

The Great Game

Part I – You Are the Quarry

You are lying on the ground on your back.

The world is bright but your eyes are shut. You feel as though your eyes would be burnt away by the light if you were to open them and you see nothing but the red of the inside of your eyelids. The veins in your eyelids come into sharper focus, dark red lines against an impossibly bright red canvas. The veins shiver and contort for a few seconds until becoming more distinct.

You see antlers.

And here you are. Just as promised. A babe in the woods.

Fortunately for you I find no sport in prey as lost and helpless as you are.

Better still I have given my word not to come for you personally for 10 years.

Assuming you survive the night I would suggest you use this time to prepare.

One of my hounds is coming for you already.

Run and hide.

Snarling, snapping teeth emerge between the antlers and a deafening roar resounds in your head permeating your entire body. Your eyes snap open as you experience the primordial, thoughtless fear common to every animal that knows it's being hunted.

You have 0 CP.

You must have either 0 or positive CP by the end of Part I.

Your eyes adjust. The sky is bright, the air is warm and you are in the middle of a small, pleasant clearing full of flowers and surrounded by trees.

Your **Inventory**: You are wearing a roughspun tunic and tattered trousers and have an iron dagger in your belt. You have no access to any items you have collected from other jumps.

Your **Attributes**: You are reduced to the attributes, abilities and appearance of your Body Mod form. You have a small pool of Magicka. You have no perks from elsewhere.

Your **Skills**: Are the same as they were and your memories are still as clear and crisp as they were. Your reduction in attributes may have a knock on effect with certain skills.

Companions

You hear shouting and clashes of metal on metal from somewhere nearby.

Your eyes clamp shut and the colour red, the fangs and the antlers swim back into sight.

Ah. Another term of the Hunt - You are not to be left to flee on your own.

There is to be a herd for me to thin before the main event.

You would be wise to see who wins without your interference for whoever survives will be with you for the rest of the hunt and you cannot invite weakness in if you hope to last.

Your eyes open again, your legs subconsciously carried you closer to the battle as the Hunter spoke. You stand next to a tree watching eight figures fighting with a red aura surrounding them and a mad, frenzied look on their faces.

Any attempt to speak to them or otherwise dissuade them from killing each other is doomed to fail.

If you stand back and watch roll 1d8 to determine who survives the battle.

Alternatively you may choose to intervene on behalf of any one of the combatants and aid them in taking down the others.

1) **Bjerna the Horker** - Nord, Vigilant of Stendarr.

An attractive (if exceedingly tall) blonde shieldmaiden sensibly armed and armoured. Currently has woad on her face that looks a bit like cat whiskers. She wears the robes of her order over full steel plate and is holding a steel shield and broadsword. Her shield seems enchanted to absorb more shock than it normally would.

+ Fights extremely well with a sword and shield.

+ Doesn't resemble a horker.

+ Level-headed, practical and kind.

= Talks in a lilting, calming voice... extremely slowly.

- Kind. She won't tolerate obviously evil acts.

- Talks about the Nine Divines quite a lot.

2) **Sulis Daryon** – Dunmer, disgraced former Morag Tong Assassin.

A tall, wiry male Dunmer with dark hair in armour of light chitin and leather. Underneath his goggled helmet his long, stern face is masked in scars and tattoos. He has a glass dagger at his hip, a brace of chitin throwing stars and a long, slender chitin blade in each hand. He carries a writ with his own name on it.

- + Extremely dangerous with practically any weapon.
- + Seems to have an endless supply of chitin throwing stars.
- + Has a reasonable level of skill with Illusion magic and is excellent in all manners of subterfuge.
- = Black sense of humour.
- Really grumpy.
- Talks often about the varieties of chitin and how it is a superior material to anything produced by men.

3) **Timely Krin** – Khajiit, occasional burglar, always a fence.

A Khajiit of the Suthay subspecies, significantly smaller than even an average male Bosmer. Wears an expensive outfit of silk with a cravat under a fine leather overcoat. Currently carrying a set of lockpicks and probes, an enchanted dwemer dagger that occasionally paralyzes those it strikes and a bag full of silverware bearing the mark of a nearby noble house.

- + Handy with a dagger. Not particularly physically powerful but an incredibly dirty fighter.
- + Won't really object to any plans you have on ethical grounds.
- + Great burglar and infiltrator, better merchant and negotiator.
- + Friendly, charming and takes a shine to you right away.
- = Very chatty.
- Totally amoral. May get you into trouble.

4) **Abelle Deveau** – Breton, alchemist and Mages Guild member.

