

THE W.A.R. BOOK



WRITING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
DESIGN AND ILLUSTRATION

KYLE RAWLINGS
SAM HANNIS

MOMENT OF TRUTH

Your moment is now. You've trained to handle this power, found shortcuts and workarounds to channel it, lectured on its might and warned of its dangers. None of it matters now as you take its reigns and go beyond your limits with its unbridled energy. You may turn this wellspring of potential to one cause.

Ask a question no one could ask and expect an answer, honest and clear. Take out a single foe such that they will never be a threat again or shape the city around you at your whim. Once the power has left you however you'll see why people were trying to warn you all this time. The world now looks on you with fear, caution or even desire. However they feel, you'll be watched much more closely now.

TEAM MOVES

When you share a **triumphant celebration with someone**, ask them if they'd make a difficult sacrifice to achieve their goals. If they answer yes, take Influence over them and add a Team to the Pool. If they answer no, lose Influence over them.

When you share a **vulnerability or weakness with someone**, tell them a terrible deed you've committed in the pursuit of your goals. If they offer comfort or consolation, exchange Influence. If they recoil in horror, exchange Influence anyway but mark a Condition.

POTENTIAL



Every time you roll a miss on a move, mark potential.

ADVANCEMENT

When you fill your potential track, you advance. Choose from the list below.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take another Form | <input type="checkbox"/> Rearrange your Labels as you choose, and add +1 to a Label |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a move from another playbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a Doom and a Doom Track from the Doomed Playbook |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a move from another playbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Unlock your Moment of Truth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a move from another playbook | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Someone permanently loses Influence over you; add +1 to a Label | |

When you've taken five advances from the top list, you can take advances from the list below.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unlock your Moment of Truth after you've used it once | <input type="checkbox"/> Lock a Label, and add +1 to a Label of your choice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choose another Playbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Retire from the life or become a paragon of the city |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take an adult move | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take an adult move | |

OTHER MOVES

They say knowledge is power, and power corrupts. You've learned this and more in the pursuit of it, sacrificed much to achieve it all for a chance to peer into the Ley Lines. The lesson that stands out among the rest however is this. It's not enough, not the power or the knowledge or even the risk. You teeter on a knife's point, learn to step away or join the ranks of monsters.

THE WITCH

HERO NAME

REAL NAME

LOOK

- ambiguous, man, shifting, transgressing, woman
- Asian or South Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Indigenous, Middle Eastern, White
- athletic body, compact body, lean body, muscular body
- stylish clothing, comfortable clothing, simple clothing, casual clothing
- simple costume, casual costume, no costume, inspiring costume

ABILITIES

The secrets that you've discovered have provided knowledge in the creation of a powerful magical weapon, one that you wield and use to harness the energy of the ley lines. This is your Signature Weapon.

FORM AND FUNCTION

You've learned much and applied this knowledge in the creation of arcane geometry, rituals and incantations with which to harness the source of your magical powers in a safe manner. These are your Forms, powerful spells that grant you a small portion of the power at your fingertips. Choose up to two Forms.

Form Change: When you enter your Form, roll + unmarked Conditions. On a miss, your Form is sloppy or provides only a weak connection to your magical source. Hold two Power and take -1 forward. On a hit hold four. On a 10+, clear a Condition.

Spend **Power** on **Signs**. You leave your Form at the end of the scene. If you have more than one Form, you may change between them at the cost of a Power. When you spend all your Power you lose access to your Form.



LABELS

(at character creation, add +1 wherever you choose)

DANGER -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

FREAK -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

SAVIOR -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

SUPERIOR -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

MUNDANE -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

CONDITIONS

- Afraid** (-2 to directly engage a threat)
- Angry** (-2 to comfort or support or pierce the mask)
- Guilty** (-2 to provoke someone or assess the situation)
- Hopeless** (-2 to unleash your powers)
- Insecure** (-2 to defend someone or reject others' influence)

BACKSTORY

- You've gazed into the Ley Lines, a powerful network of energy that criss-crosses the globe. What exactly did you see?
- What did you sacrifice for your powers that were so important to you?
- Who, outside the team, is helping to keep you from going over the edge?
- What secret do you hope to find, before you go over the edge?
- Why do you care about the team?

Once you've finished your backstory, introduce your character to the other players, and then determine what happened when your team first came together, the relationships between you and your teammates, and who has Influence over you.

