they killed their mother and buried her in the bog. Her blood watered the oak atop Ard Cerbin, and from then on the tree grew wholesome and hearty fruit for the people. As for the Lady's immortal soul, it refused to leave its beloved land, and so the sisters imprisoned it. To this day it lies trapped beneath the Whispering Hillock, where it thrashes about in powerless rage.

Short letter

Count de Botton

My Dearest Master Sigvard,

I have received your letter. I thus now know that you have a great many doubts regarding the contract I have offered you - and that you clearly suffer from gross misconceptions regarding the nature of a mercenary's trade, something which, given that this is a trade you yourself profess to practice, constitutes a highly puzzling paradox.

So let me inform you that a mercenary is not paid for asking questions or listing reservations, but for performing a concrete task. This task was described in simple, unambiguous words: you are to capture a siren - alive - and bring her to me. If you will not perform this task, you are of no interest to me. As to why I need this siren, or what I intend to do with her, that should not be of any interest to you. If these conditions do not suit you, I am sure I will find another man who will not refuse my coin.

-Count de Botton

Short letter

Louis

Janne, please – cut out this nonsense at once. This might come to you as a surprise, but a giant cat will tend to stick in people's memory. Why don't you pick some other, safer form, like I did? I've been walking around as a beggar for three years now and no one's batted an eye. And such earnings! You wouldn't need to steal anymore. So, how'll it be? If you decide on it, I'll put in a word for you with the King of Beggars.

Till our next meeting,

Louis

P.S. Burn this letter once your read it, all right?

P.P.S. Yes, yes, I know – I'm paranoid. But humor me and burn it.

P.P.P.S. If find this letter next time I come see you, you owe me a beer.

Skellige: Its History and Geography

Unknown

Skellige the political entity encompasses the archipelago of the same name, composed of twenty individual isles. The largest of them are Ard Skellig, An Skellig, Undvik, Faroe, Spikeroog and Hindarsfjall. Originally these isles were inhabited by independent clans, but these later united to face the growing threat from barbarians as well as the rising powers of the Continent. Skellige then became an elective monarchy, ruled by a king chosen from among the jarls (clan chieftains). The present leader of the Skelligers is Bran of Clan Tuirseach.

It is worth noting that, in contrast to the situation in the kingdoms on the Continent, in Skellige each inhabitant is a citizen and enjoys equal rights, regardless of birth, trade or the property they possess.

On account of the rocky and often barren terrain and inhospitable climate, the inhabitants of Skellige gain their sustenance primarily from fishing, maritime trade and armed raiding. Though this last is primarily the work of men, female warriors are not unheard of, and they equal their fathers and brothers in courage and skill. For Skelligers believe that each is master of his or her own fate, and when Freya determines a man's or woman's destiny, she looks only to inner

predispositions, and cares not for outward traits of status or sex.

Slightly torn notes by Hieronymus on the witcher Elgar

Hieronymus

It seems Elgar hid some upgrades to his gear in the area around Kaer Morhen. Some he hid in the deepest cave he could find, the one in the northern portion of the Kaer Morhen valley. Others he hid in the abandoned, crumbling watchtower in the same area. Still others he placed amidst the rocks on the shore of the valley's lake.

Smuggler's notes

Unknown

Those were the days... You'd smuggle a few bottles of hooch into Oxenfurt, then loiter about the dormitories selling it to students. You'd come away with a hefty sack of coin, and they'd have their spirits fortified for study. Then along came Radovid, who shut down the university, chased the students away and positioned ballistae on the riverbank to sink everything floating up or down the Pontar, swans included.

But there's not been a dark cloud yet that didn't have a silver lining. Yesterday I saw our brave soldiers sink a merchant vessel. Went straight to the bottom, it did, along with its whole crew... and its cargo. A shame about the men, really, but it would just as big a shame to let all those goods go to waste. So me and Martin will fish them out, dry them off and sell them – and maybe at last I'll have something to put in my pot.

Soaked letter

Falk

Hymke,

Round up the lads, we've got a job. It's time Hugo Hoff took a long walk of a short pier on the Pontar. To prove it's done, bring back his ear.

– Falk

P.S. Seems Ewald's interested in Hoff, too. So watch your arse.

Soaked letter

Pauli

Read close, mate. Lady Caroline's hanged herself. Tragic love affair, something like that. Some gallant gent stole her virtue and then split, her belly started swelling and, well, tragic results.

But enough about that. Let's get to the meat of the matter. I helped prepare her for her funeral – and I'm telling you, the shite they stuck in her coffin! More riches than in a Koviri vault! I'm telling you, you couldn't even see the body for the glare coming off all that silver and gold!

So I'm thinking all those baubles won't be one prick's lick of good to our dearly-departed lady in the afterlife, whereas you and I, why, we could put it to fine use in the here and now. So perhaps we should lighten her coffin a little bit, so as nothing goes to waste?

Thing is, I can't go anywhere, but you, you're a free man. So grab a shovel and head out to the swamp graveyard. Start digging where folk have laid out fresh flowers. Then we'll meet up and split everything fair and square... half for you, half for me. Deal?

—Pauli

Soaked letter

Yannick Delen

To His Excellency Velerad, Lord Mayor of Vizima.

Your Excellency, we can wait no longer – the scouts say the Black Ones are already readying their siege equipment.

If you wish to escape with your life, please present yourself at the Vizima Temple Quarter sewer entrance tomorrow at the crack of dawn. There is not much room on the boat, so take with you only your closest family and most valued treasures. I shall provide a few men to act as a guard, but not too many, for I do not wish to attract unwanted attention. We shall sail through Blacksol, Stoonwar, White Orchard and Charske. From there we shall continue on horseback.

— Yannick Delen

P.S. Do not tell anyone about your flight. We do not wish to arouse panic.

Sodden note

Hanna

Dear Vessy,

We couldn't afford to pay for ourselves and Patrick, so we've sent the young lad to you. I know things're tough your way, too, that you've three tykes of your own – so know that if I didn't have to, I'd not ask this of you. But here in Velen... well, you wouldn't believe it if I told you.

Please take care of Patrick like your own son. We'll come back for him soon as the war's over. A thousand thanks.

Hanna

P.S. Patrick's got a sack of coin in his bags – enough to pay his guide what we agreed on. You shouldn't have to add anything of your own.

P.P.S. Patrick's afraid of the dark. If you can, leave a candle burning by his bed.

Spy's notes

Unknown

15th day of observation (23rd of Birke)

Back in the camp. Brought in heaps of plunder, mostly armor and weapons, but this time a sealed chest, too. Towards dusk a man delivered rations of food. And drink.

16th day of observation (24th of Birke)

Messenger arrived in the camp before dawn. Caused quite a stir. They immediately organized a group to transport the chest. After dusk I'll try to track down where they carried it to.

17th day of observation (25th of Birke)

Didn't move the case that far away, just to the abandoned hut near the old mill. Set up a watch, so I wasn't able to get closer.

18th day of observation (26th of Birke)

Every man in the camp has been drinking since yesterday afternoon. If we attacked now, we'd obliterate them. Too bad the commander only sent one man (me) to this outpost. I'll try to sneak in tonight. If fortune smiles on me, perhaps one man will be enough

Stoneworker's notes

Unknown

13 VII 1271

Vimme Vivaldi's order: twenty blocks measuring 40 x 70 x 30, three 55 x 60 x 40.

Note: uniform stone, no inclusions, to be used for bank counters.

Order for the Vegelbuds' residence: five slabs measuring 120 x 80 x 5. Note: polished surface. For decorative purposes.

14 VII 1271

Order fulfilled. Collection arranged for 18 VIII 1271. Payment to be delivered in species.

To purchase: tracer x 3, wooden hammer x 5, leveler x 2, chisel x 4.

18 VIII 1271

Nilfgaard has crossed the border. Jorge did not come to retrieve his order. I've nothing with which to pay the boys for their work. They say they're gathering their tools and going to Novigrad.

20 VIII 1271

The road to Novigrad is closed. Blockades along the Pontar. Redanians on one side, Nilfgaard on the other. The horizon burns at night. Pillars of smoke can be seen during the day. We'll barricade ourselves inside. Others want to join us, but we haven't enough food so we must send them away.

21 VIII 1271

The Redanians are ordering us to open the gates. They want to station a garrison in the quarry. No mention of what will become of us, and war rages all around. They say a major battle is brewing. We're staying put. The Redanian division's small, no siege equipment, and our palisade's strong. Perhaps they will give up and leave.

Tales and Legends About Humans

Unknown

Talaith and the Evil Witch

No one in all of Tir ná Lia knew how to help Talaith remove the evil spell cast upon her brother. Overwhelming despair clouded her judgment and she went to see an old witch. She forgot the Sages' warning that the old woman's heart was black as pitch and foul as carrion crawling with maggots.

The old witch lived in a cage in the wastes surrounded by poisonous vapors and venomous vipers and toads. Talaith went there, even though her pure heart cried out for her to turn back. As she approached the cave, she smelled an odor so terrible she almost fainted. She had no idea what it was - for she had never been near a human before. She overcame her disgust, thinking all the while about her brave brother, and asking the witch for help.

"And what would you give me in return, my dear elf?" screeched the witch.

"Anything you ask."

"Give me your voice, my dear elf, and I'll lift Leod's curse."

Talaith thought about how she used to sing lullabies to her little brother and began to cry, but she gave the witcher her beautiful voice all the same. The old woman grabbed it in her crooked talons like a small silver fish and tossed it to her cat. "Now give me your hair, my dear elf! Only then will I lift your brother's curse." Talaith sobbed, but agreed, and the witch wove a thick net from her hair and hung it from the trees in order to catch birds.

"Now give me your eyes, my dear elf, or I'll never lift Leod's curse."

Talaith loved her brother very much and so gave the witch her green eyes, and the witch sewed them onto her dirty dress like precious stones for ornament. And she started to laugh. Only then did Talaith understand that the witch would never lift Leod's curse and all her sacrifices had been for nothing. But she could no longer cry. Oh, how she regretted not having listened to the Sages, who tell so many tales of human treachery!

