This Augment is meant to introduce players to the Silent Knight, an incredibly old guardian that protects a place as forgotten as the Fae themselves. Was the Cavern a seat of power to gather strength for when winter inevitably came each year? A place of sanctuary, or the site of rituals whose practitioners perished, nameless, along with their victims? Perhaps Fated with Neverborn knowledge or connections to the Autumn Knights can use the Cavern to their advantage, or glean some information on the runes and script carved into its walls. The Silent Knight may also hold a potent treasure connected to sacrifice, its briars, and the enigmatic Fae. It presents a challenging fight that focuses on terrain manipulation and strategy rather than all-out assault, with thematic options to alter difficulty. If a Fatemaster wishes to introduce the Silent Knight’s Cavern, they could read the following:

You have already gone too far off your path. The changing of seasons has left a bitter chill clinging to the air. A forest is no place to be after dark, and dusk is already beginning to claim the sky. With few options left you begin searching for something that might offer protection. After several minutes you find it: a deep depression in the earth, almost like an underground cave, ringed by the colossal roots of a tree. These roots have cracked and split. You can tell the tree is dying, but it refuses to relinquish its hold on the hard earth below. Something tells you that this was not always so, yet somehow it has always been this way. You are comforted, but unnerved. The broken stone at your feet seems to beckon, urge, pressing on the oldest parts of your mind. With one last look at the tree towering above, you slowly walk into the cool and gentle darkness.

The weight of ages in this place begins to press down with each step you take. It may have once been a temple or a tomb, but its purpose is now something different. The Cavern is large and circular, about 30 yards across, faintly illuminated by runes on the harshly carved walls and strings of odd, bulbous roots clustered near the ceiling. Dead leaves are piled into corners; you feel they may have once been golden, but are now dark and shriveled. There is no life here, but neither does death have a place. You feel an in-between, where spring’s warm desire to grow has met the cold and unyielding breath of winter.

There is a chance the Fated may not immediately see the Silent Knight, unmoving and nearly entombed as it is near the Cavern’s far wall. This offers it excellent camouflage when combined with the low light. Fated might need to succeed in a TN 13 Notice Check before they realize the Cavern has something else hidden in the shadows. If the Fated succeed, read the following:

At the end of the Cavern is a figure, its body almost indistinguishable from the hanging ivy and striated layers of stone around it. It appears armored in wood, the flesh beneath a sickly pale. Strength still radiates from its form, though its heavy blade and hooked chain have both succumbed to the embrace of the plant life still living inside the Cavern. Save for the occasional flicker from the luminous bulbs above, there is no movement. Whatever this thing was, death claimed it long ago.

Seeing the Silent Knight is one thing; actually going and attempting to interact or study is another. If the Fated meet any of the Silent Knight’s Eternal Sentinel requirements (like harming the Cavern, moving within 4 yards of the Silent Knight, or bleeding onto the floor), the following could be read:

Something cracks, like ice breaking. It echoes, accompanying the strange sounds of old flesh twisting. Dread already builds in your chest as you realize what is happening; the figure on the chamber’s far side begins to move. A cacophony of dead joints cracking after hundreds of years reverberates loudly across the Cavern. Vines and old growth begin to break away from the sentinel’s body, or perhaps they retreat willingly back to the stony walls. The being shudders. Slowly, it takes a step forward, the first uneasy but the second much more solid. Around you the runes flash, seeming to ripple in excitement. Its bowed head moves up to stare. The eyes are covered by a heavy visor, but you can see two thin lines of blood beginning to gently drip from beneath. Nearby the crowns of briars begin to tremble. The knight silently raises its weapons. You turn back in fear, but see nothing but patterned, jagged stone. The way you came is no more.

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Silent Knight

What purpose the Silent Knight served in the Court of the Autumn Queen can only be extrapolated by the runes and markings that adorn its Cavern. For those few who can translate the ancient language, the results are always the same: litanies of consumption and death, of rebirth and emerging under the light of two spring moons.

How exactly this process occurred, and indeed what role the Silent Knight once played, is up to interpretation.

Life needs only the tiniest seed to survive.

It is bringing that dormant potential back into the realm of the living that poses one of the greatest challenges. Death’s veil is strong during winter. This barren time of frost and quiet is sometimes impossible for even the most verdant of seasons to disrupt.

The Fae can break these barriers. What is harvested in autumn and winter can once again take root. What is buried under frost is never lost or forgotten.

Life is patient.

Life will wait, and Fae do not rest for long.