WHEN OUR TEAM FIRST CAME TOGETHER...

We uncovered a secret the city has been keeping hidden for a Generation, what was it and how did the city at large respond?

RELATIONSHIPS

_____ was there when I peered into the Ley Lines, who knows what would have happened without them.

_____ has a secret you're dying to know but they won't tell you.

INFLUENCE

You're part of the team but your drive makes you hard to reach. Give two teammates Influence over you.

FORM 1

Abilities:

Crest

(If only choosing one form)

Signs

(If only choosing one form)

You have access to several abilities while in your Form. Choose two per Form. If you've selected one Form, choose up to three instead.

Elemental Control, Weather Control, Inhuman Strength and Durability, Impossible Mobility, Impossible Fighting Skills, Inhuman Intellect, An Alternate Form, Plant Manipulation, Dark Sorcery, Shadow Manipulation, Shadow Walking, Portals, Illusions, Telekinesis, Light Manipulation

You have infused your Signature Weapon with a powerful **Crest**, accessible only when you enter your Form. Choose one per Form. If you've selected only one Form, choose two instead.

- Crest of Transmutation:** You may change Forms without having to spend Power and may, in addition, make minor alterations to mundane objects.
- Crest of the Wilds:** Your Crest provides protection from harsh environmental and physical conditions, shielding you from the elements, the need for sleep, food or water. In addition, your passage cannot be impeded by natural barriers.
- Crest of Knowledge:** Your Crest is a portable library on the arcane arts and magic in general. When you encounter a magical or otherworldly phenomena roll + Power. On a miss you've never encountered this particular event or phenomena. On a hit provide one detail about the situation, the GM will tell you where your information is missing or wrong. On a 10+ you're well versed on the situation, your information is correct.
- Crest of Mana:** Your Crest is particularly well crafted, granting an additional Power whenever you assume your Form.
- Crest of Beasts:** Your Crest gives you common cause, allowing you to speak with animals. Roll + Power. On a miss, the information is garbled or useless. On a hit the information is incomplete or misleading. On a 10+, the information is correct.
- Crest of Fabrication:** Your Crest turns your Signature Weapon into a portable workstation, capable of creating most simple mundane items.

You have several **Signs**, mystic arts and spells you can produce while in your Form. Choose two per Form. If you've selected one form, choose three instead.

- Clarity:** You may expend one Power when you roll to Assess the Situation to take another option, even on a miss.
- Fear:** You may expend one Power to cause an opponent to flee in terror. Roll + Power. On a miss, the opponent stands strong and is not likely to cower before you. Take -1 the next time you use Fear on them. On a hit, they flee while putting someone nearby in danger. On a 10+, they flee the scene.
- Knock:** You may expend one Power to open something locked or reveal something hidden from normal senses. Roll + Power. On a miss you've damaged what you're trying to unlock to a point it can't be opened without tools and time. On a hit you open the lock or reveal the hidden object but you leave evidence behind of your action. On a 10+, you leave no evidence behind.
- Mirror:** Choose a PC who you have Influence over. Mark a Condition and one Power to use a Move or Flair they possess. If you have Influence over no one you may instead pick another Sign to Mirror.
- Polymorph:** You may expend one Power to change the appearance of an object or person. Roll + Power. On a miss, the object or person has major tells and will be found out with limited scrutiny. On a hit, the illusion is strong but something is obviously off. What is it? On a 10+, the illusion holds until the end of the scene.
- Reflect:** If you must mark a Condition from a Powerful Blow, expend one Power to inflict one Condition on your opponent
- Sending:** You may expend one Power to speak directly to someone you know even if you're separated by large distances. Roll + Power. On a miss the message is either short or overheard by someone you didn't intend. On a hit, a key detail is left out from your message. On a 10+ the message is clear and you receive a response.
- Thief:** You may expend one Power to take a possession from anyone you can see, even if you're unable to see the item.

FORM 2

Abilities:

Crest

Signs

PLAYING THE WITCH

The Witch is someone who seeks knowledge, wishes to perfect their power, to clear away mysteries and to answer questions unasked all for the sake of improving themselves and those around them. The Witch is the member of the team who is willing to take hard choices when the team might not otherwise take action.

