Chromatic Mana

Quickstart

The Wizard's Cottage

A tabletop roleplaying game of Color, Light and theatre, for a Director and three to five players. Everything you need for a first game is in these pages: seven ready-to-play Characters, the rules in short, and a three-scene adventure that plays in about 90 to 120 minutes with new players, or 45 minutes in demo mode.

Your Color is who you are.	In Xanadu every soul shines in a Color of Light, and your Color decides what your Magic can touch: Red fire and feeling, Green stone and sensation, Blue water and thought, Yellow wind and belief, Violet bone and memory.
Runes are verbs.	Magic is built from Runes like Mend, Guard, Destroy and Conceal. Each holds a few Spells, and any of them can be stretched to solve a problem the rules never imagined, if you can talk the Director into it.
Spend your Beats.	Every Round you gain 3 Beats and spend them however you like: move, strike, cast, help, hide. Save them up and take a huge Turn later.
Chain your Maneuvers.	Register four signature moves that link Spells and Strikes into one roll. When the first part hits, everything after it follows the hit. We call it Target Cascading, and it is the heart of the game.

At the table

What you need: this booklet; a set of polyhedral dice for each player (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20); pencils; a token or miniature for each Character and Foe; and about two hours (45 minutes in demo mode).

Print the battle maps at 100% (no "fit to page"): each square is one inch, and one yard in the world.

Inside	Page
Choose your Character	2
How to Play	3
Maneuvers and Target Cascading	6
The Troupe: seven premades	7
The Wizard's Cottage (Director)	14
Battle maps	19
Quick reference	20

Choose your Character

Don't read all seven pages. Find the job you want and the moment you'd love to have at the table, then turn to that page. You don't need one of each, and two players can take the same Role.

Role	Feel	Your job	Your big moment	Page
The Spot **Willow · Green** *Florafolk (oak)*	**Simple**	Stand in front, hold the line and make the biggest Foe deal with you.	**Center Stage:** the boss has to fight you while your friends go to work.	7
The Flood **Reed · Yellow** *Faunafolk (lynx)*	**Simple**	Keep moving and keep shooting, from farther away than anyone.	**Spotter's Arrow:** hit from 50 yards and hand every friend near the target a Boon.	8
The Beam **Brand · Red** *Human*	**Simple**	Open with a Spell, then drive a heavy Strike into the same Foe.	**Line Breaker:** fire and axe in one roll, even from 5 yards away.	9
The Gel **Brook · Blue** *Elemental Intelligence (water)*	**Medium**	Heal your friends, shield them and help them succeed.	**Shelter:** on the enemy's Turn, catch a killing blow meant for a friend.	10
The Blackout **Sable · Yellow and Violet** *Faunafolk (ferret)*	**Medium**	Scout ahead, strike from hiding, and keep a way out.	**Opening Knife from hiding:** an Ambush, and every hit is a Critical Hit.	11
The Prism **Iris · Chromatic** *Elf*	**Tricky**	Set up your friends, then catch crowds of Foes in a magical display.	**Light Show:** one Spell hits every Foe around you, twice over.	12
The Strobe **Nix · Violet** *Goblin*	**Tricky**	Break the enemy's plan and make its magic unreliable.	**Break the Cue:** forbid the boss its best trick.	13

Who are they?

A Make is what a person is made of, and on Xanadu that can be almost anything: Humans and Elves, Goblins and Trolls, **Florafolk** with the essence of a rose or an oak, **Faunafolk** whose ancestors were wolves or herons, and **Elemental Intelligences**, minds of steam, stone or wind that woke one day and became someone. Each premade has a suggested Make. Change it to anything you like: the numbers stay the same.

Feel is how much there is to juggle. Simple Roles are a great first game; Tricky ones reward players who like a puzzle.

How to Play

One player is the **Director**. They describe the world, play everyone in it, and call for rolls. Everyone else plays one Character in the **Troupe**. Pick a Character from the chart on page 2, then skim these three pages together. The Director can teach the rest as it comes up: the adventure flags each new rule the first time it matters.

The Core Gameplay

Roll a d20, add the score the rule names, and compare the total with a target number. **Meets it beats it:** a total equal to the target succeeds. **Halves always round down.**

You are...	Roll d20 and add	You need to reach
Attacking with a weapon	Melee Hit or Ranged Hit	The target's Defense
Casting a Spell at someone	Spell Hit	The target's Spell Resilience
Hiding	Intuition	A Foe spots you only if its Perception is higher
Trying something else	A MOSAIC score (the Director picks)	The Hassle the Director sets (10 to 20+)

Boons and Banes. A Boon helps, a Bane hurts. For each one roll a d6, then add (Boons) or subtract (Banes) only the highest single d6. A Boon and a Bane cancel each other out, one for one. **Advantage** means roll two d20 and keep the higher; Disadvantage keeps the lower. **Percentages:** some effects have a chance, like a 10% misfire. Roll d100: at or under the chance, it happens.

Your Character

Health is how much harm you can take. **Mana** pays for Spells. **Defense** is what a Foe's weapon must reach to hit you; **Spell Resilience** is what its Spells must reach. Your six **MOSAIC** scores are the qualities you roll with:

Score	In a fight	Outside a fight
Might	Melee damage, Grappling	Feats of strength
Observation	Ranged Hit, spotting the Hidden	Noticing details, remembering clearly
Swiftness	Melee Hit, Defense, Initiative	Dexterity and fine work
Ambition	Mana, Spell power, Initiative	Bluffing, charming, persuading
Intuition	Spell Hit, ranged damage, Hiding	Reading people, instinct, nature
Composition	Health, Spell Resilience	Enduring fatigue and harsh places

Color. Your Color sets the materials your Magic can shape and the part of the mind it can reach. Each also gives a gift, already counted on your sheet.

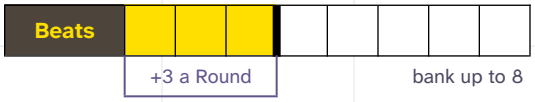
Color	Materials	Mind	Gift
Red	Fire, refined metal, ceramics	Emotions	Triple Initiative
Green	Rocks, vegetation	Physical sensations	Extra Health Roll
Blue	Water, ice, steam	Active thoughts	Extra Mana Roll
Yellow	Wind, fabric, feathers	Beliefs	Double Travel and wing Fly
Violet	Dead flesh, bones, fungi	Memories	Spell Resilience 14
Chromatic	Any Color	Any	Defense and Spell Resilience 12

Skillsets are what your Character has spent their life doing, like Physician or Scout. They don't add to rolls on their own: you **Haggle**. Tell the Director how your experience helps, and if they agree, each rank gives you 1 Boon on the roll.

Dreamlight Instrument. Every Character carries a Dreamlight Instrument, most often a small bell. Once a day, spend 2 Beats to play it and recover the Health and Mana printed on your page. It is your one big heal: don't forget it.

Combat: Rounds, Turns and Beats

A fight is a series of **Rounds**. In each Round everyone takes one **Turn**, in **Initiative** order, highest first (Initiative is Swiftness plus Ambition; Red triples it). On a tie, Players go before Foes. **On your Turn, either take a regular Action or use one of your Maneuvers**, in any mix, as long as you have the Beats. Your Maneuver cards are your best moves, not your only ones: everything in the table below is always available.



At the start of every Round, everyone gains 3 Beats. Spend them on your Turn, or on Rebuttals during others' Turns. Unspent Beats are banked, up to 8. You can never spend more than 8 in one Round.

Action	Beats
Travel (move up to your Travel Distance)	1
Weapon Strike	2
Cast a Spell	2
Use the Scenery (lever, door, rope)	2
Disengage (move without provoking)	2
Hide	2
Assist an adjacent Friend (+1 Boon)	1
Swap what is in your hands	1
Play your Dreamlight Instrument	2
A registered Maneuver	on its card
Drop an item	free

Strikes

Each weapon knows certain kinds of Strike. Your page lists yours.

