

A ROLE-PLAYING SYSTEM

ABYSSAL WAKE

A ROLE-PLAYING SYSTEM

CONTENT WARNING (18+)

The creators of this book stand for peace, mutual respect, and empathy, resolutely rejecting all forms of cruelty, violence, and hatred. Everything depicted within these game worlds is a work of speculative fiction.

Materials within this universe may contain real-world historical imagery, mythology, and fantasy elements, utilized purely for artistic purposes to establish the atmosphere of the settings.

This book and its illustrations are intended strictly for mature audiences (18+). Any scenes containing mature content feature adult characters only. If you are sensitive to dark aesthetics, occult themes, or graphic imagery, reader discretion is strongly advised.

Take care of yourself.

HELLO! :)

This is the beta version of the rules for the tabletop roleplaying game "Abyssal Wake". The engine has been tested in both voice and text-based games, backed by several chronicles and a series of one-shots across various genres (urban mysticism, superhero, fantasy, mecha).

This document contains the core mechanics for those already familiar with tabletop roleplaying games. The lists of Merits, Flaws, and templates continue to be updated on the website, with dedicated settings, ready-to-run adventures, and a Foundry VTT module to follow. Join the playtest - we hope you enjoy it!

Certain mechanics and sections are still undergoing active testing. You can share your feedback, questions, and suggestions here:
https://forms.gle/nSz2xH3ujwpXGFsF8
https://discord.gg/rolecult

ABYSSAL WAKE
CORE RULEBOOK
Open Beta, 2026

THE BEST PART

We often want to jump into the action right away, so our goal was to build a system where players can create a character in 15 minutes without having to study the rules in advance. More complex heroes - especially those wielding magic right from the start - may take slightly longer to build. However, the book provides ready-made templates that players can pick up immediately to avoid reading more than a couple of pages.

To run a session, only the Game Master (GM) needs to know the rules and underlying mechanics. The GM facilitates the game and needs to be familiar with the player characters anyway.

WHAT MAKES THIS MODULAR SYSTEM SPECIAL?

The engine adapts directly to your preferences. It features a solid core ruleset paired with modular blocks of alternative mechanics. The simple, customizable architecture of Abyssal Wake lets you run virtually anything: heroic fantasy, superhero stories, horror, occult mysteries, or character-driven drama. You can run a breezy, fast-paced session with minimal bookkeeping and light themes, or bring in the full mechanical arsenal for gritty survival and psychological terror.

PSYCHOLOGY AS A MECHANIC

A major design priority was seamlessly connecting narrative moral dilemmas, character motivations, and concrete actions. A hero's personality and values drive the plot forward and directly affect dice rolls. Principles are dynamic: they change over the course of the game, refining into a better fit through Evolution or transforming into something entirely different through Metamorphosis. These Principles define the hero's personal code and establish personal objectives that grant experience points to the entire party upon completion.

We integrated fears, stress, and mental breakdowns into full-fledged game mechanics. Inner tension extends into the core gameplay: the rules directly link each character's psychological state to the group dynamic and the momentum of the story.

Because control over a character's psyche can be a sensitive topic at the table, this book provides clear guidance on when the GM should take the reins and when decisions must remain entirely with the player, keeping table conflicts to a minimum.

AT A GLANCE

Abyssal Wake is a modular roleplaying engine focused on cinematic scenes, psychological tension, and the direct impact of a character's personality on dice rolls. While its dedicated setting is not yet published, we are genuinely excited to share it with you soon! The system equips your group with practical tools for quick game prep and dynamic play: checks without opposed rolls from the GM, streamlined difficulty benchmarks, and dedicated mechanics for moral dilemmas. All of this adapts seamlessly into any backdrop or favorite fandom you choose.

CAMPAIGN CONCEPTS YOU CAN BUILD WITH THIS ENGINE

Beloved Universes, Movies, and TV Shows: Run stories inspired by iconic films, series, books, or anime. Bringing familiar heroes and established worlds into the engine takes only minutes.

High-Stakes Drama and Temptation: Personal crises, principles tested under pressure, agonizing moral dilemmas, or compromises and bargains with your conscience in any setting.

Corporate Dystopia, Superheroes, or Alternate History: Late-stage capitalism, commodified anomalies and tech, wartime black-budget projects, and rebellion against the machine.

Occult Mysteries and Urban Fantasy: Paranormal investigations, ancient cults, local folklore, espionage, and shadow wars between supernatural factions (vampires against werewolves, clashes of primal spirits and deities, and beyond).

Tactical Sci-Fi and Combat Mechs: Piloting heavy armored walkers, deep-space expeditions, cybernetic augmentations, and cohesive tactical strike teams deployed to crisis zones.

High Adventure and Dark Fantasy: Perilous journeys, expeditions into the unknown, noble house intrigues, and ancient curses.

Gritty Survival and Psychological Horror: Bleak isolation, post-apocalyptic ruin, resource scarcity, and extreme tension where stress pushes characters to the brink of complete moral collapse.

...what will *your* story be about?



CREDITS

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ALPHA PLAYTESTERS

A heartfelt thank-you to our trailblazers who were the first to step into the Abyss, stress-tested the rules, and helped bring this system to life! We are immensely grateful to our active community for their courage, invaluable feedback, and dedicated support!

TO CREATORS AND ARTISTS

This edition currently includes few illustrations. If you would like to support the project with your artwork on a voluntary basis, we will gladly feature suitable pieces by artists and photographers with full creator credit.

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Scan the QR code above to access our interactive character sheet with clickable links to reference guides. If you prefer a printed sheet - fill it out using the instructions below.

When necessary, the GM should assist by clarifying additional rules and helping complete the sheet. This applies especially to Merits, Flaws, and all Mysticism, which must always be discussed with the GM.

Chaos (Stigma, Temptations, Vulnerabilities): Inner demons and personal flaws that drive the hero toward impulsive actions. Mechanically, this generates Stress and triggers dramatic narrative crises.

Order (Principles, Aspirations): The character's internal moral compass and core tenets. Mechanically, it governs progression and self-control: upholding ideals relieves Stress and grants experience, while betraying them breaks resolve and alters core beliefs.

Species: Human by default. If you are playing a different creature - specify it here.

Stigma: A dark past, a scandal, a grave mistake, or a malicious rumor that poisons your reputation. This social burden resurfaces whenever the character is recognized or their name is spoken. Example: Fratricide.

Temptations (minimum 2): Irresistible urges that eclipse duty, principles, and common sense. Example: Hoarding occult secrets; a weakness for beautiful women.

Vulnerabilities (minimum 3): Trigger points that provoke an emotional breakdown, loss of control, or paralysis. Examples: The smell of smoke and the sight of open fire. Being rejected or betrayed. Falling under someone else's complete control.

Principles (minimum 2): An unshakeable moral code and personal taboos that dictate the hero's actions regardless of the circumstances. These typically begin with the words "Always" or "Never." Example: 1. Always spend resources on any scrap of genuine mystery - it is worth it. 2. Always take revenge on an offender.

Aspirations (minimum 2): Concrete personal objectives for the current mission, tied directly to your Principles. Completing an objective grants experience and awards 1 point toward the Evolution track of the corresponding Principle. Examples: 1. Recover the dead mentor's encrypted journal from his laboratory archives. 2. Take revenge on the mentor's killer.

Distribute 40 Skill points with ratings from 1 to 9 maximum of 4 Skills with a rating of 7+; if a Skill is at 0, roll only 1d10). The dice pool is (Skill + 1)d10. Next, select two core Competencies. Each reduces task Difficulty by 1 (to a minimum of 1), but failing the roll inflicts +1 Stress. It is recommended to choose 10-15 Skills. Standard challenges require at least one success (a roll of 8-10 on a die). The complete Skill list is in Chapter 1.3.

Distribute another 20 points between Skills and Merits of all kinds. Merits and Flaws (Body and Mind, Lineage and Species Traits) must be discussed with the GM. You can review them independently in Section 6.

Mysticism: Modular magical effects, superpowers, rituals, or artifacts. Discuss these with your GM.

Flesh (4 dice): Physical endurance and health. Defense against injuries, toxins, pain-induced shock, and physical attacks.

Psyche (4 dice): Mental fortitude and self-control. Defense against horrifying sights, stress, fear, and psychic domination.

Stress (starts at 0) and the Drama Die: A 4-box tracker marked when you fail a check using a core Competency (+1), fail rolls or make mistakes related to any Chaos trait (+1), face GM-driven narrative drama (+1 alongside a Luck Token), or change a Principle (+2). Marking all 4 boxes activates the Drama Die (one die is replaced with a different color or simply rolled separately) on every subsequent roll made by your character.

Luck Tokens (start: 1, maximum: 10) are awarded by the GM throughout the game. Spending options: adding +1 success to a roll (up to a maximum of Difficulty 3); narrative aid (revealing hidden information, a hint, or an advantageous GM NPC); Legendary Action (spending all 10 tokens - a cinematic turning point with GM approval).

Complete your character sheet: detail your character's appearance and backstory, gear carried on your person, assets stored at your haven, vehicles, and key equipment.

Congratulations, you are ready to play!

DICE ROLLING RULES:

All rolls use ten-sided dice (d10).

Rule 1 - Determine whether a roll is possible in the given situation.

Rule 2 - Determine the Difficulty: 1 - Standard, 2 - Hard, 3 - Extreme, 4 - Epic. Higher values apply only in combat when dealing damage.

Rule 3 - Calculate the dice pool. The base pool equals the Skill rating plus one die (if the Skill rating is 0, roll only 1d10). Secondary factors affecting the roll (improper tools, favorable wind, darkness, distractions) may modify the dice pool within a range of -5 to +5. The last part of this rule is optional.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME

NICKNAME

CHARACTER PORTRAIT

SPECIES

AGE

CHAOS

STIGMA

TEMPTATIONS

VULNERABILITIES

PSYCHE ☐☐☐☐
FLESH ☐☐☐☐
STRESS ☐☐☐☐

LUCK TOKENS ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

1.

☐ Evolution ☐☐☐☐
☐ Metamorphosis ☐☐☐☐

2.

☐ Evolution ☐☐☐☐
☐ Metamorphosis ☐☐☐☐

ASPIRATIONS

SKILL POINTS ____ / ____ | GENERAL POINTS ____ / ____ | MYSTIC POINTS ____ / ____ | EXPERIENCE ____ / ____

SKILLS

Athletics	____ (+1)
Biology	____ (+1)
Brawl	____ (+1)
Chemistry	____ (+1)
Crafts	____ (+1)
Deception	____ (+1)
Engineering	____ (+1)
Erudition	____ (+1)
Finance	____ (+1)
Firearms	____ (+1)
Geo and Space Sciences	____ (+1)
Intimidation	____ (+1)
Intuition	____ (+1)
IT	____ (+1)
Law	____ (+1)
Lockpicking	____ (+1)
Logic	____ (+1)
Medic	____ (+1)
Melee	____ (+1)
Occultism	____ (+1)
Perception	____ (+1)
Performing Arts	____ (+1)
Persuasion	____ (+1)
Physics	____ (+1)
Politics	____ (+1)
Profiling	____ (+1)
Seduction	____ (+1)
Stealth	____ (+1)
Survival	____ (+1)
Theft	____ (+1)
Vehicles	____ (+1)
Visual Arts	____ (+1)

COMPETENCIES

PSYCHOSES & TRAUMAS

MERITS & FLAWS

MYSTERIA SUPREMA

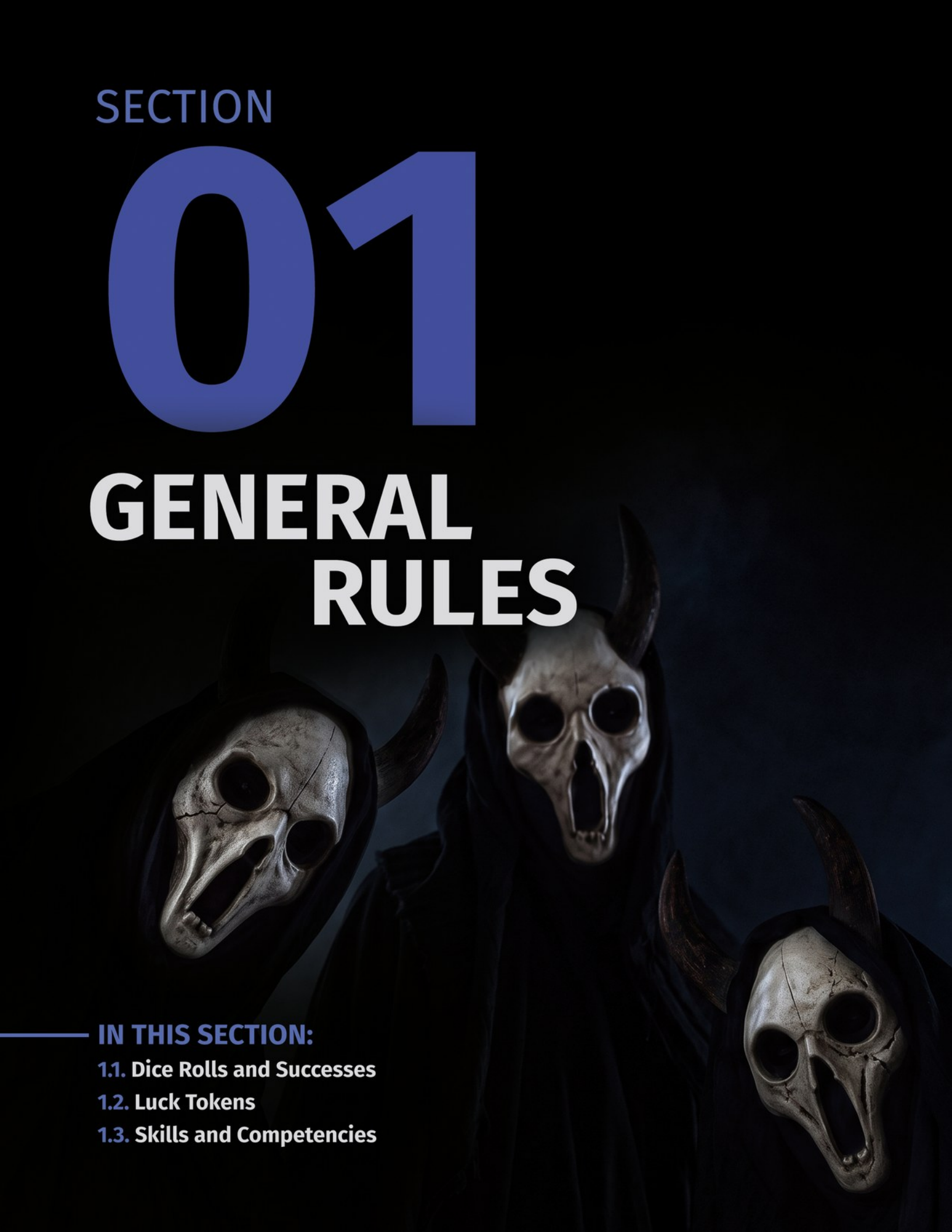
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SECTION

01

GENERAL RULES



IN THIS SECTION:

1.1. Dice Rolls and Successes
1.2. Luck Tokens
1.3. Skills and Competencies

1.1. DICE ROLLS AND SUCCESSES

When the outcome of an action or event is uncertain, roll ten-sided dice (d10). Each 8, 9, or 10 rolled counts as a success.

The Difficulty of a task determines exactly how many successes are required to achieve the intended result.

Determining Difficulty

Before rolling dice, the GM evaluates whether the action is possible at all. If a task is impossible from the start (such as reading ancient hieroglyphs on sight without knowing the language), no roll is called.

If there is a chance of success, the GM determines the Difficulty based on the context of the scene:

- **1 - Standard.** A routine, realistic task that requires composure under pressure.
- **2 - Hard.** Noticeably more demanding than average; requires professional expertise or serious preparation.
- **3 - Extreme.** An action pushed to the absolute limit, achievable only in rare circumstances.
- **4 - Epic.** A true miracle, a monumental feat, or an act of reckless daring.

Always a Chance (The Base Die).

No matter how many penalties circumstances, injuries, or the GM impose, a character's dice pool never drops to zero. The player always rolls at least one d10 - the base die. The chance to pull off a victory or roll a saving success is always there!

One success (Standard Difficulty) - is the absolute minimum in the system. Any bonuses, Merits, and Competencies can stack, but they never reduce Difficulty below 1. If a task does not require even a single success, no roll is called - the action succeeds automatically.

Four successes is the ceiling for any standard check. The sole exception is combat and direct contests between characters: here no upper limit applies, as successes translate directly into damage and decisively establish dominance (see Section 2).

GM Tip: Resource Pressure

Every check carries the risk of characters taking Stress or burning a Luck Token. The more often players reach for the dice, the faster their resources drain. If you want to wear the party down and raise the stakes - offer no leniency during crisis scenes: call for a check on every risky decision.

Three levers of difficulty

Difficulty in our modular system can be adjusted in three distinct ways: the first is set once and for all, the second decides the outcome of a single check, and the third fine-tunes probabilities on the fly. It helps to know when to pull each lever.