Gardens of thorns will bloom as they did eons before, in the time between frigid death and the Autumn Queen’s call.

Woe befall those that dare interrupt this glorious rebirth.
Silent Knight
Enforcer (10), Undead, Fae

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Armor +1: Reduce all damage this character suffers by +1, to a minimum of 1.

Hard to Kill: This character may choose to ignore one Critical Effect per Dramatic Time.

Eternal Sentinel: The Silent Knight has the Paralyzed Condition until the Fated move within 4 yards, harm the Cavern in any way, or have the Bleeding Out Condition. As soon as any of these requirements are met, Dramatic Time begins and the Silent Knight gains +2 to its Initiative. It begins the first round of Dramatic Time with Slow.

(2) Massive Cleaver (Heavy Melee)
AV: 5 (15) (15) Rg: #2 Resist: Df
Target suffers 3/4/6 damage. This attack gains ⬤ to its Damage Flips.

④ The Cavern Hungers: After damaging, place a Briar Crown anywhere within 3 yards of the target.

(1) Razor Hook (Flexible)
AV: 5 (15) Rg: ④8 Resist: Df
Target suffers 3/3/4 damage.

⑦ Pull and Drag: After damaging, push the target towards this character a number of yards equal to this character’s Might Aspect (minimum 1).

(0) Reconstitute
This character may remove any Briar Crown within 25 yards to heal 2 Damage.

(1) Command Briars (Necromancy/Tenacity)
AV: 5 (15) Rg: 8 Resist: -
Target a Briar Crown and move it up to 3 yards in any direction. Characters that come within 3 yards of the target during this movement suffer 2 Damage from its Hazardous Terrain trait.

The Cavern
The Cavern of the Silent Knight is a place lingering at the precipice between spring and winter, when life and death are at their most fragile. Characters entering this Cavern should find it to be roughly circular and around 30 yards in diameter. The Silent Knight stands opposite the entrance on a Sentinel Stone. Fatemasters should also populate the area with Briar Crowns (2+1 per Fated).

Briar Crowns
Briar Crowns are Height 2, Severe, and Hazardous Terrain. Each one occupies a specific area (3 yards by 3 yards). Fae characters do not count Briar Crowns as Severe or Hazardous Terrain. Any character can take a (2) Action to remove a Briar Crown that is within 3 yards. If a Briar Crown would ever gain the Burning Condition, it is immediately removed.

Defeating the Silent Knight
After players defeat the Silent Knight or otherwise placate it, the entrance out of the Cavern reopens.

Should Fatemasters choose, they can include the Silent Thorn Grimoire as a reward and read the following:

The Silent Knight collapses without a word. As the reality of your actions sets in, you realize something grows from the Silent Knight’s broken body. It is a tendril, like those thorned vines that called this Cavern their home. A pale flower blooms from the end; within seconds, the petals wither and fall away to nothing. All that remains is that crooked briar, moving in an absent breeze.

The first Fated that tries to take the Thorn immediately attunes to it (and therefore suffers 2 Damage that cannot be reduced).
Add-ons

If you would like to make the Silent Knight a bit different in your adventure, feel free to use any or all of these options to change its difficulty and add in some new thematic elements.

NEW AWAKENING

The Silent Knight is incredibly old. Whether forgotten by death, life, or both, it has not moved from its watch in ages. It will take some time before the Fae can fully manifest its powers against the threats it now faces.

For the first two rounds of Dramatic Time, the Silent Knight has the Slow Condition.

ADD THIS TRIGGER TO THE MASSIVE CLEAVER ACTION

Winter's Life

After damaging the target, place two Briar Crowns anywhere within 3 yards of the target; the target also gains Slow unless they have the Ice Immuto.

(1) THORN PATHS

The Silent Knight travels, fusing with its briars and reforming elsewhere.

Immediately place the Silent Knight anywhere within 3 yards of a Briar Crown inside the Cavern. This movement does not trigger Disengaging Strikes or similar effects.

CONNECTION TO THE AUTUMN COURT

Fated with the Autumn Knight Advanced Pursuit can attempt to communicate with the Silent Knight; the guardian is mute and will not speak, but a general feeling about its intentions and purpose can be gleaned from the Knight’s body language, presence, and the Cavern itself. This requires a TN 11 Bewitch or Convince Challenge. On a success, the Silent Knight stops its assault and considers that Fated an ally. It will not attack other Fated present if the Autumn Knight wishes. Attacking the Silent Knight or earning two Margins of Failure will immediately make it hostile again, with all further Social Challenges against it being considered automatic failures.