Talaith was petrified with regret, but her pure heart continued beating. When the old woman bent over her books and spells, Talaith's green eyes read along with her and in this way Talaith learned it was the witch who had put the curse on her brother Leod. She read along with the witch further until she learned how to lift curse. And so she caught fat robins with the net the witch had woven from her hair and fed them to the witch's cat. Purring with delight, the cat agreed to follow her back to Tir ná Lia. There it told the Sages the whole story about Talaith's stolen voice, and they recognized that it was true.

The evil spells cast on Leod and Talaith were reversed, and the evil witch was drawn and quartered.

Tales of the Wild Hunt

Unknown

(...) The island folk of Skellige, like many nations of the North, hold a series of beliefs about the Wild Hunt as recorded in legends, myths and fables. This horrifying phenomenon is said to herald the coming of war and misfortune. Characteristic of their tales, and distinguishing them from their continental versions, is that the islanders imagine the Wild Hunt not as a cavalcade of wraiths galloping across the night sky, but as a ghostly longship. The vessel, called the Naglfar, is said to be built of “the claws of dead men.” For this very reason, superstitious Skelligers removing the nails from their dead, expressly to prevent them from being used to fortify this ghastly ship. In many legends the Naglfar sails out of Morhogg – the land of chaos (...)

The Aen Seidhe and the Aen Elle

Unknown

Sad as it may be, to many in our time the word “elf” is a synonym for pauper, bandit or layabout. “She-elf” is used by many to denote a prostitute or woman of loose morals. The adjective “elven”, in turn, describes damaged, needlessly complicated or useless goods. Statistics, for their part, show that one in three elves living in Redania has spent time in prison, and a full one half of them have been fined at least once. The average lifespan of elves, though still thrice that of humans, grows shorter each year.

Given the above it is easy to forget that elves - or Aen Seidhe, as they fashion themselves - were once a proud race that ruled the lands stretching from the banks of the Great Sea in the west to the Blue Mountains in the east, and from the Dragon Mountains in the North to the Mahakam range in the south. The ruins of their cities scattered throughout the known world bear witness to their former might (cp. “Monumenta Elforum” by Istredd of Aedd Gynvail).

Many of the most outstanding mages, artists and poets of recorded history have been of this race. And we have elves to thank for dozens of ingenious items we rely on each day, from screw pumps to cosmetics. Those elves who dwell amongst

men have largely forgotten their history and culture - the sole sliver of elven identity left in them being a burning hatred for humans, whom they refer to as dh'oine. The elves of Dol Blathanna, that puppet vassal of Nilfgaard, and of the wild highlands of the Blue Mountains have retained much of the old knowledge and culture, though they, too, are condemned to perish. This death sentence was handed to them by biology - for men, though short-lived, are several times more fertile than elves. Thus, while the Aen Seidhe's numbers continue to dwindle, ours grow at an alarming and ever-increasing rate.

Some elves believe that the tide of events can be turned, that they can put a stop to human expansion and, ultimately, to their oppression by men. They look to their mythical cousins for salvation - to the Aen Elle, the Alder Folk. The Aen Elle are said to dwell in another world or possibly another plane to which they traveled during the mythic Age of Migration, and from which they at times journey to visit our world. Legend claims a gate between the worlds could be opened, allowing the Aen Elle to ride to their downtrodden brethren's rescue. These are, however, mere fables, naïve fairy tales this race condemned to extinction uses to provide itself small comfort in these, their last, sad moments.

The Ballad of Witcher Gerd

Unknown

Righteous and brave, of death never scared,
Such a man had we in the witcher Gerd.
Pursued by foul foes with intentions most vile,
He made a last stand on Ard Skellig's fair isle.
Fighting, all the while.

He arrived on her shores 'midst sobs and bawls,
"Help! A dragon yon elven ruins crawls!"
Hefting his sword in an expert grasp,
He set off at once and slew the winged asp.
Smiling, as it drew its last gasp.

But fierce as fiends his foes followed his path,
Hounding his footsteps, hearts brim full of wrath.
At night they attacked, using darkness as shield,
To no avail — soon their own lives they did yield.
By witcher's hand was much blood spilled.

'Tis a witcher's right nature to guard men from beasts,
And so Gerd's silver sword did not rust in its sheath.
Instead, to Clan Tuirseach from sirens defend
He forthwith to the Caverns of Melusine did mend
And took the first step towards his end.

[fragment missing]

Jarl Torgeir returned and exclaimed with pride:

Fortunate he who has friends at his side.
Proud is the jarl who can quit his home keep
And find in his absence no dangers did creep
And witcher saved all from death's deadly sleep.
[fragment missing]

The baron's notes

Unknown

Oreton boat builder went all-in and got arse-ploughed by Lady Luck. Send men to collect – if he don't have the coin, take his cards.

– Never play with that crazy old bugger from Benkelham again. Maybe he really can see the future – sure saw through my every ruse.

The Bear Legend

Unknown

The berserkers do not constitute a separate clan in terms of blood or lineage. They are instead a family forged by warriors who have heard the “call of the bear” and answered it by abandoning their loved ones and joining the community of mountain dwellers.

Not every man who seeks to join it is accepted into the brotherhood: the candidates must first pass difficult trials which usually end in their death. The last trial is the hardest. It is called the “Trial of the Bear’s Triumph,” but few outside the brotherhood have ever witnessed it and none know what those who undergo it must endure.

Quite curiously, the inhabitants of Skellige themselves know very little about the berserkers, or “vildkaarls,” as they call them. They do not like to talk about these man-bears, not with outsiders and not even amongst themselves.

The Chronicles of Redania

Unknown

Vridank the Elf

Despite what one might conclude from his moniker, not one drop of elven blood flowed in King Vridank's veins. They called him the Elf because of his exceptional beauty, and for the great admiration he felt for the Aen Seidhe. This fascination, seemingly harmless, would have horrible long-term consequences. King Vridank, spitting in the face of all laws and customs, chose as his wife a half-elf - and one of low status at that - known as Beatrix of Kovir. The fruit of this regrettable and short-lived mésalliance was Falka, who later fomented bloody revolt against her own father. Though this uprising was ultimately extinguished and Falka herself burned at the stake, the young state was thereafter thrown into chaos for years to come.

The Collected Verse of Gonzal de Verceo

Gonzal de Verceo

'Love

To love is to build a house of cards, or play a game of chess
But one wrong word or ill-thought move
And you must start it all afresh.

Tide

Whenever I watch the tide recede
Cold coils of fear grip round my heart.
Will the seas sneak back, calm and sure
In the dark of night as they have before?
Or will they stay on distant shores
Leaving crushed shells and washed-up dreams
As memory of surfs of yore?'

The Corpse of Novigrad

Unknown

Alexander Hoe walked down the long corridor, delighted that the sounds of debauchery pouring out of the rooms drowned out the sound of his footsteps. The long-neglected brothel floor creaked and moaned, as though the wood regretted being witness to the lecherous scenes fed to it by this house of ill-repute standing in the very center of the pride of the Northern cities. Hoe had been generously remunerated for this visit by the wife of a silk merchant. She had long suspected her husband of dabbling with loose women during his working hours. The case had seemed simple enough, banal, even. A cheating husband. How many similar affairs had he unraveled?

The worst was that his employers never truly wanted him to bring irrefutable proof of their husbands' guilt. On the contrary, in their heart of hearts they always hoped his investigations would prove their husbands model citizens, and their suspicions wholly unfounded. This time, it truly did turn out that the woman's husband was no whoremonger, despite the fact that his trail led Alexander to a place in which fleshly pleasures were bought and sold.

The door in front of which he stopped, following the instructions he had received from the gnome at the entrance, had a small plaque with the number sixteen on it. Unlike the other rooms, this one was enveloped in an unsettling calm. Hoe

turned the door knob and pushed the door open – and what he saw behind it far exceeded his worst expectations...

The Cult of Freya

Unknown

Freya Modron, the Great Mother, teaches us to put our faith in her no matter what life brings. Thus warriors pray to her before setting off for battle, and the women they leave behind pray for their menfolk's safe return. Freya, as a mother and a goddess, understands all the trials of mankind, she soothes our pains and provides comfort. Yet woe to him who acts against her and violates her eternal laws, handed down for the good of men and the world. Condemnation awaits such men – they will be cut off from the life-giving source of motherly love, and if they repair not their ways and, renouncing evil, return to the mother-goddess' bosom, they shall be cursed for all eternity – they and all their line (...)

The Curious Cases of Virtuous Vegga

Unknown

“Can there be such a thing as a virtuous whore?” — Vegga asked herself this question each and every morning, and each morning swore she would prove to the world that practicing the world’s oldest profession does not preclude virtue.

That determination augmented not only to her own troubles, but also those of Gaspard de Bruelle, her mother’s longtime friend who, as a personal favor, had hired Vegga to work in his establishment, The Golden Garter. Poor Gaspard had to listen to the constant complaints of customers who would charge into his office in a huff about Vegga’s behavior. Yet the girl clung firm to her principles and her ironclad drive to see them through. She would never perform with any lights lit and would avert her gaze with a powerful blush upon catching sight of the male member. Gaspard’s greatest headache, however, was the fact that virtuous Vegga never, ever accepted any payment for her services (...)

The Doppler's Salvation

Unknown

WITCHER: "To slay beasts most foul - 'twas for this I was made,
I kill as my calling, not just to get paid." - threatening or
cheerful, bold

WITCHER: "Perhaps 'midst the guests he hides, in fear?" -
suspicious or intense, lively

WITCHER: "Seems men's hearts can love for changelings
foster!" - astonished or joyful

WITCHER: "But a heart that is base, such as in this knave
aches!" - disgusted

WITCHER: "No monster is he whose shape can shift." -
ceremonial

The Elder Blood

Unknown

What exactly is the Elder Blood?

According to some, it is a powerful elven curse passed from generation to generation. Those in whose veins the infamous Hen Ichaer flows are said to carry death and destruction within them, to sow hatred and disdain in the hearts of men. It was from this contaminated blood that Ithlinne prophesied an avenger would be born, a destroyer of nations and worlds.

Others claim the Elder Blood is an extremely rare inherited talent, granting control over time and space to a degree unattainable even to elven Sages. Sadly, few bearers of this gift have been able to control it in full. This merely partial mastery inevitably leads to sudden outbursts of the Power that take the form of unpredictable, uncontrollable and thus extremely dangerous explosions. Behind the dark legends about the Curse of the Elder Blood lies the truth of these tragic cases.

