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I dedicate this book to my children, Tanis and Angélica, for their love of tabletop role-playing games, constant support by listening to me prattle endlessly about whatever new thing I came up with and helping with playtest. They're my favorite nerds in the whole wide world. Dad loves you.

I also dedicate this book to my wife, Elida. Her endless patience with my constant work on this project, and her steady support, is a big part of what made this possible.

There is a lot of people I want to thank because their support has been invaluable to keep me going, writing and creating constantly, refining this game that started out as a simple zine and is now a complete role-playing game. Jonathan, Roman, Predreg, Martin, Jason, Michael, Gabriel, Erik, Roberto, Filip, and so many others that have kept me on track, given me advice and ideas on social media, and just supported me in general...

A million thanks!

This game started off as a conversation with a very good friend who is a fellow tabletop role-playing game enthusiast. I mentioned that I never had played custom card deck fantasy games, partly because the games themselves were not that appealing to me, but also because they usually become quite expensive. We wondered about the possibility of creating such a game with a regular deck of playing cards, therefore making it accessible to most people. However, I realized right there that I could create a regular tabletop role-playing game using a card deck, as opposed to writing a straight-up card game. It would become even more accessible than a dice-based game, more portable, and would offer a distinct tactile experience at the table.

52 Fates frees players from the random results of throwing dice, as they need to make conscious choices on which cards to use, when to use them, which cards to save for later, and how many cards to use in a certain play. This adds a deep layer of player agency and strategic thinking. It brings a completely new type of play where the player has some level of control over a protagonist's fate that goes beyond role-playing decisions.

I hope that you find this game engaging, interesting, but above all, fun. May you have amazing and memorable adventures, sparked by a humble deck of playing cards and your imagination.

-- J. T. Kercado

CONTENTS

Contents	4
Part 1 Basics.....	6
Terminology.....	6
Base rules.....	9
The Fate Dealer	10
Part 2 Tasks	13
Difficulty levels.....	14
Resolving tasks	14
Investigation & inquiry	17
Task resolution process flowchart	19
Part 3 Combat	20
Combat steps.....	20
Initiative	21
Combat round	22
Turn	22
Moving.....	23
Actions and reactions	23
Sway	25
Condition targets	27
Combat sequence flowchart.....	31
Part 4 Protagonists	32
Sway	33
Outstanding attribute	33
Origin	35
Background.....	35
Skills.....	38
Wealth	43
Weapons & gear.....	45
Advancement	47

Part 5 Mages	50
Physical combat.....	50
Advancement	51
Magic & spells	51
Acroamatic crosses	53
Part 6 Fighters.....	60
Physical combat.....	60
Maneuvers	61
Archetypes	65
Part 7 Heralds	67
Physical combat.....	67
Deity & allegiance	68
Miracles.....	69
Part 8 Creatures & Monsters	71
Stats.....	72
Creature codex	73
Condition target matrix	92

PART 1 BASICS

“Who is to know what the rivers of fate will bring to each one of us? Who is to know where its currents will take us? Those who challenge these treacherous waters of destiny are rewarded with glory, power, and eternal life through the tales of their valiant acts.”

Noria Aldamar, Our Changing Times

Welcome, adventurer! 52 Fates uses the *CARD RPG* (Conducted Action & Reaction Determination) system, which requires the use of one full, regular playing card deck (like those used for poker and blackjack, also called a *French deck*) with the joker cards removed. This card deck is shared between all players, and it is called the *fate deck*. As the system name implies, the base game mechanics use an action/reaction platform. This means that for most actions performed by a player that require special skills or knowledge, a reaction will be played by an opposing party.

Terminology

These are definitions for the game terms used throughout this document. If there is an abbreviation for the term, it will be shown in parenthesis and its notation explained in the description.

ACE/ACES/ACE CARD

The ace card of any suit. Ace cards are the most powerful, as their value is higher than any other card. A play with an ace always wins, unless it is responded with another ace.

ACTION

Any plays proactively performed by a player is called an action. This covers skill-related and combat plays.

ACTION POOL (AP)

The total of cards pooled together to solve a task. These cards can be plays



from one or more actors, and are added up to determine task resolution success.

ACTOR

A player who is playing an action with their protagonist, cast member, or creature.

CARD PLAY (CP)

A term used for the cards played when performing actions and reactions. It is also used when explaining bonuses gained through diverse manners. For example, if a background provides one extra bonus card modifier for a play, this is noted as +1 CP. If a play is made with two cards, it can be noted as 2 CP.

CAST/CAST MEMBERS

Any sentient entities that are controlled by the Fate Dealer.

COMBAT ROUND

The defined segments that allows all players to make the appropriate choices for their actions, reactions, and tally up any effects.

COURT/COURT CARD

The cards with faces: jack (J), queen (Q), and king (K).

ENTITY

Any living being, sentient or not, including supernatural beings.

ENTITY GROUP (EG)

A group of entities, usually referring to those engaged in combat.

FATE DEALER (FD)

The player who is in charge of presenting the world, the environments, and controlling those entities that are not directly controlled by protagonist players.

INQUIRY CHECKPOINT (IQ)

Each IQ is a slice of the “global” information related to a situation that requires investigation, deduction, or research from a protagonist. This provides a method for structuring complicated puzzles, secrets, or other types of research.

LIFE (LP)

These points are used to keep track of damage done to monsters and creatures.

PIP/PIP CARD

Any card with a value from 2 to 10 (non-court cards).

PLAY

The act of playing one or more cards on the table as an action or reaction.

PROTAGONIST

A protagonist is the character a player controls throughout the game. As the term implies, the story and adventures in the game revolve around them and

their actions change the course of the world.

REACTION

As the opposite of an action, in some situations (like combat) an opposing party can play a reaction. This can be something like defending against a physical attack, for example.

REACTOR

A player who plays a reaction after being affected by an action, usually in a combat situation.

STACKING

The act of adding up bonus PCs as allowed by background, gear, tools, magic, and abilities, to be used in performing a task check.

SWAY (SW)

Sway (SW) is a representation of the amount of options available to the player at any given moment in time. Damage in combat reduces the protagonist's sway, as a reflection of fatigue, tiredness, and confusion caused by the damage received. Sway also refers to the player's current hand of cards.

TASK

Any non-combat action that requires a protagonist to use a certain skill set to solve or complete.

TASK CHECK (TC)

A play made to see if performing a certain task was done successfully.

TASK DIFFICULTY (TX)

The difficulty level of a task that needs to be resolved. Referenced in general as TX, but for specific tasks, the "X" is replaced by the number of cards used to determine the total TX value. For example, a task that adds up two cards to determine its difficulty is notes as T2.

TURN

The time slot for an entity to perform an action in a combat round.

ZONE

The basic unit of distance used for movement, combat, and spells. One zone is equal to 25 feet / 8 meters.



Base rules

There are some fundamental rules that are followed throughout the game on how cards and plays are to be handled.

Action & reaction

All game mechanics revolve around an action & reaction system. An action is declared and played, and an opposing party plays a reaction. Whoever has the *higher* total card value wins. This also applies to things like completing tasks: the Fate Dealer will play a required number of cards based on the difficulty of the task (the action), and a player will react by playing cards to beat this, and succeed at the task.

Card values

Each card in the game has a set value, which is used when determining if an action or reaction was successful. Card values are added up when playing two or more cards. Note that the ace card will defeat all other cards. Therefore, the ace is the only card that cannot be added up and stacked. The only way an ace card play can be defeated is with another ace card played as a reaction.

Card	Value
Pip	Card number value
Jack	15
Queen	20
King	25
Ace	Defeats all cards

Sway is kept secret

Even between players, all sway (hand of cards) must be kept secret. It is fine for a player to make suggestions and, for example, hint at the other players that they have a really good card in their hand for strategic purposes.

Actors always go first

Whoever starts an action (the actor) always plays their cards first. All reaction plays, and other secondary mechanics will be performed after that.

Card plays are final

Cards cannot be retired from play once they have been shown to the table. The moment cards hit the table face up is the moment that a play becomes official.



Additional cards plays are always optional

Usually, card plays consist of a single card. Any additional play cards that are available at the moment due to class features, background, skills, devices, or abilities, will always be up to the discretion of the player if they are used or not.

Replace cards immediately

As soon as the cards are played from a hand, they must be immediately replaced from the fate deck, taking into account the maximum sway of the protagonist at that moment.

When the fate deck is empty

If at any point in time the fate deck is emptied, the discard deck will be shuffled, placed face down on the table, and become the new fate deck.

The Fate Dealer

The Fate Dealer is in charge of presenting the world to the rest of the players, and controlling the cast members and creatures found throughout the world. They act as an arbiter and coordinator between the players, and also between the protagonists and the fantastic world that surrounds them.

They are who set the story to be played, the foundations for what could possibly be an epic adventure. However, they must also be flexible enough and be prepared to alter their original ideas based on what happens in the game. They have to keep in mind that the adventure is not written before playing, but rather it is created together with the players, at the table.

Whoever chooses to be the Fate Dealer is not there to control the game and the players, but rather to present the situations and moderate the rules, sometimes discussing with the players how to best apply a rule in the spirit of the game and the adventure being played. This means that even though the Fate Dealer will have the ultimate decision when figuring out game questions, they will not be authoritarian and simply impose their will over the players.

Coordinating the game

As the person managing the universe for the players and helping move the story forward, the Fate Dealer has a great responsibility in handling the game, and in fact they are the players with the greatest amount of tasks to perform. There are three ways the Fate



Dealer can choose to play and run the game for the creatures and cast members they manipulate.

FATE DRAW

The simplest way is having the Fate Dealer pull cards straight off the fate deck when playing for monsters, cast members, and such, using no sway for themselves. This method is called fate draw, and is totally random, as the Fate Dealer will not be able to make strategic decisions in terms of card play, but it makes it easier to run the game.

FATE SWAY

The Fate Dealer can use sway with a maximum card count equal to the highest protagonist sway in the session. This

is called the fate sway, and just like regular player sway, they will also keep their hand secret

MIXED FATE

A third way to play for the Fate Dealer, mixed fates, is a hybrid of both methods explained above, where for the most part the Fate Dealer plays using the fate draw method, but for running important cast members (such as entities in final battles, “bosses”), they use a fate hand just for that entity. This allows for more nuanced and interesting playing options.

Starting a game session

Make sure that the joker cards are discarded from the fate deck, and that it is well shuffled before the start of a brand-new session. However, if you are continuing an adventure, you might want to have players keep the cards they had at the end of the session, as well as keeping the deck as it was. Below you will find a simple way to handle this.

In addition to the cards, make sure everyone has blank ruled paper and pencils to write down game information and details about their adventures and exploits. Information on creating a protagonist is explained below in *Part 4: Protagonist*.

The Fate Dealer will distribute the cards around the table, giving each player an amount of cards equal to their sway, which for starting protagonists is usually four cards. The Fate Dealer can opt to deal the cards however they prefer to do so; they can go around the table giving each player one card at a time, or deal the cards as a bunch for every player. Everyone must keep their sway secret from everyone else, as no one knows the fate that awaits others.

Once everyone has their cards, the Fate Dealer will place the fate deck face down where all players can reach it, and now they can start introducing the adventure to the players. Time to have fun!

When the game session ends

When a game session is over (not necessarily the adventure), it is advised that all current sway be saved for the start of the next game session, especially if players were saving really good cards in their sway. It also provides a real, physical continuity in the game, something you cannot get from dice.

Before starting to save the sway, if any player has an incomplete hand, they must draw enough cards from the fate deck up to their maximum sway. The following example demonstrates how to correctly save each sway for the next session:

The players (Angelica, Jonathan, Kate, and Daniel) will make sure their sway is complete by picking up any cards from the fate deck up to their current maximum, then each one will give their sway to the Fate Dealer, face down.

The Fate Dealer starts grouping the sway together. If they are playing using the fate sway system, they will start with their own sway, writing down on a piece of paper “1. FD (4).” The number in parenthesis is the amount of sway. They will take this sway and place it at the top of the fate deck.

After this, the order in which the sway is saved is irrelevant, as long as the Fate Dealer makes clear notes of which sway belongs to whom. The Fate Dealer takes Angelica’s sway, counts it, and writes down “2. Angelica (3)”, placing the sway on the Fate Deck. Then they take the next player’s cards, counts the sway, and writes “3- Jonathan (4)”, and places the sway on the Fate Deck, continuing on until all sway have been placed together and tracked.

For the next session, the Fate Dealer simply goes up the list in reverse order, handing out the correct sway to each player. This also allows a particular player’s sway to be saved in the case that the player cannot make it to the game session; simply place that sway away, with those cards being out of the game session.



PART 2 TASKS

“Simply using a sword or wielding magic does not makes a hero; those who become someone great usually are versed in diverse, even surprising trades. As we read through history, it has been proven beyond doubt that sometimes having the right knowledge is far more crucial than having the right weapon...”

Tuliuro Bosc, Adventurers, Rogues, & Sellswords

Throughout their adventures, protagonists will need to resolve tasks that vary in difficulty. Some will be easy and automatically successful, others will require some skill or specialized knowledge, and some will be very difficult to resolve, and might even prove to be impossible. These tasks comprise things such as solving puzzles, investigating a complicated issue, or performing some sort of physical feat beyond the usual. For those situations, the game will require a *task check* (TC).



The Fate Dealer must keep in mind at all times to be reasonable about requesting task checks from players. Use common sense, and avoid falling into the trap of asking for TC plays constantly, as it just slows down the game and becomes annoying.

Actors, on the other hand, should not use TCs as a way to buff up their current hand by going through a bunch of cards while performing trivial, unnecessary plays. If the Fate Dealer sees this behavior, it should be stopped. Nevertheless, there are mechanisms in the task system to prevent this from happening.

Difficulty levels

Any task that requires the use of special skills and knowledge, and/or is intrinsically difficult, will have a difficulty level. This determines how many cards are played by the Fate Dealer to set the value that needs to be surpassed by the TC play for the task to be successful. These difficulty levels are referenced as TX in general, and as T1 to T4 depending on the difficulty level. For example, a T1 task is something of average difficulty, and T4 is a task that might as well be borderline impossible. Tasks that are easy and straightforward should not require a TC; good judgement from the Fate Dealer is key.

Difficulty	Level
Average	T1
Hard	T2
Extreme	T3
Moonshot	T4

Resolving tasks

When an actor needs to play a TC, the Fate Dealer will draw from the fate deck a number of cards equal to the difficulty level of the task (TX), place them face up on the table, and add up their value.

For example, for a hard task (T2), the Fate Dealer plays two cards from the deck. Confronted with this, the actor will need to make a choice on whether to perform the task by playing cards from their hand, and/or devise some strategy to improve their chances. If they decide to resolve the task, their total CP value must be higher than the TX.

A protagonist can only try to solve a task once under the same set of circumstances. For example, if the protagonist tried to decipher some old writings and failed, they can only retry this task if the situation changes, like getting assistance from another protagonist, or new information received related to the task, information that could shed some light on it, and so on.

Improving task success chances

A protagonist has many options available to increase their chances at resolving a task by adding PCs to the task resolution play. These cards are added together to beat the current task's TX. This group of cards is known as the *action pool* (AP).

BACKGROUND

Having a background that provides knowledge that applies to the task being worked on also provides +1 CP for their action pool.

GEAR & TOOLS

A protagonist can boost their chances at succeeding at a task if they possess gear or equipment that can help them achieve their goal. Having the right piece of equipment will give the actor +1 CP on their task resolution play. Usually, gear itself doesn't stack up for a single protagonist; for example, if they have two tools that will be used to solve the task, they still get only +1 CP for having the appropriate gear.

There might be some cases that this rule might not apply, as each tool or device does provide an individual boost. The FD must apply common sense to the situation, and make the decision on

whether individual PCs will be applied to the action.

MAGIC

Some spells might be able to help achieve success on succeeding at certain tasks. Depending on how the spell works, the FD must take this into consideration when determining how the spell will boost the task resolution. For example, a protagonist is trying to figure out how a fast-moving mechanism works. By having a mage cast a *slow* spell, they could theoretically improve their chance at figuring out the mechanism. In a case like this, the FD can choose to take the spell's total card value and add it to the AP.

SKILLS

The protagonist might possess a skill that applies to resolving the task at hand, granting them +1 CP.

Stacking PCs

Most of these aspects can be stacked. For example, if an actor has the right gear *and* the background to perform a task, they get +2 CP for their action pool (+1 CP for gear, and +1 CP for background), meaning that they could play a total of 3 CP. As a reminder, any additional PCs are optional, which means the actor doesn't necessarily have to use all available PCs for solving a task.

The exception is that background and skills cannot be stacked. The protagonist will either have the background knowledge that helps (with or without an explicit, related skill), or they will have the standalone skill that provides the bonus.

Aces cannot be stacked, either. An ace card played as part of an action pool will make the task automatically successful. However, any cards already played by other players will need to be discarded and replaced as usual.

Getting help

If considered plausible based on skills and/or background, another player can help an actor perform a task, and have whatever cards they can play added to the AP.