Innately curious, the Witch should question everything presented to them and dissect it with a critical eye. This skeptical approach may come from an early life of inquiry and a desire for power or simply a fascination with the world and its mysteries. No two Witches are the same however that one thing binds them all together, the drive to know for the sake of knowing. They've seen the truth behind the world, ancient secrets and alien minds far beyond their ability to understand and it's a bonfire to all of them, a burning quest to understand that single glimpse, that single experience, that has propelled them onto the stage of heroes. At times the Witch might seem mad and their arcane pursuits may seem just as alien as the truths they wish to uncover. There is no secret too salacious, no task too dangerous, no truth too unspeakable for the Witch to pursue. At other times they might seem the only one with clarity, even in situations where the world around them might seem ready to fall apart. Chaos is where the Witch is most in control, no matter what side it's on.

All the while it is the team that grounds them. Shows them where the line is and pulls them back when they might cross it. They may not own up to the fact they teeter on the edge of monsterdom themselves, they may be callous or eccentric but somewhere they should know what holds them down. They may not have a large pool of influences in their lives but those they have are perhaps more important than the powers they wish to pursue.

SUGGESTED MOVES FROM OTHER PLAYBOOKS

Given that The Witch does not natively have moves from their own playbook, any move that fits the Witch in play will be of particular use. Label array and the choices a Witch makes for their Crests and Signs will dictate what moves will work best for their character. Like The Nova and The Doomed, The Witch has a great deal of flexibility in their choices.

GM MOVES FOR THE WITCH

- Remind them of the things that lurk behind perception
- Show them the line, show what it would cost to cross it
- Put what holds them back in danger, ask what they'd sacrifice to keep them safe
- Show them the price of abandoning their humanity
- Show them wonders, ask how they're changed

INSPIRATION FOR THE WITCH

- Sora, **KINGDOM HEARTS**
- The Sailor Scouts, **SAILOR MOON**
- Tony Tony Chopper, **ONE PIECE**
- Crest Wielders, **FIRE EMBLEM: THREE HOUSES**

NOTES ON MOVES AND EXTRAS

While the Witch does not have traditional moves, it is important to note several parts of their Form mechanic and what might need consideration during play. Forms provide the Witch a great deal of versatility and choice, well beyond typical moves and the extra mechanics of other Playbooks. This versatility comes at the cost of Power, a resource Witches should keep their eye on. Power does not transfer after a scene has ended and a Form cannot be maintained past a scene unless the GM specifies otherwise.

The **Crest of Transmutation** only applies to the Form you've chosen it for. You cannot gain its benefits when changing into a Form that has the Crest of Transmutation. Its additional effect should stress the minor alterations. Repairing ripped clothing, changing the color of an object, altering the flavor of a meal.

Crest of Beasts allows you to speak to animals even without needing to make a roll. This communication is non-verbal and unlike human speech, merely emotions and feelings you can read and sense. The **Crest of Beasts** does not allow you to speak to supernatural or non-mundane creatures.

The **Crest of the Wilds** provides no benefit in keeping you safe from the physical effects of the environment. A fire will still burn you, electrical current will electrocute you and you're still able to drown underwater. Natural barriers apply to forests and overgrown roots, rockslides and other natural obstacles. They do not include man made structures such as fences or locks.

The **Crest of Fabrication**, which allows you to create mundane items, items with limited moving parts or generally not complex. A gun or a car are too complex for the **Crest of Fabrication** while a door or chest would not be. These items form through magic and do not require you to have the materials for them on hand. The time it takes to create them is dependent on their size and complexity. Having materials should speed creation up.

Opponents that flee due to the **Fear Sign** must flee the scene entirely and cannot return until the next scene. Simply because they've fled a scene does not mean they will not return.

The **Mirror Sign** does not apply to Doom Signs.

The **Sending Sign** specifies large distances, meaning that the Witch can send a message to anyone they've met and know within a city's boundaries.

Most importantly to the Witch are its Advances. Both its additional Form, which allows the Witch to further diversify itself, and the Doom Track from the Doomed. Players who wish to add further abilities to an existing Form should, instead of going through their primary form, select one option from each List instead of making a secondary Form.

The Doom Track is a choice for Witches who wish to truly delve into their lust and search for knowledge at the cost of their humanity and those they love. This Doom can be anything the Witch desires but GMs should take note that it should push them further from the team so long as the Witch tries to complete their goals over the team.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

You and your Adversary have been going at this for a long time but you know that it cannot go on forever. Not without becoming something more dangerous, something that will spill out and hurt everyone you care about. So this is it, your final showdown. It's climactic, it's flashy, it's violent and above all it's everything you'd ever want for your final bout. It will be bittersweet when it's all over. You may have won but you've lost someone close to you, they'll never be your Adversary again. What's more, seeing the limits you can truly reach will only attract more and more dangerous enemies in the future.

