



PSYCHEDELIC METAL RPG

SEACAT

L u k a R e j e c

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Sincere thanks to all the heroes who made this booklet possible.

P S Y C H E D E L I C M E T A L R P G

SEACAT

L u k a R e j e c

PLACEH

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PSYCHEDELIC METAL ROLEPLAYING

Introduction

A caravan on a strange long trip through the Ultraviolet Grasslands to find the Black City at the end of the world.

Devotees and deserters build a new life under red skies in the heart of the twitching corpse of the greatest city the world had known.

Half-mad fools ascend into the skies on cobbled-together chariots of fire like the shamans of old to wander the voidways of the sky gods.

Heroes end cities and civilizations and worlds through accidents and inattention, and through it all, creation and invention dance on, a couplet unbound by space and time.

What even makes a hero when the tale is told? Not goodness, perhaps. But excess, yes, indeed.

Moebius' mind-bending bande dessinée *Airtight Garage*. Blue Oyster Cult's evocative *Veteran of the Psychic Wars*. The rambling melange that is the *Heavy Metal* movie. The surreal fantasy of Jodorowsky's *Holy Mountain*. The impressionistic brilliance of Miller's *Fury Road*. The semi-coherence of the Strugatskys' *Roadside Picnic* or VanderMeer's *Annihilation*. The neo-baroque pop metal of *Ghost*.

The shifting realities of new wave science fiction. Psychedelic journeys between inner and outer spaces.

All these inspire and inform Seacat, *le chat de mer*, the roleplaying game of whimsical and capricious worlds, digressing from a single arc, lurching into branching stories, dancing into an act of creation itself. Seacat is self-consciously modernist; impressionist and expressionist by turns, embracing the theatre-of-the-mind and the infinite special effects budget that brings.

May the seacat bless you all with strange tales to laugh over for many days and many years.

—Luka, 2020



CREATING THE HERO

The Hero

“A hero need not be good, but they must be extraordinary and memorable.”
—Ikto XLIII, famously forgettable seer poet of L’Isle Parasol

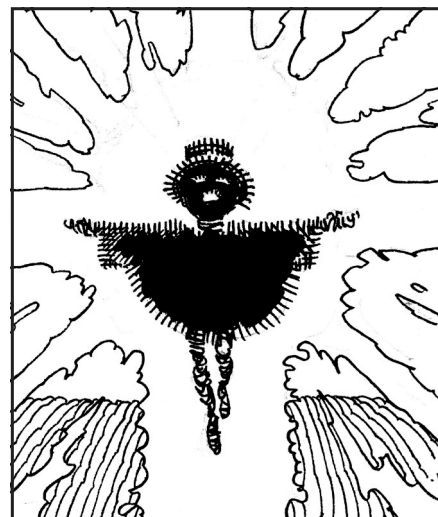
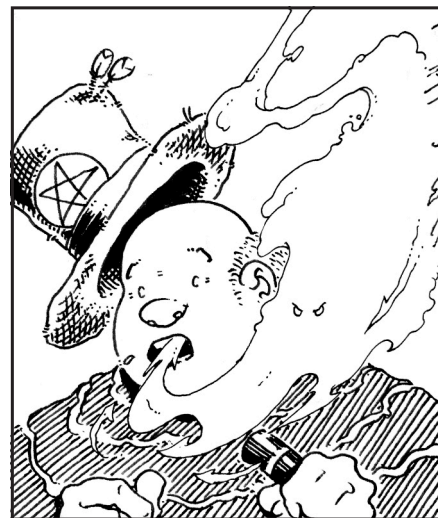
Every player needs a hero.

A hero is a player’s protagonist, their lead character. A player runs a hero exclusively and has a veto on what their hero does in play—thus that player is called the runner. A runner can have multiple heroes, pets, and sidekicks. How many of these characters are present for a given session is up to the players.

A ghost shaman possesses wizards and mediums to uncover the secrets of transcendence. A diesel dwarf warrior hunts undead bio-machines created by the wire plague. A feline aristocrat historian recreates the glories of the lost doghead empire. A pengling merchant adventurer builds a magical nanite fountain to turn water into wine. A curious many-bodied void-plumber dives into the wormways to find where the reactivated travel gate leads.

A player’s first hero is a pulp hero. Perhaps not renowned, but far more powerful than the common turnip farmer. With an array of strange abilities, skills, and magics, they are a force to be reckoned with. As they progress they perform incredible feats and inscribe themselves into history—if nothing else, as reckless fools endangering common hard-working folks and the foundations of centuries’ old ruling institutions.

To make their character a player needs a pencil, some polyhedral dice, a copy of the hero sheet overleaf, and ten minutes for the protagonic generator.



hero

NAME

TYPE

LEVEL

SKILLS

ABILITIES

LIFE

HURT

STR

END

AGI

PRO

actions

magic

CHA

AUR

THO

HERO DICE

invested XP

DEFEND

Character progression track with icons: diamond, lightning bolt, circle with cross, star.

INVENTORY

Inventory table with 3 columns and 10 rows.

The Protagonic Generator

“Ah. That was one strange machine. Some sort of dome cage. One yuman entered, two yumans left. Both a little different from the original, but convinced they were unchanged. We ended up with fifteen Porter Bobs. The sixteenth called ‘imself Pörter Bōb. Hah.”

—Robert 32-Chrome, feral polybody subsistence clan.

Tales from the Vastlands aside, the protagonistic generator is a series of random tables used to create a hero with polyhedral dice. In order:

Skills (pXX) • What a hero is good at. Butcher, banker, soldier, sailor, tinker, tailor, investigator, gladiator.

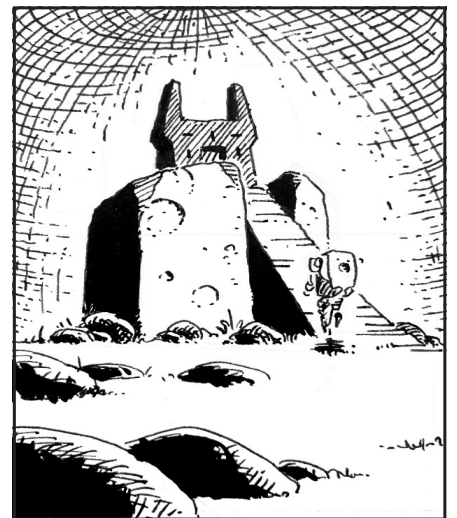
Abilities (pXX) • Perks, traits, mutations, divine gifts. A salamander’s fire resistance. Ur-plant light-feeding. Cyber-telekinesis. A parasitic symbiote heart named Bōb.

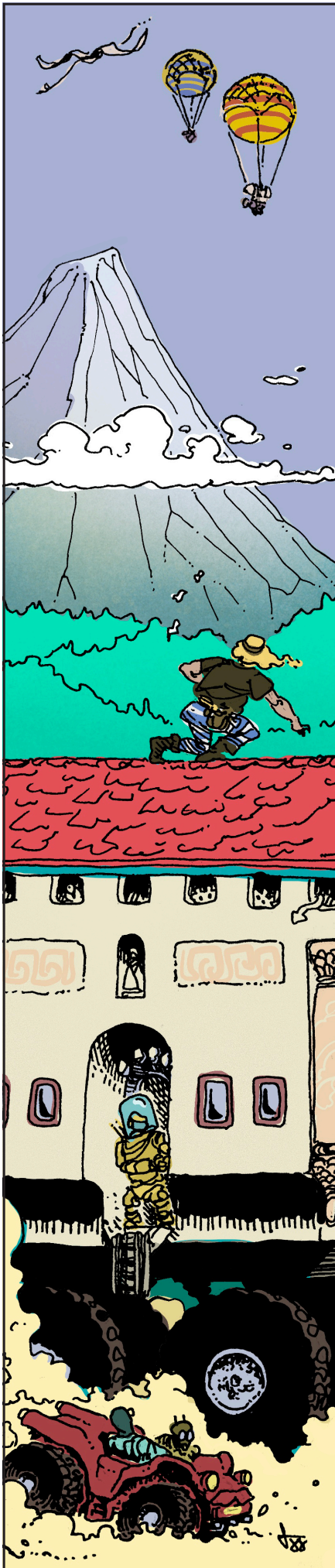
Stats (pXX) • Natural aptitudes. Strength, endurance, agility, charisma, aura, and thought.

Gear (pXX) • The hero’s cash and baggage. Woes, fears, illnesses, magic spells, mundane items, beloved pets, trusted sidekicks.

Miscellany (pXX) • The rest of the sheet.

Names (pXX) • Naming the hero.





Skills

"What glory would attend the discovery if I could banish disease from the human frame and render man invulnerable to any but a violent death!"

— Dr. Frankenstein in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818)

Every hero starts out with a few skills, which summarize what they have done in their life and what they are good at. The players rolls d100 thrice or choose three starting skills. Duplicate rolls increase the rank of a skill.

Protagonistic Skill Generator [d100]

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Agriculturalist Farmer | 51. Revolutionary |
| 2. Artist Aesthetic | 52. Rider at Ease |
| 3. Apparatchik | 53. Secret Servant |
| 4. Archaeologist Freiherr | 54. Shadow Merchant |
| 5. Athlete of Some Renown | 55. Shopkeeper |
| 6. Big Game Tourist | 56. Sidu of the Bestfolk |
| 7. Butcher Banker | 57. Sidu of the Iron Fist |
| 8. Captain in the Auxiliaries | 58. Sidu of the Leastfolk |
| 9. Cat Burglar | 59. Sidu of the Legalities |
| 10. Chevalier | 60. Sidu of the Outcaste |
| 11. Circus Acrobat | 61. Sidu of the Rhetors |
| 12. Corpocrat Suitwearer | 62. Sidu of the Sacred Deed |
| 13. Dream Voyager | 63. Sidu of the Soiltwined |
| 14. Driverjill or Driverjack | 64. Sidu of the Staunchkeepers |
| 15. Explorer of the Vastlands | 65. Sidu of the Unfettered |
| 16. Fisher Pasha | 66. Sidu of the Uptought |
| 17. Forager of the Future | 67. Singer of the Lastlands |
| 18. Gladiator | 68. Spelunker |
| 19. Groom to the Superior Species | 69. Storm Infantry |
| 20. Handyworker | 70. Street Performer |
| 21. Historian of the Downfall | 71. Survivor in the Vast |
| 22. Housekeeper of Good Repute | 72. Tactician of the Endless War |
| 23. Hunter of the Late Days | 73. Thespian |
| 24. Investigator Private | 74. Timelost Interloper |
| 25. Laborer in Reserve | 75. Tinker Toymaker |
| 26. Maker Cogsmith | 76. Useless Freeloader |
| 27. Master Packer | 77. Veda of the Abmortal Doctor |
| 28. Mule Whisperer | 78. Veda of the All-Chemist |
| 29. Navigator of Other Worlds | 79. Veda of the Awakened Sphere |
| 30. Negotiator of Relations | 80. Veda of the Biomechané |
| 31. Noble Socialite | 81. Veda of the Cosmic Architects |
| 32. Nomad Rustler | 82. Veda of the Existential Void |
| 33. Outsider Alien | 83. Veda of the Flying Serpent |
| 34. Pilot of Vechs | 84. Veda of the Golemmafexes |
| 35. Postmodern Soldier | 85. Veda of the Iron Symphony |
| 36. Praxa of the Bows | 86. Veda of the Law Necromantic |
| 37. Praxa of the Chains | 87. Veda of the Light Held Fast |
| 38. Praxa of the Good Guns | 88. Veda of the Mother Electric |
| 39. Praxa of the Energies | 89. Veda of the Old Technologies |
| 40. Praxa of the Hammeraxes | 90. Veda of the Plant Kings |
| 41. Praxa of the Knives | 91. Veda of the Rightmaker |
| 42. Praxa of the Mortal Shells | 92. Veda of the Seeming Becoming |
| 43. Praxa of the Pistoliers | 93. Veda of the Seven Summons |
| 44. Praxa of the Poles | 94. Veda of the Soul Breaker |
| 45. Praxa of the Rifles | 95. Veda of the Witching Song |
| 46. Praxa of the Rods | 96. Veda of the World's Word |
| 47. Praxa of the Swords | 97. Vome Technician |
| 48. Professor in Panhumanities | 98. White Collar Drone |
| 49. Protocollier | 99. Writer of Belles Lettres |
| 50. Psychic Veteran | |

Skill Types

The five skill tags loosely categorize the hundred listed skills.

Every skill brings different statuses and meanings in different communities. Whether this is a boon or a bane, only context can tell.

Skill rank effects only apply with suitable equipment and/or in suitable circumstances.

#adventure • Skills with practical utility in the struggle of mortal against uncaring natural worlds.

#background • Skills that represent the development of a mortal as a part of a functional community.

#combat • A combination of psychophysical battle techniques honed over millennia. Also called *praxa* from Ancient Greek for practice.

#magic • A difficult or secret compilation of lore, ritual, study and science. Also called *veda* from Slovenian or Sanskrit for knowledge or science.

#social • A pan-cultural agglomeration of custom and behavior that cuts across the living and dead cultures of the Vastlands. Also called *sidu* from Old English for custom or habit.

The Hundred Skills

1. Agriculturalist Farmer

#background

An autonomous popular people's collective ruled by an autocrat.

Grows beans. Wakes up early. Tills greenhouses. Works long hours. Pays onerous taxes. Understands magic legumes. Joins the levies. Avoids attention very, very well. Wields farm implements and light long arms. Also farms other valuable food stuffs [d12]:

- i. Squashes
- ii. Breadfruit
- iii. Tart mangoes
- iv. Saucy tangerines
- v. Giant peaches
- vi. Turnips
- vii. Hybrid oats
- viii. Uplifted monoculturalrice
- ix. Mushrooms of power
- x. Industrial grade pumpkins
- xi. Land coral
- xii. Kelp

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

2. Artist Aesthetic

#background

The unmanifest idea is worthless.

Creates treasures out of aether, dreams, and labor. Paints, sculpts, draws, dances and sings. Wields a brush and chisel, sells trinkets as avant-garde art to hungry social climbers. Known for [d8]:

- i. Bas relief etchings
- ii. Croquis and caricatures
- iii. Hyperrealist plastics
- iv. Microlithic landscape design
- v. Mixed media cave paintings
- vi. Neon jungle sculptures
- vii. Performance welding
- viii. Surrealist canvases

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table)

3. Apparatchik

#background

The highly trained bureaucrat reproduces the bureaucracy.

Project manager navigating byzantine institutions and accessing secret locations. Passes the buck and avoids blame. Organizes time sheets and sets key performance indicators. Uses office supplies as weapons. Familiar with [d6]:

- i. Cultured affairs
- ii. Foreign entanglements
- iii. History adaptation
- iv. Internal change direction
- v. Language adjustment
- vi. Ministerial truth management
- vii. Political economic corrections
- viii. Social sanitation

Rank 1 • Gets ba ITEM (table)

4. Archaeologist Freiherr

#adventure

Behold, the golden idol!

Discovers lost artifacts. Climbs, jumps and dodges boulders. Detects traps and hidden doors. Whips a small gun and cracks a neural whip.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table)

5. Athlete of Some Renown

#adventure

Run, rabbit, run.

Found fame as a [d10]:

- i. Ball hitter or kicker
- ii. Discus thrower
- iii. Dressage rider
- iv. Fancy dancer
- v. Obstacle jumper
- vi. Distance runner
- vii. Pro wrestler
- viii. Rock climber
- ix. Swimmer
- x. Wave surfer

Runs the extra mile, stretches reserves further, goes faster. Does a biathlon, a triathlon, a polythlon. Signs an autograph. Waves a bottle of fizz-wine.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table)

6. Big Game Tourist

#adventure

It's a fair chase, honest.

Shoots big guns and rides a large burden beast or armored golem. Blithely orders servants around and overlooks the lower classes. Chomps cigars, swills firewater, and talks turkey. Seeks [d8]:

- i. Asbestos phoenix
- ii. Black squid
- iii. Green roc
- iv. Iron rhino
- v. Purple grandworm
- vi. Swordtoothed bear
- vii. White whale
- viii. Yellow earthdragon

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table)

7. Butcher Banker

#background

Blood and money. Both must flow.

Lends money and practices usury. Nobs with fine folk, promotes charities and intimidates with wealth. Crunches numbers and collects arts or antiquities. Secretly [d6]:

- i. Breeds doves
- ii. Collects pet rocks
- iii. Composes sonnets
- iv. Grows tiny trees
- v. Plays the sad mandolin
- vi. Practices memorization

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table)

8. Captain in the Auxiliaries

#adventure

Lead that cannon fodder.

Leads the forces of civilization to victories over monsters of madness and chaos by navigating the military bureaucracy. Understand boots, morale and logistics. Wields standard issue weapons and equipment.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

9. Cat Burglar

#adventure

Door, window, wall. Same thing.

Breaks into and out of places. Disarms locks and traps and extrasensory wards. Moves very quietly. Appraises treasures. Stylish, suave, elegant. Loves [d6]:

- i. Berets
- ii. Calling cards
- iii. Cats
- iv. Masks
- v. Puzzles
- vi. Stripes

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table)

10. Chevalier

#background

A beacon of chivalry.

Suitors swoon and adversaries gnash their teeth. Masters etiquette and romantic literature. Wields lance, sword, and noble pin blaster from steed-seat. Rules subhuman peons with the iron fist of justice and extracts taxes without fault or fail. Titled [d6]:

- i. Dooch
- ii. En Ginny
- iii. Hazda or Gasda
- iv. May or Siz
- v. Laud or Lae or Leit
- vi. Wlada

Rank 1 • Gets VEHICLE (table).

11. Circus Acrobat

#adventure

Make no bones about it.

Squeezes into small places. Puts on circus shows. Gets out of restraints. Gets into and out of armor very quickly. Shows an amazing knowledge of pressure points. Evades enemies with surprising grace. Daydreams through dreary day jobs.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

12. Corpocrat Suitwearer

#background

The business.

Helps run corporations, banks, and self-help associations. Lubricates the world. Signs forms and documents. Toadies up to superiors. Shakes up recalcitrants, sidesteps legislations and regulations, changes facts on the ground, breaks knees. Wields concealed weapons, broken bottles, and pistols. Their specialization [d8]:

- i. Asset enhancement
- ii. Efficient downsizing
- iii. Fallout management
- iv. Human resources
- v. Mergers and acquisitions
- vi. Political lobbying
- vii. Public opinion management
- viii. Risk reprogramming

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

13. Dream Voyager

#adventure

If the vizier dies while they dream, who is at fault?

Travels in dreams. Talks to spirits and chairs. Converses with other dreamers. Visits the moon and other far places. Trades in secrets, fears, and desires. Handles psychedelics like a virtuoso.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

14. Driverjill or Driverjack

#adventure

Speed in the sign of yellow.

Handles land vehicles, manoeuvres past obstacles at speed. Repairs and keeps travel machines running. Packs surprisingly well. Masters details like rally racing, drifting, stunts, and crashing safely.

Rank 1 • Gets VEHICLE (table).

15. Explorer of the Vastlands

#adventure

Over seven rivers and seven hills.

Organizes expeditions into the unknown and survives in the wild. Navigates by rumors and landmarks, hacks through jungles and sails deserts. Negotiates with other cultures and writes popular travel literature. Wields rifles and machetes. A passable [d8]:

- i. Epic announcer
- ii. Experimental chef
- iii. Lomographer
- iv. Nonfiction writer
- v. Phonogram recorder
- vi. Rally golem rider
- vii. Water colorist

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

16. Fisher Pasha

#background

Gentle and atmospheric.

Had a claim, but it is lost [d6]:

- i. City become free.
- ii. County gone corporate.
- iii. Floating mountain stolen.
- iv. Freehold overrun.
- v. Kingdom turned republic.
- vi. Resort island gambled away.

Understands rivers and lakes and shores. Knows fish, boats and hooks, lines and poles, nets, yarns, and courtly mores. Handles a harpoon and basic navigation.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

17. Forager of the Future

#adventure

Food wriggles everywhere!

Finds berries, nuts, mushrooms, grubs, leftovers, and cooling pies. Traps rabbits, tickles trouts, scrapes lichens, starts fires. Keep dry and warm in wilds and ruin lands, sewer zones and streets.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

18. Gladiator

#adventure

Blood soothes the decadent fools.

Thrives in arenas, puts on shows. Impresses crowds and intimidates opponents. Masters showy weapons and circus mainstays like folded chairs. Trades in dirty tricks too. Styles as a [d6]:

- i. Aquatic monarch.
- ii. Caped animal crusader.
- iii. Creepy clown trickster.
- iv. Golden hero of the crowds.
- v. Raging bull warrior.
- vi. Thundering storm lord.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

19. Groom to the Superior Species

#adventure

All for the love of master.

Comprehends the superiority of the masters and understands their empathic emanations. Makes the masters happy and receives their love and affections. Grooms, brushes, styles, curls, trims, cuts, perms, and pampers. Follows and sometimes make fashion. Master may be a:

- i. Telepathic cat
- ii. Sapientized dog
- iii. Cosmic gerbil
- iv. Higher-dimensional white mouse
- v. Noösphere-linked snake
- vi. Quantum ant colony
- vii. Three-eyed grey parrot
- viii. Chronoclastic potted plant
- ix. Awakened galliform dinosaur
- x. Hypnotic toad
- xi. Pharaoh fish
- xii. Talking horse

Rank 1 • Gets PET (table). The groom treats the pet as their master. The player may also reverse roles, turning the animal into a full character and treating them as the lead hero.

20. Handyworker

#background

The trades. Unsurprisingly useful.

Hero is a skilled [d8]:

- i. Boilermaker
- ii. Bricklayer
- iii. Carpenter
- iv. Gardener
- v. Gasfitter
- vi. Ka-ba-wright
- vii. Plumber
- viii. Welder

Builds, fits, maintains, and repairs the complicated machinery that makes modern life bearable. Navigates labyrinths, pipes, ducts, and portals. Sports distinctive facial decorations and overalls. Joins trade guilds. Saves princelings. Wields tools, wrenches and orbs.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

21. Historian of the Downfall

#adventure

The war. The war never changes.

Safeguards the history of the ancient dead places and radiation wastelands. Uses ancient war machines. Learns the old rituals of technology. Assassinate dangerous sages and politicians. Preserves humanity from itself. Builds remote fortified abbeys full of traps. Treasures books. Wields oldtech weapons, knives, spears and pistols. Practices the lost martial art of gun-boxing.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

22. Housekeeper of Good Repute

#background

My home is my castrum.

Keeps the core socioeconomic unit running. Runs household. Manages accounts. Maintains schedules, supplies and logistics. Packs and prepares. Settles disputes. Collects rents. Pays allowances. Provides first aid and preventative medical care. Wields rolling pins, pans, and more.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

23. Hunter of the Late Days

#adventure

It doesn't know it's already food.