Strike	Roll	On a hit
Regular	Normal	Normal weapon damage
Accurate	1 Boon	Half damage
Evasive	Normal	Half damage, then step 1 yard without provoking
Powerful	1 Bane	Normal damage plus the weapon's largest die again
Sundering	1 Bane	Half damage, and the target's Defense drops by 1 for the rest of the fight (the drops add up)

Critical Hit. A natural 20 on an Attack Roll always hits and adds the most the damage dice could show.
Reach. A spear reaches 2 yards; most other melee weapons reach 1. A Spell with no range listed is touch range.

Opportunity Attacks. When a Foe uses Travel to leave your melee reach, you may make one free ordinary weapon attack before it goes. You get one between your Turns. Disengaging avoids it.

Rebuttals are Spells and Maneuvers you can use on someone else's Turn, after their roll and before its Effects land. Keep a Beat banked for them.

Line of Sight and Cover. You must see what you target. Something that hides a Character completely gives full Cover: move around it first.

Down, not out. At 0 Health you are **Incapacitated**: you lose your banked Beats and can't act until a Friend heals you back to 1 Health or more. You die only when your Health reaches the negative of your maximum (Willow dies at –27), so there is almost always time to save someone. When you get back up, you gain only 1 Beat the next Round.

Magic

Your Character knows a few **Runes**, and each Rune holds three Spells. Every Spell has two dials, **Magnitude** (reach, size, duration) and **Potency** (strength), written (M, P). New Characters cast everything at (1, 1). To cast, speak and gesture (some Distinctions remove one or the other), pay the Mana, spend 2 Beats and make a Spell Roll against the target's Spell Resilience. A Spell on a willing Friend always works.

Spells that shape **Matter**, like Brace, need some of your Color's material close by: a Green Caster needs wood or stone, a Blue Caster needs water. Look around the room. A **Matter Blast** fires a sliver of your material, and a hit inflicts your Color's Status:

Status	At (1, 1), for 1 Target Turn
Vex (Violet)	Each Beat the target spends deals it 1 Psychic damage.
Winded (Yellow)	Each yard the target moves deals it 1 Air damage.
Leech (Green)	At the start of the target's Turn it takes 2 Earth damage and the Caster heals 2.

Durations. "1 Target Turn" lasts until the end of the target's next Turn. "Until this point next Round" means exactly that.

Outside a fight

Skill Rolls. When the outcome is in doubt, the Director names a MOSAIC score and a Hassle: 10–12 is easy, 13–15 takes effort, 16–20 takes real talent, 20+ needs training. Then Haggle. Skillset ranks give Boons, and a clever idea can earn one too. Keep it lively and give everyone a chance to pitch in.

Runes are verbs. If a Spell or Rune could plausibly do something the rules don't cover, describe what you want and Haggle for it. A Mend Caster might knit torn pages back together; a Violet Caster might taste the memories in a bone. The Director decides, and may pair the Spell with a Skill Roll.

Hiding and Ambush. Out of sight, spend 2 Beats and roll d20 + Intuition. A Foe notices you only if its Perception beats your result. Travel keeps you hidden; any other Action ends it. A weapon attack from hiding against a Foe that doesn't know where you are is an **Ambush**: any hit is a Critical Hit.

Helping. Spend 1 Beat to Assist an adjacent Friend: 1 Boon on their next roll. In or out of a fight, a Troupe that works together wins.

A first Round, step by step

Who	What happens
Director	Two bandits block the road. Everyone gains 3 Beats. Brand is Red, so his Initiative is 6: he goes first.
Brand	Line Breaker on the nearer bandit, 4 yards off: 3 Beats and 1 Mana. One Spell Roll: d20 + 1, plus a Boon because the Maneuver opens with his attuned Mana Blast. 13 + 1 + 4 = 18 against Spell Resilience 10. The fire hits for 2d6: 7. The axe follows through the cascade for 1d12 + 1d4 + 1d12 + 1: 19. That is 26 damage against the bandit's 17 Health, and it drops. Brand's Beats are spent.
Willow	Center Stage, her one-Source Maneuver built on the Goad Spell (1 Beat, 1 Mana), on the second bandit: it has to come at her. She Travels across the road (1 Beat) and keeps her last Beat banked.
Director	The bandit's Turn. It must attack Willow, and rolls 14 against her Defense 12: a hit, about to deal 4 damage.
Willow	Turn Aside! It is her one-Source Maneuver built on the Brace Spell (1, 1), and Brace is a Rebuttal, so she uses it on the bandit's Turn, after the roll and before the damage: 1 Beat and 2 Mana. There are trees by the road, so Green Matter is close. 4 Temporary Health soaks all 4 damage.
Director	Round 2. Everyone gains 3 more Beats. Willow spent everything, so she has 3; had she saved one, she would have 4.

That is the whole loop: gain Beats, spend them on your Turn, keep one back for the other side's Turn if you want, and look for the Maneuver that chains your best moves into one roll.

Maneuvers

A **Maneuver** is a signature move: a Strike and a Spell, or two Spells, or a step and a stab, or any other series of Actions. Practiced until they flow as one. Each premade page offers six. In the full game you design your own from anything you know. On your Turn you can either take a regular Action or use one of your Maneuvers. They follow four rules:

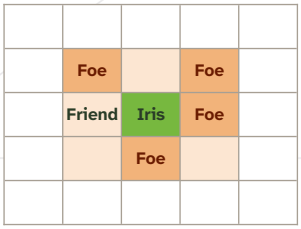
Cheaper	Add up the Beats of its parts (its **Sources**) and subtract 1, to a minimum of 1. A Strike costs 2 Beats on its own; registered as a one-Source Maneuver, it costs 1. Pay each Spell's Mana as normal.
One roll	Roll once. That single result is tested against every target the Maneuver reaches.
Once a Round	Each Maneuver can be used once per Round. You may register 4, and no Source may repeat inside one Maneuver.
One crit	Only the first Weapon Strike in a Maneuver can be a Critical Hit. A natural 20 on the opening roll makes it one, even when a Spell opened the Maneuver.

Target Cascading

When an early Source hits, every later Source follows that hit. Whatever the first part touched, the next part can reach. If it misses, the chain stops.

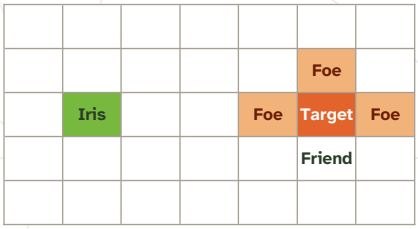
Pattern	What happens	Try it
Touch through a hit	A touch-range Source rides a ranged hit to its target.	Line Breaker (axe at 5 yards), Long Reach, Pinning Thrust
Move the origin	An area Source bursts around whatever you hit, not around you.	Distant Flare, Spotter's Arrow, Limelight, Hush, Tidal Chorus
Multiply across an area	A single-target Source reaches everyone an area hit. Only pay its Mana once.	Light Show, Firebreak, Ensemble
Partial success	An area roll may hit some targets and miss others. Later Sources follow only the hits.	Any of the above

Light Show: Field, then Blast



The Field tests one roll against every Foe within 1 yard of Iris. Each Foe it hits takes 1d4, and the Blast reaches every one of them: 2d6 Fire each, paid once. The Friend is left out (Friendly Spells).

Distant Flare: Blast, then Field



Flip the order and the Blast flies 5 yards first. If it hits, the Field bursts around the target instead of around Iris: the same roll is tested against each creature within 1 yard of it, Friends left out.

