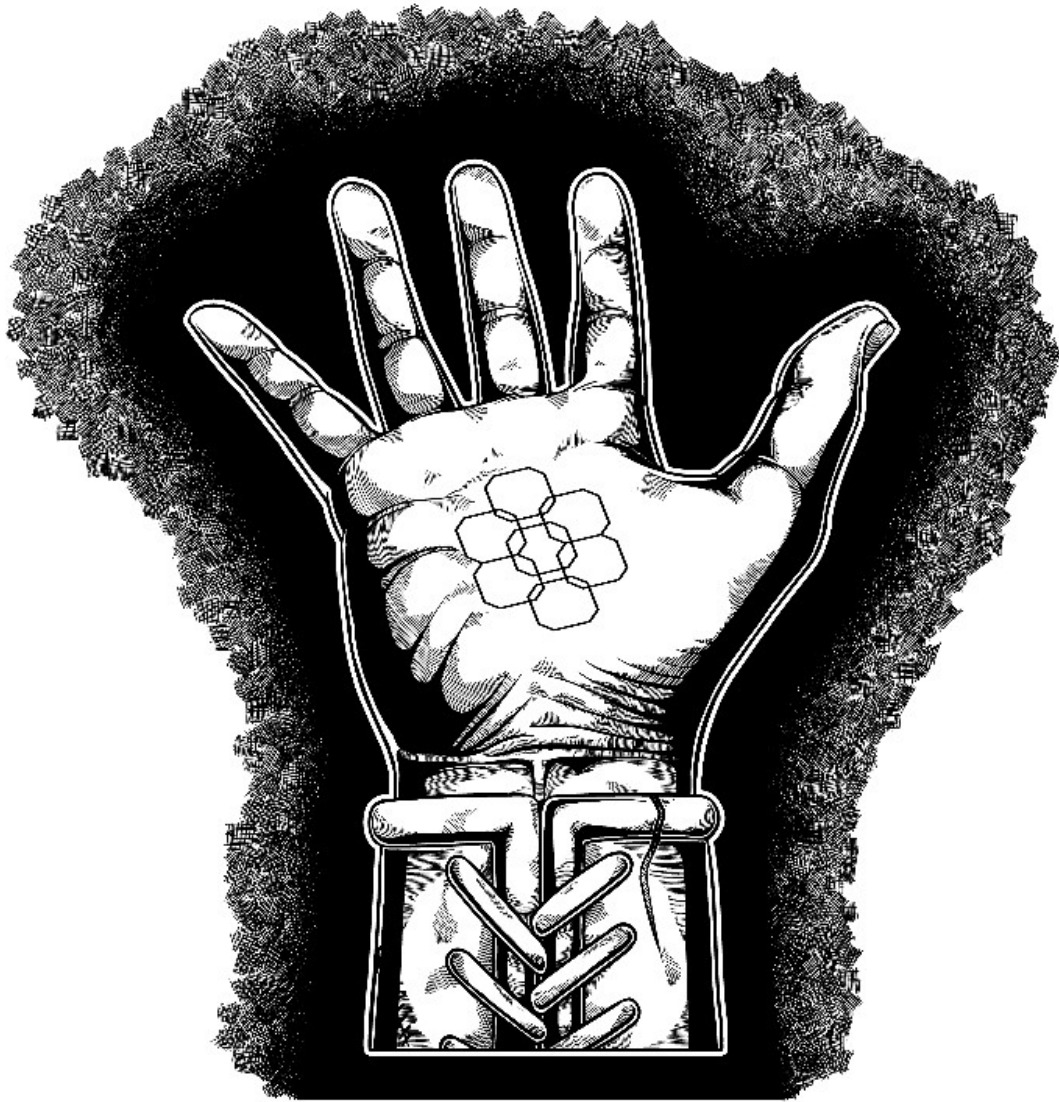


The Isles

The Game of Outcasts



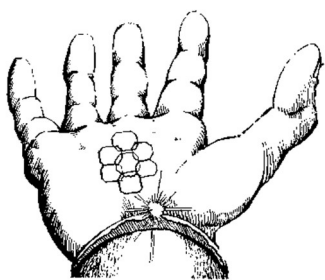
The Game of Outcasts

You are Outcast :: Cursed for crimes so heinous that your past lives memories have been torn from you. You woke in a Prison cell less than a few weeks ago.

Your first contact that you can remember with anyone else of your kind was the small flap of your cell door being momentarily pulled open so that a tin plate of plain food could be slid through. You saw briefly someones hand and hear a single word
"Eat"

Until that moment you were not even sure that it was possible to hear and speak words. You eat the bland, meagre food and wait for the next thing to press into your consciousness

What do you know?



You feel haggard, as if recovering from an illness that has drained the life and will from you. You are conscious of who

you are, able to see chinks of light through the prison door and able to identify the noises that sometimes echo within the cell. You can discern the words that you sometimes hear, but faces and places and experience is gone.

You know that you were once somebody. You cannot have been created here in this Cell. But who are what you are what you did is lost to you?

You are alone.

The Guards here talk. They mention things that happen here, and by sitting near the door you identify where you are.

This place is **Ilanthor**

It is a small town on the west site of the Star Island, also called Starann. It is a place of cold Winters and short, sharp Summers. The town is on the edge of a wild area, and despite being a point upon a trade route very little is known about the island more than fifty or sixty miles in any direction

As you sit and listen at the door, waiting for food and clay jugs of water to keep you alive and start

to rebuild your strength, you think over what few memories return to you.

You recall a ship. It has to be a sea-going vessel of some kind because it rolls from side to side in a storm and you remember vomiting into the hood that covers your head and is secured at you neck by a steel band. You remember panicking that you may drown in your own puke if you are sick again, but the hood is porous and eventually the bile drains through.

You hear gulls, for three days and nights you can hear seabirds and eventually the bellowing of men up on the deck making ready for the ships destination. You hear gulls before the nausea returns and you lie down to sleep

You recall a new feeling of moment, another rolling motion and jarring noises before a heavy force settles on you.



And then you woke.