Thinks like animals and hunts them. Tracks them, sets traps, and hides in ambush. Skins them, prepares furs, and the rest. Uses hunting weapons. Humans are animals.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

24. Investigator Private

#adventure

Elementary, my dear sidekick.

Gathers clues and pieces together answers. Discreetly interrogates people. Folds origami unicorns or other monsters. Uses small, easily concealed weapons. Breaks safes, locks, and bureaucratic police protocols. They present as a [d8]:

- i. Bounty hunter
- ii. Doctor of uncertain field
- iii. Eccentric opium user
- iv. Fiction writer
- v. Golem decommissioner
- vi. Nosy priest
- vii. Retired country landlord
- viii. Undercover operative

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

25. Laborer in Reserve

#background

Nothing to lose but their chains.

Survives in latter-day urban environments. Forages for food and work. Builds shelters, maintains infrastructure, cleans palaces, grooms bodies. Forges bonds away from the gaze of the corpocrats and aristocrats. Wields hammers, sickles, fists and improvised guns. Treasures paper titles such as [d12]:

- i. Food delivery professional
- ii. Community sanitation tech
- iii. Streetbuilder corps member
- iv. Rubble picker battalion
- v. Urbancore gardener
- vi. Houselaborer
- vii. Machine polisher
- viii. Senior janitor
- ix. Biological watch unit
- x. Conspicuous servitor
- xi. Day-and-night laborer
- xii. Power delivery specialist

Rank 1 • Gets DEBT (table).

26. Maker Cogsmith

#background

Did you try plugging it in?

Understands machines and listens to their woes. Cares for them, lubricates them, and fixes them. Even brings them back from the grave. Makes and unmakes mechanics. Wields a mean blow torch and throws a sharp spanner. Fond of [d6]:

- i. Automata
- ii. Clocks
- iii. Difference engines
- iv. Golem abacuses
- v. Locks
- vi. Waterwheels

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

27. Master Packer

#adventure

No magic bag, just a system.

Packs gear and cargo and supplies very effectively. Doesn't bruise fruit or break eggs. Finds space for the caravan pet. Warehousing and logistics experience.

Rank 1 • Gains one bonus inventory slot.

Rank 2 • Gains another slot.

Rank 3 • Two more slots. Continues with fibonacci sequence at higher ranks.

28. Mule Whisperer

#adventure

It's not talking to animals per se.

Literally talks to animals. Gets pack animals to get along. Has animal friends and keeps them happy. Finds water and food, treats injured animals, encourages recalcitrant steeds, calms panicked beasts. Animals might include [d12]:

- i. Biomaned burdenbeasts
- ii. Hairy unicorns
- iii. Hardy horses
- iv. Meta-elephants
- v. Impressive quadrodonts
- vi. Lowing biocycles
- vii. Plumed runbirds
- viii. Gore yaks
- ix. Secondary donkeys
- x. Struthiform dinosaurs
- xi. Lope possums
- xii. Carnal fastfoots

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

29. Navigator of Other Worlds

#adventure

When the seven signs align.

Masters maps and telescopes and cartography. Avoids getting lost and tracks down lost treasures and new discoveries. Charts course by stars, winds, waypoints and worms. Folds the gateways and bends space.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

30. Negotiator of Relations

#background

They think they got the better deal.

Reads people and listens to them. Figures out what they want, and how to get it for them. Generates win-win outcomes while meeting key jargon milestones. Does a bit of discrete espionage. Handles organizations and bureaucracies. Hates corruption, approves of lobbying. Was an [d8]:

- i. Ambassador
- ii. Commissar
- iii. Emissary
- iv. Secretary
- v. Spiritual interpreter
- vi. Sociotherapist
- vii. Translator
- viii. Used golem salesperson

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

31. Noble Socialite

#background

The life of the party.

Gets invited to all the parties. Dresses to impress. Knows who's who. Is mentioned in the who's who. Substitutes contacts and gossip for actual work or ability. Wields a tiny dog and a small wand. Known as a [d6]:

- i. Beauty of our times
- ii. Ditzzy fool
- iii. Lounge lizard
- iv. Raucous party animal
- v. Smooth operator
- vi. Wondrous wit

Rank 1 • Gets CONNECTION (table).

32. Nomad Rustler

#adventure

Go, go, guerrilla.

Irregular tactics and guerrilla combat. Snipes, ambushes and shoots on the run. Rides like lightning, wears large hats, finds water holes. Steals cattle. Hides tracks, plays tricks. Excellent endurance when running away.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

33. Outsider Alien

#adventure

Not normal here.

Possesses strange foreign skills out of place in civilized society. Speaks alien languages. Looks strange and out of place. Survives in ducts and sewers and ruins. Hides in plain sight. Applies cosmetics and prosthetics. Uses improvised tools.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table) and a COSMETIC MUTATION (table).

34. Pilot of Vechs

#adventure

This might be an unfair fight.

Becomes one with their mobile golem armor. Understands vechs and their void-energy needs. Speak the machine language of flashing lights and wins their loyalty. Understands war machine academy politics. Fond of [d6]:

- i. Biovechs
- ii. Hovers
- iii. Levitators
- iv. Rollers
- v. Walkers
- vi. Wheelers

Rank 1 • Gets VEHICLE (table).

35. Postmodern Soldier

#adventure

Once there were many like them.

Polishes the rituals, skills and badges of the warriors from before those wasted years when the Vüstlands swallowed the Free Imperial Republics. Wields pistols and rifles, grenades and knives. Drives half-brainless machines. Endures mind-numbing drill.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

36. Praxa of the Bows

#combat

Shoot an arrow, split a tree.

Embraces the neoprimitive. Skirmishes with the best. Looses storms and sharpshoots alike. Makes and breaks bows and arrows. Keeps fighting trim.

Rank 1 • Critical damage increased one step.

Rank 2 • [+] to close attacks.

Rank 3 • Attacks twice per action.

37. Praxa of the Chains

#combat

Against the army of the dead.

Wields flails, chains, saws and chainsaws in the savior style from the Last Zombie Necroicide. Also puts on a great show of being a lumberjill or lumberjack.

Rank 1 • Gains #reach.

Rank 2 • Critical range increased one step.

Rank 3 • Critical range increased one more step and decapitates undead on critical.

38. Praxa of the Good Guns

#combat

The big gun is good big time.

Uses and maintains really big ranged weapons, like cannons, catapults, and null walkers. Repairs simple machines. Pretty good at ballistics too.

Rank 1 • Reloads faster.

Rank 2 • [+] on long-range fire.

Rank 3 • All damage dice explode.

39. Praxa of the Energies

#combat

An elite order of laser monks?

Uses and maintains ancient energy weapons in the field. Masters wands, lasers, and death orbs. Peruses holy manuals and recites operation mantras.

Rank 1 • Energy weapon minimum settings double as tools for cutting and burning. Can choose to deal minimum damage.

Rank 2 • Adjusts settings for [+] vs. force and energy defenses.

Rank 3 • Full power modulation. Chooses damage dice results instead of rolling.

40. Praxa of the Hammeraxes

#combat

Has buttered scones for tea.

Chops down trees. Hammers down nails. Upholds the dictates of the dwarven worker-aristocracy. Slays with axes, hammers, axe-hammers, dagger-axes, mattocks, ice axes, and more. Plays traditional percussion instruments.

Rank 1 • Critical multiplier increased one step.

Rank 2 • Damage dice increased one step.

Rank 3 • Critical multiplier increased one more step.

41. Praxa of the Knives

#combat

The shark has such teeth, dear.

Chops open coconuts and cuts paths through jungle. Hides and throws and twirls knives. Guts a fish, slits a throat, spreads some butter.

Rank 1 • Knife damage dice explode.

Rank 2 • Knife attacks ignore armor.

Rank 3 • Knives deal double damage.

42. Praxa of the Mortal Shells

#combat

They made champions to win the eternal war.

Understands battle and struggle at a cellular level. Utilizes body and environment as weapons. Redesigned to endure stress, hardship and fatigue. Meditates upon falling flowers. Dances through battles.

Rank 1 • Unarmed attacks deal d6 damage. Improvised weapon damage dice increase 1 step.

Rank 2 • Unarmed attacks deal d8. Improvised dice increase 1 more step.

Rank 3 • Unarmed d12. Improvised 1 more step.

43. Praxa of the Pistoliers

#combat

Archaemagic cloaks and wands with pistol grips.

Wields fantascientific pistols and magitech wands like a gun baron of the now-defunct Powder Feudalism. Draws fast and shoots tricks, duels and dices, drinks fire water and sleeps light as a feather.

Rank 1 • Reloads as a free action.

Rank 2 • [+] to attacks against nearby targets.

Rank 3 • Attacks twice per action.

44. Praxa of the Poles

#combat

Poke with the pointy end, please.

Wields polearms in formation or alone. Unleashes fire and brimstone with the staves of elder power. Fights with spear and shield like a hero of the old days.

Rank 1 • Ha and ka defenses increased by 2.

Rank 2 • Critical multiplier increased one step.

Rank 3 • [+] to tricks, trips, pushes, and other maneuvers.

45. Praxa of the Rifles

#combat

The longest arm.

Repairs, maintains and uses long wands, guns, rifles and shotguns. Snipes from a distance and clears rooms with a prayer and a sprayer. Full-auto hunting.

Rank 1 • [+] to attacks when sniping.

Rank 2 • Reloads as a free action.

Rank 3 • Critical range increased one step.

46. Praxa of the Rods

#combat

Spare the rod, spoil the fight.

Whirls rods, maces, clubs and sticks in combat. Uses the spell-rods of the battle wizards of old and crushes bones with nuclearlithic uranium-head maces.

Rank 1 • Critical damage multiplier increased one step.

Rank 2 • Damage dice increased one step.

Rank 3 • Ignores armor.

47. Praxa of the Swords

#combat

Double stake or split, the ace of spades.

Twirls and polishes a sword, pokes and chops and pommel bashes. Parade marches and dead man's hand card games. Makes a mean musketeer (just don't ask them to shoot).

Rank 1 • Critical range increased one step.

Rank 2 • Damage dice increased one step.

Rank 3 • Critical range increased one more step.

48. Professor in Panhumanities

#background

Practical applications coming soon.

Expounds theories and histories. Navigates cloisters and libraries. Fights academic battles and browbeats foolish opponents. Memorizes one narrow field of lore. Popular fields include [d12]:

- i. Art rehistorian
- ii. Constructivist linguist
- iii. Evolved theologian
- iv. Historian of the long long ago
- v. Lamarckian bioethicist
- vi. Metascientific philosopher
- vii. Neogeographer
- viii. Parapolitical economist
- ix. Postconceptual metatherapist
- x. Psychosocial engineer
- xi. Ruinland semiotician
- xii. Theoretical anthropologist

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

49. Protocollier

#background

Once we mined coal, now we make protocol.

Holds coffee ceremonies and builds sacrificial wicker humans. Determines modes of address and titles, paints heraldries and writes genealogies. Adjudicates seating, including shotgun seats. Wields pick and shovel. Focused on [d6]:

- i. Alcohol practices
- ii. Cigarette rituals
- iii. Coffee ceremonies
- iv. Pastry formalities
- v. Tripe rites
- vi. Water pipe liturgies

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

50. Psychic Veteran

#adventure

A fire of unknown origin took their friends away.

Uses psychic and oldtech weapons. Maintains archaic and golem armors. Closes the mind to incomprehensible alien intruders. Staves off boredom. Survives and recognizes strange nootropics developed by long lost corporate kingdoms.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

51. Revolutionary

#adventure

Change is always coming.

Organizes the disaffected and downtrodden. Writes tracts and gives impassioned speeches. Steals from the rich and powerful. Robs banks and blow up treasure caravans. Accumulates wealth and power. Wields explosives, pistols, pens, and knives.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

52. Rider at Ease

#adventure

This steed is Fleetfoot the Ninth.

Rides animals and riding machines. Wields light ranged weapons and lances. Takes care keeping steeds happy and working nicely. Explores societal issues. Attracts attention of locals.

Rank 1 • Gets VEHICLE (table).

53. Secret Servant

#adventure

From chaos, with love.

Goes undercover. Hunts moles. Seduces informants. Plugs leaks. Leaks kompromat. Navigates complex organizations and files reports in triplicate. Uses pistols, umbrellas, poisons, and strange ancient artefacts. Gets left out in the cold sooner or later.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

54. Shadow Merchant

#adventure

Somebody would have sold the Hand of God sooner or later.

Buys cheap and sells dear. Assesses, refurbishes, and trades. Makes useful contacts in places low and high. Hires guards and fires guns. Sells [d6]:

- i. Drugs
- ii. Off-license biomedical
- iii. Golems
- iv. Guns
- v. Illegal spells
- vi. Smuggled essentials

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

55. Shopkeeper

#background

Now this is a party.

Buys cheap and sells dear. Pillars the community and pillories interlopers. Upholds the letter of the law and the spirit of the purse. Wields coins and decorative town swords.

Specialized in [d8]:

- i. Desirable vehicles
- ii. Exotic fruits
- iii. Glittering jewelries
- iv. Luxuriant furs
- v. Overwrought timepieces
- vi. Red shoes
- vii. Smelly perfumes
- viii. Voluptuous silks

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

56. Sidu of the Bestfolk

#social

Some folk are simply better.

Apes the rituals and customs of the ancient source-modified neoaristocracies. Masters the ingratiating arts of the courts imperial and corporate. Perches precariously on social ladders.

Rank 1 • [+] to social attacks in noble contexts.

Rank 2 • Doubles ba defense from ornate attire.

Rank 3 • When reduced to 0 life by social attacks, may immediately pay 1 physical stat point to regain 1d6 + level life.

57. Sidu of the Iron Fist

#social

The army settles in the soul.

Understands the military mindset. Comprehends the discipline and subordination required by the colony organism. Grasps the paradoxical catch-22 nature of bureaucratic systems.

Rank 1 • Takes half damage from social attacks in military contexts.

Rank 2 • [+] to social attacks in military contexts.

Rank 3 • Ba defense from ornate military attire doubled.

58. Sidu of the Leastfolk

#social

The last must be first.

Survives the harshest mistreatments. Toils in the shadows. Builds networks, contacts, and underground railways. Marks the injustices against them.

Rank 1 • [+] to social attacks in proletarian contexts.

Rank 2 • Takes half damage from non-legal and non-monetary social attacks.

Rank 3 • Reduces social damage by 1 for every nearby ally (minimum of 1).

59. Sidu of the Legalities

#social

The word made order from chaos.

Masters the logical traditions of cause and effect. Peruses the tomes of precedent. Invokes the wisdom of the long-dead. Appeals to the letter of the law.

Rank 1 • [+] to social attacks in legal contexts.

Rank 2 • Ba defense increased by pro.

Rank 3 • [+] to damage with legal attacks.

60. Sidu of the Outcaste

#social

Freedom and misery.

Travels outside the circles and customs of society. Sees the paradoxes of social life. Parts the veils of propriety. Survives without shame.

Rank 1 • Whenever the outcaste takes social damage, they immediately gain a boon.

Rank 2 • [+] to social attacks in outcast contexts.

Rank 3 • All social attacks against the outcaste deal double ba damage. Social attacks cannot reduce the outcaste to 0 life.

61. Sidu of the Rhetors

#social

Words soothe the savage beast.

Teaches and uses the art of oratory. Divines the hidden structures of languages and uses them to nuanced effect. Skewers opponents with glittering wit and honed logic.

Rank 1 • Basic social attacks deal d6 damage.

Rank 2 • Critical range increased one step.

Rank 3 • Critical multiplier increased one step.

62. Sidu of the Sacred Deed

#social

As above so below.

Grasps the social need for sacrifices and scape goats. Comprehends the value of meaning and purpose. Soothes ruffled souls and uplifts broken dreams.

Rank 1 • [+] to attacks in religious contexts.

Rank 2 • Ba defense from religious attire doubled.

Rank 3 • Deals double damage with all religious social attacks.

63. Sidu of the Soiltwined

#social

True tradition tills the terroir.

Grasps the cycles of soil and season. Works the soil and the rhythms of the lifegrowers. Understands the old ways that the cityborn have forgotten.

Rank 1 • [+] to social attacks in rural contexts.

Rank 2 • Takes half damage from social attacks in rural contexts. Takes minimum damage from social attacks while standing on their own soil.

Rank 3 • When reduced to 0 life by social attacks, may immediately pay 1 mental stat point to regain 1d6 + level life.

64. Sidu of the Staunchkeepers

#social

Debt is the mother of coin.

Upholds the dictats of the sacred economy. Creates and accumulates wealth. Battles with bribes and corruption. Resists disorder.

Rank 1 • [+] to social attacks in mercantile contexts.

Rank 2 • [+] to ba damage in mercantile contexts.

Rank 3 • Doubles ba defense from wealth.

65. Sidu of the Unfettered

#social

Beyond good and evil.

Resides outside the moralities of the mass of humanities. Trucks in higher realities and baser instincts. Trades in the dreams of a pure platonic world. Escapes into the fortress of their mind. Hides in the wilderness of their soul.

Rank 1 • [-] to all social attacks. Takes half damage from all social attacks.

Rank 2 • [-] to all social damage. Can spend a stat point to reduce incoming social damage to 1.

Rank 3 • [+] to all magical damage.

66. Sidu of the Uptought

#social

Knowledge is the only true currency.

Cultivates an air of easy grace and elite education. Understands the seventeen unironic classics. Comprehends the arc of history. Fears that their brilliance is not appreciated.

Rank 1 • [+] to social attacks in academic contexts.

Rank 2 • [+] to all ba damage dealt and received.

Rank 3 • Critical multiplier for all ba damage dealt increased one step.

67. Singer of the Lastlands

#adventure

The Old-World will never die.

Regales with [d6]:

- i. Choreographed pop pieces.
- ii. Epic lays of lost lands.
- iii. Heroic songs of desperation.
- iv. Operatic masterpieces.
- v. Polyphonic eerie chants.
- vi. Salty shanties.

Navigates the mythic wilderness of forgotten times by the landmarks of ancient days. Soothes wild beasts and rouses rage in the breasts of humans. Tells good stories with satisfying

endings.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

68. Spelunker

#adventure

Heaven is down. Always down.

Ventures into deep places. Climbs, rappels, dives. Camps. Forages. Marks and maps. Crawls and squeezes. Survives in the dark, ageless places where the eyes of the builders see not.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

69. Storm Infantry

#background

Break on through to the other side.

Masters heavy weapons, armors, and shields. Fights in formation, resists charges, and endures long periods of boredom or armor. Storms enemy lines and fortifications. Keeps camps and cook fires.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

70. Street Performer

#background

Joy of the many, coin of the few.

Brings joy to children. Performs magic tricks and sleight of hand. Uses cold reading and cunning to dupe marks. Wields hidden daggers and pistol-wands. Variants [d6]:

- i. Illusionist
- ii. Puppeteer
- iii. Jongleur
- iv. Vome charmer
- v. Fortune teller
- vi. Ventriloquist

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

71. Survivor in the Vast

#adventure

Slept in the belly of a dead bear.

Survives and thrives in the endless Vast. Fishes, hunts, tracks, hides and moves quiet as the long-stripe cat. Shoots from horse and autowagon like a child of the wild. Particularly familiar with the [d8]:

- i. Cosmic-riven highlands
- ii. Endless moon forest
- iii. Deserts of the sun
- iv. Frozen starry seas
- v. Horizon ruinlands
- vi. Thin-air plateau
- vii. Ultraviolet steppe
- viii. Thousand swimming isles

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

72. Tactician of the Endless War

#adventure

There is an art to war.

Finds strategic advantages for war or business. Paints grand canvases with the blood of lesser mortals. Narrates new chapters in the endless cycles of history. Repeats past mistakes and avoids censure. Spins defeats into victories. Day to day they do [d8]:

- i. Accounting
- ii. Carpets
- iii. Corporate consulting
- iv. Games of strategy
- v. Military consulting
- vi. Real estate
- vii. Sports
- viii. Underworld cleanups

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

73. Thespian

#background

The gods were merely actors.

Puts on plays and swaps out faces. Changes personalities and wardrobes. Moves hearts and souls with word and gesture. Gets invited to the belle soirées. Survives on fame alone, no food required, honest. Variants [d12]:

- i. Character Actor
- ii. Chosen One
- iii. Clown
- iv. Comedian
- v. Dramatist
- vi. Farceur
- vii. Leading Person
- viii. Media Star
- ix. Monologuer
- x. Mummer
- xi. Politician
- xii. Tragedian

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

74. Timelost Interloper

#adventure

A flint blade for a laser sword.

Possesses skills out of place in the modern world. Builds slave golems called computers. Spouts gibberish about quantum physics. Flies rockets and experimental one-way time machines. Knaps stone tools and starts fires with sticks. Terrified of simple magic. Comes from [d6]:

- i. A broken star
- ii. A distant future
- iii. A glorious past
- iv. A lost planet
- v. A parallel world
- vi. A warlike era

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

75. Tinker Toymaker

#background

Toys are people too.

Carves and sculpts fine toys, balanced dice, and detailed mechanical automata. Uses delicate tools. Repairs and beautifies golems and machine humans. Cheats at dice with languid elegance. Operates remote weapons. Fondest of [d6]:

- i. Ceramic dolls
- ii. Gilded games
- iii. Little vechs
- iv. Plush toys
- v. Tin golems
- vi. Wicker soldiers

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

76. Useless Freeloader

#background

It gets around.

Invites themselves to all the parties. Dresses to blend in. Knows who's who. Gets free food and board. Butters up the insecure and soothes the ruffled. Wields a smooth tongue and a lack of shame. Known to be [d6]:

- i. A layabout
- ii. Lackadaisical
- iii. Languid
- iv. Lazy
- v. Lethargic
- vi. Terminally hip

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

77. Veda of the Abmortal Doctor

#magic

Doctor what?

Fixes damaged humans, diagnoses injuries and diseases. Uses medical equipment, scalpels and knives. Recognizes poisons and potions, even curses and charms. Runs very well.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table)

78. Veda of the All-Chemist

#magic

It's supposed to explode.

Understands chemical processes and matter modification equipment. Makes explosives, cook drugs. Transmutes refuse into treasures (like excreta into gunpowder).

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

79. Veda of the Awakened Sphere

#magic

The noöaphwew is hungry.

Studies and adapts natural systems. Reads leaves and listens to churning microbes. Hears the voices of the wind. Smells the songs of the ocean. Uses biological equipment and handles hunting weapons.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

80. Veda of the Biomechané

#magic

Skin-deep poems carved in flesh.

Plays the living spirit of flesh and bough. Dams injuries and diseases, modifies biological processes, sculpts angels and monsters. Wields knives and saws, needles and probes. Unofficially dabbles in mad science body horror.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

81. Veda of the Cosmic Architects

#magic

It's not a secret club.