How many others can help depends on the situation: for example, if the protagonist is trying to decipher a document, having four people around will not probably help as much. On the other hand, if they were trying to pull a heavy object with a rope, then



those same other four people could be very helpful. The Fate Dealer must use common sense in allowing help from other players.

When a player wants (and is able) to help the actor, they play 1 CP from their sway, and that card is added to the task resolution action pool.

Bonuses related to background, gear, magic, and background also count and stack for the helpers. As an example, if a protagonist is trying to open a door with a crowbar, and another protagonist joins in with their own crowbar, they will get a total of +2 CP, one for each crowbar, plus each base card played by each one, meaning a total of 4 CP added to the AP.

Aces

If the card drawn for the task difficulty is an ace, this means the task is impossible to be solved depending on different situations. It is up to the Fate Dealer to use good judgment and determine the reason why the protagonists cannot solve this task.

As an option to this, to avoid having truly impossible tasks (and taking into consideration the context of the task being worked on), the Fate Dealer can simply ignore the ace, put it in the discard deck, and draw a new card.

Sentient entities

When the player is trying to get information from a sentient entity, the mechanics are different. In this case, the actor, will play their cards first as they attempt to get the information, and the reactor will play their cards accordingly. If the actor's cards value is higher than the reactor's cards, the information is revealed.



If using the fate hand system for running the game (playing with a hand of cards instead of just drawing from the fate deck), the Fate Dealer will take into consideration the current situation when playing their inquiry card: is there animosity between the player and the entity? Is there any situation at the moment that makes the entity be more accepting of the player and thus be more eager to share information?

Investigation & inquiry

As an option, whenever protagonists are presented with some sort of puzzle, riddle, or are trying to figure out information from something, use the task mechanic. This can be viewed similarly to running combat or magic: it is quite possible that most players do not know how to wield

medieval weapons, much less cast magic, but we do not require knowledge on those subject matters for them to be able to run combat and magic successfully.

Similarly, by simply having players make a TC, it allows them to work with complex puzzles and riddles without having to ask the exact questions needed or spend a large amount of time trying to figure out the problem at hand. Use good judgement and knowledge of your playing group to see whether this simple approach would work for them, or if they would prefer to solve these problems without card plays.

Inquiry checkpoints

To structure complicated issues, each puzzle, secret, or any other essential information that is part of the adventure can rely on one to four *inquiry checkpoints* (IQ) to be discovered. Each IQ is a slice of the “global” information related to the situation. This provides a method for structuring complicated tasks, especially if they involve sequential steps. It can also be used to escalate the potential difficulty of the inquiry.

Let’s use a ruined desert tower as an example. The tower’s entrance will be protected by a strange mechanical relic from ancient times, composed of multiple interlocking pieces. The FD could set this entrance to have two inquiry checkpoints, as follows:

1. The pieces work by sliding them in different combinations, forming a shape to unlock the door.
2. A seven-pointed star shape is the key shape that will open the door.

With those basic inquiry checkpoints set, now there is a simple, quick way for players to inquire and find out how to open the strange mechanical device locking the ruined tower. The first inquiry checkpoint could be set as a T1, and the second one as a T2, since it might be more difficult to figure out.

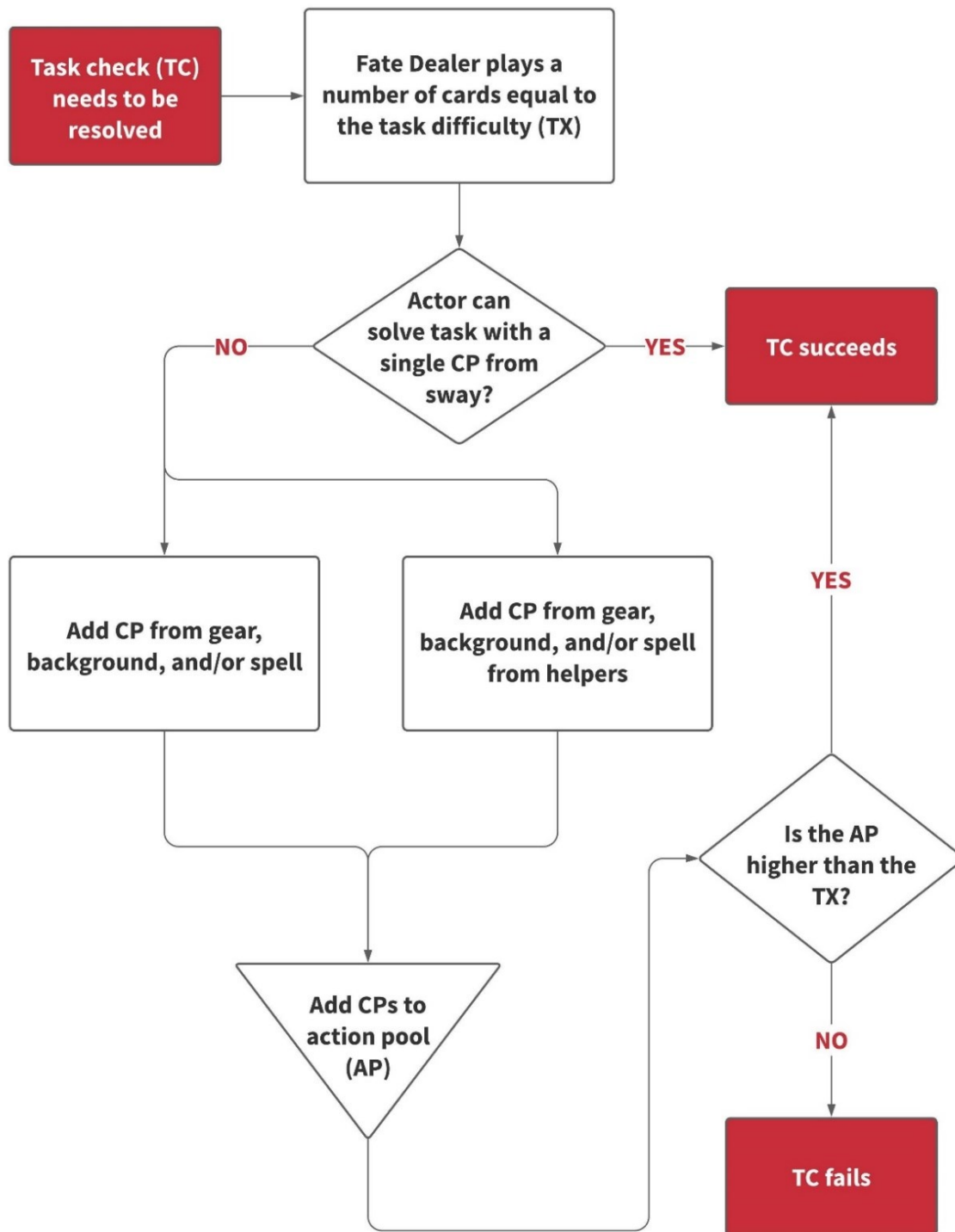
These points would usually be worked in sequence. On the first time an actor performs an inquiry, it would play against the first point. The next inquiry plays against the next point (so new cards would be played by the FD), and so on, until all points have been covered.

Not everything in the game will rely on inquiry checkpoints; they need to be used wisely. Also, players might go off in an unexpected direction, and the Fate Dealer might need to come up with improvised inquiry checkpoints to handle a situation. They have to be nimble and adapt to where the players and the adventure are taking things.

It is entirely possible for a player to figure out these inquiry checkpoints without going through the whole point deduction process; this is acceptable and should not be blocked in any way by the Fate Dealer.



Task resolution process flowchart



PART 3 COMBAT

“There is a ghost in every shadow, a beast on every corner, a monster lurking behind every person, and a constant battle for our lives.”

Noria Aldamar, Our Changing Times

Eventually, protagonists will end up having to fight enemies in combat. That does not mean that every encounter needs to be resolved that way, but it is pretty much expected to happen, especially when confronting wild, feral beasts and strange creatures. Combat is extremely dangerous in 52 Fates, and any encounter can end as quickly as it began. It is the responsibility of the Fate Dealer to impress upon the players the possible danger of a particular situation they might be facing.

Combat steps

In real life, combat is pretty fast paced and barely allows time to its participants to think clearly about their actions. Also, many things happen simultaneously, which directly affect the end result of the confrontation.

However, in the game, it would be virtually impossible to carry out events simultaneously and with the same fast pace as it happens in reality. Also, events happen more or less simultaneously but there is always a sequence of actions occurring, even if the time difference between those actions is quite brief.

There are a sequence of steps defined to allow the Fate Dealer and players to properly manage their actions, allowing them to establish a playing order, define actions and reactions, and take account of the results accordingly. Here is a simple overview of the steps required in a combat situation:



- ❖ Initiative is checked to establish the sequence in which the participants will act.
- ❖ The first participant declares and plays an action, starting their *turn*. This marks the beginning of the *combat round*.
- ❖ If required, the target of the action declares and plays a reaction.
- ❖ If the action succeeds, the effects of the action take place immediately.
- ❖ If the action fails, combat continues on to the next participant's turn, with the same action/reaction dynamic explained above.
- ❖ Once all the participants have acted and reacted as needed, the player that won initiative plays their turn again, repeating the steps as defined above.
- ❖ This cycle continues until combat is over.

Initiative

Initiative sets the order in which entity groups get to act in combat, and it is set only once, before combat begins.

Entity groups

The initiative ranking is set for each group of participants, known as *entity groups*. It is not set for each individual entity, unless there is a “group” of only one member in battle. A group will commonly be a set of related participants in combat. An easy example is protagonists; they compose a single entity group. Similar monsters could belong to a single group, or in the case of a large battle, maybe those who are close to each other.

Special monsters and “bosses” should have their own initiative, as this makes them special not only for in-game mechanics, but also sets them apart in the mind of the players.

Determining initiative

For protagonists, each player will draw one card from the fate deck and place it face up on the table. The highest player card sets the players' group initiative rank. The Fate Dealer will do the same for each entity group under their control. All cards for each entity group are compared, and whichever group draws the highest card (2 as the lowest value, up to aces counting as the highest) gets to go first, and the order continues in descending order per each group, all the way to the group with the lowest card value.

In the case of a draw between players and any of the groups controlled by the Fate Dealer, the players go first, then the tied group. If any of the groups controlled by the Fate Dealer are tied, it is up to them to decide which group goes first.



Order within each group

Players can change their action order within their group on every combat round if they wish to do so. This allows for better strategic planning and sequencing moves between each other to their advantage.

Combat round

The flurry of events in battle must be sliced into defined segments that allow players to make the appropriate choices for their actions, reactions, and to tally up any effects. This is known as a *combat round*, where all the combat participants execute their actions and reactions. A combat round is composed of one or more turns (one per participant), and within each turn, every player acts and reacts accordingly depending on the events taking places.

Turn

Each combat round is split in *turns*. A turn is the slice of time represented by a single participant's actions, and the related reactions from a target (if any). This slice of time, in general, is considered to last around 6 seconds, but this can be shorter or longer depending on the actions and reactions performed by the participants.

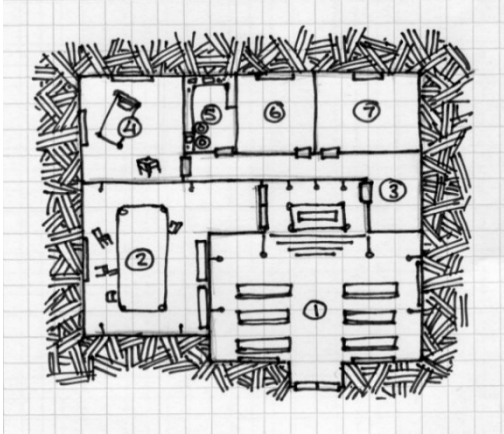
A round begins by having the first participant from the group that won initiative start their turn by declaring their action & movement, playing cards as needed. This player is known as the *actor*. If the action performed is an attack or a spell on another participant, the target of this attack can play cards to perform a reaction of their choice. This person is the *reactor*, as they react as needed to the actor's actions. Apply any damage or effects as required, immediately after determination.

Played cards are placed on the discard deck, face up, and all participants on this turn will draw new cards for their sway from the fate deck. If a player has received damage, they can only draw cards up to their current maximum sway, or must discard cards from their hand until it matches their current maximum. When actively discarding cards, players choose which cards to keep in their sway.

The next participant plays repeating the steps above. When all participants from that group have performed an action, the next group gets to execute their actions. Once all groups have participated, return back to the first group, and go through all the steps.

Moving

An entity can move before or after performing their action. Distances are measured in zones, which are around 25 feet (8 meters) in length. Movement distance cannot be split before and after their combat action. When two combatants are adjacent (within 5 ft. / 1.5 m from each other), that is known as ZZ, or *zone zero*. Melee attacks can only be performed at this distance.



A protagonist moves a maximum of 1 zone per combat round. This doesn't restrict the protagonist to moving only in 1-zone chunks; they can move anywhere within that zone range in their turn. Some creatures might move more zones per round, or even be stationary and not be able to move at all.

If moving *before* their action, they can opt to not play their action and move up to double the regularly allowed distance by dashing.

Actions and reactions

Combat mechanics work through an action/reaction mechanic, meaning that for every action there will be a reaction performed by the target of the action. As explained previously, the participants in combat are called *actors* and *reactors*, depending on the role played by them at any particular point in combat.

Actions

There are a set of actions available to any entity in combat, within the limitations set by protagonist class (a fighter cannot cast a spell, for example), creature type, or by an environmental situation (such as trying to use a sword with their hands tied). The Fate Dealer will use good judgement and fairly determine if an action can be carried out in some cases. The results of any successful actions take effect immediately.

CAST A SPELL

A spell casting entity can cast a magic spell on a target. If the spell's total card

value played is higher than the defender's play, the spell is successful and the defender receives damage and effects immediately.



EFFECT SAVE

If the entity is under an effect that requires an action to eliminate, such as having caught fire and trying to put it out, they can spend their action trying to get rid of the effect. This does not apply to saving against effects such as poisoning; in those cases the save is automatic and doesn't take up any action, as it is viewed as more of a bodily reaction.

MANEUVER

A fighter or similarly-skilled entity can perform a combat maneuver against an opponent.

PHYSICAL ATTACK

An attack is performed by an entity by using a melee weapon, missile weapon, or bare hands. If the attacker's total card value played is higher than the defender's play, the attack is successful and the defender receives damage and effects immediately.

TASK

The entity tries to execute a task under the stress of combat. Depending on the task to be performed, they might or might not need to play cards to perform the task.

Reactions

An entity that has been the subject of an action can choose to react in one of the following ways.

DEFEND

The reactor defends against an attack or spell cast at them by playing one or more cards with a total value higher than those played for the attack. If the defend play value is higher than the action, it is successful and the reactor receives no damage or effects.

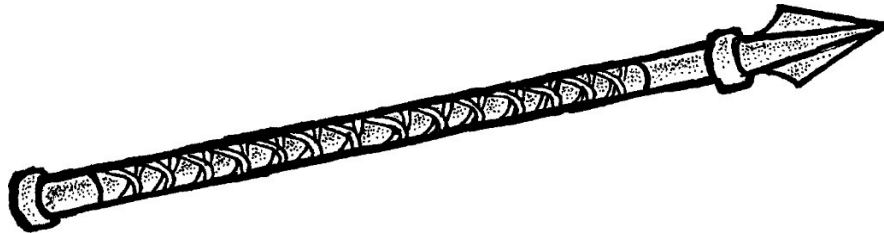
The target of an unarmed attack gains +1 CP to their defense reaction, regardless of class, background, and skills.

When an ace is played on a defense reaction, it causes the attacker to fumble, allowing the reactor to execute a riposte play that is automatically successful.

RIPOSTE

As an option, a reactor can opt to perform a *riposte*. In that case, the reactor will automatically take damage or effect from the action performed by the attacker.

However, the reactor will be able to perform any of the combat actions available to them. The actor can only play a defense reaction against a riposte, and any action taken, and its related effects, will take effect immediately if successful. Also, if the actor has not moved, they will not be able to move after being subject to a riposte reaction.



Sway

Sway (SW) is a representation of the amount of options available to the protagonist at any given moment in time to twist fate in their favor, represented by the hand of cards they use during play. Damage in combat reduces the protagonist's sway as a reflection of fatigue, tiredness, and confusion caused by the damage received, thus reducing their capability to sway fate in their favor. Sway usually applies only to protagonists, but it can be used effectively with specially powerful and smart opponents ("boss fights").

The player's hand thus serves a double purpose: not only is it used to play the game, it also keeps track of sway. Every time a protagonist loses sway due to damage, the player's maximum card hand is reduced by the same amount. When a protagonist reaches zero sway, the player has no cards left to play, and therefore out of options for acting or reacting to situations.

The damage or effect applied from a physical attack is determined by the value of the highest card played as shown in the table below. For protagonists, this damage is converted into lost sway, and for creatures and monsters, the damage translates into direct conditions.

Highest Card	Damage	Condition
Pip	1 SW	Incapacitated
Court	2 SW	Unconscious
Ace	All SW	Dying



ZERO SWAY

When a protagonist reaches zero sway, they have not died; they are just incredibly exhausted, beat up, and in really bad condition. They can still perform normal, mundane actions: moving (only ½ zone per round), speaking, drinking a potion, or using a simple object.