Lock a label as usual and pick another Adversary.

TEAM MOVES

When you share a **triumphant celebration** with someone, tell them a trait they have that you wish you could have as well. Exchange Influence and add a Team to the pool.

When you share a **vulnerability or weakness with someone**, tell them that you're not as strong as you'd like to be and ask them how you could improve. If they shoot you down, mark a Condition. If they tell you a strength you didn't know you had, exchange Influence. Either way, add a Team to the pool.

POTENTIAL



Every time you roll a miss on a move, mark potential.

ADVANCEMENT

When you fill your potential track, you advance. Choose from the list below.

- Take another move from your playbook
- Take a move from another playbook
- Take a move from another playbook
- Take an ability from another Playbook of your choice
- Someone permanently loses Influence over you; add +1 to a Label
- Rearrange your Labels as you choose, and add +1 to a Label
- Take The Bull's Heart from the Bull Playbook
- Unlock your Moment of Truth

When you've taken five advances from the top list, you can take advances from the list below.

- Unlock your Moment of Truth after you've used it once
- Choose another Playbook
- Take an adult move
- Take an adult move
- Lock a Label, and add +1 to a Label of your choice
- Retire from the life or become a paragon of the city

OTHER MOVES

THE ACE

HERO NAME

REAL NAME

LOOK

- ambiguous, man, shifting, transgressing, woman
- Asian or South Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Indigenous, Middle Eastern, White
- calloused hands, scarred hands, quick hands, inhuman hands
- stylish clothing, comfortable clothing, simple clothing, casual clothing
- simple costume, casual costume, no costume, inspiring costume

ABILITIES

Your powers are visceral and well honed by years of practice. You're fast on your feet, stronger than most and well versed in combat and the use of your powers. Pick two.

Body Elasticity, Impossible Movement, Super Strength, A Signature Weapon, Willpower Manifestation, An Alternate Form, Energy Blasts, Elemental Control, Supernatural Martial Arts

You've always been a scrapper. You've been in fights since you were a kid and now, just maybe, you can put your skills to good use. Some might call you a brute, a meathead, a bully. They just don't get it, fighting isn't what you do just because you like it. Fighting is what you do because it's the only time you feel like you connect to people.



LABELS

(at character creation, add +1 wherever you choose)

DANGER -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

FREAK -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

SAVIOR -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

SUPERIOR -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

MUNDANE -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

CONDITIONS

- Afraid** (-2 to directly engage a threat)
- Angry** (-2 to comfort or support or pierce the mask)
- Guilty** (-2 to provoke someone or assess the situation)
- Hopeless** (-2 to unleash your powers)
- Insecure** (-2 to defend someone or reject others' influence)

BACKSTORY

- How did you learn to fight?
- How did you defeat your Adversary for the first time?
- When was the first time you tasted defeat?
- Who or what, outside the team, are you fighting for?
- Why do you care about the team?

Once you've finished your backstory, introduce your character to the other players, and then determine what happened when your team first came together, the relationships between you and your teammates, and who has Influence over you.

WHEN OUR TEAM FIRST CAME TOGETHER...

We were forced to team up with my Adversary. How did they help us?

RELATIONSHIPS

You and _____ had one of your best fights before you joined the team.

_____ has always been happy to bandage you up after a fight, but their patience might be waning.

INFLUENCE

You care about the team, they're why you fight. Give them all Influence over you.

ACE MOVES

(Choose two)

