

THE MIDNIGHT CONSERVATORY

The Midnight Conservatory is a sprawling construction of glass domes, filled with all manner of flowers, trees, bushes, and other plants. A beautiful maze, the Midnight Conservatory also houses carnivorous and toxic plants that claim the occasional visitor. Many use its shadowy corners and hidden gazebos for secret assignations and conspiracies.



You cannot hurt, pluck, or keep any of the plants unless it's in their best interest.

Anything planted in the soil will sprout into a plant related to its properties.

The longer you look at a plant, the faster it will go through its cycles of growth and decay.



Scents of orchids and ferns and soil, all shades of green, spotted with bright strong colors, faceless gardeners with long sharp shears, encroaching vines, sharp leaves, thorns whose pricks make everything more colorful and floaty.

Hostee the Urgent Waterer, Frayn the Colorless, Tamai the Forlorn Wanderer.

Fleeting Moments

*An exquisite performance
for an unappreciative
audience.*



Fleeting Moments

*A cry for help or a stinging
insult hidden behind a
veil of politeness.*



THE MIDNIGHT CONSERVATORY

The Mournful Gardener is hidden deep within the Midnight Conservatory, all alone, as they prefer. The Mournful Gardener is bashful and won't show themselves easily, always hiding behind large leaves and quietly crying. If you listen closely you can hear the Mournful Gardener's confessions of being all alone, by their nature.



You open yourself to the Mournful Gardener's sadness, allowing yourself to feel their loneliness and their inability to ever overcome it. Your tears water the soil and a new garden area springs into life.



You reach into yourself and draw a seed from your saddest memory, then plant it in the garden. You will still feel its sadness for the rest of your life, but you won't remember anymore why.

Capricious Festival



THE
MIDNIGHT
CONSERVATORY



THE
MIDNIGHT
CONSERVATORY



THE MOONLIGHT MARKET

Always bathed in the livid light of three large moons, the market is a busy place. Vendors yell and crowds haggle, while performers try to capture attention and coinage. Large figures in scale armor wield wicked spears, ready to punish theft or unfair trades. Several alleys off the main drag offer less savory merchandise.



The more you search through the wares, the more you discover things from your own past.

If you steal anything, the guards will know.

A deal cannot be sealed with the Restless Collector in bad faith.



Noise, lanterns of all colors, all kinds of coins and tokens, firebreathers, swordswallowers, orphans, scents of spices and fabrics and too-strong perfumes, strange creatures sold in small cages, tall guards and enforcers of deals.

Marei the Oppulent, Tiak the Brewer of Irreverence, Sel the Trusted Blade.

Fleeting Moments

An enchanting melody leads someone off their track.



Fleeting Moments

A sudden downpour, felt or heard, with strange qualities.



THE MOONLIGHT MARKET

At the center of the market lives the Restless Collector. Emaciated and dressed in careless rags, the Collector is constantly going through their pile of oddities, never satisfied with what's there. The Collector rarely stops haggling, even when no one else is around.



You find something in the collection that grabs a tight hold of you, but the Collector would never part with it. Maybe it's something previously yours or a loved one's that you thought long lost. You steal it and run.



You trade away a most priced possession. This is something of irreplaceable emotional value to you: your only remaining memento of a loved one, the last piece of your lost home, the memory of your first love.

Capricious Festival



THE
MOONLIGHT
MARKET



THE
MOONLIGHT
MARKET



RUINS UNDER THE WAVES

What was once a great collection of architectural marvels is now a maze of broken walls, toppled spires, and ancient columns, all overgrown with coral, underwater plants, and barnacles. These sunken parts of Meridian are populated by fish, merfairies, and the strangest of sea creatures. Many others are here to explore the remains and marvel at the treasures hidden within.

Everyone can breathe and talk in the waters of the Ruins.

You cannot abscond with any of the Ruins' treasures.

As you descend further, the treasures and remnants become more fascinating, and the creatures and guardians become weirder and more dangerous.

Swaying fronds, bubbles rising from the deep, glints of gold in the sand, hidden relics, nooks and crannies, giant seahorses and starfish, reaching tentacles, volcanic fissures and black smokers, tangled seaweed traps, merfairies guardians.

Finduil the Intrepid Explorer, Indith the Connoisseur of Shells, Nivae the Last of the Pearlborn.

Fleeting Moments

*A whispered voice,
playfully distracting,
carried on the wind.*



Fleeting Moments

*A glance held too long to
be forgettable.*



RUINS UNDER THE WAVES

Deep within the ruins, the Serpent of the Ages winds among vast broken pillars and arches. Its scales shimmer colorfully, and each holds a bit of the history of the ruins within it. The Serpent welcomes visitors, for it fears that the stories it holds of days long past will one day be lost like grains of sand in the sea.



The Serpent of the Ages shows you in its scales how things used to be before they fell to ruin. You experience visions and stories of a golden age long past, and share in the Serpent's sadness of how much has been lost that will never be recovered.



The Serpent of the Ages bestows upon you one of its smaller scales containing a story from the ruins' past. You are now its keeper. Should you ever lose it, the story will be lost forever, though you can pass on this responsibility to another willing recipient.

Capricious Festival



RUINS
UNDER
THE WAVES



RUINS
UNDER
THE WAVES



THE SCARLET MASQUERADE

Hosted in a great manor, the Scarlet Masquerade is a spectacle of sound and sight. The orchestra plays on balconies overlooking the majestic main hall, but their music is heard equally throughout every room.

Figures in masks and elaborate attire are dancing and twirling and weaving imagery of grace and beauty. Upon entering, any guest will choose from a vast array of suitable attire and masks for their stay.



You cannot directly interact with another being, such as talking or fighting, unless you're dancing to the music.

The music is linked to the mood of your surroundings; change one and the other follows.

Nobody can unmask anyone else, including themselves.



Silk, lace, scarlet, purple, gold, scents of orchids and musk and soft woods, trays with lithe glasses and tiny confections, The Princes and Princesses of Grace, masked servants and guards.

Fiori the Heavenly Flute, Tua the Plucker of Hearts of the Great House of Tahn, Heanee the Sorrowful Soloist.

Fleeting Moments

A murmured chant in the dark, expressed with intensity.



Fleeting Moments

A collection of flowers, as dangerous as they are beautiful.



THE SCARLET MASQUERADE

At the heart of the Scarlet Masquerade is the Regent of Grace. They are clad in the most elaborate finery you have ever seen, their layers of fabric floating through the air beautifully with every small move that the Regent makes. They command attention, but receiving the Regent's attention feels equally unsettling and exhilarating.