For obvious reason the bearers of the Elder Blood were always subjects of great interest to the world's mighty and to mages alike. The former counted on the truth of Ithlinne's prophecy, on an avenger being born who could destroy worlds, and who they could thus use for their purposes. As for the latter, they hoped to harness the magic of Hen Ichaer to broaden their own knowledge and powers. Ultimately, however, all these plans

were for naught - the Elder Blood line broke off with the disappearance of the heiress to the Nilfgaardian crown, Cirilla Fiona Ellen Riannon...'

The Horse Whistler

Unknown

Breaking in a horse's psyche is a simple matter of instilling your will as the rider into your mount, acquiring its trust and training its obedience. Horses are intelligent, noble beasts, so they should be treated with tenderness and a decisive and firm energy.

Mayer, the unquestioned authority in this area, emphasizes that when training one's mount a rider must eternally on the lookout for errors in the training itself. Every time the taming process ends in failure, the rider must look for the blocking error first of all in the his own actions, [sic] secondly in the horse's anatomy and only in a last resort by concluding the horse has a naturally difficult temperament.

Adhering to this principle protects one from undue punishments, which destroy the possibility of reaching an understanding between rider and mount and make it impossible to gain the animal's trust.

The Illustrated Atlas of Insectoids

Unknown

Arachas. Monst. of the —>Brachyoarachindaesubg., subtype—
>viperhexapoda. Lives mainly in boggy terrain, but also in
caves and abandoned mines. Hierarchical caste struct., w/
highly spec. members. master of —>mimicry, many specimens
highly poisonous. Invasive species, immigrated from the south.
Must be fought with silver, ideally freshly coated with
insectoid —>oil.

The knight Chalimir's letter

Chalimir of Black Frydland

Your Most Honored Grace, the Duchess of Arcsea!

[illegible fragment]... The witcher Gerd feared Your Grace's wrath, feared Your Grace's righteous fury, so off he fled to Skellige, to that hive of pirates, thieves and other such bandits. In sooth, the goods must have smiled on our quest, for quickly did we catch his foul scent and track him to a public house near the village of Fyresdal, where he was banqueting with the locals. Some sought to protect him, treating the traitorous man as a companion in arms. We therefore showed them no mercy and burned the inn to the ground. Alas and alack, the witcher escaped us once again, but we tracked him to the ruins of the old fortress called Etnir, where he went to hide or else perchance lay in wait by some monster... [illegible]

We made haste to assault his position with all our strength, but still the treacherous foe slew five of my men, wounded me most severely and brought the ruins' roof collapsing down on us with some witchcraft. Never fear, we shall surely free ourselves from here soon. Meanwhile I have ordered the vile witcher's campsite searched and have found a diagram for some highly curious weapon. It is enclosed with this writing, entrusted to Your Grace's safekeeping. Another day, perhaps two, and we shall dig ourselves out of this rubble and catch the

witcher. If fate is kind, perhaps I shall next send Your Grace not a missive, but the witcher's scalp... [illegible]

...yet it must be said that from the very start he slighted Your Grace with his most rude and brusque manners, though it is beyond the reasoning of a simple knight such as I to comprehend how a base worm like that could dare refuse your Duchesness anything! Why, serving Your Most Graciousness is an honor, and anyone who shuns such service reveals himself as a simpleton and a knave. Thank all the heavens the gods watch over Your Graceful Being, and the merciless usurper, that twisted wretch who deems himself your father, could be ripped off his stolen throne without the need for that mutant's help. Yet it is a witcher's swiving employ, Your Grace, if you will pardon my Temerian, to kill monsters, and Your Good Grace's father, why, what was he, if not a beast, a murderous monster lapping up the blood of innocents? And since he was such a monster – though draped in human skin, revealing his monstrous form only through deed and not demeanor – the witcher ought to have killed him, as Your Grace asked of him. Therefore, it is just that said freak shall pay with his neck for violating the dictates of honor and witcher law alike.

You Grace's humble servant,

Chalimir of Black Frydland, of the Brant banner

The Ladies of the Wood

Unknown

The gods have abandoned us. The mighty of this earth care not for our fate. Only the Ladies of the Wood watch over Velen. In foul times, when plague or famine steals our harvest, we must beg the Ladies for help. If they deem fit, they will hear our pleas and knock back fortune's foul blows.

This is how one begs help from the Ladies:

Find a child, young and innocent, and take it to Crookback Bog. Search out the Ladies' shrine - that is where the Trail of Treats begins. Set the child off on the trail and it shall follow its sweet track and find the Good Ladies. The child will never want for anything ever again, for the Ladies are kind and generous.

Standing before their shrine, pronounce your request and the Good Ladies will hear, for they see and hear all that takes place in their demesne. If you made the offering as it must be done, your supplication will be heard.

The Last Wish

Dandelion

Three things are required for human life to be sustained – food, drink, and gossip. It is thus no wonder that no matter where I travel, be it ice-bound Poviss or ever green Toussaint, everyone asks me about the passions that bind Geralt the sorceress Yennefer of Vengerberg. As a man both cautious and discreet in nature, I refuse to betray their secrets – with one important exception. The history of their first encounter is so extraordinary, so romantic and moving, that it would be a veritable crime to hide its light under a bushel. Indeed, had I not witnessed these events personally, I would never believe that that [sic] was room in our grim and and dark world for such fantastic marvels.

It all began when Geralt and I were feeling a bit peckish and, unburdened by heavy coin purses, decided to fish our supper out of a lake. No bites were to be had, but we did not leave empty-handed – my hook snagged quite a lovely little pot. Oblivious to my friend's warnings, I opened it – and in doing so freed a powerful djinn.

Without giving it much thought I set about proclaiming my wishes. Before I could get to three, however, the djinn – irritated, I now see in hindsight, at being issued demands so soon after waking – started to throttle me. Geralt was able to drive him off, but I was left in a sorry state. I acted, the witcher

told me later, as though under the influence of some curse. Clearly, the help of an expert in magic arcana would be needed.

It was our good fortune that Yennefer of Vengerberg happened to be staying in a nearby village. Geralt went to her to ask that she heal his best friend, who happened also to be the brightest star in the North's poetic firmament. Yennefer, however, was more interested in the djinn (which she wanted to trap into magic servitude) than in its victim, and, it should be said, played the witcher like a well-strong mandolin. Yet rather than grow angry at being used in such a calculating manner, he fell white head over muddy boots in love with her.

What happened then... well, I won't go into details, suffice to say that Yennefer's plans hardly delighted the djinn, and without its cooperation she proved unable to tame it. The sorceress would surely have met a tragic end – and taken all of Rinde along with her – had Geralt not rushed to her rescue. For once, he did not need to draw either of his blades: to send the djinn packing, he had but to pronounce his third and final wish. He could have asked for anything: wealth, fame, power... but instead he asked the djinn to bind his fate to that of the arrogant yet intriguing sorceress from Vengerberg.

Julian Alfred Pankratz, Viscount of Lettenhove, born 1232. Award-winning poet, playwright and troubadour. Frequent performer at the courts of Niedamir, Vizimir, Venzlav and many other nobles and notables. Alumnus of Oxenfurt Academy.

The Little Peasant Who Confounded His Lord

Unknown

Winter was on its way and the lord once again started to think about what to do to oppress his people even more. One morning, at the crack of the cockerel's crow, he rode out into the village in a carriage pulled by two black horses, with his trusted page at his side to act as his scribe. The earth was sodden and a cruel mud covered the road, so the lord, not wanting to dirty his shiny new boots, stayed in his carriage and sent his page to do his bidding.

When they arrived at the village, the page dismounted from the carriage, a paper covered in thick ink clutched in his hands. He nailed the paper to the first hut he saw, and since he did it with a hammer, a peasant boy named Reuben soon opened the door up to see what was the matter. The boy was twelve years of age and had a straw-colored shock of cow-licked hair and a freckled-face with ruddy cheeks.

"Well? What do you want?" grumbled the page, looking at Reuben's shirt, which was covered in the same filth as everything else in the village.

"Well, uh, nuthin', rightly," Reuben shrugged, "Thing is, sir, this here's me home."

“Then get inside it.” The boy wasn’t scared, and instead stood on his doorstep looking at the piece of paper.

“S’what’s this, sir? A letter?” the boy asked.

“Read it and find out for yourself,” the scribe said, growing angrier, though Reuben didn’t seem to notice.

“Afear’d I can’t, sir. Don’t know how.”

“What the devil’s taking you, scribe?!” the lord hollered. He was still sitting in his carriage and hadn’t heard the conversation. Clearly, he was growing bored.

“The whelp says he doesn’t know how to read!”

“Aye, ‘cause he don’t,” Reuben confirmed and took two steps toward the carriage, his bare feet sinking into the muddy gray muck.

“And the ones inside, do they?” questioned the lord.

“Where d’ye reckon they’d learn a thing like that, m’lord?” the peasant asked, perplexed, for he had always thought great lords like that must surely know everything.

“So who in your village does know how to read?” asked the lord, growing ever more irritated.

“Not no one, m’lord.”

“Scribe,” the lord said, leaning far out while leaning on his carriage door, “Could you explain to me how I am to enforce my declaration on people who do not know how to read and write?”

“I don’t know, my lord,” the scribe said, taking a step back, as if he expected the lord to jump out of the carriage and assault him. The fault was not his, but the lord was in the habit of beating his scribe when he grew angry, no matter the cause.

The Lodge of Sorceresses

Unknown

Just as warty slime-slathered toads croak out into the fetid swamp in search of kindred company, so too do sorceresses seek their own kind, driven to gather and scheme against all that is good and worthy. The coven gathering the worst of them - the knab of those utterly depraved and swollen thick with the pus of magic - was the Lodge of Sorceresses.

The first fiends of this Lodge were Philippa Eilhart, Lady of Montecalvo, Triss Merigold of Maribor, Keira metz of Carreras, Margarita Laux-Antille, Síle de Tansarville of Creyden, Sabrina Glevissig of Ard Carraigh, Fringilla Vigo of Beauclair, Francesca Findabair and Ida Emean, elven women, Assire var Anahid, and Yennefer of Vengerberg.