Example: Line Breaker

Brand is Red and acts first. The Foe is 4 yards away, too far for his axe. He spends 3 Beats and 1 Mana on Line Breaker: Mana Blast, then Powerful Strike. One Spell Roll: d20 + 1, plus a Boon for opening with his attuned Mana Blast. He rolls 11 + 1 + 3 = 15 against Spell Resilience 11. The Mana Blast hits for 2d6, and because it hit, the axe follows through the cascade as if he were standing there: 1d12 + 1d4 + 1d12 + 1. Had the Mana Blast missed, the axe Strike would not follow.

Narratively, Brand slices with his Axe and a wave of fiery energy erupts from the swing, carrying both the magic and the momentum into his foe.

> **Choose your four**
> Each premade page has six Maneuver cards. **Tick four** to register them for this session; the "Suggested" line offers a set. The other two aren't lost: you can still take their parts as ordinary Actions at full price (2 Beats for a Strike or a Spell, each rolled on its own). Building your own Maneuvers is Chapter 5 of the rulebook.

The Spot

Willow

Florafolk (oak)

Green

Draw danger toward you and give your friends room to act.

Health	Mana	Beats	Initiative	Travel	Perception	Defense	Spell Res.	Melee Hit	Ranged Hit	Spell Hit
27	14	+3	2	5 yd	10	12	11	+1	+0	+1

Beats | **Health now** ____ of 27 | **Mana now** ____ of 14

MOSAIC	Might 1 · Observation 0 · Swiftness 1 · Ambition 1 · Intuition 1 · Composition 1
Runes	Compel (Goad, Command, Dominate) · Guard (Protect, Brace, Cage) · Mend (Heal, Repair, Purify)
Weapon	Spear: reach 2 yards, 1d12 + 1 Piercing. Strikes: Regular, Accurate. Buckler: Armor 1.
Skillsets	Bodyguard 1, Wilderness 1: keep someone safe, find a way through rough country.
Distinctions	Bulwark (an Opportunity Attack hit stops the Foe's Travel) · Nongesticulate Casting (cast with full hands) · Improved Health and Mana Dice
Instrument	Once per day, 2 Beats: recover 2 × (d12 + 1) Health and 2 × (d8 + 1) Mana (or take 7 and 5 each).

In the fight. You are the wall. Step in front, pick the Foe that worries you most, and make it deal with you. Center Stage forces it to come at you, and your spear reaches 2 yards, so you can hold a doorway and still strike. Keep 1 Beat and 2 Mana in the bank during Foes' Turns for Turn Aside. Your 27 Health is the most in the Troupe: spend it.

Choose your four. Suggested: Center Stage, Guarding Thrust, Turn Aside, Pinning Thrust. Swap in Hold Fast if Foes pile onto you, or Field Mend if nobody plays the Gel. *Tick any four you like.*

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Center Stage	1	1

Source 1	Goad (1, 1) · Green
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 5 yards.
For 1 Target Turn it must aim every attack and harmful Spell at you (areas must include you), may only move closer to you, and cannot take Cover. It may still choose to do nothing.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Guarding Thrust	1	0

Source 1	Regular Strike (Spear)
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 2 yards: 1d12 + 1 Piercing damage.
Bulwark: when a Foe Travels out of your reach and your free Opportunity Attack hits, its Travel stops for that Turn.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Turn Aside	1	2

Source 1	Brace (1, 1) · Green
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Rebuttal: use it on a Foe's Turn, after its attack or Spell is rolled and before damage. You or a Friend within 5 yards gains 4 Temporary Health for 1 Target Turn.
Needs rock, wood or plants nearby. Once per Target per Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Hold Fast	3	3

Source 1	Protect (1, 1) · Green
Source 2	Brace (1, 1) · Green
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

On yourself: Protect adds 1 Defense, then Brace gives 4 Temporary Health. Both last 1 Target Turn.
Needs rock, wood or plants nearby. Brace: once per Target per Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Pinning Thrust	3	1

Source 1	Regular Strike (Spear)
Source 2	Command (1, 1) · Green
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 2 yards: 1d12 + 1 Piercing.
On a hit, the spear carries your touch-range Command: one order of up to 10 words for 1 Target Turn. Each Round it disobeys, it takes 2d6. Doing nothing is always safe for it. At the start of a Round it can shake it off with an Ambition Roll that exceeds your roll for this Maneuver.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Field Mend	1	2

Source 1	Heal (1, 1) · Green
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Touch yourself or an adjacent Friend: restore 2d6 Health, up to their maximum.
A Spell on a willing Friend always succeeds; roll d20 + 1 anyway, since some rules look at the result.

The Flood

Reed

Faunafolk (lynx)

Yellow

Move into position and keep changing threats under fire.

Health	Mana	Beats	Initiative	Travel	Perception	Defense	Spell Res.	Melee Hit	Ranged Hit	Spell Hit
20	14	+3	2	10 yd	11	11	11	+1	+1	+1

Beats | **Health now** of 20 | **Mana now** of 14

MOSAIC	Might 0 · Observation 1 · Swiftness 1 · Ambition 1 · Intuition 1 · Composition 1
Runes	Perceive (Detect, Scan, Seek) · Fortify (Resist, Rally, Restore)
Weapon	Bow: 50 yards, 1d10 + 1 Piercing (two ranks of Improved Weapon Damage). Strikes: Regular, Accurate, Powerful.
Skillsets	Sentinel 1, Tracker 1: keep watch, follow a trail, notice trouble.
Distinctions	Improved Weapon Damage (Bow) · Nongesticulate Casting (cast with a bow in hand) · Improved Health and Mana Dice
Instrument	Once per day, 2 Beats: recover 2 × (d12 + 1) Health and 2 × (d8 + 1) Mana (or take 7 and 5 each).

In the fight. Find distance and keep shooting. Your bow reaches 50 yards and you move 10 yards a Travel, farther than anyone. Each Round, ask which Foe is hurting the Troupe most right now, and shoot that one. If a Foe gets next to you, Running Shot moves you first (it may swing as you go), or pay 2 Beats to Disengage safely.

Choose your four. Suggested: Quick Shot, Pressing Shot, Running Shot, Spotter's Arrow. Swap in Heavy Draw to gamble on big hits, or Watch the Wings when the Director loves ambushes. *Tick any four you like.*

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Quick Shot	1	0

Source 1	Regular Strike (Bow)
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 50 yards that you can see: 1d10 + 1 Piercing damage.
One arrow for one Beat. Leave room for it every Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Pressing Shot	3	0

Source 1	Accurate Strike (Bow)
Source 2	Powerful Strike (Bow)
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Boon. A Foe within 50 yards.
On a hit: half of (1d10 + 1), then the Powerful Strike follows with no new roll: 1d10 + 1d10 + 1. Only the first arrow can be a Critical Hit.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Running Shot	2	0

Source 1	Travel
Source 2	Accurate Strike (Bow)
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Travel up to 10 yards, then shoot. Attack Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Boon. A Foe within 50 yards: half of (1d10 + 1). Leaving a Foe's reach still invites its Opportunity Attack.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Watch the Wings	1	1

Source 1	Detect (1, 1) · Yellow
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Your hearing sharpens: +2 Perception for 1 Target Turn, and Detect makes a free Perception Roll using its Spell Roll (d20 + 1).
While it lasts you ignore Yellow Lies. It finds hidden Foes; it does not clear your shot.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Spotter's Arrow	3	1

Source 1	Regular Strike (Bow)
Source 2	Rally (1, 1) · Yellow
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 50 yards: 1d10 + 1 Piercing.
On a hit, Rally bursts around that Foe: each Friend within 1 yard of it gains 1 Boon to spend on any Roll before this point in the next Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Heavy Draw	1	0

Source 1	Powerful Strike (Bow)
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Bane. A Foe within 50 yards: 1d10 + 1d10 + 1 Piercing.
A Critical Hit adds 10, the most the bow's own die can show.