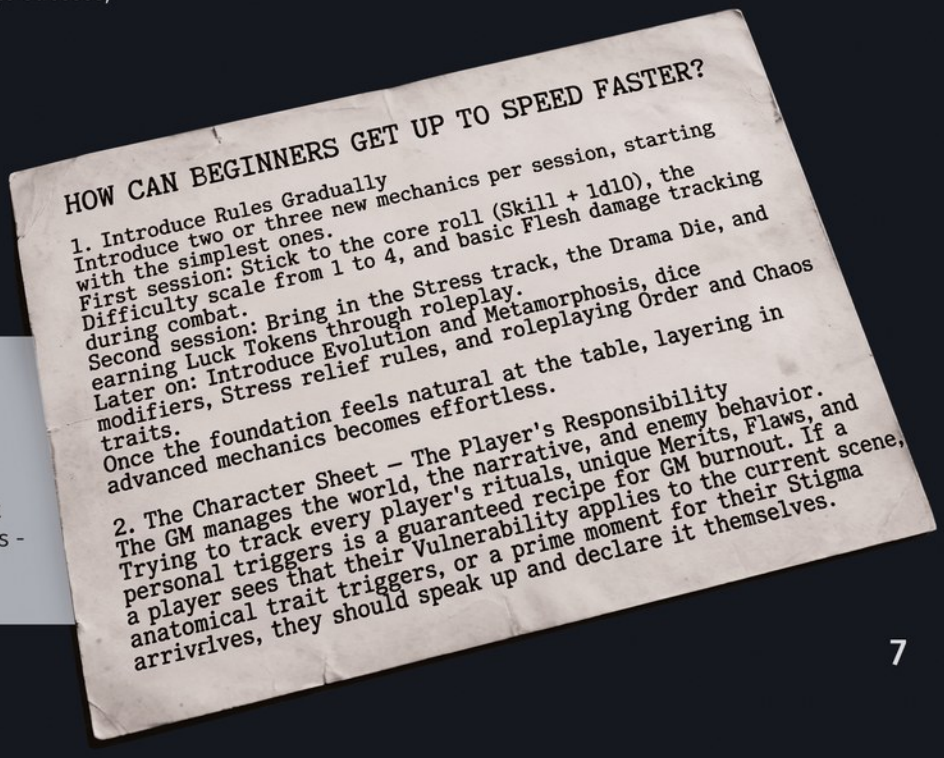
1. Chronicle Tone (Success Threshold). By default, a success is an 8, 9, or 10. To make the game more forgiving, designate a roll of 7 as a success as well. The chosen setting remains constant throughout your entire chronicle, otherwise players will lose their grasp of what their dice are worth.

2. Character Intent (The Required Successes, from 1 to 4) This is the primary and most impactful lever. When the core nature of an action changes, adjust the required number of successes. For example, rather than firing at a running beast in the gloom, shooting purely by sound in pitch darkness (Difficulty +2).

3. Character Circumstances (Dice Pool Size). Fine-tuning within a range of ±5 dice: lighting, cover, rushing, gear, aid from an ally, injuries, and so on. A single die barely shifts the odds, three make a noticeable difference, but this penalty never renders a task impossible (a minimum of one die always remains). This lever is granular and can change round by round. As circumstances shift, modify the dice pool. For example, taking aim before firing at a running beast (+1 die to the pool). **This adjustment is optional everywhere except combat scenes.**

Your dicepool

- **1 die** - if you have no Skill (Skill rating = 0), but the action is possible in principle. For example, attempting to ride a bicycle for the first time without the "Drive" Skill.
- **(Skill + 1) dice** - if the Skill is rated at 1 or higher.


HOW CAN BEGINNERS GET UP TO SPEED FASTER?

1. Introduce Rules Gradually
Introduce two or three new mechanics per session, starting with the simplest ones.
First session: Stick to the core roll (Skill + 1d10), the Difficulty scale from 1 to 4, and basic Flesh damage tracking during combat.
Second session: Bring in the Stress track, the Drama Die, and earning Luck Tokens through roleplay.
Later on: Introduce Evolution and Metamorphosis, dice modifiers, Stress relief rules, and roleplaying Order and Chaos traits.
Once the foundation feels natural at the table, layering in advanced mechanics becomes effortless.

2. The Character Sheet — The Player's Responsibility
The GM manages the world, the narrative, and enemy behavior. Trying to track every player's rituals, unique Merits, Flaws, and personal triggers is a guaranteed recipe for GM burnout. If a player sees that their Vulnerability applies to the current scene, a anatomical trait triggers, or a prime moment for their Stigma arrivrlves, they should speak up and declare it themselves.

A single task can often be accomplished using completely different Skills, so lacking a specific Skill is never an issue.

For example, investigating a crime scene is typically conducted using Logic or Perception. You roll these Skills to gather clues without additional penalty. If you lack them, Intuition, Larceny (in case of a burglary), Law, Profiling (knowledge of judicial precedent, crime reports, and forensics), or high Erudition (familiarity with detective fiction and true-crime) will work, but using these Skills adds +1 or +2 to the Difficulty.

This is only an illustrative list. Everything depends on the nature of the crime, how clearly the player explains their declared use of the Skill, and whether allowing such a check makes sense. For instance, Larceny may not be suitable to analyze a crime scene in your narrative in a case involving a murder.

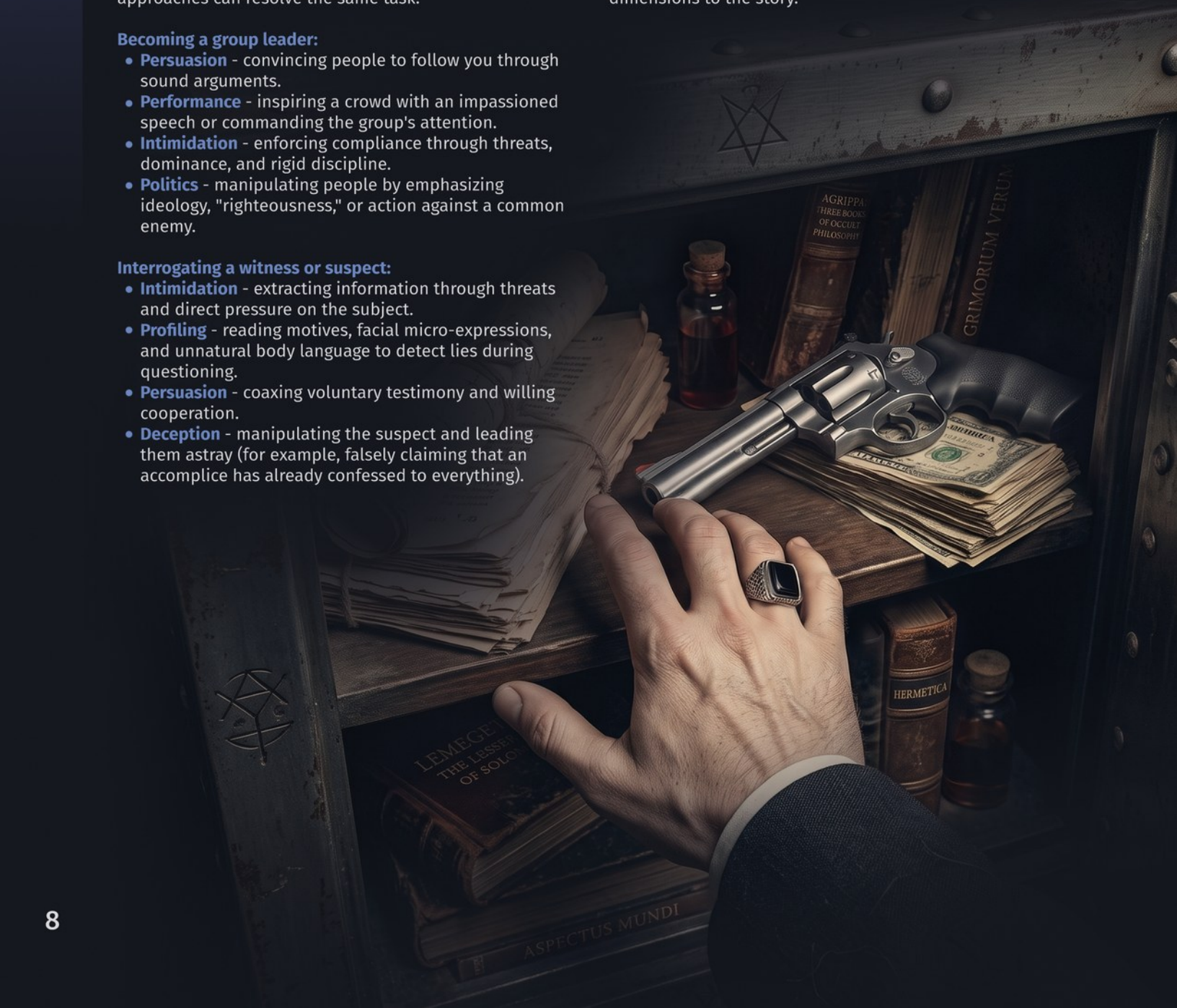
Here are some more examples of how different approaches can resolve the same task.

Becoming a group leader:
- **Persuasion** - convincing people to follow you through sound arguments.
- **Performance** - inspiring a crowd with an impassioned speech or commanding the group's attention.
- **Intimidation** - enforcing compliance through threats, dominance, and rigid discipline.
- **Politics** - manipulating people by emphasizing ideology, "righteousness," or action against a common enemy.

Interrogating a witness or suspect:
- **Intimidation** - extracting information through threats and direct pressure on the subject.
- **Profiling** - reading motives, facial micro-expressions, and unnatural body language to detect lies during questioning.
- **Persuasion** - coaxing voluntary testimony and willing cooperation.
- **Deception** - manipulating the suspect and leading them astray (for example, falsely claiming that an accomplice has already confessed to everything).

Examining an antique piece of jewelry:
- **Erudition** - knowledge of brand history, relevant trends, status symbols, and a working grasp of the market.
- **Fine Art** - understanding color composition, historical visual styles, and aesthetic design.
- **Craft** - quality of workmanship, materials used, structural durability, and manufacturing defects.
- **History** - the era of creation, country of origin, and cultural context.
- **Occultism** - the ritual purpose of the ornament, along with the symbolism of its imagery and gemstones. украшения, символизм изображений и камней.
- **Politics** - understanding the piece's status value as a symbol of power.
- **Finance** - appraising the actual market value of the jewelry.

Naturally, these tasks can also be approached using other Skills, and each unique declaration will reveal distinct details to the heroes, bringing vibrant new dimensions to the story.



1.2. LUCK TOKENS

Luck Tokens are points earned by a player for unconventional, creative, or risky decisions, as well as for significant narrative progress.

Examples:
- Using a non-primary Skill to resolve a challenging task.
- Solving a problem in an unconventional or daring way.

Each character begins a chronicle with 1 Token. Free Tokens are not granted at the start of subsequent sessions: accumulated points carry over between games and do not expire until spent. Over the course of a session (individually and asynchronously), a player can earn 1 or 2 Tokens. Awarding more diminishes dramatic tension and undermines the high-stakes atmosphere. Awarding less (strictly 1 or 0) removes the incentive to take risks and push boundaries.

A character can hold a maximum of 10 Tokens.

How to spend them:
- Add one or more successes to a roll that was already made to meet a high Difficulty (up to a maximum of Difficulty 3; for Difficulty 4, see "Legendary Action" below). Conversion rate: 1 to 1.
- Exchange Tokens for special actions.

Exchanging Tokens means the character calls upon the game world for leverage.

For example:
- Obtain a crucial clue.
- Introduce or summon a specific NPC.
- Uncover hidden information.

In certain situations, the GM reserves the right to decline a Token. For instance, if it makes no narrative sense (the NPC is unreachable) or if the GM deliberately wants to heighten the challenge of a specific task. In general, refusing a Token without a strong reason is discouraged. A Token on its own is merely potential, and only spending it converts the players' past achievements into compelling in-game advantages.

Legendary Action

If you accumulate all 10 Tokens, you can spend them all at once on a Legendary Action.

A Legendary Action is an exceptionally powerful, epic event. The GM immediately states whether its use is viable in the current scene

Example of a Legendary Action:
Saving the group from certain doom in a distinctly cinematic way fitting the scene, even if it seems wildly improbable.

1.3. SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Base Character Creation Points

Each player receives 60 points for character creation. A minimum of 40 points must be distributed solely among base Skills, with a maximum of 4 Skills receiving 7 or more points. The remaining points can be distributed between Skills and Merits. Selected Flaws will grant an equivalent number of additional points.

It is recommended to choose 10-15 different Skills.

> **GM Tip:** if these base points feel like too few or too many - feel free to adjust the starting amount to suit your game's needs!

Skill Levels

Skills reflect what a character can genuinely do. These are their professional skills. The complete list of all 32 Abilities, along with examples, is detailed below.

Each ability is rated on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 represents 10% of potential mastery (basic knowledge, superficial understanding), and 10 represents the absolute maximum within human limits (living legend status). A Skill can be raised to a maximum of level 9. The tenth die in the pool is provided by the roll's base die, which is always added.

General understanding of the levels:
1 - Minimal grasp. Makes mistakes.
2 - Novice skills. Can handle simple tasks.
3 - Confident beginner. Has consistent practice without major errors.
4 - Experienced, mistakes are rare. Can teach beginners.
5 - Reliable proficiency. Applies the Skill regularly and confidently.
6 - Seasoned. Can handle complex situations.
7 - Professional. Noticeably stands out from the majority.
8 - Master. Does what others consider difficult.
9 - Expert. Renowned mentor who inspires others.
10 - Absolute. Legendary level in their field. Achieved only through the extra die.

Lacking a Skill

If a character has no rating in an Skill (a value of 0), they can still attempt the action with the GM's permission by rolling 1d10. This die represents intuition, instinct, or blind luck. It is an attempt to act on pure chance, without preparation or confidence.

Certain actions (especially complex or technical ones) are completely impossible without a baseline Skill level - the GM specifies this separately.

Example: someone without the "Drive" Skill can attempt to start a car and pull away, but they will hardly be able to read anything in Chinese when seeing characters for the first time.

Competencies (specializations, expertise)

Competencies are fields in which a character possesses deep knowledge, experience, or professional training. This can be an official profession, practical craftsmanship, a trade, or even a criminal specialization.

A player chooses between 2 and 4 Competencies during character creation. Two are granted for free, while the remaining two can be purchased at character creation using creation points (2 points each) or later on - with experience.

A Competency can be a highly specialized skill ("Forensics," "Lockpicking," "Mountaineering"), or a broad professional background ("Marine," "Detective," "Combat Medic").

A broad Competency, or one that could carry drastically different meanings, is recorded with a strict restriction using the format "Field (Condition)." Examples: "Covering Tracks (Wilderness)," "Covering Tracks (Crime Scene)."

Application in play:
When a character performs an action tied to a Competency and the player justifies its relevance, the player chooses one of the following benefits: the roll's Difficulty is reduced by 1 (down to a minimum of 1 success), or situational penalties are ignored up to -3 dice. Competencies do not add extra dice to the pool; they only lower the Difficulty threshold or negate penalties.

Example: a character has the "Psychiatry" Competency. They are negotiating with a possessed individual, trying to deduce where the entity is hiding. The player explains that they are drawing upon knowledge of typical behavioral patterns associated with split personality. The GM reduces the roll's Difficulty from 3 to 2.

The player is entitled to justify the application of their profession in any logical scene: "Detective" can reduce Difficulty when examining evidence as well as during an interrogation, while "Marine" works for shooting as well as storming high ground. However, the GM has the right to refuse the use of a Competency if the connection is unconvincing.

Remember the cost: a Competency is a double-edged sword. Failing a check that utilizes one automatically inflicts 1 Stress point (a professional loses their composure when their signature expertise fails). A player who tries shoehorning "Marine" into every single action risks filling their Stress track quickly and spiraling into a Mental Breakdown after just a couple of failed rolls!

Merits and Flaws

20 of the 60 starting points can be spent on purchasing Merits or additional Skills. Selected Flaws return the specified number of points back into your creation pool.

The complete description of categories ("Body and Mind," "Lineage," "Species Traits") and the catalog of all traits with their costs are detailed in Section 6.

GM Tip: Broad Skills and Professionalism

The list of 32 Skills intentionally covers broad domains of knowledge to avoid overloading the game with micro-skills. For example, "Drive" governs awareness of vehicle dimensions, reaction time, and the general physics of motion.

At the same time, a character's lived experience always has its own distinct profile. If an experienced sports car driver takes the controls of a military helicopter or a powerboat, there is no need to disallow the roll: they understand the general logic of maneuvering and the physics of speed quite well. In situations like this, the GM simply increases the roll's difficulty by 1 or 2 steps, reflecting the stress of an unfamiliar instrument panel and the unique nuances of handling.

This is precisely what Competencies are for: choosing a specialization (such as "Helicopter Piloting") completely offsets this penalty.

Skills

Athletics. Using physical power, stamina, and agility to overcome physical and environmental obstacles.
- Scale a sheer wall or massive barricade to lose pursuers.
- Sprint across rough terrain without running out of steam.
- Pry open a jammed door through sheer muscle before time runs out.

Biology. Knowledge of living organisms, anatomy, ecosystems, and genetics.
- Identify an animal species by shed scraps of fur.
- Analyze a tissue sample to spot a mutation.
- Determine which biological toxin caused the victim's symptoms.

Brawl. Unarmed brawling, street tactics, improvised weapons, and self-defense.
- Knock a few teeth out of an enemy's jaw.
- Fight off three drunk patrons in a bar.
- Use a chair to fend off a feral beast.

Chemistry. Knowledge of chemical reactions, properties, brewing compounds, and neutralizing toxins.
- Cook up a potent sedative using over-the-counter medicine.
- Analyze an unknown powder lifted from a crime scene.
- Mix an acid strong enough to eat through a door lock.

Crafts. Manual trades, artisan skills, repairing gear, and modifying everyday items.
- Fashion a reliable lockpick from a piece of scrap wire.
- Stitch together functional camouflage gear.
- Restore a damaged antique to working condition.

Deception. Masking the truth, lying, misleading targets, and manipulating people.
- Lie about your name and cover story to slip past a nosy receptionist.
- Feign panic while staring past someone's shoulder to break their focus.
- Talk a hungry guard into running for coffee by offering to watch the door.

Engineering. Grasping mechanical principles, designing, assembling, and repairing machinery.
- Get a stalled generator running using improvised scrap.
- Assemble an improvised explosive device.
- Spot structural flaws in a building's load-bearing design.

Erudition. Broad, encyclopedic trivia spanning diverse fields and recalling obscure facts on demand.
- Recall a historical event tied to a specific location or relic.
- Decipher a phrase in Latin or Ancient Greek.
- Recognize a literary reference, forgotten tradition, or symbol.

Finance. Understanding economic systems, investing, money management, and tracking funds.
- Uncover an embezzlement scheme by combing through ledgers.
- Route dirty money through dummy shell companies.
- Anticipate a market crash based on street rumors.

Firearms. Handling guns, precision marksmanship, and split-second reflexes under fire.
- Hit a moving target in the middle of a firefight.
- Shoot out a streetlamp with a clean, aimed shot.
- Lay down suppressing fire to cover your team.