Thanks for buying this Starter Pack for **The Isles PBM RPG** game. We hope you enjoy reading through the Source Material, Rules and Maps and feel sufficiently enthused by the idea of the game that you will want create a Character and play

The History of The Isles as a game is a long one, with some interruptions. Originally begun in the Summer of 1987, The Isles ran as a full-time PBM

game for almost 4 years before closing in the early 90s as real life pressures made it difficult to keep running at the level of quality that its GMs aimed for.

Please read through this Guide Book, spend some time creating your character and send your Character Creation Sheet so we can process your first turn and begun your time within The Isles

What is PBM?

Play By Mail is an old-fashioned style of games that are run through the post. In the past they were sent in stamped envelopes stuffed with printed pages to many far-flung (and close) locations in the world, where players would submit turns to participate in games run either by hand, by computer-program or by a little of both.

Players would write their turns on a Turnsheet, detailing their orders before sending the orders back to the GM to process and return a set of results that the player would then respond to, often until a player or a group of players had won, conquered the other participating players, advanced to the level that they were considered to be the winners etc.

What is The Isles?

The Isles is a sub-set of these games. It is an RPG, set in a game world where there are no winners. Instead, players take on the role of a Character within the game

They can take on many roles, tasks, quests and responsibilities – They can become a traveller, moving through the lands and interacting with either Player or Non-Player Characters on the way – They can become a force for good or ill, influencing events and gaining fame or notoriety for what they have done

The Life of **Marcus Requiem**
Chapter: **FOURTEEN**

...The darkness seems to slide around him, enveloping him a liquid black cloak which becomes slowly more subtle as he walks out of the shadow of the lamp and makes for the Gable end of the house. You follow sublimely as it about to walk and see what appears to be another, equally dark figure waiting for him. You make to follow, but the slouch and whiteness of armor from the room at the inn are growing to a crescendo. It is time to flee or fight.

You flee.

There can really be no other choice – the matter that just occurred here has convinced you that for now you are very out of your depth. How could you just have appeared like that without a sound or even a slight impression in the darkness at the doorway?

You run towards the darkest spot that you can see that hopefully contains as little danger as possible. Your feet scuffle over stones and the tails of last years remaining crops. You leap a small stone water butt and head towards what you think to be woods, towards a small copse of trees that might give you a little cover.

"Who's there?" A loud voice yells from within the village "Come forth or there'll be trouble!"

There already is trouble, a great deal of it. You do not intend to stop and experience any more.

You reach the copse and immediately stride west again, back towards the town and as much safety as you can achieve.

Sounds of searching and alarm from Gate village begin to fade as you stop at the road. Taking a few moments to catch your breath, you look behind to make sure no-one is in pursuit, then realize that you have escaped you owe to an urgent walk and will look back for nothing.

It is quiet on the road. You pass a small group of men leading pack horses towards the crossroads. You turn northwards a bit, before stopping and asking for the North Gate. Two Guards stand there – you decide just to breeze it all and walk through. The guards cut a sorry look but let you pass.

As you pass beneath the stone walls you jump slightly at the sound of a foot scraping behind you. There is no challenge, so you turn on quickly towards the House and hopefully someone safe where you can sit and gather your thoughts.

"Where're you bound?" demands Fat Dog as you walk into the courtyard "I was just about to look the gate."

"Looking for work," you mutter.

"You need keep a mind to what you're here for," he says. "That matter that made it difficult to get anything other than what the Guild offers?"

You head for your room, only to learn that it has no lock. You fetch a piece of wadded wool from the basket near the common room.

fire and across the door closed as best you can. You place the chopped knife next to your pillow and try to breathe a little better.

You just arrive again – the must be the fifth time that your sleep is interrupted by a sudden panic. You glance at the street level window and see that the sky has hardly begun to brighten, but tonight is not for sleeping. You reach for some food and eat.

You stay in your room for as long as you can, before becoming and curiosity forces you out of the room. You look out onto the street again to listen for rumors or last night's news. You hear nothing. Without the murder of a man less than a few miles from here is common enough, or that bit of gossip has not yet walked through the East Gate.

What you do hear is more of that rumour about the trial that the Guild has been there all day trying to find evidence of who the 8-guards were, or even what it was that they were after. Apart from the two dead men mentioned the day before yesterday there is very little to go on other than wild rumors about bandits and that same man with the Petal.

The north wind also is off with the twilight rain. You see yourself in the cold corner again. You feel warm just for being indoors and the folk who cluster close to the fire bar you see. You hurry another two paces of the dark floor that you had before waking trying to avoid the hallway glare. In the corner near the fire someone plays a strange mauling instrument which emits a mournful, repetitive note. A couple of dwarves start to sing some kind of chant about a girl they had in a harbor town far away, but the mood here is more subdued than before. The song soon dies to be replaced by more murmurs of secret whispered legends out of the window.

Yannis does not appear at the inn. You decide against asking for him and decide to head back to the House again to see if anyone has come looking for you.

Arriving back, you are worried to see three men settled in the corner of the courtyard. You pause for a few moments, but you have already been seen, so you walk past.

You feel yourself being watched as you walk to the door. One of them makes a strange noise at you, but you ignore them all and make for the common room. Pulling the door open, you head Dog barking something at someone else. You pause and wonder who it is, but then you hear Yannis' voice.

"... I don't care what you think, old man." He says "Put them to work until I can get them a token"

"And what if we get another one?" comes Dog's second shout.

"Feed him and keep him here while we get some work back about the ship."

After speaking with the three men in the courtyard in hushed tones, Yannis sends them away and walks over to you.

"You well?"

"I am. I've been thinking about this work," you reply.

"Are you rough, and you're not more training the last."

"How much would I earn?" you ask.

"Enough to pay for the room you have here and more." He observes, stamp back at you.

It appears the work will begin as soon as Yannis is ready to leave for South Port, and you will be travelling with him and at least two of the three who are said to be the Guild's. You talk about the nature of the work and Yannis says that there have been Bear attacks on some of the men who have been clearing woodland for a small heading island. You will be helping protect the workers by setting traps and if necessary dealing with the Bears.

"It might be a bit hard, but it would do me if the Guilds to look at the work done there." Yannis observes "I need a reply by the time I'm ready to go or you will need to start packing Dog with what you earn elsewhere."