- Battle Scarred:** When facing an opponent significantly stronger than yourself, you count as having one marked Condition fewer when Taking a Powerful Blow.
- Defeat Means Friendship:** Whenever you **Directly Engage** an opponent you may choose to exchange Influence as an additional option when you make a hit.
- Talk no Jutsu:** When you Comfort or Support someone by engaging them in a fight, you may roll + Danger instead of Mundane. On a miss, mark a Condition as you exchange blows.
- Calling Your Attack:** When you call out your attacks with flashy names and techniques when you **Directly Engage** you may choose an additional option, even on a miss. On a miss, you've overextended yourself or made yourself appear foolish. Take -1 forward.
- Friendship is the Real Power:** Whenever you follow the plans of a teammate and roll + Danger. Take +1 forward when working with their plan, after the roll. On a miss they couldn't account for your general chaos and the plan is off rails. Give your opposition an opportunity. On a hit, your antics were the backbone of the plan. Give the team an opportunity. On a 10+, add a Team to the Pool.
- Animal Instinct:** When you turn off your brain to notice details you might miss otherwise, roll + Freak. On a miss, you zone out and miss an important detail. On a hit, choose one. On a 10+ choose two.
 - *You catch the scent of someone who has been in the scene but no longer is*
 - *You spot a detail everyone else has overlooked, the GM will explain what it is*
 - *Your body moves on its own, directing you to a secret passage or hidden object*

ADVERSARY

You have an Adversary, someone who's taken your occasional clashes personally. Each confrontation teaches you something about them and, more importantly, something about yourself. Your Adversary is a mirror, a foil, a version of yourself if only you'd taken their path.

My Adversary and I are **similar** because:
(pick two)

- We have similar power sets.
- They have someone they wish to protect.
- We were raised/trained by the same people.
- We value innocent lives over our squabbles.
- They have a team that cares about them.

My Adversary and I are **different** because:
(pick two)

- They are willing to sacrifice innocents to complete their goals.
- They see our conflict only as a means to defeat me.
- They follow the orders of someone else.
- They refuse the aid and warmth of others.
- They will go to inhuman extremes for more power.

When you embrace your similarities to solve a situation roll + Danger. On a miss the similarities scare you, mark a Condition and act counter to your Adversary's behavior. On a hit, your similarities offer insights you wouldn't have come to. Take +1 ongoing until the task is resolved. On a 10+, mark potential.

When you confront them over your differences roll + Danger. On a miss, your words can't reach them and they take drastic action. On a hit they balk take +1 forward against them or they give ground, the GM's choice. On a 10+ they open up to you and reverse course, for the moment at least.

Combative Influence: Your Adversary cannot lose Influence over you. When you would successfully reject their Influence, clear a Condition. When you would lose Influence over your Adversary, mark a Condition instead.

PLAYING THE ACE

One thing is clear about the Ace and it's that they love to fight. The Ace will take the option to swing a fist or sword when there are still other options on the table. This will obviously bring conflict with the team who surely know that going to such extremes all the time will land them in hot water. In this way the team acts as a chain for the Ace, keeping them from letting loose whenever they'd like and while this may put more work on them, the Ace rewards such diligence once they're able to truly break free. This desire for conflict is not, however, simple bloodlust or aggression. The Ace fights to protect the ones they care for because it's the only way they know how.

The Ace for this reason needs the team just as much as the team needs them. While the team may act as a barrier to the Ace's more combative desires, they remain at the center of the Ace's world. The team is the grounding force in a world filled with thrills and excitement. They're the people that the Ace fights to protect, the only ones the Ace feels are worth protecting when the skin hits the road.

Aces are risk takers, eager to try new experiences especially if it's hands on and challenging. The Ace should be the first to leap at new opportunities provided to the team and the last to back down from a challenge. No mountain is too tall for an Ace, no river deep enough nor no valley wide enough to cross. If the Ace puts their mind to it, the Ace will succeed.

Playing the Ace, in some ways, also means playing the Adversary. The Ace informs a great deal about their Adversaries. A compassionate Ace will often lead to an Adversary with similar feelings, even if they are under lock and key, for example. The Adversary is meant to, and designed to be, a foil for the Ace. An Ace without the team, dreams or goals of their own and who have given way to those destructive impulses in pursuit of what they want most. If the team is a leash for The Ace than their Adversary is a fellow hound, not merely a kindred spirit but perhaps the only living soul that can ever or will ever truly understand them.

GM MOVES FOR THE ACE

- Show them that fighting isn't always the answer
- Show them sometimes it is the only answer
- Give them people to protect
- Throw enemies at them they can't defeat as they are now
- Question their resolve

INSPIRATION FOR THE ACE

- Goku and Vegeta, **DRAGON BALL**
- Monkey D. Luffy and Rob Lucci, **ONE PIECE**
- Uzumaki Naruto and Uchiha Sasuke, **NARUTO**
- Kurosaki Ichigo and Kuichki Byakuya, **BLEACH**

NOTES ON MOVES AND EXTRAS

The Adversary as mentioned above should act as a foil to the Player, someone with similar motives but methods that bring them in conflict with not only the Ace but their team as well. The Differences you pick will flesh out exactly how their methods and mindset differ from your own. The Adversary does not need to be a villain though they will likely be. A hero or someone who exists within the boundaries between the two can just as easily fit into this role, so long as they have personal stakes in the wider conflict that exists between you.

