

Huldufolk

Core Rules: Alpha Slice

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Initial Notes

Caveat: This is the playtest rule set for the Huldufolk LARP. These rules are a first-draft, and will likely undergo several cycles of testing and modification before they are made official. Everyone playtesting this ruleset is invited to fill out the [survey](#) and provide us with feedback to assist in the refinement process.

Glossary:

- ❖ Actor (Major) - A huldufolk or other character considered to be a major figure in the world. Major Actors receive a full deck and always have both mundane and physical resistance thresholds.
- ❖ Actor (Minor) - A human, minion, or other relatively unimportant character. Minor Actors receive half decks and, if they are mundane, do not have a supernatural resistance threshold.
- ❖ Belief - The measure of a given character's power in the world, based on both the humans who have faith in them and the supernatural creatures who have sworn fealty to them.
- ❖ Deck (Full) - A full deck consists of the cards Ace-10.
- ❖ Deck (Half) - A half deck consists of the cards Ace-5
- ❖ Focus - A affinity to which a character has devoted an uncommon amount of time and study, marking them as far above the standard in that area.
- ❖ Quality - One of a character's three innate aspects which define who they are and how they approach the world.
- ❖ affinity - One of a character's areas of knowledge and ability.
- ❖ **TO BE CONTINUED**

Character Design

A Huldfolk character sheet is a simple thing. It has four primary sections: Qualities, affinities, Paths, and Equipment. Generally, experience is recorded on the sheet, though storytellers at their discretion may prefer to use a different recording mechanism. Here, we'll go through the four sections and discuss the mechanics they represent.

Qualities

Qualities are the most fluid, and most essential, part of a character. They represent the innate nature of the character, and affect almost every action they take. Qualities apply a +3 to any challenge¹ on which they are applied. A character selects 3 Qualities at creation, but may change those Qualities after entering play by roleplaying their shifting personality and spending XP².

There is no master list of acceptable Qualities. They are, by definition, personal to each character. However, below is a sample listing to help get a sense of what makes a good Quality. It is important for a storyteller to consider carefully the breadth of a given Quality. While most characters will fall back to acting according to one of their Qualities wherever possible, this should require some amount of effort on the part of the character.

Example Qualities:

- Alacrity
- Benevolence
- Conviction
- Cunning
- Defiance
- Devotion
- Endurance
- Precision
- Regality
- Resilience
- Tenacity
- Valor
- Vigor
- Wariness
- Wisdom
- Zeal

¹ Challenges are discussed in the next session: Challenge Resolution

² XP cost and roleplay requirements will be discussed in a future rules version.

Affinities

While Qualities describe how a character approaches the world, Affinities define the tools they use to approach their goals. A character with an appropriate Affinity does not need to test to accomplish normal, everyday tasks (CR 5 or below), but does need to test for unusually difficult situations as described in Challenge Resolution. A character without an appropriate Affinity must test to accomplish a challenge of 10 or below, and cannot test to accomplish tasks of difficulty greater than 10.

Like Qualities, there is no master list of Affinities. The list below is used to generate a list of what should be considered acceptable, but it is the decision of each ST as to what constitutes an acceptable Affinity. A character can have any number of affinities purchased with XP, but begins play with 4.

Affinity List:

- Sword-fighting
- Diplomacy
- Stealth
- Driving
- Computers
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Focus

A Focus is an Affinity which has become an intrinsic part of the Huldufolk, something they spend a significant portion of their time and energy working to improve, and a way by which they define themselves. A Huldufolk with a Focus on sword-fighting is likely to self-describe as a fencer or a warrior. A Huldufolk with a Focus on Computers is likely to self-describe as a computer scientist or a hacker. Mechanically, a character can have up to 5 focuses, each of which grants a +2 on relevant pools. A character begins play with 2 Focuses.

Spheres and Paths

Spheres and Paths will be discussed at great length later on³, but for now we'll just do a brief overview. Spheres are the general types of magic available to Huldufolk, they break down into

³ See Magic System, below

Lesser and Greater Paths, which further break down into specific, named Greater Paths, detailed below. Magic in the world of Huldufolk is an intensely personal thing, powered by and feeding a character's innate Belief⁴ as they perform miraculous and diabolic workings. No two Huldufolk use magic in exactly the same way, influenced as it is by a given character's Qualities, affinities, and personality. At creation, a character selects a single Sphere as their primary Sphere and gains the associated Lesser Path as their chosen Path, that Path will always be equal to their Belief. They also select a total of 10 points of powers, none of which may be rated above 3. Further Lesser and Greater Paths can be purchased with experience.

Spheres and Paths:

- **Creation** - This Sphere is focused primarily on weaving the raw material of the universe into new and wondrous forms. Its adherents include artists, magical botanists, and supernaturally tough warriors. Those who select Creation as their primary Sphere are known as *Artisans*.
 - **Path: Lesser Creation** - Grants benefits to any work of creation or creativity. This Lesser Path also provides a bonus to all mundane resistance pools.
 - **Path: Substance** - Focuses on the creation of nonliving things. At lower levels it allows a Huldufolk to improve mundane and simple magical equipment, at higher levels it allows for creation at incredible size and scope, and for the creation of powerful Artifacts.
 - **Path: Life** - Focuses on the creation of living things. At lower levels it gives a Huldufolk deep knowledge of other creatures' well-being, and allows for self-healing and resiliency. At higher levels, plagues, humans, and even magical creatures can be brought into being out of nothing but pure will.
- **Destruction** - Often maligned as an inherently evil Sphere, Destruction is not only for monstrous sorcerers flinging death from their fingertips (though there are certainly plenty of those). This Sphere is focused on change and chaos, often but not exclusively through the medium of violence. Its adherents include the aforementioned power-mad sorcerers, pursuers of Nirvana, and those seeking to understand the deepest nature of reality. Those who select Destruction as their primary path are known as *Champions*.
 - **Path: Lesser Destruction** - Grants benefit to any act intended to bring about change, or to inflict destruction. This Lesser Path also provides a bonus to all mundane attack pools.
 - **Path: Change** - Focuses on altering the nature of reality. Lower levels allow for the bending of chance or circumstance, higher levels allow for gross rewriting of the world around the practitioner, twisting it to serve their purposes.
 - **Path: Strife** - The path most people think of when they hear Destruction. Focuses on inflicting harm and violence. At lower levels, a practitioner inflicts inconvenience and pain upon those who draw their ire, at higher levels, a Huldufolk can inflict truly horrific damage upon their adversaries, and upon the tapestry of creation itself.