On the summit of Bald Mountain they gathered, witches all, to swear fealty to their devils and demons, their masters and lovers, and to promise to bring doom upon those living in peace in the Northern Realms. 'Twas they who stood behind the murders of Demavend, King of Aedirn, Foltest, King of Temeria and many other noble men besides. 'Twas they who sent plague and pox against decent, god-fearing folk.

Yet take comfort, dear reader, for their deeds shall not go unpunished. Our gracious leader Radovid, fifth of his name,

saw through their lies and swore their deaths, deaths as inevitable as they shall be painful.

The Lonesome World Guide to An Skellig

Unknown

An Skellig is a weary travelers paradise. Those seeking respite from the hustle and bustle of urban life need look no further. Those yearning for peace, quiet and transcendental views - the kind that leave one short of breath and renewed in spirit - will find satiation on this isle. Here one may enjoy long walks along the most charming beaches in the isles, ones whose beauty far outshines that of the decidedly overrated coasts of Kovir.

Yet the true jewel of An Skellig is its port, which is famed for its skilled craftsmen, considered by many to be the best in the isles. An Skellig's shipbuilders have passed down the secrets of their trade from generation to generation for centuries, perfecting it into something which can proudly and with no exaggeration be called an art. Naturally, as a result one must wait twice as long for a vessel ordered from the local shipwrights than when ordering from lesser workmen.

Lastly, it would be a crime to discuss An Skellig without mentioning the superb (and surprisingly sophisticated!) local cuisine. Its specialty: sturgeon roasted to golden perfection in a sea-salt crust and served with carrot shavings and a sprinkling of mint. Sadly, this dish, once a mainstay of every tavern and seaside fish-fry, now has become a rarity due to the overfishing

that caused a dramatic decline in the population of that most delicious of fish.

The Lonesome World Guide to Ard Skellig

Unknown

What time of year is the best for visiting Ard Skellig? Any time. To whom is such a sojourn recommended? To anyone who seeks adventure, craves miraculous views and adores charming villages. These last Ard Skellig has in spades: it is the most densely-inhabited isle in the archipelago, though this does not mean it lacks virgin forests or untrammelled landscapes. Particularly worthy of a visit are the villages of Rannvaig, Arinbjorn and, last but not least, Holmstein, one of the most important ports in all the Isles.

Anyone lucky enough to enjoy the sea voyage to Arinbjorn will surely notice the majestic lighthouse guiding ships to its harbor. Built at the behest of the famed Jarl Skjoldal, it constitutes one of the most fascinating spots on the isle and offers breathtaking views of the entire region.

The most spectacular vista on Ard Skellig, however, must certainly be that of Kaer Trolde, a fortress cut out of the mountain overlooking the bay and serving as home seat to the powerful an Craite clan. According to legend, Grymmdjarr, mythical Skellige hero and founder of Clan an Craite, carved the fortress with his bare hands (for more on this, see the “History” and “Culture” sections).

The Lonesome World Guide to Faroe

Unknown

The most southerly-thrusting outcrop of the Skellige Archipelago is the wild and untamed isle of Faroe. Visiting here is a must for experienced travelers undeterred by unexplored wilderness and nature at its reddest in tooth and claw. Which is not to say that Faroe is uninhabited - just that its vibrant, primeval landscapes, not its human settlements, constitute its primary attraction.

Acting as sole exception to this, and providing a wonderful treat to adventure-seeking travelers, is the port of Harviken, the home village to Clan Dimun. With a bit of luck one might find oneself there when the clan's warriors return from their overseas raids and divide their plunder. A days-long feast is thrown in the warriors' honor afterwards - providing an excellent opportunity to sample local delicacies and observe local customs. For more on this, see the "Feasts and Festivals" chapter.

The Lonesome World Guide to Hindarsfjall

Unknown

The smallest of the Skellige Isles is also the birthplace of the islander's culture. Skelligers believe themselves direct descendants of Otkell, a legendary hero who was the first practitioner of the cult of Freya in the isles. He erected a beautiful temple in honor of the goddess on Hindarsfjall (sadly the temple has been closed to visitors in recent years due to concerns about the possible theft of the famous diamond, Brisingamen, ornamenting the goddess' statue). Otkell also constructed a fantastic garden near the temple - this can still be visited upon making prior arrangements with the priestesses' mother superior.

An enticing option for those wishing to visit Hindarsfjall is the package excursion offered by the congregation of Freya worshippers in Poviss. Thanks to a longstanding agreement with the isle's priestesses, they can offer tours of all the local highlights at a very reasonable price. This is by far the best option for families with children or the elderly.

The Lonesome World Guide to Spikeroog

Unknown

Though Spikeroog is not the most frequently-visited of the Skellige Isles, one cannot deny it has a certain inescapable charm. Particularly bewitching are the snow-capped peaks towering over its southern and western shores.

Spikeroog will surely please lovers of the martial arts. The northern portion of the isle is home to a famed arena where local warriors test their strength in no-holds-barred bouts. South of the arena lies the village of Svorlag, home to Clan Brokvar. Located on a picturesque bay, Svorlag is particularly lovely to visit in the summer and around the feasts of Belleteyn. South of Svorlag sprawls a primeval wilderness that serves as Clan Brokvar's chief hunting grounds.

Visiting the southern portions of the isle should be reserved only for extremely experienced travelers, for they are completely wild, inhospitable and deprived of all human settlements. The area is crawling with dangerous creatures of all kinds (described in more detail in the "Fauna and Flora" section). One should also show particular caution when traveling near the caves along the isle's coast.

The Lonesome World Guide to Undvik

Unknown

Once-prospering Undvik was the second (after Ard Skellig) most-frequently visited isle in the archipelago. Among its ample charms are a prime location, picturesque scenery and a sublime local cuisine. Sadly the isle was recently devastated when some monstrous frosty giant awoke from his long slumber and began murdering and destroying whatever lay at hand.

After this occurrence many realms issued an official edict of warning cautioning their residents to avoid travel to Undvik. Nevertheless, the isle still attracts many travelers. They are no longer primarily lovers of carefree relaxation, however. Instead they are adventure seekers and mercenaries hoping to earn the bounty put on the giant's head, or, barring that, at least get a glimpse of this fantastic creature with their own eyes.

Though this is indeed a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to witness such a sight, we are duty-bound to advise anyone thinking of visiting Undvik to postpone their trip until conditions improve, or, even better, alter their plans and visit one of Skellige's many other attractive isles, where the risk of being disemboweled by a colossal man-beast is significantly lower.

The mage Aeramas' last journal entry

Aeramas

Hunters have stalked my house for days. I knew they would come eventually, of course - that pungent limburger's vision was all too clear - but I must risk it and stay a few more days. The cheeses have entered an intensely fascinating stage of maturity and transporting them is entirely out of the question. I have worked on this recipe for forty years and I would rather die than abandon it now.

In the event that I am unable to divine the time and nature of the hunters' attack, I bequeath my most valuable treasure to whatever brave adventurer will be able to find it. May this reward inspire him to continue my work and stand on the shoulders of the giants of tyromancy - Joffrey Munster, Aven Vieux-Boulogne and, last but not least, the Baron of Blue, Eric Stilton.

The mage Alexander's log, part 1

Alexander

Day 237

My experiments continue to return results I must consider unreliable. Methodological errors are not at fault. The problem lies in the shoddy and fallible research material I am forced to work with. Despite his prior assurance, Vserad is unable to provide me with enough moderately healthy specimens for my tests. Most of the material is starved and terrified, having been dragged here straight from the dungeon. I waste a great deal of time daily washing and delousing them before I will so much as let them step foot into my laboratory. Sterility first.

As Marti Sodergren managed to prove in her little-known work, the attitude of a patient undergoing treatment can have a significant impact on the battle against the disease.

Unfortunately the volunteers with which I am supplied do not show sufficient comprehension – let alone enthusiasm – for the noble work in which they are taking part. In fact, it seems they consider the research part of their punishment. I have tried a few times (though I am but a poor speaker) to convince them that they are contributing to the eradication of one of the greatest plagues tormenting mankind. I had the distinct

impression they understood little, but perhaps their stupor was merely a result of the early stages of the illness.

Of course, it is impossible to achieve success without significant sacrifices. The overwhelming majority of them will have to lay down their trifling lives on the altar of learning. But that is a sacrifice I am willing to make.

The mage Alexander's log, part 2

Alexander

Day 346

I never did like rats. Not because of their obscene tails, but rather on account of their lively disturbing intelligence. They are always listening when a man believes he is talking only to himself. And, what's worse, they seem to understand.

A few days ago, I caught myself talking to one of them – a particularly large, black male with a torn-off ear. At first I was overcome by panic. Was this a first manifestation of the illness? Of course, that was impossible, for I had fortified my immunity with powerful spells. Upon further consideration, I concluded it was an altogether natural reflex, one even the most learned among us find hard to restrain. We mages like to be listened to.

I placed the black rat in a separate cage. The time will come for it to play a part in the test. Meanwhile, it can “keep me company.” And observe. I've noticed it looks with great concentration at the cages of its infected brethren, particularly those cages in the last stages of illness. Fascinating.

Speaking of company – I have none, besides the black rat, and cannot hope for better. Vserad avoids the laboratory and has

expressed his desire for his daughter to steer clear of me as well. At first I thought he feared a moral scandal – which would be risible in the extreme – but he explained the true reason in due course. It seems Annabelle has always possessed a fragile psychic constitution. Observing the ill might throw her into foul humors.

The peasants taking part in the study have stopped speaking to me. I don't know what they believe this little act of defiance will serve. It does me no harm – they made for lousy conversation partners. There remains, of course, The Woman, but as for her, I try to limit my contact.

Day 362

My black rat has died – today I found him curled up in his cage. I suspected he had become infected on accident, but during the autopsy I did not uncover any signs of illness. He was also perfectly well-fed. Strange. From a medical point of view his death remains unexplained, something which, I must admit, irritates the scholar in me. But, as mentioned previously, I'm not particularly fond of rats.

The Merry Adventures of Muriel the Lovely Harlot, Illustrated Edition

Unknown

On one occasion Muriel went on a journey to see her auntie in Maribor accompanied by her nursemaid. Their path took them through a forest, and in this forest lived a raucous troupe of bandits. This infamous group was led by Flynn Selms, and all the king's men had been unable to bring them to justice. Alas, such was Muriel's great misfortune that these bandits chose to attack her carriage.