While NPCs are typically given multiple Influences across the team for a more dynamic story, the Adversary should generally not have congenial or friendly dispositions towards your team. The Adversary stands against you and your goals, and thus the goals of the team. They may take a different stance in dealing with your teammates but they should not, in general, be on friendly terms. In keeping with this however, the defeat of the Adversary when triggering a Moment of Truth doesn't have to be the end of them. The Ace makes friends with their fists and even the most defeated and run down of enemies could one day return as a friend.

The moves of The Ace are generally straightforward and simple much like the Ace themselves. The Ace is a hero and their moves reflect this earnest simplicity.

Defeat means Friendship can be triggered by Calling your Attacks so long as you make a hit on your opposition.

The dangerous foe detailed by **Battle Scarred** follows the same basic guidelines for the Facing a Dangerous Foe team mechanic. If the Ace is fighting such an opponent then **Battle Scarred** always applies. Outside of these circumstances it is up to the GM who or what counts as a dangerous foe.

SUGGESTED MOVES FROM OTHER PLAYBOOKS

As The Ace shares a lot of drama with the Bull, you'll never be wrong in taking any move from that Playbook. Of particular note are In a China Shop which rewards you for going wild with your powers in a fight and **There when it Matters** which allows you to enter a scene in dramatic fashion.

Gameface, from The Janus, is of particular note for The Ace, thematic to its Shonen elements in setting a task for oneself and following through with it.

Unstoppable from The Transformed is another great pick for The Ace, allowing them to break through scenery and foes alike.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

You've come a long way, disposed of your mentor and left adrift by the wider community they were grooming you to enter. You've heard them talk, seen them sneer when they thought you weren't looking. It was all leading up to this moment, the moment you put them all in their place. The moment you show them that their slings and arrows have only made you stronger. That all your gambles have been leading up to the big pay out. Now's your chance to put them in their place. Pull off your wildest scheme, bet high and win big. Whatever your gamble, Lady Luck shines on you. When you've accomplished your goal, and the dust settles, the world will see you didn't need them all along. The city will remember all the risks you took to pull your stunt off however and you soon might wish they'd go back to ignoring you.

TEAM MOVES

When you share a **triumphant celebration with someone**, confide in them a time they helped you through a situation you couldn't have made it through on your own. Give them Influence and add a Team to the Pool.

When you share a **vulnerability or weakness with someone**, express why you feel the wider hero community has failed you. Give them Influence and clear a Condition. If they commiserate or otherwise acknowledge your struggle, add a Team to the Pool.

POTENTIAL



Every time you roll a miss on a move, mark potential.

ADVANCEMENT

When you fill your potential track, you advance. Choose from the list below.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take another move from your playbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Rearrange your Labels as you choose, and add +1 to a Label |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take another move from your playbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Take drives from the Beacon's playbook |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a move from another playbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Unlock your Moment of Truth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a move from another playbook | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Someone permanently loses Influence over you; add +1 to a Label | |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Take an adult move | |

OTHER MOVES

You belonged once, you had a master, someone to train you and shepherd you into the wider hero community. Now you're alone, surviving by your wits, skills and any job you can. Every day's a gamble and while you no longer have a mentor, you've got Lady Luck in your corner. She is a fickle mistress however, will she be on your side for long?



THE RONIN

HERO NAME

REAL NAME

LOOK

- ambiguous, man, shifting, transgressing, woman
- Asian or South Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Indigenous, Middle Eastern, White
- tired eyes, jaded eyes, untrusting eyes, hateful eyes
- stylish clothing, comfortable clothing, simple clothing, casual clothing
- simple costume, tattered costume, homemade costume, no costume

ABILITIES

You had training with an established hero, once long ago. They trained you in a broad range of skills. Pick one.

Combat and Weapon Training, Hacking and Technology, Disguises and Sleuthing, Supernatural Theory and Craft, Superhuman Training

You have skills or gadgets you've developed since you've been on your own. Pick up to two.