A small, slender woman with mousy brown hair, huge eyes and a near permanent expression of concentration etched on her face. She is wearing nondescript grey robes, has a large satchel on her hip full of common alchemical ingredients and is carrying a staff that produces flame.

- + Able mage capable of basic magic from each of the major schools.
- + Ridiculously smart and extremely knowledgeable about alchemy.
- + Pretty cute.

- + Safety conscious. Will make sure you always have a healing potion on you and that the camp is secure.
- Extremely paranoid. She'll suspect nearly everyone but you is out to get her on some level.
- Usually nervous, easily startled and generally panicky.

5) **Ghorag gro-Shagrak** – Orc, wandering barbarian

A massive orc with a huge beard, a shaved head and mad eyes. Has a huge scar on his side from where he was clearly bitten by something very large. Shouts, laughs and generally bellows while he fights. Currently carrying an orcish battleaxe and wearing what appears to be half a bear.

- + Absurdly physically powerful and extremely quick despite his cumbersome weapon.
- + Talented smith and leatherworker.
- + Friendly, quick to laugh and doesn't take life too seriously.
- = Doesn't seem to acknowledge the existence of pain.
- Everything he makes looks horrifically ugly.
- A bit stupid but has a fondness for saying things he thinks sound wise or profound.

6) **Umy** – Ayleid, wild-child and tribal runaway.

An elf woman darker than any Altmer but lighter than any Dunmer, her hair is silver verging on white, her eyes are yellow and her face has a youthful, innocent quality to it. She wears functional leather armour of a queer design fastened with buckles of feathers and pearls. She carries a small Ayleid hatchet and a small bag of Wellkynd stones.

- + She is capable of surviving comfortably in the wild while staying out of sight.
- + Highly specialised mage knowing magic unique to her kind, particularly adept at levitating herself and others and lightning magic. She has knowledge of the proper use of Ayleid crystals.
- + You're her best friend by default.
- Very probably doesn't speak any language you know, on the plus side she's quick to learn and good at sign language.
- Isolated. Won't have any allies to call upon.
- Sad a lot of the time.

7) **Falrenne** – Mazken, warrior sent by Sheogorath, doesn't want to be here.

A beautiful purple-skinned woman with black sclera and bright blue irises. Even while fighting she looks a little bored. She is wearing the needlessly revealing armour of her kind made of a light, hard material native to the Shivering Isles. She is currently holding a large shield and a dark, irregularly shaped mace.

- + Excellent warrior and leader of troops with more experience than any mortal.
- + Duty-bound and loyal. She is likely to go along with whatever plans you have as long as they don't demean her. She's been given orders to help you.
- + May earn her respect over time.
- You're probably not going to earn her respect over time.
- Will probably scare all but the most open minded of people and she doesn't really know Tamriel.
- Weak to frost.

8) **Archduke Folka** – Imga, gentlemanly martial artist.

A massive and formidable example of the gorilla folk with intelligent eyes and huge skull-crushing arms. He is currently wearing silk clothes, large ornate riding boots and a red satin cape. He is also adorned with a variety of brooches, medals and rings of gold and moonstone and is wearing a monocle without a lens.

- + Great bestial strength tempered and put to use through a mastery of various martial arts.
- + Exceptionally agile and good at climbing. Capable of climbing obscenely quickly and on incredibly slender branches despite his considerable weight.
- + Honourable and will appreciate and treasure anyone who shows him respect.
- + Moderate by Imga standards, willing to work with humans, doesn't shave his body.
- Still thinks humans are usually primitive oafs and refuses to use any equipment not crafted by Altmer. Likes talking about Altmer culture often and at length, speaks with a lisp.
- Hot headed and has a tendency of challenging people to duels when insulted.

Shelter

After introducing yourself to your new friend and cheerfully rifling through the belongings of the dead you notice a basket next to one of the trees.

Inside the basket is two sweetrolls and a map showing the layout of the surrounding area and four nearby locations marked nearby.

Looking at the map for a moment you see that you are in the county Skingrad in the province of Cyrodiil, not too far from the borders of Valenwood and Elsweyr.

The locations marked seem to be for a **Cave**, an **Abandoned Imperial fort**, an **Ayleid Ruin** and a **Dwemer Ruin**. Each of them seem to be around a 5 day hike from your current location, they are in totally different directions from one another and they seem to be the only real shelter anywhere nearby.

Before you choose which to head towards it may be worth listening to the preference of your companion:

Bjerna the Horker: "We should head for the fort. It's the only one likely to have any supplies for a siege, will be easily defensible and it will likely have a shrine to the Nine Divines. Last thing we need is for one of us to catch Lycanthropy without a way to heal it. I might be able to persuade more Vigilants to come help us fix it up as well."