⁴ See Belief, below

- **Conquest** - There are many types of Conqueror, and they all find some use in this Sphere. The powers found in these Paths are all focused on claiming or usurping territory. While this Sphere is considered to be in direct conflict with the Sphere of Dominion, the two actually complement one another in various ways both large and small. Those who select Conquest as their primary Sphere are known as *Claimants*.
 - **Path: Lesser Conquest** - Grants benefit to any attempt to take control of a territory, person, or situation; also grants a benefit to attempts to infiltrate or violate another character's territory. This Lesser Path also grants benefits to supernatural attack pools.
 - **Path: Empire** - Focuses on claiming new territory and improving a character's ability to challenge the claims of other Huldufolk. Lower levels allow for simple acts of theft and control, while higher levels allow a Claimant to take full control of their targets and claim vast swathes of territory with a simple act of will.
 - **Path: Infiltration** - Focuses on violating the territorial claims of others, and gaining access to forbidden places. Lower levels assist the Infiltrator in bypassing simple or mundane defenses while higher levels allow the Huldufolk to take on a target's form, voice, and spiritual outline, shutting the original owner out of their own domain, territory, and even their life.
- **Dominion** - There can be no attacker without a defender. The Sphere of Dominion is focused on keeping what's yours. It is the chosen path of Feudal Lords among the Huldufolk, those who seek to preserve what is theirs and prevent any upstart usurpers from thinking they can ply their sticky fingers. Those who follow the Sphere of Dominion are known as *Peers*.
 - **Path: Lesser Dominion** - Grants benefit to any attempt to protect or maintain control of a territory, person, or situation. This Lesser Path also grants benefits to supernatural resistance pools.
 - **Path: Autocracy** - Focused on improving one's own presence and preventing adversaries from robbing the Sovereign of their freedom, be it by mundane or supernatural means. At lower levels, the :Huldufolk's force of personality becomes something imposing, showing them for the force of nature they are. At higher levels, their strength of will prevents even the most lethal adversaries from inflicting themselves upon the practitioner.
 - **Path: Demesne** - Focused on maintaining one's temporal holdings, this is the chosen path of many Huldufolk who style themselves as members of the Peerage. Within a character's Demesne⁵, their will can be exerted as easily as breathing, and to remarkable effect. At lower levels, a character's Demesne changes to match their desires and extend their awareness, at its greatest heights, the Path of Demesne allows a Peer to control the entry and exit of all creatures, and to decide their fate while they're caught in the trap.
- **Service** - The strangest, and least understood, Sphere is unlike any of the others. Where most Spheres focus on personal achievement; empowering the practitioner so

⁵ See Miscellaneous Mechanics: Demesne, below

that they might pursue their own goals, this Sphere is focused on granting others the strength and affinity they need to thrive. Adherents of this path are known as *Servitors*.

- **Path: Lesser Service** - Granting no direct benefit to the user, this Lesser Path instead allows the practitioner to grant bonuses to other characters.
- **Path: Alleviation** - Focused primarily on removing and repairing deleterious effects against other characters, the *Servitors* of this path are typically focused on getting their allies back in the fight as quickly and effectively as possible. At lower levels, beneficiaries find themselves granted a second wind or protected from the extremes of the mundane world. At higher levels, the practitioner can bring an ally from death's door to fighting fit in a matter of moments.
- **Path: Augmentation** - Focusing on improving the form and function of their charges, the *Martyrs* who follow this Path grant their own abilities and health to their allies in hopes that these beneficiaries will use them to greater effect. At lower levels, they share knowledge and affinity, granting the benefit of their experience. At higher levels, they offer up their own Belief, sacrificing their power at the altar of loyalty.

Equipment

In the world of Huldufolk, mundane equipment comes in three types. Basic equipment (laptop computers, compact cars, run-of-the-mill weapons) provides no numerical benefit, but allows the user to attempt tasks for which that gear is needed. A character cannot attempt to pick a lock without some sort of valid equipment with which to do so. High-quality gear (sports cars, hunting rifles, hand-forged swords) grant a bonus of +1, and Exceptional equipment (high-performance dragsters, supercomputers, special forces-grade weapons) grants a +2. Mundane equipment cannot naturally offer a benefit higher than +2.

Magical equipment, on the other hand, can go far and away above what mere human hands can craft. Many Huldufolk carry swords crafted by mythical figures, or paint with brushes of unicorn hair, or wear leathers of the finest dragonskin. The vast majority of magical equipment (*Baubles*) offers a between a +1 and a +3, and has no more than two Minor effects. Particularly rare or remarkable equipment (*Curios*) may reach a +4, and/or have a Major effect and multiple Minor effects. The rarest and most incredible gear, the stuff of songs and legends (*Artifacts*), can reach a +5 and have as many as three Major effects, and a litany of Minor ones.

Minor Effects

- Attacks with this weapon are considered supernatural in nature, and oppose a target's supernatural threshold.
- This item is crafted from a strange or impossible material.
- This item allows the user to travel in an unusual fashion; flight, water-walking, tunneling.
- This item grants the user immunity to weather effects, or specific types of harm.

Major Effects

- Attacks with this weapon can cut the very thread of magical workings, ending the effects of greater and lesser paths with a swing of the blade.
- This item is intelligent, acting as a confidant and advisor (whether welcome or otherwise) to its bearer.
- This item grants incredible movement to its user, allowing them to cross miles in a single step, to pass through solid objects, or to step comfortably in the heart of a volcano.
- This item binds the owner's soul to the world, preventing even the most powerful of Patrons from truly killing the Huldufolk.

Challenge Resolution

In Huldufolk, there are two basic challenge types; defended and undefended. Undefended challenges are most commonly environmental tests, situations where the task is difficult enough to require a pool, but the Actor is not actively being opposed by another character or force. Undefended challenges can most simply be understood as challenges in which only one party plays a card⁶.

In defended challenges, on the other hand, multiple opposed parties play cards. Defended challenges are the primary resolution for most combat⁷ and for opposed situations in which multiple characters or groups compete for mutually-exclusive goals. Defended challenges between player characters may always be resolved by player-to-player mediation, which allows for narrative solutions which may not be easily replicated mechanically, and carries the additional benefit that neither player has to expend a card.

Mediation

The Huldufolk rules system is designed as a rules-light game. Compared to most tabletops, or even some LARPs, there are a small number of rules, and they are not intended to perfectly simulate reality. In any contested event, players are encouraged to first determine if they can mediate a mutually-acceptable result. Due to the built-in dwindling of resources in Huldufolk, attempting to solve every problem with brute-force mechanics is likely to cause a character to run dry very early in an event. If the two players cannot reach an agreement about the outcome of a challenge, they should then take the step of engaging in a mechanical challenge.

The Deck

All characters can be separated into either Major or Minor Actors⁸, while there are a few major differences between them, the most essential is the type of deck each receives. At the beginning of a game, Major Actors receive a 10 card deck containing A-10 (known as a Full Deck) while Minor Actors receive a 5 card deck containing A-5 (known as a Half Deck). The current cards in a given player's deck signify the amount of effort and energy they have in reserve. A player with a full deck is fresh, having either expended very little effort or taken a great deal of time to rest since their last exertion⁹. A player with only three cards left is flagging,

⁶ See Cards, below

⁷ Though there are situations in which attacks may be undefended.

⁸ See Miscellaneous Mechanics, Character Types, below

⁹ See Miscellaneous Mechanics, Card Refresh, below

on the edge of their abilities. They may have exhausted their best options, or they may be carefully pacing themselves, with a couple of big plays still to make, that depends on the value of the cards still held in reserve.

A card is expended any time it is used in a test, either offensive or defensive. After the test is resolved, the player surrenders their card to the storyteller (or in some other way removes it from their deck) regardless of the result -a task requires just as much effort whether or not you succeeded or failed. The only exception to this test is the Ace card, which is never surrendered. Even at their most beaten-down, characters can at least attempt to take action, even if that attempt has only the slightest energy behind it.

Building the Pool

As mentioned above, both Defended and Undefended tests are accomplished by building a test pool and comparing the total to either the challenge rating or the opponent's test pool.