If the protagonist receives any damage *after* reaching 0 SW, they will become unconscious (and therefore under the unconscious condition), and start dying. Damage will never go below 0 SW, as you cannot have a “negative” hand of cards; any damage amount that would take the sway beyond less than zero is ignored.

SECOND WIND

As an option after reaching 0 SW, for their next action or as a riposte reaction, the player can draw a card from the fate deck and use it as a last-ditch attempt to

perform any action available to them. However, after performing this, the protagonist will automatically become unconscious, as they have exhausted all their energy on this action.

UNARMED ATTACKS

An unarmed attack by a humanoid, if successful, will only reduce sway by 1, regardless of skills, abilities, or anything else that could boost the attack.

ACES

An attack with an ace card causes the target to lose all their sway.

FALLING

A protagonist will lose 1 accumulative SW for every zone (25 feet/8 meters) of free fall. This means that the victim loses 1 SW for the first zone, 2 SW for the



second zone (50 feet/16 meters), 3 SW for the third zone (75 feet/24 meters), and so on.

For example, a protagonist falling from a height of 4 zones (100 ft. /32 meters) would lose 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10 SW in total damage.

DEATH

When a protagonist receives any damage after initially reaching 0 SW, they will immediately fall unconscious and start to die. The player needs to draw one card from the fate deck on their turn for the

next three rounds. If the player draws a hearts card, consult the table below for the corresponding effect.

Card	Effect
Pip	Stabilizes, not dying anymore, unconscious.
Court	Stabilizes, not dying, awake and conscious.
Ace	Stabilizes, awake and conscious, gains 1 SW.

After drawing three cards, if none of those cards is a hearts suit card, the protagonist has irrevocably died.

Condition targets

Combat, magic, and other situations can cause entities to fall under certain conditions that affect them negatively. These basic conditions cover all situations an entity might face, sometimes as the main adverse effect against the victim, sometimes as a secondary effect caused by something else.

Any other living entity that is not a protagonist does not use sway to track damage, but rather has three values known as *condition targets* (CT). These values tend to be higher for stronger entities, and lower for weaker ones.

Condition targets are presented as low, intermediate, and high numbers, with each one being linked to a particular condition: The lowest value relates to the *incapacitated* condition, the intermediate value represents the *unconscious* condition, and the highest value represents *dead*. For example, an entity with CT 9/12/15 would be incapacitated if they are attacked with a total value of 9 or more, fall unconscious on 12 or more, and killed of the attack value is 15 or more.

There is an additional condition that for whenever an entity receives any type of damage, known as *hurt*, and it is reached even if the attack value did not reach any of the condition target values.



Hurt

This condition, as stated previously, does not have a target number: it is triggered whenever the target of an attack loses a defense reaction (or decides to riposte). Every time an entity is hurt, their condition targets receive a -1 penalty. For example, if an entity with CT 9/12/15 is hit three times in combat, they will have a -3 penalty applied to all their reaction plays and condition targets, effectively changing their CT to 6/9/12.

Incapacitated

The entity is awake and knows what is going on around them but have limited capabilities. Being unable to move or act due to being tied, trapped under a heavy object, under some illness, stunned, or anything else that prevents them from moving freely counts as being under the incapacitated condition. If they can move, they will do so at half speed, and all action and reaction values are halved.

Unconscious

Being unconscious and knocked out, the entity cannot move or react, therefore all actions against them are automatically successful.

Dead

The entity has died; usually this is an irrevocable condition. As an option, usually for protagonists, important cast members, and creatures truly relevant to the adventure, the Fate Dealer can use a system to see if the victim can avoid dying by drawing one card from the fate deck on their turn for the next three rounds. If they draw a hearts card, consult the table below for the corresponding effect. After drawing three cards, if none of those cards is a hearts suit card, the entity has died.

Card	Duration
Pip	Stabilizes, not dying anymore, unconscious.
Court	Stabilizes, not dying, incapacitated.
Ace	Stabilizes, awake and conscious, still hurt but for the most part like nothing happened. Protagonists recover 1 SW.

Reaction play

Condition target effects are not automatic; to avoid the attack's condition effect, the reactor can defend by playing a reaction higher than the attack value.

Choosing an effect

The attack's condition can be chosen by the actor as long as the effect is from an equal or lower CT. Continuing with the previous example, the actor could have played 17 as a total value, which would normally kill their opponent, but they might instead choose to make their target *unconscious*.

Continuous effects

This includes damage caused by things like poison, fire, or other effects that can cause lingering, ongoing damage. Like tasks, these elements will have a TX as determined by the Fate Dealer or predefined aspects like a monster's special attack, and its strength will be set by drawing one or more cards from the fate deck as determined by the TX assigned. Using a poison as an example, a T3 means it is an extraordinarily strong poison, while a T1 could indicate a weaker, low-quality poison.

ABLAZE

If the entity is ablaze, they can attempt to neutralize the effect by simply spending their whole turn doing so, otherwise they will lose 1 SW per round as explained above.

POISONS & POTIONS

To check for a natural resistance to a poison or chemical, the victim needs to use their turn action to play a card from their hand that is of a higher value than the poison's TX value to stop the damage, otherwise they will lose 1 sway per round until they reach zero sway.

Drinking a healing potion or being subject to a magical healing spell will neutralize the poison immediately.

Duration

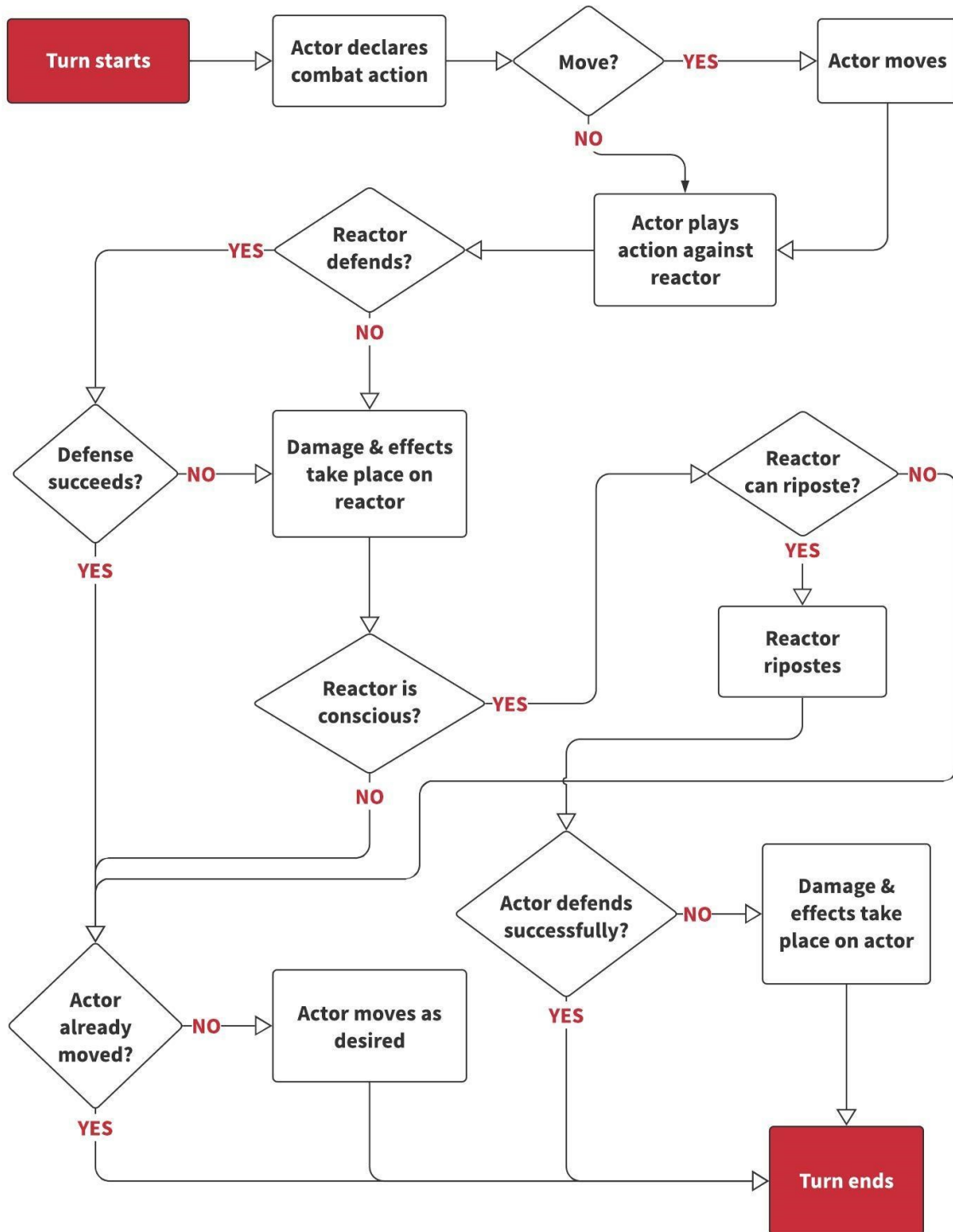
The duration of a condition other than death is equal to the difference between the CP value of the source of the condition (combat damage, potions, spells, etc.), and the reactor's CP to avoid the condition. For example, if a protagonist attacks an entity with a CP value of 14, and the reactor can only defend with a CP 8, the condition will last a total of $14 - 8 = 6$ rounds. In situations outside of combat turns and rounds, simply multiply the



value by 10, and that will be the time, in seconds, that the victim will be under the condition. In the above example, the entity would be under the afflicted condition for $6 \times 10 = 60$ seconds, or 1 minute.

This also applies to effects caused by creature special attacks.

Combat sequence flowchart



PART 4 PROTAGONISTS

“Some let fate write their stories and let themselves be carried away by the whims and desires of destiny. Others have the strength and courage to become the writers of their own story. The blade is their pen, magic their ink, and their parchment is the world.”

Iguel De Trasgon, Call of Armarica

Explorers, adventurers, heroes, renegades... All stories revolve around protagonists! If you want to participate in the game as a protagonist, continue through this chapter as we go through the steps and create what will become this world’s next hero! The checklist items marked as optional (*Opt*) are just that; you can play many adventures without using these elements, or you can also pick and choose whichever ones you want to use in your game.

Aspect	Description	Opt	Page
<input type="checkbox"/> Sway	The representation of the opportunities the protagonist has for acting.		36
<input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding Attribute	The protagonist’s single outstanding personal attribute.	X	36
<input type="checkbox"/> Origin	The protagonist’s species.	X	38
<input type="checkbox"/> Background	The protagonist’s background, which gives them skills and broad knowledge.	X	38
<input type="checkbox"/> Skills	Skills are focused, narrow abilities learned by the protagonist, unrelated to their background.	X	42
<input type="checkbox"/> Wealth	Defines the protagonist’s wealth level and purchasing power.	X	48
<input type="checkbox"/> Weapons & gear	The weapons and equipment protagonists will need for their dangerous journeys.	X	50
<input type="checkbox"/> Class	Choose to be a powerful mage, or a mighty fighter.		Mage: 56 Fighter: 61

Sway

Sway (SW) is a representation of the amount of options available to the protagonist to alter their fate at any given moment in time, to sway fate in their favor if possible. This is represented by the maximum hand card a player can use for their protagonist. Protagonists usually start with 4 SW; therefore, the player will have a maximum of four cards for their hand.

If the optional advancement system is used, this amount can grow as the character becomes more experienced. Also, since sway is decreased by damage and other situations, players might agree to start with more sway as an easy way to lower the difficulty of the game.

Outstanding attribute

Each protagonist has one *outstanding attribute* (OA). These are intrinsic, natural characteristics of the protagonist that give certain advantages – depending on the attribute chosen – by granting them +1 CP when executing an action that might be affected by this attribute. There are examples under each attribute, showing where the protagonist would be able to exert this advantage. However, there might be other situations where an outstanding attribute could also help, and these are to be considered in game between the player and the Fate Dealer.

The table below offers a quick summary of the advantages given by each OA. However, it is recommended that the detailed descriptions are read, as they will give you a more nuanced and complete idea of these benefits.

OA	Summary	+1 CP
Acumen	Higher intelligence and thought speed.	Knowledge-based tasks
Agility	Exceptional physical nimbleness.	Physical defense
Aura	Naturally attractive & appealing.	Interacting with others
Awareness	In-tune with their surroundings.	Initiative
Dexterity	Superior hand-eye coordination.	Missile attacks
Empathy	Connected with the universe.	Casting spells
Insight	Naturally intuitive and aware.	Inquiries
Resilience	Physical toughness.	Resisting effects
Strength	Raw superior muscular power.	Melee attacks
Tenacity	High mental strength.	Magic spell defense

ACUMEN

The protagonist excels at deciphering diagrams and maps, comprehending unknown languages, and understanding mechanisms and complicated structures. They will also have a greater probability of understanding subject matters they're not familiar with, and dealing with knowledge-based tasks.

AGILITY

The protagonist is quite nimble, and is able to jump, run, and leap extremely well. They also have superior skills when defending against melee attacks, and in actions such as leaping, jumping, and vaulting over obstacles.

AURA

The player with an outstanding aura is naturally attractive and has a magnetic personality. They get an advantage in reactions from entities when persuading, charming, and intimidating them. They also are better than usual at negotiations and making deals.

AWARENESS

The protagonist is in tune with the world and their surroundings. They have an advantage on initiative checks and avoid being surprised. They are also excellent at noticing details and changes in their environment or in the appearance and behavior of other entities.

DEXTERITY

This ability gives the protagonist above-average eye-hand coordination and superior motor skills for work that requires good hand control and light fingers. This provides advantages when doing things such as picking a lock, forging signatures, and working with delicate mechanisms, and also when attacking with missile combat weapons.

EMPATHY

A protagonist with this outstanding attribute is naturally in tune with magic. If they are a spellcaster, they will have an advantage when casting spells. They will be able to detect magical power sources easier than other protagonists.

INSIGHT

A protagonist that as insight as their outstanding attribute possesses a wise, intuitive, deep understanding of the world, cause, and effect. They have an advantage when performing inquiries, and figuring out intentions and motives of others.

RESILIENCE

The protagonist with this advantage is more resistant to conditions such as poisons. Also, in the case of protagonist death, the protagonist has four death card plays (instead of three).

STRENGTH

The protagonist is very strong, either due to natural constitution, or thanks to special training and exercise. The protagonist gets an advantage when performing tasks such as attacking or performing a maneuver with a melee weapon, pushing a heavy object, and climbing up a rope.

TENACITY

A protagonist with this outstanding attribute will be mentally tough and resilient. A protagonist with this trait will be hard to trick or intimidate, and also has an advantage when being inquired by others.

Origin

It is assumed that all protagonists are human by default. However, players can choose to play a protagonist of any origin, as long as it is within the range of a human's size, features, and capabilities. You can go a higher or lower in terms of size and such, but in the end it is up to you and the Fate Dealer to determine what would fit the game.

Using a different origin conveys no advantages as per the standard rules. However, if the players and the FD want to give special characteristics and capabilities to an origin they wish to use, they are free to do so.

Background

You can choose one background for the protagonist. This background defines how they were brought up and in the environment they grew up. This means that background not only affects task performance, but will also affect the protagonist's outlook on life and how they act based on certain situations. It is recommended that any background chosen makes sense in relation to the protagonist's backstory. This doesn't mean that you need to have a fully-fleshed out backstory, but it is a good idea to have a solid sense of who your protagonist is, where they came from, and what was their life like before becoming an adventurer.

A background also provides knowledge and skills that help in two areas: increases the chance of success when performing an action that is related to the background, and also can allow protagonists to perform tasks that would not be possible to perform without the knowledge provided by their background. Feel free to create your own backgrounds and discuss them with your fellow players to make sure everyone agrees. Backgrounds can range from simply a profession or craft, to establishing a whole way of living.

Even though each background has a specific list of skills, this does not mean that the protagonist will not be able to perform other background related actions; you can think of these skill lists as guidelines for managing the capabilities and abilities possessed by the protagonist with a certain background.

When performing an action that is related to their background, players get +1 CP for their plays.

BURGLAR

The protagonist has been born in a difficult situation in which, whether to survive, or to become rich, has made them earn a living by stealing other's possessions. They are proficient at infiltrating buildings and other structures, lock picking, moving silently, and hiding.

Climbing, find & remove traps, pick locks, pick pockets, sleight of hand, stealth, streetwise.

CHARLATAN

The protagonist has spent some time of their life tricking people for a living, to gain money and even fame. This grants them advantages when persuading and convincing others. They are also skillful with sleight of hand, and adept at establishing conversations and connections with unknown people.

Acting, visual arts, forgery, persuasion, sleight of hand.

CLERGY

The protagonist was an established member of an existing religion or church. They possess solid knowledge of religious subject matters and lore, including ancient religions. They are also able to convincingly talk and persuade

people and will have the full trust of other members of their church, with all the advantages this might convey.