The Beam

Brand
Human

Red

Open with a Spell, then drive a heavy Strike into the same foe.

Health	Mana	Beats	Initiative	Travel	Perception	Defense	Spell Res.	Melee Hit	Ranged Hit	Spell Hit
14	11	+3	6	5 yd	10	11	11	+1	+0	+1

Beats ☐ ☐ ☐ ▮ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Health now ____ of 14 **Mana now** ____ of 11

MOSAIC	Might 1 · Observation 0 · Swiftness 1 · Ambition 1 · Intuition 1 · Composition 1
Runes	Destroy (Mana Blast, Mana Stream, Mana Field) · Guard (Protect, Brace, Cage)
Weapon	Axe: reach 1 yard, 1d12 + 1d4 + 1 Slicing (two ranks of Improved Weapon Damage). Strikes: Regular, Powerful, Sundering.
Skillsets	Athletics 1, Monster Lore 1: climb, lift, break; know what you are fighting.
Distinctions	Spell Attunement: Mana Blast (1 Boon when it opens a Maneuver) · Nongesticulate Casting · Improved Mana Dice
Instrument	Once per day, 2 Beats: recover 2 × (d8 + 1) Health and 2 × (d6 + 1) Mana (or take 5 and 4 each).

In the fight. Pick the most dangerous Foe and end it. Red triples your Initiative, so you usually act first. Line Breaker is your whole Round and your best hit: one Spell Roll opens it, and if the fire lands the axe lands too, even from 5 yards away. Your 14 Health is the lowest in the Troupe, so let the Spot stand in front.

Choose your four. Suggested: Line Breaker, Steady Point, Firebreak, Ember Dart. Swap in Breaking Point to soften a big Foe for everyone, or Safety Brace to look after yourself. *Tick any four you like.*

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Line Breaker	3	1

Source 1	Mana Blast (1, 1) · Red
Source 2	Powerful Strike (Axe)
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Boon. A Foe within 5 yards: 2d6 Fire damage.
On a hit, the axe follows through the cascade, even at 5 yards: 1d12 + 1d4 + 1d12 + 1 Slicing. No second roll.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Steady Point	1	0

Source 1	Regular Strike (Axe)
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 1 yard: 1d12 + 1d4 + 1 Slicing damage.
No Mana, one Beat: your fallback every Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Breaking Point	1	0

Source 1	Sundering Strike (Axe)
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Bane. A Foe within 1 yard: half of (1d12 + 1d4 + 1).
On a hit, its Defense drops by 1 for the rest of the fight, and the drops add up. Everyone's weapons hit it more easily.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Safety Brace	1	2

Source 1	Brace (1, 1) · Red
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Rebuttal: use it on a Foe's Turn, after its attack or Spell is rolled and before damage. You or a Friend within 5 yards gains 4 Temporary Health for 1 Target Turn.
Needs ceramic or worked metal nearby. Once per Target per Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Firebreak	3	5

Source 1	Mana Field (1, 1) · Red
Source 2	Powerful Strike (Axe)
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1 against everyone within 1 yard of you, Friends too. Each one hit takes 1d4 Fire, then the axe reaches all of them: 1d12 + 1d4 + 1d12 + 1 Slicing each.
Warn your friends first.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Ember Dart	1	1

Source 1	Mana Blast (1, 1) · Red
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Boon. A Foe within 5 yards: 2d6 Fire damage.
Reach for the Foe you cannot get to.

The Gel

Brook

Elemental Intelligence (water)

Blue

Heal your friends, protect them, and help them succeed.

Health	Mana	Beats	Initiative	Travel	Perception	Defense	Spell Res.	Melee Hit	Ranged Hit	Spell Hit
20	27	+3	2	5 yd	11	11	11	+1	+1	+1

Beats | **Health now** of 20 | **Mana now** of 27

MOSAIC	Might 0 · Observation 1 · Swiftness 1 · Ambition 1 · Intuition 1 · Composition 1
Runes	Guard (Protect, Brace, Cage) · Mend (Heal, Repair, Purify) · Fortify (Resist, Rally, Restore)
Weapon	Daggers: reach 1 yard, 1d6 + 1 Slicing or Piercing. Strikes: Regular, Accurate, Evasive, Powerful, Sundering.
Skillsets	Physician 1, Diplomat 1: treat injuries, calm a tense conversation.
Distinctions	Helpful Assistance (your Assist adds your MOSAIC score too) · Improved Health and Mana Dice
Instrument	Once per day, 2 Beats: recover 2 × (d12 + 1) Health and 2 × (d12 + 1) Mana (or take 7 each).

In the fight. You keep everyone standing. Stay a step behind the front line, close enough to reach the Spot or the Beam. Healing fixes harm after it lands; Shelter stops it before it lands, so keep 1 Beat and 2 Mana banked during Foes' Turns. Your 27 Mana lets you cast every Round. When nobody is hurt, Assist: with Helpful Assistance it adds a Boon and your MOSAIC score.

Choose your four. Suggested: Mending Light, Shelter, Long Reach, Lift the Troupe. Swap in Tidal Chorus when friends fight shoulder to shoulder, or Guiding Light when you want to fight. *Tick any four you like.*

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Mending Light	1	2

Source 1	Heal (1, 1) · Blue
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Touch yourself or an adjacent Friend: restore 2d6 Health, up to their maximum.
Spells on a willing Friend always succeed; roll d20 + 1 anyway. Travel next to them first.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Lift the Troupe	1	1

Source 1	Rally (1, 1) · Blue
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Each Friend within 1 yard of you gains 1 Boon to spend on any Roll they choose, before this point in the next Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Shelter	1	2

Source 1	Brace (1, 1) · Blue
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Rebuttal: use it on a Foe's Turn, after its attack or Spell is rolled and before damage. You or a Friend within 5 yards gains 4 Temporary Health for 1 Target Turn.
Needs water or ice nearby. Once per Target per Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Guiding Light	1	0

Source 1	Regular Strike (Daggers)
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 1 yard: 1d6 + 1 Slicing or Piercing damage.
A dagger in one hand leaves the other free to cast.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Long Reach	3	3

Source 1	Purify (1, 1) · Blue
Source 2	Heal (1, 1) · Blue
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

A Friend within 5 yards: Purify removes one Bleed, Bruise or Expose. The cascade then carries your touch-range Heal to them: 2d6 Health.
No need to stand next to them.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Tidal Chorus	3	3

Source 1	Heal (1, 1) · Blue
Source 2	Rally (1, 1) · Blue
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Touch an adjacent Friend: restore 2d6 Health. Rally then bursts around them: they and every Friend within 1 yard of them gain 1 Boon until this point in the next Round.

The Blackout

Sable

Faunafolk (ferret)

Yellow and Violet

Scout ahead, strike from hiding, and keep a way out.

Health	Mana	Beats	Initiative	Travel	Perception	Defense	Spell Res.	Melee Hit	Ranged Hit	Spell Hit
17	8	+3	2	10 yd	11	11	15	+1	+1	+1

Beats | **Health now** ____ of 17 | **Mana now** ____ of 8

MOSAIC	Might 0 · Observation 1 · Swiftness 1 · Ambition 1 · Intuition 1 · Composition 1
Runes	Conceal (Obscure, Tamper, Encrypt)
Weapon	Daggers: reach 1 yard, 1d6 + 1 Slicing or Piercing. Strikes: Regular, Accurate, Evasive, Powerful, Sundering.
Skillsets	Scout 1: explore routes, look for danger, come back with answers.
Distinctions	Nonverbal Casting (cast in silence; you still need a free hand) · Improved Health Dice
Instrument	Once per day, 2 Beats: recover 2 × (d10 + 1) Health and 2 × (d4 + 1) Mana (or take 6 and 3 each).