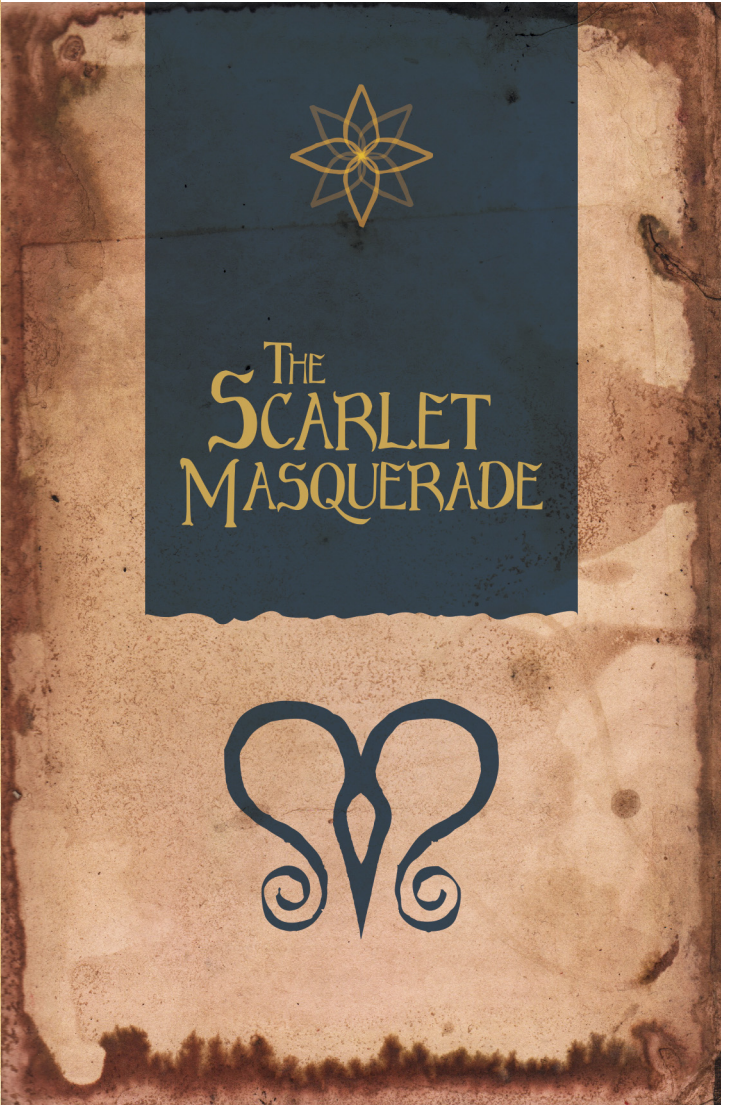
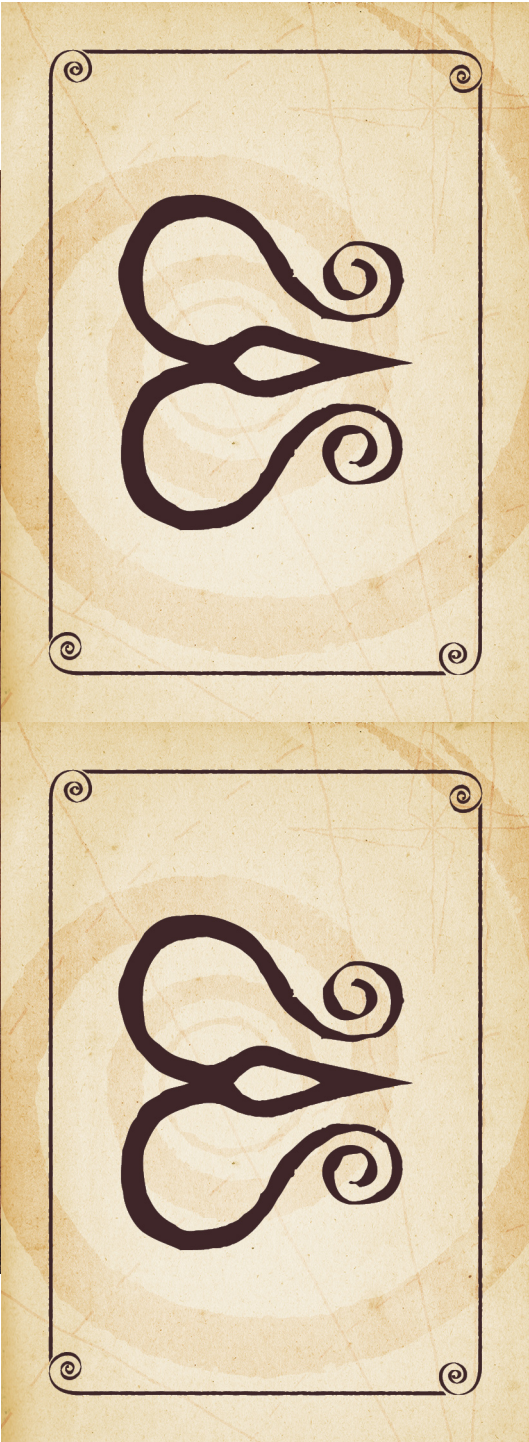
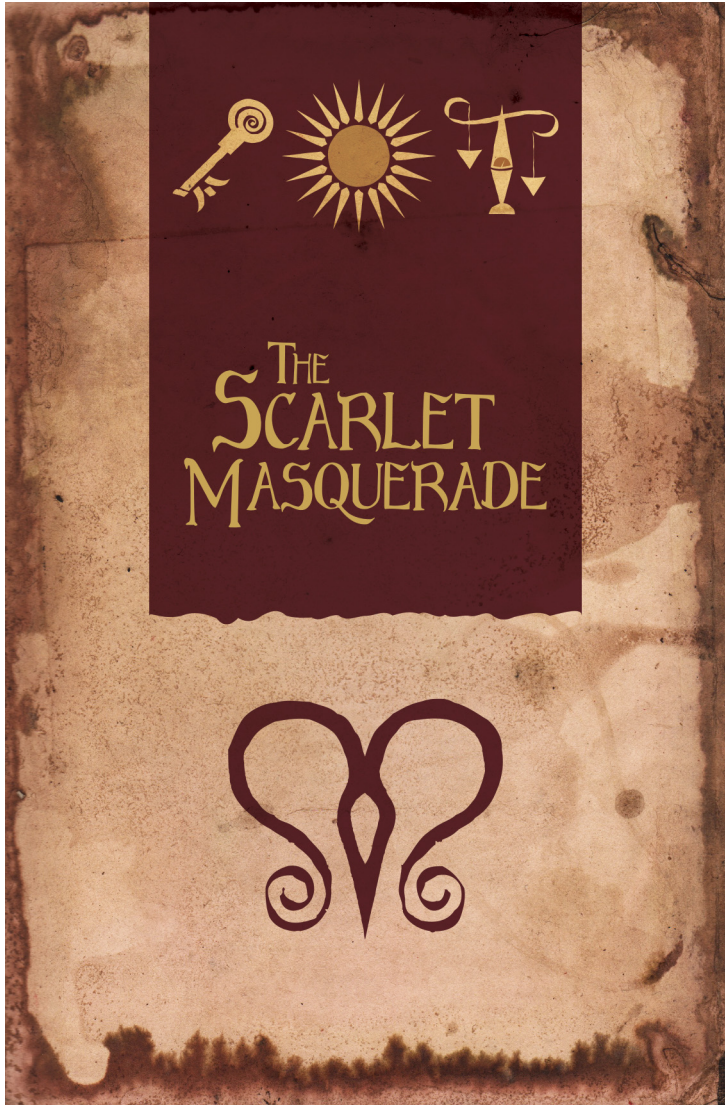


You let the Regent lead you in a tantalizing dance. Everything else turns to a blur, and you lose yourself for a while. From this moment on, your heart will forever ache for another moment just like this one.



You trade part of your grace to the Regent. They now have your steps, your little movements, your physical expression in their repertoire, while you are left clumsy.

Capricious Festival



STEAMBOAT OF FORTUNE

The giant steam wheeler slowly travels between quays on one of Meridian's rivers, picking up and dropping off gamblers and visitors. The inside is filled with large halls where games of all sorts take center stage while exquisite dancers and other performers distract the players as best they can.

You know the rules of a game as soon as you sit down at its tables.

Anything of yours that you can think of can be staked in the games.

You cannot beat the Double Dealers nor call them on their tricks and sleights of hand.

The murmur of crowds punctuated with cries of jubilation and disappointment, felt-covered tables, cushy chairs, groups of players, chips of all colors and shapes clicking together, tantalizing dancers with impeccable grace, magicians, jugglers, and animal handlers.

Phewey the Rulesmonger, Esmer of the Sultry Dozen, Tuliniale the Fiddler of the River.

Fleeting Moments

Gauzy walls of gossamer
with shadows moving on
the other side.



Fleeting Moments

A painting with faces
you recognize, with
pleading looks.



STEAMBOAT OF FORTUNE

From their private backroom, the Double Dealers pull the strings on all of the games on the steamboat. The two are dressed in flashy attire and shiny jewelry, showing off their gambling gains. They talk as fast as they play, and they have a hard time refusing any bet.



You manage to talk the Double Dealers into playing a game against each other. This soon escalates as they both try to con each other.