Influential, investigation, persuasion, religion & lore.

CRIMINAL

Different to a burglar, a criminal works at a higher level. They are more of a mastermind type of criminal, usually engaging in operations like smuggling, money laundering, or running a thief guild. They have knowledge of crime organizations and important people in them, which gives them an advantage when dealing with other criminals.

Forgery, influential, investigation, persuasion, politics, streetwise.

HUNTER

The protagonist has solid experience in hunting and trapping animals for food or for sport. Usually the protagonist will be adept at a specific environment (forest, desert, arctic). They are proficient at tracking beasts in different environments, setting and disarming hunting traps, hiding in the wilderness, and prepping and cooking caught prey.

Camouflage, hunting, navigation, survival, tracking, trapper, wilderness lore.

MERCHANT

The protagonist has experience running a business, finding suppliers, and knows the basics of setting up shop, finding the appropriate people, and understands the accounting. They know other business owners and merchants, and have access to good deals on all sorts of materials and equipment. They will also understand local business laws and requirements. *Skills: Business management, Influential, investigation, persuasion, politics.*

MERCENARY

The protagonist has worked for the best bidder as a sellsword, or even hired for their conjuring capabilities. They know people in criminal organizations, and will have key government contacts that deal with the dark side of governmental policy. They will know the right pay rates and also knows who can be trusted and who cannot when being hired, therefore gaining an advantage in such negotiations. They will also know illegal weapon suppliers, which will be able to provide weapons of high wealth value. There is a chance, however, that the protagonist will have run afoul of the law at some point. *Skills: Martial gear, persuasion, politics, streetwise, survival.*

NOBLE

The protagonist was raised with all the privileges of nobility. A protagonist with this background usually will have a

wealth level of upscale or higher; however, it does not necessarily have to be that way. They will have advantages when dealing with nobles, city leaders, and rich merchants, and optionally, can have a personal servant (note that this servant is *not* an adventurer-level individual). The player of a noble protagonist can choose one more skill in addition to those shown here as a way to reflect their education. *Skills: Entertainer, influential, politics, riding.*

RECLUSE

The protagonist lived for a long time by themselves, either by choice or by unforeseen situations. Similar to the hunter background, the protagonist is knowledgeable on outdoor lore, however, they're not as specialized or proficient. They are able to hunt small prey (rabbits and such), by using weapons or simple traps, and are knowledgeable about edible plants and vegetables. They possess an excellent sense of direction. The years spent by themselves have granted them a strong mental stamina. *Skills: Fishing, herb lore, hunting, riding, stealth, survival.*

REVOLUTIONARY

The protagonist has led (or is still leading) a revolution against a tyrannical government or is leading a subversive reform of an established organization. This grants knowledge about existing organizations and provides underground contacts either on the streets, as part of factions, or in ruling positions in government or other large organizations. The



protagonist has advantages convincing and persuading others, have access to illegal weapon and equipment suppliers, and will be connected to members of various guilds that support their movement. *Skills: Acting, influential, persuasion, politics, streetwise.*

SAILOR

The protagonist is experienced in everything related to sailing: controlling and maneuvering a ship, administering a vessel, and basic repairs of ship components. They will not get seasick. Depending on the rank they had on a ship, they will have advantages when commanding or directing groups of people. They are also knowledgeable of the seas, and will know how to guide travel (in sea or land) using the stars. *Skills: Boating, navigation, rope handling, swimming.*

SCHOLAR

The protagonist has spent most of their life studying under wise teachers and reading from the best writers on the protagonist's preferred subject matter. This

gives the protagonist advantages when researching the subject matter, general knowledge, and even at making educated guesses related to the subject matter. They will also have easy access to libraries or other information resources. The player must choose an area of expertise for the scholar. *Skills: Arcana, history, languages, research, reputation.*

SMUGGLER

The protagonist knows the best way to infiltrate merchandise into a city and the correct way to handle said merchandise. The protagonist also knows the people and distributors of whatever objects or materials are illegal in their location, or that have a large black market due to the item's high cost. They will have knowledge of secret paths, tunnels, and other means of moving and distributing illegal goods throughout their city or town, including adjacent areas. They also gain advantages when persuading people, as they have to deal with law enforcement on an almost constant basis. *Skills: acting, concealing, forgery, persuasion, streetwise.*

Skills

These are learned abilities and knowledge that are not necessarily related to the protagonist's background. Skills, unlike the broad coverage of backgrounds, are focused and narrow in scope. Knowledge of a skill grants the protagonist +1 CP for actions related to the skill.

To determine the initial amount of additional skills for a new protagonist, you can either default to four, or use the table here to randomly generate the number of starting skills.

Card	Skills
2	2
3-5	3
6-10	4
Court	5
Ace	6

ACROBATICS

The protagonist is physically nimble and able to perform diverse acrobatic maneuvers with skill. They have an outstanding sense of balance. They are also able to always land gracefully when jumping from high places, and also can jump up higher than normal, around 4 to 5 feet (1.25 to 1.5 meters) off the ground.

ACTING

The protagonist is an actor, able to change their demeanor and even their appearance to match a certain set of desired characteristics. They can also control how they present their emotions, even able to cry at will. They are also versed in the art of makeup and dress, and therefore skilled in creating disguises.

ANIMAL HANDLING

This skill allows the protagonist to properly handle and control animals. They know how to command and persuade beasts to do their bidding, within the limits of what each animal can do and their relative intelligence.

ARCANA

This skill provides the protagonist with extensive knowledge on magical subject matters, including recognizing magical devices, magic effects, and related information to the extent and power of known spells.

ARTISAN

The protagonist is skilled in a particular trade like tinkerer, leather worker, or jeweler. They could also be a member of a guild, or at least knows members of the guild related to its profession.

The artisan can be is adept at building items like simple jewelry and adornments, talismans, and charms. This person will also be very skilled with small to medium size hand tools, and knowledgeable in finishing and painting techniques for diverse items. They will also know how to perform simple repairs on items related to their chosen skill area.

BOATING

The protagonist is knowledgeable in the use and maintenance of watercraft. This includes running a crew, and recognizing different types of ships and their purpose, even from other cultures.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

The protagonist is skilled at running a business, and managing all aspects of such an endeavor including the laws related to it. They also have contacts in different places due to their business relationships, which can be of help in certain situations.

CHEMISTRY

The protagonist has experience in the mix and preparation of diverse chemicals and compounds. They can identify potions, elements, & materials, prepare

basic chemical compounds, and identify and prepare poisons and antidotes.

CLIMBING

The protagonist is proficient at climbing, both unassisted or with the appropriate tools (rope, grappling hook, etc.) This includes building walls, sheer mountain faces, trees, and rock outcroppings.

CONCEALING

The protagonist is adept at hiding items, large or small, taking advantage of the environment and the item's characteristics. They can use this skill to hide entities, or even themselves. Similarly, they are skillful at finding hidden or camouflaged objects and entities.

CONTORTIONIST

The protagonist has a very flexible and nimble body, and is able to bend it and their extremities beyond what people are normally capable of doing. This allows them to fit through smaller openings, and gives them advantage when escaping from bindings and ropes.

ENTERTAINER

The protagonist worked as a singer, actor, or both. They have knowledge of old works of theater, poetry, and song, including knowledge of origin and possibly even the writer, and will know how to play at least one musical instrument. They will have advantage when trying to recognize old music, being able to pinpoint its historical source.

FIND & REMOVE TRAPS

The protagonist knows how to find traps in locks, passageways, and entrances by recognizing key characteristics of these devices. They are also knowledgeable at disarming such traps without triggering them.

If a trap is activated, they also get +1 CP to avoid damage as a reflection of their knowledge of these devices and how they work.

FISHING

The protagonist is skilled at fishing, from small fish to large animals like whales. They know what kind of equipment to use for this, and how to handle it correctly. They also possess knowledge of the best places and times to fish for different species.

FORGERY

The protagonist is skilled at forging official documents and signatures, and knows the correct types of papers, inks and waxes (for seals) to utilize for such jobs, as well as able to engrave official seals.

HERB LORE

This skill gives the protagonist knowledge of the vast majority of plants and herbs available, their effects (if any), characteristics, and also the knowledge on how to combine them in ways that can cause certain effects. They are able to identify and find herbs in the wild, know where to buy certain components,

and prepare tinctures and mixes for poisons, antidotes, to relieve conditions, heal wounds, etc.

HUNTING

The protagonist has solid experience in hunting and trapping animals for food or for sport. This skill includes knowing where and how to find their prey and the most efficient way to attack them.

INFLUENTIAL

The protagonist has contacts and information that allows them to influence decisions from important people, from nobles to merchants. This is more likely to happen in places where this person has exerted their presence (i.e. their home town), or if they have a position that is generally respected (ranking member of a church, for example).

INVESTIGATION

This skill makes the protagonist proficient at investigating a scene, by noticing details that others might not be able to catch. This is partly by knowing what to look for and where to look for things that might give the clues needed to succeed at figuring out what has transpired.

MARTIAL GEAR

The protagonist is skilled at the use, management, and maintenance of martial weapons and armor. Fighters possess this skill automatically.

METALSMITH

The protagonist is skilled at working with metal. They can readily build basic weapons, armor, and other metal devices with the correct equipment. They are able to craft weapons, armor, and other metal items as long as they can access a forge, as well as fix broken metal items, including weapons and armor. They are also able to recognize and identify different types of metals and alloys.

PERSUASION

The protagonist is skillful at conversation and is naturally charismatic and well versed, allowing them to use this skill for persuading others to do their bidding, or to extract information.

PICK LOCKS

The protagonist is proficient at unlocking all sorts of typical locks; door key lock, padlocks, and the like. For this, they use a toolset specialized for this function. In a pinch, if they do not have their tools with them, they can still try to improvise but will not get +1 CP on their attempt.

PICK POCKETS

The protagonist is an expert at stealing from people directly without being noticed, be it from pockets, purses, or money bags.

POLITICS

The protagonist has the contacts, influence, and knowledge on how kingdoms



and large cities work, and their inner politics. They also excel at finding information about political maneuverings, nobility, and members of the government.

PYROTECHNICS

The protagonist is proficient with handling powder and explosive materials safely and correctly. They know how to build small rocket projectiles and small bombs.

RIDING

The protagonist is proficient at riding beasts, being able to perform difficult and dangerous maneuvers that most people are not capable of. They also have a deep knowledge and understanding on how to communicate with their rides.

Optionally, a protagonist with this skill might possess their own, special ride. This grants them an additional bonus when performing difficult maneuvers.

SIGN LANGUAGE

The protagonist is proficient at communicating via one or more sign languages, as those used by some societies of the world, and also used by those who cannot communicate through speech due to deafness or any other condition.

SLEIGHT OF HAND

This skill allows the protagonist to perform simple illusions and tricks; hide small objects, or making them appear out of nowhere or in another location.

The protagonist is also capable of performing tasks such as taking away an object from a location without being noticed.

STEALTH

The protagonist is able to walk and move around silently, as well as being able to use the environment and lighting to their advantage to hide themselves from others.

STONEMASON

A protagonist with this background is deft at working with stone in all its uses including construction and decoration. The protagonist will be able to determine the type of rock or mineral, origin, and source of the construction in the case of a building or structure. In some cases, they will be able to recognize weak points of the structure.

STREETWISE

The protagonist knows the seedier side of city living and its people. They have contacts in gangs, crime organizations, and factions. This allows them to find information, resources, and other things not normally available to common citizens.

SURVIVAL

This skill allows the protagonist to know how to seek or build shelter, forage for food, know where to find water (and purify it), hunt small prey like rabbits and small birds, basic fishing, and other

knowledge related directly to surviving in the wild.

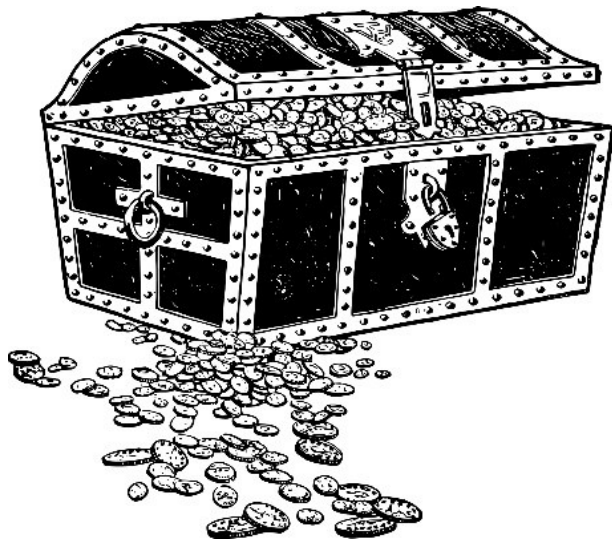
TRACKING

They are proficient at tracking beasts in different environments, figuring out the tracks left, how recent they are, and in the direction they lead to.

TRAPPER

The protagonist is skilled at building traps designed for capturing beasts small and large. These traps can go from simple net and snare systems, to being lethal and designed to kill the prey.

They also are adept at detecting and disarming these type of traps. Some booby traps might fall into this classification, but it is up to the Fate Dealer to determine if the skill applies for such instances.



VISUAL ARTS

The protagonist is talented in drawing and painting. They possess knowledge of art history, so the protagonist is able to identify old works and determine their origin. They will also be able to produce works in their area of domain, and sell them for profit if desired.

WILDERNESS LORE

The protagonist excels at knowledge of the surrounding wilderness. This will apply mostly to the type of terrain in which the protagonist acquired their skills. Although some knowledge might be common among different environments, it is not expected that a protagonist raised in the deserts would have a lot of knowledge of the wilderness of the tundra.

Wealth

As an option, money and wealth can be tracked and assessed for protagonists. However, it is not tracked in detail down to coins and coin values. Goods, services, and treasure have one of five wealth levels (WL) assigned to them: poor, modest, average, upscale, and rich. Similarly, protagonists, cast member, and creatures can have different wealth levels assigned to them equivalent to the five values mentioned, but in that case it sets or limits the level of goods they can acquire.

Determining wealth level

A protagonist usually starts at the average level, unless there is a valid backstory reason for them not to. The wealth level can be randomized as follows by drawing one card from the fate deck and consulting the table shown here. A protagonist's wealth level is only affected by any purchases performed at their current wealth level and the adjacent lower level. Protagonists will have at the start 10 wealth points (WP) available for their wealth level.

Card	Wealth Level
2-3	Poor
4-6	Modest
7-10	Average
Jack-Queen	Upscale
King	Rich

Acquisition through wealth points

All items have a base wealth level as value. For every single purchase made for an item that is at the protagonist's current level, or for every 10 purchases made of items at the immediate lower level, the protagonist will spend 1 wealth point.

Any purchases made from items belonging to two or more levels down are inconsequential to the protagonist. For example, a protagonist in the upscale wealth level will spend 1 WP on one upscale purchase, or on ten average purchases. Modest or poor items have no effect on the protagonist's wealth point level.

The table below shows how many items can be bought with 1 WP based on the current wealth level of the protagonist.



Wealth Level	Poor	Modest	Average	Upscale	Rich
Poor	1	--	--	--	--
Modest	10	1	--	--	--
Average	100	10	1	--	--
Upscale	N/A	100	10	1	--
Rich	N/A	N/A	100	10	1

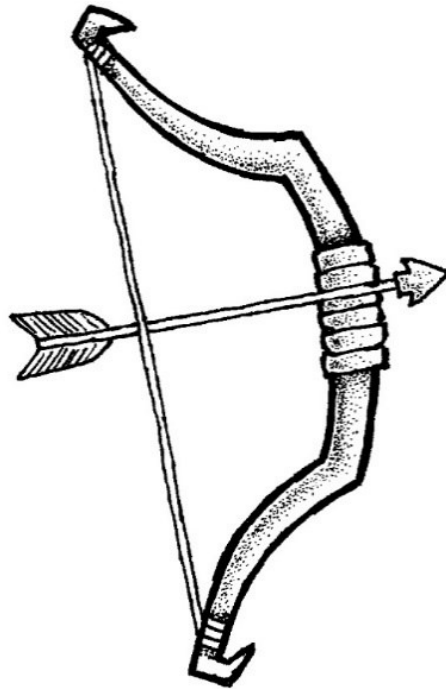
This means that a protagonist of *average* wealth can buy one item of *average* value with 1 WP, or they can buy 10 items of *modest* value with the same WP. The value "N/A" on the table indicates that buying items of this wealth level will usually have no effect at all on the protagonist's wealth. Of course, if a protagonist of *rich* wealth desires to buy

10,000 loaves of bread, the Fate Dealer must assign a nominal wealth value to such a huge purchase. Common sense is key.

Although usually items belonging to a higher wealth level are unattainable, a protagonist can buy a single item of said higher level by spending 10 WP. This means, however, that the protagonist has spent all their current wealth on this purchase, therefore automatically moving down to the next wealth level with 10 WP, with all the disadvantages that implies.