Challenge Ratings:

- 5: A test rated as difficulty 5 is a basic task. For example, driving a car on a typical day. Characters who possess an appropriate affinity do not have to build a pool in order to accomplish tasks rated at 5 or below, these are simple matters of course.
- 6-12: A test rated between 6 and 12 is uncommonly difficult. At 6, the challenge may be driving a car through rush-hour traffic. At 12, the challenge could be driving through a blizzard, or driving at night without headlights on a back-country road.
- 13-17: A test rated between 13 and 17 is exceptionally difficult. At 13, the challenge might be driving through a hurricane or while missing a tire. At 17, the task is at the ultimate pinnacle of human capacity; driving in the Indy 500 while exchanging gunfire, or some similarly incredible feat.
- 18-30: A test rated at 18 is flatly impossible for a human being to accomplish. It requires either teamwork or (more likely) magical interference. A task rated at 25 is at the very upper-edge of the most accomplished Huldufolk player characters. A task rated at 30 is achievable only by the most accomplished Huldufolk with supernatural assistance¹⁰.
- 30+: Here, there be dragons. A task rated above 30 is simply not something a player character can manage alone. It may be that they require direct assistance from other characters, or it may be that the task is simply beyond the ken of all but the Patrons.

A character's pool consists of¹¹:

¹⁰ See Magic System:Lesser Paths:Service, below

¹¹ Math for Nerds: This system is constructed such that a PC can have a maximum pool of 30 on a given test, if they have a Quality, a Focus, a powerful Artifact, and maxed supernatural bonuses (both personal and granted by the Service Lesser Path). With assistance, it is possible to go higher, to a theoretically infinite point. Most of the time, a character will hover around 10 in their specialty before the card is

Quality (If appropriate): +3

affinity Focus (If appropriate): +2

Equipment: +0 - +2 (mundane) +0 - +5 (magical)

Assistance: +1 (If assistant has the affinity) +3 (If assistant has the Focus) A character may be assisted by as many Actors as can logically take part in the action, per ST discretion

Supernatural Bonuses: +0 - +10

Card: +1 - +5 (Minor Actors) +1 - +10 (Major Actors)

The player adds all appropriate values together and determines their test pool, then surrenders the card to the storyteller, at which point the total pool is compared to their target number. In the case of undefended challenges, the card can be declared openly. In the case of defended challenges, all parties select their card before anyone announces their total pool.

Resisting Attacks

As discussed above, defended challenges are the resolution method for when two characters have mutually-exclusive goals. By far the most common example of this is when one character's goal is "hit X person" and their target's goal is "not get hit by Y person". In Huldufolk, defense is a pool, but it is constructed slightly differently than most pools. Rather than being based on the combination of a Quality and affinity, defenses are based on a combination of a Quality and a Threshold, either mundane or supernatural.

All player characters start with a base mundane and supernatural threshold of 5, as do most Major Actors. Minor Actors can have a base threshold of anywhere between 0 and 5, depending on ST discretion and character type. Mundane Minor Actors (eg., regular humans, animals) always have a supernatural threshold of 0, while Minor Actors touched by magic (eg., supernatural beasts, particularly weak Huldufolk, empowered humans) may have a supernatural threshold of 0-5. Some Major Actors have base thresholds above 5, though these are rare. The most notable examples are Patrons (base threshold 20), whose supernatural and mundane defenses are impossible to breach for all but the most powerful Huldufolk, and even then usually after a great deal of effort and struggle.

Each time a character is forced to defend against an attack, the relevant threshold decreases by 1, a threshold is restored either by magic, or by resting for 10 minutes.

A character's defensive pool consists of (Defenders win ties):

Quality (If appropriate): +3

Threshold: +0 - +5

Equipment: +0 - +5

Supernatural Bonuses: +0 - +10

added, which is what the system is tuned to assume. A particularly capable Huldufolk might hang out in the 12-14 range.

Card: +1 - +5 (Minor Actors) +1 - +10 (Major Actors)

A thorough example of defense can be found in Miscellaneous Mechanics.

Magic System

Unlike most systems, there is not a designated affinity for each path of magic in Huldufolk. Instead, when a character learns the first level of a Greater Path, they decide which affinity they want use for that Path. The chosen affinity is then used to calculate their test pools whenever necessary, and changes the form and appearance of their magic. That Path and that affinity are forever tied together. If a character loses access to the Affinity, their magic will be weakened, denying access to the spend effects of the Path. If a character has a Focus on that Affinity, they gain +2 to pools in that Path.

No two Huldufolk use magic the exact same way. A character who works the miracles of the Creation [Life] Path based on their Computers affinity may create autonomous drones or AI systems, while a character who works that Path with their Artistry affinity may bring sculptures to life or grant sentience to paintings. Because of this variance, and the relatively broad nature of Huldufolk powers, it can be very difficult to determine what Path and power is being used at any given time. A player can describe their magic in any way appropriate to their affinity and Path.

Resolving Magical Conflicts

There are several powers in Huldufolk which directly oppose another character's efforts. Typically, a character defends against a magical attack with their defensive threshold. However, in cases where both characters are attempting to achieve a mutually-exclusive goal (e.g., two characters both attempting to claim a Demesne), each character builds their attack pool as normal, and contests with that. Given the many variances in Huldufolks' approaches to magic, the conflicts can be very strange events.

EX: Bill the Elf and Sally the Demon both attempt to claim Demesne over a single location. Bill is using his Quality of Domineering and his affinity of Computers. Sally is using her Quality of Avaricious and her affinity of Diplomacy. Bill's spell takes effect as a cloud of electricity attempting to paralyze Sally and throw her out of the contested area. Sally's power manifests as whispered words, twisting and shaping Bill's mind until he realizes that he abandoned the claim apparently of his own volition. Unless specified in a power description, magic does not inflict mechanical damage even if its narrative effects would otherwise do so. A character using Melee Combat to bludgeon their enemy into submission finds that the damage is illusory and fades as soon as the contest of powers is over.

Lesser Paths

There are five Lesser Paths in Huldufolk. As discussed above, a character's primary Sphere is chosen at creation, and they receive levels of that Lesser Path equal to their Belief for free. A character can purchase levels of other Lesser Paths with XP, but can never possess a Lesser Path rating higher than their current Belief.

Each level of a Lesser Path offers a +1 bonus to relevant tests while it is active changing a character's active Lesser Path takes one Supernatural Action¹². IE: A character with Lesser Creation 3 gets a +3 to all tests relevant to that Sphere.

Creation

The Sphere of Creation is the home of artists, life-givers, and all those who value cultivation for its own sake. Increasing mastery of the Lesser Path grants benefit to all acts of creation or creativity, as well as a bonus to the user's mundane defensive threshold.

Destruction

The Sphere of Destruction lends itself not only to the monsters of the underworld, but also to the noble defenders of the helpless, the valiant knights in the hosts of holy armies, and to all those who seek to bring about change in the world around them. Each level of Lesser Destruction grants a bonus to acts of violence or destruction, or acts intended to bring about change. Lesser Destruction also grants a bonus to all offensive supernatural tests.