Hopefully you have snuck away by then, as they will be furious with you.



You bet some of your luck on a game of chance. As the game is rigged, you lose the stakes, and in the future you'll more often than not find yourself on the losing end of chance.

Capricious Festival



STEAMBOAT
OF
FORTUNE



STEAMBOAT
OF
FORTUNE



THE WHISPERING COURT

Within an old castle lies the great hall of the Whispering Court. While the décor used to be lavish, the tapestries are torn, with signs of malicious destruction. There are people, animals, fairies, trolls, and other creatures everywhere, gathered in cliquish circles that whisper wicked gossip and giggle behind fancy folding fans.



Unless you are addressing the Torn Jester, you can only talk in whispering circles.

You cannot bring something truly beautiful into the great hall unless you blemish it somehow.

When you whisper a question into the room, eventually an answer will return, but chances are you won't like it.



Fully armored knight guards with dented helmets and crooked swords, the hum of whispers, punctuated by gasps, sighs, and suppressed laughter, strong sweet scents with an undercurrent of ash, ruined luxuries, stale or slightly spoiled wine.

Plaas the Pickpocket, Firio the Speechless, Yaw the Laughing Brute.

Fleeting Moments

Snowflakes in the colors of the rainbow, whispering as they melt.



Fleeting Moments

A carved message bearing your name, in familiar handwriting.



THE WHISPERING COURT

The Torn Jester sits on the magnificent throne in the center of the great hall. They are still wearing their fool's attire, but a dented and twisted crown sits atop their head. The Torn Jester seeks to see everyone brought down from their high horse; nothing entertains them more than to drag pure or admired things into depravity.



You participate in a Fool's Challenge, in which you compete with the Torn Jester to see who can make the funnier insults. You don't have to win; you will progress even in shameful defeat. But if you do win, the Torn Jester's ire will be aimed at you for a very long time.



You share with the Torn Jester a true secret about someone you care about, something shameful that you were told in trusted confidence. You hope the Torn Jester won't use it against them or spread it around.

Capricious Festival



THE
WHISPERING
COURT



THE
WHISPERING
COURT



THE CAREENING CARRIAGES

This train of linked carriages has long left its tracks behind and rattles loudly through the streets of Meridian, pulled by a bright red engine. The cars sway back and forth as the train turns, never to stop. Passengers of all sorts fill the cars, occasionally jumping on or off of a carriage.



The train can never be brought to a stop. Your speed in advancing toward the engine is proportional to how daring you are.

While a ticket is required to ride, a rider's aplomb can make any item pass as such.



Cars of different styles, periods, and sizes, some much bigger or smaller on the inside, passengers holding on tightly, creaks and rumbles, the smell of oil and smoke.

Namek the Flustered Mechanic, Donar the Happy Ticketer, Elean Can't-Be-Still.

Fleeting Moments

Feathers of unusual color or size, with strange properties.



Fleeting Moments

The gust of someone moving at high speeds.



THE CAREENING CARRIAGES

The Gleeful Conductor controls the carriage from the engine car all the way up front. Their eyes are wide open as they guide the carriage through Meridian, cackling and hooting with delight at each tight turn.



The Gleeful Conductor asks you to take over steering for a while, as they have some urgent things to take care of. What or who do you run over as you careen through the streets of Meridian?



The Gleeful Conductor asks for your help as an axle breaks and the carriage starts swaying dangerously back and forth. Which of your possessions do you use to fix it and leave behind?

Bumpy Rides



THE
CAREENING
CARRIAGES



THE
CAREENING
CARRIAGES



THE FEROCIOUS FEAST

Set in the middle of a vast meadow is a labyrinth of tables set with an unimaginable variety of food and drink. However, much of the food is currently in mid-air or stuck to one of the joyful gourmands, as most of them are embroiled in a rather competitive food fight with ever-changing teams and motivations.



Any food you consume will change you for a short while in size, ability, shape, or perception.

When you touch a piece of food, even one hurled at you, you have to taste it.

There can be no peace or even momentary truce in this culinary battle.



Swift and evasive flying waiters, unbreakable glasses, plates and bowls of all sizes, vast assortments of aerodynamic food, goulash catapults, meatball slings, pneumatic water guns, candy traps, edible flower arrangements.

Barroa the Exquisite Connoisseur, Stepheree the Sweet Pea Sharpshooter, Flaun the Flavorful, Tibby the Hoarder of Scraps.

Fleeting Moments

Melodious giggles and soft laughter, all around.



Fleeting Moments

A word repeated many times, provided as warning.



THE FEROCIOUS FEAST

The Chef in Chief is a small, rotund figure dressed in a cook's uniform, their apron adorned with makeshift medals. They are overseeing the battle from a central castle built of tables and chairs, and while they make some protestations, they are clearly enjoying the event.



You participate in an eating contest with the Chef in Chief and other gourmets. You can never quite enjoy food the same way after stuffing yourself like this.



You trade the Chef in Chief one of your fondest memories of food, like the smell of cookies in your grandparents' house. They make a dish based on it, but your memory is gone.

Bumpy Rides



THE FEROCIOUS FEAST



THE FEROCIOUS FEAST



THE HIDDEN WORKSHOP

Anyone who wants to reach the workshop itself has to make their way through an ever-shifting maze of moving parts and deterring traps. As the walls and even the floors move, nothing ever stays the same. Several citizens of Meridian are always taking on this challenge, alone or in groups.

None of the contraptions will seriously injure anyone.

Anything you insert into one of the larger machines will be transformed into a self-propelled or robotic version of itself.

You cannot steal any of the constructs of the workshop.

Moving walls, catapult pads, padded landing zones, rotating floors, climbing ropes, helicopter platforms, goo traps, fog and wind machines, clockwork guardians.

Nil the Slightly Malfunctioning, Ever Clumsy Frassie, Tokkle the Most Daring.

Fleeting Moments

A doorway, requesting something unusual for passage.



Fleeting Moments

A thing of beauty, ever out of reach.



THE HIDDEN WORKSHOP

The Sleepless Tinkerer is surrounded by half-built machines, clockwork creatures, and strange tools. Their long coat is stained with oil and has countless pockets. They never stop their work, even when conversing. They are trying to finish a few very important machines, but never quite work right.



You help the Sleepless Tinkerer finish one of their big machines, and it actually works right. However, you have to permanently dismantle one of the intelligent clockwork creatures to get the parts.



You persuade the Sleepless Tinkerer that your journey is so important that they loan you their most favorite construct, vehicle, or assistant. You have to promise to try and return it.

Bumpy Rides



THE
HIDDEN
WORKSHOP



THE
HIDDEN
WORKSHOP



THE PHOENIX AERIE

Nestled atop of one of the tallest towers of Meridian lies the Phoenix Aerie. Your feet feel light as they wander over a vast arrangement of straw and sticks, rags and feathers. Huge slim stems of flowers reach far into the sky above you, where all kinds of flying creatures circles and chases and swoops all around each other.



When you hold a feather in each hand, you grow wings of a matching style that allow you to fly until you leave the Aerie or pick new feathers.

In the air above the Aerie, you can never go slow or stop moving altogether.

You cannot touch or land on the Skybound Phoenix.



Song birds and winged mammals and flying reptiles, the freshest air, caressing touch of the clouds, giant swaying blossoms, sweetness of nectar, petals sailing on the wind.

Ubala the Furious, Thahahey of the Whispering Winds, Luo the Last Lepal.

Quirky Creatures

A flock or swarm of identical creatures, with one slightly different outcast.



Quirky Creatures

A talking, parading animal atop a most unusual mount.



THE PHOENIX AERIE

Circling high above, the majestic Skybound Phoenix reigns. The size of a zeppelin, its feathers are a kaleidoscope of sparkling colors so bright they almost look aflame. It circles the Aerie, providing shade and protection. The Skybound Phoenix has a voice like smooth rolling thunder across the clouds.