Power Mimicry, Hi-Tech Drones, Psychometry, Impossible Movement, A Powerful Weapon, Flow State, Gadgets, Impossible Mobility, Willpower Manifestation, Phasing, Pressure Point Fighting, Powerful Armor

LABELS

(at character creation, add +1 wherever you choose)

DANGER -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

FREAK -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

SAVIOR -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

SUPERIOR -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

MUNDANE -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

CONDITIONS

- Afraid** (-2 to directly engage a threat)
- Angry** (-2 to comfort or support or pierce the mask)
- Guilty** (-2 to provoke someone or assess the situation)
- Hopeless** (-2 to unleash your powers)
- Insecure** (-2 to defend someone or reject others' influence)

BACKSTORY

- Who was, and how did you lose, your former Mentor?
- What was your first real hero work after you struck out on your own?
- Who, outside the team, has never turned their back on you?
- Why do you still try to be a hero after all you've lost?
- Why do you care about the team?

Once you've finished your backstory, introduce your character to the other players, and then determine what happened when your team first came together, the relationships between you and your teammates, and who has Influence over you.

WHEN OUR TEAM FIRST CAME TOGETHER...

We interfered with another hero's efforts. Why do they wish to deplatform us?

RELATIONSHIPS

_____ takes more risks than I do, we probably shouldn't be left alone together.

I owe _____ a debt for when they helped me on a mission, when no one else would.

INFLUENCE

You've been on your own for a while, being part of a team is new. You still need them more than you'd let on. Give the whole team Influence over you.

RONIN MOVES

(Choose two)

- There Will Be Blood:** When you scathingly **Reject** the Influence of a Hero, you may choose to inflict a Condition as if they'd been hit hard even on a miss.
- Aces High:** When you enter a dangerous situation with no plan or trick up your sleeve roll + Danger. On a miss you're truly woefully unprepared. Expect the worst. On a hit, the tools of success are near to hand. Some assembly may be required, the GM will fill in the details. On a 10+, take +1 forward to see yourself through.
- Not the Destination:** When you **Provoke** a teammate to make a risky choice or to bank on luck, you may roll + Danger instead of Superior.
- As My Master Once Said:** When you embody a lesson your former mentor taught you, name it and take +1 ongoing to fulfill your mission. If you've not completed your task by the end of the scene, flee it in disgrace.
- Dereliction of Duty:** When you call a hero out for failing to protect civilians, roll + Danger. On a miss they react to your words with anger. They will try to silence you. On a hit they cede ground and rectify their mistake. On a 10+ they begrudgingly ask for your assistance in setting things right.
- We Are Mercenary:** Whenever a civilian comes to you for aid you may lose Influence over a teammate to take +1 ongoing until the task is done. While you assist the civilian, or civilians, in question you may roll + Danger when standing in their Defense.

RISK AND REWARD

You've been on your own long enough and taken one too many gambles to learn a thing or two. How to repair your gear and stretch resources. How to watch your back when no one else will and how to watch other people's backs when they think you're not. Someone's watching your back too however, **Luck** itself. However you conceptualize this being, it's got you in its pocket. That isn't always in your favor.

When you begin play you have **Influence over Luck** and it has Influence over you. The GM acts as Luck's agent when shifting Labels or using Luck's Influence on you. Luck cannot lose Influence over you.

Risk/Reward: As long as you have Luck, you may gain 1 Hold per scene to a maximum of 2 and begin your first scene in the first session with 2 Hold. You may spend Hold at any time to reroll a Move. You must take the result of the second roll, even on a miss.

If you should go to 0 Hold at any time, lose Influence over Luck and shift Superior down and another Label up, your choice. You may mark a Condition to regain Influence over Luck. When you regain Influence over Luck, gain 2 Hold.

Ante Up: When you would **Reject** the Influence of Luck, Ante Up instead. You and Luck's Agent will roll opposing 2d6. The higher of the two rolls win. If the Player wins, clear a Condition or gain Potential. If Luck's Agent wins, lose Influence over Luck and mark a Condition.

Fortune Favors: When Luck would gain Influence over another Player, they Hold 1 and may spend it to reroll a move. They must take the second roll, even on a miss. When another Player would gain Influence over Luck, add a Team to the Pool.

PLAYING THE RONIN

The Ronin plays in several spaces already explored by Core Playbooks, specifically the roles of the Delinquent and the Protégé. As a former student of an established hero the Ronin has since lost their master's favor for one reason or another and thus finds themselves on their own in a world that's since turned their back on them.