You feel slightly pressured by what Yannis has processed. Your funds are dwindling and you again feel that what you know now after a few words has not cleared the fog in your head where everything else should be.

Kather then make a decision just yet, you check that Yannis is still at the Gable House before heading for the Market in search of a market table. You already know that the South House has a table set out with decent blades, so you head there first. The family fire is not lit today – it looks closed, but a young lad sits at the doorway with a range of small ornate things for people to buy while the table is obviously empty. Looking at the board-looking boy you scratch and have a look at the fire or six decent knives that might do the job.

Helping one out, you ask "How much?"

"Seven."

"Is not worth that," you observe.

"How if you know that then?"

"It can only be worth three at the most," you reply.

He looks away to where an equally young boy walks over and sits against him, hunkering slightly to get space on the step.

"You heard about Grem over at the inn?" she asks of the lad "Tommy watch catches a Demon sliced his head clean off right before, says it's been tracked back to here."

You feel a coldness run down your spine. Grem was the name they gave you at the Inn, and Grem was the one you went searching for at the Gate Inn.

"... and, they're feeding dogs from the Keep to hunt it."



How Do I Play?

Becoming a player in The Isles is simple. Enclosed with the Game Guide there will be a Character Creation Sheet - Fill this in and return it to us. Take care to describe your Character as much as you can.

Once received, we will set you up as a new character within The Isles and you will begin somewhere on one of the Islands that gives the game its name.

Beginning as a lowly Outcast, newly released from Prison, with few possessions, friends or even memories you must decide what you will do.

Starting to Play

Before you can begin your adventures in The Isles, you must complete and return your Character Creation Sheet. Typical of most Roleplaying Games, Character Creation involves creation an alternate human persona within the game world.

The Isles Character Creation Sheet
Use this sheet to create your character in the game. Fill in everything on this sheet. If you are unclear what to do, refer to the Game Guide.

Character Name: _____

Age: Sex: Height: Hair Colour/Style: Eyes: Skin Colour/Type:

Attributes:

DEXTERITY:

CHARISMA:

INTELLECT:

WILL:

STAMINA:

STRENGTH:

State of Mind: _____

General Appearance: _____

Player Name: _____

Player Address: _____

Player Email Address: _____

Return Address: **Wyvern Games, 86 Littlemore, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S41 8QZ, UK**

Return Email: TBA

By giving a Physical Appearance, Age, Height, Build and other characteristics to your Character you will be building a person that will be 'You' in the game world.

STARTUP


Physical Appearance : What a person looks like. Whether they have any distinguishing features, marks, scars, ticks, tattoos etc.

Age: Your Character is released as an adult, therefore any age older than Childhood is acceptable, although if a Character is of advanced age this should reflect in their physical appearance (see above) and will also impact some Player Abilities

Height: Player Characters do not necessarily have to be a specific height, they can be described as Tall, Medium, Short etc, Average heights in the game are dependant on the locality etc.

Build: A PC could be short, tall, lithe, thin, athletic, squat, stocky etc. This describes their physical build, and might also impact certain Player Abilities

Skin Colour: Most ethnic groups are represented somewhere in The Isles. Choosing ethnicities that are not local to the area where a PC is located might impact how they are perceived by other Characters



! Be aware that giving a character characteristics might make them more noticeable, memorable or anonymous to other people in the game world. For example, an Innkeeper may not be able to easily describe an average person with average features, but he will find it easier to describe a one eyed giant...

PLAYER ABILITIES

PLAYER ABILITIES are an attempt to reflect a character's mental and physical attributes using stats. The successful completion of some tasks within the game are always possible in a number of different ways, but the chances of completing a task are made more possible by having higher than average Stats in the related ability

Unlike a lot of more outwardly complicated systems, a player character is split over four levels POOR, AVERAGE, GOOD and EXCELLENT. It is possible to increase and decrease all of these skills, but the ease of doing this is dependent on environment, time and method.

! NON PLAYER Character ABILITIES are measured in the same way as above, but they will have primary of secondary sets of attributes would either be treated as separate when matched with or against a PLAYER, or combined if required. There is an underlying reason for PC stats being seen and dealt with differently for NPCs but this is not usually elaborated on within the game.

The physical abilities:

Strength A person's physical strength. A player with an above average Strength would show a defined musculature depending on their build. Having a high physical strength would allow a character to lift, push, pull, carry, press greater mass at increased force in a normal environment. Stronger character's might also be able to swim, climb or sprint and run more efficiently but this would also depend on reasonable Stamina and Dexterity

Stamina The ability to maintain high levels of exertion over a protracted level of time without suffering elevated levels of fatigue. Stamina also affects the incidence of physical injury due to normal exertion. Stamina is also the main factor in allowing a PC to hold their breath and heal quickly.

Dexterity the ability to perform tasks related to the hands primarily, but also relating to how the character's limbs integrate with the users other senses. A person with elevated Dexterity would be able to into a knot with increased speed, but it would also allow them to until a similar knot at a reduced speed but with their hands tied behind their backs. A person with good Dexterity would be better able to pick a lock or handle small, intricate tools.

Charisma in the normal sense is the way a Character would use attractiveness and charm to inspire liking from others. A high Charisma would increase the attraction to a person who is predisposed to your character.

The mental abilities:

Intelligence the ability for a character to acquire and use knowledge. The ability is quite diverse as an Intellect is not always the ability to read books. Book reading requires reasonable Intelligence, but the real purpose of reading in this sense is to allow through intellect the aggregation of an then application of knowledge that a book contains. This holds true when knowledge is gained by observation such as watching someone demonstrating a new skill.

Will is an overreaching ability and is normally innate in the character. It can manifest itself in many ways. Will is the ability to focus on a task in hand so that it may become obsessive to some people, but is in itself a way of achieving a difficult goal. Will is the ability also to be lucky, to be able to roll the correct dice roll at the gambling table, even the ability to remain steely eyed during a confrontation. Will should not be underestimated when creating a character, but it should also not be favoured too much over the mental and physical ABILITIES.

STARTUP

When beginning in the game, you are given a set amount of **14** points to allocate across the 6 abilities. By allocating above or below average stats be aware that your Characters Abilities will also be either above or below average, and as such their chance at achieving tasks that are reliant on these Abilities will also be positively or negatively affected.