In the fight. Choose when to be seen. Before a fight, scout ahead and report back. In a fight, vanish, find a Foe that does not know where you are, and open with Opening Knife: an Ambush hit is always a Critical Hit. Then slip away and do it again. With 8 Mana and 17 Health, a long trade of blows is a losing game for you.

Choose your four. Suggested: Blackout, Opening Knife, Vanishing Act, Exit Cue. Swap in Fade Out to move and hide in one go, or Quiet Cut when a hit matters more than its size. *Tick any four you like.*

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Blackout	1	1

Source 1	Obscure (1, 1) · Yellow
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

You are Hidden at once: roll Hide (d20 + 1) and add 2. A Foe finds you only if its Perception exceeds that. Moving ends the +2; attacking or any Action but Travel ends your hiding. Cast in silence.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Opening Knife	1	0

Source 1	Powerful Strike (Daggers)
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Bane. A Foe within 1 yard: 1d6 + 1d6 + 1 damage.
From hiding, against a Foe that does not know where you are, it is an Ambush: any hit is a Critical Hit (+6).

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Quiet Cut	1	0

Source 1	Accurate Strike (Daggers)
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Boon. A Foe within 1 yard: half of (1d6 + 1).
From hiding it can Ambush too. Attacking ends your hiding.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Exit Cue	2	0

Source 1	Evasive Strike (Daggers)
Source 2	Travel
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 1 yard: half of (1d6 + 1). On a hit, step 1 yard without provoking.
Then Travel up to 10 yards (normal Opportunity Attacks apply).

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Vanishing Act	3	1

Source 1	Evasive Strike (Daggers)
Source 2	Obscure (1, 1) · Yellow
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 1 yard: half of (1d6 + 1); on a hit step 1 yard free.
Then Obscure yourself: Hidden again, Hide (d20 + 1) + 2. Next Round, a knife from hiding is an Ambush.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Fade Out	2	1

Source 1	Travel
Source 2	Obscure (1, 1) · Yellow
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Travel up to 10 yards, then vanish: you are Hidden, Hide (d20 + 1) + 2.
Moving again ends the +2. The way to get into position before you strike.

The Prism

Iris
Elf

Chromatic

Prepare your friends, then catch several foes in a magical display.

Health	Mana	Beats	Initiative	Travel	Perception	Defense	Spell Res.	Melee Hit	Ranged Hit	Spell Hit
17	14	+3	2	5 yd	10	13	13	+1	+0	+1

Beats ☐ ☐ ☐ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Health now ____ of 17 **Mana now** ____ of 14

MOSAIC	Might 0 · Observation 0 · Swiftness 1 · Ambition 1 · Intuition 1 · Composition 1
Runes	Destroy (Mana Blast, Mana Stream, Mana Field) · Fortify (Resist, Rally, Restore). Chromatic: any Color.
Weapon	No weapon: unarmed 1d4 Impact. Chromatic gives you base Defense and Spell Resilience of 12.
Skillsets	Stagecraft 1: performance, spectacle, timing, a convincing show.
Distinctions	Friendly Spells (leave Friends out) · Selfish Spells (leave yourself out) · Papercrafting · Improved Health and Mana Dice
Instrument	Once per day, 2 Beats: recover 2 × (d10 + 1) Health and 2 × (d8 + 1) Mana (or take 6 and 5 each).

In the fight. You paint the battlefield. Watch for Foes to bunch up: Light Show when they crowd you, Distant Flare when they crowd each other. Friendly Spells and Selfish Spells let you leave friends and yourself out of every Spell, so you can fire into a melee safely. Big moves cost 6 of your 14 Mana, and your Health is only 17: stay out of reach.

Choose your four. Suggested: Steady Light, Light Show, Distant Flare, Limelight. Swap in Set the Stage or Ensemble when your friends need help more than your Foes need fire. *Tick any four you like.*

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Steady Light	1	1

Source 1	Mana Blast (1, 1) · Red
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 5 yards: 2d6 Fire damage.
Your every-Round spark.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Set the Stage	1	1

Source 1	Rally (1, 1)
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Each Friend within 1 yard of you gains 1 Boon to spend on any Roll they choose, before this point in the next Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Light Show	3	6

Source 1	Mana Field (1, 1) · Red
Source 2	Mana Blast (1, 1) · Red
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1 against every Foe within 1 yard of you (leave Friends out). Each one hit takes 1d4 Fire, then the Blast reaches every one of them: 2d6 Fire each.
Pay the Blast's Mana once.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Distant Flare	3	6

Source 1	Mana Blast (1, 1) · Red
Source 2	Mana Field (1, 1) · Red
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 5 yards: 2d6 Fire. On a hit the Field bursts around that Foe: it takes 1d4, and the same roll is tested against every other creature within 1 yard of it (leave Friends out) for 1d4 each.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Limelight	3	2

Source 1	Mana Blast (1, 1) · Red
Source 2	Rally (1, 1)
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 5 yards: 2d6 Fire. On a hit, Rally bursts around that Foe: each Friend within 1 yard of it gains 1 Boon until this point in the next Round.

☐ **Registered**

Name	Beats	Mana
Ensemble	3	2

Source 1	Rally (1, 1)
Source 2	Resist (1, 1) · Chromatic
Source 3	
Source 4	

Description

Each Friend within 1 yard of you gains 1 Boon until this point in the next Round. The cascade carries Resist to every one of them: Physical Resistance 1 (each weapon hit deals 1 less damage) for 1 Target Turn.

The Strobe

Nix
Goblin

Violet

Interrupt dangerous plans and prepare useful magical tools.

Health	Mana	Beats	Initiative	Travel	Perception	Defense	Spell Res.	Melee Hit	Ranged Hit	Spell Hit
20	11	+3	2	5 yd	11	11	15	+1	+1	+1

Beats ☐ ☐ ☐ ▮ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Health now ____ of 20 **Mana now** ____ of 11

MOSAIC	Might 0 · Observation 1 · Swiftness 1 · Ambition 1 · Intuition 1 · Composition 1
Runes	Conjure (Matter Blast, Matter Stream, Matter Field) · Dispel (Disjoint, Discombobulate, Suppress) · Seal (Forbid, Lock, Imprison)
Weapon	Daggers: reach 1 yard, 1d6 + 1 Slicing or Piercing. Strikes: Regular, Accurate, Evasive, Powerful, Sundering.
Skillsets	Artisan 1, Investigator 1: practical work, clues, how things were made.
Distinctions	Spell Attunement: Matter Blast (1 Boon when it opens a Maneuver) · Crystalcutting · Improved Health and Mana Dice
Instrument	Once per day, 2 Beats: recover 2 × (d12 + 1) Health and 2 × (d6 + 1) Mana (or take 7 and 4 each).

In the fight. You make the enemy's best plan fail. Watch the Foes' Turns: when one shows you a nasty trick, Break the Cue so it cannot repeat it easily. Flicker turns every Beat a Foe spends into pain and makes its Spells unreliable. Your Spell Resilience of 15 is the best in the Troupe. Mana is tight (11), so save Clear the Effect for a moment that matters.

Choose your four. Suggested: Flicker, Break the Cue, Bone Shard, Hush. Swap in Clear the Effect to save a friend from a Spell, or Slip Away for close quarters. *Tick any four you like.*

☐ **Registered**

Name		Beats	3
Flicker		Mana	2
Source 1	Matter Blast (1, 1) · Violet		
Source 2	Discombobulate (1, 1) · Violet		
Source 3			
Source 4			

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Boon. A Foe within 5 yards.
On a hit: Vex (1 Psychic damage per Beat it spends, 1 Target Turn), and Discombobulate rides the hit: each Spell it casts for 1 Target Turn has a 10% chance to misfire.