You give in to the rush of flight, losing yourself for a long time. When you come to, exhausted but full of contentment, you are no longer in the Aerie. From now on, many of your dreams will have you flying, and you will wake wistful and nostalgic.



You grant the Skybound Phoenix some of the sparkle in your eyes. A new row of feathers sprouts along the Skybound Phoenix's side, shimmering in your colors.

Bumpy Rides



THE
PHOENIX
AERIE



THE
PHOENIX
AERIE



THE UNTAMED TOURNEY

On mile-long skinny legs, Old Strider makes its way through Meridian, unaware of the creatures living on its back. The Untamed Knights are holding their tourney in these furlands, riding on giant fleas and other insects. Their cheers and campfire songs carry for miles, and their dances on their steeds are legendary.



Anyone entering the tourney will choose from a large selection of giant insects for their mount.

No one gets seriously injured at the tourney.

No one can beat the High-Seated Champion at the tourney.



Ridable insects of all kinds, knights of all stripes and colors, games of jousting and archery, campfires, songs and tales, roasted foods.

Zad Zad, Xin Xin, Yap Yap, Nek Nek, Bog Bog,
Lyp Lyp, Ton Ton, Kee Kee, Sa Sa.

Quirky Creatures

*A tiny creature,
mumbling, eagerly
gathering for its
collection.*



Quirky Creatures

*A large object floating in
the air, with a climber atop.*



THE UNTAMED TOURNEY

The High-Seated Champion is perched atop a very tall wooden chair, its poles swaying but never breaking. They watch the tourney with delight, and join in toward the end of each contest to face, and beat, the frontrunner.



You participate in a contest of the tourney from atop a giant insect. You will inevitably lose to the High-Seated Champion, which will make them quite cheerful.



You invent a new game for the tourney. Naturally, the High-Seated Champion will be the best at it. The Untamed Knights will cheer your name henceforth.

Bumpy Rides



THE
UNTAMED
TOURNEY



THE
UNTAMED
TOURNEY



ASYLUM OF THE BROKEN

The large, ancient mansion is surrounded by skeletal trees and leafless bushes. The inside is furnished with stale antiques, the walls adorned with tapestries that have lost most of their color. Some inhabitants scream or lunge at each other, inflicting violence as they struggle to keep going, but many are simply collapsed or barely dragging themselves around.



The more you want to move forward, the harder it is to do.

Everything consumed here tastes only of ash.

You cannot give a spark to those inhabitants who are already empty.



Gray, pale and lifeless shades and hues, a faint stench without character, moans and whimpers, outbursts of rage, blind asylum guards without tongues or emotion.

Ngar the Hunter of the Meek, Akrak the Despoiled Healer, Tarnare the Incessant Rebel.

Quirky Creatures

One or more wind-up servants or guides, in need of a twist of their key.



Quirky Creatures

A horde of tiny flying beasts, agitated but easily distracted.



ASYLUM OF THE BROKEN

The Monarch of Emptiness sits on a throne of plain stone at the end of a long hall, which is lined with thousands of urns containing emotions drained from the inhabitants of the Asylum. The Monarch stares straight ahead, their voice echoing through the hall without any sign of movement.



You let the emptiness enter you. Kneeling before the Monarch, you feel true hopelessness, and it is so very liberating. This lure of giving up will forever stay in the back of your mind.



You give the Monarch of Emptiness one of your main emotions. They seal it away in one of their urns. You will never be able to feel it again.

Dark Reflections



ASYLUM
OF THE
BROKEN



ASYLUM
OF THE
BROKEN



CATHEDRAL OF FORGOTTEN GODS

The ceilings of the Cathedral stretch far above, as the light falling through the tall stained glass windows bathes everything in vivid colors.

The main floor of the Cathedral is lined with beautiful statues of more sophisticated forgotten gods, while shrines to primitive and ancient deities lie within the dark catacombs below. Hidden throughout, dozens of cults intone chants and conduct ancient rituals of power.

No prayer goes unanswered here, but you can't predict by whom or what.

If you join a cult in their rituals, you earn a blessing from their deity or inflict a curse upon a chosen victim.

The worship of a forgotten deity cannot be rekindled outside of the Cathedral.

Incense and other revered herbs, a million flickering candles, offerings, cultists, spiritual seekers, benches, alcoves and niches, talismans and amulets, a maze of rafters, holy and otherworldly objects.

Eulori the First Talon of the Corvid Cult,
Domini the Most Capricious Follower, Sheev
the Scribe of Secrets.

Quirky Creatures

Hats and helmets engaged
in conversation, with or
without silent bearers.



Quirky Creatures

A seeker, upside down to
better survey the ground.



CATHEDRAL OF FORGOTTEN GODS

In a small, bare chamber in the recesses of the Cathedral, the Frayed Prophet wanders in circles, mumbling, their head jerking this way and that. They hear all of the forgotten gods, hundreds of them, vying for attention inside their head. They very much welcome conversation that distracts them, especially with mortal visitors.



Choose someone you care about. The Frayed Prophet will show you a vision of a tragedy that will befall them in the days to come. There is nothing you can do to change their destiny, unless you put yourself in their place and suffer their fate for them.



You take on the voice of one of the forgotten gods, relieving the Frayed Prophet of its demand for attention. From this moment on, the deity will speak in your mind and consider you its avatar, for the rest of your days.

Dark Reflections



CATHEDRAL OF
FORGOTTEN
GODS



CATHEDRAL OF
FORGOTTEN
GODS



GRAVEYARD OF PLAYTHINGS

Beneath a solid layer of dark clouds, the graveyard sprawls for miles. Tombs and stones rise from the ground, some very simple, some incredibly elaborate and detailed. Many of the graves have been dug up. Pieces of stuffed animals, dolls, and other toys are strewn about.



When you dig out a grave, you will find something from your childhood.

Every game or activity played here will soon turn nasty.

You cannot criticize or chastise the Petty Despoiler.



Wet dirt, mold, torn off parts of dolls and stuffed animals, open graves, smashed tombs, wailing in the distance, giant statue guardians with twisted spears.

Uvv the Sealer of Tombs, Helea of the Abandoned Heart, Ingandreh the Stone Carver.

Quirky Creatures

Two large creatures pushing against each other, neither budging.



Quirky Creatures

An insect of intellect and taste, fond of philosophical musings.



GRAVEYARD OF PLAYTHINGS

The Petty Despoiler leaves behind a trail of torn and broken carcasses of toy animals, figures and dolls. Their nails are broken and filthy from digging out graves. While they seem to be a child, they have been digging and tearing for a very long time.



You play with the Petty Despoiler, becoming their plaything for a while. They don't treat their toys well. After they tire of you they dump you in a grave or tomb.



You tell the Petty Despoiler of a childhood memory of yours. They twist and corrupt it with their words, and their version replaces yours in your memory.

Dark Reflections



GRAVEYARD OF
PLAYTHINGS



GRAVEYARD OF
PLAYTHINGS



HALLS OF THE HARROWS

A network of dark, dank hallways connects a vast catacomb of cells, filled with those the Harrows have slated for execution. Other rooms are filled with worn and often bloodied execution equipment. Executions are underway, always aligned with what each prisoner believes they deserve.



You cannot hide your guilt from the Harrows.

You cannot move faster than walking in these halls.

Every time after you are executed for your deeds, you are returned to life in your cell, soon to be executed again.



Rusted chains, rough rope creaking as it hangs, damp walls, the scents of blood and singed flesh, crooked spikes, metal bars, jagged blades, and the Harrows around every corner.

Hollau the Defiler, Sakar the Reluctant Executioner, Mnali of Graciousness.

Quirky Creatures

*Bubbles floating past,
carrying tiny passengers
or prisoners.*



Quirky Creatures

*A creature fleeing and
hiding from something
seemingly innocuous.*



HALLS OF THE HARROWS

In the central hall, The Harrow Judge presides. Dressed in robes of black silk with golden decorations, and donning their dignified wig, they hear the pleas of their prisoners and inevitably declare them guilty and deserving of execution.