Geo and Space Sciences. Knowledge of geology, meteorology, astronomy, and planetary structure.
- Predict a sudden storm from subtle environmental signs.
- Identify mineral composition and geological origins.
- Navigate unfamiliar terrain using the stars.

Intimidation. Instilling fear and getting your way through threats and raw pressure.
- Threaten a witness with physical violence to keep your identity hidden.
- Demand a cop's name and badge number, threatening to escalate to higher-ups.
- Scare off gangers with an imposing stance and a show of force.

Intuition. Sensing lies, danger, hidden motives, or the shifting tension in a room.
- Sense that someone is holding back.
- Feel when a tense talk is about to turn into a firefight.
- Sense an ambush before it springs.

IT. Understanding computer systems, networks, programming, and cybersecurity.
- Hack a corporate database to extract classified files.
- Write a script to intercept traffic across a local network.
- Recover deleted data from a damaged drive.

Law. Knowing legal codes, regulations, contracts, and finding procedural loopholes.
- Find a loophole in a contract that lets you void the deal.
- Stonewall an interrogator by citing procedural violations.
- Help an ally dodge arrest by exploiting local statutes.

Lockpicking. Bypassing mechanical security systems, cracking open doors, lockboxes, and safes using picks or improvised tools.
- Pick a warehouse padlock using a bent bobby pin.
- Open a complex door lock with a delicate touch using a professional pick set.
- Crack a mechanical safe by listening to the internal tumblers click into place.

Logic. Analyzing facts, making rational deductions, and untangling complex problems.
- Piece together facts to identify which suspect is lying.
- Crack a difficult puzzle or cryptogram.
- Analyze bullet trajectories to pinpoint a sniper's perch.

Medic. First aid skills, triage, and stabilizing critical conditions.
- Stem the bleeding from a gunshot wound.
- Stabilize a casualty until paramedics arrive.
- Patch together a field dressing on the fly.

Melee. Handling knives, swords, spears, and dedicated close-combat weapons.
- Incapacitate an opponent with a single knife thrust.
- Use combat entrenching tool tactics in close quarters.
- Show a cultist what years of dedicated swordplay look like.

Occultism. Knowledge of esoteric practices, forbidden rituals, and supernatural phenomena.
- Decipher protective warding runes painted across a floor.
- Discern the true purpose of an occult relic recovered from cultists.
- Identify a mythical entity's weaknesses using old grimoires.

Perception. Spotting details, noticing environmental changes, and catching faint sensory cues.
- Catch the distinct creak of a floorboard.
- Spot fresh tracks near an entrance.
- Find a hidden trap before stepping into it.

Performing Arts. Commanding an audience's attention, showmanship, playing instruments, or singing.
- Deliver an impassioned speech to fire up a crowd.
- Distract the guards with a virtuoso guitar performance in a bar.
- Mask your genuine emotions onstage while playing a role.

Persuasion. Swaying others to your side through solid arguments, emotion, and charisma.
- Get a resident to open up about local folklore.
- Talk a security guard into letting you pass without a badge.
- Negotiate an alliance for mutual survival with another crew.

Physics. Grasping natural laws, thermodynamics, electrical circuits, and mechanics.
- Calculate the exact trajectory of a falling heavy object.
- Calculate the voltage spike needed to overload a power grid.
- Set up an optical lens array to focus a high-power beam.

Politics. Navigating power dynamics, bureaucracy, leverage, and high-society circles.
- Pressure an official into signing off on a permit by playing to their interests.
- Read who truly calls the shots at cross-faction negotiations.
- Run a smear campaign to neutralize a political rival.

Profiling. Building psychological profiles, predicting behavior, and reading hidden motives.
- Tell from speech patterns that someone is on the verge of cracking.
- Catch lies through facial micro-expressions and tense body language.
- Build an accurate suspect profile from personal items in their living space.

Seduction. Using personal charm, flirting, and allure to win someone over.
- Flirt with an informant to draw out every detail.
- Use charm to pull attention away from your partner.
- Lure an NPC into a romantic fling for personal leverage.

Stealth. Moving quietly, blending in, and staying off the radar.
- Sneak past sentries through an abandoned facility.
- Give a patrol the slip inside a crowded train station.
- Tail a mark without blowing your cover.

Survival. The ability to stay alive, evade mortal danger, and slip out of no-win situations.

- Sprint through ruins under enemy fire, weaving between piles of rubble.
- Dive for cover when a grenade lands at your feet.
- Conceal yourself securely from a monster inside a closet.

Theft. The art of quietly lifting items, pickpocketing, planting evidence, and sleight of hand.

- Lift a cell key from a guard's pocket during a staged collision.
- Slip an expensive watch off a drunk nobleman's wrist in a tavern.
- Plant incriminating evidence into a rival's bag to frame them before security.

Vehicles. Operating vehicles under any conditions, including chases and emergency maneuvers.

- Shake off pursuers across a rain-slicked highway.
- Navigate rough off-road terrain in total darkness.
- Veer an overloaded rig onto the shoulder to avert a pileup.

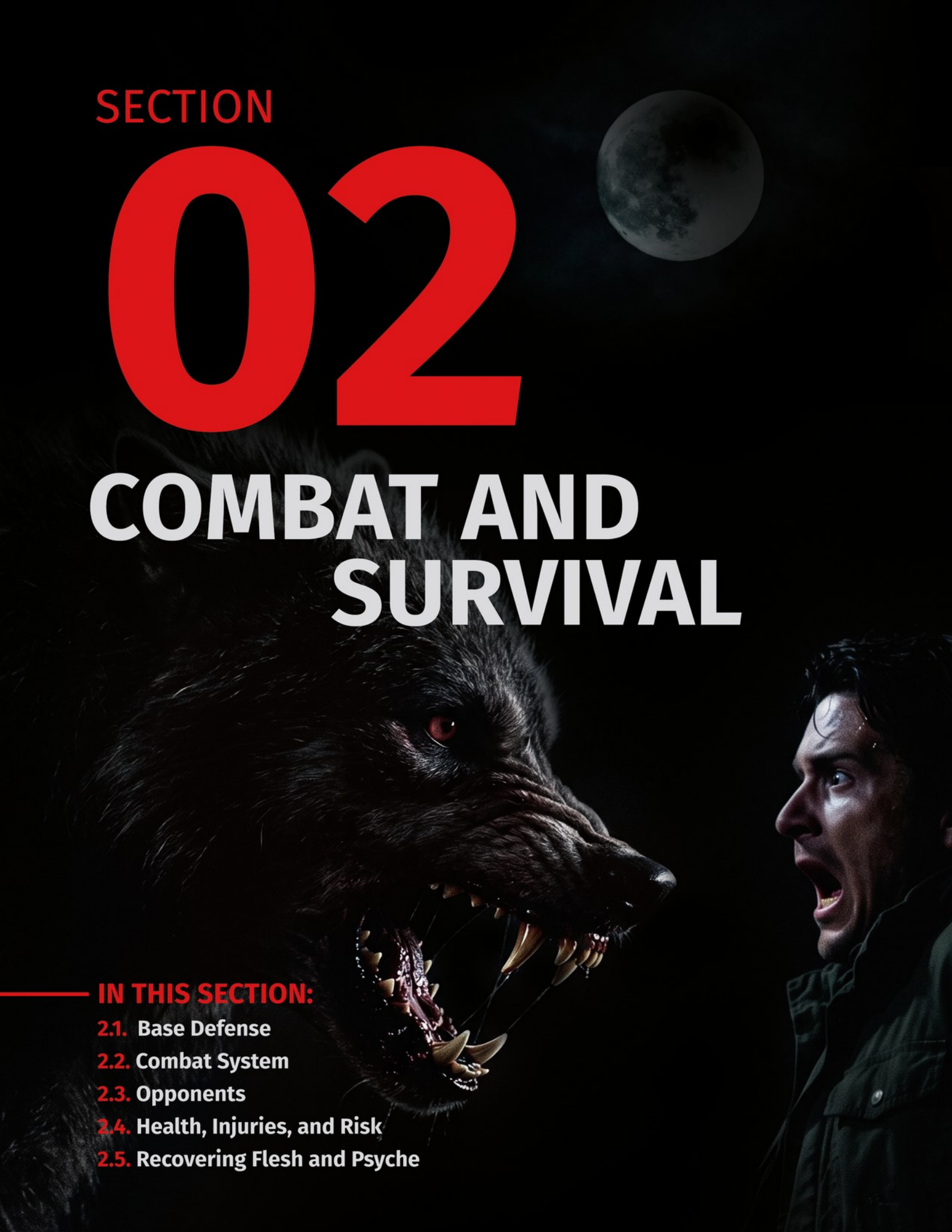
Visual Arts. Creating visual works, evaluating painting techniques, sculpture, composition, and architectural styles.

- Draw an accurate sketch of a suspect from a witness's description.
- Authenticate an antique canvas by the brushwork.
- Date a discovered fresco by pigment composition and artistic style.

SECTION

02

COMBAT AND SURVIVAL



IN THIS SECTION:

2.1. Base Defense
2.2. Combat System
2.3. Opponents
2.4. Health, Injuries, and Risk
2.5. Recovering Flesh and Psyche

2.1. BASE DEFENSE

Every character relies on two primary defensive traits - Flesh and Psyche. Flesh tracks your physical health and bodily resilience. Psyche tracks your mental fortitude. By default, any defensive action against physical or mental attacks rolls 4 dice. Ratings above or below the human baseline are adjusted through Merits and Flaws.

Psyche. Example rolls:

- Withstand severe stress or prolonged emotional strain without suffering a mental breakdown.
- Maintain clarity of mind when confronted by a terrifying phenomenon or a shocking sight.
- Resist an NPC's attempts to break your will, intimidate you, or plant foreign thoughts.

Flesh. Example rolls:

- Endure exposure to toxins, infections, heavy narcotics, or poisons.
- Stay conscious through intense pain from a severe wound or burn.
  Avoid broken bones when dropping from a high ledge.

2.2. COMBAT SYSTEM

Abyssal Wake has no initiative stat. The spotlight shifts to whoever makes narrative sense in the scene. Turn order is driven by the fiction, not by dice rolls.

Only one roll per round
You declare an action (attack, defend, flee, maneuver) - and roll the dice. A single roll resolves everything: success, damage, evasion, and side effects.

Base defense = action logic
There is no dedicated "dodge" Skill. Defense happens through active measures: diving for cover (Survival), parrying a strike (Brawl), or returning fire (Firearms).

Combined action
When declaring a combined action, define the primary intent behind your move. Sprinting under return fire can be resolved by breaking out of the kill zone (Athletics), pinning down enemy positions (Firearms), or reading angles of incoming fire (Perception).

Damage
A character has 4 abstract health points tracked on the Flesh track. Heavy hits mean greater loss. At 0, you face unconsciousness, trauma, or death. Losing points on the Flesh track cuts down your dice pool for physical defense.

Ambushes and rolls of one player against another
An ambush between two characters is resolved with a roll of Stealth against Intuition. If the ambusher wins, the target has no time to react.

Contests between two players are resolved the same way.

Resolving a tie
When a player's successes match the opposing Difficulty, the character can still choose to pull off their tactical goal, taking either 1 point of Flesh damage or 1 point of Stress in return.

If you lack combat Skills
Fall back on Survival or Stealth. Run, hide, shout for backup.

Armor and gear

Armor and items do not guarantee safety and grant no passive perks, but they can lower task Difficulty or add extra dice whenever they create a clear situational edge.

A sword against a spear, a rifle in a grapple, full plate armor against troll claws - everything is weighed against the logic of the scene. Standard item bonuses range from +1 to +3 dice. Mystical or legendary gear maxes out at +4 dice. The overall dice pool ceiling is 14.

The GM decides whether a bonus fits the situation. The GM can also add or strip dice depending on scene conditions (rain, fog, tight quarters, and the like).

Every Skill comes with an assumed baseline tool: a shooter needs a gun, a lockpicker needs picks. Standard equipment gives no bonus - without it, you simply cannot roll. Anything noticeably better or worse than standard gear is treated as a circumstance within the universal ±5 limit.

Ask a single question: how well does this item fit what the character is doing right now?

DICE	ITEM
-2... -1	Wrong tool for the job: a pistol at three hundred meters, a kitchen knife against body armor
0	Standard, functional
+1	Quality and well-maintained
+2	Professional, purpose-built for the task
+3	Unique - handed out only by the GM, and rarely

Note: the exact same item shifts in value from scene to scene. A sniper rifle in an open field is a +2. That same rifle in a cramped hallway is a -1.

Optional Rule: Gear Without Bookkeeping

Players wishing to streamline combat and eliminate unnecessary calculations can completely omit the item table and gear properties: roll only base Skill and defense dice. Weapons and equipment remain simply part of the scene description.

Special Properties. Certain items carry one or two special properties:

- **Piercing** - shuts down the target's defense (detailed further in the Opponents section).
- **Spread** - successes can be split across multiple nearby targets.
- **Devastating** - landed a hit? Add one success for free. This is huge - one success is worth roughly three dice - so this trait belongs on grenades and explosives, not a "big revolver".

2.3. OPPONENTS

NPCs never roll dice. The player makes all the rolls. Difficulty is set by the NPC's training or Skill level. The player needs to match or beat the NPC's "result" in successes to pull off an action (attack, defense, maneuver, etc.). Rolling fewer successes means failure - taking damage, suffering an effect, or missing your opening.

An opponent has only a Rank - a number from 1 to 5 that answers the question, "how dangerous are they?" Everything else is calculated from Rank:

RANK (ATTACK)	FLESH	ENEMY	ELITE
1	2	Low-level thug, security guard	-
2	4	Soldier, mercenary	Armor 1: soldier in a bulletproof vest
3	6	Special forces soldier, hitman	Armor 2: assault trooper with a ballistic shield
4	8	Legendary opponent	Armor 3: soldier in an exoskeleton Mass 1: Super-soldier bruiser
8	10	Predator from another world	Armor 4: armored vehicle Mass 2: monster the size of a house

Optional Rule: Simplified Pulp Combat

If it is difficult to determine enemy Ranks on the fly, use a universal Rank 2 opponent as a baseline. Adjust the threat level solely through their Flesh track: increase the pool to 6-8 for resilient bosses.

How an opponent takes damage. The player attacks with a standard roll. Each success strips away one point of Flesh. When Flesh hits zero - the opponent is out.

How an opponent attacks. An opponent's Attack is a flat number of successes, no roll needed. The player rolls an appropriate defensive Skill, and each success cancels out one incoming attack success. Whatever is left over comes off the player's Flesh (players have 4 Flesh). Heads up: Rank 4-5 enemies will tear through a careless hero in a couple of rounds. This is by design, but be sure to warn players about the extent of the danger in advance.

Mobs of minor enemies. Combine three or four thugs into a single opponent two Ranks higher (Flesh 6, Attack 3). Every 2 points of lost Flesh means -1 to Attack: narrate the fighters dropping out one by one.

Fighting a mob

When fighting a mob, the base Difficulty of the roll is set by the most dangerous enemy. Every additional active foe can still raise the final Difficulty. When taking on a crowd, excess successes beyond the base Difficulty spill over into damage against the enemy's minions (1 point of health per success).

Defense: two types of tough enemies

Starting at Rank 2, you can grant an opponent one of two special defenses:

Armor. A skilled combatant, heavy plating, or both. An attack with fewer successes than the Armor rating does nothing - blades glance off steel, strikes get parried. Once an attack matches or beats the Armor value, it punches straight through with full damage, no deductions: armor cannot stop a blow that finds the gap. Fights against Armor are a series of foiled attempts and one clean, decisive breakthrough.

Mass. A creature that simply doesn't care, because it is either too large, insensitive to pain or undead. Successes equal to Mass are subtracted from each attack, but the remainder always hits. The mothership hovering in the sky takes damage from anti-air missiles, but there are simply too many ships, and anti-air fire isn't very effective. Battles against Mass are a long, grueling struggle, so this defense method is best suited for situations where players can find a weak spot or acquire suitable weapons that allow them to bypass its defenses.

Limits: Armor above 3 makes players' chances of winning almost nil, and Mass above 2 makes a direct confrontation take too much time. These properties never occur together. Even if you steadily chip away at a Mass 2 enemy with a standard weapon, the fight can drag on for a dozen rounds, so Mass is best used as a hint: look for a weak spot, bring a bigger weapon, or just run away.

2.4. HEALTH, INJURIES, AND RISK

Acute Injuries: Suffering a wound (a broken bone, a laceration) inflicts an acute Injury that burns 1 die from your Flesh pool. Losing all Flesh dice results in total physical incapacitation. Once successfully treated, the die returns to your pool.

Static Flaws: Permanent physical impairments (a missing eye, an old limp) leave your baseline Flesh pool untouched, functioning exactly as described in each individual flaw.

Transitions and recovery: If an acute Injury leaves lasting damage, the Flesh die returns once healed, and a new Flaw is logged in the Bio section. With the GM's approval, Flaws can be bought off with experience: in the fiction, they can be treated through narrative means (like surgery) and crossed off your character sheet permanently.

Consequences of severe wounds

Severe wounds complicate the immediate scene. A stabbed shoulder might slap a Difficulty penalty onto your Firearms rolls, while an open bleeder leaves a trail that gives away your position until patched up.

Grapples, stuns, and similar disruptions strip dice from your roll, except on checks made to break free or shake off the effect.

Example consequences:

- **Clinch:** Standard strikes take -3 dice for those involved, while dodging other enemies suffers -2 dice. Attempts to break free, tackle, or choke an opponent roll without penalty.
- **Knocked down:** Any attacks or evasions while prone take a -2 dice penalty. Getting back on your feet carries no penalty.
- **Blinded:** Cannot aim beyond a couple of steps. Fighting blind takes -3 dice, shooting toward sound takes -4 dice. Backing up to a wall or hiding by feel carries no penalty.
- **Stunned:** Cannot reload or pull off complex maneuvers. All active actions take a -2 dice penalty.
- **Physical impediment.** Broken bones, dislocations, severe burns. The injury directly interferes with your actions. The GM bumps the Difficulty of related physical checks by 1 or 2 until first aid is applied. Dressing a wound or administering treatment has no rigid turn limit and is determined by scene logic at the GM's discretion.
- **Delayed damage.** Bleeding out, lack of oxygen, toxins. The hazard ticks like a countdown. The character loses 1 additional Flesh point if the issue is not handled before the current scene wraps up.
- **Pain shock.** Critical damage or an electric jolt. Demands an immediate Flesh check. Failure means passing out, collapsing to the floor, or losing your turn to muscle spasms.
- **Stress.** A sharp spike of agony, an unexpected ambush, or the sight of an ally's gruesome injury. Physical trauma shakes your mental stability, demanding a Psyche roll (a failure adds 1 Stress) or instantly slapping 1 point onto the character's Stress track.