Free starting gear

An option when starting up is to let the players get whatever equipment the protagonist needs free. This can be a way to hasten things in terms of game preparation, or if the adventure will be a tough one and both the Fate Dealer and the players want to make sure they are not lacking in terms of gear and weapons. The Fate Dealer needs to make sure that none of the items provided to the protagonist exceed their wealth level, unless there is a solid story reason for this (for example, being hired by a very wealthy individual, thus being provided the equipment necessary).



Weapons & gear

Being able to survive the harsh situations found while adventuring requires that protagonists equip themselves with weapons and adventuring gear.

Weapons

Using a weapon increases that probability of success for the attack being made. This is represented by the *attack bonus* (AB) of each weapon. This bonus is added to the total card value being played in the attack. Not that this bonus does not apply to combat maneuvers.

Weapons checked as *martial* require training to utilize correctly, either through extensive experience of formal education on their use. Being able to use these weapons is determined by the protagonist's class, background, or skill. The column titled *2H* indicates that it is a two-handed weapon, therefore the wielder cannot have in hand anything else other than the weapon when using it.

For missile weapons, there is the additional parameter of *range*, which indicates the longest distance a shot can be made with that particular weapon and still be possibly successful. This range is measured in zones (1 zone is equal to 25 ft. or 8 m).

Type	Weapon	2H	Martial	WL	AB	Range
Melee	Club			Poor	0	
	Dagger			Poor	0	
	Great Axe	X	X	Rich	+3	
	Great Sword	X	X	Rich	+3	
	Hammer			Average	+1	
	Hand axe			Modest	0	
	Flail		X	Upscale	+1	
	Javelin			Modest	+1	
	Longsword			Upscale	+2	
	Morningstar			X	Upscale	+2
	Pike	X	X	Upscale	+2	
	Short Sword			Average	+1	
	Spear			Poor	+1	
	Warhammer			Average	+2	
Missile	Crossbow	X	X	Rich	+3	7
	Dart			Poor	0	1
	Short Bow	X		Average	+1	6
	Longbow	X		Upscale	+2	10

Armor

Wearing armor provides a defense bonus (DB) that is added to the card value total in a defense reaction against a physical attack.

Armor type	Martial	Wealth	DB
Leather armor		Modest	+1
Chainmail		Upscale	+2
Chainmail with breast plate		Upscale	+3
Plate mail	X	Rich	+4
Shield		Average	+1

Adventuring gear

Using the appropriate adventuring gear will be the only way to perform certain actions, for example, being able to climb up a wall might be nearly impossible to do without a rope and a grappling hook. Gear also provides a one card bonus when performing certain actions related to that item as judged by the Fate Dealer on a case-by-case basis.



When adding your own items to the available inventory, think about the availability of that item, and the workmanship required for crafting it. This will help you set an appropriate wealth level for the item.

Item	Wealth level
Backpack	Modest
Flask of oil	Modest
Iron spikes (1 dozen)	Poor
Lantern, oil	Average
Pole, 10 ft./3 m. long	Poor
Mallet	Modest
Rope, 50 ft./15 m.	Average
Burlap sack	Poor
Silver mirror	Average
Stakes (3)	Poor
Tinderbox (flint & steel)	Modest
Water skin	Poor
Wine skin	Average

Food & sustenance

Item	Wealth level
Ale, mug	Poor
Bread, loaf	Poor
Cheese, hunk	Modest
Chicken	Modest
Eggs	Poor
Fish	Modest
Steak, beef	Upscale
Vegetables	Poor
Wine, cup	Average
Wine, bottle	Upscale

Advancement

There are two options for tracking protagonist progress to award their growth as adventurers. Every time a protagonist reaches a point where they should gain some reward



related to their adventuring career and experience, they reach an *advancement step* (AS). As protagonists continue reaching new advancement steps, they will acquire one or more skills, outstanding attributes, play cards, and/or sway.

Milestone

Milestone advancement is the simplest way to manage and track advancement steps, but arguably the most subjective and imprecise. With this method of advancement, the Fate Dealer decides when the protagonists gain a new AS.

The Fate Dealer might decide to grant an AS be after a particular difficult encounter, or after a certain story arch has finished; it will usually be some important moment signaled in the campaign being played (therefore, a *milestone*) that that will propel the protagonists forward in terms of experience, knowledge, and ability. With this method, all protagonists gain AS simultaneously.

Card play count

A more precise tracking option is to track card play count. This is done through play points (PP). For every card played by an individual player whether by action checks, combat attacks, or inquiries, they get one play point. It doesn't matter if the play is successful or not; if it is played, it is counted. Using play points promotes participation, as it counts all sort of actions from a player and not only combat.

For every 200 PP a player reaches, the protagonist will get to the next advancement step.

Using the play point system provides players with their own growth paths, with those that have participated more and performed more actions getting to rising up in abilities and power ahead of those who are more reserved and passive.

Although this system requires keeping track of each card played, this is something that can be easily achieved through a system as simple as using hash marks.

Advancement step rewards

The following table shows at which rate each reward is acquired. The card value shown on the top row of the table can be used for randomly selecting the advancement level of a cast member or for a brand-new protagonist. A value of 2 represents a base character with no advancements.

Aspect	Base - 2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	J	Q	K	A
Skill	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
OA	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X
CP	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	X
Sway	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	X

SKILL

For every AS the protagonist will learn one new skill. These skills can be chosen from the existing list or created between the player and the Fate Dealer. They can be related to the adventure in which the protagonist has been involved with for added dimension. For example, a protagonist in a seafaring adventure might acquire the *boating* or *navigation* skill.

OUTSTANDING ATTRIBUTE

For every four advancement steps, the protagonist gains one new outstanding attribute. Optionally, they can boost an existing OA *only once*, meaning that they would gain +2 CP when performing a task that uses their OA instead of the usual +1 CP.

PLAY CARD

Every six AS will provide the protagonist with one additional play card. This bonus will apply to any task, action, or reaction performed by the protagonist including spellcasting, although in the case of spells, they must belong to the same suit as the spell being cast.

Like defined by the basic rules, any bonus CP are optional and left to the player to decide when to use them.

SWAY

For every three levels, the protagonist will gain one extra sway, meaning that the player's maximum card hand will increase accordingly.

PART 5 MAGES

“Invariably, every mage I speak to is very much emphatic that the risk of partaking in the Imbuing was absolutely worth it, and they would indubitably risk their lives over and over again if needed, just to keep drinking from the intoxicating font of magic.”

Britu of Quelpes, Rivers of the Arcane

Mages are able to tap onto the arcane energies that permeate the physical world, and manipulate those energies in defined ways called *spells*. There are different types of magic and spells, but channeling and managing these powers is physically and mentally taxing. Therefore, a mage can only choose one type of magic to wield, as taking on more than one is impossible.

Physical combat

As they are not trained in the combat arts due to the time and dedication needed to control their special magical abilities, mages can only use 1 CP for physical combat actions and reactions under normal circumstances, even if they gain CP due to advancement steps.



Advancement

If using the advancement step system, when a mage protagonist gains a bonus play card (CP) from an advancement step, they can only add this CP to actions *unrelated* to physical combat actions and reactions. They can apply this bonus CP to their spells, as long as the card belongs to the same suit as the spell being cast. Spell mechanics are explained in *Part 8: Magic & Spells*.

Magic & spells

Magical powers flow freely from the mage, so they have no need to learn or memorize spells, as they have the learned ability to control those mystical forces. However, magical powers ebb and flow inside their bodies, meaning that sometimes they won't be able to cast a particular spell because they're "lacking" force in that particular magic area, even if it is for a few moments.

Spell types

There are aspects and features that are common between some spells, even from different acroamatic crosses. This is specified by their *spell type*. However, some spells might also have additional effects and results, so make sure to consult the specifications for each spell when determining results.

ALTERATION

These spells will attempt to change the probabilities of an action being successful. For these spells, the total value of the cards played is usually added to an action or reaction being performed by any player. To keep track of this, it is recommended that the cards played for the spell are kept on the table until the alteration is over, as specified by each spell.

DAMAGE

These are spells that inflict direct damage to their target. For these, the highest card played for the spell determines how much damage the victim takes.

Highest Card	Sway	Condition
Pip	1	Hurt
Jack	2	Incapacitated
Queen	2	Incapacitated
King	2	Unconscious
Ace	All	Dead

EFFECT

These spells will affect their target with diverse effects for a certain timespan. The highest card played for the spell determines how long it stays active as a number of rounds, based on the card's value. For example, casting an effect spell where the highest card is a 7 means that the spell will be active for seven combat rounds, or until the mage decides to dissipate the effect. If the spell is cast with an ace, the spell lasts for as long as the mage wishes it to be so.

If the spell is cast in a non-combat situation, each round will be equal to 6 seconds of real time. Thus, the spell cast above would have a duration of 42 seconds. However, to make it easier to manage, you can consult the table below to get a rounded-up value for the spell duration.

Highest Card	Time
2-5	30 seconds
6-10	1 minute
Jack	1½ minutes
Queen	2 minutes
King	3 minutes
Ace	Until mage dispels

Diametric

A *diametric* is a spell that is the absolute opposite of another spell. As such, diametric spells interact in a special way between each other, allowing a mage to use a spell to dispel and nullify its diametric spell. To achieve this, the spellcaster needs to cast the spell with a value higher than the active diametric spell. If this is done, the target spells is immediately dispelled, its forces dissipating back into the universe.

When a spell has duration, it is a good idea to keep the cards up in front of the player, as a reminder that the spell is in effect.

HEALING

These are spells that heal damage. For these, the highest card played for the spell determines how much damage is healed.

Highest Card	Heal
Pip	1 SW
Court	2 SW
Ace	All SW

RANGE

This type of spell usually involves movement or detection at a distance. The highest card played determines this distance, measured in zones.

Highest Card	Distance
Pip	1 zone
Court	2 zones
Ace	Any distance within eyesight

Acroamatic crosses

Spells are focused on sets that complement each other and work in a natural conjunction. This combination of spells is called an *acroamatic cross*, and it is comprised of four spells, usually represented as a four-pointed cross in magical literature due to their complementary nature among each other. It is thought that these four aspects of each magic, these spells that comprise each type, correspond to the basic elements of nature and the universe (water, air, fire, and earth), the humors (black bile, yellow bile, phlegm, and blood), or the points of a compass (north, south, east, and west).

There are so far only four known acroamatic crosses. Some claim that the world has reached a limit on what they can control and manipulate, otherwise people would become almost gods. Nevertheless, old mages, scholars, and powerful institutions keep researching ways to expand the known powers that can be manipulated by living beings.

A mage can only have domain over a *single* acroamatic cross, as it is physically impossible for them to sustain more than one type of magic.

Each “point” of the acroamatic cross is represented by each card suit; therefore, each suit represents a specific spell. If the player does not possess a card of a particular suit in their hand, their protagonist will not be able to cast the corresponding spell for that suit.



Blood & Infliction

Mages that master the spells from the acroamatic cross of Blood & Infliction have been imbued with magical powers that complement and repel the onslaught of warriors and fighters in battle. They can inflict damage, heal, and support fighters by shielding or making their opponents more susceptible to receive damage.

♣ EXPOSE

Type	Alteration
Diametric	Protect

This spell tears down defenses and lowers the target's protection, making it easier for them to be hurt by an incoming attack, whether physical or magical. When cast, a glowing bolt of deep red energy leaps from the caster's hands towards their target. If it hits, the target of the spell is surrounded by a red, iridescent aura.

When an attack or spell from any entity occurs against the target, the *expose* spell card value is added to the action, therefore increasing the chances of success. Once the attack is performed, the spell disappears, and the card is placed in the discard deck, regardless if the action was successful or not.

In the case of a successful attack, the damage inflicted will still be determined by the attacker's highest value card and is not affected by the *expose* spell card value.

If *expose* is cast with the ace of clubs, the target of the spell will automatically receive damage from all attacks made at them until the end of the current combat round.

♠ HARM

Type	Damage
Diametric	Heal

A black bolt of power, deep as the darkest night, is shot by the mage. This bolt flies at an amazing speed, looking for the target chosen by the spellcaster. This spell affects creatures and objects, causing internal damage by tearing apart organic and non-organic tissue.

♥ HEAL

Type	Healing
Diametric	Harm

The *heal* spell cures and repairs damage on living creatures. It also removes conditions like poisoning and illness. When cast, a peaceful white glow emanates from the mage's hands. In a wispy, vapor-like way, this glow moves to the intended target, which glows for a few instants as their wounds are healed by the spell.

Different to other spells, the recipient of the *heal* spell does not need to play a defense reaction, as the curative effect of the spell is welcome. However, there could be the rare case of a creature not wanting to be healed; in such case, the target of the spell can play a defense reaction opposing the *heal* spell.

◆ PROTECT

Type	Alteration
Diametric	Destruct

When this spell is cast, a shimmering, crystal shard-like stream of magical particles flow from the spellcaster and surround the intended target. These particles remain floating around the target for the duration of the spell, putting up a magical barrier that protects the target, lowering the chance of receiving damage or being affected by a spell.

When a *protect* spell is cast, the spell's cards are added to the target's defense play the next time they are subject

to an attack or a spell. Therefore, the cards used in the spell attack must be kept face up on the table until the *protect* spell dissipates either by the target is attacked by any other means, or if the spell is nullified.

If the target of the spell reacts with a riposte, the spell card still counts against the attack. Once said attack is performed, the spell card is placed in the discard deck, regardless if the attack was successful or not.

If this spell is cast with an ace, the recipient will be invulnerable to damage for one combat round.

Affinity & Divination

Mages that are imbued by this acroamatic cross are proficient in magical arts that work on the minds of living beings, how it works, and how they perceive the world around them. This allows them to cast spells that trick the mind and alter reality temporarily for their target.

One characteristic of these spells is that they are totally invisible. However, that does not mean the target cannot avoid their effects, as the mind reacts by reflex, rejecting the alternative reality being presented by the spell.

♥ BEFRIEND

Type	Effect
Diametric	Estrange

This spell allows the mage to temporarily befriend the target of the spell, or have the target befriend another individual or group. This does not mean that the mage has mental control of the target; it just means the target will have a sudden, completely friendly and helpful disposition towards whoever the caster decides.

Therefore, the target of the spell will assist and follow any request for help given to them by the newly befriended entity, as long as the request is not something that would be absolutely contrary to their nature.

When the spell effect is gone, the target will remember what happened, although probably confused if it was real or something they imagined.

♣ **ESTRANGE**

Type	Effect
Diametric	Befriend

This spell causes the target to act an enemy of an individual or group determined by the mage, including the mage themselves. However, the target is not under any sort of mind control, so they will act on their own volition, but under the temporarily changed circumstances regarding who are their allies.

When the spell effect has vanished, the target will remember what happened under a haze of confusion.

♦ **HIDE**

Type	Effect
Diametric	Reveal

Casting the hide spell on a single object or a creature makes it seem to disappear, or if the caster chooses to, will make it seem to be another object or creature for the duration of the spell. The range of the spell is limited only to the mage's line of sight up to a distance of 4 zones.

The effect is not automatic: If the spell is cast on an entity, they have the

option to try and resist the spell by playing a defense reaction.

If the spell is cast onto an inanimate object, the Fate Dealer must draw a card from the fate deck. If the spell's total card value is less than the card drawn, the spell fails.

♠ **REVEAL**

Type	Effect
Diametric	Hide

The *reveal* spell will find any creature or object that is hidden either by magical or physical means within the range of the spell. The spell's range is only limited to the mage's line of sight up to 4 zones away.

The spell's effect is not automatic. If the spell is cast on an entity that is aware that they are the target of it, they can play a defense reaction to avoid the spell's effect.

If cast onto an inanimate object, the Fate Dealer must draw one card from the fate deck. If the spell's total card value is less than the card drawn, the spell fails.

Flux & Locus

The spells that emerge from this acroamatic cross are focused on the physics of movement and placement. They allow mages to alter the movement of living and inanimate entities.

♦ HOLD

Type	Effect
Diametric	Move

A blurred, distorted, transparent energy emerges quickly from the spell caster towards a chosen target. If successful, this spell temporarily causes an entity or an object to stop moving.

If cast onto an entity, it will prevent them from moving in any way. If cast on an object, it will make it unmovable. If cast at a moving object or entity, it will cause them to stop moving instantaneously, magically freezing even mid-air.

♣ MOVE

Type	Range
Diametric	Hold

Casting the move spell allows the mage to instantly change the location of an object or entity. When cast, a faintly-glowing, churning cone of energy, similar to a tornado, moves at high speed towards a chosen target. If successful, the move is instantaneous, and the target of the spell can be moved in any direction as long as there is not an object already occupying the same spot.

♠ SLOW

Type	Effect
Diametric	Speed

A cloudy, semi-transparent bolt of energy travels from the caster to its intended target. As the bolt flies through the air, the sounds around its trajectory become distorted, twisted, and deeper.

If the spell is successful, it will make its target move at half speed for the duration of the spell. The value of the highest card played determines the duration of the *slow* spell.

This means that a regular entity would take two rounds to move 1 zone. Likewise, it will take two rounds of combat for the target of a *slow* spell to perform any action. This slowness affects physical attacks, and if a slowed down entity manages to successfully strike a target, they will only inflict damage as shown below.