Conquest

There can be no empire without a conqueror, and the Sphere of Conquest is where the greatest and most terrible conquerors find their power. Any act of taking control, attempting to usurp or violate the claims of other characters, or sway others to your service gains a bonus from this Path. Additionally, Lesser Conquest grants a direct bonus to all offensive mundane tests.

Dominion

Keep what is yours, make it safe, and allow no one to usurp your claim. This is the basis of the Sphere of Dominion, and its adherents live this ideal with every breath. Any action devoted to keeping control of yourself, your territory, or to enforcing your sovereignty receives a bonus from Dominion, this same bonus is also granted to a character's supernatural defensive threshold.

¹² See Miscellaneous Mechanics: Actions, below

Service

For every knight there is a squire, for every king, a kingdom. Many view the role of the servitor as a weak one, of minor import to the great and powerful. Those who master the Sphere of Service, however, understand the truth; that only by consent of the governed can a ruler stand. The path of Lesser Service grants no immediate benefit to the practitioner. Instead, a Servitor can grant a total number of bonuses to other characters equal to their rank in this Path. The bonuses can all go to a single character, or be split up among multiple targets. The recipient of this largesse is unable to refuse the gift, nor to force its award through any means. The gift can be granted only by the unaltered will of the Servitor.

Greater Paths

Creation

Substance

Substance 1: Reforging (Undefended) - The Huldufolk can repair a mundane object and restore it to full functionality. Typically, this requires a single supernatural action. However, if the object is exceptionally damaged or complex, it may take as long as an hour.

Spend: By spending a Belief, the Huldufolk can improve the object to the limits of mundanity. The item grants a +2 bonus on appropriate actions (this replaces any original bonus from the item).

Substance 2: Improving (Undefended) - The Huldufolk has passed beyond the limits of mortality, and can bring mundane objects to greater bear than any human could manage. By focusing on the object for a single supernatural action, the equipment's bonus is increased by 1, to a maximum of +3, regardless of whether or not it originally provided a benefit. This bonus lasts until the next dawn or dusk. This power can be used multiple times, to bring a +0 or +1 item to +3.

Spend: By spending a Belief, the Huldufolk takes the first steps in working with magical items. For each Belief and Action spent improving the object, its bonus increases by 1, to a maximum of +5.

Substance 3: Platonic Exemplar (Potentially Defended, Mundane) - The Huldufolk understands the nature of creation intimately, allowing them to

conjure items of unsurpassed quality. By spending a supernatural action, the character creates a platonic exemplar (a perfect example) of a given object. The creation can be a simple or a complex machine, but it must be an object which already exists in the mundane world; no teleporters or lightsabers. The object can be up to 1 metric ton in weight or 10 cubic meters in total volume. Once created, the object lasts for 1 hour, it grants a benefit of +2 on any relevant tests. If the creation in some way targets another character (creating a sword inside their chest, binding them with conjured manacles, etc), this power is Defended.

Spend: By spending a Belief, the Huldufolk can create a magical item, weaving shadow and air into a cloak, or conjuring a sword of flame. The item created grants a benefit of +2, but can be improved by other powers to a maximum of +5. At creation, the object has two Minor Effects.

Substance 4: Larger than Life (Potentially Defended, Varies) - This power modifies Substance 3. When creating an object, the Huldufolk can now create objects of up to 3000 cubic meters in size, and create up to 100 duplicates of a mundane object. Additionally, mundane objects created are now real in every sense and last indefinitely. If the creation in some way targets another character, this power is defended by either the mundane or supernatural threshold (attacker chooses).

Spend: By spending a Belief, the Huldufolk can create truly massive or numerous objects. Castles spring from nothing, entire legions are armed with a thought, and charging hordes are stopped cold by previously nonexistent bulwarks. If a character spends a Belief to conjure a magical item, they can spend an additional Belief to make that item permanent as well.

Substance 5: Ex Nihilo (Potentially Defended, Varies) - This power modifies Substance 3. Magical objects can now be created without spending Belief. When created, a magical object has a base rating of +3, and can have up to 3 Minor Effects or 1 Minor Effect and 1 Major Effect

Spend: The created object has a base rating of +4 and can have up to 4 Minor Effects, or 2 Minor Effects and 1 Major Effect

Burn: The created object has a base rating of +5 and can have up to 5 Minor Effects, 3 Minor Effects and 1 Major Effect, or 1 Minor Effect and 2 Major Effects.

Life

Life 1: Delving (Defended, Supernatural) - The Huldufolk learns the current health and any diseases affecting a Minor Actor. If the Minor Actor is aware of this power and willing to be subjected to it, the power is Undefended.

Spend: The Huldufolk can use Delving on a Major Actor. If the Major Actor is aware of this power and willing to be subjected to it, the power is Undefended and does not require a Spend.

Life 2: Regeneration (Undefended) - The Huldufolk has learned to understand their own body to an incredible extent. By spending a supernatural action concentrating, the character can heal one level of damage.

Spend: The Huldufolk forces the process to happen much more quickly, healing 3 levels of damage with a single supernatural action.

Life 3: Second Wind (Undefended) - The Huldufolk's regenerative capacity has improved to the point that they can restore a single level to their mundane defensive threshold, washing away the fatigue of battle.

Spend: The Huldufolk completely renews their resources, restoring their mundane defensive threshold to its maximum.

Life 4: The Little Things (Defended, Mundane) - The Huldufolk has taken the first steps of bringing about true Creation, conjuring simple life forms such as viruses and bacteria. The created life forms can perform one of the following functions:

- Damage: Inflict 1 level of damage per turn until healed or until the target is rendered incapacitated.
- Coma: If the target becomes incapacitated before this disease is healed, they remain in that state until such time as they are healed.
- Fatigue: The target loses 2 levels of their mundane threshold when subjected to an attack, rather than the normal 1.
- Blindness: The character is blinded until healed. They do not have line of sight unless they have access to a supernatural method of operating without sight.
- Lameness: The character can only take one action per round (either mundane or supernatural) until healed.

-Antibody: The disease targets an existing malady and can alleviate any mundane or supernatural illness (if the target is willing, this power is Undefended)

Spend: The creator selects two choices from the above list.

Life 5: Genesis (Undefended) - The Huldufolk has reached the height of this Path and can now conjure life from nothing. By spending a supernatural action, the Huldufolk can create a single mundane Minor Actor. The Minor Actor is not mindless, but it is essentially a blank slate, able to perform the functions necessary for survival but without any *a priori* knowledge or affinities. The Minor Actor is given three qualities, but no affinities.

Spend: The created Minor Actor may be a supernatural creature.

Burn: The creation is a Major Actor.

Special: Three characters who possess this power may opt to use it in conjunction, each burning a Belief, to resurrect a dead character¹³. The resurrected character loses 1 Belief rating upon revival. If the character does not have a Belief rating, or would be reduced to 0 Belief by the resurrection, they cannot be resurrected.

Destruction

Change

Change 1: That's What I Meant (Undefended) - The Huldufolk can make a small addition to a given situation, so long as that addition would not contradict the description already given by the storyteller. (EX: A handy tool was left nearby [no bonus, mundane equipment])

Note: These changes are small, a single mundane item laying around, a door or window being unlocked, a strand of hair left on the floor. The ST, not the player, determines the origin of these items. A player might say, "There's a diary sitting on the desk", which is a valid use of the power, but the ST is justified in saying that the diary is empty, or contains a grocery list, agenda, etc. STs are encouraged to exercise discretion.