Muriel's nursemaid was old, blind and deaf. She did not wake when a tree fell in front of their carriage with a loud thud, nor when the bandits fought a fierce battle against their guardsmen. When Flynn ripped open the carriage door with his muscular arms and stepped inside, Muriel had to deal with the danger herself. "Make our guest comfortable, young lady," the old nursemaid muttered in her sleep. Muriel obediently carried out her instructions.

The Natural Obscurity of Curses

Count la Guevre

To my dear friends, Phillip and Anna - From Count la Guevre,
Minister of Culture for the kingdom of Temeria.

Vizima, 1265

Whoever thinks curses are only ever manifestations of one being's ill will towards another is sorely mistaken. Shockingly commonplace are reports of curses cast unwittingly on oneself or on objects in one's immediate environment. The consequences of doing so can be difficult to predict. In many cases they lead to harm or even the death of the person afflicted by the curses, or of the people spending time with the object or being on which the curse fell. That is why it is so essential to take preventative measures to safeguard oneself as thoroughly as possible against the casting of curses. As an absolute minimum Madame Amelia Veracruz-Leon recommends: cleansing oneself of all negative thoughts, striving to be at one with the world and achieving harmony between body and mind.

The Opposition in Nilfgaard

Unknown

While Nilfgaard's emperor wields absolute power, harshly crushing the slightest sign of disobedience, opposing forces continue to exist within the empire. By this I do not mean the disgruntled leaders of conquered provinces, but the amgantes within the City of a Thousand Towers who are unhappy with the current leadership. This conflict between the emperor and the noble houses of Nilfgaard the capital dates back to many years. All the princes of the blood and magnates expected their ruler to wed one of their daughters and sire and heir with one of their own. The emperor, however, had other plans. This proved a slap in the face of all the great families from which he refused to take a bride.

The Nilfgaardian opposition patiently waits for the emperor to slip up, for some event to occur which will weaken his authority, be it an economic crisis or a defeat in battle. A secret conspiracy lies ready to seize such a moment to incite the disaffected, assassinate the emperor and carry out a coup d'état culminating with one of their own number ascending to the throne.

For obvious reasons, only a limited few know of this conspiracy, but any shrewd observer of Nilfgaardian politics can read the signs of its workings. So long as men are men and the world is as it is, certain dynamics will forever be the same,

and the discontented will always form subversive societies
with their secret signs and hiddne agendas.

The Poisoned Source

Unknown

No one is born a mage. We still know too little about genetics and the mechanisms of heredity. We devote too little time and resources to this research. Sadly, we still conduct trials in the inheritance of magic ability using, let us say, natural methods. The results of these pseudo-experiments far too often can be seen in the gutters of our cities and begging outside our temple walls. Far too often we see and encounter brain-dead and moronic women, women covered in their own spittle and passing themselves off as prophetesses, seers, village diviners and miracle workers — cretins with brains degenerated by the uncontrolled Power they inherited.

These simpletons and fools can themselves breed, can pass on their “abilities” and continue the degeneration. Is anyone capable of foreseeing or defining what the last link in such a chain will look like?

Most of us mages lose the ability to procreate as a result of changes and disruptions to the functioning of our pituitary glands. Others — sorceresses, most often — mature into their magic powers with gonads intact. They can conceive and give birth — and have the audacity to consider that good fortune, a blessing. Yet I repeat: no one is born a mage. And no one should be! Aware of the gravity of what I write, I provide an answer to the question posed at the Summit in Cidaris. I answer with

every certitude: each of us must decide what she wants to be —
a sorceress or a mother.

The Slaughter of Cintra

Unknown

(...) The cavalcade of riders pounded across the blood-soaked courtyard. They looked at no one and asked no questions - they knew exactly where they were going and why. To kill the old queen and capture the Cintran princess. As to what would become of her after that - no one would say.

Calanthe and a group of her most loyal subjects had barricaded themselves inside the castle. They were protected by stone walls and a gate sealed by a spell - but they all realized neither would last long against a concentrated assault by the Nilfgaardian army and the mages supporting it. After four days, enemy soldiers forced their way inside (...)

The Treatment of Furuncles Through Cauterization: A Study

Unknown

Everyone's seen a boil, usually more than they'd care to. These deformities don't just mar your beauty – they can be signs of disease, or even the disease's cause and epicenter. If your lungs wheeze and your heart flutters, or if your just sick of pustules, you can carve them off and be free of this ill for good.

When you carve off a boil, use a sharp knife which've you've had a dog lick thoroughly beforehand, for a dog's tongue works wonders in healing wounds. You got to be brave as you go about it, slicing as confidently and steadily as if carving off a hunk of cheese. Then quickly cauterize the resultant wound using a red-hot poker. Don't pay any mind to screams or tears. Pus, bile and any other humors need to be gathered in a basin, then dumped in a pit and the pit covered, else the illness might return.

The Ways and Manners of Skellige Folk

Unknown

One's attention immediately is drawn to the fact that their seemingly impoverished huts shine with cleanliness. The walls of their homes are usually made from pine and covered with a substance derived from sap which keeps out all manner of vermin. I believe it scares off insects as well, for I did not see a single one indoors during my entire stay in Skellige.

The interiors of their huts are quite spacious and usually divided into two rooms. The first is used by the members of the household during the day and is separated by a doorway from the second, which acts as a bedroom and contains only simple wooden beds covered with linens that resemble sacks more than Continental bedding.

In the middle of each main chamber stands a large round table around which the members of the household gather to eat only once a day. This usually happens just after dusk, the time for their main meal. This supper is a hallowed event and is carried out in a nearly ritualistic manner. At its start, before the family members have even taken their seats around the table, the eldest of the family tears off a piece of bread and places it on something of a household altar, which occupies a place of honor in each Skellige home. This serves as a symbol of respect

for deceased ancestors. At the end of this ceremony for the departed, the entire family sits down to eat. The eldest woman places a steaming bowl in the middle of the table. Everyone has their own spoon, which they dip, one by one, into the basin of food. They most often eat porridge, over which they pour a gravy made from meat or fish.

Curiously, immediately upon the supper's conclusion the eldest takes the piece of bread set aside at the start of the meal and places it in a large amphora. As I later learned, when an amphora becomes full, it is filled with boiling water and a beverage is brewed which in taste somewhat resembles beer, though it is much weaker.

The White Frost

Unknown

One can hear Ithlinne's Prophecy whispered at every market, garbled and reused by every village witch, delved into in any treatise touching on sooths and diviners and in general saturating our common culture. We all know that "the time of the Wolf's Blizzard approaches, the Time of the White Frost" and that "the world will perish amidst ice." But few truly understand the meaning of these words.

The self-proclaimed prophets who shout out Ithlinne's words mistake stars reflected in a still pond for the sky. For the White Frost is no legend or mythical apocalypse. It is a natural phenomenon that can be described in the dry yet precise language of scholarship.

The renowned scholar of Thorn's studies have clearly shown that our world is not the center of the universe, but one of a thousand such globes spinning in the endless darkness of space. This space is usually described as a vacuum - yet to do so is grossly misleading, for through this "vacuum" swims, invisible to the naked eye, the White Frost.

We do not know exactly what the White Frost is - perhaps a microscopic dust that blocks the incoming light of the sun? Perhaps infinitesimal particles of the sort postulated by

Democritus of Ban Ard, with the unusual property of sucking up warmth as a sponge does water?

We know for a certainty however, that, thanks to the telescopic observations of elven astronomers, the White Frost, whatever it is, has already destroyed a great many worlds. The star systems in which it appears perish into lifeless hunks of ice over the course of a few decades. Furthermore, each scholar is agreed that the White Frost will one day come to our world. Ithlinne's Prophecy, though based on magic intuition and not scientific observation, thus appears to foretell the truth.

Many mages are skeptical about the theses presented here. I recommend they carry out the same experiment I have conducted in my own laboratory. Using the spellPortus Asterum, [sic] open a microscopic portal for three and a half seconds to the coordinates 03 31 48 90, 89 27 09 34. Yet before you do, dress in your warmest furs and ready an axe for breaking through thick ice.

The Wonders of Zerrikania

Unknown

During my many travels I have seen countless extraordinary places - the primeval wilds of Brokilon, with trees so high their tips disappear in the clouds, dwarven chambers carved into the guts of the Mahakam Mountains, with walls plated in pure gold, the ice palace of Pont Vanis, adorned with stained-frost windows - yet none of these made such an impression on me as did the rightly-famed Zerrikania.

Yet while I was traversing the Fiery Mountains, I feared disappointment awaited me on the other side. I had heard many a fantastic tale about Zerrikania - about its trackless sands, burnt white by the sun, its golden-scaled dragons, weaving their nests amidst the dunes, its hunch-backed horses able to survive weeks without even a swallow of water - yet none seemed to me at all plausible. I was sure all these sensations were but the figments of some bard's overactive imagination.

I know this will be as hard for you to believe, dear reader, as it once was for me - but all of the unbelievable tales are true. Not only that - during my many months of travel I came across wonders far surpassing those any prior travelogues mentioned. I saw temples dedicated to the worship of dragons. I heard their voice, almost human, but reverberating with a thousand echoes. I met warrior maids clad in leopard skins, tattooed

from head to foot and giving no ground to witchers in mastery of the blade. I saw mages who channeled Power from fire. I saw seemingly harmless flies whose solitary bite would make a man fall into a deep slumber, never to awake save to die. In short, Zerrikania is a land where the fantastic is normal, and the impossible occurs daily...

Thief's journal

Yrjan

Sveinar, I've been sitting with these damned whale carcasses for ages, and still no sign of Steinfinn. Either he's wrecked against the rocks or he's left me high and dry. I told Anke not to bring that bastard into this! Now I don't know what to do — who else would be willing to buy this sword? Maybe we ought to take it back to Kaer Trolde? Maybe Crach will laugh and let it all slide?

Remember how it stank in the hut when that rat died behind Ma's and Da's bed? Well, it stinke even worse here. And it's cold.

Write back soon. Or even better — come.