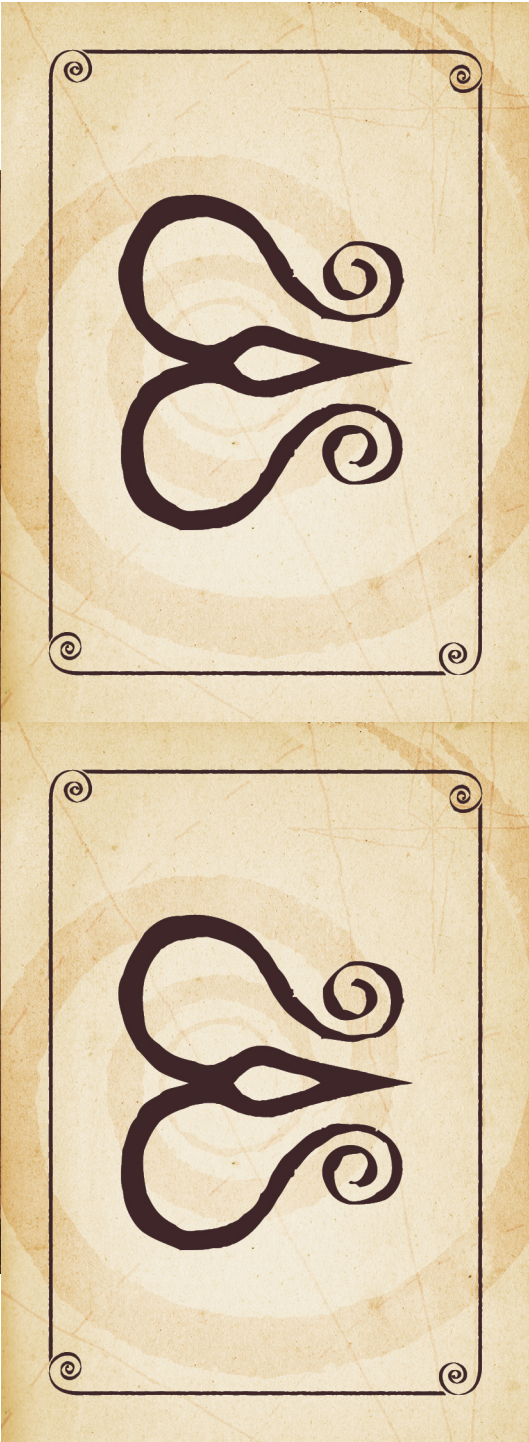
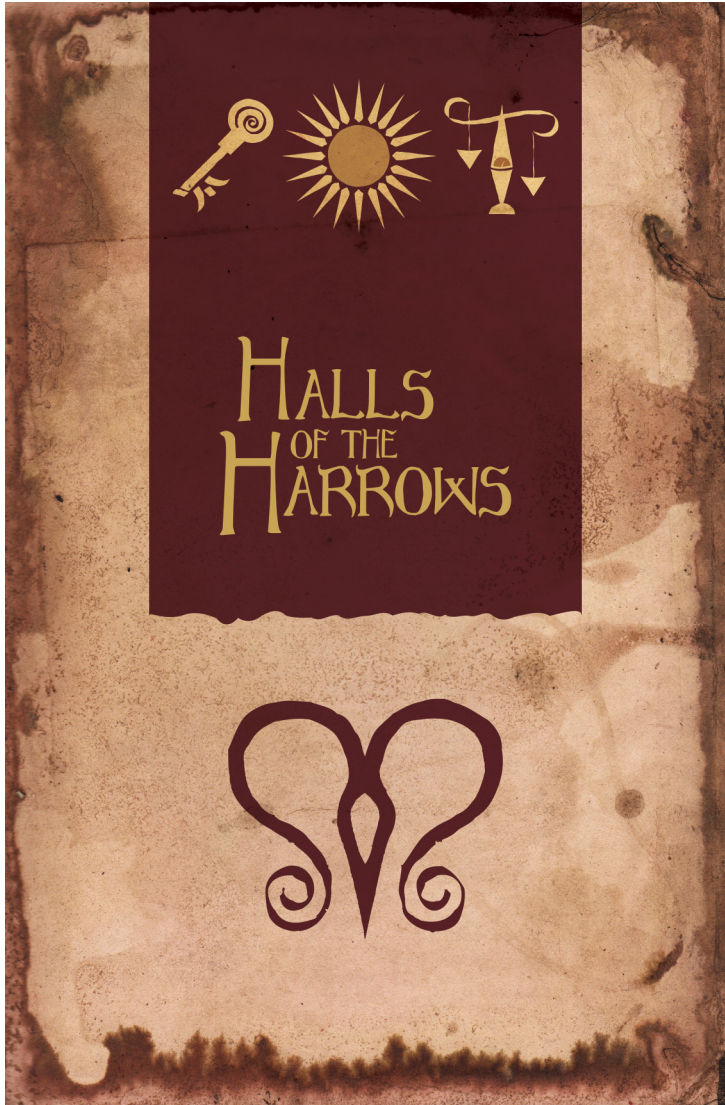


You accept the role of executioner for 13 prisoners, conducting your duty for each of them once. Memories of what you have done will return to you in unprepared moments, forever.



You volunteer to suffer the execution on behalf of a prisoner you believe has paid their dues. After you are returned to life in your cell, you and they both are released.

Dark Reflections



THE MAUSOLEUM OF MIRRORS

A maze of dark stone, with indecipherable scriptures engraved into the smooth rock floor. Shadowy figures move about, but your eyes can never quite focus on them. Every now and then a room opens up with a mirror set in its center, some of which contain the grieving reflections of people who aren't there.

Each mirror shows a reflection that's slightly different: who you wish you were, whom others see in you, or who you fear you will become.

If your grief is strong enough, or by the Sorrowful Twin's will, you can become trapped in one of the mirrors.

You cannot damage or break the mirrors.

Scents of incense and embalming oil, various shades of grey accentuated with occasional dark green or purple, shadowy guardians with elongated limbs, cracks in the stone, whispering scripture, distant chants.

Morok the Shadowmonger, Telle the Hesitant,
Meyl of the Grieving Hymns.

Quirky Creatures

*An advisor speaking
in strange and
incongruous metaphors.*



Quirky Creatures

*Someone caught in a trap,
though maybe deservedly.*



THE MAUSOLEUM OF MIRRORS

The Sorrowful Twin is pale and fair-haired, a stark contrast to their home. They reside in a huge hall lit with myriad candles, at the center of which stands a sarcophagus whose stone carving shows a mirror image of the Sorrowful Twin. They speak softly, but there is no warmth left in them.