Card	Damage
Pip	No damage
Court	1 SW
Ace	Half max SW

If the slowed-down target casts a spell, the effect of the spell is unaffected but it will take the slowed-down caster two rounds to complete the casting.

♥ SPEED

Type	Effect
Diametric	Slow

A crackling, erratic, blurry bolt of magical energy springs from the mage's hand

towards a target. Casting this spell successfully on a target doubles their speed. This can be cast on objects or on living entities. The target of a *speed* spell is able to move at double speed (2 zones per round), and is able to perform any two actions per round through the spell's duration.

Radiance & Febricity

The acroamatic cross from this acroamatic cross manipulates the storage and release of some of the fundamental energy aspects of the universe. The wielders of this magic are particularly known by the fact that they use it often to help society; for example, it is known for Radiance & Febricity mages to prepare devices that cast permanent light as a replacement for lamps, or to freeze food for conservation for a long time.

♦ COLD

Type	Effect
Diametric	Heat

With this spell, the mage can remove all heat from the target of the spell, making its temperature to drop dramatically and cause temporary freezing of liquids and fluids. When cast, it looks like a shimmering, pearly wind that floats from the target and back to the spellcaster.

When cast on a living being, the spell will cause 1 SW of damage per round.

♣ DARKNESS

Type	Effect
Diametric	Light

With this spell, the caster dissipates the light around the spell's target (a bubble about 5 ft. /1.5 m), creating a deep, inky black darkness surrounding the target. When the spell is cast successfully, a bright stream of energy flows from the target into the caster's hands.

If it is successfully cast against a living being, the creature is automatically blinded, and no one will be able to see inside the darkness bubble for the duration of the spell. When the spell succeeds against an object, it will be shrouded in darkness, therefore, when cast against something like a vehicle, any occupants will be blinded too until they exit the vehicle.

♠ **HEAT**

Type	Effect
Diametric	Cold

This spell allow the caster to produce a distorted, vapor-like stream of heat that sizzles through the air almost invisibly towards a selected target. If the spell is successful, any flammable objects hit will immediately catch fire.

If the spell is cast on a living entity and they catch fire, the target will lose 1 SW per round until the fire is put out.

♥ **LIGHT**

Type	Effect
Diametric	Darkness

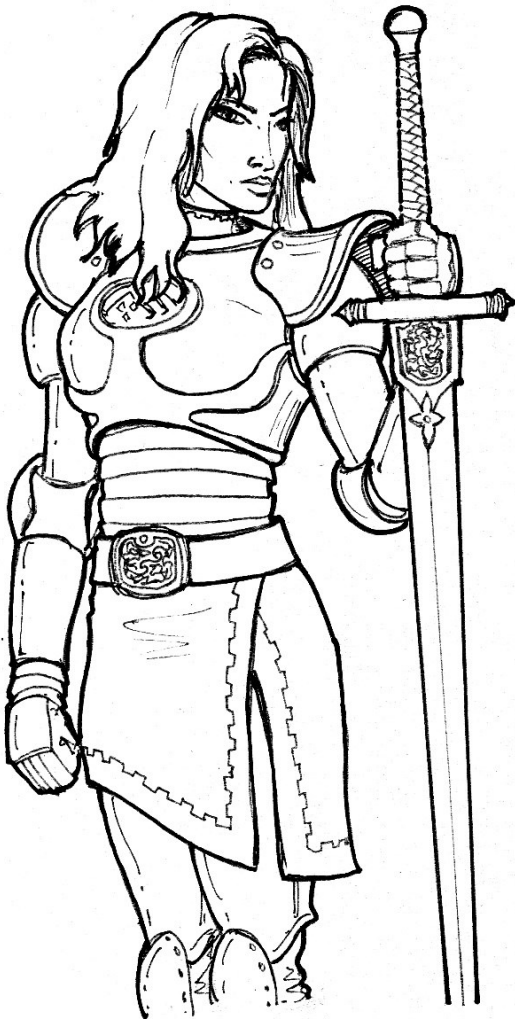
This spell allows the mage to produce light at various intensity levels, as desired. It can go from subtle light all the way to a blinding flash of light. The spell needs to be cast against a target, either an object or a living being. The area around the target will be lit in a bubble about 5 ft. / 1.5 m in diameter.

In the case of the spell being cast against a creature, they will be blinded for the duration of the spell, as determined by the highest card played.

PART 6 FIGHTERS

“Even when having access to a magic-user, a good swordhand is necessary, as those who wield the arcane can be subject to the whims of their own powers, while the blade is always subject to the whims of its wielder.”

Tuliuro Bosc, Adventurers, Rogues, & Sellswords



Fighters focus on melee and missile combat. Most heroes and legendary characters in the history of the world are fighters, warriors, and soldiers. As people dedicated to the art of combat, they are usually properly equipped for such activities with large, deadly weapons, and protective armor. Even with the advent of magic, it is always good to have a good fighter in an adventuring party, as their strength and power in combat is unquestionable, and arguably more reliable than magic.

Physical combat

Due to their training and focus on combat arts, fighters can use up to 2 CP for physical combat actions and reactions.

Maneuvers

When performing a combat action, fighters can use special combat maneuvers instead of executing a regular attack. These focus on different areas of offense and defense. Maneuvers are played based on the card suit, and the specific effect changes depending on the highest card value played.

Since they are based on card suits, the player of a fighter can only choose four different maneuvers when creating their protagonist and assign each maneuver to a particular card suit. Once a maneuver has been assigned to a card suit, it cannot be changed. If playing one more than card, all cards used in a maneuver must belong to the same suit.

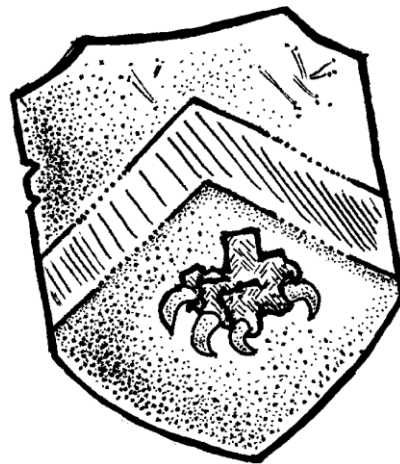
On the table below, the card value on the first column is used to randomly determine available maneuvers for a cast member or protagonist, if so desired.

Card	Maneuver	Description
2	Disarm	Disarms the opponent.
3	Evade	Strike an opponent and move away.
4	Frighten	Attack and intimidate the opponent, preventing them from attacking.
5	Goad	Make an opponent lose their cool, makes it easier for others to attack.
6	Guard	Defend another entity and increase their defense capability.
7	Hunt	Focus on a single target and increase attack success.
8	Knock	Cause an opponent to become prone.
9	Lead	Direct one of your companions to improve their attack's success.
10	Parry	Increase the fighter's defense capabilities.
J	Push	Push an opponent away, with related side effects.
Q	Rage	Inflict focused, heavy attacks on a single opponent.
K	Stun	An attack that manages to stun the opponent, incapacitating temporarily.
A	Sweep	Attack more than one adjacent opponents with a single strike.

DISARM

The fighter uses their melee weapon, and through clever moves, manages to disarm their opponent.

Card	Effect
Pip	Weapon falls to the ground in front of them.
Court	Weapon is thrown 1 zone away.
Ace	Weapon is thrown 1 zone away, plus broken.



EVADE

The fighter inflicts an attack while simultaneously moving out of melee distance. By doing so, they potentially avoid being struck by any physical attacks coming from their opponent, and automatically abort any chance of a riposte reaction.

Card	Distance
Pip	½ zone
Court	1 zone
Ace	1 zone, plus attacker is confused, fighter will have +1 CP on their next defense reaction against this opponent, as long as it happens in the same or the next combat round.

FRIGHTEN

The fighter uses their combat skills and presence to inflict an attack on their opponent that causes them to become frightened. Due to this, the opponent will refuse to attack the fighter, automatically defending all attacks and if possible, will try to hide away.

Card	Duration
Pip	1 round
Court	2 rounds
Ace	Permanent until desired, or until another maneuver is performed by the fighter.

GOAD

The fighter tricks a single opponent with this maneuver, provoking them and getting their full attention. During the maneuver, all attacks against the goaded opponent performed by all other entities except the fighter will do so with +1 CP. However, since the goaded entity is completely focused on the guardian, all their attacks against the guardian will be done at +1 CP.

Card	Duration
Pip	1 round
Court	2 rounds
Ace	Permanent until desired, or until another maneuver is performed by the fighter.

GUARD

The actor plays a card for another entity that the fighter wishes to protect. This protected entity needs to be at a maximum of 1 zone away from them. If the target being defended ends up farther than that at the end of a combat round, the maneuver is automatically canceled.

During the maneuver, the target being protected receives +1 CP for all their defense reactions.

Card	Duration
Pip	1 round
Court	2 rounds
Ace	Permanent until desired, or if protected entity ends up more than 1 zone away after both have finished moving.

HUNT

The fighter chooses a single target as the focus of their attacks. For the duration of the maneuver, the fighter gets +1 CP on all their actions and reactions when battling against their chosen target only, including any actions executed as a riposte.

Card	Duration
Pip	1 round
Court	2 rounds
Ace	Permanent until desired, another maneuver or a riposte is performed.

KNOCK

With this maneuver, the fighter is able to cause their opponent to trip and fall to the ground. The actor chooses if the victim will fall prone face down, or on their back.

Card	Effect
Pip	Target falls on the spot.
Court	Target falls down, any weapons wielded or objects held are dropped.
Ace	Target falls down unconscious, unconscious.

LEAD

The fighter, instead of attacking, uses their combat knowledge and skills to direct their companions and increase their chances of success in their combat actions. For the duration of the maneuver, the fighter's companions that are within sight gains +1 CP on all their physical attack actions.

Card	Duration
Pip	1 round
Court	2 rounds
Ace	Permanent until desired, or until an attack action or maneuver is performed by the fighter.

PARRY

The actor plays a card which is added to all their protagonist's defense reactions throughout combat for the duration of the maneuver, or if the fighter decides to execute a different maneuver. A riposte reaction from the fighter will also cancel the *defend* maneuver.

Card	Duration
Pip	1 round
Court	2 rounds
Ace	Permanent until desired, another maneuver or a riposte is executed.

PUSH

This allows the fighter to push their opponent in any direction they desire, using their strength and skill with weapons. Not that this is only possible to perform in melee combat.

Card	Effect
Pip	Target pushed 1 zone away.
Court	Target pushed 1 zone away, knocked prone.
Ace	Target pushed 1 zone away, unconscious.

RAGE

This allows the fighter to use more than one card (except an ace) on a single melee attack, and on a successful attack add up the total damage value of the cards played, and inflict that on their target.

For example, if the fighter uses two pip cards, the target would receive 2 points of damage, one per each pip card. If the fighter used one pip card and one court card, the target would receive 3 points of damage; one for the pip card, and two for the court card.

There is no limit on how many cards a fighter can use in a rage, as long as the actor is left with at least a single card in their hand.

STUN

The fighter attacks their opponent in a special manner as to not cause bodily harm, but stunning their opponent for a certain period of time. While the opponent is stunned, they are under the unconscious condition.

Card	Duration
Pip	1 round
Court	2 rounds
Ace	Permanently, or until the target of the stun is woken up.

SWEEP

When attacked by two or more adjacent entities, the guardian can use this maneuver to perform a sweeping attack that potentially hits all their enemies within melee range. The damage done to each one of the opposing entities is the same, based on the highest card played.

Archetypes

Here are some fighter archetype examples to give an idea of how you can build a fighter protagonist with a solid, underlying theme. This could spark your imagination in terms of what maneuver sets can go together nicely for your own creation, or you can just make your fighter using one of these archetypes. There is no particular meaning for the suits; pairing a suit to a maneuver is completely arbitrary.



Assassin

Assassins are usually hired to perform covert operations for eliminating a target. Although usually the target of these operations are nobles, merchants, and dignitaries, sometimes these missions involve eliminating some dangerous creature that is threatening an area. This specialization on focused search and destroy makes the assassin proficient in offensive maneuvers and a master of improvisation in the midst of combat.

Suit	Maneuver	Description
♣	Stun	Stun the opponent, incapacitating temporarily.
♦	Knock	Cause an opponent to become prone.
♥	Evade	Strike an opponent and move away.
♠	Hunt	Focus on a single target and increase attack success.

Berserker

A berserker is a fighter that fights wildly and recklessly, sometimes to their own detriment. Nevertheless, they are feared in the battlefield, as their disregard for their own personal welfare is both dangerous and disturbing.

Suit	Maneuver	Description
♣	Sweep	Attack more than one adjacent opponents with a single strike.
♦	Knock	Cause an opponent to become prone.
♥	Frighten	Attack and intimidate the opponent, preventing them from attacking.
♠	Rage	Inflict focused, heavy attacks on a single opponent.

Guardian

The guardian specializes as a vigilant and protector of an individual or even an object or a place. As such, they possess special skills related to defense, protection, and vigilance. Guardians usually shun martial weapons as they are deemed too heavy for their line of work, which requires nimble movement and rapid response. This does not mean that they cannot use them, if needed.

Suit	Maneuver	Description
♣	Push	Push an opponent away, with related side effects.
♦	Guard	Defend another entity and increase their defense capability.
♥	Parry	Increase the fighter's defense capabilities.
♠	Sweep	Attack more than one adjacent opponents with a single strike.

Warrior

Warriors have knowledge of the battlefield as guards and soldiers, and excel at working with groups of other fighters, helping them and leading to reach victory in the battlefield.

Suit	Maneuver	Description
♣	Disarm	Disarms the opponent.
♦	Goad	Make an opponent lose their cool, makes it easier for others to attack.
♥	Lead	Direct one of your companions to improve their attack's success.
♠	Push	Push an opponent away, with related side effects.

PART 7

HERALDS

“These vessels of the divine can manifest such incredible power sometimes, that it is almost as if they turned into gods themselves.”

Noria Aldamar, Our Changing Times

Heralds represent a deity that they worship and follow unequivocally. They promote their beliefs throughout the world and will even fight to defend those principles established by their deity.

Due to their dedication and piety, heralds have been granted the power to perform miracles through their deity. These can be incredibly powerful, but at the same time can bring on unexpected results, as the miracle is subject to the whims of the deity and how strong is the herald's faith.

Physical combat

Heralds can only use 1 CP for physical combat actions and reactions. However, they are allowed to use martial-grade weapons and armor.



Deity & allegiance

The player must choose a deity to whom they have dedicated himself body and soul, and is the source of his strength and powers. Each deity is defined by the following aspects, which will define the herald's behavior throughout their life.

BASIS

Each deity represents, or is represented, by a foundation of the universe. This foundation can be something like fire, water, air, or earth. It can also be something ethereal like justice, love, or revenge. Any foundation is valid as long as the rest of the aspects can be established in a concrete way.

PURPOSE

Based on the foundation, each deity possesses a purpose or goal that they possess and promotes for the universe in which the herald lives. This purpose is extremely important, since it defines how the herald should act, and therefore

how much support he will receive from his deity in difficult moments.

ATTRIBUTES

Each deity has at least three defining attributes, and the herald who follows this deity is expected to use those attributes as a guide in his actions. Examples of attributes would be terms such as *fair*, *warrior*, *considerate*, *vigilant*, and *neutral*.

HOLY SYMBOL

Each deity can have, as an option, a sacred symbol that identifies their followers in the world. This is usually presented on a medal, ring, scepter, weapon, or any other appropriate item.

Temples and alliances

Usually, the herald is part of an established temple or church. This organization, which can be local or established in more than one kingdom, is the one that sends heralds on missions for their purposes. These organizations can be extremely powerful and influential, or they can be an up-and-coming church based on some newly-discovered old writings.

SPURIOUS

A herald can be an independent entity without the support of any known temple, having established their powers through a personal relationship with a deity. They can be so even for deities that already possess an established church.

These are known as spurious, and are generally viewed with distrust, especially by members of any established temple that follows the same deity.



FACTIONS

Alliances with factions may or may not be through a church, as it could originate from a faction that is against the church to which the herald belongs. This is

something that the player and Fate Dealer can agree on and establish, and it is up to them to make it known to the other players if they wish, or to keep it a secret.

Miracles

Heralds have the ability to perform miraculous acts by channeling the power bestowed upon them by their deity. They do so by praying to their deity, and asking for their intervention. After the prayer, the herald player will then proclaim the desired miracle and its effect. This can be anything, with no limitations, unless said miracle goes against their deity's basis, purpose, and attributes.

Asking their deity for a miracle takes one full combat turn for the herald, in which the herald cannot do anything else but pray fervently. This prayer can be silent.

On the next turn, the herald player will pull out a card from the Fate Deck. This card represents the results of their prayer and determines how powerful their miracle is, detailed in the table below.

For miracles performed with a pip card, the target of the miracle (when applicable) must be able to be physically touched by the herald, including via a weapon or other item.