While playing in the game, be aware that a Character who is described as for example lower than average Strength will not be able to lift greater weight than a Character who is above average in the same Ability.

When creating a Character during Start Up, make sure you allocated attributes in a similar way as the example Character below

Note that it is only during Character Creation these 15 points are allocated across the 6 Player Abilities, and once allocated the Abilities are described as POOR, AVERAGE, GOOD and EXCELLENT

Attributes

Distribute 14 points – each Attribute must have points allotted

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
DEXTERITY	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input checked="" type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>
CHARISMA	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input checked="" type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>
INTELLECT	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input checked="" type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>
WILL	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input checked="" type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>
STAMINA	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input checked="" type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>
STRENGTH	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input checked="" type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>

STARTING TO PLAY

Once you have completed and returned your Character Creation Sheet, you should receive a basic Status Sheet containing information including your location, your current state of health, possessions and money and any information relevant to your Character.

At this point it will be up to you to decide what your newly created Player Character is going to do. You will be placed in either a Town or City where your character will have been released. You will have a small amount of money and a few possessions to keep you fed and alive for a few weeks (if you use them wisely), but otherwise it will be the choices that you make that will dictate whether you live or die, succeed or fail in the Game of Outcasts

Every Turn you will receive a Turn Sheet separated into a number of sections

Thoughts: This can be left blank but is useful to indicate what your character is thinking, how they are feeling and what they are aspiring to do

Example: Your character could be angry that they have perhaps been threatened by someone, fearful that they may be caught or hopeful that a high Mountain Pass they are approaching has remained open despite new snow-fall

Actions: These are separated into Actions that you want

your Character to attempt during the period of the Turns. They can be as brief or detail as you feel necessary

Example: Your Character may want to find a Clothier to find new over garments. Detail what type of clothes you want, how much you want to spend and perhaps whether you will pay the asking price or try to haggle the seller down to better price

Example: Your PC may have found themselves at the point of someones knife over a disagreement. The first action of the Turn could be to explain how you intend talking your way out of a fight you feel you may lose

Example: You may need to speak to someone about something. Use an action to detail what you want to say and what you hope to get out of the interaction

Player Notes: These are notes that you want to address with the GM. They may be to provide feedback for previous turns, to explain that you will be on holiday for a number of weeks and may not be able to submit a turn as regularly as you usually do

Standing Orders: These comprise Tick Boxes and a small section to write in notes to request what your Player Character might do if they encounter a Threat, an Opportunity to benefit from or something that is of Interest to you. Each encounter type comprises a simple action which is either Passive, Aggressive or stops the Turn at that point to allow you to give further Thoughts or Actions.

Return to GM for Moderation

Once you have filled out the Turnsheets, you should return it to your GM, who will process the turn and write out a response to your actions and thoughts. You will received a new Turn Results Sheet to read and react to, along with a new Turn Sheet to fill in and continue with you adventures

SKILLS

Skills reflect what a Character has learnt. They can usually be acquired to a reasonable proficiency by training OR gained and improved over time by repeating a task that involves that particular skill

For example. Archery can be trained out quickly to someone by someone proficient in the skill. Archery can also be acquired by a PC obtaining the relevant Bow and Arrows and slowly learning the skill on their own. Being trained by someone proficient in a Skill will usually pass on a higher proficiency in the skill at a faster speed than just repetitively trying.

In The Isles, skills can be learnt in most things that are not natural to a PC. This means that 'Eating' or 'Walking' cannot be trained as they are assumed to be something a player already Naturally Knows, whereas Archery is again something not innate to the person and so can be learnt and hence is a Skill.

Having a Skill increases a Players success in doing that skill. A PC who owns a Bow and Arrow but is not proficient at using it can still attempt to use the Bow and Arrow but will not necessarily be successful in doing-so. However a PC who owns the requisite items AND has a trained Skill in Archery can use the items and will have a modicum of success in doing-so

Most Skills are dependent on at least one and often more than one of the six Player Abilities. For example, again using Archery – a player who has Excellent Dexterity will ave an improved chance of using the Archery skills.

▪ *As another Example, a user with above average Strength might be better chance at using the Climb skill on a Cliff face, but if they are weak in the Stamina ability they may not be able to Climb very far without frequent stops / rests.*

If a Player Character becomes proficient in a skill, the Status Sheet of the player will be amended to reflect this.

Below are the first few of along list of skills that can be learnt in The Isles, these are brief examples from a list of over 150 basic skills that can be learnt in order to improve the chances of completing tasks within the game

Acrobat: The ability to perform a series of tumbles and rolls, often enabling difficult terrain to be traversed. The skill is difficult to learn and improve. DEX, STR

Backstab: The skill to drive a knife hard and with great force into someone's back. The definitive assassination skill. Reduces the chance of the dagger/knife glancing off a bone and saving the victims life DEX, STR

Balance: Enables the walking along narrow ledges and high walls in safety DEX, STA

Barter: The skill to get a good price for something which you are selling or buying without seeming mean. Usually knowledge in this skill allows a character to get goods cheaper. INT, CHA

Camouflage : The skill to hide in Wilds using undergrowth, foliage and the lie of the land Requires 75xp to improve by one point. Can be used in a lesser extent in urban / town / city areas DEX,INT

The Game System

To the Player, The Isles is 'Rules Light' – You do not need knowledge of how the game works or what method is used to resolve actions – But The Isles still has an underlying system. This allows GMs to resolve whether actions are successful, how far a PC can walk or run, whether they are successful carrying out a complex task or whether they will be the victor in such things as a fight, a game of dice or a struggle for power

Success or failure in The Isles is usually dependant by at least three things:

Player Abilities: If a PC has the ability to perform a task, they will most likely be successful at doing-so. As in most Roleplaying Games, the chance of being successful is weighted towards a Character who is predisposed to succeed

Skills : If a PC has a certain Skill which is required to perform a task, again the chances of succeeding will be weighted in their favour. A PC *not* having a particular skill (eg Juggling) would be very unlikely to be able to complete a task that requires it (eg their attempt to Juggle three balls will fail)

Roleplay: The game is very dependent on Player input. By being creative, very specific in what a PC is to do and by good roleplaying a PC will often be more likely to successfully complete a task.