Builds buildings. Shapes stones. Understands dungeons. Forms mystery cults. Treads the boundary between life and death. Plays with magic gates. Wields hammers and chisels.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).**82. Veda of the Existential Void**

#magic

Where imagination fails the void dwells.

Journeys the hidden paths. Braves the madness and fast decay. Dreams of stars and hopes, mistakes undone, futures rewritten, promises remade.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).**83. Veda of the Flying Serpent**

#magic

Prayers to the feathery one.

Mixes poisons, potions, and medicines. Entreaties the tiny machines that swim in all living things. Harvests herbs that heal and those that ill. Wields knives, pestles, and mortars.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).**84. Veda of the Golemmafexes**

#magic

Robotacist to the initiated.

Heals and maintains ancient autonomous machines. Follows preserved manuals of ritual assembly to copy platonic golems. Communicates with machines via the ancient art of coding. Uses integrated energy weapons and void screwdrivers.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).**85. Veda of the Iron Symphony**

#magic

The spheres are ringing.

Uses music to unite and divide, to share and preserve. Makes a band and tours the Vastlands. Ignores ingested poisons and shatters objects with instrumentals alone. Wrecks inns and hotels, leaves heartbreak behind. Casts the spells of the vibrating spheres.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).**86. Veda of the Law Necromantic**

#magic

Life and death are legal matters.

Talks to the dead and interprets their wishes. Mediates between living and dead. Consults the wisdom of past ages. Brings things back from the long sleep where they dreamless lay. Impeccable taste in candles, perfumes, skulls and gowns.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).**87. Veda of the Light Held Fast**

#magic

It would work if you just believed.

Uses placebos and nocebos to change the world. Stores and retrieves information with living crystals. Focus and refract magics through oldtech gems. Creates plays of light and shadow. Wields crystal wands.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).**88. Veda of the Mother Electric**

#magic

Creation hums the song Electric.

Practices the old rites of electric equipment maintenance and repair. Uses heavy energy weapons and ka batteries. Casts spells with blueprint scrolls.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

89. Veda of the Old Technologies

#magic

It's how they did things Long Ago.

Understands the fantascience of Oldtech. Activates or deactivates nearly anything. Reverse-engineers how to use ancient technomagical artifacts. Jury rigs a feeble emulation of the glories of the Long Ago.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

90. Veda of the Plant Kings

#magic

Just because the trees talk, doesn't mean they're crazy.

Talks to plants and hears what they have to say. Encourages verdant growth and opulent fruition. Promotes mobility and advancement for the plant kingdom. Harvests strange fruits. Wields sickles, axes, clubs and blunts.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

91. Veda of the Rightmaker

#magic

Soothe the savage mob.

Feels society and community in their bones. Sacrifices the few for the many. Understands the exigencies of survival transcend morality. Judges with stern impartiality. Wields great swords and ornate guns.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

92. Veda of the Seeming Becoming

#magic

They're magic beans.

Researches who wants what and how much they're willing to pay. Makes rough guesses and drives data. Writes adventuring campaigns. Handles public relations. Wields confusion and obfuscation.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

93. Veda of the Seven Summons

#magic

It wants to serve us. Trust me.

Finds the multitudes inhabiting the realms beyond the aether veils and in this dark material reality binds them. Bends, breaks, and enthralls daimons. Makes them give up their secrets. Pretends to their trust and loyalty.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

94. Veda of the Soul Breaker

#magic

Did I dream I was a human, or was I a human dreaming I was a spark of infinity?

Reads people's intentions and desires. Intuits strength of character and weakness of desire. Twists plans and dreams. Subvert the ka and steals the body with the terrifying spells of the ultras.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

95. Veda of the Witching Song

#magic

Ears for the all-song.

Listens to the world around them, the folk big and small, and hears what they say. Mixes herbs and opens the spirit eye to protect against daemons and slanders. Heals with words and attentions. Works in possibilities and glances.

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

96. Veda of the World's Word

#magic

The will of the world is written in the wind and the seed.

Reads the omens of wind and sky and water and grass. Divines the desires of the gods and their immutable laws. Adjusts those laws to help others and themselves. Deities and belief systems might include [d12]:

- i. Hedonic flesh-firstism
- ii. Opiate stasis

- iii. Mystery objectivism
- iv. Pan-noöspherical gratitude
- v. Builder beatification
- vi. Sociotheism
- vii. Cogflower growth gospel
- viii. Ur-rationalism
- ix. Ancestral apotheosis
- x. Pre-singularity nostalgia
- xi. Rainbow panoply polytheism
- xii. Machine idolatry

Rank 1 • Gets SPELL (table).

97. Vome Technician

#adventure

Once these machines were our servants.

Studies and repairs vomes. Adapts and uses vomish implants. Manages their side-effects. Takes control of vome drones and independent units. Uses vometech weapons.

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

98. White Collar Drone

#background

Just killing time.

Dresses appropriately and understands the etiquettes of modern life. Speaks three languages. Has a suitable degree and years of experience. Understands jargon. Masters arcane communication and management rituals. Clandestinely takes care of personal affairs despite the watchful eyes of jaded bosses. Creates ornate project documentation that nobody will ever read. Dreams of a better life. Secretly [d6]:

- i. Writes erotic poetry
- ii. Builds tiny model towns
- iii. Plays make-believe games
- iv. Dresses up in costumes
- v. Joined a motor-golem gang
- vi. Summons small daemons

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

99. Writer of Belles Lettres

#background

Calligraphy and purple prose.

Makes a living as a scribe using the three traditional scripts. Writes stories, fictions, and forgeries. Inscribes ritual code scrolls with fluid ease. Wields a pen sharper than a sword. Cuts with tongue, drowns with ink. Genres include [d6]:

- i. Belle epoque novel
- ii. Postconstructivist poetry
- iii. Oldtech fiction
- iv. Generative stories
- v. Epistolary tales
- vi. Subtextual plays

Rank 1 • Gets ITEM (table).

PLACE
HOLDER
HOLDER

Abilities

"Remember, thou hast made me more powerful than thyself; my height is superior to thine, my joints more supple."

— The Creature in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818)

Abilities allow a hero to function outside the human norm. They are neither good or ill, just ... dangerous. Players roll or choose twice for abilities. Duplicates increase the rank of an ability.

Ability Generator [d100]

1. Artiforganism
2. Aural Corona
3. Bloodclad
4. Bloody Nimble
5. Bravely Runs Away
6. Break the Weak
7. Channeling Hands
8. Citoyen Formidable
9. Combat Monster
10. Critical Master
11. Death Hunger
12. Devastator
13. Dosemaster
14. Echolocator
15. Electromagic Hacker
16. Empty Shell
17. Expert Sidekicks
18. Fleshsong Audiophile
19. Fluid Anatomy
20. Friend of the Elements
21. Gastrointestinal Upgrade
22. Glittering Incorruptible
23. Hacked Shorttimer
24. Honor Bound
25. Inspiring Hero
26. Insufferably Cute
27. Lazarus Soldier
28. Lifewind Inhalation
29. Machine Whisperer
30. Master Blaster
31. Memory Palace
32. Meticulous Ritualist
33. More Than Human
34. Motorbreath
35. Natural Born Comrade
36. Neural Machine Symbiote
37. Noblesse Obliged
38. Omniactivation
39. Overlooked by the Gods
40. Panmolecular Sensorium
41. Pheromone Panoply
42. Polybody Unity
43. Porcelain Skin
44. Protector of Innocents
45. Psion Scion
46. Querulous Kvetch
47. Radiant Panoptics
48. Rauber Baron
49. Renowned Racer
50. Rubberskin
51. Secured Flesh
52. Sparklefingers
53. Spell Detonator
54. Stargazer
55. Symbiotic Friend
56. Symbolic Receiver
57. Unblinking
58. Uncanny Confidence
59. Undying Parasite Heart
60. Uplifted Exemplar
61. Vacuum Hardened
62. Vibrant Soul
63. Void of Memories
64. Vome Optic Enhancement
65. Wizardkiller
66. Zootic Masterform

Place
holder

1. Artiforganism

#biomachine

The unborn. The made.

Rank 1 • Hero is not actually alive. They do not need to eat, breathe, drink, or sleep. They gain energy from the sun or from magical batteries.

Rank 2 • Hero can replicate themselves given a few weeks and security backups.

2. Aural Corona

#fantascience

Flaring off the elemental excess.

Hero is surrounded by [d8]:

- i. Light
- ii. Fire
- iii. Sky
- iv. Water
- v. Green
- vi. Metal
- vii. Radiation
- viii. Void

Rank 1 • Hero crackles with an overcharged aura. They take half damage from their element.

Rank 2 • Hero can spend 1 life to flare their aura to an adjacent creature, either sharing their resistance or transferring all the damage they avoided.

Rank 3 • Hero takes minimum damage from their element.

3. Bloodclad

#power

Action hero style.

Rank 1 • When below half life, hero only takes half physical damage. They're tougher covered in their own shiny blood!

Rank 2 • Below half life, hero can shrug off one physical attack each round.

4. Bloody Nimble

#power

Speed overwhelming.

Rank 1 • Once per turn hero can spend 1 life to gain one additional action. This boost is not an action.

Rank 2 • Hero can choose to

spend 3 life to gain two additional actions instead.

5. Bravely Runs Away

#fortune

Can't touch this.

Rank 1 • Opponents suffer [-] when hero is retreating. Any sacrifices to avoid encounters are worth twice as much.

Rank 2 • [+] to all tests while being chased. Ally morale does not suffer when hero retreats.

Rank 3 • Cowardly reputation. [+] to surprise attacks and against fear effects. Takes half damage from social attacks.

6. Break the Weak

#power

Cut them down like wheat.

Rank 1 • When hero physically strikes an opponent of lower level than themselves, the opponent is out of the fight (and probably dead).

Rank 2 • When the hero knocks an opponent out of the fight they get a free attack against a nearby enemy.

7. Channeling Hands

#fantascience

Be the conduit.

Hero conducts the element of [d8]:

- i. Light
- ii. Fire
- iii. Sky
- iv. Water
- v. Green
- vi. Metal
- vii. Radiation
- viii. Void

Rank 1 • Hero's bare hands can flare with the element. They can't throw it, but they can affect matter. Also, their unarmed attacks deal elemental damage.

Rank 2 • Elemental conduit grows. Unarmed elemental damage increases two steps (e.g. 1d3 to 1d6).

Rank 3 • Conduit grows. Damage increases two more steps (e.g.

1d6 to 1d12).

8. Citoyen Formidable

#fortune

The city makes the citizen.

Rank 1 • The natural city-slicker. Hero gains [+] to social interactions, travel, and navigation in cities.

Rank 2 • Social and physical attacks against the streetwise hero suffer [-] in cities.

Rank 3 • Hero deals damage with [+] in cities.

9. Combat Monster

#power

Fight alone. Fight dirty.

Rank 1 • When hero fights an opponent alone they have [+] to attacks and tests to trip, trick, or otherwise hinder their enemy.

But they never benefit from flanking or other help in combat.

Rank 2 • When the hero fights alone their opponents never gain [+] from flanking or surrounding them.

10. Critical Master

#power

Knows where it hurts.

Rank 1 • Hero's critical hit multiplier is now equal to their proficiency or x3, whichever is higher.

Rank 2 • Hero's critical hit multiplier is now equal to their level, their proficiency or x4, whichever is higher (maximum x6).

11. Death Hunger

#power

Death awakens the blood demon.

Rank 1 • Player tracks enemies taken out by the hero in a battle scene. Each enemy taken out grants a cumulative +1 to attacks until the end of the scene.

Rank 2 • Hero also gains cumulative +1 to damage for every enemy taken out.

12. Devastator

#power

Damage is everything.

Rank 1 • Hero's attacks always deal extra damage equal to their proficiency or +3, whichever is higher.

Rank 2 • Hero's extra damage is now equal to their level or their proficiency or +4, whichever is higher.

13. Dosemaster

#brains

Measured in all things.

Rank 1 • Hero knows their doses. They don't roll dice when healing with meds and potions or when applying poisons. Instead they treat the maximum result as the number of charges. E.g., a med that normally restores 1d8 life, always restores 8 life in the dosemaster's capable hands.

Rank 2 • Hero rolls an additional matching die, increasing the charges they can nurse out of a med dose.

14. Echolocator

#biomachine

Voices paint pictures.

Rank 1 • Hero can use echolocation. Gains 1 agility.

Rank 2 • Hero can dimly see around corners and through closed doors using echolocation and vibrations. Gains 1 agility.

15. Electromagic Hacker

#fantascience

Talk long enough into the machine and it will talk back.

Rank 1 • Hero can hack adjacent oldtech creatures and equipment. In combat, hacking is one action, each command is another action.

Rank 2 • [+] to hacking tests if touching target.

Rank 3 • Hero can give target one free command per turn.

16. Empty Shell

#biomachine

No hell or heaven awaits.

Rank 1 • Hero has no soul or ka. All curse spells always fail against them. They are resistant against all mind-affecting attacks. They can never be restored to life if they die.

Rank 2 • Hero can absorb a soul leaving its dying body, gaining 1 Aura until the next session. This destroys the absorbed soul. While they have an absorbed soul, they appear normal and not like a soulless husk.

17. Expert Sidekicks

#brains

Friends are the best.

Rank 1 • A number of sidekicks equal to the hero's proficiency can be experts. This means they add the hero's proficiency to their sum when testing something they're good at.

Rank 2 • The number of possible expert sidekicks increases to the hero's level or proficiency or 4, whichever is highest.

18. Fleshsong Audiophile

#fantascience

Codes of creation singing in the flesh of the mortal and the damned.

Rank 1 • Hero is creepily well acquainted with biology; [+] to all biological research tests. When they touch flesh it sings and tells them what it has experienced. After a few minutes of physical contact they can ask or answer one question about the medical history and condition of a living creature.

Rank 2 • [+] to all biological tests, including biomancer spells. Flesh songs answer questions about medical histories of dead organisms.

19. Fluid Anatomy

#biomachine

They have organs they shouldn't have in places they shouldn't be.

Rank 1 • Hero's insides rearrange and rebuild to keep them going despite dreadful trauma. Hero can spend 1 stat point to turn a critical hit into a normal hit.

Rank 2 • Can spend 1 stat point to regain life equal to hero's level.

Rank 3 • Can remove 1 hurt per session.

20. Friend of the Element

#fantascience

Accept the love of the source.

Hero is beloved of [d8]:

- i. Light
- ii. Fire
- iii. Sky
- iv. Water
- v. Green
- vi. Metal
- vii. Radiation
- viii. Void

Rank 1 • Hero gains [+] to all elemental attacks.

Rank 2 • Hero now has [+] to all element-related die-rolls, including damage.

Rank 3 • Hero always deals double damage with element.

21. Gastrointestinal Upgrade

#biomachine

Everything should be fuel.

Rank 1 • Hero's gut is a marvel of technomagic. They are immune to food poisoning and gain [+] vs. all other ingested toxins. Also, they can digest anything organic, from wood to bone to petroleum.

Rank 1 • Hero has a matter converter installed in their body and can derive sustenance from inorganic material.

22. Glittering Incorruptible

#fortune

The body is a temple of purity.

Rank 1 • Hero's source code has been enhanced by chance or ancient germline intervention. The hero cannot suffer mutations through corruption. Instead they take a point of harm. The ill hero requires a week's rest to recover.

Rank 2 • Hero's source code actively resists all diseases and toxins. Hero can choose to lose 1 stat point to avoid all other effects of a disease or poison.

Rank 3 • Hero can not be reduced to 0 life through social attacks.

They are simply too golden.

23. Hacked Shorttimer

#power

We were better for a while.

Rank 1 • Hero comes from stock crudely optimized for improved short term performance. They gain 1 strength, endurance, or agility. Sadly, their bio-cobbled body imposes [-] against diseases, venoms, or toxins.

Rank 2 • The optimization went further than was wise. Hero gains 1 more strength, endurance, or agility. Their physical stat maximum is increased to 6. Alas, they suffer [+] damage from one type of attack: physical, social, or mental.

Rank 3 • Flawed divinity. Hero gains 1 more strength, endurance, or agility, and 1 charisma. Their physical stat maximum is increased to 7. Hero suffers [-] against one kind of elemental assault.

24. Honor Bound

#fortune

Where courts dare to tread, honor is the law.

Rank 1 • Hero possesses an aura of honor, granting [+] to social tests in nomadic and clan-based societies.

Rank 2 • Powerful mana protects the hero from dishonorable opponents (i.e. city-dwellers or hunter gatherers). Their social attacks against the hero have [-].

Rank 3 • Tribal aura. Hero takes half damage from all social attacks in the wild lands.

25. Inspiring Hero

#brains

For great glory!

The intangible quality of a leader has a quantity all of its own.

Rank 1 • A number sidekicks equal to the hero's proficiency fights with unmatched ferocity. They add the hero's proficiency score to all their attacks and tests during battle scenes.

Rank 2 • The number of possible

inspired sidekicks increases to the hero's level or proficiency or 4, whichever is highest.

26. Insufferably Cute

#fortune

Just the cutest.

Rank 1 • A winsome face. [+] to social interactions, but all interactions take twice as long as everyone fusses over the hero.

Rank 2 • Small and cuddly. [-] to all direct attacks against the hero, but the hero's inventory is permanently reduced by 3.

27. Lazarus Soldier

#power

Didn't let them grind ya down.

Rank 1 • The first time the hero is reduced to 0 life in a session they immediately regain 6+level life.

Rank 2 • When the hero would be permanently removed from play, the player can return them into play in the next scene. The hero gains a permanent scar or burden occupying one inventory slot and they lose a rank of Lazarus Soldier.

Rank 3 • After the hero dies they return to life on the next full moon or other significant astrological event. This creates a probabilistic dysfunction and unleashes an undead plague.

28. Lifewind Inhalation

#power

Deep breaths, action hero, deep breaths.

Absorb the vital principles of sky and green through superior patterns of consciousness.

Rank 1 • Hero recovers twice as much life when spending a hero die.

Rank 2 • Thrice as much life.

Rank 3 • Four times.

29. Machine Whisperer

#brains

Soothe the savage robot.

Rank 1 • Talking machines naturally like the hero. [+] to social tests with machines.

Rank 2 • Complex machines always try to help the hero. Complicated locks try to unlock themselves when whispered to, audio-visual orbs try to fix themselves when banged vigorously.

30. Master Blaster

#power

Only Blaster leave!

Rank 1 • Hero rolls all exploding damage dice (e.g. 1d6*) with [+].

Rank 2 • [+] to all explosive tests, including attacks and spells. Hero feels the energy trapped in matter yearning to be free like a phoenix.

Rank 3 • Oops. Blaster blew up. Time for a new hero.

31. Memory Palace

#brains

A prison of dreams traps the unwary.

A true wizard's mind is a scary old palace, full of dark holes where magical parasites hide.

Rank 1 • The hero squirrels away extra spell burdens in their mind as magic memories. The memory palace has a number of magic rooms equal to their level. This is a bonus inventory just for carrying spells.

Rank 2 • Hero also gains memory points equal to their level. These are used to cast memorized spells as if they were life points.

Rank 3 • Hero's memory point total from this ability is doubled.

Players should fancifully describe their hero's memory palace. The more fanciful, the better.

32. Meticulous Ritualist

#fantascience

Accurate ritual records must be kept for meaningful summoning!

Rank 1 • Hero gains [+] to tests when casting all spells that take more than a dozen or so minutes to cast.

Rank 2 • Hero also rolls effects of

their ritual spells with [+].

Rank 3 • Hero reduces price of all ritual spells they cast by 2 (minimum of 1).

33. More Than Human

#fantascience

The cosmos gazing at itself.

Rank 1 • An awareness of common consciousness grants the hero [+] to communicating with synthetics, golems, and void creatures.

Rank 2 • The hero is incredibly versatile, adapting to alien dimensions, higher colors, strange gravities, and non-euclidean spaces within a few minutes. This negates any penalties from such environments, though the hero still dies from exposure, lack of air, etc.

Rank 3 • Tapping the cosmic mind, the hero gains [+] to all social and mental interactions with alien sentiences. Additionally, the hero can willingly abandon their mortal shell and become a ka-ba spirit. This is a one-way trip. Afterwards humans count as alien sentiences for the hero.

34. Motorbreath

#brains

Give me that which I desire.

Rank 1 • Hear the roar. [+] when using machines with engines.

Rank 2 • Eat the dust. Gains an extra action when using a machine with an engine.

Rank 3 • Break on through. [+] to damage and initiative with machines with engines. Critical range increased one step in vehicular combat.

35. Natural Born Comrade

#fortune

Icon of the hunter scavengers.

Rank 1 • Hero gains [+] to social tests among their equals. Whenever they give away most of their wealth in social conflict and keep an equal or smaller proportion for themselves, all their attacks are twice as

effective.

Rank 2 • Wealthier opponents have [-] to social and physical attacks against the hero. Hero deals double social and physical damage to wealthier opponents.

Rank 3 • Hero suffers no penalties from opulent wealth in the eyes of the poor, since they are only safeguarding the wealth for the common folk.

36. Neural Machine Symbiote

#biomachine

Silver ships slip through my veins.

Tiny silver animalcules flow through the hero's bloodstream, glittering golden wires thread their neural networks.

Rank 1 • Hero can pilot golems and other thinking machines hands-free. The symbiote accelerates their minds (hero gains 1 thought).

Rank 2 • The symbiote accelerate all reflexes (hero gains 1 agility) and lets the hero talk with machines and other neurally enhanced humans at great distances.

37. Noblesse Obliged

#fortune

Better folks are bred, not made.

Rank 1 • Hero owns a country estate and a fancy title. Social attacks can never remove the hero from play. Hero gains an additional hurt state, "attending to personal matters in the countryside." This hurt state immediately removes the hero from play for the session, but prevents any further injury, as they are ensconced in their "cottage".

Rank 2 • Lucky death of a relative brings finances to match the title. Hero gains [+] whenever money would be an issue. Because money, or at least credit, is not an issue.

Rank 3 • Friends in high places. Once per session the hero can call on a favor to get out of a pickle or rum do. Hero gains [+] in all courts of law and public opinion.

38. Omniactivation

#fortune

The red button will be pushed.

Rank 1 • Hero ignores all restrictions on all fantascientific devices. Doors recognize them, sentient bombs talk to them. Does the hero understand what they do? Unlikely.

Rank 2 • Once per session the hero can touch a dead fantascientific machine or artifact and it sparks to life, giving off one last gasp of utility. A dead autowagon rolls forward a last few meters. A visual calculator's last output glows dimly on its cathode sphere for a few minutes. An electronic lock reactivates and bolts a door.

39. Overlooked by the Gods

#fortune

Omniscience is a lie.