¹³ Alternatively, if a single character would be able to burn 3 Belief and still retain access to this power, they may opt to do so. Performing the action in this manner permanently reduces their Belief rating by 1.

Spend: The character may alter something already described (EX: A stoplight is green instead of red, a key that didn't fit just needed to be turned the other way). The ST is the arbiter of what can and cannot be changed.

Change 2: I Knew That (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - By spending a supernatural action, the character gains access to an affinity they do not possess for one round. If the character already possesses that affinity, they may choose to gain a Focus in it (even if they have already reached the maximum number of allowed Foci). Alternatively, the character may attempt to deny access to an affinity to their enemy. The player selects an affinity and, if the target possesses that affinity, they lose it for one round. If the player chooses to target a Focus, they must specify that they are doing so, and if the target possesses that Focus, they lose access to it for one round.

Spend: This power's duration is extended to one hour.

Change 3: Water to Wine (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - On a whim, the Huldufolk can reshape what is and is not real. The Huldufolk changes the composition of a mundane object, turning water to wine, steel to silk, or stone to air, adding or removing benefits as they see fit (add or remove bonuses up to the mundane maximum, or low enough that the object no longer functions as equipment). With a single activation, the Huldufolk can alter up to 1 ton of total material, or up to 10 cubic meters in volume (whichever is larger). If the object is currently in the possession of another character, they may choose to Defend against this power.

Spend: The Huldufolk may choose to target magical objects. However, the changes on a magical item are not permanent, the object reverts to its original material after 1 hour unless the Huldufolk spends an additional Belief to continue the effect.

Change 4: Werewolf (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - The Huldufolk improves their capacity for change, altering their own body in fantastical ways. The user gains 2 of the following abilities:

- Flight
- Waterbreathing
- Increased Health (+2)
- Unnatural Weapons (magical equipment, +3, 1 Minor Effect)
- Unnatural Armor (magical equipment, +3, 1 Minor Effect)

- Burrowing
- Supernatural Senses

Spend: The Huldufolk can inflict change upon other characters. Select from the following list:

- Blindness: The character is blinded until healed. They do not have line of sight unless they have access to a supernatural method of operating without sight.
- Lameness: The character can only take one action per round (either mundane or supernatural) until healed.
- Waterbreathing: Only water. The character takes 1 level of damage for every round spent without submerging their head in water.
- Infirmity: The character's maximum threshold (either mundane or supernatural) is reduced by 2, if their current threshold is lower than the new maximum, the current threshold is unaffected.

Change 5: A Trick of Perspective (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - The Huldufolk is the arbiter of what is and is not true, inflicting widespread and dramatic change throughout their immediate area. The scenery is altered, or the air changed to noxious gas. Minor Actors may be added or removed to the scene, or may have any change inflicted upon them at will. Perhaps they are restored to full health and refreshed, or perhaps they find that their organs are replaced with steel, to their very temporary discomfort. If the change would directly affect another character, they may choose to Defend. The Huldufolk who activated this power activates it once, and all attempts to resist are against that target number. This state of Godhead lasts for one round, at which point the effects become the new reality.

Spend: In addition to the normal effects, Major Actors may be affected by this power. Major Actors cannot be killed outright or added to or removed from the scene, but the changes inflicted will do damage as though this were an attack.

Burn: Major Actors can be added or removed to this scene. If they are unwilling, they can Defend.

Strife

Strife 1: Malocchio (Defended, Supernatural) - Bad luck follows the target Minor Actor. They miss the bus, step in a puddle, and find their car has been burgled in the middle of the night. The effects vary from person

to person (ST discretion), but they are universally unpleasant, lasting up to 24 hours.

Spend: The misfortune is especially extreme. The target may be mugged, be run over, or simply find that every squirrel in a 10-mile radius has developed an intense and personal hatred for them. The Huldufolk who uses this power may choose for it to be an attack, or may choose to control the specific nature of the misfortune inflicted.

Strife 2: Swift Vengeance (Undefended) - The Huldufolk is surrounded by damaging forces, be it armor of flame, or simply a strong bending of chance. For one hour, foes who target the user with Melee attacks find themselves punished for their transgression, suffering one point of damage for each attack.

Spend: The Huldufolk wills their defensive magic to become an instrument of Destruction, wrapping it around their weapon, or weaving it into every bullet. For one hour, the Huldufolk's mundane attacks a base of 2 damage.

Strife 3: Entropy (Defended, Supernatural) - The Huldufolk's control of the forces of Destruction have reached the point that magic itself is now an avenue of attack. This power is a damaging attack against a single target.

Spend: The Huldufolk can target 3 enemies at once. The user spends a single card for all three attacks, and all the attacks are resolved simultaneously.

Strife 4: Killing Word (Defended, Supernatural) - Unweaving the tenuous threads of life is now a matter of course for the Huldufolk. With this power, the Huldufolk kills a Minor Actor outright.

Spend: Instead of hitting a single Minor Actor with the full force of their destructive might, the Huldufolk infuses the surrounding area. All Minor Actors within the user's Direct Influence¹⁴ are weakened as the power of destruction assaults their vitality. They lose one action (either mundane or supernatural, user's choice) for the next five turns.

Strife 5: I am become Death (Defended, Varies) - The Huldufolk's capacity for inflicting harm is incomparable. They inflict harm upon all

¹⁴ See Belief: Direct and Territorial Influence, below

enemies (the user can exclude targets at will) within their Personal Influence with a single attack. The defenders resist with either their mundane or supernatural threshold (defender's choice).

Spend: The magic of Destruction will not be denied. The attacker chooses which threshold the defenders will use (it must be the same for all defenders).

Burn: The Huldufolk's wroth is such that it shakes the foundations of the world. When resolving damage against enemies in the user's Personal Influence, the base damage is 2. The Huldufolk additionally inflicts the normal attack against all characters within their Territorial Influence (the user can exclude targets as normal)

Conquest

Empire

Empire 1: Taxation (Defended, Supernatural) - The Huldufolk who uses this power need not covet, because they've already taken whatever they want. The user may take a single item they can see that is currently in the possession of a Minor Actor.

Spend: The user can target a Major Actor.

Empire 2: Plant the Flag (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - The Huldufolk claims a new Demesne¹⁵, gaining the benefits associated with a Demesne and gaining the ability to affect the area with powers from the path of Demesne. If this area is already claimed by another Huldufolk of the same or lesser Belief rating, the current possessor may Defend.

Spend: The user claims the new Demesne permanently.

Empire 3: Insight (Defended, Supernatural) - The Huldufolk learns one of their target's Qualities, Foci, or Path affinities.

Spend: The user can deny the target access to a Quality, Focus, or Path affinity for one hour. This can be used simultaneously with the non-spend effect of this power, learning an enemy's affinity Path and excising it simultaneously.

¹⁵ See Miscellaneous Mechanics: Demesnes, below

Empire 4: Force of Will (Defended, Supernatural) - The Huldufolk's power is such that their orders simply must be followed. The target follows the user's verbal commands for up to one hour. Minor Actors will follow the commands to the exclusion of all else, even their own survival. Major Actors will follow the commands until they take a level of damage which is not healed within one round, or until following the order would lead to their immediate death.

Spend: The user need not speak their orders. They simply exert control over their target, perceiving as they do, and deciding their actions.