The search for affirmation of one's peers and society at large are the core drive for the Ronin. Left on their own, many Ronin find themselves scraping by for supplies and jobs that would otherwise go to respectable heroes and those with more clout in the wider hero world. This places them at odds with their fellows and the wider social structure, further isolating them even as they struggle to reassert themselves into the lives of old friends and familiar faces. This might make them lash out at those they see as oppressors or gate keepers, petty crimes and outbursts more to garner attention (negative though it may be) than outright spite of malicious intent.

The team is especially important for the Ronin, more than likely the final bastion of concentrated help they're going to get in their search for a place to belong. The team acts not only as a place to rest and pool resources but as a group of people to share hardship and adversity. While the Ronin may not require their constant validation through pranks or other attention seeking antics, they should always keep in mind that when the rest of the world turned their backs on them, the team was there to offer a shoulder.

NOTES ON MOVES AND EXTRAS

The Ronin's Risk and Reward provides a great deal of versatility to the Ronin, allowing them to take a chance to fix possible mistakes or even weather withering blows from opponents. While the mechanics are separate from the general fiction, the GM should use comic panels and other narrative conventions to display how one outcome would have played out while then providing the actual outcome.

Luck, as a character who can give or take Influence, should be up to the GM to flesh out as they wish however there should be several general conventions the GM should take forward. One is that Luck is fickle, egging the Ronin on to greater and more dangerous risks. Luck should be the small voice in the Ronin pushing them to do these deeds, moving them to take wild gambles and to put their all on the line for the attention of others. Failing to do so should incur Luck's wrath, providing a small dichotomy on how it interacts. Use its bonuses as narrative weight as you heap rewards on teammates when the Ronin isn't following along with Luck's whims, punish them with the abandonment they already feel from everyone else and make them work to get Luck's Influence back. Luck is the carrot, be both willing and able to use the stick when the Ronin wants to hedge their bets or be cautious.

While **Aces High** specifies a dangerous situation, one should take care that the move can be used in lower octane situations if the Ronin is attempting a significantly dangerous gamble. Such examples would be defusing a bomb when no enemies are around to harass the team, finding a method to safely disembark a moving vehicle or other obviously dangerous, but not immediate, situations.

Not the Destination should bring your teammate into serious trouble if they fail when you provoke them into doing so, or they should at least have a high chance of failure if they're leaving everything to luck. Whatever it is you're egging them into, it should be a gamble.

SUGGESTED MOVES FROM OTHER PLAYBOOKS

While the Ronin is by no means a Protégé, one could easily read them as a Protégé that could have been. **Been Reading the Files** is a great move to hammer home just how close they were to being an accepted hero and gives them plenty of access to the wide heroic world that's turned their back on them.

Another particularly thematic move for The Ronin is The Scion's **All the Best Stuff** and The Brain's **Always Prepared** which cover The Ronin's knack for having all the supplies they need on hand at a second's notice.

GM MOVES FOR THE RONIN

- Remind them of the life they've lost
- Show them the dark side of the heroing world
- Offer them chances to return to their former life, for a high cost
- Show them the value of true friends
- Offer them succor in the least likely of places

INSPIRATION FOR THE RONIN

- Miyamoto Usagi, **USAGI YOJIMBO**
- Spike Spiegel, **COWBOY BEPOP**
- Ogami Itto, **LONE WOLF AND CUB**
- Mugen, **SAMURAI CHAMPLOO**

THE JOINED & W.A.R.

The Joined operates much in the same way with the Ace, Ronin and Witch as they do with any other core Playbook.

THE JOINED AND THE WITCH

The Joined must take at least one different Crest than their Witch counterpart and must select at least one different Sign as well.

THE JOINED AND THE ACE

The Joined and the Ace share the same Adversary however the relationship between them and the Joined are different. Choose one of the same similarities as The Ace and one of your own. In addition, choose two differences that your other half did not choose.

THE JOINED AND THE RONIN

You and your other half shared the same Mentor. The Joined also has Risk and Reward and may take two moves from the Ronin Playbook.

RIGHTS AND CREDITS

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Much of the basics for the W.A.R book and its individual Playbooks are taken directly from Masks: A New Generation by Brandon Conway and Magpie Games (magpiegames.com)

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And many others who wish not to be named but whose assistance we could not have done without.

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