2.5. RECOVERING FLESH AND PSYCHE

Recovering Flesh (body and wounds)

- **Field aid:** a Medic check backed by a medkit or a stim restores 1 box of Flesh right in the field (typically once per scene).
- **Full rest:** a full day of downtime in a secure hideout restores 1 box of Flesh. Full recovery from severe trauma takes anywhere from a week to a month in hospital care.
- **Severe maiming:** if an injury is irreversible, the Flesh box returns once healed, but the character takes on a Flaw (a limp, a scar, a prosthetic). It can later be bought off with experience or through fitting roleplay.

Recovering Psyche (mind and mental damage)

- **On-the-spot psychological aid:** taking sedatives or talking things through with an ally (a Persuasion, Profiling, or Medic check) snaps you out of a stupor and restores 1 box of Psyche following a mental attack or shock.
- **Safe haven:** sleeping where nothing threatens the hero (far from monsters, the occult, and Rifts) naturally recovers 1 box of Psyche over a few days of quiet living.
- **Personal anchors:** returning to civilian routines, connecting with loved ones, or leaning into a favorite hobby helps restore clarity of mind after living through nightmares.

If damage spirals into Psychosis, that Psyche box stays locked out until cured (see section 3.5).

SECTION

03

PSYCHE AND PSYCHOLOGY



IN THIS SECTION:

3.1. Duality of Personality: Chaos and Order
3.2. Stress mechanics
3.3. The Drama Die Enters Play
3.4. Stress Relief Through Roleplay
3.5. Mental Trauma (Psychoses)

3.1 DUALITY OF PERSONALITY: CHAOS AND ORDER

The psychological profile on your character sheet is shaped by the constant tension between two opposing forces - Chaos and Order.

> **Simplifying "Inner Turmoil" for Pure Adventure**
>
> Not in the mood to roleplay your character's internal conflicts? Feel free to drop the sheet's heavy narrative baggage (the Brand, Principles, Temptations, and Vulnerabilities) and just play using Skills and Luck Tokens!

Chaos

Entropy and your hero's inner demons. Chaos encompasses the Stigma, Temptations, and Vulnerabilities. These traits sow discord in your character's thoughts, driving impulsive choices and pushing them to give in to weakness. Mechanically, Chaos acts as a Stress engine and the prime trigger for dramatic story crises.

Order

Structure and the bedrock of personality. Order consists of **Principles and Aspirations**. They function as an internal compass, setting clear personal boundaries and pointing the way forward. Mechanically, Order governs character advancement and mental resilience. Standing up for your ideals rewards you by clearing all accumulated Stress and awarding bonus experience, while betraying your personal rules kicks off an adaptation mechanic - forcing your hero through an agonizing crisis of character to forge an entirely new core conviction.

A Stigma - is a stain on your reputation, a shadow from the past, a persistent rumor, disgrace, or suspicion hanging over your character. It can be something you actually did, a crime pinned on you, or an unproven allegation that simply sounds too plausible to shake off.

The Stigma is social or personal baggage that rears its head whenever someone recognizes you, brings up your past, or hears your name. It can be a notorious story, a humiliating moniker, an old scandal, a betrayal, or a grave mistake - anything that poisons your name, even years down the road.

Examples:
"The one who sold out their crew to buy their own freedom."
"Banished from the order for slinging spells for the enemy."
"Rumor has it he butchered his own brother out of jealousy."
"Tied to a botched ritual that got children killed."

Write down a brief summary of why people recognize, judge, or steer clear of your character. It can flare up at any second - or serve as your personal path to redemption.

If you hit a wall brainstorming a Stigma, build off one of the prompts below:

1. Traitor
2. Dabbled in forbidden arts
3. Indecent conduct
4. Fratricide
5. Tainted name
6. Lust, debauchery, and vice
7. Pathological liar
8. Drowned in debt, gambled it all away, compulsive gambler
9. Arrogance - better, smarter, and above everyone else
10. Gloomy, depressive, good-for-nothing
11. Hothead, incorrigible brute
12. Convicted of a crime, served time

A character can carry two or more Stigmas. Whenever a Stigma comes into play, the player gets first say on which one triggers, followed by the GM.

Can you completely shake off a Stigma? No, though there are caveats. A character must always carry at least one Stigma. If you have several, you can redeem all of them except for one through roleplay. If you have only one Stigma, redeeming it means replacing it with another - usually by picking up a second Stigma first, then shedding the original.

When a character actively works toward redeeming a Stigma (openly, through story beats, or internal struggle), the GM can award bonus experience.

Temptations are destructive cravings capable of throwing your hero off track. They are obsessions you chase too hard: an all-consuming passion blinding you to duty, common sense, and sometimes raw survival instincts. A Temptation fuels constant internal conflict. It might stem from noble or creative impulses, but its runaway force breeds real danger. You must pick at least two Temptations at character creation, and this list expands as the campaign unfolds.

Examples:
Flattery and recognition
Wealth and luxury
Power over others
Truth at all costs
Control and order
Violence as a way to feel alive
A chance to set things right, even at the cost of your life

Vulnerabilities are the things that cut your character to the bone. They are your weak spots - triggers that spark an emotional breakdown, loss of control, or paralysis under pressure. Each one serves as a psychological or moral pressure point. You must choose at least three Vulnerabilities relevant to the campaign that can regularly crop up or resurface. More can be added over the course of the game.

Examples:
Losing loved ones
Being rejected or betrayed
Powerlessness
Abandoning justice
Reminders of the past
Threats to family
Feeling controlled

If you hit a wall brainstorming Vulnerabilities, build off one of the prompts below:

1. Being (mis)understood
2. Failing to prove you are the best
3. Getting a "yes" (or "no," as an option)
4. Repeating a past mistake
5. Feeling unsafe
6. Learning a truth best left forgotten
7. Being unloved
8. Getting attached to someone or something
9. Hearing praise
10. Having zero control over the situation
11. Having no say
12. Taking revenge on the innocent or the weak (punching down)
13. Losing an ally in combat, or losing them in spirit
14. Being unable to start with a clean slate
15. Feeling pain instead of emptiness
16. Becoming replaceable
17. Ending up in a situation where you will never be forgiven
18. Being proven wrong

Principles are two core rules in your hero's life, the things they believe in down to their bones. They make up an internal code, personal morals, and the foundation of their convictions. A Principle gives your character a sense of integrity: breaking this rule means betraying who they are. It is what they are willing to fight for, suffer for, or chase to the bitter end.

This section reflects what your character considers right and vital, what they stand by no matter what life throws at them. It defines:
- what they will always do, no matter the cost;
- what they will never do, even staring down death;
- how they believe the world should work;
- what they are willing to sacrifice everything for.

You must choose at least two core convictions that form your character's moral backbone. Where they take their stand. Beliefs that will be put to the test - by temptations, agony, and fallout. Values and Principles can expand as the campaign plays out.

Examples:
"Always protect the weak, even if I take the fall."
"I never throw a punch without a reason."
"The truth must come out, no matter how ugly it gets."
"Authority must be just, or it must burn."
"I never cross anyone who put their trust in me."
"Order and control are the only things keeping the world alive."

If you hit a wall brainstorming Principles, build off one of the prompts below:

1. Protecting the weak and the innocent
2. Aiding the disabled
3. Fixing old things
4. Never strike first
5. The law - something everyone must follow
6. Never follow anyone's laws
7. Inflicting pain on others
8. You like being humiliated
9. Live bright - die young
10. Always pay your debts (financial and moral)
11. Never leave your people behind
12. Tell only the truth, no matter how bitter
13. The strong are always right
14. Beauty justifies any price
15. I will never break my word
16. Believe nothing but the facts
17. Love is a weakness
18. Revenge is a sacred duty
19. Freedom over security
20. No one survives alone
21. Other people's secrets are my strength
22. Punish traitors without mercy
23. Everyone deserves a second chance
24. Traditions and rituals above all else

Aspirations are internal character goals for the current mission, two of which must tie directly to each of your Principles. You must have at least two. Additionally, an Aspiration can be personal motivation, a specific task, a search, or an emotional need driving them alongside the group's primary objective.

Make sure each Aspiration is achievable within the scope of the mission, even if only partially. Keep the focus squarely on the "here and now" rather than a lifelong dream - what your character wants to accomplish, uncover, change, or gain in the relatively short term.

> A Principle points you toward which Aspiration to pursue, and fulfilling that Aspiration proves the strength of the Principle in action.

Examples:
"Find out what happened to my sister."
"Find proof that I was right."
"Earn the group's respect."
"Test whether I am truly ready to kill."
"Track down my dead mentor's journal."

The player writes down what their character wants personally out of this story. This helps the GM build scenes where that motivation can come into play.

The GM can (and we strongly recommend it) award experience for fulfilling an Aspiration. If the goal was tied to a Principle - add 1 point to its Evolution track.

If you hit a wall brainstorming Aspirations, break down one of the prompts below:

1. Make sense of your past
2. Take revenge on an enemy
3. Find peace or happiness
4. Find your place
5. Restore your reputation
6. Become the leader of the group
7. Test your limits
8. Pursue political power
9. Search for something vital
10. Seek knowledge
11. Win someone's heart
12. Attain immortality

> **"Voice in the Head" GMing Style**
> The GM takes on the role of the character's subconscious, intuition, or intrusive thoughts. The hero's internal monologues turn into an active dialogue with the GM. The GM voices hidden desires, fears, and trains of thought directly inside the hero's head. This format creates dynamic and deep roleplay.

Evolutions and Metamorphoses

Once two Principles are chosen, each gains a 4-point track for Evolution and Metamorphosis.

Whenever the character upholds one of their Principles and accomplishes something meaningful, the GM adds 1 point to that Principle's Evolution. A serious departure from a chosen Principle adds 1 point to Metamorphosis.

If the **Evolution** track fills up first (the character would gain a 5th point past the maximum of 4), both of that Principle's tracks (Evolution and Metamorphosis) reset to zero. The character gains one Luck Token, and current Stress completely resets to zero. Following that, the player refines the Principle along their chosen path (Radicalization or Reflection).

> **First Evolution (Radicalization):** The conviction becomes stricter, more categorical, or uncompromising. The player determines the degree of this rigidity themselves - from a slight escalation to grim fanaticism. You decide just how far your hero is willing to go. Example: "Always protect your students" turns into "Strictly control your students' every step for their own safety."

> **Second and Subsequent Evolutions (Choice):** The player decides whether to push Radicalization further or choose Reflection. Reflection represents psychological maturation: the core value remains, but the way you achieve it becomes wiser, deeper, and more mindful. Example: "Always protect your students" turns into "Train your wards to protect themselves, backing them up from afar."

You can replace the corresponding Aspiration.

If the **Metamorphosis** track fills up first (the character would gain a 5th point past the maximum of 4), both of that Principle's tracks (Evolution and Metamorphosis) reset to zero. The character gains +2 Stress. If the Stress track exceeds its maximum of 4 points as a result, the hero immediately suffers an automatic Breakdown (following the Drama die trigger rules), and the Stress tracker resets to zero. The player must revise and update this Principle - changes can be made at the end of the game session. The linked Aspiration may also be replaced.

This mechanic seamlessly introduces new character Aspirations through the drive to fulfill Principles, eliminating character creation "mistakes" by allowing players to tweak and adapt on the fly to match roleplay. Characters continuously develop across experience, morality, feelings, and emotions, while the constant momentum and reaction to internal and external influences allow you to explore radically different narratives in a single campaign without switching characters or chronicles.

Tip: Past Experience, Starting Evolutions, and Metamorphoses

Not every hero starts a chronicle with a "clean slate." If your character concept is a seasoned veteran, a cynical detective, or someone with a storied past, with GM permission you can start the game with marks already filled in on your Principle tracks, or even with a completed first Evolution (Radicalization) or Metamorphosis.

The only condition - justify it in your Biography: Write a specific dramatic scene from your past into your backstory that served as the trigger for the change.

- What trial forced the hero to harden their code into cold fanaticism (starting Evolution)?
- Whose betrayal or what catastrophic mistake shattered their former faith in the world, forcing them to forge an entirely new Principle (starting Metamorphosis)?

This way, the hero's past immediately starts working for the story, giving the GM ready-made triggers for future scenes.

This mechanic is especially valuable in one-shots and short stories: filling a track from scratch over a single session is practically impossible. If a character starts with a couple of marks on the tracker, they balance on the edge of a breaking point from the very first minutes - and the first sharp moral choice in the game will spark a powerful climax right in time for the finale.

3.2. STRESS MECHANICS

Stress is a 4-box track. They are filled in the following cases:

- Rolling zero successes on a roll using a Competence automatically grants 1 point of Stress. A professional loses their composure when their core Skill fails.
- If a situation directly touches on a character's recorded Vulnerability, Temptation, or Stigma, failing a roll automatically grants 1 point of Stress.
- Metamorphosis when shifting a Principle always adds 2 Stress. If this causes Stress to exceed the maximum of 4, the character immediately suffers an automatic Breakdown, as if triggered by the Drama die. The Stress track resets to zero. See below.
- Intense dramatic moments at the GM's discretion can automatically add 1 Stress, but the player must receive 1 Luck Token in return.
- Certain Flaws and the Velum (negative mystical effects) can add additional conditions for gaining Stress.

How to Roleplay Stress

Stress on the character sheet reflects physical and nervous overload. To make the tension felt at the table, convey it through physiology and small behavioral cues:

1-2 Stress (background tension): a slight tremor in the fingers when lighting a cigarette or reloading a weapon. Fidgety movements, a habit of twisting a button, drumming fingers on the table, a nervous chuckle, or frequent pauses in conversation.

3 Stress (the verge of crisis): noticeable trembling in the hands, cold sweat, ragged breathing. Tunnel vision sets in: the character stops noticing surrounding details and fixates entirely on the immediate threat. The voice cracks; sarcasm, hostility, or panicked urgency creep into interactions with allies.

4 Stress (the Drama die enters play): the limit of self-control. Hands shake so violently it is difficult to hold a small object, teeth grit to a grind, knuckles turn white gripping the handle of a knife or pistol. The hero either desperately looks for an excuse to snap and unleash their rage on whoever is closest, or goes completely numb, one step away from an emotional explosion.

3.3. THE DRAMA DIE ENTERS PLAY

As soon as 4 points of Stress accumulate, the player must designate a Drama die (a d10 of a different color or simply the last die in the pool rolled separately) for every subsequent roll.

A Drama die triggering on a success (8-10) sparks the most intense scene. The character might achieve their goal, but pays for it with an emotional Breakdown. Accumulated tension breaks through and spills out, securing the result through dirty, frightening, or painful methods. The success on the Drama die counts toward the result as usual, but the character carries out the declared action while completely losing control of their emotions, acting impulsively in a reckless manner. Stress completely resets to zero, and the Drama die is removed until the track fills again.

If the Drama die did not trigger, but Stress is added again - the character suffers an automatic Breakdown, the Drama die is removed, and the Stress track resets to zero.

The character can suppress this breakdown (the player declares a refusal to roleplay the Breakdown). In that case, the Stress track still resets, but the character suffers mental trauma - Psychosis, loses 1 or more Psyche, and may gain a Flaw appropriate to the situation.

Optional Rule: Gradation and Escalation of Drama Dice

Base rules introduce a single Drama die only at the peak - at 4 points of Stress. If you want to fine-tune the game's genre or heighten tension in a specific scene, use these alternative options:

1. Stepped Drama (the "2 + 2" scheme)
The first Drama die enters the pool once 2 Stress accumulates. The character shows signs of nervousness earlier, and the risk of breaking down becomes tangible in the middle of a conflict.

A second Drama die is added when all 4 Stress boxes are filled. At the limit of their composure, the hero rolls two Drama dice at once on their checks, doubling the odds of an impulsive or terrifying breakdown.

2. Early Threshold (for fast, cinematic one-shots)
The Drama die enters play strictly at 2 points of Stress (with the track reduced to two boxes). This keeps players on edge and pushes them to roleplay emotional outbursts more frequently in short sessions.

3. Psychological Extreme (Nightmare Mode)
A die for every step: each point of Stress gained immediately adds +1 Drama die to rolls (up to 4 dice at the maximum). Scope of application: this variant is too destructive for a calm, long-running campaign, but ideal for localized horror scenes:

- Direct contact with a terrifying ancient entity;
- A torture scene, hallucinatory delirium, or a panicked flight from a collapsing bunker;
- The climax of a grim survival one-shot.

"Dark Fate" Mechanic

If you come up short on a roll, want to avoid gaining Stress, or refuse to give in to Vulnerabilities or Temptations, you can call upon Dark Fate. Destiny or ill fortune, your situational luck will come back to haunt you in the future at the worst possible moment.

"Sacrifice" Mechanic

At moments of critical choice, when a character must push past their Temptations or Vulnerabilities to save an ally or complete a mission, the player can declare a "Sacrifice." Instead of a standard roll, the player describes what cherished possession, memory, or vital social Connection their character gives up in that moment to find the strength to act.

Mechanical effect: The action succeeds automatically with the best possible outcome without rolling dice. However, alongside gaining 1 point of Stress, the specified sacrifice is sealed: the memory vanishes from the mind, the connected NPC's attitude toward the character turns permanently cold or hostile, and so on. This forces the player to feel genuine loss in exchange for victory.

3.4. STRESS RELIEF THROUGH ROLEPLAY

Option 1: Toxic Efficiency
The character clears 1-2 points of Stress by channeling their Temptations or Vulnerabilities directly while resolving the main objective. In doing so, they describe exactly how that factor helped them achieve their goal - usually through selfishness, rage, panic, or cruelty. They get what they want, but leave ugly consequences behind. The player declares: "I beat the needed information out of this clerk, but stress makes me snap into outright threats, and I break his fingers." The plot moves forward, but collateral complications arise with the police or witnesses.