Empire 5: State of Mind (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - The Huldufolk immediately becomes aware of any claimed Demesnes within their Territorial Influence, who owns them, and their Belief rating.

Spend: The Huldufolk may contest for ownership of any Demesne they can sense, so long as the current possessor is of equal or lesser Belief rating.

Burn: The Huldufolk can contest for ownership of a Demesne held by a being with a higher Belief rating.

Infiltration

Infiltration 1: Open Sesame (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - No door can bar the passage of a Huldufolk with this power. The Huldufolk bypasses all mundane security on a location, finding access points which should be secure.

Spend: The Huldufolk attempts to bypass supernatural wards, entering a secure Demesne. The owner of that Demesne Defends.

Infiltration 2: Out of Sight (Undefended) - Perhaps light passes through them, perhaps shadows and foliage conspire to blur their outline. Whatever the cause, the Huldufolk becomes invisible, so long as they remain still.

Spend: The Huldufolk is able to move while invisible, under this effect, the power lasts for one hour.

Infiltration 3: Insider Trading (Defended, Supernatural) - Doors having long ago become child's play, the more talented infiltrators among the

Huldufolk turn to more challenging tasks. With this power, a Huldufolk invades the target's very mind, opening their secrets to be read at leisure. In general, the Huldufolk gains access to the current thoughts of the target. However, in cases of well-trained or willful adversaries, the Huldufolk may not be able to penetrate defenses so easily. Or, possibly, the target may have learned how to hold a lie so strongly in their mind that cursory inspection fails to identify the falsehood. Whatever the case, if the user wishes to ensure that they will get true and useful information, they may choose to get the answer to one of the following questions:

- Is the target actively concealing information?
- Is the target currently in a heightened emotional state? If yes, what emotion is predominant.
- Does the target intend to commit violence in the next few minutes?
- What is the target's given name?
- Has the target recently been involved in a violent situation?

Infiltration 4: Wind in the Willows (Undefended) - The mundane world doesn't have as tight a grasp on Huldufolk as it does on humanity. A committed practitioner learns that even the most essential rules can be ignored by a sufficiently powerful will. This power lasts one hour. While it is active, the user is intangible in some way. Perhaps they become a sentient illusion, or a breath of wind, or some other similarly untouchable fabrication. Whatever form they take, the Huldufolk cannot be touched and cannot touch, they pass through walls, floors, and weapons with equal ease. A Huldufolk cannot actually fly with this power, but they can easily sink into the ground. Under this power, a Huldufolk is immune to mundane attacks and cannot be targeted by Minor Actors who do not have a supernatural threshold. In turn, the Huldufolk is unable to physically affect the world in any way, and cannot make mundane attacks against other characters.

Spend: A Huldufolk under the effects of this power may spend Belief in order to physically affect the world for 1 round without being subject to physical attacks themselves.

Infiltration 5: The Greatest Trick (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - Huldufolk are, one and all, experts in the field of deception. For most, their very identity is the result of a clever lie. Those who have mastered those power can confidently name themselves as the first among equals in the arena of untruth. By activating this power, a Huldufolk perfectly imitates a character. The target being imitated is not immediately aware that this has happened, and does not Defend against it. All other

characters and all supernatural powers detect the user as being the target, and only truly egregious mistakes (forgetting one's own name, openly revealing incongruent allegiance) will cause even the slightest trace of suspicion. If the user gives strong cause for doubt, or if the user and the target are observed at the same time, the observer is able to Defend.

Spend: While this power is active, the target cannot perceive the user. They simply cannot keep the user in their mind long enough to notice them. If the Huldufolk attacks the target or places them in a position where they must logically acknowledge the Huldufolk's presence, they appear as a complete stranger, though one who seems vaguely familiar. If this effect is used, the target is able to Defend, though if it is successful, the target does not know what it was they were Defending against.

Burn: Much more insidious, if the Huldufolk burns a Belief, the *target* fades from the perception of all other characters. They simply cannot make themselves known. Indeed, the target finds that they cannot even take actions which would lead to them being noticed. For the duration of the power, they are unable to attack, unable to block paths or doorways, unable to do anything to force their presence upon another character.

Dominion

Autocracy

Autocracy 1: Celebrity (Potentially Defended, supernatural) - For 1 hour, the Huldufolk becomes remarkable. Perhaps they seem unnaturally beautiful, or carry an aura of violence, or simply draw the eye with pure animal magnetism. For the duration, Minor Actors will not attack the Huldufolk unless attacked first. They may choose to avoid the Huldufolk, or to toady up to such an apparently important person. This use is Undefended.

Spend: The Huldufolk can use their power to draw not only the eye, but the admiration. A single Minor Actor can be forced, against all evidence of the senses, to regard the Huldufolk as a close friend and confidant. The Huldufolk may have just finished pulling their sword from the character's gut, but all is forgiven and forgotten when such a close ally is involved.

Autocracy 2: Searchlight (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - Any Noble must be conscious of potential assailants. Assassins have been the first argument of a great many kings, and the Huldufolk have learned to handle that threat with this power. For one turn, the user automatically knows when a character is mundanely hidden within 10 meters, and gets a vague sense of their direction. If a character is hidden with a supernatural power, they may Defend against this power.

Spend: The effects of this power last for one hour.

Autocracy 3: Rejuvenation (Undefended) - Magic is the weapon of many who would deny the Huldufolk their due, and Magic is the shield against the greatest dangers of the world. With this power, the Huldufolk restores 1 to their supernatural defensive threshold.

Spend: The Huldufolk restores their supernatural defense threshold to its maximum.

Autocracy 4: Disbelief (Undefended) - Sovereignty from the effects of magic, cutting the ties which bind a Huldufolk to their birthright, is an extreme step, but at times an essential one. By activating this power, a character forces mundanity upon themselves with such power that they become completely untouchable by magic. All active magical effects (including Lesser Path bonuses) upon the character end, and they become impossible to affect with further supernatural effects. The user cannot be targeted by supernatural effects and cannot use magic.

Spend: While this power is active, the Huldufolk may spend Belief to make use of magic for one turn, they still may not be targeted with supernatural effects.

Autocracy 5: In Persona Christi (Undefended) - The Huldufolk's will is paramount in all matters of autonomy. Activating this power restores the character to full health and ends all supernatural effects currently active upon them.

Spend: The Huldufolk can be more discerning in their unwrapping. When activating this power, the character may decide which effects to remove and which effects to keep.

Burn: At times, the most important ability is to fight another day. When the tide of battle goes too far against the Huldufolk, they may decide to exercise the essential right of travel, disappearing from their current

scenario without a test (all other effects of this power still take place) and reappearing anywhere within their territorial boundary.

Demesne

Demesne 1: Honey Trap (Potentially Defended, Supernatural) - The patient spider is best rewarded. The Huldufolk who has begun down the Path of Demesne has learned this and can shape their Demesne to act as their proverbial web. By activating this power, the Huldufolk causes their Demesne to either become attractive; in which case Minor Actors find themselves subtly but irrevocably drawn toward it, or unattractive; in which case Minor Actors avoid it unconsciously, requiring forceful intervention to even acknowledge its presence.