Card	Class	Range	Duration	Sway Cost
Pip	Minor	Touch/1 zone max	Instantaneous	None
Jack	Notable	2 zones	1 hour	1
Queen	Incredible	4 zones	1 day	2
King	Superior	8 zones	1 week	3
Ace	Celestial	16 zones	1 month	All sway

As stated above, the effect of each miracle is at the total discretion of the player, and there are no limits as to what the herald performs, as long as the miracle to be performed is aligned with the deity being worshiped. An action that goes against these precepts in a radical way can neutralize the miracle, sometimes even backfiring or having an effect opposite to what was desired in the first place.

Sway cost

Even though the power of miracles comes from their deity, performing these powerful acts of channeling raw divine power take a temporary toll on the herald's health. Therefore, some miracles can have a sway cost, depending on their intensity. Sway lost



in such a manner can be recovered only by healing through rest, as it is not “normal” damage like that received in combat.

If the herald reaches 0 SW through performing a miracle, they will not be dying, just unconscious. However, if they do receive any damage when unconscious, then they will begin the process of dying.

Permanence

Although miracles have a maximum duration, some effects may be permanent, although this would be indirect. For example, if the miracle sets a cart on fire, there is a possibility that the fire in the cart will be put out and it will be fixed in the future, but it is also possible that it will not be possible to put out the fire and the cart will end up destroyed, which would be an indirect permanent effect.

PART 8 CREATURES & MONSTERS

“And like a god snapping his fingers, strange beings appeared into the world, and the canvas upon which our own reality is painted on was ripped and torn apart, never to be sown back again.”

Cado Nuiplata Eron, Forgotten by the Gods

As part of the bizarre and dangerous things that the protagonists will find in the world, monsters and creatures are an important element in those adventures. Some of these creatures will be indifferent, some will be good... and far too many will not be friendly to our heroes!



Stats

Monsters and creatures are defined by a group of stat scores that establish their speed, combat prowess, resistance to damage, and special skills and abilities.

MOVE

Determines how many zones a creature can move in a combat round. One zone equals 25 feet/8 meters.

CONDITION TARGETS (CT)

Condition targets are presented as low, intermediate, and high numbers, with each one being linked to a particular condition: The lowest value relates to the *incapacitated* condition, the intermediate value represents the *unconscious* condition, and the highest value represents *dead*.

An attack against the creature must be equal or higher to one of these values to inflict the desired condition on them.

OUTSTANDING ATTRIBUTE (OA)

Similar to protagonists, creatures have a single, naturally outstanding attribute that grants them +1 CP when performing tasks that use this particular attribute.

ACTION

Determines how many PCs the creature can use when performing actions.

REACTION

Determines how many PCs the creature can use when reacting to events such as physical attacks or spells.

ATTACK

This establishes the way the creature usually strikes in combat against their opponents. If more than one attack is described, it means that it makes one of each attack per turn.

SPECIAL ATTACKS & DEFENSES

If the creature has special attacks or features that are set by a specific card suit, they will be listed with the corresponding suit, and a brief description on the action's mechanics.

In the case where the special action or feature happens always, no suit symbol will be presented. Some creatures have special skills associated to a class, in that case, the class will be mentioned.

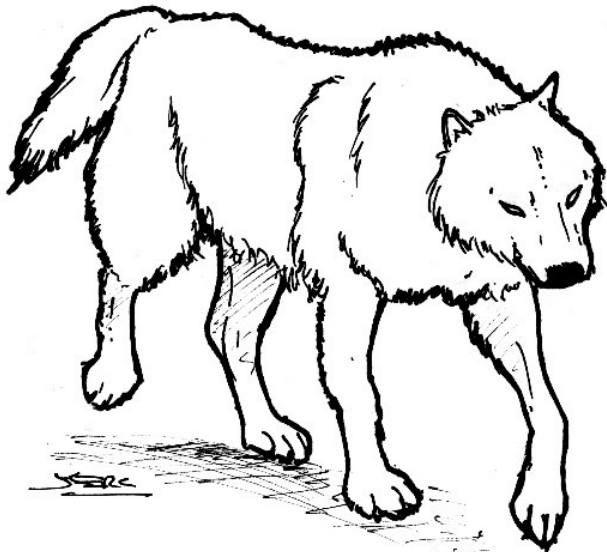
Creature codex

This is a small collection of creatures and monsters that you can use in your adventures, and that can also work as a springboard for creating your own monsters, or adapting creatures from other games.

Amarok

Move 2	Condition targets 5 / 8 / 10	OA Awareness
Action 1	Reaction 2	Attack Bite, claws.

◆ **Focused target:** Single out an opponent by playing this card against them, giving the amarok a bonus equal to the card's value on all actions against that chosen target.



The amarok is a formidable beast related to wolves. Unlike their more common counterpart, the amarok is a solitary animal, preferring to wander and hunt by itself. However, amaroks do have lairs where they go to rest with their pack after a long hunting session.

Amaroks are nocturnal animals, preferring to use the stealth provided by darkness as a way to catch their prey. They possess incredible night vision, and because of this they are unaffected by dark environments.

The amarok's appearance changes depending on its location.

Those from cold, snowy regions have long, pure white fur, while those that live in forested areas tend to have shorter fur that goes from reddish brown to brown-grays.

They are fairly intelligent and have evolved to recognize humanoids as direct threats to their hunts and their environments. Therefore, an amarok will not hesitate in proactively attacking a group of humans as long as that group is not too large.

Ant, giant

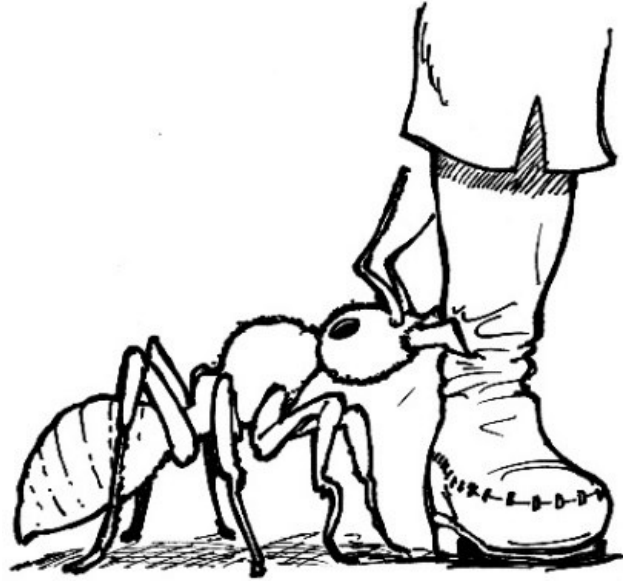
Move 3	Condition Targets 2 / 3 / 4	OA Agility
Action 1	Reaction 1	Attack Bite.

♣ **Drag:** Opponent gets dragged away, save against 1 CP for 1-4 ants, +1 CP per every 4 additional ants carrying the victim.

♣ **Venom:** Bites and injects victim with a painful venom. Target is under the incapacitated condition for a random number of rounds.

Vicious, fast, and incredibly strong just like their normal-sized counterparts, giant ants are about the size of a large, domesticated cat. They are a shiny blue-black color, and their bite is incredibly painful.

On some occasions, giant ants opt for carrying away their opponents, presumably to take them back to their lair and eat them. An entity carried away must save against T1 to liberate themselves from the ants, and this increases in difficulty for every four ants that are dragging away the entity. For example, someone being dragged away by ten giant ants has to save against T3 to free themselves.



On other occasions, the ant will inject the victim with a painful venom. An entity suffering this attack will be under the *incapacitated* condition due to the venom's effect.

Ape, berserker

Move 1	Condition Targets 8 / 13 / 16	OA Strength
Action 1	Reaction 1	Attack Bite, punch, claw.

- ♣ **Charge:** Runs at a target and tackle, stunning them (incapacitated) for a random number of rounds.
- ♣ **Slam:** Grabs a victim, raise them high, and slam them onto the ground, making them unconscious for a random number of rounds.



Berserker apes are nearly indistinguishable from their regular counterparts except for the large plume of coarse white hair that sticks up from the top of their head to the middle of their back, and the huge fangs that protrude out like those of a saber tooth tiger. Their fur ranges from a ruddy brown to black.

When angry, the white plume of hair rises straight up, all the way down their bodies, giving them a specially menacing look, and a good warning to their would-be victims.

They are quite strong although not that agile, and one of their favorite ways to attack and capture their victims is to slamming them into the ground and then punching and biting their unfortunate prey until it dies.

Assassin vine

Move 1	Condition Targets 4 / 6 / 8	OA Strength
Action 1	Reaction 1	Attack Slam.

♣ **Grapple:** Wrap quickly around target, putting them under the incapacitated condition. Save against T2 to be freed. After 4 rounds, victim loses 1 SW per round due to choking.

These appear as innocuous vines with lush green leaves and sweet-smelling, seven-petal lavender flowers. These vines are usually between 8-10 ft./2.5-3.0 m in length. The plant itself covers roughly the same area in a circular fashion.

If a creature just passes by them, they do not make any attempt to attack, however, they will spring up to life if they are stepped on or receive some sort of damage. In their natural habitat the vines tend to run all over the place, so the chances of someone stepping on the vines are rather high. To determine this, have players try to avoid the vines against a T2 difficulty. Especially dense foliage might make this even more difficult, raising the difficulty to T3.

Once they detect a living being touching them, the vines immediately respond in a very aggressive manner, either slamming their victim with their thick, strong vines (around 2-3 in./5-8 cm thick), or trying to grapple and choke the victim to death.

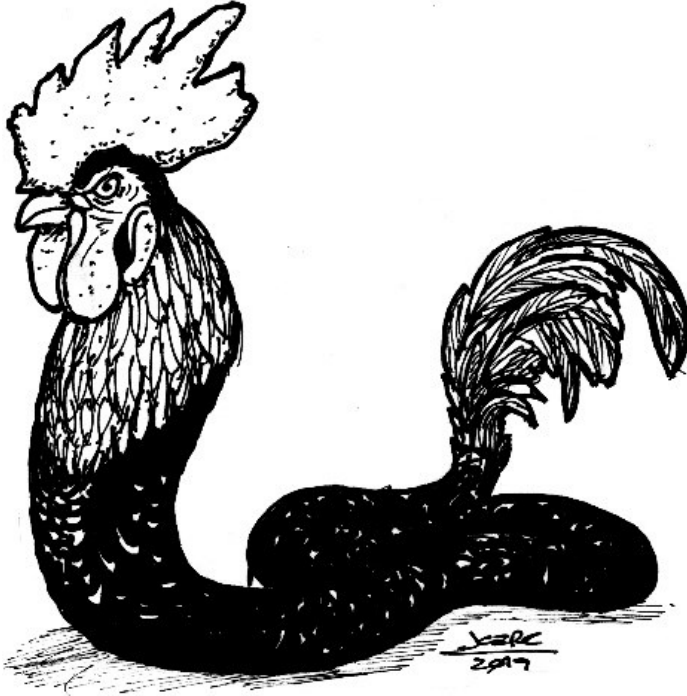
The vines do not move from their base location, but can reach out at the move rate shown in the stat block.



Basilisk

Move 1	Condition Targets 10 / 16 / 20	OA Tenacity
Action 2	Reaction 2	Attack Bite, slam with tail/body.

- ♣ **Constrict:** Wrap their snake-like body around target, putting them under the incapacitated condition. Save against T2 to be freed.
- ♦ **Paralysis:** If an entity gazes at the basilisk's eyes, they have to save against T3 or become petrified (unconscious) for a random number of rounds.



A bizarre creature of obscure magical origins that looks like a black-feathered rooster with the body of a snake, basilisks are dangerous creatures that tend to mind their own business but will undoubtedly charge and attack at the slightest threat.

No one knows about the origin of these fascinating beasts; some allege that they must come from the bizarre experiments of deranged mages.

They tend to lead lonely lives, with rarely anyone finding two or more basilisk together in a lair. A female basilisk will only lay a single egg throughout their lifespan. As can be imagined, ap-

proaching the lair of a nesting basilisk is asking for death.

Their eyes are a beautiful purple hue that contrasts beautifully against the black plumage; this beauty is in fact a lure for the basilisk's victims, as its gaze can cause any creature to become paralyzed and defenseless.

When a paralysis attack is successful, the victim will be *unconscious* for several rounds, or until the condition is removed through medical or magical means.

Bee, giant

Move 3

Condition Targets 3 / 5 / 6

OA Awareness

Action 1

Reaction 1

Attack Sting.

A giant bee looks just like a regular bee, but it is roughly the size of a pigeon. When threatened, they will sting their victims, leaving the stinger embedded in the victim releasing a venom that lasts for several rounds as determined by the table below (based on the highest card played), or until the stinger is removed. The venom will place the victim under the *incapacitated* condition. After a successful attack, the bee will die.



Giant bees build amazing, giant beehives that can be more than 50 feet high, and their honey is quite prized and expensive. Unfortunately, trying to get this honey is a dangerous endeavor, as the bees will protect their hive at all costs.

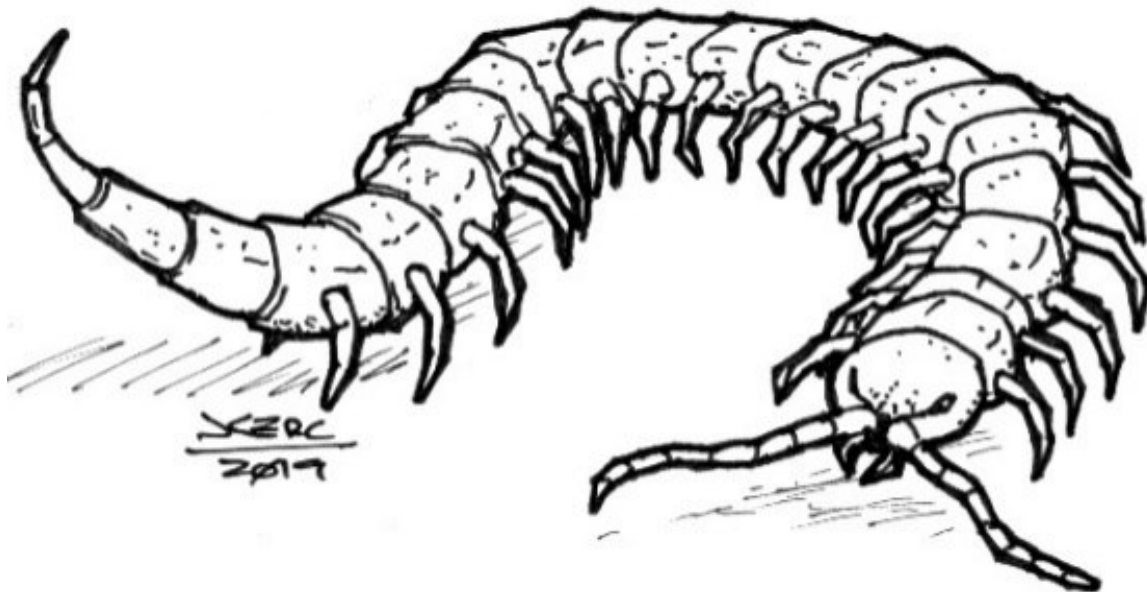
Centipede, giant

Move 3 **Condition Targets** 6 / 10 / 12 **OA** Resilience
Action 1 **Reaction** 1 **Attack** Bite.

♣ **Venom:** Injects victim with a numbing venom that makes the victim dizzy, under the *incapacitated* condition for a random number of rounds.

You can usually hear them inside a dungeon with a characteristic continuous, quick tick-tick sound of their chitinous myriad legs tapping against hard stone floors. Giant centipedes are quick, vicious, and sometimes deadly. They are usually very dark brown or black, with some odd examples in dark green.

Their bite can sometimes be venomous, which will cause the victim to become incapacitated, shivering on the ground until the effect passes away or is healed.



Cobold

Move 1	Condition Targets 4 / 6 / 8	OA Dexterity
Action 1	Reaction 1	Attack Weapon, unarmed.

◆ **Vanish:** They can trick a single entity and appear to vanish from their sight. However, others nearby will be able to see the cobold.

Cobolds are odd creatures with an unknown magical origin. Their skin is dark purple and has a strange appearance like smooth carved wood. Their bodies are skinny and oddly bent, looking like a miniature human being with crooked claw-like fingers, and are no more than 36 inches (1 meter) in height. On the place where a humanoid would have their heart, cobolds have a strange, softly-glowing circle, betraying their arcane origins. They usually wear long (for them) cloaks to cover themselves and their glowing "heart".

They are known to make demands to towns, castles, and other types of residences and settlements for food and other things, even gold. If their demands are not met, they will usually assemble a mob and invade the place, crawling all over the buildings, going down chimneys, forcing their way in through windows and doors, attacking the people and stealing valuables from them.



Gargoyle

Move 1/fly 4

Condition Targets 9 / 14 / 18

OA Resilience

Action 2

Reaction 2

Attack Claws.

◆ **Stone skin:** They can turn their skin to stone, therefore able to add any diamonds card to their defense reaction.

Gargoyles are magical creatures made of carved stone, usually about 30 to 50 inches in height (0.8 to 1.2 meters). They are squat with disproportionately thick bodies that belie their agility.