The choice between a Temptation and a Vulnerability belongs entirely to the player. The player directs the scene of their own downward spiral, framing the moral toll through compelling narrative, which fits squarely into the "Rules For Fun" philosophy.

Option 2: Scene of Revelation
Relief occurs during breathers. The player voluntarily initiates a brief dialogue with another party member, exposing their Vulnerability. The player says: "Listen, I need to tell you why seeing that werewolf froze me up like that." This deepens bonds within the squad, completely resets the Stress tracker to zero, and gives players room for compelling roleplay without dragging down the global mission.

Option 3: Validating the Stigma - "Going with the Flow"
The character clears Stress by acting exactly as their bad reputation dictates to resolve the immediate problem faster or easier. They deliberately confirm the worst expectations of those around them for an immediate advantage right here and now.

This mechanic brings the character to life, ensuring key emotional beats are never brushed aside, generating world detail around the party, and driving active momentum within the player group.

3.5. MENTAL TRAUMAS (PSYCHOSES)

Gaining a Psychosis: When refusing to roleplay a Breakdown, the character gains a Psychosis from the list below (chosen together with the GM or determined by a die roll). Each acquired Psychosis removes 1 Psyche die. Accumulating 4 psychoses reduces Psyche to zero and removes the character from play. You are free to add your own custom options to the list below.

List of Psychoses:

1. Paranoia: expecting betrayal, wasting time searching for hidden threats from allies.

2. Cruelty: choosing the most painful and radical way to resolve conflicts.

3. Apathy: mechanical execution of orders with complete disregard for the suffering of others.

4. Isolation: withholding uncovered clues and personal plans from the group.

5. Obsession: fixation on a single object or goal to the detriment of the main mission.

6. Megalomania: demanding submission, taking unjustified risks for the sake of status.

7. Stupor: freezing up and refusing active measures when confronted with a personal trigger.

8. Sadomasochism: deliberately seeking pain and openly provoking powerful enemies.

9. Hallucinations: conversing with nonexistent entities, reacting to false threats.

10. Impulsivity: rushing headlong into danger on the first urge, blowing the group's stealth.

11. Fatalism: actively seeking death, refusing cover and medical aid.

12. Kleptomania: stealing dangerous or high-status items during critical moments of the mission.

13. Narcissism: refusing dirty work that ruins clothes or damages reputation.

14. Hysteria: bursting into loud laughter or screaming in situations that demand absolute silence.

15. Misanthropy: outright insulting allies and sabotaging useful social connections.

16. Regression: lapsing into animalistic behavior, constantly seeking caretaking from a party member.

17. Fanaticism: interpreting any coincidence as a sign from above, imposing personal dogma on others, and rejecting rational plans.

18. Self-Incrimination: an overwhelming urge to confess sins, publicly spilling personal secrets and party intelligence due to crushing guilt.

19. Denial: total refusal to believe the unfolding horror, ignoring threats and making a point of acting normal in critical situations.

20. Martyrdom: deliberately taking the blame for others' mistakes, attempting to sacrifice oneself for random bystanders to the detriment of survival logic.

21. Pathological Lying: deceiving allies and NPCs even when the truth is clearly advantageous, constantly twisting facts on the fly.

22. Hoarding: strictly refusing to expend consumables, ammunition, or resources, choosing mortal peril over using life-saving gear.

23. Compulsion: the need to perform pointless, obsessive rituals (counting rounds, tapping walls) before taking any active action.

24. Total Control: attempting to micromanage every step of other party members, shutting down any of their independent plans or decisions.

25. Vandalism: the urge to deface, smash, or burn vital clues, machinery, and valuable items the moment the character slips out of the group's sight.

26. Provocation: deliberately escalating every dialogue, openly insulting enemies just to make them lose their temper.

27. Mimicry: blindly copying the speech patterns, emotions, and tactics of another character, completely surrendering personal initiative during tense scenes.

28. Erotomania: inappropriate flirting, vulgar innuendo, and attempts at physical contact with allies or enemies in moments of peak danger.

29. Pica: an obsessive desire to taste inedible, dangerous, or revolting substances (dirt, monster blood, occult ash) while searching for clues.

30. Ritualism: inventing absurd protective rules, strictly refusing to act until fulfilling invented omens (never stepping on shadows, tapping three times on every door).

31. Pathological Squeamishness: panic-stricken fear of filth and infection; refusing to touch clues; descending into dungeons or searching corpses induces panic.

32. Hypervigilant Smothering: manic defense of a single party member, shutting down any independent action of the charge at the slightest sign of danger.

33. Pyromania: a compulsive urge to set items ablaze across the location, destroying evidence with fire and blowing stealth through reckless flames.

34. Squandering: uncontrolled discarding of useful resources, ammunition, and valuables out of conviction that they are contaminated or cursed.

35. Cannibalistic Urge: a morbid desire to taste the flesh of slain monsters or humans, secretly attempting to carve off and stash pieces of corpses.

36. Autophagy: inflicting minor self-harm under stress, clawing skin or biting lips bloody, unnerving those nearby.

37. Siege Syndrome: dread of open spaces, refusing to cross streets or wide halls, attempting to move only while crawling or hugging walls.

38. Persecutory Delusion: conviction of being hunted by an unseen entity, constantly attempting to cover tracks out of nowhere to the detriment of mission time.

39. Savior Complex: rushing to the aid of random bystanders, criminals, or monsters to the detriment of mission priorities and squad safety.

40. Infantilism: refusing to make any decisions, shifting responsibility onto others, throwing tantrums and sabotaging in response to criticism or orders.

Narrative Healing of Psychosis

The player initiates a scene to overcome their Psychosis. Erasing the trauma tag and recovering a Psyche die requires spending a total of 5 Luck Tokens. A player may only spend 1 Luck Token per scene. The party has the right to pitch in Tokens to cover an ally's recovery. "Healing Tokens" are burned entirely, granting no additional successes or narrative advantages in the current scene.

Example: A character suffers the Infantilism psychosis; they refuse to take any responsibility. The party embarks on a mission where their help is crucial. A scene is played out where the character, pushing through immense strain, steps up and accomplishes something meaningful. The player declares Healing and spends 1 Luck Token. The three other players roleplay offering support - moral or physical - in this shared effort and contribute 1 Token each. That brings the total spent to 4 out of the required 5 Tokens in a single scene. The player only needs to roleplay one more such scene and spend 1 Luck Token to fully heal the psychosis.

Dynamics of Psychoses in the Game

Avoid handing out Psychoses at every opportunity. The Stress track exists specifically to ratchet up tension gradually, bringing the hero smoothly toward the boiling point.

A Psychosis is always the culmination of a mental fracture and severe trauma requiring significant effort and resources to heal. Keep these psychological blows rare, but impactful.

Tie the trauma to the source of horror: if a character gets buried under rubble in the catacombs, assign them the Phobia Flaw (enclosed spaces) or the Stupor Psychosis. If the party's employer betrays them, Paranoia or Misanthropy makes a logical choice. If the hero miraculously survives an inferno, assign Pyromania or Fatalism.

Dramatic choice: a psychosis occurs when a player refuses to roleplay an immediate breakdown and shoves the endured nightmare deep down inside. Discuss with the player: which specific fracture in character will make their hero's story stronger?



SECTION

04

MYSTERIA SUPREMA

IN THIS SECTION:

4.1. The Nature Of The Rift And The Narrative Cost Of Magic

4.2. Types Of Mystic Sacraments

4.3. Creation Of Mystic Sacraments

4.1. THE NATURE OF THE RIFT AND THE NARRATIVE COST OF MAGIC

Narrative Framing: "The Rift" and Adaptation to Other Genres

The concept of the Abyss and metaphysical Rifts outlined below serves as a baseline example of how magic integrates into the game world. The mechanics of reality's resistance and the narrative cost of magic are universal, but you are free to adapt the narrative framing to suit your genre:

Cyberpunk and the Net: instead of the Abyss - neural interface overload, thermal spikes from implants, hardware glitches, and the scrutiny of hunter AIs.

Space Opera and Science Fiction: instead of Rifts - quantum instability, ruptures in the spacetime continuum, dark matter leaks, and radiation bursts.

Urban Fantasy and Occultism: instead of primordial chaos - the attention of infernal entities, thinning of the veil between realms, or ancient generational curses.

Whatever your setting, the core rule remains constant: any crude disruption of the world's physical laws provokes a backlash from the environment.

The Rift and the Abyss: General Principles

The Abyss functions as a primordial law governing the dissolution of form and order. It is an ambient force carrying concentrated chaos that exerts pressure on the universe from the outside. It is perpetually present in the here and now on a lethal frequency imperceptible to ordinary people, inducing distortions in reality through Rifts. Every human catastrophe, mass psychosis, and conjured Sacrament tears reality's protective framework, allowing destructive force inside and opening a Rift.

A Rift is a literal tear in the architecture of creation at a point of metaphysical tension. It emerges exclusively under external influence. By admitting the power of the Abyss, a Rift causes a fundamental breakdown in universal physical laws and creates critical anomalies in the fabric of matter.

Mysticism and magic are consequences of these rifts in all their forms, while simultaneously serving as the tools used to deliberately open or widen them. Every use of magic compels the surrounding world to generate anomalies and mutations, ranging from imperceptible glitches to the birth of monstrous new species.

Magic operates on a modular constructor principle. The player builds a Mystic Sacrament by selecting one of the core categories: damage, control, defense, movement, perception, creation, or transformation. The Skill is customized through modifiers: Acrises amplify the effect, while Velums impose restrictions and activation conditions.

The Inherent Imbalance of Mysticism

The effect of a Rift, and mysticism in any manifestation, directly shatters the laws of physics and warps narrative logic.

Mastered Sacraments allow characters to bypass obstacles entirely - reading witnesses' minds, phasing through walls, or erasing objects from existence. Mathematically balancing effects like these is **impossible**. Players will inevitably discover a combination that invalidates any prepared challenge with a single declared action.

The GM and the group define the laws of the world: the degree to which mysticism obeys physical laws or ignores them for cinematic flair. You establish your own baseline of realism - ranging from strict physics (conservation of mass, heat transfer, recoil) to comic-book conventions.

Because mysticism stems from a Rift, it eliminates barriers while simultaneously widening the breach and generating narrative fallout. Breaching reality's laws is the GM's sharpest tool for establishing fresh flashpoints of tension, tuned as softly or brutally as the scene demands:

Shifting Focus. The player teleports through an armored blast door, bypassing the heist's elaborate planning stage. Let them do it. The physical barrier is cleared, but reality inside the vault reacted to the intrusion. Warped space tripped occult security wards, sealed emergency exits, or inverted local gravity. The GM converts the player's immediate success into an entirely new, stranger, and far more dangerous encounter.

Ripple Effects. The player reads a key enemy's mind and instantly uncovers the campaign's central intrigue. The hero gets every answer, but their psychic touch leaves an imprint inside the target's head. Now the powerful antagonist knows the hero's face, glimpses their deepest fears, and launches a calculated manhunt. A broken mystery converts into paranoia and a desperate survival game.

Moral Equilibrium. Absolute healing inside a Rift pulls a partner back from the brink of death, instantly mending torn flesh and halting blood loss, yet flesh mysticism cannot void physical damage out of existence. The purged trauma and concentrated agony follow the path of least resistance - bleeding into the body of an innocent bystander on the street or someone through the wall. The ally's survival directly claims the life of an innocent civilian, who dies agonizingly from the transferred wounds. The GM highlights the instability of the Rift: collateral tolls can strike anyone unfortunate enough to be caught in the blast radius.

Environmental Distortion. Persistent distortion warps the world around a mystic, expanding the Rift. Freezing time causes vegetation within a one-kilometer radius to wither and die. Conjuring fire from thin air flash-freezes the room, siphoning heat from nearby surfaces. This hands the GM concrete narrative hooks: locals riot over an unseasonal freeze in midsummer, and government agents trace the squad through localized radiation spikes or dead wildlife left behind after invoking Sacraments.

4.2 TYPES OF MYSTIC SACRAMENTS

Damage

General Description: Inflicting direct physical or mental harm. Examples: a burst of flame from open palms, a telepathic spike, hurling a glob of caustic acid.

Base Mechanics: A contested defense roll is always made, unless the target willingly accepts the blow or cannot resist. Against physical attacks, the target may roll Athletics (evasion), Survival (taking cover), base Flesh (enduring the impact), or defensive Sacraments. Against mental attacks, base Psyche is used. In combat against NPCs, the player rolls their dice pool against the enemy's Difficulty. Each excess success beyond the defense roll deals 1 point of damage to either the Flesh or Psyche track.

Control

General Description: Inflicting debilitations, mental suppression, and sensory distortion. Examples: a mental compulsion to drop a weapon, a cloud of paralytic vapor, a telekinetic chokehold.

Base Mechanics: The target rolls Psyche against mental control, or Flesh against physical effects (poisons, numbness). Against NPCs, the player rolls against the enemy's Difficulty. 1 excess success inflicts a minor penalty (the target loses 1 die from their pool on their next turn); 2 successes cause partial control or stun; 3 or more successes inflict complete paralysis or total compliance with commands.

Defense

General Description: Mystic wards, shielding, and unnatural resilience. Examples: transmuting skin into hardened steel, projecting an energy barrier, radiating an aura that unravels hostile sorcery.

Base Mechanics: When active, this effect reinforces existing armor and serves as a threshold of successes an attacker must breach. For each tier of this Effect, the character either gains +1 die to all combat defense rolls, or the Sacrament automatically reduces incoming damage by 1 through absorption (select one option during creation).

Movement

General Description: Any form of spatial traversal or unnatural relocation. Examples: an instant blink behind a hostile target, levitating over a chasm, melting into shadow to glide across walls.

Base Mechanics: The Effect roll substitutes for Athletics or Drive during crisis situations, allowing the character to ignore physical obstacles entirely. 1 success allows a leap onto a nearby rooftop or directly behind a target; 3 successes enable teleportation to the far side of the city.

Perception

General Description: Sensory expansion beyond human limits, including senses without biological organs. Examples: reading thoughts, X-ray vision, echolocation, precognition, communion with otherworldly entities or beasts.

Base Mechanics: If the target actively hides or shields their mind, roll a contested check against their Psyche or Stealth. Enemies can employ occult wards or Stealth. The Sacrament can substitute for Awareness and Intuition rolls. 1 success yields surface data (the target's immediate emotional state, presence of ambient magic); 3 successes expose buried secrets, exact thoughts, or pierce through reinforced concrete bunker walls.

Creation

General Description: Materializing physical objects or sensory phenomena. Examples: hard-light or holographic illusions, walls of hellfire, conjuring a steel crowbar out of thin air.

Base Mechanics: The Effect roll determines the durability of the manifested construct or the believability of the illusion. A conjured barrier or construct possesses a durability (Flesh) pool equal to the rolled successes.

Alteration

General Description: Reshaping the physical world or living biology. Examples: mending wounds, regeneration, elemental transmutation, resurrection; instantly fusing a compound bone fracture, turning an enemy's firearm into a rubber balloon, mutating a forearm into an organic blade.

Base Mechanics: An unwilling target always makes a contested Flesh roll to resist transformation. Healing allies bypasses resistance. For healing: each success restores 1 point of an ally's Flesh track. For transmuting inert matter: the Difficulty (scaled from 1 to 4) depends on the object's mass and structural density (turning a door lock into fine sand is far easier than transmuting an armored tank).

4.3. CREATION OF MYSTIC SACRAMENTS

The supernatural power tier of a character is chosen during character creation together with the GM:

- **Talented:** 1 point (or 2-3 points at the GM's discretion)
- **Adept:** 5 points
- **Master:** 10 points

The cost of 1 base die equals 1 Mystic point. Points gained from drawbacks (Velums) may only be spent on augmenting that exact same Skill.

Adjust these starting conditions freely if your game requires a different balance of power.

Base Parameters for Mystic Sacraments (Unmodified)

A Sacrament activates instantly on the character's turn and lasts for one round. Base range to the target is roughly half a meter (close/melee reach). Effects without attack potential target the mystic by default.

Sustaining magic requires a fresh base roll every turn. Prolonging an ability demands continuous concentration; maintaining it under high-stress conditions requires a successful Psyche roll. By default, an effect cannot be canceled or dismissed early - it always persists for exactly one round.

The base mechanics are customized using **Acrises** (positive modifiers) and **Velums** (negative modifiers) below. If necessary, the same Acris or Velum may be taken multiple times for different effects.

A **Velum** grants points only for logical restrictions that genuinely limit mystic power. For example, the "Situational" Velum conditioned on "does not function while unconscious" awards zero points for attacks, control, or telekinesis: an unconscious character cannot take actions anyway.

That same restriction provides a legitimate bonus alongside the "Permanence" Acris - sustained enchantments will unravel if the hero loses consciousness.

If an effect is meant to operate autonomously under any condition without rolling dice (such as passive wound regeneration or underwater breathing while unconscious), it is better designed through appropriate Species Traits (see Chapters 6.5-6.6).

Identical outcomes can be achieved through vastly different methods: fire damage can stem from a direct combat Sacrament, a prepared occult ritual, or an activated artifact. Different traditions of magic often reach the same end result through completely different Mystic types.

Combining Sacraments

With GM approval, you may create combined Sacraments where two or more effects work together (for example, inflicting damage while altering an enemy's body). The roll uses the Sacrament with the lowest number of dice, and each additional effect adds +1 to the Difficulty of the roll. The GM may disallow any combination deemed inappropriate for the specific game.

Optional Rule: Simplified Sacrament Construction

You can skip the Acris and Velum tables: the GM simply grants an increased pool of Magic points, where each point directly adds one die to the chosen Sacrament type. Establish all Skill conditions verbally during character creation, and reflect situational advantages and drawbacks during play through standard roll Difficulty.