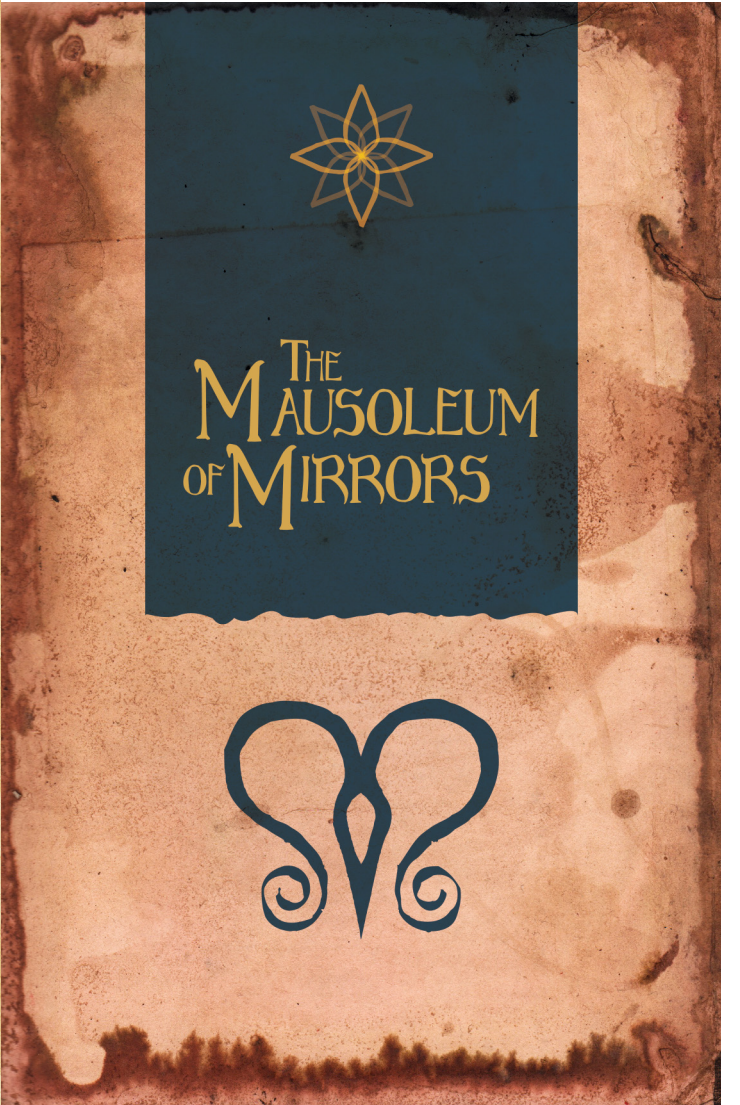
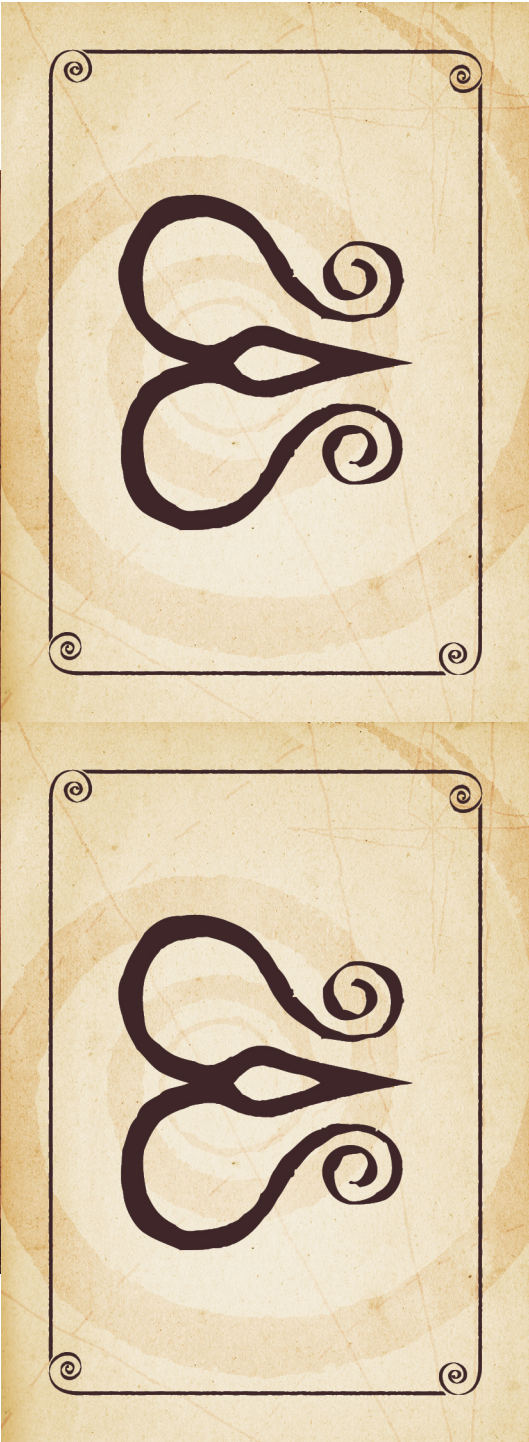
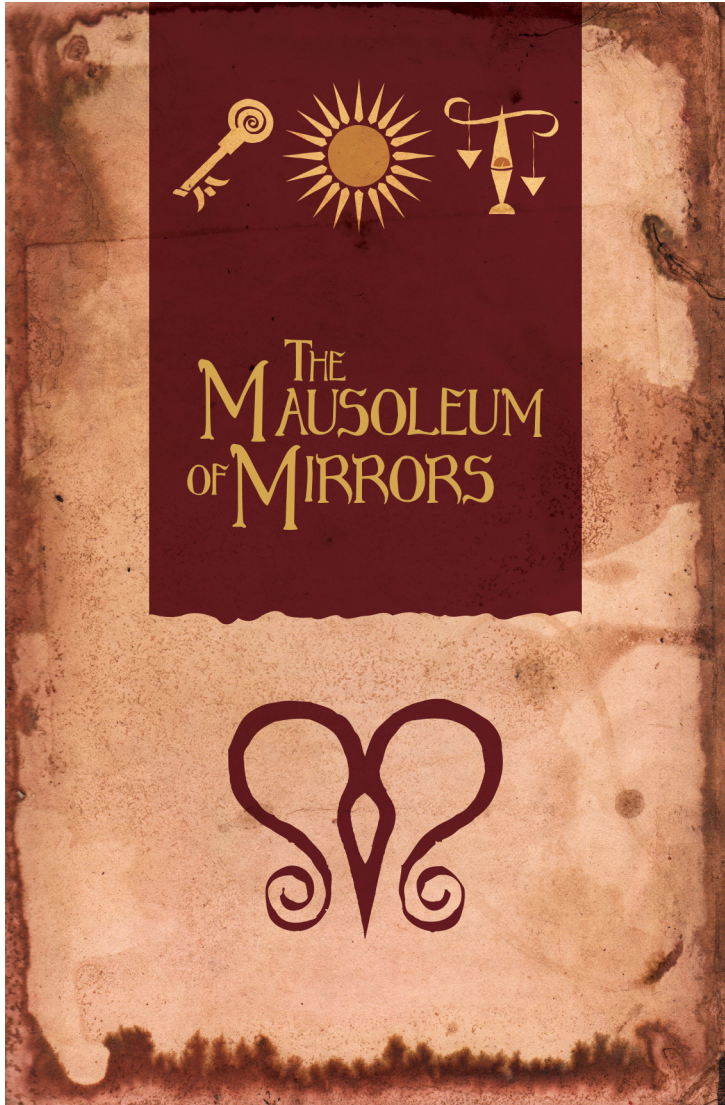


You step into a mirror that shows whom you fear you will become, and face off with your mirror self. You emerge from it as an amalgamation of both.



You give your true reflection to the Sorrowful Twin, who locks it into one of their mirrors. It will forever stay there, and your own reflection in other mirrors and surfaces will always look strange to you.

Dark Reflections



THE STREETS OF STRIFE

Lying deep within the urban center of Meridian, the Streets of Strife are a constant warzone. Creatures of all kinds, ranging from hulking bearfolk to insectoid hybrids to battle fairies, are embroiled in skirmishes everywhere. One side brandishes a blue banner, the other yellow. All soldiers are bandaged and scarred, and several seem to have incongruous replacement limbs grafted onto them.

Wearing predominantly blue or yellow will earn violent hostility from one side and protective approval from the other.

Anyone can wield any personal item as a weapon here, displaying both great proficiency and a style expressing their personality.

No one and nothing can ever stop the fighting.

Squads of soldiers, dark red splatters, severed body parts, screams and cries, broken weapons, sweet scent of death, vultures and crows, carrion crawlers.

Tret the Frayed, Loida the Clumsy, Mabatei the Only Pacifist Union Member.

Quirky Creatures

*A multi-headed being, only
in harmony when it sings.*



Quirky Creatures

*Several smaller creatures,
pretending to be one
large being.*



THE STREETS OF STRIFE

The White Surgeon operates in a large green tent set up in the center of the Streets. They are tall and lanky, dressed in blood-splattered white robes and gloves, their face all but hidden underneath a veil. The White Surgeon aids both sides of the conflict, stitching up even the most serious wounds to the applause of gathered assistants and sending the soldiers back out into the fray, forever.