– Yrjan

Thief's Journal

Yrjan

Sveinar – I got good news and bad. I'll start with the bad... Me and Gimre went to Lugos. Gave us the welcome custom demands, mead and meat aplenty. But as soon as we unwrapped Kuliu from its leather and asked how much he'd give us for it, he ripped the blade from our hands and knocked us both on our arses, calling us thieves. He then sent us running from his house, hounds at our heels. Gimre runs slow, so they got him. That's fine – only means a bigger cut for us.

Now here's the good news – we still got the sword, and now I know how to get rid of it. I talked to Steinninn, me brother in law, and he'll sell Kuliu in Novigrad and split the coin with us after. I know, I know, but I swear, you can trust him. I'll give him the sword on the beach by the whale cemetery on Ard Skellig. I'll go alone, so as not to attract attention.

Watch out, Lugos might have sent a messenger to Kaer Trolde to inform them of the theft. Just in case, hole up somewhere – maybe with Aunt Hilde? She's not right in the head, but you can rely on her anyway.

Cheers,

–Yrjan

Thief's journal

Sveinar

Brynold! Fat as a seal 'fore winter y'are, with a maw that reeks like a cesspit, but your head – brilliant! Making a mold of the key with a lump of clay – damned clever, can't believe I didn't think of it meself! I strolled right into the armory after dark, Kuliu was lying there right where you said, in a case, wrapped in oilcloth. What a blade! Fits your hand like a toothsome lass's tit, point's sharp as a needs, hilt's set with gems... Stared so hard I didn't hear that fool Olaf coming. He would've caught me had he not tripped and smacked his gob into the ground. Seems the gods are looking after us!

So now we've got to sell the blade – and that won't be easy. Not many got that kind of coin, and them who do don't want to cross Crach. Luckily, my brother Yrjan knows a merchant, fellow named Gimre, who always finds willing buyers for "second hand" goods. They're going to meet in the old fortress near Fyresdal. Maybe they'll make a deal with Lugos? He's got heaps of gold – and not a drop of fear for an Craite.

Cheers to you, old goat!

Sveinar

To the Most Beautiful Woman in the World

Unknown

Such is my quest - to wander the villages of this fair land of Velen singing the praises of Maid Bilberry. I shall bring due fame to her unequalled beauty and her unparalleled charms. Maid Bilberry is without a doubt the most intelligent, most understanding and most compassionate of all creatures to walk this our imperfect world. I shall immediately and with full prejudice correct any man who dares to claim otherwise. The most stubborn and foolhardy of these ignorami shall taste of my family blade. Indeed, just the other day I came across a certain gentleman fondling some tart and having the cheek to call her "my most beautiful little flower." This enraged me so egregiously that I decided to explain to the fool the magnitude of his error, but he refused to listen, and when I insisted further, he fled. This truly is a land of cowards. I shall not rest until I've convinced all the locals that they should direct their compliments to Maid Bilberry - and only Maid Bilberry.

Toussaint, a Duchy Out Of Tales of Fantasy and Wonder

Unknown

When a traveler from the Northern Realms first crosses the border into Toussaint, he feels at once as though he has stepped into a land ripped straight from the pages of a fantastic fairy tale. He will know no inclement weather there, for even the winters in Toussaint are mild and sunny, with only gentle, calming breezes and not a hint of gale. He will know no hunger, for the trees and bushes of that land burst with ripe and juicy fruits all the year long. He will know no loneliness, for each and every soul he encounters will treat him like a long-lost friend. He will not find a single backwater of dullness, boredom or inquietude in this overflowing stream of marvel. In Toussaint, the wine rages in torrents, music plays ceaselessly and everywhere the air is filled with the sound of birdsong and the twittering of beautiful maids, who are never stingy with their ample charms when a handsome knight comes a-calling. The capital of the duchy, Beauclair, is an architectural gem, full of glorious elven monuments: delicately soaring towers, masterfully carved reliefs and atmospherically mysterious ruins. Only the rare sun in a field of black, the odd gold and dark stain on an otherwise pristine edifice, reminds one that this land, this fable incarnate, is a vassal of Nilfgaard...

Transit pass

Unknown

Know ye that these present writings do give and grant the right of passage across the Pontar and its subsidiaries, unobstructed by any blockade or other such obstacle, to the bearer thereof. Whoever doth hinder this right must desist in his unlawful skullduggery or sorely regret it forthwith. Thus speaketh I, King Radovid V, called the Stern by some, a man too busy to go about applying my royal seal to trivialities such as this.

Trapped mage's notes

Bernard

Dear Lizzy!

I will be leaving here soon. I bought off a guard with a few potions and the promise of a reward once I am secure in my freedom. Prepare yourself, we will have to flee - pack only what is absolutely necessary. Take bandages and ointment - they have not treated me too kindly. But do not fear, another day or two and we will be together. The guard swore on his mother's grave that he will get me out of here. Wait for me.

Your Bernard

Travel Between Worlds

Unknown

Running through many folk tales is a common motif of travel between worlds. By way of example, think of Orphelios, who ventured into the nether realms to save his beloved, Theodor, who, fleeing a hurricane, found himself in the drab and monotonous world of Zo, or Ecila, who tumbled down a ferret hole into a land that had never heard of wonder. Also of this ilk are the many rural legends about people captured by the Wild Hunt, only to return to their homelands after years riding the sky with the spectral cavalcade.

Academia has, for the most part, dismissed these tales as mere epiphenomena of human irrationality. I, on the other hand, always operate on the assumption that a grain of truth lies in every tale - and so have decided to make it my goal to find it. After years of research, I have ascertained with great certainty that travel between worlds was once indeed possible - though only to a select few.

The key is the so-called "Elder Blood" - or rather, to use the scholarly term, the gene of Lara Dorren, the powerful elven sorceress. By comparing her genealogical tables against all known folk tales I have been able to determine that she and her descendants were the archetype of the worlds-traveling heroes of many legends. The bearers of Lara's gene possessed an extraordinary talent which allowed them to move through

time and space and to reach realms beyond the borders of the known world. The overwhelming majority of them, however, did not know how to control this. It would only manifest itself in extreme situations, pushed out by sudden bursts of emotion or when the bearer's life was at risk.

That is how the above-mentioned Orphelius, in shock after the death of his wife, could in fact journey to another world, which he foolishly mistook for the afterlife. The hurricane provided the pressure needed for Theodor, terrorized at home by his zany Uncle En, to unleash his talent and teleport to a world free from madcap antics. And if we read between the lines, we clearly see Ecila was a prostitute and a fisstech addict - the "ferret hole" represents how, when she had reached rock bottom, she whisked herself away to another universe to get sober.

Unfortunately for any future Ecilases, the sad conclusion of my research is this: Lara Dorren's line has been irrevocably cut off. The last bearer of her gene, Cirilla Fiona Ellen Riannon, heiress to the throne of Cintra, died childless many years ago.

Traveler's notes

Unknown

The worst part? The all-encompassing quiet. It seems there is not a living soul around - only snow, snow, everywhere snow, as far as the eye can see. Though sometimes we find people still alive in their homes. Everyone is hungry, everyone is frozen to the bone, but no one refuses help. They let us warm ourselves by their fire and regain some strength before we move on, towards the lighthouse. They say food supplies there have not yet run out.

Traveler's notes

Unknown

I swear, not in my whole life have I ever seen such waves. Ten, twelve, fourteen feet! And the wind – why, it shook the mast and battered the sails so there were near about to fly off. Rocks everywhere, currents treacherous... Helmsman said we'd pull through, that he'd seen worse and come out all right. Me, I'm not so sure. If the storm don't calm soon, this tub's going to break in two.

Trial of the Grasses registry tome

Unknown

Bartel of Hengfors, age 9 – died after administering Witchgrass. Heart failure.

Diederik of Ghelibol, age 10 – survived the trial, died shortly afterwards. Multiple organ failure.

Jaap of Ban Glean, age 8 – survived the trial, but damage to brain was too extensive. Had to be euthanized.

Aleid of Roggeven, age 10 – died after administering Speargrass. Cerebral hemorrhage.

Koenrad of Rinbe, age 9 – survived. Convalescing. May begin training next month.

Tristianna and Isador

Unknown

Tristianna did not care a whit for her stepmother's admonitions. She would toss off her ragged foot wrappings and walk barefoot instead. She would wear Koviri lace and batik knickers under her rough hairshirt. And when dusk fell and the other novices dutifully went to offer their evening prayers, she would slip off quietly and run down to the bay, where Isador awaited her. This merry devil was thick as a barn and had hooves instead of feet – but Tristianna like him all the same, more than anyone else in the world. For him, she broke off her betrothal and defied her family's will. She knew that if their bond was ever discovered both she and Isador would be burned at the stake, and so in the dark hours of night she planned their escape.

Tyromancy, or the Noble Art of Cheese Divination

Unknown

What splendid diversity reigns in the kingdom of cheese! The ripened curd can be white or blue, hard or soft, fresh or aged, from the milk of cows, sheep or goats, brined, pickled or untouched... This list could go on till the end of time! Ad each of them, every last slice, every morsel and crumb, not only brings with it an unmatched rush of sensory experience, but in the right hand can be made to reveal the universe's most closely-guarded secrets.

For cheese, like the innards of sacrificed animals, the flight of a swallow or vivid dreams, can be used for divination. The depth and size of a cheese's holes reveal when rains will fall in the coming year, while the color of the mold veins tells who shall love whom, and the scent of a hard grana padano predicts which army will vanquish its foes and which shall perish.

The best divination, however, is done using the ancient method of fondue. One must simply melt two different kinds of cheese, preferably emmental and gruyere, in white wine, or in a pinch, in a dry apple cider. Then one must use a long stick to immerse a morsel of bread in the resultant thick soupy mixture, all the while keeping in mind the question, "What shall my child be like when he (or she, as the case may be)

grows?" Then bring the cheese-covered morsel of bread up to a candle, so that it casts a shadow on the wall: the shape will provide a sure and easily understood answer to your query.

Unfinished book

Aldert Geert

It is widely known that “historia magistra vitae est,” or in the Common Tongue, “history is life’s teacher.” Her students, however, have heretofore preferred to partake of her lectures from afar, namely amidst the quiet stacks of university libraries. They knew her teachings solely from the accounts of third parties, accounts inevitably colored by these individual prejudices or imperfect memories. I, by contrast, have decided the time has come to break with this convenient yet harmful practice and begin to draw knowledge from the source, writing history where it is made, on the front lines of conflict. Many will say this way madness lies, and that my venture will indubitably end in my untimely death. To them I say with pride, “audentes fortuna iuvat!” - or in the Commo

(The writing ends abruptly.)