☐ **Registered**

Name		Beats	1
Break the Cue		Mana	1
Source 1	Forbid (1, 1) · Violet		
Source 2			
Source 3			
Source 4			

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 5 yards.
Name one Spell, Strike type or Maneuver. For 1 Target Turn it can use that only by paying the cost and then rolling an Ambition Roll that exceeds your Spell Roll.

☐ **Registered**

Name		Beats	1
Clear the Effect		Mana	5
Source 1	Disjoint (1, 1) · Violet		
Source 2			
Source 3			
Source 4			

Description

Within 5 yards: remove Potency 1 worth of Spell Effects from one Target (never Statuses).
Or Rebuttal a Potency 1 Spell being cast: if your Spell Roll exceeds its Spell Roll, it fails. Costs stay spent.

☐ **Registered**

Name		Beats	1
Slip Away		Mana	0
Source 1	Evasive Strike (Daggers)		
Source 2			
Source 3			
Source 4			

Description

Attack Roll: d20 + 1. A Foe within 1 yard: half of (1d6 + 1) damage.
On a hit, step 1 yard without provoking an Opportunity Attack.

☐ **Registered**

Name		Beats	1
Bone Shard		Mana	1
Source 1	Matter Blast (1, 1) · Violet		
Source 2			
Source 3			
Source 4			

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Boon. A Foe within 5 yards takes a sliver of bone and is Vexed (1 Psychic damage per Beat it spends, 1 Target Turn).
Matter Blast deals no damage of its own.

☐ **Registered**

Name		Beats	3
Hush		Mana	6
Source 1	Matter Blast (1, 1) · Violet		
Source 2	Suppress (1, 1) · Violet		
Source 3			
Source 4			

Description

Spell Roll: d20 + 1 with 1 Boon. A Foe within 5 yards: Vex.
On a hit, a 1-yard Suppress field opens around it until your next Turn begins. Anyone else casting inside rolls with 1 Bane and must exceed your Spell Roll, or the Spell fails.

The Wizard's Cottage

For the Director. Read this section before you play. Players: stop here, so the surprises stay surprising. Boxed text is for reading aloud; everything else is for you.

The story so far

Master **Kavols Tam** was a hedge wizard with a cottage at the edge of the woods, a library that bit, and one obsession: a plant that could grow in the **Faed**, the realm of Death itself. Death on Xanadu is a place, and Kavols Tam believed anything that could root there would carry medicine the living world has never seen.

He succeeded. He fed a cutting from the glade of the Autumn Embers, where the living world thins into the Faed, and coaxed it into the **Lichbloom**: a plant alive in both worlds at once. He drank its sap to stay strong for the work, and the extra years he took were noticed. A **Vulture** brought him Black-Mail, the black envelope Death sends to those who stretch their lives with Magic. He kept it unopened until the night the Lichbloom flowered. Then he sat down, opened it, and died at peace. The Lichbloom, hungry for dead flesh and memory, grew roots into him afterward. He stopped coming to town for supplies three weeks ago. His books have been guarding the study ever since.

The hook

> **Read aloud**
> *The letter came sealed in grey wax stamped with an open book: the mark of V, Headmistress of the Archivist's Tower in Dio. "A correspondent of mine, Master Kavols Tam, has gone quiet. He wrote that he was close to growing a plant that lives in the Faed, and that its sap would heal what nothing else can. Find him. Bring me his research and a living sample. The Tower will pay each of you two coins."*
>
> *The cottage sits at the end of an overgrown lane. Smoke no longer rises from the chimney. The door is unlocked.*

Any patron works: a town healer, a guild, a worried apprentice. Change the letter to suit your table.

Running it in 90 to 120 minutes

Time	Scene	What it teaches
20–30 min	Before play	Each player picks a premade and ticks four Maneuvers. Read the How to Play summary aloud together.
25–35 min	1. The Foe-lios	Beats, Strikes, Spells, Maneuvers, Opportunity Attacks. A short, loud fight. One Foe-lio per player.
15–20 min	2. The Study	Skill Rolls, Hassles, Haggling and creative Magic. Each clue found is an edge in Scene 3.
30–35 min	3. The Lichbloom	A miniboss with more than one way to win. Cascades, Rebuttals, Hiding and Ambush all shine here.

Scaling and teaching

- **Players:** built for 3 to 5. Foe-lios equal the number of players. The Lichbloom has 10 Health per player plus 10. Use 2 Vines, or 3 with 5 or more players.
- **First Round:** walk each player through their Beats. Remind them they gain 3 Beats, ask what they want to do, and point at the card that does it.
- **Say yes to Haggling.** When a player explains how their Skillset or a Rune helps, reward it with a Boon. That conversation is the game.
- **Foes use the same rules.** Foe blocks list their scores; a Foe's Maneuver works exactly like a player's.

> **Demo mode: a 45-minute slot**
> Players take the Suggested four Maneuvers, and you teach from the first Round on page 5 instead of reading How to Play aloud. Use one Foe-lio fewer than the number of players (at least two), offer only the journal, the songbook and the workbench in Scene 2, and give the Lichbloom 10 Health per player, without the extra 10. No more than one clue can burn.

Scene 1: The Foe-lios

> **Read aloud**
> *The study smells of ink, dust and something green. Books cover every wall, floor to ceiling, and a cold kettle sits on the hearth. As you step in, a hundred pages lift at once, like a flock of birds startled from a field. They tear free of their bindings, swirl, and stitch themselves together: tall, rustling men of paper, each wearing its book's cover and spine for a face. One clears its throat with a sound like a page turning, and begins to read aloud.*

Setting up

Use the **Study** map (page 19). The Troupe starts in the doorway squares, and beside them if there are more than three. Place one Foe-lio per player in front of the shelves, spread across the three colors. This fight should be quick and loud: two or three Rounds. The Foe-lios are paper, and they fight like it: they tear easily.

Name	Make	Level	Tier	Lumens
Foe-lio	Construct (paper)	1	Point	—

Red	Green	Blue	Yellow	Violet	Chromatic
✓		✓	✓		

Resources

Health	Mana
6	4

Actions & Awareness

Initiative	Beats	Perception
1 (Red 3)	3	10

Travel	Fly	Swim	Burrow
5 yd (Yellow 10)	—	—	—

Defense

Defense	Spell Res.	Armor	Evasion
11	10	0	1

Red	Green	Blue	Yellow	Violet	Phys.
—	—	—	—	—	—

MOSAIC

Might	Observation	Swiftness	Ambition	Intuition	Composition
0	0	1	0	1	0

Offense

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Range	Type	Strikes
Paper Edges	+1	1d6 + 1	1 yard	Slicing	Regular

Runes			Spell Hit
One Rune,	by shelf	(see table)	+1

Body

Size	Shape	Limb Sets				Sensory Organs
		Arms	Legs	Wings	Tail	
Medium	Humanoid	1	1	0	0	4

Distinctions	Rank	Distinctions	Rank

Maneuvers

Name	Beats	Mana	Name	Beats	Mana
Shred	1	0	Read Aloud	1	1

Sources	Sources
Regular Strike (Edges)	Its book's Spell (1, 1)

Description	Description
d20 + 1 against Defense: 1d6 + 1 Slicing.	d20 + 1 with 1 Bane (Ambition 0) against Spell Resilience. See the shelf table.

Fixtures	Effect

Effects and Statuses

Each Foe-lio has one Color: its shelf's.

Fire that tears one apart can start a fire (Fire in the library).

Tactics and Notes

Each Turn: Travel next to whoever looks most bookish, then Shred and Read Aloud. Combustion and the Almanac can Read Aloud from 5 yards before they move; the Manual of Etiquette must be adjacent. They fight until torn apart.