Sulis Daryon: "The cave. Definitely the cave. Probably has water running through it somewhere knowing the area and look at its name 'Palmatahrit'. Does that sound like Cyrodilic to you? There's something in there."

Timely Krin: "This one believes the fort is our best bet. Being chased? Hide in a fort. Common sense. Also Timely Krin is used to the finer things, yes? I am thinking there will be no wine cellar or officer's bedroom in the cave, and where would the guests sleep hmm?"

Abelle Deveau: "Well, I doubt any of them are going to be empty and we're probably going to die anyway but I have been in Dwemer ruins before. They defend themselves if you can figure out the traps and they're always full of gems, oil and mushrooms. I'd be able to make a bunch of neat potions with the stuff we find they're I'm sure."

Ghorag gro-Shagrak: "As I always say: You know where you are when you're in a cave." He crosses his arms and smiles at you as if this settles the matter.

Umy: Umy looks at the map, looks at you and then looks down at the map again. After seeing a sign she recognises on the Ayleid ruin marker she repeatedly taps it with her finger, smiles and then runs around in a little circle excitedly.

Falrenne: “That one” she says instantly pointing at the Dwemer ruin. You look at her inquiringly. She looks away, sighs and says “Fine. Whatever. Do what you like. Let’s just go already.”

Archduke Folka: “I’ve always found Ayleid ruins to be the quintessential ruin in Cyrodiil. The stonework is quite marvellous. Besides, it simply wouldn’t be appropriate to leave such a fine place in the hands of whatever ne’er-do-wells currently foul it with their presence.”

Cave, Abandoned Imperial fort, Ayleid Ruin or Dwemer Ruin?

Choose one to flee towards, the first hound is on its way.

Blessings

The gods watch on. Before you set off you may receive blessings to aid you on your journey.

Unfortunately for every blessing you receive the Huntsman will take note and make those that hunt you more dangerous and numerous.

Sai’s Blessing – 200 CP

Old Lucky walks with you in spirit and you find that you are likely to have considerably more luck in all areas. It is wise not come to rely on such luck as Sai will surely abandon you.

Ebonarm’s Blessing – 200 CP

The god of War guides your arm granting you far greater proficiency with one martial weapon and unnatural strength in your dominant arm.

Baan Dar’s Blessing – 200 CP

You carry the desperate genius of the Bandit God with you. Whenever things get dangerous your thought process speeds up to unnatural levels allowing you to formulate the best course of action.

Dibella's Blessing – 100 CP

You are blessed with great beauty, have a divine talent in a single art form and great ability in all things considered conventionally erotic. You know you're being chased by werewolves, right?

Julianos' Blessing – 300 CP

You are considerably more intelligent and have become incredibly quick at picking up new languages and remarkably fast at doing mathematics. You also have a little more starting magicka.

Kynareth's Blessing – 300 CP

A warning is carried to you by a brief blast of wind every time you are in imminent danger.

Mara's Blessing – 300 CP

You have a fine understanding of restoration magic and any magic you do to heal yourself or others costs half the magicka.

Stendarr's Blessing – 300 CP

When shown mercy your defeated foes will, nearly to a man, take up arms in your name if you should offer them a position. Unfortunately this does not work on slaving beasts or zealots.

Zenithar's Blessing – 200 CP

You are now a naturally excellent merchant and trader who is consistently lucky when it comes to business. Could be useful, probably won't be for at least the next few days.

Talos' Blessing – 300 CP

You are a great leader of men, have an aura of authority and have a natural grasp of tactics. Just like old Tiber Septim himself.

You step towards the edge of the clearing and your entire body jolts with panic as a particularly large Dremora steps out from behind a tree.

It looks you up and down as if measuring you up.

“Are you the guy?” it asks sternly.

He peers over your head to see the mass of bodies in the clearing.

“Oh yeah, you’re the guy.” He says with a small, horrible laugh before giving you time to respond.

A small merchant’s stall appears around him. The sign says Trazhrannhur’s Trinkets.

“Got some useful stuff for you. It won’t cost you any gold but you’d be a fool to take too much. There’s always a price, mortal.”

Items

Survival Kit – Free

“Nice little bag with some rope, a couple of knives, a small axe, a flask and some flint. Y’know when I said there’s always a price? Well there actually isn’t for this one.”