Unsent Letter

Dalegor

To The Most Great And Honorable Sergeant Cahwry var
Llechyn, Esquire,

You asked me, My Good Sir, to reckon how many lads I could
drum up to work for the Empire's glory. So here's my reckoning.

First off, Your Esquire's gotta know that I can scrummage up a
few hayseeds from Claywich whenever you want, but that's
what I'd call second-rate goods - geezers and squirts, mainly.
But if Your Excellency thinks he can find use for even dregs like
that, send us a messenger and within a week's time you'll get a
transport full of them, trussed up like coneys.

I've also had a word or two with some soldiers who quit the
baron's service after he got soused one night and jammed a hot
poker in one of them's eyes. They've pitched two camps, one
right next to the castle, the other near Velen's southern border -
and as I'm sure Your Wondrousness has guessed, they're
looking to make some quick coin. So if Your Most Reverend Sir
can send us a few crowns as a deposit, why, we'll get to work on
the double-quick and send you the prettiest dames and
hardiest lads in all of Velen, maybe even in all the North - a
hundred, two hundred, how ever many of them The Great
Sergeant wants.

Your Humble Servant,

Dalegor

Unsent Letter

Edgar

Dear Elke,

Thank the gods fools believe in them! We've made good use of that fact twice now. Firstly, when we stole that load of silver from the temple. No one was watching it - because who would be brave enough to risk the gods' wrath by desecrating such a holy place? And then we hid it all in the ruins said to have been cursed by elven gods. No one goes near there, no one even looks at them too closely - so we didn't really have to hide it, as treasure's safer there than in the Vivaldi Bank.

We'll spend the night in the woods, then I'll ride to Novigrad, find a buyer for the whole stash. We're going to be rich, Elke, rich! And maybe then I'll throw something in the plate, a token of my gratitude to superstition and stupidity!

-Your Edgar

Unsent Letter

Unknown

Boss, we've looked and looked for that Queen Zuleyka's treasure, and what've we found? Fuck, beg your pardon, all. Though we have mighty enjoyed eating our fill of the oysters we fish off of the bottom. You sure that map's the real deal, boss? Not some counterfeit? Cause it seems to me that sailor cheated us. But we'll keep looking around, till something eats us, or till you give us other orders.

Unsent Letter

Willich

Melitele bless ye, Nittel!

Listen, Nittel, that little case you gave me to transport... was there anything of value inside? Because thing is, I had a bit of an unfortunate work accident and... well, the blased case fell in the water and I couldn't spy it for the life of me. I tried to fish it out, but some devil must live on hte bottom there, cause every time I tossed my net, I'd catch a snare. Maybe there's, I don't know, some way I can repay you? A discount on your next shipment, maybe?

Sincerely,

Willich

Unsent Letter

Jeanette

My dear papa,

The wedding's over. It's done. It didn't all go exactly like I'd imagined as a little girl, but, well, you always taught me to make the most of what I've got. We're traveling now, so I'll send this letter as soon as we arrive.

I'll start with what I'm sure interests you the most - financial matters. As I'm sure you've noticed, a few crowns have gone missing from your lockbox, the cupboard's a couple silver plates lighter, and your jewelry box isn't near as full as it once was. I took it. As my dowry. No doubt much less than you'd have given, had I but found myself a "worthy partner," but, tough, that's life.

Kurt - or, as you like to call him, "that good-for-nothing bare-arsed lazybones" - is now my husband. And your daughter's precious purity, which you cared about more than her feelings, tears of pleadings - well, it's only a memory now.

We'll soon arrive at our destination. Naturally, I won't tell you where exactly that is - just in case you get it in your head to come visit. Wherever it is, know your silver will be enough to set up a nice home. That's important - because I'm expecting a child. Are you glad? I doubt it. You always said poor matches

only produce mutts and scoundrels. So it's a good thing you'll never have to see this one.

Your little girl,

Jeanette

Unsent Letter

Hrodeberth

Dear Mother,

This might be my last letter. My head hangs low as I write, for I have brought great shame on our family. I have failed my brothers at arms. In the hour of truth, my courage failed me. I ask no forgiveness, for I deserve none. I ask only that you pray for me.

May you live in health,

H

Unsent Letter

Izbor

My Dear Helke!

Remember when you said, “Izbor, don’t you go robbing folk, the gods don’t like it, and besides, only refugees on the roads these days, and they’re even poorer than us”? How you were cross that I shirked working in the fields and didn’t bring a scarp home to put in the pot? Well, you are gonna have to eat those words, my dear! Gobble them all up, with a hearty slice of humble piece and some baked crow on the side!

Yesterday we corned this merchant. And not a Gors Velen or Brenna man, but from Nilfgaard itself, you see? From the City of Golden Towers! Didn’t speak much Common, but enough so’s we could understand each other. He said he was carrying some goods to the Black One’s camp. We took everything he had, and I’m telling you, Helke dearest, you’ve never seen so many crowns in your life, nor could you ever hope to count that high!

Now we’re going to rough him up a bit more to make sure he hasn’t hid some of his gold or goods. Once we cut off his thumbs he’ll spill the beans about any extra treats slashed in the soles of his boots, and once Mirko scalds him a bit he’ll tell us about the precious stones he’s got sewn in the feedbag. Might tell us a great many such things of interest, in fact. You never know just what till you try.

Tell the young'uns Da's gonna be home soon. That he'll bring them toys and treats and they'll eat so many honeycakes their tummies're gonna burst. For you Helke, I'll bring a silver necklace and brooch. Because while you can be awful cruel atimes, I still love you, you naughty bint.

-Izbor

P.S. Throw on that nightshirt with the lace and red beads for my arrival. And color up your kisser somewhat.

Unsent Letter

Simon

Ahoy, Gregor!

Did you hear they chased the pirates off? It's true! Not a trace of pirate left, save for a few fresh graves and some bloodstains. The shipyard's more or less in the same state we left it in - meaning everything's about to collapse, but holding up for the time being, and the tools are all rusty, but get the job done. In a word, you can return - just for the gods' sake, don't go south, for some other bandits have pitched camp there. Nature's a whore for vacuums, or however that saying goes.

It'll be just like the good old days, mate - the crashing of waves, singing of seabirds and the stink of pitch smeared over hulls. So whaddaya say? Will you come back?

-Simon

Unsent Letter

Ove

Leif,

Go round up a few pearl divers and bring them here. But good ones this time - those turds we brought in from Spikeroog drowned before they could be any use to us.

I don't know, maybe that ship really has sunk too deep for any man to pull anything out of it... but it's worth a try. From what the survivors said, it was carrying a mighty hefty load of silver.

-Ove.

Unsent Letter

Unknown

To be delivered personally to Damien de la Tour

Dear Commander,

We, the undersigned, turn to you with a polite request to provide protection to our humble settlement on Coopers' Slope, for we live in fear of acts of rampage and destruction on the part of giants descending from Mount Gorgon. As recently as a week ago, one such giant attacked our cooper's workshop, destroyed our yard, stole one of the barrels and put it on his head (as if donning a helm!). Heedless to our warnings that this contradicted the item's intended use and might lead to unpredictable side effects, it then fled towards the Sansretour River. The ducal paper pushers refuse to believe our words and we are afraid those monsters will kill us all in our sleep. We thank you in advance for considering our humble plea.

Amelia

Carol

Jacob

Grégoire

Caroline

Varin's journal

Varin

Elgar's gear is fantastic. I knew it at once, soon as I found it. Right away I said every new witcher we train should be given such equipment – that is, if we are serious about making monster slayers out this band of prissy schoolboys.

How many times must I as our honorable resident mage to devote some of his precious time to actual work! Resident like that's as useful as a boil on the bottom. At least his assistant, Chird, knows a thing or two about metallurgy. The two of them have finally gotten down to work.

The steel sword diagram is now ready, and, assuming they don't foul anything up, tomorrow I'll forge the first blade. I'll got to Chird's workshop in the old watchtower after today's training and see if he's finished the silver sword diagram as he promised. Then I'll go to Hieronymus' tower – he should have finished that armor diagram by now.

Thought I heard a signal horn in the distance a second ago. Hooch must be getting to my head. No one's fool enough to attack a keep full of witchers.

Warrant

Unknown

WANTED: Three bandits in possession of magic contraband. Objects are dangerous, banned, to be destroyed immediately.

Lussi, known as the Fox. Hiding on Temple Isle, near the bridge.

Fritz, hiding near the Crooked House.

Wallter, last seen in the Lacehalls, near the Putrid Grove.

Bandits are to be apprehended or, if they resist, killed where they stand.

Water-damaged letter

Bert

Molke,

I know you don't smuggle no more. That you've set aside plenty of coin and ain't interested in the risk, just wanna enjoy time with your wife and kiddies. But I gotta ask you for a favor. We gotta move one more load - and it's the last, I promise. It's a simple job, couple of chests, risk's minimal and the reward's substantial. Please, do it - if not for the gold, then at least for old time's sake.

-Bert

Well-preserved notes by Hieronymus on the witcher Elgar

Hieronymus

For safekeeping, Elgar hid his improvements to the School of the Wolf's equipment in multiple locations. One set he hid in an underwater cave beneath a castle in central Velen. Another he left in a cave to the south of Oxenfurt, while a third he placed in the elven ruins found on a small isle in southern Velen.

What shall become of Temeria?

Unknown

Temeria... a land where milk and honey once flowed. In what did she wrong the gods that they should treat her so cruelly? The Pearl of the North to some, she proved a galloping range for Nilfgaardian cavalry to others. As a country it had survived two previous wars against the empire. It was here that the wars' bloodiest battles were fought. It was in Temeria where their most bestial deeds were wrought. It was Temerian civilians who bore the full brunt of these wars' horrors.

And bear them we did, bravely and steadfastly, until the demise of our great protector - King Foltest. Then providence turned its fickle face from Temeria. Murdered most treacherously, Foltest failed to leave Temeria a worthy successor.