Combat



As an RPG, Combat is a major part of The Isles. Success in Combat is again dependant on Player Abilities, Skills and Roleplay – It also relies on WHAT / WHO the PC is fighting. Remember that as an Outcast your player will not be overly super-human and expect to survive against overwhelming odd or adversaries that are stronger, better skilled and more motivated.

The **Standing Order** section of the Turnsheets is often relied upon by the GMs to keep turns moving – This is also the case in Combat. If a player selects a passive stance or a stance that will cause the PC to Flee, they will most likely not fight at all.

Standing Orders:

Threat

Stop and Passive	<input type="checkbox"/>	Run	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stop and Aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Opportunity

Stand and Watch	<input type="checkbox"/>	Investigate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talk	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Interest

Look and Leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stop and Look	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stop and Investigate	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Whereas, if a PC instead takes an Aggressive stance in their Standing Orders, they will most likely attempt to win the fight

Money vs Barter

Like in many quasi-Mediaeval settings, The Isles has a system of trade based on supply and demand: Basic Goods that are needed to clothe, house, feed and keep people warm are produced and consumed usually close to where people live. Excess of these Basics are sold on either through Coin or a Barter system

Barter:

The Barter system operates throughout The Isles, either in less civilised areas, or places where Coin is not required for simple trades. Bartering can be attempted just about any more and the success of achieving a Barter transaction relies on what both participants of the Trade want, whether Barter is acceptable to both participants and whether the Barter itself is actually practical to do.

? *For example, a PC realises that she does not have enough Silver Coins to buy a Knife at a Tinker Camp on the road she is travelling. She offers three Silk Scarves instead when she sees the seller admiring them and they agree to Barter the Knife for the Scarves*

Coin:

Coin is usually the preferred (but not exclusive) method of Payment in most Towns and Cities. Because coins are minted in a number of places in The Isles, your PC might have coins of different weight and different values from up to ten different places.

Because of this diversity of coin, the number of Copper and Silver (and maybe Gold) is usually reduced to simple numbers.

? *For example, a Player Character might have 1GC12SC12CC written on their Turnsheets. This means they have the equivalent of 1 Gold Coin, 12 Silver Coins and 12 Copper Coins in weight. This might not mean they have this exact number of coinage in their purse or pocket.*

A Pint of Beer / A Loaf of Bread / 1CC

In general, a Pint of locally Brewed Beer or a small Loaf of Bread sufficient for about two meals will cost 1CC (One Copper Coin) – This is the universal guide.

Because it is often difficult to break a single Copper Coin (or penny) into anything smaller without cutting it into pieces, the 1CC is the smallest coin denomination in the game system.

10CC = 1SC

10SC = 1GC

Prices increase and decrease based on supply and demand.

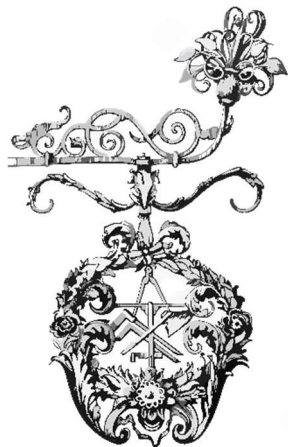
In one Town where there are a number of Smithys a basic short knife would cost 1 – 3SC. In a small out of the way Village it may cost 5SC if there are none 'spare' to sell or far less if they have plenty to sell.

Prices are usually more stable and more constant in a large City than a small backwood Village. Remember, if you are unable to find an item in a certain place, there may be no demand for the item where you are looking. For example, exotic spices may not be easily obtainable in a small mining Village

Below is a short list of common items found in many Cities and Towns of the islands, along with an average price:

Item	Average Price
Beer (pint)	1CC
Bread (small Loaf)	1CC
Knife	1SC
Trousers / Skirt	1SC5CC
Shirt / Blouse	1SC5CC
Basic Lodgings (Night)	3SC
Wine (Bottle)	5CC
Rope (20ft, hessian)	1SC
Pony	12SC
Horse (Riding)	25SC
Sack (Hessian)	2CC
Short Bow (w/ 1 sinew string)	2SC
Arrow (fletched)	1CC
Flint and Steel	1SC
Fishing Hook (steel)	5CC
Cloak (Wool)	1SC
Cloak (Leather)	12CC
Jerkin (Leather)	3SC
Shoes (Leather)	3SC
Boots (Leather)	5SC
Candle (Wax)	3CC
Candle (Tallow)	2CC
Short Sword	10C

GUILDS



A **guild** /gɪld/ is an association of artisans or merchants who oversee the practice of their craft/trade in a particular area. The largest mercantile Guilds acts as confraternities of tradesmen, with levels of ability, a leadership, assets, property and a great deal of influence. Guilds can be organized in a manner something between a professional association, a trade union, a cartel, and a secret society depending on the nature of the craft/trade.

For example, the Merchants Guild of Eldanor is a massive Guild that controls almost all of the trade and merchant transactions on the North Island (Erat) and in its client Cities and Towns across a number of other locations. The Guilds leadership are well-known, visible to the population and extremely wealth and outwardly competent. The Guild has great political and martial influence. Its flagged Ships ply its trade across thousands of leagues of sea, while its mercenary companies have often been accused of helping win wars in foreign lands.

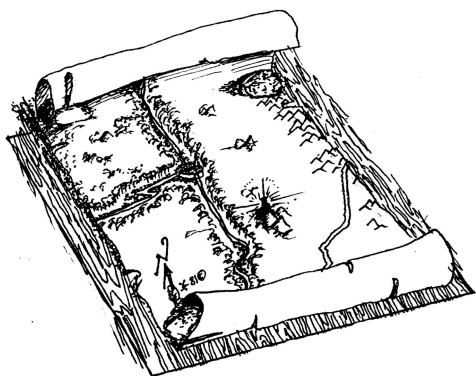
For example, the Guild of the Third Eye operates as a small, secretive Guild seeking to further the practice of Magic for the good of people. It is openly persecuted by the leaders of the Towns and Cities that it operates in but has a disproportionately large influence on the fears and superstition of the people who have heard of it.