Rank 1 • All holy or sacred tests rolled against the hero suffer [-].

Rank 2 • All curses and blessings have minimal effect against the hero. Hero gains 1 aura.

Rank 3 • Hero gains [+] to all attacks and direct tests against the extra-normal 'gods' and their 'divine' servitors. They just slide off those creatures' perception fields.

40. Panmolecular Sensorium

#biomachine

They can hear the songs of the oceans. Read stories in wind and stream.

Rank 1 • Hero's sensorium is expanded with new cutaneous and olfactory organs that let them read trace molecular remains. Their sense of smell is as acute as a blood hound's and they can 'taste' with their fingertips. [+] when tracking, testing food for poison, sampling fuel for impurities, and other similar tests.

Rank 2 • Hero can literally smell emotions. [+] to discerning intentions, picking up lies, and ferreting out tricks.

41. Pheromone Panoply

#biomachine

A smell is worth a hundred memories.

Write poetry with biochemistry.

Rank 1 • The hero has modified biological chemo-factories in their body. These provide communication molecules on demand. [+] to charming or intimidating social attacks. Can scare away or 'blind' creatures like ants and termites that rely primarily on chemical signals for communication.

Rank 2 • Hero can use their pheromone panoply to communicate with and try to command insects or other creatures that depend on pheromones.

42. Polybody Unity

#brains

More bodies, more choices.

Rank 1 • Hero has an additional body. Their bodies are connected in a real-time glandular psycho-to-psyche network. Neither body has priority and they have a single mind. The hero can have up to 3 bodies. Adding a body is very expensive, takes about a week, and requires a surgeon-psychopomp. Each additional body is treated as a secondary character with its own physical stats and action pool. Each body beyond the first in visual range grants 5 life points. Area attacks against a polybody characters multiply their damage by the number of bodies present.

Rank 2 • Hero can have up to 6 bodies. Some of their bodies can be animals.

Rank 3 • Hero can have up to 9 bodies. Some of their bodies can be synthetics.

If a hero sends off a body on its own, the player decides how much life is assigned to it. The player can invest xp in a body to increase its stats and life totals.

Heroes may merge a with a new body instead of outright stealing their body. In this case the player rolls a new set of mental stats and uses the set with a higher aura score. The hero gains one bonus skill and replaces a number of other skills equal to their new

thought score.

43. Porcelain Skin

#fantascience

They made people prettier once upon a time.

Rank 1 • Hero's uncannily smooth skin is resistant to diseases and scarring. Gains 1 charisma.

Rank 2 • Hero's luminous skin is resistant to acid, chemicals and fire (half damage). Gains 1 more charisma.

44. Protector of Innocents

#fortune

Despite the gore, a noble cause.

Rank 1 • Hero gains [+] to attacks and tests when they are fighting to protect an unarmed or helpless innocent.

Rank 2 • Once per turn hero can instantly redirect an attack from a nearby creature to themselves (this is not an action). Hero can redirect additional attacks at the cost of 1 life per attack. Word gets around. Downtrodden communities always scrape together meager resources to help the hero.

Rank 3 • [-] to all attacks and damage against the hero while they are defending an innocent.

45. Psion Scion

#brains

A soft blanket for the soul.

Rank 1 • Low-level empathic field grants [+] to trickery, lies, and illusions.

Rank 2 • [+] to direct mental attacks against a single target.

Rank 3 • Empathetic enlightenment. [+] to assist, console, and otherwise help scared and vulnerable creatures. Resistant to fear and trickery.

46. Querulous Kvetch

#power

Complaining is a cure.

Rank 1 • Hero gains an additional hurt state, "grumbling quietly." It

imposes no penalties.

Rank 2 • Hero gains one more hurt state, “griping and groaning.” When the hero reaches this state, sneaking becomes difficult [-].

Rank 3 • Hero gains a third hurt state, “kvetching viciously.” When the hero reaches this state, they suffer [-] to social interactions. They also gain [+] to one action.

47. Radiant Panoptics

#biomachine

The inverse of colour blindness. Redline machine microbes swirl in the hero's eyes.

Rank 1 • Hero's infraoptic symbiotes detect heat signatures and traces. Gains [+] to survival and investigation tests.

Rank 2 • Hero can “see” in absence of visible light using a panoply of electromagnetic sense organs.

Rank 3 • Hero's senses can probe through several layers of base matter. Gains [+] when searching for hidden objects or trying to figure out if there is somebody standing behind the draperies eavesdropping.

48. Rauber Baron

#brains

Money is magic.

Rank 1 • Hero is savvy. Hero has [+] to all business-related rolls. Including treasure rolls.

Rank 2 • Hero is surprisingly well-off. Hero can deal physical damage with social attacks. It's called paid help. Once per session, they acquire an expensive item on “credit”.

Rank 3 • Hero reveals they have a servile butler running a monopolistic corporation on their behalf. Hero can deal mental damage with social attacks. It's called owning a media subsidiary. Once per session they turn out to own a useful building or asset.

49. Renowned Racer

#brains

The grand velocity trophy proves life has meaning.

Rank 1 • [+] to tests during

vehicular chases. Fame (and notoriety) also grant the hero [+] in many social interactions.

Rank 2 • Some of them were death races. [+] when maneouvering to attack or defend with a vehicle.

Rank 3 • Gains an extra driving action every turn.

50. Rubberskin

#fantascience

Nemesis of the thunder demons.

Skin laced with symbiotic insulating caucho-fungoid.

Rank 1 • The hero is resistant to electromagnetic and energy attacks (halving all damage).

Rank 2 • The caucho-fungoid is interwoven with whole body. Immune to electromagnetic and energy attacks.

Rank 3 • No longer fully human but an evolved caucho-fungoid chimera. Electromagic and energy attacks heal the hero. Note they don't repair broken bones or open wounds. Those still need surgery.

51. Secured Flesh

#biomachine

I am that I am.

The hero knows how their body works, keeping it strong and stable.

Rank 1 • [+] to all tests against mutations, dangerous spells, or anything else that might corrupt their body (e.g. disease).

Rank 2 • Hero takes half damage from toxins, venoms, poisons, and diseases.

52. Sparklefingers

#fantascience

Conducting the ambient electromagic of the world.

Rank 1 • The hero's unarmed attacks can deal 1d4 electric damage instead of 1d3 physical damage. Conducting materials extend attack range.

Rank 2 • Electric touch increases to 1d6 damage. Hero can spend a few hours to recharge dead

batteries.

Rank 3 • Increases to 1d8 damage. In a medical setting hero's touch gives [+] or [-]; restarting stopped hearts, improving muscle tone, reducing viral replication.

53. Spell Detonator

#power

Things must boom.

Rank 1 • Hero's spell damage dice become explosive. E.g., a magic bullet (1d4) becomes 1d4*.

Rank 2 • Spell damage dice explode on highest and second-highest rolls.

Rank 3 • [+] to all spell damage.

54. Stargazer

#fortune

Through madness, enlightenment.

Gazed upon Mother Star and saw through the Veil of Ignorance cast upon humanity by the Dark Sorcerer at the top of the false heaven. Saw through their whips and chains, and now they are as gossamer.

Rank 1 • [+] to all tests against magic.

Rank 2 • The moon-tide roars within the hero. They deal double damage to magic-corrupted monsters and abominations. And dark wizards.

55. Symbiotic Friend

#biomachine

There's a little more than me.

The hero has a small, telepathically bonded pet living on or in their flesh. It is a [d8]:

- i. chirping monkey-lizard
- ii. air-breathing fish
- iii. furry rabbit-snake
- iv. many-handed cuttlefish
- v. rainbow land-crab
- vi. glistening biomechanical newt
- vii. burrowing glass bird
- viii. iridescent scarab colony

Rank 1 • The symbiotic friend can perform a single skill with the same bonus as the hero. It

occupies no inventory slots.

Rank 2 • The friend is an expert, using double the hero's proficiency score.

Rank 3 • It is an incarnation of skill. It's sum bonus with that skill is +13.

56. Symbolic Receiver

#brains

That's ... that's not really a thing.

There are patterns everywhere, and they all emit meaning into the receiver's head. The hero knows what every symbol means, or says they do.

Rank 1 • Hero can always tell if a symbol is broadly positive or negative. Price of all symbolic spells reduced by 1 (minimum of 1). Symbolic spells include magic circles of protection, magical exploding symbol traps, and the like.

Rank 2 • [+] to all tests when casting or nullifying symbolic spells.

57. Unblinking

#biomachine

An inhuman stare.

Rank 1 • The hero never needs to blink. [+] whenever undivided attention is useful. Harder to surprise. Also, they can creep people out.

Rank 2 • [+] to casting and nullifying horrific spells as hero gazes clearly and directly into the eye of madness.

58. Uncanny Confidence

#power

Reality bends before belief.

Rank 1 • Hero adds their pro to all social damage rolls.

Rank 2 • Hero adds their pro to their social defense.

Rank 3 • Hero gains [+] to all social damage rolls.

59. Undying Parasite Heart

#biomachine

Have a little piece of their heart.

Rank 1 • The hero's heart is a baysymbiote which stores their memory-patterns. The symbiote is a perfect auto-replicant and cannot die of old age. When the 'heart' is placed in a suitable excavated body cavity it sprouts tendrils and a crystalline neural web, taking over the host in a matter of days. Every time the hero is 'reborn' this way they lose a mental stat point, coming closer to their final end as a twitching madness of pulsing, tentacled flesh.

Rank 2 • The monstrous heart is larger and stronger. The hero permanently gains 1 endurance and [+] to long-distance running and other endurance sports.

Rank 3 • The monstrous heart is even stronger. The hero permanently gains 1 endurance. Every time it takes over a new host, the hero acquires one of the host's skills. If the hero has no available skill slots left, they may use inventory slots to store additional skills in subsidiary neural organs.

60. Uplifted Exemplar

#biomachine

Now they understand.

The hero was a [d8]:

- i. Capybara
- ii. Chimpanzee
- iii. Pig
- iv. Pigmy Rhino
- v. Mouse
- vi. Tortoise
- vii. Wolf
- viii. Zebra

Rank 1 • Now they are a bestial humanoid one-off with super-human aptitudes and opposable thumbs. Hero gains 1 stat point and one heightened sense appropriate to their base animal. The heightened sense grants [+] in relevant situations.

Rank 2 • The uplift did not stop. It kept working, changing. Hero gains 2 thought. Their thought stat maximum is increased to 7.

Rank 3 • Hero gains 1 more thought. Maximum increased to 8. Superhuman manual dexterity and astounding brainpower gives the hero [+] with improvised equipment, weapons, and plots of world domination.

61. Vacuum Hardened

#biomachine

When did they forget Old World?

Rank 1 • Hero can survive a full day in hard vacuum due to significant nano-magical modification. Gains 1 endurance.

Rank 2 • Survives a full month in hard vacuum. Hero can derive sustenance from radiothermal batteries or other such devices.

Rank 3 • Survives indefinitely in hard vacuum. Hero can synthesize life-sustaining trace minerals and compounds with their internal artazotheic organ.

62. Vibrant Soul

#power

The spirit is faster than the flesh.

Rank 1 • A fiery glare, a malevolent eye. The hero can use one of their actions to make a spiritual attack before other creatures act, outside the normal initiative order.

Rank 2 • The hero gains an additional action they can use for spiritual attacks or tests.

Rank 3 • [+] to initiative tests.

63. Void of Memories

#brains

The spells are eating my mind!

This wizard's mind is riddled with wormholes to voids where old magics are wont to hide.

Rank 1 • Hero gains memory points equal to their highest mental stat. These are used to cast memorized spells as if they were life points. Also, hero learns a void spell.

Rank 2 • Hero's memory points from this ability are doubled.

Rank 3 • The points are doubled again.

64. Vome Optic Enhancement

#biomachine

Now you see them looking into you.

Rank 1 • Technomagical machines swirl in the hero's eyes,

whirring and clicking, focusing and demanding. Hero's eyes provide low-light vision, sure, but their eyes are also ridiculously sharp and come with built-in filters. They can stare into the sun-line safely. The optics provide [+] to all long-distance aimed attacks.

Rank 2 • The hero's optophotonics can convert the hero's own life force into a ray attack (1d12 damage, long range, #precise, costs 1 life per attack).

Rank 3 • Optophotonic toolkit upgrade lets the hero use their eye rays as a built in laser toolkit for precision welding, surgery, engraving, etc.

interest. They can have one human servant at a time.

Rank 2 • Zootelepathy. The animal hero can communicate telepathically with their enthralled servant and make them speak, like a ventriloquist with their dummy. Once per session the hero can dominate their enthralled servant for a few minutes. After the domination the servant falls unconscious for a few hours.

Rank 3 • Mass zootelepathy. The animal hero can simultaneously enthrall a number of humans equal to their level.

65. Wizardkiller

#power

Smash.

Rank 1 • Hero gains [+] to damage against wizards and magical creatures. Hero's magic cost increased by 1.

Rank 2 • Hero gains [+] to hit wizards and magical creatures. Hero's magic cost increased by 1 more.

Rank 3 • Hero deals double damage to wizards and magical creatures. Hero cannot cast spells.

66. Zootic Masterform

#brains

The pet is the boss.

The hero appears to be a [d8]:

- i. Cat
- ii. Dog
- iii. Owl
- iv. Parrot
- v. Rat
- vi. Snake
- vii. Spider
- viii. Toad

Rank 1 • Hero's strength and endurance are reduced to 0, their agility and thought increase correspondingly. Their inventory is reduced by 3. Given a few hours they can empathically enthrall a human or other oversized member of the local dominant culture to care for them and serve them. Their human servant is not a mind-controlled slave, yet still generally acts in the hero's

PLACE
HOLDER
HOLDER

PLACE
HOLDER
HOLDER



Stats

"You still don't understand what you're dealing with, do you? Perfect organism. Its structural perfection is matched only by its hostility."

— Ash, *Alien*, 1979 (written by Dan O'Bannon)

The natural aptitudes of a hero are represented by six stats: strength (str), endurance (end), agility (agi), charisma (cha), aura (aur), and thought (tho). Each stat ranges from 0 to a maximum of 5 points. The average for a prime adult human is 0. Injuries, spells, and other events affect heroes' stats.

To create a hero a player can distribute 7 points among the six stats, with a maximum of 3 in any one stat. Or they can be brave and roll once on the stat generator. Results list stats that are not zero.

Stat Generator [d100]

1. **Scattered** • All stats 1.
2. **Musclebound** • Strength 5, one stat 1.
3. **Virile** • Endurance 5, one stat 1.
4. **Elastic** • Agility 5, one stat 1.
5. **Hypnotic** • Charisma 5, one stat 1.
6. **Reserved** • Aura 5, one stat 1.
7. **Highbrow** • Thought 5, one stat 1.
8. **Ogrish** • Strength 4, two stats 1.
9. **Lumbering** • Endurance 4, two stats 1.
10. **Frenetic** • Agility 4, two stats 1.
11. **Dainty** • Charisma 4, two stats 1.
12. **Aetherial** • Aura 4, two stats 1.
13. **Focused** • Thought 4, two stats 1.
14. **Strapping** • Strength 2, two stats 2, another 1.
15. **Energetic** • Endurance 2, two stats 2, another 1.
16. **Twitchy** • Agility 2, two stats 2, another 1.
17. **Fetching** • Charisma 2, two stats 2, another 1.
18. **Fierce** • Aura 2, two stats 2, another 1.
19. **Knowing** • Thought 2, two stats 2, another 1.
20. **Brawny** • Strength 2, one stat 2, another three stats 1.
21. **Bulky** • Endurance 2, one stat 2, another three stats 1.
22. **Lissome** • Agility 2, one stat 2, another three stats 1.
23. **Nice** • Charisma 2, one stat 2, another three stats 1.
24. **Inflexible** • Aura 2, one stat 2, another three stats 1.
25. **Crafty** • Thought 2, one stat 2, another three stats 1.
26. **Rugged** • Strength 2, five stats 1.
27. **Stout** • Endurance 2, five stats 1.
28. **Spry** • Agility 2, five stats 1.
29. **Likable** • Charisma 2, five stats 1.
30. **Firm** • Aura 2, five stats 1.
31. **Schooled** • Thought 2, five stats 1.
32. **Doughty** • Strength 3, one stat 3, another 1.
33. **Athletic** • Endurance 3, one stat 3, another 1.
34. **Nimble** • Agility 3, one stat 3, another 1.
35. **Charming** • Charisma 3, one stat 3, another 1.
36. **Resilient** • Aura 3, one stat 3, another 1.
37. **Critical** • Thought 3, one stat 3, another 1.
38. **Big** • Strength 3, two stats 2.
39. **Hardy** • Endurance 3, two stats 2.
40. **Adroit** • Agility 3, two stats 2.

41. **Slick** • Charisma 3, two stats 2.
42. **Obstinate** • Aura 3, two stats 2.
43. **Articulate** • Thought 3, two stats 2.
44. **Stalwart** • Strength 3, one stat 2, another two stats 1.
45. **Healthy** • Endurance 3, one stat 2, another two stats 1.
46. **Deft** • Agility 3, one stat 2, another two stats 1.
47. **Glamorous** • Charisma 3, one stat 2, another two stats 1.
48. **Disciplined** • Aura 3, one stat 2, another two stats 1.
49. **Clever** • Thought 3, one stat 2, another two stats 1.
50. **Vigorous** • Strength 3, four stats 1.
51. **Robust** • Endurance 3, four stats 1.
52. **Quick** • Agility 3, four stats 1.
53. **Alluring** • Charisma 3, four stats 1.
54. **Gritty** • Aura 3, four stats 1.
55. **Cultivated** • Thought 3, four stats 1.
56. **Powerful** • Strength 4, one stat 3.
57. **Lusty** • Endurance 4, one stat 3.
58. **Limber** • Agility 4, one stat 3.
59. **Bewitching** • Charisma 4, one stat 3.
60. **Sublime** • Aura 4, one stat 3.
61. **Inventive** • Thought 4, one stat 3.
62. **Muscular** • Strength 4, one stat 2, another 1.
63. **Hale** • Endurance 4, one stat 2, another 1.
64. **Sly** • Agility 4, one stat 2, another 1.
65. **Winning** • Charisma 4, one stat 2, another 1.
66. **Discerning** • Aura 4, one stat 2, another 1.
67. **Perceptive** • Thought 4, one stat 2, another 1.
68. **Tough** • Strength 4, three stats 1.
69. **Abiding** • Endurance 4, three stats 1.
70. **Deft** • Agility 4, three stats 1.
71. **Provocative** • Charisma 4, three stats 1.
72. **Moody** • Aura 4, three stats 1.
73. **Original** • Thought 4, three stats 1.
74. **Mighty** • Strength 5, one stat 2.
75. **Unflagging** • Endurance 5, one stat 2.
76. **Winged** • Agility 5, one stat 2.
77. **Seductive** • Charisma 5, one stat 2.
78. **Oracular** • Aura 5, one stat 2.
79. **Encyclopaedic** • Thought 5, one stat 2.
80. **Steely** • Strength 5, two stats 1.
81. **Vital** • Endurance 5, two stats 1.
82. **Driven** • Agility 5, two stats 1.
83. **Irresistible** • Charisma 5, two stats 1.
84. **Devillish** • Thought 5, two stats 1.
85. **Herculean** • Strength 4, one stat 3, another 1.
86. **Sinewy** • Endurance 4, one stat 3, another 1.
87. **Fleet** • Agility 4, one stat 3, another 1.
88. **Impressive** • Charisma 4, one stat 3, another 1.
89. **Single-minded** • Aura 4, one stat 3, another 1.
90. **Creative** • Thought 4, one stat 3, another 1.
91. **Olympian** • Strength 5, one stat 2, another 1.
92. **Glowing** • Endurance 5, one stat 2, another 1.
93. **Mercurial** • Agility 5, one stat 2, another 1.
94. **Angelic** • Charisma 5, one stat 2, another 1.
95. **Hermetic** • Aura 5, one stat 2, another 1.
96. **Genius** • Thought 5, one stat 2, another 1.
97. **Forceful** • Strength or Charisma 3, two other stats 3.
98. **Resolute** • Endurance or Aura 3, two other stats 3.
99. **Tricky** • Agility or Thought 3, two other stats 3.
100. **Blessed** • All stats 2.



Gear

Nothing so heavy as the burden of that terrible guilt.

— The Undying Historian, *Perfect Memory's Curse* (UR 39,340)

A hero can either start with 300 cash, or the player can roll 1d100. The player also gains or rolls for equipment depending on their skills. The player can then spend their cash on additional equipment.

Cash on Hand [d100]

1. A wheel of cheese

Place
holder

Inventory

• The limit of what a hero can bring along on adventure.

Tests • How a character struggles against the world.

Contests • Competition between characters against the world.

Conflict • Characters fighting other characters.

Damage • Characters getting hurt.

Defeat • Characters losing.

Recovery • Characters getting well again.

Advancement • As players invest xp in their characters and equipment they become more powerful.

Gameplay • Examples.

Miscellany

Now our days are done, the winter come.

— Baron Greencorner, *Last Night of Brezim* (UR 19,940)

The hero is nearly complete.



PLACE
HOLDER
HOLDER



PLAYING THE GAME

The Game

“*Iacta alea est.*”

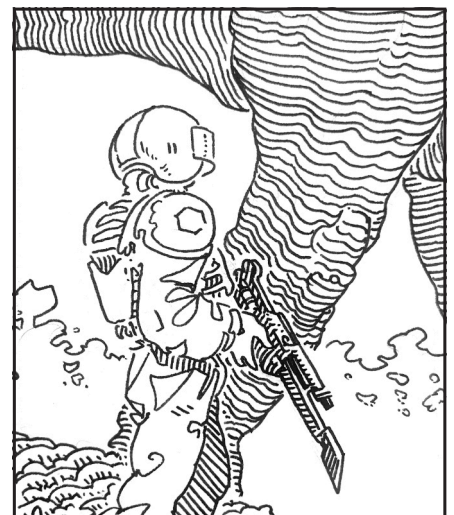
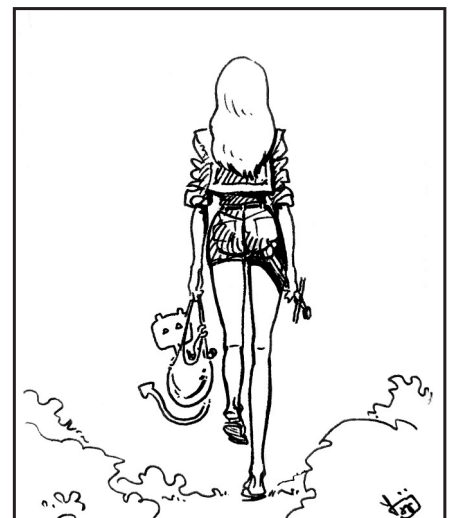
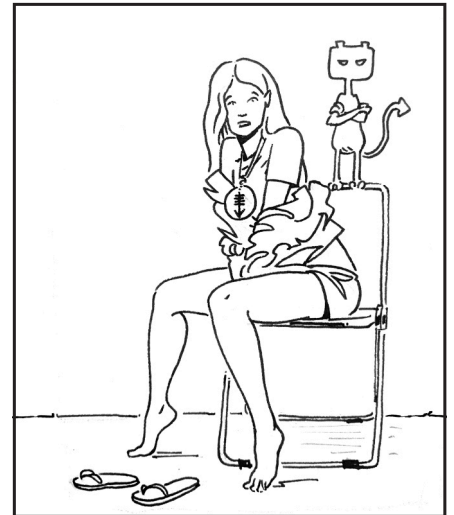
—JC according to Suetonius

A hero from another time awakens in their nanomagical sarcophagus. Researchers marooned on a mountain struggle to win the trust of the local yeti-analogues. Savages en route to a battle-world run amok on a void ship. Godlike lings on their ring-habitat argue about which of the local flora and fauna would make the best uplift candidates. A sentient motorcycle possesses their rider like a puppet of flesh and bone. A crowd of bystanders looks on, perplexed.