ACRISES

MODIFIER	COST	DESCRIPTION
Range	-3	The ability is used within line of sight as a projectile or beam. Requires a clear flight path. Perception and Movement effects always act at range, so there is no need to take this Acris for them.
Area of Effect	-4	The effect strikes an area, hitting multiple targets simultaneously within a designated radius.
Duration	-2	The effect continues to operate autonomously for several rounds, requiring no actions or concentration from the mystic.
Secondary Effect	-1 per round	The ability inflicts a lingering effect (burning, corrosion, pleasure), dealing damage or applying an effect at the start of the next round.
Penetrating	-7	The strike or effect completely ignores mundane physical armor and material cover. Mystic barriers, energy shields, or supernatural wards are breached only through a contested resistance roll by the target (Flesh or Psyche, depending on the nature of the enchantment).
Homing	-2 per round	On a failed roll (0 successes), the charge attempts to trigger again in the following round without spending the character's action.
Reflection	-3	When damage is successfully absorbed by a shield, half of the energy (rounded down) is reflected back at the attacker, and resistance is rolled as normal.
Autonomy	-4	The effect operates according to a preset routine without concentration or commands from the mystic. An illusory dog runs around the room, a golem attacks the nearest enemies. The magic vanishes at the end of the current scene or upon the expiration of its base lifespan.
Materialization	-4	The effect manifests directly on or inside the target. There is no flight path, making physical evasion virtually impossible.
Permanence	-6	The effect anchors permanently into reality. An illusory wall stands for centuries, an erected barrier petrifies forever. The magic is static, persisting until it is physically destroyed or dispelled by a spell.
Inversion	from -1 to -8	Reverses the core operational principle of the Sacrament. For example, it allows transmitting thoughts instead of reading them, preventing something from escaping a barrier into the outside space, or dismantling an object previously conjured by the character. Applicable only with GM approval. Inverting different aspects of the same Sacrament requires taking Inversion separately for each. For example, with a flame barrier: first - a fiery or icy barrier; second - around oneself or around others; third - igniting or extinguishing one's own barrier.
Amplification	-12	Subject to GM approval, drastically magnifies the effect at extreme Difficulties (burning through a planet, teleporting to another galaxy, etc.). Can be paired with the Limit and Cooldown Velums.

VELUMS

MODIFIER	BONUS	DESCRIPTION
Touch	1	Requires literal physical contact with the target (contact can be made through clothing or armor).
Noticeable	1	Mysticism jarringly intrudes upon the surroundings and draws immediate attention. Bystanders readily spot the anomaly: they see visual distortions, hear an unnatural hum, or physically feel sudden cold, dread, and an unseen gaze.
Consumable	1-6 by rarity	The ability requires specific fuel (e.g., blood, batteries, chemicals); without the resource, the magic is unavailable. Modifier values: +1–2 for common phenomena or readily accessible resources (e.g., works only at night, requires a drop of one's own blood); +3 for specific conditions (e.g., works only in the rain, requires charged accumulators); +5 for rare phenomena (e.g., works under a full moon, requires a rare or precious metal); +6 for unique conditions (e.g., once a year, blood of a specific rare creature).
Preparation	1 per round, maximum 3	The ability requires continuous, real-time concentration. The character forfeits their actions or turns while gathering power (+1 point for each full round of preparation skipped prior to activation).
Ritual	4	The Sacrament requires extended preparation (from five rounds to days or months): specialized reagents, ritual actions, incantations, or inscribed sigils. The ability cannot be activated spontaneously without fulfilling every required condition.
Uncontrollable	1-3	On a failed roll, the magic triggers an unintended consequence, such as destroying vital surroundings (+1), striking a random ally (+2), or inflicting two points of Stress on the mystic (+3).
Artifact	2	The power is tethered to a physical object (an artifact, a prosthesis). If the item is lost or destroyed, the ability is disabled.
Inaccurate	1-3	A cumbersome or volatile ability. It activates with inherent variance or chaotically damages everything surrounding the primary target, collateral targets, or the nearby terrain.
Location-Bound	1-4 by rarity	Functions exclusively in designated locations, such as zones with a thinned Veil of the Abyss or high background radiation. The value depends on how difficult such a location is to access, determined by the GM
Backlash	2 or 4	Every activation deals 1 point of Flesh damage (+4) physically or mentally to the mystic, or inflicts an acute temporary narrative Health Condition Flaw (+2) until the end of the scene (e.g., deafness, tremors, severe migraine).
Situational	1-4 by rarity	Functions only under strict conditions (e.g., only at night, only in the rain, only if the mystic is already wounded, or only if the mystic is heard and understood). The rarity of the circumstance is determined by the GM.
Fragility	2	The shield or mystic effect is instantly shattered upon contact with a designated element (e.g., a shield uniquely vulnerable to fire).
Direct Contact	3	Requires bare skin-to-skin contact with the target, unimpeded by gloves, clothing, or other barriers.
Stress-Fueled	4	Every activation automatically inflicts 1 point of Stress on the mystic.
Limit and Cooldown	1-12	The ability has a limited number of uses, recovering after a specific amount of time. Add the two factors together. 1. Charge reserve (until recovery is required): • 3 charges: +1 point • 2 charges: +2 points • 1 charge: +4 points 2. Recovery time for each charge: • One turn: 0 points • 2 turns: +1 point • 1 scene: +2 points • 1 day: +4 points • 1 per story (mission): +8 points Charge recovery begins only when the character ceases using the ability. Expending any charges during the cooldown resets accumulated progress and restarts the timer.

SECTION

05

CHARACTER PROGRESSION

IN THIS SECTION:

5.1. Rewards And Experience

5.2. Advancing Attributes

5.1 REWARDS AND EXPERIENCE

The baseline rate for a single game session is 3-7 experience points. We recommend awarding experience equally to the entire group, regardless of who specifically completed an arc or personal Aspiration. You may, of course, agree to handle it differently.

- 1-2 XP - for participation and successful completion of the session.
- 1 XP - for in-game character development.
- 1 XP - for vivid roleplay of Principles, Temptations, or a Stigma.
- 1-2 XP - for successfully resolving a personal Aspiration.
- 1 XP - for completing a story arc.

5.2 ADVANCING ATTRIBUTES

Advancing Skills

The Skill scale ranges from 1 to 10, so experience costs increase progressively. This protects balance against rapidly maxing out Skills.

Increasing a Skill by +1:	New level × 2 XP
Learning a new Skill:	3 XP

Example: Raising a Skill from level 3 to 4 costs 8 XP. Raising from level 6 to 7 costs 14 XP.

Advancing Mystic with Experience

+1 die for an existing Sacrament:	new level × 4 XP
New Sacrament(1 die):	5 XP.
Adding an Acris:	4 XP per point
Removing a Velum:	4 XP per point

Advancing Non-Numeric and Narrative Elements

Advancing narrative elements is necessary, as it reflects personal growth, social changes, and healing from trauma.

Purchasing a new Competence: 4 XP (maximum 4)
Acquiring a new Merit or removing a Flaw: Trait cost in points × 3 in XP (removing a Flaw strictly requires narrative justification).

Changing Principles and Temptations: Occurs for free through built-in Metamorphosis and Nervous Breakdown mechanics.

Redeeming a Stigma: Requires no XP expenditure. Occurs exclusively through roleplay and narrative actions.

Example: Purchasing the "Danger Sense" Merit (3) costs 9 XP.

Example: Curing "Minor Health Condition" (-1) costs 3 XP and requires surgery or medical treatment undergone in-game.

SECTION

06

MERITS AND FLAWS

IN THIS SECTION:

6.1. Body and Mind: Merits
6.2. Body and Mind: Flaws
6.3. Heritage: Merits
6.4. Heritage: Flaws
6.5. Species Traits: Merits
6.6. Species Traits: Flaws

Merits and Flaws in the **Body and Mind** category adjust the character's base attributes when their physical or mental traits deviate from the baseline human average. These parameters are purchased with creation points at the start of the game.

Merits and Flaws in the **Heritage** category reflect the character's social standing, financial status, connections, and reputation in the game world. They are also acquired at the start with character creation points.

Merits and Flaws in the **Species Traits** category reflect the supernatural nature of the character. This section compiles the innate gifts and curses of your species.

We strongly advise the GM to always clarify which Species Traits might not be applicable in a specific game - we are merely offering options to choose from, understanding that some of them can easily break the game.

Removing a Flaw or acquiring a Merit during play is possible with GM approval by spending experience points.

6.1. BODY AND MIND: MERITS

Danger Sense (1): Decreases the base Difficulty of Intuition rolls by 1 when anticipating ambushes, traps, or hidden threats.

Combat Reflexes (3): Grants +2 dice to any defensive actions (dodging, parrying, suppressive return fire) in any combat encounter. Requires combat Competence.

Pleasing Appearance (1): Grants +1 die to all Seduction and Persuasion rolls on first impressions. Cannot be taken alongside "Attractive" or "Stunning Appearance".

Attractive (2): Grants +2 dice to all Seduction and Persuasion rolls on first impressions. Cannot be taken alongside "Pleasing Appearance" or "Stunning Appearance".

Stunning Appearance (3): Grants +3 dice to all Seduction and Persuasion rolls on first impressions. Cannot be taken alongside "Pleasing Appearance" or "Attractive".

Conditioned: Athletic Form (1): Grants +1 die to checks requiring raw brute strength or endurance. Cannot be taken alongside "Strong" or "Peak Athleticism".

Conditioned: Specialist (2): Grants +2 dice to checks requiring raw brute strength or endurance. Cannot be taken alongside "Athletic Form" or "Peak Athleticism".

Conditioned: Expert (3): Grants +3 dice to checks requiring raw brute strength or endurance. Cannot be taken alongside "Athletic Form" or "Strong".

Very Tall (2): Height grants +2 dice to Intimidation checks through physical dominance, but automatically increases the Difficulty of Stealth rolls in crowds by 1.

Strong-Willed (3): Grants +2 dice to base Psyche checks against any attempts at mental coercion, intimidation, or hypnosis.

Pleasing Voice (2): Decreases the Difficulty of Performance, Seduction, and Persuasion rolls by 1.

High Pain Threshold (6): The character is accustomed to severe injury and knows how to endure pain. Ignores penalties from wounds and physical hindrances up to -2 dice (or +1 Difficulty). Grants a +2 dice bonus to Flesh checks against Pain Shock and pain-based mystic Control effects. Cannot be taken alongside the "Absolute Pain Threshold" Merit.

6.2. BODY AND MIND: FLAWS

Addiction, Mild (1): Dependence on substances in the bloodstream. If denied the substance, the character suffers a -1 die penalty to all mental rolls and Psyche checks.

Addiction, Severe (3): If denied the substance, the character suffers a -1 die penalty to mental rolls. In addition, withdrawal imposes a -2 dice penalty to physical actions, and the character gains 1 point of Stress for each day without a dose.

Poor Appearance: Unattractive (1): Subtracts 1 die from all Seduction and social interaction rolls (where logical, at GM discretion). Cannot be taken alongside "Ugly" or "Repulsive".

Poor Appearance: Ugly (3): Increases the Difficulty of Seduction and social interaction rolls (where logical, at GM discretion) by 1. Cannot be taken alongside "Unattractive" or "Repulsive".

Poor Appearance: Repulsive (5): Increases the Difficulty of Seduction and social interaction rolls (where logical, at GM discretion) by 2. Cannot be taken alongside "Unattractive" or "Ugly".

Restless (1): The character cannot stand prolonged preparations, drawn-out arguments, or passive waiting. In situations requiring prolonged stillness (hours of stakeouts, ambushes, tedious bureaucratic negotiations), test Difficulty increases by 1. If the group is forced to sit idle for hours, the character gains 1 point of Stress from mounting irritation. Cannot be taken alongside the "Impatient" Flaw.

Impatient (3): The character literally cannot sit still: preparation and waiting unnerve them. When a plan requires waiting patiently for the right moment (sitting in an ambush, tailing silently, or holding fire), the GM may call for a Psyche roll. On a failure, the character acts prematurely or gains 1 point of Stress if allies physically hold them back. Cannot be taken alongside the "Restless" Flaw.

Poor Vision, Mild (1): Only impairs the character upon losing or breaking glasses or contacts. Without them, the character suffers a -2 dice penalty to all visual checks. Cannot be taken alongside Poor Vision, Severe; Poor Vision, Special Condition; or Blind.

Poor Vision, Severe (2): Only impairs the character upon losing or breaking glasses or contacts. Without them, the character suffers +1 Difficulty to all visual checks. Cannot be taken alongside other poor vision Flaws.

Poor Vision, Special Condition (3): Persists even with glasses (tunnel vision, photophobia), increasing the Difficulty of relevant visual rolls by 1. Cannot be taken alongside other poor vision Flaws.

Blind (4): Results in automatic failure on any action requiring visual contact. Cannot be taken alongside other poor vision Flaws.

Mobility Impairment, Legs (2): A -2 dice penalty to the pool when attempting active movement, such as running, jumping, or pursuing a quarry. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw from the "Mobility Impairment" category.

Mobility Impairment, Lame (3): Reduces the pool by 4 dice for any physical actions tied to spatial movement. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw from the "Mobility Impairment" category.

Mobility Impairment, Cannot Run (4): The character is physically incapable of moving faster than a slow walk. The hero automatically fails any rolls for speed or pursuit. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw from the "Mobility Impairment" category.

Mobility Impairment, Fully Paralyzed (5): The character is confined to a wheelchair. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw from the "Mobility Impairment" category.

Short Stature (2): Your height is significantly below average for your species. This increases the Difficulty of any rolls requiring reach, as well as Intimidation, Brawling, and physical contests by 1 against taller opponents.

Risk-Taker (1): The player loses the right to earn Luck Tokens for unconventional solutions if they choose a safe plan of action when an overtly risky alternative is available. This Flaw does not guarantee receiving a Token, and the final decision always remains with the GM.

Physically Weak (1): Increases the final Difficulty of all rolls requiring physical strength, heavy lifting, or endurance by 1. Failing such a check may necessitate a Flesh roll to avoid a subsequent accident.

Weak-Willed (-5): Increases the final Difficulty of all rolls resisting mental coercion, intimidation, suggestion, or any external influence on Psyche by 1. Failing such a check automatically inflicts 1 additional point of Stress on the character.

Bigmouth (-3): This Flaw is actively roleplayed during the session. In critical or tense situations, the GM may call for a Psyche roll for the character to restrain themselves from revealing a crucial secret or meddling in someone else's conversation.

Health Condition, Minor (-1): Example - allergy or migraine. Within a trigger zone or during a flare-up, the Difficulty of relevant rolls increases by 1.

Health Condition, Moderate (-2): Example - asthma. Under physical exertion without medication, temporarily subtracts 2 dice from Flesh rolls.

Health Condition, Severe (-3): Example - diabetes. Skipping medication requires a Flesh roll. On a failure, the character suffers a -3 dice penalty to all actions due to the risk of losing consciousness.

Poor Memory (-2): Increases the final Difficulty of rolls by 1 in situations where the character needs to recall something.

Vulgar (-1): Increases the Difficulty of all social rolls by 1 in situations requiring tact, restraint, or adherence to etiquette.

Dangerous Knowledge (-2): The character possesses secret information. They may be under surveillance. The Flaw must remain relevant in play.

Dangerous Knowledge (-4): Secret information threatens serious trouble. The GM may regularly generate threats and complications. The Flaw must remain relevant in play.

Dangerous Knowledge (-6): Disclosing the information threatens catastrophe. Influential entities may dispatch kill squads after the character. The Flaw must remain relevant in play.

Intolerance (-1): The character harbors open disdain toward a specific social group, faction, creature species, or phenomenon. Increases the Difficulty of all rolls by 1 when directly interacting with the object of intolerance. Cannot be taken alongside the "Hatred" Flaw for the same chosen subject.

Hatred (-3): The character is consumed by blind rage toward a specific group of people, faction, or creature species. Precludes peaceful negotiation or compromise with the object of hatred. In the presence of the target, the GM may call for a Psyche roll for the character to restrain themselves from provoking open conflict or derailing the group's plan. Forced peaceful cooperation with the object of hatred automatically inflicts 1 point of Stress on the character. Cannot be taken alongside the "Intolerance" Flaw for the same chosen subject.

Perfectionist (-1): The character is pathologically dissatisfied with their work and constantly devalues personal achievements. When receiving public praise, the character must openly deny their success or automatically gain 1 point of Stress from internal dissonance.

Dangerous Curiosity (-3): The character has a morbid fixation on secrets, locked doors, and classified information. They are willing to jeopardize their own safety and violate direct orders to obtain answers. When encountering an intriguing mystery or forbidden object, the player must make a successful Psyche roll. On a failure, the character disregards logic and investigates, even if doing so triggers a trap, exposes the group's position, or provokes an enemy.

High-Strung (-1): The character reacts sharply to any pressure, easily loses their temper, and escalates arguments into open conflict. A sharp tongue and volatility routinely ruin negotiations and social ties. The dice pool for any social checks requiring diplomacy, patience, or politeness is reduced by 1. Cannot be taken alongside the "Hotheaded" Flaw.

Hotheaded (-2): When directly provoked by an opponent, a successful Psyche roll is required to prevent the character from responding with hostility or throwing the first punch. Cannot be taken alongside the "High-Strung" Flaw.

Phobia (-3): The character suffers from an irrational, paralyzing fear or uncontrollable panic regarding a specific trigger - such as fire, enclosed spaces, spiders, heights, chosen by the player. As long as the source of the phobia is within sight, the character's pool for all actions is reduced by 2 dice. Direct interaction with the frightening object may require a Psyche roll. Upon an unexpected encounter with the source of their fear, the character instantly gains 1 point of Stress. A Phobia cannot duplicate an active Psychosis, but it can escalate into one.

Masochism (-2): The character harbors an unhealthy fascination with physical pain, perceiving it, for instance, as proof that they are alive. They adamantly refuse painkillers, often neglect armor, and delay bandaging wounds as long as possible. Upon suffering a wound in combat, the character must pass a Psyche check to force themselves to take cover or retreat - on a failure, they continue relishing the fight and openly bait enemies into landing more strikes. If their pain is suppressed by force, the character gains 1 point of Stress.

Vengeful (-4): The character pathologically remembers any slight, betrayal, or insult directed at them. Peaceful negotiations, forgiveness, or compromise with the offender are impossible. In the presence of the target of vengeance, the GM may call for a successful Psyche roll for the character to keep their composure and not derail the group's plan with a sudden attack. Forced cooperation with the offender, conceding, or passing up a clear chance for retribution automatically inflicts 1 point of Stress on the character in every such scene.