Guilds can be a good career move for those seeking a purpose in life, but new members will almost always start at the bottom of the organisations hierarchy and progress upwards through skill, knowledge and demonstrating skills that would be of benefit.

TRAVEL

Some time during your Characters life they will need to travel – either just a few miles outside of the Town or City that have been living, or far further afield to investigate new lands. As with most things in The Isles travel is straightforward as long as you have an idea of how Where you want to go and How you want to get there.

The Isles is based on an early-mediaeval, pre industrial European world of approximately 13th to 15th Century. As such, there are roads, paths and sea routes with their associated methods of travel along them.



Foot : Overland, this is the most basic method travelling. On a good cobbled road or flat Path a fit and healthy person can feasibly walk up to about 18 miles a day.

Horse / Pony: As with travelling on Foot, the distance that can be travelled in a single day is about 18-24 miles – The benefits of travelling by Horse or Pony is that you can carry more and for short distances you can travel at a quicker pace.

Cart: The distance achieved by travelling by Cart or Wagon is dependant on good quality roads and tracks, what weight is being carried on the cart etc. An average mileage of about 20 miles can be achieved per day

Boat: Boats are an expensive method of travel due to the cost of supplying and manning the Ship / Boat itself. They are restricted to water and normally travel between Ports, although this is not always the case if one has enough money to pay for the vessel to travel somewhere that is not on a trade route

Method of travel	Average Distance (on Flat Ground) in a Day
Travel on Foot	18 Miles
Horse / Pony (Riding / Without Tiring /Exhausting)	18-24 Miles
Cart / Wagon	12-20 Miles
Ship (Dependant on Winds, Currents and Weather)	Up to 100 Miles
Rowing Boat	10 Miles

Brigands / Footpads / War and Weather



Many factors may have a negative effect on any journey you undertake.

Fitness: If your PCs fitness, health and wellbeing is not at 100% they will not be able to travel as far as they should if they were at their peak.

Food: On long journeys with few opportunities to re-stock, food supplies may hamper your journey

Weather: Travelling in Winter or the heat of Summer will have an effect on how well your PC can travel. Travellers always make slower progress when it rains, whilst the weather may close Mountin Passes or wash away river crossings. It has been said many times that Spring and early Autumn are the best times to travel – but this advice is not often heeded

Terrain: The nature of the land you are travelling over will always have an effect on your journey. Travelling over high mountains or through dense forest will usually hamper your progress, while a nice flat walk on a cobbled road through farmland will be quite straightforward

Others on the Path: You will not usually be the only one to use a path, a road or route. Brigands and Outlaws, wild animals and over-zealous Militia men and Guards may get in the way. Journeys are often necessary, but there will always be potential for danger wherever you go.

Weaponry and Warfare

The Isles is set across a wide equivalent timespan, equivalent to the 13th to the 15th Century late Medieval Europe. As such, the weapons available to people occupying the islands range from wooden clubs, steel knives and swords to Bows and Crossbow.

- Armour ranges from thin leather to plates of steel secured over intricately woven chain mail
- Types of weaponry and armour and their availability depend on location. If it is unlikely that there is a market for a Greatsword then it will be unlikely that such an item can be bought without great expense.
- Warfare and combat could be a 1-to-1 duel, a skirmish or a full pitched battle
- Horses in a lot of places are extremely expensive. Fighting involving horse-borne Cavalry is possible but often very unlikely.
- In general the ability to win in an armed fight will be dependent on a Characters Physical Ability, their Skills, roleplaying demonstrated in a players Turn, weapons used and a modicum of luck

Crime

! You play a character in The Isles who already has been a recipient of justice. Already you are unsure whether the punishment of an unknown amount of time in prison and the theft of your past is worthy

- payment for whatever heinous crime you must have committed. With this in mind, crime and its risks should be foremost in your mind




Crime is common in the islands. Poverty will drive beggars to steal, to make old soldiers consider using their skill for war for more nefarious needs, and to make the fearful lash out at the unknown and the different.

Punishment of crime is not usually fair. Petty thievery is often punished by the removal of fingers and hands, and sometimes with death, while worse crimes will usually see the perpetrator hanged.

Prison is not always used as a punishment, hence it is often confusing to many as to why Outcasts such as your character would have been subjected to incarceration instead of a quick death.

Most Towns and Cities have a Watch, tasked with keeping the streets free of trouble. The Watch will happily deal a good beating to anyone they feel deserves it, and often they will deal the same to people just on the recommendation of townsfolk with a few copper coins to hand.



! It is always well advised to know who and where the City or Town Watch actually are, and also to know the best way to avoid them.

Superstition

Along with the fear of war, dying and monsters, superstition is something citizens of The Isles have a great interest in. Many spirits, faeries and deities occupy the thoughts of people. Ilanthor has at least four separate Gods that are worshipped

The Gods in Ilanthor

The four main Gods that are openly worshipped in the Ilanthor region have Priests, organised followers, property, land and Shrines. Because of the nature of folk, other beliefs thrive in the Towns, Villagers and Wilds of the area. Some are tolerated alongside the Four Gods while others are persecuted, feared or simply ignored.

What is certain amongst their worshippers is that the Gods/Goddesses and lesser deities of The Isles are real, have an interest in their worshippers and openly have a hand in everyday life.

Gelt

The Goddess of Money, Merchants and Travel. Gelt is widely worshipped – The church is a rich one with a lot of influence throughout the region. Priests of Gelt are often young sons of wealthy Merchant families and as such hold great sway over the mercantile Guilds

Duhn

The God of Towns and Doorways. Followers of Duhn are often very martial in their outlook yet look to propagate civilisation and stability in their actions. They believe in structure, law and holy warfare.

Cern

The Goddess and God of the Woods, the Wilds, Trees and to some also the Night, which sometimes puts the deities followers in conflict with followers of Lun. Worshippers of Cern are taught to be free thinking and distrustful of authority

Lun

The Goddess and God of the Night. Luns duality means She has followers who might be in conflict with each other due to the opposite beliefs of what He is actually the deity of. There can often be more than one shrine or temple to Lun in one place.

Superstition and suspicion is insidious within the occupants of the Towns, Cities and Villages of The Isles.