Players run these characters. The runner players handle the protagonists: the heroes, their pets, sidekicks and other attendants. The top cat player handles the antagonists: the villains, minions, creatures, and bystanders.

This chapter covers the following:

- Test** • How a character struggles against the world.
- Contest** • Competition between characters against the world.
- Conflict** • Characters fighting other characters.
- Damage** • Characters getting hurt.
- Defeat** • Characters losing.
- Recovery** • Characters getting well again.
- Experience (xp)** • The metacurrency players earn.
- Advancement** • How characters and game objects become more powerful.
- Inventory** • What a hero brings along on adventure.
- Gameplay** • Examples.





The Test

"The character against the world."

—Venerable Mede, *Brews Against the Terror of Knowing*

The top cat presents a situation. The runner says what their hero does. The ref narrates the outcome.

Playing the game involves only dialogue until an uncertain and consequential situation arises. Then the top cat calls for die rolls to test what happens.

Heroes roll **d20 + stat + skill over target.**

Extras roll **d20 + sum over target.**

A player rolls a 20-sided die and adds the sum of their hero's relevant stat and skill to beat a target between 3 and 19 set by the top cat. The sum of stat and skill can never exceed 13. Context determines what stat and/or skill is relevant in a particular situation.

Extras (including pets and sidekicks) are simplified characters that have a single sum score they use when they know what they are doing, instead of different stats and skills. This sum can also never exceed 13.

The top cat uses the amount by which the test result exceeds or misses the target to narrate the quality of the success or failure.

Special Numbers

These natural numbers rolled on a d20 have special effects during tests:

- 1** • Fumble. The test is an automatic failure with an additional drastic, catastrophic, or humorous consequence determined by the top cat.
- 7** • Silver lining. Whether the test succeeds or fails, there is an unexpected positive side effect determined by the top cat.
- 13** • Luck runs out. Whether the test succeeds or fails, the character runs out of a resource (such as ammunition) or suffers an unexpected negative side effect determined by the top cat.
- 20** • Critical. The test is an automatic success with an additional exceptional consequence determined by the top cat.

Edge Roll

When a character's d20 + sum precisely equals the target their runner or the top cat can suggest a sacrifice that will allow success at a cost. For example:

- A warrior takes a blow or breaks their weapon as they push through an enemy's shield wall.
- An ambassador pays a bribe or gives away a personal item to get into an exclusive club.
- A magus of the seventh circle sets themselves on fire or summons a weaker **ominous daemon** (L3, chilling) rather than suffering corruption.
- A burglar destroys their tools or triggers an alarm as they disable a lock.

Stats

Heroes have six stats: strength (str), endurance (end), agility (agi), charisma (cha), aura (aur), and thought (tho). The stats range from 0 (worst) to 5 (best) and represent their natural aptitudes.

Skills

Skills describe what a hero is good at, they do not limit what the character can try to do. A skilled hero is good enough to make a living with their know-how (they're a pro) while an expert is good enough to teach that profession. Players can invent new skills to suit their characters.

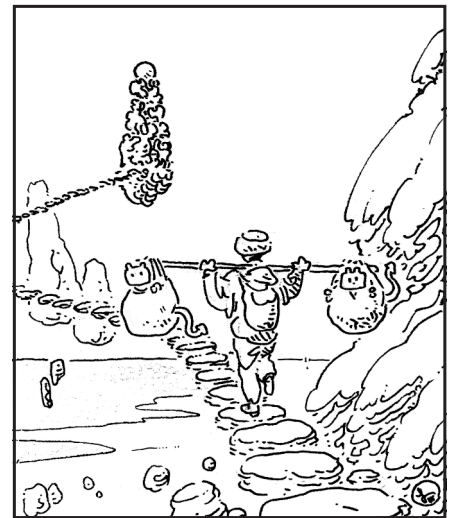
Proficiency (pro) ranges from 1 (poor) to 7 (unbelievable) and represents how good the hero is at their skills.

There are three situations when a hero rolls a test with a skill.

No relevant skill • Hero does not add their proficiency to the test and suffers a bane [-] to their roll. An amateur or beginner.

One rank in a relevant skill • Hero adds their proficiency to the d20 roll when they make a test. A skilled professional.

Two or more ranks in a relevant skill • Hero adds double their proficiency to the d20 roll when they make a test. An expert.



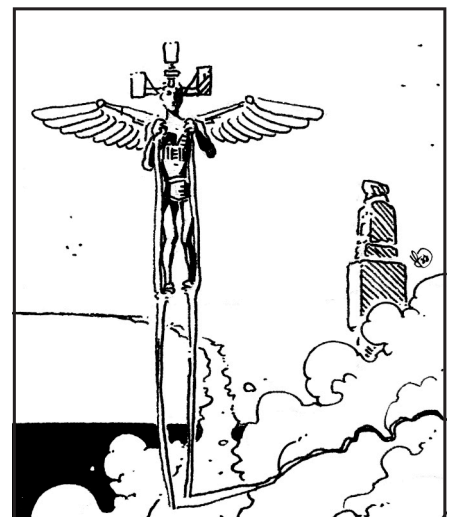
Targets

How hard is it to leap over a burning fence? While carrying a large bucket of gasoline? Without spilling any of it? While blindfolded?

The top cat uses their judgement to assign a target number between 3 (very easy) and 19 (very hard), then **describes** the probability. Leaping over a burning fence might be routine, with a target of 7. Doing it while carrying a bucket is moderately hard, (target 10). But doing it without spilling anything? Rather difficult (target 15). More so while blindfolded (target 19).

Example Targets

| TARGET | EXAMPLE |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 minor, frivolous, trivial | A terrified thief tries to start their engine as zombies crawl towards them. |
| 7 easy, elementary, simple | A knight explains feudalism to some peasants with their sword. |
| 11 common, moderate, regular | A watchmaker attempts to stop a ticking time bomb. |
| 15 difficult, onerous, tough | A duelist rolls under a golem spider to stab their soft(er) belly. |
| 19 dire, extreme, utmost | A surgeon tries to put out a gorgon's eye with a thrown scalpel. |





Dice

Seacat uses a ladder of classic polyhedral dice to determine effects. Special abilities, spells, and other circumstances move dice up and down this ladder.

Dice Ladder

| DICE | AVERAGE | COMMON EFFECT |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| d1 | 1 | Minimal life or stat damage. Disposable extra's life. |
| d4 | 2.5 | Weak damage. Level 0 extra's life. |
| d6 | 3.5 | Civilian weapon or improvised damage. Annoying extra's life. |
| d8 or d10 | 4.5 or 5.5 | Common military weapon. Up to L5 extra's life / level. |
| d12 | 6.5 | Big weapon. Big extra's (monster's) life / level. |
| d20 | 10.5 | Very large / scary weapon, opponent or trap. Can defeat any level 3 hero. |
| d6 x 5 | 17.5 | Terrifying. Can defeat any level 4 hero. |
| d8 x 5 or d10 x 5 | 22.5 or 27.5 | Tremendous. Can defeat any level 6 hero. |
| d6 x 10 | 35 | Extreme. Can defeat any hero. |
| d10 x 10 | 55 | Overkill. |

The d100, generated by using one d10 for the tens and another d10 for the units, stands outside the dice ladder. When tables call for more unusual dice, like d30, d40 or d60, players can simulate them with a d100.

Boon [+] and Bane [-]

A boon lets a player roll an additional die and use the result they prefer. A bane requires that a player roll an additional die and use the worse result.

Boons and banes may apply to every roll. Boons cancel banes and vice versa.

Multiple boons or banes do not stack. The one exception is when a player spends hero dice to gain additional boons to their roll.

Exploding*

Exploding dice are marked with an asterisk. Whenever a player rolls a maximum natural roll with an exploding die, they roll an extra exploding die of that type and add the result. Exploding die rolls are open-ended in theory.

Consecutive/

Consecutive rolls are used in some tables to create rare results. In a d12 encounter table 12/12 means that when a player rolls a natural 12, they roll again and if the second result is also a natural 12, a special result occurs.

Group Action Token

Every player begins with a group action token (or *gat* token). This is a small but memorable object: a meeple, a large die, a polished stone, or a cat idol.

The gat token is used in two ways:

- To perform group actions.
- To create game lore.

Group Actions

A runner uses their gat token when they make a test that affects the whole group. For example, encounter or misfortune rolls, initiative tests, and any other test where the whole group is trying to achieve a goal, whether it is sneaking past a guardian golem, convincing a priest-king to buy a golden barge, or breaking the ur-father's mental control over their wayward child.

When a group of runners attempts a group action the top cat declares a group action test and a participating runner with an available gat token steps up.

The runner declares what they are going to do, place their gat token in the centre of the table, and roll the relevant dice. They use their character's abilities and equipment to help (or hinder) the group.

A runner cannot perform a group action when their gat token is in the centre of the table. When all the runners have spent their gat tokens, each collects their token from the centre of the table and the circle of actions resumes.

Creating Game Lore

When the runners encounter something new in the game the top cat can take an exquisite-corpse improv approach.

First, the TC broadly describes the newly encountered scene, creature, object, or whatever-it-is. Then they pass their gat token clockwise to the next player and ask them a question that adds some detail. After the player answers, they pass the TC's gat token along to the third player.

The top cat can then continue to ask questions, adding contrast and nuance to the game. After each runner adds their part, they pass the TC's gat token along.

An example scene the TC might narrate while the heroes are traveling:

“The heroes are welcomed to a camp of steppelanders on a spiritual drinking voyage. The nomads pass their ornate cup of ka-cha around, and as each drinks, they relate a story that brought them to this wastey place under the red stars. One tells of how she hung upon the mother tree for nine days to travel through her mind's eye. Another of how he learned a spell from the stone fish atop the white mountain. Then the cup passes to you. Why do you wander here?” says the TC and passes their gat token to the next player.

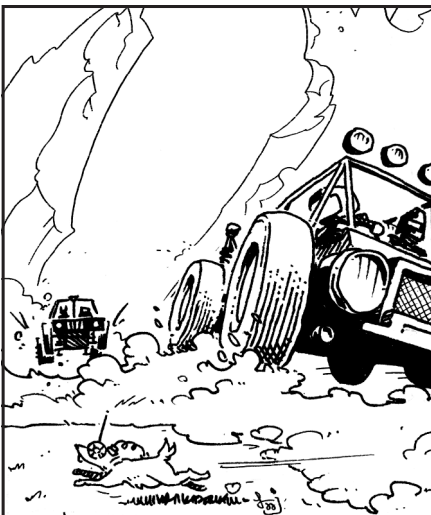




Two malcontents scramble for a gun.



Musicians compete to entrance rats.



Racers tear through Fraxion's Gap.

The Contest

"May the better golem win."

—Lectus Ecce, selectron of Voidport Coalition,
traditional greeting at the annual politician simulator battles.

A contest occurs when two or more characters compete for the same goal. Every character rolls one test and the highest successful result wins. Ties mean the competition has ended in a draw.

In a contest between groups, one character from each group rolls a group action test.

Bidding Contest

A character can take a risk in order to test first. Each risk taken increases the fumble range by 1 (e.g. from 1 to 1-2).

This starts a bidding contest. Another character has to take more risk to roll first instead. When all the characters pass on taking more risks the tests begin. The character who took the most risk rolls their test first, then the character with the second most risk, and so on.

In a bidding contest the first character to test successfully wins.

Characters who took no risk roll tests last as in an ordinary contest.

The Conflict

*“Always comes to this,
shores of Lake Infinity,
clatch of blade on blade,
whispering demons made steel,
rage from dream to dream.”*

—Iäga, electric witch, *Future Memories of the Eternal Struggle*

When the runners’ characters physically (ha), spiritually (ka) or socially (ba) attack or are attacked by another character or group a conflict starts. Each of these characters or groups is a party to the conflict. There can be two or more parties to a conflict.

The conflict unfolds over a series of rounds. Each round the parties contest initiative. The results of the contest determine the order in which parties take their turns. Every character gets two actions per turn and all members of a party act in any order they like on their party’s turn.

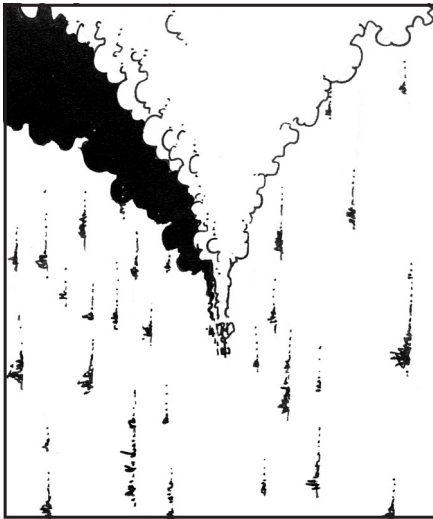
Anything can be an action in a conflict. There is no fixed list of actions. Context determines whether an action counts as an attack, defense, or other action.

Every conflict ends in a victory, draw, or defeat.

Surprise

Every conflict starts with an attack. If the defending party(-ies) were not expecting an attack they are caught by surprise and the attacking character gets an immediate free action outside the normal round structure. If the attacking party coordinated beforehand, each member gets a free action.





Rounds & Ranges

"Accurate time records aren't worth much when you're hurtling across the salt flats in a ten golem-power three-wheeler!"

—Candide Desormais, team *Chat'damante* golem racer on winning the Tristes Pantropiques race.

Each round is sufficiently long for meaningful actions in a conflict. The top cat defines the approximate duration of a round at the beginning of a conflict. As circumstances change, they may adjust the duration.

Turns and actions are abstractions and have no defined duration outside of the round. Turns follow one another to help run conflicts as games.

Each character gets two actions per round during their party's turn.



Ranges and Zones

The top cat uses the duration of a round to spitball ranges and zones. The longer the round, the greater the scope. Ranges work as overlapping zones surrounding every party and/or character in a conflict. There are three ranges or zones.

Here • A zone or range within immediate reach of an acting character. They don't need to move in order to act within this range. Other terms: *melee, adjacent, next to, in the thick of it, at hand, etc.*

Near • A middling zone or range. A character needs to spend an action to physically move to a nearby zone. Nearby zones may be comfortably within reach of projectiles and other ranged attacks. Other terms: *close, short range, not far, vicinity, in the area, etc.*

Far • A large zone or a long range. A character needs to spend two actions to physically move to a far away zone. Far away zones are hard to reach with projectiles and other ranged attacks. Other terms: *long range, distant, a ways, etc.*



| ROUND | SCOPE | HERE | NEAR | FAR |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| milliseconds | spiritual dilemma, psychic hacking, daemonic possession | the brain | the aura | other spirits |
| seconds | gun or knife fight, human-scale physical conflict | the mat | the audience | entrance to the arena |
| minutes | oratorical duel, dance-off, hover golem skirmish in the high pines, vehicle-scale physical conflict | the stage, the ridge | the stadium, the slopes | the parking lot, the plain |
| quarters | snipers stalking snipers, naval battle, legal fight in court | the building | the neighborhood | across the river |
| hours | gruelling negotiations, courtly ball, grinding endurance battle | the palace | the capitol district | the leader-bunker |
| days | public scandal, military investment, wrestling with god | the city | the province | the state |
| weeks | political campaign, void-scale physical conflict | the fast star | the territorial void | the local cluster |
| months | corporate legal war | the court | the conglomerate | the local econonet |
| seasons | political economic war | the nation | the region | the world |
| years | light-year war | the world | the system | the local cosmos |

Dimensions and time scales are ideas, not instructions

Off Stage

Places not immediately visible or accessible to the parties in a conflict are off stage. This might be a hidden room, a fortified town above the plain of battle, or the rest of the realm during a negotiation. A character that goes off stage leaves the conflict. New characters may sometimes join a conflict from off stage.

Initiative

“Sometimes going first just means you lose faster.”

Initiative is a **special contest** between parties to determine turn order. At the beginning of every round a different character from each party rolls an agility group test. This initiative test does not have a target number.

Before they roll, the player decides their party’s stance for the round.

- Push** • The player rolls 1d20 for the initiative test. The party aggressively tries to seize the initiative.
- Hold** • The player rolls 2d6 for the initiative test. The party focuses on maintaining their position.
- Pull Back** • The player rolls no dice. Their party takes their turn last in the round. They may *withdraw* from the conflict on their turn.

The player hides their chosen initiative dice until it is their turn to roll them.

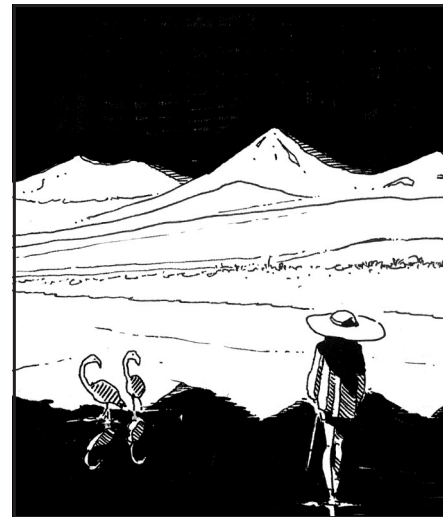
If players turn initiative into a bidding contest, the party that risks the most rolls initiative first and acts first.

Parties that took no additional risks roll initiative at the same time. The party with the highest initiative result acts first, then the second highest, and so on. If parties are tied for initiative chaos reigns and all the actions between those parties resolve simultaneously.

Initiative Effects

Natural numbers rolled during initiative tests apply special effects.

- 1** • Every member of the party loses an action on their turn this round.
- 7** • Every member of the party gets one boon to spend this round.
- 13** • Every member of every other party gets one boon to spend against the party this round.
- 20** • Every member of the party gains an action on their turn this round.





Actions

“Running, hiding, shooting, shielding, spearing, tricking, flanking, provoking, subduing, jumping, singing, driving, spellcasting, talking, and swimming.”
—Milleregard the Very Golden, *My Many Talents*

Anything that a character can reasonably accomplish in a round and that makes sense within the context of a conflict is a valid action. The top cat decides precisely how and whether an action can apply.

Attack, defense, movement and assist type actions have predictable effects. Other actions can be more unusual. Withdrawal is a specific type of action that ends a conflict in a defeat or a draw.

Initiative, ability and circumstances may increase or decrease the number of actions a character can take in a round.

Turn Effects of Action Types

A character can spend all their actions on attacks, defenses, other actions, or any combination of actions.

By default a character balances attack and defense on their turn, taking one attack action and one defense action. Narratively, the character is looking for openings to attack while keeping their guard up. Mechanically, the character tests once to attack and opponents have no boons or banes against them.

| ACTIONS THIS TURN | EFFECT |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 defenses | bane to attacks against character |
| 2 attacks | character tests to attack twice |
| 2 moves | character moves to a far away zone |
| 2 assists | character or ally gains two boons on their next test this turn |
| 1 defense | no modifiers to attacks against character |
| 1 attack | character tests to attack once |
| 1 move | character moves to a nearby zone |
| 1 assist | character or ally gains a boon to their next test this turn |
| 0 defenses | boon to attacks against character (reckless) |
| 0 attacks | character does not test to attack (waiting) |
| 0 moves | character stays in the same zone |
| 0 assists | no effect |
| run away | no other actions this turn |
| withdrawal | no other actions this turn |

Attacks

When a character attacks they make a relevant test against their target’s physical (ha), spiritual (ka) or social (ba) defense. This is called an attack test, or simply an attack. If the test succeeds, they inflict damage to their target depending on their equipment, skills, and abilities.

Natural numbers rolled during attack tests apply special effects.

- 1** • Fumbled attack. Target gets a free counter attack..
- 7** • Even if the attack misses, it applies minimum damage.
- 13** • After this attack weapon is out of ammunition or broken (bane to damage rolls).
- 20** • Critical damage. Damage, including all modifiers, is multiplied by 2.
- 20/20** • Damage is multiplied again. Additional consecutive natural 20s multiply damage further. This is open ended.

Not all equipment can be used to deal every kind of damage. Even an unarmed human character can always inflict 1d3 damage of any kind.

Defenses

When a character defends they do not have to do anything specific. They are in a state of readiness to anticipate their opponent's attacks. The more defensive actions (or precautions) a character takes, the harder it is for opponents to attack them until the character's next turn.

0 defensive actions • All opponents have a boon to attack the character.

1 defensive action • No modifiers.

2 defensive actions • All opponents have a bane to attack the character.

Additional defensive actions • Each applies another bane to attacks against the character. Additional banes cancel out boons but the opponent never rolls more than 2d20, taking the worse result, from the banes.

Movement

A character takes an action to move to a nearby zone or two actions to move to a far away zone. They do not take actions to move around within their local zone, even if it can be quite large depending on the scope of the conflict.

Assist & Hinder

A character can take a reasonable action to help another character or to setup their next action. This is called an assistance action or assist. Every assist grants a boon within the current turn.

A character can also take a reasonable action to hinder an opponent. This inflicts a bane on an opponent's next turn or blocks them from a course of action. An opponent can spend an action to overcome the hindrance.

Other Actions

Disarming a bomb, picking a lock, resuscitating a fallen comrade, planting a secret message, inflating a balloon, filling a gas tank, scrawling a warning.

Characters can take an infinite number of other actions in a conflict that do not fall neatly into one of the four types.

Combined Actions

Characters can never take a single action that counts as both an attack and a defense. Movements, assists, and hindrances can sometimes reasonably be combined. Examples:

Move and attack • Warrior maidens charge a shield wall. Debutante dances up to a rival, showing off his superior grace.

Attack and assist • Thief stabs a troll, distracting them from their friend.