6.3. HERITAGE: MERITS

Resources: Well-Off (2): Grants +1 die to Finance rolls. Provides the character with baseline comfort and the ability to purchase standard services without counting change. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw or Merit from the Resources category.

Resources: Wealthy (4): Grants +3 dice to Finance rolls. Narratively secures access to expensive real estate and substantial funds. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw or Merit from the Resources category.

Resources: Filthy Rich (6): Grants +5 dice to Finance rolls. Provides access to exclusive resources, military-grade hardware, and the ability to bribe high-ranking officials. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw or Merit from the Resources category.

Gang (3): The character commands a small group of loyal followers (2 to 5 people). They may be routinely tasked with gathering street gossip, guarding static facilities, staging minor diversions, or providing crowd cover. These NPCs perform only simple tasks, cannot replace fully competent allies, and do not fight or operate in complex missions on the character's behalf.

Ally (3): Access to a loyal NPC with useful skills. The ally is willing to perform significant favors or take personal risks, but regularly demands equivalent reciprocity; prolonged neglect will sever the relationship. If an Ally is lost, the GM may introduce a replacement during play.

Renowned: Niche Field (1): Reduces the Difficulty of Politics and Persuasion rolls by 1 when interacting with members of a specialized circle. Grants clearance to restricted industry areas. Fully incompatible with the Authority Merit. Cannot be taken alongside any other trait from the "Renowned" category.

Renowned: Local Fame (2): Reduces the Difficulty of social rolls by 1 within the city and its surrounding areas. Fully incompatible with the Authority Merit. Cannot be taken alongside any other trait from the "Renowned" category.

Renowned: National Fame (3): Reduces the Difficulty of social rolls by 1 nationwide. Fully incompatible with the Authority Merit. Cannot be taken alongside any other trait from the "Renowned" category.

Renowned: International Fame (4): Reduces the Difficulty of social rolls by 1 worldwide. Fully incompatible with the Authority Merit. Cannot be taken alongside any other trait from the "Renowned" category.

Additional Language (2): Enables reading, comprehending, and speaking a chosen foreign language.

Authority (3): The character's voice carries weight within a specific community. Ordinary members offer basic assistance without rolls, but securing dangerous or resource-heavy favors always requires standard social rolls at -1 Difficulty. Fully incompatible with the "Renowned" Merit.

Etiquette (2): Grants a +2 dice bonus to all social rolls (Persuasion, Deception, Seduction, Politics) in situations where strict adherence to protocol, chain of command, or cultural customs is paramount.

6.4. HERITAGE: FLAWS

Resources: Low Income (-1): Increases the Difficulty of Finance rolls by 1 when attempting to purchase equipment beyond basic gear. You have no savings and are ill-prepared for hard times. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw or Merit from the "Resources" category.

Resources: Poor (-2): Eliminates automatic purchases. Procuring even basic gear and ammunition requires a successful Finance, Deception, or Craft check. You struggle to pay everyday bills. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw or Merit from the "Resources" category.

Resources: Destitute (-3): You have no home, and your possessions are rags and scraps. The character has no shelter or belongings beyond what they can carry. Any social interaction rolls in polite society suffer a -2 dice penalty. Finding a secure place to sleep and maintaining basic hygiene continuously requires separate Survival rolls. Cannot be taken alongside any other Flaw or Merit from the "Resources" category.

6.5. SPECIES TRAITS: MERITS

Child of the Abyss (5): The character possesses an exceptional bond with their powers, channeling them intuitively to guarantee results. When rolling to activate magic, the character always receives 1 automatic success. The dice pool is rolled solely to generate additional successes. Recommended for superhero-style games.

Total Shift - Beasts (4): When shifting into a beast, the character mirrors the creature's biology down to the cellular level. The character gains access to all evolutionary adaptations of the chosen animal: echolocation, venom glands, gills, infrared vision, or egg-laying capability. All natural attacks and unique senses function as innate physical properties, requiring no Sacrament point investment.

Total Shift - Humans (2): Assuming a new form replicates the subject's biology down to the cellular level, granting access to every physiological system of the chosen body, including fully viable reproductive functions.

Chimera (4): The character belongs to a non-human species or possesses the anatomy of a mythical creature that defies standard human biology. The character gains a fixed set of innate traits (primarily anatomical) native to that entity: functional wings, horns, a tail, specialized sensory organs, or exotic biology. These features operate as natural bodily functions, requiring neither activation rolls nor Magic point expenditure. Specific traits are determined with the GM during character creation. Hazardous environmental effects should be built using the "Innate Anomaly" Merit (see below).

Natural Resilience (6): This species possesses dense muscle mass, thick hide, bone plating, or supernatural endurance (trolls, golems, lizardfolk, mutants). Health boxes remain standard (4 Flesh slots), but the character receives a permanent +3 dice bonus to their base Flesh pool for all physical defense rolls: resisting impacts, fractures, toxins, burns, and pain shock.

Environmental Immunity (4): The character is immune to one chosen natural force or hazardous environment: open flame, freezing cold, electrical current, radiation, caustic acids, or biological toxins. The character completely ignores physical damage from this threat - whether mundane, technological, or mystical in origin. They can walk unharmed through conflagrations, inhale chlorine gas, bridge live high-voltage wires, or stand inside radiation containment breaches. This Merit may be taken multiple times for different threat types.

Physical Invulnerability (12): An extreme Merit reserved for incorporeal spirits, shadows, or indestructible titans. The character completely ignores all physical and kinetic impacts: bullets (including armor-piercing rounds), blades, shockwaves, terminal falls, and blunt force trauma. Harm can only be inflicted through Psyche attacks, non-physical magic, or personal species vulnerabilities. Available strictly with GM approval.

Absolute Pain Threshold (9): The character feels no physical pain (cyborg, undead, combat anesthetics, or rare mutation). The character ignores all action penalties from fractures, burns, torture, and open wounds, and automatically succeeds on all Pain Shock tests (never losing a turn to pain spasms). Mystic Control exerted through inflicted pain does not function against them. Physical damage is dealt normally: the body still suffers structural destruction, and losing the final Flesh box results in death or complete incapacitation from shattered bone and tissue. Cannot be taken alongside the "High Pain Threshold" Merit.

Innate Anomaly, Minor (4): The character's physiology constantly exudes a low-level supernatural hazard (mild contact toxin, burning eyes, mounting nausea in their presence, glamour, mystical pheromones). Operates passively at all times - even while unconscious or dead. Choose one trigger during creation: direct eye contact, physical contact (bite, touch, blood), or an aura within a one-pace radius. The effect is reversible: the target's Difficulty for all actions increases by 1 for the duration of exposure or until the toxin is cleared from their system. Cannot be taken alongside other tiers of "Innate Anomaly".

Innate Anomaly, Dangerous (8): A severe species phenomenon operating passively and continuously (e.g., thrall charm, necrotic venom, infectious zombie/vampire/werewolf pathogen transferred via bites and scratches, acidic blood, or an aura of dread). Choose a trigger at creation: gaze, physical contact, or another condition. The victim suffers a -2 dice penalty to all actions and temporarily loses 1 point of Flesh or Psyche. If formulated as a virus or toxin, it deals 1 point of damage at the end of every scene until the infection is purged or the victim overcomes the disease with a Flesh check. Cannot be taken alongside other tiers of "Innate Anomaly".

Innate Anomaly, Lethal (12): An epic species curse available strictly with GM approval (a Gorgon's petrifying gaze, an incurable virus erasing identity, instant flesh-dissolving necrosis). Functions continuously even in a deceased corpse. The trigger and manifestation must be detailed. The effect is irreversible: standard fodder (Tier 1-2) perish outright (turning to stone or mutating without rolls). Formidable foes and player characters suffer severe Flesh Trauma or Psychosis; to avert permanent mutation or demise, the victim must pass a Flesh check against Difficulty 3 (if a roll is permitted). Cannot be taken alongside other tiers of "Innate Anomaly".

6.6. SPECIES TRAITS: FLAWS

Vulnerability to Silver (-3): This metal acts as a total toxin, dismantling the body's supernatural anatomy. Any incoming damage from silver-bearing weapons is automatically increased by 1 point. Direct physical contact with the metal (silver manacles, an embedded bullet) strips the character of the ability to activate magic and inflicts 1 point of Stress every 24 hours until the contact is severed.

Curse of Daylight (-4): The character carries a mystical branding rendering them vulnerable exclusively to genuine sunlight. Artificial light sources and UV lamps cause no harm. Under direct sunlight without dense protective garments, the character suffers 1 point of physical damage each round. Even if fully enveloped in fabric, the sun's oppressive mystical aura lingers - reducing all dice pools by 2 until the character retreats into deep shade or a windowless room. Cannot be taken alongside the "Vulnerability to Ultraviolet" Flaw.

Vulnerability to Ultraviolet (-3): A biological mutation or anatomical quirk causes cellular decay under ultraviolet radiation. The source is irrelevant - damage is dealt equally by midday sun, medical quartz lamps, or club blacklights. Direct exposure to an intense UV source deals 1 point of physical damage every round. Dense garments prevent burns, but standing within the irradiated zone brings weakness and persistent nausea - all dice pools are reduced by 1 until the light source is neutralized. Cannot be taken alongside the "Curse of Daylight" Flaw.

Echo of the Original (-2): When copying the body of a humanoid or animal, or delving into another's psyche, the character adopts the instincts or adverse habits of the original (feral dread of fire, craving for raw meat, foreign nervous tics, thought patterns, and routines). After reverting to their true form, these behaviors persist until a full rest. Going against a compulsive urge in a critical situation demands a successful Psyche roll. On a failure, the character succumbs to the instinct and gains 1 Stress.

SECTION

07

TEMPLATES

IN THIS SECTION:

7.1. Sample Characters

7.2. Superpowers, Spells, and Artifacts

7.1. SAMPLE CHARACTERS

The sample characters below cover different genres to illustrate the character creation mechanics in practice. Any of them can be picked up immediately for play or used as a reference when building your own hero.

A brief concept description is provided at the bottom of each sheet to outline the character's core identity.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Dmitri Sokolov

ALIAS
Mitya



SPECIES
Human

AGE
38

CHAOS

STIGMA

Traitor to the system: a former boxer who sided with illegal workers against security forces and the police.

TEMPTATIONS

1. A thirst for total control over those he protects.
2. Power through the fear he inspires.

VULNERABILITIES

1. Witnessing violence against the defenseless.
2. Criticism of his methods of protection.
3. People he failed to save from deportation.

PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

The strong protect the weak.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

Discipline is above strength.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Build a network of safe houses for illegal workers.
2. Expose corruption in the migration police.

SKILLS

	⇅ 0
Athletics	7 **8**
Brawl	8 **9**
Deception	1 **2**
Firearms	3 **4**
Intimidation	5 **6**
Intuition	5 **6**
Law	3 **4**
Medic	4 **5**
Perception	4 **5**
Performing Arts	2 **3**
Persuasion	5 **6**
Profiling	4 **5**
Survival	4 **5**

COMPETENCIES

Boxer
Guardian

BODY & MIND

Combat Reflexes [-3]
Strong-Willed [-3]
Hothead [+2]
Dangerous Knowledge [+2]
└ *Corruption in the migration police*

LINEAGE

Authority [-3]
└ *The criminal underworld*

INFORMATION

Appearance: A big man, 190 cm tall, with a broken nose and scars from his boxing career. Dresses simply - tracksuits and sneakers.

Biography: A former boxing champion who left the sport after seeing police beat an unarmed migrant worker. Now he patrols the industrial district.

Carries: Leather jacket, cash, mobile phone, gym keys.

Transport and cargo: An old minibus for ferrying fugitives, medical supplies in the vehicle.

Home: A small apartment in the industrial district, punching bags, an archive of documents on corruption.

Protector: A former boxer who uses his strength and authority to shield illegal workers from the arbitrariness of the system.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Rajesh Verma

ALIAS
Doctor Verma

CHAOS

STIGMA

His name is tied to an occult experiment in which a student died.

TEMPTATIONS

1. A thirst for forbidden knowledge at any cost.
2. A need for academic recognition that pushes him toward forgery.

VULNERABILITIES

1. Guilt over the student's death.
2. Public criticism of his theories.
3. Loneliness in the search for truth.



PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

SPECIES
Human

AGE
27

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

Truth matters more than safety.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

Knowledge must not be hidden from people.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Find the lost manuscript.
2. Atone for his guilt with a discovery that will save lives.

SKILLS

	↑↓ 0
Chemistry	5 **6**
Deception	3 **4**
Erudition	7 **8**
Finance	4 **5**
Intuition	4 **5**
IT	5 **6**
Logic	6 **7**
Occultism	6 **7**
Perception	4 **5**
Persuasion	4 **5**
Politics	4 **5**
Profiling	4 **5**
Survival	3 **4**

COMPETENCIES

Occult archives
Deductive analysis

BODY & MIND

Perfectionist [+1]
Dangerous Curiosity [+3]

LINEAGE

Additional Language [-2]
└ *Latin and Sanskrit*

Additional Language [-2]
└ *Tibetan*

Renowned: Niche Field [-1]
└ *Occult research*

INFORMATION

Appearance: A lean man in glasses, always carrying a notebook. His clothes are shabby - he spends money on books, not on himself.

Biography: A professor whose research into occult texts was banned by the university. He hunts for manuscripts in archives and private collections.

Carries: Voice recorder, magnifying glass, photographs of manuscripts.

Transport and cargo: A battered sedan crammed with books.

Home: An apartment-archive with thousands of pages of notes.

Occultist: A disgraced professor seeking forbidden knowledge and atonement for the death of his student.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Priya Patel

ALIAS
Doctor Patel

CHAOS

STIGMA

An archaeologist expelled from the academy, rumored to have stolen some of the artifacts missing from museums.

TEMPTATIONS

1. Revenge on those who wronged her.
2. Proving herself right at any cost.

VULNERABILITIES

1. Rejection of a woman scholar in the academy.
2. Doubts about her own competence.
3. Isolation from the scientific community.



PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

SPECIES
Human

AGE
28

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

History belongs to the people, not to museums

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

Truth matters more than reputation and name

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Publish the stolen discovery under her own name.
2. Expose the plagiarism of her former colleagues.

SKILLS

	↑↓ 0
Brawl	2 **3**
Deception	3 **4**
Erudition	7 **8**
Finance	1 **2**
Geo and Space Sciences	2 **3**
Intuition	3 **4**
IT	2 **3**
Lockpicking	4 **5**
Logic	5 **6**
Occultism	3 **4**
Perception	5 **6**
Persuasion	2 **3**
Politics	1 **2**
Stealth	6 **7**
Survival	3 **4**
Theft	6 **7**
Visual Arts	2 **3**

COMPETENCIES

Field archaeology

Artifact theft

BODY & MIND

Dangerous Curiosity [+3]

Intolerance [+1]
└ *Academic injustice*

LINEAGE

Additional Language [-2]
└ *Ancient Greek*

Renowned: Niche Field [-1]
└ *Archaeology*

Additional Language [-2]
└ *Farsi*

Additional Language [-2]
└ *Hindi*

INFORMATION

Appearance: A dark-skinned woman with a penetrating gaze, always in practical field clothes.

Biography: An archaeologist who was expelled after her male colleagues appropriated her discovery. Now she digs in forbidden places and steals artifacts from museums (for various purposes).

Carries: A set of lockpicks, gloves, an old notebook.

Transport and cargo: An SUV with excavation equipment.

Home: A stash of stolen artifacts.

Archaeologist: An archaeologist rejected by the academy, stealing back her own discovery from those who appropriated it.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Carlos Santos

ALIAS
Carlito



SPECIES
Human

AGE
27

CHAOS

STIGMA

They say he is a rat: he sold out his own people to both sides.

TEMPTATIONS

1. A thirst for power over people.
2. A craving for status and luxury.

VULNERABILITIES

1. Revenge from the people he betrayed.
2. Being exposed before those he lied to.
3. Loneliness behind a mask of charm.

PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

Family above all.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

In business, personal feelings are a hindrance.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Reconcile the warring factions for his own profit.
2. Get his younger brother out of prison.

SKILLS

Athletics	2	3
Brawl	1	2
Deception	7	8
Erudition	4	5
Finance	2	3
Firearms	3	4
Intimidation	3	4
Intuition	4	5
Law	1	2
Lockpicking	2	3
Melee	1	2
Perception	4	5
Performing Arts	2	3
Persuasion	5	6
Politics	1	2
Profiling	4	5
Seduction	7	8
Stealth	3	4
Theft	2	3

COMPETENCIES

Settling conflicts

Double game

BODY & MIND

Attractive [-2]

Pleasing Voice [-2]

Dangerous Knowledge [+2]
└ *Secret deals of warring gangs*

Intolerance [+1]
└ *Betrayers of alliances*

Addiction, Mild [+1]
└ *Alcohol*

Poor Vision, Mild [+1]
└ *Contact lenses*

LINEAGE

Ally [-3]
└ *Cop*

INFORMATION

Appearance: A charming man with a perfect smile, dressed stylishly beyond his means.

Biography: Grew up in a Rio favela and became a go-between for gangs and the police. Now an informant and tipster, but a chain of people he betrayed for profit trails behind him.

Carries: Two phones, a wad of cash, business cards under different names.

Transport and cargo: A flashy motorcycle.

Home: An apartment with a view of the city, full of other people's secrets on paper.

Sweetheart: A charming intermediary between warring sides, trading in trust for his own gain.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Marta Lindstrom

ALIAS
Night Shift



SPECIES
Vampire

AGE
76

CHAOS

STIGMA

Rumor has it that Marta does not age and that bags of blood go missing on her night shifts.

TEMPTATIONS

1. Give in to the hunger and feed from a living person instead of the supplies.
2. Erase the memory of someone who has figured out too much about her instead of disappearing.

VULNERABILITIES

1. The smell of fresh blood on an empty stomach.
2. Invitations to daytime meetings.
3. People who begin to notice she does not age.

PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

I only take from those who consent.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

The secret matters more than attachment.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Live out a life in one place without changing her name.
2. Find a way to endure daylight for at least an hour.