Gargoyles usually wear grimacing faces with horrible, wide grins, and a multitude of horns on their heads, but they do not necessarily have humanoid bodies, as some can have bodies that look like wolves, lizards, or birds of prey.



They regularly are used to guard buildings and entrances, simulating statues, unmoving and weathered by the elements. Therefore, they get 1 extra card on their initiative as they surprise any unwitting adventurers. Due to their stone skin, gargoyles are immune to slashing or stabbing attacks (as from a sword or an arrow), and can only take damage from bludgeoning weapons like maces, hammers, and such.

Ghoul

Move 1 **Condition Targets** 6 / 10 / 12 **OA** Acumen
Action 2 **Reaction 2** **Attack** Weapon.

◆ **Charm:** On a successful action, the victim will be charmed. However, commands against the victim's deepest nature will be resisted.

Ghouls are unspeakably evil creatures who usually dwell in abandoned places by themselves. They usually do not have a specific appearance, as they adopt the appearance of their last victim. This cannot be confused with ghouls taking over their victim's body, as some people think.

As soon as their victim expires, they go through a pleasurable yet painful experience as their bodies completely transform and copy their victim's.

However, they do not possess the victim's memories. They are intelligent enough to attempt to act normally when planning and trying to capture a victim, as the ghoul might have learned a couple of mannerisms and expressions from their previous prey, therefore having a chance of passing undetected. However, on very rare occasions, some people have seen ghouls in their real form, which some claim to be that of a humanoid woman with pointed ears, but instead of a court, her whole head is a hole.



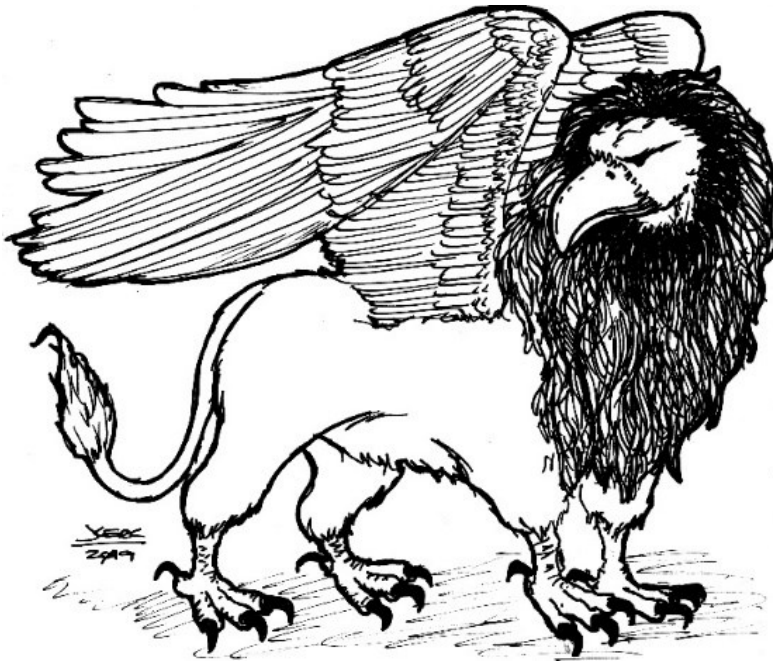
Griffin

Move 1	Condition Targets 9 / 14 / 18	OA Dexterity
Action 2	Reaction 2	Attack Claws, beak.

♣ **Grab & drop:** Victim is grabbed and taken way up high in the sky, then dropped.

Griffins are large, majestic creatures that have the oversized body of a lion with the head, wings, and claws of a giant eagle, and they can reach a length of 10 to 12 feet, not including the tail. Even though its body is that of a lion, it is covered in soft, small feathers throughout. A griffin's plumage is usually very dark brown and black, with deep orange feathers at the outer edge of their wings and the end of the lion's tail. Their habitat is usually on tall, forested mountains in temperate climates, where they build large, impressive nests on sheer cliffs.

Their flight speed in combat is quite fast, and they are agile and nimble even when on the ground. This speed is part of the reason why they are fearsome in combat, in addition to their sharp claws and beak. Griffins are quite intelligent, and can have a basic understanding (but now speak) the common language of the region they inhabit. They



possess an intrinsic sense of justice and will only attack if they feel threatened, or if they observe a creature bullying and abusing another one.

One of their more fearsome attacks is to grab a victim, take flight quickly, and drop them onto a hard surface to their death.

Hellhound

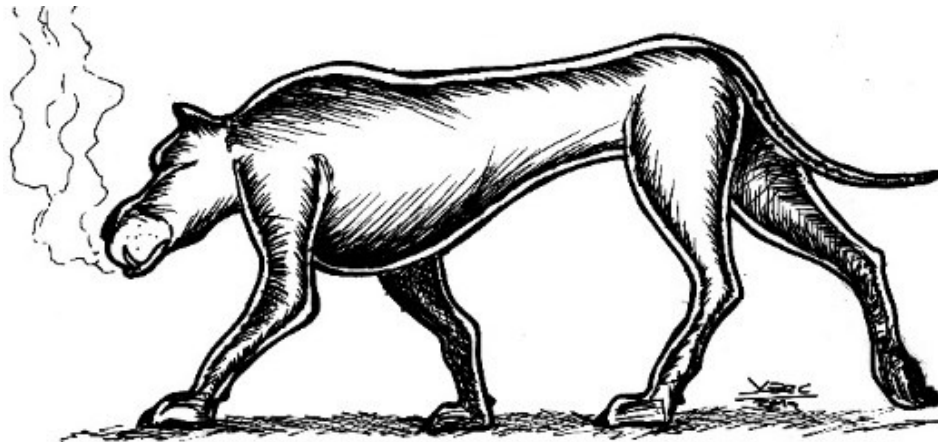
Move 2	Condition Targets 8 / 13 / 16	OA Dexterity
Action 2	Reaction 2	Attack Claws, bite.

◆ **Firebreath:** A stream of fire swirls towards the target, causing damage (as per highest card played) and setting any flammable items on fire.

These infernal, magical canine-like beasts look like giant mastiffs, their heads a solid six feet off the ground. Their skin has no fur, with a dark gray coloring that has a strange polished metal sheen to it. However, they are not made of metal at all. They are muscular, heavy-set, with cut-off tails, large silvery canine fangs, and glowing red eyes. They make an unsettling, incredibly deep growl.

Hellhounds are usually deployed to guard an area and prevent intruders from entering a protected area. They are faithful to their masters to death. However, there are known cases of “rogue” hellhounds that for some unknown reason are found wandering around aimlessly.

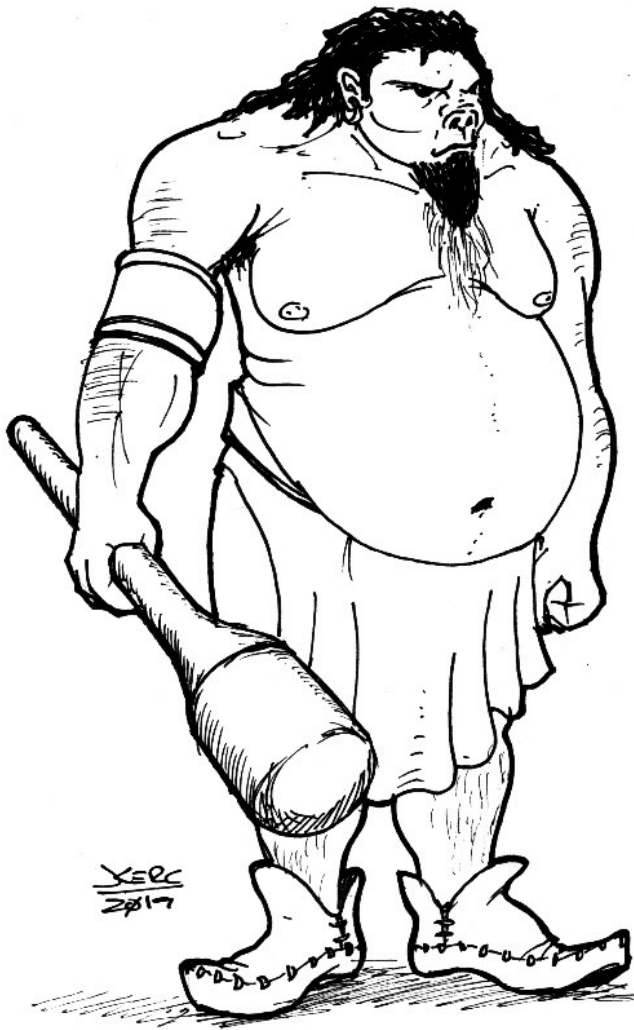
Their most fearsome attack is their fire breath, which can strike a target from 2 zones (60 ft. /18 m) away.



Ogre

Move 2	Condition Targets 10 / 16 / 20	OA Resilience
Action 3	Reaction 1	Attack Punch, kick, weapon.

◆ **Crush:** The ogre jumps over the victim, crushing them with their body. Damage is determined by highest card played. Every round the victim is under the ogre will be under the *incapacitated* condition.



The human-like ogre is a species of incredible strength and size, usually reaching 140 to 160 inches (3.5 to 4 meters) in height. Their bodies tend to accumulate a lot of fat and, due to their size, that might give the impression that they are simply overweight, but under those layers of fat is pure muscle that is stronger than that of almost any humanoid.

They have with very thick necks, making them look like their head just protrudes straight off of their shoulders. Their faces have brutish, strong features, with a protruding brow and large pig-like noses.

Their bodies are not that good at controlling their temperature, so ogres enjoy bathing in mud and keeping their bodies covered in dried mud, as this helps them keep their body temperature at a comfortable level. This is part of the reason why they wear barely any clothing, with many opting for simply being naked all the time. They have a preference from eating raw meat, and will not hesitate in eating other humanoids if they can.

Piskie

Move 1 **Condition Targets** 3 / 5 / 6 **OA** Empathy
Action 1 **Reaction 1** **Attack** Weapon.

◆ **Deceit:** On a successful action, the victim will be charmed. However, commands against the victim's deepest nature will be resisted.

Piskies are clever and naughty fey creatures that are tiny, mischievous, and quite strong in their magical powers considering their small size of no more than 12 inches (30 cm) in height. They are often ill-clothed or naked, but they have a preference for bits of finery, like silk ribbons and small precious stone earrings. They look like tiny halflings, with very skinny bodies. Their skin tones are the same as those of most humanoids, ranging from pale tan to dark brown. They have bat-like wings which allow them to fly and dart around like hummingbirds.

Some piskies are said to steal children or to lead travelers astray. They are drawn to horses, riding them for pleasure and making tangled ringlets in the manes of those horses they ride. They are great explorers familiar with the caves of the ocean, the hidden sources of the streams and the recesses of the land, so if the adventurers are able to befriend or negotiate with a piskie, they could gain a worthy guide. However, as mentioned above, some piskies cannot resist the chance of tricking adventurers and taking advantage of them.



Rat, giant

Move 2	Condition Targets 3 / 5 / 6	OA Dexterity
Action 1	Reaction 1	Attack Bite.

◆ **Sickness:** Due to their dirtiness, they will make their victim temporarily ill. Treat as being under the *incapacitated* condition.



Giant rats look just like their normal counterparts but about 48 inches (1.2 meters) in length. They are sneaky, sometimes aggressive, and will definitely eat through materials, opening their way into unwanted places. Sometimes they can transmit illness with their bite; in the case that happens, the victim will be sick until the effect is over.

Shrieker

Move 0
Action 0

Condition Targets 1 / 2 / 3
Reaction 1

OA Awareness
Attack Sting.

Shriekers are rather large mushrooms that grow in thick clusters. The tops are reddish purple, and are pock-marked with myriad holes similar to a lotus blossom. They range from 12 to 36 inches in diameter (0.3 to 1.0 meters), and grow from 24 to 60 inches (0.6 to 1.5 meters) in height. The stalks are an off-white color and quite thick.

These mushrooms are harmless per se, and you can make a fantastic tea out of them which will give a one card bonus on initiative to whoever drinks it.

However, if they detect movement nearby, the shriekers feel threatened, filling a set of internal bellows in their stalks and producing a high-pitched, shrieking sound (thus their name) that will blow the cover of any unfortunate adventurers that come across them. The shrieking will continue for around 5 minutes or until the shriekers are destroyed.



Spider, giant

Move 3

Condition Targets 6 / 10 / 12

OA Awareness

Action 1

Reaction 2

Attack Bite.

♣ **Venom:** Injects victim with a painful venom that makes the victim temporarily unconscious (unconscious) for a random number of rounds based on the highest play card.

♣ **Web:** The spider wraps their victim in their web. The victim will be conscious but otherwise unconscious. They can break free against a T2.



Giant spiders are found in dark, hidden areas in abandoned dungeons and castles, and in caves throughout the world. They range from 24 to 48 inches in size, with black or blue-black coloring, and have short, stiff hairs covering their bodies in an almost spike-like way.

They are quite aggressive and territorial and will attack on sight. On some occasions they will grapple an opponent and use their web to wrap them in it. A victim in this situation is considered to be under the incapacitated condition. A spun web will have a variable target score for its strength as deemed by the Fate Dealer. Victims need to play a card higher than the target score to break free from the web.

Topiar

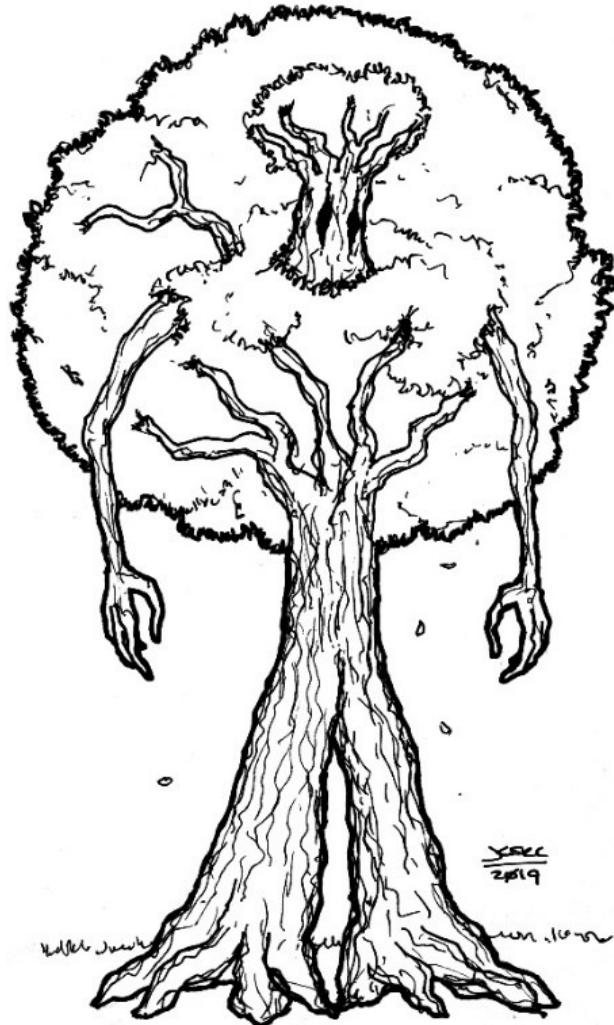
Move 2 **Condition Targets** 11 / 18 / 22 **OA** Strength
Action 3 **Reaction** 1 **Attack** Punch, kick.

◆ **Toss:** The topiar will grab a victim and toss them a random number of zones as determined by the FD.

Topiars are sentient, moving trees, usually about 25 to 35 feet (8 to 10 meters) in height. When resting, they look just like any other tree, with thick barks and lush foliage, although not as wide on top as a regular tree. However, when woken up, the trunk separates into two legs, and their head and arms seem to sprout out of their foliage.

They are generally gentle creatures with a calm demeanor and the wisdom of hundreds of years of life, but they are fierce defenders of their surroundings, and will attack anyone who willfully harms their forest home.

They are usually found in the densest forests, where most travelers are even unaware of their presence as they pass through.



Troll

Move 1
Action 2

Condition Targets 7 / 11 / 14
Reaction 1

OA Resilience
Attack Punch, kick, weapon.



Large, imposing, and deadly, trolls are found all over the world, usually living in isolation, as independence is highly valued in their culture. A typical troll will be around 9 to 12 feet tall, with very muscular, human-like thick bodies. Their hands have only four fingers, and their feet four toes. They tend to be hairy in the same patterns a human can be. Their skin goes from dark gray-brown to pale gray. Usually, the darker-skinned trolls are found in the tropical areas, while skins get gradually lighter as you move into colder regions.

Trolls do not get along with any other species, and basically consider everything else that moves as possible food. They are quite aggressive, will fight with berserker rage.

Condition target matrix

This table contains the progression of condition targets used for monsters and creatures. The *card* column allows you to randomly pick a CT level if you are creating a new monster.

Card	Incapacitated	Unconscious	Dead
--	1	2	3
2	2	3	4
3	3	5	6
4	4	6	8
5	5	8	10
6	6	10	12
7	7	11	14
8	8	13	16
9	9	14	18
10	10	16	20
Jack	11	18	22
Queen	12	19	24
King	13	21	26
Ace	14	22	28