

one woman army who draws power from her god, she is one of the greatest threats the player faces. To complicate things, though, she does have a previous connection to the player, having met them in her travels, and may have her faith shaken in the institutions of her home. She is a *somewhat* possible romantic interest.

Warden Katheln: A stoic and figure, Katheln is the head of the Verdant Circle druidic order that guards Melenrika's Woods, the magical forest that guards Shornigov's capital and heartland. While his first priority will always be the forest, Kaelen's loyalty to the kingdom and its people runs deep, and he will defend it with whatever means necessary.

Eidolarch Mardek: The only living Echoborn –beings of incredible power capable of manipulating Resonance to create new magic, and manifest that magic without even casting spells– Eidolarch Mardek's Empire spans nearly the entire continent of Quendir. They are shrouded in mystery and rumor, but all know that they are capable of feats of incredible power, and command near absolute control over wherever their influence extends.

Stats

Primary Stats:

Vigor: Your brawn and hardiness, vigor represents your ability to strike hard with weapons and fists, as well as take blows.

Finesse: Your dexterity, flexibility, and speed, finesse measures your ability to move quickly and with precision.

Oratory: Your speaking skills, whether to inspire, persuade, intimidate, or otherwise.

Lore: Your learning and knowledge of the world around you, be that history, geography, knowledge of peoples and their customs, of magic, and any other information that may be useful for a conqueror.

Trickery: Your ability to lie, deceive, and otherwise mislead, both in your interpersonal interactions and in strategic decisions.

Battlemage: Battlemage is tied to your ability to cast offensive and defensive energy spells, useful on the field of battle and when a direct but powerful approach with magic is required. The Stoneweald legion are other significant practitioners.

Hemomancer: Hemomancer represents your capabilities with blood magic, which is used to lay curses on populations as well as strengthen or weaken individuals. The Burning Host are other significant practitioners.

Gloomwright: Gloomwright allows you to cast more advanced shadow and illusion magic, used to disguise oneself or others, and make people see things that are not there. The Circle of Veils are other significant practitioners.

Chimera: Chimera is an ancient skill that makes use of spirits that transform one's body, pushing physical capabilities of all kinds far beyond normal limits. Käll is another significant practitioner.

Inspiring/Intimidating: What kind of obeisance do you demand from your companions, and for the people you conquer? Do you call people's hearts and minds to action, or do they follow you for fear of what you might do?

Ruthless/Merciful: Do you show mercy, or give your enemies no quarter?

Honorable/Cunning: Do you honor promises you have given, even to your foes? Or you swear oaths left and right, only to break them when convenient for you?

Ambitious/Content: Are you constantly trying to elevate your position, in Mardek's empire and beyond? Or are you content with your lot, simply doing what is expected of you?

Secondary Stats

Kingdom control: Measures the efficiency with which you take control of Shornigov.

Eidolarch's suspicion: Represents the Eidolarch's trust in you, and how much of a threat to power they view you to be.

Respected/Reviled: Your reputation among the people of Shornigov and conquered peoples, whether they view you with respect despite your conquest, or as a tyrannical overlord.

Resonance: Your power as an Echoborn, unlocked in chapter 5. The strength of the new magics you create.

Army Strength: The overall power of your forces, including their number, moral, skill, and more.

Supplies: Mundane resources of all kinds, necessary for supplying an army, building fortifications and the like.

Paige's Opinion: Measure's Paige's opinion of / disillusionment with the Kingdom of Shornigov, the lower it is, the more disillusioned she seems, and the higher likelihood that the player can turn her to their side.

Companion Loyalty: Separate loyalty tracking for Aedwell, Shaelys, Nicos, Cyrios, Mirel, Käll, and Brynn.

Chapters

Chapter 1

The game begins with the player's arrival in the city of Briargate, a city on the border of Eidolarch Mardek's Empire and the Kingdom of Shornigov. It is from here that the conquest of the kingdom will be launched. As Aedwell accompanies them through the city, discussing the past and the journey ahead, they are greeted by Orvo Drask and Gael Scythehand. Some tension arises from Orvo around his city being used as a staging ground, and the presence of the Eidolarch's personal assassin is certain to ruffle the feathers of all present. Then then go on to meet the various armies and leaders that they will command during the invasion. Already, tensions arise over who will have the honor of leading the first assault into Shornigov's borderlands. Each meeting sets the tone for alliances, rivalries, and the moral complexities of the player's relationships. *What sort of entrance will you make into the city? Are you sympathetic to Orvo's annoyance, should he be more deferential to you? Will you try to find out more about why Gael is here? How will you win your lieutenants and their soldiers over to you? Who will you select to lead the first assault?*

As you stand before the new forces under your command all eyes are on you. This is your chance to set the tone for their loyalty and how they perceive your leadership.

1. Deliver a rousing speech promising glory and fortune. (Tests Oratory)
 - a. Success [+Army Strength, +Resonance, +Cyrios, +Shaelys, +Käll]
 - b. Failure [-Army Strength, -Cyrios]
2. Demonstrate your prowess in a match against multiple soldiers. (Tests Vigor/Finesse)
 - a. Success [+Army Strength, +Resonance, +Nicos, Shaelys, +Käll]
 - b. Failure [-Army Strength, -Käll]
3. Show off your knowledge of Shornigov, explaining their weaknesses and why they will fail. (Tests Lore)
 - a. Success [+Army Strength, +Resonance, +Nicos, +Aedwell, +Miriell]
 - b. Failure [-Army Strength, -Aedwell]
4. Present a display of your magical power (Tests Highest Magic Stat)
 - a. Success [+Army Strength, +Resonance, +Miriell, +Shaelys, +Nicos]
 - b. Failure [-Army Strength, -Miriell]
5. Challenge Käll to an exhibition sparring match in front of the whole army [+Käll] (Goes to sparring with Käll Scene)

Gael Scythehand's presence here is certainly suspicious, perhaps it is worth looking into why?