Charms above doorways are often touched or 'beseeched' at the start of a working day

- Stones, pools, and strange features in the land are treated with reverence or distrust for fear of malign or strange forces that may be associated with it
- Woodland and forest are seen by many as dark places where death is always just a few footsteps away
- Poor or Good Luck are often blamed on belief or lack of belief in one of the Gods/ Goddesses

'Magic', 'Sorcery' and 'Witchcraft'

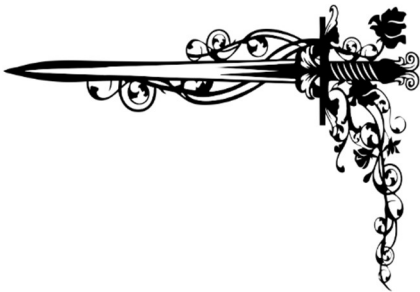


Magic in no uncertain terms is feared by almost everybody on the islands. It is believed that malign folk who have turned their faces to darkness and unnatural creatures practice dark acts that bring great ill to folk. Scientists in many of the great centres of learning have spent many days attempting to prove that magic does not exist and its practice is little more than petty tricks to fool the weak of mind. There are few places where the existence of magic is accepted as being a normal thing.

The Guilds, the Watch and the Nobility openly and regularly declare their opposition to anyone practicing witchcraft and sorcery. The most extreme trials and punishments are usually carried out on those found to be carrying out dark acts.

A small cult closely aligned to the Temple of Luhn called the Third Eye often works to increase knowledge of Magic and its natural and benign potentials, but they are held in low regard and barely tolerated because of the Third Eyes small number of healers who (though mistrusted) have some benign abilities and practices.

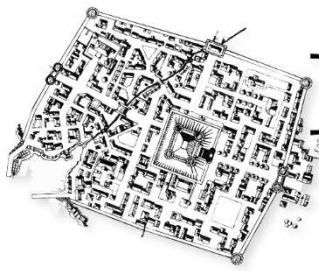
Both the Town Watches and the mercantile Guilds actively oppose the practice of any kind of Magic within their areas of influence.



Anything out of the ordinary : the tragedies that blight the common folk of the islands, a bad run of luck or a debilitating illness are blamed on spirits, malign Gods or sorcery visited by malevolent enemies or strangers.

In the same way, good luck or good fortune are often attributed to the self-same beings. Because of this, fear and ignorance and prejudice walk hand-in-hand with belief and the will to submit to unseen forces in the Towns and Cities of a hundred lands.

It is often possible for someone accused of witchcraft to be executed at the same time and on the same gallows as a murderer.



Ilanthor

and its surrounding
Region

Ilanthor is a new town and also an ancient site – Less than 60 years have passed since settlers from Danor on the West Isle arrived in the small natural harbour of what used to be the ruins of Dun Ilan. Seeking hardwood and limestone for building, galina and iron ore for weapons and roofing

materials, the original miners and woodsmen established a small Keep on the old Dun mound, walls that closely followed ruined earthworks and a town and harbour. The fortunes of the Town have slowly expanded and contracted from this centre of commerce ever since.

Villages were established first in the surrounding Oak and Birch woodland, then southwards along the coast, following the veins of iron into the Star Mountains.

Although a client town of Danor, Ilanthor Town and its surrounding villages are influenced by uneasy alliances with the surrounding area.

Ilanthor is directly bordered to the west by Caldoen lands. Caldoen Clan chiefs until less than a hundred years ago ruled all land from the sea in the west to the high Star Mountains east of the town, but War followed by Plague reduced the Cald population to small numbers that have still yet to recover. Hala Broch sits less than forty miles from Ilanthor and has a higher population than the Town and its surrounding area, but Hala is an insular kingdom and does not usually welcome strangers.

The Calds trade iron, wool and food with Ilanthor

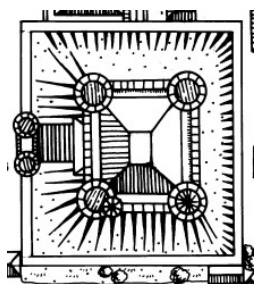
Ilanthor sits at the jagged mouth of the Cold River, a distortion of the Caldoen name, which itself is the outflow of Cold Lake which lies to the north of the Ilan area. Once surrounded by thick forest, large tracts have now been cleared to grow meagre crops to supplement the grain brought as trade goods from warmer climes – Heavy woodland of seasonal broadleaf and pine trees extend to the east and west of the town, rising in the east to hills and mountains, and the west to the Caldoen Highlands and more dense woodland at its foot. Steep gorges lie to both sides of the Town and are sources of limestone and ores

Ilanthor is an outpost with one main purpose – Trade.

It competes for wealth with the Town of Rignor to the north and constantly with the Cald folk to the west. Ilanthors low population has prevented the land surrounding the immediate area around the town from being tamed. The paths and roads outside of the City are often dangerous through weather, wild animals and the occasional act of brigandry. Life can be hard for anyone not able to work hard for a living.

Few children are born in Ilanthor, and those that are often struggle to survive into adulthood due to the climate and hard life that exists within the region.

The Town



Ilanthor town is nominally controlled by a lesser Lord – **Alleyn** – who bought the Keep twenty years ago. Alleyn supposedly holds fief over the Ilanthor region, but his fortunes have waned over the twenty years he has occupied the Keep and it is the Merchants Guild that has real control.

The Town is surprisingly well serviced by trades and guilds – the **Merchants Guild** is responsible for the import and export of goods to maintain prosperity, while **Wool Merchants, Miners** and **Coopers** have large Guild Houses.

Outcast Guilds have Way Houses in the Town but they are small – Few prisoners were brought to Ilanthor until recently and the Outcasts leaders have remained quiet for fear of drawing the attention of the Merchants Guild.

There are a number of Inns in the Town – the three with either the best or worst repute (depending on how they are judged) are **The Market**, **The Ship** and **The North Gate**. The Market is considered to have the finest ale, The North Gate has the most interesting of folk, and The Ship has the worst reputation.



Ilanthor Docks benefit from a fine and natural deepwater harbour. They are large and always busy with exports from the Mines and the Woods, and imports of grain and luxuries that are not obtainable from most other places on the Star Isle.