Spend: Narrow focus can yield wide results. While the Huldufolk's Demesne may have no sway on the flowing river of humanity, they may choose to specifically affect only a single Minor Actor, drawing them or pushing them away while leaving the overall effect of their Demesne unchanged. If the power is used in this way, it is Defended.

Demesne 2: Intellectus (Undefended) - This power is passive. From the moment the Huldufolk learns this power, they are always aware of all locations they've claimed as Demesne. They know without effort how many people are inside and their general locations. They can sense the layout and contents without effort, navigating their Demesne with eyes closed as easily as otherwise.

Spend: With an effort of will, the Huldufolk can observe any part of their Demesne as though they were physically present.

Demesne 3: Velvet Rope (Defended, Supernatural) - With an effort of will, the Huldufolk forces a single character from their Demesne, ejecting them to the boundary without necessarily crossing the intervening distance.

Spend: After a target has been ejected, or if they are already outside the Demesne, they cannot reenter for one hour (if they are already outside, this power is Undefended)

Demesne 4: Master of the House (Potentially Defended, Mundane) - For one hour, the Huldufolk can control their Demesne without effort, spending a supernatural action to cause doors to spring open, lights to

turn on or off, or objects to fly across the room. If the Huldufolk chooses to use this power offensively, they may attack any character currently present in the Demesne.

Spend: If the character attacks, they may attack any number of characters, so long as those characters are currently present in the Demesne.

Demense 5: Not in My House (Defended, Supernatural) - For one hour, Minor Actors cannot leave or enter your Demesne unless you allow them to do so. Major Actors must test in order to enter or leave without your permission.

Spend: The character's Demesne is sovereign, even to the greatest powers of the Huldufolk. Any time a supernatural power is used in the Demesne while this power is active, the user can choose to disallow it. This is a Defended challenge, but the card the Huldufolk uses is not expended by the test.

Service

Alleviation

Alleviation 1: Caduceus (Undefended) - The Huldufolk are largely proof against mortal ailments, their supernatural origin protecting them from diseases which would lay a human low. With this power, the Huldufolk can grant some of that capacity to a character in their charge. The Huldufolk washes away the target Minor Actor's fatigue or sickness, curing them of common illnesses (cold, flu, etc) with a wave of the hand, and restoring their mundane threshold by 1.

Spend: The target is immune to environmental effects for 1 hour.

Alleviation 2: Field Medic (Undefended) - The Huldufolk are a hardy race, capable of withstanding attacks which would outright kill lesser beings. With this power, the Huldufolk grants some measure of that miraculous fortitude, healing their target for 1 point of damage per round.

Spend: The Huldufolk can heal up to 3 damage this round, split up among multiple characters if they so choose.

Alleviation 3: Shoring Up (Undefended) - The Huldufolk are resistant to attacks, be they mundane or supernatural, in a way that few other races can help but to envy. With this power, the Huldufolk extends that resistance to their charge, restoring one point of a Minor or Major Actor's mundane or supernatural threshold.

Spend: The Huldufolk cannot allow their charge to become defenseless. The target fully restores the chosen threshold.

Alleviation 4: Proper Function (Undefended) - The Huldufolk has learned to finely tune their healing abilities. They may not be able to self-heal, but they can certainly eke the most of their natural resiliency when giving it to others. The target is healed of any and all mundane illnesses, regardless of their severity. Additionally, the Huldufolk's Alleviation 2 power now heals a base of two damage to one character, and spending to heal gives six points of damage to heal, spread out among multiple characters if the user so chooses.

Spend: The Huldufolk instantly ends one harmful supernatural effect on their target.

Alleviate 5: Back in the Fight (Undefended) - The Huldufolk takes a fighter on their last legs, and restores them to fighting strength. Refresh one low card (A-5) for the target character.

Spend: Refresh all low cards for the target, or one high card (6-10)

Burn: Refresh another character's entire deck.

Augmentation

Augmentation 1: Crash Course (Undefended) - The Huldufolk has learned to share knowledge or, in times of crisis, simply give it away. For 1 hour, the target learns a single affinity that the Huldufolk knows. The Huldufolk loses access to that affinity while this is active.

Spend: You can instead grant a Focus, regardless of whether or not the target has the prerequisite affinity.

Augmentation 2: Help from Afar (Undefended) - This power is passive. The Huldufolk cannot always be next to their charge, but with this power they might as well be. The Huldufolk can assist another's actions even in

situations where they normally couldn't (aiding attack from across the room, aiding a drive check over the phone, etc).

Spend: In times of need, the Huldufolk becomes sharper and more affinityful on behalf of another than on their own. For 1 turn, the assistance the Huldufolk provides is improved. If you don't possess the affinity, you can still grant a +1. If you do possess the affinity, but not a focus, you grant +3. If you possess the appropriate focus, you grant +5.

Augmentation 3: Bodyguard (Undefended) - At times, the best protector has to decide that their own safety is secondary to that of their charge. For one turn, any damage taken by your target is instead inflicted upon you. (Note: This cannot be chained. Another character cannot then take the damage on your behalf.)

Spend: When taking damage on behalf of another character, that damage is reduced by 1.

Augmentation 4: What's Mine is Yours (Undefended) - The Huldufolk is, at this point, a master of self-sacrifice. So potent is their willingness to give of themselves that they can grant access to their own powers. For one turn, your target gains access to a single supernatural power you possess, you lose access to the power for that duration.

Spend: The duration is increased to an hour.

Augmentation 5: The Giving Tree (Undefended) - There is no commodity so important, or so hotly contested, as Belief. With this power, a Huldufolk can sacrifice even this last and most potent sign of their power. For one hour, the character can spend Belief on behalf of other characters, granting them the direct benefits, or empowering their magic with its strength.

Spend: The user can also Burn Belief on behalf of other characters.

Burn: The character's sacrifice is rewarded. You do not need to spend Belief to grant other characters the spend benefits of the first three levels of their Greater Paths.

Belief

A character's Belief is a measure of their influence upon the world, and it impacts nearly everything about them. Belief is a hotly contested resource, with Huldufolk spending months or even years to steal a single follower from their rivals¹⁶.

There are five ranks of Belief available to player characters. While Huldufolk innately know the relative strength of Belief when encountering another character, it can be difficult to know exactly where a character stands. In Huldufolk society, it is common to refer to these ranks with formal titles.

- Rank 1 (Freeholder)
 - The Huldufolk can purchase powers of level 3 or below and use them freely.
 - The Huldufolk can purchase powers of level 4, but must spend Belief to use them, or Burn Belief to access their spend effects.
 - The Huldufolk's Personal Influence is 10 meters in radius.
 - The Huldufolk's Territorial Influence is 1 km in radius.
- Rank 2 (Citizen)
 - The Huldufolk can purchase powers of level 4 or below and use them freely.
 - The Huldufolk can purchase powers of level 5, but must spend Belief to use them, or Burn Belief to access their spend effects.
 - The Huldufolk's Personal Influence is 20 meters in radius.
 - The Huldufolk's Territorial Influence is 2 km in radius.
- Rank 3 (Knight)
 - The Huldufolk can purchase powers of level 5 or below and use them freely.
 - The Huldufolk's Personal Influence is 30 meters in radius.
 - The Huldufolk's Territorial Influence is 3 km in radius.
- Rank 4 (Margrave)
 - The Huldufolk can use the Spend effect of level 1 powers without expenditure.
 - The Huldufolk's Personal Influence is 40 meters in radius.
 - The Huldufolk's Territorial Influence is 4 km in radius.
- Rank 5 (Sovereign)
 - The Huldufolk can use the Spend effect of level 2 and below powers without expenditure.
 - The Huldufolk's Personal Influence is 50 meters in radius.
 - The Huldufolk's Territorial Influence is 5 km in radius.