For each TN 11 Bewitch or Convince Challenge an Autumn Knight succeeds against the Silent Knight, reveal one of the following pieces of information in the order below. With a Margin of Failure, the Silent Knight lowers its trust in the Autumn Knight; all further Social Challenges against the Knight suffer -2. With two Margins of Failure, the Knight will once again consider the Autumn Knight and all Fated as enemies and resume its attack.

- The Cavern’s carvings are written in an ancient dialect and seem to detail the place as a bastion against winter, where life can retreat and be kept safe until the cold and deathful season passes. The carvings suggest that the Knight is part of a larger order that defends Caverns like this one.

- The briar crowns that occupy the Cavern seem almost to be extensions of their master’s body. Your presence has excited them. The Silent Knight is restraining them, for now, but you sense they would gladly feed off of the bodies of your living companions.

- There is a skein of death in the Cavern, but underneath is new life waiting to burst forth. The Fae used this place as a reservoir for magic to rapidly throw off the ague of winter. It seems the Silent Knight’s order was key to ensuring these places remained protected and likely undertook the grim task of using old blood magic to maintain themselves and their sanctuaries until called to help usher in spring.

- Accepting you as a fellow member of the Court of the Autumn Queen, the Silent Knight offers a gift. You receive the Silent Thorn Grimoire, and the way out of the Cavern opens.
Optional Reward

**GRIMOIRE: SILENT THORN**

Having grown from the remains of the Silent Knight, this object still shudders with dark life. It is not fully dead; with enough sacrifice, the Thorn's power can be called upon to grow new, lethal, black-tipped thorns. When attuned and alive it appears as a dark piece of bramble vine that occasionally twitches; when de-attuned and dead, it is little more than a crooked, dried husk. One may find as time passes that they must give more and more of their life to call upon the Silent Thorn's power. The most devoted allow the Thorn to drink them almost dry, and even then they feel compelled to give more…

To attune to the Thorn, a Living or Fae character must grip it tightly and allow it to pierce their skin; they suffer 2 Damage that cannot be reduced. After casting any one of its Magia, the character must suffer 1 Damage that cannot be reduced; if they do not, they immediately de-attune from the Grimoire. Autumn Knights do not suffer 1 Damage after casting a Magia, and will always be considered attuned to the Grimoire unless they willfully elect to de-attune. The Silent Thorn contains the Dark Growth and Thorny Lash Magia, and the Natural and Native Environment Immuto.

**DARK GROWTH (NECROMANCY MAGIA)**

**Aspect:** (Tenacity)  **AP:** (1)  **TN:** 10  
**Resist:** -  **Range:** (5 Yards)  
**Effect:** You summon a dense and potent bundle of writhing vines. Place a Briar Crown anywhere within this spell's range. It lasts until removed or destroyed. Each surviving Briar Crown you have placed this way increases the TN of this spell by +4, calculated before the action is resolved. You may destroy one Briar Crown you have made this way as a (0) Action.

Alternatively, this spell can be cast on yourself to cover parts of your body with glistening, deadly thorns. If cast in this way, you gain **Armor** +1, **Defensive** +1, and all characters targeting you with Close Combat attacks suffer 2 Damage after resolving their attack action. Characters that attempt to grapple you or otherwise make direct contact suffer 3 Damage instead. If cast this way, Dark Growth lasts 1 round.

**THORNY LASH (NECROMANCY MAGIA)**

**Aspect:** (Tenacity)  **AP:** (1)  **TN:** 9  
**Resist:** -  **Range:** (10 Yards)  
**Effect:** At your will, a cluster of vines and thorns lashes out like a whip and injures your foes. Target a patch of non-sentient plant-life or Briar Crown within range (occupying a space of 3x3 yards). All characters within 3 yards of the target must take a TN 11 Evade Challenge or suffer 2/3/4 Damage. If you cast this spell while under the effects of Dark Growth, you may treat yourself as the target of this spell.

**NATURAL (ELEMENTAL IMMUTO, TN+2)**

Any character that suffers damage from the spell also gains the following Condition until the start of the caster’s next turn: **Rooted:** This character may not take Walk or Charge Actions. If this character is pushed, this character suffers 3 Damage, then end this Condition.”

This Immuto may be added to a spell multiple times. Each time, increase the duration of this Condition by +1 round.

**NATIVE ENVIRONMENT (IMMUTO, TN -3)**

This Immuto can be added once if the caster is in a non-urban area that would be populated by Malifaux’s natural flora, or one that already contains briars, creepers, thorns, and similar non-sentient plants.