Attack and hinder • Rock star trips a zombie with their golf club, stopping them from moving.

Move and hinder • Wizard drives up in their van, blocking the goblin goons' line of fire against their allies.

Run Away

If a character is not facing an opponent or party alone, they can run away, leaving their allies in the lurch. If they are alone and run away, each of the opponents they are facing gets a free attack against them.

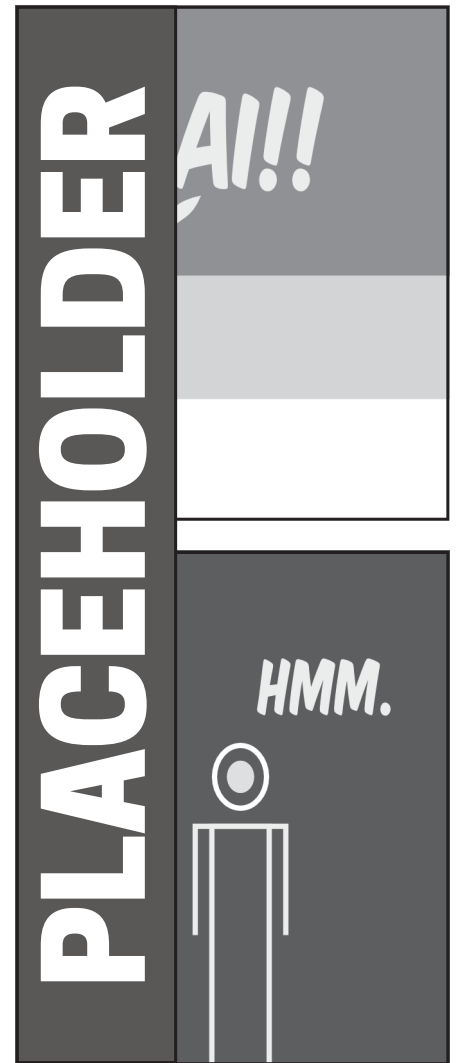
Withdrawal

A party who has pulled back during the initiative test may withdraw as a group action. This ends the conflict.

Both parties pulled back • Conflict ends in a draw.

One party pulled back, other held • Withdrawing party is defeated.

One party pulled back, other pushed • Withdrawing party is defeated. Each member of pushing party gets a free attack.





Damage

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Hurt



Conditions

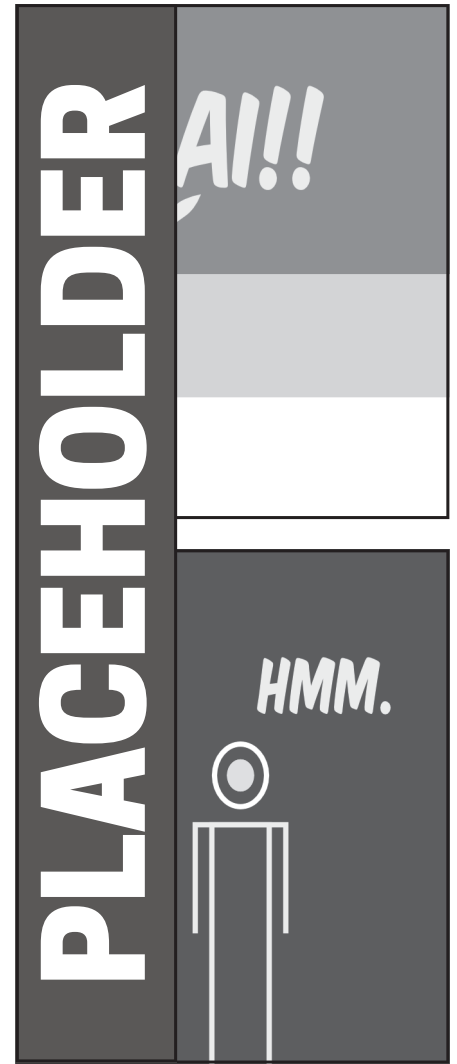
Damage • Characters getting hurt.

Defeat • Characters losing.

Recovery • Characters getting well again.

Advancement • As players invest xp in their characters and equipment they become more powerful.

Gameplay • Examples.



Ending Conflicts

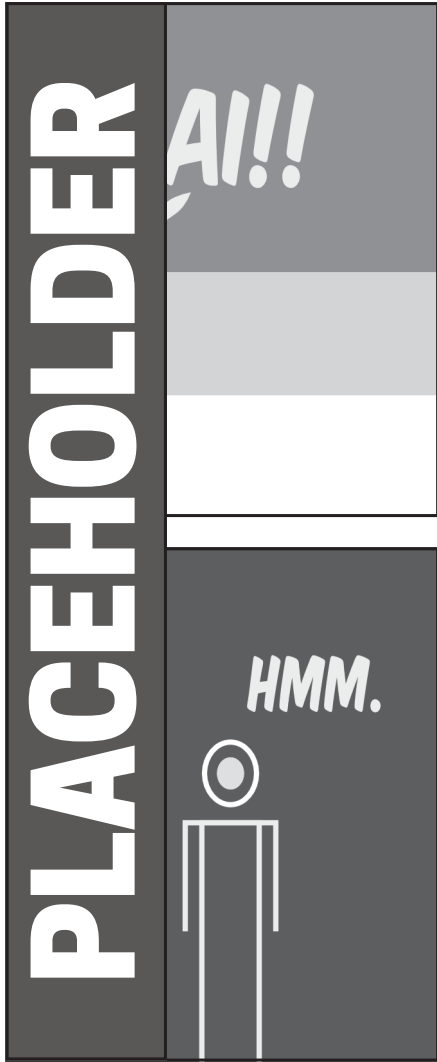
Morale Test

Flight

Surrender

Fight to the End

Special Options



Defeat

Flight

Surrender

Fight to the End

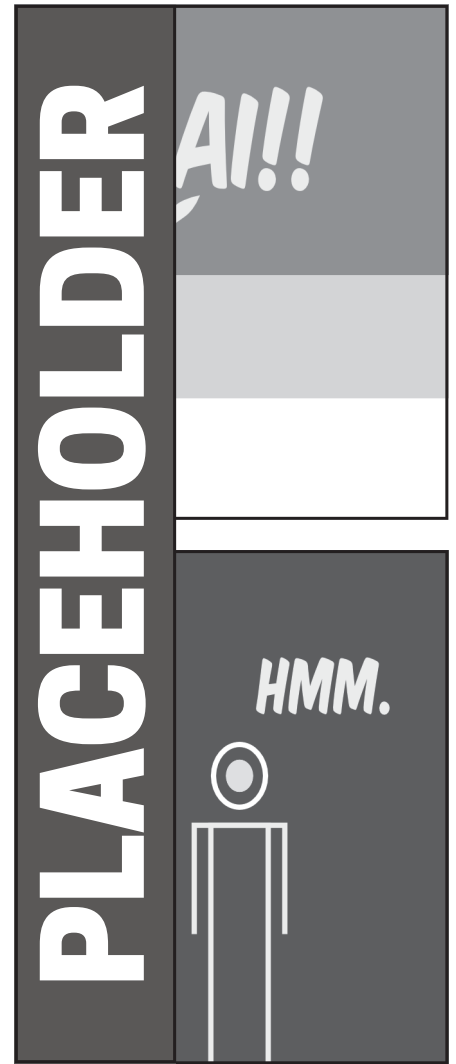
Replacement Heroes

Recovery

Recovery • Characters getting well again.

Advancement • As players invest xp in their characters and equipment they become more powerful.

Gameplay • Examples.





Inventory

"Wish known. Wish known,"

—mumbles the word-drained wretch at the sanatorium, warning the next round of heroes to brave the accursed tomb.

The hero's inventory is a core mechanic of Seacat. Runners have to make hard choices between what they want their heroes to bring along on their adventures and what they can.

It is where the player notes all the things burdening their hero. Not just physical objects; woes, fears, illness, and magic spells, pets, extras all occupy inventory space. If heroes run out of space for abilities or skills, they can repurpose the inventory. Crucially, the choice of gear determines a hero's offensive and defensive capabilities.

Inventory space on the human scale is defined with the following units.

1 sack = 10 stones = 100 soaps = 2,500 cash

Sack (sk) • All ten slots on a hero sheet. A basic inventory unit. What an average human can carry more-or-less unencumbered. Doesn't have to be a literal sack.

Stone (st) • One tenth of a sack. A generic significant item, like a sabre or spear or shield or shovel. About 5–7 kilos.

Soap (sp) • One hundredth of a sack, a tenth of a stone. A generic small item, like a signal whistle or signet ring or spike. Or bar of soap.

Cash (€) • A standard unit of currency. An average wage slave's daily earnings. Does not have to be physical coins or bills.

A human can carry two sacks at once, but the second sack is cumbersome. A hero carrying any items in their second sack is encumbered, suffering a bane [-] to every physical test (and likely to many social or mental tests). Items in a hero's hands are part of their first sack of inventory.

Stored Equipment

Heroes can own more (much more) property than they are carrying at any given time. They might own a mansion stuffed with ill- and well-gotten booty, sky-cars of ancient make, hidden dimensional fortresses beyond the bridge of rainbows. This is fine, encouraged even.

However, players should record all this treasure separately. Only gear on a hero's sheet is available during a given conflict. If the hero has entered the tomb of the thief of words and forgotten their magic cap of safe thoughts in the bedroom, that's just too bad. It'll stay in the bedroom as the ghost of words pilfers one phrase after another from the hero's barely protected brain.

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Experience

“Would the world forget these heroes? Yes. There would be local histories. Then folk tales. Then deeds swallowed by the legends that survive the test of time, by the myths invented to explain the vast uncaring cosmos.

All their superhuman deeds would be swept away, just so much storytelling on the careless winds of time.”

—Zarvan, Aide Mayor of Plish, *After the Mountain Fell* (UR 24,503)

Players earn experience points (xp) through play. Xp are stored on their active hero’s sheet. Players without active heroes can note their xp somewhere else until such time as they have an active hero. Players invest these xp to advance heroes, sidekicks and pets, or attempt to improve gear, spells, or other items.

Players can invest experience when their active hero rests in a safe location for a full week. They can invest the hero’s available xp in as many different characters and items as the hero has access to during their rest period, but only once for each individual recipient. Players can also invest experience in other players’ characters and equipment.

The maximum total xp that can ever be invested in a hero is 99,999. Sidekicks, pets, and equipment have lower maximums. A hero can never store more than 9,999 xp for later investment.

If a hero is retired with uninvested experience, their player can immediately invest the entire amount in a new hero or a promoted sidekick.

Earning Xp

The top cat assigns xp earned during play itself.

Minimal achievement • Hero does something interesting. A cool move, a glorious deed, a humorous slip up, or a funny fumble. Immediately earns 1d6 x 5 xp (5–30 xp).

Common achievement • Hero survives a conflict, discovers a new location or creature, or completes a mediocre rat-hunting quest. 1d6 x 10 xp (10–60 xp).

Rare achievement • Hero carouses magnificently, survives an epic conflict, or completes a memorable quest. 1d6 x 100 xp (100–600 xp).

Unique achievement • Hero completes a legendary quest, altering the flow of history and transforming the game. 1d6 x 1000 xp (1k–6k xp).

Players also earn xp automatically by participating.

Runner attends session • Earns 500 xp at session’s end.

Player also helps prepare or run session • Earns 100 xp at session’s end.

Top cat runs session • Earns 500 xp at session’s end. Double amount if all the other players agree the session was enjoyable.

Advancement

“8000以上だ...!”

—Vegeta Saiyan shouting “It’s over 9000!” [sic] in “The Return of Goku,” *Dragon Ball Z* (1997).

When players invest xp in a hero, pet, sidekick or item, they roll on the relevant advancement table (pXX). The tables usually increase a character’s power, but they also generate story points and complications.

| CHARACTER | XP | LEVELS | NOTES |
|-----------|--------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hero | 1,500–99,999 | 3–9 | Player’s main character(s). More complex than sidekicks or pets. A player can have multiple heroes. Sidekicks and pets cannot be higher level than the player’s highest-level hero. |
| Sidekick | 0–6,666 | 0–5 | A player’s secondary or less important character. Once it reaches 3 rd level, its player can promote it to hero status. |
| Pet | 0–6,666 | 0–5 | A hero’s pet. Once it reaches 3 rd level, a player can promote it to hero status. |
| Item | 0–6,666 | 0–5 | An item (weapon, vehicle, armor, tool, or other personal object) favored by a hero. As the player invests xp, the hero’s legend rubs off, making the item more powerful. |
| Extra | NA | 0–17+ | Characters and antagonists controlled by the top cat. May be assigned to a player, becoming a sidekick or pet. The top cat decides whether a player can invest xp in such a character. |

Levels

Levels are an abstract, non-linear representation of power. An average baseline human corresponds to a level 1 character. Level 0 characters would represent little threat to an average human in most situations. Levels 10+ represent characters and creatures so powerful compared to ordinary humans that they might as well be extradimensional horrors from beyond time and space.

| LEVEL | DEF | LIFE | SUM | NOTES |
|-------|-----|------|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0 | 10 | 4 | +2 | rat, degenerate quarter-ling, radiation ghost, vome lapin |
| 1 | 11 | 8 | +3 | average human, android, husk,swinedeer, wire ghou |
| 2 | 12 | 12 | +4 | foot soldier, ur-eagle, vome drone, time-orphan, necro vome |
| 3 | 12 | 16 | +5 | elite rider, fire fetish, majestic elk, heretic ecstatic |
| 4 | 13 | 22 | +6 | vomish irrupter, steppe-wolf, crab-lion, arcane hermit |
| 5 | 13 | 29 | +7 | biomech queen, lunar antibody, polybody swarm, cat count |
| 6 | 14 | 38 | +8 | great hero, porcelain golem, ultra, swarm, black metal auton |
| 7 | 14 | 52 | +9 | vome generator, mirror dragon, void assaulter |
| 8 | 15 | 68 | +10 | spectrum walker, machine bear, nature spirit, memory gazer |
| 9 | 15 | 90 | +11 | legendary hero, moon-breaker, lightning lizard, crystal golem |
| 10 | 16 | 120 | +12 | grand golem, ghost of light, living ship, house mimic |
| 11+ | 16 | 155 | +13 | angel out of time, crawling city, floating fortress, machine folly |
| 17 | 19 | 666 | +13 | demiurge, void crawler, rebuilder, artificial deity |

For heroes, level has no direct effect on proficiency, stats, skills, hero dice, or other attributes. Level only affects some spells and abilities which are based directly on the level of a character or their opponent.

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Inventory

• The limit of what a hero can bring along on adventure.

Tests • How a character struggles against the world.

Contests • Competition between characters against the world.

Conflict • Characters fighting other characters.

Damage • Characters getting hurt.

Defeat • Characters losing.

Recovery • Characters getting well again.

Advancement • As players invest xp in their characters and equipment they become more powerful.

Gameplay • Examples.

Gameplay Examples

• Examples.



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RUNNING THE GAME

PLACEHOLDER

Top Cat

Using the Six Stats

Strength

The active physical stat. It does what it says on the tin. Lifting bars, bending gates, whacking heads, carrying mehirs.

Endurance

The passive physical stat. It represents how much pain and strain a hero can take. Marathons, freezing temperatures, disease.

Agility

The dynamic physical stat. It's about applying the hero's body with precision and speed to dodge oncoming death hamsters and throw void bombs with razor precision.

Charisma

The active mental stat. The name goes back to classical Greek *khárisma*, representing divine fortune and favor. The gods and reason hate the uncharismatic, so charisma also serves as a luck stat. When a hero tries to force through their arguments by force of personality, this is what they use.

When a player asks if their hero can find a war pig, greased lightning mobile, rod of doom, or simply the latest edition of *Burly Barbarians at the newsmonger's*, that's also a charisma test. Further, nine times out of ten, random effects or mindless creatures will target the least charismatic hero first (actually, this rule is optional).

Aura

The passive mental stat. It indicates how much punishment the hero's soul, spirit, or psyche can take when faced by horror and stress. It correlates almost completely with endurance.

It is explicitly not wisdom. It does not show good judgement or shrewd insight. Those are character traits that players decide for their hero, much like they decide on the colour of the hero's hair or shoes, without affecting mechanics in any way.

Thought

The dynamic mental stat, correlated with how quickly the hero can process and manipulate information. Its naming is also a shout out to the Egyptian god Thoth.

Example Boons [+] [d20]

1. Terrain advantage.
2. Helpful props (chandelier, trees, statue, stage).
3. Assistance from another character.
4. Blessings from strange AI gods.
5. Superior alien weaponry.
6. Magic and enchantments.
7. Surprised or unaware opponents.
8. Cover of darkness or invisibility.
9. Convincing evidence.
10. Teamwork or flanking.
11. Cunning plans.
12. Lots and lots of cash.
13. Cover or fortifications.
14. Mutation or bio-augmentation.
15. Fancy titles and social standing.
16. Significantly greater ability.
17. Incredible mastery of a specific skill.
18. Cheating and foul play.
19. Magical potions and meals.
20. Good luck.

Example Banes [-] [d20]

1. Hindering terrain.
2. Obstacles (rubble, tables, chairs).
3. Obstruction by another character.
4. Curses from ultracosmic spirits.
5. Inferior barbarian tools.
6. Enchantments and magic.
7. Keen, watchful, ready opponents.
8. Bright spotlights and neon paint.
9. Isolation and vulnerability.
10. Laughably falsified evidence.
11. Stupid plans.
12. Poverty.
13. Exposed ground or restrictions.
14. Corruption or bio-degradation.
15. Dirty jobs and no social standing.
16. Significantly inferior ability.
17. Incredible clumsiness.
18. Naiveté and deluded honesty.
19. Illness, poison, or fatigue.
20. Bad luck.

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Hero Advancement Tables

There are three tables for hero advancement depending on how many xp a player has invested in their hero. The players as a group can start with more or less experienced heroes. If they decide to start with an intermediate amount of xp, they should invest and roll on the appropriate advancement tables until they've accounted for their xp budget.

0 xp • The opening act of the journey from ordinary character to hero. Abilities are few, survival is uncertain, and advancement is slowed by the hero's need to rest. Hero Advancement Table 1 (pXX).

1500 xp • The standard starting hero. Here they rise up from among the great society of humanity and become individuals. Unique, unforgettable, historic. As glorious in battle as the great horse lords of the Centaur Empire, as powerful as the great avatar wizards who laid waste the oldest world with the heavy metal arrows of the Rain God. Hero Advancement Table 2 (pXX).

12500 xp • Epic heroes become creatures of legend. Their advancement is slowed by high experience costs and smaller life increases. A mortal body can only hold so much life! Still, what is life compared to power overwhelming? Hero Advancement Table 3 (pXX).

99,999 xp • Advancement ends. The hero has completed their journey.

Hero Advancement Table 1

“That special mix of ambition and desperation, longing and regret. That unique experience of loss, that particular need to prove themselves, to recover stability and security, to build a better world. But it’s not just that.

There were signs from early on. Patterns. Proof of their competence. Exceptional ability. An unusual calling.

Yes. They are unique. Just like all the other skeletons gently baking in the Transplutonian Waste.”

—Gurta of the Nodding Sisters, *Oral History of the Etching* (UR 15,643)

Quick Start

A new hero with no invested xp starts with:

1. **Level** • 0
2. **Life** • 5

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all list

the stats list, then subtract 2 points).

Investing Xp [d20]

Every time the hero rests in a safe location their player can invest 70 xp and roll d20 once on this advancement table, tallying results. Each result only applies once. When they roll a duplicate result, they choose instead.

1. **Despair** • A dead end. No progress. Worse, disillusionment drives the hero to abandon an old pursuit, losing an existing skill or ability.
2. **Learning** • Hero learns a new skill or ability, but their health suffers as they study mouldering artefacts and implants, rather than enjoying the fresh air. Gains a skill or ability and loses 3 life.
3. **Portent** • Hero receives a sign that they are on the right path. Gains 1 hero die.
4. **Growth** • Takes solace in friendship and camaraderie. A bond is forged. Gains 3 life.
5. **Awakenings** • Forgotten ancestral abilities awaken. Gains a random ability.
6. **Kindly Stars** • In the light of a welcoming star, the creative daemons smile. Gain 4 life.
7. **Strange Luck** • Fortunes smiles. Player (roll d6): (1–3) rolls on the next advancement table or (4–5) rolls again on this table (if a duplicate is rolled, the player chooses another result instead; any result chosen or rolled is not crossed off) or (6) rolls a random skill.
8. **Education** • Dreams are in reach for those who apply themselves, whisper the implant-sellers. Gains a random skill.
9. **Society** • Community acknowledges the hero’s competence. Hero gains 1 level. *Also:* every several weeks (roll d6): (1–3) a tedious but necessary task occupies the hero, (4–5) a chance to trade their skill for an uncommon but useful item arises, (6) the community surprises them with a useful and valuable gift.
10. **Noticed** • A chance encounter with a notable personage helps the hero unlock more of their potential. Gain a random ability and 1 hero die.
11. **Proficiency** • By the light of the old builders, they become better in every way. Hero’s proficiency increases by 1.
12. **Confidence** • The warm glow of success strengthens the hero’s anchor to this mortal world. Gains 4 life.
13. **Grit** • Misfortunes suffered make the hero stronger. Gains 1 stat point. If the hero has no abilities, they also gain an ability.

14. **Survival** • The weeks and months of trials have taught the hero much in the way of not dying. Gains 3 life.
15. **New Powers** • With another dawn seen, another trial survived, they become more. Gains a random ability and 1 life.
16. **Diligence** • Study brings not only its own rewards. Gains a random skill and 2 life.
17. **Luck** • Without luck, there is no survival. The longer a hero survives, the luckier they must be. They gain 1 hero die.
18. **Respected** • Other professionals acknowledge that the hero is no rabble. Hero gains 1 level.
Also: a role model or leader surprises the hero with the gift of (roll d6): (1) a trendy new spell, (2) sharp-looking clothes or armor, (3) a fine steed, (4) a significant amount of money (€200 + 100 per hero's level), (5) a masterful weapon, or (6) a rare magical item from long long ago.
19. **Cultured** • The hero's efforts and good luck have made them better. Gains 1 stat point and 1 life.
20. **Guidance** • Hero finds a guide or guru willing to teach them how to become an archetypal hero of their choice (for examples see the Archetypes book). The guide sets the hero three tasks.
The tasks are (roll d6): (1) a week of backbreaking labor helping the guide, (2) expensive investments in the guru's less-than-savory habits equal to half of the hero's wealth, (3) a week of lonely exile in a remote place fetching or delivering strange half-worthless items and culminating in a dangerous struggle with some foe or daemon, (4) an unusual ritual alteration of the hero's appearance, (5) the traditional casting aside of a beloved possession or prior bond, (6) 1d4* weeks spent crafting an artefact to impress the guide with the hero's dedication. They then sell or destroy the artefact. After three tasks are completed, the guru inducts the hero into their new archetype with a week-long ritual and wellness package. The exact details are up to the player, but perhaps some kind of certificate is involved. After certification, the hero adopts their new archetype. Additionally, the hero learns a new skill and acquires a new weapon, spell, armor, steed, or



piece of near-magical gear of their choice.

or

No masters! No gurus!
The hero refuses to be pigeon-holed and will make their own path to glory. They complete one random personal task taking at least a 1d4* weeks. The hero then gains a skill or ability of the player's choice (except any with a #pinnacle tag).