¹⁶ Mechanics for gaining Belief will be added in a later slice.

Miscellaneous Mechanics

Actions and Turns

All characters have two actions at base, one mundane and one supernatural, with the exception of mundane Minor Actors, who lack a supernatural action. These actions are resolved simultaneously, but one or both may be held until later in the initiative.

A turn in Huldufolk lasts 10 seconds, characters can generally move freely, though at the ST's discretion for full distance. As a general rule, a character who takes an action and moves can travel about 10 meters, while a character who devotes their entire turn to movement can travel around 30 meters. These numbers are not exact, as movement is not a primary mechanic in the Huldufolk system.

Initiative

Initiative in Huldufolk is done by playing a card. All characters acting in the combat play a card, and simultaneously reveal what card was selected. Ties are resolved by each tied player drawing a card from the ST's deck and comparing. This card is not lost, as though it were used in a challenge, but become inaccessible to the character for the duration of the combat. When the combat has concluded, the character reclaims their initiative card, adding it back to their hand.

Actions may *not* be held. If a player has no actions on their initiative, they forfeit their turn.

Demesne

A character's Demesne is their home base. At creation, a character can have only one Demesne, typically it's wherever they spend the majority of their time. A character's Demesne has a maximum size of their Personal Influence. The building may be larger, but only that portion is recognized by the strange rules which govern Huldufolk magic.

Over time, a character's Demesne changes to suit them. It may take on an otherworldly beauty, hinting at their angelic origins, or a sinister feeling of fear may pervade every surface. Either way, as the character's hold over a Demesne increases, they find that their chosen Sphere begins to assert a hold over it. All characters in the Demesne receive a +1 to actions which match the owner's primary Sphere, as though they were benefiting from one level of that Sphere's Lesser Path. This bonus increases to +2 at Belief 3 and +3 at Belief 5.

Additionally, the area surrounding a character's Demesne begins to be influenced by that character's power as well. The character's Territorial Influence begins to shape the thoughts and actions of Minor Actors who spend significant time in the territory.

Example of Mundane Defense:

Bob the Elf has drawn the ire of three hexenwolves (Minor Actors, supernatural). He's a Stalwart defender (+3), armored (+1), and hasn't faced an attack in the last 10 minutes (base +5). The hexenwolves are Vicious attackers (+3), wielding knives (+1), and have Focused on Melee combat (+2).

In the first round of combat, all three wolves attack Bob. His player recognizes that they're Minor Actors, and therefore much more limited than he. On the first attack, the wolf selects its highest card (+5) while Bob plays from the low end of his deck (+2). The two add their cards to their pools and determine that the Wolf's total is 11, while Bob's total is also 11. As Bob is defending, the wolf's attack is narrowly avoided. On the second attack, Bob no longer has his 2 card, and his threshold has been reduced by 1. However, his player is fairly certain they have the measure of these wolves, and selects the 3 card. As before, the wolf plays their highest card and achieves an 11, matched by Bob, who has a lower base (now +4), but played a higher card to mitigate the attack. The pattern repeats with the third wolf, Bob's threshold is now +3, and he selects his 4 card to keep the beast from hitting him.

On Bob's action, he has a difficult choice to make. He's reasonably confident that he can hit one of the wolves if he really swings for the fences, but he has no Qualities or affinities relevant to attacking, and his only weapon is a short sword (+1). He doesn't know for sure what the wolves' defenses are, but he knows that hitting them will likely require at least his 6 card¹⁷, given that most creatures have a base threshold of +5. He decides that it's better to attempt the attack than simply stand there while being shredded. Rather than go with the minimum possible card, he swings for the fences. The ST, deciding for the wolf in question, believes that Bob's player will continue to try and eke out small victories, and selects the wolf's Ace card. The wolf is a berserker, and has no appropriate defensive qualities or armor. Therefore its defense is entirely based on its threshold, currently a +5¹⁸. Bob and the ST build their pools, to the ST's surprise, Bob swings with an uncharacteristically high 11, while the wolf has a mere 6. Because he exceeded the target by 5¹⁹, Bob's attack inflicts two damage, enough for the relatively fragile wolf to be brought down.

In round two, Bob faces only two wolves, but he's already starting to tire from the strain of fighting off the wolf pack. His threshold is now down to a +2, and he's starting to burn through

¹⁷ 5 base threshold + at least 1 from the card, defender wins ties.

¹⁸ Though the wolf has been active in combat, the threshold is only reduced by being the *target* of attacks, which until now hadn't happened.

¹⁹ See Miscellaneous Rules: Combat, below

his cards. The two wolves attack with their highest remaining cards (4 for each), while he's forced to use even higher cards to resist (5 for the first, 6 for the second). When his turn to attack comes up, he decides his best bet is to use his Ace for the attack. He knows he won't hit, but he doesn't want to waste his dwindling card supply. The ST, based on his previous attack, expects Bob to play a high card, and spends his highest remaining card for that wolf (3). The two compare pools once more, Bob's total of 2 isn't high enough to hit the wolf's defense of 8, but he takes solace in knowing that the beast is running out of cards.

Round three, the two wolves attack again, one spending 2 and one spending 3. Bob's threshold is now at 0, which means his defenses are at 4 (Quality + Armor), but they won't be going any lower. The wolves' attack pools are still at 6 before the card, which is higher than Bob's Ace defense (5 total), which means he has to either spend his few remaining high cards, or take some hits. However, now that he knows their resources are depleted, and that he's not at risk of taking multiple damage per hit, he's willing to take a bit of damage in hopes of putting the pair down. He spends his Ace on both attacks, taking 1 damage from each, and uses his 9 to hit the wolf he attacked previously, who now has a threshold of 4 and only an Ace remaining. The wolf's total defense is 5, while Bob's attack is at a 10. This wolf, like the last, is brought down.

Round four, there's only one wolf, and Bob's defenses remain unchanged. Realizing that it is unable to do enough damage to bring him down before he destroys it, the ST decides that the wolf is going to flee. While Bob could give chase, his player decides not to risk walking into another ambush and lets it escape.

As should be clear, even a small fight like this one was very nearly lethal to Bob, who only got through it with careful play and a bit of luck. Individually, the wolves would have been no challenge, but being outnumbered three to one had a major impact on the fight. In the real world, 5 good fighters will almost always defeat 1 great fighter, and the same is true in Huldufolk. Some of the most powerful warriors, or those blessed with truly remarkable Artifacts, may be able to handle a large group of enemies, but these characters are much more the exception than the rule. That said, characters willing to take a bit of a beating can still deliver dangerous blows to their adversaries on the way out.

Additionally, while a player needs to track only their thresholds, a storyteller with multiple NPCs needs to track thresholds for each, as well as the cards spent by each. With large groups, this can rapidly get out of hand. Huldufolk is not a system designed to replicate armies, and the paperwork involved is non-trivial²⁰.

²⁰ We are currently developing a mass-combat system, but it will not be included in this slice.