1. I will simply pay them a visit and ask them (Tests Oratory)
 - a. Success [Information gained, +Oratory, +Honorable]
 - b. Failure [Information not gained, -Gael]
2. I will sneak into their quarters and uncover what I can (Tests Trickery or Gloamwright)
 - a. Success [Info gained, +Trickery, +Cunning]
 - b. Failure [Info not gained, -Gael]
3. I will corner and intimidate them (Tests Strength/Intimidating)

- a. Success: [Info gained, +Vigor, +Intimidating, - Gael]
 - b. Failure: [Info not gained, - Gael]
- 4. I will simply speak with Aedwell, to see what they think.
 - a. Auto Success [-Aedwell, -Trickery]

Chapter 2

The player and their forces travel to Shornigov, spending time among one of their companions at that companions' forces. Along the journey, the player reflects on their past within the Eidolarch's Empire, and the time they spent honing their skills in one of four regions (chosen in Chapter 1), the Flame-Licked Plains, the Rotnan Highlands, Nova Exus, and the Forests of Veldrann. It was during this time that the player met Dame Paige for the first time. The two played a pivotal role in each other's lives during this time period, whatever relationship the player defines for them during this flashback, and however it ended. The player is shaken from their reverie by a rock slide caused by what appears to be a small ambush force that threatens to injure soldiers and block the army's passage. *As you travel, will you move amongst the soldiers or keep to yourself? Who will you travel with as the army marches? Were you a friend, enemy, student, or lover of Paige? Did she hamper or hinder your purpose in the region in question? How will you mitigate the damage of the rock slide, and clear it from the army's path so it can proceed?*

Your thoughts linger on your parting words to Paige, the last time you saw each other. You...

- 1. Encourage her to prove her resolve, even if you are on different paths.
 - a. Auto Success [+Paige Opinion, +Inspiring, +Eidolarch Suspicion]
- 2. Confide in her about some of your own doubts
 - a. Auto Success [++Paige Opinion, ++Eidolarch's Suspicion]
- 3. Insult her, tell her you never cross paths again.
 - a. Auto Success [-Paige Opinion, -Eidolarch Suspicion]
- 4. Press her on the flaws of her current path (Test Oratory)
 - a. Success: [+Paige Opinion]
 - b. Failure: [-Paige Opinion]

As your army marches through the narrow mountain pass, the sound of rumbling echoes from the cliffs as a cascade of rocks and boulders crashes towards the marching lines. A few silhouettes atop the cliffs rush away after having set off their trap.

- 1. Attempt to quickly organize your troops to clear the rubble of anyone under it. (Tests Oratory & Lore)
 - a. Success: [+Army Strength, + Resonance]
 - b. Failure: [-Army Strength, -Aedwell, -Nicos]
- 2. Undergo a partial physical transformation, and attempt to stop the falling boulders yourself (Tests Chimera & Vigor)
 - a. Success: [+Army Strength, + Resonance]
 - b. Failure: [Army Strength, -Nicos, -Miriel]
- 3. Conjure a barrier to block the rock slide (Tests Battlemage)

- a. Success: [+Army Strength, +Resonance]
 - b. Failure: [Army Strength, -Nicos, -Miriel]
- 4. Call to Käll, ordering him to lift rocks off of those trapped under them.
 - a. Auto Success [+Army Strength, -Käll]
- 5. The soldiers will be fine, it's more important that we capture the the ones who set it off
 - a. Auto Success [-Army Strength, -Nicos, +Shaelys, +Ruthless]

Chapter 3

Whichever force the player sent as a vanguard has completed the initial invasion. Battles have been fought, local forts have been taken, and the infrastructure of war is being built. The player and the rest of the army arrive as a makeshift camp and base of operations is being set up. Proper structures must still be set up, and the cohesion of the players forces from different parts of the empire. Additionally, the initial invasion has displaced many local populations and villages as the army continues to move in, who have fled to forests, turned to banditry, and in some cases fled to your army to beg for aid. Finally, there remains a single fort, Arctow Hold, that Shornigov's army continues to stalwartly defend, disrupting supply lines to Briarwatch. *Who will you send to deal with which tasks that need doing? What decision will you make regarding the fate of the refugees of Shornigov? How will you approach taking Arctow Hold, to secure your control of the borderlands?*

The populations of the local villages on the hinterlands have been displaced by the invasion. Many desperate people have turned to banditry, many more have fled to village outskirts, and some have even taken to following your army. Something must be done before resistance becomes more organized, and the conquered become a strain on the rest of the invasion.

- 1. Send expeditions out to crush any pockets of resistance, keeping highwaymen and refugees alike in line and out of your way
 - a. Auto Success: [-Army Strength, +Kingdom Control, +Ruthless, + Reviled]
- 2. It's crucial that we punish anyone actively hindering our progress, but we should aid others where we can to win hearts and minds. Kill any bandit groups that have formed, but send supplies to the innocent
 - a. Auto Success [-Army Strength, -Supplies, +Kingdom Control, +Respected]
- 3. We cannot afford the manpower it would require to hunt down brigands, but we ought to help those we displace where possible
 - a. Auto Success [-Supplies, -Kingdom Control, +Respected]
- 4. We can afford neither the manpower to fight bandits, nor the supplies to aid these so called refugees
 - a. Auto Success [--Kingdom Control]

(In the case of a failed or skipped negotiation for the surrender of the Actow Hold) *With the garrison of Actow Hold refusing to turn over control to you, you and your companions must*