And so all manner of cur soon fell upon her, tearing her apart like so much carrion. She had no more allies, then. None remembered that we had once been the armor protecting the North from the designs of the mad Dancer, he who had the gravestones of his foes pounded into a ballroom floor.

A free and independent Temeria is no more. A dark-faced sun looms over her every rampart. Yet we Temerians live on. And always will. As long as folk believe, the usurper who took our beloved capital, Vizima, to treat as his property will forever peer over his shoulder in fear. For in the shadows lurks not one

dagger, but the power of a nation of daggers, waiting to deal justice's blow.

Witcher experimentations - cont.

Farid

5/20/1271

My Dear Gaspar,

We cannot rest on our laurels. True, we managed to convince the witcher to drink the concoction we had brewed without much difficulty, but now we must gather information.

Somehow I doubt this Gerard, or whatever his name was, truly will truly keep an experiment diary, even if by some miracle he is literate. And without hard data, the Academy's governors will never renew our grant - believe me, I've been down that road before!

To keep one step ahead of events, I've already taken appropriate action. To be precise, while in Flotsam I hired a spy who will follow our witcher's every move and observe his deeds, especially those performed in the alcove. If our calculations are correct, within a year's time his sterility will be reversed - proof of which fact should come quickly in the form of expanding female bellies, if the rumors about him contain even a grain of truth.

The spy's wage is costly, true, but I'm convinced this investment will yield dividends. I believe a potion which

restores the ability to reproduce to those who have lost it due to magic or alchemic experiments will be in high demand - and earn us a fortune.

Vivat Academia,

–Farid

P.S. Just remember - not a peep about this around the department, or the ethics committee will flay us alive.

P.P.S. I've received the spy's first report. The witcher is headed to Loc Muinne. Perhaps it's a good time to visit?

Witcher George's confession

Witcher George

I, the undersigned George of Kagen, a witcher by trade, testify as follows.

While traveling through Velen I received summons to provide professional testimony in the matter of the accused Bartoslav of Luvfield.

This Bartoslav stands accused of causing several shipwrecks near the lighthouse which it is his duty to keep. Ships led astray by errant signals from his lighthouse have repeatedly smashed against rocks near the shore, and the lighthouse keeper is held to be responsible for this state of affairs. During the trial Bartoslav testified that he was diligent in the fulfillment of his duties and that the accidents were caused by nightwraiths deceiving sailors with their false glow.

Having investigated the area, I can testify that I found no trace of nightwraith activity. There are likewise no signs of noonwraiths, mamunes, errnymphs or any other specters in the habit of misleading weary travelers journeying by foot, sea, or horse.

I did, however, find the catastrophes' true cause. They were not at the fault of the nightwraiths blamed by the accused, but neither were they the fault of the lighthouse keeper himself. The accidents were caused by local hooligans who have taken

to lighting fires on the hill at night and then robbing the ships that subsequently wreck upon the shore. I was put on their trail by Bartoslav's son, who showed me the ashes from their misleading fires.

My testimony shows that the lighthouse keeper Bartoslav of Luvfield is not guilty of the crimes of which he stands accused and should be freed. I also humbly ask for the bailiff to put the lighthouse keeper and his family under his protection, for in light of the revelations Bartoslav's son led me to discover, there will surely be certain parties with cause for vengeance. I cannot undertake the task of protecting the family myself, for I have accepted a contract to kill a dragon said to be lurking atop the Crookback Hills and so I must return there posthaste to kill the beast and complete my task.

Signed: George of Kagen, witcher

Transcribed by Vincenzo Stock, a marshal to the royal prefecture in Gors Velen.

Witcher George's journal

Witcher George

Having heard rumors of a dragon, I raced at full speed to Velen. Sadly, I was dragged away from my hunt by the prefects of Gors Velen. They summoned me as an expert to solve the riddle of a string of shipwrecks suspected to be the work of nightwraiths. Hmph. Seems a dragon ravaging the countryside is a lower priority than blocked trade routes. Luckily I was able to solve the riddle of the lone lighthouse quickly and raced off after the dragon.

I learned that the peasants from the ravaged villages had taken shelter in the elven catacombs under Lake Wyndamer. Wise. Yet they were not wise enough to bring firewood... and so warmed themselves by burning elven manuscripts! It aches my heart to think what knowledge about the Alder Folk went up in those flames... At least a few of the manuscripts survived (including some highly interesting sketches of armor). Yet enough about that.

Eye witnesses have reported: ashen scales, height at haunches — 2 fathoms, length — 5 fathoms (addendum: estimated weight — approx. 14 quintals), able to maintain a high temperature in its bellows (dragon lungs) for longer than a quarter hour. Conclusion: we are dealing with a green dragon.

Commencing hunt.

Witcher Needed!

Uggo

I – the writer of this notice – seek the help of a witcher. The work on offer's tough, true, but for a witcher, it should be a breeze. Time's short, so don't tarry. Any interested withcers, look for me outside the inn in Fyresdal.

Uggo, son of Olaf

Witcher Signs

Unknown

As a mule is neither ass nor horse though it has traits of both, so are witcher neither mages nor common men.

Witchers are able to cast simple spells they call Signs, drawing on the basics of telekinesis (Aard), pyrokinesis (Igni), hypnosis (Axii) and so on. They are not, however, capable of utilizing more complex spells – indeed, they treat real magic with reserve and distrust. Widespread in their ranks is an irrational, nigh onto superstitious fear of teleportation (let me remind you that deadly accidents during translocational travel occur only once per hundred instances of such travel!)

This aversion surely stems from the fact that witchers do not possess inborn magic talents, but instead gain them during their infamous Trial of the Grasses. It can thus be said that their casting spells is an affront to nature – as is, in fact, everything witchers do.

Witcher wanted!

Ealdorman of Lindenvale

Witcher wanted to root out and exterminate the monsters rampaging around these parts.

During the time it takes to complete the contract, said witcher'll will have to right to room and board in the ealdorman's hut (costs deducted from final pay).

Message from the ealdorman of Lindenvale

Witchers: Not Quite the Devils You Thought

Unknown

A conviction has arisen amongst both mages and the hoi polloi that witchers barely rise a hair's breadth above animals, that they are deformed and bloodthirsty mutants, and that in slaking this thirst they do not limit themselves to the fluids of monsters. Meanwhile the research and observations of Virgil of Ban Ard paint an entirely different picture of the caste.

Of course, it is an indisputable fact that the mutations witchers undergo influence their temperament, immune system, strength and endurance, yet one cannot consider them unthinking beings forged only for killing as a result. In fact, witchers cultivate a unique culture, a specialized body of knowledge, an effective training system and even a code of honor. They know an incredible amount about the effects of ingesting various organic and inorganic substances, and also a small amount, but nevertheless something, about the fundamentals of magic (by which I mean the simple spells they call "Signs"). On the surface the witchers appear to be a homogeneous social entity, but in truth their fighting styles, training regimens and world views differ significantly depending upon the school to which they adhere. The best-known witcher schools on the Continent are the School of the

Wolf, the School of the Bear, the School of the Griffin, the School of the Viper, and the School of the Cat.

Wondrous World of Insectoids

Unknown

One is hard-pressed to think of a creature more hard-working and better organized than the endrega. Ants, bees and termites are no match for them in this regard. Endregas best even humans when it comes to foresightedness and industry.

In fact, the human race could benefit a great deal from following their example, resigning from the primitive and obsolete social structures of feudalism and adopting instead a form of arachnocommunism.

In arachnocommunism, every individual has a specific place and performs a specific labor for the common good. The roles are as follows: worker, soldier and queen. Each comrade contributes to the necessary daily toil according to his special abilities, and takes from the common fund of wealth according to his special needs.

Worn-out and faded notes by Hieronymus on the witcher Elgar

Hieronymus

Elgar hid improvements for School of the Wolf gear in various corners of the world, so that witchers could make use of them on the Path. Some he hid in elven ruins and a sunken ship in the south of Velen.. Others he put in a hideout far to the south of Oxenfurt.

Yellowed diary

Unknown

27 III 1250

It's happened. Volker sent a petition of our grievances against the lord to the court at Vizima. Listed all the harm he's done us. How he killed Johann for not taking off his cap quick enough. How he trampled our fields when drunk with nary a thought of repayment. How he barged in during Pieter's wedding and demanded his right of the first night. Now we've finally got what we begged Melitele for in our prayers for so long – the judge recognized our grievances and waived all our bonds and duties to the lord. We can finally strike out on our own. At last, we can live as free men!

12 IV 1250

The first day of our freedom. Hovel's not much of a village yet, but to my mind it's better than the most fantastic palace. Volker fumed our home with hazel wood smoke to drive out evil, buried a marten under the gate, to make sure no thieves cross our threshold. And then he gave me a bracelet – loveliest I've ever seen. Mother said it's foolish to spend so much on a bauble when we haven't ploughs nor hoes and that we ought return it to the merchant. Over my dead body! I'll never take it off. It's always be there to remind me of Volker – of how happy we were that day.

23 IV 1250

They say the lord is coming to see us. That he wants to make a deal, to beg us to return to the village. They say he's calmed since his son died, that he's not as quick to anger about small slights. Well, we'll see. One way or another, I've no intention to move one inch from here.

Yennefer's journal

Yennefer

My thoughts turn with increasing frequency to the idea of capturing a djinn. If I could just harness its power... there is much I would gain. Amos var Ypsis' tome confirms what I have long suspected - that, despite my failure to do so previously, taming a djinn is, in fact, possible.

According to var Ypsis, the difficulties involved in bending such a being to one's will can be overcome. He managed to do so, at the least.

Alas, this does not mean his methods will necessarily be useful to me - each djinn is different, each case requires a singular approach. I've more experience unraveling such magic riddles than almost anyone else alive, and if Geralt, with his talent for wrestling unruly magic beings, agrees to help, we just might find a way to do it. The problem is we must first find a djinn, a daunting task unto itself...

Yennefer's letter

Yennefer

Dear friend,

Forgive me for not asking about your health or how you have been these last years. Time is very short.

I have important news. We must meet, and soon. Ride to Willoughby, near Vizima, and don't spare the horses - while I do eagerly await our reunion, I won't be able to wait, eagerly or otherwise, very long.

Your dear friend,

Yennefer.

P.S. I still have the unicorn.