Most Trade is done at the Ship Inns window booths

There are three Smithys in the Town – Coopers near the East Gate, North Gate which backs onto the Inn of the same name and Smokers on the Market Place. Each Smithy is capable of making goods relevant to trade, travel and warfare but all three predominantly produce items to keep commerce flowing in and out of Town. The Smiths of the Town are held in high regard and are paid good stipends to remain in what is still a frontier town on the edges of the Danor League.

Trade Roads strike north, east and west – All are patrolled by the City Guard. Paths extend in many other directions to service the Villages, Mines and temporary Wood Camps that feed the City and its docks with raw materials. It is thought that more folk live outside of the Town Walls than within

Ships take folk and trade to the Danor League, the north island of Erat as well as other more exotic locations. In turn they bring in large quantities of food and other basic items that Ilanthor cannot yet produce

The Outlying Area

Ilanthor Town is bordered by farmland where the poor-quality soil is considered good enough for the growing of hardy grains and tuber-leaves. The gorges and woodland have been deforested for 5 or six miles surrounding Ilanthor itself, but the land further out becomes far wilder in the east and more doubtful in the west.

The woods and gorges even close to Ilanthor are considered dangerous to lone travellers and those unfamiliar with path lore.

The Cald folk used to occupy both Ilanthor and its surrounding lands less a hundred and fifty years ago. A large population of Farmers and traders lived in the area before they were decimated by Plague and interval strife. Evidence of the long-lost Cald population exists through the Ilanthor area. Ruined Villages and earthworks dot the land.

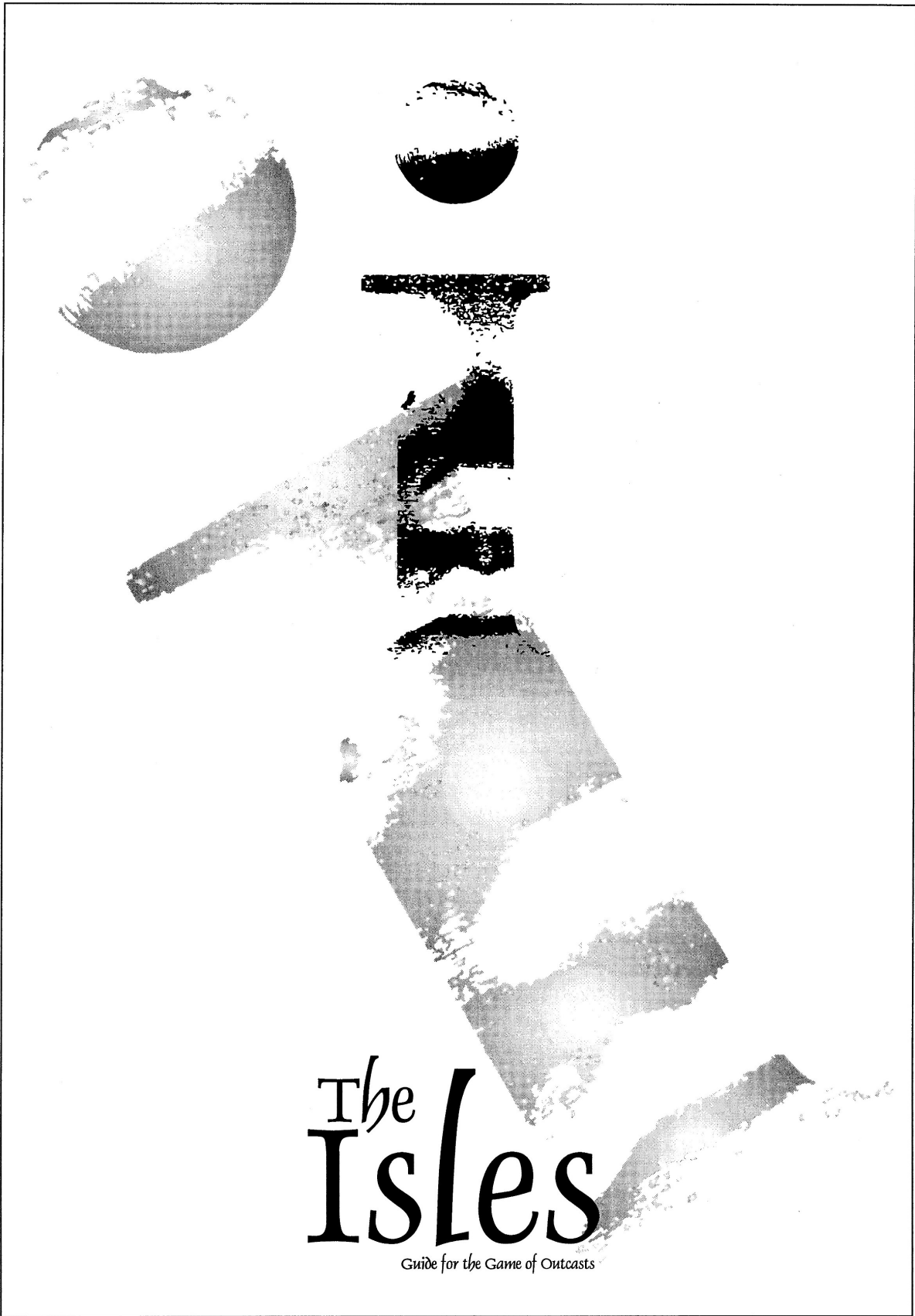
External Threats

Ask anyone in the Town and Villages of the region and they will mention the Caldoen folk, unknown brigands and sorcery as the main threats to life.

Climate and wild animals are an equal threat. The Star Island should be relatively warm compared to the North Island, but Summers are short and Winters are long and can be severe. Most folk blame the Coldbringer (often referred to as some kind of malign force called Bringer) – The **Coldbringer** is an almost mythical entity that occupies lands east of the region high in the Star Mountains. It is name by the Caldoen to be a vast Cave from which the Winter should flow outwards for a quarter of the year, then back inwards for a reciprocal three months.

Few people have claimed to have seen the Coldbringer. Many that have for some reason set off in search of it have not returned.

The Caldoen to the west of the region have an uneasy peace with the Town and the Merchants Guild. They protect their borders closely for fear of losing more land.



The Isles

Guide for the Game of Outcasts