You assist the White Surgeon in an operation. The soldier on the operating table has a broken soul and pleads with you to just let them die this time, but you have to complete the operation and send them back out into neverending battle.



You trade one of your major organs to the White Surgeon. You watch from your back on the operating table as they remove it and replace it with something else.

Dark Reflections



THE
STREETS
OF STRIFE



THE
STREETS
OF STRIFE



*Someone being denied
desperately needed
love or attention.*



Dread & Doubt

*A painted or mosaic
image of a childhood
transgression.*



Dread & Doubt

*A stalker in the shadows,
gaunt and twisted.*



Dread & Doubt

*A faded ghost, its eyes
filled with blame.*



Dread & Doubt

*A fluffy, cuddly
creature thinking itself
terribly ferocious.*



Quirky Creatures

*A master of grimaces with
a golden heart.*



Quirky Creatures



*A plea for mercy, albeit
lacking conviction.*



Dread & Doubt

*Two creatures, partially
merged or stitched together
against their will.*



Dread & Doubt

*Someone carrying their
own broken-off wings
or limbs.*



Dread & Doubt

*A defenseless creature
being viciously teased
and heckled.*



Dread & Doubt

*A twisted face, barely
recognizable, with
piercing eyes.*



Dread & Doubt

*A creature of many limbs,
entrapping another.*



Dread & Doubt



The smell of decay, and a trail to its origins.



Dread & Doubt

Someone harming themselves, or just about to.



Dread & Doubt

Something sticky or slimy, creeping along skin.



Dread & Doubt

Something moving beneath the skin that does not belong.



Dread & Doubt

An ugly or unwelcome truth, innocently spoken.



Dread & Doubt

Damage done by great rage, and whimpers from within the debris.



Dread & Doubt



*Handprints of blood, and
the creature that
left them.*



*A creature covering to
the domineering
will of another.*



LOCALES

Read or paraphrase the description and state the Laws. Let the Journeyer explore the Locale. Make sure everyone follows the Laws.

If the Journeyer gets into conflict with a secondary character that is not easily resolved, draw a Cadence. On a sun symbol, the Journeyer gets their way. On other symbols, they don't. Discard.

Keep an eye on the Cadences that are being played! Once 3 Cadences have been played, introduce the Nexus, the character at the heart of the Locale.

FINALE

Set up a scene at or near the last Locale, together with the Journeyer. It should put the Journeyer's goal within their grasp.

After the Journeyer makes the choice on their Finale card, you and each Touch draw a Cadence card to add to the Journeyer's Finale stack. Make sure the Companions follow their Finale card instructions, too.

If the Finale stack ends up with at least as many sun symbols as the number of Locales visited, tell the Journeyer that the risk comes to pass.

NEXUS

Play the Nexus according to the established mood. They should be larger than life. Make the progression offers obvious to the Journeyer. They will usually choose the progression, but a Companion might use theirs instead.

Play out the progression.

Narrate the transition to a new Locale. Pick the Locale based on the theme and mood established.

When the time seems right or is running out, go to the Finale instead.

PLAYING A TOUCH

Draw a hand of 3 Cadences. When the Journeyer explores a Locale, weave a Cadence into the narration to create other characters and moments, then place that card face up in the middle of the table and draw a replacement. Each Locale has some possible characters listed in the Notes, if you need it.

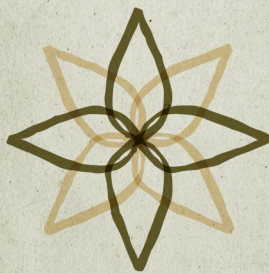
You can adopt an established character by trading this card for a Companion set. Return unused Cadences to the deck.



GUIDE
Finale



GUIDE
Locales



TOUCH
Role Card



GUIDE
Nexus



PLAYING A TOUCH

Draw a hand of 3 Cadences. When the Journeyer explores a Locale, weave a Cadence into the narration to create other characters and moments, then place that card face up in the middle of the table and draw a replacement. Each Locale has some possible characters listed in the Notes, if you need it.

You can adopt an established character by trading this card for a Companion set. Return unused Cadences to the deck.

PLAYING A TOUCH

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You can adopt an established character by trading this card for a Companion set. Return unused Cadences to the deck.

PRELUDE

What's your name, age, situation? It can be as close to or far from your own self as you like.

Who are the people closest to you and how do you feel about them?

What powerful emotion is driving you to Meridian (grief, guilt, rebellion, loneliness...)?

Choose whether you are chasing someone you care about to Meridian. If so who (your little sibling, your grandchild, your pet...), and how do they disappear?

PROGRESSION

You break a Law of the Locale. No citizen of Meridian can do this, and they will react strongly – especially the Nexus, who might send their guardians after you, usher you out, or just give you what you need out of pure shock. Add the Cadence showing this symbol to your Finale stack and discard the others on the table.



FINALE

Make your final choice:

- * You will definitely get home; the risk is leaving Meridian behind forever, maybe thinking it was all a dream.*
- * You cling tightly to Meridian; the risk is never being able to go back home and becoming a permanent citizen of Meridian instead.*

Draw a random Cadence to add to your Finale stack. Let all other players follow their instructions. Then resolve the risk.

PRELUDE

Which Locale is your home, and why are you so devoted to it (it can be a Locale you vaguely make up now)?

Is it threatened by an invading corruption, because the Nexus has fallen ill, or by some other change?

What skills or aptitudes do you possess that made the Nexus choose you as their envoy?

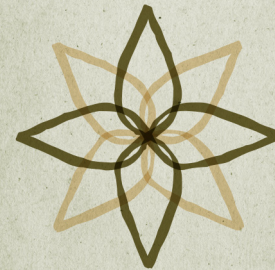
Which other character(s) at your home Locale do you care about?



Journeyer
DEFIANCE
Finale



Journeyer
DEFIANCE
Prelude



TOUCH
Role Card



Journeyer
DEVOTION
Prelude



Journeyer
DEFIANCE
Progression



TOUCH
Role Card

PROGRESSION

You push through, powered by your devotion, by pleading your case, using your skills, or simply forcing your way. In most cases, this will involve a cost or consequence: someone gets hurt, something gets lost or destroyed. Add the Cadence showing this symbol to your Finale stack and discard the others on the table.



PRELUDE

What's your name, age, situation? It can be as close to or far from your own self as you like.

What does your heart crave so badly that you are willing to go anywhere and give anything for it?

What is your great competence (mastery in a martial art, a path of sorcery, a prodigious skill...)?

Which people closest to you have you already hurt in your pursuit?

FINALE

Make your final choice:

- * *You abandon your obsession and walk away; the risk is that you will forever feel a hole inside where your obsession used to be.*
- * *You claim the object of your obsession; the risk is that it will consume you.*

Draw a random Cadence to add to your Finale stack. Let other players follow their instructions. If you are consumed by your obsession, you become a Nexus; describe your own Locale.

FINALE

Make your final choice:

- * *You definitely succeed in your quest; the risk is that you have to pay the highest price: your life, your soul, or something of similar value.*
- * *You keep yourself safe; the risk is that you fail to fulfill your quest and your home suffers the consequences.*

Draw a random Cadence to add to your Finale stack. Let all other players follow their instructions. Then resolve the risk.

PROGRESSION

You get your way using your great competence, fueled by your obsession to attain your object of desire. As this goes against the normal ways of any Locale, your success will often involve some form of violence, coercion, deceit, or bartering. Add the Cadence showing this symbol to your Finale stack and discard the others on the table.



CONNECTION

You have a connection to the Journeyer, possibly romantic interest or an emotional need. You want to be close to them, but you also know that they are set on a certain path, so you decide to join them. Show interest in them, exchange vulnerability when possible.

You no longer have a hand of Cadences.

Once per journey, you can use your progression instead of the Journeyer choosing one.