The precise task is up to the players. A simple mini-game is for the hero's runner to suggest a skill they want. The other players then suggest quests, subject to the cat's soft veto or complication, and the runner picks the one they prefer.

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21: Pulp Everyhero Status

After all 20 results are marked off, the next time the hero rests the player can invest a final 100 xp to advance them to level 3 (with a total of 1500 xp invested).

The hero is now officially 3rd level. People in their community and their avowed calling know of them. They are capable of far greater feats than average human. Warriors are as wily and tough the best captains of the undying legions, wizards make reality bend to their whim like the cinnabar scholars of the air-hopping order, adventurers recall the tales of the fabled seven delvers who restored the five great scientific traditions to the kneeling ancestors of today's great republics.

The hero also receives (roll d6): (1) a humble residence courtesy of their community, (2) an offer of initiation into a shadowy regional cabal, (3) the approval of local mercantile interests and reduced prices, (4) a measure of renown that opens doors and buys free drinks and meals, (5) an eager sidekick (L1, apprentice) willing to overlook even the most glaring character flaws, (6) or an ancient magitech artifact of some power and utility.

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MAKING THE WORLD

A Unique World

“First it was Chaos, and next broad-bosomed Earth.”

—Hesiod, *Theogony* (116: The Cosmogony), translated by J. Banks

Players experience the game world through their characters. The game world becomes their own unique, shared artifact through play and invention. This section presents guides and tables for invention and shared creation.

Inventing Skills • New jobs, hobbies, professions, social statuses.

Inventing Abilities • New strange powers.

Inventing Items • The spells, gear, burdens, and other items they use to interact with the world.



Inventing Skills

"The uplifted chipmunk is exhibiting unusual behaviors."

—Petush Iă, maker father, source code baker.

Skills are broad bundles of learning, practice and experience. This incoherence is purposeful: there is overlap in the daily tasks of an accountant and a plumber, and there is difference. The same holds for other skills. Players use their wits and imagination to figure out how their hero's skill might reasonably apply in given circumstances. A skill could cover:

Specialization or expertise • Axe fighting, welding, pastry-making.

Jobs, occupations, or professions • Soldier, spy, tinker, tailor.

Hobbies • Gamer, dancer, maker, embroiderer.

Social status • Socialite, servant, hobo, homemaker.

When a hero rolls or chooses the same skill multiple times they gain ranks. Ranks may provide additional effects or items.

Making a New Skill

When players invent new skills they should ask:

1. Does it sound fun to roleplay?
2. Is it something a person could do for a living or as a hobby pursuit? Could it be used to describe a person's status?
3. Can it be described in three sentences?
4. Is the title memorable? Evocative?

If the answers are yes, it's probably a good skill to play with.

For example, 'Sleight of Hand' wouldn't make a very good skill. It describes a very specific task, with very narrow application. 'Street Magician' or 'Party Clown' would be a better, broader and memorable skill. 'Sleight of Hand' could easily be turned into an ability, something like 'Unnatural Sleight of Hand'.

'Melee Combat' sounds a bit dull and mechanical. 'Anointed Gladiator' or 'Infantry Sergeant' make for more vivid characters and better stories.

Anatomy of a Skill

Infantry Sergeant —not terrible title, suggests certain experiences.

#adventure —a general tag.

Survived feeding the war god. —fluff to give a bit of nuance to the skill title.

Fought in more wars than they have fingers. Long experience in not dying and keeping others from dying. Setting watches, storming trenches, hiding in bunkers, interpreting orders and handling mobile infantry weapons. — three sentences to outline what a hero with this skill is good at.

Rank 1 • Gets a fancy weapon (roll on table pXX). —the rank effect distinguishes one infantry sergeant from another.

Inventing Abilities

"It's a flying pig! With a flame thrower!"

—last message from Ulurartu, porphyry city of a hundred trades.

Abilities are thematically both narrower and weirder than skills. A catch-all category for things ordinary could never do no matter how much they studied or practiced. Luck, mutation, strange magics, and alien gods might bestow abilities. They change how a hero interacts with the rules and don't require tests, sacrifices, ammunition or other equipment. Common types include:

Direct augmentations • Increased stats, the ability to go without food.

Situational modifiers or actions • Increased damage when cornered, a boon to tests with cold iron items.

Special resources • Additional memory inventory for spells or a summonable extra.

Special effects • Visible auras, unarmed attacks that restore life.

When a hero rolls or chooses the same ability multiple times they gain ranks. Ranks may provide additional effects or items.

Making a New Ability

When players invent a new ability, they should ask:

1. Does it have a one-line poetic description and memorable title?
2. Can its effect be described in one or two sentences?
3. Is it completely overpowered?
4. Does it make the game boring for heroes without the same ability?

If the answers are yes and yes, no and no, it's probably a good ability.

For example, 'Detector of Evil' isn't a very good ability. It makes a hero the ultimate arbiter of morality. This removes choices from the other players. Something like 'Desire Detective' would be more interesting.

'Gill Implants' is a bit basic, but fine. A water-breathing hero expands the group's reach, but can lead to solo adventures. If the top cat is comfortable assigning extras to the other players, this can become more interesting.

'Biomechanical Intestinal Upgrades' is kind of cool. Maybe it lets the hero digest any organic matter. This reduces their dependence on food supplies, but makes for mildly humorous situations ("Hansel eats what? Again?").

Anatomy of an Ability

Death Hunger —colourful and impressive

#demon —so the character becomes demonic? Alright.

They had become a death cult. Death awakened the blood demon within.
—poetic description gives a thematic idea of how it manifests in play. It tantalizes with world-building ideas and gives hooks for roleplay.

Rank 1 • Hero gains a mark for each opponent taken out of the fight (or killed) in a physical conflict. Each mark gives them a cumulative +1 to attacks until the conflict ends. —this is a bit fiddly, but players who want a combat monster might relish this kind of ability.

Rank 2 • Also gains a cumulative +1 damage for every mark —for the hero who doubles down on this ability.

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THE META GAME

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Nine Core Ideas

1. Players: Top Cats and Runners

One player is mainly responsible for preparing the game, they're the top cat or TC. Like a bass player they set the rhythm of play. The other players run heroes and sidekicks. They're called runners. When seacat refers to players, it always means all the players: TC and runners.

2. Co-Creation

The players co-create the game world through play. The top cat moves play forward and wields a soft veto to maintain a measure of consistency, but they are not the only player with a say in how the fantasy world works.

3. Players Earn Experience, Not Characters

Players choose into which heroes, sidekicks, pets or equipment they invest their xp. Players can have a stable of characters and diverse fantasy assets. When a character is defeated or training, their player runs another character.

4. There Is No Balance

Heroes do not encounter linear progression or balanced encounters. The vast world does not conform to the heroes' powers and abilities.

5. Heroes Are Different

The runners' heroes use different, more involved rules than do their sidekicks and pets, or the extras run by the top cat. The TC doesn't have as much time to put into preparing each extra as a runner has for their personal hero.

6. Inventory Matters

The heroes have a strictly limited personal inventory of ten slots. The gear they carry is a crucial resource and affects what they can do in a conflict or scene.

7. Everything Is a Resource

Every attribute on a hero sheet is a resource which may change, deplete or increase through play. This includes stats, skills, and abilities.

8. D20 Roll Over Core Mechanic

Players roll polyhedral dice. They use a d20 + a sum of modifiers to test their heroes against challenges. Tests succeed when a player rolls over the target number. The number a die rolls is its natural or naked roll. Modifiers (stats, skills) may apply. Boons or advantages [+] and banes or disadvantages [-] may apply. High rolls are almost always better. Rolling a maximum result (a natural 20) is always a good thing, a natural 1 is always a bad thing.

The top cat verbally describes a challenge's difficulty and secretly assigns a target number between 3 (very easy) and 19 (very hard). Challenges may have binary or multiple possible outcomes. The runners may ask what target number they need to beat and the top cat should tell them.

9. Hard Limits for Heroes

The maximum level a hero can ever reach is 9. The maximum sum (stat + skill) they ever add to any d20 roll is +13. The highest target number a hero can ever possess or set is 19—this includes defense.

Three Counterpoints

1. Rules Break

Monsters and obstacles set by the top cat can break all the the hero rules and limits. Specific abilities and variants supersede all core rules. The players together can decide to change any rules.

2. Roleplaytime

The players are a group of friends—or people who might want to become friends—gathered together to have a good time. That they are also playing social games of unexpected heroes in strange imaginary worlds is incidental. Breaking immersion to tell a joke or put a meal on the table is fine.

The players should act like friends: with respect and kindness towards one another. If a player acts inappropriately that is not something game rules can fix. The players should pause play and address the issue honestly and directly.

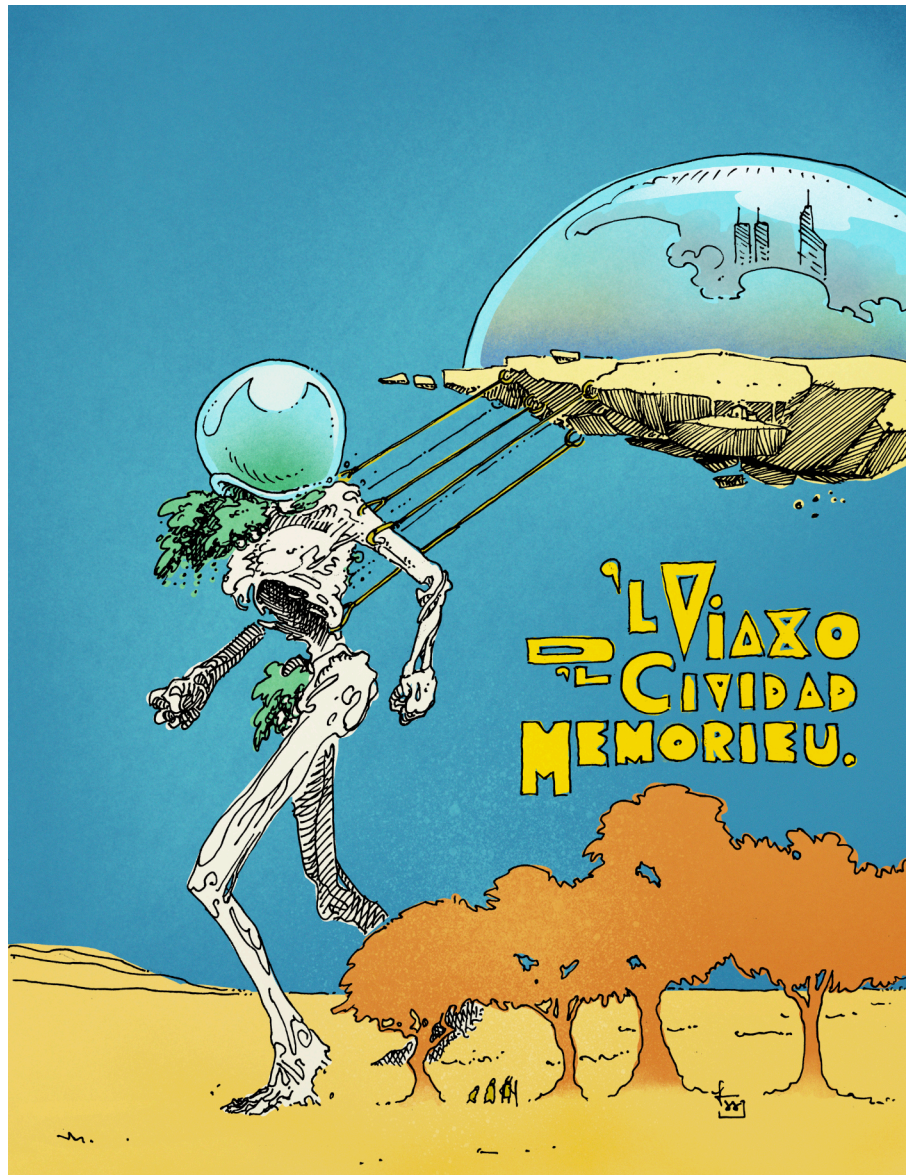
3. Incomplete as a Feature

No set of rules and mechanics and random tables and games can cover all the possibilities of roleplaytime. Nor should they even try. During play the players will come across situations not covered by the game rules. Rather than shy away, they are encouraged to improvise and adapt. To take existing mechanics and bend and break them until they fit.

The players will, in the course of play, realize that some parts of the game aren't useful or are even hindering their fun. They should throw them away.

Finally, players will invent or find bits and pieces of other games they want to try. They should try them. Their games and rules will naturally evolve from session to session. This is fine. There is no way to break roleplaying games.

Every player in a roleplaying session becomes a game designer, and that is part of the fun: expanding, changing, creating their own games and worlds.



Top Cat, Not Game Master

The top cat is explicitly presented as a type of player role, not some kind of “master” outside the group of friends playing at the table.

The term “top cat” is self-consciously playful to break down the bombast of terms like “dungeon master” or “game master” or “judge.” Not only are those titles pretentious, they are misleading. The top cat isn’t an official outside of the game, like in football, or a director in control of the narrative, like in the theatre. Maybe they are the host of the playing group. Maybe they referee and apply the game rules. None of this makes the player running a roleplaying game session the “master” of that session.

One unfortunate consequence of the search for mastery is that many “game masters” try to invest far more time and effort than other players, not least to justify calling themselves “masters.” This is often counterproductive: it can turn a fun playtime activity into a chore and it builds unnecessary barriers between playing a hero and running a session.

The “top cat” role is akin to that of a bass player in a band. It sets the beat for the session, but doesn’t demand hours of prep and embraces the fact that a session is coolest when everyone plays and shines together.

The absence of “mastery” also makes space for imperfection and improvisation. Rules will be forgotten. Scenes will go off the rails. Exciting conflicts will fall flat. Names for villains will turn out to be embarrassing jokes when spoken out loud. Deeply plotted multi-session story arcs will be subverted with jokes about bodily functions. Players will miss sessions. The top cat will forget details between sessions.

None of it means that the top cat or the players are doing anything wrong, or that they are failing at roleplaying. All this is perfectly fine and acceptable. This is play time, not work. They can dust the story off and play more.

The shared goal of all the players is to have a fun session. Memorable characters and interesting scenes are a bonus. Perfect continuity between sessions is impossible. Accurate record keeping will always fail before the onslaught of entropy and time. And that’s all ok.

The top cat sets the stage for the playtime, prepares the sandbox, lays out the narrative hooks and themes, then runs the games and arbitrates the interactions of the heroes with the world through a mix of common sense, rules, and rulings.

The runner cats take control of the protagonists: heroes, sidekicks, and sometimes even extras. They play their various characters and use them to explore the world, overcome challenges, win against the odds or die, and in the process discover their stories through blind luck (dice) and fate (decisions).

A table of players can switch around who is the top cat from session to session. Or even during a game, maybe from scene to scene. The cat doesn’t have to complete an immense, epic arc for it to be a proper roleplaying experience. A one-shot or five good scenes in a row can be enough. It is even possible to play a session with multiple boss cats or just a single runner cat. It’s not as common, but just as legitimate.

All the players, all the cats together, are responsible for making a roleplaying session fun. But they’re also all together responsible for making a roleplaying session work: for organizing the time of play, for preparing food and drinks, for taking notes, building up the world and possibly turning a series of sessions into a full, interconnected campaign.

No Non-Player Characters

If all the players are players, top cat and runner cats both, then it makes no sense to split the characters into those that belong to players and those that do not. The characters are instead split according to how prominent they are within the session and how mechanically detailed they are.

While the heroes, the main protagonists of play, remain in the runners’ hands throughout, the sidekicks and extras can shift around among players as the scenes require. For example, if a single hero goes to reconnoitre a town, the top cat may well assign extras like guards, townspeople, and the jeering mob to other players who would otherwise have little to do during the scene.

The Metagame is the Game

There is a common idea that “metagaming”—bringing the mundane social reality of friends getting together to roleplay, tell jokes, eat food, drink drinks, and have a good time into the fictional narrative (or “diegesis” for some who love rare words)—reduces the quality of roleplaying by breaking “the immersion.” Seacat explicitly rejects the idea that this is possible and suggests the players can embrace the metagame *as* gaming to improve their roleplaytimes. The following tables could help.

Special Top Cat Titles

The players can assign their top cat a special title and power each session. Each power gives a different meta-game effect to liven up the session and, sometimes, encourage friendlier roleplay.

1. **Catspaw** • If there is an actual cat in the house, it is now the top cat’s nominal boss. They can use its name as part of their title.
2. **Cat Lady or Lord** • Gift other players 50 * level xp for lasagna or a tin of tuna.
3. **Game Golem** • Once per session they can move a random location on the game map due to a reality glitch.
4. **Dog Duke** • Can grant 1d4 re-rolls to players who bring food, snacks, and music to the game session.
5. **Caître D’** • Can give a player 100 * level xp if they help clean up the kitchen and table after the game session.
6. **Dyeus Katter** • Can have a hero’s mildly annoying ancestor ghost appear to give advice or present the moral lesson of the session.
7. **Sky Cat** • They can invoke epic atmospheric effects in-game at any time, from rain to lightning. And nobody may groan at the cliché.
8. **Trve Bassist** • Can give a player 1d6 * 10 xp every time they choose an apt background song. They can veto annoying songs, of course.
9. **Hazeraiser** • Can open one travel portal for heroes per session. May demand sacrifices to use the portal at will.
10. **Prismatic Lady** • Randomly recolours in-game locations. It becomes (roll d6): (1) monochrome, (2) desaturated, (3) all cool hues, (4) warm hues, (5) bright, harmonious colours, (6) a brutal riot of neon and day-glo.
11. **Hero Herder** • Draws a great big (abandoned?) railroad linking prepped quantum locations on the big map in the middle of the table (there is one, right?). The heroes don’t have to ride the rails.
12. **Nine Lives** • Nine times during the session, they can bestow an extra life point on a character without a gat token.

Hats For the Cats

"Give them non-quantitative bonuses, depending on type of headgear"

—Galactic Nomad

In a very real sense roleplaytime is a bit like carnival. The players get together and use the rituals of dice and rules to give one another permission to goof off and be silly. To emphasize this the players can decide to institute a magic hats rule at their table: wearing a hat at a session grants a one time special ability that session.

1. **Improvised Hat From Paper and Tape**•Player chooses a different hat ability and uses it once. Their next test is with disadvantage.
2. **Generic Hat**•Player gets bonus xp. Efforts are encouraged.
3. **Bike Helmet**•Negates damage.
4. **Top Hat**•Player can stage a coup and seize the role of top cat (requires thumbs up from more than half of the table, including the revolutionary).
5. **Cowboy Hat**•Automatically wins initiative or a fast draw.
6. **Baseball Cap**•Blends into a crowd.
7. **Chef's Hat**•Creates a potion from monster parts that perfectly replicates one of its abilities.
8. **Boater Hat**•Avoids drowning or heat exhaustion.
9. **Pasta Strainer as a Hat**•Breaks a rule or magically makes a teacup appear in orbit around the world.
10. **Wizard Hat**•Casts 1 spell of a power lower than the hero's level for free.
11. **Sombrero**•Can get a week's rest in a single afternoon.
12. **Beret**•Can use bread as a simple weapon (1d6 damage).
13. **Firefighter's Helmet**•Immune to fire.
14. **Lucha Mask**•Mistaken for someone of player's choice.
15. **Astronaut Helmet**•Does not suffocate.
16. **Penguin Hat**•None of the player's characters can die or be exposed to gore. They are all surrounded by a PG-13 field.
17. **Tinfoil Hat**•One wrong assumption turns out to actually be correct.
18. **Toupée**•Advantage to social tests in calm conditions. Disadvantage when there is wind or rain or moisture or after any kind of exertion.
19. **Big Hair Wig**•Sets any die to eleven.
20. **Cat-in-the-Hat Hat**•Player wins the game. Then maybe rolls an extra d20 once per session, adding the result to another roll.

Players are encouraged to come up with their own little list of rituals, rules, and props. Heroes might get theme songs their players use once per session to get a bonus. Players could use costume jewelry to gain a boon in social encounters or a fake moustache when they play a character going undercover. A small bonus will not break the game, but it will encourage people to loosen up and relax, which is one of the things that is best about roleplaying.

Twenty Session Tasks

Players perform multiple tasks during a roleplaytime session. Traditionally many systems bundle them together with the roles of top cat and runner. The top cat is often tasked with much more work than the other players, which can lead to exhaustion, burnout, and failed roleplaying groups. It's also a big reason why many players avoid running sessions. By unpacking the tasks and talking about them it might be easier to divide the labor fairly.

1. Organizing a session

Finding a time and place for the group to meet. This can be any player, but it's good to make sure somebody is responsible for making the call.

2. Hosting a session

Often roleplaying takes place at somebody's home. This can be any player, but it's important to realize that as the host, they are also have a social role beyond just play. Thus, while the host has an obligation to make the group feel welcome, the other players have a responsibility to be good guests and not abuse the host's hospitality. If playing outside of a home, say at a cafe, the player organizing the session takes on some of the social role of a host. Playing online, somebody will usually be responsible for setting up the digital tools used to play and track events in the game.

3. Taking care of food and drinks:

Roleplaying is a social event that often involves eating and drinking. Whether there will be food and drinks at the table is a group decision, but it's worth respecting the host player's preferences. Some groups make every player responsible for their own food, others do potlucks, yet others prepare communal meals like the traditional frozen pizza of adventuring.

The players should decide who will bring what, who (if anyone) will handle preparation during the sessions (e.g. who's handling the frozen pizzas and making sure they don't burn in the oven, who's making sure the glasses don't run dry), and it's absolutely a good idea to collect food money up front so nobody's left holding the tab. Online this task tends to disappear.

4. Cleaning up after a session

Especially if there is food involved, there will be crockery and cutlery to clean up. All the players should pitch in to help the host clean up after a session. Ideally, the players won't leave until the venue is as clean as they found it.

5. Generating characters

New heroes and sidekicks regularly come into play. There should be one player who knows the rules for making new characters well enough that they can help others. It is helpful if this is not the top cat, letting them focus on keeping the session rolling along.

6. Introducing new players to game rules

When a new player joins the group, it helps if there is another player who is not the top cat who can guide them through the rules.