Shelf	Color	Read Aloud casts
Treatise on Combustion	Red	Mana Blast (1, 1): a Character within 5 yards takes 2d6 Fire damage. Red triples Initiative, so these act before most of the Troupe.
Almanac of Winds	Yellow	Matter Blast (1, 1): a gust at a Character within 5 yards, inflicting Winded (1 Air damage per yard moved, 1 Target Turn). Yellow doubles Travel.
Manual of Etiquette	Blue	Command (1, 1), touch: a polite order of ten words or fewer. "Bow to your host." "Remove your boots indoors." Each Round the Character disobeys, they take 2d6. Doing nothing is always safe.

Fire in the library

The Beam and the Prism burn things. The **first** time Fire tears a Foe-lio apart, burning pages drift onto the rug: describe it as a warning. After that, each time Fire finishes a Foe-lio, a fire starts. Any Character can spend 2 Beats on the Scenery to stamp it out before the end of the Round (Blue Magic and the kettle help too). If nobody does, one Scene 2 clue burns: the **Journal** first, then the **Songbook**. No more than two clues can burn. This is the Troupe's first taste of using the scenery.

Things in the room

Spells like Brace need a material of the Caster's Color nearby. Everyone can find some here: the desk, bookcases and potted ferns (Green); the iron fire grate and a ceramic teapot (Red); the kettle (Blue); the owl perch and its feathers, and every page in the room (Yellow); a cat skeleton in the curiosity cabinet (Violet).

When the last Foe-lio falls, the pages settle like snow. Move on to Scene 2.

Scene 2: The Study

Read aloud

Through the door at the back of the study is a potting room, all clay pots and trowels, and beyond it a shuttered glasshouse. Kavols Tam is here. He sits in a worn armchair beside the glasshouse door, long dead, with a strange satisfied smile. Pale roots have pierced his chest and temple and wind back across the floor, under the door and into the dark garden. A black envelope sits on the arm of his chair. It has been opened, and it is empty.

Somewhere beyond the shutters, something breathes in.

How it works

There are five clues. Each Character investigates one, and with fewer than five players some take two. Ask what they do, then call for the roll. Let them **Haggle**: each Skillset rank they can argue for is a Boon, and a Friend can Assist for 1 more. A success gives the Troupe an edge in Scene 3. **A failure** wastes time and makes noise: each failed roll adds 5 Health to the Lichbloom as it feeds. Burned clues (Scene 1) can't be searched.

Clue	Roll	Haggle with	On a success
The body	Intuition 13	Physician, Monster Lore, Investigator	They understand the Black-Mail and the roots: he died at peace, and the plant moved in after. They can cut the taproots: the Lichbloom has **one fewer Vine**.
The journal	Observation 13	Investigator, Artisan	Kavols Tam's notes say the seed pod at the top of the stalk is the living sample, and where to cut it. Aiming at the pod takes **1 Bane instead of 2**. Torn pages? A Mend Caster can try to Repair them.
The songbook	Composition 13	Stagecraft, Diplomat	A lullaby, written for the plant in the margins. Played or sung at the door, it lulls the Lichbloom: Scene 3 opens with a **Surprise Round** in which it and its Vines gain only 1 Beat. If it was sung, end the Scene 3 read-aloud with this in place of the scream: "The Lichbloom sways, half asleep. Then it notices you."
The window	Observation 14	Scout, Sentinel, Tracker, Wilderness	A crack in the shutters shows the garden. The Troupe **chooses its starting squares** in Scene 3. On 18 or more, read them the Lichbloom's stats too. **Or scout it:** one Character sneaks out for a look and makes a Hide Roll (d20 + Intuition) against the Lichbloom's Perception Roll (d20 + 1). Meets or beats: the same result, and a natural 20 reveals its stats. A natural 1: it knows they are coming, and the songbook's Surprise Round is lost.
The workbench	Swiftness or Intuition 13	Artisan, Athletics, Investigator	A crank by the door works the glasshouse shutters. In Scene 3, a Character at the door can spend 2 Beats on the Scenery to throw them open: sunlight floods in and the Lichbloom **can't use Wail of Two Worlds** until the end of the next Round. While the shutters are open, sunlight burns off its Faed half and its Spell Resilience drops to 10.

Runes are verbs

Reward creative Magic. A Violet Character might taste the memories in Kavols Tam's roots; a Blue one might read the last thought left in his ink. Treat it as a custom Spell: Intuition 15, Haggle as usual, and on a success reveal any one clue they haven't found. A Detect or Seek Spell can stand in for a search. If the idea is good, let it work.

When everyone has had a turn, they open the glasshouse door. Move on to Scene 3.

Scene 3: The Lichbloom

> **Read aloud**
> *The glasshouse is warm and wrong. Half the garden is lush and green; the other half is grey, cold, and growing anyway. At its heart, in a raised bed, stands a plant the size of a cart: a twisted stalk of bark and bone, with a single seed pod glowing at its crown like a lantern. Its roots plunge into soil that isn't quite there. Thorned vines rise to meet you. And the Lichbloom screams: a sound like a garden full of birds and a graveyard full of wind, both at once.*

Setting up

Use the **Garden** map (page 19). The Lichbloom cannot move. Its Vines grow from the marked squares. The Troupe enters through the door, or starts where it chose if it found the window clue. Add up what Scene 2 earned before Round 1.

Name	Make	Level	Tier	Lumens
The Lichbloom	Plant	—	Point	—

Red	Green	Blue	Yellow	Violet	Chromatic
	✓			✓	

Resources	Actions & Awareness			Defense			
Health	Initiative	Beats	Perception	Defense	Spell Res.	Armor	Evasion
10 / player + 10	3	3	11	11	14	1	0

Mana	Travel	Fly	Swim	Burrow	Red	Green	Blue	Yellow	Violet	Phys.
20	Rooted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

MOSAIC

Might	Observation	Swiftness	Ambition	Intuition	Composition
2	1	0	3	1	0

Offense

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Range	Type	Strikes
Thorned vine	+0	1d10 + 2	2 yards	Impact	Regular

Runes			Spell Hit
Conjure			+1

Body

Size	Shape	Limb Sets				Sensory Organs
		Arms	Legs	Wings	Tail	
Large	Plant	0	0	0	0	—

Distinctions	Rank	Distinctions	Rank
Improved Weapon Damage (Whip)	1	Friendly Spells	1
Selfish Spells	1		

Maneuvers

Name	Beats	Mana	Name	Beats	Mana
Taproot	1	1	Wail of Two Worlds	1	5
Sources			**Sources**		
Matter Blast (1, 1) · Green			Matter Field (2, 1) · Violet		
Description			**Description**		
Within 5 yards. On a hit, Leech: 2 Earth damage a Turn; it heals 2.			Spell Roll against all within 2 yards of the bed. Hit: Vexed 2 Target Turns, 1 Psychic per Beat spent.		
Thorn Lash	1	0			
Sources			**Sources**		
Regular Strike (Whip)					
Description			**Description**		
Reach 2 yards. d20 + 0 against Defense: 1d10 + 2 Impact.					

Fixtures	Effect
Seed pod	The prize. See Taking the sample.

Effects and Statuses

+5 Health for each failed roll in Scene 2.

Shutters open: Spell Resilience 10 while open; no Wail until the end of the next Round.

Tactics and Notes

Every Round: Thorn Lash whoever is closest, Taproot whoever is farthest, Wail when two or more are near. Mana for a Taproot every Round for five Rounds and three Wails.