Journeyer
OBSESSION
Finale



Journeyer
OBSESSION
Prelude



Journeyer
DEVOTION
Progression



Companion
CONNECTION
Role



Journeyer
OBSESSION
Progression



Journeyer
DEVOTION
Finale

PROGRESSION

You step up for the Journeyer. You might fight for them, pay the price of a Locale progression, or otherwise put them first. There should be a severe cost or risk involved for you. Keep the Cadence showing this symbol until the Finale, discard the rest, and play this out with the Guide and Journeyer.



TROUBLEMAKER

You are a spirit of mischief. You don't like rules, and you tag along with the Journeyer because of the opportunities for new experiences the journey offers. Try to play this in a way that's fun and light, not annoying and disruptive. Look for little moments of sincerity in the levity and vice versa.

You no longer have a hand of Cadences.

Once per journey, you can use your progression instead of the Journeyer choosing one.

FINALE

You have become very attached to the Journeyer and want them to do well, even if this means they will be gone.

If you used your progression, discard your Cadence and do not add anything to their Finale stack.

If you did not use your progression, draw a random Cadence and add it to their Finale stack.

FINALE

When the Journeyer is about to make their final choice, you either plead with them to stay with you, or you push them away (interpret this according to the choices they have). This will depend on how you feel about the Journeyer.

If you did not use your progression, draw two random Cadences.

If the Journeyer listens to you and chooses accordingly, discard your Cadence(s). Otherwise, add your Cadence(s) to their Finale stack.

PROGRESSION

You put the Journeyer in a difficult position by annoying the Nexus, making a playful mess, or otherwise interfering. You keep the Cadence showing the matching symbol instead of adding it to the Finale stack. Discard the other Cadences and tell the Journeyer to pick either Locale progression (they neither need nor keep a matching Cadence).



SEEKER

You initially see the Journeyer as a means to an end: their journey can get you to something you want. Maybe it's getting back into the graces of a Nexus, maybe it's an object you desire, maybe it's wealth or safety. You do not need to decide what it is until you get a chance to act upon it.

You no longer have a hand of Cadences.

Once per journey, you can use your progression instead of the Journeyer choosing one.



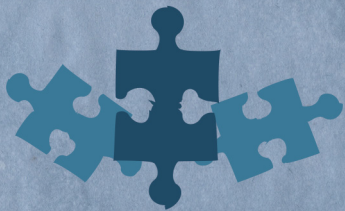
Companion
TROUBLEMAKER
Finale



Companion
TROUBLEMAKER
Role



Companion
CONNECTION
Progression



Companion
SEEKER
Role



Companion
TROUBLEMAKER
Progression



Companion
CONNECTION
Finale

PROGRESSION

You sell out the Journeyer to get what you want by “trading” them to the Nexus as a prize, stealing from the Nexus and running away, etc. The Journeyer has to use the progression from their card, but you keep the Cadence showing this symbol instead of adding it to the Finale stack. You no longer travel with the Journeyer, but you can return later to apologize.



UNBOUND

You are a freely roaming citizen of Meridian, not bound to any Locale. You have visited many Locales and often other characters and Nexuses will know your name. Choose a skill or attribute that makes you memorable. At each Locale, you can decide whether you’ve visited it before or experience it for the first time now.

You no longer have a hand of Cadences.

Once per journey, you can use your progression instead of the Journeyer choosing one.

FINALE

When the Journeyer is about to make their final choice, tell them what you hope for their future.

If you already have a Cadence from your progression, discard it and do not add anything to their Finale stack. If you do not, draw a random Cadence and add it to their Finale stack.

FINALE

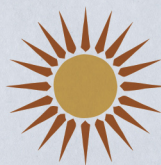
If you haven’t returned yet, you can do so now.

If you betrayed the Journeyer, you can offer your apologies or rationalization to them. If they forgive you, discard the Cadence you collected earlier. If they do not forgive you, add your Cadence to their Finale stack.

If you never betrayed them in the first place or you don’t return, draw a random Cadence and add it to their Finale stack.

PROGRESSION

You pledge your servitude to the Nexus of the current Locale. While you will be able to continue the journey to the end, you will have to return here afterwards and be bound to service until the Nexus deigns to release you. Keep the Cadence showing this symbol until the Finale, and play this out with the Guide and Journeyer.



STALKER

You are a creature, force, or group following the Journeyer. Ideally you represent an aspect of themselves that they need to overcome (their grief, temper, temptation...).

At Locales, describe how you or your minions move within the scene. Until the confrontation, you are usually hidden, seen at a distance, or arrive just as the Journeyer has departed.

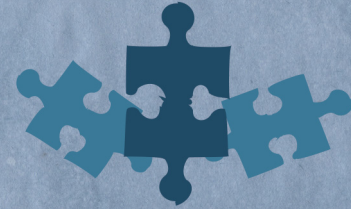
You no longer have a hand of Cadences. Once per journey, you can use your progression instead of the Journeyer.



Companion
UNBOUND
Finale



Companion
UNBOUND
Role



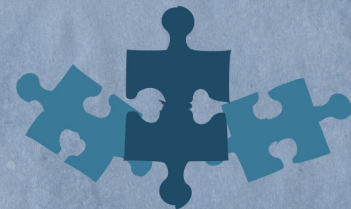
Companion
SEEKER
Progression



Companion
STALKER
Role



Companion
UNBOUND
Progression



Companion
SEEKER
Finale

PROGRESSION

Describe how you finally catch up with the Journeyer and put them in a bind, forcing them to face off with you. Find out through your interaction whether they vanquish you, reconcile somehow, or escape. Either way, you keep the Cadence showing this symbol instead of adding it to the Finale stack.



FINALE

If you used your progression, discard the Cadence you collected. If the confrontation didn't permanently vanquish you, you can appear one last time, but you are no longer a threat.

If you didn't use your progression, now is the time for confrontation. Explain how you try to keep them from their goal, allow them to overcome you, and draw two random Cadences to add to their Finale stack.

SUMMARY OF A JOURNEY:

Setup: The Guide reads or paraphrases the Introduction. Each player chooses a role and takes the associated role cards: one Guide, one Journeyer of a specific arc, and the rest Touches. Place the sets of Companions in reach of the Touches.

Prelude: Answer the questions on the Journeyer's Prelude card; optionally play a Prelude scene. Play out how the journey starts. Shuffle together one or more sets of Cadences. Each Touch draws a hand of three Cadences.

The Journey: Play through *Locales* (three to five, depending on time and flow). See the steps to a Locale on the next page.

Finale: Set a scene with the Journeyer's goal within reach and let them interact with any Companions. The Journeyer makes their final choice according to their Finale card. The Journeyer, Guide, and Touches each add a random Cadence to the Finale stack, while Companions follow the instructions on their Finale cards. Afterwards, count the number of sun symbols in their Finale stack. If there are at least as many as the number of *Locales* visited, the risk comes to pass, otherwise it does not.

Postlude: Play a scene or montage in the aftermath of the journey.



PLAYING THROUGH A LOCALE:

1. The Guide selects a Locale and reads aloud its description and Laws. All characters follow the Laws.
2. The Journeyer plays their character exploring the Locale, the Guide elaborates on the Locale, and Touches provide little moments and play characters based on Cadences and the Locale's Notes and Characters.
3. After a Cadence is narrated, place the card on the table face up and draw a replacement for your hand.
4. *Optional:* Any Touch can claim an established character and trade their Touch card for one of the Companion sets.
5. **Once 3 Cadences have been played, introduce the Nexus.**
6. The Guide plays the Nexus in interaction with the Journeyer.
7. The Journeyer chooses a progression from their own card or the Locale by picking one of the Cadences on the table with a matching symbol. The Journeyer adds this card to their Finale stack. The other two Cadences on the table are discarded.
8. *Optional:* Sometimes a Companion uses their progression instead of the Journeyer.
9. The Guide describes the transition to the next Locale (or the Finale, if you're close to done).



Companion
STALKER
Progression



Companion
STALKER
Finale