7. Roleplaying the heroes

This is the primary task of the runners. The top cat should absolutely not roleplay the runners' heroes or make their decisions for them.

8. Roleplaying the antagonists

This is a primary top cat task, since obstacles to the heroes' desires is where stories are born.

9. Roleplaying the extras and sidekicks

Any player can take over the extras in a scene. Usually, a runner will roleplay their hero's sidekicks, but they can also assign them to other players.

Likewise, the TC can assign an extra along with a one or two-line description to a player not directly involved in a scene. The top cat can call for tests to determine the extra's reactions, but leave the rest to the other player. Sharing out extras keeps all the players playing and makes outcomes unexpectable. Who knows, maybe the player will suddenly turn the stat-less invented-on-the-spot shopkeeper into a beloved recurring character?

10. Preparing hooks, plots, and modules for a session

This is almost always the top cat's task. Ideally it should be fun, not a chore. As a rule of thumb, the preparation should not take more time than running the session itself, and ideally less. The more the TC listens to the other players during a session and riffs off their ideas, the more dynamic it will be.

11. Making up lore, names, and backstories

A large part of the fun of roleplaying is invention and imagination. Any player can and should do this. Traditionally, this task falls almost entirely on the top cat (or on pre-written tomes), however it's a good idea to share it out among all the players, which is why the game uses group action tokens.

Additionally, the top cat can declare runners to be the experts on their heroes' cultures, lives, and previous experiences. For example, the runner of a dwarven hero takes the center stage when it comes to describing dwarven breadstick duelling customs.

When the top cat takes this approach, they should wield a soft veto to maintain some consistency in the shared world and to keep it roughly balanced, so that one player's ideas don't steamroll everybody else's. The whole group should also be relaxed about fitting all the bits together.

12. Running the environment, sandbox, and adventure module

This is another primary top cat task. Keeping the imaginary world ticking over, setting the stage for the heroes.

13. Running antagonists in combat

This task usually falls to the top cat, but they could outsource it to a player whose characters aren't present, or even a secondary top cat player.

14. Refereeing conflicts and combat between heroes and antagonists

This is a primary top cat task, but insofar as it deals with rules, another impartial player whose characters are not involved, could also handle this task.

15. Keeping track of the heroes' resources

This is a task for each runner individually when it comes to their own heroes, but one player might serve as a quartermaster and handle the resources of the whole group, for example their caravans or possessions.

16. Rules arbitration

This task usually falls to the top cat, but it is easy to outsource to any player so long as they are fair and impartial.

17. Referencing existing books and lore

Another task that usually falls to the top cat, but could be assigned to anyone.

18. Keeping a campaign journal

Yet again, a task that often falls to the top cat, but can go to any player. A group can even decide to skip it altogether, and the sessions will still be fun. Ideally, the player taking on this task will enjoy writing.

19. Drawing characters, scenes, and maps

This is a task that really helps bring the game alive and every group should encourage as many players as possible to participate. The hero sheet has a large portrait area to encourage drawing. In practice, many groups will usually have one or two players who really enjoy the craft aspect of play. That's excellent. Having a session art journal is a fun activity in itself.

20. Staying on the same page

This isn't really a task, but a useful reminder for every player. A group meets to play together and it's important for all the players to read the room, make sure nobody is getting uncomfortable, and that everyone is enthusiastically on-board with a course of action. Splitting the party could be fun, but it might leave a lot of players pretty bored. Introducing a terrifying spidercat character might have been a good idea, if two of the players weren't arachnophobic.

Runner Session Titles

The players can all take on special titles and powers each session. Why leave that fun just to the top cat? Each title covers some tasks along with some meta-game effects. Runners can choose a different title each session.

1. **Time Maker** • Task: organizes the session. Power: once per real-time hour gives another player an extra action to spend on one of their characters.
2. **Lady or Lord of Hosts** • Task: hosts the session. Power: once per session discovers a safe location for the characters or introduces a host of extras in the distance. The host does not need to be friendly.
3. **Chef of Gods** • Task: provides food for the session. Power: once per session discovers a delectable meal that restores one character's health or life total. They also gain 50 * level xp.
4. **Senior Hygiene Technomancer** • Task: oversees cleanup. Power: once per session removes poison or curse from a character.
5. **Maker of Heroes** • Task: helps players make characters. Power: once per real-time hour grants another player a boon [+].
6. **Gatebreaker** • Task: explains rules to new players. Power: once per session adjusts a rule just this once.
7. **Villain's Secret Friend** • Task: beefs up the antagonists. Power: once per session gives an antagonist a boon on all tests in exchange for doubled xp from that scene. If the boon is not given, the top cat gains two boons to use in one scene of their choice next session, doubling xp from *that* scene.
8. **Inventor of Names** • Task: invents names for locations, items and extras. Power: once per session discovers the true name of an antagonist, granting a boon to a few harmful spells.
9. **Loremaker** • Task: lore about places and things. Power: once per session sneaks a useful feature into the environment.
10. **Quartermaster** • Task: tracks party resources. Power: once per session discovers a useful mundane item in the stores.
11. **Keeper of References** • Task: tracks in-game lore. Power: once per session changes one item of lore to benefit the party.
12. **The Journalist** • Task: keeps campaign journal. Power: once per session may forget to record an event, "inadvertently" helping the party.
13. **Catkin Cartographer** • Task: keeps the party's maps. Power: once per session discovers a shortcut or secret route.
14. **Adventure Artist** • Task: illustrates the party's adventures and encounters. Power: once per session spots a weakness or vulnerability on a creature or object.

Uses of Experience

As a session starts the players should have some idea of the kind of game they want to play and what in-game achievements and meta-game behaviors will be rewarded with experience. The sources of experience form an incentive structure for play and changes how play unfolds.

The amounts of experience players can earn do not vary much with the power (or level) of their heroes. Lower level heroes are restricted in how swiftly they can advance by the limitation on how often they can invest experience, higher level heroes by high quickly they can earn experience.

Players can choose to speed up or slow down advancement by adjusting experience earned.

More Sources of Xp

There is no one right way to play and no single way to assign experience. Players can even change up sources of experience from session to session depending on what kind of game they want to play that day. For a horror adventure, experience might be gained by sheer survival, a power metal heroic adventure might assign it for displays of valor, rousing speeches or guitar solos, and killing monsters, while an old school tomb-robbing module might be best suited by experience for gold. Individual adventure modules can include their own specific victory conditions and experience sources.

So long as players are on board with what their heroes are getting into during a given session, everything is fine.

When xp are won for an achievement, for example discovering a new location in the wilderness, that amount is earned by each participating player. Even a player who participates in a scene indirectly by assisting the top cat by running one of the extras should roll for experience earned.

Possible Achievements

1. High roller. Luck snowballs. Top cat rations rolls. Player earns 20 xp for every natural 20 rolled, natural 100s earn 100 xp each.
2. All cash earned, looted, or stolen. Encourages heists and murderhobo shennanigans. Earn 1 xp for every 1 cash.
3. All works of art recovered and brought to a museum. The more rare, elaborate, and difficult to transport, the more xp. 1d6 x 20 xp per slot.
4. All cash profligately wasted carousing. A pulp adventure vibe. 1 xp for every 1 cash.
5. All enemies killed. Slaughterquest. 10 xp per enemy's level.
6. Monsters hunted. Murder quests. 100 xp per target's level with proof.
7. Enemies defeated. Trickery rewarded. 10 xp per enemy's level.
8. Trophies collected. Big game hunting. 100 xp per target's level for trophy.
9. Encounters survived. Cowardice pays. 1d6 x 5 xp every time the hero is injured. 1d6 x 20 xp for every encounter survived.
10. New creatures observed and studied. Biology and naturalism. 100 xp per target's level for observations brought back (minimum 100 xp).

11. New locations visited and explored. Tourism. Natural geography. 1d6* x 20 xp per location.
12. New spells and anomalies found or activated. Archaeology. The pushing of red buttons. 100 xp per minimum power of spell.
13. Quests completed. Story mode. Top cat pre-seeds sandbox with quests and xp values. Each runner prepares a personal quest. Major quest is worth 4000 xp. Sub quests are worth 400 xp. Mini quests 40 xp.
14. Civilians saved. Valorous hero mode. All civilians saved: 1000 xp. Most civilians saved: 200 xp. Some civilians saved: 100 xp. No civilians saved. Well. Zero.
15. Loyal lackeys gained. Feudal lord mode. 100 xp per level of lackey.
16. Locations and creatures illustrated. Artist setting. 100 xp per creature or location illustrated.
17. The episodic and colourful tales of the party written and recounted. Writerly encouragement. 100 xp per vignette written up. 500 xp if whole session written up.
18. Drinks prepared for the group. 500 xp. If multiple players prepare together, rewards are split.
19. Helping run the game. Encouraging pro-social behaviour. 100–500 xp.
20. Food prepared for the group. Play as social dining experience. 500 xp. If multiple players prepare together, rewards are split.

Personal Quests

Players may also have personal quests or goals for which they alone can earn experience. Examples might be a hero avenging their parent's death or finding a way to magically regrow their face after a magical accident. The cat should work with all the runners to make sure these sources are fair. A player should not earn more experience simply for being more vocal than others.

The runners may also set themselves group goals or quests, with the cat again having final say in how much experience certain achievements might be worth. These might be a quest to rebuild a community, circumnavigate a planetoid, or overthrow the Grey Lords of Deadtime.

Experience As Reward For Exploration and Interaction

When the cat is running the game as a sandbox they should distribute sources of experience unevenly around the world. This is easiest with generic sources, like xp for landmarks, artworks, or treasures.

A simple rule of thumb to use is pareto's 80/20 principle. 80% of the achievements are relatively simple and account for about 20% of the total available experience. These might be poorly defended rooms in a dungeon, gullible extras to convince to a cause, or easy to find and explore natural sights. The remaining 20% of achievements hold 80% of the available experience. These might be secret chambers protected by traps and monsters, demanding lords whose support would change the course of a war, or breathtaking wonders made inaccessible by grueling terrain, weather, and other obstacles.

Each sandbox session the top cat can prepare around 200–400 xp per player in easy to reach areas and 800–1600 xp in the difficult areas.

PLACEHOLDER

Inspirations

“The best games happen in a vacuum.”

—Voidpilot Schtiff, *The Ken of Motorgolem Maintenance*

Game design does not happen in a vacuum. A variety of games, books, music, comics, novels, and more inform every creative step.

Ben Hur (1959) • Few movies do epic better. The chariot race is spectacular.

Black Hack • A cool OSR game. The source of risk dice in previous iterations.

Dungeons & Dragons • The game that started it all.

Hugo Pratt • A comic book artist whose quickest sketches sing and dance.

In the Year 2525 (Exordium & Terminus) • Zager and Evans' 1969 incredible deep time one hit wonder.

Last and First Men (1930) • Deep future history by Olaf Stapledon.

Macchiato Monsters • A fantastic and fun OSR game. A lesson in sharpened prose.

The Master & Margarita (1973) • Mikhail Afanasyevich Bulgakov's incredible satirical dark comedy brings out the devil in the bureaucratic state.

Microlite RPG • An elegant mid '00s distillation of d20 into its simple essentials.

Microscope • An rpg that brings the worlds above and below together.

Mike Mignola • One of the best chiaroscuro comic book artists around. A master in the art of shadows.

Moebius aka. Jean Giraud • A superlative comic book artist. Inspiring in so many ways.

Whitehack • A wonderfully elegant d20 game. The source of the contest bidding. An inspiration of minimalist writing layout.

Zardoz • A wonderfully weird 1970s piece of sci-fi by John Boorman that captures the experimental weirdness of the times.

Glossary

"There is a house in UVG they call the Rising Cat."

—Steppelands folk son, author unknown.

- Ability** • Inherent attribute of a character that lets them perform in unusual ways.
- Advancement** • The effect of investing xp in a character
- Hero type** • A bundle of attribute and advancement tables. Also archetype, skin, or class.
- Attribute** • The things describing a character in play. Proficiency, stats, skills, abilities, inventory, life, hurt, hero dice.
- Ba** • The mind or personality, provides a unique direction to consciousness. Used in social conflicts.
- Boon [-]** • Situational penalty to a roll. Player rolls additional die, takes worse result. Also disadvantage.
- Boon, [+]** • Situational bonus to a roll. The player rolls an additional die and takes the result they prefer. Also advantage. A character may accrue multiple boons.
- Campaign** • Series of inter-connected meetings of players, featuring a similar cast of heroes. Similar to a show's season.
- Character** • Imaginary person or thing run by a player at a session.
- Conflict** • A fight between heroes (aka. Protagonists) and antagonists. Runners roll dice for the protagonists, the cat for the antagonists. There are three main kinds of conflict: spiritual (ka), social (ba), and physical (ha).
- Contest** • A competition between characters to see who achieves a goal first or best.
- Critical** • A natural 20 rolled on a d20 during a test. Always succeeds and has some additional positive effect. Also crit.
- Critical damage** • In conflicts criticals multiply damage dealt. The critical damage multiplier steps are $x2 > x3 > x4$, etc.
- Critical range** • The range of natural rolls that inflict a critical. The critical range steps are $20 > 19-20 > 18-20$, etc.
- D20, d12, d10, d8, d6, d4** • The polyhedral dice with different numbers of faces.
- Dice notation** • 2d6 is two six-sided dice rolled and added together. 3d8 is the sum of three eight-sided dice. D100 is two ten sided dice with one representing the tens, the other the digits. A roll of '00' is treated as 100.
- Defense** • A character's target number in a conflict.
- Extra** • Sketched out background character.
- Fumble** • A natural 1 on a d20 rolled during a test. Always fails and has some additional negative effect.
- Fumble range** • The range of natural rolls that result in a fumble. The fumble range steps are $1 > 1-2 > 1-3$, etc.
- Inventory** • The hero sheet places a strict limit on how much a hero can carry. It covers all sorts gear, weapons, armor, tools, spells, burdens, fears, woes, and treasure. Carried equipment greatly impacts a character's abilities.
- Gat token** • Physical object to help players take turns performing group actions or co-creating the game world.
- Ha** • The body, the vehicle of the soul (ka) and mind (ba). Used in physical conflicts.
- Hero, protagonist** • Excessive. A primary character.
- Hero dice (hd)** • D6s that modify a hero's natural rolls and provide some other benefits.
- Hurt** • Serious injuries. Cumulative penalties that accrue as life, stats and other resources run out. Also fatigue or death spiral.
- Ka** • The soul, the motive fire of consciousness and being. Used in spiritual conflicts.
- Level (L)** • A creature's relative power.
- Life** • A character's plot armor and vital force all in one. Once upon a time called hit points.
- Magic, fantascience** • Anything sufficiently advanced to be indistinguishable from magic.
- Natural result** • The number on a rolled die before any modifiers. E.G. A natural 20. Also naked roll.
- Player** • Sentient creature partaking in a roleplaytime session.
- Praxa** • Psychophysical battle techniques honed over millennia. From Ancient Greek for practice.
- Pro, proficiency** • A modifier between +2 and +5 used by skilled and expert heroes.

Relevant Stat or Skill • Stat or skill that the players judge to apply in a given context. The top cat has a final (soft) veto on whether a stat or skill applies.

Roll • Rolling any polyhedral die.

Round • During a conflict, a sufficient amount of time for every character to take their turn.

Runner • Player running protagonists (heroes and sidekicks).

Scene, encounter • Basic unit of roleplay when and where the characters interact with the shared imaginary objects.

Session • One meeting of all or some of the players at their table to play. Similar to a show's episode.

Sidekick • Secondary character or pet with simplified attributes.

Sidu • A pan-cultural agglomeration of custom and behavior that cuts across the living and dead cultures of the Vastlands. Sidu comes from Old English for custom or habit.

Skill • Trained attribute of a character. A profession. First rank (skilled) applies proficiency to relevant tests, second rank (expert) doubles this.

Spell • Recipe for altering reality. A type of gear, it takes up inventory.

Stats, S.E.A.C.A.T. • The six game stats represent natural aptitude and modify most natural rolls.

Sum • Total modifier (stat + skill) applied to a d20 test. Can never be larger than +13.

Table • The physical or virtual space where the players meet.

Target • A number between 3 and 19 set by the top cat to represent the difficulty of a test.

Test • A d20 roll to overcome a target number to determine whether a character's desired course of action succeeds. Modified by a character's stat and skill (or sum).

Top cat, TC, cat • The player running the game session and antagonists. Also referee, ref.

Turn • Part of round, time unit when a character takes their actions.

Unusual dice • Polyhedral dice that players may have trouble finding, such as a d30. A dice rolling app or online random generator helps.

Veda • A secret compilation of lore, ritual, study and science. From Slovenian or Sanskrit for knowledge or science.

Xp, experience • Points or metagame currency a player collects through play and invests in their

characters and game objects. Xp represent characters' successes and experiences.



Tags

“Look upon my works ye mighty and compare.”

—Rushime, ancient monarch cursed to immortality and irrelevance.

Tags categorize skills, abilities, and effects. They also help with searching through the book.

Ability Tags

#biomachine • Artificial abilities for created organisms.

#brains • Thoughtful application of superior intellectual capabilities for the furtherance of personally acceptable outcomes.

#fantascience • Magic and science by another name.

#fortune • Luck and the manipulation of the underlying fabric of probability.

#power • The will to strength. The unyielding oak. The crushing boulder. The alacrity of the born warrior.

Skill Tags

#adventure • Skill has practical utility in the struggle of mortal against uncaring natural worlds.

#background • Skill represents the development of a mortal as a part of a functional community.

#combat • Also called a *praxa*, this skill represents a combination of psychophysical battle techniques honed over millennia. *Praxa* comes from Ancient Greek for practice.

#magic • Also called a *veda*, this skill represents a difficult or secret compilation of lore, ritual, study and science. *Veda* comes from Slovenian or Sanskrit for knowledge or science.

#social • Also called a *sidu*, this skill represents a pan-cultural agglomeration of custom and behavior that cuts across the living and dead cultures of the Vastlands. *Sidu* comes from Old English for custom or habit.

Conflict Tags

#clumsy • [-] to attack roll.

#precise • [+] to attack roll.

#reach • Wielder can use an action to counterattack against an attacker. The counterattack is resolved before the attack. Negates other #reach tags.

PLACEHOLD

FIN



El Titolo

Seacat is self-consciously modernist; impressionist and expressionist by turns, embracing the possibilities of a theatre-of-the-mind-first approach and the infinite special effects budget that brings.

1. A caravan underakes a strange long trip through the Ultraviolet Grasslands to find the Black City at the end of the world.
2. Five
3. Four
4. Six

dd

1. **Two**
It were so it was oh aye!
2. **Threehundred:** a cat
3. **Fourty ninety:** a dog

Def: 11

Life: 20

Sum: +5

Devoted and deserters alike build a new life under red skies in the heart of the twitching corpse of the greatest city the world had known.

John

Half-mad fools ascend into the skies on cobbled-together chariots of fire like the shamans of old to wander the voidways of the sky gods.

- o **Librete:** Heroes end cities and civilizations and worlds through accidents and inattention, and through it all, creation and invention dance on, a couple unbound in space and time.
- o **What even makes** a hero when the tale is told? Not goodness, perhaps. But excessive, yes, certainly.
- o **May the seacat** bless you all with strange tells to laugh over for many days and many years.

Introduction to the introduction to the reality interdiction

Moebius' mind-bending bande dessinée Airtight Garage.

—Blue Oyster Cult's evocative Veteran of the Psychic Wars.

The rambling melange that is the *Heavy Metal* movie.

There is a cat.

The surreal fantasy of Jodorowsky's *Holy Mountain*.

Impressionistic brilliance of Miller's Fury Road.

The semi-coherence of the Strugatskys' *Roadside Picnic* or VanderMeer's *Annihilation*. The neo-baroque pop metal of *Ghost*. The shifting realities of new wave science fiction. Psychedelic journeys between inner and outer spaces.

1. **Musique** • All these inspire and inform Seacat, *le chat de mer*, the roleplaying game of whimsical and capricious worlds, digressing from a single arc, lurching into branching stories, dancing into an act of creation itself.
2. **Senape** • Seacat is self-consciously **modernist**; impressionist and expressionist by turns, embracing the possibilities of a theatre-of-the-mind-first approach and the infinite special effects budget that brings.
3. **Lattitude** • A caravan underakes a strange long trip through the Ultraviolet Grasslands to find the Black City at the end of the world.

1. La Romanza D'arlequinna.

Devoted and deserters alike build a new life under red skies in the heart of the twitching corpse of the greatest city the world had known.

Half-mad fools • ascend into the skies on cobbled-together chariots of fire like the shamans of old to wander the voidways of the sky gods.

End of cities • Heroes end cities and civilizations and worlds through accidents and inattention, and through it all, creation and invention dance on, a couple unbound in space and time.

What • even makes a hero when the tale is told? Not goodness, perhaps. But excessive, yes, certainly.

May the seacat bless you all with strange tells to laugh over for many days and many years.

Los Ojos de Huevo

| D11 | ITEM | ARMOR | SIZE | SPECIAL | PRICE |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|--------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Iksan bone-rank leather greatcoat. Fine white leather with special pockets for the Book of the Reasonable Screed, an official party notebook, and a set of pens. | +2 | 1 | Good vs. undead. | 150 |
| 2 | Morri scalefish armor | +2 | 1 | Good for swimming. | 30 |
| 3 | Izvoreni homeostatic suit | +2 | 2 | Recycles fluids. Heat resistant. | 160 |
| 4 | Izvoreni glyphed tile armor | +3 | 2 | Good vs. golems. | 50 |
| 5 | Ebéteen red living mail. Chitinous, half-living armor of flowing arthropod links. | +4 | 2 | Heat comfortable. Feeds on flesh to give 5 life. | 200 |
| 6 | Iksan shock armor. Porcelain and olivine plates over a slippery metallic mesh. | +5 | 2 | Good vs. grappling. | 500 |
| 7 | Ebéteen lapiz mail. Rocky tiles overlaid on a living chitinous matrix. | +5 | 3 | Breathes in hot weather. Good vs. blunt weapons. | 400 |
| 8 | Tirsteen bronze-glyphed armor. Heavy plates of sinew-reinforced bronze. | +6 | 3 | Good vs. spells. | 100 |
| 9 | Iksan leveller armor. Green plates of ceramic threaded with silvery metallic links. | +7 | 3 | Good vs. energy attacks. | 500 |
| 10 | Ebéteen scarab armor. Iridescent parasite-bonded plate armor. | +8 | 3 | Heat comfortable. Feeds on flesh to give 5 life. | 1500 |
| 11 | Iksan storm shield. Full-body ceramic shield. | +2 | 2 | Good vs. missiles. | 30 |

fine della tabella nuvolosa.

S TEST PAGE

REMOVED