Name	Make	Level	Tier	Lumens
Vine	Plant	—	Point	—

Red	Green	Blue	Yellow	Violet	Chromatic
	✓				

Resources	Actions & Awareness			Defense			
Health	Initiative	Beats	Perception	Defense	Spell Res.	Armor	Evasion
10	0	3	10	10	10	0	0

Mana	Travel	Fly	Swim	Burrow	Red	Green	Blue	Yellow	Violet	Phys.
0	Rooted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

MOSAIC

Might	Observation	Swiftness	Ambition	Intuition	Composition
1	0	0	0	0	0

Offense

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Range	Type	Strikes
Thorned vine	+0	1d6 + 1	2 yards	Impact	All five

Runes	Spell Hit
	—

Body

Size	Shape	Limb Sets				Sensory Organs
		Arms	Legs	Wings	Tail	
Medium	Plant	0	0	0	0	—

Distinctions	Rank	Distinctions	Rank

Maneuvers

Name	Beats	Mana	Name	Beats	Mana
Lash	1	0			
Sources			**Sources**		
Regular Strike (Whip)					
Description			**Description**		
d20 + 0 against Defense: 1d6 + 1 Impact.					

Fixtures	Effect

Effects and Statuses

2 Vines (3 with 5+ players), minus 1 if the taproots were cut.

Gives Opportunity Attacks like anyone else.

Tactics and Notes

Lash, then spend its other 2 Beats on one ordinary Strike. A cut Vine stays down; moving past one on the way to the bed costs something.

Taking the sample

The Troupe came for a living sample. There are three ways to get one, and a creative Troupe can find a fourth. Once they have it, they can walk out the door (the Lichbloom can't follow) or stay and finish it.

Way	Cost	How it works
Shoot or cut the pod	An attack aimed at a precise part: 2 Banes (1 with the journal)	Any hit cuts the pod free. Its damage still counts against the Lichbloom. The pod rolls to the edge of the bed, into a square of the Director's choice; any Character there picks it up (free with an empty hand). A ranged Strike or a cascading Maneuver works as well as a blade.
Steal it	2 Beats, while Hidden, next to the bed	Swiftness Roll against the Lichbloom's Perception (11), with 2 Banes because the pod is fixed to the stalk. A success takes it and the thief stays Hidden. A failure means the Lichbloom knows exactly where they are. Blackout's whole kit points here.
Take a root cutting	2 Beats (Scenery), next to the bed	Might Skill Roll, Hassle 14. Haggle with Wilderness, Athletics or Physician. It's enough to satisfy V, but only the pod holds the real prize. The last resort if the Troupe cannot defeat the Lichbloom.

What Scene 2 earned

The body	One fewer Vine.
The journal	Aiming at the pod takes 1 Bane instead of 2.
The songbook	Surprise Round: the Lichbloom and its Vines gain only 1 Beat at its start.
The window	The Troupe chooses its starting squares (any empty squares more than 2 yards from the bed, out of its reach). On 18+, read out the Lichbloom's stats.
The workbench	2 Beats at the door opens the shutters: its Spell Resilience drops to 10 while they are open, and no Wail of Two Worlds until the end of the next Round.
Each failed roll	+5 Health for the Lichbloom.

If it goes badly

Characters at 0 Health are Incapacitated, not dead: a Friend can drag them clear of the bed (being dragged never provokes an Opportunity Attack) and heal them. If the whole Troupe is in trouble, the Lichbloom stops when nobody is within its reach. It is a plant: it doesn't chase. Nobody needs to die in a first game.

Ending

At 0 Health the Lichbloom is Incapacitated, not destroyed: it wilts into its bed, and its roots in the Faed will grow it back by spring. When the Troupe has its sample, read:

> **Read aloud**
> *The pod is warm in your hands, and it hums. Inside, behind a skin like frosted glass, light moves.*
>
> *When you step back into the study, you are not alone. A woman in a travelling coat stands at Kavols Tam's desk, leafing through his papers, and two hired swords wait at the door behind her. "He wrote to me too," she says, and her eyes go to the pod. "The Tower offered two coins each? I will pay four. Shall we talk, or shall we not?"*
>
> **With only a root cutting, swap the first line and her speech**
> *The cutting is cold in your hands, and it twitches toward the garden you just left.*
>
> *"He wrote to me too," she says. She glances at the cutting, then past you, to the glasshouse door. "The Tower can have that. I want the pod. Four coins each to whoever brings it out. Shall we talk, or shall we not?"*

The prize: the pod is a Lumencache that holds 50 Lumens, and they go to whoever ends up holding it. V pays 2 coins to each Character for the research and a living sample (a root cutting will do); the rival offers 4 each for the pod. Coins are Xanadu's money, and each is worth 5 Lumens. In the full game, Lumencaches are what Characters use to craft Lumencrafts, powerful bespoke magic items.

Who is she? Your call: a rival apothecary, a noble house's agent, a collector who wants the only cure in Xanadu for herself. Let the Troupe Haggle, accept or refuse, and end the session on their answer. If they reach for weapons, stop there: that fight opens the next session. For more, Loose Leaves is a free adventure for Troupes to adventure through levels 1-12. Its next scene picks up revealing her identity.

Battle maps *Print at 100%. One square is one inch, and one yard in Xanadu.*

The Study Scene 1. Foe-lios start at the marked squares, plus more beside the shelves for larger groups. Shelves and hearth block movement.

Combustion shelf	Combustion shelf	Hearth iron grate	Hearth kettle	Almanac shelf	Almanac shelf	Owl perch
Foe-lio				Foe-lio		Door to potting room
Potted ferns		Desk	Desk		Foe-lio	Etiquette shelf
Start	Start	Start		Teapot table	Curio cabinet (cat bones)	Etiquette shelf

The Garden Scene 3. The Lichbloom cannot move. Water, iron, wind chimes and grey grave-soil give every Color something to work with.

					Rain barrel	Iron tools
			Vine			
	Lichbloom					
			Vine (5+)			Wind chimes
	Vine			Door (shutter crank)		

Quick Reference

The roll

d20 + score against a target. Meets it beats it. Halves round down.

Roll	Against
Skill Roll + MOSAIC	Hassle
Attack + Melee / Ranged Hit	Defense
Spell + Spell Hit	Spell Resilience
Hide + Intuition	Perception must beat it
Misfire chance d100	At or under %

Boons and Banes: roll a d6 for each, add or subtract only the highest. One cancels one. Advantage: 2d20, keep high.

Hassles: 10–12 easy · 13–15 effort · 16–20 talent · 20+ training. Haggle: 1 Boon per Skillset rank.

Action	Beats
Travel	1
Weapon Strike	2
Cast a Spell	2
Scenery	2
Disengage	2
Hide	2
Assist (adjacent, +1 Boon)	1
Swap items	1
Steal while Hidden	2
Dreamlight Instrument (once a day)	2
Search (Perception Roll)	1
Drop an item	free

A Round

Everyone gains 3 Beats (bank up to 8; spend at most 8 a Round). Turns go by Initiative, highest first; Players win ties.

Strike	Roll	Damage
Regular	–	Normal
Accurate	1 Boon	Half
Evasive	–	Half, step 1 yd free
Powerful	1 Bane	+ largest die again
Sundering	1 Bane	Half, Defense –1 (adds up)

Critical Hit: natural 20 always hits; add the dice's maximum. **Ambush** from hiding: any hit is a Critical Hit.

Opportunity Attack: a Foe leaving your reach by Travel; one between your Turns; ordinary attack only.

Maneuvers: Sources' Beats added, minus 1 (min 1). One roll. Once a Round each. Up to 4. A hit cascades to every later Source.

Statuses (1,1): Vex 1 per Beat spent · Winded 1 per yard moved · Leech 2 a Turn, Caster heals 2.

0 Health: Incapacitated, banked Beats lost. Dead at minus your maximum. Back up at 1+, with 1 Beat next Round.

Aiming: a region 1 Bane, a precise part 2 Banes.

Surprise Round: the surprised side gains only 1 Beat.

Where next

You've played the opening of Chromatic Mana. The full rulebook has character creation with every Color, Rune and Make, Lumencrafting, Upstage, the Dreamlight, the House Cast of Xanadu and much more, free at **rules.chromaticmana.com**. Build your own Character in the Companion app at **companion.chromaticmana.com**.