SKILLS

Athletics	1	2
Biology	3	4
Chemistry	1	2
Deception	5	6
Intuition	7	8
Medic	7	8
Occultism	4	5
Perception	7	8
Persuasion	5	6
Profiling	2	3
Seduction	2	3
Stealth	7	8
Survival	2	3
Visual Arts	1	2

COMPETENCIES

Night shifts at workplaces

Identity change

BODY & MIND

Strong-Willed [-3]

Stunning Appearance [-3]

Addiction, Severe [+3]
└ *Blood*

Dangerous Knowledge [+2]
└ *Her own past under former names*

Perfectionist [+1]

LINEAGE

Additional Language [-2]
└ *Spanish*

SPECIES TRAITS

Curse of Daylight [+4]

Innate Anomaly, Dangerous [-8]
Vampirism virus; one can survive it if bitten only once. It
└ *runs like a severe flu, after which the target either dies and turns into a vampire or recovers.*

MYSTIC SACRAMENTS (3 base Mystc pt)

Shadow Glide (Movement) 2
└ *The body dissolves into a shadow and moves from one to another, bypassing obstacles.*
└ *Duration [-2] (The glide lasts several rounds)*
└ *Situational [+3] (Needs continuous shadows along the path)*

Command Suggestion (Control) 3
└ *A short order that the target carries out as if it were their own decision.*
└ *Range [-3] (The command works at a distance)*
└ *Situational [+1] (The target must hear and understand the language of the command)*
└ *Stress-Fueled [+4]*

False Memories (Control) 3
└ *Implants a false memory into the target's mind that stays forever.*
└ *Permanence [-6] (The memory does not fade)*
└ *Backlash [+2] (Migraine and weakness after the procedure)*
└ *Situational [+1] (Only in conversation, outside combat)*
└ *Limit and Cooldown [+5] (One use, then a two-round pause)*

INFORMATION

Appearance: A thin woman with dark shoulder-length hair and very pale skin. Wears dark glasses, long sleeves and soft fabrics, and almost never smiles. Looks thirty, though she is over seventy.

Biography: Turned in the early sixties, but instead of hunting at night she chose a quiet life among humans. For many years she has worked as a dispatcher at a blood transfusion station on the night shift and feeds only on expired donor supplies. Once every ten years she burns her documents, moves to another city and starts over. Lately it has become harder to part with the people who have grown close to her.

Carries: Dark glasses, a walking-stick umbrella, a thermos of donor blood, a work pass, a set of forged documents.

Transport and cargo: An old sedan with tinted windows and curtains on the windows.

Home: A basement apartment with heavy curtains and a fridge for her supplies.

Vampire: A vampire quietly living among humans: works nights at a blood transfusion station and disappears every ten years so as not to give herself away.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Tobias Kern

ALIAS
Smoke



SPECIES
Werewolf

AGE
24

CHAOS

STIGMA

People whisper that Kern disappears on weekends and comes back scratched and with someone else's blood on his clothes: either he drinks or he gets into fights.

TEMPTATIONS

1. Turn a dying person into a werewolf to save their life, changing their fate forever.
2. Let the beast out when human strength is not enough.

VULNERABILITIES

1. Silver on the skin: chains, badges, cufflinks.
2. The crew's annual medical exam.
3. The smell of burnt flesh.

PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

I leave no one in the fire.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

I keep myself in check.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Find the one who turned him and learn how many others are infected.
2. Become the best rescuer in the region and not lose control of the beast.

SKILLS

↑↓		0
Athletics	7	8
Brawl	7	8
Survival	7	8
Intimidation	5	6
Intuition	5	6
Perception	5	6
Medic	3	4
Chemistry	2	3
Persuasion	2	3
Profiling	2	3
Stealth	2	3
Lockpicking	1	2
Vehicles	1	2

COMPETENCIES

Rescue operations

Acting in poor visibility

BODY & MIND

Conditioned: Expert [-3]

Attractive [-2]

Danger Sense [-1]

Strong-Willed [-3]

Hothead [+2]

Dangerous Knowledge [+2]
└ *Who turned him and where*

Restless [+1]

SPECIES TRAITS

Total Shift - Beasts [-4]
└ *Wolf form*

Innate Anomaly, Dangerous [-8]
└ *Werewolf virus through bites and scratches. Trigger: physical contact (bite, scratch).*

Vulnerability to Silver [+3]

Echo of the Original [+2]
└ *Animal fear of fire, a craving for raw meat*

MYSTIC SACRAMENTS (1 base Mystc pt)

Danger Sense (Perception) 5
└ *A sixth sense warns of mortal danger a second before it strikes.*
└ *Autonomy [-4] (Triggers on its own, without an action)*
└ *Limit and Cooldown [+4] (2 charges (+2), recovery 1 scene (+2))*
└ *Stress-Fueled [+4]*

INFORMATION

Appearance: A tall (192 cm), athletic twenty-four-year-old guy: broad shoulders, dark hair, a warm smile and a confident gaze. He spends a lot of time in the gym, his clothes always fit well, and his strength shows in every movement.

Biography: Tobias joined the fire station after the army and immediately became the best in his class on the standards. Two years ago, on one of his first night calls, he carried a stranger out of a burning house, and the stranger bit him in panic. Since then Tobias is a werewolf: he is twice as strong, his senses are sharper, and on weekends the beast strains to get out. So far he holds on and remains the station's favorite, but he does not know who that stranger was or how many like him there are.

Carries: A helmet, a fireproof jacket, a radio, a first-aid kit, a folding knife. Wears no silver.

Transport and cargo: An old motorcycle and a rescue kit.

Home: A room at the fire station, a closet with spare clothes (they tear after transformations) and a folder of clippings about unsolved arsons.

Werewolf: A young, strong firefighter-rescuer, the darling of the station, who hides that two years ago he was bitten and now turns into a beast.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Vaelor Sirtan

ALIAS
Witness



SPECIES
Elf

AGE
326

CHAOS

STIGMA

Perjurer: an elf whose false word under oath cost the life of an entire border town.

TEMPTATIONS

1. Take his own lie for the truth to stop feeling guilt.
2. Use the gift of speaking with the dead to keep someone on a hook.

VULNERABILITIES

1. The smell of burning.
2. A direct question under a promise or oath.
3. Relatives of the dead who recognize him.

PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

I must help the dead be heard

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

A word spoken aloud is unbreakable.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Name aloud all who died in Brezenholm.
2. Publicly renounce his false testimony before the council.

SKILLS

Athletics	3	4
Biology	1	2
Deception	4	5
Erudition	2	3
Firearms	3	4
Intimidation	1	2
Intuition	6	7
Law	1	2
Lockpicking	1	2
Melee	3	4
Occultism	4	5
Perception	8	9
Performing Arts	4	5
Persuasion	4	5
Politics	1	2
Profiling	6	7
Stealth	2	3
Survival	4	5

COMPETENCIES

Court witness

Reading the last moments

BODY & MIND

Pleasing Voice [-2]

Danger Sense [-1]

Phobia [+3]
└ *Open flame*

Dangerous Knowledge [+2]
└ *The authentic text of the Brezenholm treaty*

Intolerance [+1]
└ *Oathbreakers and liars*

LINEAGE

Etiquette [-2]
└ *The elven court*

Renowned: Niche Field [-1]
└ *Witnesses of treaties*

Additional Language [-2]
└ *Dwarven rune treaties*

MYSTIC SACRAMENTS (3 base Mystc pts)

Last Word (Perception) 5
- *Hear the last thoughts and words of the deceased.*
- *Touch [+1] (Touching the body or the place of death)*
- *Situational [+2] (No later than a day after death)*
- *Consumable [+1] (A drop of his own blood)*

Oath (Control) 5
- *Compel someone who has already sworn an oath to speak the truth.*
- *Situational [+2] (Only on one who has previously spoken an oath)*
- *Noticeable [+1] (The ancient chant is heard by everyone around)*

Twilight Step (Movement) 4
- *A gliding dash through shadow over a short distance.*
- *Situational [+2] (Only at dusk or at night)*

INFORMATION

Appearance: A tall, spare elf with silver-gray hair tied in a knot. Slender fingers stained with ink, modest clothes the color of twilight. His gaze lingers on the person he speaks to a second longer than is customary.

Biography: Three hundred years ago he became a Witness of Treaties at the elven court - by law, a Witness's word was not subject to doubt. When a dispute over water rights threatened war, Vaelor testified that a human delegation had signed a clause it had not signed. Peace was preserved, but the town of Brezenholm was declared a treaty violator, and the border guard burned it. Now he wanders from place to place, arriving where a death occurred, listening to the last words of the dead and bearing witness for them - for pay or for free.

Carries: A stack of blank scrolls, a quill with a supply of ink, a short dagger, a narrow bow with a quiver of arrows, a silver needle for blood.

Transport and cargo: A calm bay mare, saddlebags with papers and herbal infusions.

Home: No permanent home. An archive of copies of all his treaties remains in a mountain tower.

Elf Medium: A long-lived being whose false oath destroyed a town. Now he listens to the last words of the dead and bears witness for them.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Durmar Helgrin

ALIAS



SPECIES
Dwarf

AGE
84

CHAOS

STIGMA

Inherited a clan debt that cannot be repaid in a single lifetime.

TEMPTATIONS

1. Skim part of what he collects to close his own debt faster.
2. Switch sides to buy back the debt record sooner.

VULNERABILITIES

1. Talk of his family's debt ledger.
2. A word broken on stone.
3. Long stays under the open sky.

PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

A contract on stone is always two-sided.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

Collection gives no right to cruelty.

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Close the last page of the Helgrin family debt ledger.
2. Find the authentic pledge contract, which he suspects contains a forgery.

SKILLS

Athletics	7	8
Crafts	5	6
Engineering	4	5
Finance	8	9
Intimidation	6	7
Law	7	8
Melee	7	8
Perception	5	6
Persuasion	5	6
Profiling	4	5
Survival	3	4

COMPETENCIES

Debt law

Miner's combat

BODY & MIND

Conditioned: Specialist [-2]

Hothead [+2]

Phobia [+3]
└ *Open sky and heights*

Vulgar [+1]

Addiction, Mild [+1]
└ *Beer*

LINEAGE

Authority [-3]
└ *Collectors' guild*

Renowned: Niche Field [-1]
└ *Debt guilds*

MYSTIC SACRAMENTS (3 base Mystc pts)

Stone Skin (Defense) 4
- *The skin fills with the gray density of granite.*
- *Duration [-2] (Lasts several rounds)*
- *Situational [+2] (Only while standing on stone or earth)*
- *Fragility [+2] (Acid eats away the protection)*

Stone Hearing (Perception) 3
- *Sense tunnels, voids and footsteps within the rock.*
- *Touch [+1] (Palm on stone)*
- *Location-Bound [+1] (Only in bedrock and underground)*

INFORMATION

Appearance: A stocky dwarf with a graying red beard braided into two plaits with iron rings. A leather apron over chain mail, palms calloused from the hammer's haft.

Biography: Durmar's father pledged the clan's mining property to human moneylenders and died without paying. Under dwarven law the debt passed to his son, and after him it will pass on down the line. Durmar works as a guild collector: the guild credits part of each recovered debt toward his own. He sees himself in every debtor, so he is sometimes too soft and sometimes breaks into fits of rage - and the guild keeps an eye on him.

Carries: A war-hammer pickaxe, an extract from the debt ledger, the guild seal, a set of measuring scales, a pouch of pledge coins.

Transport and cargo: A sturdy wagon train with crates of confiscated property taken in payment of debts.

Home: A cubbyhole at the guild, a chest with copies of the clan's contracts and a notebook where he keeps count of his own debt.

Dwarf Collector: A stocky guild fighter who beats out debts with hammer and law while paying off the debts of his own clan.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Ray Kovac

ALIAS



SPECIES
Human

AGE
29

CHAOS

STIGMA

His implants pick up infrastructure signals not meant for humans, and he alone noticed that the city's failures run on a schedule. Madman?

TEMPTATIONS

1. Stage his own failure, out of spite.
2. Trust the city AI if it insists it is on his side.

VULNERABILITIES

1. An unclear or sharp hum in his acoustic implants.
2. People who do not believe in patterns.
3. Complete loss of signal.

PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

Fix it so it serves people, where you can

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

I don't believe in coincidences

- Evolution
- Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Find out what the city is preparing for with its "random" failures.
2. Publish the failure schedule where it cannot be erased.

SKILLS

	↑↓ 0
Athletics	7 8
Brawl	4 5
Crafts	4 5
Deception	3 4
Engineering	8 9
Firearms	3 4
Intimidation	1 2
Intuition	3 4
IT	7 8
Lockpicking	2 3
Logic	5 6
Melee	2 3
Perception	6 7
Physics	5 6
Profiling	3 4
Stealth	3 4
Survival	2 3
Vehicles	2 3

COMPETENCIES

Communication systems engineering

Interface hacking

BODY & MIND

Combat Reflexes [-3]

Danger Sense [-1]

Conditioned: Athletic Form [-1]

Health Condition, Moderate [+2]
└ *Chronic pain at the implant joints*

Addiction, Mild [+1]
└ *Painkillers for the interface*

Risk-Taker [+1]

Dangerous Knowledge [+2]
└ *City network failure schedule*

Addiction, Severe [+3]
└ *Cigarettes*

Vengeful [+4]

Phobia [+3]
└ *Devices that control his senses (noise, psychogenic weapons)*

LINEAGE

Ally [-3]
└ *Sabine, the illegal ripperdoc*

Resources: Poor [+2]

MYSTIC SACRAMENTS (3 base Mystc pts)

Power Manipulators (Damage) 4
└ *A strike with an industrial prosthetic built for work in mines.*
└ *Artifact [+2] (Forearm implants)*
└ *Noticeable [+1] (Drive noise and a burst of steam)*

Channel Hijack (Control) 3
└ *Seize control of someone else's electronics through the interface.*
└ *Range [-3] (Radio channel in line of sight)*
└ *Artifact [+2] (Neural interface)*
└ *Consumable [+3] (Charged interface batteries)*

Network Hearing (Perception) 3
└ *Hear city infrastructure signals and electromagnetic noise.*
└ *Artifact [+2] (Acoustic implants)*

INFORMATION

Appearance: A wiry, dark-skinned guy with shaved temples. His arm and shin joints are replaced with industrial cybernetic hinges, and he wears massive acoustic rings on his ears. Wears a gray thermal-insulated jacket and rigger's elbow pads.

Biography: Ray serviced the elevator shafts and power nodes of the megablock, so he was fitted with industrial implants for work at height. A side effect was hearing that picks up the city network's service signals. He noticed that failures shut down entire neighborhoods on the same schedule, while the corporation calls them random. His report vanished and his access was revoked, but no one dared remove the implants from him. Now he roams the technical underbelly of the city, hunting for patterns.

Carries: A handheld scanner, a set of cables, spare batteries, a stun gun, a forged technician's pass, a portable communicator.

Transport and cargo: A modified electric scooter with a box for instruments and tools.

Home: A capsule in a cargo hostel, a wall covered with printouts of signals and network diagrams.

Augmented: A technician with industrial implants who hears the city's service signals and uncovers the pattern in its supposedly random failures.

ABYSSAL WAKE

NAME
Nika Lawrence

ALIAS



SPECIES
Human

AGE
19

CHAOS

STIGMA

Rumor has it that the masked girl called "Spark" is either a hero or an arsonist, since burned fences and bent street lamps are left behind after her outings.

TEMPTATIONS

1. Force the city to obey by strength
2. Reveal her identity for glory and recognition

VULNERABILITIES

1. The threat of exposure.
2. Physical traps.
3. Situations where help came too late.

PSYCHE
FLESH
STRESS
LUCK TOKENS

ORDER

PRINCIPLES

Help first, figure things out later.

- [x] Evolution
- [x] Metamorphosis

The identity behind the mask must stay hidden

- [x] Evolution
- [x] Metamorphosis

ASPIRATIONS

1. Figure out what exactly the accident did to her.
2. Assemble a team of others like her.

SKILLS

	↑↓ 0
Athletics	7 **8**
Brawl	7 **8**
Deception	5 **6**
Intuition	7 **8**
Medic	3 **4**
Perception	7 **8**
Persuasion	5 **6**
Physics	1 **2**
Profiling	4 **5**
Stealth	4 **5**
Survival	4 **5**
Vehicles	3 **4**

COMPETENCIES

Night patrol

Work under a mask

BODY & MIND

Strong-Willed [-3]

Danger Sense [-1]

Risk-Taker [+1]

Hothead [+2]

Phobia [+3]
└ *Enclosed rooms without windows*

SPECIES TRAITS

Child of the Abyss [-5]

MYSTIC SACRAMENTS (5 base Mystc pts)

Eye Beams (Damage) 3
└ *Energy beams from the eyes that burn a target at a distance.*
└ *Range [-3] (Beam in line of sight)*
└ *Noticeable [+1] (A bright flash and glowing eyes give away her position)*
└ *Limit and Cooldown [+4] (One charge per two turns)*

Telekinesis (Control) 3
└ *Move objects and people with the power of thought.*
└ *Range [-3] (Works at a distance in line of sight)*
└ *Uncontrollable [+2] (On failure may hit a random ally)*
└ *Fragility [+2] (If something enters the field of view in the process, the effect ends)*

Flight (Movement) 2
└ *Free flight over the city at running speed.*

INFORMATION

Appearance: An athletic girl with a short light-brown haircut. In the mask and a dark blue suit with silver inserts she is a recognizable silhouette over the rooftops. Without the mask she looks like an ordinary grad student: jeans, hoodie, backpack.

Biography: Worked as a lab assistant at a research institute. An accident at the accelerator gave her powers: eye beams, telekinesis and flight. Since then Nika patrols the city at night in a mask - stopping robbers, putting out fires, pulling people from rubble. By day she hides her identity, while the security service is already closing in on those who knew her at the institute.

Carries: Mask and suit in her backpack, a spare phone, a first-aid kit, a flashlight, an institute pass.

Transport and cargo: A city bicycle, flight when necessary.

Home: A rented room with a window onto the roof, on the wall - a city map with marked calls.

Superheroine: A masked girl who gained powers in an accident: eye beams, telekinesis and flight. Protects the city at night and hides from the security service.

7.2. SUPERPOWERS, SPELLS, AND ARTIFACTS

Keep in mind that the examples list only the **starting parameters** for Mystic Sacraments. Over the course of the game, characters can spend experience to purchase Acrises or remove Velums, developing and altering these effects.

[This section will be expanded in October 2026]



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