Steel Weapon – 50 CP

“None of that loot you grabbed off those folks back there to your liking? Haha, don’t worry about it mortal I won’t tell anybody. Steel weapons are not really what you want to fight werewolves but in my experience if you poke enough holes in something it’ll go down.”

Leather Armour – 50 CP

“Flexible, can take a bit of damage and you’ll look good doing it. Got a full outfit here of the stuff. Probably not going to want to rely on it ”

Steel Armour – 50 CP

“A full set of steel plate. Might not be the best thing to have if you’re going to be running around a lot but at least you’ll be able to take a hit in it and not... y’know... die instantly.”

Silver Weapon – 100 CP

“Here we go, I knew we’d get to the good stuff eventually. A weapon made of silver. Classic and effective against all varieties of werebeasts, ghosts and daedra.”

Dwemer Weapon – 100 CP

“A fine dwemer weapon. Utilitarian in design but extremely hard and (if edged) sharp. May not have the same quality as silver against daedra or werebeasts but hits harder against everything else.”

Dwemer Armour – 100 CP

“Dwemer plate armour. Very hard and durable. Same issue to bear in mind as steel in that it’s heavy but maybe you’re one of those weirdoes who runs across country in full plate like it’s nothing.”

Elven Weapon – 150 CP

“Or more specifically a weapon made by the Altmer. Usually have an eagle somewhere on them. Either way they’re surprisingly light and viciously sharp despite how light they are. ”

Elven Armour – 150 CP

“Light armour, the helmets always look a little silly but the set as a whole strikes a terrific balance of weight against durability. Feels like it was practically made for running around in the woods being chased by werewolves.”

“I’ve got a selection of bows around here somewhere as well. They’re the same price as the other weapons and I’ll even throw in a quiver and 30 arrows with arrowheads of the same material. You can buy a further 50 arrows of a specific material for the same cost as a weapon as well.”

“Got some enchanted stuff lying around somewhere as well.”

Viperstars – 100 CP

“Ten throwing stars. May seem a little pricey but these things are made of pure, hardened silver and they’re enchanted to poison whoever (or whatever) you should happen to throw them at.”

Sword of Agustas – 150 CP

“An ornate Nordic claymore that causes those it strikes to become less co-ordinated and agile. It also causes those it strikes to be chopped into bits if you know what you’re doing.”

Mace of Slurring – 200 CP

“A unique if rather niche item. Made by an insane Altmer who enjoyed the idea of people babbling as they were crushed by it. Reduces people’s ability to speak when they are struck by it. Even without the effects it’s a particularly fine elven mace in the likeness of a Dremora’s head.”

Stormforge – 200 CP

“A dwemer halberd with some elegant lightning enchantments. Not only will it give one hell of a jolt to whatever you stick with it but they’ll get a shock just by standing near you if they mean you ill.”

Silver Staff of Reckoning – 200 CP

“A silver staff that can paralyse people and beasts from afar. Nothing stopping you from bludgeoning them with it when they’re nice and still as well. You’re going to want to be quick though.”

Silver Flamesword – 200 CP

“Not a unique item per se but it is made of silver and it does set the things it strikes on fire. Werewolves don’t like silver and I can only assume they don’t enjoy being set on fire either.”

Pounder – 200 CP

“A heavy, immensely solid dwemer warhammer. As it strikes it reduces the speed at which your enemy can move while simultaneously causing them to feel as if they’re physically being weighed down by something.”

Shield of the Undaunted – 200 CP

“A shield made from some sort of chitin. Takes a hit surprisingly well given how light it is but more remarkably it can magically restore your stamina. Undeniably useful if you’re in the habit of running for your life.”

“Hmmm. Well suit yourself, if that’s what you want that’s what you want I suppose.
I’m sure we’ll meet again, or possibly never again depending on whether you’re eviscerated over the
next few days.

I’ll be rooting for you, mortal.”

Drawbacks

There is currently one werewolf that has your scent and it is likely to reach you within four days.

**For +200 CP you may double the number of werewolves following you. You may take this as many
times as you wish.**

**For another +100 CP you may halve the distance the wolves start away from you. You may take
this twice.**

**For +100 CP one of the werewolves is now a werebear. You may take this once for each werewolf
hunting you.**

**For +200 CP each one of the Werewolves is now a particularly large and vicious Daedroth. You may
take this as many times as you have werewolves chasing you.**

**For +200 CP any other predators anywhere near you will join the chase. There are a lot of wolves
out there.**

The Golden Road

You may gamble everything. Instead of a normal gauntlet with a safety net where you continue on
your merry way should you perish here you instead risk all. If you choose this option dying here will
end your chain.
